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COPPER-PLATED CAN

You guys have the largest pool of experts that I trust in one location so I'm hoping you can help. I just don't understand what happened. I went to the range to test a new trigger on my AR — set up with a YHM 5.56 Phantom QD suppressor. I fired mostly double taps, a few single shots and a couple of 6-8 round strings. I let everything cool between magazines and I didn't do any mag dumps or anything like that. I fired 100 rounds of Lake City 62-gr. ammo in total. I removed the silencer as soon as it was cool enough, put everything away and went home. When I got home I started to clean everything, ran a wet patch down the bore. Filthy as usual with carbon, ran another patch and let it sit awhile. While it was sitting I started scrubbing up the muzzle device and was shocked to find it "plated" with copper. I've never had this happen before. The more I scrubbed the shinier it got. First if you could educate me as to what happened and why, and even more importantly do I need to be concerned about the inside of my can? Any information you could dig up for me would be greatly appreciated. Oh, by the way, *GUNS* and

American Handgunner are hands-down the two best gun magazines on the market. Thank you and keep it up.

Kerry Domenicelli
Via Email

That's vaporized copper. And, yes, normal enough in a suppressed gun. Heat and pressure in firing always vaporizes some amount of copper off a bullet (mostly its base). Technically, it's atomized copper resulting from vaporization. It's adhering on your muzzle device because it has nowhere else to go; it's captive within the can. Temperature fluctuation also influences this (the gas cools quickly when pressure drops). As you know, suppressed guns run dirty! There's a lot of heat and additional pressure within the whole system, and for a longer time. Running "genuine" NATO means even more pressure. It should clean up using a dedicated copper-solvent-type bore cleaner, but make sure to get this all dried out and gone before putting the gun away.

—Glen Zediker

CHICKEN SHOT

I enjoyed John Taffin's April "Hand-loading" column on the .30-30. I've always been a .30-30 fan. Since I don't hunt anymore, my .30-30s are mostly used for Cowboy Action shooting. And, of course, they're all Marlin! Several years back, John wrote an article about the Marlin 39A. A few weeks after reading it I found one at a gun

continued on page 32

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PARDON OUR BRAGGING



Slip-ups like the one below drive Your Humble Editor several steps closer to clinical psychosis but in the end I'm still smiling because, occasional goofs aside, *GUNS Magazine* is on a real roll! If you hadn't noticed, the great-looking July issue had an additional eight pages because we sold significantly more advertising. Though some readers don't like ads, most folks realize they help pay the bills and are a necessary part of any publication (and many readers actually value such things!). The fact *GUNS* has never cut back on ink or paper quality and was "forced" to add pages at a time when many competitors are facing hard times means we're all optimistic about the future here at *GUNS*. Thanks to all of you for staying loyal — or recently joining our "family."



DOING OUR PART

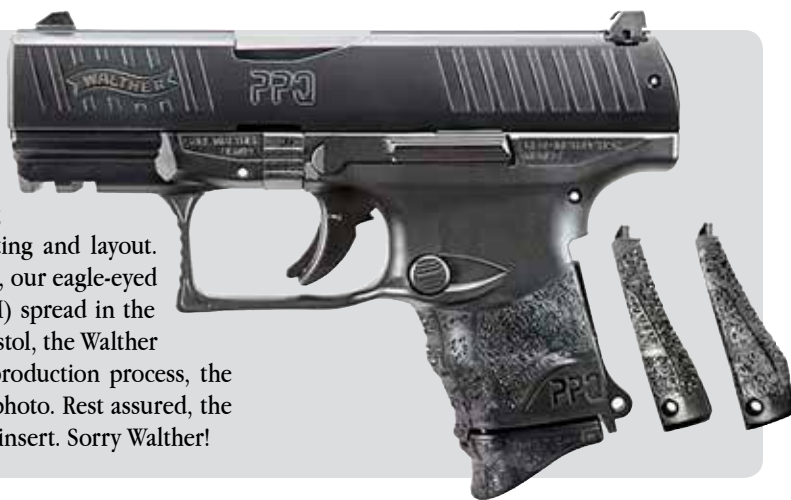
FMG Publications, our corporate entity that publishes *GUNS Magazine*, *American Handgunner* and *Shooting Industry*, had a problem: a bunch of Mossberg shotguns we used at the "Shooting Industry Masters Competition" over the years. The event was one of the most popular in the industry but it simply grew too expensive and time-consuming to organize for our relatively small company. Now, rather than let the guns — donated for the event by Mossberg! — gather any more dust, we donated them to the 4-H Shooting

Sports Program in Carson City, NV. Here's a letter and pic from Tom Crowley, one of the leaders with the program:

"As promised here are some pictures of some of the 4-H youth enjoying the Mossberg shotguns you sent. The weather was finally good enough to take the kids to the trap range. Many of the youth had never used a shotgun. The kids learned very quickly, and started to enjoy breaking clays. Again thank you for the shotguns. The guns are now a valuable asset to the Douglas County 4-H Shooting Sports program."

DARN IT!

When putting together 80-plus pages of America's Greatest Gun Magazine each month, we come close to batting 1.000 in terms of grammar, spelling and fact-checking beyond the usual editing, photo correcting and layout. Unfortunately we recently did make a boo-boo and, as usual, our eagle-eyed readers spotted the slip-up! In the Gun of the Month (GOM) spread in the July issue of *GUNS*, we had a picture of our great giveaway pistol, the Walther PPQ SC. Unfortunately, somewhere along the line in the production process, the pistol's interchangeable backstraps were removed from the photo. Rest assured, the PPQ SC does come with both a medium and large backstrap insert. Sorry Walther!



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CO-DEPENDENT OR NOT?

We recently saw a rather unusual report from an equally unusual source. The personal-finance website WalletHub recently released their report which ranks the states as most (and least) dependent on the gun industry. The rankings take into account 17 metrics such as firearms industry jobs per capita and gun sales per 1,000 residents, though based on the results, I'd say sales and ownership weighed the heaviest. Here are the bottom feeders: #50 New Jersey, #49 Rhode Island, #48 New York (can you believe it?). On the positive side of the scale, here are the top five: #5 Arkansas, #4 Wyoming, #3 South Dakota, #2 Alaska and #1 was Idaho. You can read the entire report at www.wallethub.com.



WHY SHOULD ANIMALS HAVE IT BETTER?

Many privacy experts and common folks have a real problem with the automated facial recognition software increasingly employed by government and private agencies to track people. Used for everything from counter-terrorism to targeted marketing, "they" can now identify and track us around the clock, for better and worse. In perhaps one of the most inventive applications of the technology, Spypoint and Moultrie

are now marketing cellular trail cameras that can identify specific species of animals and then notify you instantly. Currently the cameras can only discriminate deer from hogs or turkey but insiders tell us we are only a year or two away from the cameras actually detecting individuals based on things like antler pattern. Imagine the day when, "Yep, old #27-994A is on the move!" becomes part of our normal hunting banter. Insert your own opinion here.



THIS IS COOL

On the technology front, it was recently announced Hornady had received two patents for Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) used in their line of RAPID gun safes. Tiny, unpowered RFID chips are commonly used in department stores as anti-theft devices and in access cards or dongles used to enter secured areas (such as my local 24-hour gym). Hornady meanwhile had the brilliant idea to use RFID chips to open gun safes, preventing unauthorized access but instant access for proper users. The chips used for the gun safes come in wristbands, key fobs and decals. Hornady says the decals are often attached to the back of mobile phones so a quick swipe of the phone means instant access to your bedside firearm.

RANGEMASTER TACTICAL CONFERENCE

TAKE A DRINK FROM THE POOL OF KNOWLEDGE ...



John Murphy watches a student move while shooting a 3D target.



This shooter demonstrates a bit of "push-pull," even from the Isosceles stance.

For a score of years now, master instructor Tom Givens and his wife Lynn have hosted the annual Rangemaster Tactical Conference. The program is a 3-day smorgasbord of presentations ranging from adult learning theory to criminal psychology, tactics, hand-to-hand combat and shooting — ranging from live fire to force-on-force. It's a gold mine of cutting-edge information and techniques. Here are some of the nuggets I mined at the 2019 conference in New Orleans.

THE FINER POINTS

Street cop and martial artist Paul Sharp is best known for his teachings on fitness and *jiu-jitsu* but he's also deep into defensive firearms. His class on recoil control combines his knowledge in all those fields and goes far beyond its title. Here are some samples:

You know how we're taught to hold the pistol with the barrel in line with the long bones of the forearm? Paul has a slightly different take. Hold your hand and fingers straight, he says, as if you were doing a "karate chop" and your gun hand will now be in his recommended alignment of pistol to arm and aiming eye.

"For a very precise shot, don't just focus on the front sight, watch the *edges* of your front sight."

Paul's advice on stance includes the following. "Brace your body between hips and pelvis," he says. "Roll your toes in, as if you were grabbing the ground with them." He quotes Matt Burkett's principle of "drive your chin into the target" to keep your body weight forward *into* the gun for better recoil recovery, but leave your head still straight up to better aim and scan for additional targets.

"Press the pinky finger of the firing hand upward toward the thumb," he advises. Another gem: "For a very precise shot, don't just focus on the front sight, watch the *edges* of your front sight." He also likes to use some push-pull, even with an Isosceles stance. Sharp gives credit to those from whom he has learned. He explains he was heavily influenced by D.R. Middlebrooks

and the late, great grandmaster Ron Avery. It was Ron, says Paul, who got him into kinesthetic learning with the handgun.

VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS IN CONTEXT

You'll learn a lot just watching John Murphy's YouTube channel at FTF Training. He's best known for his analyses of actual violent encounters and for explaining the subtle danger cues that can tell you whether you or yours have been targeted — and what to do about it. Well, it turns out he's a darn good firearms instructor, too. He makes his students think, with lines like "You want maximum return on investment per cartridge" when he's working them for fight-winning accuracy.

Among other drills, John had us all shoot a 3-D mannequin from various angles while moving. It was a test of shoot-on-the-move skills but it also stressed the importance of aiming at the parts *inside* the target to get the bullets where they need to go to shut down lethal hostilities.

A most innovative instructor, Murphy

has also worked out a system of "shoot/don't shoot" training while he verbalizes the "opponent's" dialogue from behind the shooter while using SIRT laser guns to project dots on the silhouette target. One color means "danger." Another means "you're under attack." This technique teaches the students to use visual cues, which are what they'll most often have to work with on the street.

PRECISION HITS AT SPEED

Wayne Dobbs is a retired cop and a helluva shooter. He won High Lawman at the TacCon competition shoot, and not for the first time. He's also a helluva good instructor. His program focuses on accuracy delivered fast enough to stop the threat, yet at a pace allowing the brain to perceive and process what is happening on the other side of the gun.

He uses a lot of NRA B8 bulls-eye targets because their round black bull is about the size of a grapefruit, which in turn is roughly the size of your target for a fight-stopping heart or brain shot. His focus on



Paul Sharp demonstrates his method of alignment of hand and arm with the pistol.

fast precision hits has helped his trainees win gunfights.

These were the only three under whose tutelage I actually got to shoot. There were more fine instructors teaching, and many more eager students filling their classes. The annual Rangemaster Tactical Conference is a fabulous deal for self-defense.

www.rangemaster.com
www.sbgillinois.com/fitness
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THE HANDY OFF-HAND POSITION

UNSUPPORTED SHOTS ARE CRITICAL IN THE FIELD

It's one of the paradoxes of hunting and shooting — the novice hunter, most likely not very skilled at shooting off-hand, is also the one most likely to use the off-hand position in shooting at game. The veteran hunter, even if he does have some skill in off-hand shooting, almost always looks for a rest of some sort and seldom shoots without support in the field.

Personally I can hardly recall the last time I fired off-hand in the field. I've devoted columns to encouraging the use of rests such as bipods, backpacks and shooting sticks, or improvised rests such as rocks, fence posts and trees. If no support is available I'll shoot either prone or sitting, if the terrain permits.

Nonetheless I do think abandoning off-hand shooting altogether is a mistake. There can be circumstances when off-hand shooting skill can be very useful. It's a tool every competent rifle shooter should have in the toolbox.

Even if you never fire an unsupported shot in the field there are benefits to off-hand training. Off-hand shooting is tough, no doubt about it. In terms of accuracy, results are never going to be very impressive.

The fact it's hard is what makes off-hand training worthwhile. Off-hand shooting can improve your technical skills, especially trigger control, and it might make you more demanding of your shooting equipment.

**“To acquire skill
in off-hand
shooting you
have to practice
— a lot!”**

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

To acquire skill in off-hand shooting you have to practice — a lot! I wish there was a shortcut but there isn't. On the plus side, it doesn't have to be expensive. A great deal can be learned by dry fire, which won't cost a thing except time. I'm a great believer in the benefits of dry fire. The lack of recoil and noise helps prevent (or cure) bad habits such as flinching or blinking. A serious

shooter needs to allocate time for dry fire. The trouble is it's boring.

Fortunately, there is a solution to boring in the form of air rifles and .22 rifles. The tools I use for training in off-hand shooting are: an 8" diameter steel target; a safe place to shoot to at least 100 yards; an accurate, reliable, well balanced .22 rifle with a decent trigger; and a couple of thousand .22 cartridges.

Since I mostly hunt with bolt-action rifles, I prefer bolt-action .22s as well. Since the .22 will likely be shot more than any other, I don't mind stretching the budget a bit for an Anschütz, CZ, the new Tikka and don't overlook the Browning T-Bolt. However, in terms of performance and value for the dollar, it's hard to beat the Ruger American Rimfire.

My favorite version is the Compact model. It is accurate, durable, handles well and uses the reliable Ruger rotary magazine. The factory trigger is usually adequate out of the box and can be tweaked a bit as well. I treated myself to the Timney replacement trigger, which is just splendid. For not a lot of money this is a great combination, easily as capable as rifles costing twice as much.



The late Barrie Gwillim was one of the best riflemen Dave has known. Barrie demonstrates his off-hand stance with a 1948 Winchester Model 70 .30-06.



David Tubb is one of the very best competition rifle shooters of all time. Here he demonstrates the position used in NRA Standing Rifle competitions.



Dave modeling his own off-hand including a lowered right elbow. Rifle is a new Winchester Model 70 Featherweight .264 Win. Mag. with a Leupold 6x scope.



Dave thinks the Ruger American Rimfire is ideal for economical off-hand practice.



The trigger of the Ruger American Rimfire is good out of the box but Dave splurged on a Timney trigger to make the gun even better.

I have many fine .22 rifles on the rack but the little Ruger is the one I seem to reach for most.

GET SET

The photos show examples of off-hand shooting stances but don't be afraid to modify them. The objective is to be consistent. Sight the rifle in carefully and start shooting off-hand at the 8" steel plate at 100 yards. Make it 50 yards if you are just starting to learn off-hand but get to 100 without undue delay. You want to get to the point where you hit consistently and never — hardly ever — miss at 100 yards.

When you reach this point, the temptation is to reduce the size of the target. Don't do it. If you are hitting every shot, the majority of your hits are likely in about a 4" circle. Reduce the target to 6" or 4" in diameter and you get slower and more deliberate, which is not the point of off-hand shooting. If there is time to be slow, there is time to find a rest.

Instead, stay with the 8" target but work on getting the shot off more quickly. A shot timer is great if you have one; there are some free timer apps you can use with your smart phone. Start with the rifle held as you might while still-hunting; at the signal bring the rifle up, release the safety and fire. Never sacrifice accuracy, you should still be hitting every shot, just do so without unnecessary delay. Think smoothness and economy of motion — the speed will come.

When you can go from start signal to shot (and hit) in four seconds, you can handle about any practical field situation requiring an off-hand shot. If I've kept up my training I can generally get down to two seconds, which is likely no big advantage — sure is fun though!

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THE .455 WEBLEY

PART II: DEALING WITH THE CONVERSION QUESTION

It's a whole lot easier to remove metal than to replace it. This is especially true when working with firearms — particularly in the sad case of the .455 Webley revolvers.

After World War II there were thousands upon thousands of .455 Webleys available in the British Mark VI top breaks as well as the Smith & Wesson 2nd Model Hand Ejectors. Even back then, the .455 was considered a dead cartridge so someone (unfortunately) made the decision to modify most of these classic surplus sixguns to shoot .45 ACP in moon clips or .45 Auto Rim cartridges without clips.

The solution was to mill off the back of the cylinder of these .455 Webley-chambered guns to change the headspace — allowing the use of the thicker rims on the .45 Auto Rim or the moon-clipped ACPs.

FIXING THE “FIX”

Fast-forward 60-plus years: Now it's *extremely* difficult to find an original, unaltered Mark VI or Smith 2nd Model that will handle .455 Webley ammo. One solution would be to alter the full moon clips so they'd simply work as a shim on the back of the cylinder to put back the proper headspacing.

When I discussed this possibility with my

gunsmith, I was told the moon clips weren't thick enough for this to work. The solution was to make circular disks of the proper thickness that would fit over the extractor star and allow the use of the thin-rimmed .455 Webleys. I wanted to make several disks for each revolver, however, they were so time-consuming and labor-intensive we stopped with one of each. Therefore, I've always been very careful not to lose one and they are always left installed on the proper revolver.

These disks were made for both the Webley and the 2nd Model Hand Ejector. The star on the Smith is wider in diameter than the Webleys. The upshot here? The one made for the Smith will also work on the Webley — but not vice versa. These disks are simply placed over the back of the cylinder — in line with the chambers and then loaded with .455 cartridges. They work perfectly for firing, however, there's a slight problem with the Smith & Wesson due to the small lug on the back of the frame keeping the cylinder from moving backwards.

TWO-GUN SOLUTION

At first when unloading, cartridges had to be tapped out (at least the first two or three), then the disk with the remaining cartridges

could be removed. I expected to have to make a small cut in the circular disc to allow it to move past the lug, but I've since discovered just wiggling the disk a little allows it to move past the lug.

There's no problem with the Webley as there's nothing to interfere with the circular disk and the fired cartridges being removed. You might wonder why I go to all this trouble when these two revolvers will already handle both .45 ACPs and .45 Auto Rims. My answer is simply because it *can* be done and I wanted to be able to shoot these big sixguns as they were meant to be shot originally. The fact both can still be used with .45 ACP or .45 Auto Rim is an extra-added bonus!

CHRONO AND PAPERWORK

The original .455 Webley hollow base bullet had a long pointed nose and weighed about 262 grains. I'll soon have a supply of these and will be working with them in the future — especially for black powder loads in an original Mark I. For now I've made do with the .45 Colt bullets sized to .454. Some of these are hollowpoint versions designed for use in heavy .45 Colt loads and I use them in the .455 Webley with no thought of them actually expanding.

As expected the Smith & Wesson 2nd Model Hand Ejector shoots better with most loads than the .455 Mark VI, however much of this may be due to the less-than-ideal sights on the latter. I've never been one to



Both the Smith & Wesson and the Mark VI have been returned to their intended original service with the use of custom circular disks.



These targets (above) were fired with John's S&W 2nd Model .455 using loads approaching .45 Colt performance with 5.0 grains of Unique. Standard .455 level groups (below) were fired in John's Mark VI at 20 yards. Not bad for an old Brit warhorse!



handle wide V-notch rear sights very well.

Using a 274-gr. RCBS 45-270SA HP in front of 4.0 grains of Unique gives me 726 fps from my 6" Webley Mark VI. This load gives me 1-3/8" groups. From my 6-1/2" S&W, a 244-gr. RCBS 45-255KT HP in front of 4.0 grains of Unique gives me 694 fps and prints 1-1/4" groups

But for now one of my best loads — the one load I would choose if I had to settle for just one load to work in both sixguns

— is assembled with the RCBS #45-270SA. This bullet weighs 284 grains and over 4.0 grains of Unique does 722 fps in the Smith & Wesson with a 1-1/4" group and 699 fps in the Mark VI and 1-1/2" in the Mark VI, both with five shots at 20 yards. I can certainly live with this and enjoy life while shooting them. In all loads, incidentally, I used Winchester Small Pistol primers and Fiocchi brass.

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WORLD WAR II SNIPERS MYTHS, REALITIES, TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Since my pre-teens I've been an avid student of World War II. About a thousand times in my reading I've encountered something like this, "Sadly so and so was felled by a sniper's bullet." But most likely "so and so" was *not* shot by a specialist sniper armed with a scope-sighted rifle and trained in its use. There simply weren't enough of them fielded to account for all the shooting attributed to them.

THE PLAYERS

The notable exception was the Soviet Union's Red Army. By their entry into World War II they had about 60,000 trained

snipers, including some women. Compare this to the United States and British armies who had no snipers or schools to train them in marksmanship and fieldcraft. Some U.S. Marines were considered snipers, but early on, those were mostly members of competition rifle teams.

The Germans had a meager number of pre-war snipers but rushed a large training program into being quickly in 1941. Why? They were stunned at how many of their officers and NCOs were being killed by Russian snipers. The Japanese Imperial Army did have snipers prior to declaring war on America, but their doctrine was

different from other nations.

Most armies expected a sniper to fire a shot from a good hide, then move. For instance, a U.S. Marine forward observer for mortars on Okinawa reported a sniper team joined him on a ridge. He said every time they fired a shot, the team had to run because the Japanese would quickly drop a mortar pattern on the area they had just vacated. Conversely, the Japanese army considered snipers expendable. They were to tie themselves into trees or other concealment and then inflict casualties on enemy troops until killed.

THE RIFLES

With considerable expenditure of time and treasure, over a period of years I've managed to acquire a modest collection



Britain issued their No. 4 Mk1 .303 in sniper configuration with a 3.5X No. 32 scope (top). The Soviet Mosin/Nagant 7.62x54R (bottom) is shown here with the PU 3.5X scope.



