

HANDGUNNER

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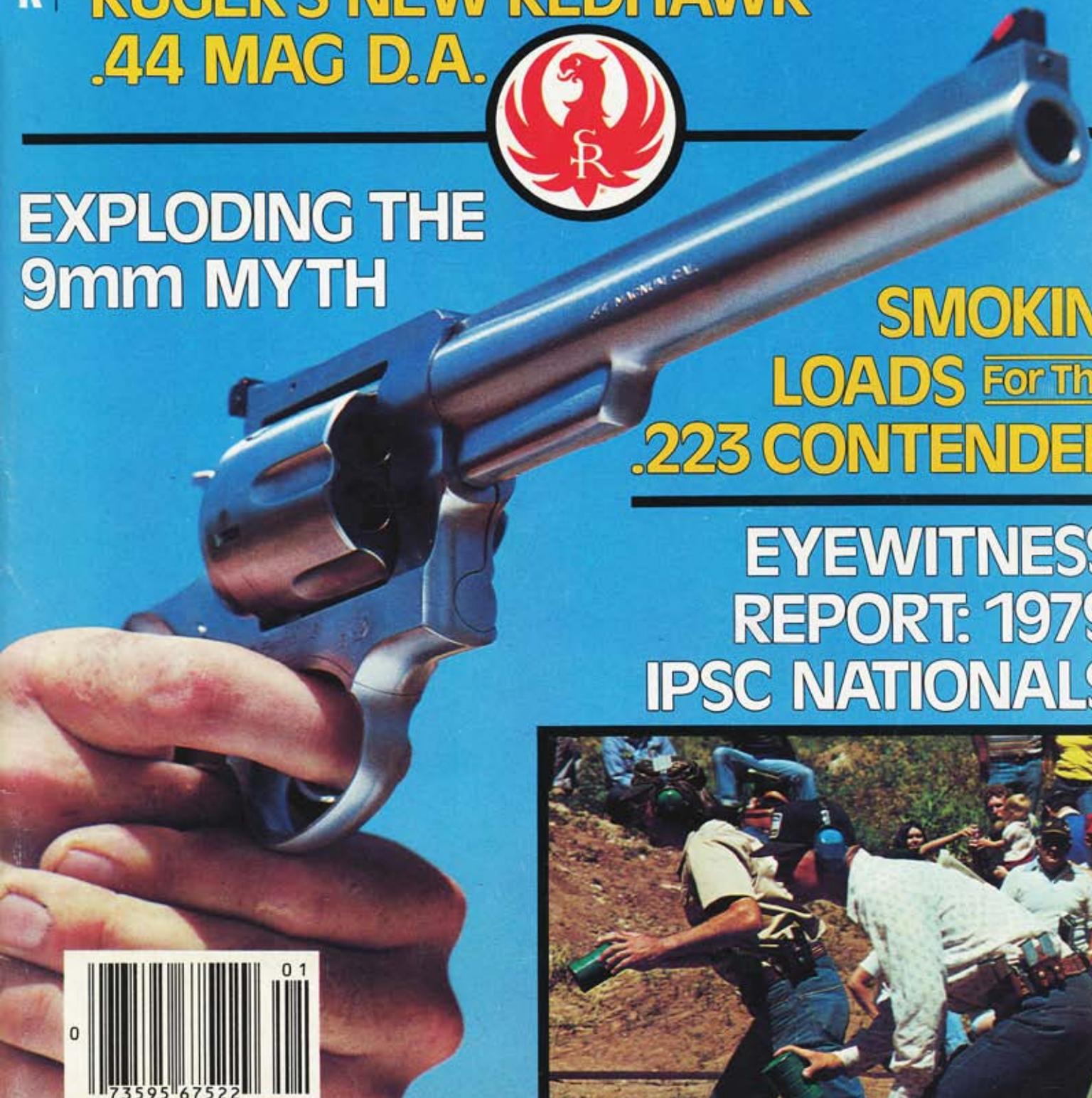
