



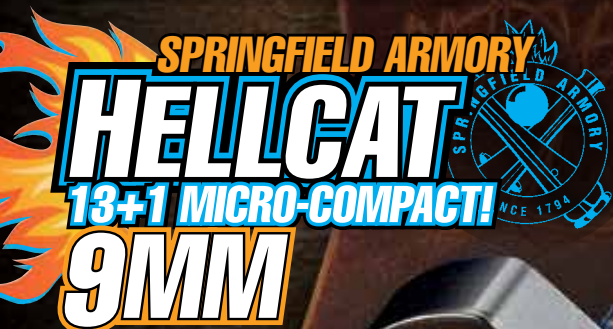
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**SHOT SHOW
HIGHLIGHTS**

FOCUS:

**TAFFIN TESTS: KELTEC PMR-30 .22 MAG
COP TALK: RISE AND FALL OF THE .45 GAP
CARRY OPTIONS: THAT BOX OF HOLSTERS!
PISTOLSMITHING: DIAGNOSING FEEDING PROBLEMS**



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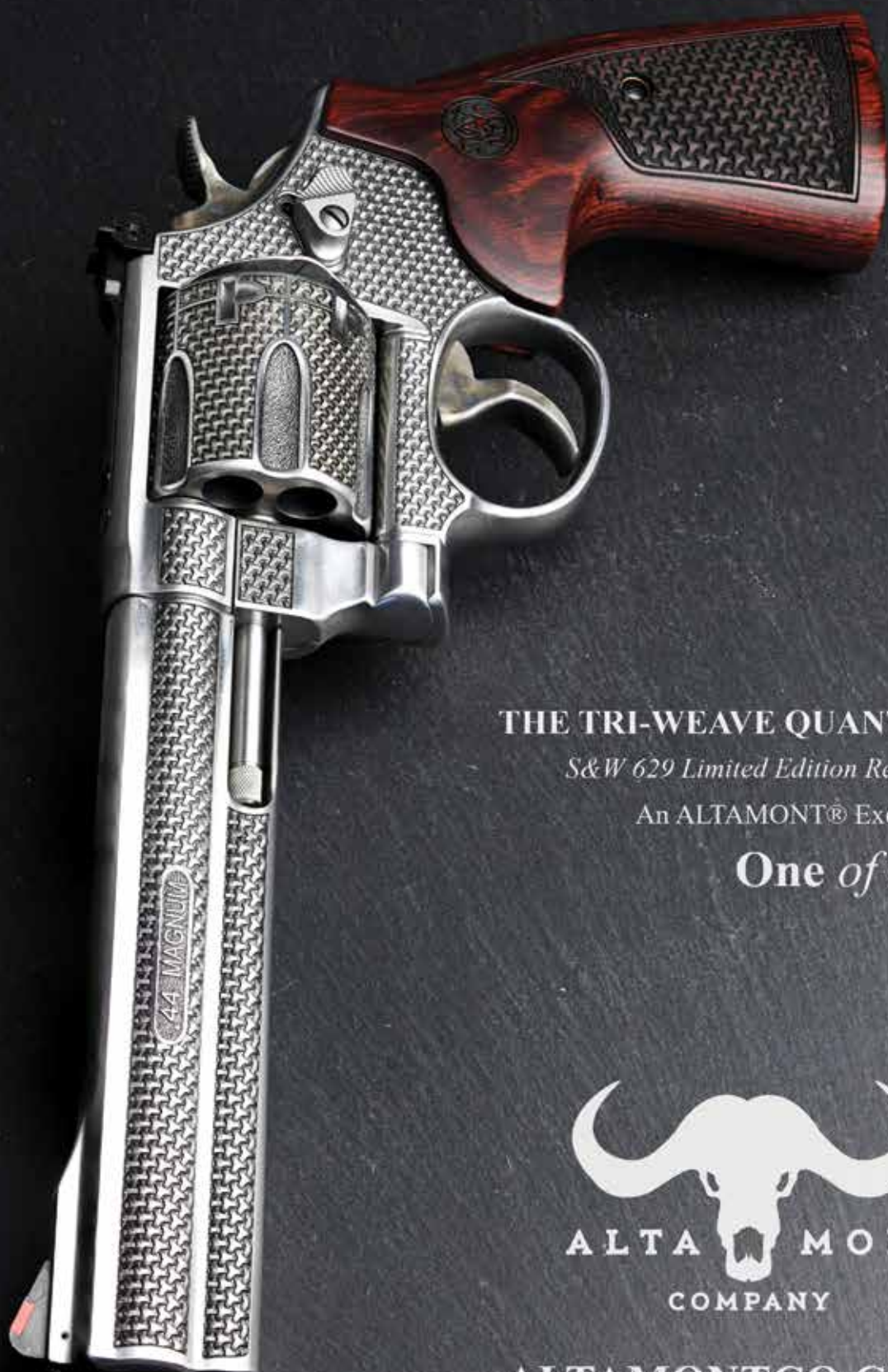
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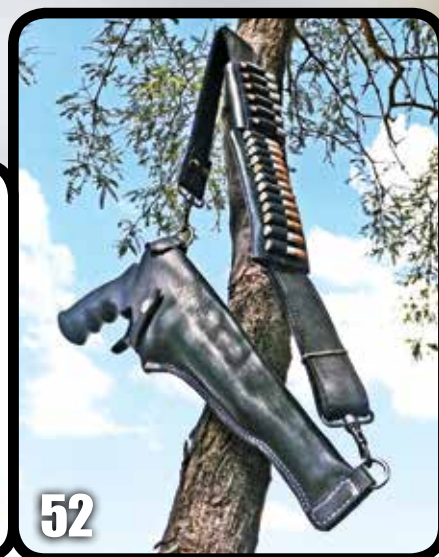
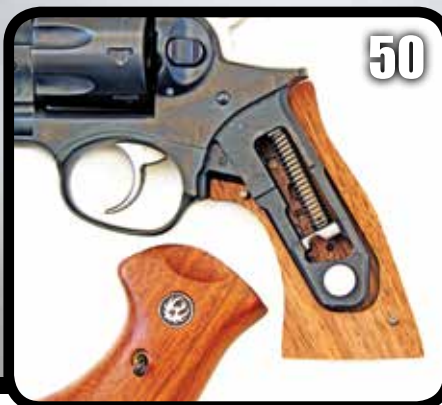
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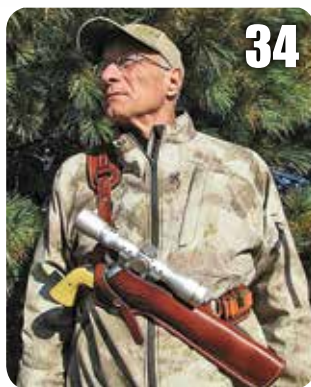
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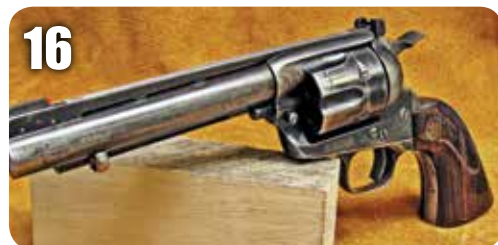
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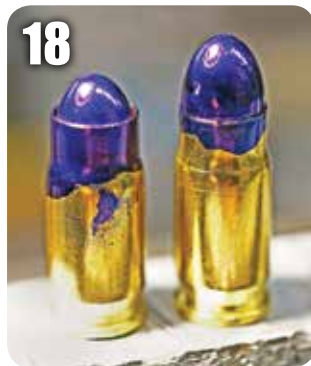
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ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

A new year brings new guns, ammo and gear to market, and our Jeff "Tank" Hoover and Dave Workman provide their thoughts in weekly online exclusives for *American Handgunner* and *GUNS Magazine*. Read recent first looks at the Ruger Super GP100, Kimber Raptor Collector's Edition series, SIG SAUER CROSS and more at americanhandgunner.com and gunsmagazine.com.

SHOT SHOW COVERAGE

Go behind-the-scenes of the 2020 SHOT Show with sights and sounds from range day and the show floor with exclusive coverage from the shooting, hunting and outdoor industry's largest event! See what you missed with photo recap articles, video interviews and product demonstrations and our "Best of" lists — available online and on our YouTube channel at youtube.com/fmgpubs.



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Don't have time to listen to a full podcast interview? New *GUNS Magazine Podcast Quick Hits* offer short and enjoyable episodes with Editors Brent T. Wheat and Roy Huntington, discussing topics such as snubie revolvers, church security and why you don't read bad reviews in our magazines. Download and listen everywhere, including Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, and gunsmagazine.com/podcast.



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VANTAGEPOINT

TOM MCHALE

Industry friend and treasured buddy Tisma Juett carried the torch for the NSSF's First Shots program for years, exposing thousands of first timers to the shooting sports. One of my favorite parts of SHOT Show is catching up with friends, even if it requires the occasional selfie!



WHY WE SHOOT

Some of you entered this world, kicking and cursing, brandishing a custom 1911 in each hand — likely scaring the living hell out of the mid-wife. Some of us, including me, came to appreciate the joys and satisfaction of shooting later in life. Often mid-course corrections result from some significant event; sometimes positive and sometimes terrifying.

On occasion, a few of us experience a rude awakening, changing our views on guns — radically. My wife is a shooting boss, has been carrying for decades and most of her friends know it. One of her core group of ladies had always been militant, and vocal, about her opposition to guns. One night as the half-dozen friends exited the local Piccadilly Cafeteria, they noticed a shady character hanging around their cars.

others in the group did, so the encounter resulted in some good for all of us.

In my case, it took a violent crime to wake me from my apathetic stupor. While my childhood home didn't include firearms, there was no active opposition to the idea — just a lack of interest. Later, having a wife and young kids of my own, I figured out the hard way I was shockingly unprepared. It's a long and involved story, and I wouldn't want to diminish the training value by condensing it, so we'll save it for another time. Let's just say my outlook on the world of firearms for self-defense did a 180 in about 0.0007 picoseconds.

My favorite "come to shooting" moments happen at the range when teaching first timers. One dear friend had never seen a gun, much less held or fired one. However, being strong

"OFTEN MID-COURSE CORRECTIONS RESULT FROM SOME SIGNIFICANT EVENT; SOMETIMES POSITIVE AND SOMETIMES TERRIFYING."

Tampa, Florida suburbs aren't exactly the south side of Chicago, but there's more than enough violent crime to go around, so the skeezy guy caused some concern. Without the slightest recognition of hypocrisy, the hoplophobic friend turned to my wife and asked, "You DO have your gun, right?" Yeah, I know. She didn't end up changing her views, but

of will, heart and curiosity, she took the plunge. Our first range outing was more like an NFL Combine drill. With each shot fired from nearby lanes, she flinched. By "flinched" I mean both feet left the ground — you could sweep a 55-gallon drum clean under at her apex. However, she leaned into the fear and took to instruction like a "how

to earn millions from the comfort of your recliner" student. Now she's a confident gun owner and concealed carrier who takes other first-timers to the range. It's "paying it forward" at work. That's good for all of us.

While admittedly late, my 2020 New Year's Resolution is to take more first-timers to the range. Care to join me in the endeavor?



Perfect "first-timer" pistols. A Smith & Wesson Victory and suppressed M&P 22 Compact. No noise, no recoil and no flinch — but plenty of smiles.



THE VIEW FROM SHOT SHOW 2020

Persecuted feet, a depleted supply of Advil and a profound sense of gratitude for the industry in which I work signal this: SHOT Show 2020 is a wrap. While finding gear like red dot sights that use computerized imagery to auto-zero themselves — and wondering if it will require daily reboots — brings back "kid in a candy store" emotions, the real value from the Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade show is the direct insight into the state of the firearms world. This year, the prevailing winds of attendee sentiment carried a refreshing scent — optimism. I don't mean the fear-based sales projections driven by firearms owners' "stocking up" before some gun or gizmo becomes evil and restricted, but a view of good business dead ahead fueled by product enthusiasm and new customers entering the market. That's good news for all of us.

An initiative from the National Shooting Sports Foundation intends to amplify the wave of new shooter participation and combat the daily negativity we all see on the nightly news. The Gun Owners Care campaign aims to help educate the non-shooting population with what we already know: Gun owners are the folks you want to befriend, share precious leisure time with and rely on to watch your back. We know we've driven gun-related accidents to the lowest level in recorded history, conserved wildlife, and made communities safer, but much of the soundbite media consuming public doesn't. How about helping the NSSF get the word out? Find out more at gunownerscare.org.



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SINGLE ACTION LIGHT RAILS!?!

Please tell Duke to knock it off. The idea of a light rail on an SA revolver is somewhere above zombies but below political parties on the Evil Idea Index. I know he said hopefully no one would do that but that's not strong enough. Just mentioning it will make some idiot think it's a good idea. No, just no!

Bob Fillpot
Via email

ASP Memories

Just a quick response on excellent article by Dr. Will Dabbs on the EAA MC911SC (March/April 2020). Back in 1979 I was a Boston police detective working in the District Attorney's Organized Crime Unit. The Chief ADA of the Unit carried a 9mm ASP. To me it was revolutionary with the clear grip and innovative clear magazine revealing how many rounds it contained. I also recall he had a 14 kt gold lapel pin displaying the last two blips followed by a flat line, as seen on an

electrocardiograph monitor. He wore it daily on his suit. Everyone in the office knew the meaning, but most lawyers and civilians just thought it was some kind of unusual pin design. Ha!

Joe Fiandaca
Via email

Fancy Flashlights

Since you almost always feature bits about flashlights and gun lights, I figure you might be able to answer a

couple of questions about all this wonderful new flashlight technology. I did email several inquiries to your sister FMG publication, *American Flashlighter*, but have received no replies. Pretty shoddy behavior in my opinion, but I still trust you guys.

I love the new compact high-output LED flashlights, especially the ones with zoom lenses. Amazing stuff. However, I really have no use for all the different



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settings, such as strobe, SOS, Thaw, Popcorn, etc., and would really prefer one with just a high and low setting. The controls on these little marvels are obviously run by computer chips. Since many preppers use these things, and since one of the top prepping scenarios involves an EMP disabling all manner of computer chips, might these flashlights be vulnerable in such a situation? In other words, would these flashlights be rendered useless right along with iPads and vehicle ignition systems?

How about the LED itself? Would it be fried, also? I'm still holding onto all my old Mag-Lites with their devilishly clever mechanical switches. However, they also all sport LEDs, so is this a potential concern? Should we all be keeping a stock of Tiki torches on hand? I would appreciate your insights. Keep up the good work on the best gun magazine out there, and please tell the editorial staff at *American Flashlighter* to get on the stick.

Bob Christensen
Via email

Gads man ... don't say American Flashlighter as that might prompt the higher-ups to think that's a good idea. No ... please no.

I asked someone I know at Streamlight about the EMP and their circuit boards and they said they "doubt" it'd affect anything. One engineer said they had a default mode if the board goes bad you can still get a basic on-off light. Not sure how to test it short of an explosion?

Maybe those 99-cent two-D cell Ray-O-Vac lights from the dime store when we were kids might still be best?

Oh, they did say the LEDs would be fine, regardless.

Officially? I don't give a hoot. If an EMP happens, I'll just stay home that day burning candles and lanterns and shooting .22's from my non-electric single shot .22. Oh, I'll break out the string and empty tin cans to talk to my wife when I'm in the shop. —RH

Military Gun Nonsense

The recent shooting at NAS Pensacola reminded me the navy has long been politically correct regarding handguns. During the Korean police action I served in the Orient as a line officer on board an attack transport. When in port the officer of the deck was required to carry an unloaded sidearm. We were not even permitted to possess a loaded magazine on our person. I tried to object to this state of affairs, but you can well imagine how much weight the opinion of an ensign might carry. It was explained to me there are three ways of doing something — the right way, the wrong way and the navy way. It was further explained the pistol was not to

Continued on page 80

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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE .45 GAP

The .45 ACP left, shorter .45 GAP right. The latter allows more hand to get around the pistol.



In 2003, a joint effort by GLOCK and an ATK team led by the brilliant Ernest Durham birthed the .45 GAP cartridge. GLOCK's 13+1 round G21 had, in 13 years, become the most popular standard issue .45 ACP among America's police, but smaller-handed personnel complained of its girth and long trigger reach. The .45 GLOCK Auto Pistol cartridge came in at a size that could run in 9mm-size platforms: OAL 1.070" and a case length of 0.755". This allowed its use in the standard GLOCK frame as opposed to the larger one developed for the .45 ACP and 10mm Auto.

New York State Police were the first big agency to adopt it. Soon 10 percent of our state police agencies had armed their troopers with the GAP, including Pennsylvania, Georgia, South Carolina and Florida. All reported excellent results in actual shootings. Other ammo makers offered .45 GAP, with a choice of 185-, 200- and 230-gr. rounds fully duplicating standard pressure .45 ACP performance. Springfield Armory tooled up to make pistols for the new cartridge. The .45 GAP was on a fast track.

Today, however, 80 percent of those bellwether LE agencies have abandoned it. Half of those, PA and NY, went back to .45 ACP, while the other half, GA and SC, went to the 9mm. What happened? There's more than one answer.



CONFLUENCE OF TRENDS

Some on the Internet speculated the GAP was an ingenious solution to a non-existent problem, or a sop to Gaston Glock's vanity. The facts show otherwise. Testing by prestigious agencies like FHP showed the G37 in .45 GAP was easier for small-handed officers to shoot, and larger-handed officers shot better with it than with the big G21. However, some other things were going on, creating a perfect storm causing the new cartridge to founder in popularity.

Competing .45 ACPs came out, including GLOCK's own, that were easier to grasp. The Smith & Wesson M&P had a slimmer grip-frame and shorter trigger reach, as did the Springfield Armory XD45, the first achieved with a 10-round magazine and the second with a 13-runder in a longer grip-frame. In-house, GLOCK had made two changes to allow more ergonomic grasping of their own 13+1 round G21 .45 ACP: the SF (for Short Frame) series, and the Gen4 .45's. In essence, GLOCK's own .45 ACPs were making their .45 GAPs redundant.

Ammo droughts had disparate impact on the less common calibers. Remember 2012, when ammo shelves were bare and people queued up at WalMart to buy their two rationed boxes of 9mm or .22 on ammo delivery day? That hit the police market, too, with departments waiting many months for delivery of duty and training ammo in even the most popular calibers. Consequently 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP got priority on the production lines; .357 SIG, 10mm, and yes, .45 GAP were sort of "we'll make some when we get caught up." The waits were even longer for cartridges in the .45 GAP's "new kid on the block" level of use.

MORE BANG

Fostered by FBI and the ammo companies, the trope of "new ammo developments have made 9mm equal to the larger calibers" flourished in both the armed citizen and police sectors. While improved ammo certainly helped the 9mm to a greater extent than it did more powerful rounds, what was undeniable was 9mm was easier to shoot, cheaper to buy, and more readily available by far than .45 GAP. There was also the on-board firepower element. Within the space of a standard frame GLOCK's magazine, a department like SCHP or Georgia State Patrol went from 10+1 .45 GAP rounds in-gun to 17+1 rounds of 9mm when they swapped their G37s for G17s.

What none of the departments that dumped the .45 GAP complained about was so-called "stopping power." Without exception, they were pleased with how fast solid hits with good JHPs from the .45 GAP stopped violent encounters.

Though it's fading, the .45 GAP isn't gone. It remains an extremely viable choice for the user who wants the reassurance of the proven .45 caliber bullet, and a pistol fitting most hands well — can keep a goodly stock of ammo in their armory.



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FRONT SIGHT... FOCUS?

Lately I've been reading classic works on pistol use from the mid-1900s. McGivern, Askins, Jordan, Gaylord — these are just a few of the gunmen of that time writing about pistol use and the serious subject of self-defense. What's interesting is there are whole sections and chapters in these books devoted to stance, grip and trigger work but only a brief mention on using the sights. "When the sights are aligned on target, smoothly press the trigger." Followed by a whole section on how to smoothly press the trigger.

Around the late 1990s things changed. Everyone became obsessed with "front sight focus," often neglecting everything else, especially the trigger press.



Keep the head and neck erect, bring the sights up into alignment between the eyes and target. Then, with both eyes open, just look at the front sight and hold it as steady as possible.

"Focus" came to mean seeing the front sight as crisply as possible, as if looking at it through a microscope. Even if this required squinting or shutting one eye.

Yes, you should focus on the front sight ensuring alignment with the target and rear sight prior to, during and after the trigger press. Our eyes can't focus on the target and the front and rear sight at the same time. So, we pick the middle of those three — the front sight — to focus on. The target is blurry, but by watching the front sight you can hold it steady on-target. The same is true with the

rear sight. Shots scattered around the target indicate the shooter is looking at the target instead of the front sight.

JUST SEE — DON'T FOCUS

"But," you say, "the sight is sharper when I close one eye." We're binocular creatures. Closing an eye has several disadvantages. It decreases your field of view, and you lose depth perception. The open eye dilates to gather additional light, attempting to compensate. And while the sight may initially be crisp, it won't be for long. The open eye will fatigue quickly.

A better way to think about "focus" is to just "watch," "look at," or "see" the front sight naturally with both eyes open. The eyes are focused at the distance where the front sight is located. The sight may not be crisp or clear, especially as you age. How crisp you can see it isn't the question. What counts is you're looking at the front sight, as opposed to bouncing back and forth between it and the target.

It's easy, too. Pretend you're holding a pistol, except hold your thumb up —

that's your front sight. Pick out a target, and look at it keeping both eyes open. Raise your arm — keeping both eyes open — bringing the "sight" up into alignment between your eyes and target. Now — still with both eyes open — look at your thumb. There it is, front sight focus. It's that simple.

Obviously, the front and rear sight need to be aligned. "Alignment" is relative to the accuracy required. With close, large targets at typical self-defense distances, as long as the front and rear sight are relatively close to aligned you'll get a good hit. This is what Jeff Cooper called a "flash sight picture." You see the front sight on or over the target and press off the shot. As distances increase, and/or target size decreases, alignment becomes more critical. Now we're talking "dedicated" sight pictures, aligning everything with care.

You watch the front sight, hold the



The target on the left is ideal for checking the fundamentals and zeroing your pistol. "Negative targets" (R) are better for defensive training. Negative targets also cure shooters of looking for their "hits."

pistol steady and smoothly press the trigger. The shot breaks. Was the sight on-target when the pistol lifted up on recoil? If so, it's a good hit. If you see the sight dip or jerk as you press the trigger — recoil anticipation — you know it wasn't a good hit. "If you have to look at the target to see if it was a good shot or not," I tell students, "you're not watching the front sight."

IT JUST TAKES PRACTICE

It's also important to watch the sight before, during and after the shot. After every shot you follow-through — recover from the recoil, reacquire another sight picture and reset the trigger. This prepares you to fire again. How many hits are required to stop the threat? The threat will let you know.

Visually tracking the front sight as it rises and during recoil recovery prevents the eyes from shifting to the next object in your line of sight — the target — then

having to refocus back to the sight. This consumes time, about one-quarter of a second when your eyes are young. Most people will also lower the pistol slightly, trying to see the hit. More time lost. Watching that sight before, during and after the shot makes you accurate and efficient, both important for self-defense.

Shooting accurately isn't difficult. Aim, hold, press and follow through. Each of these fundamentals is important. Just remember to watch that front sight during the entire process. Make sure each shot is an accurate one — until you've determined it's not necessary to fire again.





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A ROYAL RESTORATION



"After" picture shows the total refinishing and re-cut lettering.



This "before" photo shows the King Colt's worn finish and faded lettering.

In the May/June 2019 *Handgunner* I spoke of Old School Cool. It was all about a very special Colt Single Action Army dating back to before WWII. To review a little: "Checking the serial number I found this was a Colt Single Action manufactured in 1921. It was chambered in .357 Magnum which did not arrive until 1935. So sometime between 1935 and the beginning of WWII it was sent back to Colt to be converted to the then relatively new .357 Magnum, with a 5½" barrel. But this was only the beginning! It was then turned over to the King Gun Sight Company for extensive custom work.

"D.W. King was a rifle marksman who was not satisfied with the sights which were generally available, so he decided to make his own. This was in the late 1920s and he formed the King Gun Sight Co. King not only provided rifle sights he did a brisk business applying custom sights to sixguns especially for target shooters. A look at some pictures of his custom work will show his ideas were later incorporated into factory guns. In addition to the sights he did custom work such as cockeyed hammers and wide triggers both set up for a short action. The King Gun Sight Co. could not survive after the death of the founder and disappeared in the early 1950s."

My new/old gun had lots of serious issues though and as I worked with it a bit I wondered if I should restore it.



This 100-year-old Colt is now ready for its second century thanks to a restoration and tuning by Bobby Tyler.

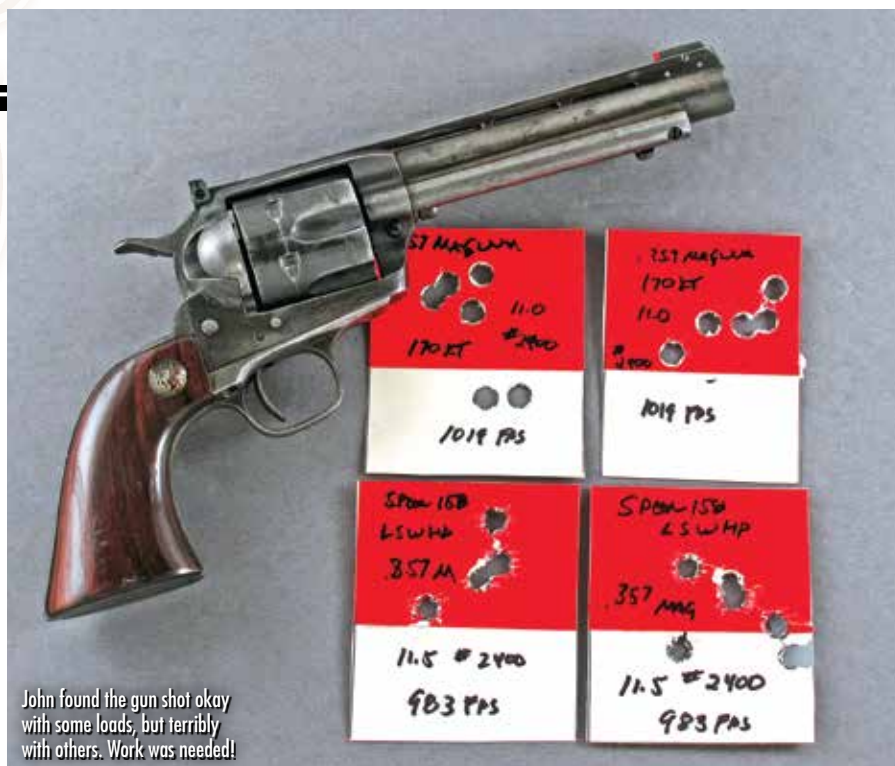
Grips are by Scott Kolar. It carries nicely in this carved #120EK holster by Mike "Doc" Barranti.

TO FIX OR NOT?

From the wear on the finish it was obvious it had a lot of use. And since it was chambered in the most powerful cartridge of the day I can at least imagine this Perfect Packin' Pistol saw a lot of everyday use. The larger issue was the fact, as beautiful as this sixgun is, I have to say it was absolutely the most exasperating sixgun I've encountered in over 60 years of shooting. Many sixguns will shoot anything well that will fit into the cylinder. However, this single action .357 Magnum was very picky. Of 18 handloaded .357 Magnum and .38/44 loads only six would group five shots at 1" or less at 20 yards.

I felt the accuracy could definitely be improved. The forcing cone was very short and I thought perhaps re-cutting it would help the accuracy. I was also in a dilemma of a historical sort — to refinish or not? Normally I would not consider refinishing a First Generation Colt Single Action, however this is not a factory original sixgun. I can see it beautifully re-blued with a case hardened frame and hammer and fitted custom stocks. On the other hand, however, would I be removing some true sixgun history in the process?

His Esteemed Editorship, Roy, asked readers to drop him a line about their thoughts on this issue. He not only received feedback, but I also



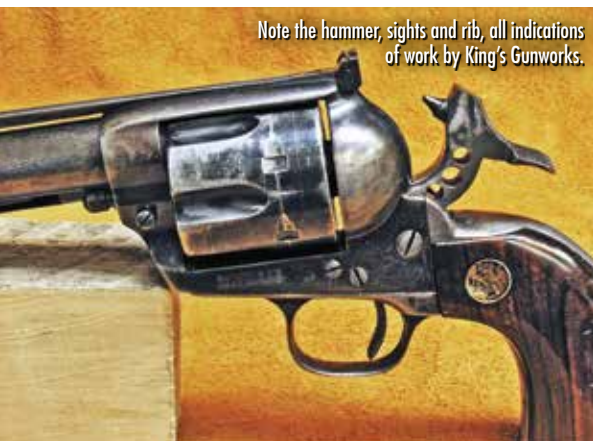
John found the gun shot okay with some loads, but terribly with others. Work was needed!

had personal phone calls and e-mails. Responses fell into three categories: Yes, restore it. No, leave it alone. And then there are those who hedged their bets and gave reasons for going either way. Here are some of the responses from those who said leave it alone: Claude says "Please enjoy the old colt just as it is and listen to its stories." Tom's response was "Tell Taffin not to refinish the gun, he'll ruin it." "Don't do it, John!" came from Seth.

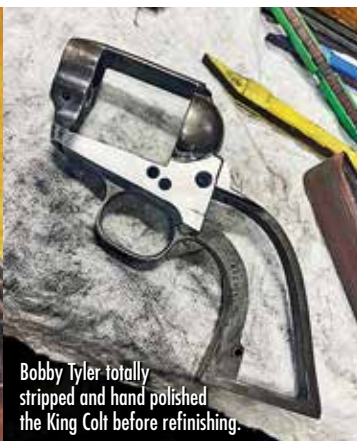
I received several phone calls and emails from friends who said go for it. The following responses gave me both options, so I had to make a choice as to which one to go with. Eric said: "If

money is no object and you can write another article based on the refinishing you get done, then do it and offer something really unique." Jan responded with: "If it's a field gun, refinish and refit it as necessary." And from Hal, he shared in no uncertain terms: "Refinishing this gun would be a crime, but a restoration might re-create a true masterpiece." I wonder if he's a politician?

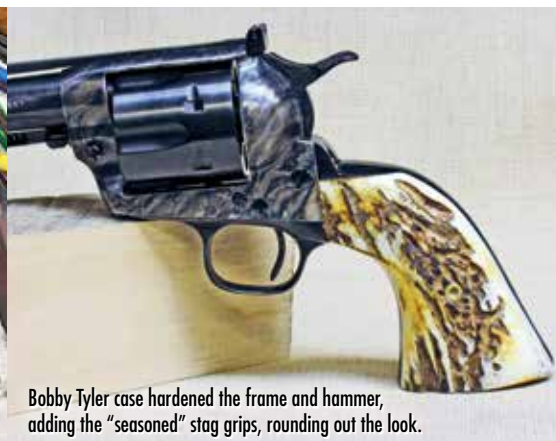
My favorite response was also published in the July/August 2019 *Handgunner* and it came from Janet: "Restore it John! Make it purty! We gals aren't afraid of a bit of makeup and neither is that gun, I'll bet." Janet I love you — you're my kind of gal.



