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GUNS Magazine (ISSN 1044-6257) is published monthly by Publishers' Development Corporation, 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Diego, CA and at additional mailing offices. SUBSCRIPTIONS: One year (12) issues \$24.95. Single monthly copies, \$5.95. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Eight weeks notice required on all changes. Send old address as well as new. SUBSCRIPTION PROBLEMS: For immediate action email subs@gunsmagazine.com, write Subscription Dept., 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064 or call (866) 820-4045. CONTRIBUTORS submitting manuscripts, photographs or drawings do so at their own risk. Material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. PAYMENT will be made at rates current at time of publication and will cover reproduction in any or all GUNS Magazine editions. ADVERTISING RATES furnished on request. Reproduction or use of any portion of this magazine in any manner, without written permission is prohibited. All rights reserved. Title to this publication passes to subscriber only on delivery to his address. The opinions and recommendations expressed by individual authors within this magazine are not necessarily those of Publishers' Development Corporation. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to GUNS Magazine®, ATTN: Circulation Dept., 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064. Copyright © 2019 by Publishers' Development Corporation.

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THE BOOGIE MAS?

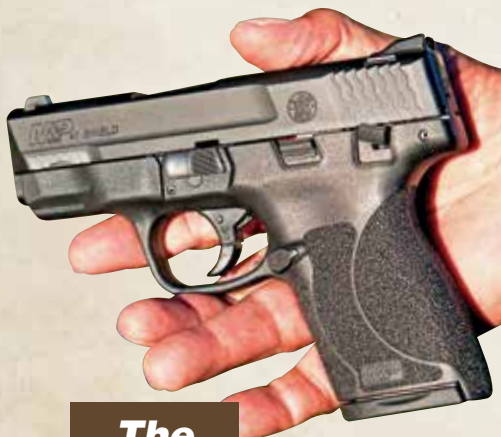
I have it on good authority that the Boogie Man checks under his bed for Chuck Norris before he goes to sleep. Who, pray tell, does Chuck Norris look under his bed for?

Massad Ayoob of course!

I very much enjoyed his most recent writing on the Smith & Wesson Shield .45. I too, have much respect for the Shield .45 and find it to be as close to the perfect concealed carry companion as is available anywhere. I have the standard and Performance Center models and both of them inspire confidence without sacrificing comfort or versatility. Having Mas agree is excellent.

James Lee

Awww ... that was nice. Thanks! —Mas



The Boogie Mas?

REDHAWK REDO

For John Taffin: as an experiment, I took some full moon clips that I use in my S&W Mod. 325, and using my flatbed sander, thinned them out until I could close the cylinder on a 6-pack of 45 ACPs. They worked fine, great in fact. I then obtained a bunch of 45 Winchester Mag brass (another tongue-in-cheek story) and loaded them up to max. They also work great. I have an overactive appreciation for guns that can shoot ammo in different forms of their caliber. It makes me happy!

Thanks guys, for making *GUNS* and *American Handgunner* the best mags!

Bert Brown

Bert, thanks for writing and for the excellent information. When friends in the industry sponsored a hunt and banquet for me, I agreed to raffle off my .455 Super Redhawk. It went for \$5,400!!! —JT

HISTORY USUALLY REPEATS ITSELF

I am a Disabled Veteran with a story to tell:

Feb 4th, 1938. Adolf Hitler promoted himself to Military Chief of Germany. Hitler took over Austria on March 14th, 1938. After massing thousands of Nazi troops at the Austrian border. Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg admitted defeat and was arrested. One might ask what has this got to do with the right to keep and bear arms?

My wife of more than 50 years was living in Austria at that time and she told me how the

continued on page 30

GUNS
MAGAZINE
THE FINEST IN THE FIREARMS FIELD SINCE 1955

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FMG PUBLICATIONS

GUNS
MAGAZINE

GUNSMAGAZINE.COM
EDITOR: Brent T. Wheat

HANDGUNNER

AMERICANHANDGUNNER.COM

PUBLISHER & EDITOR: Roy Huntington

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SHOOTING INDUSTRY

SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM
EDITOR: Jade Moldae



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866.820.4045

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HOW TO KEEP SHOOTIN' PART I: HANDGUNS

WHEN AGE BECOMES AN ADVERSARY, THERE ARE OPTIONS

We live in an ever-changing world. Everything around us is always changing and we ourselves are always changing. If we live long enough, we definitely see major changes physically and especially so when it comes to shooting.

I well remember the day when I was working on reloading data for the Freedom Arms .454 Casull and shot more than 800 rounds in one day. Then there was the testing of the .475 and .500 Linebaugh Longs (Maximums). They were brutal! Over the decades I made it through all of those and a lot more — even enjoyed most of it, but now my hands hurt just thinking about it. Something has definitely changed!

Actually, the changes began a long time ago when it was discovered I had washed all the cartilage out of my wrist bones. I've been able to mostly live with the wrist pain, however once the hands started really hurting, something had to be done. This time I found I had extreme carpal tunnel syndrome so I had surgery on my right hand. It helped but I still have pain, my fingers are mostly numb but my trigger

finger still works and I can still see to shoot so I feel greatly blessed. There was also a cataract surgery along the way.

So — what are some of the things we can do to keep shooting when the years catch up with us?

WEIGHT

When the .44 Magnum arrived, Smith & Wesson found the 1950 Target .44 Special with a rechambered cylinder worked fine except the recoil was brutal in the 39-oz. sixgun. To add more weight, Smith & Wesson lengthened the cylinder and added a heavy bull barrel, bringing the weight up to 48 oz. Today we can do the same thing — simply add more weight. There are several .44 Magnum sixguns which place shooting of heavy loads back into the tolerable category, sometimes even sneaking up on pleasant.

One of these sixguns can only be found on the used-gun market — the Dan Wesson Heavy Barrel .44 Magnum. The combination of heavy weight and very practical smooth wooden stocks go a long way to taming

felt recoil. Two currently produced “easy shooting” .44 Magnums are the Taurus Raging Bull and the Ruger Super Redhawk. I do not face shooting either one of these .44 Magnums with any fear or trepidation.

Muzzle Brakes also add weight, but more importantly, go a long way to controlling felt recoil. My Encore .308 wears an SSK Brake while the Freedom Arms .454 has been fitted with a Mag-na-port Muzzle Brake. Both are great ways to tame these hard-kicking handguns.

GRIPS

Anyone who has read my work for very long knows I have a soft spot in my heart for custom stocks. I grew up reading Elmer Keith, who had a real feeling for ivory grips. Skeeter came right behind, talking about ivory stocks especially on Colt Single Actions. I still like ivory, rams' horn, stag, exotic woods and ...

However, here we are not dealing aesthetically but realistically — we are in survival mode. The Colt Single Action grip frame has been touted for decades as the

If you can't take the pounding of a heavy pistol anymore, Dan Wesson sixguns chambered in .32-20, .32 Magnum and .327 Magnum make for pleasant shooting.





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perfect grip for every man. It works, and works well, but only up to a point. Ruger copied this grip perfectly for his first .44 Magnum Blackhawk in 1956 however it was not long before he redesigned it to the Super Blackhawk configuration. Thankfully Ruger did not stop there and in the mid-1980s came forth with an improvement over the original Colt Bisley Model of 1894. The Ruger Bisley made it possible for single actions to be chambered in really heavy recoiling cartridges.

I find the original design of the Colt Single Action works with standard .45 Colt and .44 Special loads, however I am now right on the edge. My solution has been to change the grip frame by adding a replica 1860 Army grip frame and stocks. This change to a longer grip helps to lower felt recoil. On the Super Redhawk I add Hogue rubber finger groove stocks.

LOADS

It took me a long time to realize everything I loaded did not have to be loaded full-bore. For many years my standard load with the Keith 250-gr. .44 bullet in the .44 Magnum was 22.0 grains of #2400. Several years ago I changed my standard load to the same bullet with 10.0 grains of Unique.

A few years back I received several requests to come up with low recoil loads which would still operate the slide on the 1911 .45 ACP reliably. I came up with the loads and both Buffalo Bore and Double Tap began offering this type of ammo.

With the advent of Cowboy Action Shooting we now have all kinds of pleasant shooting loads for the .44 Colt, .44 Russian and .44 Special, all of which work in the .44 Magnum. Even the .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum have very pleasant cast bullet loads available.

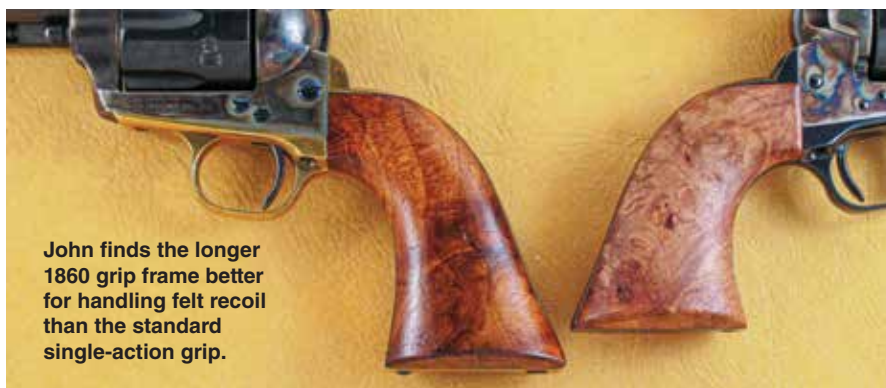
CALIBERS

Over the past 140-plus years, Colt has offered a long list of chamberings in their Single Action Army. The .45 Colt is still the number one choice but if the recoil is more than we care to experience, we can drop down to the .44-40. The next step down is the .38-40 and if none of these are enjoyable, there is the .32-20. Of course there is always the .44 Special and the original loading of a 246-gr. cast bullet at about 750 fps still remains very pleasant and can be shot in both .44 Special/Magnum sixguns as well.

The .32-20 remains one of my favorite



Muzzle brakes from SSK Industries and Mag-na-port help in taming John's hard-kickin' .308 Encore and Freedom Arms 454.



John finds the longer 1860 grip frame better for handling felt recoil than the standard single-action grip.

cartridges and it has been joined over the years by sixguns chambered in .32 Long, .32 Magnum, .327 Magnum and in the Ruger Blackhawk, .30 Carbine. They work fine for plinking, target shooting, hunting of varmints and small game and for the most part could even be pressed into service for self-defense. The .32 Long is a little on the light side however this was once the standard police load in cities on the East Coast.

What if we still want to shoot really big stuff, the .475s and .500s? We can do the same thing several of the producers of these sixguns do — test them by using loads assembled with Hodgdon's Trail Boss Powder. This powder was originally designed for easy-shooting Cowboy Action Loads but also works in these large-capacity cartridges, giving velocities in the 800–900 fps. This brings them down into, or at least close to, the easy-shooting level.

ALWAYS

If none of these solutions suffice there is the one thing in the "Always" category. The first successful cartridge-firing sixgun was the S&W Model #1 in 1857, chambered in a

brand-new cartridge, the .22 Rimfire. Today we have a long list of excellent shooting .22 sixguns and semi-automatic pistols exhibiting very little, if any felt recoil.

In 1953 Ruger modernized the Colt Single Action Army pattern with the .22 Single-Six featuring virtually unbreakable coil springs. The finest double-action .22 ever produced, and I will not say *arguably*, is the Smith & Wesson K-22. It's still offered today and several different versions are available on the used gun market. This is only the beginning — Browning, Taurus and several others offer high quality .22s.

NO EXCUSES

The only thing not allowed are *excuses*. If nothing else can be handled, the .22 will still work, and if the eyes refuse to focus on the sights anymore scopes and red dot sights are available. As long as we have the energy to move, and the desire to keep shootin', it can be accomplished.

Winston Churchill once gave a short speech in which he said: "Never Give In; Never Give In; Never Give In." His words are still relevant today for us.

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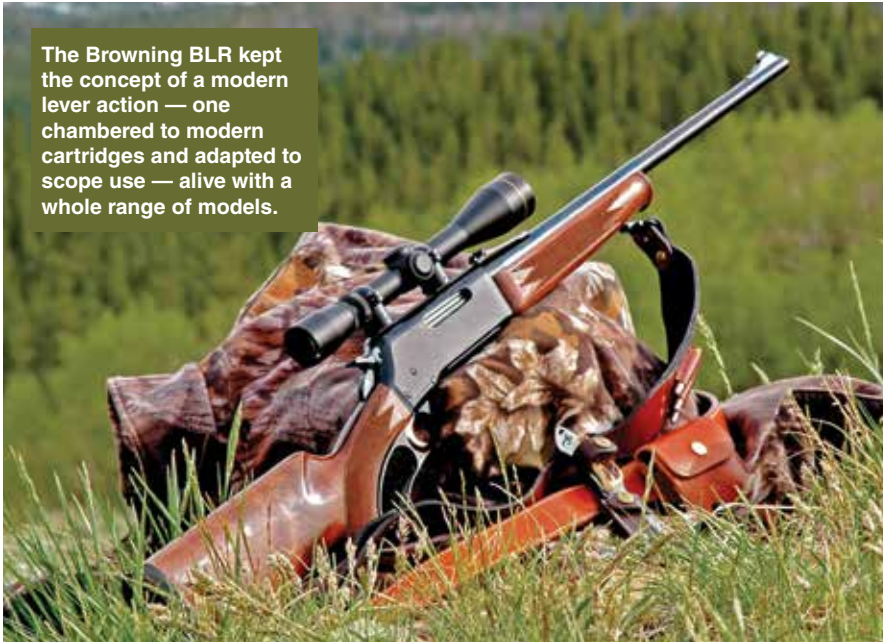


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THE GOLDEN DAYS ARE HERE LEVER FANS REJOICE — THESE ARE THE BEST OF TIMES!

In the early 1960s I was a pre-teenager fascinated with hunting and shooting — well, in addition to fishing, camping, hiking, baseball, hockey, archery and even golf. Hunting for the most part meant deer hunting and almost every household had some sort of “deer rifle.”

At this time and place, lever-actions predominated. Old timers (anyone over 40 was an old-timer to me) often had Marlin or Winchester carbines in .30-30 or .32 Special. The more serious hunters generally had a

Savage 99 in .300 Savage or .308 Win or a Winchester 88 in .308 Win. I recall a couple of Winchester 100s or Remington 740/742 semiautomatics and one or two Remington 760 pumps.

Military surplus bolt-action rifles were fairly common as they could be purchased for a fraction of the cost of commercial sporting rifles. One friend of my dad's stands out in my memory because (1) he would sometimes let me tag along when he was hunting, and (2) his rifle was a

Winchester 70 .270, both of which were unique in my experience.

CAN'T STOP A WAVE

What began as a trend towards bolt-actions really got going after WWII, became an unstoppable wave in the '50s and '60s and achieved almost total dominance by the '70s. Several factors came into play — the introduction of new magnum cartridges, a tremendous growth in cartridge reloading and increased interest in accuracy. More and more the bolt-action was seen as the choice of the more serious and capable rifle shooters.

An article I read in the early '60s predicted the demise, within a decade or two, of every action type except bolt-actions and semiautomatics. The bolt-action would be the choice of enthusiasts interested in maximum accuracy, powerful cartridges and reloading. The casual, once-a-year hunters would gravitate to the semiautomatic.

As predictions go this one wasn't too bad. Pump-action rifles have their devoted followers but in no great numbers. The few new pump guns to appear didn't sell very well or last very long. The Remington pump rifle remains in production and seems to fill what modest demand there is.

BAD TIMES

For lever-action enthusiasts such as myself, the decades from the '60s and into the '90s were a melancholy era. Of the more “modern” lever actions, the Winchester 88



An original high grade Winchester 1876 (top) with a model 89 from Big Horn Armory. These Big Horn rifles aren't cheap but the quality is absolutely superb.



Miroku of Japan makes replicas of several classic Winchester designs, such as this 1892 short rifle in .357 Magnum, with exceptional fit and finish.

One of Dave's favorite Henry's — the steel-frame, big-loop Big Boy carbine, this one in .357 Magnum and featuring a glove-friendly large lever ring.

was discontinued in 1973, the Sako Finnwolf in 1974. The Savage 99 staggered along a bit longer. Savage did a good job of maintaining quality — in fact I consider the 99A as made from 1971–1981 one of the neatest 99s ever made. But price increases made necessary by inflation and reduced demand finally took their toll. Other than Winchester commemoratives and Marlin big bores, the lever action market looked dire.

THE "GOLDEN YEARS" RETURN

But events don't move just one way. Today the lever-action market is probably stronger than at any time in the postwar era. Some of the reasons:

1. The Browning BLR — Browning kept the concept of the modern lever-action rifle alive with the BLR, adding new models and even adapting the rifle to accept magnum cartridges. The BLR styling may not suit everyone's taste but it has always been a high quality and reliable rifle.

2. Cowboy action shooting — The popular sport created a demand for traditional-style rifles, and a great many makes and models appeared to fill the demand.



An early BLR model, this .308 has a steel receiver and straight grip.

3. Pistol-caliber carbines — Cowboy action shooters made pistol-caliber carbines more desirable. A few lever-action fans had long appreciated the utility of a compact, light carbine in .357 or .44 Magnum while new makes and models attracted the attention of many more rifle enthusiasts.

4. Winchester and Marlin are back — Browning/Winchester introduced Miroku-made replicas of several of the classic Winchester models, made to very high standards. Marlin went through some bad times but recently has committed the resources to once again meet the quality standards of a proud name.

5. Henry Repeating Arms — From its

beginning with a basic .22 lever action this company has seen amazing growth, adding many new models and chambering for a wider range of cartridges. The company's uncompromising commitment to quality and customer service has won it a loyal customer base.

And let's not overlook Big Horn Armory, whose virtually custom-quality rifles are highly prized by discriminating lever-action enthusiasts. For those of us who love lever actions these are good days. My main enthusiasm right now is for compact .357 Magnum carbines. I can't believe I overlooked such useful and enjoyable rifles for so long!

THE WEDGE HOLD A QUICK FIX FOR LOW OR LATERAL SHOTS

In 47 years as a handgun instructor, I've noticed more bad shots go low and to the shooter's "weak hand" side than anywhere else. It's often due to a sympathetic response called "milking" — when the trigger finger moves, the other fingers want to move with it, creating a movement like pulling a cow's udder, honking the shot low and toward the less-supported weak hand side. The hard "crush grip" I've advocated in this space previously may cure the problem but it won't necessarily cure another possible cause — too much or too little finger on the trigger face, pulling the gun muzzle

sideways as the shot is triggered. Too little finger on the trigger can pull to the weak hand side while too much trigger finger pushes to the strong hand side.

Hence, the Wedge Hold — I've found it can be an effective cure for both low and lateral shots.

BACKGROUND

I started as a young police firearms instructor in 1972 when most cops were carrying double-action revolvers. All firing at less than the 50-yard line was done with the long, heavy DA pull. One of the most



"X marks the spot" where the middle finger of the support hand contacts bottom of the trigger guard for a Wedge Hold.



The wedge hold begins like this ...



... and finishes like this.

popular off-duty guns was the Airweight S&W J-Frame, a 14-oz. revolver with — often — a 14-lb. trigger pull. On qualification days anything you could do to stabilize against such a heavy pull proved useful indeed.

My dad had started me early, and in my early teens I was shooting the S&W Bodyguard Airweight and Colt Cobra .38s. By trial and error I had come up with what I called the Wedge Hold. It goes like this:

The firing hand takes its "master grip" with the web of the hand high into the grip tang of an auto or at the high "horn" at the back of a double-action revolver's frame, grasping tightly. The support hand comes in from the bottom in sort of a rolling motion. The first index point is critical: Let the middle finger of the support hand make contact with the bottom of the trigger guard, and lock it there tight. The two fingers below it should lock hard, too. Now, bring in the index finger under the trigger guard, tightly, without moving the other fingers. The index finger will end up ahead of the other three fingers of the support hand. It will vary a bit with hand and gun size but your support hand index finger should now be tightly wedged under the front of the trigger guard, probably at about the distal joint.

If you are doing it correctly, you should feel the muzzle cam upward. You should also feel the grip tang of an auto pistol press more firmly into the web of your hand. If it feels uncomfortable at first, it's nature's way of telling you you're doing it right. You won't feel the advantage until the actual shooting starts. If you want comfort, wrap

“ IF IT FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE AT FIRST, IT’S NATURE’S WAY OF TELLING YOU YOU’RE DOING IT RIGHT. ”

perhaps preventing it entirely.

Student feedback tells me this is one of the key “it made me shoot better” take-aways from my classes. The worst critique is usually “It doesn’t work better than how I was holding the gun before.” Pro tip — if the new technique is as good as what you had before, nature is telling you with some repetition it will very likely work even better if you just give it a chance.

Some shooters tell me it reduces recoil. Strictly speaking, this is not possible as we can’t change the laws of physics. What’s happening is the gun *is* moving less in the hand on recoil, creating the illusion of less “kick.” But, of course, “the perception is the reality ...”

