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GLOCK 48

This G19 "sliced thin" may be 9mm carry perfection.

Massad Ayoob



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Delta 5

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Mike "Duke" Venturino



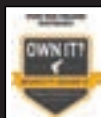
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Hunting with Gibbs

Rocky Gibbs made magnums out of the mundane.

Wayne Van Zwoll

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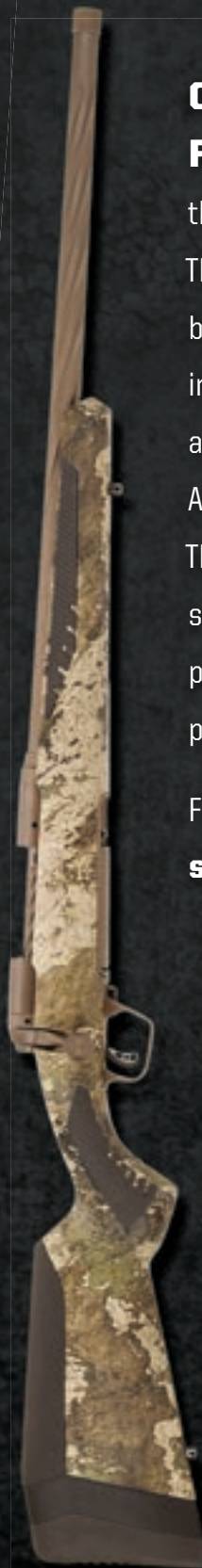
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HIDDEN MP40

Dear Mr. Venturino,

Since you are an MP40 nut, re: *GUNS Magazine* May 2019, you may find my MP40 Saga of some interest. In May '55 while on patrol duty out in the country, a German came yelling at us to come over to his work area, he had something for us. He was tearing down an outside brick smoker. He had found two MP40s stuffed up the chimney. They were wrapped in burlap and had five or six loaded magazines with them. The surface rust wasn't too bad, probably shootable. We put the guns on the floor of the jeep, my side, and I had a chance to examine them. The headstamp on the ammo was 1945, black tipped. They were probably concealed at the end of the war. I asked the corporal what are we going to do with them? "Turn them in," was his reply.

*Name withheld by request
Via U.S. Mail*

RUBBER BULLET FUN

Thirty-five years ago when I was still living in Austin, Texas I bought a box of .38/357 rubber bullets. The only directions

were a sized brass case and standard small primer and we never had any issues with primer setback. Our backdrop was a large thick cardboard box at 7 yards to catch the bullets with a paper target taped over the open front. I remember one time three shots into an old couch pillow from about 25 feet pretty much shredded it. Think I'll load a few up and step out back to do some plinkin'.

*Rick Schulken
Via Email*

Hi, I just read the rubber bullet story by David Freeman. Very interesting. He mentioned drilling out the primer pocket of .45 Colt brass with a 1/8 drill bit to prevent malfunctions due to the primer being pushed



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THE FINEST IN THE FIREARMS FIELD SINCE 1955

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BIG GREEN IN THE RED

Things keep churning at Remington. The company filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in March 2018, shortly after a Connecticut trial court found Sandy Hook parents could sue the company for manufacturing one of the guns used in the massacre. Fortunately, Remington then emerged from

bankruptcy a few months later after shedding nearly a billion dollars in debt.

Remington

Now, in May of this year, it was reported the company plans to furlough 500 employees and shutter production lines in Alabama and New York this summer in an effort to reduce excessive production. The company also just named Ken D'Arcy as its new CEO and made some rearrangements in the executive suite. You have to be a serious optimist to find much positive karma right now at America's Oldest Gun Maker.

BIG DISTRIBUTOR SINKING

United Sporting Companies (USC), a huge firearms distributor that began life as Ellett Brothers and also owns Simmons and Accusport (among other companies), recently filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection due to too much debt and excessive inventory. Anti-gunners are hailing this latest gun business snafu as proof the industry is in trouble but according to court filings, it primarily stems from USC

betting on a huge demand spike if Hillary Clinton had been elected. However, there is another part of the story not being widely reported: primary USC creditor Prospect Capital Corp. also filed a suit against Ellett Brothers' owner, Wellspring Capital Management, alleging investment funds were used for personal expenses by the owners rather than put into the business. As they say, there's surely "more to come ..."



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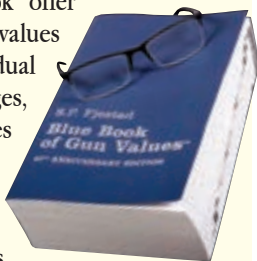
SALESFORCE FORCING GUN MAKERS OUT



Here's one of those hidden but major assaults on the Second Amendment: Salesforce, the leading provider of back-end customer-management business software, started banning firearms businesses from using the company's wares in April. Recently, Capstone Precision Group (manufacturer of Berger Bullets and distributor of Lapau and SK products among others) issued a press release noting it was going back to old school methods of dealing with customers "... before supporting software providers that grandstand in the name of political correctness." It's funny the press release doesn't mention Salesforce by name.

A GREAT READ

Don't buy the 40th edition of the *Blue Book of Gun Values*. Just don't do it, I'm warning you! The reason — you'll probably never get any work done. I just got my very first copy of the venerable (and weighty) book and to say I was missing something is a gross understatement. Not only does the book offer over 500,000 gun values for 23,000 individual models in 2,500 pages, it gives brief histories for many, offers serialization charts to help determine age and even has an 80-page color spread to illustrate how to grade guns. Even if you're not buying and selling firearms for a living, this one book is as close to a "Bible" as there is in the gun business. Check it out at www.bluebookofgunvalues.com



INTERESTING MOVE

If you spend much time on the internet, there is a significant change you might want to note: 2nd Adventure Group, wholly owned by Pete and Frank Brownell, has purchased AR15.com. The website is a major force in the online gun world, boasting 5 million users. According to media reports, Brownells



Pete Brownell

"sees the importance, now more than ever, for having a free, unfiltered forum for pro-Constitutional voices and ideas to be heard." It is reported there are "big things ahead" for AR15.com and now with the backing of a group having serious business and media-savvy, along with impeccable 2nd Amendment credentials, this probably means the site will become a bigger player, especially in the Gun Rights movement. Good for Pete and Frank!

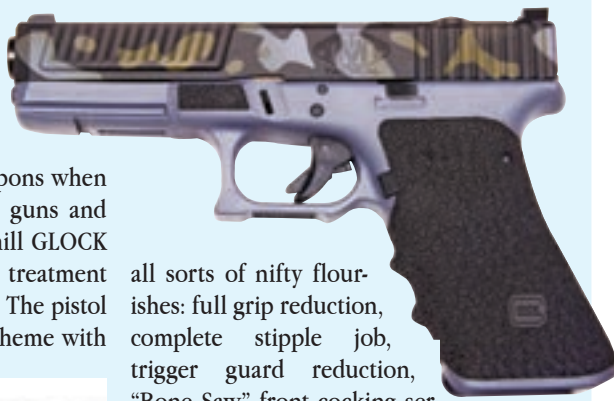
NEW COVER GUN – NOT!

Once in a while something comes across the transom that causes us to clap like a toddler and chuckle enough we have to share with our reader family. In this case, it was an email touting a "fully loaded" AR15 rifle. As you can see (we apologize for poor image quality, but hey, it's the internet!), this super-duper *uber-gun* really *is* fully accessorized and has everything except a ground-pepper dispenser and a tactical beard-oil container. We suppose there is a trigger in there somewhere but couldn't swear as such in a court of law. If you were hoping to see this on the cover of *GUNS*, you'll probably be waiting a long time but I'd guess several of our esteemed competitors are trying to find the owner as we speak.



HOW COOL IS MY (OLD) TOOL?

Check out my former duty gun, as re-imaged by the creative geniuses at Toner Machine and Tool (TMT). We officers were allowed to buy back our individual service weapons when the Police department changed guns and what started as my run-of-the-mill GLOCK 22 received the full makeover treatment courtesy of TMT boss Jim Toner. The pistol now sports a "Thin Blue Line" theme with



all sorts of nifty flourishes: full grip reduction, complete stipple job, trigger guard reduction, "Bone Saw" front cocking serrations, machined pocket for optics, U.S. flag engraving, multi-cam Cerakote and several other fun things. The only problem now is my inner conflict: Do I shoot it, or let it freeloader as a "safe queen?" Decisions, decisions ...

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TURKEY TAKEDOWN TECHNOLOGY REDEFINING THE .410 – AND MORE!

There's no field sport better than turkey hunting to introduce new hunters to the skills needed to pursue big game. Keen of sight and omnivorous in his food habits, old Tom Turkey ranks right up there with the devious whitetail in terms of challenge. To hunt him is to respect him. You can spend a lifetime pursuing turkey and still be outfoxed on a regular basis, so let's get those first-timers out there chasing him. Fortunately, equipping a novice hunter has never been easier.

Several developments recently caught my eye — Stevens' introduction of a turkey-tuned, single-shot .410 and Savage announcing a dedicated 12- and 20-gauge turkey bolt gun. Moreover, Federal Cartridge shared the eye-opening news they had developed a .410 turkey load based on 13/16 oz. of No. 9 Tungsten Super Shot (TSS) as well as blended TSS turkey loads of No. 7/9 and No. 8/10 shot for the 12 and 20 gauges.

SMALL PELLET POWER

Frankly, traditional turkey hunters will

probably be shaking their heads about the use of No. 8 or 10 shot of any make, but the latest specialized turkey loads are so superior to any ammunition we've ever had,



Small-bore smash! At 30 yards, Federal's new .410 TSS No. 9 loads proved lethal.

it'd be foolish to settle for anything less. Cost is meaningless. Premium ammunition is the cheapest part of the hunt.

By way of explaining the lethality of their high-tech tungsten turkey-shot, Federal engineers claim *"No. 9 Heavyweight TSS pellets have more penetration energy at 60 yards than No. 5 lead shot at 40 yards, with nearly the same velocity — all with a drastically higher pellet count."*

Just think about this statement for a moment. If you've been around the track a few times, the use of No. 9 shot on turkeys is totally counterintuitive. Fortunately, I was able to get my hands on the TSS blended loads for the 20 gauge and the No. 9 TSS loading for the .410, but first I needed some new guns to test them.

DEDICATED GOBBLER GETTERS

Stevens' Model 301 single-shot .410 turkey gun, with its 26" barrel capped off with an extra-full choke tube, sporting a Picatinny rail for optics and a synthetic stock with sling swivels, is a 5-lb. fast-handling



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flea-weight any novice would find manageable. Clothed in Mossy Oak Obsession or Bottomland, it's a classic, break-open hammer gun and very safe with the addition of a side-mounted manual safety and a hammer block. With a suggested retail price of \$199, it's also affordable.

Savage's release of a 20-gauge (Model 220) and a 12-gauge (Model 212) bolt-action turkey gun surprised me since there is already a Model 320 dedicated turkey pump gun in the Stevens line. Based on the Model 110 rifle action, both models debuted years ago as super accurate slug guns, enhanced with Savage's fully adjustable (2.5-6 lb.) AccuTrigger, AccuFit synthetic stock system and AccuStock internal chassis bedding system. In fact, a scoped, rifled 12-gauge Model 212 is my go-to gun for slug shooting and it leaves nothing on the bench when it comes to sheer accuracy.

Now offered as 22" barrel smoothbores with extra-tight turkey choke, both models sport a Picatinny rail, Mossy Oak camouflage, 2-round magazine and a weight of approximately 7.5 lbs. The 212 and 220, retailing for \$779 and \$695 respectively, are super-accurate, super-adjustable, utterly stable platforms for picking off Mr. Tom or winning a big money card shoot.

Especially when you consider the revolutionary things Federal, their sister company, has done with turkey loads.

MILD BUT WILD PAYLOAD

While the *cigarillo*-sized shell and little .410 bore is controversial as an effective upland combination, this mild-mannered little shell has been the introduction for millions of novices to the shotgun sports. Federal's development of an honest-to-God .410 turkey load just confirms the caliber's versatility. Let's look at the numbers.

If I were forced to select a standard load for turkeys in a .410, it would be the typical 3" shell loaded with 11/16 oz. of No. 6 lead shot. This would translate into 155 pellets flying downrange toward your bird. Federal's new loading with 13/16 oz. of No. 9 Tungsten Super Shot sends 294 pellets downrange, virtually smothering Mr. Turkey's vitals with a swarm of high-energy pellets. Federal's TSS loads in the .410, 20- and 12-gauge represent a quantum shift in the way we understand the external ballistics of shotgun payloads.

My test targets reflect what Federal has accomplished. Mounting the turkey guns with a Bushnell Trophy 1x28mm red/green



Stevens' new turkey-tuned Model 301 is a bantamweight any novice can manage.



Once your bird's down, measure his spurs using the handy ruler on the side of the 20-gauge TSS shotshells.



Savage's Model 212 and 220 bolt guns are precise platforms for turkeys or card matches.

dot optic, I fired both at 30 and 40 yards using Champion's VisiColor turkey targets which depict lethal brain and spinal column pellet strikes in pink.

I had no doubts about the performance of the 20-gauge TSS No.7/9 load and the single target I shot at 40 yards confirms it. But my real interest was in the .410 TSS No. 9 loading.

With only 10 shells available, I expended five of those getting the Bushnell optic zeroed and the pattern centered at 30 yards. After shooting one pattern at 30 yards and

two patterns at 40, I'm saving the last two shells for a "rabbit hunt" test. However, of the patterns shot, the results were dead paper Toms at 30 and 40 yards. At 40, the pattern was pretty thin, but still packing enough penetrating punch where it counts.

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THE .45 AUTO RIM

FLAPPERS, MOON CLIPS AND A CLASSIC REVOLVER ROUND

What do you do when you find yourself at war without either the needed weapons nor the ability to produce them as fast as you need them? The answer? *Improvise*.

That's exactly what the United States military did in WWI. Just a few years earlier, the 1911 Government Model .45 had been selected as the official sidearm and now our troops were being shipped to Europe but there was no way they could be equipped with the relatively new semi-auto .45 fast enough.

REVOLVER TO THE RESCUE!

However, at the same time both Smith & Wesson and Colt were making large-frame revolvers chambered for the .45 Colt and .455 Webley. An unknown engineer at S&W came up with an excellent idea allowing the use of .45 ACP cartridges in the Colt New Service and the S&W Second Model Hand Ejector. Both revolvers so set up became the Model 1917.

Our standard service handgun cartridge was the rimless .45 ACP for use in the 1911. By careful machining, revolver cylinders could be set up so the .45 ACP headspaced with the mouth of the case butting up against a ridge in the cylinder. But even if this worked (not a sure thing), once the cartridge was fired the ejector star did not catch the non-existent rim and cartridges had to be punched out or picked out one at a time by thumbnail. This is not an acceptable situation under battle conditions. The idea of the moon clip was devised to allow three cartridges to be placed in the half-moon clip. Two of these could be dropped in the cylinder and easily ejected with the ejector star. In fact with a little practice a revolver so set up could be very quickly reloaded.

RIMMED ALTERNATIVE

After the war, Model 1917s became quite popular with the civilian population and were often used by ex-military men when entering law enforcement — especially in rural areas. Around 1920 a new cartridge

was devised that enabled the use of these revolvers without moon clips — the .45 Auto Rim.

Just as the name suggests, these were .45 ACP cartridges with the rim added. To

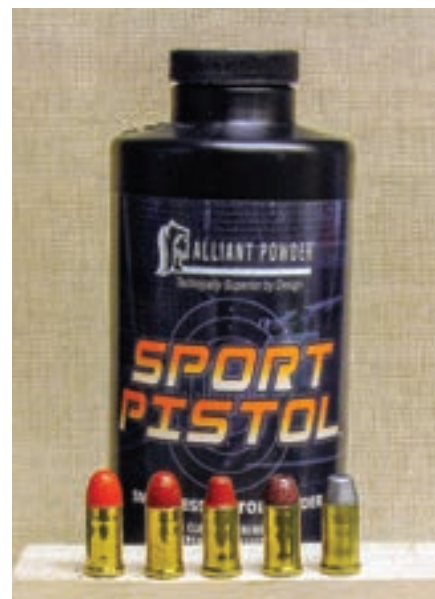
replace the moon clip required a larger than normal rim, which is why the .45 AR stands out among all other sixgun cartridges by having a taller-than-normal rim. Shooters now had the choice of using .45 ACPs with moon clips (available today in both half-moon and full size) or the “new” .45 AR.

Reloading the .45 AR is very straightforward. You don't need a new set of dies but simply a new shell holder to add to your .45 ACP dies — if you're set up for

Two targets, two Smiths:
The Model 625 .45 Auto Rim held its own with a .45 Colt Mountain Gun with a lighter, faster 225-gr. bullet.



True Blue is rapidly becoming one of John's favorite propellants for the .45 Auto Rim.



Cast or coated bullets? Alliant Sport Pistol powder works well with John's .45 ACP or .45 Auto Rim loads.

crimping. Years ago I purchased a separate .45 AR crimping die to add to my set of ACP dies. If you look at the length of a sixgun cylinder compared to the overall cartridge length of the .45 AR/.45 ACP, you might surmise accuracy would suffer with the bullet having to travel the extra length of the cylinder before entering the barrel. However, this doesn't seem to be a problem. In fact, .45 Auto Rim/.45 ACP cartridges will often shoot more accurately than longer cartridges. In .45 Colt revolvers

from Ruger and in Freedom Arms with auxiliary cylinders for the .45 ACP, the ACP will often outshoot the .45 Colt. My first .45 AR sixgun, an S&W Model 1917, was purchased when I was still a teenager so I have a long history of shooting and reloading for this excellent little cartridge.

In the 1950s — before we had a proliferation of excellent gunsmiths tuning the 1911 — target shooters stayed with the revolver. S&W offered the 1950 Target and then followed it with the 1955 Target.

The 1955 was offered in a different barrel configuration to better handle cast bullets and has a heavy barrel (much like the .44 Magnum).

Both of these .45 ACP/.45 AR guns were offered with excellent sights and 6-1/2" barrels — cutting them to 4" results in a Perfect Packin' Pistol. One of the best shooting .45 AR sixguns is the Model 1988 from Smith & Wesson with a heavy, full-underlug 5" barrel.

THE AR HOLDS ITS OWN

The .45 AR can be reloaded with bullets designed for the .45 ACP or the .45 Colt or, in the case of Elmer Keith's #452423, a 240-gr. bullet specifically for use in the .45 AR. The latest innovation in coated bullets, such as the 230-gr. .45 ACP bullets from Acme and Syntech both work well in my 6-1/2" Model 1955 when loaded in Starline .45 AR brass. With 5.5 grains of Alliant's Sport Pistol, muzzle velocity for both bullets is right at 825 fps and both put five shots into 1" at 20 yards.

Using the same powder charge with Oregon Trail's 225-gr. FNHC bullet results in 875 fps with the same accuracy. All three of these loads also shoot well in my 4" Model 1955; however, as expected muzzle velocities are 50-75 fps less.