Note the hammer, sights and rib, all indications of work by King's Gunworks.



Bobby Tyler totally stripped and hand polished the King Colt before refinishing.



Bobby Tyler case hardened the frame and hammer, adding the "seasoned" stag grips, rounding out the look.

FORTUITOUS TIMING

About the time I was making my decision I "just happened" to see a Colt Single Action which had been tuned and refinished by Bobby Tyler of Tyler Gun Works. I talked to Bobby and told him it not only needs

refinishing but also tuned up as there were a couple of problems with the action. On the cosmetic side Bobby did a beautiful job of re-bluing and case coloring. Of the case coloring Bobby said: "As far as the finish work goes, we went very straightforward and removed all blemishes and

Continued on page 76



KER-PLUNK VS. WHOOSH

For the custom pistolsmith it's not always about cosmetics, the pistol has to function and be accurate. Function is kind of "job one" in my shop. If it doesn't run it just won't do.

Recently a client was in the shop for some new sights and spied a project I was working on the "Caliber Project" — more on that later. On the bench was a .30 Luger barreled 1911 Colt. He said this was his favorite caliber and wanted one. He had a 9mm Colt that would be the basis for the conversion; a 9mm breech face is the same as the bottle-

necked .30 Luger.

I ordered a 5" .30 Luger barrel from Bar-Sto Barrels, who had made the Commander-length barrel I was already using. I ordered it semi-fit, meaning the chamber is close to final cut. This allowed me to fit hood length and width and the lower lugs of the barrel, then finish ream the barrel with my Clymer reamer.

Now comes the fun part. Since this Colt 9mm frame was fitted with a conventional barrel (non-ramped), the Bar-Sto was made the same so the owner



The effect of bullet push-back due to improper feed angle. This raises pressures to dangerous levels.

could swap back and forth. Function testing starts on the workbench. One note of caution, in my shop we never bench test with live ammo in a working gun. I usually have a number of non-primed, powerless cases for testing on the bench, but in this case I did not so I removed the firing pin from the pistol. This allows me to test feeding without the risk of firing a shot inside.

FUNNY SOUNDS

The first test is just to see if the rounds will feed. The owner supplied a pair of magazines from an unknown maker. In a 1911 the rounds have a distinctive "whoosh" when being stripped from the magazine during feeding into the chamber. The first rounds fed in this case, have a two-part "ker-plunk" indicative of the bullet nose skipping off the feed ramp then into the barrel chamber. Not what we want. Hitting the feed ramp or barrel ramp can cause malfunctions and in some cases dangerous ammo issues — which it did in this case.

The bullet nose hit the ramp hard and the bullet pushed back into the cartridge case about 0.080". This results in a "compression load" for the round, increasing pressure, and could result in a ruptured case during firing.

There are a number of causes for "bullet skip" so I need to find the cause and a correction. One trick I do to see where the bullet nose is impacting the ramp is to coat a number of rounds with layout fluid. The fluid is like a temporary paint used in machining. As the coated rounds are stripped from the magazine on chambering, the blue coating rubs off the nose of the bullet, leaving a trace on the area it impacted. Now I can see the spot the bullet is skipping off of.

In this case it was the barrel throat area, about midway up



from the bottom of the barrel. On this barrel the ramp has a very steep angle, allowing more case support on the necked cartridge. I really don't want to modify that too much. The next thing to check was the magazine feed angle. Is it too low to allow for proper feeding? In my shop I supply Tripp or Wilson magazines with custom builds so I next tried one of them. Still hitting a little low. Next test was the actual position of the magazine. I noticed, when seated, the magazines were a little loose and had some vertical movement. I measured the movement and they had about 0.070" of vertical play. This was almost identical to the amount the bullet nose was hitting low on the barrel throat.



PRESTO

To solve this, Evolution Gun Works (EGW) offers a 1911 mag catch seating magazines higher. As the magazine is seated higher it allows the bullet to enter the barrel without impacting the barrel ramp too low. Now the rounds feed smoothly and I'm ready for live firing at the range. Almost victory!

Speaking of victory, Dustin Housel of HS-Custom has come up with a great slide fixture. It makes handwork on a slide

much easier. The jig holds the slide from the muzzle end and locks it securely with two setscrews. The long shaft is faceted to hold the slide in a number of angles in a vise, with full access to all sides of the slide. I used it and realized it saved a lot of clamping and adjusting of the slide — the way I'd been doing it for years. Thanks, Dusty!



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UNORTHODOX CCW THOUGHTS

Everything in life involves tradeoffs, beginning with where you live. In two-season country you have six months of too hot and six months of just right. In four-season country, beginning in spring you have three months of fairly nice, three months of just right, another three months of fairly nice, and then winter. If you have the time and money, the way to deal with winter is to take a three-month vacation in two-season country.

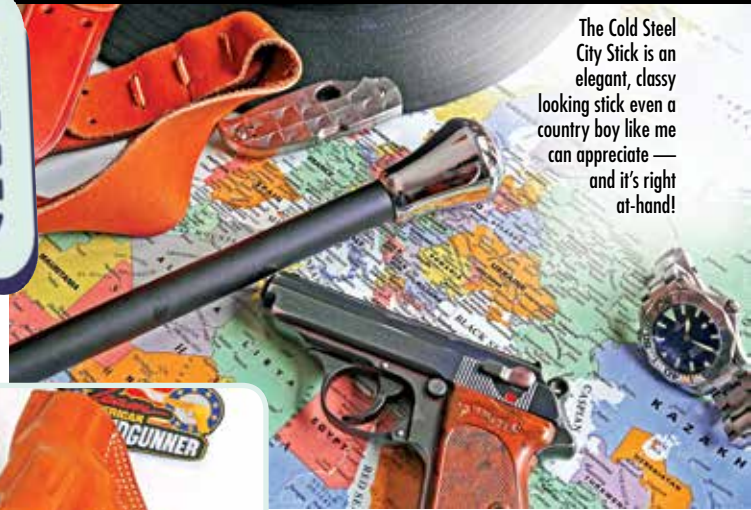
Winter sports can be fun when you're young. A good winter's day now involves a fireplace, a steaming cup of coffee, a good book and a dog sleeping with his head on my fleece-lined slippers while the wind and snow beat on the window.

Sometimes you just have to go out, which leads to the issue of where to carry the CCW. Most of the year an IWB holster high on the right hip works just fine. Where it doesn't work very well is when cold weather requires a long, warm winter coat.

A long, heavy winter coat does have one advantage — the bulk makes for easy concealment. With some coats you could



A long heavy coat for cold weather wear makes it slow to access a pistol worn as I usually do, on the right hip. This Galco shoulder holster keeps the Colt Cobra revolver readily accessible.



The Cold Steel City Stick is an elegant, classy looking stick even a country boy like me can appreciate — and it's right at-hand!

likely conceal an M4, short-barreled shotgun, knee mortar, or attack dog. Eventually though you get to where you're going and the outer coat comes off. Now we're back to a handgun, and you still need a light garment to keep it concealed.

With a winter coat and strong side carry, forget any kind of speed draw. Only the most patient mugger or street thug is going to stand there waiting while you pull off your gloves, unzip or unbutton the coat and dig out your sidearm. One solution, I suppose, is to hope for the best. Muggers and thugs don't like cold any more than you do. Up north we used to see bumper stickers saying, "Forty below keeps out the riffraff."

POCKET TRANSFERS?

Another is to transfer your sidearm from the holster to a pocket of the heavy coat when putting it on, and back again when taking it off. This works, though you do need some privacy when making the transfer. I've heard some suggest keeping a light, concealed hammer revolver in the coat pocket. I just don't like the idea of hanging the coat up so the gun is not under my immediate control.

Another solution is to be a woman — or at least identify as one? — and carry a stylish purse with a special pocket for your pistol. Or if not a purse, a European carryall, organizer, or briefcase. These keep the handgun readily accessible. The downside is the purse or carrying case itself may become a target for muggers. Inevitably there are going to be moments when the case is not under your immediate control.

Of course there is no law saying your CCW must be worn on the hip. I'm kind of lukewarm about shoulder holsters as a rule, but circumstances alter cases.

When cold temperatures require wearing a heavy coat a shoulder holster comes into its own. The handgun is reasonably accessible if the coat zipper is open a bit, or if one or two buttons are left unbuttoned. With a light vest beneath the coat the gun can be concealed even when you take the outer coat off.

If your regular carry gun isn't too bulky or heavy it may work for you in a shoulder holster. Personally I like a lightweight gun in a shoulder holster. I haven't found anything I like better than an alloy-framed Colt Cobra. It weighs about 18 oz. when loaded with six cartridges. For me at least the grip is large enough to fit the hand comfortably.



Carrying a small pistol in the coat pocket and transferring it to a pants pocket when taking off the coat is an option for CCW in cold weather.

DAVE'S IDEA

There's a way to eliminate the need for concealment, and to have the weapon already in your hand. Recently what with creaky knees and, in my wife's case, knee replacement surgery, we've come to appreciate the utility of walking and hiking sticks. Such a stick can also be a very effective defensive tool. A local cutlery shop carries a selection of Cold Steel sticks. After comparing models I bought two, an elegant City Stick and what I guess you could call a Country Stick, a long "blackthorn" model.

The advantage these have over my homemade and store-bought wooden sticks is they are very strong, and have some heft and substance. I've been practicing a few basic defensive moves from online videos. The stick is always right there — *in your hand*. No one gives a second look to a "seasoned citizen" carrying a cane. I can take it anywhere, even on a plane. That last one is something to think about.



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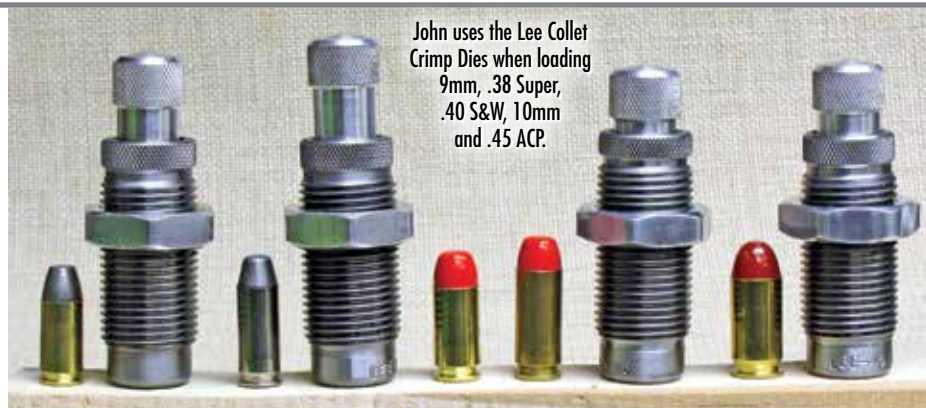
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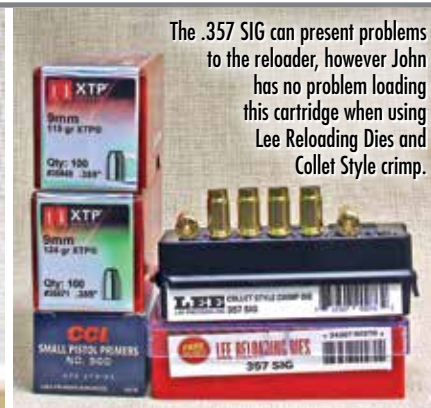
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John uses the Lee Collet Crimp Dies when loading 9mm, .38 Super, .40 S&W, 10mm and .45 ACP.



The .357 SIG can present problems to the reloader, however John has no problem loading this cartridge when using Lee Reloading Dies and Collet Style crimp.

LEE PRECISION DIES

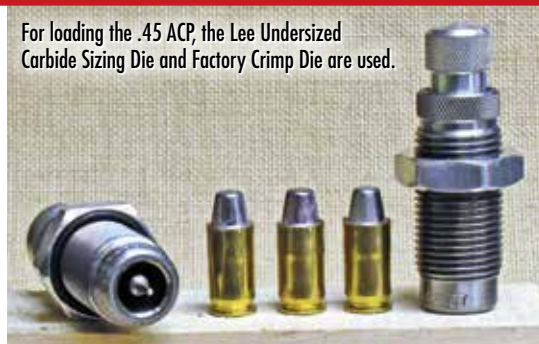
It was definitely an “I coulda’ had a V-8!” moment complete with the required hand slap to the forehead. I was talking to one of my former editors about the price I had to pay to get a set of .455 Webley dies and he asked me why I didn’t check with Lee. Slap! I’ve used many Lee dies over the years with complete satisfaction and should have remembered! Instead I paid nearly three times what a set of standard dies should cost simply because the .455 Webley dies I ordered were classified as Special Dies. Well, at least I learned something, even at my age!

In addition to offering dies for loading just about any cartridge, Lee always provides a shell holder at no additional cost and also a powder scoop particular to a charge for the dies ordered. All of my reloading dies are in their respective manufacturer’s boxes and stacked in a cupboard in my reloading room, with the most-used dies found on my loading bench. Above my bench is a special rack my friend Denis made for me containing my Lee Specialty Dies. There you will find my 9mm Carbide Sizing Die as well as the Undersized Carbide Sizing Die for the .45 ACP. I won’t say how many different .45 ACP semi-autos and sixguns I load for but it’s definitely more than two, and this minimum sizing die ensures any cartridges I load will fit any one of those guns.

DO OR DIE?

Most three die sets, especially for loading sixguns, are provided with a carbide or standard sizing die to size and deprime at the same time. There’s also a case expanding die, flaring the case mouth enough to make the bullet enter easily, and a die to seat and crimp the bullet to finish the operation. Dies for bottleneck cartridges such as the .30-30 normally only have the first and third dies with no die provided to expand the case.

This “normally” works okay for jacketed rifle bullets, especially if they are of the boat tail design. However it leaves a lot to be desired with many jacketed bullets and certainly cast bullets. The answer is the Lee Universal Case Expanding Die. This die set contains two tapered expanders designed to flare any case from .22 to .45. This gradual taper gently flares the case mouth, and I find just a simple kiss of the case mouth with the proper expander is enough to facilitate seating both jacketed and cast bullets. Then simply seat the bullet and crimp using the standard crimping die. But for many cartridges, I just seat the bullet but don’t crimp using the standard die. Next up is the Lee Collet Crimp Die.



For loading the .45 ACP, the Lee Undersized Carbide Sizing Die and Factory Crimp Die are used.

DON'T CRIMP YOUR STYLE

To crimp many cartridges, I use the Lee Collet Crimp Die. When done properly bullets will not recede into the cartridge case. The Lee Collet Crimp Die does not seat the bullet; this must be done with the standard seating die. Once the bullet is seated to the proper depth the Collet Crimp Die is used. It works on bullets with or without a crimping groove. It is very easy to set by following the directions provided by Lee.

The crimping operation consists of four splits in the Collet that are closed when the shell holder is raised. For some cartridges this is called the Collet Crimp Die and for others the Factory Crimp Die. They both work the same

and I now use them for all semi-automatic pistol cartridges I load, including .45 ACP, .38 Super, 9mm, 10mm, .357 SIG and .30 Luger. It’s also used for lever action cartridges, not only the .30-30, but the .32 Winchester Special and the .32-20 as well.

Using the Universal Case Expanding Die and the Factory Crimp/Collet Crimp Die require extra time and extra operations, however they are well appreciated by the results afforded when shooting. This is especially true when loading the .357 SIG, .30 Luger and when using cast bullets in the .30-30 and .32 Winchester Special.



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SLIP-UPS AND BLUNDERS



With my writing career nearing 50 years (full time since 1981) with over 2,000 printed features and columns I'm bound to have made mistakes. I'm talking not of mistakes in opinions. Those can modify or change entirely with age and experience. I'm talking about mistakes of facts.

There was a pretty good one in my column in the Nov/Dec 2019 *Handgunner*. I stated Remington's Model 1875 revolver had not been chambered as a .45 except for a "few for government trials." I was wrong on two points. The more minor one was saying "few" without double checking my sources. Actually there was only one .45 sent to the U.S. Army. It was chambered for the then-standard .45 Government, aka .45 S&W, aka .45 Schofield. However, its chambers were bored straight through so longer .45 Colt rounds would also chamber. The Army officers testing that .45 sample liked it, but no orders to Remington followed. My bigger mistake was saying Model 1875 .45's had not been made otherwise. Mostly my statement was based on an original Remington catalog dated 1877 and my own observations at dozens of antique gun shows.

Thanks to reader Daniel Pozerak of Michigan I've been hereby corrected. He sent me documentation that Remington actually did make .45's to the tune of hundreds (exact number unknown). These had mostly been ordered by the Mexican Government, chambered for .45 U.S. Government and fitted with 7½" barrels. He also enclosed a copy of a Remington advertisement dated 1882 saying the Model 1875 was available in chamberings of .44 Remington, .44 Winchester and .45 Government. Thanks for this info, Dan!

Duke has written the .38-40 caliber stamp (bottom) was never put on 1st Generation Colt SAAs. It was always .38 WCF (above). He was wrong.



Duke was wrong that Model 1875 Remingtons were never chambered as .45's — he stands corrected.

MISTAKES GALORE!

Here's another boo-boo of mine. Several times over the decades I've written, although Colt's 3rd Generation Single Action Army revolvers have mostly been caliber-stamped, .38-40 originals never were marked so. I said they were all marked ".38 W.C.F." I discovered this was wrong when a friend handed me his late 1st Generation SAA marked .38-40 exactly like the new 3rd Generation ones. I'm not sure when the caliber stamping was changed. I have one with a factory letter saying it was shipped in 1926. It's marked ".38 W.C.F." on its barrel's left side. An original Colt catalog I have dated 1935 says the SAA is available in ".38-40 (.38 Winchester)". So the change probably came somewhere in those nine years.

Here's another example of a mistake you can enjoy celebrating with me. In his book *History Of Smith & Wesson*, author and S&W historian Roy Jinks said their .44 Special was developed in 1907 so it would hold 26 grains of black powder compared to 23 grains used in their 1872-introduced .44 Russian. As .44 Special fans know it was the introductory cartridge for the S&W Hand Ejector, 1st Model (Triplelock). Several times, I doubted in print the .44 Special had ever been loaded with black powder because its heavy fouling would have quickly tied up those Triplelocks' finely fitted mechanisms.

I was proved wrong when another writer found black powder .44 Special factory cartridges listed in a 1916 Winchester catalog. And on this note I did more searching and found in the *Ideal Handbook No. 28* dated 1926, Remington's black powder .44 Special factory loads with 246-gr. lead bullets were rated at having 820 fps velocity from a 6" barrel. I still think black powder would have tied up a triplelock in only a few rounds, but .44 Specials factory loaded with black powder indeed existed.

ONE MORE OOPSIE

That was in copying previous writers in saying .45 Colt SAAs had 0.454" barrel groove diameters in the 1st Generation and the dimension was changed to 0.451" simultaneously with the introduction of the 2nd Generation in 1956. Nope. Not so. Never happened. Back in the 1990s I was given a 1922 fac-

tory spec sheet from the Colt factory. It said all their .45 barrels — .45 Auto and .45 Colt — were to measure 0.451" minimum and 0.452" maximum across their grooves. I have an SAA from 1926 and its barrel slugged 0.451". Also, the 1926 *Ideal Handbook No. 28* lists .45 Colt groove diameter as 0.452" and .45 Auto as 0.451".

So here's my advice to future gun'riters. Don't discount everything you read from us current ones. But check our facts for documentation. We might not know what we're talking about!



Duke felt logically, the .44 S&W Special (right) was never loaded with black powder as was the .44 S&W Russian (left). He was wrong again.

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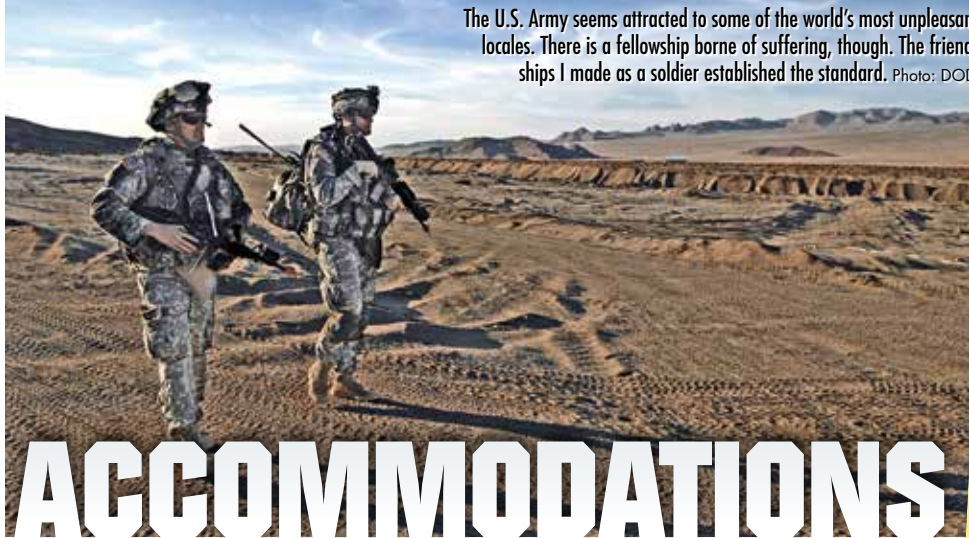


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The U.S. Army seems attracted to some of the world's most unpleasant locales. There is a fellowship borne of suffering, though. The friendships I made as a soldier established the standard. Photo: DOD



ACCOMMODATIONS

Immiseration is the act of making those around you miserable. An exceptionally smart person with whom I am very close introduced me to the word after I griped unduly about a particularly onerous day at the clinic. In a military context, however, sometimes being miserable is entirely relative.

People seek out military service for a variety of reasons. Patriotism and an unbridled thirst for adventure lead many a youngster into the uniform. That's what first snagged me. However, I learned early on you certainly don't join the Big Green Machine for the creature comforts.

I was encamped in a desert most-wretched with a Light Infantry Battalion. My several hundred mates and I were bivouacked in a sandy wash devoid of breeze, trees or shade. Amongst the entire unruly mob we had but a single tent and that was for the headquarters. We all just tossed our fart sacks (sleeping bags in the vulgar tongue) out on any convenient spot and declared it home. Somehow in my wanderings I happened upon a discarded Whirlpool dishwasher box.

I have no idea how the box got there and am fuzzy on exactly where I found it, the intervening years having clouded the details. However, I relocated said box to the Battalion area and arrayed my gear neatly within. It took perhaps 10 minutes to transform the ample carton into a proper domicile.

I secured the big cardboard container in place with my rucksack and arranged the head of my fart sack inside such that the omnipresent dust and sand were now nicely excluded. The first evening thusly protected was nigh heavenly.

The following day a most remarkable thing occurred. My grunt brethren

began filing by to admire my cardboard box, many of them clearly perturbed they were themselves without one. That's when it hit me.

I was a commissioned officer in the Army of the most powerful nation on earth, and here I was living in a cardboard box. Not only was I living in a cardboard box, but other people coveted my cardboard box. Furthermore, I was clearly going to have to take some fairly extreme measures lest someone steal my cardboard box. I could swear I heard one of the young grunts nearby grumble, "Aviators always get the good stuff."

Beware The Dude

Crime is in the news these days because crime is forever in the news. We are a lamentably fallen species, drawn to tragedy as filings to a lodestone. I have, however, discovered one single thing law enforcement could do that would legitimately slash crime rates in every major metropolitan area in the country. They just need to catch "Some Dude."

The details varied. However, the gist is always the same. Every shot-up thug who dragged his ventilated carcass into the emergency department had some variation on the same tale.

"There I was, sitting on the front porch sipping iced tea and reading the Bible to my blind grandmother, when Some Dude jumped out of the bushes and busted a cap on me. It was dark and he was wearing a hoodie

so I couldn't see his face, but he was packing a GLOCK nine."

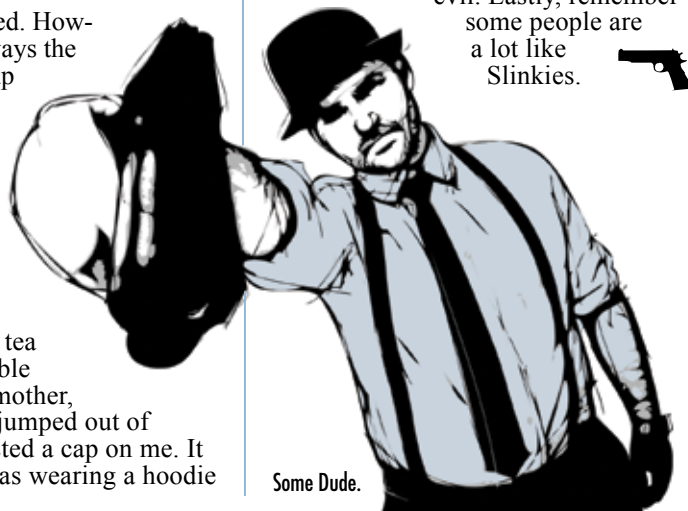
We need to find him.

Ruminations

"Life is pain, Highness. Anyone who says differently is selling something." You can find a great deal of wisdom imbedded within the rarefied banter of *The Princess Bride*.

Life is indeed painful. However, it can also be pretty funny. Sometimes you just have to peel back the darkness to find the comedy. Let's take a moment and be thankful we have a roof over our heads. Right this second brave young Americans are out there living like animals and risking their lives so we can all be warm, comfortable and free. May God bless them every one.

Also, as you wander through your daily sojourn keep an eye out for Some Dude. That guy is the Chuck Norris of evil. Lastly, remember some people are a lot like  Slinkies.



Some Dude.



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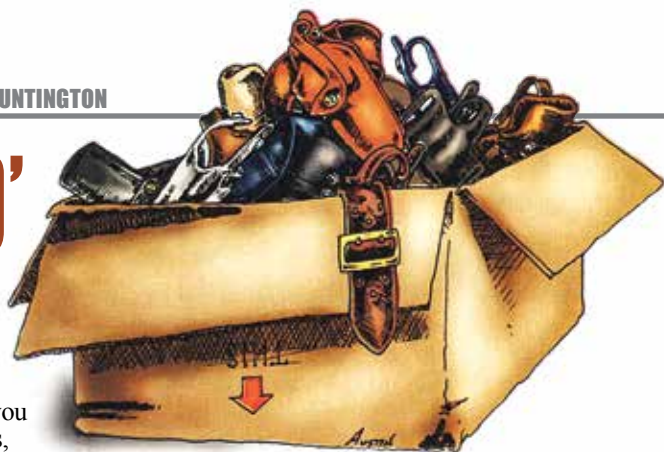
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THE BOX O' HOLSTERS



We all have one — or at least *should* have one. It's that pesky box full of cast-off holsters. Your lost hopes, unheralded pleadings and hand-wringing attempts searching for the enlightened moment of bliss when you finally attain a zenith of concealed carry perfection. But alas, it simply contains documentation of your lost hopes and dreams. Right?

Wrong. And you need to get over it. I like to think of it more as an investment in your future. You save money in

a 401K. The money grows, sometimes disappears, then you hope for better and it delivers, then it fools you and you're depressed yet again. The holster box is like this. You have high hopes, invest, cross your fingers, then those hopes come crashing down, a train wreck smelling of burnt leather and melted plastic.

But sometimes it works, just like your 401K. Sometimes the holster from the unknown maker, the guy at the gun show maybe, or the one you read about

in — dare I say it — *American Handgunner*, actually delivers the goods.

It can happen. It takes hands-on experience to learn. In my 45+ years of gun-carrying as a cop, regular-Joe, retired person and even editor of *Handgunner*, I've found some consistencies. And some things making no sense at all when it comes to carrying.

THE STUPID IDEA SYNDROME

In spite of everything we learn, in the face of common sense, warnings by our friends, our wives and workmates — we'll continue to be wooed by stupid carry ideas. "Oh, this is going to revolutionize concealed carry. We promise, carrying your gun so it points at your chin while you draw is not only a good idea, but 'More social media influencers like it than ever before!' — so you will too!"

But you won't, even if you live through it. You'll regret it. And not only that, it's likely a stupid idea — a really stupid idea — and you just might shoot your chin off or worse. But we can't help it; we'll buy it anyway. Then learn,

hopefully before we shoot our chins off — then toss it into "The Box."

After buying or testing literally thousands of holsters and other do-dads, I'm only just now getting to where I can look at something and think (on my inside voice, if the maker is there), "Um, that's stupid."

So I don't buy one. We also don't write about it.

If you do buy one, it's okay, because you *have* to. You need to feed the muse. You won't listen to those who have the experience. You'll "know better" and it "might work for you" and it's "such a great deal" and "it's got cutting edge technology." But

many are imprudent — and many simply don't work. But you won't know unless you give it a try, right?

Look back 100 years, though. Most holsters were pouches carrying your gun. Look forward 100 years and guess what, most holsters are pouches carrying your gun. Look at wrenches 100 years ago and they look a lot like wrenches look today. People 100 years ago had hands and feet and waists like we have today, so the same sorts of rules still apply. Materials change, design specifics change too, but in the long run:

"A pouchy-looking thing holding your gun securely still works." Feel free to quote me if you like.

MAGIC ISN'T REAL

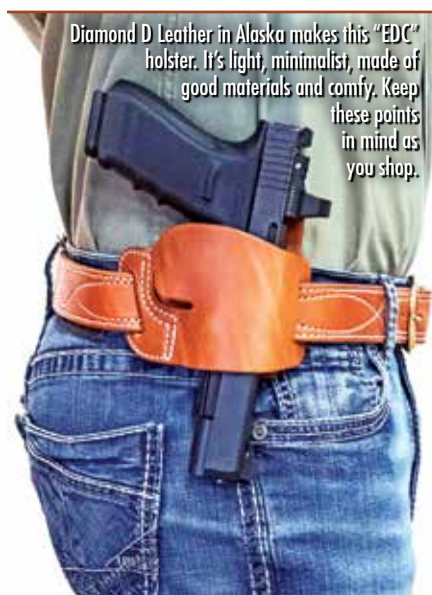
My job isn't to be nice to you, it's to be truthful. I'm too old to care about worrying about how you "feel" about me. I'm much more concerned about giving you the tools you need to be safe. A call saying, "Hey Roy, I had my gun in a good holster and it saved my life," will make me happy.

Don't be distracted by magic bullets — or magic holsters. Never, not once, have I seen a "magic holster" make it in the marketplace. Ditto for magic bullets. They surge in popularity for a while, then disappear in a cloud of nothingness, simply vanishing. There's no magic bullet — or magic holster. I'm sorry — but it's true.