CAVEATS

Nothing works 100 percent with everyone with every gun. If you have a big hand with thick fingers and a short trigger guard handgun like a 1911 auto or a frontier-style single action revolver, there probably won’t be enough trigger guard for you to wedge under. Might you miss the grasp so the index finger of the support hand then ends up level with the other fingers? Yes, and if it happens, you’re



“X marks the spot” where the middle finger of the support hand contacts bottom of the trigger guard for a Wedge Hold.

Seen from below, the support hand index finger is forward to wedge the front of the trigger guard upward. Mas assures us he was smiling on the inside!



just back to your regular two-hand grasp: no great loss.

Give it a fair try for a few hundred rounds. As I tell my students, anything new goes through a three-way triage. If it works better for you from the beginning, adopt it and put it in “the front pouch of your bag of tricks.” If you understand the rationale but it doesn’t work any better, put it one pouch

back in the tool bag for use with a different gun, or perhaps, one of your students who can benefit from it more than you. And if it doesn’t work for you at all, flush it down the toilet and you’ve still had a valid learning experience. So far, the Wedge Hold has generally ended up in one of the two front pouches of my students’ tool bags of techniques.

THE M2 CARBINE FULL-AUTO “LIGHT RIFLE” IS A HOOT TO SHOOT

One of World War II’s most successful infantry weapons was the U.S. Carbine Caliber .30. It was manufactured by no fewer than 10 factories to the tune of over six million in only about four years. When the U.S. Government decided they needed a “light rifle” to replace .45 Auto Model 1911A1s, their original specs called for select-fire capability — semi-auto or full-auto — at the push of a button or lever. It didn’t happen. During testing of initial prototypes in May 1941, full-auto reliability was spotty.

Thereafter the select-fire stipulation was dropped because the new weapon was needed quickly. (The “light rifle” moniker was also shed along the way.) Eventually, in further testing later in 1941, Winchester’s prototype won, became the legendary M1 .30 Carbine and served U.S.

forces around the world until well into the 1960s.

FORGETTING THE BLASTER

However, the selection fire option had not been forgotten. By 1944 reports from battlefields indicated full-auto .30 Carbines would have been an asset. The idea was the carbine should be accurate to 300 yards with aimed, semi-auto fire, with full-auto coming into play in short-range “emergency” situations. Those Japanese “Banzai charges” come to mind.

First needed were magazines with higher capacity. Obviously 15-rounders as standard with semi-auto M1 .30 Carbines were too limited for a full-auto. Thus a 30-round curved one was developed even before full-auto designs have been accepted. By July, 1944, Inland Manufacturing — the

largest producer of M1 .30 Carbines — had developed an experimental full-auto designated T4.

Here’s something I did not know, even having been a M1 .30 Carbine fan for over 50 years — 500 T4 “experimental” .30 Carbines were produced along with 8,500 curved 30-round magazines and sent to various military bases for testing. Some were sent to the Pacific Theater of Operations for combat use. By September 1944, the government accepted the Inland modification as the “U.S. Carbine Caliber .30 M2.” Semi-auto .30 Carbines were then classified as Limited Standard.

BUILDING AND REBUILD

Only Winchester and Inland were contracted to produce the new M2. Production of the new full-auto version began in the spring of 1945. Since Germany surrendered in May 1945 and Japan followed in August, it’s doubtful if any M2s built from scratch saw combat during the war.

“MY M2 IS A HOOT TO SHOOT. WHILE NOT A TACK-DRIVER IN SEMI-AUTO, IT’S PERFECTLY ADEQUATE FOR ITS INTENDED COMBAT PURPOSE.”



Duke firing his
M2 .30 Carbine.



The versions of .30 Carbines — M1 (top) with no bayonet lug. Second is a U.S. M1A1 with folding stock for paratroopers. Bottom is an M2 with curved 30-round magazine.

Post-war M1 .30 Carbines were called in for refurbishing. Bayonet lugs were installed, non-adjustable aperture rear sights were replaced with fully-adjustable types and many thousands were converted to M2. Most, but not every one, of the conversions received a “2” over-stamp on the M1.

HIGH POINT

It was in the Korean War of 1950 to 1953 when M2 .30 Carbines saw their heyday. They were widely issued to Army and Marine Corps troops. There were reports of poor performance at times due to a lack of stopping power (.30 Carbine is a 110-gr. FMJ at 2,000 fps) but there were also reports of their effectiveness during “human wave” attacks by Chinese “volunteers.” Both M1 and M2 .30 Carbines were also used extensively in the Vietnam War by both sides.

TANK HAS HIS FUN

Personally speaking, my very first centerfire firearm was an M1 .30 Carbine as sold by the Director of Civilian Marksmanship (DCM) to NRA members. I was 16 and my father purchased one for me. Many .30 Carbines, including some handguns, have



This small lever at the M2's left side determines semi-auto or full auto. It is forward in this photograph meaning the carbine is set for full auto.

passed through my hands over the years but it was not until 2008 that I endured the ATF's red tape and several months' wait to take delivery of an M2 .30 Carbine. Actually, it was an over-stamped M1 produced by the Saginaw Steering Gear Corporation during World War II. Converting an M1 to M2 required special parts and a heavier stock was designed with a recess cut into the left side for the select-fire lever.

My M2 is a hoot to shoot. While not a tack-driver in semi-auto, it's perfectly adequate for its intended combat purpose.

Then, with a simple flick of the thumb, it becomes a machine gun! And it's no “chug-master” like the M3 .45 auto submachine gun — aka “grease gun.” M2 .30 Carbines' full-auto RPM (rounds per minute) are rated at a fast 750 to 800. It will empty a 15-round magazine in a couple seconds. Like many before me I've found the curved 30-round mags to be less reliable than the straight 15-round types. Although not considered a submachine gun *per se*, it's one in practical fact and perhaps one of the best ever.



MOSSBERG 590A1 RETROGRADE BACK-TO-BASICS FIREPOWER

Back before the colors of Flat Dark Earth, Ranger Green, Coyote, camouflage *du jour*, etc., all the cool kids used Scorched Earth, also commonly called Black. I was as cool — or guilty — as everyone else and clearly remember the day I replaced the walnut stock on my Remington 870 with black plastic.

As I have become older — I like to refer to it as *seasoned* — my tastes have returned to appreciating stocks, both on long guns and handguns, made from a nice piece of wood. I must not be alone in this thought process because when I attended the 2019 SHOT Show, I saw many firearms which haven't worn wood

for some time suddenly sporting organic stocks. One of these was the Mossberg 590A1 Retrograde.

GETTING WOOD

One reason why synthetic stocks became popular with manufacturers is it's easier and less expensive to injection mold a stock than to machine one from wood. The Mossberg 590A1 Retrograde's stock is made from dark walnut and has pressed checkering in the pistol grip area. The matching forend is

Mossberg's "cob" style, ensuring the user's hand will not slip while cycling the action.

THE GUN

The Mossberg 590A1 is a rugged, combat-proven 12-gauge shotgun. In fact, it is the only pump-action shotgun to pass MilSpec 3443E. The shotgun has a 20", heavy walled cylinder-bore barrel capable of firing 2 3/4" or 3" shells. The 590A1 has a corrosion-resistant Parkerized finish with a total capacity of nine rounds. It features dual extractors, positive steel-to-steel lockup, twin action bars and an anti-jam elevator ensuring smooth operation.

One of the most renowned attributes of Mossberg shotguns is the tang-mounted safety on the top of the receiver. It is vastly more ergonomic than the safeties on most shotguns, provides for ambidextrous operation and can be operated even when the shooter is wearing gloves. The slide release, located behind the trigger guard, can also be operated with either hand.

The fully-adjustable rear sight is protected by wings while the front sight sits on a serrated ramp with a fluorescent orange insert. There is a sling stud located at the rear of the stock and the front sling stud is installed in the magazine cleanout tube's retaining knob.



The rear sight is fully adjustable and the tang-mounted safety is easily manipulated by either hand.



The Mossberg 590A1 Retrograde (above) is a rugged shotgun with a total capacity of nine shells (8+1). The front sight (below) sports a high-visibility fluorescent orange insert.

If you're feeling froggy after Rambo X (or whatever the movie number is up to), there is a bayonet lug brazed to the magazine tube for attaching the M16's (M7 or M9) bayonet. Along with the ventilated handguard, it does look cool.

If the shotgun is fired with the bayonet fixed, however, it has been reported the lug will shear off. If this is the case, why in the wide, wide world of sports would you want to go with the pokey thing in the first place if you have ammo available?

STOKE 'ER WITH SHORTIES

In terms of ammo availability, the 590A1 with its eight-plus-one capacity already has more ammo on tap than 99 percent of shotguns. If you feed it the Aguila 1 3/4" Minishells, capacity runs to 12+1. Each buckshot shell has 11 #4 buck pellets.

These shells have two perceived drawbacks. The first is they don't pattern very well at a distance. This is generally true but in my testing with the 590A1 Retrograde all 11 pellets went into the head of a standard

IPSC target at 30 feet — perfectly acceptable accuracy for defending your castle.

The second, and more important drawback, is the Minishells don't function reliably in most shotguns. A device called the OPSol Mini-Clip will solve the functioning problem in Mossberg pump guns and transform the shorty into a

"high-capacity" firearm.

I have one in my home-defense Mossberg 590A1 and it increases the overall capacity using the Minishell to a total of 165 .24-caliber projectiles on tap. The OPSol Mini-Clip installs and removes in seconds and only runs about \$15.

HEAVY TRUTH

No truer statement was ever made than, "There's no such thing as a free lunch." The tradeoff for the longer barrel and more capacity results in a muzzle-heavy firearm. No big deal if the shotgun is used for home-defense or taken out of a squad car for a relatively short period of time. If being used in a three-day course such as the Gunsite 260, the muzzle heaviness will become a very big deal for most folks.

I mentioned earlier a machined wood stock costs more to manufacture so expect to pay about \$150 more for the Retro model than a synthetic stocked 590A1. Opinions vary, but to me, it's worth it. MSRP is \$930.



The unique OPSol Mini-Clip allows reliable functioning with Aguila Minishells and increases capacity from 8+1 to 12+1.

www.mossberg.com
www.opsolmini-clip.com

LEVERGUN LOADS: THE .41 MAGNUM LOADING THE UNCOMMON CLASSIC

I spotted what looked to be a pre-Remington Marlin levergun on the used gun rack in a local shop. It looked to be in excellent condition with a 20" barrel, checkered forearm and checkered pistol grip. I figured it was a .44 Magnum and since I already had my original Marlin 336 .44 Magnum from the 1960s as well as one of the very rare Trapper Model 1894 .44 Magnums, I almost didn't bother to look at it. But something within me stirred and said, "Pick it up!" so I did.

I noticed the virtually brand-new condition with no handling marks whatsoever

and it even appeared to be unfired. I looked at the barrel marking, saw, ".41 Magnum" and wasted no time writing a check and filling out the paperwork. This was the only Marlin .41 Magnum I had ever seen — they are as rare as honest politicians!

COMPOUND PROBLEMS

Loading up a batch of .41 Magnum loads especially for use in the Marlin, I prepared to enjoy myself while sighting-in. That's when the problems started. I could not sight it at 25 yards as the bullets were all over the target. I said to my friend Denis:

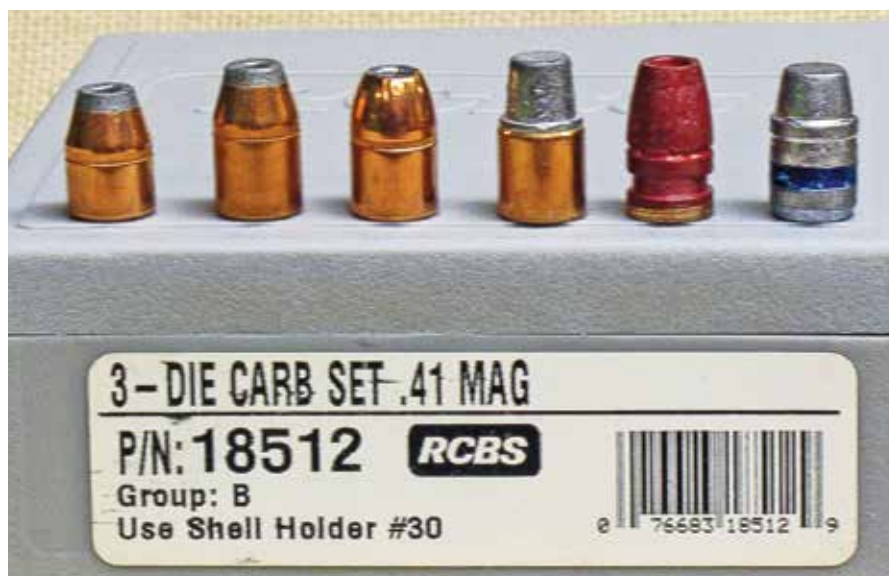
"Maybe this is why it was on the used gun rack. Looks like someone tried to shoot it and it wouldn't group so they traded it in." However, I learned long ago not to give up too quickly. I continued shooting and before I had fired 50 rounds, the groups started to tighten up and it got better and better until I was getting groups well under 1" for three shots at 45 yards.

Like most Marlin leverguns, this one has a problematic compound word on the side of the barrel, especially when shooting cast bullets — "Micro-Groove." Perhaps whoever had this Marlin had tried to fire cast bullets without knowing how picky these barrels can be. It just took a little time for this barrel to be shot-in or conditioned or whatever you want to call it. Once the process was done, the gun was ready to perform.

“ THIS WAS THE ONLY MARLIN .41 MAGNUM I HAD EVER SEEN — THEY ARE AS RARE AS HONEST POLITICIANS! ”



John's jacketed bullet loads in the .41 Magnum Marlin.



John's bullets of choice (L-R) — 170-gr. and 210-gr. Sierra JHCs, 210-gr. Hornady XTP-JHC, Speer 220-gr. SWC, 212-gr. PCHPGC and the Oregon Trail 215-gr. SWC.



Three of John's favorite powders for the .41 Magnum as well as other Magnums are Alliant #2400, Hodgdon's H110 and 4227.

DEVELOPMENTAL DEAL

All sixgun-caliber carbines, especially if it is to be sided with a sixgun, call for load development first. Sixguns will fire just about anything which will drop into the chamber but leverguns are much more particular about what they will feed, chamber and shoot, especially those with Micro-Groove barrels. My .41 sixguns have no problem with 250-gr. Keith-style bullets

nor 260-gr. WFN (Wide Flat Nosed) bullets, however the first one will not feed in the levergun as the wadcutter shoulder hangs up while the latter is too long to feed through the action.

BULLET CHOICES

My bullets of choice for loading the .41 Magnum Marlin are the Sierra 170-gr. and 210-gr. Jacketed Hollow Cavity and the

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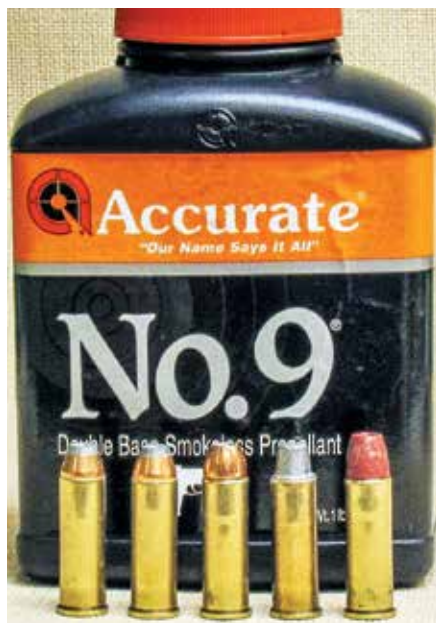
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Hornady 210-gr. XTP-JHP. These are pretty well standard bullets for use in .41 Magnum sixguns and work just fine in the Marlin levergun. I also have a diminishing supply of the old-style Speer 220-gr. SWC with the copper cup and lead core. I wish these were still made; however they aren't so I use them sparingly.

My final choice was a bullet I had not yet tried. With all of these I first loaded dummy rounds to make sure they would feed through the action and chamber. I expected trouble with this final choice, however there was none. It is a 212-gr. cast hollow point gas check design supplied to me by my friend and fellow shootist Dick Thompson who powder coated them before sending. Those five bullets are used for Magnum loads and I have one more for assembling easy-shooting loads, the Oregon Trail 215-gr. cast semi-wadcutter bullet. I did not expect great results from this bullet through the Micro-Groove barrel, but there is only one way to find out — actually shooting them.

POWDER IT UP

For normal .41 Magnum loads my powders of choice for full-house loads are Alliant's #2400, Hodgdon's H110 and Western Powder's Accurate #9. For slightly milder loads I opt for Hodgdon's IMR 4227. With the Oregon Trail bullet I want very pleasant shooting loads so the powders of choice are Alliant's Red Dot and Winchester 231. My loading dies are the RCBS 3-Die Carbide Set and my brass of choice is Starline.



Accurate #9 gives excellent results in a .41 Magnum Marlin.



Very pleasant light shooting loads can be assembled with W231 and Red Dot under the Oregon Trail 215 SWC.

RESULTS

I found the 170-gr. Sierra to be picky in this particular Marlin, however with 22.0 grains of #4227, muzzle velocity was just under 1,600 fps with a 1" group for three shots at 45 yards. The heavier 210-gr. Sierra JHC proved to be a stellar performer in the gun with 18.0 grains of Accurate #9, 18.0 grains of #2400, 22.0 grains of H110 and 20.0 grains of #4227 all giving very small groups well under 1". The H110 produced a 5/8" group at 45 yards. Muzzle velocities were 1,598 fps, 1,678 fps, 1,679 fps and 1,440 fps respectively. Similar results were obtained with the Hornady 210-gr. XTP-JHC, giving me the tightest group of any jacketed bullet, 3/8", over 18.0 grains of #2400 and a muzzle velocity of 1,636 fps. This same load under the Speer 220-gr. SWC gave 50 fps more muzzle velocity and grouped into 3/4" for three shots at 45 yards.

I did not have a clue as to how the

212-gr. PCHPGC would perform as I had never tried this bullet before in a sixgun. Actually, I didn't expect it to perform very well in a rifle barrel either but I was very pleasantly surprised. With four different loads I average 3/4" with 18.0 grains of #2400 coming in just under 1,700 fps. This should be a very potent hunting load. I got another very pleasant surprise when I tried the Oregon Trail Hard Cast 215-gr. SWC. Both 6.0 grains of Red Dot and 6.5 grains of W231 gave muzzle velocities around 1,100–1,150 fps with 1" groups, however I really hit the easy-shooting jackpot with 8.0 grains of Unique coming in over 1,300 fps and giving an amazing 3/8" for three shots at 45 yards.

It is a little easier these days to find .41 Magnum leverguns as Henry Repeating Arms chambers their Big Boy thusly. Now Marlin is once again producing quality leverguns, perhaps they will bring back the .41 Magnum also.

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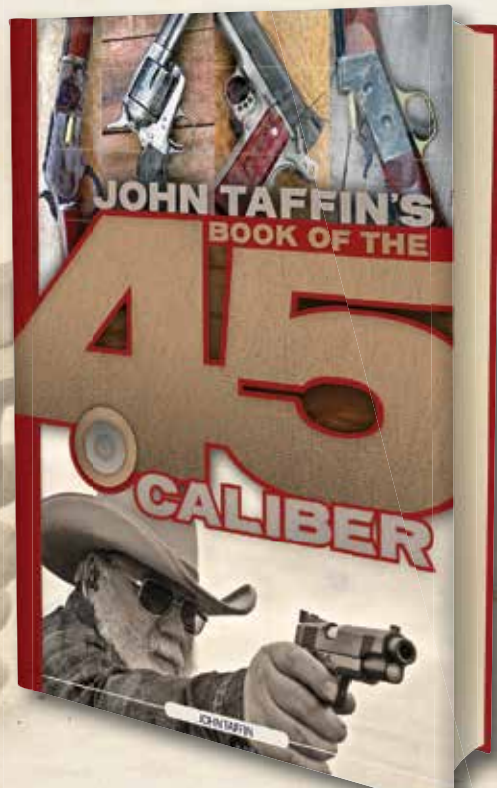


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SIG SAUER ASP 20

AIR-POWERED ELEGANCE, REAL RIFLE FEEL

Tom McHale

Are you a big boy or big girl? Then you need a big-kid air rifle! Sure, anyone can buy an “airgun” at the local Cheap Junk Emporium Mart, but you won’t find any of these type of rifles on the shelves. The SIG SAUER ASP 20 is a proper rifle which just happens to be powered by air instead of pyrotechnic combustibles.

SILENT WORLD DOMINATION

A few years ago, when SIG embarked on its strategy to take over the world by entering every known shooting sports product category, one quiet (at the time) but dedicated group was figuring out how to make world-class airguns for recreation, hunting and training. Since then, we’ve seen a barrage of air-powered clones of classic SIG centerfire designs like the 1911, P226 and P229, P320, M17, MCX and MPX. If you have any of the noisier equivalents of these firearms, you may have already discovered the joy and training value of having low-powered BB and pellet alternatives you can use at home with your existing holsters and other gear.