A reader and friend, Dick Thompson, recently sent me some powder-coated bullets, one of which was a 205-gr. HP. These are cast bullets coated with a powder paint available at Harbor Freight. They shoot phenomenally well in my 4" 1955 with 6.0 grains of Sport Pistol, clocking out at 865 fps and shooting into a 7/8" group. This makes an excellent every day carry load.

One item on my reloading bench I've found virtually indispensable when loading .45 AR with .45 ACP bullets without a crimping groove (or .45 ACP for that matter), is the Lee Factory Crimp Die. When using it, first seat the bullets without crimping and then use the Lee die in a separate step. It's well worth the effort.

The .45 Auto Rim has been around almost 100 years and is still relevant. In fact, it can even give the .45 Colt a run for its money.



The Smith & Wesson Model 1955 Target is a classic launching pad for either the .45 Auto Rim or .45 ACP. Its 6-1/2" barrel is heavier than that of its 1950 predecessor.



As long as John still has S&Ws like this 1950 Target, he'll never abandon the .45 Auto Rim.

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WHEN A GREAT GUN GUY PASSES ... "D.O." SET THE BAR HIGH FOR POLICE WORK AND REVOLVERS.

In May of 2019, we lost Denny Reichard after a valiant battle with COPD. We'd been friends and colleagues for well over 30 years. Let me tell you about him.

ON THE RANGE

We first met at one of the early Bianchi Cups, where I was struck by the fact he was competing with a 6" Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum revolver and stout loads legendary power advocate Elmer Keith would have approved of. He was also vying against the rest of us with target handguns and the lightest-load ammo the rules would allow — and he did well, too. In the same sport, which soon became the NRA Action Pistol discipline, he won the Indiana State Championship multiple times with the same gun and loads.

The school I ran then was the Lethal Force Institute, and he went through it to the highest levels. At the loftiest part, LFI-IV, we had the students compete against one another on some of the toughest "combat shooting" courses ever devised: the Hackathorn Standards, and the Impossibly High Standards course from the International Practical Shooting Confederation. Denny won both of those, the Hackathorn with a higher score than the top tally at a recent National Tactical Invitational. He did it with a matched pair of those Dirty Harry



D.O. Reichard at Sand Burr: A Mare's Leg appealed to his taste for old-school guns.



Retired cop and revolversmith extraordinaire, Denny "D.O." Reichard.

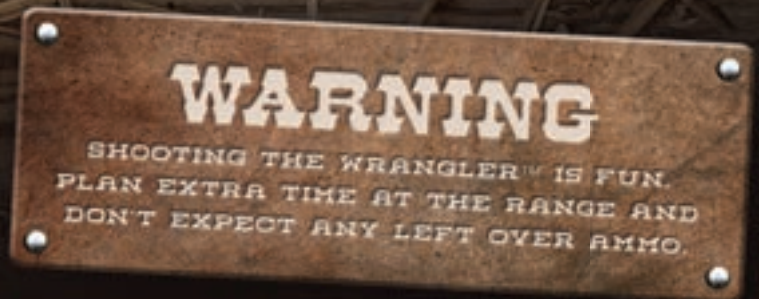
signature model .44 Magnums and stout handloads, dumping one when it ran empty and drawing the backup in lieu of reloading.

For much of his law-enforcement career he carried the pair in uniform, and at one point had his whole department doing the same. Those who couldn't qualify with the brutal recoil of the full power .44 Magnum easily did so with the optional .44 Special Winchester Silvertip. For those who made the grade with magnum loads, the issue round was Federal 44B, a 180-gr. JHP at 1,600 fps. No wonder Denny's nickname was "Rolling Thunder."

Denny and I taught together every year, first under the auspices of another great Indiana shooter, Jim Reinholt, and after Jim's passing, at Denny's own Sand Burr Gun Ranch, a combined shooting range and old school gun shop. In 1986 Denny became one of the very few people I certified to teach LFI deadly-force courses and likewise for my current school, Massad Ayoob Group. He was a great diagnostician for shooters who had problems, stern with the ones who had bad attitudes and eternally patient with those who were sincerely trying to overcome their issues.

THE PERFECT REVOLVER

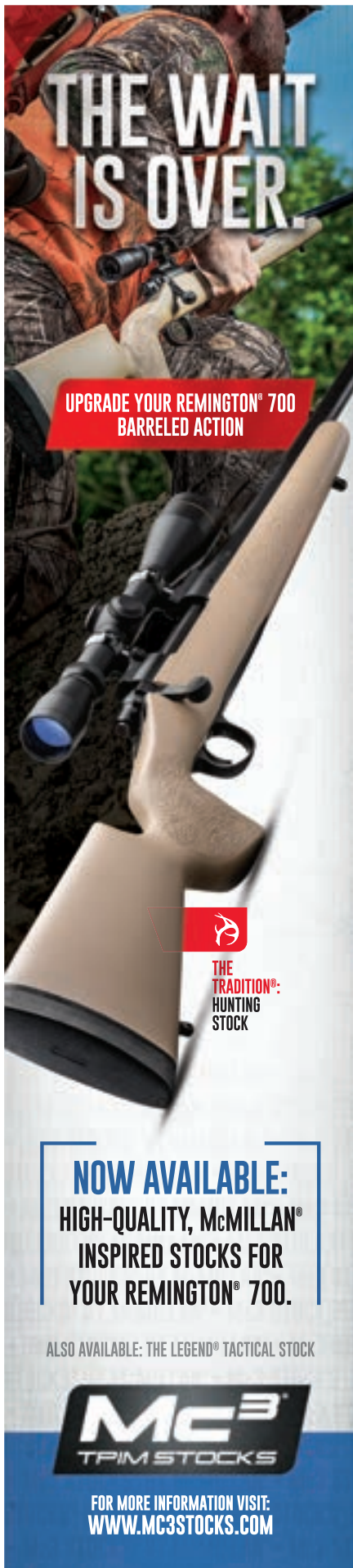
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D.O. watches as Mas tries one of his slick S&Ws — a Model 15 .38.

“Riding with Denny, I learned why they revered him as a supercop.”

ON THE STREET

Denny served 36 years in a police department in Indiana — in a tough little town, which saw its share of action. I got to know several of the officers Denny worked with, from the chief to rookies he broke in. Whenever I could, I did the “busman’s holiday” thing and rode with the local police to see how they did things. Riding with Denny, I learned why they revered him as a supercop.

With the public, “D.O.” was a combination of Officer Friendly and Andy of Mayberry. The local thugs, however, lived in fear of him. On those ride-alongs when he’d spot a local troublemaker, they didn’t say “F--- the pigs!” or raise a middle finger; they said respectfully — and sometimes querulously — “Good morning, Mr. Reichard.” He was a fearsome street fighter. I had the privilege of certifying him as an instructor with the Monadnock PR-24 side-handle baton, and he could make the instrument sing. He cherished a picture a young witness drew and sent to him after seeing him use the PR-24 on the street: The kid titled it *Ninja Cop*.

Reichard understood the question, “Is a cop a peace officer or a law enforcement officer?” and answered “Both!” When he lost a leg in a line-of-duty accident, he stayed on

the job for another decade as a detective, hugely successful because, in part, informants knew they could trust him to be fair.

ON THE BENCH

A man who would carry the S&W revolver or nothing at all, Denny went to all the S&W Armorer’s classes under one of the all-time great instructors, John Contro, and became perhaps his star pupil. He earned a reputation as second to none for slicking up a Smith & Wesson revolver — for street or competition, different packages — and it’s what he did after he retired and really became famous for in the gun world.

I can attest to why. In 2010, I used a Model 15 .38 Denny slicked up to win First Master at the East Coast IDPA Championships, coming in second only to Craig Buckland, the overall Stock Service Revolver Champion who later won the world title — this Model 15 had only the “duty action tune,” not the super-light match version. Yes, his work was that good.

Denny’s widow Cindy, daughter Ashley Gibbons and her husband Austin Gibbons will continue his legacy at Sand Burr Gun Ranch in Rochester, Indiana.

www.sandburrgunranch.com

A composite image featuring three hunters in tactical gear holding MSR rifles. The background is split into three vertical panels: a wooded area on the left, a desert landscape in the center, and a field with a wire fence on the right. The hunters are dressed in camouflage, a grey tactical shirt, and a black tactical shirt, respectively. They are all wearing headsets and holding MSR rifles. The MSR logo is prominently displayed at the top center.

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THE SCOUT RIFLE COOPER'S TIME-PROVEN CONCEPT

During a long and productive life, the late Col. Jeff Cooper introduced many innovative ideas in firearms and firearm training. One of his last projects was the "Scout Rifle" concept. Mainly through my involvement with IPSC shooting I met and talked with Cooper on several occasions — apparently without making any lasting impression, as I had to introduce myself every time.

At the SHOT Show one year, I ran into Cooper on the floor. What we chatted about I don't recall, but it was likely some aspect

of handgun shooting. Cooper said, "Let's walk and talk, I have a meeting coming up." The meeting turned out to be at the Steyr exhibit where I said goodbye. As I was leaving, I heard Cooper say to the Steyr rep, "Let's make a rifle."

THE BANDWAGON ROLLS

In retrospect, Cooper must've made some convincing points. A couple years later, in 1997, Steyr introduced their Scout rifle. The Steyr Scout wasn't an inexpensive rifle and never became a bestseller, but did

well enough it's still in production nearly a quarter-century later. I think Cooper, who died in 2006, would be pleased to see other makers — Marlin, Mossberg, Ruger, Savage, Springfield Armory, Tikka — offering rifles incorporating at least some of his design concepts.

Cooper's original concept was of a general purpose, all-around rifle capable of handling a multitude of practical shooting demands. In our current era of specialization, this seems like a novel concept. When I was a kid, all-around rifles were the norm. The adults I knew owned one centerfire rifle and made it do for *everything*.

Personally, I like any reason to own another rifle but a shooter's views gradually evolve. Even with a vault full of rifles, I only use a few on a regular basis. It seems these favorites, while not necessarily Scout rifles in every detail, do share Cooper's basic concepts.

THE OPTICAL ELEMENT

One concept I can take or leave alone is the forward-mounted scope. I think it is regrettable this scope style has become the defining feature of the Scout rifle when it is just one aspect, and by no means the most important one. I've shot thousands of rounds with Scout-scoped rifles, and, believe me, I *get* the concept. Far from being an all-around sighting device, I find the Scout scope rather specialized. A conventional receiver-mounted scope of 4-6X is the most versatile sighting device I know of.

If the forward-mounted scope is keeping you from trying the Scout concept, just omit it and use a conventional one, or (gasp!) iron sights. Alternatively, do as I do and have a Scout scope with quick-detach rings in the rifle case.

What I consider the template for an all-around rifle actually goes back a long way, to 1944 and the Lee-Enfield No. 5 Mk. 1 "Jungle Carbine." Though it had little impact as a military arm, the No. 5 appealed as a hunting rifle. What I like about current Scout rifles (and several "non-Scouts" as well) is they offer the good features of the No. 5 while making up for its few shortcomings.

The good features? They are compact overall length, moderate weight and adequate power. To these I would add the qualities I want in any rifle — reliability, durability, a good trigger, comfortable stock



The all-around rifle should be reasonably light, compact, fast handling and easy to shoot from any practical position.



Three "all-around" rifles for most any practical hunting situation, and not a scope in sight! From left: Lee-Enfield No. 5 Mk. 1 .303, Ruger Gunsite Scout .308, Tikka Arctic Ranger .308.



The Savage 110 Scout features an excellent adjustable rear aperture sight as backup.
Photo: Rob Jones/Imagesmith LLC

fit, balance and handling. I dislike muzzle-light rifles and want the balance point about 5" ahead of the trigger.

ALTERNATIVE CALIBERS

The .308 Winchester is most often associated with the Scout concept and I've had a lot of experience with this cartridge. I don't understand how some consider the .308 a mild, moderate round. It's actually a powerful round, and in a 7- to 8-lb. rifle has all the recoil most shooters can handle.

Depending on personal preferences, the .243 Winchester, .260 and 7mm-08 Remington are good options, and I'd certainly add the newer 6mm and 6.5 Creedmoor rounds to the list. It's a nice bonus if the maker provides optional magazine capacities. I can't imagine a need for more than a 10-round capacity, but I do like having the choice.

OTHER OPTIONS

If none of the Scout models appeals to you, there's another alternative. Most makers offer youth/compact models, promoting them as ideal for women or young shooters. Here's a secret: they're ideal for about all shooters. I found this out long ago when my wife bought a Browning A-Bolt Micro-Medallion in 7mm-08. By the time I had a scope fitted and sighted in, I could hardly stand to give it back to her.

Generally these compact models have 16 1/2 to 20" barrels, 36 to 40" overall length, and weigh 6 to 6 1/2 lbs. I find the shorter length of pull (12 3/4 to 13") an excellent fit when wearing a hunting coat. Compact models are available from Browning, Kimber, Remington, Ruger, Sako, Steyr, T/C, Tikka, Weatherby and Winchester.

I like 'em all — almost as much as I like my old Lee-Enfield No. 5. 



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THE ESSENTIAL OPTIC

BINO-TRUISM: MORE MAGNIFICATION ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

Sight is a wonderful gift. To see is to discover. Sight also confirms — and helps us achieve. *Vini, vidi, vici*: “We came, we saw, we conquered.” Sight is power.

Our eyes need light to see. Light has properties of particles and rays. As early as A.D. 1100 Arab scientist Alhazen described the behavior of reflected light. Egyptian geographer Ptolemy followed with observations on refraction. In 1621 Dutch spectacle-maker Willebrord Snell showed every substance has a refractive index. By then, Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei had built a telescope with convex front (objective) and concave rear (ocular) lenses. But Johannes Kepler upstaged Galileo by bringing the focal point *inside* the telescope from behind the rear lens.

If these men could see Walmart’s optics selection today, they’d be stunned.

ON THE GROUND

The telescope sired the spotting scope. When it was realized people had two eyes, the binocular was born — essentially two short telescopes joined by a hinge.

Years ago, hunting with the Inuits above the Arctic Circle, I carried a Bausch & Lomb 7x35 Zephyr, a wonderful binocular for its day. The patriarch of our group, a leathery

man with hair pale as moonlight on snow, had a cheap, battered 7x50. He held it vertically, squinting through the bottom barrel because the other didn’t work. After canoeing through rowdy seas along the northern reach of Hudson’s Bay, we pitched tents on a rock spit. During the night, a south wind jammed a mountain range of ice against our shore. We hunted caribou the next day. The old man with the one-eyed binocular staggered in after dark with six hides strapped to his back by a rope. He’d shot all the animals with an iron-sighted .22.

Limited to one hunting optic, I’d pick a binocular over a riflescope. Indeed, my last hunts have been with open sights. A scope extends effective shooting range; it won’t help you find animals.

A binocular can help most up close, where you must see game before it spots you, where you’ve no chance for a second look. Once, cresting a ridge, I immediately set to with my binoculars, picking apart a distant meadow. Then a twig snapped. Scant yards below me, a bull elk strolled into cover. He’d been there all along. I’d lost my chance by looking first where glassing was easy, instead of using the bino where glassing was urgent.



This cutaway of a Swarovski binocular shows its complexity. Good glass is costly for a reason!



See best with a two-hand hold — braced when possible. Don’t pan. Choose modest magnification.

Another time, traipsing through African thorn, my binocular dangling, I all but bumped against a rhinoceros. He could have left footprints on my khakis but evidently he decided anyone blind to a beast the size of a sedan at a few feet was harmless.

Bill McRae worked as an optics consultant for Bushnell. “I miss binoculars like this,” he told me once, hoisting an aged 6x30 Bausch & Lomb. He saw the glint in my eye. “It’s not for sale.” While the 6x30 and my 7x35 Zephyr can’t match current glass optically, they’re lighter than the 8x42 and 10x42 binos so popular now. No need for a harness you’ll have to fight with while shedding your jacket — and whose elastic soon weakens so the bino bounces on your chest and drags in sand and snow when you crawl.

MORE POWER, LESS VERSATILITY

Like riflescopes, binoculars have grown more powerful and, arguably, less versatile. A 6X bino makes a deer a quarter mile away appear as big as a deer looks to the naked eye at 73 yards. Though more power delivers more detail — and has a place in big mountain basins — the wide field of a 6 or 7X lets you see more without moving the bino. It also yields a deeper field-of-view; the range of acceptable focus is greater,

Distant glassing accounts for most binocular use. Thus, the trend to higher power, bigger objectives.





You need binos that yield bright images to the end of legal shooting.

both closer and beyond the range you've chosen for tack-sharp focus.

If you're a still-hunter, you'll often glass without support, sometimes pausing in a climb. Magnified, your pulse bounces the image. Low power quells the quake — and delivers big exit pupils (EP) with small front glass. An EP of 5mm seems to me big enough for all but bat-cave conditions. You get it with 30mm objectives in a 6X binocular, 35mm lenses in a 7X. You need 50mm glass to snare 5mm EPs in 10X binos. Weight and bulk stack quickly.

I favor porro-prism (offset) barrels to the ubiquitous roof-prism. They're easier to hold and the bigger the gap between front lenses, the greater the binocular effect helping you judge distance. Try ranging an animal with one eye closed!

As gnashing my teeth over the demise of low-power porro-prism models hasn't revived them, I'm inching closer to trim roof-prisms. Binoculars heavier than 20 oz. become a burden on the single strap I keep short to limit swing and permit a quick tuck for a crawl. Meopta's Meopro 6.5x32 is a champ. I also like the 8x32 Zeiss, Leica's 8x32 Ultravid BR, Swarovski's 8x32 EL. All are around 20 oz. All are expensive and worth their street price.

Fortunately, you don't have to pilfer your child's college fund because mid-price binos are now very good. Check them for fully multi-coated lenses and needle-sharp resolution. Check the spin of center and diopter adjustments, along with the comfort of the eyecups. Peer into shadow and sunshine. Beware field curvature, color fringing. Zeiss's LotuTec, Bushnell's Rain-Guard and other water-shedding treatments clear the view in wet weather.

Remember: Every hunt hinges on what you see. Galileo didn't buy cheap glass. 

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.270 Winchester	140 gr., GAMECHANGER
7mm-08 Remington	165 gr., GAMECHANGER
7mm Remington Mag.	165 gr., GAMECHANGER
.308 Winchester	165 gr., GAMECHANGER
.30-06 Springfield	165 gr., GAMECHANGER
.300 Winchester Mag.	165 gr., GAMECHANGER

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ARMY BUDDIES

GOOD BOOTS WILL NEVER LET YOU DOWN

We've been everywhere together. We've trudged through fetid jungles, shivered in snow caves, crouched within powerful war machines, and even flung ourselves into the dark abyss underneath a parachute canopy. Through it all, we got over and around some of the roughest terrain on earth together.