Three basic variations of WWII German sniper rifles (from top down): K98k with 1.5X ZF41 scope, K98k with 4X Zeiss scope in turret mounts, G/K43 with ZF4 scope in QD side mount.

of original sniper rifles from Germany (5), Japan (3), the Soviet Union (2), Great Britain (1) and the United States (1). I've fired all of them in an effort to understand their finer points and/or flaws.

None of the combatants mentioned actually developed a rifle for snipers, although Germany's K98k's actions stamped BCD4 were made from the beginning as sniper rifles with a 1/8" thicker left side rail. Also the Soviet Union's SVT40 — meant for scoped use — needed a simple groove atop the action's rear. It was only cut onto ones meant for optics.

THE SCORECARD

Germany put scopes on K98ks and G/K43s. Both were 8mm with the 98k being a bolt action with 5-round magazine and the '43 a semi-auto with a 10-round magazine.

Japan put them on Type 97 6.5mms and Type 99 7.7mms. Both were bolt actions with a 5-round capacity. The Soviet Union

put their optics on Mosin-Nagant Model 91/30 bolt actions (5-round magazines) or SVT40 semi-autos (10 rounds). Both chambered 7.62x54R. Britain had 10-round .303 bolt action No. 4s and the U.S. had the Model 1903A4 .30-06 bolt action (5-round capacity).

The Germans and Japanese also made their sniper rifles shootable with their iron sights. Japanese sniper rifle scopes were offset to the left so the open sights are completely exposed. Germany had more different types of sniper rifles than any other nation, so I'm speaking in generalities about them. Their turret type mounts had holes beneath scopes so the iron sights were usable. Others such as the long and short side rail versions had mounts offset to the left but scope rings were hung over the rifles' actions. Their ZF41 and Z4 scopes on K98ks and G/K43s were quick-detachable. American, British and Soviet scopes were not QD in the usual sense of dismounting



The Japanese issued two types of sniper rifles — the 7.7mm Type 99 (left) and the 6.5mm Type 97 (right).

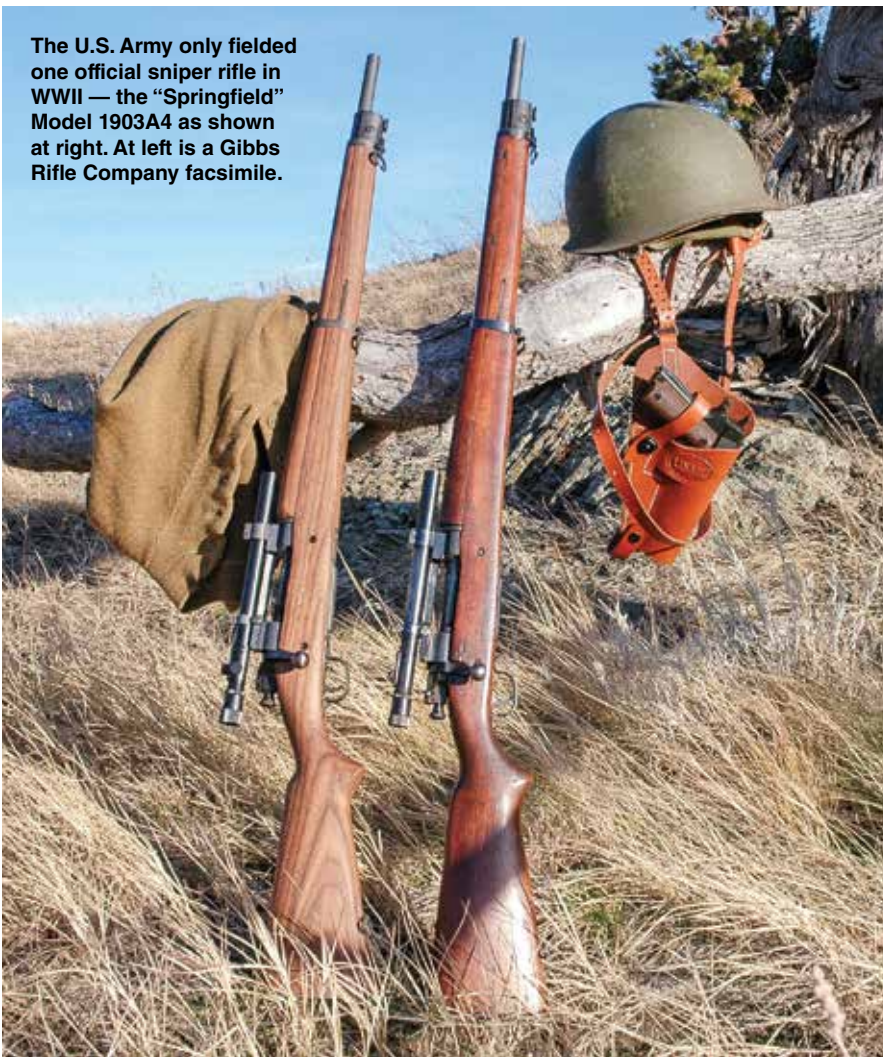
and remounting in a few seconds.

Also — with one exception — scopes were low in power. The ZF41 was only 1.5X and the highest magnification on German rifles was 6X. British and Soviet scopes were 3.5X and the U.S. and Japan favored 2.5X. Some later Japanese Type 99s did get 4X scopes and the U.S. Marine Corps put 8X scopes on Model 1903 Springfields, but considered the combination as less than perfect. By war's end, the USMC was also using Model 1903A4 "Springfields" as developed by the U.S. Army.

Also, the modern mystique of long range sniping didn't really apply in World War II. The scopes weren't powerful and few — if any — of the rifles were actually capable of MOA accuracy. Mine mostly will do 1.5 to 2 MOA with very good ammo. Surviving snipers tell of more 200- to 300-yard (or meter) shots than any at longer ranges.

Here's something else to consider: An American, British, German or Russian soldier armed with their own army's sniper rifle could quickly put a captured enemy's rifle into action, but not the Japanese. Their scopes were not adjustable. Therefore, Japanese snipers had to memorize points of aim with the tic marks on their reticles and they'd have been lost when trying to shoot a captured scoped rifle.

The U.S. Army only fielded one official sniper rifle in WWII — the "Springfield" Model 1903A4 as shown at right. At left is a Gibbs Rifle Company facsimile.



AR-ALTERNATE CALIBERS

DEALER'S CHOICE: BIGGER, FASTER, SLOWER OR QUIETER?

Sometimes it seems nobody really *likes* the .223 Remington. Ever since the inception of the AR15 60 years ago, this little round has been under a magnifying glass. It honestly isn't so bad, especially not

for the uses most of us request from our AR-platform firearms.

However, your AR15 doesn't have to be .223! There are so many choices now. I'll confine this bit here to a scant few of

the most popular and, I think, also those having the greatest capacity to redefine — or at least re-purpose — an AR15.

Notice I didn't just say, "make it better." Define better! The question is "Better for



A "new" AR may only mean a new upper assembly. Here's Glen's with a choice of .223 or .300 Blackout.

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what?" Also, for this first look into alternate cartridges, I'm going to focus on those with the most straightforward of conversions.

Many cartridge changes require parts swappage — different bolts, different magazines, upper receiver modifications and



The hotrod Nosler and Valkyrie produce gas aplenty. Easiest way to counter that ill effect is with a valved gas block, like this Odin Works Tuneable.

more. The original .223-class of cartridge options use a 0.378" bolt face but others need larger diameters. Along with a larger-diameter bolt face, there can also be small differences in extractor geometry, bolt lug dimensions and bolt face recess depths. Here's some advice: The best results come from using a proprietary bolt engineered for the specific cartridge you've chosen.

.300 BLACKOUT

This ominous sounding round came from longtime wildcatter JD Jones and is, pretty much, a .221 Remington Fireball with a .308 neck. The Fireball was based on a shortened .222 Remington (some say .223) and developed for the old Remington XP100 bolt-action pistol.

Originally called the .300 Whisper, Advanced Armament Corporation secured production-cartridge status (which means it got SAAMI-certified) and called it the .300 AAC Blackout.

It was originally developed as a subsonic round, which is the reason for the bigger bullet (to retain more impact effect



The .300 HAM'R comes close to matching .30-30 ballistics.

at slower speed). Nowadays, though, supersonic loadings with bullets up to 135 grains are its common application. Short course: the idea is to provide 7.62x39-level power in a round fitting into original AR15 architecture. It does! Same bolt, same magazine, same magazine capacity.



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The short 1.4" case and bigger bullet doesn't give much room for propellant. Therefore, it's a faster-burning fuel and produces less gas. Carbine-length gas systems are routine. Because of this (and to offset velocity/energy loss from a short barrel), I think the AAC Blackout is the best choice for anyone wanting a pistol-format AR.

6.5 GRENDL

This is one of my top recommendations for those looking for more energy and tight groups at longer ranges in a ready-to-go package (bolts, magazines, barrels, brass and loaded rounds).

Bill Alexander of Alexander Arms created this round based from experiments NRA High Power Rifle competitors (me included) were running on PPC "tall-boys." It's a PPC case with the shoulder elevated, thereby increasing its internal capacity after fire forming.

Bill improved on this wildcat and, as suggested, created a fully SAAMI-certified round. The Grendel has the well-proven PPC silhouette — 30-degree shoulder, "short/fat" overall design — which gave the PPC a reputation as "the world's most accurate cartridge."

.22 NOSLER AND .224 VALKYRIE

I know these are two different rounds, but I group them together because they each set out to do essentially the same thing — maximize velocity in .224-caliber bullets.

The .22 Nosler is a fully proprietary design (no parent case) with a rebated case rim to fit a standard .223 bolt face. Case

length is 1.76 (same as a .223) and it has the hot-rod standard 30-degree shoulder.

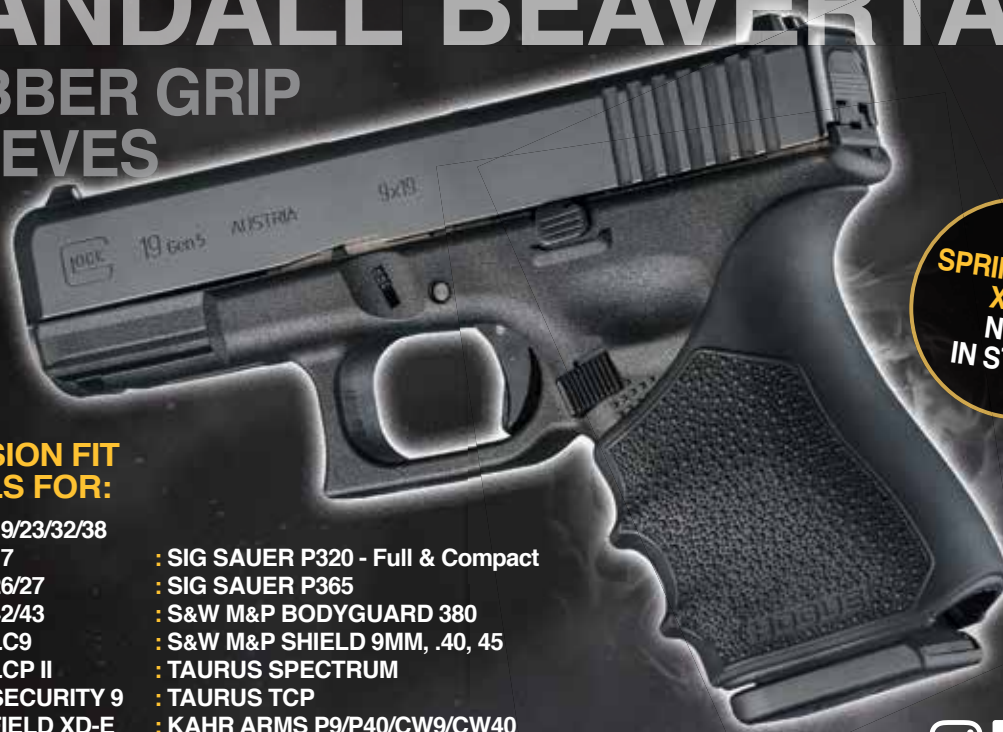
It has a much bigger body, much more capacity, much higher velocity — about +300 fps with any weight bullet. It's pretty much a .22-250 ballistically.

The .224 Valkyrie is from Federal and based on the mil-spec 6.8 SPC so it has a 0.422 case head. Compared to the .22 Nosler, it's shorter but longer-necked. The idea was to maximize the



One of Glen's faves is the 6.5 Grendel (right). It grew from the wildcat "Tallboy PPC" (center) that grew from a PPC (left).

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Here's a few "factory" rounds now commonly found inside AR15 uppers (from left): .223 Remington, .224 Valkyrie, .22 Nosler, 6.5 Grendel, 6.8 SPC, .300 Blackout.

best balance of velocity and accuracy with the biggest of the .224 bullets (75-90 grains). The shorter case length improves loaded round architecture because these long bullets are not seated as deeply into the case. The result is impressive. Velocity and longer-range accuracy are well improved over .223.

Which is better? The Nosler's faster, the Valkyrie has better paper-punching potential and upward flexibility in bullet weight. In my experience, however, it's not a simple "speed or accuracy" choice. One important factor is the Valkyrie is more available.

.300 HAM'R

Last, and maybe saved for best, is a brand-new round from Wilson Combat. Short course: In terms of performance, it's a radically ramped-up .300 Blackout. It also fits a standard .223 bolt — simple swap.

Wilson based the .300 HAM'R on Kurt Buchert's good-but-obscure 7.62x40WT which has been available from Wilson for years (Wilson offers over 20 alternate chamberings for its AR-platform guns). Much experimentation refined the round into the .300 HAM'R, and it's now been SAAMI-certified and is a complete package (for buyers or builders). The cases are 0.040" longer than the 7.62x40WT and a whopping 0.260" longer than the .300 Blackout.

The result? An easy +300 fps beyond the Blackout with 110-135-gr. .308 bullets, which means a solid 2,600 fps with a 110 grain. For hunters, this means a +400 ft. lbs. muzzle-energy increase. It closely matches the good old .30-30 Winchester, which was Bill Wilson's goal.

And the HAM'R hammers! Accuracy is superb.

There are more alternates to the .223 and I hope to get back on this topic shortly.

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TIPPMANN'S M4-22

A "SPITTIN' IMAGE" RIMFIRE RENDITION OF OUR SERVICE RIFLE

One of the most endearing qualities of rimfire firearms is they can be fabricated to replicate just about any centerfire model. Among the most interesting are the rimfire clones of current military arms. Not only are they fun to shoot and cool to look at, but the low-cost practice afforded by these arms will definitely make you a better shooter and hopefully help to entice our youth in getting involved in the shooting sports.

Walking down an aisle at the last SHOT Show, I came across an old familiar name with an entirely new product line. It was the Tippmann Arms Company. Back in the 1980s, Denny Tippmann Sr. rocked the gun world with his stunning 1/2 scale models of the classic Gatling gun chambered in .38 Special, followed by 1/2 scale renditions of the belt-fed Browning 1917/1919 .30 caliber MGs in .22 LR and the Browning M2HB .50 HMG in .22 Magnum.

These exacting-looking models were packaged with perfectly scaled traversing and elevating tripods, miniature ammunition cans and .22-scaled feed belts. Offered in semi-auto and full-auto, until a

change in the National Firearms Act in the late '80s prevented the sale of newly manufactured full-auto firearms to civilians, the Tippmann machine guns became an instant collector's prize — if you could find one and afford it!

Did it stop the Tippmanns? Nope, they got in on the ground floor of the paintball craze and produced millions of full-auto and semi-auto paintball guns before finally selling off the highly successful business.

THE SPITTIN' IMAGE

The current focus of the Tippmann Arms Co. is an exacting rimfire rendition of the M4 AR. It was designed painstakingly by Denny Tippmann Jr. I've had the opportunity to handle any number of rimfire military clones. The new Tippmann

Denny Tippmann Jr. spent weeks perfecting a 25-round magazine that would feed any brand of rimfire ammunition reliably.

M4-22 and HK's model come closest to feeling and functioning like the real deal.

An important element in the construction of the new Tippmann is it's not based on synthetics and polymers. *Yup.* No polymer lowers or plastic handguards commonly found in other brands. This baby's crafted out of real steel and real aluminum, and it makes all the difference.

Tippmann's current lineup includes four rifles and one pistol. With the exception of a factory scoped "Sharpshooter's" rifle and, of course, a distinctive pistol, the variations among the rifles are slight, mostly differences in furniture and are best viewed on Tippmann's website. The model I had the pleasure of working with is the M4-22 "Elite." Like all the Tippmann models, it's largely mil-spec compatible and will accept most AR15 stocks, handguards and sights.

If I set it next to a real M4, you'd be hard pressed to see the difference between the two. One of the key features I look for in a quality M4 rimfire clone is a *working* forward assist. You won't need it, but many competing brands merely feature an



With different bullet profiles and different lengths, rimfire ammunition is a challenge for semi-auto designers.

Snugged into a Caldwell Precision Turret rest, the Tippmann delivered some memorable groups at 50 yards.

ersatz lump of molded polymer in its place. The Tippmann sports a fully operational forward assist, a properly positioned shell deflector and a functional ejection port cover.

MEETING THE RIMFIRE CHALLENGE

Another feature I value in a quality AR clone is a realistic-looking and foolproof magazine. In fact, when I asked Denny Tippmann Jr. what his most challenging design issue was, he said it was the magazine. He pointed out .22 LR rounds vary considerably depending on the shape and length of the projectile. The challenge is to design the follower, retention and feed lips so every bullet shape is oriented properly and chambers smoothly. The Tippmann ersatz 30-round magazine holds 25 rounds and fed everything from Remington's truncated cone Vipers to CCI's lead-free, Copper-22s without a hiccup.

Of course, a quality AR clone should have the proper controls in the proper positions and the Tippmann does. There's a two-position safety, also marked "Auto," which you don't see too often, a bolt catch, a magazine release, a standard disassembly push-pin and even an ambidextrous sling adapter plate snuggled next to a 6-position butt stock.

The Tippmann Elite features a 16" barrel with a 1/2 x 28 threaded A2 birdcage-style compensator/flash suppressor housed in a 12" aluminum free-float M-LOK handguard with a full-length Picatinny rail. Standard flip-up sights are provided with windage controlled by the rear sight and elevation by the adjustable front post. Overall weight of the Elite is 5.7 lbs.

Rimfire ammo is dirty stuff, so Tippmann nickel-plates their bolt, which seems to shed firing residue and is easily wiped clean after a range session.

PROOF ON PAPER

The surprise for me was the Tippmann trigger. It is *sooo* nice, breaking cleanly at 4.5 lbs. It helped me squeeze out some impressive groups.

I thought the Tippmann would deliver excellent accuracy and it did. Twelve different loads from five different makers were used during the testing phase. At 50 yards, Winchester Power Points grouped five rounds into 0.41". CCI Mini-Mag would have



The Picatinny rail of the Elite carries a set of fully adjustable flip-up sights.



A quality AR clone should have functional controls in the right places. Holt was particularly impressed with the working forward assist.

claimed second place but threw one shot so it was a 4-round group of 0.44". Then, it was CCI Clean-22 at 0.68", CCI Standard at 0.71", and Winchester Super-X HP at 0.72". The Elite fed, fired, extracted and ejected like a champ.

I really enjoy honing my skills with quality military rimfire clones plus I've never been around a young man or woman who didn't want to shoot one! This may be their greatest value of all when it comes to the future of our shooting sports. 

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.177 BACKYARD PLINKER OR .25-CALIBER "HUSHED HORSEPOWER?"

Tom McHale

Want regular or super-sized? Normally the question is a surefire way to add some unwanted pounds but I've got good news. This choice will add exactly zero inches to your pants size. In fact, the only harm in ordering both will come to your wallet, but I guarantee you'll be happy about it.

First, what's a PCP? It's an acronym for "Pre-Charged Pneumatic." As you're reading this magazine, you already know gun people have to make things way too complicated. You know — like naming cartridges that use the same diameter bullet, such as the .38 Special and .357 Magnum. Anyway, a PCP is an airgun packing a reserve of air onboard so you can fire multiple shots without cocking the dang thing.

To illustrate the usefulness of the concept, imagine SCUBA diving but having to come to the surface for every breath. I guess most people call it snorkeling but you get the idea. It's the same with airguns. Since a PCP stores a bunch of breaths in its tank, you get to spend more time shooting and less time going for air between every shot. The real innovation is the inclusion of regulators in these rifles. Rather than hook a tank of air, which outputs decreasing pressure (and lower velocity) with every shot, a regulator meters doses of air so every shot leaves the muzzle at the same pressure.

You may be thinking, "Hey, that sounds *more* complicated, and as we all know, 'complicated' translates to 'expensive!'" A few years ago, you'd be right but now, not so much. Airgun manufacturers have been on an affordability bender the past couple of years and now PCP technology is economical — like big-box super-store economical.

You can buy a nice PCP rifle for less than \$300. This is important because now that the basic technology guts are cost-effective, your premium product dollars go towards things we can all appreciate — fancy stocks, upgraded sights, precision accuracy and other features separating the \$99 shooter from a \$3,500 luxury model.

I've been working with two modern PCP rifles that are rock stars of the new generation of air power: the Umarex Gauntlet and the AirForce Condor SS. I wouldn't say these are comparable, or examples of "basic" and "fancy." They're different. Kind of like pistols and revolvers.

UMAREX GAUNTLET .177

Umarex turned the industry on its ear with the release of the Gauntlet family of air rifles. While the company has since added more powerful .22 and .25 caliber models, the original was a standard .177 pellet offering. It's perfect for safe and quiet backyard fun. The first thing you'll notice about the Gauntlet is the generous 13 cubic-inch air tank in the forend. This is important as the 90-shot per charge capacity means more fun and less filling. The air cylinder is also removable, so you can pack a pre-charged spare or two for your shooting session.