More recently, the SIG Air folks have created an air rifle all their own. The SIG SAUER ASP 20 is a break-barrel rifle,

offered in .177 and .22 calibers, that’s all elegance and class. I’ll bet Princes William and Harry have a couple stashed away. We’re talking real wood, actual steel, a centerfire-like heft and performance to boot.

The unique break-barrel design is part of what makes this air rifle special. Break-barrels have been plagued since the beginning of time with droopy barrels as they age. Because you unlock and relock the barrel and receiver with every shot, over the years the lockup loosens. The barrel eventually “droops” a bit low relative to the perfect orientation of its youth. The proprietary breech lock on the ASP 20 looks something like a key stone in an arch and creates perfect and consistent alignment of barrel and receiver over time. You won’t suffer the embarrassment of droopy shots.

I should mention the included scope. Unlike Cheapo Mart package rifles, the Whiskey ASP scope is a first-class piece of gear. It’s made for air-powered shooting — the parallax focuses as close as seven yards. At airgun distances, a normal rifle scope will give you a sight picture similar to a mezc-induced haze because it’s designed to focus at 50 yards or more. The Whiskey sight picture is crisp and clear, the reticle is fine, and the optic is built like a tank. It’s legit.



The SIG ASP 20 is made right in the same factory as all their centerfire guns in Exeter, NH.



Tom shot this 0.86" five-shot group at 20 yards from a wobbly card table using SIG SAUER Match Pb 13.73-gr. pellets.



The SIG SAUER ASP 20 feels and handles like a true centerfire rifle, making it ideal for training — or plinking, hunting and pest control!



The included SIG Whiskey ASP scope focuses as close as seven yards. It's designed specifically for airgunning.



The unique barrel mechanism provides bank-vault lockup. For accuracy, SIG drills through the receiver and breech simultaneously so the parts on each rifle are perfectly mated.

MADE IN THE U.S.A.

What's interesting about the SIG SAUER ASP 20 is it's made in the United States in the same Exeter, NH factory where SIG makes so many other centerfire rifles and pistols. On the shop floor, the ASP 20 production area is right in the middle of everything else. The barrels are made right there using the same technology used on louder and fierier models. The technicians who complete assembly come straight off the centerfire production lines, although they're specifically trained on the air products. What all this means is the ASP 20 is a SIG SAUER product through and through, from design to manufacturing. It's not some overseas knock off with a licensing deal logo slapped on the box.

SHOOTING THE ASP 20

Since airguns are more susceptible to wind thanks to those light pellets, I've built an indoor range in the large garage space under my raised home. It's walled-in, so wind conditions range from zero miles per hour to none at all. When my wife isn't home (shhh!) I set up a shooting bench in one corner and a target box in the opposite corner. This configuration gives me a full 20 yards — a good distance for testing most airguns.

Cocking the SIG ASP 20 is not as hard as the power level would imply. The SIG Air team has done some clever engineering to reduce the force required. Once you break the tight barrel to receiver lockup — a good thing — it's easy. As with any break barrel air rifle, be sure to engage the safety and keep your hand on the end of the barrel through the whole cocking

cycle. If you get careless, or something breaks, your loading fingers will be right in the way of a warp-speed closing-barrel-guillotine. Safety first! As a side note, the ambidextrous sliding safety doesn't automatically reengage with every shot. I like it because I prefer to control the safety myself, just like on most centerfire rifles.

RADAR LOVE

I've been using a new piece of gear that completes the indoor range experience. The folks at FX Airguns have invented a pocket radar chronograph barely bigger than a deck of cards which can measure velocities up to 1,100 feet per second and transmit data to a companion smartphone app. Nothing to set up down range, no optics to get wonky from weird indoor lighting and it's accurate. It's brilliant and the \$199.99 price point is not much more than an optical chrony.

I shot two types of .22-caliber pellets: SIG SAUER Match Pb (13.73 grains) and H&N Sport Barracuda Match (21.14 grains). According to the FX Pocket Chronograph, the SIG Match pellets averaged 876.7 feet per second and the Barracudas 678.0. As for accuracy, my wobbly card table bench produced 20-yard average group sizes of 0.86" and 0.64" for the SIG and Barracuda pellets.

The SIG SAUER ASP 20 is available in .177 and .22 caliber and you can choose either a synthetic (\$549.99) or wood (\$639.99) option. All models come equipped with the Whiskey ASP scope.



www.sigsauer.com



Designed by Yisrael Galil, originally produced by IMI and rebuilt to comply with U.S. laws by ATI, the Galeo is "a fitting homage to one of the great assault rifles."

AMERICAN TACTICAL IMPORTS GALEO RECREATING IDF'S CLASSIC GALIL

Frank Jardim

If you asked AK enthusiasts to rate the varied models of the venerable Galil by their quality of manufacture and shootability, the Israeli Galil, and perhaps its older cousin the Finnish RK 62, would top the list. American Tactical Imports (ATI) now makes a semi-automatic version you can own, built from genuine military IMI parts and new American receivers and barrels. At the end of my day on the range with the ATI Galeo, I was imagining a future where I forsake all my other AKs and run off with this Israeli beauty to live happily ever after. Galeo can do that to you.

HOME COOKING

Galeo rifles are built in-house at ATI's South Carolina facility in small batches using the best of the original Israeli Defense Force (IDF) Galil parts kits imported from Israel last year. These are combined with the five American-made components needed to meet the compliance requirements of USC 922r — receiver, barrel, magazine body, magazine follower and magazine floorplate.

The single, high-invincible, TAPCO Intrafuse 30-round magazine the rifle ships with accounts for three of those parts. If you want to use original steel 35-round magazines, ATI has them for \$24.99 but you will have to substitute three more American parts on the rifle to stay compliant.

To make their new receivers, ATI starts

with solid billets of 4140 CDA (Cold Drawn Annealed) steel and mills them to final form on their own CNC machining centers before sending them out for expert heat treating. From a cosmetic standpoint, the receiver appears to differ from the original only in terms of markings and the lack of the lightening cut on the right side below the ejection port, and the unsightly, shallow cut and screw hole on the left side intended for an optics mount rarely used by the IDF.

The Galeo's new American-built barrels come from the respected barrel makers at Bear Creek Arsenal. ATI reverse engineered the original IDF barrels with the same size gas port but improved them by adding nitrite treatment to increase wear and corrosion resistance. Rather than the original 1:12 rifling twist, ATI chose a 1:7 twist barrel to better stabilize 62-gr. and heavier bullets.

GET READY

The ATI Galeo I tested was set up as an AR, lacking the carry handle and bipod of the standard-issue version. Still it weighed 8.6 lbs. without a magazine with the early model wooden forend. Both wood and plastic are available. ATI doesn't offer a bipod or carry handle options but those parts are out there on the surplus market for those who want to set the rifle up like a standard-issue ARM-model.

ATI guarantees the Galeo will run with the modern TAPCO magazine only. There's no reason their Galeo shouldn't run with the good surplus steel magazines but ATI can't back your \$20 gun-show-find being out-of-spec, damaged, dirty, etc., etc. The IDF also issued 50-round magazines used in a light machinegun role but these are a bit harder to come by. They were not particularly popular with troops because their excessive length made it difficult to engage elevated targets when firing prone.



Impressive accuracy in a battle rifle: Frank's best 100-yard five-shot group was just 1.25" with Black Hills Ammunition 62-gr. Barnes TSX JHP.



The Galil is tame in terms of recoil but violent in operating action. Frank says several of his casings are still in low earth orbit!



The stock Galil piston (top) works fine but the KNS Adjustable Gas Piston is necessary for suppressor work or if you want to slow down the action speed.



BANGING IT OUT

The spacious facilities at the Knob Creek Shooting Range in West Point, Kentucky allowed me to test out the Galeo at targets out to 300 yards. The rifle's ambidextrous controls, especially the right-hand, thumb-operated safety, relieve it of the traditional AK's awkwardness of operation. The side-folding buttstock locks up solidly and doesn't compromise accuracy for more compact stowage. I found it comfortable. It allowed me a solid cheek-weld where the old AK under-folders permitted only an unsteady "jaw-weld" at best.

The fully adjustable front sight uses opposing screws to adjust windage and lock it in place, using just an ordinary screwdriver. The Galeo also includes the original Galil's integral, tritium, flip-up night sights though now exhausted of their glow. ATI has plans to import new replacements for them.

ACCURACY

Standing, off-hand, it was a snap to hit gallon milk jugs out to 150 yards thanks to the aperture rear sight and the rifle's nice, 4.75-lb. trigger pull. From the inside, the fire-control-group looks like a normal double-hook AK type with the exception of a separate trigger return spring. However, the travel before let-off is noticeably shorter than a standard AK trigger which means less time between squeeze and bang, with better accuracy overall.

For accuracy evaluation, I fired five-shot groups at 100 yards with iron sights from a prone, rested position. After testing six different loads with 55-gr. and 62-gr. bullet weights, the rifle definitely favored the heavier projectile. Accuracy was impressive — my tightest group being only 1.25". The best and fastest velocity load was Black Hills Ammunition 62-gr. Barnes TSX JHP that averaged 1.81" and 2,932 feet per second. Federal's Fusion MSR 62-gr. JSP hunting loads averaged 2.25" while Hornady Black 62-gr. FMJ averaged 2.79".

MILD YET WILD

Recoil in this heavy rifle was mild, but the action in all Galils is noticeably and typically violent. The cases I was able to recover were deeply dented on the side. Most of the cases simply went up and were never seen again, presumably caught



The Galil went into IDF service in 1972 and has performed well during multiple wars and insurgencies. Field troops love the function but hate the weight!

in low Earth orbit.

If you want to shoot the Galeo suppressed as anything other than a single-shot rifle, you need to replace the stock fixed gas piston with an adjustable one from KNS Precision. This upgrade allows you to easily fine tune the gas flow in the field with no tools. Even if you don't want a suppressor, the KNS adjustable piston lets you tame down the action speed and reduce wear and tear on the gun. Adding the American-made KNS piston also counts as another U.S. part toward USC 922r compliance if your goal is to use original magazines.

LABOR OF LOVE

ATI did a great job of recreating the classic Galil with the Galeo, making it a fitting homage to one of the great assault rifles of the Cold War. Company VP and COO Robert Bartl described the Galeo project as a "labor-of-love" and explained they were building up the rifles in small runs to maintain quality control. Quality was evident in the tight fit of the rifle, its impressive range performance, and naturally reflected in the \$1,299 MSRP.

If you aren't carrying it all day, every day, on the battlefield, I doubt its shooting qualities will ever lose their charm. From my point of view, beautiful workmanship and extreme durability in an AK variant are worth the extra ounces and dollars. 

www.americantactical.us
www.knsprecisioninc.com

CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued from page 8

Nazi troops took away the firearms from the farmers and the village people. soon after that the Jews and the Gypsies disappeared from the countryside, a few of their bodies were found, the rest sent off to prison. They had nothing to defend themselves with.

I pray to God that freedom loving people in our beloved United States take this lesson in history, so that we may keep and bear arms and the right to defend ourselves.

Don Humphrey

SHAVED BABY LLAMAS?

Love the magazine. Really miss Connor. One of the things I have looked forward to is his collected writings in book format. I'm one of those guys who likes source material in physical format so I can scribble in the margins and not worry about internet access (or censorship).

I'm unsure who actually owns his columns, but can the issue be looked into? Can ya poke him with a stick? There is a ton of collected wisdom in his writings and my writing hand is getting tired.

David D. "Sabu" Myers

My email reply to Mr. Myers: We own all his columns penned for FMG (GUNS and American Handgunner) ... maybe we should consider running a "Best of."



T/C Question

Unfortunately, I was recently told Mr. Connor is steadfastly refusing to come out of retirement, even after we resorted to gift boxes of money and then blackmail via doctored photographs. —BW

GUNS received this in reply: I knew those photos of the shaved baby llama with the Cool Whip weren't gonna do it. I will have to get a needle and thread and try to sew myself a field expedient copy of his works. Thank you very much for getting back to me.

David Myers

had a tag on it for \$150 and it looked like the stock was refinished by a 4-year-old with a can of lacquer and a washcloth. It is stamped Western Field. The guy wouldn't come down at all, so I left.

I only live 4 miles from the gun show so I went back up this afternoon (Sunday). He still had it and would soon have to tote it back out to his van. Still wanted \$150 for it — so I pulled out a \$100 bill and said, "Listen carefully to what this bill is saying to you." I got it for the \$100 and 10 minutes later I was shooting it. Amazing design for a 100-year-old shotgun. Since I got mine for \$50 less than you paid, I don't hate you anymore.

Dave Schmidt

SPAT RESOLVED

Clayton Walker, I hate you! Your article about the John Browning-designed Stevens 520 was bouncing around in my head when I went to a gun show yesterday. The owner

I'm glad our little spat resolved so amicably! Your story reminded me of what Branch Rickey once said: Luck is the

Spat Resolved



residue of design. Those of us armed with a knowledge of those old "department store" guns and a cool head for negotiation will find bargains to be plentiful. Congrats on your find! —Clayton

T/C QUESTION

After reading the July 2018 issue of *Guns Magazine* review of the Thompson Center Compass rifle by Holt Bodinson, I rushed out to our next evil gun show and bought one of these rifles. I went on the TC web site to register my warranty, completing this task took me to another window and a red box appeared stating to stop using all Compass rifles for safety reasons and a resolution would be issued shortly. Are you aware of this problem and have you heard anything from Thompson Center concerning this?

*Sincerely,
David N Hasenflu*

This recall affects Compass rifles manufactured prior to August 16, 2016. After communication between David and Holt, we got things resolved and David sent a follow-up:

I called them and learned my rifle was made Jan 2019 and the recall didn't apply; that made my day. Now just gotta find a good place to go shooting. Thanks.

David N Hasenflu

ELECTRIC PRIMERS AND STONE CLUBS

To Mike Venturino: In your "Montana Musings" article about accuracy loss due to firing pin problems, you stated: "If there is a firearm using metallic cartridges that operates without a firing pin, I'm completely unaware of it." Okay, I wanted to make you aware that around the turn of the century, Remington introduced the model 700 EtronX VSSF in 22-250, and 243 Win. This rifle did not have a firing pin but instead used a 9-volt battery to apply an electronic pulse to the special ammo with EtronX electric primers instead of a firing pin strike. It went over about as well as their 5mm Rimfire magnum or the Gyrojet series of rocket propelled bullets. If you could find them, EtronX primers for reloading ran about \$0.19 each, \$19 per 100! Great article about firing pin problems causing loss of accuracy. In decades of shooting/reloading, that thought never crossed my mind. I'm amazed.

Bert Brown

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Bert: I did remember that Remington had made an electric trigger at one time but since it went the route of the Gyrojet I ignored it. Yes, I'm old enough to have actually seen Gyrojets. Taffin is old enough to remember stone clubs! (Just joking.)
—MV



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

I want to thank Savage Arms for going the extra mile to help our program solve a huge problem. We were having extraction problems with our Savage MK 1 and 2 models of .22 LR. Nick White of Savage Arms came through with replacement parts of extractors, guides and spring clips. After installation of the new parts the problems were gone. It was refreshing to see this caliber of service and I want to express my gratitude and respect to a fine company that will stand behind its products. KUDOS Savage Arms.

James F. Yeoman,
Chairman, CMP Jr. Shooting Program



Mark Hampton 686

EARLY DELIVERY EXPLAINED

Dave Workman, terrific article in the January issue of *GUNS*. Not sure why *GUNS* sends me the Jan issue in November. Maybe RH can't wait for 2020 to arrive.

"Wild Bill"

The "early" publication dates are normal across the magazine publishing industry primarily because of consumer preference

for fresh news. As various magazines within a genre publish on different dates, a situation arises where one magazine might only publish one day later than a competitor but appears "newer" (and more valuable to readers) than the others. Therefore, most publishers publish a month ahead so "old" magazines are never sitting on the shelf past their "expiration date". The practice was started decades ago. —BW

Early Delivery Explained





One More Pump



Mystery Gun

MARK HAMPTON 686

Completely agree with Mark Hampton's 686 article in the January issue of *GUNS*. The first handgun my father bought me when I turned 21 was a 686 no dash 6". Fell in love with that gun at first shot. I now have other 686s in different barrel sizes, including 2-1/2" Mag-na-port and don't forget S&W's own version, PowerPort 686 6" inch, which I happen to own. Once you own one, you kind of want to own all barrel sizes!

A.T. Harris

Me too! The 686 has been on my "wish list" for years and unfortunately, they keep appreciating in price. I continually find myself saying, "Maybe at the NEXT gun show ..." One of these days I'm just going to have to bite the bullet and pry open my wallet! —BW

ONE MORE PUMP

In regards to David Freeman's article on pump-action rifles (*GUNS* January issue), I've a dandy to add. About 30+ years ago I bought a Rossi model 62 slide action in .22 LR, a copy of the Winchester "Gallery" gun. It is also a takedown. It is still like new and a joy to shoot ...

Laurence J. McFall

ANOTHER O-RING FIX

John Taffin's *Campfire Tales* in the December edition of *GUNS* has a letter addressing a reader's problem also suffered by Mr. Taffin and many others — the inner magazine tube being loose, and sometimes falling out of its outer cover on Winchester's 94-22 and others. Solution is simple and costs only a few cents. Simply take your inner magazine tube to your hardware store, buy a rubber "O-ring" that fits over the mag tube, roll the ring to the knurled end of the tube. That has worked perfectly on my 93-22 and costs virtually nothing.

Ray Shaw

MYSTERY GUN

I received this boot pistol many years ago and have seen none like it. There are no readable markings. It is chambered for a .22 cal bullet and the barrel is rifled. Can you tell me anything about it?

Fred Olefson

That's a Stevens Model J, as I recall. Worth around the \$150 mark. Safe to shoot with modern .22 standard velocity loads. I only shoot shorts in mine.

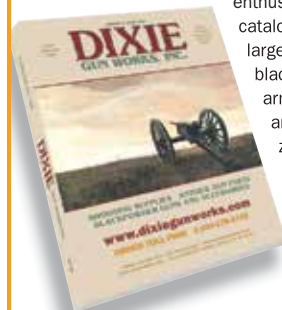


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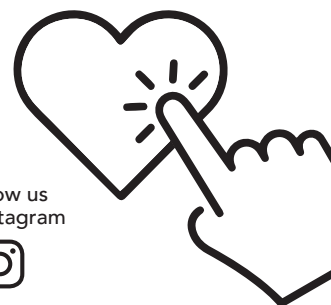
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ROCK RIVER ARMS

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TACTICAL CARBINE

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MIKE CUMPSTON WITH STAN JAROSZ

Rimfire conversion units for the AR platform, as well as complete .22 long rifle arms, have been around about as long as the rifle itself. My experience with them is far from extensive, though in the mid-'80s I harvested two bullfrogs with a Colt conversion on top of a CAR 16 with the switch on full buzz. This is about the only way to smoke two B-frogs at basically the same time.

A decade or more ago, I shot the Colt rimfire “understudy” to the Stoner platform and, as seems to be the case with other AR 22s, selection of materials, design and construction are — in keeping with the significantly lower price — not on the same

plane as the center-fire rifles. The reliability of previous .22s could be described as “Tedious and Occasional.” Rock River Arms changed this situation at SHOT 2019 with the introduction of a family of bone-serious complete rifles built of the same material and to the same standard as their well-respected center-fire line.

LINEUP

There are three variations. The basic MID A4 is a knock-off of the U.S. military-issue carbine with the familiar plastic handguard. The next model is an NM A4 CMP Trainer featuring a longer stainless match-chambered heavy barrel inside an M-Lock



The IM22 Tactical Trainer is the first of a triad of rimfire rifles built to the same standards as the entire family of Rock River Arms ARs. The 50-yard groups shot from the Caldwell Lead Sled (right) averaged well under an inch.

alloy rail. As the designation implies, it's deemed an understudy for National Match and Civilian Marksmanship gear.

The Tactical Carbine was the first model out the door in late Summer 2019 and the one we have on hand for testing. The Tactical Carbine, like the NM/CMP, comes with an alloy hand guard configured for M-lock accessories. All three models are optics-ready with a Picatinny rail full length on the receiver and at the front of the hand guard.

The Tactical Carbine (like the MID A4) has a 16" barrel and weighs 6 lbs., 4 oz. after we mounted a TRUGLO Ignite 30mm electronic dot sight over a set of auxiliary Irons from Ozark Armament. Common to all three models is the six-position collapsible stock, while the Tactical and CMP Trainer models have

the catch enclosed inside of the skeletal structure to shield from inadvertent release. With the stock fully forward, the carbine is 32.5" long and 37.25" at full extend.

SPEC IT UP

The lower unit is basic to the RRA line — a forged aluminum lower marked "RRA LAR 15 M Multi Caliber." There is also a polymer variation costing about \$100 less. The upper is likewise forged aluminum with chrome moly 16" barrel with 1:16 twist. The trigger is a mil-spec two-stage version with an ideal 5 1/2-lb. pull. The A2 Flash Hider on the suppressor-threaded barrel rounds out the features falling short of the Full Gorilla only in rifles lacking a bayonet lug and grenade launcher.