It's been said an army marches on its stomach. I disagree — an army marches on its *boots*. Of all the many-splendored cool-guy toys soldiers tote, pack, shoot, fly or drive, none are quite so important as boots. You may have the most lethal tricked-out rifle mankind can contrive, but if you're scurrying about the Hindu Kush in dime store flip-flops, you aren't going to be doing much with it.

BROGAN HISTORY

My first set of LPCs (Leather Personnel Carriers) were the nondescript leather sort. Lacing was an arduous chore, they were hot in the summer and cold in the winter. However, the soles were grippy and they offered adequate protection against rocks, razor wire and similar pokey bits.

Jungle boots with speed laces represented a quantum improvement. They went on and off in a jiffy and the canvas uppers wore like sneakers. Vent holes in the bottom let air and water both in and out with comparable aplomb.

Holdovers from a previous age, jump boots were as heavy as Aunt Edna's fruitcake. The slick leather soles didn't offer much purchase and they took a lifetime to lace up, but I'm living proof you can use them to leap out of a perfectly good airplane and emerge with your ankles intact. The WWII versions were brown. Ours were black.

I have logged countless hours laboriously polishing with Kiwi and an old t-shirt. Squeeze the greasy stuff into all the crevices and then buff it out with a boot brush. The wooden-backed brush also makes a serviceable close-quarters weapon. One of my drunken soldiers earned an Article 15 for attacking some poor schmuck with his.

M-Nu paint blackened out the steel eyelets when they got shiny. A First Sergeant once told me it was so Soviet satellites

couldn't pick us out on the parade field. *Sigh*. When you're all done, buff everything out with some of granny's panty hose to really conjure a shine.

It's tough to admit, but today's versions are better. The uppers are rot-resistant

nylon rather than canvas. The bodies are rough suede and won't take polish if you rubbed them for a month. Today's boys and girls in uniform don't have to polish boots at all. I cannot imagine what they do with their time. Play video games, I suppose.

I've burned through a single pair of the new sorts, and they hold up nicely. The suede ages well and the soles grip like politicians grab other people's money. The

Tools of the (old-school) trade: Kiwi shoe polish, an old T-shirt, a boot brush, panty hose and a lot of elbow grease were all required to keep footwear up to scratch.



Why boots? These rancid feet actually belong to a friend of Will's named Beth who snapped this picture right after she finished a 100-mile road race.

laces slide smoothly and let you get into them faster than you might a pair of cross trainers.

TOP OF THE HEAP

I recently saw a scruffy-looking guy in my medical clinic and could not help but notice his high-mileage but well-maintained hard-use footwear. The kid was a former Marine who now worked an outside civilian job. Despite the grime his boots were meticulously maintained. It was my first hint he



This old jungle boot gave its life for Will when he wandered into some concertina wire while answering nature's call late one night in a moonless desert.

wasn't your garden-variety thug.

I was so impressed with his boots I bought a pair myself. I've worn out at least half-a-dozen sets over the decades, and these are hands-down my favorites. They're titled the "Clash LT" from Blauer, and they set me back a C-note.

These are tall ankle-supporting combat boots a full 6" high. They wear like your favorite pair of running shoes and weigh a paltry 18 oz. The body of the boot is mixed suede and breathable mesh. There is also an integrated shank for stabilization should you need to fast rope into some evil despot's lair. The psychedelic soles will have you climbing like a monkey on Adderall.

The coolest aspect of these *uber-cool* stompers is the integrated BOA lacing system. This inspired rig employs a braided stainless steel cable and a handy tightening wheel with a clutch of sorts making donning and doffing quick, easy and painless. With my nifty high-tech boots I'm through airport security faster than the nearby hippie in his Birkenstocks. If the unthinkable happens and my world is



Will's new favorite, the Clash LT from Blauer. Lightweight, comfortable and rugged, these high-tech wonders are light-years ahead of what they had "back in the day."

suddenly dark, jagged, upside down and on fire, I'm much better positioned to get out alive than my unwashed pal in sandals.

These boots felt broken-in out of the box and should last me the rest of my days. They'll take me anywhere. Like my Army buddies, there's really nothing we can't do together.

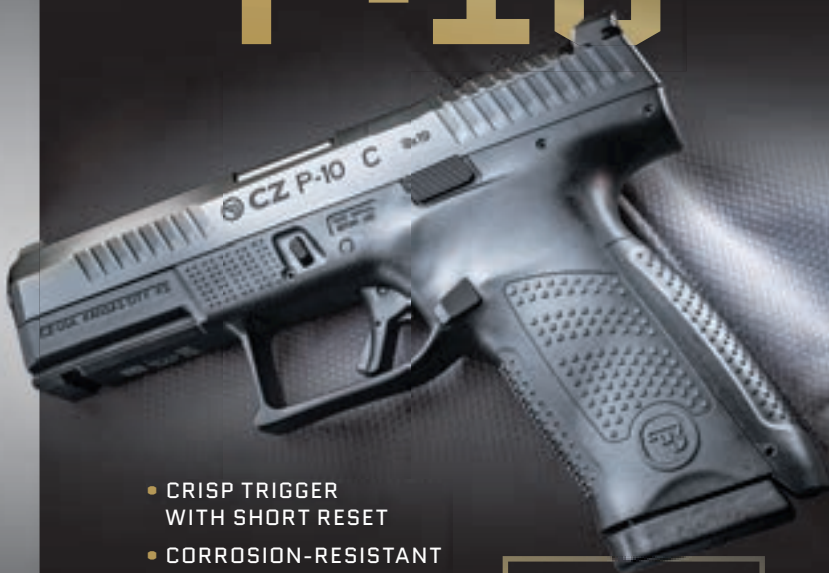
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PLAINS WAR SPENCERS CIVIL WAR CARBINES SAW FRONTIER SERVICE

The Spencer carbine played an important role in the Plains Indian Wars yet it's almost been forgotten by modern shooters. Its cartridges came with confusing names such as .56-56, .56-52 and .56-50. Unlike most black powder-era metallic cartridges, the first set of digits does *not* allude to caliber but to the width of the cartridge rim. The second set of digits — at least in the case of the .56-50 — actually refers to bullet diameter.

During the Civil War, Spencers were the most prevalent carbines issued to Federal Cavalry and played important roles in several large battles. In essence, the Spencer design (rifle and carbine) was a lever action but it differed greatly in function from the Winchester, Marlin and other leverguns of the era.

MANUAL OF ARMS

To load a Spencer, you must first open the trapdoor in the butt plate and remove the cartridge follower. With muzzle slightly at downward angle, you drop in seven cartridges and reinsert the follower. The breechblock is then lowered by pulling down on the trigger guard to expose the chamber. If there's an empty case in the chamber it will be ejected. Pulling the lever back into place feeds a fresh cartridge into the chamber. The hammer is then full-cocked for firing.

Interestingly, during the Civil War a "speed loader" was developed called the *Blakeslee Box*. It could hold seven to 10 tubes made of tin, with each tube holding

seven rounds. It was carried by the trooper with a leather strap over the right shoulder with the box hanging to the wearer's left side. The magazine was emptied into the Spencer with muzzle tilting down. Alternately a Spencer's magazine could be filled one round at a time and if severely pressed for time during a battle it could be fired as a single shot.

FIELD REPORTS

History buffs of Plains Indian Wars history can run across numerous instances of soldiers and civilians using Spencers against hostile warriors and vice-versa. A most interesting book is *Cheyenne War, Indian Raids on the Roads to Denver 1864-1869* by Jeff Broome. What intrigued me was most accounts in the book are first-person narratives taken when the speaker was under oath. Several times survivors of raids credited their fast-firing Spencer carbines with saving their lives (44 Henry repeaters also get credit at times).

Army use of Spencer carbines in the 1860s Plains Indian Wars was considerable. In December 1866 near Fort Phil Kearney in Wyoming, an infantry/cavalry detachment of 81, plus two civilian volunteers, was wiped out to a man by Sioux and Cheyenne. The warriors took 29 Spencer carbines from the dead cavalrymen. A young Cheyenne named Two Moons took one and used it until surrendering in 1877.

In September 1868 in eastern Colorado, a special unit of "frontier scouts" commanded by Major George A. Forsyth



At left is an original .56-50 factory load. At right is a "new" .56-50 using Starline brass.



Taylor & Company's Model 1865 Spencer with lever down and breechblock lowered.

was surprised in camp by a large force of Cheyenne. The scouts ran across a channel of the Republican River's Arickaree fork to a small island and made their stand.

Each of the scouts had been issued a Spencer carbine and Colt .44 (Model 1860) revolver. Using those arms they successfully held the Indians at bay for three days. Six of the scouts were killed and 18 wounded. In November of the same year, the 7th Cavalry under Lt. Col. George A. Custer tracked a raiding party of Cheyenne holding white captives to their village on the Washita River in Oklahoma. Most of the 7th Cav. troops carried a Spencer and so did many officers.



What a well-armed U.S. Cavalryman carried in the Civil War: a Spencer carbine, a Colt .44 revolver and a saber.



Duke shoots a Chiappa-made Spencer Model 1865 .56-50 carbine.



The system for loading the Spencer is akin to how some .22 rimfires are loaded still.

In this instance, it wasn't enough.

After about 1870 civilian and military references about Spencers are not exactly rare but not at the 1860s level. It could be due to the fact production ceased in 1869 but ammunition was still factory loaded until well into the 20th Century.

THE SPENCER TODAY

Back in the mid-1980s I was loaned a Spencer on which I had a centerfire breech-block fitted. After much experimentation I got it functioning about 90 percent of the time with my black powder loads. (Rimfire .56-50 Spencer cartridges were said to have 350-gr. conical lead bullets in front of 45 grains of black powder.)

With the growing interest in Cowboy Action Shooting, it was a certainty somebody would offer a Spencer replica. The loaner carbine I have on hand is marketed by Taylors & Company and made by Chiappa Firearms of Italy. The chambering is called .56-50 Centerfire and Lyman even makes dies for this "new" cartridge.

My handloads use newly made Starline brass and 320-gr. bullets from an old mold I had lying around. With little effort I had it shooting nicely considering its military open sights — best of all, it functioned 100 percent.

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RUGER PC CARBINE TACTICAL UPGRADE: MAKING 'BETTER' INTO 'BESTEST!'

Holt Bodinson

When I was growing up, Ruger's first entry into the long gun market was their unique .44 Magnum Carbine introduced in 1960. It was a head-turner. We all lusted for the little semi-auto M1-looking carbine, chambered for the era's most powerful revolver cartridge and a caliber companion to Ruger's Super Blackhawk. Having a carbine and a revolver of the same caliber was heady stuff and took us back to the dreamy days of the Winchester Model 1873 and Colt Single Action Army chambered in .32-20, .38-40 and .44-40 WCF.

TOUCHY DEERSTALKER

Paging through the gun magazines of the era, there was ad-after-ad showing Bill Ruger, Sr. on safari in Kenya and Uganda with his .44 Magnum Carbine and an assortment of trophies ranging from leopards to waterbucks. Ad copy was as seductive as the carbine itself:

"America's newest game rifle ... Proven on the plains of Africa, the RUGER 'Deerstalker' carbine is a technological breakthrough for the benefit of the American sportsman — proven not only on Whitetails in North America, but on Leopard, Hyena, Wart Hog, Topi and many other species in Africa ..."

To those hardy souls who remember the .44 Carbine, it was very touchy about the ammunition it would shoot, and

was a bear to put back together once disassembled. Yet, I still miss mine!

Over a quarter million .44 Magnum Carbines were made through 1985. Then there was a long period of drought for the concept of a pistol-caliber carbine from Ruger. When it returned in 1998, it was designed and marketed more toward the law enforcement community as the "Police Carbine" (PC) and chambered in 9mm Luger and .40 S&W as a companion piece to the most popular duty handguns of the day.

Gone was the walnut stock of the .44 Magnum Carbine, replaced by a plain, boring, black synthetic stock. Gone was the unique bottom feeding magazine of the .44 Carbine, replaced by conventional 10- and 15-shot pistol magazines while adjustable open sights were gradually replaced by a rear receiver sight combined with a protected blade front. It was Ruger — rugged, reliable but not particularly stylish with its forearm barrel band. I suspect we mere mortals bought more PCs than all the police departments combined.

All this has changed with the recent return of the new PC Carbine in 9mm and 40 S&W. It's a complete redesign and is being offered in 9 variations with six 9mm models and three in 40 S&W as well as four limited special editions from Talo, Bill Hicks, Lipsey's and Davidson's.

HANDGUARD ADDED

The PC model we reviewed is #19117, which is distinguished by its tactical, CNC-milled, aluminum free-float handguard with Magpul M-LOK accessory attachment slots on all four flat sides for easy mounting of M-LOK-compatible rails and accessories. With a diameter of approximately 1.8", it's

The tactical-looking model Holt tested features an aluminum free-float handguard riddled with Magpul M-LOK accessory attachment slots.





Featuring a full-length Picatinny rail, the new PC action is optic compatible and fully ambidextrous. The barrel is also threaded for suppressors and accessories

very comfortable and hand-filling, offering excellent control and enough M-LOK slots to satisfy the most dedicated “accessorizer.” It definitely sheds the “low-profile” lines of the standard PC and shouts “tactical.”

The rear stock is made from a black, glass-filled nylon composition with a defined cheekpiece on both sides and a textured pistol grip. A really nice feature of the new PC is the LOP of the buttstock is adjustable from 12.6 to 14.12" using the factory-supplied spacers. This carbine will pretty much fit the whole family.

The new aluminum receiver features an integral Picatinny rail, just perfect for advanced optics although the adjustable factory ghost-ring receiver sight is fast and practical. The blowback action is fully ambidextrous, with a reversible charging handle and magazine release, and, yes, the bolt locks open when the last shot is fired.

The new PC has two really outstanding features — it's a takedown and it offers interchangeable magazine wells.

With an overall length of 34.37", a 16.12" threaded, fluted barrel and a weight of 7 lbs., the PC beaks down into two parts by simply toggling a recessed lever, twisting the forend/barrel assembly 90-degrees clockwise and pulling the two sub-assemblies apart. Likewise, the PC arrives fitted with an SR-Series/Security-9 pistol magazine well and a 10-round magazine. Also included is an additional magazine well for GLOCK mags while Ruger American Pistol magazine wells are available directly from www.shopruger.com. Pretty neat and very versatile!

TRIGGER TIME!

How did it shoot? I mounted a Bushnell Trophy 1x28mm red/green dot optic on the Picatinny rail and headed for the range with five different popular 9mm loads with bullet weights ranging from 115 to 147 grains.

First impressions? The crisp trigger was a delight to work with — averaging 5.5 lbs. on my Lyman gauge with a quick reset. It had great balance in the offhand position with minimal recoil and barrel flip. It fed a variety of hollow point designs without a hiccup.



All current PCs are fast, easy, compact takedowns.



The factory aperture sight is very practical and fast on target.

Accuracy delivered at 50 yards for 3-shot groups averaged around 3 MOA using CorBon 90-gr. JHP +P, Federal 115-gr. FMJ, Hornady Critical Defense 115-gr. FTX and Remington Golden Saber 124-gr. BJHP. I thought I had, more or less, a 1.5" gun until I fired Winchester's 147-gr. load and got the tightest group of all at .710. The carbine's 1:10 twist thrived on the heavier bullet, which proves how important it is to test a variety of bullet weights to determine any gun's potential — although most 9mm's will do just fine with the common 115-gr. loadings.

It's great to see the thoroughly modern and refined PC carbine returning to the Ruger stable. It's a family-friendly rifle, a plinker, a hunting gun and a reliable firearm for self-defense in the universal 9mm pistol caliber. MSRP for the model tested is \$729.



www.ruger.com

CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued from page 8

backwards, jamming a revolver's cylinder from turning. My question is, would you use the same size drill bit with .38/.357 cases as well (which is what I am thinking of using), or a smaller drill bit because it is a smaller primer pocket than the .45 Colt?

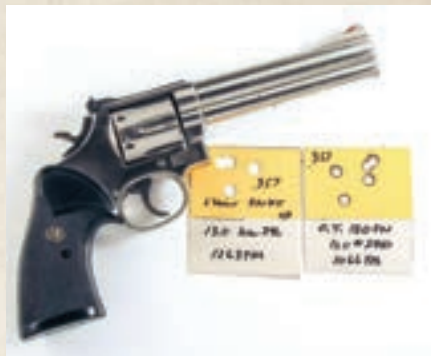
Guy Waller

Via Email

I read with interest the article on shooting rubber bullets powered by just a primer (August 2019), as I had done this many years ago and had forgotten I even had them. Used to shoot in the basement into a target box I built to recover the bullets and minimize the ricochet. On the caveat to keep the drilled-out brass separate, I used aluminum cases like CCI Blazer, as you aren't ever going to reload them anyway, so no chance of inadvertently building unsafe ammo. Thanks for the memories.

Mike Jury

Via Email



SENDING THE PYTHON HOME

On the .357 article (by John Taffin), I had a Python in .357 and took it with me to Vietnam. Big mistake, it did not hold up and I had to send it home. I ended up being issued a .38 cal Model 1917 from two wars before. I then bought a .45 and a Thompson from our South Vietnam army guards and sold them to the guy replacing me when I left. I did own a Security Six in .357 some years later and found it adequate until I became a federal officer and traded the Python for a SIG P220!

Joseph Schvimmer

Via Email

WEBLEY WONDEFUL

Great article on the big Webleys, John! I love them, and I have one of each Mark except the Mark III. I believe in them enough as combat guns that my "bedside boomer" is a blued commercial Mark V (no broad arrow markings). I also have one of their stubby brothers, the Webley 2 1/2" Royal Irish Constabulary in .450 Adams. It is old enough that it is black powder only, using cut down .455 cases and a 200-gr. lead wad-cutter over 12 grains of FFFg. If you have big pockets, it could be considered a "pocket revolver," and was likely what Sherlock Holmes would have carried in his greatcoat. It has one advantage at spitting range. If you miss with the bullet, you will singe your adversary's eyebrows and likely set fire to his clothes!



Clete Davis

Via Email



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G48

SILVER SLIDE SLIM: A POPULAR 9MM SLICED THIN

MASSAD AYOOB

PHOTOS: GAIL PEPIN

The 2019 introduction of the G48 9mm finally answers the yearning of three decades of GLOCK users. Introduced in the late 1980s, the very popular G19 roughly fit the footprint of a Colt Detective Special .38 snubbie but held 16 rounds instead of six. It became an instant hit for concealed carry and has long remained so but many fans wished this cut-down version of the G17 service pistol were thinner for more discreet carry.

Where the G19 was a chopped and channeled G17, the new G48 is the opposite. It's a subcompact G43, the super-slim single stack 6+1-shot 9mm introduced just a few years ago, extended at nose and butt. This affords a full grip with all fingers, a longer sight radius, and a 10+1 capacity. If you want more rounds and

a longer grip-frame, but like a short barrel and slide, you can get the concurrently introduced G43X (more about this one later).