With an MSRP of \$200, you get a lot of bang for the buck. This rifle is regulated, so all those shots per tank are a consistent 900 to 1,000 feet per second depending on pellet weight, which leads to solid accuracy. Outdoors in the wind, the Gauntlet puts five shots into a quarter from 25 yards, even in windy conditions. When I bring the shooting indoors to my high-tech 10-meter range (read: *garage*) I get 5-shot groups of about 0.20. If you do the math, you can see the effect of the wind when outdoors. On a windless day, those 25-yard groups should be about 0.50.



In wind-free conditions, Tom was able to coax quarter-inch 25-yard clusters out of the Gauntlet.





The Umarex Gauntlet is a discreet, quiet .177 plinker combining a high level of accuracy with a top-end velocity of 1,000 fps. The pre-charged air reservoir is in the forend.



The large air reservoir of the AirForce Condor (above) performs double duty as a stock. Total efficiency! These are .25-caliber 48-gr. HP bullets from Hunters Supply (left). If you want heavier, you can order varieties up to 105 grains.

Oh, last but certainly not least, did I mention the Gauntlet is quiet thanks to its shrouded barrel? If you live under the iron-fisted rule of an oppressive homeowners' association, they'll never know you're shooting in the backyard.

AIRFORCE CONDOR SS .25

From the "Protect Your Nuts!" people at Airforce Airguns comes the Condor SS Air rifle. Like the Gauntlet, I love this one because of its generous 490cc, 3,000 psi on-board air reservoir. I also love it for its flexibility. Hold this thought for a hot second.

The Condor SS features a shrouded 8" Lothar Walther barrel. Even though airguns don't use fire and brimstone, like a popping balloon they make noise when all the air pressure

is released at once. Hence the prevalence of perfectly legal silencers and shrouded barrels on rifles like the Condor SS. As for barrel quality, when I dodge the wind, I can shoot 0.25" to 0.45" 5-shot groups from 25 yards. At 50 yards, under an inch is easy.

All the AirForce rifles look space age, and it's intentional, but not for cosmetic reasons. The big air reservoir I mentioned also doubles as the buttstock so there's no portly object hanging under the barrel up front — the rifle balances and handles well. The tank is also removable, so like the Gauntlet, you can keep a pre-charged spare on hand. One nice feature of the Condor SS is the adjustable pressure. Using a simple dial you can change the amount of *oomph* you want to deliver to the pellet. Depending on ammo type and weight, you can shoot from a leisurely 600 feet per second up to about 1,300 fps.

Speaking of ammo, this is where the Condor SS shines. It's a breechloader. It may sound like a drawback if you're into big magazines, but in this case it's a benefit. Having the ability to load singly into the breech means you can shoot just about anything .25 caliber. Standard pellets? No problem. Where things get interesting is with .25 caliber lead slugs. Talk to the folks at Hunters Supply and you can get your hands on some slugs weighing 48 grains all the way to 105 grains. This versatility, plus adjustable air pressure, makes for a lifetime of tinkering and fun.



The Umarex Gauntlet is a discreet, quiet .177 plinker combining a high level of accuracy with a top-end velocity of 1,000 fps. The pre-charged air reservoir is in the forend.

www.airforceairguns.com
www.umarexusa.com
www.hunters-supply.com

ROLLING-BLOCK THUNDER

A SINGLE-SHOT .50-CALIBER POWERHOUSE PISTOL!

Holt Bodinson

While the American Civil War was raging, the U.S. Navy was already casting about for a metallic cartridge replacement for their cap-and-ball revolvers. When they functioned, they functioned well, but cap-and-ball handguns, exposed to a humid saltwater environment, had their drawbacks. Charges got damp and wouldn't fire. Reloading was slow. Percussion caps were hard to handle and susceptible to corrosion and the nipple channels themselves could corrode and become clogged if not kept scrupulously clean.

The Navy had purchased approximately 6,000 revolvers from Remington during the war and, in 1864, the Bureau of Ordnance inquired if Remington had "... taken steps to prepare a model single-barreled pistol suggested during a personal interview at the Bureau some time back. Such a weapon is very much needed for naval purposes."

Remington was indeed in the process of refining what would possibly be their most successful design, the rolling-block, breech-loading action, patented by Lenard Geiger in 1863 and refined by a fellow mechanic at Remington, Joseph Rider.

The rolling-block action was elegant in its utter simplicity, consisting primarily of two parts — a rotating breechblock and a hammer locking the breechblock in place at the moment of firing. It was fast to operate (it was said a competent rifleman could get off 17 aimed shots a minute). It was strong and readily made the transition from black powder to modern smokeless cartridges. And it was safe — as long as the block was open, the trigger was blocked and could not be pulled.

Remarkably, as a single-shot pistol model, it was in production at Remington from 1865 until 1909, and as a military rifle as late as WWI when it was supplied to the French in



The rolling-block action (above) is simple, strong and fast to operate. The frames were color casehardened (below). "P S" stands for "Proved Stickney," in reference to Inspector Curtis R. Stickney.



8mm Lebel. Licensed to countries around the world, military rolling-block rifles were produced in the millions.

THE OLD ARMY/NAVY GAME

Did the Navy get their pistols? Yes, beginning in 1866 with the 1865 Model Navy. It was chambered for a .50-caliber rimfire



Holt's Model 1871 Army is a two-barrel set chambered for the .50 Pistol and .50 Carbine cartridges.



Fig. 72. This 1871 Army Pistol has U.S. Army Inspector's acceptance markings. (Remington Arms Co. photo)



Fig. 74. A civilian sale ad for the 1871 Army Pistol which appeared about 1875.



Fig. 73. This is an 1872 illustration of the 1871 Army pistol.

Fig. 75. This is the catalog page for the 1891 Target Pistol. The action is 1871 Army Pistol.

cartridge carrying a 300-gr. bullet powered by 30 grains of black powder. It featured an 8.5" browned barrel, sheathed spur trigger and walnut grips while the receiver, breechblock, hammer, trigger and sheath were color case hardened. Total production is estimated at 6,500. In 1870, most of these early production models were converted by Remington to .50 centerfire and refitted with traditional trigger guards while the barrel was shortened to 7". In collecting circles they're known as the Model 1867 Navy. Confusing, isn't it?

Which brings us to the Model 1871 Army pictured here. This model is the last of the Remington military single-shot pistols. Based on the recommendations for the improvement of the Model 1867 Navy by the "St. Louis Commission," (an Army Ordnance Board), a firing pin retractor and rotating extractor were added. The barrel was lengthened to 8".

The grip frame was redesigned with a distinctive hump, offering better control when supported by the web of the hand. The front sight was changed to a long blade and main-spring power was transmitted to the hammer via a stirrup. It was chambered for the .50 centerfire pistol cartridge. Total production of the Army model is estimated at 5,000 units although the Remington Model 1891 Target and Model 1901 Target pistols continued to utilize the Model 1871 Army action.

The Model 1871 Army in the picture came with two barrels — the original barrel and a modern replacement barrel chambered not for the .50 Pistol cartridge, but for the .50 Carbine cartridge.

PISTOL .50 OR CARBINE .50?

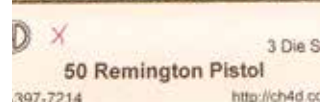
If it sounds a bit odd, the only other Model 1871 Army regularly appearing at our range carries an original barrel re-chambered to .50 Carbine — a round originally developed for the Model 1867 .50-45 Navy Carbine made by Remington. It featured a shortened .50-70 case (1.35 rather than 1.75")

carrying a 400-gr. bullet backed by 45 (rather than 70) grains of powder.

So here you have two Model 1871s with carbine-length chambers. The question is why? My hunch is because the .50 Carbine case is so much easier to make than the .50 Pistol case from .50-70 brass. When you cut a .50-70 case down to pistol length (0.90), the case walls are so thick you can't seat a 0.512–0.518 diameter bullet without thinning out the walls with a reamer!

In fact, the .50 Pistol cases I have made were from Starline's .56-50 Spencer brass by Buffalo Arms Co., and the cases have been inside-reamed. Cutting a .50-70 case down to .50 Carbine length doesn't require reaming. The other advantage of a carbine-length case is you can cobble up some ammo using inexpensive .50-70 dies.

Anyway, using a modeler's cut-off saw from Harbor Freight, I slice off carbine length cases from .50-70 brass, trim them to length in a Forster big-bore trimmer, load them with a magnum primer and 30 grains of Alliant's BlackMZ. I then seat a 300-gr. bullet from Buffalo Arms and send it down-range at 960 fps. This 30/300 combination is the original load formula for the .50 Pistol cartridge and it's great fun! Lots of smoke, noise and recoil. It's the smell of *power*! Plus, I can keep my shots within 2" at 25 yards. Don't ever pass up a Remington single shot pistol — they have too much character and a fascinating pedigree.



Left to right: the .50 Pistol, .50 Carbine and .50-70 Musket cartridges were all chambered in Remington rolling blocks.

CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued from page 8

show for \$275. The first chicken silhouette shoot I entered, I was the only one to get all 10! Thanks, John!

*Richard Gibson
Amarillo, TX*

PLAY THOSE OLDIES!

Wonderful finds by John Taffin in his June "Campfire Tales," and greatly appreciated. As we find ourselves in constant pursuit of the latest and greatest, it is nice



to see our ancestors sought the same advantages. Their words were so prescient. One tidbit I found especially interesting. The "notorious bandit" discussed in the final letter, seems to me to have been the legendary Tom Horn, who was apprehended after escaping the Cheyenne Jail in 1903 after the semi-automatic pistol he stole had jammed. He was hanged shortly thereafter. Thank you for this most interesting piece.

*Camillus Robinson
Munster, IN*

CAST LIGHTWEIGHTS

I greatly enjoyed Duke's article about lightly loaded pistol-weight cast bullets in centerfire rifles in lieu of .22 rimfires. Ammo and component droughts during the Obama administration gave me some

new perspectives, too. Still, I noted I have some .312 Meister 94-gr. RNFPs left over from another project and a 7.62x39 CZ 527 bolt-action carbine. I've assembled a dummy cartridge that feeds unexpectedly well, but I've no clue for a powder charge that might yield a velocity of 1,100-1,300 fps or so. Might Duke or someone else in your pool of knowledgeable people have some advice ... other than buy a .22?



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AMERICAN MAPLE WOOD STOCKS

MAGPUL 30-ROUND MAGAZINE



**CENTURY
ARMS**

You always give a chance to learn something.

*Brad Adams
Via email*

TOXIC MASCULINITY?

I just finished reading my June issue and I wanted to thank Dr. Dabbs for his article "Testosterone: The World's Most Potent Poison." Having spent 33 years in the Field Artillery at various levels of command, I had the opportunity to participate in a number of what we referred to as "firepower

demonstrations" here and in Europe. These were designed to show the lethality of the combined arms team. The article really brought back a lot of great memories. Thanks again.

*Phil S.
Via email*

OLD STEEL

Just a few comments on JT's article on .32-20 rifles. After a few hundred rounds of Hornady 100-gr. JHPs, I switched to cast only. Two friends had octagon rifles and



both shot them out. One sold his and the other had his relined. Old guns, old steel. I'm wondering if JT's Winchester 1892 is a rare short rifle as it has a 20" barrel but no saddle ring.

About 20 years ago, I got a .25-20 round rifle and then an SRC. To think I ran almost 500 87-gr. JSP's through them before I wised up. Besides, that JSP doesn't open up at all at .25-20 velocities. Again, old guns and old steel.

If I had the money, I would get a Marlin .32-20. Shouldn't be all that hard to use the dovetailed magazine hanger and add a full-length magazine. Add a carbine butt plate and wouldn't that be nice?

*Bill
Via email*



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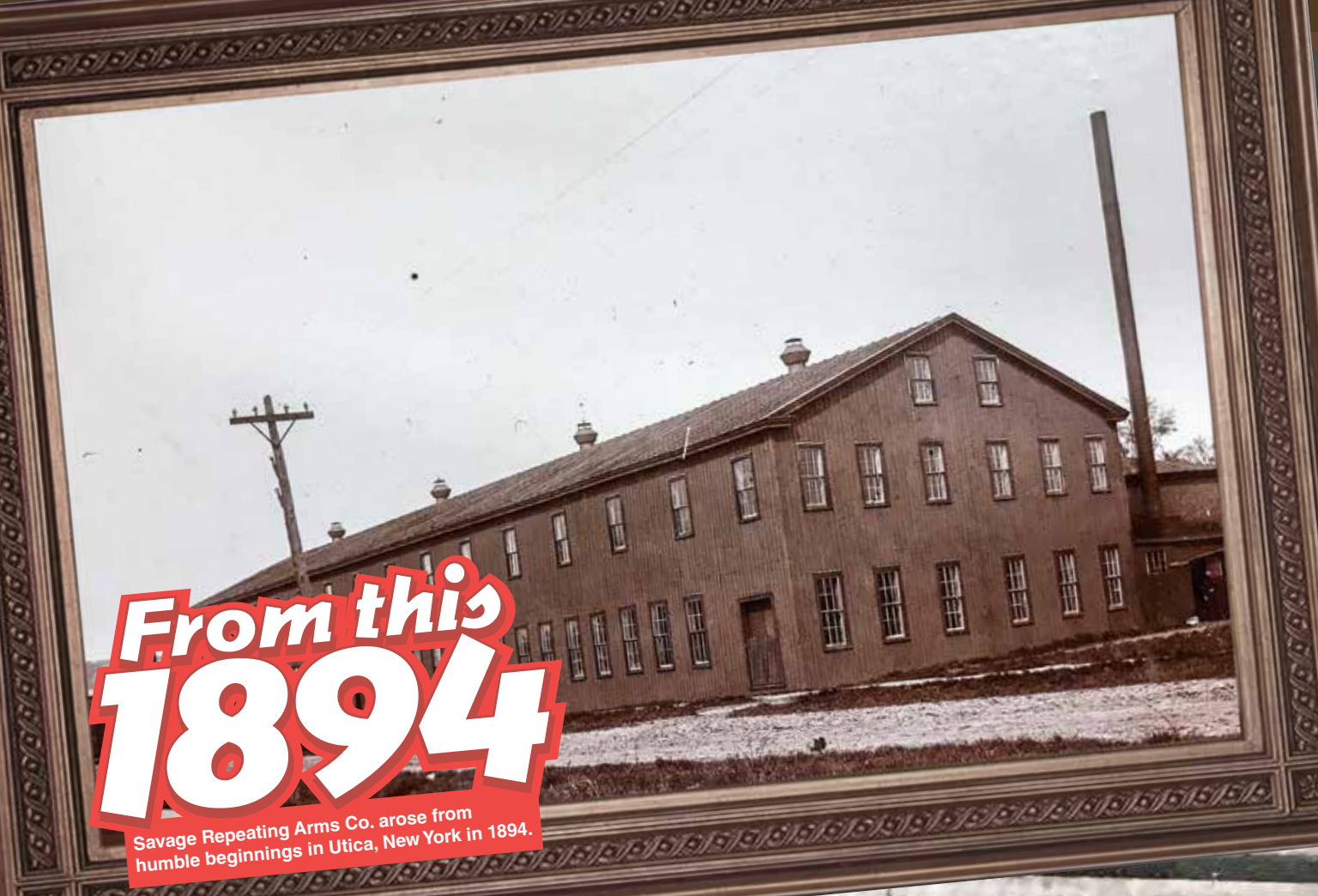
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**From this
1894**

Savage Repeating Arms Co. arose from humble beginnings in Utica, New York in 1894.



The year was 1894. Grover Cleveland was president, Coca-Cola was first offered for sale in bottles and 12,000 tailors in New York City struck against sweatshop conditions. Notable births that year include Jack Benny, John Ford and Norman Rockwell.

For shooters, two things stand out about 1894. Winchester introduced the Model 1894 lever-action rifle and Arthur Savage founded the Savage Repeating Arms Company.

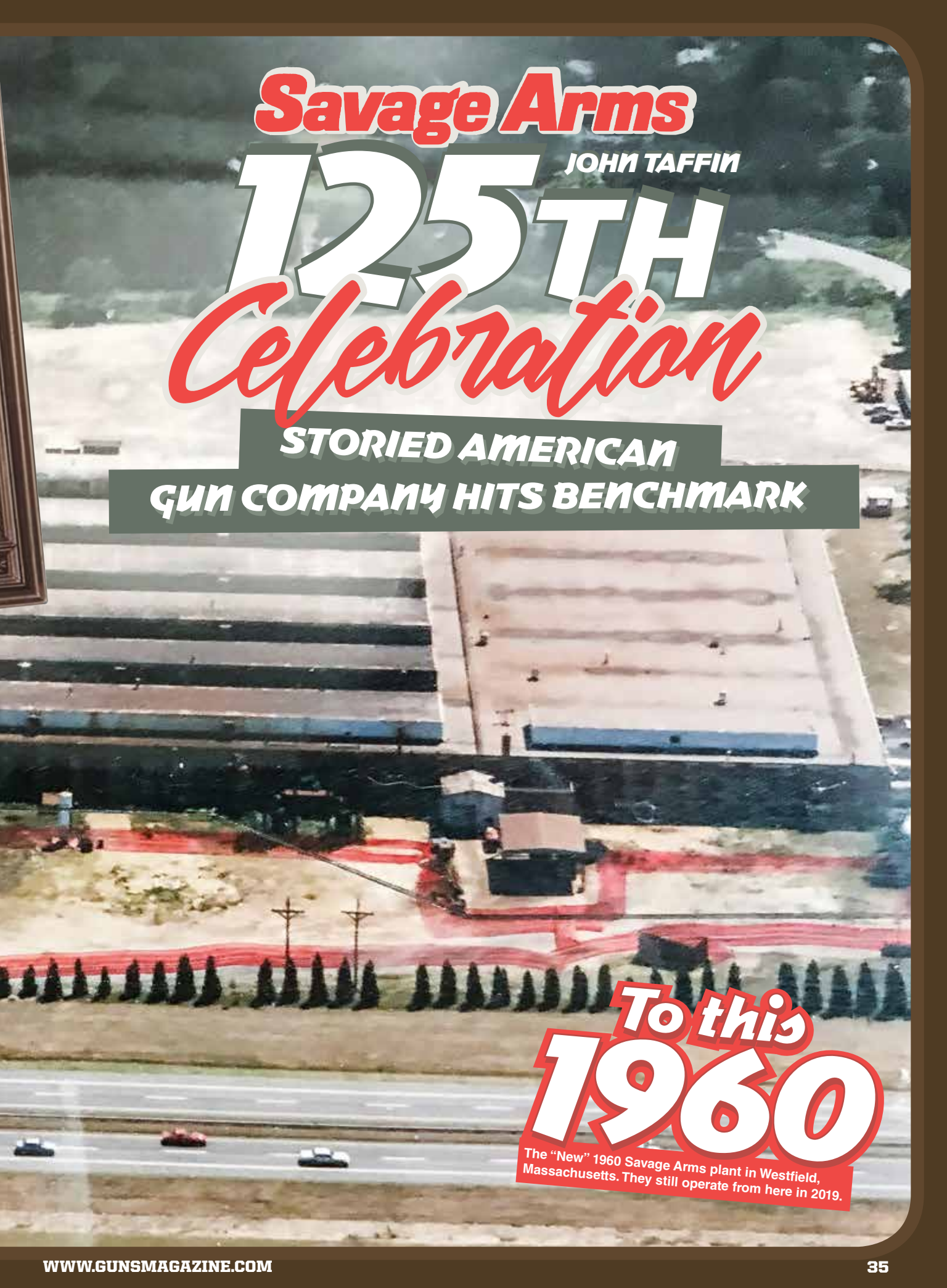
The Winchester 94, of course, came from the genius of John Browning. However, when it came to lever actions, Savage didn't take a backseat to anyone. He was born in Jamaica in 1857, the son of a British government official. Savage was educated in Britain and in the United States as a Christian missionary and an artist. He started working on his first lever-action rifle to provide the British government with a repeater based on the single-shot Martini.

In 1886 he moved to New York and went to work for a publishing company. His inventive genius started to appear and in 1887 he not only patented the repeating Martini rifle but also the Savage-Halpine naval torpedo. He then moved to Utica and took over managing a belt-line railroad.

BIRTH OF THE 99

Now it was time to turn his genius towards real lever action rifles. In 1893 his prototype levergun was chambered in .32-20 and would become the basis for his 1895 production rifle. This rifle featured no external hammer and a rotary magazine with a 5-round capacity, chambered in .303 Savage — slightly more powerful than the .30-30, which arrived the same year.

The 1895 was financially successful to the point where Savage could open a new factory in Utica, New York, and his 1895 became the Model 1899 with the first chambering available



Savage Arms

JOHN TAFFIN

125TH *Celebration*

**STORIED AMERICAN
GUN COMPANY HITS BENCHMARK**

**To this
1960**

The "New" 1960 Savage Arms plant in Westfield, Massachusetts. They still operate from here in 2019.



Savage's 125th Anniversary Model 10 is a traditional upscale blued steel/walnut sporter.