MANUAL OF ARMS

A basic construction and dismounting drill, unlike many of the rimfires, is a close mirror of the larger rifles though a bolt-mounted recoil spring takes the place of the standard buffer tube arrangement. The buffer tube is functionally superfluous, giving rise to the notion the system might be an ideal basis for a handgun or even a quality knock-off of the C96 Mauser. The receiver has no forward assist. This is a good thing as applying force to chamber a rimfire round is not a good thing to do.

The bolt lock system also differs from the center-fire ARs. It locks all the way back with an empty magazine in place but there is no way to manually lock it back when the magazine is out. Removing the empty magazine drops the bolt and it's necessary to work the charge handle to chamber a round. The manual bolt lock will lock the bolt back about 3/4" and can be used to close the bolt from this



The muzzle-heavy carbine hangs steady on the 100-yard turkey. Mike found the turkey hard to miss with the LAR 22 and the 2-minute dot sight.



The back-up iron sights are in mil-spec profile and easy to use with or without the optical sight mounted.



The TRUGLO Ignite with a 2-minute red dot provides fast target acquisition and a wide field of view. Windage and elevation adjustments are 1/2 minute.



The bolt can be manually locked back about 3/4" out of battery — convenient for flagging the chamber at the range.



position. This would be a handy way of inserting and retaining the chamber flag required on many ranges.

THE FULL PACKAGE

The TRUGLO Ignite 30mm optic with a 2-minute dot and cantilever mount sits atop the flat receiver at the ideal height to allow co-witness with Ozark Armament Micro Flip Up back-up sights. The red dot sight runs on one AAA battery and toggles through 10 brightness levels. Suggested retail is a bit over \$200 but Optics Planet and Amazon list it at well under \$200.

Experience with more expensive electronic sights led me to install the battery and leave the unit in “off” mode for several days to see if the battery would die. It remained charged and the battery is still alive weeks later. The TRUGLO has a wide field of view and the multi-coated lenses are as clear as they should be.

I can't really address the sharpness of the dot. Both Stan and I have astigmatism that will grow faux fuzz on the best reticle. Nevertheless, I had no trouble shooting groups significantly smaller than the inch a 2-minute dot covers at 50 yards. The back-up sights are a good idea with any primary optical system and the Ozark Armory aperture sights provided excellent rapid-fire accuracy at 50 yards.

LOADING UP

I had five varieties of .22 long rifle ammunition and the rifle was totally reliable throughout a considerable amount of shooting. Aguila Super Extra and CCI Standard Velocity at 1073 fps and 1038 fps were standard velocity loads with 10-round spreads of 37 and 23 fps. Federal HV Match at 1,193 fps showed an extreme spread of 38 fps. CCI Mini-Mag solid clocked 1,203/81 the 37-gr. Mini-Mag HP read 1,293/93 fps.

Paradoxically, the Mini Mag RN and HP had the widest extreme spreads over 10 rounds but, in keeping with my long-term experience with this round, together with the CCI Standard Velocity, had the best and most consistent 5-round, 50-yard

groups over the Lead Sled. All three CCI loads produced back-to-back groups of .90 caliber and the hollow point shot the best group of the day at 0.73".

The LAR .22 seems not to be a bit “ammo sensitive.” Worst group of the day measured 1.2" with Aguila Super Extra standard velocity loads.

THE FUN PART

Given the superior quality of the LAR carbine and its sterling performance it seems only proper to avoid the word “plink.” Instead we, backed off 100 yards and “engaged” some white painted hanging steel — a silhouette turkey and a 10" round plate. Stan Jarosz shot a bench group on the round thing and then proceeded to shoot an off-hand cluster not much bigger. I concentrated on the steel *guajolote*, aiming at the top of its back to compensate for the 5" to 6" drop from a 50-yard zero, and proceeded to ding the thing regularly and at a brisk pace.

The 6.5-lb. rifle with the balance tilted toward the muzzle hangs very steady on target and the 5.5-lb. trigger is just about perfect for off-hand shooting. It seemed almost impossible to miss the 100-yard targets. We flipped up the Ozark back-up sights and shot the same targets off-hand from 50 yards. These sights clamp to the accessory rail, lying flat and out of the way until needed. They have the same small and large aperture as the basic M16 sight and adjust in the same manner. Acquisition of the sight picture through the intervening dot sight was unimpeded and it seemed to be impossible to miss even shooting at a frenetic, Dillon Thomas-like cadence.

Both Stan and I were very impressed with the Rock Island/LAR 22 and had a lot of fun ringing it out. It certainly put to rest my long-standing prejudices formed around the earlier rimfire AR Conversions. MSRP \$630, polymer lower \$550. 

www.rockriverarms.com
www.truglo.com



RUGER **'GO Wild'** Camo American Rifle

ROY HUNTINGTON

Yeah, I said it. Even “girls” can use a .300 WM — and so can senior “boys,” other shooters in general, youngsters and anyone else who hates to be beat-up by big boomers. The secret in this case is a smart rifle design, a superb muzzle brake and a dose of Hornady’s “Custom Lite” reduced-recoil ammo. More on all this later.

Since it was first announced, Ruger’s American Rifle has continued to cause their competition to keep eyebrows raised wondering what was going to happen next. With each new iteration, the platform gets new calibers, clever new features, more versatility and sometimes even fancy new colors.



Hornady’s line of “Custom Lite” loads for common calibers helps soften the blow for recoil-sensitive shooters. It turned the fire-breathing .300 WM into an accurate, friendly hunting companion.

A few years ago I shot one of the very first American Rifles out of the factory at FTW Ranch in Texas. Chambered in .30-06, the 12 rifles we had all shot sub-MOA and 3" 300-yard groups were almost easy — all this with a dead-stock \$375 street-price rifle. We all kept scratching our collective balding pates wondering how this could be. It turns out it’s because of some innovative bedding engineering, a great trigger, good barrels and attention to details. Imagine that!

LET’S GO WILD

The legacy continues with this handsome version decorated-up with Bronze Cerakote and the “GO Wild” camo. They call it “GO Wild” but I think it means like, um, “Going wild in the woods” — like “Be a wild animal” maybe? I think so because the pattern itself is muted and easy on the eyes — it’s not really wild and crazy. I like it, and I normally avoid camo because much of it screams “Camo!” which I believe qualifies as an oxymoron if there ever was one. “Hey, check out this camo here!” See? It just doesn’t make sense to me.

The rifle has a few features and benefits pushing the practical meter into the green happy zone. A comfy stock, soft, cushy recoil pad, a terrific trigger — Ruger calls it their “Marksman”



The separate box magazine’s design allows a good grip to place or change it and makes clearing the rifle easier than a blind floor plate design.

Ruger's "GO Wild" camo stock on their latest rendition of the American Rifle series goes well with the bronze Cerakote metal finish. It's a handsome rifle at any level.

PROOF EVEN 'GIRLS' CAN USE A .300 WM ...

trigger — a short, 70-degree bolt throw, a safety in the perfect spot on the tang and a magazine extended just enough you can actually grab it easily spells great-thinking on Ruger's part. Also, the rifle's stock is a lightweight synthetic blending, a classic look with modern "finger grippy areas." It feels great.

The bolt deserves a closer look too. It's a full-diameter bolt, not full of cut-outs and such, so it's strong, stiff and runs smoothly in the "round" receiver innards. It's also got dual cocking cams, making it easier to run the bolt while the rifle is at the shoulder. The patented "Power Bedding Block" system I hinted at positively locates the receiver each time it's installed, allowing the barrel to free-float. We may be giving away secrets here?

ACCURATE – AND LOUD

The barrel is actually cold hammer-forged, not some cheap "bulk-rifled" \$10 job. This is why accuracy isn't just "adequate" — it's *excellent*. Our test rifle, using low-recoil Hornady ammo, consistently shot 1" or less at 100 yards. The muzzle brake did its job on recoil. Don't shoot this without hearing protection though, and I don't care what you think about, "Oh, it's only one shot while hunting." One shot will blast your ears into the dead-zone,



Suzi Huntington's nice elk using this very test rifle. She found the recoil and weight/ergonomics of the Ruger to be very friendly and easy to tote at 10,000 feet!

as it were, and if you have to shoot a time or two more in a row, you may as well start learning to say, "Huh? What'd you say?" A good brake is a give-and-take thing. I wear ear-pro when I hunt so don't mind a brake at all.

The rifle comes with a factory installed Picatinny rail and without irons of any sort. This is a rifle you'd scope so the omission isn't a problem. The gun weighs 7 lbs., bare naked, has a 24" barrel and a "fit anybody" 13.75" length of pull — more smart thinking.

While it can easily handle standard .300 Win. Mag ammo, loading down or finding something like the limited-run Hornady reduced recoil stuff really takes the sting out while still delivering plenty of performance. In our case, it chronos at around the 2,800 fps with Hornady's classic 150-gr. SST bullet.

Wife Suzi (the "girl" in the title who gave me permission to say as much) took a huge Elk at about 280 yards just fine. She commented several times about how comfortable the rifle shot. "It feels more like my .308 Remington Police rifle than a brute of a .300 WM." The horse's mouth, as it were.

At an MSRP of \$629, buy one, shoot it, carry it, use it, enjoy it. Heck, take it to Africa someday too! It's as close to a do-all rifle as I can imagine.



Right to Left: 6.5 Creedmoor, .308 Win., .30-06, .300WM "Lite" load and .375 H&H. Using .300 WM light loads, you can turn this brute into a versatile .308/.30-06-performance companion.

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www.hornady.com



The new Springfield Armory M1A Tanker (left) really hits the mark for military rifle enthusiasts or those who want good firepower in a ranch- and vehicle-friendly package!

The flip-up buttplate (right) was originally conceived as a full-auto shooting aid but nearly all M14-variants still hang on to this official anachronism.



M1A TANKER



WILL DABBS, MD PHOTOS: ROB JONES/THE IMAGESMITH, LLC

Springfield Armory is a powerhouse in the contemporary American gun world. Resurrected in 1974 from the ashes of the venerable 200-year-old government armory, the modern iteration of Springfield Armory offers today's civilian shooters a unique menu of tactical, hunting, defensive and recreational weapons.

The Springfield Armory M1A has been around for 45 years. An Information Age civilian rendition of the classic GI M14 combat rifle, the M1A in its several modern guises remains on the cutting edge of today's gun technology. The most recent M1A Tanker takes everything righteous and wholesome about the classic M1A and shrinks it down to a more manageable length. The origins of this remarkably capable defensive and sporting firearm have deep roots.

WAR STORY

I both loved and hated working in the VA hospital. The patients were all sick as stink, but there was never any shortage of cool stories. I did my time in the VA as our crop of irreplaceable World War II vets was wearing out. When things got slow all you needed to do was find a door ajar with a light burning to guarantee an engaging tale.

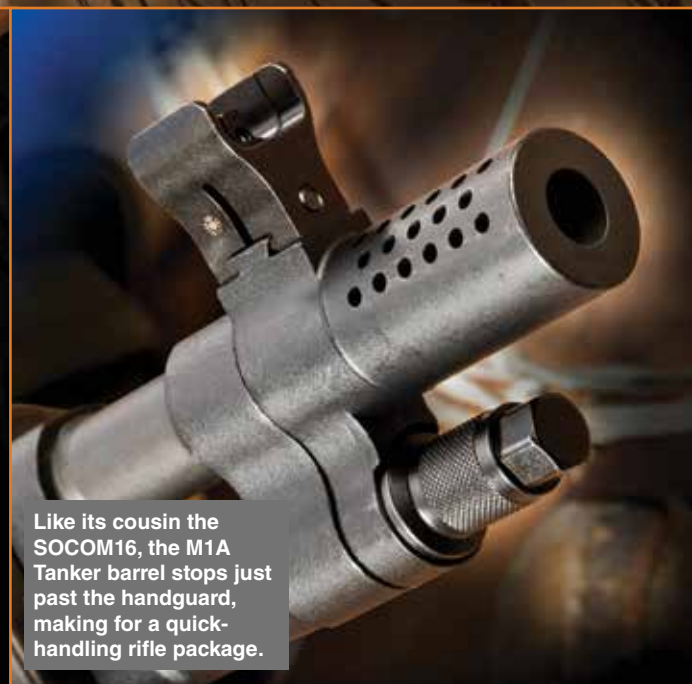
Mr. Mahaffey landed on Omaha beach in an M4 Sherman tank right after D-Day. Before his war was over he had his tank as well as another four like it shot out from under him. Each time he lost at least one friend. Those of us who came later simply have no idea.

He always regaled me with the silly funny stories, never the other sorts. He once happened upon an unattended Belgian

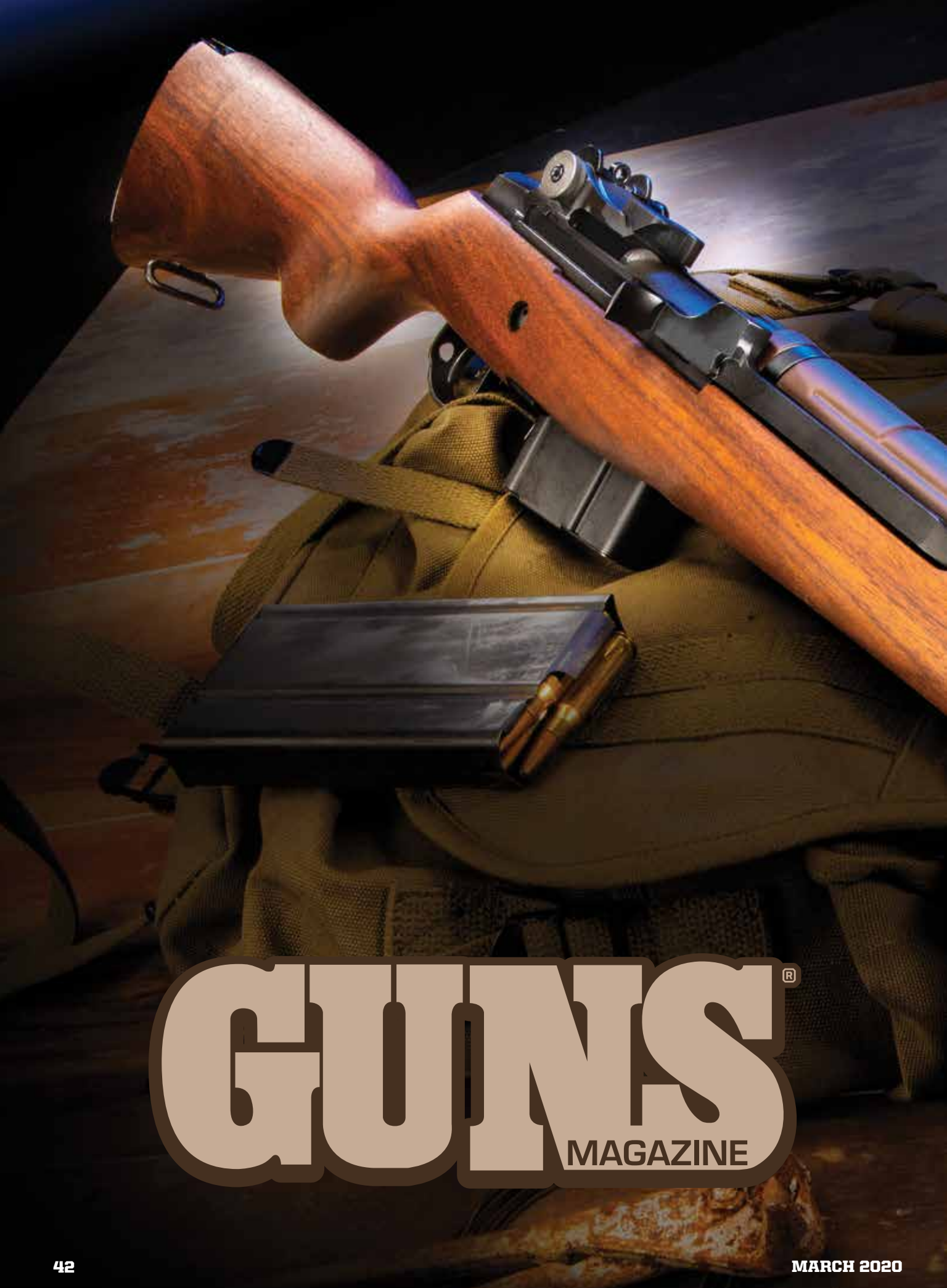
INFORMATION AGE AWESOME, CLASSIC COOL



Ten rounds of .308 Win resting in the low-profile magazine should solve most of life's challenges around the farm, the hunting field or as a self-defense weapon.



Like its cousin the SOCOM16, the M1A Tanker barrel stops just past the handguard, making for a quick-handling rifle package.

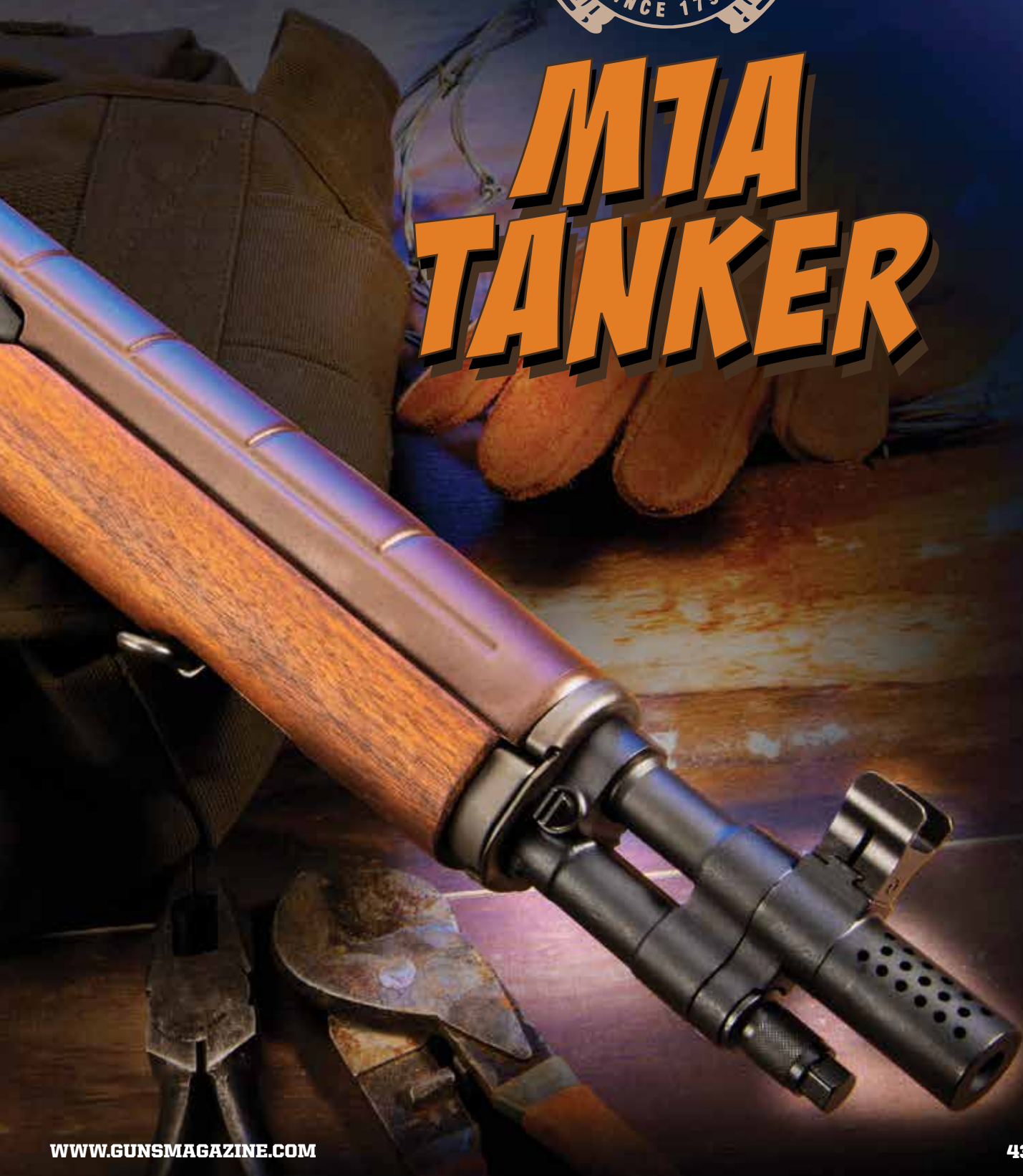


GUNS[®]

MAGAZINE



M7A TANKER



warehouse stacked high with cognac. Proper booze was like gold in liquid form in 1945 Europe, so his guys piled the engine deck of their tank high with pilfered alcohol.

Later the same afternoon Mr. Mahaffey was rumbling down a Belgian trail in his tank, he and his crew imagining all the bounty soon to be theirs once they bartered the cognac. Out of the clear blue sky a single German mortar round plopped onto the engine deck of their moving tank, obliterating every drop of the booze without harming the vehicle. What remained of their dreams ran uselessly off the vehicle and into the thirsty Belgian soil.