AT FIRST GLANCE

A curb weight of 20.74 oz. is the factory-spec for an empty G48, which compares to 18.7 oz. for the G43 and 16.23 oz. for the original, short-butt G43. GLOCK lists the G48 as a Compact while the G43X — like the G43 — is a Subcompact. The G48 has a 6.85" slide enclosing a 4.17" barrel, which is a tad longer than the G19's while the G43X has the same barrel and slide dimensions as the G43 — 3.41 and 6.06" respectively.

The company refers to these guns as "Silver Slides," named for the Physical Vapor Deposition process providing an extremely



The 9mm G48 has 10+1-round capacity in a svelte platform. Photo: Mike Humphries



With a curb weight of 20.74 oz., the G48 is listed by the company as a Compact. It's about 2 oz. heavier than the original short-butt G43. Photo: GLOCK

What Mas likes to call a "FrankenGLOCK": A G48 top end on an original Subcompact G43 frame.

thin, extraordinarily wear-resistant coating. Both the G43X and the G48 have additional grasping grooves at the front of the slide, a currently popular feature. This worries me, since manipulating the slide of a loaded pistol so close to the business end really doesn't seem too smart. The solid grip-stippling pattern popularized by the G43 and the various Gen5 pistols feels good to the hand. It continues with the G48 and G43X.

SWEET SPOT MAINTAINED

What I like most about the G48 is the trigger reach, which is the same as the G43. When Gaston Glock did his original research he wanted his service-size pistol to fit the hand of an average adult male soldier perfectly. At the time, the marksmanship manuals said the finger should contact the trigger at the pad so he designed the first pistols accordingly. However, average-to-long-fingered folks who preferred the greater leverage of working the trigger at the distal joint of the finger couldn't comfortably do it, and very short fingers had trouble reaching it even with the pad. This was addressed in the Gen4 and Gen5 pistols, but most successfully with the G43. This "sweet spot" trigger reach has thankfully been preserved in both the G48 and G43X.

ACCURACY, SHOOTABILITY

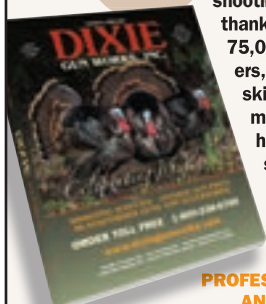
I didn't have the opportunity to do the normal bench-rest accuracy protocols. I didn't get the test gun in time and my schedule took me on the road, so I rented a G48 and shot it on an indoor range. However, even without a bench rest and with

Mas shot the G48 indoors in sub-optimal conditions, but managed this 25-yard group with Speer Gold Dot 124-gr. +Ps.



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**Comparative thick-
ness: From left,
G43, G48, G19.**



less-than-optimum lighting, the G48 “shot where it looked” and delivered OK groups. I’m looking forward to giving it a real bench-rest test in the future, but for now, I’ll go with USPSA Grandmaster Karl Rehn, who is getting 3” groups at 25 yards with his.

The slimmer slide allows more recoil, but hell, it’s a 9mm — nothing a competent shooter can’t handle.

“FRANKENGLOCK” POTENTIAL

If you already own a G43 and buy a G48, you don’t just have two slim-line 9s, you now have four. The reason — the top ends of each interchange with the bottom ends.

Take the barrel/slide assembly off your “subcompact” G43, put it on the “compact” frame of your G48, and voila — you have a G43X. One advantage of this configuration is if you carry in an OWB holster, the shorter barrel/slide length is slightly more concealable: the cover garment can ride up higher without revealing the holstered pistol.

A second advantage of this format is the stubbier front end comes out of the holster a wee bit faster, allowing you to get on target much sooner. A third advantage comes in weapon retention: if there’s a struggle for the gun, the longer butt gives you more leverage than your assailant’s hand has on the shorter front end of the gun.

Or — do the reverse with the longer barrel/slide assembly of the G48 atop the short-butt G43 frame. If you carry IWB on or near the hip, the longer slide’s contact with the hip tucks the grip frame tighter against your torso, lowering the holstered pistol’s profile and enhancing concealment. A G43 so “topped,” of course, also offers a slightly longer sight radius for enhanced

accuracy potential, and the longer barrel gives you more velocity. This top/bottom swap gives you a smaller version of a popular G19 conversion — cutting the butt down to G26 dimensions.

One interchangeability element you won’t have, though, is the magazines. The 10-round mag of the G43X and G48 do *not* work in the original size G43 (and vice versa).

One caveat: There’s a good chance if such a “hybrid” G43/G48 needs work, the parts swap will have voided the warranty. GLOCK tested the G48 to work with G48 parts and the G43 to work with G43 parts after all, and does *not* recommend this particular parts swap.

ALL IN ALL ...

Different people wear different size clothes of the same style; motorists might need a compact car, a family sedan, or a pickup truck and trust the same manufacturer for all; and the world of the firearm isn’t much different in this respect. If you like the most popular of the striker-fired polymer *pistolas*, you’ll likely welcome a G48 or its sibling, the G43X, into your stable. The G48’s MSRP is \$580.

www.glock.com

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01-27719-001-E53211

DANIEL DEFENSE DELTA 5

The Daniel Defense Delta 5 offers precision-rifle features for the price of a quality hunting gun.



BRENT T. WHEAT

**PHOTOS: ROB JONES/
THE IMAGESMITH, LLC**

Have you ever driven a really expensive car, eaten a \$100 steak or stayed in a too-fancy-for-me hotel? If you have, and you're like most gun folks I know, you really enjoyed the brief dance with decadence yet there's always a little niggling voice inside saying, "This is wonderful, but it's just *too* much of a good thing."

Furthermore, you can't really afford it so your little voice serves the useful purpose of keeping your finances intact. *However* ...

You won't hear such things bouncing around inside your cranium when you sit down to fire the Daniel Defense Delta 5 precision bolt-action rifle. If you hear anything from the little spoilsport between your ears, it'll be something along the lines of "Woo-hoo! More!

More ammo! *More* distance! Different targets! Let's get shooting!"

And, you'll happily comply.

A NEW DIRECTION

The Delta 5 is the first bolt action produced by *uber* black-rifle builder Daniel Defense and was formally introduced to a select group of gun writers last December at a secret location in Georgia. The group included many of the top word-slingers in the business and — by some monumental miscalculation — Your Humble Servant was also invited. Of course, I didn't argue and took my scribbling seat with all the other semi-luminaries.

On a sunny but cool morning precisely at 8, CEO Marty Daniel stood up in a lakeside cabin,

Because Sometimes Too much — is Just Right





DANIEL
DEFENSE
GUNS[®]
MAGAZINE



The bolt features a three-lug bolt head running like a greased glass rod through its 60-degree throw.

sunlight illuminating him so perfectly I was sure a special-effects crew was stationed outside, and hoisted the Delta 5 for the bunch of us. To say everyone was shocked would be hyperbole, but there *were* audible noises and tongue clucks rippling through the room like a gust of wind through a wheat field.

Searching for some literary device to frame a story about this entirely new product line, I later asked Marty if this was a “left turn” from their place as one of the best AR-platform builders in the world. He didn’t miss a beat.

“It’s not so much a left turn, it’s just a continuation,” he said, drawing attention to one of the singular features of this most unusual gun. “The engineers have done a really good job of taking the modularity of an AR we know so well, and building it into a bolt-action rifle. The Delta is a math symbol that means ‘the difference’ so that’s why we named it ‘Delta 5’ — it’s so different from anything on the market.”

Whoa! Did he say “modularity” and “bolt-action rifle” in the same sentence?

We all know one thing to be true: Precision bolt-action rifles must either be built by a specialized gunsmith using parts from widely disparate manufacturers, or be purchased from semi-custom builders at a price equivalent to two semesters at a state university. In either case, switching out parts on the assembled gun — shooters being unrepentant tinkerers — means a trip back to the gunsmith.

But with the Delta 5, things have changed — *Significantly*.

KITCHEN-TABLE GUNWORK

First off is the barrel-mounting system, which makes you smack yourself in the forehead and say, “Why didn’t I think of that?” On almost all bolt-action rifles, the barrel screws directly into the front of the action. Headspace, the critical dimension ensuring your gun will feed and fire — and not become a small pipe bomb inches from your face — is then determined (and adjusted via



At 200 yards, Brent’s best three-shot group using Black Hills .308 168-gr. ELD-M ammo was 0.949.

machining the various parts) from the closed bolt face.

With the Delta 5, the barrel is attached via a barrel extension, much like an AR. Headspace is achieved through the bolt/barrel extension combination. It’s not truly “self-headspacing,” but in practical terms, it is. I was given the technical explanation on how this works, but my eyes glazed over halfway through the discussion and we don’t want this article to grow another 10 pages. So I’ll just say it works via magic gun fairies.

To change barrels on the Delta 5 you remove the barreled action, undo the barrel nut, install a new barrel, tighten the barrel nut to the proper torque and then re-install the entire barrel/action assembly into the stock. With proper wrenches you can literally change out a barrel in minutes at your kitchen table. Daniel Defense currently offers .308, 6.5 Creedmoor and 7mm-08 Remington barrels in Heavy Palma contour, but my question regarding potential future calibers was met with grins and shoulder shrugs. (If I had to bet, we’ll be seeing other calibers and maybe even a long-action Delta 5 sometime in the future.)

Daniel Defense makes their own cold-hammer-forged stainless steel barrels in-house. Owners of other DD rifles know their barrels are some of the most accurate and long lasting mass-produced M4 barrels in the industry. Claimed round-counts of some of the Delta 5 test barrels are eye opening. They’re



The Leupold Mark 5HR 7-35x56 FFP scope makes a perfect companion to the Delta 5, allowing you to clearly see and engage targets past 1,000 yards.



The stainless steel Heavy Palma-contour barrel is cold-hammer forged, features a target crown and threads for a muzzle brake or sound suppressor.

accurate and long lasting — you probably won't be swapping Delta 5 barrels out because you burned one out.

AN AVALANCHE OF FEATURES

Daniel McLeroy, Product Design Director of the Delta 5, explained the idea of a custom-but-not-custom rifle. "One of those things we wanted to do," McLeroy said, "was to produce those high-end custom features you normally have to go to a gunsmith for, and have them right out of the box."

Following the modularity mantra, most of the parts of the Delta 5 follow the Remington 700 pattern, so there are plenty of aftermarket goodies to trick out your gun — *if* desired. The bolt handle uses 5/16-24 threads and is easily swapped while the bolt itself is a 3-lug, 60-degree-throw with a floating bolt head. Naturally, the barrels are threaded for muzzle brakes or suppressors.

The action is likewise stainless and features an integral recoil lug and a 20-MOA integrated Picatinny rail on the top. The receiver is bedded into a mini chassis within the stock and has two integral pillars allowing for robust screw compression to minimize impact shift due to thermal and humidity changes. The gun feeds from 5-round PMAG 5 7.62 AICS Short Action magazines.

The action also comes from the factory mated with the popular single-stage Timney Elite Hunter trigger — adjustable from 1.5 to 4 lbs. This makes complete sense on such a rifle. After all, why make your engineers lose sleep designing a really good trigger when you can buy an already-proven model in truckload quantities?

The stock is almost a story in itself. The black carbon-fiber-reinforced polymer furniture is relatively lightweight and more adjustable than Elizabeth Warren's ancestry. The cheek riser is changeable for height, yaw and drift, while the buttstock has an adjustable length of pull, toe-in and height. It features 15 M-LOK attachment points along the forend and one near the butt. There are also three M-LOK QD sling points.



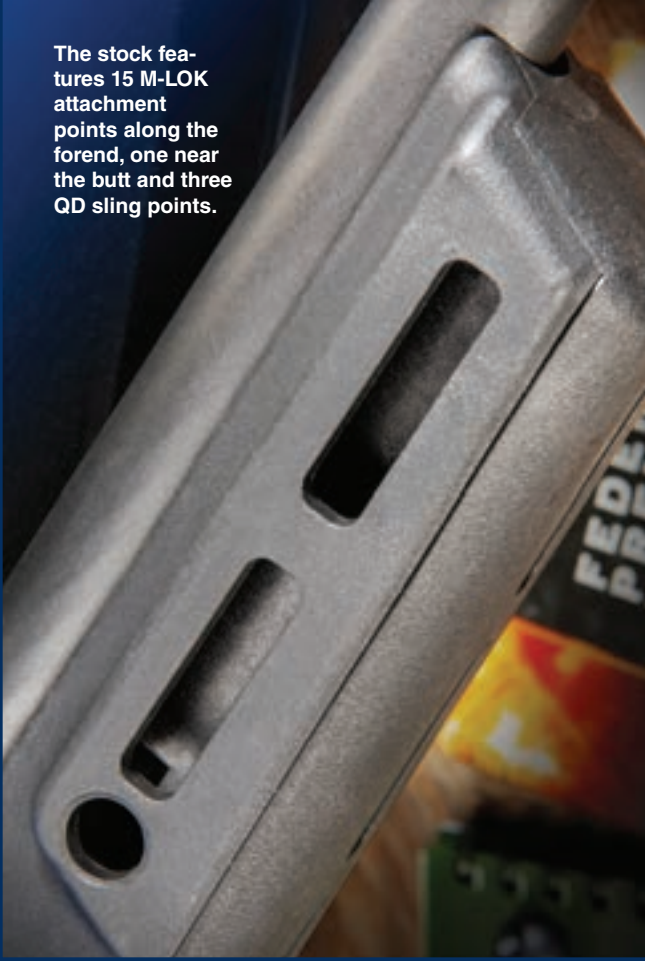
The Delta 5 barrel extension in front of the action. Unscrew the extension, add a new Daniel Defense barrel, reassemble and you've re-barreled your gun!

The overall gun is short (around 40" OAL) and features a stubby 20" barrel in the .308 version (24" for the 6.5 Creedmoor). It's also fairly lightweight for a precision rifle, with our test gun tipping the scales at 12.6 lbs. empty with scope attached.

McLeroy, a hardcore pig hunter, loves the fact the Delta 5 just isn't a "match queen" but nimble enough to be a real-world rifle for hardcore hunters. "One of the best things I like is, it's light enough to pack around," he said. "I can carry this to my stand,



Brent sets up a "Tango" target using the Delta 5. Don't worry — he remembered his eye-pro before firing!



The stock features 15 M-LOK attachment points along the forend, one near the butt and three QD sling points.



climb up, and if I see something out at 600 yards, I can dial it up and have the confidence to take the shot.”

But how does it *shoot*?

HO-HUM AT THE RANGE

The Delta 5 deserves a quality optic, so we put a Leupold Mark 5HR 7-35x56 FFP scope atop it and headed out. It really was too much scope for our shorter home range, but who’s going to turn down a chance to mess around with such great glass?

Truth be told, I really didn’t need to shoot the gun at all since I had already burned up plenty of ammo in Georgia several months earlier. However, as a dedicated journalist, I felt it was my sworn duty to burn even more powder in such a cool gun. (On a more-serious note, I did want to see how an off-the-line production version would perform.)

I wasn’t disappointed. Daniel Defense will *only* claim “sub-MOA” for the rifle, but I would suggest it’d be legally defensible to say the gun is at *least* “sub-half-MOA” because most groups using Black Hills 158-gr. ELM-M .308 were just one ragged hole at 100-yard spittin’ distance. At the maximum 200-yard line at our local range, I managed a 0.949 three-shot group. For the math-challenged, this translates to just under a half-MOA. Had I more time and ammo to really fit and tweak the gun, I’m confident the group size would shrink further.

However, I can verify the other end of the range spectrum isn’t a problem. At the writer’s event I managed to hit 4x4 feet targets at 1,500 yards with no problem and whacking an 18 steel at 800 yards from an elevated sniper tower almost became monotonous — *almost*.

One area of concern among the writers was bolt function. Daniel Defense intentionally made the bolt tolerances loose to

enhance feed reliability but the result on the early test guns were the bolt sometimes bound up. Our test gun had none of the slop evident in the prototypes and the bolt ran like polished glass even when dirty.

THE LITTLE VOICE AGAIN ...

We’re supposed to be completely objective about the guns we review. I sometimes have to chide our writers about being too gushy, but be warned! I’m going full-on, starry-eyed fanboy here — the Delta 5 is one of the best precision rifles I’ve shot in a long time at *any* price.

Therein lies the final piece of this puzzle. With an MSRP of \$2,199, the Delta 5 delivers the performance and features of a true custom rifle at a price you’d find difficult to build a gun for yourself — even if you had the necessary skills and tools. In fact, I told several people “The Delta 5 is like a XXX-brand rifle for half the price.” (Use your imagination to replace the Xs.)

If you’re a serious competitor, a law enforcement sniper or a long-range hunter, the Delta 5 could well offer the best cost/benefit ratio in a current bolt-action rifle. I’d compare it to a Rolex dive watch, a Mark Levinson stereo amplifier or a Baileigh table saw — not inexpensive, but a serious tool for serious practitioners.

Moreover, even if you don’t quite fit the mold of a hard-core rifle shooter or competitor, I’d suggest sometimes it is *completely* rational to buy yourself something nice, especially when the price is so reasonable given the quality.

And if you’re still worried about the little voice, just buy him some more ammo and he’ll instantly shut up once you have the Delta 5 in your hands!

www.danieldefense.com

CPX-3 .380 ACP

FUNCTIONAL COOL AT A GREAT PRICE

WILL DABBS, MD

SCCY is a remarkable gun company with a strange name. Their defensive handguns are pacesetters in the modern firearms market and the newest SCCY CPX-3 .380 represents the company's first departure from their traditional 9mm CPX line. This efficient little pistol is itself the culmination of a most fascinating tale.

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

Once upon a time there was a little boy who really liked electric trains. An only child, Joe Roebuck occupied himself alone for long periods. At age four, he imagined a coal chute to compliment his Lionel train set. He sketched out what he had in mind and gave it to his parents.

Joe came from a family of engineers, doctors, toolmakers and successful businessmen. Impressed with their son's mechanical proclivities, his parents built him a machine shop when he was 8. Joe's Dad — an immigrant from Malta — was no stranger to hard work and he expected the same of his son. Each day Joe came home from school, did his homework, took a regimented dinner with his family and spent the evening in the machine shop. Every Saturday was spent in the shop as well. He had Sundays off.

By age 13 Joe was getting good at being a machinist and his parents sought out work. His mother formed a small company to keep things organized while his father solicited and prioritized his projects. Joe didn't see a dime of the proceeds.

Joe learned to fly an airplane at 15. At 17 he finished high

The SCCY CPX-3 makes a nice addition to your daily load-out.





The new SCCY CPX-3 .380 ACP is a quality yet affordable handgun. Packing 10+1 into a package, Will calls it "the Volkswagen of defensive pistols."

"At his high school graduation, his parents presented him with a check for nearly a quarter of a million dollars ..."

school a year early and moved out on his own as a self-taught toolmaker. At his high school graduation, his parents presented him with a check for nearly a quarter of a million dollars, the proceeds of his many years of toil in his little machine shop.