You might not own a collectible firearm, but have you thought about a Savage lawn mower (below)? The Savage Model 1907 pistol (right) was chambered in .380 and .32 ACP. It was well-regarded as a "pocket gun" in its day.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST April 16, 1955

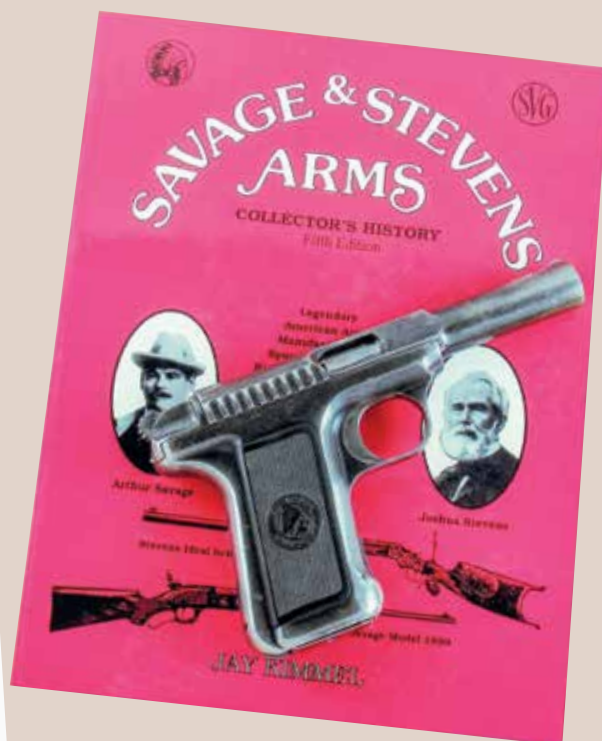
Lawn mower service records prove:

For solid quality you can't beat Savage!

Savage Rotary-Type
4 models (3 gasoline, 1 electric) 20" and 18" cut. Recoil starter optional on 3. These trim close to fences, gardens, cut thru tall grass. Handles easily adjustable to your height, and for parking. Leaf-mulcher at no extra cost on gasoline models.

The greatest testimonial a lawn mower ever received is recorded in service shops from coast to coast: "No mower beats Savage for sound."

The NEW Savage

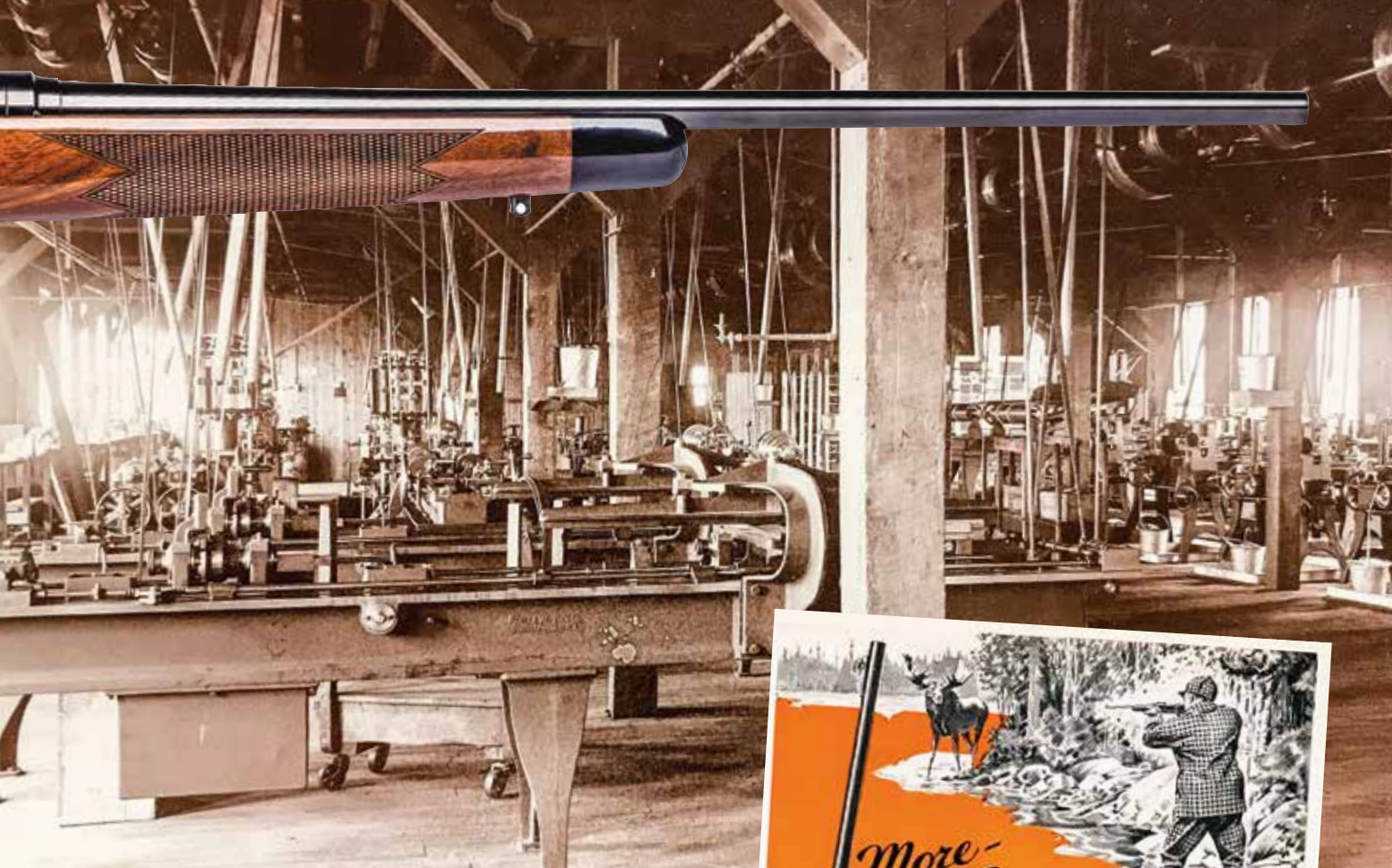


being the .303 Savage. In 1900 Savage added the .30-30 Winchester in the 1899, however it was marked as "Caliber 30" so as not to use the Winchester name. In 1903 three more Winchester chamberings were added — .25-35, .32-40 and .38-55.

.22 HI POWER, .250-3000, .300 SAVAGE

Often the cartridge which first comes to mind in the Savage 1899 is the .300 Savage, however this would take some time before arriving. Charles Newton designed two cartridges for the Savage 99. Necking down the .25-35 Winchester in 1912 resulted in the .22 Savage Hi Power, then in 1914 he used a shortened .30-06 to produce the .250 Savage. Newton intended this latter cartridge to utilize a 100-gr. bullet at 2,800 fps but Savage Arms decided to capitalize on the quest for a high velocity at the time so the bullet weight was reduced to 87 grains, making it possible to increase the muzzle velocity to 3,000 fps. Since the now-classic cartridge was the first to attain such a velocity, it became known as the .250-3000.

The fabled .300 Savage did not arrive until 1920. Now shooters had a lever-action rifle that would handle spire pointed bullets in its rotary magazine resulting in performance significantly better



Early Savage production line (above) — prior to the invention of liability lawsuits! Wish you could still pick up a Model 99 for under a C-note (right)? Yeah, us too!

ballistically than the .30-30 in the Model 94 Winchester — and very close to the .308 which arrived 30 years later. Savage's lever action was definitely ahead of its time.

THE LITERARY CONNECTION

I grew up in a non-shooting family, but I had two outlets as far as shooting was concerned. First there was my uncle who owned a farm and I spent a lot of time there shooting, hunting or fishing. The second outlet was reading about guns and shooting. We were blessed to have a school librarian who stocked all three of the major outdoor magazines available at the time as well as a large supply of adventure, hunting and exploring books. One of the heroes I found in those books was Roy Chapman Andrews who explored exotic regions such as the Gobi Desert for the American Museum of Natural History. I bring him up for the simple reason he used a Savage Model 99 as well as a bolt-action Savage Model 1920 on his explorations. Both were chambered in .250-3000.

STEVENS AND FOX

Two other names associated with Savage are Stevens and Fox. In 1920 Savage purchased Stevens Arms and in 1930 added A.H. Fox Gun Company. I've spent a lot of time over the past half-century plus shooting Savage Stevens 311 double-barreled shotguns (mine's a 12 gauge and Diamond Dot's is a 20). Fox doubles are still offered by Savage in a high-grade \$5,000 offering.

At one time Savage also offered semi-automatic pistols chambered in .32 and .380, even the famous former lawman Bat Masterson recommended Savage pistols for self-defense. When the

**More-
POWER
.. SPEED
.. CONTROL**

**for the Biggest Game
in North America!**

Whether you hunt nearby woodlands for the white-tailed buck . . . take to the saddle along high ridges in search of the wary big-horns . . . feel the blood drumming as you align your sights on a towering bull moose . . . whatever the big game you encounter . . . You have exactly what it takes to anchor your trophy if you're shooting a .300 Savage Model 99 Hi-Power Rifle! Especially if you use Savage ammunition, with the new "Top-Notch" Expansion Controlled bullets . . . you strike sledge-hammer blows that penetrate, shock, and drop 'em to stay down!

**ACTION—A MARVEL OF
SIMPLICITY, STRENGTH
and POSITIVE FUNCTIONING**

Examine this ingenious action and you will find a sturdy mechanism, consisting of few parts, that functions *reliably*. The compact rotary magazine feeds positively and may be reloaded when partly empty. As cartridges are fired, the perfect balance of the rifle never changes. The heavy breech-block locks securely against the solid steel wall of the receiver and is held firmly up in place by the finger lever. The entire mechanism is completely housed within the smooth, unbroken lines of the receiver.

MOST PERFECTLY STREAMLINED

Blending stock, receiver, and barrel into one smooth, flowing masterpiece of design, the streamlining of this rifle contributes as much to steady holding and positive control as it does to handsome appearance.

There are so many other refinements that you'll find every hunting circumstance has been anticipated . . . the right feature provided for you, in this finest of big-game rifles. By all means, see it at your dealer's.

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SAVAGE
MODEL 99 HI-POWER RIFLES

MODEL 99 Hi-Power
Rifle
100 SAVAGE and
1240 3000 SAVAGE
\$53.70



A return to boyhood: John's stainless steel Savage Model 93 .22 Magnum is a hoot for him to shoot — and it groups very well!

military called for trials for a new pistol, Savage entered their .45 semi-automatic pistol.

Other Savage firearms of note (at least from my perspective) were the Model 340 — a no-frills, relatively inexpensive, accurate bolt action chambered in .222 Remington, .22 Hornet and .30-30. Then there's the Model 24 over/under .22/.410. It was born the same year as I was, 1939, and over 1 million have been sold. The versatility of the Savage company can be seen by the fact they also made lawnmowers and they were always ready to help the war efforts. During World War I they produced Lewis machine guns and in World War II manufactured British No. 4 Enfield rifles that were sent to Britain under Lend-Lease. It's also worth noting most of the Thompson SMGs used in World War II were produced by Savage.

THE MODEL 110

Another significant moment in history was 1957/1958. I met Diamond Dot and we were married less than four months later. Of greater importance to the shooting world was Savage's introduction of the Model 110 bolt-action rifle.

This year marks the 125th Anniversary of Savage Arms and to celebrate, a special edition Model 110 will be offered with only 1,894 being built. All will feature a high gloss Monte Carlo walnut stock and special engraving on the receiver, grip and detachable box magazine. They'll feature a button-rifled barrel, drilled and tapped receiver and the trendsetting AccuTrigger. Chamberings available will, of course, be the classic .250 and .300 Savage as well as .243 and .308 Winchester. A fifth chambering will be the most popular current cartridge — the 6.5 Creedmoor. MSRP will be \$1,499.

COBURN "ACCUTRIGGERS" A TURNAROUND

A most important year for Savage was 1988. Savage Arms was going through tough times and on the verge of bankruptcy. Ron Coburn was named CEO and he began the long path back for Savage — saving the company required drastic measures. The work force was cut and after nearly 90 years, the very

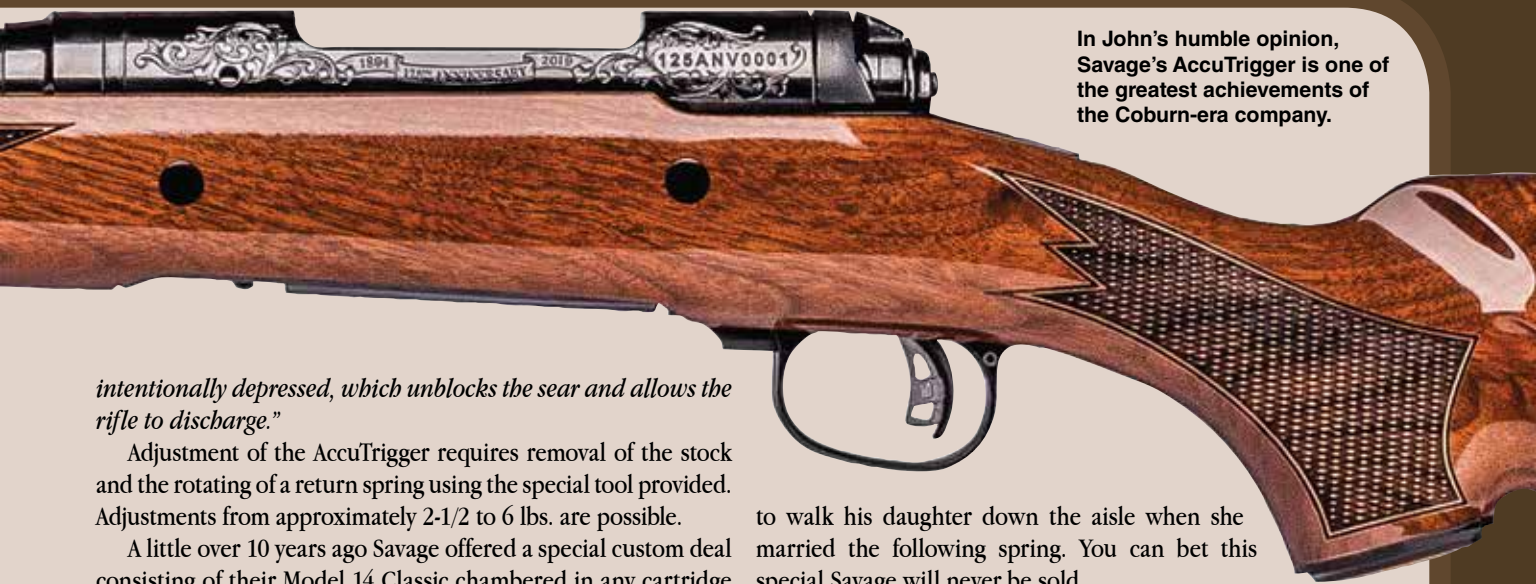


The seminal M99 is represented by this vintage specimen chambered in the company's proprietary .250 Savage — the 3,000 fps 87-gr. load was a barnburner. Photo: Doug Fee Collection

expensive-to-produce Model 99 was dropped from production. Improvement efforts were concentrated on the bolt action Model 110 with Coburn giving Savage engineers the assignment to come up with a great trigger — a mandate resulting in the AccuTrigger.

This revolutionary design gives new meaning to having a fine trigger on a rifle and it is interesting to note other rifle manufacturers are now putting better triggers on their production rifles as well. Today the Savage Model 110 is recognized as one of America's finest production rifles and Savage offers several other bolt-action models in sporter, varmint, target and tactical versions; all featuring the AccuTrigger.

The AccuTrigger is easy to recognize with an integral AccuRelease in the face of the trigger. Savage says *"The AccuTrigger gives the shooter flexibility to set the trigger pull to individual preference without having to pay a gunsmith to adjust it. Even when adjusted to its lowest setting, the AccuTrigger is completely safe and cannot accidentally discharge during normal use from being jarred or dropped when used properly and maintained and adjusted as intended. The AccuTrigger is designed with an integrated AccuRelease that must be completely depressed or the rifle cannot fire. When pulling the trigger, the AccuRelease is*



In John's humble opinion, Savage's AccuTrigger is one of the greatest achievements of the Coburn-era company.

intentionally depressed, which unblocks the sear and allows the rifle to discharge."

Adjustment of the AccuTrigger requires removal of the stock and the rotating of a return spring using the special tool provided. Adjustments from approximately 2-1/2 to 6 lbs. are possible.

A little over 10 years ago Savage offered a special custom deal consisting of their Model 14 Classic chambered in any cartridge they had reamers for, as well as your choice of stock finish. I wanted something accurate and easy on the shoulder and a little out of the ordinary, so I decided on a non-cataloged .250-3000 chambered in a Savage Model 14 Classic. It was my first encounter with an AccuTrigger and the first time I actually fired the rifle. I wished every rifle I owned had one!

The Model 14 went on a special hunt along with my friends Rick Vonderheide and Roger Bissell. We all used the rifle to take Catalina goat, Mouflon and Corsican ram. It was a very special hunt for several reasons, not the least was it proved to be Roger's last hunt. He passed on just after Christmas and it fell to me

to walk his daughter down the aisle when she married the following spring. You can bet this special Savage will never be sold.

I've found as I've gotten older .22s are just as much fun now (maybe more so) than they were when I was young. One of the most accurate .22s I own is Savage's Model 93 in .22 Magnum. It's a bolt action with a thumbhole laminated stock and — just like the centerfire Savage rifles — it has the wonderful AccuTrigger. Someday this rifle will be passed down to one of the great-grandkids.

Happy anniversary Savage!



www.savagearms.com

[brace yourself]

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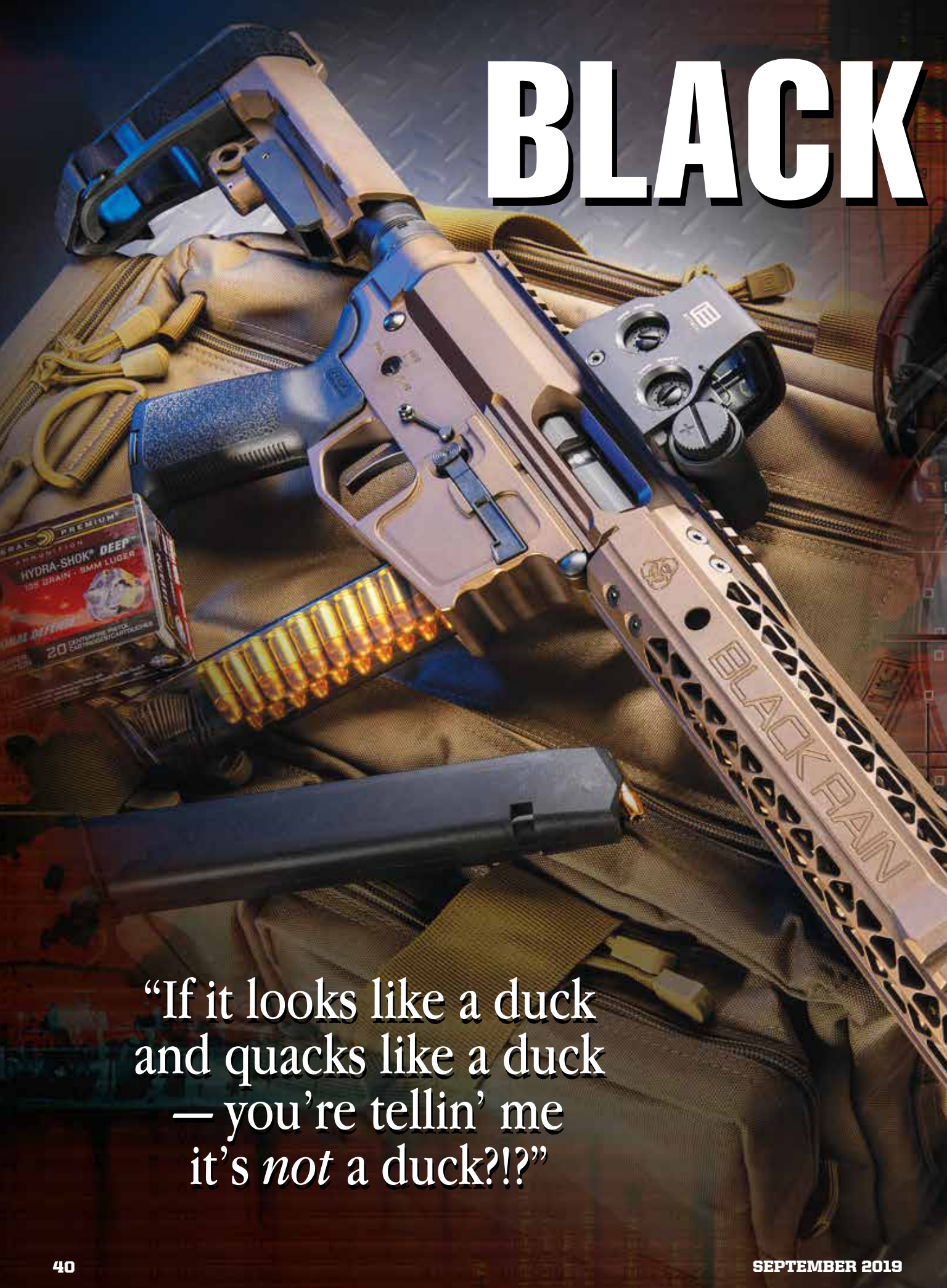


Carry your pistol like any handgun, in a get-home-bag or inside a vehicle where permitted.



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[BRACE YOURSELF]®



BLACK

“If it looks like a duck
and quacks like a duck
— you’re tellin’ me
it’s *not* a duck?!?”

RAIN'S ION 9

THE FUTURE OF PISTOL-CALIBER CARBINES?

“Menacing.” It’s the right word — menacing. It’s a *boplophobe’s* nightmare.

The Ion 9 semi-auto pistol by Black Rain Ordnance is so scary it cannot be shipped to 10 states and six American territorial possessions.

Its sexy-looking, ventilated fore grip has Picatinny bases for front and rear sight mounting. It also has Picatinny bases on the fore grip’s left and right sides for accessories, such as a tactical light, a laser, and — oh, I don’t know — maybe a beer opener.

WHAT IS IT?

Of course, the aforementioned fore grip might also keep the shooter’s hand from sizzling like crispy bacon while holding a hot barrel — if you happened to fire it fast and often enough to heat things up.

It looks as if it could be a submachine gun — but it’s not. Even worse, it looks as if it could be a dreaded “black gun” — but it’s not.

The test gun has a handsome, earth-toned, non-reflective, olive finish — not black. Okay, okay, the Magpul MOE pistol grip *is* black, as is the EOTech Holosight mounted on the test gun.