No mortarman is good enough to hit a moving vehicle with a single round. The event was clearly random. However, Mr. Mahaffey took it as a sign from God to eschew alcohol going forward.

Mr. Mahaffey said his tanks were unimaginably cramped on the inside. The Commander in a Sherman actually rode wrapped around the gunner from behind while in combat. What little extra space there might have been was filled with ammunition, gear and personal effects. An armored vehicle crewman's individual weapon must therefore be compact.

SHORT HISTORY

In the fall of 1944 two parallel efforts strived to produce a shortened M1 Garand. Engineers at Springfield Armory designed the M1E5, a stubby version of John Cantius Garand's eponymous wonder. The M1E5 incorporated a collapsible steel stock philosophically similar to the M1A1 Paratrooper Carbine. Alas, the slow-burning powder used in wartime .30-06 ammunition produced excessive muzzle flash and undue wear on parts, so the project faltered.

Simultaneously Colonel William Alexander of the Pacific Warfare Board, a strategic weapons review entity located in-theater, directed the ordnance division of the 6th Army based in the Philippines to produce 15,000 shortened M1 rifles for use by paratroopers, tankers and soldiers operating in jungle environments. They bodged together 150 relatively crude examples, a pair of which made it back to Springfield Armory for evaluation. These guns re-energized the Springfield Armory guys, and they contrived an updated prototype titled the T26. This weapon sported a traditional wooden stock and 18" barrel (the original M1 had a 24" tube).

“ THE M1A TANKER SHOOTS STRAIGHT ENOUGH FOR MODEST LONG-RANGE TARGET WORK ...





... AND INTERFACES WITH
YOUR SOFT FLESH LIKE
YOUR FAVORITE PAIR OF
BROKEN-IN BOXERS. 7 7

The T26 suffered from the same challenges as did the M1E5, so it was binned in short order. The prototypes were either damaged in testing, scrapped for parts, or otherwise lost. A single remaining 1943-dated example resides in the Springfield Armory museum and is worth more than my house. However, at least one of the in-theater short-barreled examples was indeed used in action by soldiers of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment.

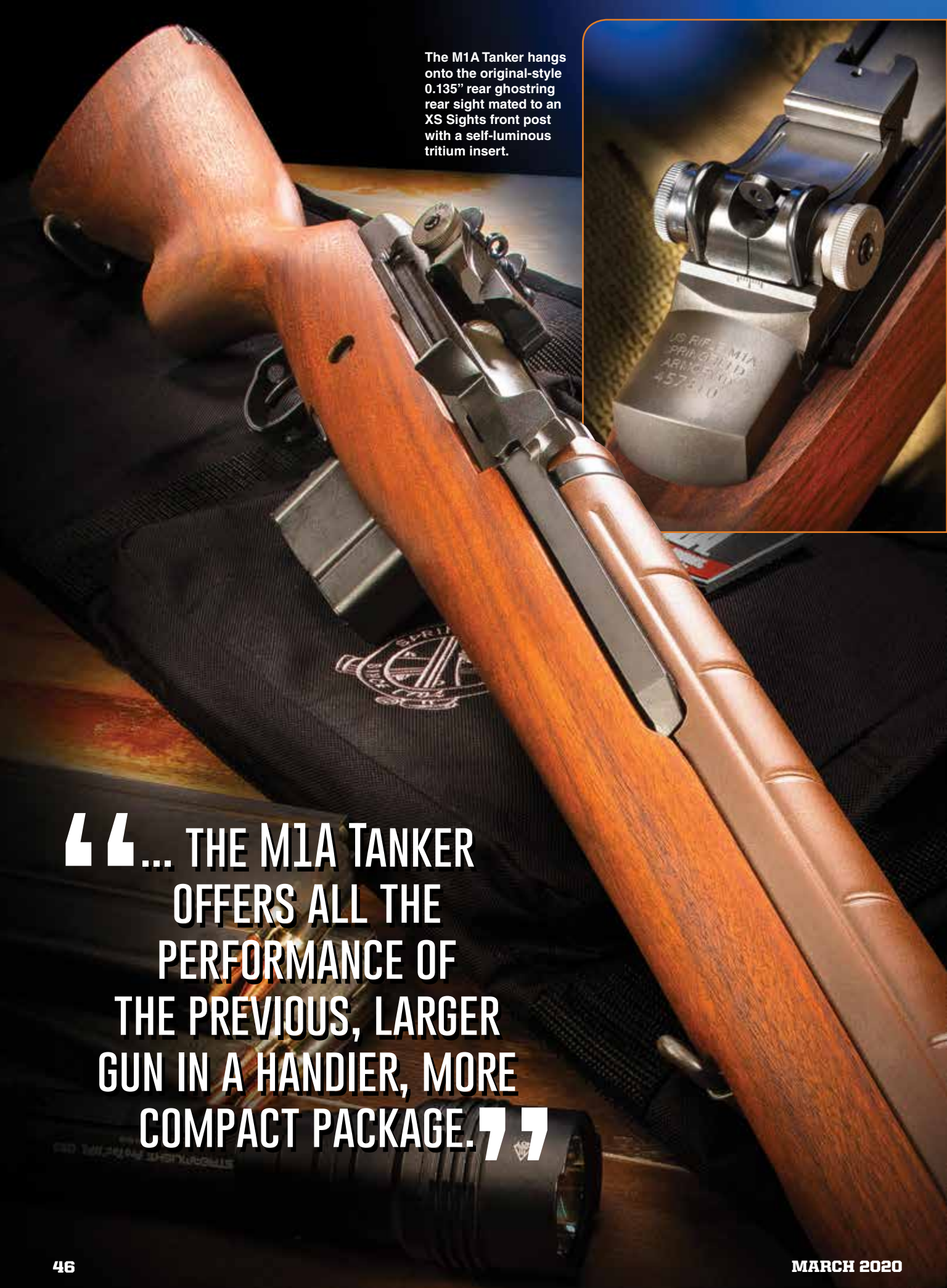
Tank crewmen did and do require short, compact personal defense weapons, but the moniker "Tanker Garand" was actually a post-war civilian marketing tool. However, the need yet remains for compact, full-power battle rifles for use around vehicles, in built-up areas and indoors. Special Operations units engaged in ongoing kinetic activities overseas are using such weapons as I type these words. Modern technology and advances in ammunition have excised these stubby guns' wartime shortcomings. Nowadays Springfield Armory has taken the Tanker concept and updated it for today's shooters.

THE SPRINGFIELD ARMORY M1A TANKER

The new Springfield Armory M1A Tanker begins life as their updated SOCOM16 version of the classic M14, itself a product-improved variant of the M1 Garand. The new rifle sports a 16.25", 6-groove carbon steel barrel with a 1-in-11 right-hand twist tipped with their proprietary perforated brake. This chassis is set within a beautiful full-length walnut M1A stock.

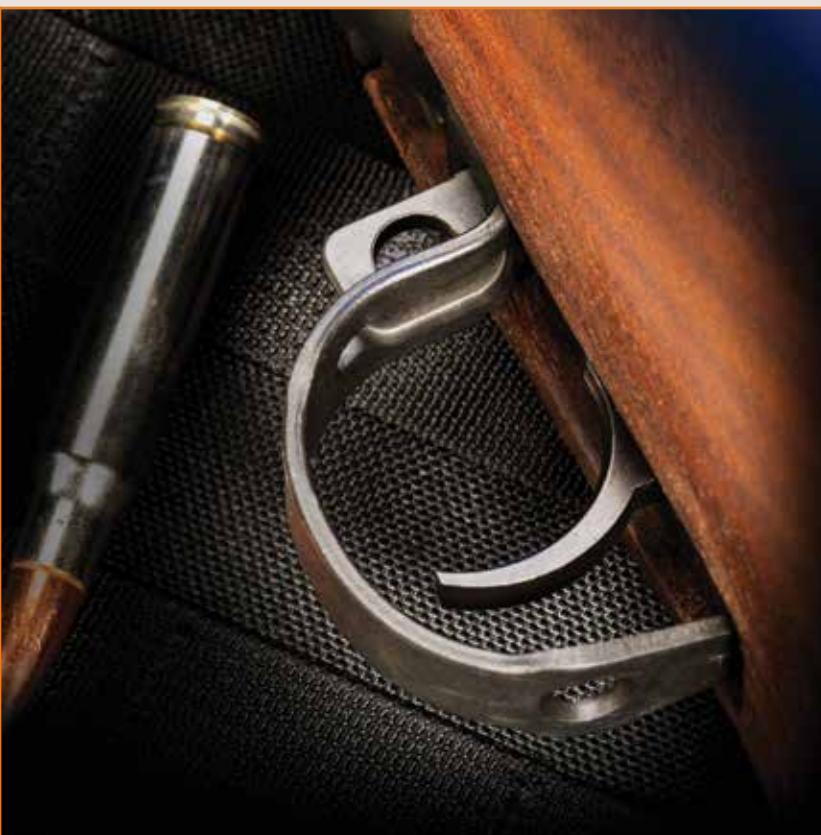
The rear sight is a generous ghost ring sort, while the front post includes a luminous Tritium insert from XS Sights. This is a close-range combat machine designed for near to mid-range engagements. The sights are therefore optimized for this battlespace. The M1A Tanker is 1/2-lb. lighter and 6" shorter than the standard Infantry model M1A. When fired alongside my full length M1A the shortened barrel cost about 120 feet per second.

The M1A Tanker is otherwise classic Springfield Armory M1A. The gun comes with an abbreviated 10-round box magazine but any standard M14 mags will fit including aftermarket drums. The charging handle is part of the bolt carrier assembly and reciprocates as it is fired. This allows you to man-handle the action in the extremely unlikely event of a stoppage. The trigger assembly clearly spawns from the same fertile ground



The M1A Tanker hangs onto the original-style 0.135" rear ghosting rear sight mated to an XS Sights front post with a self-luminous tritium insert.

“... THE M1A TANKER
OFFERS ALL THE
PERFORMANCE OF
THE PREVIOUS, LARGER
GUN IN A HANDIER, MORE
COMPACT PACKAGE.”



The trigger guard (left) is large enough for even cold-weather gloves and features the Garand-style oversized safety in front of the trigger. The gun sports a 16.25", 6-groove carbon steel barrel (right) with a 1-in-11 right-hand twist capped with a proprietary perforated muzzle brake.

which birthed the Garand. The safety is a pivoting tab in the front of the trigger and doesn't care about your particular handedness.

Magazines must be hooked in the front and rocked into place like those of a Kalashnikov rifle. The magazine release is a thumb-activated paddle located on the midline behind the magwell. There is a stripper clip guide so you can top the gun off with strippers from above if desired.

PHILOSOPHY

You need to ask yourself what you are looking for in a compact battle rifle. I have a tricked-out SOCOM16 ready to grab and go if the zombies arrive ready to party in cars or behind cover. This gun has plenty of space for whiz-bang accessories and features a state-of-the-art optical sight. You could get to the same place with the M1A Tanker, but it would entail swapping out the upper handguard and procuring a separate side-mounted scope mount. Such swapping kind of misses the point.

Collapsible stocks will never be as comfortable, rigid, or effective as their solid forebears. The Springfield Armory M1A Tanker is not designed to equip Delta Force as they HALO into the Hindu Kush to rescue the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders from some deranged despot's evil lair. The SOCOM16 would fit the bill nicely. The M1A Tanker is for more refined applications.

The M1A Tanker shoots straight enough for modest long-range target work and interfaces with your soft flesh like your favorite pair of broken-in boxers. Technology advances apace, but there still has not yet been anything contrived producing a finer cheek weld than quality stained walnut. Combine it with the inimitable stony gray of Parkerized steel and you have a familiar yet functional aesthetic.

For all this, however, the M1A Tanker also renders yeoman's service around the home and rural farm. As a rugged ranch

rifle the M1A Tanker is literally peerless. The gun will reach out farther than I can reliably see with iron sights yet maneuvers indoors and around an automobile like a much lesser gun. Whether the threat is a hungry coyote, a belligerent bear, or the kind of skunk skulking around on two feet to foment mischief, the M1A Tanker is reliably good medicine.

For the traditionalists among us the M1A Tanker would make a superb hunting arm. The .308 Winchester is proof against any reasonable North American game and its semiautomatic action guarantees swift follow up shots. Venison, elk, antelope or moose, the M1A Tanker will readily keep the larder stoked.

BEMUSEMENTS

The Springfield Armory M1A Tanker is as efficient and effective as it is aesthetically attractive. The manual of arms is simple and stupid-proof while the basic action has been proven in the crucible of real-world combat. With its shortened barrel and efficient muzzle brake the M1A Tanker offers all the performance of the previous, larger gun in a handier, more compact package.

Mr. Mahaffey lived a long, rich life after investing a year of it in the unvarnished hell of war-torn Europe in the 1940s. He passed away at home at age 95, a good man who had done a great many good things. The many manifest rights and freedoms we so blatantly take for granted are spawned from his sacrifices as well as countless others like him, especially those who did not come home. My life is much richer for having known him. The new Springfield Armory M1A Tanker hearkens back to such days as his.

MSRP is \$1,987.



www.springfield-armory.com

ROUND-NOSED Reverence



The results speak for themselves. Round-nosed bullets just plain work. No animals were lost and over half were taken with one shot.

A photograph showing five round-nosed bullets in a wooden holder at the top. Below them, on a target with a grid, are six bullet fragments. The fragments show varying degrees of expansion and penetration. The background is a white target with black grid lines.

Simple cup and core construction with RN bullets still gets the job done on tough African game.

“OLD FASHIONED” STILL WORKS ON AFRICAN GAME

JEFF “TANK” HOOVER

Today's advancements in bullet technology provide sleek, sexy, needle-nosed projectiles with ballistic coefficients north of .500, intended for ranges farther than most of us can see without optical assistance. Yet, they provide miraculous expansion and tremendous wound channels. What more could you want, or need?

TRADITIONAL IS COOL TOO!

Then there's the old school, mild-mannered, round-nosed bullet. With a ballistic coefficient of a brick, this Cinderella slug is pleasing to the eye and like grandma's chicken soup, soothing to the soul. Sometimes we need to scratch the nostalgic itch to experience what those before us did.

HISTORICALLY ...

When thinking of great turn-of-the-Century African hunters like Taylor, Selous, Bell, Hunter and Roosevelt, visions of long, round-nosed bullets pop into our minds. Made with a simple copper-jacket surrounding a lead core with an exposed nose, these bullets lack the sleekness of today's bullets but still have wonderful sectional density.

In other words, they are heavy for caliber, making them torpedoes capable of penetrating deeply through tough African game. Driven at moderate velocity, these rambling rockets kill animals by using momentum to reach the vitals on raking shots. Dependable expansion, combined with deep penetration is a

simple formula that still works. Hunters appreciate quick expiration and recovery of game and round-nosed bullets fill the bill when properly placed.

FIRST HAND IS BEST

On a recent hunt in Botswana, I used round-nosed bullets exclusively. Yes, Tank's maiden voyage to the Dark Continent was an utter success using such a simple slug.

Rather than bring my own guns, I opted to use the camp rifle, a Sako bolt-action rifle with internal suppressor using hand-loaded .308 Winchester ammo with Hornady 180-gr. Round-Nosed bullets at 2,450 FPS. Sound familiar?

The ammunition was ordered by the Wildlife Game Manager of the ranch, Richard Pascall, a certified Professional Hunter with over 50 years' experience, along with a *younger* PH, John Sheehan, who has a mere 33 years' experience. Think they know what works?

TANK'S TERMINAL TURMOIL

I was fortunate to take nine different animals ranging in weight from a 100-lb. springbok to a 1,400-lb. bull Eland. I can tell you the Hornady 180-gr. RN bullets performed beautifully, performing five 1-shot kills out of 9, while I accounted for four 1-shot kills out of 9 animals. *How?* you ask? Because bullets do the darndest things, usually due to the shooter. Let me explain.

My four single-shot kills were a red hartebeest, eland,



Tank used this suppressed Sako bolt-action .308 Winchester (right) along with an Interarms .30-06. A wide brimmed hat, binos and water are essential in the Kalahari Desert!



Ammo on Tank's safari was Hornady 180-gr. .30 caliber RN bullets. The target was confirmed after blowing a shot on a bush-buck. It was not the rifle ...

wildebeest and impala. My waterbuck required two shots as the first totally missed. How? I haven't a clue? My sight picture was good at the trigger break but the 80-meter chip shot was anything but — it went over his back! Our tracker, Barrond, showed his skill by tracking the hiding waterbuck and another 80-meter neck shot off the sticks dropped him. So bullet-wise, the Hornady was responsible for five one-shot kills.

KUDU DEFLECTION?

The Kudu bull required two shots. The first at 220 meters dropped him with his left femur shattered by the bullet! How I managed to be 6 feet off-target, I don't know. I'm calling deflection from a thorny acacia bush. A second double-lung shot finished the majestic bull.

GEMSBOK

While driving one evening with Richard we came across a majestic gemsbok. While snapping pictures, Richard asked, "Would you like to shoot him, Tank?" I respond, "Yes, I have several pictures of him, Richard." "No, with the gun, TANK!"

Lickity-split, I swap my camera for the Sako rifle and steady the crosshairs tight behind the shoulder for an easy 100-meter shot. Just as the trigger breaks, the bull whirls. My shot drops him. Cycling another round, he gets up and takes off. Damn!

Barrond again shows his skill. The old bull, very sick from the shot that caught his rear ham and angled up to his chest, only



Close-up of a perfectly expanded Hornady RN 180-gr. .30 caliber slug recovered from a critter.

went 70 yards. A follow-up shot through the lungs ended things quickly.

ZEBRA

After a 2-1/2 hour track, we spot a lone zebra stallion in an acacia thicket. The 200-meter shot is tough, and I'm having a helluva time steadying the crosshairs from the shooting sticks. Normal maximum heart rate is 210 minus your age but I'm sure mine was around 260. Walking in sand is tough when following a 120-lb. bushman/Hottentot because my feet sink deeper than Barrond's.

My first shot strikes too low and forward. A second angles through the ribs as he runs. A half-hour later, and roughly seven miles total, he is down. Who said safari hunting is easy?

PLACEMENT PERFECTION?

We all strive for perfect shot placement. In the real world, real things happen, whether hunting, or defending yourself. Bullets miss, deflect, hit low, or high. The thing to remember is never give up and shoot until your quarry is down for keeps.

And lastly, the wonderful RN still has a place in the vast array of wonderful bullet choices.

Kudu Safaris
Ph: (702) 637-9836
titiger7@yahoo.com



TAURUS G3

EVERYTHING YOU NEED
AT A NICE PRICE

DAVID FREEMAN

On the day Taurus officially announced their new G3 pistol, one of my grandsons was turning 16 and put together a shooting adventure with some of his buddies to celebrate. My role was more than just Granddaddy — I was the chauffeur, guns and ammo supplier and Range Safety Officer. A friend from church had offered use of his at-home gun range and the weather was perfect.

PICKING A WINNER

My grandson Josh came over the night before and went through the safe, picking the guns he figured he and his friends would want to shoot. One of those was the Taurus G3 I had been reviewing prior to release. I now had the freedom to share it with others.

We set up a table behind the firing line and unpacked all the guns. I didn't do an exact count, but I believe there was something like 22 to 25 handguns there for the guys to shoot. As it turned out, the girls who had been invited were diverted by a conflict, leaving us with all experienced shooters. I watched as they did a number of drills they had been taught during a previous trip to this range when a BSNF Railroad Police trainer was there to provide range safety. These guys were having fun!

For each drill, they were free to pick the gun they wanted to use. Josh has always favored my P226 and for this very reason, I left it behind, wanting him to try some of the other handguns. I was delighted when he kept coming back for the Taurus G3 and asked him why. He said his dad has a Taurus PT 24/7, and he loves shooting it. He especially likes the trigger. "This G3 has the same trigger, only smoother," he told me. I think there is more improvement than just the trigger but it does speak well of the heritage of the Taurus striker-fired pistols.



The G3 (above) builds on the Millennium G2 (below) by adding capacity and features.

GOALS

Taurus has a number of semi-automatic pistol offerings: the Model 92 series, which are essentially Beretta 92s with a few tweaks; full-size and Commander-size 1911s; the hammer-fired TH series; and the made-for-concealed-carry Spectrum. The Millennium G2 series; has been a hot commodity and the National Sports Shooting Foundation reports it to be one of the leading sellers in gun stores across America. But their full-size striker-fired guns, once represented by the PT 24/7 series, has been out of the lineup for the past couple of years. Maybe you've not had a chance to experience what these guns have to offer. I think if you tried one, you'd be in for a nice surprise.

The stated objective for the G3 was to take the features of

their very popular Millennium G2 series and morph them into a larger gun with more capacity. I have a G2 I frequently carry — it's close in size to single-stack nines like the GLOCK 43, S&W Shield and Springfield XDS but it's a double-stack gun with a 13-round capacity. The G2 was around \$200 retail and it's a lot of gun for the money. Now Taurus is offering more — a better grip, longer sight radius, two to four more rounds, and an improved trigger for what will probably turn out to be \$300–\$325 at the gun store.