By age 19 Joe was head die-maker at Schrade Cutlery. Using the seed money from his childhood business, he opened his first private company to exploit his own medical inventions. If you've ever had a pair of eyeglasses ground while you waited, Joe's machine did it.

After several companies birthed, built, and later sold, Joe turned his knack for invention towards firearms. He felt the market was saturated with expensive name-brand combat handguns. The void he saw was for a mid-range offering — a gun

of impeccable quality, basic features, and reasonable price. He designed the weapon from the outset to be functional, reliable, and easily manufactured. Now thoroughly evolved, the SCCY CPX is a refined design still within the financial reach of the common man.

SCCY'S THE LIMIT

I recently had the opportunity to tour the SCCY manufacturing facility in Daytona Beach, Florida. Joe told me quality is a culture and it starts at the top. While a solid design is a necessary starting point, keeping the plant busy requires a passion. Joe surrounds himself with people who share his.

SCCY makes everything metal on the gun in-house. Barrels,



Despite the CPX-3's utilitarian features, the gun remains quite accurate. It printed these teacup-sized groups at 10 meters from a simple rest.

frames, incidentals, and magazines all spawn from a single facility. This allows Joe and his team to keep close tabs on every step of the process. If something isn't up to spec, it's on them and nobody else.

Joe maintains an extensive toolroom and designs and builds all the fixtures used to make his guns. Rotating towers grab bits of bar stock and allow slides and receivers to be cut in rapid succession. These towers rotate into and out of the mill so one can be reloaded while the other is cut. This keeps the machines

running constantly.

The slide starts as a piece of 1.25" steel bar stock and it takes 17 minutes to build a finished one. In addition to function and aesthetics, SCCY CPX pistols are designed to be mass-produced. This aspect of the design is a major factor in keeping a quality handgun affordable.

The barrels start off as long sticks of ordnance steel. The lathes cutting the barrels feed stock in from one end, turn them to contour, cut the newborn barrels free, and index to the next iteration. SCCY does their own chambering and rifling as well as laser engraving. Wandering about the plant is like visiting Santa's workshop.

A .380 ADDITION

The SCCY standby is the CPX 9mm series. The CPX-1 has a manual external safety while the CPX-2 is the same pistol without the manual safety. The CPX-3 is a new .380 ACP version likewise without a manual safety. All three of these guns are double action only. As expected, the CPX-3 is a bit tamer on the range.

All the CPX triggers are monotonously predictable from start to break. The long-but-smooth revolver-style trigger is the gun's primary safety system. The chances of the gun being jostled and going off accidentally are essentially zero. The CPX remains an accurate and shootable gun on the range.

While the basic layout is the same throughout, what you get to choose is the color scheme. Slides come in black or stainless,



The only tool required to disassemble a CPX pistol is a fingernail or case rim.



Unlike most handgun manufacturers, SCCY also makes their own magazines.



A robot sorts and packs barrels.



CPX slides start out at pre-cut lengths of steel bar stock. Custom fixtures keep the mills running constantly.

and the frames can be had in 10 different hues. If desert tan, olive drab, or basic black trip your trigger, SCCY has it. If your personality wanders more toward pink, white, gray, teal, or orange, they can do these colors too.

The newest SCCY Gen 3 guns incorporate lessons learned from hundreds of thousands of copies produced thus far and have a slightly different flavor. The frame has been substantially thinned down and the skeletonized backstrap was deleted. The resulting trim architecture keeps the gun carry-friendly. The action incorporates the patented Quad-Lock system optimizing mechanical performance of the weapon. Each SCCY pistol comes with a pair of 10-round double-stack magazines with both flat and finger-rest base plates.

TRIGGER TIME

The newest .380 ACP CPX-3 fills the hand comfortably. The polymer finger-groove frame is roughened on the sides and back, and the left-sided slide release is over-molded in Zytel for easy access. The sights sport three white dots and the rear is drift-adjustable for windage.

The slide is sufficiently ample for easy purchase, though the frame remains plenty thin for comfortable carry. Generous finger grooves on the sides make charging the gun easy even if you are sweaty or rushed. The left-sided magazine release button protrudes just enough and drops magazines away cleanly. The whole gun is adequately portly to be comfortable on the range, while remaining svelte enough for easy concealment.

Recoil is painless given the gun's double-stack girth and modest chambering. After the first magazine, the CPX-3 was completely reliable with everything I fed it. The long 9-lb. trigger pull is an acquired taste, but the CPX-3 is, after all, a rugged defensive tool, not an elegant target pistol. No matter. At reasonable defensive ranges the CPX-3 produced nice tight clusters regardless of the ammo.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The word "SCCY" doesn't mean anything. Joe told me. It started it out as "SKYY," but the vodka people complained. Joe picked SCCY because he's a pilot and he liked the ring of it. At the end of the day, however, SCCY is really Joe Roebuck.

In a way Joe is still the little 4-year-old who really likes trains. He grew up in a machine shop and has an obvious gift for making stuff. The same attitude and mindset that figured out how to grind eyeglass lenses while you wait now makes exceptionally nice, reasonably priced defensive handguns.

If you're on a budget, the SCCY CPX-3 represents a great value. Even if money is not so tight, the CPX-3 offers reliability on par with the Other Guys, along with American-made pride of ownership and the capacity to color coordinate your defensive weaponry. Joe Roebuck picked a single concept and polished it to perfection. This company is his baby, and he is a proud dad indeed. MSRP of the SCCY CPX-3 is \$305.



www.sccy.com



The Savage 110 High Country decked in TrueTimber camo and fitted with a Leupold VX-6HD 2-12x42mm scope suitably dressed in Gore Optifade Subalpine camo.

Savage Arms

MODEL 110 HIGH COUNTRY

Mark Hampton



With the adjustable AccuStock, Mark said the Savage Model 110 High Country was a pleasure to shoot and looks great due to the factory-fluted barrel.

CUSTOM FEATURES AT DISCOUNT STORE PRICES

If you haven't noticed, Savage Arms continues to offer new and improved variations of existing models. The company is never satisfied with the *status quo* and is always looking for improvements, enhancements, new options and is constantly adding new calibers. This is certainly good news for shooters and hunters alike and, every Savage I've shot is accurate right out of the box — no need for trigger jobs, re-barreling or replacing stocks. They just plain *shoot*.

After looking over their new catalog for this year, one particular model jumped off the page and struck me between the eyes. This rifle would be an ideal hunting gun anywhere but it reminded me of western hunting in particular — perhaps it was the cool camouflage pattern.

I didn't have the willpower to resist the lure of Savage's new 110 High Country! I've shot several iterations of the Model 110 in the past and they have all been shooters. This new High Country had the appearance of what Western hunters would take to the field.

ALASKA TO ARGENTINA

The 110 High Country comes in 11 different calibers ranging from .243 Winchester to .300 Win. Mag., including the 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.5 PRC, .270 Win, .280 Ackley Improved, 7mm-08 Rem, 7mm Rem. Mag., .308 Win, .30-06, and .300 WSM. This spectrum covers just about everything you'd want to hunt in North America and most of what you'd be after abroad. All barrel lengths come in either 22 or 24" trim, depending on caliber. To be honest, I wanted to try several of these options but finally settled on the .308 Win.

For starters, the TrueTimber camo is a great pattern and pleasing to the eye. The burnt-bronze PVD-coated barrel, receiver, bolt handle, triggerguard and magazine all blend perfectly with the camo and prove visually appealing.

There are many excellent features of the 110 High Country that stand out. The action is secured three-dimensionally along the entire length within the AccuStock internal chassis. The 3-position safety is located directly behind the bolt and can be operated nicely with the thumb of your shooting hand. The receiver is drilled and tapped for scope mounting. A detachable 4-round magazine can be removed easily with the textured magazine release and there's no hassle with re-inserting the magazine.

The synthetic stock features overmolded surfaces around the grip and forend areas. This non-slip surface will be appreciated in wet conditions or when your hands are sweaty. Aesthetically speaking, I liked the looks of the spiral-fluted bolt and barrel. The bolt knob is large and finely checkered on the top. Like other 110 rifles, the High Country features a floating bolt head and barrel nut to ensure reliable headspacing — which enhances accuracy. My .308 test rifle — wearing a 22" barrel — comes with a threaded muzzle ready for accessories such as a muzzlebrake or suppressor. The diameter at the muzzle was 0.750". Magnum calibers come with a 'brake included. Before I scoped it, my



The rifle features a threaded muzzle so you can easily add a muzzle break — or an ear-saving sound suppressor if Congress ever gets its act together!



The factory-fluted bolt gives the Savage 110 High Country the look of a high-end custom hunting rifle at Real World prices!



The AccuFit stock system features interchangeable comb risers and length-of-pull spacers with a cushy recoil pad to fit most shooters like a glove.



Savage is known for its game-changing user-adjustable AccuTrigger offering a short lock-time to help accuracy. On the test gun, 3 lbs. pull proved perfect.

particular rifle tipped the scales at a tad over 8 lbs.

The 110 High Country features Savage's user-adjustable AccuTrigger — no more trips to the gunsmith for an expensive trigger job. The trigger on my test gun broke cleanly at 3 lbs. and could be adjusted down to 2.5 lbs. The great trigger is complemented by Savage's AccuFit stock system allowing the shooter to customize the rifle's comb height and length of pull for the perfect cheek placement when looking through a scope. Each 110 High Country comes with easy-to-replace comb inserts and



Mark found the High Country loved Federal Premium hunting ammo and delivered great groups right out of the box.

LOP spacers. If you have a Phillips screwdriver, you're in business. You'll never have to worry again about the rifle fitting you properly as you try to find your target in the scope.

AMMO'D UP AND SCOPED OUT

An accurate rifle is but one component of success — without quality ammunition, all is lost. Federal has reintroduced a complete lineup of its Premium Barnes TSX offerings and has also launched new hunting loads using Berger Hybrid Hunter bullets. In addition, the company will offer its Premium Nosler AccuBond loads, which have received a lot of positive response. Our test offerings included the 165-gr. Nosler AccuBond, 150-gr. Barnes TSX and 168-gr. Berger Hybrid Hunter.

For some time now, I have wanted to try Leupold's new VX-6HD 2-12x42 scope. The scope includes the FireDot Tri-MOA reticle and I immediately mounted it on the rifle using Warne's newly introduced Maxima horizontal steel rings. The scope wears Gore Optifade Subalpine camo and features a 6:1 zoom ratio via a removable throw lever, which can be a real benefit if you're hunting in cold weather with gloves on.

The scope itself only weighs 16.8 oz., is 12.5" long and comes with Leupold's CDS-ZL2 Zero Lock feature. Both elevation and windage dials can be repositioned to align the zero mark of the dial with the witness mark. This allows you to dial back



The detachable box magazine on the test gun held four rounds of .308 Win, plenty for most of North America's big game — if the hunter does his job.

to the original zero in the event adjustments are made. To illuminate the reticle, just press and release a button located on the left side of the adjustment turret (a dandy feature for those low-light opportunities). This is definitely a serious hunting scope.

PROOF ON PAPER

At the range there were no surprises. I expected this one to shoot well — and it did. Once the gun was sighted-in, 3-shot groups were shot with all three Federal Premium loads. The rifle wasn't fussy and — with all three loads — performed well up to my expectations. Take a good rifle, top it with quality glass, feed it premium ammunition and gratifyingly tight groups are the result.

The bolt ran smooth and fed the ammo

consistently. Recoil wasn't unpleasant even when shooting from the bench. The stock incorporates a nice, cushiony buttpad that absorbs the recoil. This Savage High Country proved to be a pleasure to use.

Right out of the box, the High Country makes a superb hunting rifle regardless where you may find yourself. I wouldn't hesitate taking this Savage loaded with Federal Premium 165-gr. AccuBonds on an elk hunt or any other game (with the exception of *big* bears). If you're in the market for a good-shooting rifle loaded with features for the serious hunter, the Savage Model 110 High Country is worth a look.

www.savagearms.com

★★★★★
**UPGRADE TO
FIRST
CLASS**
AT A COACH PRICE



The TP9 Elite Combat EXECUTIVE.
Comes stock with performance components
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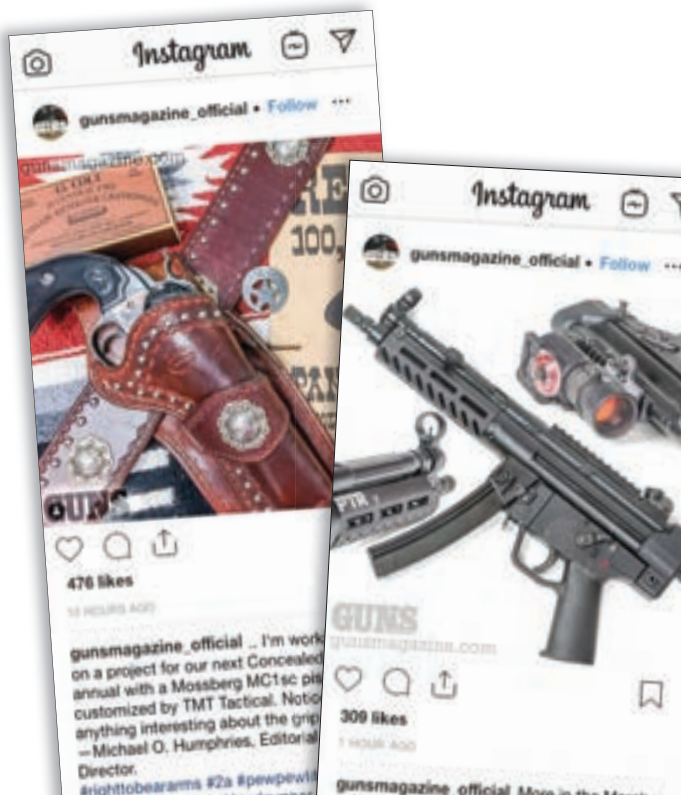
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Semi-Auto **HANDGUNS** *of* **WWII:**

MIKE "DUKE" VENTURINO

PHOTOS:
YVONNE VENTURINO

World War II handguns ranged from the poorly thought out single-shot "Liberator .45s" to General Patton's iconic brace of engraved, ivory stocked sixguns. When building my collection of WWII firearms I decided to eschew handguns that mostly served as ornaments and with which their owners never actually expected to fight. A good example there would be Germany's Luftwaffe pilots who

were issued tiny 6.35mm (.25 ACP to us) semi-autos, or American general officers who were given Colt Pocket Pistols as a badge of rank.

What I wanted for my collection were autos and revolvers issued to frontline combat troops with the full expectation they'd be *used* for fighting. The major combatant nations all had such but here we're only going to hit the semi-autos.

SOVIET SIZZLE

World War II service pistols are an interesting assortment, ranging from the Soviet TT33 in their super-hot 7.65x25 on the small end, to (of course) America's .45 ACP Government Model. In between were some very practical handguns that in basic style and function are still perfectly serviceable today. Others were bad ideas at the get-go and make you wonder if their

FROM *Tremendous* — TO TREMENDOUSLY *Awful*

The Browning Hi Power, also known as P35, was used by both sides. From top: Inglis-made British paratrooper model, Chinese Government issue, FN-made German gun.



The Japanese Type 14 8mm is a well-made but poorly thought-out pistol.



designers were humorists.

The Soviet Union's first-rate combat units usually got TT33s. It's a traditional single-action semi-auto: a reciprocating slide encasing a barrel which unlocks on firing. Magazine capacity is 8 rounds. Interestingly there is no safety arrangement, which makes importing unaltered ones into this country a bit difficult nowadays. As I said, its 7.62x25 cartridge is a hummer (an 86-gr. bullet at 1,500 fps) and *loud* from the TT33's 4½" barrel.

JAPAN, FRANCE, BRITAIN

Japan was capable of manufacturing fine quality weapons but they lacked somewhat in genius when designing good handguns. Col. Nambu was their most famous designer, but next to handgun designers of the West, he was in kindergarten. Evidence of this is the Type 94 semi-auto 8mm Nambu. It has a 3¾" barrel with a 6-round magazine. The 8mm Nambu cartridge propels a 106-gr. bullet at about 1,000 fps. Type 94s are one of the most dangerous handguns to carry with a round chambered. Why? The sear

Duke shot a surplus U.S. Army steel pot helmet. The .45 ACP FMJ glanced off while the 9mm penetrated.



The Japanese Type 94 8mm Nambu is one of the poorest-designed autoloading pistols ever issued to a major military force.

The image displays four German pistols arranged vertically. From top to bottom: a P38 with a silver slide and black grip; a P08 with a silver slide and black grip; a P38 with a silver slide and black grip; and a P08 with a silver slide and black grip. The P38s have a more complex design with a visible magazine release and a trigger guard. The P08s have a simpler design with a visible magazine release and a trigger guard.

Germany's two most prolific 9mm Parabellum pistols of World War II — the P38 (above) and the "Luger" P08 (below).

The image shows a French Model 1935A pistol, which is a semi-automatic handgun with a silver slide and black grip. It has a distinctive design with a visible magazine release and a trigger guard. The slide is marked with the number 472585.

The French Model 1935A (below) shows a resemblance to the U.S. Model 1911 but is chambered for the puny 7.65x20 Longue.

bar is exposed on the pistol's left side — a light press on it and the gun fires. The earlier Type 14 8mm Nambu is a step up but still has many design flaws. For instance, Type 14 magazines serve as the bolt stop, making it a challenge to extract an empty. When the magazine is freed, the bolt slams shut and has to be fully retracted again to chamber a new round. The Japanese didn't take the Type 14's development far enough. Bill Ruger did. He admitted to basing his Mark I .22LR on it.

The French, being who they are, did a very odd thing. They mated a well-designed and well-made autoloader — the SACM 1935A — to a completely lackluster cartridge. Then to add insult, they painted it black. The cartridge is 7.65x20 Longue, derived precisely from the American .30 round intended for Pedersen Devices (which converted bolt action Model 1903s to semi-auto function). The French ballistics had 85-gr. bullets moving around 1,100 fps. Model 1935As are trim, well-balanced handguns with an 8-round magazine. If they'd been chambered for something like 9mm Largo or .38 Super, they could have been near the top of practical WWII sidearms.

Until well into World War II the Brits stuck with revolvers whose basic designs were old news in the 1880s. Finally, somebody in Britain's stuffed-shirt military hierarchy got their head out of a shadowy place and gave their paratroopers an adequate sidearm. Those were knockoffs of FN's Browning Hi Power (aka the P35), made by the John Inglis Company of Canada. Not only was its 9mm Parabellum cartridge much better than British revolver rounds, the P35's magazine held 13 of them.