A first glance at a familiar-looking side profile suggests it might be an AR15 — but it’s not that either. The adjustable arm brace resembles an AR15’s 6-position collapsible buttstock — but it’s not, it’s an “arm brace.”

The Black Rain Ordnance Ion 9 is just a semi-auto pistol chambered for 9mm Parabellum.

What? *Wait!* Did I just say the Ion 9 is not an AR15? If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck — you’re tellin’ me it’s *not* a duck?!

Nope.



Ready on the left side: A non-reciprocating charging handle is a blessing for those who forget to keep their thumb out of the way!

STAN SKINNER

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



GUNS[®]

MAGAZINE



ION9





The business end: Threaded for a suppressor, naturally (right). A futuristic blend of 9mm SMG and AR, the Ion 9 is eye-catching, compact and efficient.

WELL, WHAT THE HECK IS IT THEN?

The Ion 9 is a 9mm semi-auto pistol with an arm brace for stability when fired with one hand. It has a patented side-charging, non-reciprocating, blowback action on an upper receiver, mated to a dedicated billet lower.

The paired upper and lower receivers share several AR15-type characteristics. This includes a pivoting safety, magazine release and buffer tube. Also, AR15-style fore and aft pivot pins secure the upper to the lower.

VIVE LA DIFFERENCE

The differences are significant, including the patented blowback action, which features a non-reciprocating charging handle on the left side of the upper receiver. This replaces a T-handle located at the rear end of the receiver to draw back a bolt carrier as found on an AR15.

Let me take a moment to sing the virtues of a “non-reciprocating charging handle.” Many semi-auto (and full auto) firearms have a charging/operating lever which slams to the rear at blurring speed every time it fires. If a carelessly placed body part — say your thumb — should interfere with this rearward travel, said thumb will find itself split to the bone, accompanied by a copious gush of blood. Been there, done that, got the T-shirt.

So, if you shoot a firearm with a reciprocating handle such as I’ve described, be careful — be very careful — all your body parts are placed properly before firing.

Of course, the BRO Ion 9’s non-reciprocating charging handle will not bite you like those so you can be as careless as you like.

On the lower receiver, the Ion 9's magazine well is designed to accept a GLOCK-style, double stack magazine. The well is beveled for quicker reloading in a tense situation. The Ion 9 comes with a 30-round magazine — which is transparent so you can see at a glance how many rounds remain.

So, neither the operating system nor various components are characteristic of an AR15. It means the Black Rain Ion 9 might look like a duck, but a duck, it ain't.

Now we've established the Black Rain Ordnance Ion 9 is — a blowback 9mm semi-auto pistol equipped with an arm brace — let's take a closer look.

MATERIALS, DIMENSIONS, PERFORMANCE

The BRO upper and lower receiver set are "billet" manufactured from 7075 T6 aluminum. The billet method begins with a piece of extruded aluminum bar stock which is CNC machined to the finished dimensions. The receiver is then color anodized for the final finish.

The BRO billet receiver has sharp flats and angles. This produces quite an attractive appearance readily distinguishable from the rounded contours of forged or cast receivers.

An 8.75" barrel is encased in a 10" MLOK hybrid fore grip. The Ion 9's overall length is 26" and it weighs just over 6.5 lbs.

At the range I discovered several

interesting things about the BRO Ion 9. First, it's pretty accurate as pistols go. I fired a 5-shot group at 25 yards from a shooting table with Fiocchi 124-gr. FMJ ammo measuring a scant 2". The EOTech Holograph provided a precise aiming point at this distance, but I had to substitute a shorter GLOCK magazine for the long 30-round mag, which interfered with my shooting rest.

Incidentally, the 30-round magazine requires a good deal of force to press rounds into place as the magazine fills up. A lever-type magazine loading tool makes this



The Ion 9 comes with a Velcro arm brace. It accepts 30-round GLOCK magazines although Stan preferred a shorter one for shooting off the bench.

chore a lot easier.

Unseasonable rains shortened my accuracy testing, but the Ion 9 functioned flawlessly with several defense loads tipped with expanding bullets of varying weights.

DEFENSIVE APPLICATIONS

I was a bit disappointed with the arm brace, which is designed to fit around the shooter's forearm. A webbing and Velcro strap is supposed to secure it, but I found it difficult and time-consuming to cinch in place around my fairly large forearm.

Once the arm brace was in place, I found it nearly impossible to align my eye with the Holograph and would have to resort to point fire. Neither fact is acceptable if you are about to confront an intruder in your home. In this situation, seconds — and accuracy — count.

What worked for me was a modified two-handed, Weaver stance. I assumed a cheek weld against the arm brace with my left hand on the pistol grip (I'm a lefty) and my support hand on the ventilated fore grip.

In a home defense situation, you should bear this in mind: A defensive firearm might be used by a woman who has limited physical strength (and might also be only marginally familiar with guns). In this case a short, one-hand firearm (a pistol) is too easy to point in an unsafe direction. Also, an intruder might find it too easy to disarm a person who has lesser strength.

In contrast, the BRO Ion 9 allows the shooter to grip the firearm firmly with both hands, making it difficult for an intruder to disarm him/her — and it's long enough an inexperienced person is less likely to forget where it's pointed.

In my book, this factor makes the Ion 9 a fine choice for home defense. It's also a hoot to shoot! The MSRP is \$1,259 to \$1,999. 



The ventilated fore grip is "Picatinny-railed" for a plethora of sights, lights and lasers. It'll also serve as a heat shield should you get into a high-volume shooting session.

www.blackrainordnance.com

COLT King Cobra .357

MASSAD AYOOB **PHOTOS: GAIL PEPIN**

Last January Colt announced the new King Cobra, not their first revolver to bear the name, so a brief history is in order.

The D-Frame series, as we know it today, goes back to the Police Positive Special of 1908. In 1926, Colt decided to make a 2" barreled version called the Detective Special — it hit dealer shelves a year later and owned the small-frame .38 Special snub-nose market for the second quarter of the 20th Century.

In 1950, Colt made a Detective Special with a first-of-its-kind lightweight aluminum frame, and named it the Cobra. As

the end of the 20th Century neared, these Old World-crafted guns became too expensive to produce at competitive prices so Colt did a revamped design in all stainless steel, the SF-VI and DS-II series. For one year (1999) Colt made a beefed-up version in .357 called the Magnum Carry, with some 6,000 sold. Meanwhile, they had debuted the first King Cobra in 1986 — a chunky V-Frame (.41) heavy-duty service .357.

By the dawn of the 21st Century, those neat little double-action Colt revolvers were no more ... until 2017, when Colt

“RE-FRAMING” A CLASSIC SNAKE



Mas' favorite .38 Special +P load: Speer's 135-gr. GDHP, 25 yards.

Mas loves the enlarged trigger guards on the new Colt, which allow full trigger return even with gloved fingers.

Mas' test gun has a 0.004" barrel/cylinder gap. It's a hair tighter than he likes but there was no binding.

The King Cobra's full-length rod usually cleared all brass, but one would occasionally hang up.





Colt's new King Cobra (top) with the original 3" Cobra from the Steve Denny collection.

“It’s very much a shooter’s gun!”

introduced an updated version of the DS-II in all stainless called the Cobra by Colt (and the New Cobra by shooters). They’ve now followed with the same gun in .357 Magnum, featuring a full-underlug 3" barrel.

MEET THE NEW KING COBRA

Overall, the new gun somewhat resembles a stainless, fixed-sight Diamondback — the deluxe Python-esque D-Frame Colt .38 (and .22) of 1966. Its heft is right between the 2" Cobra of 2017 and a 3" K-Frame S&W. An Ohaus LS2000 scale weighed our unloaded test sample at 28 oz. By comparison, a 3" S&W M13 .357 weighed 32 oz. even. The original 3" Cobra .38 (1971 vintage) scaled a hair over 16 oz.

The front sight is a square Patridge type with an old school flat brass bead. I’ll say right here I think it’s the best front sight Colt has put on a D-Frame since 1972! It’s interchangeable if you prefer a night sight or fiber optic, both available. The revolver’s finish is dull silvery. This gun shares the enlarged trigger guard of the new Cobra, which I think is this series’ best tactical feature as it allows full trigger return with a heavily gloved hand, unlike

most double-action revolvers. Capacity is Colt’s traditional six rounds.

FUNCTIONING, SHOOTABILITY

I want about a 0.006" clearance between barrel and cylinder. On our test sample, the empty gun closed on a 0.004" feeler gauge, but it dragged a bit with empty casings inserted and pushing the cylinder slightly forward at 0.005". There was no binding in dry or live fire, however, even when we shot the gun dirty.

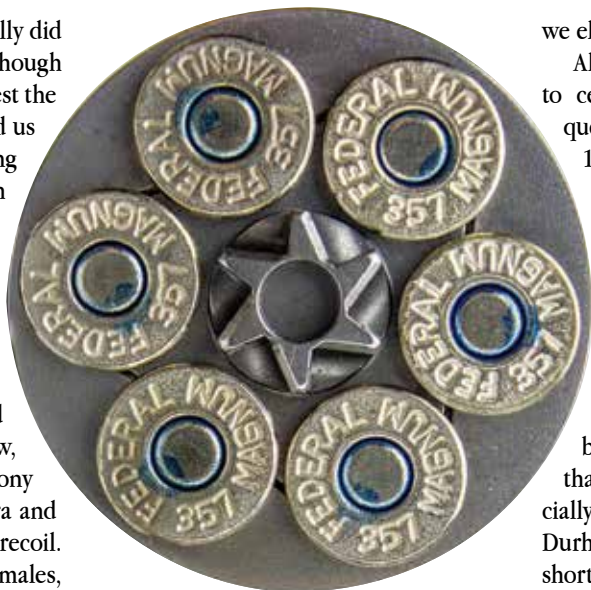
The trigger itself is smooth faced (a good thing!) and pull is relatively light. On a Lyman digital gauge, measuring from the center of the trigger where the index finger naturally lies, double-action pull averaged 9.25 lbs., and single action, 4.3 lbs. In both modes it felt lighter than it weighed. Single action release was crisp with no perceptible backlash, and double action was extremely smooth. The current iteration of the V-shaped Colt mainspring is more of a U-shape, resulting in slight stacking (increase in resistance toward the end of the double-action stroke) but it seemed to disappear during rapid fire.

The full-length ejector rod generally did a good job of kicking out the brass, though occasionally the one spent case nearest the frame would stick a bit. This required us to flick it out by hand before inserting the HKS size "10" speedloader, which worked just fine.

Decades ago, gun expert Jac Weller wrote Colt had experimentally chambered the Detective Special for .357 Mag, and though the gun stood up, they believed recoil would be intolerable, which killed the idea. That was then and this is now, when people buy 11-oz. .357s. Cushiony Hogue grips come on the King Cobra and do a wonderful job of absorbing recoil. From petite females to burly 6-foot males, all our testers loved the action on the King Cobra and didn't mind the recoil with even the hottest .38 loads — they found "Magnum Force" recoil surprisingly tolerable (but certainly not fun).

ACCURACY

I tested three loads from a Caldwell Matrix rest on a concrete bench at 25 yards in single-action mode. They ranged



The King Cobra takes six rounds of .357 Magnum if you're feeling frisky — or six .38 Special if you're not!

from mild to wild. For mild, I chose Black Hills' Match 148-gr. .38 Special mid-range wadcutter. From the lab to the street, such authorities as Duncan McPherson, Dr. Gary Roberts and Chuck Haggard have endorsed this humble target load for self-defense, and

we elderly arthritics certainly appreciate it.

All groups were measured center to center between the farthest shots in question. The 5-shot WC group measured 1.85". The best three hits — a measurement which tends to factor out human error and come closer to what the same gun and load would have done for all five from a machine rest — was only 7/10"!

With small frame .357 revolvers like this, the .38 Special +P is often the compromise between controllability and power. I've found none better than Speer's 135-gr. +P Gold Dot, especially engineered by a team led by Ernest Durham for maximum performance out of short barrels. In the King Cobra, it led the grouping test with five shots in 1.70 and the best 3 in 0.80.

"Wild" in small revolvers is the full power .357 Magnum and we chose the legendary "lightning bolt," Federal's 125-gr. semi-jacketed HP. The whole quintet went into 2.70", and the best three, 1.95. Overall, group size averaged 2.08" and the best three measured 1.15". Basically, the King Cobra is a 2" gun at 25 yards (with sub-1" potential).

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Colt's new King Cobra .357 features a heavy 3" full-lug barrel with an enclosed ejector rod.

Colt revolvers are famous for their accuracy, with their rock-solid cylinder lockup and the 1:14 twist to its LH rifling. This new incarnation of the King Cobra certainly lives up to the Colt rep.

Grouping is only part of accuracy: The other element is point of aim *vis-à-vis* point of impact. Our test gun centered a bit low left with .38 wadcutters, low center in the black Birchwood-Casey Shoot-N-C bull with the Speer .38 +P, and center for elevation but a wee bit right with the hardest kicking load — the 125-gr. Federal .357. The broad range of velocity and POI/POA combinations in a .38/.357 revolver cry out for adjustable sights, and rumor has it an adjustable sight version of the King Cobra may be available by the time you read this.

CARRYING THE KING COBRA

I wore the test gun for a few days inside the waistband behind the hip in an ARG holster for a 3" K-Frame S&W by Mitch Rosen. I had worried the sharpish edge of the hammer spur might dig into my side but it didn't. The third inch of barrel pretty much takes this gun out of "snubbie" class in terms of pocket or even ankle carry but for a compact belt gun, it's just right. In or on the belt, the extra inch of barrel bears against the hip and tucks the butt inward

The recoil-absorbing underlug, quick-change front sight, and recessed muzzle crown of the King Cobra.

toward the torso, improving concealability.

It's very much a shooter's gun! The sights are easier to see than what you find on most small frame revolvers, though one tester felt the smooth silvery rear of the frame created bothersome glare. I took it to the range to shoot a 4- to 15-yard off-duty qualification. The test finished with a 100 percent score, 300 out of 300 points for the 60 shots — it's hard to ask for more in a gun of this type.

"METROPOLITAN SPECIAL"

One of the most influential gun experts in the mid-20th Century was New York City holster maker and quick-draw ace Chic Gaylord. He was a big Colt revolver guy, and in his 1960 *Handgunner's Guide*, he postulated his ideal concealed carry gun which he called the "Metropolitan Special." It was the D-Frame Police Positive with a 3" barrel, maybe a gold bead front sight, and a bird's head-style round butt, in .38 Special. Gaylord considered the .38 Special with 200-gr. bullets to be an absolute minimum for self-defense and liked the idea of something even more potent.

If you think about it, the new King Cobra

pretty much *is* the Metropolitan Special, as rendered almost 60 years later in the .357 Magnum chambering Chic would certainly have appreciated.

Colt has set the MSRP for the new King Cobra at \$899, putting it neck and neck with the six-shot Kimber K6 series, its only real competitor in the niche of small-frame six-shot stainless .357s with this size barrel. I think they're going to sell a lot of them. 

www.colt.com
www.federalpremium.com
www.black-hills.com
www.speer-ammo.com
www.mitchrosen.com

BARRETT TILLMAN

If living in a care facility, a defensive handgun can be discreetly secured in a lock box like this one from Hornady.

Older people are more vulnerable to strong-arm attacks and muggings. The feral stalkers prowling the urban jungle naturally prey on the weak and the unsuspecting, but the media have been critical of those who defend themselves against “unarmed” assailants. Meanwhile, FBI stats show annually about 600 people are killed by “unarmed”

What should a senior do? The answer depends upon individual motivation, ranging from “Do what they want” to “Not now, not ever.” The problem with the former, of course, is what they may want is the victim unconscious on the pavement. However, seniors who employ lethal force to avert a potentially fatal or crippling blow probably have more leverage in court than younger defendants.





S&W's M&P Shield .380 EZ (top) is easier to manipulate if hand strength is lacking, while a revolver's trigger might simply prove too challenging.

RETIREMENT HOMES AND CARE FACILITIES

There's a sort of no-man's-land in the twilight zone between extended late life and the impending end of life. Whether by necessity or choice, more elder shooters will move into retirement centers, assisted living facilities, or nursing homes. Many outlets provide progressive care for each level, ranging from occasional help to round-the-clock attention.

In the past few years a longtime friend, a senior pistol instructor, moved into a retirement facility. Do the math: Gunsite opened in 1976 when many of us were in our 30s. During the preliminary interview the facility's staffer asked, "Do you own firearms?"

The *pistolero*, who now uses a walker, was faced with a dilemma. "Basically, you can say 'yes' or you can lie. That's what the system requires today."

However, the honest answer did not immediately disqualify the shooter and his wife from moving in. "Three of my former students are lawyers and I had each of them read the contract. They all agreed — there was nothing preventing me from having a gun in my apartment."

Information is sparse, but it seems certain few retirement or care facilities specifically permit residents to keep guns "on campus." However, the lack of specificity

worked to the advantage of a former World War II aviator who moved into assisted living in his late 80s. He kept a Colt .380 in a combination box hidden in a locked cabinet. The Mustang was available on fairly short notice, and he could handle it safely despite arthritis. The management never knew of the gun, even after the flier died.

THE WORST PART

Maybe the worst experience some of us will face is telling a loved one it's time to put up the guns. Advancing dementia, reduced judgment and physical limits all play a part. Says one instructor, with heart-rending experience, "If anything, it's worse than telling Dad or Grandma they can't drive anymore. Those of us who grew up in 'the gun culture' identify with our guns as something more than wheels or convenience. Guns are a big part of our identity, and if we've been involved in competition or training, it's even stronger."

The problems attending firearms confiscation are too complex to address here but increasingly they involve government intervention. Sometimes related to elders are so-called Extreme Risk Protection Orders. As of 2019 eight states have enacted "red flag laws," permitting seizure of firearms upon recommendation by family members or police. The procedure, still of uncertain constitutionality, is widely opposed on the basis of due process. While red flags reputedly decreased suicides in Indiana, they prompted an offset

by other means in Connecticut.

However, if those close to the declining individual are proactive, the more unpleasant legal ramifications can be avoided or at least minimized.

An attorney friend — a shooting partner in fact — is also an estate planner. His work involves anticipation of clients' demise as well as preparation for diminished capacity. There are various approaches to those sensitive subjects, including group discussions with the principal and family members. It's especially helpful to hold such discussions and to draft documents while the client remains rational and lucid. He or she may disclaim a prior agreement after dementia takes hold, but at least there's a basis for legitimate action.

PHYSICAL CHALLENGES

Advancing age equals physical decline. Aside from vision, decreasing physical abilities come in two flavors — strength and flexibility.

People who spent their lives shooting relatively heavy big-bore handguns discover they can no longer hold onto the pet 1911 or favorite wheelgun as before. Accuracy degrades, and so does safety. Many shooters readily acknowledge the fact and switch to smaller calibers. Single-stack 9mm 1911s



Big bore revolvers are often the first to go as we age. Be thinking now about how to sell or gift them!

are a growth market and I now know two fine shooters who carry .380s — and practice with them.

As for agility, a friend I'll call "Mike" retired certain holsters because they forced him to lift the gun a little higher on the draw. He explained, "Since I tore my rotator cuff, it's hard to lift the pistol high enough to clear leather. Lowering the top of the holster by an inch, and shortening the barrel by $\frac{3}{4}$ " using a Commander may not seem like much, until you catch a half-inch of slide on the top of the holster a few times. I've flubbed enough draws to recognize the reality of my physical limitation."

Then there's Jim: "I have to move my holster to in front of my hip to draw. I just can't lift my .45 high enough when my arm is that far back anymore. Makes it a bit harder to hide. Maybe I should do like Elmer Keith, and just wear it in the open all the time!"

Even for seniors no longer able to keep firearms at hand, options remain. Friends or relatives can — and do — provide outings to the range or farther afield during hunting season. My brother once set up Dad at a bench in a hay barn overlooking a pasture infested with ground squirrels. Even though no varmints appeared, it was a pleasant experience away from the care center, sharing quality time with a match-grade AR-15.

Lessons learned? Be proactive and take action to keep shooting fun now, while anticipating changes as you age to help make it easier on your extended family. 🦋

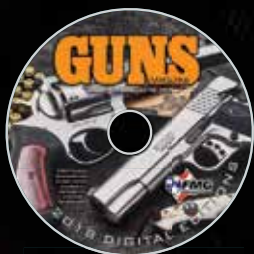


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Remington

MODEL 31

BILLY MARABLE



Billy's all-time favorite pump:
a 16-gauge Remington Model
31. Built on a 20-gauge frame, it
handles great in the field.



It's steep and rocky in southern Idaho — and today it was *cold*. I hadn't gotten 100 yards from the truck when I was already out of breath. "Why do I keep doing this to myself?" I thought.

Suddenly a large covey of chukar flushed just below me. I quickly swung my gun just ahead of the last bird and fired. I stroked the slide on my pumpgun and a fresh shell slid into the chamber for a second try, but it wasn't needed. The bird crumpled and fell 35 yards away. The gun? A 16-gauge Remington Model 31.

PRIME NUMBER

I've gone through many types of shotguns over the years. Most have been 16-gauge. I have found them to be smaller in frame, lighter in weight and equal in effectiveness to the 12-gauge yet not as long in shot pattern as the 20.

Unfortunately, the 16 isn't as popular as it once was and ammunition — though not hard to find — is often lacking in diversity. I love pumpguns and nine years ago began exclusively using a vintage Remington M31.

BEGINNING STRUGGLES

For Remington, efforts to develop a pump-action shotgun in the early 20th Century proved to be a struggle. Their first pump shotgun was the Model 10 designed by John D. Pedersen and introduced in 1908. The M10 loaded and ejected from a port underneath the receiver and provided Remington with a good start into the pump market. It was relatively popular and saw service in the trenches of WWI.