FROM THE BEGINNING

The gun weighs in at 25 oz., is less than 8" long and just a little over 5" high. With a width of 1.25" and a capacity of 15 or 17 rounds, it's the perfect size for many of us when it comes to a carry gun.

Let's start with the grip and frame. It has several unique features designed for comfort and to push the shooter toward a correct and accurate handhold. It starts with a palm swell, forcing the shooting hand high on the grip. Complementing the shape of the grip are textured panels on the sides, front strap and back strap to help the shooter maintain a secure grip even with sweaty palms. Thumb shelves are integrated into the frame on either side of the grip, which place the index finger in position for a straight pull on the trigger.

Integrated into the frame above the trigger guard, Taurus "Memory Pads" offer a natural location for indexing the trigger finger when not actively engaging the target. These Memory Pads have been around since the PT 24/7 I bought 15 years ago and are located on both sides to accommodate left- and right-hand shooters. It also has a Picatinny MIL-STD-1913 accessory rail for lights.

MOVING ALONG

The G3's stout polymer frame is topped by the choice of carbon steel or stainless-steel slides. The Matte Black slide is subjected to an oxi-nitrocarburizing process creating a strong, case-hardened surface. G3 barrels made of stainless steel are 4" in length and rifled using a broach cut process. The recoil system utilizes a steel guide rod and spring assembly with the spring specially tuned to deliver an easy recoil pulse.

The slide is tapered in front for easy holstering and snag-free operation around clothing. Front and rear serrations are designed for a no-slip grip when operating the slide. The sights are the familiar three white-dot arrangement and the rear sight is adjustable.

The trigger exhibits a smooth take-up with a crisp 6-lb. break and a short reset which is both audible and tactile. It's easily one of the best triggers you'll find on a handgun at any price. Since it is a striker-fired pistol, it becomes a single action as soon as a round is chambered. But unique to Taurus striker-fired pistols is their second-strike capability. If the gun doesn't fire when the trigger is pulled, the shooter can reset and pull the trigger again to restrike the primer.

SAFETY FIRST

The G3 has several safety systems. First is the trigger safety, which is designed to prevent the trigger from being pulled unless the shooter's finger is positioned over the trigger shoe firmly and the trigger safety is pressed. A striker block prevents the striker from moving forward until the trigger is pulled rearward.



David found the Taurus G3 accurate and reliable with all the ammunition he tried.



Disassembly is very similar to the GLOCK — there are slide removal tabs on each side of the frame and you need to pull the trigger before the slide will disengage.

A manual safety lever just above the thumb rest adds to the safety systems.

A loaded chamber view port lets the shooter know if a round is chambered. It's tiny and only works in bright light. I hope Taurus engineers take note of this and open it up a bit more on future versions.

NO HICCUPS

Prior to the birthday shooting trip, I had taken the G3 to a range twice. I shot a wide assortment of 9mm ammo, trying to find something the G3 didn't like. I didn't find it. I put at least 300 rounds through the gun with not a hiccup of any kind. Although I'm not always the world's greatest shot the G3 made me look good. It's not hard to hold and shoot for an extended range session and as long as you do your job of aligning the sights and moving the trigger smoothly rearward through the break, the G3 will place rounds where the gun is pointing. Josh and his friends had the same experience.

The Taurus G3 proved accurate, reliable and is backed by a lifetime guarantee. I don't believe you would ever regret adding one of these to your arsenal, even if it's an arsenal of one. MSRP is \$345.



www.taurususa.com

DESERT FORGE ARMS

BUILDING POWERFUL LONG-RANGE ACCURACY

SAM FADALA

**PHOTOS:
NICK ROBBS PHOTOGRAPHY**

There are few firearm platforms I've missed as a full-time writer. Those I have not owned, I have made a point to find and shoot, such as the 2-bore double rifle that developed horsepower instead of foot-pounds of muzzle energy. Currently, a Thompson/Center G-2 is central to my interest with .357 Maximum 180-gr. bullets at an average velocity of 2,050 fps — my new favorite deer/antelope partner. The G-2 also has an MGM .22 Long Rifle Match barrel for small game and one in .22 Hornet for varmints. But more on this affliction another time.

THE .30-30 KID CHANGES HORSES

Tom Ownsby, of Desert Forge in Benson, Arizona, recently said, "You want what? The Thirty-thirty Kid is looking for a precision long-range rifle?"

My challenge to Tom was putting bullets spot-on at long ranges. For the first time I wanted a rifle built around a bullet — Hornady's .30-caliber 225-gr. ELD Match. To encourage velocity,





The Bell and Carlson stock is a classic but takes advantage of modern build technology. The muzzle brake helped to tame the recoil of the .300 RUM.

we chose the .300 RUM (Remington Ultra Magnum). I also asked for a muzzle brake and Tom's in-buttstock recoil reducers — two please. I gave Tom his choice of action and telescopic rifle sight. I also wanted to see “how much rifle” could be built without breaking the bank. Tom said he could do it and I said, “Go for it.” It's always good to let the expert pick the parts they know best.

As I watched him work, I quickly learned I knew no more about preparing a rifle for long-range shooting than building a rocket to Pluto. “Stop,” I said one day as I visited the work in progress. I was paraphrasing his steps, but knew I was missing much. Tom's an intelligent, literate person so I said, “You write it down, because I don't know what you're talking about.”

TOM SAYS ...

“I like the Remington 700 action to build my long-range rifles for big game hunting,” he said. “The 700 is a solid platform, reliable and durable. The cost is reasonable for an entry level precision rifle because of 700 action availability, plus it offers many customizing and aftermarket enhancements. It's the Chevy and



Tom included two of his patented Desert Forge Recoil Energy Mitigators into the buttstock. Sam says the recoil is similar to a .308!



The goal: a powerful long-range precision rifle that didn't break the bank. The solution: Tom Owensby of Desert Forge Arms. The result: a stunningly accurate Remington 700 in .300 RUM.

Ford of the automotive industry, where custom parts abound.

“Specifically, the M40 version is a first step to a fine rifle. It comes with a heavy barrel and workable Bell & Carlson stock, two prime ingredients for the kind of rifle I want for my customers. Added to this, I do know specific points — both obvious as well as relatively hidden — for my machine work.”

SECRETS REVEALED

Tom patiently explained some of his secrets to me. When beginning a precision long-range rifle retaining its factory caliber, he changes the stock 3/16" recoil lug to a 3/8" thick heavy duty one, surface-ground flat and parallel. The action is “blueprinted,” meaning the working parts, receiver and bolt are brought parallel and square to the bolt raceway.

The receiver is bored to 0.705" and the bolt sleeve to 0.703" to remove play. Any play causes the bolt to fail in locking up to the receiver, pitching the locking lug forward to lose full contact with its mating surface. The chamber is also headspaced to minimum SAAMI-spec clearance to minimize case stretching.



Power with surgical precision — With several recoil-taming features, Sam is able to shoot his new rifle comfortably while still enjoying 1/2-MOA accuracy!



Sam's new rifle held half-minute accuracy with a 225-gr. Hornady ELD Match bullet at 2,878 fps and has more energy at 600 yards than his favorite .30-30 does at the muzzle!

The bolt lugs are machined square and are of the same dimension, with the bolt face squared to the centerline. The receiver threads are recut square and parallel to the receiver centerline. It's like "blueprinting" a stock engine in a hot-rod. You make sure everything is running straight and true.

The Remington X-Mark trigger is more than acceptable in a hunting rifle, even one of precision long-range character. Adjustment is made to a very crisp 2.5-lb. release with no creep or backlash. Any experienced shooter will manage this trigger well.

SCOPING IT OUT

On this rifle, I used an SWFA SS 3X-15X FFP rifle scope with an MOA reticle. Tom considers this scope a super value for under \$700 and I agree completely. It pays to listen to those who know! The low-end magnification gives the shooter a clean opportunity for a closer shot, while higher numbers promise long-range bullet placement. The glass is very clean with an etched reticle and it's also a first focal plane scope. Rings are SWFA 6-screw medium height with an EGW Picatinny scope base — a very solid setup.

RUM PUNCH

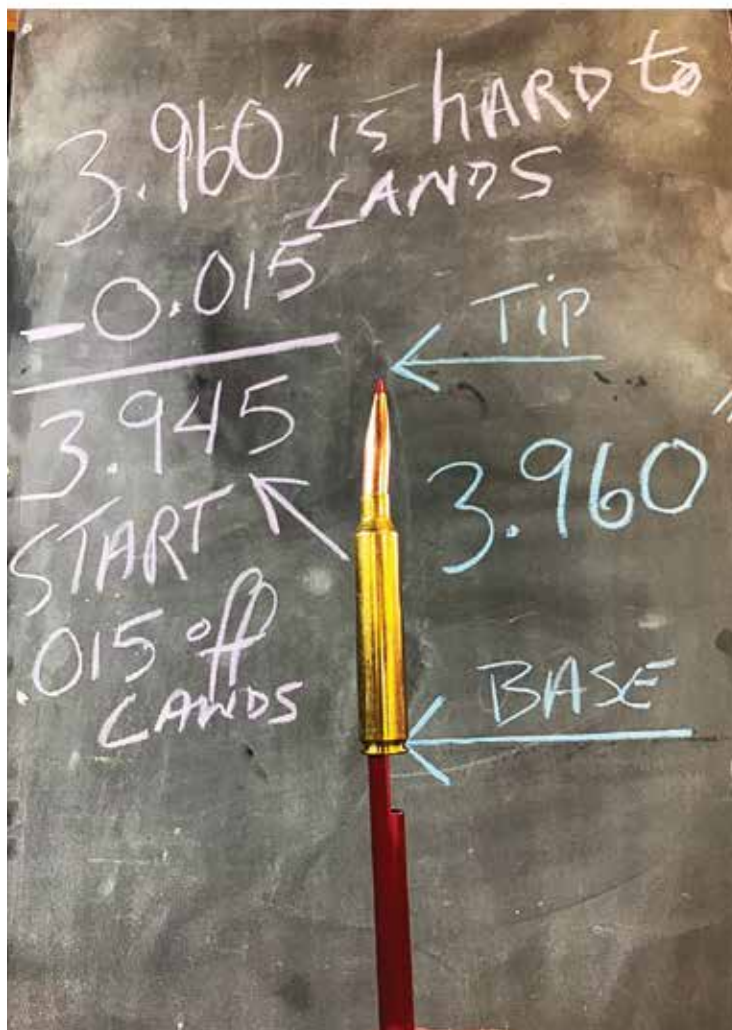
The rifle in .300 RUM was right for long-range high-energy delivery. The RUM will send a heavy, controlled-expansion big-game type bullet to 600-yards with greater punch than my .30-30 has at the muzzle. This is the kind of Moxy you need for really big game, like moose.

Even in this purposely heavy rifle, this kind of generated energy comes at the expense of recoil. The goal is to reduce its effect as much as possible for best shooting. Tom began with a Precision Armament M4-72 .308/7.62 muzzle brake for this rifle. The reverse venting, triple baffled design with upward biased venting reduced muzzle lift for greater recoil management. It worked great.

Tom told me he's seen RUM recoil described as "hellacious" at 32 foot-pounds. Call it about double .30-06 recoil. While weight plus muzzle brake tames the RUM considerably, Tom



Tom replaced the stock Remington 700 3/16" recoil lug with a 3/8" thick heavy-duty one, surface-ground flat and parallel.



Notes, notes and more notes! Tom used his phone's camera to keep notes and document his build, keeping things well organized.

also included two of his patented Desert Forge Recoil Energy Mitigators into the buttstock. As a demonstration of these recoil-reducers, in Tom's hands, felt recoil with a 225-gr. Hornady ELD Match with 87 grains of Retumbo chronographing at 2,878 fps compared to the kick of a .308 — very moderate! After 40 rounds, he said he could still shoot the rifle comfortably — and he hates recoil!

RANGE PROOF

The rifle performed for me later as intended, with half-minute accuracy and without brain-scrambling, spine-twisting recoil.

Sometimes, it pays to simply sell off what you don't use any longer and invest in one quality tool. My rifle cost about \$2,500 including the new rifle, scope, parts and labor. Prices can vary due to individual options you may choose, but it's still an amazing deal. To say I'm happy I did this is to sorely understate the situation!

IDENTICAL SHOOTING

TWINS



Uberti has a .22 Single Action Army (top) every bit as much fun as the .45 Colt models and a lot cheaper to shoot.

DAVID FREEMAN

The lady was being stalked. Encouraged by her husband, she made an appointment with me to learn how to shoot a gun. Although she agreed with the concept of being armed, she thought she might be more afraid of the gun than the stalker. I was at the shop waiting for her when the distinctive sound of an approaching Harley got my attention.

I watched through the window as the rider parked at our curb, took off her helmet and shook out a headful of curls. My client who was afraid of a little bitty gun had shown up for her first shooting lesson comfortably riding a big Harley Softtail. Later when we had gotten to know each other a little, I questioned her about it. Her response was, "I've had training on the Harley." Smart lady. She was now about to get some training on handguns.

SCHOOL IN SESSION

This was a perfect situation where having a .22 caliber handgun mimicking the size and operation of a centerfire defensive handgun was perfect. After some classroom training on safety and gun handling, we moved to the range. One of the guns she handled and dry-fired in the classroom was a 9mm

ENHANCE YOUR TRAINING WITH RIMFIRE/CENTERFIRE PAIRS

The .22 1911 by Walther (bottom) is a great trainer for shooting .45 ACP and 9mm 1911s.



Smith & Wesson M&P. She liked the way it felt and was interested in seeing how it shot.

Several of the shooting lanes were active when we made our way to our assigned lane. Even though she was wearing hearing protection, Elaine flinched every time a gun went off. I quickly perceived handing her a 9mm for her first shooting experience would just scare her away from shooting for life — so I didn't.

I loaded up a full-size .22 caliber S&W M&P for her to shoot. Even after assuring her the gun wasn't going to be as loud as the ones she was hearing in other lanes, she asked me to put my hands on the gun with her for her first shots. I did, and after three or four uneventful shots, she was ready to go solo.

FLYING ALONE

We worked together with the .22 for several shooting sessions before graduating to the 9mm. Due to the progression from the smaller caliber, she handled it fine.

I've had many similar experiences when introducing people to shooting, especially kids and women shooting for the first time. But this isn't the end of why .22s mimicking larger guns are great for training. In fact, I use them myself. Shooting any gun correctly and being accurate will improve your skills as a shooter. If you shoot the .22 twin of a larger caliber gun, the transference of any developed skill is going to be high. Your training won't cost as much and it won't put as much wear on your hands and shoulders.

CHOICES

What kind of rimfire/centerfire identical-twin combinations are there? Many of the .22s in my collection are fun to shoot but they don't have a direct correlation to any centerfire guns.

As a trainer I've found the M&P a great platform. The fact S&W



David purchased a conversion kit from SIG allowing him to shoot his 9mm P229 as a .22.



Working with a .22 rifle can help hone the skills needed for hunting with a larger caliber. The Henry .22 (bottom) nicely compliments the Rossi .44 Magnum lever-gun.

made a .22 version in the same size and configuration as their centerfire models really made it a winning combination for me.

One good rimfire/centerfire matchup I found was the Colt .22 1911 made by Walther, paired with any of the thousands of Government model clones. A relatively new combo also working well for training is the Taurus G3 and TX-22. The G3 is a purpose-built, full-size defensive 9mm handgun while the TX-22 is a .22 of the same size and roughly the same configuration.

SIG SAUER, GLOCK and others have .22 conversion kits consisting of a .22 slide and magazine for some of their centerfire pistols. The conversion kit I have for a SIG P229 makes shooting the gun both cheap and fun because it's a SIG and it's recoil free.

WHEELGUNS

Having a .22 caliber revolver matching the operation and ergonomics of a larger caliber of the same model is also beneficial. Ruger's SP101 is available in multiple calibers starting with the .22. For single-action fans, Heritage, Uberti and Ruger all offer .22 versions of the single-action army-style revolver.

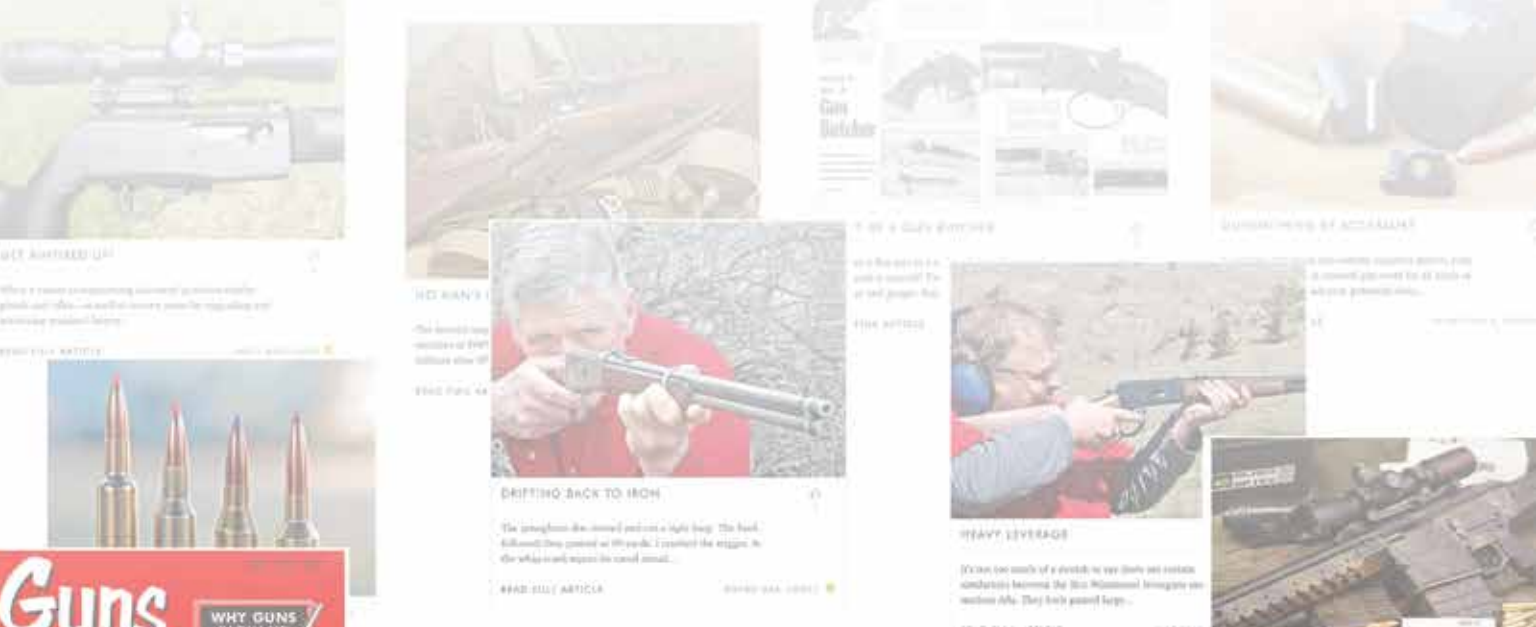
SHOULDER ARMS

It works for long guns, too. I started shooting .22 rifles at around nine. Hitting a squirrel with the rifle required more concentration and a steadier aim than with a shotgun. At Boy Scout camp I went through hundreds of cheap rounds earning progressively higher junior marksmanship badges until I had them all. The time shooting .22 rifles as a kid meant when I started shooting an M16 in basic training, the Drill Sergeant didn't have to spend much time with me before I qualified.

I've got a few centerfire lever-action rifles and also have a Henry .22 lever-action I encourage the grandkids to shoot and enjoy shooting myself. Plinking with the lever-action .22 results in hours of fun and every trigger pull ending with a pinged aluminum can or hole near the center of a target means a much better chance of success when shooting my .30-30 at a deer or the .44 at a hog.



With a bucket of cheap .22 ammo, David's grandson Josh polishes both his revolver and semi-automatic skills.



Guns

WHY GUNS BLOW UP

CAN WOMEN OUTSHOOT MEN?

For decades in 1955 the answer was yes. And it still was today. Here's a fun look back at R. D. Galt's five-page article in the July 1955 issue of GUNS...