When I wrote the *Handgun Leather* column here more than 20 years ago, when asked how to spot a "good" holster, I said something along the lines of: "Quality of design and materials is important. Lightweight is paramount, a minimalist nature necessary — and comfort vital." Did I generalize? Possibly. But today, when I look at my favorite carry rigs, all the rules apply. My "most-favorite" rig I carry virtually daily (along with a pocket-holstered gun) is an amazingly simple leather rig with two belt loops. Minimalist, light, elegantly designed and comfortable. There are hundreds of options that might work for you. Just believe the tenants.

There are other ideas and you need to explore them. Some might meet your *particular* needs. But prepare to buy holsters and products and prepare to assemble your own box.

One nice thing about "the box?" You can offer your mistakes to others who are still searching. "Here, try this ..." as you smile knowingly.



Diamond D Leather in Alaska makes this "EDC" holster. It's light, minimalist, made of good materials and comfy. Keep these points in mind as you shop.

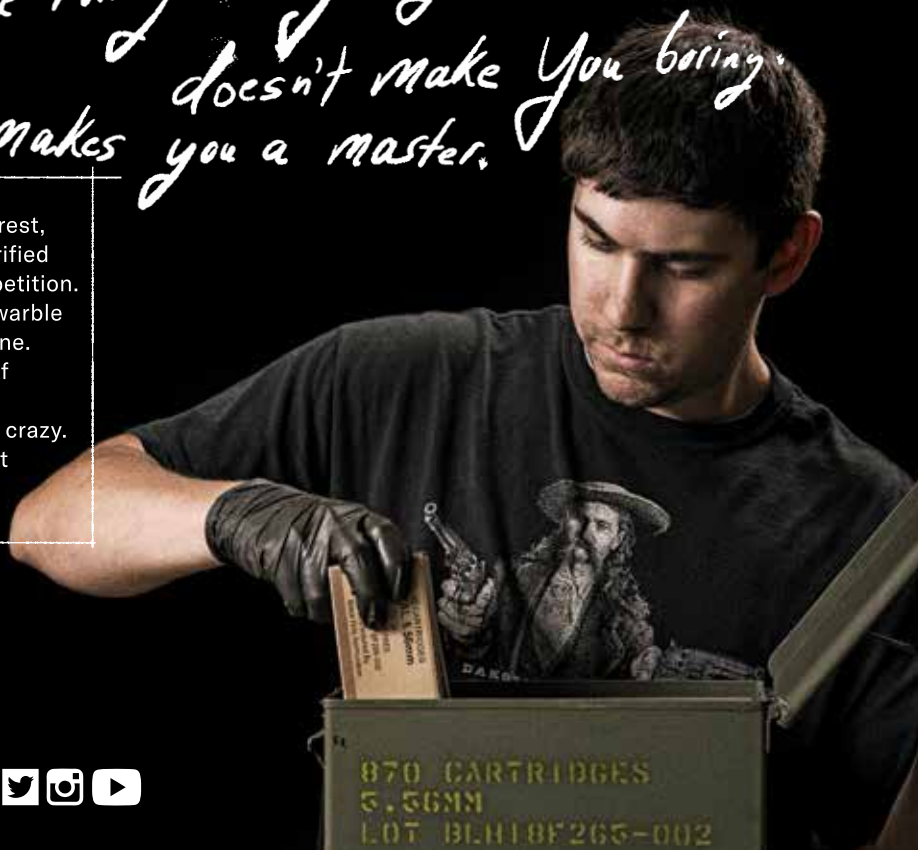
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DOG DEFENSE

WE LOVE DOGS — BUT BE SMART TOO

How much danger is there of being attacked by a dog? It depends on how you interpret the statistics. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates there are 4.7 million incidents of dog bites annually in the U.S., of which 800,000 require medical care. This means in 3.9 million — about 83 percent of the incidents — the person bitten felt the injury was so minor it didn't need a doctor's care.

Of those requiring medical care, some online sources say about 300,000 to 350,000 dog bite cases are treated annually at emergency rooms. Certainly not an insignificant number, but a small part of the total injuries treated. In 2016, emergency room visits resulting from accidental injury totaled about 42.2 million.

Fatal attacks are rare, in the range of 40 to 60 annually. A disproportionate number of those killed were either very young or very old; those least able to either leave the scene or defend themselves. To put this in perspective, in the U.S. in 2016 there were 36,338 deaths from accidental falls, 40,231 killed in vehicle accidents and 64,795 deaths from accidental poisoning.

Statistically lots of things are unlikely, but because people like us are sensible we take precautions. We change batteries in smoke and CO₂ detectors regularly, keep first aid kits, fire extinguishers and flashlights handy, fasten seat belts, wear life jackets and carry concealed sidearms — just in case.



The nice thing about a stick is you can calibrate the amount of force. Generally, using it as a barrier and pushing the dog away is enough, but the stick has plenty of power in reserve if you need it.



If you own a dog it's your responsibility to provide discipline and basic obedience training. If you don't someone else will and they may not be as gentle and patient.

GUN VS. STICK

I've partnered with various dogs for most of my life. A dog can be a most useful ally in defending home and hearth. Mostly I agree with the old saying there are no bad dogs, just bad dog owners.

Nonetheless in an altercation with a dog, I'm not concerned with analyzing its motives. It may be as harmless as a friendly dog jumping up with muddy paws to say hi, or a lethal all-out attack. The immediate goal is to make it stop. I know some will disagree, but for most dog situations I feel better armed with a stick than a sidearm. It's kind of the opposite of defense against humans.

Muggers and thugs know a firearm is a deadly weapon and may surrender or flee when the firearm is displayed. They may be less impressed with a stick, though a skillfully used walking stick or cane can be a formidable weapon. Displaying your defensive handgun is likely not going to deter a dog. Plus if you start drawing your sidearm every time a dog jumps up or barks at you, there's a good chance you'll lose your permit and sidearm. A handgun is not the best solution to every defensive problem, in spite of what some may think.

FERAL PACKS

Theodore Roosevelt's advice to, "Talk softly and carry a big stick" is as valid today as ever, whether we're talking dogs or international politics. A hiking or walking stick is already right there, in your hand, as I explain in my *Better Shooting* column in this issue. It lets you fine-tune the amount of force employed, from using it as a barrier, to a gentle tap, a sharp poke, or an all-out baseball swing. I have a nice balsam hiking stick I like, though it's a bit light and like all wood it can break. Recently I bought a Cold Steel City Stick. With

its fiberglass construction it's very strong, and the aluminum "scent bottle" grip adds substantial weight.

The most dangerous dog situation, one I hope never to encounter, is a pack of feral dogs. A pack can be anything from two dogs and up. Rather like a human mob, it seems dogs in a pack will do things no individual member of the group would do. If I'm ever approached by an aggressive pack the stick isn't going to get the call. Before the dogs get close I'll have the sidearm out and whichever dog is closest and/or most aggressive is going to get shot dead. As will any others who don't flee. I consider a feral dog pack far more dangerous than wild predators, as the dogs have little to no fear of man.

I recall when I was eight or 10 years old, one winter several farm and village dogs formed a pack and started chasing deer. In those days people didn't wait for a child to be killed before acting, nor did they ask for any official help or permission. One day the dogs were all gone, and no one talked about them again. Like the dog that bit me once when I was little — I guess they just ran away.



"Hey, you forgot your walking stick!" A retriever can be a handy dog to have around!



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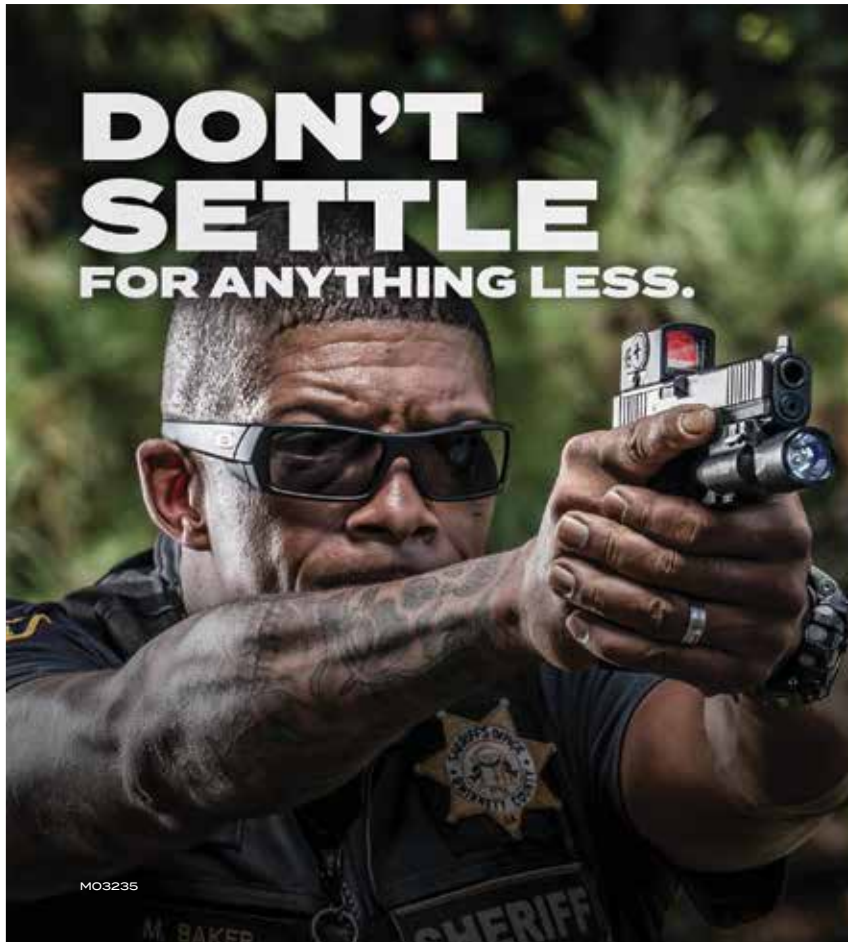
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KELTEC PMR-30



The KelTec PMR 30 comes in a padded case with two 30-round magazines. John used a "black and tan" pair.



The KelTec .22 Magnum pistols are fun to shoot at plates — even if they are paper!

BROTHERS

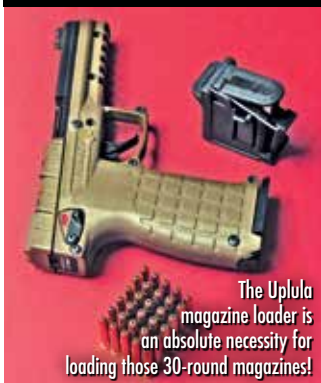
Except for color these two Kel-Tec .22 Magnums are identical. Kel-Tec says of this model: "In 2008, our Chief Design Engineer, Tobias Obermelt had a vision to build a semi-auto .22 WMR pistol that holds 30 rounds in a flush-fit magazine. Roughly based on an early, futuristic looking George Kellgren design, the PMR 30 was released in 2010 with high praise and stands out as one of the most innovative handguns in the world today." I can't disagree with their take on the PMR 30 and don't understand how I missed it for so long.

The PMR 30, even though it has a magazine capacity of 30 rounds, only weighs 14 oz. empty. That is with a 4.4" barrel length. To go along with this light weight and high magazine capacity, both of these KelTec .22 Magnums have a 4-lb. trigger pull. These pistols also ship with two 30-round magazines giving you 60 rounds in a very lightweight package that can be carried in a holster all day easily. It also will fit nicely into a backpack, large tackle box, or under the seat of the 4x4 pickup.

The PMR 30 can also serve for home defense as well as concealed for self-defense as several companies are now offering .22 WMR ammunition designed for this purpose. Even with the light weight there is very little felt recoil. The PMR 30 certainly fits the definition of what it takes to be a candidate for the title of Perfect Packin' Pistol. If you live in or wander about in an area where the .22 Magnum is all that's needed it will certainly fill the bill. It should work very well for close range hunting of varmints or small game.

.22 MAGNUM

PEG YOUR FUN-METER'S 'HIGH CAPACITY'!



The Uplula magazine loader is an absolute necessity for loading those 30-round magazines!

In the Sept/Oct 2019 *Handgunner* I covered two .22 Magnum semi-autos, the long gone AutoMag II and the new RIA (Rock Island Armory) 1911 chambered in .22 Magnum. At the time I said it had been decades since a .22 Magnum semi-auto pistol had been offered. An obvious one overlooked by me, though, was the KelTec PMR-30, and for the life of me, I can't understand how I forgot about it!

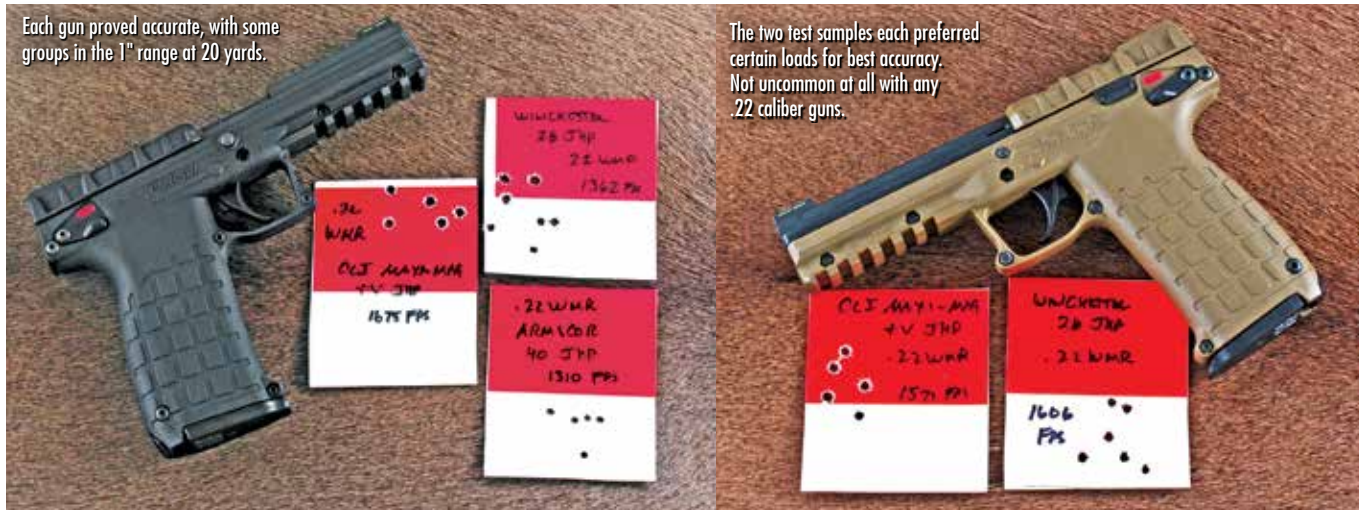
I checked with my local gun shop about getting one and was told they'd have to order one and wait, which we did. Meanwhile my friend Gary Reeder of Reeder Custom Guns, normally has a Saturday sale found on his website.

Wouldn't you know the next Saturday sale had a KelTec PMR-30, colored tan and in like new condition. I immediately called and got to it before anyone else. Arrangements were made to send it to my FFL holder, Buckhorn Gun.

This was on Saturday. It arrived the following Wednesday and that same day Buckhorn received one from one of their distributors. Since I had found another one they said I did not have to take it. However, I took it as a special sign both these .22 Magnum KelTecs arrived the same day and I did not hesitate to take the second one. It's black giving me an un-matched, matched pair of .22 Magnum semi-autos. I'm definitely not sorry I made this decision.

Each gun proved accurate, with some groups in the 1" range at 20 yards.

The two test samples each preferred certain loads for best accuracy. Not uncommon at all with any .22 caliber guns.



MECHANICS

The sights are excellent, with a fiber-optic green front matching up with a square notch rear with a red fiber-optic dot on each side. The rear sight is not adjustable and the front sight can be drafted for windage. However KelTec cautions against doing this without the proper tools. For me both pistols were pretty much right on for windage while the elevation was deter-

mined by the ammunition used.

It's also set up to accept a light or laser using the integrated accessory rail. There's an ambidextrous safety mounted on the frame below the rear sight and although small, can be easily manipulated with the thumb. The magazine release is found at the back part of the butt and is easily pushed in with the off-thumb.

The tan (Dark Earth) version has a black slide, safety, slide stop and trigger while the black version is, well all black. The grip has molded-in small rectangles on both side panels aiding

in a secure grip. The trigger guard is somewhat squared off in the front and the area at the back of the trigger guard where it meets the frame is relieved to allow a high grip.

The only drawback to shooting these .22 Magnum pistols is the same as any other pistol, sixgun or rifle chambered in .22 WMR — cost. A box of 50 rounds can run anywhere from \$12 to \$15 and at the upper end one can purchase two boxes of 9mm for the same price. What is spent in dollars, though, is paid back in a whole lot of fun shooting.

SHOOTING INFO

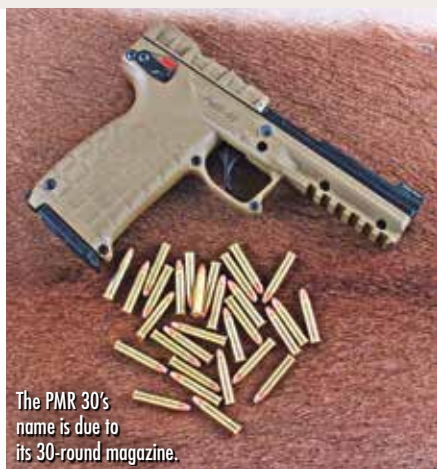
Nine different .22 WMR loads were test-fired in each of these PMR 30 pistols. No matter the muzzle velocity all loads, running from a low of 1,057 fps to a high of 1,675, functioned perfectly in both pistols. However, each pistol favored certain types of ammunition for accuracy.

With the black pistol the most accurate ammunition for five shots at 20 yards was the Armscor 40-gr. JHP. These clock out at 1,310 fps and grouped all five shots into 1". With the gun two of the faster loads were the most accurate. The CCI Maxi-Mag +V JHP and the Winchester 28-gr. JHP both grouped into 1" for five shots at 20 yards with muzzle velocities of 1,571 fps and 1,604 fps respectively.

Other excellent performers in the black PMR 30 included CCI Maxi-Mag +V JHP, Winchester 28-gr. JHP and Federal 50-gr. JHP. Others working well in the tan PMR 30 included

the CCI Speer Gold Dot 40-gr. JHP and the Federal 50-gr. JHP. For whatever the reason the CCI Maxi-Mag JHP did not perform well in either pistol, with keyholes experienced with the black gun. All .22's can be very particular about their ammunition, so whether .22 Long Rifle or .22 Magnum it pays to check how well each particular firearm will do with a load before stocking up.

Each PMR 30 was test-fired with a variety of .22 WMR ammunition and was 100 percent reliable with them all.



The PMR 30's name is due to its 30-round magazine.

SERIOUS OR FUN?

These can certainly be used for serious work, however they're also just simply a lot of fun to shoot. In fact I had to control myself to keep from running too many full magazines through each gun in one session. I could definitely hear the cash register ding as I was enjoying myself. Several years ago I gave my oldest daughter and her husband a 9-shot .22 revolver to use as a camp gun. Perhaps, it's time to replace this sixgun with a more modern .22 Magnum semi-auto. I can look into the

future and see just what ammunition they would be receiving for birthdays and Christmas!

These are simply great little pistols! The MSRP is \$455, however I picked up both of mine for just under \$400 each. One accessory that is a must is the Uplula magazine loader specially made for the PMR 30. I would not want to try to stuff 30 rounds into the magazines by hand. This special magazine loader works slick and fast.



For more info: www.keltecweapons.com; www.maglula.com

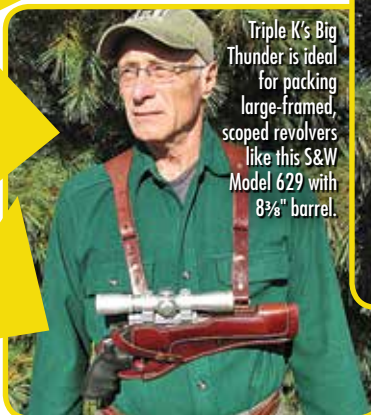


THE PACK'N BIG ONES

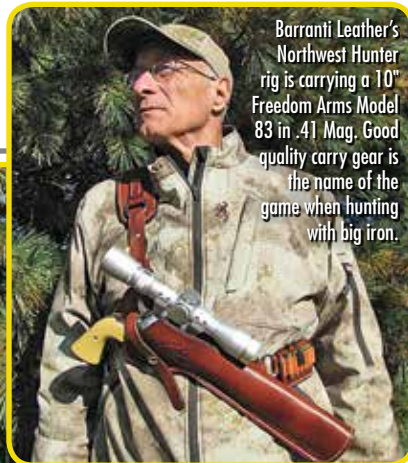
One of the most frequent questions I receive revolves around carrying large-framed, scoped handguns. Single-shot handguns are in a different class than revolvers, dictating different carry methods. Let's focus on the options for carrying revolvers for now.

Since we're all built differently, hunt using different methods and in all types of terrain and weather, it's difficult for one particular holster to cover all of your needs, all of the time. Luckily we have some mighty fine options to pack our revolvers whether we're taking a short walk to the deer stand or hiking all day in the mountains looking for a big bull elk.

I recently stumbled across a unique holster from Triple K. Their Big Thunder rig is a great option for carrying a large-framed, scoped revolver. The Big Thunder distributes the weight of the handgun evenly across both shoulders via well-designed straps. These straps are not thin, and ride your shoulders comfortably. Your belt anchors two straps in the back



Triple K's Big Thunder is ideal for packing large-framed, scoped revolvers like this S&W Model 629 with 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " barrel.



Barranti Leather's Northwest Hunter rig is carrying a 10" Freedom Arms Model 83 in .41 Mag. Good quality carry gear is the name of the game when hunting with big iron.

and another strap goes around your mid-section fastening to the holster, keeping it secure next to your body.

The holster itself carries a revolver in a perfectly horizontal position, always in the ready position and can be adjusted easily. If you prefer to hang binoculars from your neck, the holster can adjust to ride directly beneath the binos. I've got my rig riding a little higher on the torso and it keeps the gun next to my stomach. This holster is great for hiking, climbing over fences or up a ladder to your deer stand, getting in and out of a UTV, etc. and stays completely out of the way leaving both hands free.

The leather is premium and my Big Thunder currently carries a S&W Model 629 with an 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " barrel safely, securely, and just as importantly, comfortably. Now if you really want to impress your friends at the next BBQ, check out Triple K's Space Cowboy rig!

EVEN MORE OPTIONS

No stranger to our pages, Barranti Leather is a top-shelf hide-stretcher making some mighty fine holsters. Their Northwest Hunter is my favorite when packing a Freedom Arms Model 83 with 10" barrel. The padded shoulder strap is most appreciated, and an additional strap wraps around your torso keeping the gun close to your body and ready for action. I've worn this holster for hours on end during long hikes while tracking buffalo in Africa. When the long-barreled Freedom Arms goes hunting — it's riding comfortably in a Northwest Hunter rig.

Another neat shoulder type rig is the Bandito from Pistol Packaging. This holster covers the scope, keeping it protected. I've been using one for my S&W Model 686 with 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " barrel and have found this rig to be very practical. Add some cartridge loops and you're good for all day affairs. Pistol Packaging makes several different style holsters useable with their Bandito Shoulder belt.

Another top-shelf hide-stretcher is Simply Rugged. This company provides a variety of holsters for

large-framed revolvers which can be used in their Chesty Puller harness system. This is a very good option for packing those scoped, heavy revolvers around for a day or a week. The system offers simplicity and comfort. Besides making quality holsters — Robb there is a great guy!

For those of you who prefer reflex sights in lieu of scopes, Diamond D Custom Leather makes a great rig for

carrying the gun across your chest. Their Guides Choice rig is ideal for not only hunters but fishermen too who venture to the back country. At the farm I frequently carry a S&W Model 610 wearing an UltraDot sight in the Guides Choice rig — and I love it. Holsters designed to wear across the chest are ideal for a multitude of applications. Diamond D Custom Leather does it right.

NO CHEAP HOLSTERS NEED APPLY

The Galco Kodiak Hunter Chest Holster is right at home packing a scoped, large-framed revolver. This well-thought-out design features a chest-style, crossdraw carry. It's not only practical but it comes in attractive Havana brown. A good friend borrowed my Kodiak Hunter for a mountain lion hunt. He must have liked it — I haven't seen it since!

I know what you're thinking — there are no cheap holsters mentioned. That's a fact, as I'm not about to put an expensive firearm in a cheap holster. Serious hunting handguns require a different carry method than your 20-oz. polymer EDC gun. We're talking about a large, heavy, scoped handgun, likely wearing a long barrel. When I invest — at least that's what I tell my wife — a lot of hard-earned cash on a handgun, it's not going into a cheap, uncomfortable, flimsy, unsafe holster of any kind.

When you pack these large handguns around the mountains for a few days you'll appreciate a well-designed holster providing comfort and protection for your cherished shooting iron. A quality holster is worth every penny. Honest. 

For more info: www.triplek.com; www.barrantileather.com; www.pistolpackaging.com; www.diamonddcustomleather.com; www.simplyruggedholsters.com; www.galcolgunleather.com



MASADA

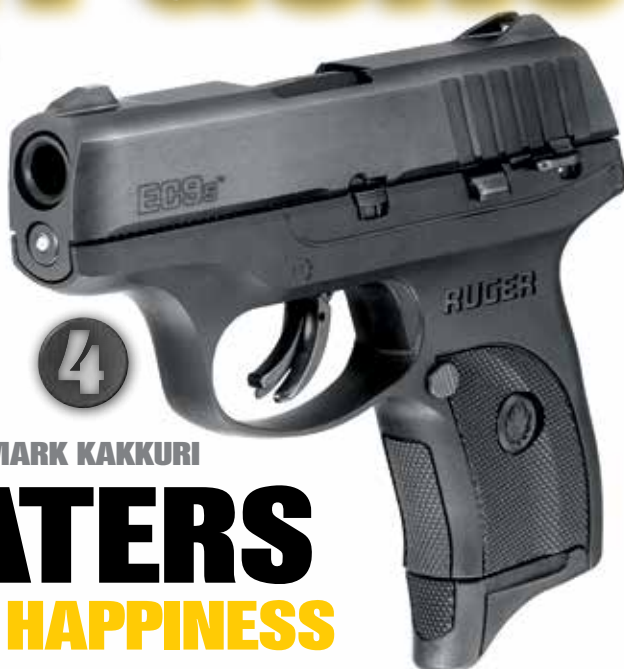
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BUDGET GUNS



MARK KAKKURI

BUDGET BEATERS

AFFORDABLE HANDGUN HAPPINESS

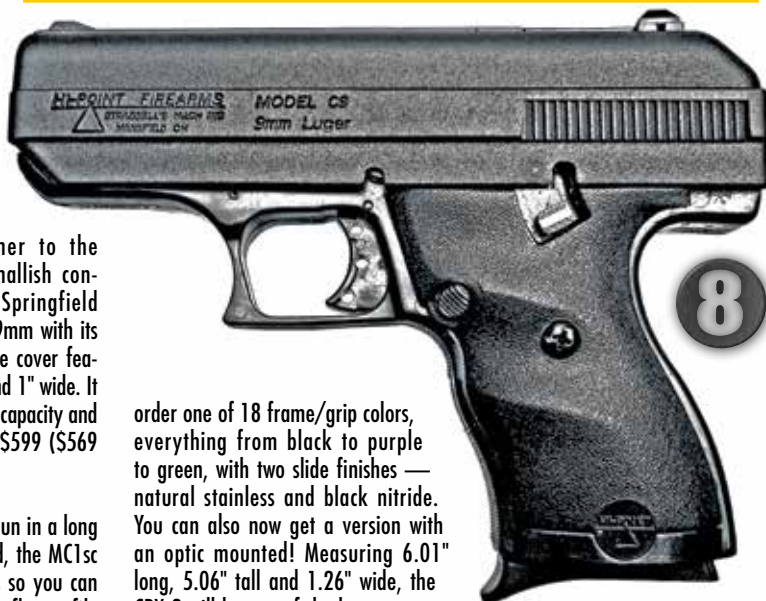


1 A relative newcomer to the crowded field of smallish concealed carry handguns, the Springfield Armory Hellcat's primary boast is a capacity of 11+1 rounds of 9mm with its standard magazine, and 14 with the optional one. (Check out the cover feature!) This is good in a gun measuring only 4" high, 6" in length and 1" wide. It sports Adaptive Grip Texture and a slide ready to accept an optic. If capacity and optics-ready are your thing, the Hellcat is worth a look. MSRP is \$599 (\$569 without the optic-ready slide). www.springfield-armory.com

2 Mossberg's MC1sc, is a 6+1 9mm and Mossberg's first handgun in a long while. Sporting a 3.4" barrel and an extended trigger guard, the MC1sc weighs 22 oz. fully loaded and features clear plastic magazines so you can instantly see your round count. Take note of the snag-free sights, flat-profile trigger and aggressively textured grip panels, all in a gun measuring 6.25" long, 4.3" tall and 1.03" wide. Some models are available with a cross bolt safety, a Viridian laser, or TRUGLO Tritium sights. Basic gun MSRP is \$421. www.mossberg.com

3 SCCY CPX-2 pistols are DAO self-defense handguns with two 10-round magazines. They have the common features you'd find on any small, defensive handgun. But there's a couple of exceptions. First, you can

know ... I know ... we often show fancy guns costing in the thousands in *Handgunner*. I like to look at old Packards too and can't afford to buy one — but it's fun to see what's out there, right? This is something different. While one person's "budget" gun might cost a bit more than another's, the idea here is to not break the bank — but still deliver the goods. Pick and choose and make a decision. Or maybe two — since they might be "under" budget!



order one of 18 frame/grip colors, everything from black to purple to green, with two slide finishes — natural stainless and black nitride. You can also now get a version with an optic mounted! Measuring 6.01" long, 5.06" tall and 1.26" wide, the CPX-2 will be one of the larger guns in this lot, but it's still a subcompact and worth checking out. Our test guns have run just fine and seem a great value. MSRP is \$269. www.sccy.com

4 Ruger's long been known for its line of single-stack nines — mainly because they're reliable, accurate and affordable — and the company's EC9s continues this legacy. A 7+1 9mm with a 3.12" barrel, the EC9s weighs 17.2 oz. unloaded and measures 6" long, 4.5" tall and 0.9" wide. Equipped with a trigger safety, manual safety and magazine disconnect, the EC9s provides



2



9



5

more safety features than many other guns in the class. MSRP is \$299. www.ruger.com