However, entry of the superlative Winchester Model 12 into



The M31's safety is at the rear of the triggerguard while the slide release is forward. Side-ejection allowed it to compete with the popular Winchester M12.

the market spelled trouble for Remington. The Winchester M12 was a hugely successful side-ejection pump, which became very popular with competition shooters and hunters alike.

The Remington M10 was a good gun but was mechanically complicated and prone to breakage while shooters preferred the side-ejection feature of the Winchester M12 for the ease of single-loading a round.

Remington then introduced the Model 17 in 1921. This gun was a big improvement over the M10 with a simpler design and easier takedown, but retaining the bottom-ejection feature.

In 1929, Remington's Crawford C. Loomis improved on the M10 and brought to market the Model 29. Still, none of these models could compete with Winchester's M12 — whose sales far exceeded all three Remington offerings combined. Remington finally recognized the public demand for a side-ejection gun and the limited chamberings of their existing models. It fell upon Loomis to come up with a new design, with contributions from O.H. Loomis and C.H. Barnes. Development started in January

THE PUMP AT ITS PRIME



The Model 31's barrel is easily removed by turning the knurled barrel lock nut at the front of the magazine tube.



This California quail was no match for the quick handling Model 31.

1930, and the first Remington Model 31 was shipped to distributors in August 1931.

THE MODEL 31

The new design was based on the best attributes of the M17 but with side ejection and a simpler design than the previous models. It was initially offered in 12-gauge with 16- and 20-gauge added in 1933. Remington got it right this time. Like the M17, the barrel was easily removed by way of a knurled nut at the end of the magazine tube. This made for easy cleaning and the barrel could quickly be swapped out, unlike the Winchester M12 where the barrel and magazine come apart as a single unit. Remington's new gun had two frame sizes — a larger one for the 12, while the 16 bore was on a 20-gauge frame.

Now Remington had a gun on par with Winchester's iconic M12. However, its 1931 introduction coincided with the lowest point of the Depression, which was a very tough time to start production of a high quality, relatively high-cost shotgun.

If *this* wasn't enough, Remington's retail price for the Model 31 was \$48.95, while Winchester had just dropped the price of

the M12 to \$39.50. The high production cost of the M31 kept Remington from any meaningful reduction in retail prices for most of the pre-war years.

The M31 was made in 35 variations and grades from the Standard Grade to the TF Premier Grade with factory engraving and ventilated rib, which sold for \$302 in 1931. Most grades could be ordered with a number of special options. Some 8,992 M31s were sold to the U.S. Government for use during WWII though none are known to have been used in combat. Remington also offered an aluminum frame gun starting about 1941.

The M31 had several refinements over the years so not all parts are interchangeable. The most notable change was the early guns had barrel collars. In 1941 the trigger guard was lengthened and moved back.

PUMP ACTION PINNACLE

Remington discontinued the M31 in 1949 after a total production of 189,243 units of which 21.3 percent were in 16-gauge and 16.5 percent in 20-gauge. During the same period Winchester

produced 588,000 M12s. Interestingly, the M31 pulled within 12,000 units of annual production versus the Model 12 in the year it was discontinued.

The M31 was discontinued for the same reason the Winchester M12 was dropped 14 years later — production cost was too high and profit margins too low. The two guns, which represented the pump-action's pinnacle of design, craftsmanship, function and beauty, were dropped in favor of more easily manufactured and more profitable designs. Remington's status as a dark horse was to change in 1950 with the introduction of the successor to the M31. The Remington Model 870 would soon leave Winchester and the M12 in the dust.

BACK TO NOW

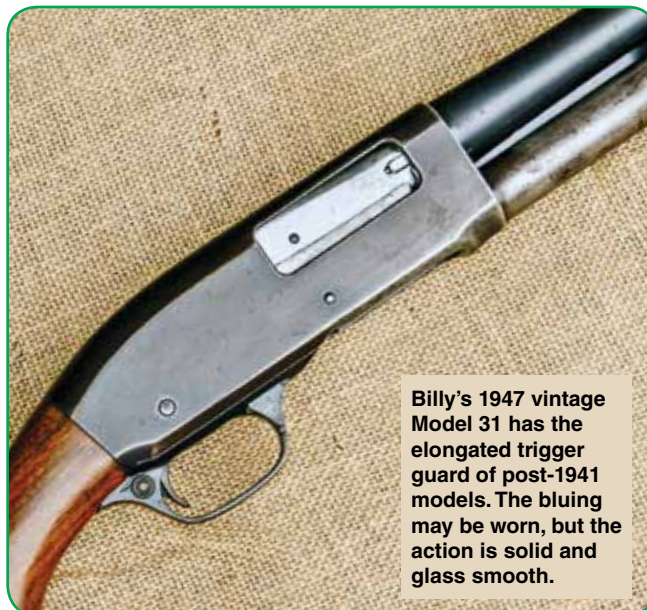
My gun is a post WWII gun made in March 1947. It sports a 26" barrel marked Improved Cylinder. Looking for a hunting, not collector, gun I wasn't disappointed when I found the gun only retained about 65 percent of its original bluing, much of it plum brown. The stock had the original finish but also three cracks in the pistol grip, which needed to be addressed.

Otherwise, the gun was “well used but not abused” and had no rust whatsoever.

Mechanically it was in great shape with a mirror-like bore. I repaired the cracks in the grip area, glass-bedded the action for additional strength, installed a 1" Pachmayr recoil pad and refinished the wood. Then, the forcing cone was lengthened to even out patterns and reduce recoil a bit. Afterward, upon patterning the gun, I found it prints 60 percent patterns with my No. 7 reloads at 40 yards — closer to a Modified choke.

MY GO-TO GUN

This M31 is my all-time favorite shotgun. At 6 lbs., 12 oz., it's a blessing to carry in the field. I love the handling of the 26" barrel for upland game here in Idaho as the gun quickly swings into action. The stock dimensions provide a perfect, effortless sight picture for me. No shotgun handles better in my hands.



Billy's 1947 vintage Model 31 has the elongated trigger guard of post-1941 models. The bluing may be worn, but the action is solid and glass smooth.

Finally, there's the issue of smoothness. These guns do not have ball bearings but I think the description of “ball bearing action” fits perfectly. I've never found anything comparing to the smoothness of the M31. It has a lighter stroke than Winchester's M12 or the Remington's M870, which replaced it. The stroke on the M31

is the shortest of the three at 3-1/2" inches compared to 3-3/4" for the M12 and 3-7/8" for the M870.

I prefer the placement of the safety behind the trigger guard compared to the forward placement on the M12. Furthermore, the slide-release button on the M12 is in an awkward position compared to the easier-to-find-release along the front right side of the trigger guard of the M31.

Don't get me wrong — I love the M12 Winchester. If something happens to my M31 and I can't find a replacement, you'll find me hunting with a 26"-barreled, 16-gauge M12.

However, until that sad day, I hope never to go afield without

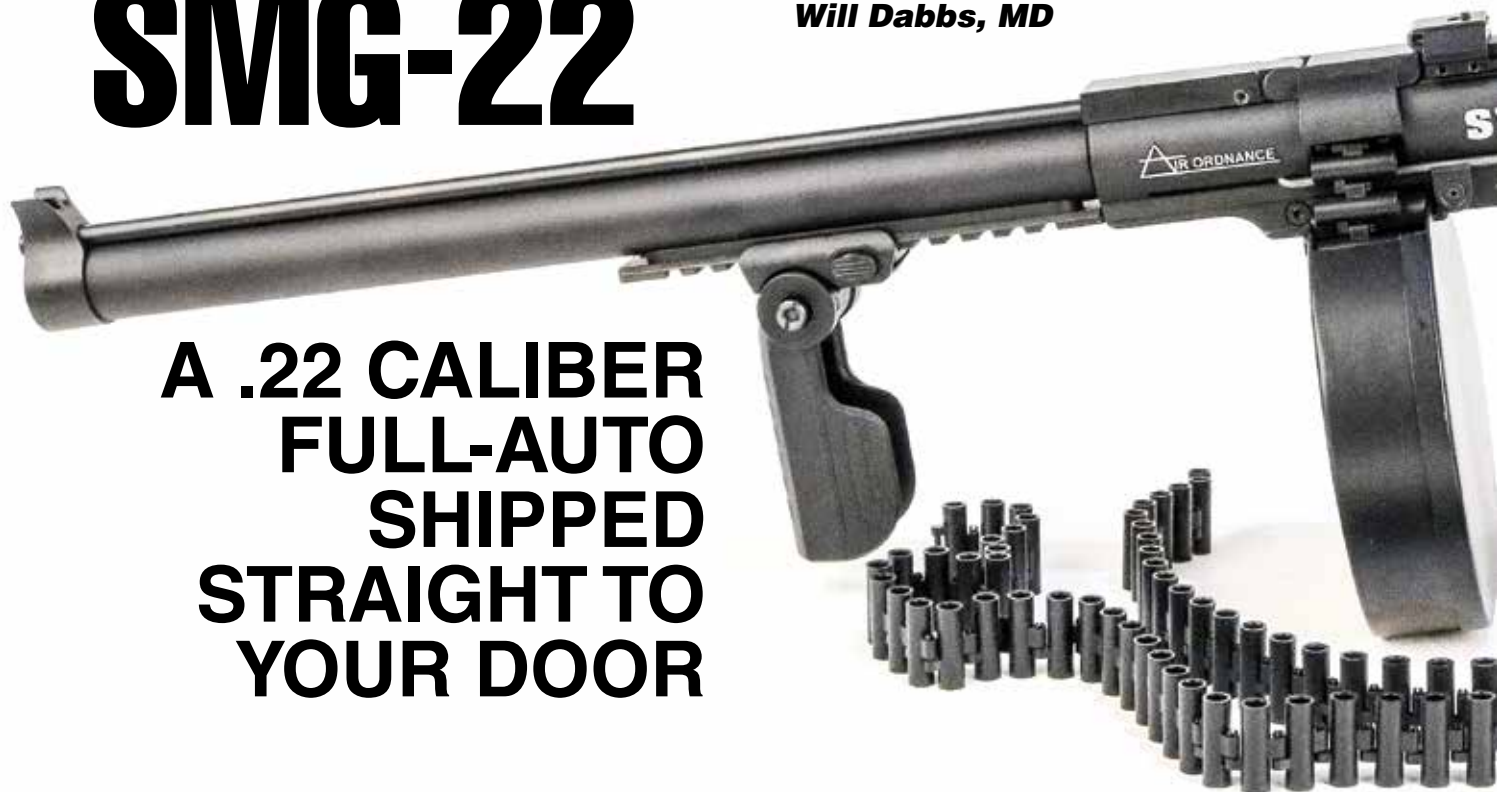
Remington's Model 31.

The author would like to thank Roy Marcot, President of the Remington Society of America, for key research material used in the development of this article.

www.remington.com

AIR ORDNANCE SMG-22

Will Dabbs, MD



A .22 CALIBER FULL-AUTO SHIPPED STRAIGHT TO YOUR DOOR

One of my first automatic weapons was an M16. Don't hate me for it, but back in 1987 I bought the stripped transferable full-auto receiver for \$600. The new machinegun ban had not yet seen its first birthday so the prices for transferable MGs had not yet gone insane. The same gun costs 20-grand today.

So what's a proper millennial gun nerd to do? A cheap transferable MG costs as much as a nice used car. Unless your name is Gates, Trump, or Soros, you'll not be amassing much of a full-auto collection in the Information Age.

Fortunately Air Ordnance has the answer.

EVERYMAN'S FULL-AUTO FUN

A transferable .22LR American 180 SMG cycles at about 1,200 rpm and will set you back around \$16,000. The transfer process takes about a year. They're also not making any more. Break it in some substantive way and you have a *very* expensive paperweight.

By contrast, the Air Ordnance SMG-22 is a genuine full auto .22-caliber gas-powered SMG they'll ship straight to your door and it sells for about what my M16 cost back 32 years ago. This gun sports a variable rate of fire, genuine belt-fed operation and requires nothing more than a credit card and a shipping address to own.

HIGH VOLUME MAYHEM

According to federal law, a firearm expels a projectile via some kind of explosive. Push the same projectile using

pressurized gas and the resulting gun is no more controlled than a doorstop. The SMG-22 can run off CO₂, compressed air or pressurized nitrogen.

The SMG-22 fires standard .22-caliber airgun pellets. You can buy those rascals at any Wal-Mart for a fraction of the cost of conventional ammunition. Paintball fields and some sporting goods stores can refill your CO₂ tanks. Drive your gun with compressed air and you can recharge using a scuba tank.

The first chore was to figure out how to get the pellets organized and into the firing chamber. The Air Ordnance guys designed a non-disintegrating belt-feed system to accomplish this task brilliantly. The end result is efficient, reliable, and effective, while still pegging the "Awesometer."

The gun fires from an open bolt and feeds from a 100-round belt which then goes back into the drum for easy maintenance. The top of the gun is railed for an optic (included) and the front end will accept a forward handgrip. The tank screws into the back of the pistol grip, and the rear of the receiver accepts a standard M4 collapsible stock.

The end result is fairly long and bulky and the center of gravity is a bit far to the rear, thanks to the tank layout. The manual of arms is an odd hybrid between a German MP40 and a Browning 1919. The end result is addictive.

BELT UP AND BLAST

You'll want several ammunition belts. They come as snap-together links. Once assembled you need not take them apart again. They seem plenty rugged.



The Air Ordnance SMG-22 belt-fed submachine gun ships straight to your door. This thing is just crazy cool.



The belt loading process is indeed laborious, but no more so than the same chore for a cartridge-fed weapon.



Loading the SMG-22 involves popping open the top cover and locking in a reusable ammo belt.

You first arrange the belt in the loading tray. You then put a perforated steel plate on top and pour your pellets out loosely onto the plate. Give the loading tray a little wiggle and the pellets automatically settle into the holes nose down.

Once you have a pellet in every hole, pour off the excess and use a handy pressing tool to seat the pellets five at a time. It obviously takes 20 iterations to fill a 100-round belt — a great thing to do while you catch up on your Netflix.

Stack the belt in the drum according to the instructions. Once you're ready to shoot, you lock the bolt to the rear, lift up the top cover — just like an M60 — and lay the first link into the

feed sprocket. Close the feed tray, point the gun toward something you dislike, and unleash chaos.

ADJUSTABLE RPM

The SMG-22 sports a manually adjustable rate of fire. I consider myself a bit of a connoisseur of machineguns, and I am particular when it comes to my cyclic rates. If you feel like a Grease Gun or Sten, set the gun to cycle at around 500 rpm. If you feel more in an M4 mood, then set it to 750 rpm. Covet an MP5 and 900 rpm is your goal. Should you feel profligate, then another twist will produce a blistering MG42-style 1,200 or so rpm.

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It fires from an open bolt like a real SMG and it comes with an optic for the rail.

Just like any automatic weapon, this thing will absolutely gobble up ammo. A 250-round tin of pellets is good for two-and-one-half belts. However, it is still massively more economical than anything running on fixed ammunition.

ON-TARGET AWESOME

The literature claims you can get about 600 fps out of your pellets. I used CO₂ and logged about 450 fps out of mine. This means engagements out to 60 meters or more begin to seem parabolic. The gun's still super fun; it just becomes an area weapon system at those distances. Where the SMG-22 really dominates is at CQB ranges.

I absolutely shredded a water-filled milk jug with a full 100-round mag dump without a single malfunction. In fact, so long as it is treated with some modest modicum of respect, the SMG-22 does not seem to malfunction. The mechanism was unnaturally reliable.

The unique manual of arms will reliably raise serum testosterone levels regardless of your gender. Snapping a drum in place, locking the first link into the sprocket and laying down a withering sleet of full-auto .22-caliber lead will reliably cure what ails you!

Although \$600 may seem spendy for a pellet gun, this is no ordinary pellet gun. This is a genuine belt-fed SMG. It doesn't hit quite as hard as a "real" gun, but it will absolutely wear out an empty Coke can. When compared to finicky and expensive transferable machineguns, the SMG-22 is an absolute steal.

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From its graceful bead-blasted Titanium frame to its top-shelf blade steel and machined pocket clip, the Impinda has all the trappings of a CRK knife.

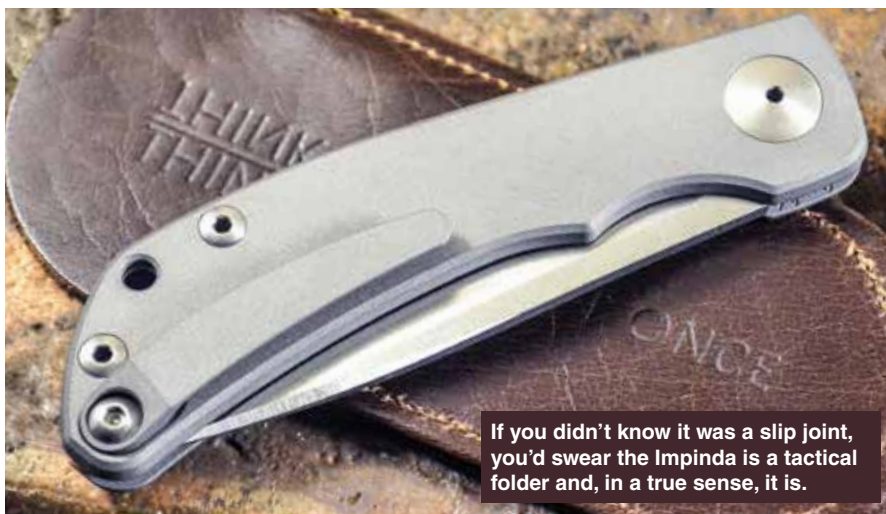
CHRIS REEVE KNIVES IMPINDA A TOP-OF-THE-LINE SUPER SLIP!

Prepare to change the way you think about slip joint pocketknives — the Chris Reeve Knives Impinda is not your granddad's traditional pocket folder by a long shot. Think Titanium. Think top-shelf exotic steel. Add the most unique pivot lock-up mechanism ever to grace a slip joint and you're almost there. The only thing left is to handle the Impinda. Once you roll the blade out, you'll know you've arrived.

Chris Reeve Knives (CRK) called on custom knifemaking veteran Bill Harsey — who has collaborated with the company on several projects in the past — to design the Impinda. Harsey's answer is a 3.1" blade rolling out of the folder's 4" handle with slightly increasing force until it locks up tight. His unique pivot cam/lock-up mechanism creates more force as it opens and, once locked in, the blade requires

more force to close, making it safer for the user by helping to avoid accidental folding during use.

The construction of the knife is pure CRK, starting with a beautifully machined and bead-blasted Titanium handle. The blade is a graceful hollow-ground drop point of Crucible Industries' CPM-S35VN premium stainless steel. There is a nail nick because slip joints should have one — but the blade has enough exposure to be pinch-pulled open as well. Out back is a machined pocket clip and on the base, the obligatory lanyard hole. Total weight is 3.38 oz. Yes, it's svelte for its size thanks to the weight savings inherent in Titanium.



If you didn't know it was a slip joint, you'd swear the Impinda is a tactical folder and, in a true sense, it is.

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT

Like all CRK knives the Impinda is upscale, but it's bulletproof and guaranteed for life. No other knife manufacturer has won more quality awards than CRK, a big reason serious knife users buy them like hotcakes. The Impinda design is very tactical, a rarity around the slip joint genre, and the added safety of the Harsey lock-up mechanism adds peace of mind. Despite its good looks, the Impinda is a hard-use knife to perform with the best and then some. MSRP is \$450.

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BACK IN SESSION CONGRESS RETURNS THIS MONTH – MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Something remarkable happened on the last Friday in March gun owners should habitually remind their congressional representatives about as they return to work in September.

A federal judge in San Diego ruled the California ban on so-called “high capacity magazines” was unconstitutional. U.S. District Judge Roger Benitez wrote in his 86-page ruling:

“Congress tried for a decade the nationwide experiment of prohibiting large capacity magazines. It failed. California has continued the failed experiment for another decade and now suggests that it may continue to do so ad infinitum without demonstrating success. That makes no sense.”

The case is *Duncan v. Becerra*, and it just might wind up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

With Democrats in control of the U.S. House of Representatives, they have launched a variety of gun control efforts, perhaps based on faulty or misleading data and it is time to call them out. If a federal judge can do it in the most liberal circuit in the nation, then Second Amendment activists can do it at home.

Refute misleading rhetoric with facts. Back in December 2018, a story in the *New York Times* declared:

“More people died from firearm injuries in the United States last year than in any other year since at least 1968, according to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

“There were 39,773 gun deaths in 2017,” the report continued, “up by more than 1,000 from the year before. Nearly two-thirds were suicides. It was the largest yearly total on record in the CDC’s electronic database, which goes back 50 years, and reflects the sheer number of lives lost.”

At least the story didn’t call all of those people “gun violence victims,” which is a long-standing habit of the gun control crowd. Indeed, the *Times* article made it clear far more people took their own lives than there were crime victims, and it is an important distinction. When you can

separate the actual number of homicide victims from those suicides and accident victims, one gets a better perspective about possible courses of action.

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Report for 2017, of the 15,129 murders reported during the year, 10,982 people were killed with firearms, a terrible number by any definition. Balance this against the estimated 80 million to 100 million gun owners and, by some estimates, more than 350 million privately owned firearms, which weren’t involved in any sort of crime – it amounts to a fraction of a fraction.

There are a couple of other numbers



California Attorney General Xavier Becerra

from 2017 one should remember. Of the 2017 firearm-related slayings, 403 were known to have been committed with rifles and 264 with shotguns. The same year, 1,591 people were murdered with knives or “cutting instruments.” Another 467 were killed with blunt objects and 692 were beaten or stomped to death (hands and/or feet).

So far, nobody has demonized knives, hammers, crowbars, golf clubs, baseball bats or other things used to commit murder.