GERMAN CLASSICS

Rest assured a handgun made in Germany was excellently manufactured. Such were P08 9mms (Lugers) which the German Army dropped officially in 1938 while Luftwaffe ground-combat units kept them until the end in 1945. As so many other nations' autoloaders, Lugers had 8-round magazines. Their toggle-type action is certainly unique. Lugers are wonderfully made and finished handguns and millions were used in combat, but truthfully their heyday had passed by WWII.

Luger's successor was the Walther designed P38, also in 9mm with an 8-round magazine. Of all the handguns described here, P38s were the only ones with a double-action trigger mechanism.

Interestingly, P38 slides are to the rear of the barrel instead of surrounding it full length like most other semi-autos. One feature both P08 and P38 shared was dovetailed front sights. The sight blade could be moved laterally for windage and a range of heights were available to help zero the elevation. Both of these German autoloaders had 5" barrels.

Now we return to the FN P35 Hi Power. FN stands for *Fabrique Nationale* in Belgium. Germany occupied the country in 1940 and kept FN's machines turning. Many thousands of P35s were then issued to the Wehrmacht. It has been written SS units liked P35s. Of all the pistols mentioned herein the P35 has the credit of being issued to both sides in the European conflict. British paratroopers had Inglis-made P35s and Germany handed FN ones out to many types of combat troops. Both "brands" of P35 had 4-5/8" barrels. It's nigh on impossible to pin down 9mm Parabellum military loads used by many different nations. My best stab at it is a 115-gr. FMJ at about 1,300 fps. (Incidentally, it's the same as rated for 9mm NATO; same cartridge just different moniker.)



The U.S. Model 1911 .45 Auto. The updated Model 1911A1 .45s were produced with a Parkerized finish and most had plastic grip panels.

AN AMERICAN LEGEND

Lastly, we get to the United States. All our armed forces carried .45 ACP Model 1911s and 1911A1s for frontline issue. The easiest way to discern the variations is by their serial numbers: up to 700,000 are considered 1911s and after that they are 1911A1s. Generally speaking, 1911s had walnut grips and 1911A1s had synthetic ones. The big .45 cartridge meant magazines could only hold 7 rounds with bullet weight of 230 grains at approximately 800 fps. Although U.S. military doctrine decreed the 1911s/A1s be carried with

chambers empty, the design is well set up for carrying "cocked and locked" with a loaded chamber because of the grip safety as well as a thumb safety on left side of frame.

Considering the above-mentioned factors, what nation fielded the best combat auto of World War II? Despite being a patriotic American, I must say the .45 Model 1911/1911A1 is in 2nd Place while the 9mm Hi Powers by Inglis and FN are in the top spot with their practical 13-round magazines. I'd say the double-action German P38 rates a solid 3rd Place.



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WAYNE VAN ZWOLL

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The Springfield had been restocked in plain walnut, carefully inletted. Its shape and age-hardened Pachmayr pad, I figured, dated it to the '60s. The safety and bolt handle swept low, dodging Buchler rings gripping a J.C. Higgins 4X. The rest of the metal was pretty much as issued, save where the sights had been. What sold me was the barrel stamp: .30 Gibbs.

The proprietor winced at my offer, scratched his chin. "OK." I dug out a wad of 20s before he could change his mind.

"Next year, Spud, you'll see me out on Bone Mountain with one of them Gibbs .30 Magnums." So wrote Francis Sell in his fine book on deer hunting, which I read soon after its 1964 publication. I'd yet to kill a deer, but I wondered, "Who *was* Gibbs anyway?"

Born November 12, 1915, Manolis Aamoen Gibbs lost the sight in his right eye early to typhoid. He learned to shoot from the left shoulder. Soon after graduating high school in Gainesville, Texas, he traveled to California, land of promise for Dust Bowl refugees. On the train carrying him to Richmond, he marveled at the Rocky Mountains. The name had a big, rough-edged ring. He would adopt it.

NEW NAME, NEW GAME

The newly minted "Rocky Edward Gibbs" learned the gunsmith trade, then entered his rifles in competition and refined

his marksmanship. Contest scores combined group sizes at 100, 200, 300 and 400 yards with bullet drop at 400 so both accuracy and flat arcs mattered. Denied victory with the .270 Winchester and .270 Ackley, Rocky set a match record in 1953 with his own .270 wildcat. The chamber, in a Remington Model 721, was cut with a Keith Francis reamer leaving a 35-degree shoulder and a short .250 neck. He would use this formula to hotrod the .30-06 case with bullets of other diameters, six of them within a year or so.

In 1955 Rocky left California for a 35-acre tract near Viola, Idaho, arriving in a March blizzard. There he set up a 500-yard rifle range and converted a metalworking shop into one equipped for rifle building and handloading.

No stranger to hyperbole, Rocky claimed his .270 Gibbs was "the best all-around cartridge for a handloader." Even Jack O'Connor acknowledged its merits: "As far as I can tell," he wrote in *Outdoor Life*, "Brother Gibbs doesn't do it with mirrors." Claims of 63 grains of IMR 4350 in his .270 sent 130-gr. bullets at 3,430 fps surely fueled many campfire debates. How could an '06-based wildcat match the .270 Weatherby? However, Rocky held

firm. He insisted 139-gr. missiles from his 7mm galloped out the muzzle at 3,300 fps. This wildcat got a lukewarm reception, in part methinks because Warren Page, shooting editor of *Field & Stream* at the time, was giving his 7mm Mashburn steady ink.



Born in 1915, Manolis Aamoen "Rocky" Gibbs moved to California, then Idaho. He died in 1973.



Bill Perry's outfit begins the 26-mile ride back to trail head after Wayne introduced a big bull elk to Mr. Gibbs.



Building a .30 Gibbs from .30-06 brass: Neck up to .33 or .35, form a new shoulder with a Gibbs die, fire-form.

When the belted 7mm Remington Magnum arrived with the Model 700 in 1962, there was no need for either.

Yet Rocky was colorful and his cartridges put lightning-bolt speeds in reach of anyone willing to re-barrel or re-chamber a .30-06. In his era, guns such as the surplus Springfield 03A3 which caught my eye sold for \$29.95.

DOUBLE-SHOULDERED DATA

To make a Gibbs case, you must first relocate the “datum line” which arrests forward movement of the cartridge to establish proper headspace. To make .30 Gibbs cases from .30-06 brass, you expand necks in a .338-06 or a .35 Whelen sizing die, then run them through a .30 Gibbs sizing die. The cases now have two shoulders. Firing modest loads in a .30 Gibbs rifle, you erase the lower, original shoulder. Shooters in Rocky’s day could streamline the process with a Gibbs Wildcat Case Forming Tool.

These days, commercial .35 Whelen brass eliminates the need to neck up before necking down to deliver a .30 Gibbs hull — though .338-diameter shoulders are adequate to establish headspace, and you’ll lose fewer cases by working the brass less. Incidentally, I avoid nickel-plated brass for wildcatting, as the nickel can flake off, forming grit when hulls are given new or sharper shoulders.

I’m sweet on the .30 Gibbs because it’s more efficient and more versatile than the smaller bores such as the .240 Gibbs. It has nothing ballistically on the 8mm Gibbs, which Rocky fashioned to salvage 8x57 Mausers pulled from the wreckage of World War II. However, then — as now — options in .323 bullets barely outstripped choices in Size 16 shoes. In addition, few

This restocked 03A3, its original barrel rechambered to .30 Gibbs, came with a 4x J.C. Higgins scope.



Wayne’s 03A3 is no nail-driver, but groups like this doom animals farther than he’ll shoot in the field.

stateside shooters were rushing to adopt the favored bore of the Third Reich. The .33 Gibbs might have fared better had not Winchester's .338 Magnum appeared about the same time.

With 180-gr. bullets in a tight footrace with factory loads from the .300 Holland & Holland, the .30 Gibbs was rightly considered a "poor man's magnum." It seemed to me an ideal elk cartridge.

BUILDING A WILDCAT

After several passes with Hoppe's on brush and patches, the bore of my Springfield gleamed. No indication it had been damaged by corrosive priming. Replicating the way hunters in the 1960s made .30 Gibbs cases, I necked one batch of .30-06 hulls to .358, another to .338. The bump to .338 was noticeably easier. A pass through Redding's .30 Gibbs sizing die then formed a second shoulder and new datum line.

A critical caveat: Unlike the .30-06 Ackley Improved, the .30 Gibbs cannot safely be fire-formed from unaltered .30-06 brass. You must form the new shoulder first! Igniting .30-06 cartridges in a .30 Gibbs chamber causes a condition of excess headspace, with the risk of case separation. Escaping gas can damage your rifle and test your health insurance!

New shoulder in place, I loaded mild 50-gr. charges of IMR 4350 behind 165-gr. bullets to erase the old. Cases emerged perfectly sculpted. Inspired, I increased charges to bring velocities 100 fps higher than those of commercial .30-06 ammunition did. No problem! Accuracy with these fire-forming loads averaged just over 2 MOA.

Accuracy improved with the fully formed cases — and after I replaced the ancient scope with a 3-9x Leupold Vari-X II. With 150- and 165-gr. bullets, I came to favor Hodgdon Hybrid 100V powder. The 180s performed best with IMR 4451 and RL-19, though H414 also delivered good results. No tackdriver, the 03A3 drilled 1¼-MOA groups with my favored loads — certainly adequate for hunting. In a nod to my first elk load, 180-gr. Speers in a .300 H&H, I decided to hunt with these bullets over a charge of 4451.

INTO ROUGH COUNTRY

The Gibbs merited a hunt in storied elk country, so I booked a pack trip with Bill Perry's Hidden Creek Outfitters into Wyoming's Thorofare drainage. The prospect of hunting the Thorofare was heady indeed. Then, short weeks before pack-in, I broke my ankle. Graciously, Bill agreed to re-schedule, as reports came of giant bulls flocking off the peaks ahead of early snows. Mules plodded the 26 miles to trailhead under tons of meat. Massive antlers arced over packsaddles to hook brush on both sides, beam tips brushing fetlocks.

I healed, readied the Gibbs and a year later swung into the saddle, jacket off under Indian-summer skies. Bulls wouldn't migrate early this September. Drainages thick with grizzly tracks led us to wall tents under vaulting crags. For three days, I poked through thickets just under the rims, glassing scattered herds. A raghorn 5-point looked me over. I left him alone to grow up. On a hunch, I climbed the same ridge next morning.

Dawn was a titanium tinge when a bull brayed far above me. On steep trails I scrambled toward him. Then a twig snapped. Antlers flickered. My crosswire found a slot, high on rib. Hit but not dead! My follow-up left as scree underfoot gave way, the muzzle raking sky as I windmilled to stay upright. Again the bolt



flicked home. *Bang!* A perfect call. Two Speers were suddenly too much. The 6-point collapsed.

My Springfield had proved good company on the elk trails. More than a tool, it's a link to another era, to people, events and places erased by time but tangible still in the heft of my 03A3. Thumbing a .30 Gibbs into the well, I'm no better able to kill an elk than if it were another of the 38 cartridges I've used hunting these great animals. Yet the Gibbs has a richer past than most. It makes a hunt memorable, whether a shot comes or not.

POSTSCRIPT

In 1973, leukemia would claim Manolis Aamoen "Rocky Edward" Gibbs at the age of 58. Gibbs had a flair for the dramatic and apparently guarded his own raw range data. Rumor had it he instructed his wife, upon his death, to burn his notes. His cartridges, with those of Donaldson and Ackley, Mashburn, Weatherby and others, mark the golden days of wildcatting. Long before the advent of chassis-stocked bolt actions, Gibbs helped shooters send bullets faster and hit targets farther off — all from \$30 infantry rifles and pails of fired '06 hulls.



The Bow River, designed by custom knife maker Phil Wilson, is a handsome workhorse, able to perform multiple field functions.

SPYDERCO BOW RIVER

FIXED AFFORDABILITY YET STYLISHLY SUBDUED

Spyderco is best known for their dazzling array of folders, but they put out some stellar fixed-blades as well — from slick outdoor field knives to wicked tactical slicers. The new Bow River falls into the field category and does so in style.

There's nothing overly fancy about it, but this lack of dazzle makes it such a versatile fixer. There are no tricky design elements to define it or pigeonhole it for a specific purpose, an admirable trait in an outdoors knife if you're looking to perform a myriad of tasks.

A collaboration between Spyderco and seasoned custom knife maker Phil Wilson (Seamount Knives of Mountain Ranch,

California), the 8.14" (overall) Bow River has a graceful 4.4" trailing point blade, deeply ground for superior slicing. The 8Cr13MoV stainless blade sports a satin finish and a small trademark Spydie-hole that can be used for lashing.

The Bow River's 3.74" "grabbing end" is a bag handle-style featuring attractive black/gray layered G10 scales plus there's a tubed lanyard hole in the base. At 4 oz., the knife's a light carry in its black leather belt sheath (included).

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT

The Bow River's blade length is perfect for performing a wide variety of field chores.



Nothing overly flashy here — just a comfortable, no-nonsense bag handle grip with attractive black and gray layered G10 scales.

This knife is just as comfortable stripping and carving wood as it is dressing game — and it's not at all a stretch for it to serve as a bird and trout knife. Throw in its ability to serve as a light knife for food prep and the Bow River is your go-to jack-of-all-trades.

Like all Spyderco knives, the Bow River comes sharp as a razor right out of the box so you're ready to slice, dice, skin and carve right from the get-go. The MSRP is an extremely affordable \$50.

“There’s nothing overly fancy about it, but this lack of dazzle makes it such a versatile fixer.”

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INTERVIEW WITH ALAN GOTTLIEB PART I

NATIONAL GUN-RIGHTS ADVOCATE OFFERS WINNING ADVICE

Do the math: Since January 2017, two new conservative pro-Second Amendment justices have been appointed to the United States Supreme Court.

More than 100 federal court vacancies have been filled with judges who appear to believe there are 10 amendments in the Bill of Rights, rather than nine plus a regulated privilege.

Want to keep this going? Then take some advice from one of the nation's leading Second Amendment advocates — Alan Gottlieb, founder and executive vice president of the Second Amendment Foundation and chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms — and put the next 12 months to the best possible use.

GUNS Magazine sat down with Gottlieb for an exclusive interview to get his insight into the present state of affairs for gun rights

in the United States, and how to keep the momentum going to, as he has often said, “Make the Second Amendment great again.”

What should American gun owners be doing right now as the nation heads toward the 2020 election?

First of all, it's really important for gun owners to become extremely engaged and active in the 2020 election cycle.

The best thing they can probably do that's easy, and doesn't cost them any money, is social media. Virtually everybody is on social media, between Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and others. It's really important to be out there sharing who your friends are, who your enemies are and what gun owners need to do.

Have you seen over the years and most recently how some gun owners seem to like fighting with each other more than uniting and fighting a common enemy? Wouldn't it be a good idea to bury the hatchets for a

while and get on with business?

I have not seen as much infighting in the last few years as sometimes I have seen historically. I don't view it as that ‘giant’ a problem, but it's important we really focus on our enemies and not ‘take on our friends,’ so to speak.

There are going to be a lot of candidates who are not 100-percent pro-gun but they're going to be 75 or 80 percent pro gun and their opponents are going to be at 10 or “zero” percent. The bottom line is sometimes you're going to have to vote for somebody or support somebody who isn't 100 percent with us, but they're with us *most* of the time. The logic is in a legislative body or congress, all you need is 51 percent of the votes and you win, so it's important we build a strong enough coalition — even with people who aren't 100 percent with us, but (at least) aren't 100 percent against us.

Otherwise we're going to have problems

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with legislation in various key states and Congress. So sometimes it's important not to in-fight and pick on people ... because, again, all you need is control.

The important thing right now is to get Democrats out of the U.S. House and get (President Donald) Trump re-elected and keep control of the Senate. If you get somebody in the Senate, say, Susan Collins, who isn't always with us but if she's re-elected in Maine, that means Republicans will probably control the U.S. Senate. If they control the Senate, they run all the committees and the legislation to see the good stuff gets through and the bad stuff doesn't get through — that's critical.

Same thing in the House as well, so it is crucially important we play smart in the elections and vote smart.

What about recruiting local candidates all the way from city council to the state legislatures?

A lot of gun owners don't get involved on the local level. When it's a prominent race, you see it on TV, read about it, they get engaged, but they don't often get



Alan Gottlieb is the founder and executive vice president of the Second Amendment Foundation and chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms.

engaged — and that's one of our problems — on the local level.

City councils, county councils, and judicial races on the lower level; it's really important, and sometimes it's a good idea for a local gun club to get one of its leaders to run for local office and throw their weight behind it. Because, if you don't get involved, and don't get the right people running, sometimes there are no choices on the local

level. So you have to *create* choices so gun owners have people they can vote for.

What are some things gun owners tend to overlook? Money, I know, is a big factor.

Gun owners as a whole, a percentage of them are very engaged, very active, and donate, volunteer their time. But, by and large, a lot of gun owners are individualistic and they do their own thing, they don't do things in group settings sometimes and therefore they don't get engaged.

I hate to say it but a lot of surveys and public opinion work we've done shows in many cases gun owner voter-turnout is less than other groups. We have to make sure this changes, particularly in the 2020 election cycle.

We have to turn out larger numbers than the general population or other interest groups, particularly the anti-gun interest groups.

Editor's Note: Check out the November issue of GUNS Magazine for the final part of this interview with Alan Gottlieb.

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PERFORMANCE CENTER SHIELD 2.0

S&W'S CCW "PHENOM" GETS A HOTROD MAKEOVER

David Freeman

The Smith & Wesson Shield has now become the 2.0 version and the Performance Center mod shop has added enhancements with a ported model. The gunsmiths at the Performance Center conceptualize, engineer and handcraft their products from the ground up and comprise the "Best of the Best" — each with an average length of service at S&W of over 23 years. What they've done for the Shield, in addition to porting the barrel and slide, is to polish the feed ramp and hood, tune the action, install a PC sear and test fire each gun for function.

A PLATFORM EVOLVES

Introduced in 2012, the Shield is a continuation of the polymer-framed, short-recoil, locked-breech Military and Police (M&P) line introduced in the summer of 2005. The intention was to go head-to-head with GLOCK in the law enforcement market. Since its introduction, the M&P has captured a large percentage of this market. But while targeted at LE agencies, the M&P is extremely popular in the commercial market.

For the Shield, S&W took the power and features of their full-sized M&P and put them into a slim, lightweight pistol the size of your hand. The M&P Shield is easy to conceal, offering professional grade features with simple operation and reliable performance. It was one of the first of what we've come to call "single-stack nines," attractive to the concealed carry crowd. Although the 9mm was the first one introduced, it was quickly followed by a .40 S&W version, and by early 2017, a .45 ACP version. S&W announced in November 2015 they had sold over one million Shields, and they've continued to sell well.