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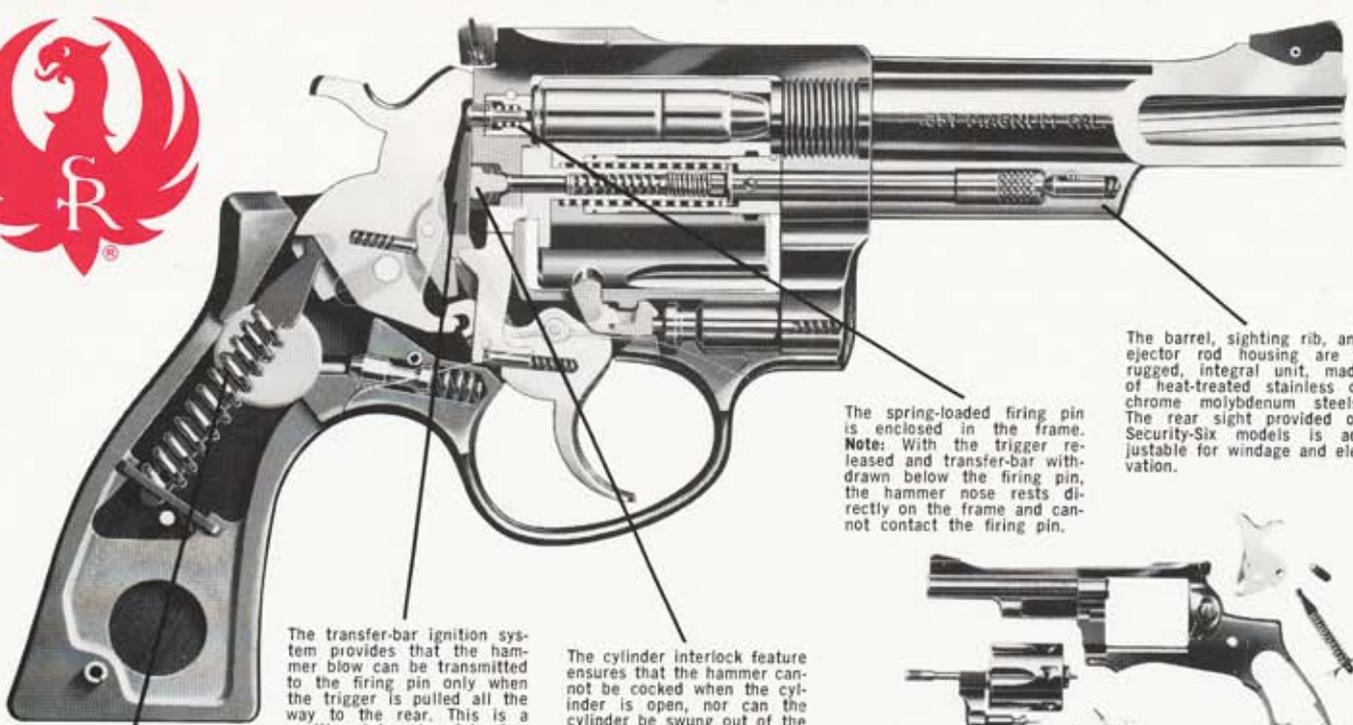