5 If you're really interested in minimizing weight, a snub-nosed revolver such as the Charter Arms Off Duty might be worth considering. Weighing in at a measly 12 oz., this 5-round, 2"-barreled wheelgun loads up with .38 Special rounds. There's no need to feel outgunned with only five rounds of .38 Special on board — at least you'll have a loaded gun on you if something goes down. And the concealability, simplicity and reliability of a revolver — the reasons gun makers still make these things — may be just the ticket. MSRP for this two-tone model: \$452. www.charterfirearms.com

6 Remington's RM380 is a 6+1 .380 ACP sporting an overall smooth, rounded finish, the simplest of operation and smallish dimensions. A DAO with a long, smooth trigger pull, the RM380 also sports a light slide pull weight. It's also one of the smallest guns in this list at 5.25" long, 3.9" tall and less than an inch wide. Also minimal — the sights. Machined into the slide, the rear notch and front ramp sights of course are not adjustable. But this is a gun you'll use in very close proximity to your target. MSRP: \$328. www.remington.com



7

7 Smith & Wesson continues its successful Shield offerings with the updated EZ series, featuring a slide easy to rack when chambering that first round. In addition, this gun offers a tactile loaded chamber indicator, grip safety, three-dot sights, reversible magazine release and an optional ambidextrous manual safety. This new model carries 8+1 rounds of 9mm, an upgrade from the previous in .380 ACP. It sports a 3.67" barrel and the 6.8" overall length make it the longest in the

WWW.AMERICANHANDGUNNER.COM



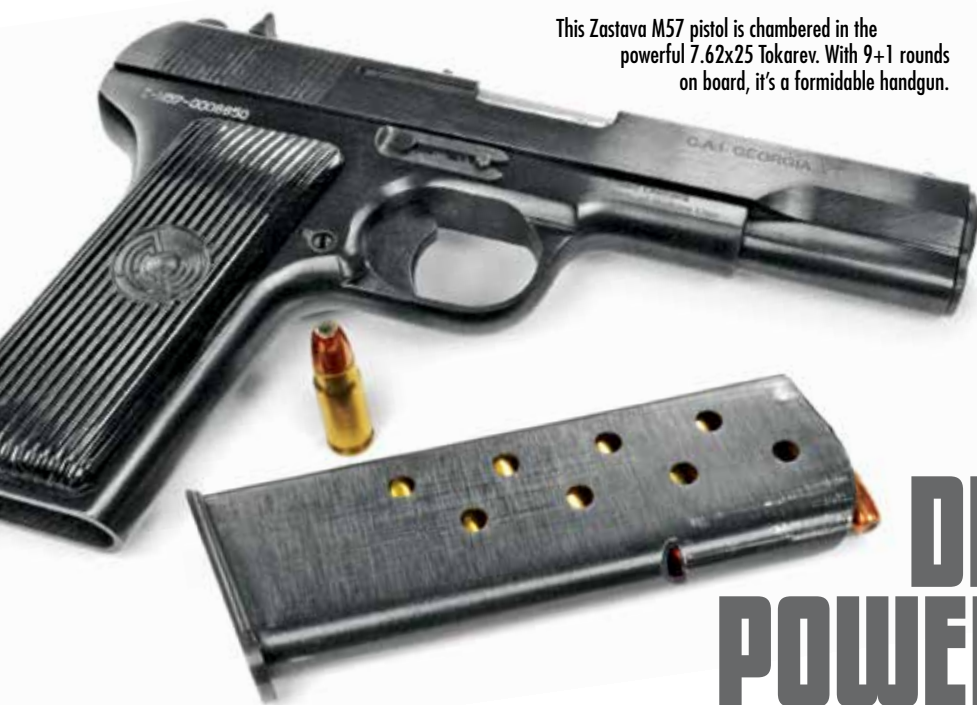
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list. Sporting a tactical rail and weighing just over 23 oz., it's a versatile handgun while still being a relative lightweight. We liked this model a lot. MSRP: \$479. www.smith-wesson.com

8 Yup, Hi-Point. You can't ignore the fact these homely but virtually 100-percent reliable handguns put affordable home defense into the hands of many who could not otherwise afford to protect their families. We've tested various models over the years and all have proven surprisingly accurate and reliable. Some models are in the \$150 range at local gun stores. Put their non-traditional looks aside if you're in need of a beater for the truck, or just don't have the bucks to spend more. Our hats are off to the team at Hi-Point for making this price-point available to shooters. www.hi-pointfirearms.com

9 The Taurus TX-22 is more than a simple .22 plinker. The sort of "full-size" polymer frame build means it can do double-duty as a trainer for your "real" 9mm defensive pistol. It's a 16+1 capacity, 4.1" barrel, adjustable sights, striker block/manual and trigger safeties and weighs a feathery 17.3 oz. It's got a great trigger too and runs fine. Pair this with your fill-in-the-blank "real" gun and you get plenty of trigger time to practice. MSRP is only \$349. www.taurususa.com





This Zastava M57 pistol is chambered in the powerful 7.62x25 Tokarev. With 9+1 rounds on board, it's a formidable handgun.



The .32 caliber auto rounds: (left to right) .32 Auto, .32 NAA, 7.62x25 Tokarev.

DELICATE DELIGHTS TO POWERFUL PALS!

THE MIGHTY 32'S BRAD MILLER



The hot-rods in the .32 category: The 327 Federal (left) and 7.62x25 Tokarev.

When someone mentions .32 caliber handguns, we often think of small, low powered rounds. The .32 ACP comes to mind, and the .32 S&W Short and Long pop into our minds when considering revolvers. None of these are considered

powerful rounds though. Most of us feel they might be okay for casual plinking and target shooting, but they're generally thought of as marginal, at best, for defense. Having said that, small loaders like Buffalo Bore offer higher "performance" loads in these normally anemic calibers and merit a look if you're

inclined to spice up the performance of your favorite small gun.

In the wheelgun world, we have newer .32 caliber rounds packing more punch. The .32 H&R Magnum was introduced in 1984, bringing more power to the .32 caliber revolver. It pushes 85-gr. bullets to around 1,120 fps, getting it in

the .38 Special range. The .32 H&R magnum has a flat trajectory and is very suitable for small game. It also has enough power for defense against human predators.

The king of .32 caliber revolver rounds is the 327 Federal Magnum. Introduced in 2008, the 327 Federal is a "magnum" in every sense of the word. It has a very long case, very high-pressure limit (45,000 psi, which is 10,000 psi higher than the .357 Magnum) and packs a very big punch. It drives a 100-gr. bullet to 1,500 fps from a 4" barrel. An average .357 load is a 125-gr. bullet at 1,450 fps from the same barrel length. If you doubt the 327 Federal's power, just shoot a full-powered load. The recoil and muzzle blast will make a believer out of you. This kind of power is more than enough for small game and for self-defense, the original reason for its creation.

A nice feature of the .32 caliber magnum revolver rounds is a gun chambered for these longer cartridges is backward compatible with the shorter rounds because the non-magnum rounds are much lower in pressure. A gun chambered in 327 Federal Magnum can shoot the .32 H&R Magnum, .32 S&W Long and .32 S&W. Ruger currently makes over a dozen revolvers in 327 Federal Magnum.

Semi-Autos

In the world of semi-autos, there are few choices for cartridges more powerful than the .32 Auto. The .32 North American Arms (.32 NAA) is a little more powerful than the .32 Auto. It's a .380 ACP necked down to .32 caliber. It pushes an 80-gr. bullet to 1,000 fps. This compares to the .32 ACP pushing a 73-gr. bullet to 1,000 fps, though most .32 Auto ammo is loaded a little lighter than this. The .32 NAA is only chambered in one gun, the NAA Guardian, a very small pocket auto for self-defense. This limits the versatility of the round.

At best, those two .32 caliber semi-auto rounds approach .38 Special ballistics. But hold on. There's a .32 caliber semi-auto round blowing the pants off them both. It's the 7.62x25 Tokarev, and it's in the same power league as the 327 Federal. It pushes an 85-gr. bullet to 1,645 fps getting some serious juice going.

Essentially Unknown

This semi-auto cartridge is not well known in the U.S.A. because it was not developed here. It was developed in the land of our Cold War enemy, the Soviet Union. The 7.62x25 Tokarev was developed in 1930 from the very similar .30 Mauser (7.63x25 Mauser)

and chambered in a new Soviet TT-30 pistol, which evolved into the TT-33 pistol. The 7.62x25 Tokarev is also chambered in the Czechoslovakian CZ 52 pistol and various clones made by China, Vietnam and the former Yugoslavia (Serbia). It's also the cartridge used in the famous Russian burp-gun of World War II, the iconic drum-fed PPSH-41.

Some of the TT-33 pistols and variants as well as CZ 52 pistols have made their way into the U.S. being bought by collectors and enthusiasts for their novelty and history. Owners quickly learned the bottlenecked 7.62x25 Tokarev round had very impressive ballistics and produced impressive fireballs with every shot. The 7.62x25 Tokarev is a potent and versatile cartridge, and pistols chambered in this caliber are still around at many surplus gun dealers. Ammo appears to be plentiful.

A few loading manuals in the U.S. (Hornady, Sierra) use .308 bullets for their 7.62x25 Tokarev load data, which would make it a .30 caliber cartridge. But according to the C.I.P. (Permanent International Commission for the Proof of Small Arms, which is the European version of the SAAMI), the 7.62x25 Tokarev uses 7.90mm bullets, converting to 0.311". That makes it a .32 caliber cartridge.

The 7.62x25 Tokarev is a long cartridge not easily fitting in most pistol designs. The Tokarev has a length of 1.385", exceeding the maximum lengths of cartridges such as the .45 ACP (1.275") and .38 Super (1.280"). Thus the 7.62x25 Tokarev is

not easily adapted to existing semi-auto pistol platforms other than the original guns. There have been 7.62x25 Tokarev conversion barrels for the 1911, but you can only get 3-4 rounds in a 1911 magazine because of their length.

Last Thoughts

The limited types of guns chambering the Tokarev and the even more limited sources for good hollow-point bullets in factory ammo limits its use as a defensive cartridge. However, hand-loaders can take advantage of excellent bullets by Hornady, Sierra and Speer to make some very effective loads for defense as well as hunting small game.

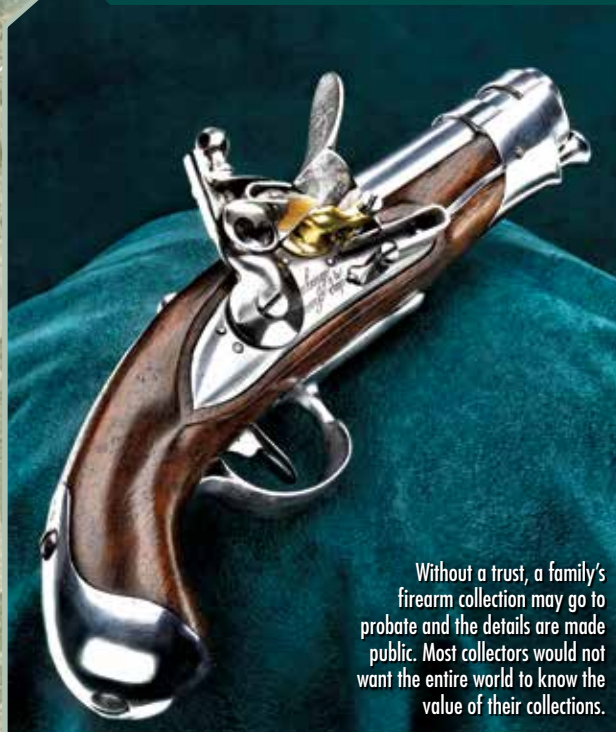
This variety of .32 caliber handgun rounds from the mild to the mighty can fill a variety of roles. From plinking, target shooting and small-game hunting to self-protection, these small-bore delights can be both great fun and serious tools. Match the cartridge to the task and you can hardly go wrong.



The .32 caliber revolver rounds: (left to right) .32 S&W, .32 S&W Long, .32 H&R Magnum, 327 Federal Magnum.

FIREARMS TRUSTS

MANAGING YOUR GUNS FOR END-OF-LIFE EVENTS



Without a trust, a family's firearm collection may go to probate and the details are made public. Most collectors would not want the entire world to know the value of their collections.

If you have a cherished family heirloom, a Trust can assure it remains in the family rather than being sold once you pass. Great Grandpa's old military 1911 can stay in the family — safely.



When I was a teenager, my father frequently told me I should become an attorney because I had a knack for arguing. Well, I didn't go to law school, so I'm sharing with you as a layman. If any of this information strikes a chord with you, make sure you have an attorney or legal service company create the necessary documents. But I hope this gets you thinking.

The career path I did choose has allowed me to encounter folks who've worked hard and accumulated some assets, one of which is a nice gun collection. A chief concern of many is what happens to the gun collection when they pass or become unable to use them.

There's a solution that might work for you, and I first became familiar with it while dealing with suppressors.

Dealers in suppressors and other NFA items usually have some type of relationship with a law firm that can create a "Trust" for purchasers of NFA items. When I bought two suppressors several years ago, I engaged the services of the attorneys at U.S. Law Shield to create an NFA Trust to hold those suppressors. For some of the reasons you're going to see, I transferred my non-NFA firearms into that Trust.

What's A Trust?

Here's how the Trust works. Think of it as a separate "entity" who "owns" whatever you put "into" it. You as the Settlor (in some states it's Grantor) pur-

chase the items on behalf of the Trust. Typically, you will also be the Trustee. You can name multiple co-trustees, allowing them to use, transport and have access to the NFA items owned by the Trust. During your lifetime you can add or remove co-trustees, name a successor trustee and a beneficiary.

Buying NFA items through a Trust doesn't require the signature of the Chief Law Enforcement Officer where you live for you to acquire NFA items like it does for an individual. All co-trustees can use the items, and items the Trust owns can be passed down. NFA items do require ATF Form 5 if they are being passed to beneficiaries.

Even if you don't own any NFA items, but do have a sizeable



A Firearm Trust may make sense for firearms other than NFA items for collectors.

If you've spent a lifetime amassing a collection hard to duplicate, protect it with a Trust.



Buying suppressors or other NFA items through a Trust eases administrative requirements, allowing other qualified members of the Trust to use the NFA items.



“A CHIEF CONCERN OF MANY IS WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GUN COLLECTION WHEN THEY PASS OR BECOME UNABLE TO USE THEM.”

and/or valuable gun collection, there are several benefits of creating a Trust to own those firearms.

Your Privacy

If you die without having your firearms in a Trust, in most states the executor of your estate would be required to file an inventory of the probate estate. Probate inventories are public documents filed with the court and available for anyone to see. The firearms included in the estate and the market value of each would be listed in the inventory. That's not information the heirs would probably want known to the general public. If the firearms are owned by a Trust, they would not be included in the probate estate and would not be listed on the probate inventory.

Your Collection

A Gun Trust can provide for the orderly disposition of the firearms by having them transfer to the successor trustee and co-trustees. This is an excellent way to keep the valuable firearms in the family. I suggest if you, as the Settlor, transfer your firearms to a Trust in which you

are the Trustee, you name as Successor Trustee one of your close relatives who is trustworthy and who is knowledgeable about and can legally own guns.

Name co-trustees who also fit that bill as much as possible. It will help the Successor Trustee and any co-trustees if you will take the time to document the history and value of each of the firearms in the collection. If the Trust is created correctly, the firearms can pass down through the Trust through multiple generations. You'll need to make sure your Trust is written to accomplish this goal.

Protection

It appears even in gun-friendly states, the possibility of Red Flag laws in some form or another are going to become law. I'm sure you won't become the target of a Red Flag action, but then again — who knows? Even without the Red Flag possibility, at some point you may simply not be competent or safe to own firearms due to age and/or health reasons. With a Trust, it would not be an issue because the Successor Trustee would be there to manage the Trust and hold or distribute the firearms based on your intentions as outlined in the trust document.

Easing The Burden

The cost of setting up a Gun Trust is small, whereas leaving a large, or

even small, collection in an estate to be dealt with by an executor could be a complex situation, avoided by having the collection owned by a Trust. Discuss these concerns with the law firm who sets up your Trust and let them know you want it for more than just buying NFA items. You want it to secure and protect your assets to ensure an orderly transition to your heirs.

What It Doesn't Do

A typical Gun Trust is set up as a Revocable Trust, which means the Settlor/Trustee can make changes to the Trust during his/her lifetime. From a legal standpoint it means the Settlor still owns and has control of the Firearms in the Trust. This type of Trust does not protect the assets from creditors. If you need or desire that type of asset protection it will probably cost you more and you must specify to the attorney setting up your trust that asset protection is one of your goals.

Buying NFA items through a Trust is a no-brainer. This type of Gun Trust can be created inexpensively. I see prices on the Internet varying from \$59.95 up to \$500. The lower cost ones are created through filling out forms online. Once completed, the Trust is emailed to you. If you do it this way, just make sure the Trust is created so it's legal in the state in which you reside.



A PARADIGM MAKEOVER FOR 9MM CARRY GUNS



SPRINGFIELD ARMORY'S

Palm-sized, the Springfield Armory Micro-Compact Hellcat still holds 14 rounds of 9mm.



MICRO-COMPACT

HELLCAT

WILL DABBS, MD

The new Springfield Armory Micro-Compact Hellcat concealed carry pistol packs as much 9mm as you might carry in a full-sized Browning Hi-Power — all going into a trim little package small enough to hide comfortably. At this point, the Hellcat might be the ultimate iteration of modern Information Age concealed carry firearms. Easy to run, utterly reliable, meticulously engineered and now offering a service

pistol-grade magazine capacity, the new Hellcat changes things.

Origins

John Hay and John Nicolay, the special assistants to President Abraham Lincoln, nicknamed Abe's epically fulminant bride Mary Todd "The Hellcat." Mrs. Lincoln, with the benefit of hindsight, likely suffered from raging bipolar disorder. Her incendiary temper was the stuff of legend.

The 76mm Gun Motor Carriage M18, a World War II-era tank destroyer





of some renown, also proudly bore the moniker. With a top speed of 50 mph, the M18 was the fastest American tracked armored vehicle of the war. It also enjoyed the highest kill-to-loss ratio of any tank or tank destroyer the U.S. produced.

In 2015 Chrysler debuted a new supercharged version of their 6.2-liter Hemi engine titled the Hellcat. This muscle-bound plant powers both the Dodge Charger SRT and Challenger SRT Hellcat muscle cars as well as a souped-up version of the Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT called the Trackhawk. However, all of this pales in comparison to the singular Hellcat ruling them all.

The big-boned Grumman F6F Hellcat swept the skies clean of Japanese Zeroes and helped turn the tide of the war in the Pacific. Powered by an 18-cylinder Pratt and Whitney R-2800

Double Wasp radial engine producing a cool 2,000 horsepower, the F6F Hellcat was the Navy's premiere fighter plane for the second half of World War II. Rocking half a dozen Browning .50-caliber heavy machineguns, the F6F claimed 5,163 aerial kills in two years of full-bore service.

The new Springfield Armory Micro-Compact Hellcat has some big shoes to fill.

Elements

Simply put, the Micro-Compact Hellcat is a revolutionary firearm. The chassis is small, occupying about the same space as Springfield Armory's current line of XD-S single stack concealed carry pistols. However, what these guys have done with this space is pretty amazing.

The standard Micro-Compact fea-

tures aggressive charging grooves both front and rear on the billet, machined steel slide. There are also matching grooves on the top rear of the slide for optimal purchase when sweaty, rushed or terrified. The OSP (Optical Sight Pistol) variant has the rear portion of the slide deck cut to accept a micro red dot sight. This allows you to run your deep carry pistol with a state-of-the-art Information Age electro-optical sighting system.

The U-Notch iron sights on both guns feature a generous tritium-powered dot up front and a white semi-circle in the back. Imagine a Cyclops happy face and you'll visualize the sight picture. The rear sight is of the "tactical rack" sort. You can jack the slide against your belt or a handy firm surface one-handed if your day suddenly becomes extra sucky.

MICRO-COMPACT *HELLCAT*



Both versions sport a 3" hammer forged steel barrel with a 1-in-10" twist and Melonite finish. Dual captive recoil springs ride around a full-length guide rod with a textured standoff tip. The gun will still run even if pressed vigorously against a firm surface. The pistol is 6" long and a mere 4" to 4.5" tall depending upon the magazine you choose.

The flat trigger connects to a Nickel Boron treated fire control group for maximum smoothness. The striker-fired trigger system is predictable from the first shot to the last. You take its measure in the first magazine, and then it feels just like home.

The Feel

The frame is black polymer and features an adaptive grip texture comprised of a series of microscopic pyramids. The top versions are left flat, while the lower sorts are still sharp. This keeps the gun from gnawing up your sensitive flesh but still grips more vigorously the tighter you squeeze. I couldn't see the details without a proper magnifying glass.

There is the niftiest little textured parking spot on both sides of the frame giving you a designated place to keep your trigger finger when you are not actively unleashing chaos. We all appreciate your trigger finger is the primary safety on any combat pistol. This just formalizes the fact. All combat handguns need these.

There's also the expected blade safety built into the trigger as well as the fail-safe internal drop safety system. The magnificent Springfield Armory grip safety is gone and I mourn its passing, but this design is cut to the



bone to keep everything tiny. It still remains utterly safe. However, the Micro-Compact Hellcat is really built around its remarkable magazine.

The gun comes with two magazines and three floorplates. The 11-round version sits flush with the bottom of the frame with the flat floorplate installed and I'm thinking it is really too short for most folks. The same magazine can be fitted with an included extended pinky rest for a little extra purchase.

The 13-round extended variant costs you an extra half-inch but fits my mitts perfectly. If this bit offends you unduly you can pack the big mag as a spare, but

the gun is still only 4.5" tall and 1" thick even with the large magazine installed.

To put this in perspective the single stack GLOCK 43 is a quarter inch taller and slightly thicker yet packs six rounds onboard. The SIG P365, magnificent firearm that it is, offers 10 rounds at 4.3" tall and the same grip width as the Hellcat. I have no idea how the Springfield Armory guys did it. Magic, I suppose.

The Glass

My Micro-Compact Hellcat came fitted with a Shield Reflex Mini Sight-Compact (RMS-C). The RMS-C lacks

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY



AMERICAN
HANDGUNNER

HELLCAT

MICRO-COMPACT





any external controls and feeds from a Lithium CR2032 battery. The sight includes an automatic darkening feature adjusting the brightness for ambient light conditions. Though the sight is technically on all the time, it will still run three years or more on a single battery.

The RMS-C weighs a paltry half-ounce and is sufficiently tiny as to ride on a legitimate pocket gun. The sight doesn't interfere with the superb Cross-

breed IWB holster and can even be pocket carried should you be so led. Tiny, bright, and all but indestructible, the RMS-C mounted atop a Micro Compact Hellcat adds science fiction capabilities to your deep carry gun.

How Does It Run?

It's frankly uncanny. With the flat floorplate mounted on the stubby magazine the gun packs 12 rounds onboard

and is just stupid tiny. At a mere 4" tall it's really not much bigger than your cell phone. I pocket-carried the gun in this configuration comfortably even with the red dot sight in place.

The extra half-inch afforded by the extended magazine didn't bother me one whit underneath my clothes. I'm a skinny guy living in the Deep South, so I am as naked as decorum might allow when wandering about town in the summer. The gun still rides on my right hip without poking out unduly. The Hellcat really does offer you service pistol-sized capacity in a chassis as concealable as puny single stack pocket guns.

Despite the compact dimensions, the high beavertail and undercut trigger guard do a splendid job of controlling recoil and mitigating muzzle flip. Slip on the pinky grip floorplate, and the gun feels that much better. With the extended magazine the Hellcat is still shorter than lesser guns. This is the most comfortable configuration of the three.

This is a tiny gun running full power 9mm Parabellum, so it jumps around a bit. However, at defensive ranges I could keep all 14 rounds inside what's essentially one jagged hole firing offhand and at a decent cadence. I could even connect on my steel plate out at 60 meters a surprising percentage of the time. All Springfield Armory guns are accurate, and the Hellcat is no exception.

Running at speed the Hellcat lacks

MICRO-COMPACT *HELLCAT*



any snaggy bits, so it presents quickly and painlessly. The stubby mag runs just fine, but the extended version felt better to me. Recoil is snappy without being onerous, and follow-up shots flow forth like snot in a daycare full of two-year-olds. Sorry, the MD in me gets out at times.

I'd gladly tell you if I found some ugly little secret about the gun making it somehow less cool than it appears, but I was vexed. The Hellcat carries like a dream, shoots like a much bigger gun and packs enough downrange horsepower to get you out of the stickiest of spots. The Hellcat does alter the landscape a bit.

Bemusements

I really, really like the name. All the major machines in the Dabbs family have their own names. My big Stihl chainsaw is Beavis. My blue New Hol-

land tractor is Bluezebul — so coined by my bride who does not technically hold my tractor in great esteem. My zippy little homebuilt airplane is Tommyrot. It means "Foolish, silly, or ill advised." Also contrived by my Anglophile bride who feels even less affection for the airplane than she does the tractor.

I think titling this new Springfield Armory high capacity Micro-Compact pistol the Hellcat gives the remarkable little gun a healthy dose of character.

A personal defense firearm is more than just a tool. It's not like a box wrench or a screwdriver. If you ever have to use this thing for real it will suddenly be worth more than your entire 401K. This will be the machine standing between you and your family and tragedy inexpressible. There's therefore an implied intimacy to the relationship. I think it entirely appro-

priate such a hallowed contrivance earns its own moniker.

Your local gun emporium is cluttered with sundry defensive pistols all chock full of features, widgets and tactical ditzels. I have myself fallen for more than a few over the decades. The Springfield Armory Micro-Compact Hellcat is bet-your-life reliable, more capable than anything in its genre, and a class act from heel to muzzle.

The Hellcat has, in one fell swoop, rendered all my concealed carry guns obsolete. If you're interested I've got a handful of low mileage single stack defensive pistols I'll let go cheap. It seems I have no need of them anymore.



For more info: www.springfield-armory.com. Go to www.americanhandgunner.com to enjoy Will Dabbs' video on the Hellcat.



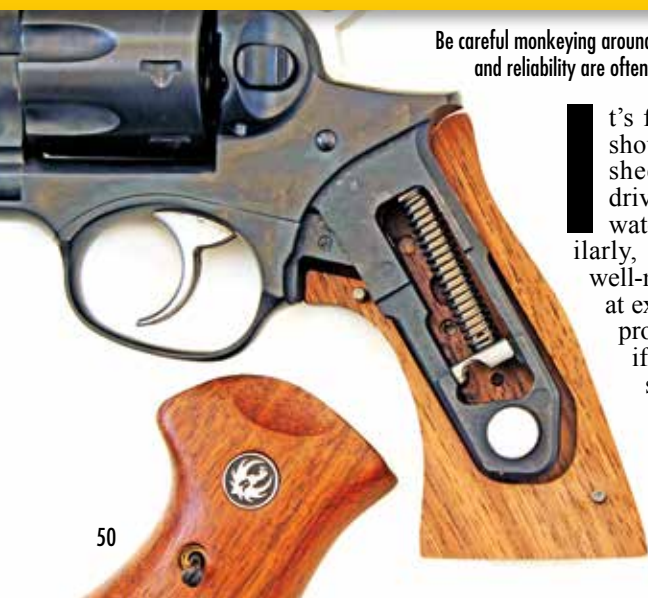
A bog-standard XD-9 with 10-yard off-hand target. They can shoot once you learn the trigger.



S&W "Third Gen" guns are underappreciated gems. Perhaps because of their trigger system!

IN PRAISE OF THE STOCK TRIGGER

SOMETIMES BAD CAN BE GOOD



Be careful monkeying around with springs. Lightness and reliability are often on a see-saw.

CLAYTON WALKER

It's fine to like nice things. No one should feel guilty for sleeping on sheets with a high thread count, driving a sports car, or wearing a watch eliciting compliments. Similarly, it is an absolute joy to own a well-made gun with a trigger breaking at exactly four-point-zero lbs. — the proverbial "glass rod." I'd be lying if I didn't admit to having *several* such gems in my collection.

In my younger days I'd have said the tools make the man. If you wanted to shoot at your best, you'd

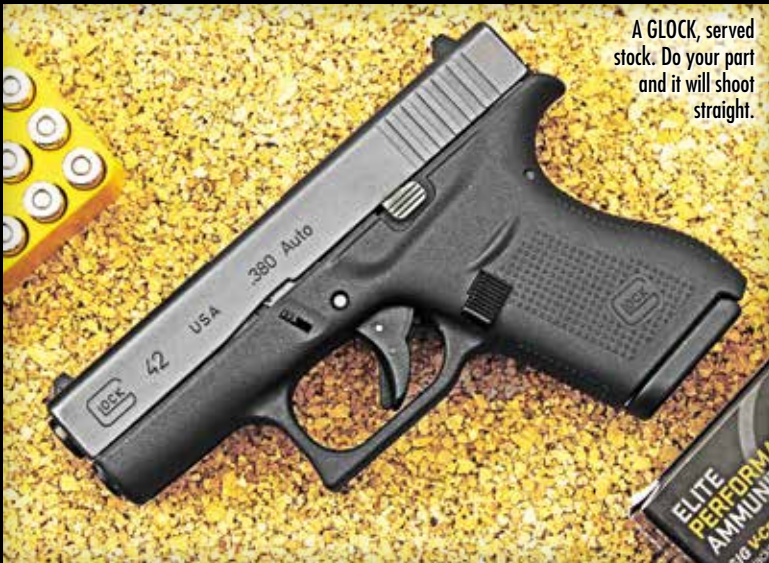
be doing yourself a disservice to not run the best equipment you could afford. Fast forward 10 years, and I've noticed my worst groups now are on par with my best groups then. I put on my big boy pants and gave this fact a real good think.

Today, I can state emphatically much of my growth as a shooter came from experience on platforms that, well — *were not the best*. To wit, handguns whose triggers were heavy and creepy, those with hitches and stacks, pre-travel and over-travel, and resets anything but crisp. So before you ship a new-to-you

The SIG P6 — a quintessential “hard-but-fair” military surplus handgun.



A GLOCK, served stock. Do your part and it will shoot straight.



gun off to the gunsmith for what seems like an “essential” trigger job, see if something in these pages doesn’t ring true to you.

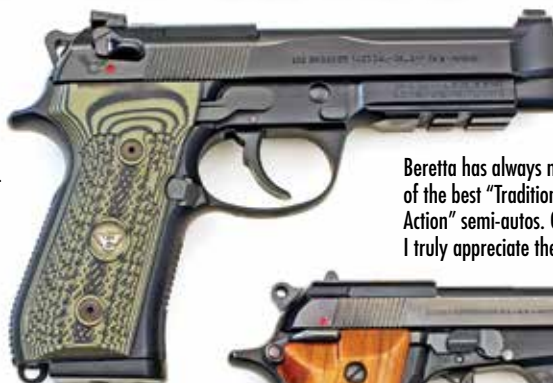
Devil’s Advocate

Let’s define a “bad” trigger. We’ll call it one with the worst qualities of a bad double-action *and* single-action trigger. Imagine you bring this imaginary gun up to eye-level and aim it at the target. You’d first need to pull through a long amount of pre-travel. Then you’d need to exert considerable effort to pull the trigger through its range of rearward motion, perhaps to the order of 14 lbs. or more, until the sear finally trips at some unknown point.