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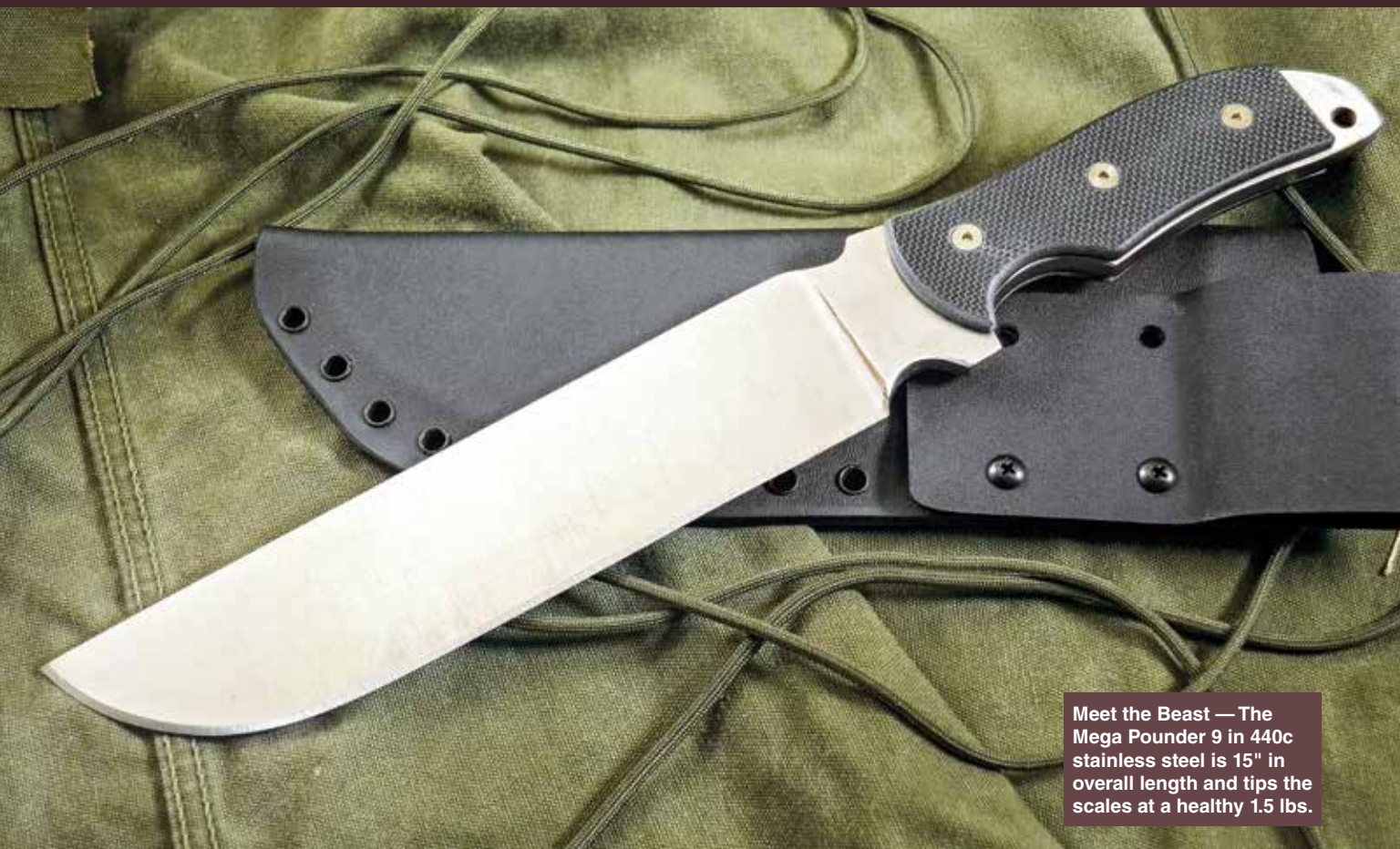
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GURUS .357 MAGNUM RAGING HUNTER

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Meet the Beast — The Mega Pounder 9 in 440c stainless steel is 15" in overall length and tips the scales at a healthy 1.5 lbs.

GRAYMAN MEGA POUNDER 9

STAINLESS BRUTE IS BIG, TOUGH AND WHOLLY INDEFATIGABLE

Simply put, Grayman Knives has a reputation for making hard-use knives geared to endure extreme abuse. Many think they are the best mission knives out there and a whole bunch is seeing duty by our troops in the far corners of the world at this very minute. Grayman proudly states on their website, "Grayman knives are not designed for collectors, they are designed to be used." Since their inception the company has offered

1095 High Carbon

steel exclusively on their fixed-blade knives, but now they've added a new twist — 440C stainless steel. The Mega Pounder 9 you see here is just such a knife.

The Mega Pounder 9 is the most revered in the Grayman line and its name pretty much sums up why. It's a beast of mammoth proportions. At 15" in overall length think of this knife as a modern day Bowie knife with an attitude. The 9" all-business blade is 2" wide with a flat V-grind from edge to spine. While 440C is a common stainless steel, the trick to making it perform at peak best is all in the heat-treating — something Grayman does right. Years ago I had a famous custom knifemaker tell me he'd still be using 440C on his knives if his customers weren't hell bent on the latest, greatest steel *du jour*. Enough said.

The Mega Pounder 9 has a deep finger choil for choking up on

the blade and the handle scales are thick, checkered G10 composite in your choice of green or black. You can also choose between a leather or Kydex sheath. Weight is a healthy 1.5 lbs.

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT

You'll like it for the same reason Grayman's other customers do. You can beat the living hell out of a Grayman knife and it will keep coming back for more. The Mega Pounder 9 in carbon steel saw a lot of duty overseas during the wars in the Middle East and the stainless steel version carries on the tradition proudly. Grayman Knives' founder Mike still grinds each one by hand and signs the company name on the handle spine, also by hand, the same way he always has. If you like your knife big, tough and indefatigable, the Mega Pounder 9 is your knife. Grayman sells the behemoth for \$315.

The Mega Pounder 9 has a deep finger choil and the handle scales are of amply thick, checkered G10 composite in your choice of green or black.



www.graymanknives.com

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THE PRESS PERPETUATES PREVARICATIONS

HOW TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST MEDIA MISINFORMATION

Guns are going to be an important campaign issue this year and you need to be ready to counter misinformation. The only way to fight falsehood is with fact. Moreover, don't try to deny some facts even if it's uncomfortable.

WORD PLAY AT WORK

You will see and hear the media using the lexicon of gun prohibitionists. Stories will mention "gun safety organizations" and "gun reform efforts." It's gun control *camo-speak* — semantics designed to create an impression the people behind this crusade are interested in public safety. They are far more interested in disarming the public, and it's rare for reporters to challenge them on it.

When a reporter refers to "common-sense gun laws," ask what it means. Force them to explain their perspective about firearms laws. Compel them to challenge gun control proponents to offer their definitions.

It has long been a practice of gun control advocates to combine the numbers of homicides, suicides and accidents for a more dramatic total they could tout as "gun violence" victims. It is a deliberately deceptive practice, and unfairly dismisses suicide as a crime when it is an act of desperation, fueled by extreme emotional instability.

Sadly, the establishment media has virtually ignored the work on suicide prevention championed by such groups as the Second Amendment Foundation, National Rifle Association and National Shooting Sports Foundation. Whenever the media talks about "gun deaths," it is an opportunity for rights activists to set the record straight.

If a reporter, whether in print or on the air, talks about "gun safety" organizations, call them on it, because none of these organizations promote firearms safety. They promote gun control or gun prohibition.

Whether it's the Brady Campaign, Moms Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, the Alliance for Gun Responsibility, or any of the state Ceasefire groups, not one of them

fields certified firearms instructors. Only the National Rifle Association and the U.S. Concealed Carry Association do and you can say so with authority. USCCA is a relative newcomer while the NRA has been teaching firearms safety for more than a century.

CALL THEM ON IT

Many newspapers and television stations routinely conclude an online report by providing contact information for the reporter, either an email or twitter address, and sometimes even a telephone number. If they don't, it's easy to find on a news agency's website a general telephone number. Ask for the newsroom and ask for the managing editor.



Remember these three rules after identifying yourself and the reason for your call —

1. Don't engage in name-calling because you'll hear a click and the conversation is over forever.
2. Don't use foul language and remain calm, even affable.
3. Explain your objection briefly and be on-point — tell the reporter or editor the problem, have facts to back up your argument and be polite!

BECOME A WRITER

You can write a letter to the editor, and don't talk yourself out of it by deciding it won't matter. It will matter. Make sure you spell every word, especially names, correctly, otherwise you will look like an idiot. It's not a way to win arguments or sway someone's opinion and it reflects on every other gun owner to reinforce the popular caricature of gun owners as illiterate rednecks.

You can go a step further and write an Op-Ed. Keep it within 350 to 400 words, be

terse, tactful and truthful. Don't pull "facts" out of thin air and for sure don't rely on anything you read on the Internet for accuracy.

If you're talking about "gun violence," don't use the term. Erase it from your vocabulary — we're talking about violent crime committed by people misusing firearms. Refer to the FBI Uniform Crime Report. People might suggest you're lying, but they're not going to challenge FBI crime data if used accurately and in context.

OR BE A SOURCE

Another effective strategy is to become a knowledgeable source to provide balance. As a firearms journalist who happens to work for a couple of major gun rights organizations, reporters working on gun-related stories in the Northwest often contact me. Part of the reason is to provide the obligatory alternate viewpoint, but in my case, they often just want to check their facts. I do it as a professional courtesy, one journalist to another. You can do this as a local expert.

Put together a resume of sorts you can email to reporters or editors. Include such information as firearms courses you may have taken, whether you are a certified instructor, if you've attended or even spoken at conferences dealing with firearms, ever published anything relating to firearms; anything to show you know what you're talking about.

Broadcast stations all have websites, and usually at the bottom, or at the top, there is a link to their FCC Info, which contains the telephone number, mailing address of the station and its call letters while the main website may just be labeled "NBC5" or "CBS7." You should also find the mailing address and telephone number for the FCC.

If you have a complaint about a news report, let the station know, and if you see a pattern of news bias or outright falsehood, contact the FCC. It shouldn't come to such measures if you reach out to the station news manager as detailed earlier.

GO FOR THE WIN

Let's be honest about this. There is press bias and any news agency denying it is living in denial. However, if they're called on it diplomatically, you just might open a door which has been foolishly closed and lay the groundwork for changing minds — and hearts.



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POWDER RIVER PRECISION XD PARTS AND 10-22 KIT

Roy Huntington

The Springfield Armory XD pistol is a great piece of engineering but like most polymer pistols, often suffers from a slightly spongy trigger release. It works great, is reliable and fine for most duty, sport or self-defense use but if you're seeking a crisper trigger, Powder River Precision comes to the rescue! Dan Batchelor's family-owned company offers after-market action kits to turn your daily shooter into something really special.

Pictured is the High Performance Striker, Stainless Steel Pin Set, Titanium Striker Status Indicator Kit and the XD/XDm Striker Safety Lever Kit. All should be installed by a competent

pistolsmith. The sample gun I looked at had a crisp, positive, almost 1911-like trigger!

The company also offers a "Drop-In" 10-22 trigger group kit. Amazingly, the auto-release bolt lock and the ejector in the unit have spare extractors incorporated into each part! Use one to upgrade your stock gun and keep the other as a spare. Once installed in my 10-22, it delivered a short, light, smooth trigger break measuring right at 2.25 lbs. with an electronic Wheeler gauge. An easy way to make a good gun great! 🔫

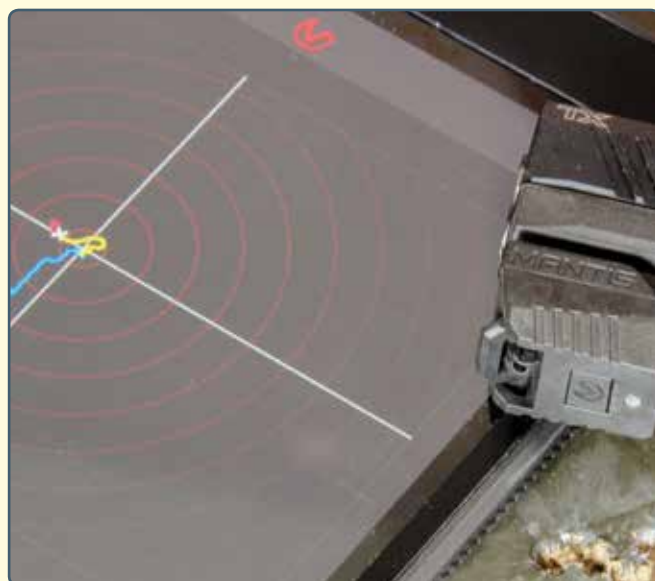
www.powderriverprecision.com

MANTISX

I've used plenty of electronic training and marksmanship systems over the years and they're great. Each system is different but all offer feedback on your gun handling, marksmanship and even decision-making. They are great in every way except one: They are expensive. That's not a big problem for an organization or club but for individual shooters, owning such a valuable training adjunct is cost-prohibitive — until now.

The MantisX is a small module fitting on the rail of your firearm and records an array of parameters ranging from draw stroke to trigger pull during live or dry fire. It even works with CO₂ firearms! We'll review the entire system next month but right now, it's one of our favorite shooting accessories of all time! 🔫

www.mantisx.com



FEDERAL CUSTOM SHOP

Have you thought about taking your shooting to new heights by handloading your own ammunition — but didn't? Me too. Handloading is a highly rewarding activity but at this stage of my life I don't really have the ability to take on another project, no matter how useful.

For folks like me, Federal Ammunition

has just opened their Custom Shop. This new service focuses on handloading custom small-batch rifle or shotgun ammunition at their state-of-the-art facility in Minnesota. Initially Federal is offering rounds in common hunting gauges and calibers but ultimately plan to offer a wide range of loads, even some obsolete ones.

If there is a specific bullet you want atop your .270 Winchester, or a specific pellet-count in your 28-gauge sporting-clays shells, Federal will do it. The rounds aren't cheap — prices average around \$100/box of 20 — but when you consider the quality, it is an attractive option for serious shooters who don't reload.

www.federalpremium.com



STREAMLIGHT POLYTAC HP

Today we're blessed with a multitude of LED flashlights for every need which is why I was underwhelmed when the Streamlight Polytac HP flashlight was first handed to me. It's a well-designed, rugged and attractively priced two-cell CR123 LED flashlight — so what? It's not the most powerful light in its class so I struggled to understand exactly how this light was different than many others.

Then, I switched it on and quickly realized: This is a great “truck light!”

With 600 lumens, the beam isn't super-bright but what it lacks in overall power, it makes up with range. Using a larger and more elongated reflector than similar-sized lights, it throws a concentrated beam up to 300 yards. If you're looking for a small handheld light capable of checking utility lines, searching for lost people and cattle or sweeping a dark alley, the Polytac HP rises above the rest.

www.streamlight.com



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"You asked for it so we built it!"

~ Roy Huntington
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!

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VRPA40
ROCK ISLAND ARMORY

The *VRPA40* brings the pump action to Rock Island Armory's VR family of shotguns. Promising to be an ideal home defense shotgun, the 12-ga. *VRPA40* is made of 7075 T6 aluminum with a Marine Black Anodized

finish. OAL is 55.11"; weight is 6.9 lbs. empty and 8.06 lbs. loaded. Magazine fed with a 5+1 capacity of 2-3/4" and 3" shells, the *VRPA40* has a 20" contoured barrel and comes with a heat shield. Other features include an interchangeable magazine with other RIA VR Series shotguns, a rail scope, fiber optic front and adjustable rear sights, and more. For more info: (775) 537-1444, www.armscor.com



1911 COMMANDER
TAURUS USA

Taurus USA's *1911 Commander* was first offered in .45 ACP. The new model is now chambered in 9mm Luger with a 9-round capacity. With an all-steel slide and frame in matte black finish, it has a checkered grip and a hammer-fire design with a grip safety, manual safety and firing pin block. With a barrel length of 4.2", an OAL of 8" and an extended beaver tail, the *1911 Commander* 9mm Luger is both comfortable to shoot as well as carry. It comes with drift-adjustable Novak front and rear sights. For more info: (800) 327-3776, www.taurususa.com

**6.5MM CREEDMOOR
LOW RECOIL AMMO**

HSM AMMUNITION

HSM Ammunition's *6.5mm Creedmoor Low Recoil Ammo* reduces felt recoil by 47 percent!

A rifle in this caliber can be shot by anyone, even a young girl or boy, without worrying about excessive felt recoil. The ammo also features full, standard weight-for-caliber, 140-gr. hunting bullets.

HSM partnered with Sierra Bullets to develop the bullet with the distinct HSM orange ballistic tip. Only the best cases and primers combined with a "secret" blend of temperature-tolerant powders drive those bullets. For more info: (406) 777-2106, www.hsmammunition.com



RECON TACTICAL

WILSON COMBAT

The *Recon Tactical* is Wilson Combat's vision of "a practical AR for rigorous tactical training, hardcore hunting or all-purpose field applications." It is now offered in 350 Legend, a straight-walled, medium-bore, AR-compatible round for medium- to large-size game. At the

core of the *Recon Tactical* is a 16" Wilson Combat match-grade, medium-weight stainless steel barrel. It is loaded with Wilson Combat custom features and accessories including a Billet Upper (Flat-Top), Billet Lower Receiver, a Carbine Length Gas System, a 12.6" M-LOK Rail and more. For more info: (800) 955-4856, www.wilsoncombat.com



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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 the *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, exclusive trigger guard radius, stainless steel trigger, checkering on the front and back strap and more. However, the reduced-footprint 92 Centurion has a skeletonized hammer while the easy-to-carry 92 Compact has a bobbed hammer. For more info: (571) 385-2979, www.langdontactical.com



COMPOUND SERIES LEFT-HAND MODELS

VERSACARRY

Versacarry introduced the Compound Series of holsters early this year. They are hybrid holsters with the comfort of leather and the structural properties of Kydex. Today, Versacarry offers the *Compound Series Left-Hand Models*, the same holsters with a Kydex frame embedded between layers of water buffalo leather but for left-handed carry. The Compound Series is offered in IWB and OWB models with adjustable hardware for draw tension modification. For more info: (979) 778-2000, www.versacarry.com



104 COMPADRE CAMP KNIFE

BUCK KNIVES

The *104 Compadre Camp Knife* from Buck Knives was designed for serious outdoor tasks like shaving wood for tinder or preparing meals. The 4.5" drop-point, full-tang blade is made of 5160 spring steel and coated in Cerakote Cobalt for durability and corrosion resistance. The handle is natural canvas Micarta. With an OAL of 9.5" and a weight of 7.1 oz., the 104 Compadre Camp Knife comes with a genuine leather sheath with a belt loop. For more info: (800) 326-2825 ext. 4, www.buckknives.com



TAC-POD CARBON PRO BIPODS

TRUGLO

The *TAC-POD Carbon Pro Bipods* from TRUGLO, Inc. quickly mount to Picatinny rails and have a rotating design for easy shooting-angle adjustment. The lightweight and compact design makes it ideal for bench- or prone-shooting. Made of carbon fiber and aluminum, the TAC-POD Carbon Pro Bipods allow users to pan, tilt and roll for various shooting positions. For more info: (309) 944-5341, www.truglo.com



ARX LUX

TENICOR

The *Arx Lux* from Tenicor is an OWB holster for GLOCKS. It can be used with compact weapon lights like the Streamlight TLR7 and Surefire XC1-B. However, it can also work for a gun without a light. The low-profile design draws the gun close to the body for better concealment. A 10-degree forward cant rotates the grip toward the body. This two-piece holster with integrated belt loops is built from custom CAD designs and precision machined CNC tooling for a positive fit. For more info: www.tenicor.com



SCALLOPED COMMERCIAL BUFFER TUBE **LUTH-AR LLC**

Luth-Ar has added the *Scalloped Commercial Buffer Tube* to its line of carbine buffer tubes. Add it to your AR and its unique design will set you apart from the crowd. It gives a quick visual indication of the

selected position of the buttstock by the number of scallops exposed. Made of 6061-T6 Aluminum with a Hardcoat Anodized Black finish, the 6-position Scalloped Commercial Buffer Tube works with Luth-Ar's MBA-3, MBA-4 and MBA-5 buttstocks. For more info: (763) 263-0166, www.luth-ar.com

30-06 SPRINGFIELD **STARLINE BRASS**

Starline Brass has added the *30-06 Springfield* to its line of high-quality brass. The 30-06 was adopted in 1906 for the 1903 Springfield service rifle for the U.S. Military. Since then, this round has been chambered in many rifles in every action type. Considered one of the most versatile cartridges, the 30-06 is available in a variety of projectiles. With the proper bullet, the 30-06 can take on almost any game. For more info: (800) 280-6660, www.starlinebrass.com



TORIC 10X50 BINOCULAR **TRACT OPTICS**

TRACt Optics has added the *TORIC 10x50 Binocular* to its high-end optics line. Featuring SCHOTT HT (high transmission) glass for superior images, the TORIC 10x50 Binocular comes standard with a magnesium alloy body, Argon-filled waterproof and fog-proof construction plus multistep eyecups with rounded edges. These enhancements result in sharp and bright images for long-range viewing. Each TORIC 10x50 ships with a Neoprene neck strap, an eyepiece rain guard, tethered/removable objective lens covers and a micro fiber cleaning cloth. For more info: (631) 662-7354, www.tractoptics.com