Only firearms get the treatment. It doesn’t hurt to ask why.

Understanding how the gun control crowd plays the numbers game makes it possible to offer a reasoned counter-argument.

HERE CAME THE JUDGE

When it comes to making good arguments, there may be nothing better than the wisdom from Judge Benitez, a 2004 George W. Bush nominee. Elections do matter. Can you imagine a federal District Court judge nominated by Al Gore, or Hillary Rodham Clinton, writing the following?

“That large capacity magazines are useful in military service, there is no doubt. But the fact that they may be useful, or even ‘most useful,’ for military purposes does not nullify their usefulness for law-abiding responsible citizens. It is the fact that they are commonly-possessed by these citizens for lawful purposes that places them directly beneath the umbrella of the Second Amendment.” —U.S. District Judge Roger Benitez

An appeal by anti-gun rights California Attorney General Xavier Becerra was guaranteed the moment Judge Benitez released his ruling and he moved fast, asking for a stay of the ruling while it was being appealed. Becerra will defend his turf, even if it amounts to a legal landfill where, beneath a benign-looking surface there lies a mass of rotten legislation designed solely to erode the rights of honest citizens.

Judge Benitez offered so many juicy passages in his ruling it is difficult to pick the best with which rights activists can make an argument. But here’s one we found particularly relevant:

“Mass shootings are tragic. But they are rare events. And of these rare events, many are committed without large capacity magazines. For example, in the two high school incidents in 2018 one assailant used a shotgun and a .38 revolver (at Santa Fe High School, Santa Fe, Texas) while the other used an AR-15-style rifle but with 10-round magazines (at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida). In the attack at the Capital Gazette newspaper (Annapolis, Maryland), 5 people were killed and 2 injured by an assailant with a shotgun and smoke grenades. The Attorney General has not supplemented the record with a police report of the single mass shooting in California last year (at

the Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks, California). However, press reports indicate the shooter used a legally purchased pistol with an 'extended magazine.' Another report said seven 30-round magazines were found at the scene. Eighteen years of a state ban on acquiring large-capacity magazines did not prevent the assailant from obtaining and using the banned devices."

Translation: All of those California restrictions enacted over the years haven't really accomplished anything. If a federal judge can figure this out, why can't state and federal lawmakers? If you, the gun rights activist, can reason this through, why can't those who support restrictive gun laws?

The answer is simple. They don't want to, and they don't care that you do. Their agenda isn't about public safety, it's about public disarmament, and explaining this may require a bit of political incorrectness.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT, SHOULD YOU ACCEPT IT?

There will be more federal judicial appointments by President Donald Trump. Do your homework, find out about each nominee and support the confirmation of those who understand the Second Amendment doesn't grant a right, it protects a right, and it is equal to all the other amendments in the Bill of Rights.

The chairperson of the Senate Judiciary Committee is Lindsey Graham. He's the South Carolina Republican who unleashed a blistering verbal slapdown of Democrats on the committee a year ago, in the aftermath of the attempt to derail Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court (he may be contacted at 290 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, [202] 224-5972, lgraham.senate.gov).

While Sen. Graham might prefer to hear from his South Carolina constituents, in his role as chairperson of a powerful Senate committee, he should anticipate hearing from citizens who live in other states. It's your right and his responsibility.

ONE THING MORE

In 2018 the Senate did not act on National Concealed Carry Reciprocity legislation, allowing it to die after the House of Representatives approved the bill in late 2017.



Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC)

Back in January, legislation was reintroduced as the Constitutional Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act. We'll put something to rest right now because the rumor mill works overtime in an effort to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

According to South Dakota Sen. John Thune's website, this legislation does not establish national concealed carry standards and it does not provide for a national concealed carry permit. Got it?

Also, this legislation does not allow a resident to circumvent their home state's concealed carry permit laws, Thune's website continues.

All state laws concerning where and where not to carry are respected. No state laws are overridden, even if anti-gunners claim otherwise.

With Congress returning in September, and the traditional summer vacation season ending, it is now time to get politically active. Don't just work yourselves into a frenzy. Channel your energy and accomplish something besides yelling at the television or nodding your head at the latest Fox News report.

Find out who your two U.S. Senators are and connect with them here: www.senate.gov.

Remind your senator there are now 16 states with "constitutional carry" (no permit or license required), and three joined the category just this year. Passage of a national reciprocity bill could bring it a step closer for the entire country.

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The Ruger African in 9.3x62 has the classic looks of an African rifle.

RUGER AFRICAN 9.3X62

A CLASSIC PLATFORM FOR A STORIED GERMAN METRIC

Jeff "Tank" Hoover

As time ticks by, common guns lose their shine and we want something different. Something to put the green-eyed monster in friends' eyes, making them wish they owned one too.

Jason Cloessner, VP of Product Development at Lipsey's, has a knack for stirring those kinds of things up. He tweaks factory guns into Lipsey's Exclusives, using his knowledge and leverage to persuade the factory honchos to make guns to his specifications — in limited runs, so markets aren't flooded — to create a tinge of excitement. This is how the Ruger African came to fruition.

AFRICAN ROOTS

We all know guns serve as vehicles for our dreams and Lipsey's African series is just that. First in the series was the .275 Rigby, also known by its more common name of 7x57 Mauser.

Just using the Rigby moniker seduced guys like me with visions of 20th Century hunters such as W.D.M. Bell brainning elephants, with the precision of well ... a brain surgeon, but with an affordable rifle within reach of working stiffs.

OTTO BOCK

In 1905, Otto Bock designed an all-around cartridge for German settlers in Africa. Wanting to get the biggest bang for his buck — and using a standard-length 1898 Mauser as his platform — he developed the 9.3x62.

First loadings pushed a 286-gr. .366-diameter bullet around 2,150 fps. This was later raised to the standard 2,350 fps, nipping on the heels of the great .375 H&H, but made in a peasant-affordable Mauser (my kind of gun).

The 9.3x62 is basically a European .35 Whelen with a shorter neck. The 9.3x62 packs a little more punch than its American cousin but there is more behind the story.

The 9.3x62 has a rich history of use in Africa by farmers protecting crops from marauding buffalo and other large bovines, as well as being a man-stopper for anyone intending harm. Being more peasant than prince, the 9.3x62 was a

natural for me. Ballistics aren't flashy, they just plain *work* for this metric meat maker.

A SHOOTER FOR SURE

Shooting was done at 100 yards with a sandbag perched on a carpeted block of wood. I fired three-shot groups using two different loads from Hornady, and one handload using Speer 270-gr. Hot-Cor semi-spitzers loaded over a stiff charge of 3031.

The Hornady Custom ammo features a 286-gr. bullet and shot under 0.75". The Hornady Superformance International uses a 250-gr. bullet and printed just under 1". Lastly, my handloads shot just under 1.5". The Ruger African was obviously a consistent and accurate shooter.

THE RIFLE

Good stuff here: The walnut stock is sleek, with a delicate wrist, and feels good in your hand with stylish, tight-line checkering. The forearm is also checkered and has a contrasting ebony-tip forend in traditional African rifle style. The barreled action is a high polished blue with the traditional barrel band for both form and function.

The thin contour 24" barrel swings smoothly and





The 9.3x62 (left) is basically the .35 Whelen's stronger cousin. The 9.3 has a shorter neck, more powder capacity and slightly better ballistics.

effortlessly — the balance point is just forward of the trigger guard, as it should be.

The rear sight is a marvelously sculpted bridge-base with folding rear sight, while the front sight is fully banded and just

as handsome with a brass bead. A soft red rubber butt-pad will absorb any felt recoil for those afflicted with cream-filled shoulders.

A well-rounded bolt knob makes cycling the Mauser-like action a joy. It's got a non-rotating extractor with controlled round feed and fixed ejector for positive extraction. This, incidentally, marks the first time Ruger has blued their bolt knobs since the old tang-safety Model 77.

The Ruger Hawkeye African is a dandy. It's built Ruger tough with the stylish good looks of a turn-of-the-century safari rifle, without the cost. Chambered in 9.3x62, you'll be well armed for anything on this continent, as well as most African game.

The MSRP is \$1,279. If you want one, have your local gun dealer order you one from Lipsey's before they're gone. 

www.lipseys.com

www.ruger.com

www.hornady.com

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY 911

.380 MICRO: A CCW SHOOTING STAR

Mike Cumpston
with Deborah Davison

Springfield Armory has been a significant player in the concealable handgun arena and the 911 is their first .380 — and smallest handgun — in the Springfield catalog.

The 911 has a relatively short trigger reach and the slide and frame are measurably smaller than similar 1911-ish micros from other makers. At 12.6 oz., it's 0.8 oz. lighter than the Kimber and 2.6 oz. under the SIG 238.

The 911 features a loaded chamber indicator, a robust external extractor and a flat-wound recoil spring. The grip panels and trigger are G10. The material is lightweight and extremely tough, being produced by high pressure melding of fiberglass and epoxy.

Our sample 911 arrived as a complete CCW package riding in a zipper case complete with an owner's manual.



Introduced in 2018, the 911 is Springfield's first .380 and the smallest handgun in their line.

Two magazines are standard — a flat-base 6-round one and a 7-rounder with an extended floor plate. The magazines bear the Checkmate C.M.I cartouche — good news to those in the know about top quality mags. (The SIG 932 mag appears identical and functions perfectly in the 911.) The pocket holster is well designed and will remain in the pocket while shielding the trigger and safety lever, keeping the pistol in position for ready acquisition.

The 911 itself is 5.5" long, 3.9" tall from rear sight to the base of the flat magazine and 0.85" across at the widest part of the slide. It has positive ambidextrous thumb safeties, a passive firing pin block and a true partial-cock notch instead of the frequently substituted intermediate "step."

SIGHTS, TRIGGER

Five-shot groups from a sandbag rest from 25 yards averaged 4.3" inches. These were from seven premium loads and ranged from 4.0 to 4.9" — about what I get from all of the micro 1911s. The point of impact was about 4" left and the same distance low with the exception of Buffalo Bore's 100-gr. LFP, which hit about 4" high and centered.

The "left and low" tendency remained the same when shooting two-handed offhand. The sights have green tritium inserts with a large, visible day-glow green front bead. Drifting the sights in their dovetails would require cautious use of a



Five rounds each at 3, 7 and 15 yards. The 911 has a good trigger and is easy to shoot in CCW qualification drills.

sight-pushing tool to preserve the tritium elements. The measured let-off on the trigger was right at 5 lbs. as claimed.

AMMUNITION UPGRADE

Not too many decades ago there was but a single JHP load for the .380. It was loaded to high velocity and the bullet — pretty as it was — would expand perfectly if placed on a hard surface and struck with a 3-lb. ball peen hammer. From the standard-sized pistols of the day, it didn't fare so well.

I wondered if current .380 loads would perform as intended from the 2.7" of the 911, or if they'd pencil on through organic matter like an FMJ. On the average, the loads on hand lost 116 fps in comparison with the 3.6" barrel of my Walther PPK. My assortment of 90-gr. JHP loads — SIG Elite, Hornady Critical Defense and the Hornady American Gunner (XTP) — averaged around 920 fps. The Black Hills and Fiocchi loads both launched the 90 gr. XTP to 840+ fps.

A quick and dirty protocol involves shooting into raw meat and observing expansion. I shot several bullets from my ammo assortment through beef slabs thick enough to bring them to full expansion and caught them in water jugs set behind. All of them worked consistently — pretty much like the pictures on the boxes suggested.

PRACTICAL ACCURACY, SHOOTABILITY

The Springfield Armory 911 functioned perfectly with all loads. The 7-round magazine with external base extension provided room for all fingers on the grip and the highly visible sights and optimal trigger made shooting at the usual distance for CCW qualification very easy. I fired a tight group on the head of a B-27 target standing, two-handed at a comfortable pace from seven yards and then shot five rounds each on the scoring rings from 3, 7 and 15 yards, holding right and slightly high to compensate for the deflection from zero. Looking back at targets I have shot with the other micro 1911 .380s, I



Five rounds each at 3, 7 and 15 yards. The 911 has a good trigger and is easy to shoot in CCW qualification drills.

found the results to be the same.

Shooting at maximum speed from 3 yards, I dumped a full magazine into the 10 and X-rings. The 911 feels more comfortable recoil-wise than my PPK and delivers repeat shots significantly faster. Just for grins, Deborah and I fired a magazine each from 25 yards from an isosceles stance. Debra used her micro carry gun while I shot the 911. We both kept our shots inside the scoring rings with the bulk of them inside the 9-ring.

FINAL NOTE

Variations? How about a black nitride finished stainless slide and 7075 T6 aluminum alloy frame, or a stainless slide over black nitride frame? Either color scheme is available with a green Viridian laser. The pistol retails for \$599 in either color scheme or \$799 with the laser.

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ATHLON CRONUS SPOTTING SCOPE

A SURE HIT WITH LONG-RANGE SHOOTERS

Frank Melloni

Bang! "Miss, 6 inches right" ... Bang ... "No, too much, don't you know what 6 inches is?"

We've all been there, especially with new shooters. Trying to make a hit at long range is hard enough, but trying to get a rookie to learn what "X" feet or inches *really* looks like at extended distances is tough. Fortunately, Athlon's Cronus Tactical spotting scope makes it easier.

The Cronus Tactical is a 7-42X first focal plane (FFP) spotting scope that takes the guesswork out of corrections and range estimation. Housed inside the first focal plane is a mil-dot reticle, which stays relative to the target size throughout the entire magnification range. Using this reticle a spotter can see where on the scale the

shot impacted and relay accurate information back to the shooter, such as "1.5 mils left" instead of "I guess, like, 2 feet left." The reticle is marked in 0.2 mil increments for fast but precise measuring. Shooters with minute-of-angle scopes can just multiply by four for a good rough estimate (3.44 if you want to get technical).

The reticle also has a range-finding scale for PRS shooters



Athlon's newest optic comes with a Picatinny rail for mounting a laser rangefinder so you can identify and range targets with one hand. Photo: Athlon Optics

and those who enjoy shooting standard IPSC silhouettes. By using the lines off to the right and left in the bottom half of the reticle, a spotter can simply line up head to base and see how far away it is by the correlating number. Military and LE shooters also have lines subtending 72" to gauge how far away a 6 ft. tall man is. When my wife was checking the 600-yard target, I ranged her up — it worked!

If I had to explain the functionality of the Cronus, I would describe it as "A riflescope and a spotting scope had a baby." Focusing is done back by the eyepiece, like a riflescope — except it has a 3-position eyecup, like a spotter. You can also screw the Cronus onto a tripod via the standard thread. But like a riflescope, it is built on a straight tube for instinctual target acquisition as opposed to an angled housing which usually takes a few extra seconds while you figure out where you're *actually* pointing. The tube, incidentally, is built out of aluminum — like a riflescope — not plastic like some cheapo spotters out there.

Lastly, the Cronus has a Picatinny rail section at the 12 o'clock position and comes with a proprietary mount so you can slap on your favorite laser range finder to spot and range a target in seconds. This would be ideal for hunting, especially varminting where you may need to engage multiple targets quickly and at many different distances. We found the Cronus for sale on opticsplanet.com for \$999.99. Pricey,



The reticle of the Cronus uses ranging marks designed to work with the IPSC targets commonly found on PRS and 3-Gun courses. The lower marks can also range a 72" enemy combatant. Photo: Athlon Optics

but it *is* FFP and is built with fully multi-coated Extra-Low Dispersion glass so you'll be getting what you pay for. The price includes the scope, rangefinder mount and sunshade. The Cronus is also covered by Athlon's no-fault transferable lifetime warranty. For more information visit their website — and stop bickering about the range. You're grown-ups for crying out loud!

www.athlonoptics.com

STREAMLIGHT PROTAC 90 RIGHT-ANGLED, HANDS-FREE ILLUMINATION!

Will Dabbs, MD

I'm pretty old and back when I wore the uniform, we were issued those clunky green D-cell angle-head Army flashlights. They were as big as a paper towel tube and weighed as much as a hand grenade. They also didn't put out a whole lot of light. The angle-head design, however, had much to commend it. Now, fast-forward a few decades and Streamlight has done it so much better.

MULTI-BATTERY, MULTI-MODE

The Protac 90 is not much larger than your thumb, yet it produces 300 lumens of brilliant white light. Its "multi-fuel" design will run off either one AA alkaline battery or a single CR123A lithium cell. Both are included. The Protac 90 weighs less than 3 oz. and is waterproof.

There is a rubber pushbutton tail switch and the light offers three different programmable operating modes. Run time ranges from about 2 hours on maximum output to 15 hours on low. The light can be programmed to produce a disorienting strobe effect as well.

A BRIGHTER IDEA

The Protac 90 comes with a handy pocket clip as well as a nylon belt holster. The chassis is rugged, machined aluminum, and the unit comes with a limited lifetime warranty. What really sets this light apart, however, is its basic geometry.

The Streamlight Protac 90 is the everyday carry illumination solution offering true hands-free operation.



Unlike conventional in-line designs, the Protac 90 can be hung on your shirt pocket or belt and direct its beam out ahead of you for hands-free operation. It offers everything a lesser light might with no significant downsides. It's also small enough to ride around in your pocket with your car keys and sufficiently rugged to thrive there. Compact, powerful, lightweight and brilliantly contrived, the Protac 90 means you never have to be in the dark when it comes to illumination.

www.streamlight.com

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GUNS

MAGAZINE



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HAMMERLI ARMS, INC.

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Versacarry's *Compound Series* offers the comfort of a leather holster and the structural properties of a Kydex holster. The Kydex frame between layers of water buffalo leather gives a rigid structure to make it easy to re-holster and keep the front sight from snagging. The Compound Series is available in IWB and OWB models with adjustable hardware for adjusting draw tension. For more info: (855) 278-9678, www.versacarry.com



TRUE ZERO OPTIC SYSTEM
WILSON COMBAT

Wilson Combat's *True Zero Optic System* offers Mini Red Dot Sights (MRDS) as a custom shop installation service for most new Wilson Combat 1911 or GLOCK pistol orders. The system can also install the MRDS on existing 1911 or GLOCK handguns. The True Zero System requires slide machining and refinishing. For more info: (800) 955-4856, www.wilsoncombat.com



TACTICAL SHOOTING GLASSES/GOGGLES
HACKETT EQUIPMENT

The *Tactical Shooting Glasses* from Hackett Equipment feels larger than traditional glasses because they are designed for a wider range of sight and for better protection around your eyes. The glasses look like stylish sunglasses but converts into shooting goggles. They are ideal for work, riding a motorcycle, a day at the range or just everyday use. Available in Black, OD Green, Desert Tan and Pink. For more info: www.hackettequipment.com



CRACKSHOT XBR PACKAGE

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PERFORMANCE FIREARMS**

The *Crackshot XBR Package* from Traditions Performance Firearms consists of a Crackshot .22 caliber single-shot rifle and an XBR Upper. The Crackshot .22 caliber rifle has a 16.5" barrel and is ideal for small game hunting and plinking. The XBR

Upper turns the rifle into the Crackshot XBR that shoots Traditions Firebolt 2216 arrows. The arrows can travel up to 385 FPS and are paired with the Traditions XBR Powerload in .27 Caliber Long. The Crackshot XBR with a 20" barrel is accurate with a kill range out to 70 yards, has low recoil and emits a low decibel sound when fired. For more info: (860) 388-4656, www.traditionsfirearms.com



SBA4 PISTOL STABILIZING BRACE

SB TACTICAL

The *SBA4* is a 5-position adjustable brace compatible with all pistol platforms that will accept a mil-spec carbine receiver extension. Based on the popular SBM4 brace design, it comes with an ambi QD sling socket and an adjustable nylon strap. The *SBA4* offers the user enhanced cheek weld ergonomics, increased stability and improved accuracy while adding only 10 oz. of overall weight. For more info: (603) 854-5030, www.sb-tactical.com

PREPARED CITIZEN CLASSIC

MAXPEDITION

The *Prepared Citizen Classic* is a CCW-enabled backpack from Maxpedition. It looks like most common daypacks thus giving its owner an uninteresting and non-threatening appearance. This protects him and provides a tactical advantage. The Prepared Citizen Classic has an overall capacity of 1,360 cu. inches with a dual-side accessible, fully looped and lined concealed carry compartment. For more info: (310) 768-0098, www.maxpedition.com



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The *B.A.M.F.F. 10.0* combines a powerful spotlight for long distance visibility with a wide-angle floodlight for close-range area lighting. These can be used together or separately to increase the user's field of vision. The *B.A.M.F.F. 10.0* can produce as much as 1,000 lumens of light. It features premium CREE LEDs, an aircraft-grade aluminum body, a removable belt clip and five light modes. The *B.A.M.F.F. 10.0* is waterproof and comes with a full gun kit including a Picatinny rail mount, a traditional tail switch and a remote pressure switch. For more info: (833) 201-7143, www.strikerconcepts.com



DICER KITCHEN KNIVES

TOPS KNIVES

TOPS' *Dicer Kitchen Knives* are made of CPM S35VN premium steel with blue and black G10 handles. They are kitchen tools likely to be passed down from generation to generation. The Dicer will eventually be offered as a complete set but right now, there are two available: the Dicer 8 Chef Knife and the Dicer 3 Paring Knife. The Dicer 8 has an OAL of 12.25"; blade length is 7.75". For the Dicer 3, OAL is 7.88"; blade length is 3.5". For more info: (208) 542-0113, www.topsknives.com



500 CENTENNIAL LIMITED EDITION SHOTGUN

MOSSBERG

O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. celebrates its 100th anniversary with the limited edition *500 Centennial Limited Edition Shotgun*. Chambered in 12 gauge with a 5+1 capacity, the pump-action shotgun weighs 7.5 lbs. with an OAL of 47.5". The 28" vent rib barrel comes with Mossberg's ACCU-CHOKE tubes. The nickel-plated receiver is engraved with the Mossberg 100th Anniversary logo on the right side and ruffed grouse on the left, both highlighted with 24 karat gold accents. Designed for reliable, smooth operation, the pump-action shotgun features non-binding twin action bars, dual extractors, a positive steel-to-steel lock-up, anti-jam elevator and more. For more info: (800) 363-3555, www.mossberg.com