What would you need to do to shoot this gun well? First you’d need to bring the trigger through the pre-travel to the “wall” of the break, however long this may be. Then, you’d need build with increasing pressure, through heavy resistance, until the gun fires — since you won’t fully be aware of where that point actually is. To do so, you’d need to figure out some way of using gross

motor skills to steady the gun in combination with the fine motor skills needed to manipulate the trigger finger. And, since the trigger itself is so unpredictable, you’d have no option but to rely on this technique every time, since it would be impossible to rely on a mash or a quick stab of the trigger to get a shot off with so much resistance.

Now let’s separate this nightmare of a trigger into two different components. Even with the best double-action triggers, DA shooting is hard for most because of the length of pull. Watch most novices shooting DA for the first time, and they’ll almost always mash the trigger straight through and flinch in the process. The instinct is to get the scary part over



Beretta has always made some of the best “Traditional Double Action” semi-autos. Only now do I truly appreciate them.



as fast as possible. Good DA shooting requires pulling straight through with an even and constant speed until — *bang* — the shot breaks. Even with heavy resistance, a smooth and deliberate pull is the way to go.

What makes a “bad” single-action

Continued on page 75



Quality DA .22 revolvers, like this Colt, will do wonders to build your trigger skills.

Left: At 5.75 lbs., the Springfield Mil-Spec trigger is no glass rod, but not every 1911 trigger needs to be.

3 BARRELS

5 CARTRIDGES

SAM FADALA

A G-2-Three is not an artificially intelligent 24th century spaceship robot. Rather, it's my Thompson/Center Contender G-2 pistol with three barrels: A Match Grade Machine Company (MGM) .22 Long Rifle Match, MGM .22 Hornet and a T/C .38 Special/.357 Magnum/.357 Maximum. Anticipation is the mother of preparation, and I had great anticipation to wring-out the Contender on these five platforms. The .22 Long Rifle, .22 Hornet, .38 Special, .357 Magnum and .357 Maximum test became a reality once the barrels were in-hand.

.22 Long Rifle

The Anticipation: Riddle tin cans, make pine cones jump along with a special challenge in a favorite boulder field of thriving cottontail rabbits — Wyoming white meat tasty. Not Cape buffalo thrill in the Mopane in Africa, but a day winding along the narrow pathways is a time warp to a new dimension. Look, find, rest pistol on hiking staff for steady aim, gather and care for. Too good not to, and then add tree squirrels to the mix. My handgun coach made 3-shot dime-covered groups at 25 yards with the MGM .22

A friend made a fine holster for Sam's G-2. Sam likes the handi-ness of keeping your hands free in the field.

A G-2-THREE



Lil' Gun powder was originally developed for the 410 shotgun, however, it proved supremely great in the .22 Hornet, .357 Magnum and .357 Maximum during targeting in the multiple barrel G-2.



A single cartridge case was loaded over and over to see if a load was entirely within safe pressure range. The cartridge shown here is not the test cartridge, but a micrometer was used at the base of the actual test cartridge (as illustrated here) to find evidence of brass flow — there was none.



Match-grade .22 LR ammo in the MGM .22 LR match barrel proved it could out-shoot Sam!

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES



Sam's "G-2-Three" with the .357 Maximum/.38 Special/.357 barrel, the MGM .22 Hornet barrel and the MGM .22 Long Rifle Match tube. Three barrels, five cartridges.

LR match barrel, my shots made nickel pieces. I couldn't ask for more with open sights, which is my choice for clean holster carry.

.22 Hornet

The Anticipation: Why Hornet when there's the .223? Two benches over at the range one day is a sharp crack — boisterous! It was a .223 Contender. The Hornet will do all I ask of it "quietly" for incidental varmints. Prairie dogs, jackrabbits, gophers, ground squirrels, marmots are all correctly-sized. Add called-in coyotes with bullets in the 33- to 55-gr. weights and the game is ramped up some. After years of shooting Hornets, I came upon Lil' Gun at 13 grains for superior ballistics from the little case with a 40-gr. bullet from my G-2 barrel. Can you say 2,800 fps, a 45-grainer at 2,325 and a 50-grainer at 2,345? I couldn't ask for more. Neither should you.

.38 Special

The Anticipation: While the .357 Magnum and .357 Maximum proved manageable in the solid T/C Contender (I wear a wrist wrap and impact gloves with hottest Max), the .38 Special is apple pie sweet for practice and sheer joy of shooting. A vendor at a gun show had a veritable bucketful of .38 caliber bullets he couldn't wait to get rid of. Handloads with minuscule fast-burning

powder charges provided plenty of pasta with these 158-gr. wadcutters. Also in the lineup, Black Hills 148-gr. HBWC chronographed at 880 fps from the 12" G-2 barrel and was plenty accurate. Sheer fun.

.357 Magnum

The Anticipation: Everyday carry along with duty in the whitetail thicket. My preparation included a variety of bullets. All were accurate, with adequate performance for deer-sized game in-close. I was content with different powders until I ran across tiger loads from MGM with — wait for it — the same .410 shotgun powder hitting the high notes with the .22 Hornet — Lil' Gun. A 140-gr. Hornady Flex Tip left the muzzle at 2,020 fps with 23.0-grains Lil' Gun from the 12" G-2 barrel. A 180-gr. Barnes Tipped TSX FB gained 1,800 fps with 20-grains of Lil' Gun. What's not to like there?

.357 Maximum

The Anticipation: Let's just say it — big game. Whitetails in wood and thicket, mule deer in mountain and hill and pronghorn on the plains. I called up online "MGM .357 Magnum & .357 Maximum Load Data" and was rewarded with 12 pages of great information. A .357 Maximum Stout Load 140-gr. bullet ran a freckle under 2,400 fps at the test range, with a charge of

29-grains of Lil' Gun.

I worked up a personalized load with a 180-gr. Barnes bullet for 2,050 fps based on MGM's 25-grain Lil' Gun load. In between 140s and 180s, many 158-gr. bullets shot well. Any of these will bring home the bacon.

Grist

Colonel Doug Wesson went forth with the then-new .357 Magnum handgun for deer, elk, moose and add a grizzly, one shot per customer. Only a pronghorn buck — of all things — requiring two. The G-2 .357 Maximum with Lil' Gun is a much stronger cup of tea. Being a Wyoming boy, I'm privileged with three antelope tags annually, same for deer, elk up to two, and now and again a moose. All with longbow to mainline big game rifles, a lot of 30-30 in between. This coming season though? My G-2 with hunting loads. Our family processes, packages, freezes and distributes — along with one of my cookbooks — to a variety of people and organizations.

Simplicity can be pretty. The .22 MGM Match barrel with competition ammo surpassed all expectations. The .22 Hornet with Lil' Gun was perfect. MGM provided .38 Special Subsonic loads with Hornady XTP HP 180-gr. bullets and 9.3 grains H-110 for 900

Continued on page 81

There's no slide release lever but once the slide is locked back and you've reloaded a fresh magazine, just pull the slide back and release.



THE ASTRA MODEL 400



Made in Spain, the 400 is chambered for the 9mm Largo round. Use caution and don't use .38 Super!

J.B. WOOD

If you dare to do it, take down can be more easily accomplished using a common empty .50 GI case. However, J.B. warns don't try it unless you know what you're doing!



That grand old man Skeeter Skelton once described the Astra Model 400 as “wart-hog ugly,” but I’ve always thought it had a certain simple elegance. And, in that simplicity there are numerous touches of brilliant design. To make the Model 400 — also called the Model 1921 — Astra looked at the earlier Campo-Giro and corrected all the mistakes.

The Model 400 is chambered for the 9mm Bergmann-Bayard cartridge, known in Spain as the 9mm Largo (Long). Well-known in Europe, it has not, until recently, been available here. It’s long been known some Model 400 pistols will work with the old .38 Colt cartridge, but this is an individual

thing. If the extractor and bolt face will accept the tiny difference in rim diameter, it might work.

But let me caution you! The .38 Super has the same dimensions, but its pressure levels could be dangerous in the Model 400. This is an unlocked action, relying on a heavy slide and an extremely strong recoil spring. The slide rails are internal and run the full length of the grip-frame. It’s a strong pistol — but let’s not push our luck.

Minutiae

The well-positioned manual safety lever blocks the trigger and can also be used as a slide hold-open for cleaning. At the rear, a grip-safety directly blocks

the gear. The slide locks open after the last shot, but there’s no manual release. Just retract the slide slightly and let it go. An internal magazine-out safety blocks the trigger.

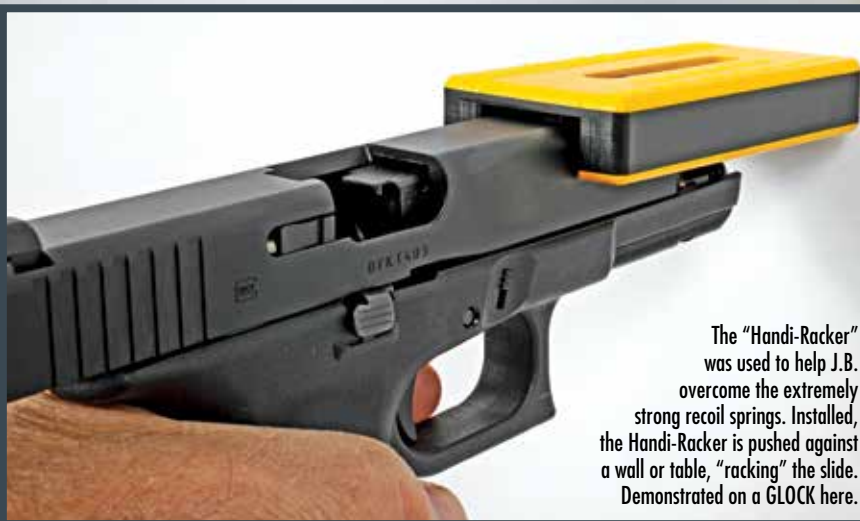
The Model 400 has a pivoting hammer inside, and the sear engagement is at its rear. This helps to give a crisp trigger pull, with minimal take-up and over-travel. On my pistol, the pull averaged 6.5 lbs. Hey, it’s a military-issue piece, not a target-pistol. The let-off, though, is crisp and clean.

The sights are square-picture, with a U-notch at the rear. Both are part of the slide, so can’t be adjusted. Fortunately, my Model 400 shoots to the point-of-aim. Every time I try it out,



The Astra Model 400 is more accurate than most old-school duty-type autos. J.B. got 3.5" to 4" groups at 15 yards.

Steinel makes excellent 9mm Largo ammo and J.B. was very impressed by the quality.



The "Handi-Racker" was used to help J.B. overcome the extremely strong recoil springs. Installed, the Handi-Racker is pushed against a wall or table, "racking" the slide. Demonstrated on a GLOCK here.

9mm Largo had dwindled. Steinel Ammunition came to the rescue with a beautiful load, and priced more moderately than the custom loaders.

The other problem seemed to have no solution. When the hammer is in "fired" position, retracting the slide is against the combined power of two very stiff springs. My hands have served me well for 80-plus years, and I use a hand exerciser regularly. Even so, I found I can no longer rack the slide of

a Model 400! Disaster!

Then, I found the Handi-Racker. It's made of a hard polymer and comes in two sizes, each of those having two graduated bearing surfaces. If a pistol's slide comes all the way to the muzzle, one of these will fit it. You just hold it against a firm surface, like a shooting-bench, insert the pistol and push. It works beautifully and only costs about \$20.

Take-Down

Those springs are also a factor in after-shooting takedown.

It's best to just lock it open and brush it out. If it needs to be field stripped, take it to a gunsmith. When you push the little locking collar and turn the muzzle bushing — watch out! Wear full-face protection and hold a shop-cloth over it as the spring is released.

Assuming you're going to try it anyway, here's a tip: That locking collar is difficult to depress and requires a tool to push it. Many muzzle-bushings get marred. Now, thanks to my old friend Dave Shellenberg, there's a perfect non-marring tool — an empty U.S. .50 caliber cartridge case. It's exactly the right size.

The Astra firm has, alas, been gone now for quite a few years. A victim, I've been told, of corporate regulations of the government of Spain. Fortunately, the elegant Model 400 lives on. Having written this, I think I'll take my Handi-Racker and my Steinel ammo and go out and shoot it again.



For more info: Steinel Ammunition, www.steinellammo.com, Ph: (330) 840-7086; Handi-Racker, www.handitracker.com, Ph: (515) 480-4905.

well-centered groups average 3.5" to 4" at 15 yards. Many other military-issue pistols won't do that well.

One of the things contributing to accuracy is that long slide giving a sight radius of 7.5". For those who like to have all the numbers, here are the rest of them: Empty weight is 33.5 oz., overall length is 8.7", height is 5.25", the barrel is 5.9" and the magazine holds eight rounds.

Recently, when I wanted to go out and shoot my pistol, I ran into two problems. The first was ammunition. My original supply of imported

SHOT SHOW

TAKE-AWAYS — WE WISH! — FROM LOST VEGAS

HIGHLIGHTS

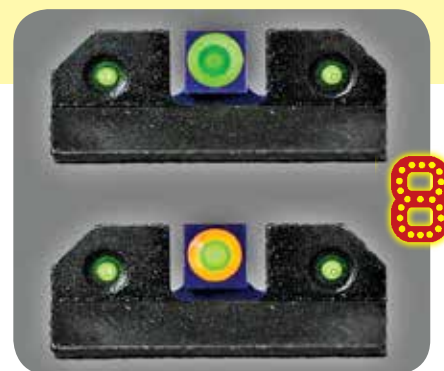


Four frantic days, 1,600-odd exhibitors, seven miles of aisles and 60,000 people all trying to see and be seen — welcome to the SHOT Show in Las Vegas. It's a must-do — and also a “Good god man, this is overwhelming”-do. But we survived, again, and came home with our brains frazzled, yet dancing with loads of cool stuff we saw. Some of it will be gracing our pages and digital domains in features, videos and online hits. But not everything, so in no particular order herewith are some of the underlines helping to leave us dazed and mumbling ... “Really, really want that!”



1 Remember those little milk cartons when you were a kid? Me too. But now they can come filled with either 125 rounds of CCI Maxi-Mag .22 Magnum or .17 HMR ammo. And, remember how you'd open one end to stick a straw in (sorry California, not any longer for you), or just so you could gulp down the milk? Well now, since these are called “Pour Packs” you can pour a handful of your favorite load right into your hand for easy loading. Then stuff the carton back into your pocket. I love this idea! Also comes in a 200-round .22 LR “Clean Suppressor” carton, made to run clean in your .22 suppressor. www.cci-ammunition.com

2 KelTec's very cool new .22 LR semi-auto plinker called the P17 is light — 14 oz. — has an adjustable rear sight, holds 16+1 and is



barely longer than a dollar bill. It's also got a barrel threaded for a suppressor and is made of polymer and metal bits. This reminds me a lot of the old Sheridan “Knocabout” single shot plinker and trail pistol from the 1950s, but this one is semi-auto and you can get it now! It comes with three mags, a really good trigger pull and the MSRP is only \$199! Can you say, “Sell a zillion of 'em?” www.keltecweapons.com



3 The CZ75 platform is growing in popularity again and some custom makers — like Gunrafter Industries — are doing amazing work with them. Mec-Gar's new 19-round CZ75B 9mm magazine adds to the options by incorporating a clever Drop Protection Systems (DPS)



2

floorplate. The design incorporates technology from the building industry to reduce and redistribute shock when the mag is dropped on a hard surface. Great for competition and training. MSRP: \$47.45. www.mec-gar.com



6

It's handy and lightweight at only 2.4 oz. You need a light on your home defense gun if you don't have one! MSRP: About \$150. www.streamlight.com

4 There's so much going on at Nighthawk Custom and their Korth line of revolvers we couldn't decide on just one. So while the Super Sport ULX (.357 and 9mm) shown is eye-catching, you really do need to check out their website to see the many models available for this amazing, high-end revolver. Now including the new .44 Magnum Korth! Stay tuned for a review of the latter. Our Korth Kups runneth over! www.nighthawkcustom.com

5 Lightweight and compact, the Streamlight TLR-7 A light features customized ergonomic on/off rear switches with a High (left in picture)



7

Ed Brown's "Fueled Series" starts with a S&W M&P 2.0. Then it's broken down to the base and rebuilt. Brown adds a custom accuracy rail, custom slide, custom barrel, custom extractor, custom sights, custom trigger, custom magwell, custom baseplates for the mags, custom machined pins and even a custom backplate. That's a lot of customs! There are several models and the MP-F2 is shown. MSRP: \$1,995 to \$2,544. www.edbrown.com

6 SIG SAUER's ROMEO1PRO is a miniature open reflex red dot sight, with either a 3 MOA or 6 MOA dot. It has 12 brightness settings and SIG's "TruHold" Lockless Zeroing System is designed to hold up to recoil and return to zero shot after shot. The lenses are a molded glass "aspheric" type, with all sorts of high performance coatings on them to boot. It has a 20,000-hour battery life and an IPX-7 waterproof rating. This thing is tough enough to go to war! MSRP: \$519.99 in black. www.sigsauer.com

8 XS Sights' new "RAM" Night Sights (Radio Active Material) are 3-Dot tritium, with a classic notch and post sight picture. Available in orange or green for the front dot, the blacked-out rear and less powerful tritium in the rear dots, help the front to really jump out in the dark. Also, the front has the XS "Ember Glow Dot Technology." The tritium "charges" the ember material and the combined glow really enhances the front sight appearance. The sights are CNC'd steel and can be installed by hand or using a sight pusher. They're available for GLOCKS, SIGs, S&Ws, XD series pistols and the FN 509. MSRP: \$100 to \$120. www.xssights.com



9



3

9 I'm a big fan of putting rifle scopes on hunting handguns like TC Encores and Contenders. A rifle scope with enough eye-relief gives you more options than most dedicated handgun scopes. This new model from Skinner Sights is their first scope. Made to exacting standards, it's a 1x to 6x with a 30mm tube. It also has an adjustable brightness 2 MOA dot in the crosshairs, comes with steel QD rings and a basic mount for Marlin and Henry rifles. My sample has bright optics and great build quality for the price. MSRP: \$249. www.skinnerights.com

THE ISRAEL WEAPON INDUSTRIES MASADA

The fortress at Masada is built upon a desolate mesa overlooking the Dead Sea, as imposing a defensible edifice as might be reasonably imagined.
Photo: Israeli Government Press Office



A REFINED 9mm POLYMER DEFENDER

WILL DABBS, MD

The IWI Masada offers everything you could want in a modern polymer-framed combat pistol. Sporting state-of-the-art materials science along with a generous feature set leaving literally nothing on the table, the Masada is what other polymer pistols aspire to become. Considering the deep well of tactical experience from which this gun draws, it's no surprise it's this awesome.

History

Masada is taken from the Hebrew word *metsada*, meaning fortress. Built by Herod the Great atop a massive mesa overlooking the Dead Sea between 37 and 31 BC, Masada is frankly overwhelming up close. Sporting a 13-foot casemate wall, ample storehouses, an armory, a palace and cisterns sustained with rainwater, the fortress of Masada was deemed nigh impregnable.

After the Romans destroyed the Second Jewish Temple in AD 70 the Jewish Sicarii rebels fled to Masada with their families and provisions. The Romans were not known for their tolerance so they mobilized the Tenth Legion Fretensis and laid siege. At the time, 967 Jews took refuge in the fortress. Over 15,000 Romans and auxiliaries constructed a series of forts on the plains around the plateau. For three months the Romans laboriously built a siege ramp, absorbing arrows as they went. On April 16, AD 73, the Romans finally breached the wall with a battering ram.

Inside the fortress the Romans found all the buildings save the storerooms ablaze and 960 of the 967 inhabitants



The IWI Masada shoots plenty straight and was reliable with everything we fed it. The gun printed these groups at 10 meters.

Interchangeable Small, Medium and Large wraparound grips accommodate any hand sizes.



The Masada 9mm pistol from Israeli Weapon Industries is a thoroughly modern combat pistol that stems from decades of real-world tactical experience.



dead by their own hands. Only two women and five children remained alive. The Roman commander Lucius Flavius Silva was so moved by the spectacle he let these last seven survivors go free. These Jews would sooner die than live subject to Roman tyranny. In the history of mankind this is likely the world's most egregious example of raw unfiltered defiance. It is this spirit inspiring the newest Israeli handgun.

Particulars

The Masada is a striker-fired pistol sporting a trigger pull between 5 and 6.6 lbs., pleasantly crisp and fairly typical of the genre. The gun weighs 23.5 oz. empty, which is amazingly light. There is the expected blade safety built into the trigger face.

All the pistol's controls are mirrored on both sides of the handgun, including the genuine bilateral push-button magazine release as well as the slide catch. The cold hammer-forged 1-in-10" right-hand twist barrel is polygonally rifled and set low to help mitigate muzzle flip. A deep beavertail thoroughly precludes contact with the reciprocating slide, and the frame maximizes the grip elevation. The gun comes with three wraparound backstraps to suit any conceivable hand size.

The beating heart of the Masada is its removable modular fire control unit. This component is easily extracted

The Masada comes with a brace of steel 17-round magazines.



for cleaning or service, though care must be taken to keep track of the little spring in the back. Ask me how I know this.

The trigger must be pulled for disassembly but this cannot be accomplished until the slide has been locked back. This may seem a small thing, but I am personally acquainted with five serious injuries having stemmed from striker-fired handguns going off unintentionally because of little stuff such as this. The Masada is stupid-proof in this regard.

The magazine offers 17+1 of 9mm chaos on-tap. The trigger guard is large to accommodate gloves and the rugged, combat-style no-snag sights come standard, with fixed 3-dot tritium versions

This thumb-sized Streamlight TLR-8G combination light and laser perfectly complements the IWI Masada.



available as options. A pleasantly pebbled grip texture keeps things tight when sweaty or otherwise in distraction.

The slide features deep positive cocking serrations both front and rear, while the generous external extractor serves as both a visual and tactile loaded chamber indicator. The fiberglass-reinforced frame includes the expected Pictinny MIL-STD 1913 accessory rail on the dust cover. If there's anything else you could want in a modern defensive handgun I can't think of it.

Practical Impressions

Polymer-framed handguns are *de rigueur* these days. Everybody makes them. However, in most everybody's gun you can find something that could be made just a little bit better. Not so much with the IWI Masada.

The grip-to-frame angle approximates that of the revered 1911, so it

Continued on page 73

A CUT



ZT 0470 Sinkevich



ZT 0450 Sinkevich

PAT COVERT

ZERO TOLERANCE KNIVES BLEND SLICE WITH STYLE



ZT Hinderer 0566

When Kai USA, the manufacturer of Kershaw Knives, decided to up their game they not only upped it, but exceeded their wildest expectations. Kershaw already had a respected name in the cutlery industry.

"Kershaw was founded in 1974 by Pete Kershaw. It started by producing high-quality hunting knives in Japan with Kai, a long-established Japanese blade maker," Jim MacNair, senior designer and new product coordinator for both Kershaw and Zero Tolerance told *Handgunner*. "Years later, Pete sold the company to Kai, and Kershaw became the first brand of Kai USA. In 1996, Kai USA began building Kershaw products in the U.S.A. as well as overseas. Today, over one million Kershaw and Zero Tol-

erance pocketknives are produced in our Tualatin, Oregon facility.

"The Zero Tolerance brand was started in 2006, designed to be fully U.S.A.-made knives intended to court military and police buyers," Jim adds. "However, the innovative designs, quality construction, and competitive pricing soon attracted civilian customers, and the brand took off in the general knife market as well." Those first Zero Tolerance knives, both fixed-blades and folders, were built like tanks, making a statement the company was serious about offering hard-use, heavy duty knives for hard users.

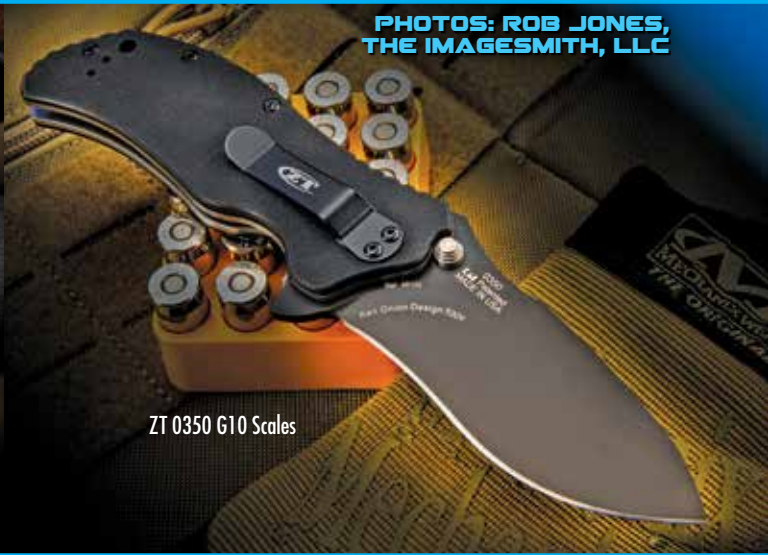
Upping The game

When the upscale tactical and EDC market started picking up steam, Zero

ABOVE!



ZT Hinderer 0566



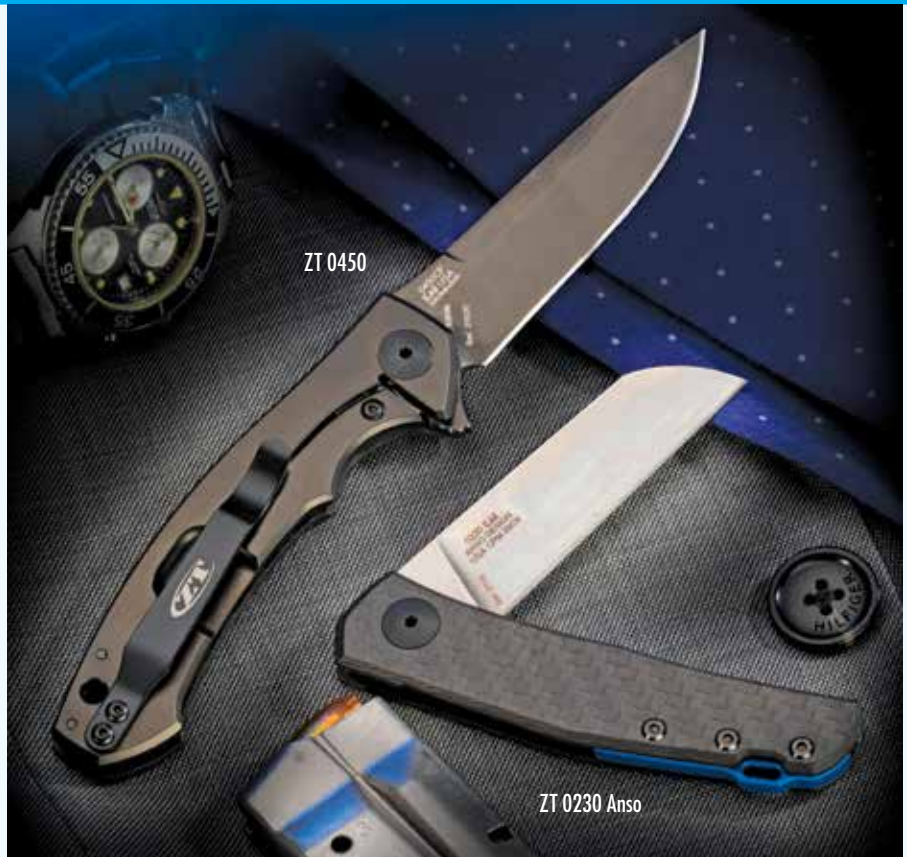
ZT 0350 G10 Scales

PHOTOS: ROB JONES,
THE IMAGESMITH, LLC

Tolerance saw an opportunity to expand their brand to include more stylish knives and today has a much different face than those early years. “I would say Zero Tolerance is a premium and professional-focused brand. Zero Tolerance has grown and expanded over the years,” notes MacNair, “and I would argue our perceptions about what a knife needs to be have changed as well. There will always be a place for larger, over-built knives designed for the professional market, but we find more and more that lightweight, reasonable cost, and ease of carry/use matter more to the majority of our customers. Our customers vote with their dollars, and we try to dream up new products to make them happy.”

Zero Tolerance — often referred to as simply “ZT” — had worked with custom knifemakers on several designs from early on. With their new push for more upscale folders they kicked their collaborations into high gear and over the past 10 years have brought in a who’s who of notables. “The list is fairly extensive. Notably, we collaborate with Rick Hinderer, RJ Martin, Dmitry Sinkevich, Les George, Todd Rexford, Jens Anso, Matt Diskin and Ernest Emerson. We also focus on our own original designs under the ZT Originals designation,” Jim informs.

The Zero Tolerance line today is loaded with slick, high-tech offerings featuring top shelf materials, such as Titanium and Carbon Fiber, along with modern locking mechanisms and other state-of-the-art design features. “ZT is a premium brand, and as such we offer premium materials,” MacNair explains. “The newest products use CPM 20CV exclusively, but you’ll find some of our



ZT 0450

ZT 0230 Anso

legacy knives use CPM S35VN and CPM S30V. We make our handles from 6AL4-V Titanium, Carbon Fiber and G10. Most of our knives use frame lock or liner lock mechanisms. Our focus in the last few years has been to reduce the weight and width of our knives while maintaining a durable build and usable ergonomics.”

Finely machined design patterns, eye-pleasing handle inlays and anod-

ized accents are frequently used to set their knives apart, and aggressive blade styles provide the crowning touch.

We asked MacNair to give us some insights into the hot sellers in the ZT line. “That can be hard to answer. These days, the smaller knives in the lineup tend to be the best sellers, but a few of our much larger pieces are top sellers as well. The smaller pieces like the 0450

Continued on page 69

AIRGUNS

A CLOSE LOOK AT



6



2

AIRGUNS: AFFORDABLE ALL-SEASON FUN

TOM MCHALE

PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

When you live in the suburbs, most neighbors tend to frown upon the idea of constructing a shooting range in your backyard. Come on, what's a little noise and flying debris among friends? As unreasonable as it may seem, we ought to do our part to spare the angst and triggered emotions of those who may live within hearing-safe distance of our yards. Enter airguns.

While you can get monster airguns capable of taking African game, the affordable all-season fun stuff usually comes in .177 and .22 caliber. Those small, light pellets offer safe shooting with their low risk of penetration and quiet operation. You'll still need safety glasses but no hearing protection. The bottom line? They open up backyard range possibilities — even in the burbs.