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THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1980 Vol. 5 No. 1-20

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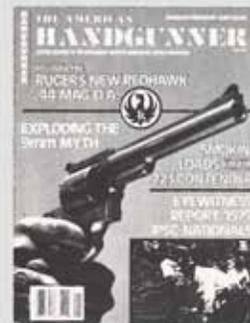
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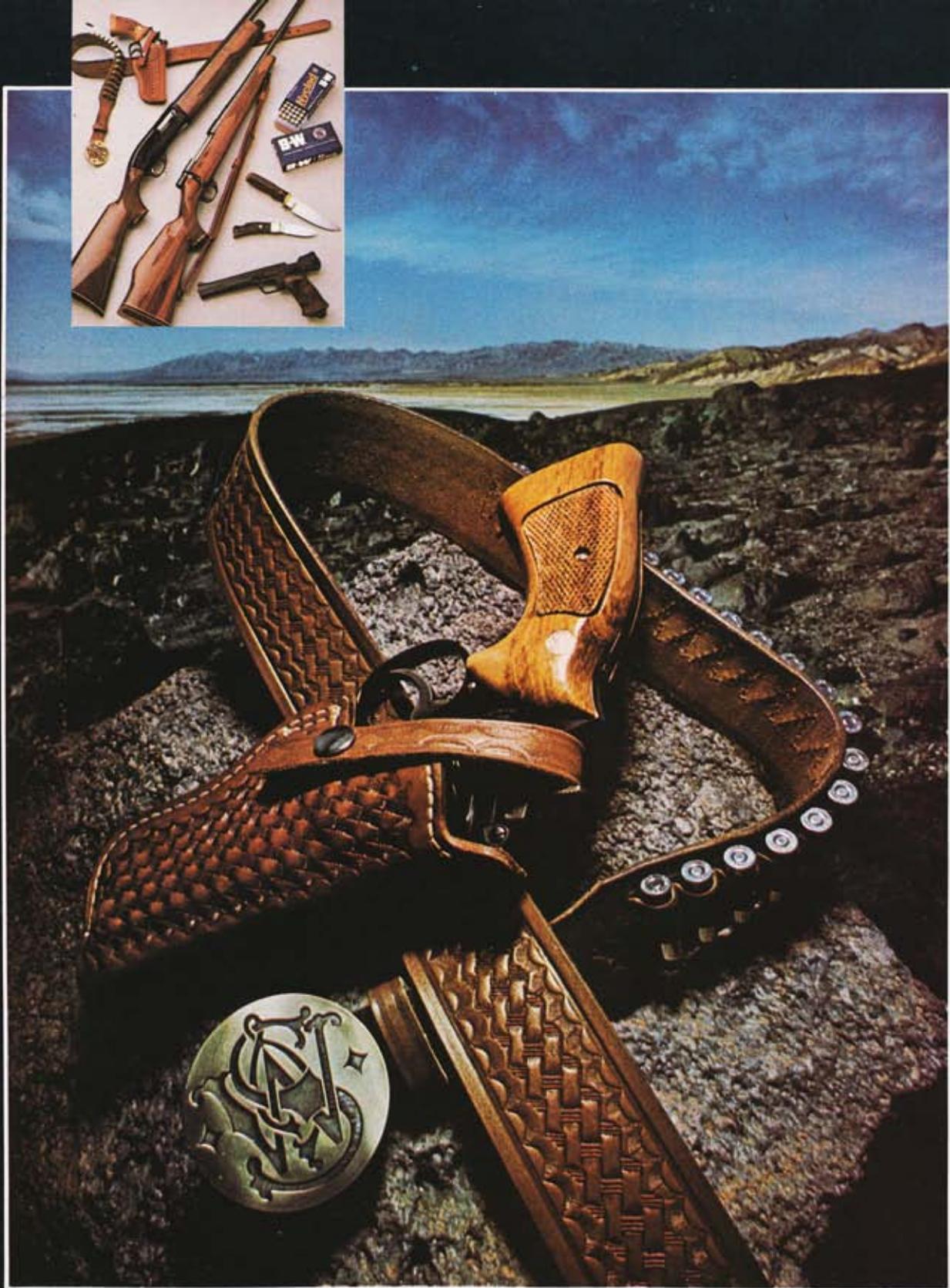
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PHILIP C. BRIGGS

SIGHTS FOR SORE EYES

Today's unlimited pistols, especially the bolt guns, are good enough to shoot possibles anytime. All the shooter has to do is align the sights, hold the proper sight picture, and squeeze the trigger. And yet, considering the number of well-equipped shooters trying, there aren't that many straights being shot.

Why? Well, I'd guess it's because most people can't see the sights well enough to achieve or maintain proper alignment and/or they can't see the target or the sights well enough to hold a consistent sight picture. What you can't see, you obviously can't hit. Now, some people just see better than others and, if you're one of those people, you're fortunate. But don't give up the game if you're not, as there are some basic choices you can make as well as some fine tuning you can do to close up the gap.

Many of the early unlimiteds were built with peep rear and globe front sights; it still seems that those you see in magazines, whether featured in a story or in an ad, are so equipped. Witness the big spread on custom XP's in the January/February "Handgunner"—peep rear and/or globe front sights on every one that wasn't scoped.

I expect this situation developed because of two facts: 1) This sight combination is the most accurate iron rifle sight combination available; 2) It looks trick. It has probably persisted because everybody seems to be doing it.

Consider that first fact for a moment. On a rifle, the peep sight is a few inches from the eye and you just look through it and put the front sight, whether post, aperture, or crosshair, on the target. The eye, at that short distance, tends to center the front sight/target combo in the peep. On the pistol, however, the peep is around eight inches from your eye shooting prone and maybe twenty-four inches away when supine. Some find the peep an aid when shooting prone, but any farther away and the peep's self-centering benefit is lost. It's just another sight to line up. Thus, whether the peep or the standard open notch is easier to align depends on your vision and, to some extent, if you shoot prone, side-winder, or Creedmore.

The first choice is then between the transplanted (misplanted?) peep, and the sort of sights that have been used on pistols

for a couple-three hundred years. As you can tell, I've made my choice, but let me give you a few more thoughts to consider.

Besides being able to see the sights, you have to be able to position them on the target. The peep reduces the amount of the light reflected from the target that reaches your eye, as well as restricting your view of the target. If the target is dusty, partially obscured, or contrasts poorly with the background, you're in trouble. With the open sight, you can quite often cope with the situation.