RAGING HUNTER .44 MAG AND .357 MAG

TAURUS

The *Raging Hunter* from Taurus received the American Hunter Handgun of the Year Golden Bullseye Award in 2018 for its reliability, innovative design and value. Two models are being offered: the Raging Hunter .44 Magnum (6-round capacity) and the Raging Hunter .357 Magnum (7-round capacity). Both come in three barrel lengths — 8.375, 6.25 and 5.125". Developed as a big-bore revolver for big-game hunting, the Raging Hunter features a unique barrel with factory-tuned porting and a gas expansion chamber to reduce muzzle rise and recoil. For more info: (800) 327-3776, www.taurususa.com

CITADEL AMERICAN FLAG 1911 AND AMMO CAN

LEGACY SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

Legacy Sports' *Citadel American Flag 1911 and Ammo Can* package consists of a full-size Government 1911 in .45 ACP and an ammo can. The can is fitted with an impact foam insert to nicely store the 1911 and two mags. Offered in three color schemes, the flag-decorated guns and ammo cans are coated in Cerakote with a Battleworn effect. For more info: (800) 553-4229, www.legacysports.com



GOOSE AND DUCK DECOY BAGS

ALPS OUTDOORZ

When hunting, carry your decoys comfortably with the 6-slot *Goose Decoy Bag* and the 12-slot *Duck Decoy Bag* from ALPS OutdoorZ. Both are designed to provide an organized and convenient way of transporting decoys in a waterfowl environment. Each bag features a technical mesh bottom panel and 600D polyester side and divider. A top drawstring closure secures the decoys in their respective slots for transport. For more info: (800) 344-2577, www.alpsoutdoorz.com

For more New Products visit us online at www.gunsmagazine.com



DELUXE AIWB HOLSTER

MTR CUSTOM LEATHER

The *Deluxe AIWB Holster* from MTR Custom Leather allows users to conceal larger firearms. The holster's "claw," a piece of plastic mounted under the trigger guard, uses the firmness of the gun belt to push the grip side of the holster and gun into your body. This prevents the grip from sticking out, a common occurrence during concealed carry. The Deluxe AIWB Holster provides full coverage for the weapon and trigger and is available for most firearms. Custom options include a tailored sweat shield, bull or exotic leather, single or double stitching and more. For more info: (336) 878-2166, www.mtrcustomleather.com



BEAR EDGE 61120

BEAR & SON CUTLERY

The *Bear Edge 61120* from Bear & Son Cutlery is an addition to its line of assisted-opening lockback knives. Designed for boot or pocket carry, the 61120 has a closed length of 4.5" and weighs 4 oz. Its 3" blade is made of black powder-coated 440 high-carbon stainless steel. The aluminum handle sports a Realtree EDGE camo pattern. Features include thumbs studs for quick left- or right-hand opening, a positive lock design to keep the blade in place when cutting, jimping along the handle and spine for a no-slip grip and a pocket/boot clip for tip-down carry. For more info: (256) 435-2227, www.bearandsoncutlery.com

UNIVERSAL PRESS STAND

LYMAN

The all-steel, heavy-duty *Lyman Universal Press Stand* accepts most single, turret and progressive presses. The stand will raise your press 9-1/4" above the bench surface to lessen your fatigue from having to bend over to cycle your press. It also provides a clear view of all reloading operations. The Universal Press Stand can be bolted or C-clamped to your bench. For more info: (800) 225-9626, www.lymanproducts.com



SMART BRUSHES

REAL AVID

Smart Brushes is the new line of gun-specific brushes from Real Avid. It shows a new approach to how guns should be cleaned. The brushes have four different shaped heads in two materials: phosphor bronze and nylon. They are designed to fit into the dark recesses of your guns as well as hard-to-reach areas like rails and bolts. Trimmed-down bristles produce more brushing power while reducing splaying. A glass-filled nylon handle bends in your hand but puts extra pressure on the brush. There are also angled picks and scrapers at the back of the brushes. For more info: (800) 286-0567, www.realavid.com



METAL AMMO CAN TRAY

MTM CASE-GARD

The *Metal Ammo Can Tray* from MTM Case-Gard is ideal for stacking, storing and carrying traditional metal military ammo cans. It's a practical way to transport and store 30- and 50-caliber metal ammo cans. Made of high impact plastic, the can tray (in Dark Earth color) holds multiple ammo cans securely. The 30-cal. tray holds four cans; the 50-cal. tray stores three. Trays are stackable with or without cans and can be stacked tall. For more info: (937) 890-7461, www.mtmcase-gard.com





MC1sc PISTOL PACKAGE

As Mossberg says on its website, "Trouble is unpredictable. It shows up without warning. It rears its ugly head when and where you least expect it." Mossberg offers the MC1sc as a countermeasure. It's a subcompact 9mm with optimal shootability and superior ergonomics. The MC1sc was built for concealment with a slim, dehorned profile for a snag-free draw. Made of lightweight and durable polymer and weighing only 22 oz. fully loaded, it's ideal for everyday carry. The MC1sc features a grip angle for easier targeting, aggressive texturing on grip panels for more control and a flat-profile

trigger for improved pull. It also has Mossberg's exclusive Safe Takedown System. With it, a user won't have to pull the trigger during disassembly. The pistol in this giveaway is a standard model and comes with TRUGLO Tritium Pro Night Sights.

This giveaway also includes four boxes of Hornady's *Critical Defense 9mm 115-gr. FTX* for "threat-stopping power." The ammo goes hand in hand with the MC1sc to give you protection when you need it.

The *ProTac HL-X* produces up to 1,000 lumens of light on high and will run up to 23 hours on low. Powered by

one Streamlight 18650 USB port or two CR123A lithium batteries, this handheld tactical flashlight is waterproof with several flexible lighting options.

Maxpedition's *Prepared Citizen Classic* helps the user appear uninteresting and non-threatening. Looking like most common daypacks, it actually has a fully looped and lined concealed carry compartment.

With these prizes, you'll be prepared to handle trouble if it ever comes your way. But you have to win first. All you need to do is enter! Just click on www.gunsmagazine.com/giveaways. You can also mail a postcard! —Jazz Jimenez



MC1sc PISTOL WITH TRUGLO TRITIUM PRO NIGHT SIGHTS

MAKER: O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc.
(800) 363-3555

CALIBER: 9mm, **CAPACITY:** 6, **BARREL
LENGTH:** 3.4", **OAL:** 6.25", **WEIGHT:** 19 oz.

www.mossberg.com

VALUE: \$526

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**TOTAL VALUE:
\$858.85**

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MAKER: Maxpedition
(310) 768-0098
www.maxpedition.com
VALUE: \$59.99



If you are unable to enter online, mail a postcard with your name and address (no envelopes please) to *GUNS Magazine*, GOM September 2019, P.O. Box 502795, San Diego, CA, 92150-2795. Entries must be received before September 30, 2019. Limit one entry per household.

CRITICAL DEFENSE 9MM 115-GR. FTX

MAKER: Hornady Mfg. Inc.
(800) 338-3220
www.hornady.com
VALUE: \$115.36



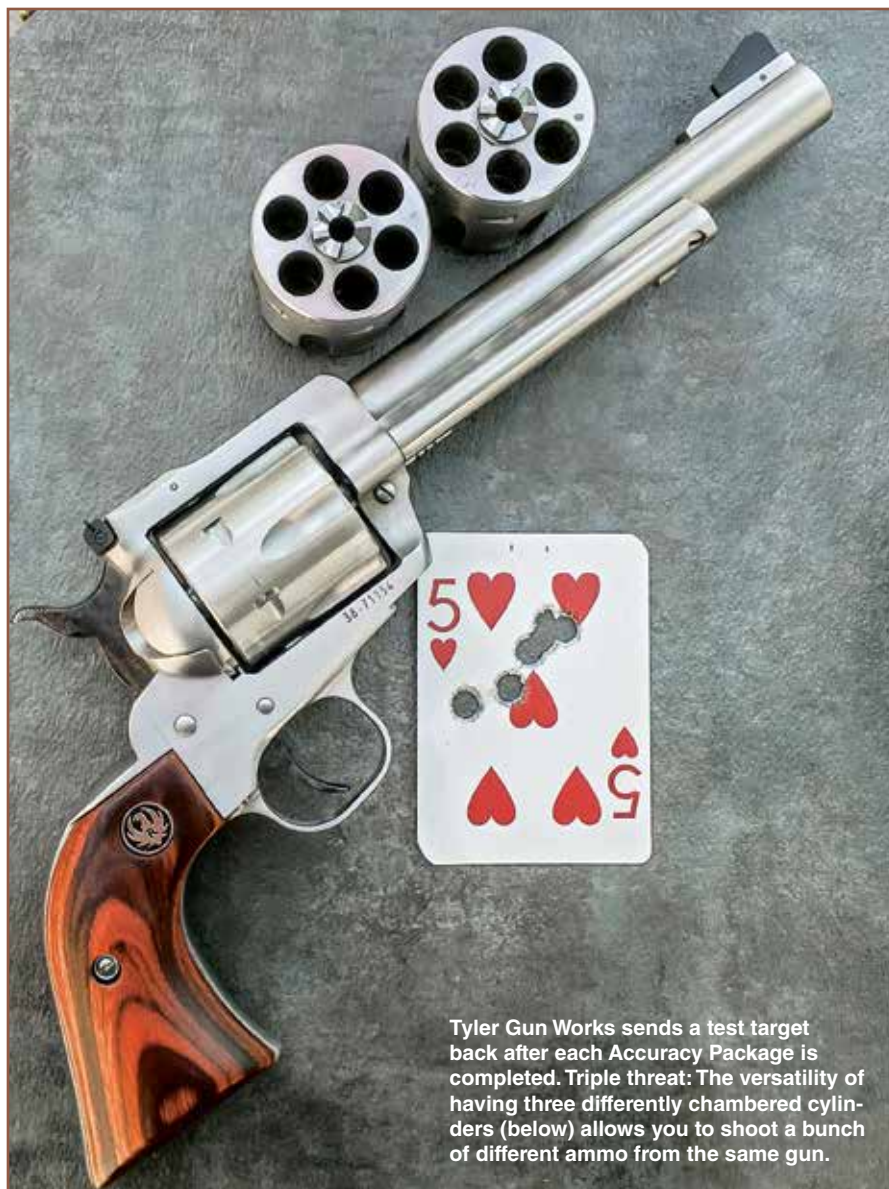
WINNERS CHOSEN BY RANDOM DRAWING. Limit one entry per household. To protect the privacy and security of winners, their names will NOT be made public. Contest void where prohibited by law. Winners must undergo a background check and comply with all other federal, state and local laws. Taxes and fees will 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.



PROTAC HL-X

MAKER: Streamlight
(800) 523-7488
www.streamlight.com
VALUE: \$157.50

TYLER GUN WORKS BLACKHAWK TAKING SINGLE ACTION VERSATILITY TO A HIGHER LEVEL



Tyler Gun Works sends a test target back after each Accuracy Package is completed. Triple threat: The versatility of having three differently chambered cylinders (below) allows you to shoot a bunch of different ammo from the same gun.



Last year, Ruger — in conjunction with Lipsey's — released their single-action Blackhawk in 10mm/40 S&W. The dual-cylindrical cyclone was met with great success. While everyone embraced a 10mm single-action with open arms, many wondered why inarnation would you bring the .40 S&W to the party when there are so many other cool calibers out there?

I for one was glad Ruger/Lipsey's utilized the 10mm Short (which is how I like to refer to the .40 S&W) for two reasons. First off, there's a lot of .40 S&W ammo still stashed in the gun lockers and closets of shooters out there. Plus, us retired coppers just may have an abundant supply of it for some sneaky reason. And what better way to blow those rounds out than through a classy thumb-cocker?

The second reason is for the more industrious individuals. The .40 S&W, chambering is the perfect candidate for a custom caliber. Those having a penchant for the historically hyphenated .38-40 can easily have the chambers punched out for it. And those with more modern inclinations can go with the snappy 10mm Magnum — a stretched-out version of the 10mm Auto.

A 10-SCALE WORK-OVER

While talking to Bobby Tyler one day, I asked him if he ever punched a .40 S&W cylinder out to .38-40? Laughing, he said, "Just send the whole gun so we can do it right." I did, and am I ever glad! Bobby turned my good shooting Blackhawk into a great shooting one!

He did a complete action job on the hammer and trigger. Cocking my single-action Blackhawk made me wonder if he forgot to replace the springs — it's that smooth. The trigger was creep-free and averaged just under 2.5 lbs.

Bobby then administered his Accuracy package, consisting of recutting the forcing cone to 11 degrees, followed by a polish and lapping of the barrel face, ensuring it's square, and lastly, setting cylinder gap so barely any sunlight can be seen when you hold it up. Finally, a target barrel crown completed the job.

For style (and his signature trademark), Bobby color-casehardened the stainless



steel hammer and trigger — giving the stainless gun much-needed warmth while upping the Coolness Factor tenfold.

HANDGUN HAT TRICK

So now, I have a sixgun capable of shooting 10mm and .38-40. What could be better? Not knowing when to stop (and still having a closet full of .40 S&W ammo), I started looking for a Blackhawk cylinder chambered to the short, straight-walled case.

This is where it pays in spades having sixgun buddies to help us out every now and then. I found a willing donor and, as luck would have it, the cylinder fit was perfect! Since the rimless cartridges head-space on the mouth of the brass, you can't shoot .40 S&W out of the 10mm cylinder. Now I have a triple-threat thumb-cocker capable of shooting three different kinds of ammo.

Shooting the Tyler Gun Works tuned sixgun is a symphony of perfection, and shooting lead out of any single-action is a natural. My favorite molds include a Lee 145-gr. SWC in the .40 S&W, along with their 175-gr. TC design in both .40 S&W and 10mm.

I had a special mold from Arsenal molds in a Keith style SWC. Loaded over 8.5 grains of Unique makes for an accurate and potent .38-40 load.

Factory loadings for the .40 S&W were represented by Black Hills, including their 115-gr. HoneyBadger and a 140-gr. Barnes TAC-XP. The 10mm fodder was represented with 125-gr. HP Honor Defense ammo and some SIG 180-gr. Elite FMJ.

Another Tyler touch (above): A target crown for Tank's Blackhawk. Color casehardening of the hammer and trigger (below) really spruce up a stainless sixgun.



Everything shot surprisingly well, as it should in a well-tuned single-action. Groups were all around 2" or better at 50 feet from a sandbag rest. The HoneyBadger ammo almost shot a one-hole group. Need I say more?

HITTING THE TRIFECTA

Now I have a triple-threat shooter at my fingertips. Pull the base-pin, swap cylinders and I'm ready to go with the caliber of my choice. You just may be a better shot than you think you are after Bobby and the Tyler Gun Works crew works your gun over. I know I was!

If I happen to stumble over another .40 S&W cylinder, I just may have it chambered for the 10mm Magnum, providing me with a Fearsome Foursome Fightin' Iron. It's the only way I could possibly improve on what I have now.

www.tylergunworks.com

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In this particular episode on the Winchester Model 1873, I caught several mistakes and I wanted to call Terry immediately but now we'll have to discuss it when I, too, cross over the river. In this particular segment it was stated as fact Oliver Winchester — after he saw the success of the 1860 Henry — bought the Henry Rifle Company and changed it to Winchester. Not even *close* to the truth!

In 1855 Oliver Winchester and his partner purchased the remaining assets of the Volcanic Arms Company. They changed it to the New Haven Arms Company and hired B. Tyler Henry as shop foreman. Henry designed the rifle bearing his name. There never was a "Henry Rifle Company" until the arrival of Henry Repeating Arms in the last quarter of the 20th Century. Winchester was not quite ready to put his name on such an endeavor. After the success of the 1860 Henry the company name was changed to Winchester and the 1866 lever gun was the first to bear the Winchester name.

I really regretted not being able to share a laugh with Terry over it!

TOUCHING BASE OVER THE YEARS

How many times have I heard it said Elmer Keith invented the .44 Magnum? Terry and I discussed this several times, along with the fact Elmer said he was as surprised as anyone was when he got the call from Smith & Wesson in December 1955 about his .44-caliber dream becoming reality!

I've also seen it in print Elmer Keith invented the .357 Magnum! Again, not true. Keith did do a lot of work with heavy loads in the .38 Special after Smith & Wesson came out with the .38/44 Heavy Duty sixgun. He designed a special bullet — Lyman's #358429 — with a long nose to fill out the cylinder of the .38-44.

When Smith & Wesson brought out the .357 Magnum with the same length cylinder, it was found Keith's bullet was too long to be properly crimped in the groove of the longer brass and fit the cylinder of the new magnum sixgun. So Keith continued to use his .38 Heavy loads in the new .357 Magnum. In fact, he reported the hits on long-range targets in Ed McGivern's book (out to 600 yards) were accomplished with his .38 Heavy in a long-barreled .357 Magnum S&W. Terry,



John and good friend Bill Jordan present the Outstanding American Handgunner Award to Harry Reeves.

of course, knew this also.

Every two months Terry would call me to tell me he just received the latest issue of *Handloader* and tell me about all the good things in it (he always received his copy at least two weeks before I did). This past issue came to me very early and I couldn't even call Terry and tell him I already had mine.

He also called me every time *GUNS* and *American Handgunner* showed up to tell me about all the good stuff in them. He read all three magazines cover to cover. Terry was also a great fan of college football and he would also call me and tell me about some of the teams which I had very little knowledge of except for Boise State. When Boise finally hit the big time and defeated some very worthy opponents in bowl games, I think he was even happier than I was (even if he lost a buck on our bet!).

This past bowl season, "his" team Ohio State won big and my first thought was to call Terry, but he'd passed just before Christmas and, unfortunately, long-distance phone calls don't work when trying to call Heaven. I will continue to think of Terry often especially when I see or hear glaring errors. I always knew he would know exactly what I was talking about. Many of the history books in my library are there because Terry recommended them and now that is done.

SPECIAL EDITION, SPECIAL SHOOTIST

When the first Shootist Special Editions were issued Terry couldn't afford to purchase one, which was unfortunate since he

was directly responsible for the project. In the early 1990s Terry had contacted Tom Ruger to see about a special Ruger sixgun for the Shootists. I was sitting in Bill Ruger's office when he got the phone call telling him about Tom's fatal leukemia. After Tom died I told Terry to wait a while and then contact Bill directly and see if he wanted to carry on the project as a tribute to Tom. Terry did and Bill agreed and the result was the 4-5/8" stainless steel .22 Bisley Model, specially marked in honor of Tom Ruger. Several Shootists came together and made sure Terry received one. It was presented to him as a gift from Deacon Deason after Deacon passed on in 1994. They're probably discussing this right now.

The last time Terry was visiting me he had two very special Ruger .22s. One was a little Bearcat, which not only shot superbly accurately, its muzzle velocity registered much higher than you'd expect from such a short barrel. His other .22 — which he cherished a great deal — was his Bowen-customized Single-Six.

When Terry talked about this project he had planned to stay with the 6-1/2" barrel and I told him he absolutely had to go with a 7-1/2" barrel, which he did. He was never sorry and this particular Single-Six with its bright blue and case hardened colors is as beautiful as they come. I hope someone has it now who'll appreciate it.

Terry old friend, my adopted little brother, I'll see you down the line. Keep the bacon sizzling and the beans bubbling and don't let the campfire die out.

ABSENT FRIENDS

WHEN A SHOOTING BUDDY PASSES, IT LEAVES A MIGHTY BIG HOLE

Regular readers know I never repeat myself, however I sometimes, well, *review* things. I've often said the best part of my job is not all the guns, but rather all the friends I've made — friends who not only taught me much but were also great encouragers. I've corresponded with many of them regularly, and when the letters and phone calls stop it usually means they've been called Home.

Never in my wildest dreams could I have ever envisioned such men as Rex Applegate and Bill Jordan being friends. Both of them called me on a regular basis and I've missed

those phone talks for a long time now.

Hal Swiggett was a very special friend and fellow Shootist; he helped me in many

ways. John Lachuk was a great encourager. I always enjoyed visiting with John Wootters and we were definitely close kin when it came to sixguns. It has been more than 30 years ago since John saw my article on "Lil Guns" and he wrote me a long letter about his friendship with Skeeter Skelton and also how Skeeter's Custom Ruger .44 Special came to be. The last time I talked to him by phone was just before he passed and we discussed small-bore rifles. Two giants in the industry, JD Jones and Wayne Baker have been close friends for four decades (I'm blessedly joyful they're both still around). Wayne was just here this past week for a visit and we spent much time discussing important things like Faith, Family, Friends and Firearms.

A FELLOW CRITIC FOUND

I just finished watching an episode of *Gun Stories* and as I listened to the expert I immediately thought, "I have to call Terry Murbach." I first met Terry in 1988 at the first Masters Tournament in Barry, Illinois. I was eating lunch in the hotel dining room when this fellow walked up and introduced himself. We shared lunch together and were friends ever since. Terry was a voracious reader and he and I both shared a real appreciation of history. Today history is being rewritten both deliberately and through a flat-out lack of knowledge. Whenever I caught a mistake by any of the so-called experts on TV, I'd call Terry and we'd both decry the misinformation being disseminated.

continued on page 81



Buena Vista around 1990 (left to right): Bob Baer, John Taffin, John Wootters, Bart Skelton, Jim Wilson and Terry Murbach.



First meeting, Masters Tournament, 1988 — John and Terry.



Ohio get-together (left to right): Blackie Sleevea, JD Jones, Terry and John.



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