4

1 As a shooter who appreciates centerfire also, I'm jealous. The folks at FX Airguns have invented a pocket radar chronograph. Yes, pocket. The FX Pocket Chronograph is smaller than two or three stacked drink coasters and pairs with a smartphone app to display velocities. It's got all the bells and whistles, allowing you to record strings, set gun and ammo (pellet) profiles, and calculate all the geeky stuff like standard deviations. Did I mention it operates by radar? It lists for \$199.99 and sorry, it works with airguns only. We can hope, though? www.fxairguns.com

2 Who says you can't shoot a classic sixgun in your garage or backyard — even if you live under the iron fist of a neighborhood association? The Air Venturi Colt "Duke" Pellet Revolver looks and feels like the big bore real deal, but it's powered by CO₂, shooting .177 pellets. The nifty part is it uses removable cartridges — just load a pellet in the base of each cartridge (where the primer would go) and you're off to

the wild west of suburbia. This Peacemaker's rifled barrel will give you about 380 fps of backyard fun. MSRP is \$149.99. www.pyramydair.com

3 Backyard shooting requires reduced scale. This set of 1/8" steel Airgun Slinger Metal Silhouette Targets by Air Venturi are modeled precisely after the big bore competition steel beasts, with one notable difference — they're exactly 1/10th scale. This means you shoot the ram at 45 yards, the turkey at 36, the pig at 30 and the chicken at 20 if you want to follow official silhouette shooting rules. If you use your Colt Duke pellet revolver, reduce the distances accordingly. They're great fun but be sure to use pellets or lead BBs only. Steel or copper BBs will bounce all over creation. MSRP is only \$9.99. www.pyramydair.com



10



3



4 If you're hankerin' to practice your quick-draw skills, get yourself an Air Venturi Diamond Gong Target. This 12"x12" diamond target comes with its own stand. The height is adjustable from 33" to 45" and the base has holes to stake it into the ground. The steel plate is 1/8" thick, so stick to .177 caliber pellets or lead BBs only please! MSRP is \$29.99. www.pyramydair.com



5 The big deal in the airgun world is affordable, portable compressors. Capable of spitting out 4,500 lbs. per square inch of air power, the Air Venturi Nomad II 4,500 PSI Portable PCP Compressor runs on 110 or 220 volt power and 12-volt systems. With the included alligator clips, just attach this unit to a nearby car, boat, ATV or lawn tractor if you like. It'll top off the most powerful airguns in a few minutes. Yes, it costs \$699.99, however, you must remember with this one purchase you're buying an infinite supply of shooting power. It's a bottomless equivalent to centerfire cases, primers and powder, so you only pay for the "bullets" as you go. Buy once — cry once. www.airventuri.com

6 Here at *Handgunner*, we're fanatically cautious about not shooting each other. Here's an exception. The SIG Proforce M17 Airsoft gun is designed for force-on-force training. It shoots 6mm plastic BBs and looks and operates just like the louder version. Two versions are available. One operates on Green Gas and cranks out 320 fps while the other uses standard CO₂ cartridges and delivers up to 410 fps. Take it from my hind-side, these can hurt, so it adds some, let's say, excitement to live training. Do be careful and always use proper face and eye protection when training. MSRP is \$159.99. www.sigsauer.com

7 PCP (pre-charged pneumatic) air rifles will spoil you rotten. With onboard high-pressure air supplies, there's no cocking, no *ka-ching* when you press the trigger and most come with magazines so they operate much like a bolt-action rifle. They're also powerful, accurate and quiet. The word "elegant" comes to mind. One of my favorite starter PCP rifles you'll never outgrow (like a fine rimfire) is the Umarex Gauntlet. It's generous and a hot swappable air reservoir gives you 90 or so shots per fill so you'll shoot more and recharge less. It's accurate, thanks to its regulated air delivery system delivering consistent velocity, and



you can't beat the price. The fully shrouded barrel (acts like a suppressor, perfectly legal on airguns) keeps the neighbors from complaining. MSRP is an affordable \$269.99 for this much performance. www.umarexusa.com

8 Airgun scopes have special requirements. First, if you're using one on a spring or gas pistol rifle, they need to handle double recoil abuse — forward and backward — thanks to the motion of the piston followed by the ejection of the pellet and compressed air. Second, they need to focus at much shorter distances. While centerfire scopes can get away with 100-yard fixed focus if they don't have an adjustable parallax, an airgun scope needs to be functional down to 10, or even five yards. MTC Optics makes fantastic air rifle scopes like this Cobra F1 model. You'll appreciate the luxury touches like turret adjustments not requiring tools to zero and recalibrate indicator wheels and push/pull locking turrets keeping your adjustments set. You'll also like the extras such as the threaded flip-up lens caps and a crystal-clear sight picture. The Cobra offers 4-16x magnification and a 50mm objective lens. MSRP is \$489.99 but it's an amazing tool. www.mtcoptics.com

9 Believe it or not, you do need to clean airguns now and again, and even more importantly, lubricate them with the right lube (no petroleum-based products please!). The new Tetra Gun Air Rifle kit (.22 and .177) includes their Triple Action (airgun safe) cleaner/lub, a brushless version of the Bore Boa cleaning rope and a silicone cloth. MSRP is \$14.99. www.tetraguncare.com

10 SIG's Precision Super Target Air Pistol is aimed at entry-level target shooters and scores 100 percent there. It's accurate enough to challenge you, but affordable enough to make it fun to own. Muzzle velocity is in the 350 fps range and it's quiet enough for basement or backyard fun. It's a single stroke pneumatic-action (break-open) style, with adjustable trigger and big, bold adjustable sights. The 33-oz. weight and 7.5" rifled barrel is deadly on those 10-meter targets! MSRP is \$359.99 and it even has real wooden grips! www.sigsauer.com



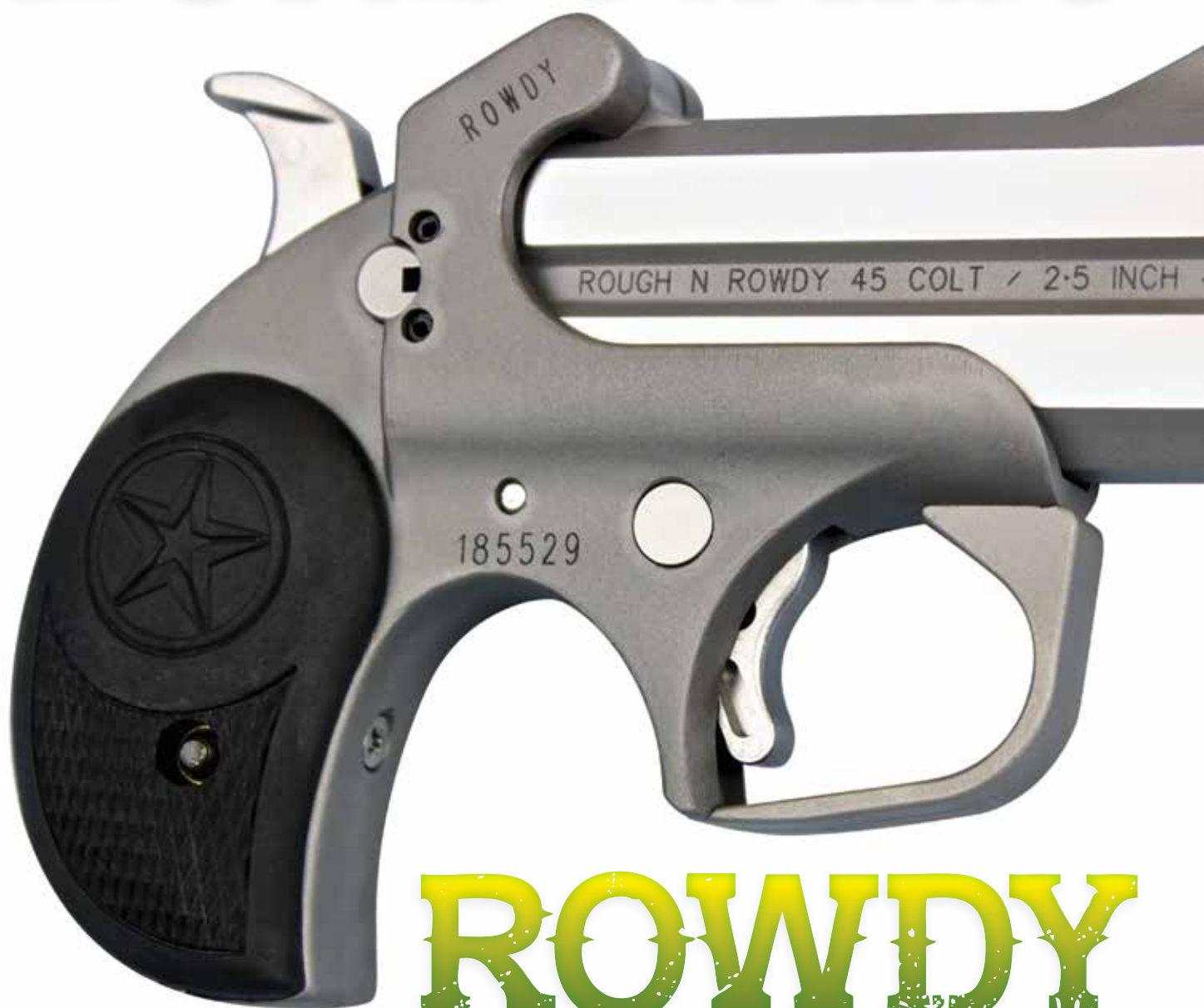


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HANDGUN OF THE MONTH

BOND ARMS



ROWDY PISTOL PACKAGE

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE MAY 31, 2020 WINNERS CHOSEN BY RANDOM DRAWING. Limit one entry per household. To protect the privacy and security of winners, their names will NOT be made public. Contest void where prohibited by law. Winners must undergo a background check and comply with all other federal, state and local laws. Taxes and fees will be the responsibility of the winner. Contest open to U.S. residents only. Employees and agents of Publishers' Development Corp. are not eligible. No purchase necessary. Winners will be notified by certified mail on official letterhead. Winners must respond within 30 days of receiving notification or an alternate winner will be selected. Attention deployed military: use stateside address! Giveaway guns and accessories may have evidence of being test fired or exhibit minor handling marks. Factory warranties may apply in some cases. The *Handgun of the Month* package is awarded only to the entrant drawn and will not be awarded if the firearm presented is illegal in the jurisdiction of the winner. An alternate, authorized winner will be selected. No substitutions or transfers to a third party are allowed. **UNABLE TO ENTER ONLINE?** Mail a postcard with your name and address (no envelopes please) to *American Handgunner Magazine*, GOM May/June 2020, P.O. Box 501377, San Diego, CA, 92150-1377.



SCAN TO ENTER



We have interesting prizes in this issue of *American Handgunner*. First is the Rowdy from Bond Arms. It's compact yet rough looking. Built with a 3" barrel, this single-action, double-barrel pistol is chambered for .45 Colt and 2½" .410 shells. It features a stainless-steel finish, black rubber grips and an automatic spent casing extractor. The Rowdy also has fixed sights along with a push-button cross-bolt safety and a rebounding hammer. The trigger guard is removable and barrels are interchangeable with all standard Bond Arms barrels.

Up & At 'Em is an everyday carry knife to help you complete projects on your workbench or outdoors. Who says functional can't look good too? CRKT's Up & At 'Em has a flipper opening for fast blade deployment and a frame lock to secure the blade. OAL is 8.375"; closed length is 4.719". The knife's 2-tone, clip-point blade is 3.622" long, 0.121" thick and made of 8Cr13MoV stainless steel with a satin finish. You'll see what you can do with the Up & At 'Em if you win the giveaway!

Our next prize is the 1,000-lumen ProTac HL-X from Streamlight. The tactical handheld flashlight can be used with a rechargeable 18650 USB battery and integrated micro USB port or with two CR123A lithium batteries. This "multi-fuel" innovation ensures you'll always have a beam when you need it.

Gun-Werkz Gun Cleaner is a solvent that's easy on the skin. Spray Gun-Werkz on something that needs extra cleaning and the stuff will be at work on it for days. If you win, you can try the product, no, not on your new Rowdy yet, but on one of your older guns!

I think it's time for some fun. Race to your computers and type www.americanhandgunner.com/giveaways or get a stamp to mail a postcard. —Jazz Jimenez

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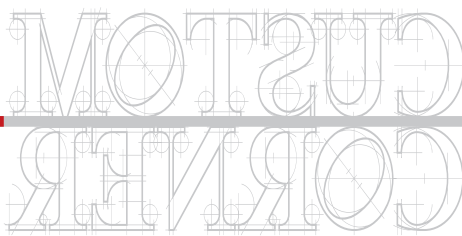
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Custom Corner features paid listings by the identified pistolsmiths. Many are members of the American Pistolsmiths Guild and the American Handgunner Club 100. Advertising information is available from: **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER**, Adv. Dept., 13741 Danielson St. Ste. A, Poway, CA 92064; delano.amaguin@fmghq.com; (888) 732-6461.



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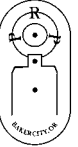


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GUN RIGHTS

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THE U.S. BILL OF WRONGS

WHAT'S GOING WRONG IN AMERICA

PRELUDE: Before we start, note — Iranians can't run for U.S. President. Not that they are, just know there are limits on who can. It's in the Constitution: Article 2, Section 1, Clause 5. Read it, carefully, understand it, and consider if everyone now running is actually eligible. Okay, let's begin!

If watching what's happening on TV doesn't infuriate you, you're not watching with your eyes open. The way the leftist party of neo-democrat socialists is assaulting the nation's leader is beyond disgraceful. When one sack of lies fails they simply switch to another, and along the way they trash every decent value Americans hold dear — not the least of which is our right to arms. They know an armed populace is a direct threat to them, so when one yells from the stage, "We're coming for your guns!" not one of them objects. The audience cheers madly (a carefully chosen descriptive word), and police stand quietly by, waiting to see where the chips fall.

The impeachment fiasco is a case in point, and when it comes up you can reply simply with devastating effectiveness. "I'm tired of all this — I want to hear about Russian collusion already, the president is a Russian spy!" We endured two-and-a-half years of that abject nonsense before the manic deceivers moved to a new theme. Don't let them get away with it. Demand answers — and watch them sheepishly scuffle off. He's not a spy. They all know it but haven't apologized. Skewer them. Just like the gun myths we've explored here before. If it weren't for myths, they'd have nothing. Invisible guns, drop tests, melting points, Saturday night specials, one-a-month, make-believe gun-free zones, CCW blood-in-the-streets, not a single crime-stopping plan, just infringements, and on to the next fabrication.

This leaves us at what amounts to the U.S. Bill of Wrongs. An entire litany of things the anti-American political faction in our nation wants to enforce on the rest of us, in direct contravention of our sacred Bill of Rights. Thanks to an education system deliberately turned into an indoctrination system by communist infiltration, a teacher's union without God or family values, and power hungry misfits, the principles that guided us for centuries have been overwhelmed. The Founders told us if the nation isn't run by moral people it won't work. They were right. The Bill of Wrongs is extremely broad, here is the gun part.

It's Wrong To Disarm Americans

It's not only wrong, it's banned. The Bill of Rights, which actually exists, begins by saying Congress shall make no law. Nothing could be more clear. The gun part says the right of the people to keep and bear arms (more broad than just guns, by the way) shall not be infringed. Also as clear as the English language gets. The neo-democrat socialists are ignoring it, pointing out the biggest problem with the U.S. Constitution. It provides no punishment explicitly.

Continued on page 77

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A CUT ABOVE

Continued from page 61

are lightweight and easy to carry, but large enough to fit most hands. They also work well in slacks, and the small size makes them more appropriate for office environments. The new 0230 has been very well received — being a non-locking knife, it's a departure for ZT — and it's rewarding to see our customers embrace concepts we haven't tried before." For those who still like the early heavyweight bruisers, the #350 series folders are still in the line, ready for extreme use.

The ZT Breed

To get an idea of who buys the finery that is Zero Tolerance we asked Jim to define his customer base. "Our customers vary, but they all want edge retention, comfort, style and bang for their buck. Some customers are looking for a small, light knife that disappears in their pocket. Others are focused on a larger, hand-filling grip and texture to keep the knife secure during heavy use."

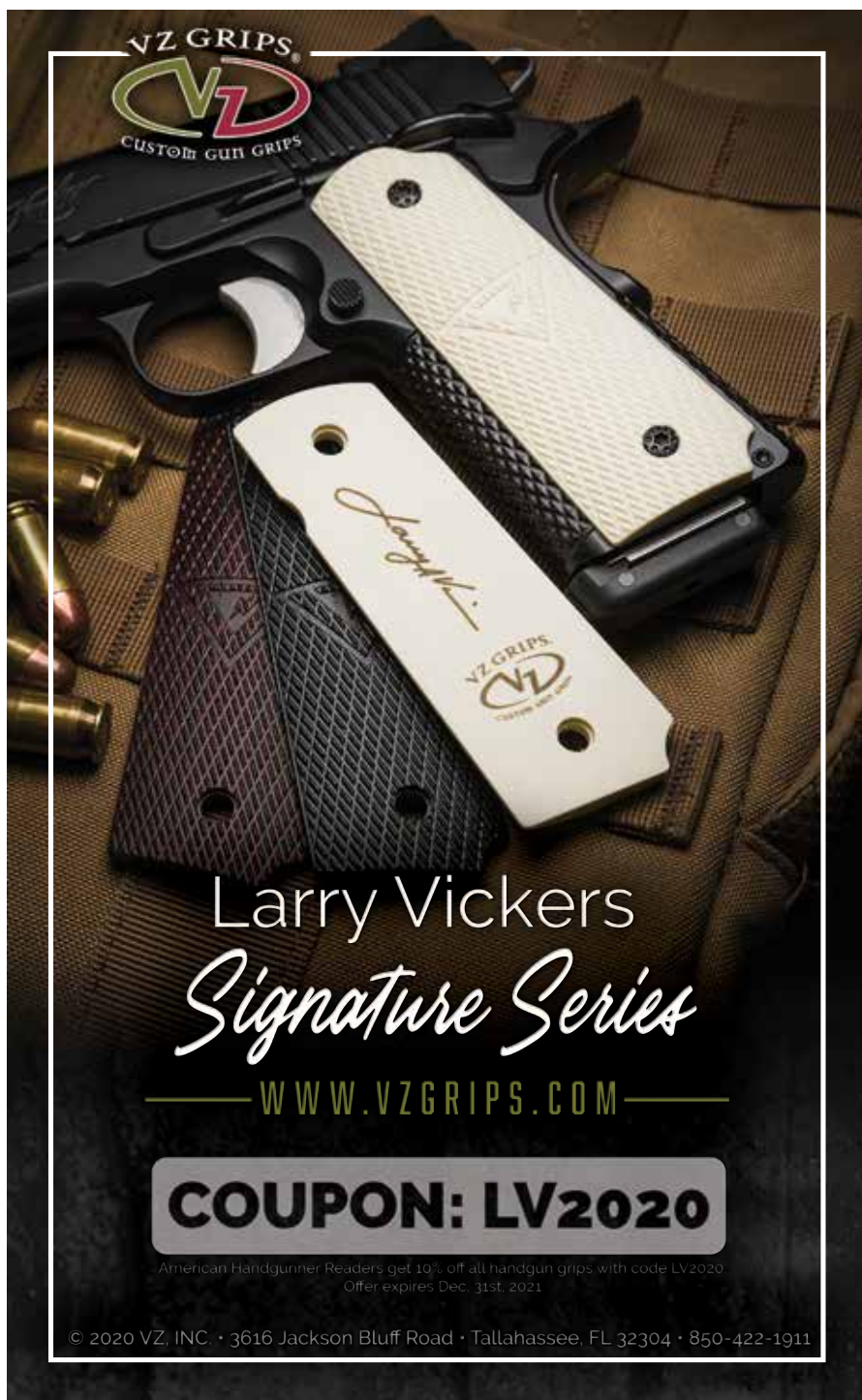
**Our customers vote
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and we try to dream
up new products to
make them happy.**

What does the future hold for this successful, trend-setting brand? "We're doing our best to balance the current trends towards smaller, lighter, knives with our heritage of making large, tough, usable tools. No company can be everything to everybody, but we try to listen to our customers and create exciting new products relevant to them. We released some exciting new models at SHOT 2020 and more will be released throughout the year."

Smart companies are able to change with the times and Zero Tolerance has done this with both style and efficiency. Many of the design and mechanical changes to the line have filtered to Kershaw Knives, now offering customers a budget minded alternative to their higher end sibling. Going a cut above with the Zero Tolerance line turned out to be a stroke of genius and should keep paying dividends for both the company and their customers  for many years to come.

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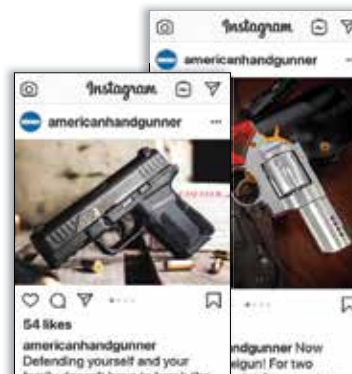
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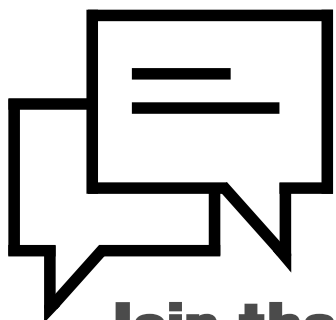


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AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 85

Foster turns to look for Pam, and suddenly she's there, thrusting a revolver into his hand. It's a snub-nose Taurus 5-shot .38 Special. He turns back toward the man, firing as he goes, from the hip.

And in the middle of the volley, he sees a gunshot explode from the other man's hand, aimed his way. Only now does he realize the object the man had been bludgeoning him with is a handgun. Foster keeps firing. At the second and third shots, he hears the man utter a primal scream.

Coker has been able to keep track of his shots: Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. His mind racing, he realizes his 5-shooter is empty, and the other man's gun with its now recognizable extended magazine most certainly isn't. He drops the Taurus, and as he dives at the attacker he shouts to his wife, "Get me another gun!"

Gun Grapple

Foster's left hand closes on the forearm above the intruder's right hand, the gun hand, trying to keep it pointed away from himself. It becomes a wrestling match. The taller, thinner man is wiry and amazingly strong, fueled by desperation and rage. He is shouting "Come on, boss, I got this! Come on, bro!" But Foster Coker won't be distracted by trash-talking. When he loses his grip on the gun arm he goes for a reverse head-lock, a *hakimi-waza* with the man's main body mass in front of him instead of beside him, the intruder's torso parallel to the floor. Pain shoots through Foster as the intruder bites deeply into his left side and underarm area, but he hangs on.

They're on the floor. Foster grabs the man's head and starts pounding it against the floor. The intruder gets Foster's left little finger in his mouth and bites down, hard, but Foster ignores the pain.

Wife Joins Fight

And now Pam is back, with another gun. Her husband shouts to her, "You're gonna have to shoot him!" Rising to his feet, Foster picks the man up with him. His left side and the attacker's right are now toward his wife. She calls to him, "I can't! I'll hit you!" Foster shoves the man as far away from himself as he can without letting go and tells Pam desperately, "You have to shoot him *now*!"

Pam opens fire.

The masked man jerks with the impact once, and again. Foster feels him weakening, deflating. The man collapses to the floor in a sitting position, his back against the sofa.

But the black pistol with the extended magazine is still in his hand, and he's still moving.

Keeping his eye on the threat, Foster reaches out to Pam, and she presses the gun into his hand. It's a short-barreled RG .38 Special revolver he has inherited from his grandfather. Bringing it up to line of sight, right hand only, Foster aims at the bandanna-covered head and fires one more shot.

He sees the man go completely limp, his head pitching forward. It's over.

Foster staggers back, catching his breath. Pam, badly hurt in the initial encounter with the intruder, hobbles to the phone to call 911. Foster sees the gun is *still* in the gunman's hand, and he grabs it with his own left hand, keeping the .38 leveled on him with his right. With time to think now, he remembers his antagonist screaming "Come on, bro," and realizes instead of trash-talking, he might have been calling to an accomplice. Foster keeps his head on a swivel, watching both the downed gunman and the back door.

When police arrive Marquise Yates, 21, is dead, and there are no accomplices present — now.

Results Of Investigation

The JSO, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, is one of the best trained law enforcement agencies in the nation, and one of the most experienced in the investigation of violent crime. They quickly determined Marquise's gang connections, and his history. "I was told he had just gotten out of prison for shooting someone when he was 16. He got out after five years and went right back to it."

Far from being a lone home invader, Yates had been one of a trio. There had been another member of the gang at the back door. He had apparently fled, Forest learned, after hearing the homeowner yell, "Get me a gun!" A young woman accomplice had been outside driving a getaway car. Both had escaped the scene.

Foster told *American Handgunner* in 2019, "The guy who ran got convicted of murder for Yates' death, got 15 years in a plea bargain. The female getaway driver cooperated with the police and got seven years. There was another participant who helped to plan it. He didn't come but later made threats to come back and kill us 'crackers.' He wound up with 10 years for being a convicted felon with a firearm. All that took three years to play out. We didn't get our guns back until then, because they were evidence. By then, the police told us, the Cutthroat Committee was pretty much out of business from the chain of arrests that started with the attack on our home."

Reconstruction

"The Beretta .40 was never tracked successfully," Foster Coker told me. "Police discovered the extended magazine was loaded with 9mm ammo so after the first shot, it did not feed."

The single shot Yates got off during

the initial exchange of gunfire missed Foster — sort of. Medics found a graze wound on the side of his head they attributed to Yates' shot. Mr. Coker had never even felt it during the heat of the deadly battle. The bullet had gone through a wall behind him, into the guest room, and shattered a lamp near his little grandson's head.

Both of the Cokers sustained serious injuries. Foster had multiple lacerations and serious closed head trauma from the pistol-whipping. No infection ensued from Yates' bites into soft tissue, but the bite to Coker's hand caused a crushing fracture of the little finger. "The bone looked like someone had been chewing on a Number Two pencil," Foster remembers.

Pam's injuries were more long-lasting, sustained when her much larger attacker savagely threw her to the floor at the opening of the encounter. Foster says, "When he knocked my wife to the hardwood floor, he dislocated her left kneecap, tore her left meniscus and left anterior cruciate ligament, and broke her left big toe. Her right hamstring was also torn during the ordeal. She was in a wheelchair for several months, walks with a cane or walker today, and needs a knee replacement. She couldn't get the additional surgery on her knee because it was excessively swollen for months, and the orthopedist wanted the swelling to subside first. She was only allowed three moths off work and had to go back to work before the surgery could be done. Her health insurance coverage changed the following year and surgery is now less affordable."

And Yates? He had been hit with two of Foster's five rounds from the Taurus, which had been loaded with light, fast Winchester Silvertip .38 Special jacketed hollow points. One is believed to have caused a through and through wound of the forearm. The other, however, hit heart and aorta, and Foster believes that was the mortal wound.

One of Pam's bullets had struck Yates in the neck and lodged in the spine, which would be consistent with Yates' collapse at that point. The RG revolver she used, said Foster, was loaded with 148-gr. lead mid-range wadcutter .38 Special rounds, which had been scored across their flat frontal surface. One of these was fired in the final shot, the head shot, and Foster says "I never found out if they opened up or not. That last bullet rode around the side of his head and did not penetrate the skull."

Aftermaths

Yes, "aftermaths," plural. Legal. Emotional and psychological. Social. And of course, as we've already discussed, physical.

The police arrived expeditiously, and years later, the Cokers are still grateful for the professionalism and compassion

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they demonstrated. Veteran street cops and investigators tend to be remarkably perceptive in such matters. “The cops were very understanding,” Foster told us. “They came in with guns drawn. The first guy through the door told me to put my gun down; I had already put the guns down when I saw them coming. One officer told me later, ‘It was pretty easy to figure out what happened.’” He adds, “One officer wrapped our grandson in a blanket and carried him out of the house, so he wouldn’t see the gory scene. Pam and I will always appreciate that.”

He continues, “An Assistant State’s Attorney came out that day, did a walk through, and told the cops ‘I think we can put this one down as justified.’” Angela Corey, who at the time had just gotten done losing her prosecution of George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin shooting, was State’s Attorney for the district. Though not widely seen as friendly to armed citizens, she was sympathetic to the Cokers. “Angela Corey was a high school classmate of my wife. She was very kind to us. She brought us into her office and talked to us personally,” Foster told us.

While the Cokers never heard from the family of the deceased, police intelligence gathered information of death threats against them from Yates’ fellow gang members. “The police recommended we stay elsewhere for months during the death threats. At first friends of ours came over with guns to guard us. The police convinced us to move so we got an apartment for 10 months, which was financially devastating, paying our home mortgage plus apartment rent. The city did help with the mortgage for two months.”

He continues, “I have to say friends and family were extremely supportive. Friends and neighbors flooded over to the house. Even some of my most adamantly anti-gun lefty friends were supportive. The Justice Coalition of Jacksonville supported us and attended court hearings with us and on our behalf.”

Psychological aftermath? Says Foster, “The first few nights were awful, we couldn’t sleep at all. We felt too vulnerable to take the sleeping pills the doc gave us. Even at friends’ houses, and the one night the police put us up in a nice hotel, we were still hypervigilant. My wife had nightmares. She can’t tolerate loud, sudden noises or people walking behind her in a public place.”

Their seven-year-old grandson had called out to Pam when he was wakened by her scream in the opening of the gunfight. Pam had shouted for him to stay in his room; she learned later he had huddled there and prayed during the death battle. Foster says, “Our grandson was pretty shaken up. Even to this day he doesn’t like to talk about it. He once said to me, ‘Next time that happens you need to shoot him in the leg or some-

thing.’ All the rest of his sleepovers until age 11 he slept in our room.”

Lessons

You always go to the participant first for the lessons. Foster Coker offers these learning points: “I should have come out with my gun as soon as I heard the screams. My wife hadn’t done a lot of shooting, and had only shot a revolver. She grabbed what she knew how to work. She didn’t know my Firestar .45 auto, my regular everyday carry then, was in my night table drawer.” A 7-round .45 *might* have ended the fight sooner than that first 5-shot .38. He has upgraded his firepower since, replacing the Firestar with a Springfield XD Mod 2 .45, putting a Mossberg 500 12 gauge by the bed, and adding an AR15 to the Coker family home defense armory.

Foster Coker is glad he taught his wife to shoot. It was her shot to the home invader’s spine that seems to have really brought the death battle to an end.

Mr. Coker was a fast learner as to shooting from the hip, particularly while moving: one vital hit and one peripheral hit out of five rounds fired. By the end of the fight he had seen the importance of bringing the gun to line of sight: his single head shot fired that way went where it was aimed.