RUGER WRANGLER PISTOL GRIPS **N.C. ORDNANCE INC.**

Ruger Wrangler Pistol Grips are available from N.C. Ordnance. The C190 is ivory-like and smooth; the C190RM comes with Ruger Medallions. Other grip models include Ivory-Like, Stag-Like, Repro Jig Bone, Repro-Jigged Buffalo Horn, Pearl Premium, Barked, Raised Mexican-Eagle with Snake, Steer and Bison Skull. Check out N.C. Ordnance's over 2,200 reproduction grips and buttplates. For more info: (252) 237-2440, www.gungrasp.com

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AMBIDEXTROUS SWEAT SHIELD REMORA HOLSTERS

The *Ambidextrous Sweat Shield* can be used in all forms of carry. Offered in Remora's original Non-Slip or New GEN II material, the holster is not draw-side specific. Lightweight and durable, the Ambidextrous Sweat Shield's outer skin is made of rubberized non-slip fabric. The holster comes with Sweat Shield Modification to protect the top of the gun from body oils and sweat. The feature also protects the user from "Hammer Gouge" or similar irritation. For more info: (239) 316-7770, www.remoraholsterstore.com



COMPOUND HOGUE KNIVES

Hogue Knives' *Compound* is an out-the-front automatic knife. Its hybrid design features an aluminum chassis encased by a G10 frame. The Compound sports a 0.125"-thick, 3.5"-long CPM S30V

stainless steel blade with a Black PVD finish and a hardness rating of 58-61 HRC. The knife has a double-action automatic trigger to deploy and retract the blade. The Compound's honeycombed G10 exterior is made from Hogue's G-Mascus or solid black G10. OAL is 8.4"; weight is 3.6 oz. For more info: (800) 438-4747, www.hogueknives.com

A-KLUB TOPS KNIVES

The *A-Klub* is TOPS Knives' first knife designed by a woman. Known for appearing on the TV show *Naked and Afraid*, Amanda Kaye grew up hunting and learning Native American survival skills. She based the knife on influences from Native American war clubs. The blade

is 12.38" 1095 RC 56-58 with an acid rain finish; the handle is Green Canvas Micarta. The A-Klub's overall length is 17.88"; weight is 23.8 oz. It comes with a black Kydex sheath with dangler. For more info: (208) 542-0113, www.topsknives.com



BEAR OPS AC-510-B4-B BEAR & SON CUTLERY

Bear OPS, the tactical brand of Bear & Son Cutlery, introduces the *Bear OPS AC-510-B4-B*. The multipurpose automatic knife has a modified drop-point blade with a taper-ground 3.25" blade edge made of Sandvik 14C28N premium steel. It opens with a push of a button and an integrated safety prevents accidental

deployment. The Bear Ops AC-510-B4-B has jimping on the top of the blade and black G10 handle. The knife weighs 4 oz.; OAL is 8". For more info: (256) 435-2227, www.bearandsoncutlery.com

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY ONLINE:

TriStar Trinity LT OVER/UNDER PACKAGE

TriStar Arms *Trinity LT Over/Under* graces the giveaway page of this issue of *GUNS Magazine*. The 12-ga. shotgun featuring a laser-engraved aluminum receiver is wrapped with Turkish Walnut. It comes standard with a red fiber optic sight, five choke tubes (Beretta/Benelli Mobil), top tang barrel safety selector and 28" chrome-lined barrels. Ideal for a day out in the field, the Trinity LT weighs 6.3 lbs. making it one of the lightest shotguns on the market.

If you win this giveaway, you can secure and protect your Trinity LT shotgun by keeping it in InvictaSafe's *Firearm Display Safe*. Featuring see-through ballistic glass with a picture-type frame, it "showcases your valuable like a work of art." Combined with the LED lighting, it makes your firearm stand out and attract attention like a painting.

The *Blacktail* is a sleek and slender knife for everyday carry. With an overall length of 6.75", the knife has a drop-point style blade made of 8Cr14Mov steel and an aluminum handle. This folding knife not only looks good, it also gets the job done.

We have one more prize: the *MEC Sizemaster*. The choice of many hunters, this single-stage reloader features a highly accurate power ring collet resizer that returns every base back to original factory specs and the E-Z Prime auto primer feed that dispenses primers automatically. The resizing station handles high- or low-base brass or steel heads.

For a chance to own the Trinity LT Over/Under package, just go to www.gunsmagazine.com/giveaways or mail a postcard. Who knows? It may be your time to win! —Jazz Jimenez

MEC SIZEMASTER

MAKER: MEC Outdoors
(800) 797-4632
www.mecoutdoors.com
VALUE: \$351

TRINITY LT OVER/UNDER

MAKER: TriStar Arms Inc.
(816) 421-1400
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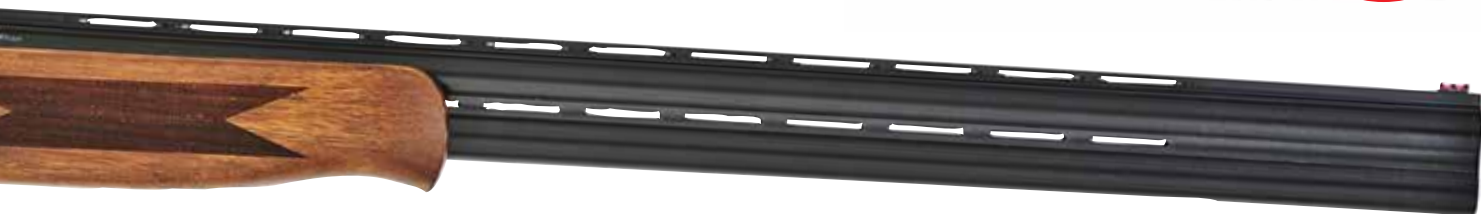
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WINNERS CHOSEN BY RANDOM DRAWING. Limit one entry per household. To protect the privacy and security of winners, their names will NOT be made public. Contest void where prohibited by law. Winners must undergo a background check and comply with all 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. 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 Gun 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.



Target on the left shows typical accuracy of the T/C Contender carbine at 100 yards. Square targets are from the Marlin 375 at 100 yards. All were shot with cast bullets and AA1680.



THE .375 WINCHESTER

MODERN POWER FOR LEVERS AND CARBINES

The .375 Winchester was introduced in 1978 and is a modernized version of the .38-55 Winchester from the 1880s. Wanting to breathe life into the popular Winchester 1894 lever-gun, Winchester released their “big bore” 1894s chambered in .375 Winchester. Although slightly shorter than the .38-55, the .375 Winchester operates at a much higher pressure, 52,000 CUP, making it a powerful, modern-day puncher.

BACK DROP

I first heard about the .375 Winchester when dealing with a severe bout

of “Marlinitis” back in the early 1990s. After obtaining several different models of Marlin lever-guns, my symptoms subsided. Marlin 336s chambered in .30-30 and .35 Remington were easily bailed out of the “used” rack for \$200, a bargain even back then. The 1894s cost slightly more.

Later, I learned about the rare Marlin chambered in .356 Winchester, called the 356 ER. I stumbled across one at a gun show, where it was quickly lugged back to my vehicle and checked off my wish list.

HOLY GRAIL GUN

Then there’s the model 375, chambered

in — what else — the .375 Winchester. A straight-walled case like no other, it’s the start of the big-bore blasters. Looking like the undernourished brother of the .444 Marlin (and its big brother, the .45-70) the smaller-girth .375 Winchester packs a lot of punch without rattling your teeth like the .444 or .45-70.

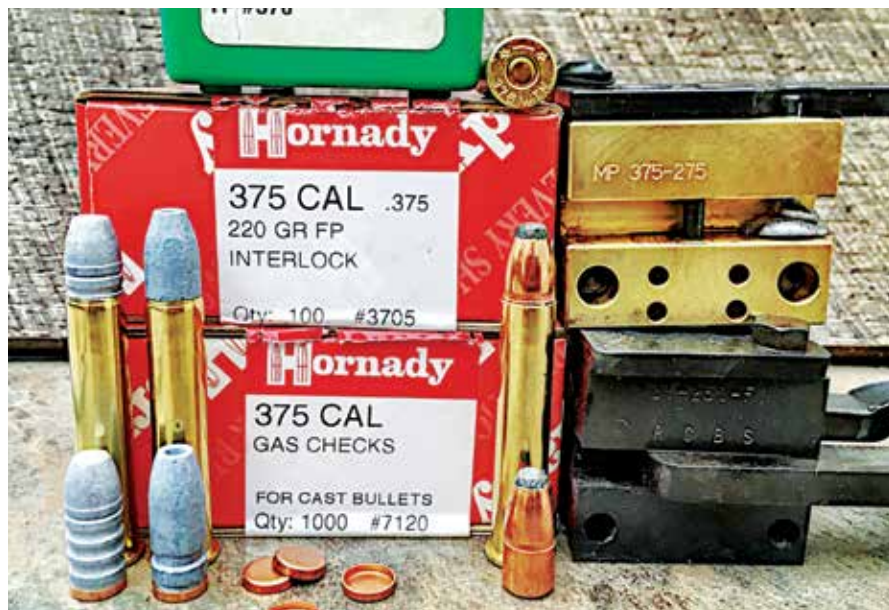
Plus, straight-walled cases make for perfect cast-bullet shooters since you don’t have to worry about case-neck length when seating bullets. I had to get one and ended up with two, they’re so good!

HANDLOADER’S DREAM

In the early 1990s, getting factory brass was kind of iffy with Winchester’s limited runs, and factory fodder was expensive for my cheapskate tendencies. This was no big



Tank sizes and applies gas checks with LEE push-thru sizing dies. He then sizes to 0.377" for best cast bullet accuracy in the .375 Winchester.



Tank's favorite cast bullets are from molds by RCBS and MP-Molds. Starline Brass is making sure the .375 Winchester won't fade away into obscurity!

deal, as the parent cartridge of the .375 Winchester is the .30-30. All I needed to do was blow out the cases of readily available .30-30 brass — it's a simple, fun and satisfying process for those who enjoy tinkering in handloading.

THE SECRET — CREAM OF WHEAT

Load three grains of Bullseye powder into a primed .30-30 case and top it off with Cream of Wheat (COW). Simply push the cartridge neck into a block of paraffin wax (used for canning) and break it off, sealing the cartridge case.

Now shoot your loaded case to fireform your brass. You wouldn't think COW has enough substance to blow out a brass case, but it does. You'll end up with perfect cases every time.

STARLINE BRASS

This year, Starline Brass breathed new life into the wonderful .375 Winchester by offering it as a regular-stocked item. Like many, I have moved onto other gun/cartridge interests but now seems like the perfect time to reacquaint myself with this straight-walled wonder.

THE BULLETS

My staple bullet for the .375 Winchester is the RCBS 37-250 FNGC (flat-nosed gas checked) bullet. My bullets drop out at 270 grains. Using a stiff charge of AA1680, I'm nudging 2,300 fps, with no signs of high-pressure and excellent accuracy in the 1.5" to 2" range at 100 yards.

New to the .375 caliber family is the MP-Molds 275-gr. gas-checked hollow-point, which also shoots great. Since I powder coat my cast bullets, I use LEE push-thru sizing dies to size and crimp the gas check onto my slugs.

Lastly is the old standby, Hornady's 220-gr. jacketed flat-point. It hits hard and is good for up to elk-sized game.

NO POWDER PUFF

I've found the best powder for the .375 Winchester to be AA1680. Alliant ReLoader 7 is also good, as is 2400. Lastly, Unique is wonderful for lighter plinking loads. The Internet is full of good loads as are the many handloading manuals available.

T/C CONTENDER CARBINE

Not long after my bout with "Marlinitis," I came down with T/C Symptoms, short for Thompson Center Arms. It started with an



Loading is straightforward for straight-walled cases. Tank shows how easy it is using a LEE Classic Turret press for his loads.

innocuous looking .50 caliber Renegade muzzleloader and ended up with a slew of Contender and Encore frames and barrels, one of which is a blued .375 Winchester barrel, in carbine style, and boy is it a shooter!

This carbine killed three birds with one stone, as I have an affinity for single-shots, T/C carbines and lastly, the .375 Winchester. It is a handy-toting carbine packing plenty of punch. It is a true one-ragged hole shooter with my cast handloads and does wonderfully on deer. The ones I've shot don't travel far.

If you're lucky to find a Winchester or Marlin levergun chambered in .375 Winchester, don't pass it up. Same goes for a T/C Contender barrel, trust me, you won't be sorry.

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When you are looking for a custom gunsmith, there is one place to check, Gary Reeder Custom Guns. With over 70 series of full custom guns to choose from custom large caliber rifles for Africa, to custom Contender or Encore barrels, to custom 1911s to custom revolvers like the El Diablo shown, check with us first. Call me for more info or see it and more at www.reedercustomguns.com.

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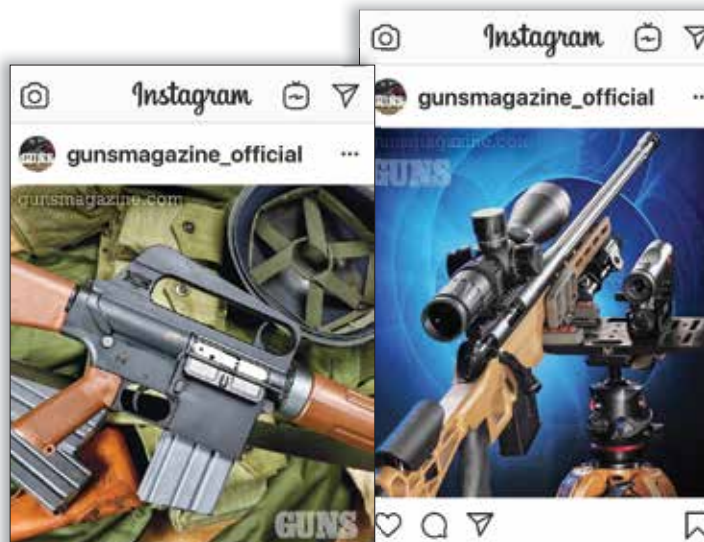
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LOOK TO THEM FIRST WHEN YOU ARE READY TO MAKE A PURCHASE.

**MARCH
2020**

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"HELL YES, I CAN WALK UP THERE!"

If this doesn't inspire you to get up off the couch, I'm not sure anything will.

Honored American Veterans Afield (HAVA) recently hosted the 8th Annual HAVA/Monroe Schuler Foundation (MSF) hunt at Vermejo Park Ranch near Raton, NM. The goal of the event was to "test the resolve of seriously injured veterans," in a hunt at 9,000 feet in temperatures dipping to zero degrees. The 10 veterans overcame the serious environmental obstacles despite significant disabilities with eight of the 10 bagging an elk.

During the hunt, one participant, a severely injured marine who was a double leg amputee in January 2019, was just beginning to learn to walk with his prosthetic limbs. Despite his mind-numbing challenges, the marine wouldn't accept help from volunteers or guides and was eventually seen walking up the mountain by himself, "yelling for all to hear, 'Hell yes, I can walk up there!'"

And he did.

HAVA Chairman Tom Taylor said later, "Our goal is to put disabled veterans in challenging situations and encourage them

HAVA



to face the realities of various outdoor activities. It's wonderful to watch these American treasures test their resolve, and to see the joy when they overcome tremendous odds."

It's a great story from a great organization founded by shooting and outdoor industry companies. FMG (parent company of *GUNS* and *American Handgunner*)

is a sustaining sponsor of HAVA, along with partners Smith & Wesson, NSSF, SIG SAUER, Crimson Trace, GLOCK, Hornady, Leupold, Mossberg, Ruger, Savage, SureFire, Taurus, Vista Outdoors/Federal, XS Sights and several others. For more information, visit www.honoredveterans.org

WINCHESTER SERIAL 1

We get press releases approximately every 10 minutes but this one was a doozy: How would you like to own the two Winchester Model 70 rifles with serial numbers 1 and 2?

If you have some cash — starting with a cool \$1,750,000 — you can own them both. As of this writing, the rifles are being offered by sportsmanslegacy.com to the first person who can write a non-bouncing check for the above amount.

Most of us would probably assume the first dozen or two Winchester Model 70s



were held by the factory or sent to dignitaries. As it turns out, it wasn't the case — Winchester put the guns into shipping boxes and out the door they went!

Rifle #1 was built January 20, 1936. Shipping records have been lost but the history suggests the current owner's uncle purchased the rifle from a hardware store in Durango, Colorado during the 1937 hunting season. If you haven't been to Durango, it ain't easy to get there and we can only imagine how it was in 1937!

Apparently the rifle spent 50 years in the field until the owner realized he was sitting on a literal gold mine.

Rifle #2 has a murkier history but was acquired by the owner of rifle #1 sometime after 1980 for an undisclosed sum.

Both .30-06 rifles are in good shape in approximately 80 percent condition. The price is firm and the pair will not be separated. If you buy them, call me at the office because we'd certainly love to write a story about it!

NOT JUST A TOY

Most of us consider airsoft weapons as the province of play-acting youngsters, even though airsoft recreational leagues are huge worldwide, especially in areas where real guns are frowned upon. Yet, to most of us lead-n-powder folks here in the U.S., airsoft is generally considered one step below BB guns in the grand scheme of shooting.

However, if you've spent any time as part of an armed organization, you've likely used an airsoft weapon in training. The guns are a valuable tactical training tool, safe to use against (properly outfitted) people to provide a decent approximation of live fire for the shooter and a mild pain stimulus for operational failures by the target. They're also great because they don't generally hurt



the surroundings after a missed shot, making them great for active shooter training and room-entry practice in "regular" buildings.

To this end, I just got my grimy mitts on the new semi-auto SIG AIR Pro Force P226 Airsoft gun. It looks, feels and operates just like the real P226 (minus the red barrel tip) and would be a great training accessory if you are so-armed in real life. In fact, the U.S. Coast Guard recently selected the SIG piece as their standard training pistol to mimic their issue P226s. SIG also offers an M17 replica of the U.S. Military service sidearm.

The P229 has a list price of \$159, making it a very reasonably-priced, serious training tool — and just plain fun for those of us who are hopelessly maturity-challenged!

PODCAST

You've probably seen it mentioned elsewhere but the *GUNS Magazine* Podcast is rolling merrily along! We've been talking to a great list of guests and there are more big-name surprises in store.

In spite of great reviews and a growing audience, we've found the number one reason folks don't listen is because they're not familiar with how to use a podcast — therefore, I'll walk you through it.

A podcast is essentially a radio show contained inside a computer file. You download the file and listen on your cell phone, tablet or home computer, just like listening to digital music. Most folks listen to podcasts

while driving, working out or working around the house, just like the radio. The big advantage is you can listen anywhere, while stopping and starting whenever you need to. It's like a VCR for your radio (anybody remember VCRs?).

The easiest way to listen is by visiting GunsMagazine.com, go to the "Podcast" tab and click on the episode. An audio player will appear and you just hit "play." Most smartphones also have a podcast application

already on the phone or you can download one such as Apple Podcast or Spotify. You

then search for the *GUNS Magazine* Podcast, click "subscribe" and start listening!



THIS IS COOL

Billed as "The All-American Handgun for All-American Handgunners," it certainly is — especially if you're a fan of our sister publication, *American Handgunner*! I'm pleased (and under no obligation whatsoever, honestly) to announce the Les Baer



"American Handgunner Special Edition 1911."

Starting this month you can purchase one of these special guns from the venerable Iowa pistol builder which specializes in high-end 1911s. The new gun was built in consultation with our own handgun guru, Roy Huntington. As many of our readers also subscribe to *Handgunner*, they already know His Majesty Roy is both editor and publisher of the venerable publication (which, for the record, is *almost* as good as *GUNS*). Roy is also a retired cop and former competitor who knows a thing or two about quality 1911s. As I hear it, Les and Roy conspired over spirituous beverages to bring out the commemorative pistol incorporating features Roy likes on his own guns.

The handgun is a Government-sized 1911 with a brushed hard-chrome lower and blued top end, featuring Rolo adjustable sights and tritium night sight inserts. It also has great-looking double-diamond VZ black and blue grips and is guaranteed to shoot 3" groups at 50 yards. For more info, check out www.lesbaer.com. If you're feeling extra generous, please have one sent to the destitute but kindly editor of this fine publication which doesn't have its own commemorative gun — yet.

SAAMI APPROVES TWO

The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturer's Institute has recently approved two new cartridges: the 1-3/4" shotshell and the 6.5-284 Norma rifle cartridge

The 6.5-284 Norma has actually been around for a while even though most shooters probably haven't heard of the round. A modification of the .284 Winchester, it was internationally standardized in 1999 and has seen extensive usage



in the long-range benchrest competition community. It pushes a 130-gr. bullet around 2,900 fps and is known best for its long-range accuracy at 1,000 yards. It remains to be seen if it becomes popular compared to the newer 6.5 PRC round which is actually a tad bit better in most categories, including cost.

The other announcement is the official codification of the shorty shotshell. There has been tremendous interest in these rounds from competitive and self-defense shooters, effectively adding shell capacity to a shotgun with little ballistic penalty. Unfortunately, they don't feed well in most shotguns without minor modifications but we have it on good authority at least one major gun maker is currently looking at the problem.

continued on page 81



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10/22® Team, Newport, New Hampshire

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