The 2.0 version was first announced with the full-size M&P in January 2018 with the Shield 2.0 version following later the same year. It's a bit of a facelift based on feedback from Shield users over the preceding five

The PC touch: Alongside the S&W Shield Model 2.0 comes a Performance Center model with tuned action and ported barrel and slide.



years. The 2.0 has a refined trigger for a smoother pull, crisper break and a more audible, tactile reset. The frame stippling has been changed to give the shooter a better grip on the pistol — it's a bit rougher, almost like sandpaper, but it does give you better purchase. The machining of the slide is a bit different, with a softer bevel and some fish scale serrations toward the front of the slide that aren't on the original model.

The Performance Center added porting to help reduce muzzle flip and to provide some reduction in felt recoil. PC 2.0 Ported Shields are available in six flavors: two 9mms, two .40 S&Ws and two .45 ACPs. The difference in the two models for each caliber is the sights. You can opt for Tritium night sights or HIVIZ fiber optic sights. The two 9mm models have thumb safeties.

None of the .40 S&W or .45 ACP models have them, though all Shields have internal safeties and trigger safeties.

LESS FLIP, BETTER BREAK

To find out how the porting works and to determine if there was any negatives — such as blinding muzzle flash or potential burns on the hands — I spent an afternoon shooting five different types of ammo through both the PC 2.0 Ported Shield and

a non-porting original. I also enlisted the aid of some additional shooters to get their overall opinion of the new model.

The first thing we all noticed about the PC 2.0 Shield is the trigger. It's definitely smoother. I checked it later with my Lyman Trigger Pull Scale and determined only a slight difference in the pull weight — 5.5-lb. average for the PC 2.0 Shield compared to a little over 6 lbs. for the original Shield. The real difference was in how it *felt* — the smoother pull, the tactile break and the reset. None of us even noticed any muzzle flash. The PC engineers apparently took care of this problem by how they placed the ports on the barrel and slide. The barrel ports are at 10 and 2, well forward on the barrel. The slide has three corresponding holes on each side moving rearward from the barrel holes. The arrangement seems to be very efficient.

Shooting at 7 yards from a standing two-handed position, all shooters were able to put all their rounds within a pie plate-sized target. The ported Shield wasn't more, nor less, accurate than the older one, but it was easier on the hands and more pleasant to shoot. With an MSRP of only \$539, it's definitely worth the money to have a Performance Center gun to brag about!



The Performance Center added two ports in the Shield's barrel and six ports in the frame to dissipate redirected gasses. The ports reduce muzzle flip and felt recoil.

S&W'S MODEL 610

THIS CLASSIC COMEBACK IS A PERFECT "10"

Mark Hampton

After searching for a good used S&W Model 610 for quite some time, I discovered a couple of things. First, they are not hiding behind every bush — they've become somewhat difficult to locate. Second, when you do find one, the cost may involve seriously diminishing the kid's college fund. Therefore, when I heard the announcement of S&W reintroducing the M610, I immediately ordered one.

Over the past few years, the 10mm Auto cartridge has become much more popular. I'm not really sure if it's personal defense, recreational shooting, or hunting — or perhaps a combination of all three — driving the market but one thing's certain, the 10mm comeback is for real. Jan Mladek, General Manager of S&W and M&P brands said, "We felt it was important to offer a 10mm revolver for personal protection and handgun hunting. The N-Frame has long been a staple in big-bore revolvers and the 10mm is a natural caliber addition to the line." Well, I'm thrilled S&W reintroduced the 10mm to their revolver offerings.

Built on the large S&W N-Frame, the gun is ideal for launching the 10mm Auto while it is also capable of handling the .40 S&W. This is a good-looking revolver as the stainless steel frame, cylinder and barrel match up well aesthetically to the black synthetic grips.

The round-butt grips have slight finger grooves and are most comfortable. I appreciate the full under-lug and, if I could wave my magic wand, I'd really like an unfluted cylinder. The trigger face is smooth and wide while the revolver is easy to cock in single-action mode, thanks to the wide, checkered target hammer.

The new M610 is offered in two barrel lengths — 4 and 6.5". The 10mm provides plenty of horsepower for home defense and personal protection. It is also a good option for close-range whitetail or wild hogs. Since I'll be using this gun for hunting, the longer barrel was chosen. My test gun tipped the scales a tad bit over 50 oz. and balances extremely well with the longer tube.

The gun arrived in a nice blue hard case

Using an UltraDot L/T mounted with Weigand's new mini mount, the big N-Frame performed flawlessly and wasn't picky about ammo.



The reissued S&W M610 10mm will be welcomed by shooters and hunters alike.



with three moon clips provided. The moon clips make loading and unloading painless. There are quite a number high-cap semi-autos chambered in 10mm, but moon clips narrow the "reloading speed gap" on the revolver side.

If you're target shooting at the range in ideal lighting conditions, iron sights will suffice. The factory front sight features an interchangeable black blade while the rear sight is fully adjustable and includes a white notch outline. However, with aging eyes I am not going to try fooling myself — I need optics, especially for those early morning or late evening opportunities. I don't see open sights well enough to place a bullet where it belongs 100 percent of the time.

For many years I've enjoyed the dependability of UltraDot, so it was an easy choice to mount their L/T reflex sight on the M610. The four MOA dot size will show up nicely on a big hog's shoulder and the unit has 10 brightness settings, allowing you to adjust the dot according to light conditions. This is a great asset!

Mounting the UltraDot L/T on the S&W was easy, thanks to Weigand Machine and Design's sleek and clean-looking mini Weigand-Tinny mount. (Weigand has a mount for

all K-, N- and X-Frame S&W revolvers.)

Loaded with a truckload of ammo, I was ready for a trip to the range to see what the M610 could do. After a few quick adjustments on the UltraDot, the gun was sighted-in at 25 yards from a sandbag rest. The trigger broke crisp and clean, as I've experienced with other S&W models. It didn't take long before five- and six-shot groups were in a cluster. DoubleTap, HSM, SIG, Hornady and a few other brands of ammo were tested and the M610 proved very manageable with recoil a non-issue. HSM 180-gr. JHP put four rounds in the same hole and the other two were almost touching. The M610 flat-out shoots!

I see close-range deer and hog hunting in my M610's future. There are some excellent hunting loads from a variety of manufacturers including Hornady, DoubleTap, Federal, Underwood and HSM. For plinking, I'll stick with the 180-gr. FMJs.

I'm probably not the only shooter glad to see S&W reintroduce their M610. It's already found a secure spot in my handgun battery.

www.smithandwesson.com
www.jackweigand.com

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A-10 RIFLE STOCK MCMILLAN FIBERGLASS STOCKS

The *A-10 Rifle Stock* is designed for shooters of a smaller stature. It incorporates many features of McMillan's popular tactical stocks but in a compact style. The A-10 has the thinner forearm of the A3-5, a butt hook similar to the A-5 and the sleek lines of the A-6. Its shorter trigger reach is just right for shooters with smaller hands. For more info: (877) 365-6148, www.mcmillanusa.com

856 REVOLVERS WITH VIRIDIAN GRIP LASERS TAURUS

Taurus has added Viridian Grip Lasers to two of its small-frame revolvers. As a result, the *856 and 856 Ultra-Lite with Viridian Grip Lasers* will have enhanced target acquisition during defensive situations. Designed for everyday concealed carry in a .38 Special +P platform, the revolvers have a 6-shot capacity with spurred hammer, DA/SA performance. The Viridian Grip Laser provides a dual sighting system as a back up for iron sights or as a primary sight. For more info: (800) 327-3776, www.taurususa.com



SPRINT SERIES BUCK KNIVES

Buck Knives' *Sprint Series* features a ball bearing pivot system. Knives in the series have a 3 1/8" blade made of 420HC steel with a stonewash finish. At 4 3/8" long when closed, the lightweight liner lock flippers are ideal for everyday carry. The Sprint folders have glass-filled nylon handles and a deep pocket carry clip. For more info: (208) 262-0500, www.buckknives.com



RENEGADE X COMPRESSION STUFF SACK ALPS OUTDOORZ

Keep your stuff dry with ALPS OutdoorZ's waterproof storage gear. The *Renegade X Compression Stuff Sack* is made of 70D ripstop nylon that's neither heavy nor bulky. The bag sufficiently compresses contents to allow for a lot more storage. Waterproof seams, nylon webbing and bar-tacked stress points make it withstand compression. For more info: (800) 344-2577, www.alpsoutdoorz.com



10/22 COMPETITION RIFLE STURM, RUGER & CO. INC.

The *10/22 Competition Rifle* from the Ruger Custom Shop features a hard-coat anodized, CNC-machined, heat-treated and stress-relieved aluminum receiver. Paired with a heat-treated, nitrided, CNC-machined match

bolt, the receiver comes with an optics-ready, 30-MOA Picatinny rail. The stainless steel bull barrel is fluted and has black Cerakote accents. Other features include an adjustable cheek rest, a brown laminate stock, a Ruger BX-Trigger, and a 10-round rotary magazine. For more info: (336) 949-5200, www.ruger.com



MOTHERLODE CAMELBAK

The *Motherlode* tactical pack from CamelBak is made of 500D double-rip Cordura fabric and has a 40L cargo capacity. It features the 3L Mil-Spec Crux Lumbar Reservoir with zippered back panel access. Laser-cut Mountain M.O.L.L.E. panels provide secure attachment of accessory pouches. For more info: (877) 271-1220, www.camelbak.com



PROFESSIONAL CHARTER ARMS

Charter Arms' *Professional* is a seven-shot revolver chambered in .32 H&R Magnum. Its stainless steel frame, cylinder and 3" barrel are treated with Blacknitride+. The Professional comes with contoured walnut grips and an easy-to-see neon-green front sight. Weighing 22 oz. (unloaded), this concealable revolver delivers optimal performance with reduced recoil. For more info: (866) 769-4867, www.charterfirearms.com



HD-X600 3.4X50 NIGHT VISION SCOPE BARSKA

The *HD-X600 3.4x50 Night Vision Scope* from Barska is ideal for hunting and target shooting. It offers clarity in all conditions through its Advanced CMOS Sensor Technology. It can transition from day-to night-time use with its Infrared Illuminator. With a push of a button, magnification changes from 3.4x to 6.8x to get a close-up view of a target. For more info: (888) 666-6769, www.barska.com

CUSTOM TURRETS KENTON INDUSTRIES

Kenton Industries designs *Custom Turrets* to replace the factory knobs on most riflescopes. Their custom turrets are marked in 50-yard increments and are dead-on accurate with any rifle load. Aside from turrets, Kenton Industries also provides bullet drop compensators, riflescopes and accessories to marksmen and hunters around the world. For more info: (805) 531-0476, www.kentonindustries.com



MOUNTAIN SHADOW AXIAL PRECISION

Axial Precision calls the *Mountain Shadow* the "ultimate sheep rifle platform." It's the product of more than five years of research and testing with input from over 50 sheep hunters and sheep guides all over the world. Uniquely designed and built around its cartridge propellant, Mountain Shadow is only chambered in cartridges compatible with temperature-stable powders. The rifle features a full-size, 5-layer, hand-laid carbon fiber stock with ultra-light fill. It's also pre-threaded for a Picatinny rail or dual front swivels. For more info: (208) 608-5179, www.axialprecision.com





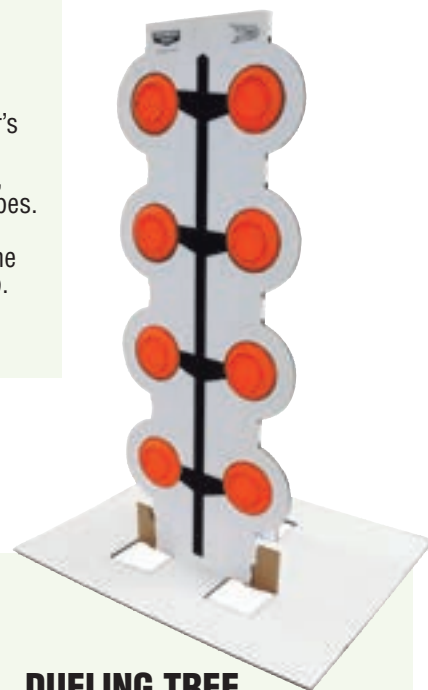
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WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER

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GAMECHANGER SIERRA BULLETS

Sierra Bullets' "legendary match-grade accuracy and bone-punching terminal performance" has resulted in the *GameChanger* — a re-engineered MatchKing with a thick copper jacket, a hollow-point design and a synthetic green tip. Sierra combines bullet-crafting genius with proprietary brass, primer and powder to produce its hunting rounds. They now have eight hunting calibers: 243 Winchester, 6mm Creedmoor, 6.5 Creedmoor, 270 Winchester, 308 Winchester, 7mm Remington, 30-06 Springfield and 300 Winchester Magnum. For more info: (888) 223-3006, www.sierrabullets.com



DUELING TREE 8-CLAY HOLDER

BIRCHWOOD CASEY

Birchwood Casey's *Dueling Tree 8-Clay Holder* target is freestanding and holds eight clay targets (not included). With the 35"-tall portable holder, users won't need heavy stands, staples or tape. It is also ideal for ranges with steel target restrictions. For more info: (800) 746-6862, www.birchwoodcasey.com



440C STAINLESS STEEL KNIVES

GRAYMAN KNIVES

Select models of Grayman Knives are now available in American-made *440C Stainless Steel*. Grayman Knives' standard 1095 carbon steel is tough and effective for hard use, but stainless steel is preferred for diving, survival chores and food prep. The stainless lineup mainly includes double-bevel knives. For more info: www.graymanknives.com

LIL' TREESTALKER HARNESS IN BOTTOMLAND CAMO

HUNTER SAFETY SYSTEM

Hunter Safety System has partnered with Mossy Oak to offer its *Lil' Treestalker Youth Harness in Bottomland Camo*. Featuring bark, sticks and leaves, the camouflage pattern helps hunters stay concealed in treestand environments. Weighing 1.5 lbs., the harness is protected with the ElimiShield Hunt Scent against odor and mildew. For more info: (256) 773-7732, www.hssvest.com



SHOTSHELL FIELD AND RANGE CASE

MTM CASE-GARD

MTM's *Shotshell Field and Range Case* is a portable container for various sizes of shotgun shells as well as ear plugs, shooting glasses and more. It features O-ring technology to create a leak-proof barrier so the case can be used even in bad weather. Each case comes with a double latch for protection and a pull-out ammo tray for easy access. The case holds up to 100 rounds of 12-ga. shotshells up to 3" but can also hold other gauge sizes. For more info: (800) 543-0548, www.mtmcase-gard.com



HOGUE EXPLOIT OTF

HOGUE KNIVES

The *Hogue Exploit OTF* is intended for frequent one-handed operation in close-proximity situations. This out-the-front knife from Hogue Knives has a clip-point blade made of anodized 6061-T6 aluminum and sports a gray aluminum handle and black screws. Its double-action automatic trigger swiftly snaps with every deployment and retraction. For more info: (800) 438-4747, www.hogueinc.com



VICKERS TACTICAL SLIDE STOP (VTSS-004)

TANGODOWN INC.

TangoDown's recent addition to its tool lineup is the *Vickers Tactical Slide Stop (VTSS-004)*. Specifically for the GLOCK 43X and 48, the VTSS-004 has an uprated return spring to accommodate the increased slide mass of the G48. The thumb pad is reshaped with deep serrations for easy manipulation even when wearing gloves. Installation by a certified GLOCK armorer or gunsmith is recommended. For more info: (909) 392-4757, www.tangodown.com



HAKET LUMBERJACK

TOPS KNIVES

TOPS Knives' original HAKET (Hawk and Knife Emergency Tool) is great for survival situations but not so much for chopping wood. That's why TOPS came up with the *HAKET Lumberjack*. The lightweight chopper has a 4.5" cutting edge on the ax portion. The 0.19"-thick blade, made from 1095 steel with a Black Traction finish, can be used with or without the handle. OAL is 15" and weight is 21.3 oz. The HAKET Lumberjack comes with Kydex blade covers and a nylon carrying pouch. For more info: (208) 542-0113, www.topsknives.com

TRAILBLAZE

OUTDOOR EDGE

Versatile and easy to carry, the *TrailBlaze* drop-point folding knife from Outdoor Edge is a capable hunting knife also suitable for everyday carry. Offered in either a 2.5 or a 3.3" blade length, the TrailBlaze features ambi-thumb studs and a stainless-steel pocket clip. The orange glass/nylon polymer handle and molded rubber inserts give a non-slip grip when field dressing game in a camp or job site. For more info: (800) 447-3343, www.outdooredge.com



CASE TRIM XPRESS

LYMAN PRODUCTS CORP.

Lyman's *Case Trim Xpress* has its own power source and a strong speed motor to quickly and cleanly trim brass for reloading. The trimmer comes with a set of 10 bushings designed to fit most popular bottleneck rifle cases. The bushings are spring loaded for a smooth, effortless cut enabling the user to trim about 15 cases per minute. An adjustment wheel allows case lengths to easily be "dialed in" to 0.001" increments. The compact, low-profile design uses minimal bench space. For more info: (800) 225-9626, www.lymanproducts.com

TAC ULTRA FS 1911 PISTOL PACKAGE

According to Rock Island Armory, their guns are “solid as a rock.” For this company with roots in the country of my birth, “it’s not about cutting corners to make a less expensive gun. It’s about delivering performance at a price that makes shooting affordable.” You’ll know this is true when you win our Handgun of the Month — the *TAC Ultra FS*. Chambered in .45 ACP with a 5" button rifled barrel supported by a full-length guide rod and dust cover, the TAC Ultra introduces a full tactical rail. It features a skeletonized hammer and trigger with adjustable over travel stop, a 1:16" length of twist, G10 tactical grips, a low-profile adjustable rear sight and a high-visibility fiber optic front sight. The pistol is built with 4140 Ordnance steel and finished with a parkerized matte coating. Like Rock Island Armory’s other 1911s, it comes with a crisp, factory 4- to 6-lb. trigger.

The CEO folding knife could be mistaken for a pen at first glance because of its low profile. But that’s just the way it’s designed. Inconspicuous. But when necessary, the CEO can quickly deploy its 3.107"-long, satin-finished blade that’s made of 8Cr13MoV steel.

The TX14R is ideal for LE and the military. With a Long-Range Optic System with Slide Focus and an anti-roll bezel, it’s easy to use in the field. It produces 900 lumens of light on high for over 4 hours and 165 lumens for 8 hours on low. The 7.625"-long flashlight weighs 8.8 oz.

I’m sure the TAC Ultra FS, the CEO and the TX14R have already caught your fancy. Enter the giveaway for a chance to own them. Go to www.gunsmagazine.com/giveaways or mail a postcard! —Jazz Jimenez



TAC ULTRA FS 1911

MAKER: Rock Island Armory
(775) 537-1444

CALIBER: .45 ACP, **CAPACITY:** 8

BARREL LENGTH: 5", **OAL:** 8.75"

WEIGHT: 2.82 lbs. (unloaded)

www.armscor.com

VALUE: \$775



CEO

MAKER: CRKT
(800) 891-3100

www.crkt.com

VALUE: \$49.99

TX14R

MAKER: COAST
(800) 426-5858

www.coastportland.com

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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.