Another lesson: Don’t expect immediate incapacitation from heart shots. The annals of the *Journal of Trauma* are replete with cases of patients who have survived handgun wounds to the heart. The published work of highly experienced forensic pathologists such as Doctors Vincent DiMaio, Werner Spitz and Abdullah Fatteh cite many men who committed mayhem after being shot in the heart. The rule of thumb is if the brain is fully oxygenated, even if the heart is completely stilled, there may be 18 seconds or more of purposeful physical activity before the heart-shot man becomes unconscious. And not all gunshot wounds *will* completely halt cardiac function. The case under discussion is a good example.

It was not lost on the couple Marquise Yates had kicked in their door with two “thumps.” Foster reports, “We put in a security alarm system and cameras. EZ Armor on the door. A metal plate inside the doorjamb with a very long bolt. The whole frame of the back door came away when he kicked it in. We replaced it with one with really long screws that go into the joist, and a hurricane-proof storm door outside of that.”

We thank Pam and Foster Coker, and we applaud their life-saving courage and determination. Foster finishes with this advice: “Always be prepared. Make a plan and discuss scenarios with your family. Make your home a fortress. All responsible family members need to know where your firearms are and how to use them.”



IWI MASADA

Continued from page 59

feels right for most corn-fed Americans. The Masada sports a full-sized frame with an EDC barrel, so it packs about like a GLOCK 45 or G19X. The controls and general feel of the piece are comfortable, convenient and familiar.

The top of the slide is cut to accept a micro red dot sight, and the gun comes with a variety of mounting adaptors. This military-grade rugged combat pistol incorporates everything a modern defensive handgun should. The bilateral controls, easily maintained architecture, customizable grip, sleek lines and optics-friendly design are all things real-world users demand in a proper fighting firearm.

Shooting Thoughts

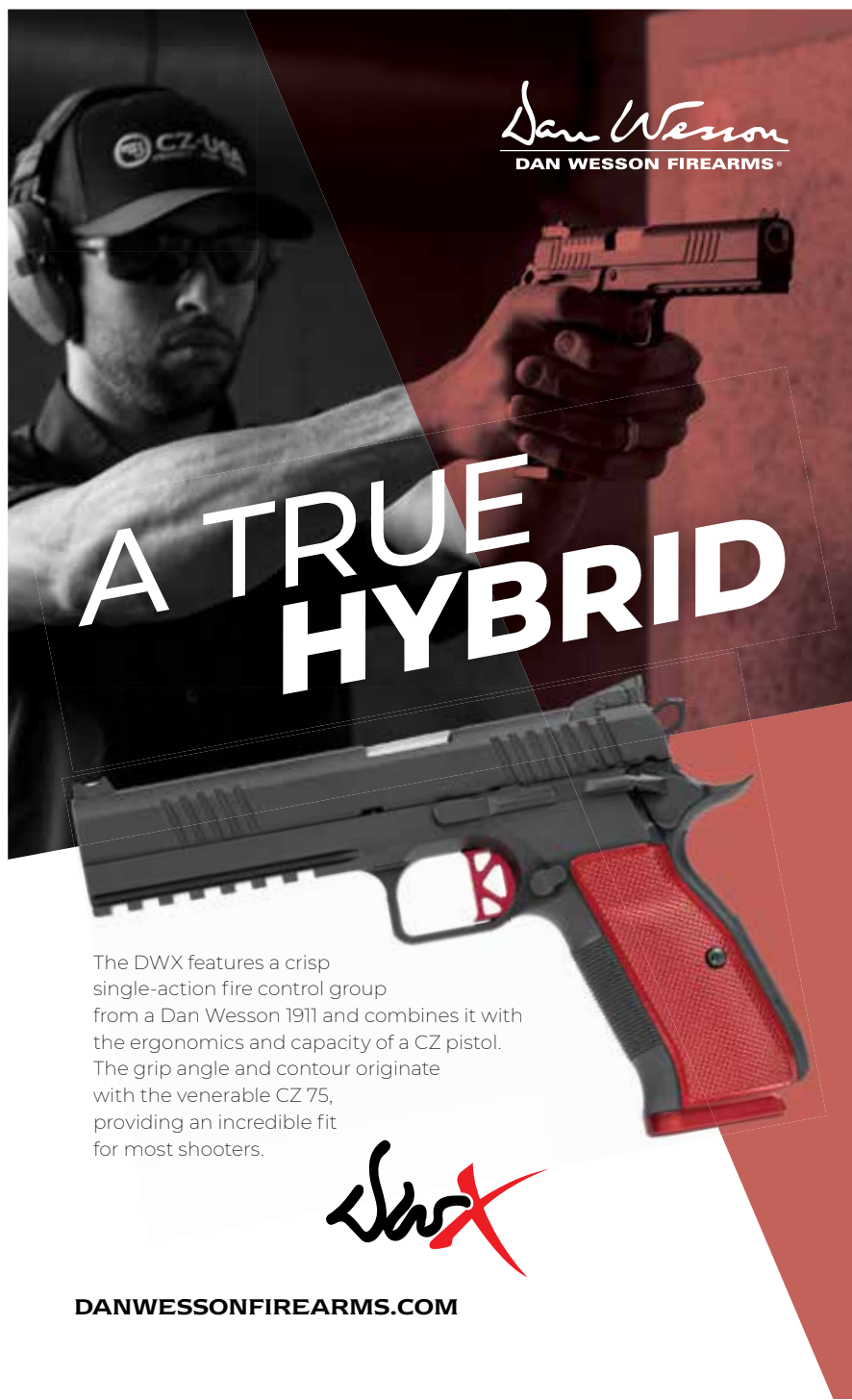
The low bore axis and high grip conspire to keep recoil in check, so follow-up shots are fast and clean. The triggers on all striker-fired handguns compress a striker spring, so there's an inevitable wee bit of springy take-up, even on the great ones. The Masada's trigger weight and personality are really about perfect for a combat tool.

“Considering the deep well of tactical experience from which this gun draws, it's no surprise it's this awesome.”

There's a scant taper at the base of the grip handy in the immensely unlikely event a magazine gets sticky. Though the magazine buttons are a bit on the small side, the magazine on our test gun shot out of the grip like a greased eel. Reloading drills are fast as a result. The switches are all just the right size for quick manipulation without being so large as to be cumbersome, or risk inadvertent activation.

The metal three-dot sights strike a nice balance between speed and precision. They are both sufficiently tapered as to slide out from underneath clothing quickly and painlessly. Jacking the slide either to charge the weapon or close the action over a fresh magazine is reliable and positive. The corners are all lightly melted to keep from unduly abrading things.

I like the fire control unit. Your great grandchildren's children will not wear anything out on this gun, but it's nice



A TRUE HYBRID

The DWX features a crisp single-action fire control group from a Dan Wesson 1911 and combines it with the ergonomics and capacity of a CZ pistol. The grip angle and contour originate with the venerable CZ 75, providing an incredible fit for most shooters.

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to be able to tidy up the gun's entrails without having to earn an engineering degree first. I am continuously shocked whenever I strip down my carry guns and find a clothes dryer's worth of accumulated pocket lint in the inner workings. The modular nature of the Masada helps you keep this inevitable entropy in check.

Final Thoughts?

Every concierge, schoolteacher and information desk person I encountered in Israel carried a gun. Israel suffers more than its share of terrorist actions, but none of them last very long. Sadly, I fear this is the new normal for our own country

as well. The upside is these guys really know how to make effective weapons.

Every bit of the IWI Masada is designed for real-world combat use. The gun is bet-your-life reliable, and the controls and features are just right. With an MSRP of only \$480 the Masada is also a fantastic bargain. The fortress for which the weapon is named represents history's most glaring example of patriots giving the ultimate middle finger to the forces of tyranny. The Israelis know their guns, and the Masada is the product of two millennia of combat experience.



For more info: www.iwi.net

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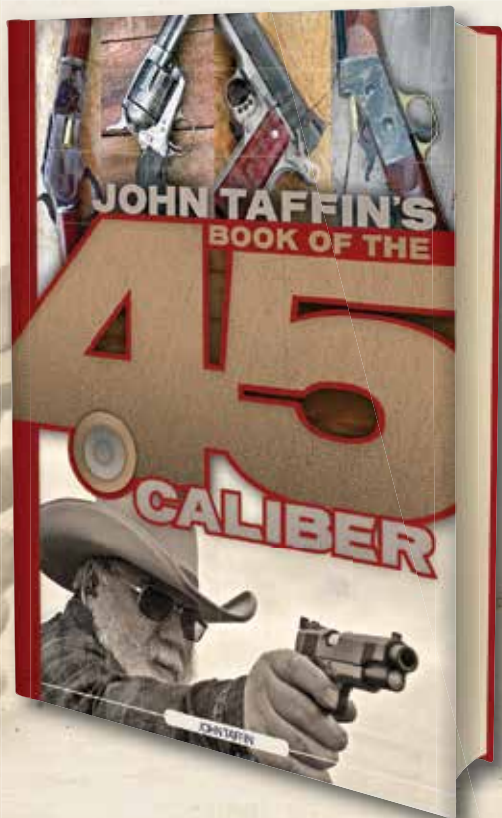
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STOCK TRIGGERS

Continued from page 51

trigger? The main complaint I hear is it isn't crisp, but "mushy." I offer this — consider it like a compressed double-action trigger. While it may not require nearly the amount of pressure to engage, the rules are the same. Pull straight through at a deliberate pace, regardless if the trigger creeps or if it stays put, and let the shot break where it will.

Don't get me wrong, struggling with a gun whose trigger exhibits all of the negatives isn't something necessarily fun or enjoyable. However, given these challenges, you can take to heart one incontrovertible fact — if you can shoot this gun well, you can shoot anything well.

Bugs Or features?

In certain cases, the tactile sensations of a "bad" trigger may have arisen because other design criteria were simply more important. I'll be the first to mention most handguns are oversprung. However, when a consumer says, "I want absolute reliability under any condition," handgun engineers hear, "This gun should be able to detonate surplus, soviet-made primers in the dead of winter." In revolvers especially, this means heavy springs and the inevitable heavy trigger pulls.

Can you reduce the spring weight? Definitely. But *should* you? Only if you understand the trade-offs you're making. I used to swap out springs to get the lightest trigger pulls possible, even if it meant light primer strikes and sluggish trigger returns. Now, I've swapped heavier springs back into a lot of my guns, as the extra couple pounds of resistance bothers me less than hearing clicks without attendant bangs. If there's even an off-chance I might rely on a gun for self-defense, I can guaran-damn-tee you I leave it stock.

Another sell on negotiating a stock trigger revolves around the dividends it will provide in building not only your technique, but your versatility. Hoping between various "okay" triggers builds awareness of how to negotiate guns on their own merits. A decade ago, I wouldn't have given a second glance towards "Traditional Double Action" semi-autos, those whose first shot is fired DA, with the rest to be shot in single-action. Today, I can honestly say I would *prefer* to conscript a de-cocked Beretta 92 or HK USP to a self-defense role than a striker-fired design.

I like the notion of having the first trigger pull be long and deliberate like a DA revolver, requiring no futzing with safeties, and knowing follow-up shots can be pressed out in quick cadence if desired. Becoming familiar

with two separate trigger pulls is not really a big deal once you're familiar — nay, comfortable — with *several* suboptimal pulls.

Coming Full Circle

Broken and inconsistent triggers are terrible to deal with, and I've shot DA revolvers with such heavy pulls I thought I'd develop nerve damage if I kept up the effort. I wish these experiences on no one. However, go to a quality gun store and point your finger randomly at any new pistol or revolver, and the odds are *very* good you'll pick a platform you can work with.

**Today, I can state
emphatically much of
my growth as a shooter
came from experience
on platforms that, well
— were not the best.**

Additionally, new shooters don't need any additional barriers to developing good marksmanship. Learning the fundamentals is easier when you don't have to fight the gun in any way, shape, or form. So leave the Nagant revolver at home, okay? Also keep in mind laying the foundation for a great first range trip is often the best "activism" you can do to create a life-long shooter and friend of the Second Amendment. Introducing too difficult a challenge to a novice — too soon — is always bad news.

For the rest of you, and barring the worst of the worst handguns, I maintain having experience with less than stellar triggers certainly will allow you to appreciate a good thing when it comes your way. After dealing with mushy 7-lb. single action triggers common to the military surplus world, a crisp, "glass rod" 4-lb. 1911 trigger becomes an utter delight. Even a regular old CZ-75 or Springfield XD becomes pretty damn great by comparison.

I've read more than a few times the *real* reason we take vacations is so we can come back home with a set of fresh eyes and realize how good we have things. Working with stock triggers is a great way to make you a well-traveled shooter, and likely able to take full advantage of whatever gun finds its way into your hands. As R. Lee Ermey said in Kubrik's classic *Full Metal Jacket*, "Because I am hard, you will not like me! But the more you hate me, the more you will learn. I am hard — but I am fair."



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SIXGUNNER

Continued from page 17

hand polished everything to completion. Your flats are still flat and your rounds remain round! You may remember the Colt roll mark was a little faint. We re-marked everything back to the way Sam would have wanted.

"When doing the coloring on the receiver, hammer, loading gate we decided to try to tame it down and keep the colors as true to the original as possible," Bobby explained. "One of the things we decided to leave alone and absolutely untouched was the front sight blade. The King rib markings were faint as well and we just re-cut them. It was our goal for this to be as close to the original as possible. To finish this I was talking to Scott Kolar with SK Grips out in Pennsylvania. I asked about the possibility of him building a set of stag grips for this project. He did a beautiful set and as we put them on the revolver I went ahead and aged them like we do most of our stags."

Scott's stag grips not only look exceptionally beautiful they also feel right in my hand.

Mechanical Magic

Cosmetics are important, however the most important thing was timing and tuning. "John," said Bobby, "this has been an exciting project, yet challenging! One of the very challenging parts was dealing with the short stroke timing issue. We worked on and off repetitively trying to resolve this problem with very little success. Every time we would go out to test fire it, it would actually unlock the cylinder under recoil. We decided the bolt notches were too shallow in your cylinder."

Bobby took care of this problem and the cylinder is now locking up with absolutely no perceptible play. He also helped the accuracy problem by re-cutting the forcing cone. Now it not only looks great, it shoots the same way! It is always pure sixgunning pleasure to handle a single action that has been worked over by one who really knows his way around sixguns. Bobby is such an artist.

The greatest sixgunsmiths who ever lived are alive and practicing their art today. I am privileged to know many of them, as well as experience their work. I am very pleased to add Bobby Tyler to this exclusive list. May I live long enough to add some wear to this new finish and someday may some of my great grandkids have great grandkids who will still be shooting this King Colt.



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GUN RIGHTS

Continued from page 67

The punishment is implicit — we are armed and are supposed to stop them, with the same force they use to usurp power. We have grown too fat, lazy and complacent. The Founders never saw that coming. And no one seems to see the inevitable result of so much explosive pressure building under a thousand cuts.

It's wrong for many Americans to think guns are bad.

This results from immoral takeover of the education system and the so-called "news" media. You and I know *guns are good*. America used to know this too, so much so the Founders put it in the Bill of Rights for Pete's sake. Now, under the fascist principle of lie long enough and people will believe anything, a sizeable part of the electorate believes guns are bad, even evil, despite their own eyes, and watching police stop criminals by shooting them. Guns save lives. Guns stop crime. Guns protect you. Guns are fun. Just look at this fine magazine.

It's wrong for schools not to teach marksmanship.

The notion schools have banned not only guns, but discussion of guns in schools is worse than wrong. It's perverse. Schools used to have shooting ranges so kids could learn how to shoot straight, learn marksmanship and gun safety, compete on interscholastic teams, prepare for national defense and military training. Now these things are gone, removed by what we incorrectly call teachers. Oops, they now call themselves "educators." They are anything but.

Who Are These People?

You can't teach history properly without discussing weapons, armaments, strategy, inventions, tactics — how are kids supposed to learn? Aha, we've stumbled on one of the greatest wrongs going on today, kids don't learn in schools any longer. They are indoctrinated. By the time many children get to college, they are offended — offended I say — by *free speech*, much less any talk about the righteous role firearms play in the preservation of peace and freedom. If they don't like what's being said, they now denounce it as hate speech, and figure it's okay to outlaw it. Who are these people? Certainly not the neighbors we grew up with. How are you supposed to run a free country if only the officials are armed?

There's plenty more where this came from in the next issue.  Please tune-in.

Award-winning author Alan Korwin has written 14 books, 10 of them on gun law, and has advocated for gun rights for nearly three decades. See his work or reach him at gunlaws.com.

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GUNNYSACK

TOM MCHALE

MANTIS X10

A few years ago, the engineers at Mantis launched a training tech revolution with their MantisX sensor. When paired with a companion smartphone application, the rail-mount device could show you exactly what's happening when you break a shot. Motion sensors track the most minute movements of the gun, allowing you to see muzzle movement before, during and after the shot break. That's impressive stuff, and it's a great way to improve hold and trigger technique, especially since the system works with dry, live and airgun firing modes.

Hold on to your shorts because things just got a lot more exciting. With the Mantis X10 device release and a slew of software updates, the system now does even more — a whole lot more. For starters, you can analyze your draw technique in excruciating detail. The Holster Draw Analysis drill records and tracks five different components of the draw: the times to acquire a proper grip, clear leather, rotate the muzzle to horizontal, raise the gun to target and sight and break the shot. Oh, and you'll also get a bonus chart showing the exact movement of your gun. If you're wasting fractions of seconds moving sideways or bringing the muzzle back down to target, you'll see it. Now dry-fire practicing competition or concealed carry draws at home is actually fun. Of course, the system works with live fire too. It's a range timer on steroids, complete with a computerized instructor.



Another winner is the Recoilmeter. As you fire, the system tracks four components of gun movement. Think you have a great grip? This system will let you know by highlighting the "mistakes" too subtle to see with the human eye. You'll know after every shot how high you allowed the muzzle to rise, how long it took you to get back on target, whether or not the gun recoiled upward at an angle and the width of any "recoil circle" caused by the upward and sideways movement of the muzzle. Using this at the range allows you to make adjustments to your grip technique and pressure and see the results on the very next shot. It's hard to overstate the training value.

Be sure to order a magazine baseplate adapter. The X10 unit is small enough now to rest at the bottom of the magazine instead of the handgun rail. That allows drills from your standard holster. www.mantisx.com

ROY HUNTINGTON

FERMIN GARZA'S SIGHTS

Think old-school here, one man working alone in his shop making very precise sights for a modest range of revolvers and uses. Fermin Garza is that man. I've been fortunate to get to know of his work through John Taffin, Jeff "Tank" Hoover and Doc Barranti of Barranti Leather. These guys know their stuff so when they recommended Fermin's work, who am I to say anything but yes? Fermin sent me this cross-section of his "2 Dogs Custom Single-Six Sight" in various sight blade widths. Keep in mind, this is true custom work, so Fermin offers options and you can tailor them to your needs. While these fit Ruger Single Six revolvers — and come with the correct screw — you can also use them for custom bigger bore guns, and even heavy-barreled .22 autos if you custom-fit the sight base. Each project might be different and Fermin's

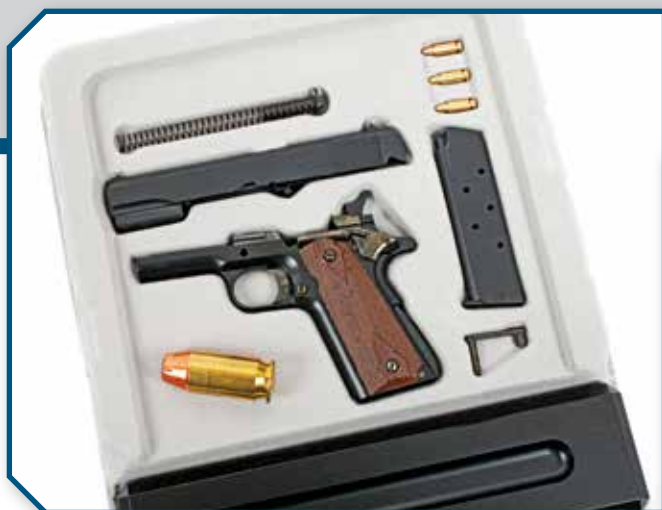
sights offer a solid steel option you can build on.

These sights are a standard width front of 0.125", but Mr. Garza offers custom widths of 0.115", 0.110", 0.100" and 0.085" for a small additional fee. I've found, especially as I've aged, seeing "more light" on either side of the front sight makes the sight picture brighter and clearer for me. Keep in mind, a narrower front sight might be right for you, rather than a wider, bolder look. Or increasing the width of the rear sight slot may serve the same purpose while keeping a front sight slightly wider to be more rugged.

Fermin also offers a range of other custom sights. The Bearcat sights make those little guns even better, the 2 Dogs Custom TLA front gives you repeatable hold-over lines and the BFR fronts give you custom options if you have one of those burly revolvers. Fermin's custom pin-in blades help with custom front sight ideas, his retro 2 Dogs Mirrored Sights harken to the classic King Gun Sights originals and his "Custom Dovetail Sights" allow unlimited ideas for custom pistolsmiths. Sights start in the \$59 range and go to close to the \$100 range, depending on design and options. Fermin encourages you to reach out to him with questions and to help ordering the sight you need. Classic sights — and a classic craftsman — offering top-quality at affordable prices. Imagine that. www.fermingarza.com, Ph: (361) 960-3697



GUNNYSACK



ROY HUNTINGTON

RW MINIS 1911

I've handled real 1911s worth \$40,000 and readily admit this tiny pretend 1911 generated just about the same amount of interest when I showed it around. No fooling. "It's so cute!" or "Geez, it acts like the real thing!" were common comments. "Can I have it?" too, but "no" was the proper answer. This tiny gun takes down like a real 1911, the safety goes on, the hammer falls when you pull the trigger, the grip safety works and the mag comes out — and even has teeny-tiny brass pretend cartridges.

There's a metal display stand supplied, and the entire package is of remarkably high quality. The "real" cartridge in

the photo is a .45 ACP and showcases the 3.75" size. Weighing in at a feathery 0.9 oz, and being honest 1/3 scale size, this looks like a toy, but keep it away from small kids. There's just too many tiny parts, easy to lose and swallow. Mine now lives on my desk and is pretty much a constant distraction.

RW Minis also makes a broad line of equally cool "other" mini models. There's a sort of Barrett-looking .50 rifle, several AR variants, a couple of AKs, two bolt-action precision rifles and even a nifty Dragunov Sniper mini! Most are in the \$39 to \$45 range. They also offer a line of accessories like spare mini-cartridges, mini-scopes and even a tiny "pocket holster" for the 1911. All of this stuff generates an instant "Must-Have-One!" gut feeling, and at the price point, it's not painful to spend the few bucks to have the fun. www.rwminis.com, Ph: (262) 689-7008

TOM MCHALE

FENIX PD36R RECHARGABLE LIGHT

There are infinity-trillion tactical lights on the market — with good reason. A quality handheld light is one of the most useful tools around, whether you use it "tactically" or not. I often carry one in my pocket, always have one in my pack or briefcase, and keep others in the car.

The Fenix PD36R features an internal rechargeable power source, so no batteries are required — ever. Did I mention it's rechargeable? Changing batteries in my existing lights, sometimes weekly, makes the rechargeable option a big deal for me. The included USB Type C cable connects to most any standard power source: laptops, phone chargers or 12-volt car systems. One of the most useful features is the runtime from a single charge. Depending on which brightness level you choose, you'll get between just under three hours to a monstrous 115 of continuous use.

This little handheld wonder packs a wallop. On its Turbo setting, you're pumping out a whopping 1,600 lumens of light. That translates to a beam of light reaching out to just shy of three football fields. Be careful, Turbo mode might set your hair on fire! The light is computer moni-



tored, so if it begins to overheat, the intensity will drop a few lumens to protect the electronics. A brass button up front cycles through the power levels. Eco mode produces an indoor-friendly 30 lumens, Low 150 lumens, Medium 350 and High 800. By holding the selection button for a half second, you can also select a disorienting strobe mode, useful for self-defense applications. The 5,000 mAh battery will take just about four hours to charge.

For all its power, the PD36R is portable enough for everyday carry, although it won't compete with a penlight. It's about the same size as a 17-round 9mm magazine but precisely half the weight, according to my kitchen scale. A steel clip offers dual-purpose mounting to belts, pants, or pack pockets, but the "S-shaped" design also allows you to mount it to something pointing beam-forward. It makes a great car light too. Use the low-power modes for interior use, middle range for roadside repairs and the Turbo modes to flag down help or send Morse code messages to the International Space Station. www.fenix-store.com

SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 11

be considered a weapon, but a symbol of my authority. Personally, I regarded it more as a bullseye on my back.

Robert Harrison
Via email

Monitoring Web Sites

Regarding Drake's letter (*Speak Out*, Jan/Feb 2020) on catching terrorists. First and foremost Drake's suggested method of monitoring web-sites for potential "mass shooters and terrorists" is missing a major piece — due process. The concept of monitoring, watch-lists and "follow" tags made me think of the GDR's State Security Service (*Staatssicherheitsdienst*, SSD), commonly known as the *Stasi*. Keep that in mind maybe.

Stephen Pulcheon
Via email

Cheap Wasn't Cheap

I'm 52 years old and find the older I get the more "Good Old Days" moments I have. I thoroughly enjoyed Dave Anderson's article (*Good Old Days?*, March/April 2020) because it helped spark some serious introspection for me. It's true, my father (77) and I often talk about missed opportunities to purchase "cheap guns" throughout our lives, but Mr. Anderson helped put some perspective on "cheap." Not only does his insights apply to guns, they apply to life in general. In the current social climate in which we live it's easy to think about the "Good Old Days" and find ourselves becoming "glass half empty" types. But more sobering reflection will help us see in many ways the "Good Old Days" were really the introduction to "Better Days to Come" — if we can prove ourselves to be good stewards of what we currently possess. Great article, Mr. Anderson!

Daniel Woodring
Via email

Ruger Remembering

Roy's stroll down memory lane (*Insider*, Nov/Dec 2019) with regards to his Ruger Single Six, sparked a few of my own. In about 1969 I was a 12-year-old 8th grader when my dad bought me my first handgun — the .22 Ruger. How could you not love it, when you grew up watching every western series ever made. I put enough bricks of .22 through that gun to build a two-story house. Like you, my dad never bought me any Magnum ammo because of the cost. To this day, that cylinder still rests, unused, in its original sock. But .22 LR

ammo was plentiful. Dad put a stump down at one end of the basement to serve as a target stop. I shot frequently, and only quit due to smoke obscuring the target. After all, why open a window when you can breathe it in!

Mike Krzynowek
Via email

Cartridges Or Calibers?

I recently looked back in time to some 1930's era ads from Winchester and in the ads they used the term "calibers" instead of "cartridges." I'm sure examples can be readily found even earlier than this. I've come across this many times over the years. I'm well aware technically wrong words and even slang words come into general usage and become the "new" grammatically correct way to express something. Language has had this kind of evolution for a long time and etymology is a fascinating way to study history and culture.

But again, this can generate confusion on a technical subject. Let's say I buy a .30 caliber rifle, just like in the ads. I also want to buy some .30 caliber ammo for it and find I need to know what the actual cartridge the rifle is chambered for. Ha, who knew? I look forward to you enlightening me on the correct usage of caliber and cartridge, and this subject in general.

Meyer Weiner
Via email

Meyer, thanks for your note, and a good question. In the early days, there weren't that many "calibers," as it were. So a ".30 Caliber" meant the .30-06. The ".30 WCF" meant the .30-30. The ".44-40 WCF" caliber meant the .44-40 cartridge.

But over the years as more and more "cartridges" were developed all using the same "caliber" (like .30, or 7mm, or .45, etc.), the terms of science tended to change to become more specific. It's like saying, "Oh, I have a Ford" and in the old days, that meant a Model T. Later, you had to say which Ford "model" you had. So a "cartridge" is like a "model" of the "caliber" in question. Now I'm confused too! —RH

Atta' Boys

I must sing the praises of two companies. I had shipped a Kimber rifle barreled-action out to Mag-na-port in Michigan to be ported. Unfortunately, the company with brown trucks said it was "lost/stolen" in Detroit. I know, I know ... hard to believe.

Donna at Mag-na-port helped me file the proper form with the ATF as well as chasing down the brown truck to make sure it really was missing.

Alex at Kimber did me a huge favor.

Since I had the stock, trigger assembly, bolt and magazine well, Kimber allowed me to send in the parts and built a new rifle for me at substantial savings.

A+ customer service for all-involved except the brown truck people.

Lessons learned? Always pay the extra fee for Second Day Air. Expect the brown truck company to be painful about getting your insurance paid.

I've always enjoyed my Kimber firearms and I believe Mag-na-porting is the best modification to improve shootability in a firearm.

Jens Jensen
New Harmony, UT

Off-Duty Carry

It's common to talk about LEOs as having taken an oath to "serve and protect." Whatever the employing agency's position on the practice of being armed off-duty is we need to remember police officers are people too. And they are people who are doing a job, sometimes dangerous, requiring they get in people's faces occasionally, and when they do they may need to be armed. But when they're not working it's understandable they want to be just plain folks. They just want to be left alone. And remember, we don't pay them 24/7, so why would we expect them to work 24/7?

But police officers should understand, and accept, sometimes bad things happen to good people. In fact, much of their jobs involve facing that very fact. And if they are going to frequent the kinds of places where those things might happen, like bars, and if they're going to project the confidence and power they need to on the job, then that increases the odds trouble will find them.

Personally, I don't care if they're armed because I don't expect them to rescue me, off- or on-duty. I accept responsibility for that. But they should be armed for the same reason I am, to protect themselves and their families as effectively as they can if bad things happen. They should go armed, not for me, not to "protect and serve" — but for themselves.

Jeff Weiss
Forest, VA

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G-2-THREE

Continued from page 53

fps. I can shoot all day with this ammo.

The .357 Magnum MGM load in the G-2 is great for everyday carry on hikes, with enough authority for thicket and woods whitetails. The .357 Maximum is the big dog for hunters willing to work for bullet placement. Colonel Wesson did it with a "lot less gun" — but I have no handicaps other than myself.

While this is not a hunting story, I'm hoping you've now gotten an itch to take a Contender into the field. Especially from stands, where arrow-range is the rule, the pistol will do the job. Then the sometimes-forgotten way of hunting — spot-and-stalk — negotiating the terrain more like a cougar than a bulldozer can also come into play. The Eye of the Hunter (binoculars), *searching* to find game, not peeping at that already seen with a naked eye, means a game is afoot. A solid rest with the glass eating up bits of country a small bite at a time, especially early and late in the day, is the way to go.

The Field

My home state has five subspecies of whitetail. I love the smallest, thriving

in heavy brush along streams and rivers. Bucks wear a crown not much bigger than a good-size Coues deer. My heaviest field-dressed mature buck scale-weighed 170 lbs. Sittin' along trails by my favorite mountain stream is rewarding, because something interesting always comes along.

One day I saw a lynx — not a bobcat — a lynx. Never before and never again. He or she was hunting, and I had a ringside seat to the show. Lay a little scent out. Rattle if timing is right. Try a call, even. I like to walk the stream. That means *in the stream* with high boots. Although deer have radar ears, the stream gurgles up sound. I've had many opportunities for bedded does and small bucks. So could you, and the G2 carries so nicely.

Pronghorn antelope live in my "backyard." This coming season the G-2 will go for Mr. Fleetfoot of the Flatlands, but it's more rolling hills where I hunt. I've taken bucks with longbow to hotshot rifle, with the 30-30 tempering the field, but only a couple with a handgun and none with a Contender. Get to know habits and close shots are possible. At first light and late afternoon bucks "lose caution" allowing a hunter to get closer. Work the fences. Anyone who thinks antelope cannot jump a fence has never seen a game department roundup.

However, odd as it may be, antelope will most often dive *through* barbed wire, rather than jump over it. I have gotten longbow close by watching a pronghorn trail along a fence, the single-minded buck passing right by my ambush.

You Too?

The hunter willing to actually hunt will have opportunity — from small to large game — with the G-2 pistol. Getting shoelace-close for the one perfect shot as Colonel Wesson must have with his .357 Magnum, makes a story to tell later. The more I shoot, the more confident I become, if I stalk for that perfect shot, the butt-kicking .357 Maximum with MGM Stout Load will do the rest — *with a rest*.

"A Handgunner is no better than his rest," a wise client in Africa told me when I was guiding him. He proved his point. I have two rests — the ever-present hiking/shooting staff, and an Easton Cross Shot easy-carry with a fast setup.

A 180-gr. bullet at 2,050 fps is not far behind an everyday 30-30 load I like with a 170-gr. bullet at 2,200 fps. And my "Little Thirties" have put plenty of protein in the freezer. 

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NEWPRODUCTS

WALTHER Q4 TAC PRO IN COYOTE TAN

Walther Arms

The *Walther Q4 Tac Pro in Coyote Tan* is an addition to Walther Arms' Q4 Tac Series. Guns in the series are adaptable, efficient and integrate both professional and tactical dynamics. The Q4 Tac is designed to allow users to easily switch from iron sights to optics. Built for right- and left-handed shooters, it features an ambi slide stop and reversible button-style magazine release. The Q4 Tac Pro comes with a Walther Performance magwell and three magazines with +2 aluminum extensions. For more info: (479) 242-8500, www.waltherarms.com



RAPID FORCE DUTY HOLSTER

Alien Gear Holsters

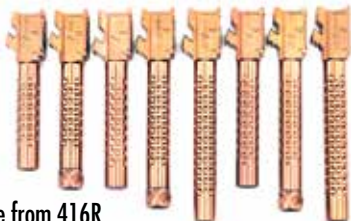
Alien Gear's *Rapid Force Duty Holster* for law enforcement and the military is built for a fast, intuitive draw. Designed with input from active and retired L.E. officers and military veterans, the holster addresses what is lacking in conventional police holsters. The Rapid Force Duty Holster. It can be used with or without a weapon-mounted light, and with or without a red dot optic. For more info: (208) 215-2046, www.aliengearholsters.com



OPTIMIZED MATCH BARREL

ZEV Technologies

Redesigned for improved performance and Gen5 compatibility, the *Optimized Match Barrel* from ZEV Technologies is made from 416R stainless steel. This is an ideal material for making match grade barrels because it allows precise cutting of chambers and rifling. Enhanced features include ZEV's proprietary broach cut 1 in 14" left hand twist rifling to create the most accurate GLOCK after-market barrel available. Testing confirms a significant increase in accuracy over factory barrels in all standard bullet weights. For more info: (805) 486-5800, www.zevtechnologies.com



THE RAZORMAX

Outdoor Edge

The *RazorMax* is Outdoor Edge's first fixed-blade knife to feature the replaceable blade system, dubbed the *RazorSafe* System. It accepts both standard replacement blades as well as a new 5" boning/fillet blade, making it ideal for preparing big game. The new *RazorMax* allows you to field dress, skin, debone and process game ready for cooking — all with a single tool. Made of Japanese 420J2 stainless steel, the knife comes in two interchangeable blades. The 3.5" drop-point blade is a field-dressing blade; the 5" boning/fillet blade is for processing meat. Each blade locks securely into the *RazorMax*'s black-oxide blade holder. For more info: (800) 447-3343, www.outdooredge.com



COMBAT CURVE TRIGGER

CMC Triggers

CMC Triggers' *Combat Curve Trigger* (CCT) combines the comfort of the classic curve with the indexing of CMC's patented flat trigger into one hybrid trigger bow. Featuring one-piece assembly, the CMC CCT has a smooth feel, ultra-clean break and an exceptional lock time and reset. (The 3.5-lb. trigger pull is factory preset and not user adjustable.) Made from 8620 alloy steel and S7 tool steel with machined tolerances of plus/minus 0.001", the CCT fits Mil-Spec AR-15 and AR-10-style rifles. For more info: (817) 563-6611, www.cmctriggers.com



VICKERS TACTICAL MAGAZINE RELEASE

TangoDown Inc.

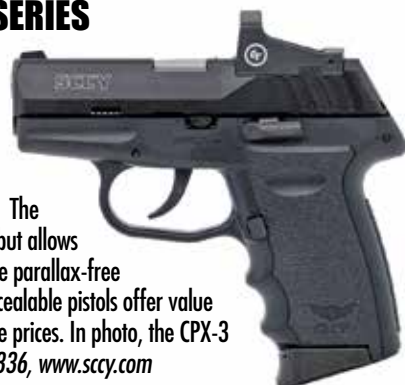
The *Vickers Tactical Magazine Release* (GMR-007) from TangoDown is for GLOCK 43X and 48 models. Made of the same bullet-proof material and offering the same features as other GLOCK improvements in the GMR series, the GMR-007 can be used regardless of finger size or length. Its unique shape prevents unwanted magazine release if placed on a hard surface. Installation by a Certified GLOCK Armorer or Gunsmith is recommended. For more info: (909) 392-4757, www.tangodown.com



CPX RED DOT PISTOL SERIES

SCCY Firearms

SCCY's *CPX Red Dot Pistol Series* incorporates a factory Crimson Trace, CTS-1500, 3.5MOA Red Dot to the 9mm Luger CPX-1 and CPX-2 as well as to the .380 Auto CPX-3 and CPX-4. The CPX Series retains backup iron sights but allows the user to focus on the target with the parallax-free Crimson Trace Red Dot. The small concealable pistols offer value and features to the user at competitive prices. In photo, the CPX-3 Red Dot. For more info: (386) 322-6336, www.sccy.com





BOWIE BROWN JIGGED BONE HUNTING KNIFE

PUMA Knife Co.

Handmade by skilled craftsmen, the *Bowie Brown Jigged Bone Hunting Knife* from the PUMA Knife Co. has an overall length of 11" and a blade length of 6.1". Its satin-finished blade is made of 1.4116 German Cutlery Steel — sourced from Solingen, Germany — and has a Rockwell Hardness of 55-57. This is a classic outdoors knife for hunting, fishing, camping, tactical, survival and bushcrafting. The Bowie Brown Jigged Bone knife comes with a brown leather sheath with lanyard. For more info: (913) 888-5524, www.pumaknifecompanyusa.com



MALUS SOL

Tenicor

The *Malus SOL* from Tenicor is a low-profile holster that keeps your

gun well hidden. It's designed to work with the Surefire X300 series of weapon-mounted lights. The body contour on the holster is designed to fit to your body, driving the top of the gun flush against the torso. The camming bar is interchangeable with three different sizes to fine tune concealment. When cinched by the belt, it rotates the grip into the body to keep the gun hidden. For more info: www.tenicor.com



AMERICAN COMBAT PISTOL (ACP)

Wilson Combat

The *American Combat Pistol (ACP)* features the latest generation forged slide, frame and barrel handfitted by Wilson Combat pistolsmiths with machined Bullet Proof parts. With a capacity of 8 rounds, the ACP has

an OAL of 8.7" and weighs 41.6 oz. empty. It has a full-size carbon steel frame, a 5" stainless match-grade barrel, a contoured magazine well and a 5" carbon steel slide. A new Eagle Claw grip and slide surface offers a non-abrasive, tactile grip. The American Combat Pistol is offered in .45 ACP and 9mm Luger. For more info: (800) 955-4856, www.wilsoncombat.com

LONG RANGE HYBRID TARGET BULLETS

Berger Bullets

The 7mm 190-gr. *Long Range Hybrid Target Bullet* boasts a high ballistic coefficient and a jump-tolerant hybrid ogive profile. The 7mm 190-gr. LRHT is ideal for F-Open competitive shooters and is tailored to cartridges as the 284 Winchester, 7mm WSM, 7mm SAU, and 7mm Remington Magnum and more. For more info: (660) 460-2802, www.bergerbullets.com



PRIMO LEATHER GUN BELT

Hackett Equipment

The *Primo Leather Gun Belt* from Hackett is a heavy-duty belt designed to enhance everyday carry. The belt is handmade with one solid piece of quality leather. It's 1.5" wide by 0.213" thick and fits waist sizes from 30" to 54". Just add 4 to your pants' size to get your belt size. Hardware consists of a silver color buckle and Chicago belt screws. For more info: www.hackettequipment.com

92 ELITE COMPACT AND CENTURION

Langdon Tactical

The 92 Elite LTT has been described as the ultimate Beretta 92. Recently, Langdon Tactical



released the carry friendly versions of the pistol — the 92 *Elite Compact and Centurion*. The two models have the same slide, frame, grip and barrel as the full-size 92 Elite LTT. Other common features include front cocking serrations, dovetailed fiber optic front sight, square notch serrated rear sight, solid steel guide rod, exclusive trigger guard radius, stainless steel trigger, checkering on the front and back strap, Ultra Thin VZ/LTT G10 Grips and more. For more info: (571) 385-2979, www.langdontactical.com

GWII DELUXE "GRANDE CALIFORNIAN"

Pietta USA



From Pietta USA/EMF Company comes the next generation of the popular "Californian" single-action series.

The *GWII Deluxe "Grande Californian,"* available in both .357 and .45 LC, has Victorian scrollwork and sunbursts on the blued barrel. It also features a deep rich color-casehardened frame and is accented with a one-piece, diamond-checked grip. For more info: www.piettausa.com



NEWPRODUCTS

S&W M&P9 SHIELD EZ HOLSTERS

CrossBreed Holsters

S&W M&P9 Shield EZ Holsters are available from CrossBreed. Owners of the pistol can choose from the following: the

SuperTuck, the Reckoning, Freedom Carry, SnapSlide, DropSlide, Purse Defender, Modular Belly Band and Last

Ditch. Each holster is custom fit to the M&P9 Shield EZ and is suitable for multiple carry styles. For more info: (888) 732-5011, www.crossbreedholsters.com



PIVOT KNIFE SHARPENER

Work Sharp Outdoor

The *Pivot Knife Sharpener* is one of four new manual sharpeners launched by Work Sharp Outdoor. Aside from the *Pivot Knife Sharpener* (in picture), the other products are the *Pivot Plus Knife Sharpener*, *Pivot Pro Knife & Tool Sharpener*, *Micro Sharpener & Knife Tool* and the *Angle Set Knife Sharpener*. These products use Work Sharp's Convex Carbide Sharpening System to create a superior convex edge quickly and easily. For more info: (800) 597-6170, www.worksharptools.com



MC2c COMPACT 9MM PISTOL

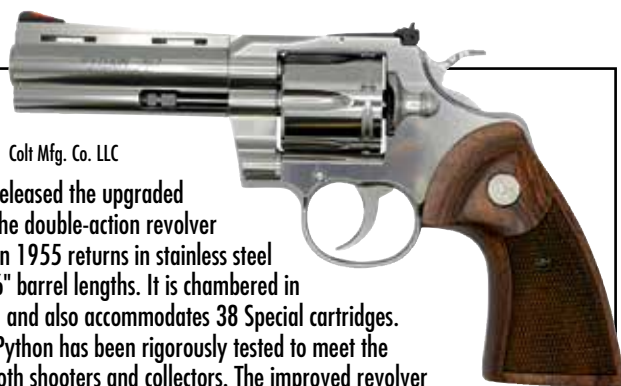
Mossberg

After the MC1sc comes the MC2c. The *MC2c Compact 9mm Pistol* is Mossberg's addition to its series of handguns. With a 3.9" barrel and an overall length of 7.1", the MC2c is a good size for concealed carry or home protection. Its frame is glass-reinforced polymer; slide is stainless steel. Integrated into the slide is the Mossberg STS (Safe Takedown System). Five initial offerings include two frame variants (standard and cross-bolt safety); choice of slide finishes (black DLC-finished or bead-blasted stainless steel); and with optional TRUGLO Tritium Pro Night sights. All MC2c models come with 13-round flush and 15-round extended coated-steel magazines. For more info: (203) 230-5300, www.mossberg.com

COLT PYTHON

Colt Mfg. Co. LLC

Colt recently released the upgraded *Colt Python*. The double-action revolver that debuted in 1955 returns in stainless steel in 4.25" and 6" barrel lengths. It is chambered in .357 Magnum and also accommodates 38 Special cartridges. The new Colt Python has been rigorously tested to meet the demands of both shooters and collectors. The improved revolver uses stronger stainless steel alloys, a redesigned rear sight to increase the cross-sectional area of the top strap and minimal trigger action parts. Features such as a recessed target crown, a user-interchangeable front sight and an updated Walnut grip were also added. For more info: (800) 962-2658, www.colt.com



ACTION .38 SUPER COMP

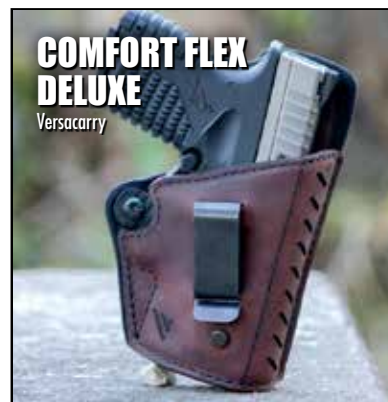
ELEY



ELEY's *Action .38 Super Comp* has been developed for use in firearms manufactured to handle Major Power Factor ammunition. The round delivers reduced recoil for improved sight picture recovery, and its "rimless" case loaded with a round nose copper metal jacketed 124-gr. bullet offers reliable magazine stacking and feeding. For more info: (325) 754-5771, www.eleyammunition.com

COMFORT FLEX DELUXE

Versacarry



Versacarry has added an inside-the-waistband holster to their *Comfort Flex* line. The *Comfort Flex Deluxe* provides comfort while securely holding the firearm in place. Made from Versacarry's signature water buffalo leather surrounding a polymer insert, this IWB holster has a forward cant for easy draw and a draw-tension adjustment to custom fit the holster to your firearm for a secure carry. For more info: (979) 778-2000, www.versacarry.com

SIG SAUER TACTICAL SERIES

Hogue Knives



Hogue Knives is offering the *SIG SAUER Tactical Series* as an alternative to the SIG SAUER Legion Series.

Knives in the Legion series match the finish of SIG firearms including the chevron medallion, matte black hardware, checkered frame texture and gray Cerakote blade finish. Knives in the Tactical Series has the same fire-arm matching as the LEGION line. However, a SIG medallion instead of the chevron is embedded into the Tactical series knives. In picture is the SIG A01-MicroSwitch Tactical Folder (#16112). For more info: (800) 438-4747, www.sigknives.com

HOME INVASION: THE COKER FAMILY INCIDENT

SITUATION: Home invasion in a nice neighborhood on a morning like any other.

LESSON: Nice neighborhoods aren't immune. Pick up the gun before you run to the danger. If you and your spouse are both armed and trained, you're more than the sum of your parts

On the night of August 14, 2014, Marquise Trevel Yates was planning a hit. A member of a Jacksonville, Florida gang calling themselves The Cutthroat Committee, he had picked a target. He had noticed a house in a nice neighborhood where, a couple of nights a week, several cars came and stayed for a while. In his world, that meant one of two things: illegal gambling, or a drug house. Either way, there would be cash — he told one of his associates he figured on \$90,000 at least — and maybe drugs to boot.

In the house, Pamela and Foster Coker slept peacefully, their seven-year-old grandson slumbering in the guest room. They regularly had members of their church over to their home for game nights and Star Trek marathons: These were the strangers Yates had observed and misidentified.

They had no way of knowing Marquise was coming.

Morning

At about 6:20 the following morning, Pam had been the first of the family to arise, the little boy and her husband each sleeping in. She went to the dining room to dress so she wouldn't wake anyone. She heard a loud thump at the back door. Because the neighborhood was home to many feral cats and other animals, she thought nothing of it.

But then she heard another, louder noise, and realized it was something else. A very tall man burst through the door he had just kicked down, spotted her, and lunged at her. She turned and ran, but he was too fast. He grabbed her and slammed her brutally to the floor. Pain shot through her body. She screamed out to her husband.

Awakened

Pam's screams jolt Foster from a deep sleep. He bolts from the bed clad only in his sleepwear, an old favorite tee shirt and a pair of gym shorts, and runs to the sound, his heart already racing. As urgency blasts him wide awake, he realizes what she is shouting is "Get your gun!" but the family weaponry is already far behind him in the bedroom. He is both barefooted and barehanded.

Foster explodes into the living room to see his wife crumpled at the feet of the towering attacker. He lunges at the man, grappling with him, pushing him back away from his injured wife.

The masked intruder smashes him in the head with some hard object. He can't see what it is. Through the fog of the head blow and the blood beginning to pour from his scalp into his eyes, Foster can see something long and black protruding from the bottom of the man's hand. "A pipe," he thinks, as the man hits him again and again.

Pistol-Whipped

Under the rain of vicious blows, Foster cannot yet perceive he's being pistol-whipped. The black object in the attacker's hand is actually a Beretta Centurion pistol, .40 caliber, with an extended magazine protruding from its butt. The weapon descends again, and again, each swing catching Foster Coker in the head. He realizes he's facing unconsciousness, and if that happens, he knows he'll be helpless to defend his wife and grandchild.

He yells to Pam, "Get me a gun!"

The deadly intruder is taller than he, but Foster is a big man in his own right. He picks the attacker up and bodily throws him as far as he can. The masked man's back hits the front door, and as his legs scramble to keep him upright, the doormat slips from under his feet and he falls on his butt, landing in a sitting position with his back to the door.

Continued on page 70

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Publisher



The world's best handgun magazine teamed up with Les Baer Custom to create an exclusive celebration of both the classic John Browning 1911 design — and the custom touches readers have asked for!

Among the many features are:

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- Signed insert card certifying pistol by serial number

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the serial number. It was the stolen gun. Officers staked-out the parking lot and the nearby roads. Three plainclothes detectives were posing as “customers” when the suspect showed. Scout and Amelie alerted on him and stood watching.

“Well, did you fix it?” he said, obviously hurried and anxious as he strode to the counter.

“You bet,” said Amos, “I fixed it alright, and everything will be just fine now. Won’t even cost you a dime!”

As the suspect raised his eyebrows as if to say, “How’s that?” the three detectives moved in, securing the suspect’s arms and cuffing him. “Hey, what’s this?” the suspect said looking anxious.

Kurt came in from the back. “Yup, that’s him Amos. Matches the video perfectly. We sure appreciate you doing what you did.” The detectives walked the suspect outside.

“My pleasure, Kurt. But honestly? It was the girls who spotted him for who he was. They made it clear — he wasn’t welcome! I just followed their lead!”

ADD IT UP

2018

Year of third lowest violent crime rate since 1970.

6.2 PERCENT

Rate murder and non-negligent manslaughter fell over 2017 in 2018.

30

Years violent crime rate has steadily declined in the U.S.

2

Percentage of homicides involving rifles of all types in 2018.

344

Homicides in Baltimore in 2015 (strict gun laws).

164

Homicides in the state of Arkansas in 2015 (lenient gun laws).



KORTH— OVER THE TOP

lbs., it’s no lightweight, but it holds six, has great sights and is a sort of “ultimate” field and hunting revolver. MSRP is \$5,299, so while it’s not for the faint of heart, it’s also about what a really nice custom 1911 runs, and this is essentially a custom revolver. www.nighthawkcustom.com

Nighthawk Custom announced a Korth revolver now in .44 Magnum. It’s got about every feature you can imagine, including plenty of Picatinny rails for weights, sights and such. It’s a classic SA/DA revolver and builds on the history-making German Korth design, but modernized. At 3.05

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY RONIN OPERATOR

ARonin is a sort of “masterless” Samurai, a warrior who only works for the guy he wants to — no pushing him around — that sort of thing. Call him a freelancer. And I think it’s an appropriate name for this new forged steel 1911. Available in 9mm and .45 ACP, it’s chock full of solid features. The rear sight is one you can “rack” the slide with, a fiber optic front, beavertail, 20 LPI checkering on the mainspring housing, 8+1 mags, speed trigger, forged stainless frame and a forged carbon steel slide are among the features. It’s also got forward serrations for press-checking. In my experience with their 1911s I’m thinking this will shoot 1.5” or better at 25 and run like the proverbial top. Only \$849 at MSRP, this is a screaming deal for a high quality production — but beautifully made — 1911. We’ll have a test sample by the time you read this. www.springfield-armory.com

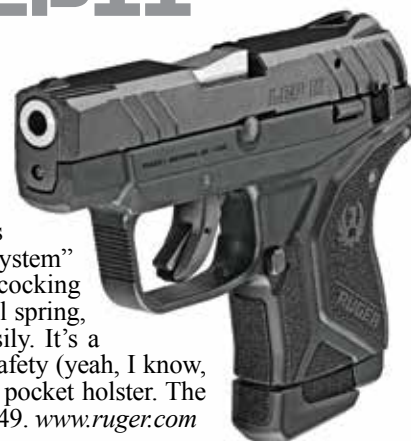


ALISON BAGS A DEER

Reader Joe D. sent me this great pic of his wife, Alison, all-grins. “We were hunting the West River deer season in South Dakota,” said Joe. “Alison used a Savage Model 11 Lady Hunter in .243 to take this nice animal.” According to Joe this was also the first deer Alison skinned and cleaned herself. According to Joe, at the shot she said, “I hit him! I made a shot on a moving deer! Grab the cart, he’s down! Sorry I had to shoot a bigger deer than you did, Joe!” Ha! Good job Alison!

RUGER’S LCPII .22 LR!

What a delightful little pocket pistol this is. I’ve got one and it’s a little jewel. It’s run 100 percent with about an entire brick of ammo through it now. It’s exactly like the LCPII .380 but in .22 and with a nifty little safety on the left side. Hits on 8” paper plates at 25 yards are a breeze. Ruger’s “Lite Rack System” includes refined slide serrations, pronounced cocking “ears” on the back of the slide and a light recoil spring, meaning virtually anyone can run this gun easily. It’s a 10+1 capacity, has a crisp trigger, a magazine safety (yeah, I know, I know ...), and ships with a mag loader and a pocket holster. The slide even locks back when empty! MSRP is \$349. www.ruger.com





NHC DROP-IN TRIGGER SYSTEM

Speaking of Nighthawk Custom, check out this remarkable idea — an actual “drop-in” trigger system for a standard 1911. The unit comes in a sort of chassis with the hammer, sear, disconnect and spring assembly. It goes right in, using your stock hammer and sear pins to hold it. It also has a modified spring for the grip safety. The kit is \$299 and my sample honestly dropped right into three different guns I tried it on. They do say you may need to do some minor fitting to the thumb safety on some guns so this is a job for someone who has some experience at least. It comes in a fancy box too. Also look for other new parts they’ve just introduced. Go to www.americanhandgunner.com and you can find a video I did on it. www.nighthawkcustom.com



MORE C.O.R.E. PISTOLS FROM S&W

Our friends at the Performance Center have expanded their line of C.O.R.E. and ported M&P M2.0 pistols. Look for upgrades in sights, optic-ready options, actions, tuning and more. These guns are essentially competition-ready and there are models to meet your specific needs. Way too much to list here so check ‘em out on the Smith & Wesson website. www.smith-wesson.com

RUGER-57 PISTOL

I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again — Ruger’s outta’ control these days. The Ruger-57 breaks all-new ground for them. It’s a 20+1 capacity new design firing the hot 5.7x28 high velocity, lightweight cartridge. It’s flat shooting, holds lots of rounds and feels great in the hand. It’s got fully adjustable sights (fiber optic front) with a mounting plate available for an optic. It’s soft-shooting, weighs in at 24.5 oz. and ships with two 20-round magazines. We’ve got one and will be reporting on it soonest. MSRP: \$799. www.ruger.com



“I think there are only two kinds of people who don’t own defensive firearms — cowards and fools. So stand up and be counted with your kind.” — Howard Kent

THE NEW GUY

I have a rule about hiring people — hire slow. I first asked Tom McHale to come to work with us about four or five years ago. He smiled broadly, thanked me but said he was busy with other projects, although he really appreciated my asking. It meant a lot to him. I’ve nudged him a few more times over the years but was always met with a polite no-thank-you. After Mike Humphries recently left us, moving to Springfield Armory to run their media side of the house, I nosed around for help and sort of struck out. I’m particular. And in the “hire slow” tradition I wasn’t in a hurry. Sort of out of habit though, I asked Tom again, “So, how’d you like to help us build the best handgun magazine in the world?” I geared up for the no-thank-you and was caught off-guard when he said, “Sure, a great idea, I’d love to. Timing is perfect.”

Striking while the iron was hot, I made the arrangements, and it pleases me no end to say Tom McHale is not only an old friend, but now a fellow team member here. Tom cut his teeth in the tech industry, heavily into mar-



keting especially, but left it entering our industry as an author and consultant. Tom’s written hundreds (thousands?) of articles for about every publication and significant digital platform you can think of. You can find his “Practical Guide” books (reloading, holsters and other topics) online and they’re

a fun read. Tom will be the Executive Editor of *American Handgunner*, assist with our special editions, the various digital things we do like videos, podcasts, online articles and such, travel to shows and trade events and will be chatting with you directly too, just like I’ve always done.

You’ll find him personable, a good writer, a real gun-guy and quick to put his good humor to work. I’ll be around for some time yet, so don’t pound the table and stomp your feet celebrating His Editorship’s dictatorship being over. Not so fast, me-hardies! Tom helps to make our team stronger and you can look forward to even more fun here at your favorite gun magazine! Check out his first column at the front of this issue. Welcome aboard Tom — finally!





AN AMOS GRUNDY STORY: SCOUT CATCHES A CROOK



Amos lifted his welding helmet after working on a gouged side plate on a S&W revolver. Scout was always interested when Amos was TIG welding and although he wasn't quite sure what that was all about — he had a sneaky feeling Scout may know more than she let on. Amos had set her up with her own welding goggles and she'd sit watching for as long as Amos was at work. He liked the company, and always got a kick out of seeing Scout in her goggles — although Amelie seemed to feel guarding the front door was a better idea.

Maybe she was right.

Carefully checking the welds, Amos decided to shut down for the day, looking forward to relaxing with the pooches at home. As Amos flicked of the workroom lights, the front door jingled and he heard something he didn't often hear — Amelie made a sort of soft yelp.

"Hey, somebody here? Call your dog off!" an agitated voice called.

Amos hurried to the front counter and watched a stranger walk toward him as Amelie — and now Scout — watched the visitor intently. "What's up with the dog with the goggles?" the stranger said.

"Oh, don't mind her, she watches me welding," Amos said. He was still wondering what this was all about, as both dogs were intent on this unexpected customer.

"Well, I don't like dogs so keep 'em away," the stranger said. "I've got this gun and it won't shoot," he added, laying something wrapped in a rag on the counter with a soft thud.

Amos didn't like this at all — the man, the timing, or the pooches' reactions. Amos reached down, sliding the goggles off of Scout's eyes as he

thought things over. Scout's attention never wavered on the stranger. Amelie was sitting with her back against the far wall — also watching.

As he straightened, Amos smiled as he slid his right hand into his front pocket where his Ruger LCPII resided. "What's this all about then?"

"My gun, um ... well, it won't shoot," said the man. "I tried shooting it today and it didn't fire," he said unwrapping a new looking Kimber 1911. "I want you to fix it."

"Won't shoot?" said Amos. "What's that mean exactly?"

"I put ammo in it, and when I pulled the trigger, it just clicked. No bang. Like I said."

"Is it a gun you've had for a while and it's suddenly acting-up now?" said Amos.

"Uh, no ... I um, just got it. First time I tried to fire it," said the stranger.

"Okay, but you'll need to leave it with me. I'm closing right now, and I'll look at it tomorrow. Here," said Amos, sliding a form across the counter, "fill this out with your info. I'll give you a call."

"Um, uh ... I don't got a cell, so just tell me when to come back."

"Oh, in that case, how about Friday, around two?" said Amos.

"Uh, yeah, sure, around two. I'll be here. Get it done, eh?"

"You bet," said Amos. The stranger left after filling out the form with his name and an address. Amos locked the front door, added the serial number of the 1911 to the form, logged it into his FFL books and stowed the gun in the safe. The girls stayed close by his side while he locked up. A long day — with a strange ending.

Scout's Nose

The next morning, Amos pulled the 1911 out of the safe. There was a pecu-

liar rounded look to the firing pin protrusion, stirring a memory for Amos but he couldn't quite recall it. When he slipped the slide off and took out the firing pin stop there was a sort of whispery "zing" sound and something zipped past him, lost in the shop. "What the heck?" he said.

Amos didn't find a firing pin, or a spring in the gun. He thought they might have made a great escape. Looking around, he spotted Scout laying down, peering under a workbench across the shop, intently looking at something. Amos assumed the "gunsmith's prayer" stance — on his hands and knees — and reached in. At Scout's nose there was a steel BB — and a long, thin spring laying nearby.

Then Amos remembered. Some dealers and manufacturers use a steel BB and a spring in place of a firing pin in 1911s for gun and trade shows. It makes a display safe. Amos scratched Scout's nose, grinning. "Girl, I think you just caught a crook."

Calling his old friend Kurt Galloway, a sergeant on the local PD, Amos said, "I had a strange character drop off a Kimber 1911 he said wasn't firing. I just found out it had a sort of display set-up and not a real firing pin. Are you aware of any guns stolen from a trade or gun show around?"

"Amos, I should hire you!" laughed Kurt. "Is he there now?"

"Nope," said Amos. "I told him to come back tomorrow at 2 o'clock."

"Perfect," said Kurt. "I'll stop by with a team. And yes, we had a series of guns stolen from a gun show last weekend. One was a Kimber 1911. I'm betting you have the gun there. We've got 'em on video too."

Closing In

A couple of hours before the suspect was due, Kurt and a team showed up. Checking the Kimber, Kurt verified

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