LONG YARDAGE REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMETHING – *CHEAP!*

“You can’t shoot that far, especially with a rifle like that ...!”

“JUST WATCH ...”

Long-range shooting is one of the fastest growing shooting styles sweeping the nation. Thousand-yard ranges are popping up around the country, accommodating shooters who enjoy hitting distant targets. While hunting numbers continue to drop, gun ownership and long-range shooting are growing. Many enjoy the challenge of

calculating environmental inputs — wind, mirage and temperature — to hit a target way out yonder.

The shooting industry has taken notice with a slew of high-end equipment to answer the call — scopes, rifles, ballistics programs, ammunition, specialized reloading tools, even high-tech tripods.

UTILITY UPGRADE

What about the guy who maybe wants to dabble in long-range shooting but doesn’t

want to sell the family car to get started? Being a cheapskate, I thought “Why not try a regular deer rifle, give it better optics and try my hand?”

Already having my “utility rifle,” a box-stock Ruger Hawkeye All-Weather stainless synthetic in .308 Winchester, I was halfway there. All I needed to do was put better glass on it and give it a chance to reach out a bit. A plan was beginning to formulate in my warped, budget-minded brain.

Since I already had a Ruger Hawkeye, I felt like I was cheating and ordered a Ruger American in .308 to do a side-by-side shoot-off of sorts. Ruger Americans run about \$350 and are known for their accuracy. My plan was coming along nicely.

Shooting took place at my friend Bill’s farm. A retired state trooper, Bill converted his 67-acre spread into a shooter’s playground. Steel is set up at ranges from 100 to 400 yards, as well as separate pistol ranges and another rifle range for zeroing in at 100 and 250 yards.

For someone who lives 22 miles from our Nation’s capitol, Bill and his farm are a Godsend and it gives me an excuse to visit the joke-cracking codger. Black Hills Ammunition sent me some 168-gr. ELD-M ammo and we were ready to shoot.

POOR MAN’S PRECISION

My Ruger Hawkeye is set-up for what I call a “utilitarian rifle.” Normally, it sports a slim and trim Weaver 2-7X variable. Perfect for deer hunting, riding in the Suburban, plinking or defending the home front, it can manage a hodgepodge of duties and shine while doing it.

Bushnell recently released a new line of optics in the “Engage” line, meaning those who are frugal at heart can obtain a target scope with turrets for \$300. Power range was 2.5-10X, perfect for my paltry long-range system.

Dialing in the scope is easy with the Toolless Zero Reset Locking Turret. Once you’re dialed-in, simply unscrew the turret knob top and reset your reference zero. Clarity and glass are exceptional for a scope in this class of affordable optics.

Mounting the Bushnell Engage couldn’t have been easier with the Ruger rings. Since the scope has a 30mm tube, I did have to order 30mm rings for it. Once mounted, sighting in was a breeze. Starting at 25 yards, I removed the bolt and bore-sighted



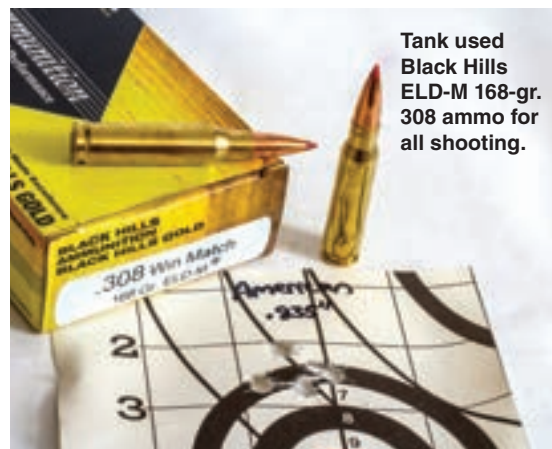
There’s no need to panhandle to get into the long-range shooting game.



Tank’s Ruger Hawkeye mounted with Bushnell Engage 2.5-10x44 scope (top). The Ruger American (bottom) is a less expensive option.



Hammered steel! Five shots in 3.75" at 400 yards from the Ruger American was par for the course.



Tank used Black Hills ELD-M 168-gr. 308 ammo for all shooting.

the gun. I know "dead-on" at 25 yards usually puts you within a few inches of zero at 100. It took two shots, with adjustments, to get where I wanted to be and move on to Bill's 100-yard range.

I was in the bull the second shot and started to build a nice 5-shot group. It measured .920, impressing me and further instilling confidence in my faithful "utilitarian rifle."

RUGER AMERICANS

I ordered some Weaver 30mm tactical rings from Amazon for \$30. Mounting was simple with the American's scope rail. Again, a few shots at 25 yards and we were ready to move to the 100-yard range. My first group of five at 100 yards was a measly .835. Although 1.5" high, six clicks down and I was in the bullseye. These guns are shooters!

This budget-minded rifle is probably one of the best-kept secrets in the shooting world, but word has leaked out — for good reason! Somehow, the engineers at Ruger have managed to put together an affordable gun that shoots as good, if not better, than rifles costing 3 or 4 times as much.

I don't know about you, but I feel kind of smug after outshooting buddies with expensive rifles and glass. Using bare-bone basics to get the job done has always impressed me more than the price tag.

The Ruger American weighs 6.1 lbs. and has a 22" cold hammer-forged barrel made of alloy steel. Its black synthetic stock is lightweight and feels good when shouldered. Its patented-pending "Power Bedding" bedding-block positively locates the receiver and free floats the barrel for exceptional accuracy. It has a tang safety reminiscent of the original Model 77. The



The Ruger Hawkeye (left) and American (right) are quite serviceable long-range shooters for the budget-minded.

short action has an integral Picatinny rail and the bolt has three lugs with a 70-degree throw, giving you ample scope clearance while cycling the action. The Ruger Marksman Adjustable trigger is easily set between 3 to 5 lbs.

By no means am I saying the Ruger American will shoot as well as a custom \$5,000 rifle topped with a \$2,000 scope — that's crazy! What I *am* saying is you can participate, learn and have fun along your journey to long-range shooting using this kind of outfit until you're certain you want to invest more money into it.

In my mind, the Ruger American is one of the best bargains in firearms history. When you get down to it, accuracy is the name of the game and the American delivers without breaking the bank.

OLD RELIABLE

My Ruger Hawkeye stainless synthetic has earned the nickname *Old Reliable*. The name speaks for itself. It's followed me over hill and dale and performed admirably,

taking deer, groundhogs and other critters while riding with me in the Suburban.

Adding the Bushnell Engage scope turned her into a long-range shooter. She impressed me by keeping 5 shots under MOA for several strings at 400 yards.

Both rifles easily hit and were able to keep sub-MOA accuracy for 5 shots at 400 yards. Sub-4" groups were the norm, usually running 3.5 to 3.75" for both rifles. Yes, I *know* this is just sneezing distance for many shooters, but it's just enough of a teaser to see if you're the type who will enjoy shooting at long ranges.

Even if you don't compete, long-range shooting is fun. Just plop down to the Back 40, set up some steel and start shooting. You'll learn a lot about ballistics, trajectory and having fun. There are bullet-specific smart phone apps and these are invaluable for dialing in your scope for distant targets. How simple can it be?

I've got to admit, this long-range shooting is fun, and at the end of the day, that's all we're after.

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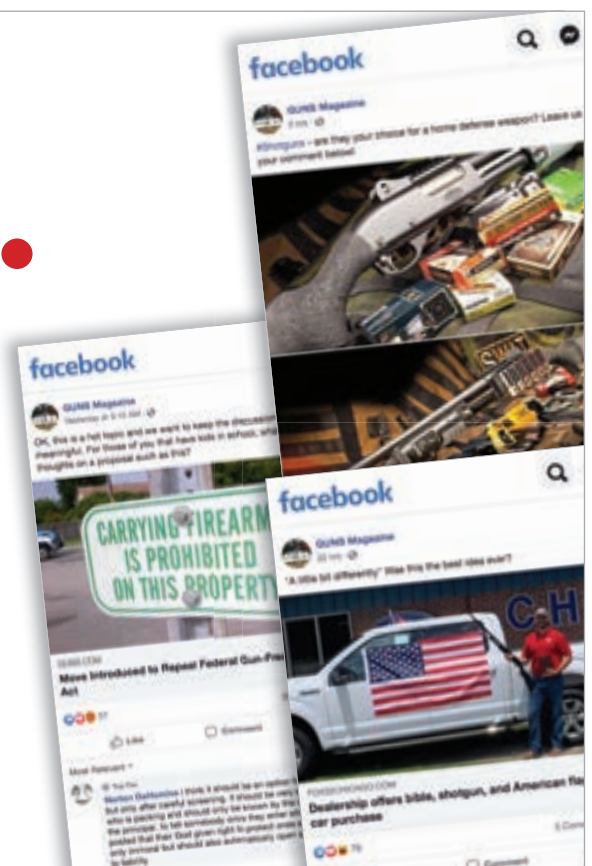
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Winchester Trappers came in pistol calibers as well as .30-30, and in big loop lever or standard trim — but they're all sleek little classics.

CAMPFIRE TALES

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This time it was open for the Labor Day weekend crowd so I stopped. They were having a 20-percent-off sale on everything and I immediately spotted a straight-gripped Marlin on the shelves. When I asked about it, the shop owner said, “Oh you probably don’t want that thing. It’s not a .30-30. It’s a .35 Remington.”

I tried to contain myself as I made the sacrifice and settled for “second best.” I always preferred straight-grip stocks until recently, as my abused wrists have started bothering me more and now I find pistol grips to be much more comfortable. In fact I’ve added two pistol-gripped Marlin to my levergun battery — a .30-30 and a .35 Remington.

In 1979 Marlin brought out the 1894C chambered in .357 Magnum. If there’s a better all-around rifle than a .357 levergun I don’t know what it is, so I quickly grabbed one. Then Winchester began offering their Trapper Models and I had to have one of each chambered in .30-30, .45 Colt, .44 Magnum, and most assuredly, .357 Magnum. About the same time Browning was offering their Winchester-replica Model 1892 in both .44 Magnum and .357 Magnum. Naturally, I had to have one of each.

DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY

I was so taken with the .357 Magnum Marlin I decided to buy one every time I could find a reasonably priced example to put away for my grandkids. At the time I had three grandsons and five granddaughters. When they started shooting I realized I’d eventually have to have one .357 for each one of them. I now have 14 grandkids to supply with .357 Magnum leverguns.

Marlin was shut down for about 10 years after being purchased by Remington while they learned basically from scratch how to build Marlin. When Marlin were not available, Winchester were — not “real” Winchester but Rossi replicas of the Model 1892 and the Miroku-built 1892. I thought I was gaining on the grandkids as I now have 10 rifles put away for them, however they are prolific and we now have six great-grandkids. I’m dancing as fast as I can trying to keep up with them!

I still have my original Marlin 39A and have given several to the grandkids over the years. Winchester has also offered excellent Model 9422 leverguns in both Long Rifle and .22 WMR. I found a couple of used examples of these a few years ago as well. We will never see their likes again! During the nice weather months both of my daughters like to go shooting .22 leverguns.

My oldest daughter prefers the original receiver-sighted Marlin I bought back in 1956 while the other prefers a scoped Winchester. They are both grandmothers now so they are finding their shooting time limited as they often wind up babysitting. I do supply their shooting needs with .30 caliber ammo cans loaded with .22 Long Rifle cartridges I always grab when I find them on sale. A .30 caliber ammo can hold 3,200 .22 cartridges.

DIY TRAPPERS

In addition to the Winchester Trappers, Marlin also offered a very small number — I believe 500 each — of 1894 Trappers in .44 Magnum and .45 Colt. I found both sitting side by side in a grocery store gun shop. What about rifle-cartridge Marlin Trappers to match up with my Winchester .30-30 Trapper? I had to take things in my own hands there, so I cut the pistol-gripped .30-30 Marlin to Trapper length (the same thing is going to happen very quickly to my Marlin in .35 Remington).

So what’s the best choice, Marlin or Winchester? The latter gets points for slickness while the former is easier to scope. I follow the same advice I always give to readers in these situations, which is “Buy ‘em both!”





John cut down the barrel on this Marlin 336 .30-30 and installed a Lyman receiver sight. It's light, handy, powerful and will handle most any moderate-range rifle chore.

MARLIN OR WINCHESTER? A LEVER LOVER WRESTLES WITH THE ETERNAL QUESTION

Regular readers of this column know my first firearm was a .22 rifle — not just *any* .22 rifle, but a Marlin 39A Mountie. Growing up with Saturday afternoon matinee Westerns, followed by the proliferation of TV Westerns in the mid-'50s, it was only natural my first rifle would be a levergun. This influence carried over with my first handgun, a Ruger .22 Single-Six, which was a natural “Western” companion to the Mountie. Shortly thereafter, I followed with my first centerfire sixgun, a beautiful pre-WWI 4-3/4" Colt Single Action Army chambered in .38 WCF. Now I followed up my .38 WCF Colt with a Marlin Model 1894 chambered in .38-40. The .38-40 and .38 WCF are the same cartridge, however, it's my understanding Marlin used .38-40 as they didn't want

“Winchester” on their rifles.

Four years later, I had my first Winchester, a pre-64 Model 1894. Notice the setting for confusion here. Marlin's 1894 was a levergun chambered in sixgun cartridges, while their Model 1893 housed .30-30 cartridges and the like. At about the same time, Winchester's Model 1892 was for sixgun-length cartridges and *their* Model 1894 handled the .30-30 and others, which were strictly rifle cartridges.

Dumb teenager I was, I wasn't smart enough to hold on to the Marlin .38-40 as well as another Marlin in .25-20 chambering I managed to pick up. Both went away in trades. I was no longer a teenager — nor quite as dumb — when I watched the .30-30 Winchester go. I was in college with three young babies who always seemed to be

hungry and I had a choice of paying tuition or feeding the kids. I knew if I dropped out of school how tough it would be to get in the mood to go back, so I had to sell some guns for grocery money — one of which was the beautiful old .30-30.

In the mid-1960s, both Winchester and Marlin offered leverguns chambered in .44 Magnum. I ordered a Winchester from my dealer, but when it arrived I was disappointed in the finish so I instead took the .44 Marlin he had. By now I'd learned not to let things go and I still have — and regularly use — the Marlin Model 336 .44 Magnum. Marlin offered the 336 in several special editions including the Texan and the Marauder. The latter was a short-barreled levergun offered in .30-30 and .35 Remington I lusted for. After graduating from college Diamond Dot and I packed up a few belongings (mostly guns) and our three pre-school age kids, hooked a U-Haul to the back of our 1965 Ford station wagon and headed for Idaho.

A .35 TURNS UP

Remembering earlier how much I wanted a Marlin 336 in .35 Remington, I looked for a straight-grip .35 for years. I even had others looking for me, yet we just couldn't find one at a decent price. Then one Labor Day weekend, Diamond Dot and I were on our way to the Payette National Forest about 100 miles north of us. I always passed a little gun shop outside of Cascade, Idaho on these trips but it was always closed.

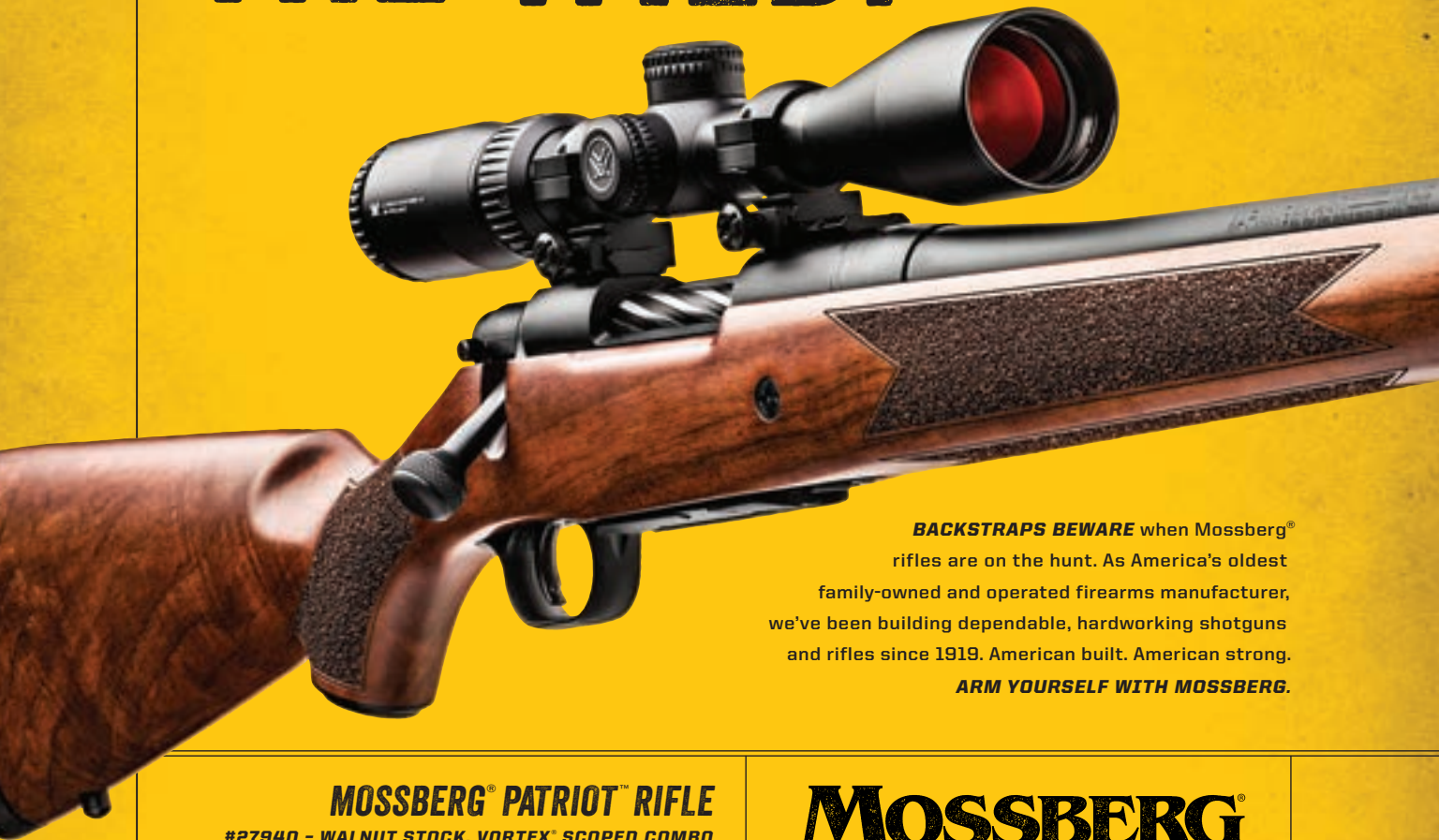


The Winchester (bottom) may win the slickest handling title but the Marlin (top) is easier to scope.

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