At the Idaho IHMSA State Championship this year, the sponsoring club had painted the rams white, and one bank faded into the sagebrush as the day pro-



Here's a Dever-built XP-100 with a Micro sight on a custom base.

gressed. By noon, when I shot, you could barely see the fifth one with the naked eye. The belly line, my usual reference, wasn't very clear on the rest of them. The rail they were on was thick enough to be visible though, so I cranked four more clicks into my Micro. Setting the top of the sights on the rail and aligning the sights under the center of the left-hand fuzzy white spot, I touched off the first round. It fell, much to my relief, as, in turn, did the White Ghost of the Desert. You just can't do that with a peep/aperture combo.

It's because of these sorts of problems that every shooter around here that started with a peep has switched. The Idaho shooters told me the same story—few still use peeps.

Some people shoot peeps and do well, of course. Jimmy Mitchell, New Mexico IHMSA Director, and silhouetter since the first El Paso shoot, prefers them, as he shoots in a lot of mirage. Jimmy says that when the targets fuzz out from the heat, he can just center the indistinct form and

dump it. So, the choice depends somewhat on where you shoot, and the conditions you'll encounter.

On bolt guns the rear sights are almost always hung on the rear receiver ring. If you'll accept the premise that a peep sight on a pistol is just an open sight with a circular notch, you'll have to admit that you can't focus on either type of rear sight and the front sight at once—that's just the way the eye works. Now, consider for a moment your ability to focus on two objects that are a fixed distance apart as they are moved farther and farther from your eye.

As you move away, the two objects seem to get closer together, and both will eventually come into perfect focus. You can take advantage of this phenomena by moving the rear sight to the front receiver ring, and the front sight to the end of the barrel. That's not enough of a move to cure the problem, but it is a step in the right direction. How much it will help you is a function of your vision. One of our new AAA shooters had his sights moved up at my suggestion. With no opportunity to practice with the new rig, he lay down at the next match and shot a four-0. "I can see the sights now," he said. That's the last time I share a trick with him.

So there's your second choice.

Now, whichever sight type/placement you choose, don't just lie down and shoot them. Try some variations.

The peep will come with a standard insert. Try different sizes including none at all (just the holder). Don't be afraid to drill an insert out to get that special size. You'll find that different sizes work best for each animal, and the best is effected by lighting conditions. A Merit adjustable insert will allow you to cope with this situation, and may be your answer.

If none of the peep inserts seem to work—don't despair. Williams and T/C both make a regular open sight blade that replaces the insert holder and turns a receiver peep into a receiver open sight.

The globe sight comes with an assortment of posts and apertures. Try them all.

Once you get the typical pistol sight mounted, you'll probably find the notch is too wide for the front sight. You can change either.

It's pretty simple to cut a new rear sight blade for the Micro, with a notch in your choice of width. For the Williams or the T/C you can superglue a custom blade on the back of the stocker.

Up front, of course, you can fit a different width blade in the ramp, or try the various posts that come with the globe. Whichever set-up you have, I'd suggest you try some fronts that are narrower than normal for pistols. Just don't go too far, as sight definition suffers.

If all of these options have left you confused, I'd suggest you try a Micro and a square blade. It's as inexpensive a combination as you can find, and it works well.

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Handgun Hunting

J. D. JONES

Hunting is fine—but without a little “finding” thrown in now and then it gets a little tedious. Tell me about it. One year I travelled over 10,000 miles, spent many bucks, and ended up with four poop ducks and acute sinusitis.

Frankly, a lot of hunts are unsuccessful simply because the hunter can't shoot

“Frankly, a lot of hunts are unsuccessful simply because the hunter can't shoot worth beans.”

worth beans. In addition—he thinks he is good and has absolutely no idea of his real capability. I've had numerous guides to tell me they hate to guide for Bullseye shooters. Doesn't make any difference if it's rifle or pistol. According to the guides—the Bullseye shooters have trouble getting it together with the sights on hair.

Now I don't particularly buy that in general. Any fairly competent competitive

Silhouette shooting comes in handy as good hunting practice

shooter knows the elements of sight alignment and trigger squeeze. A little experience on hair and he'll probably outperform the field shooter. Having been a field, bullseye, silhouette and bull shooter, I'll have to say handgun silhouette shooting is the best training ground for game shooting with a handgun outside of actually shooting game.

If you want a humbling experience, go to your nearest silhouette range, plunk down your bucks and crank off 40 from standing—or sitting or however you want to. It will probably ruin your day! In actuality, the expertise gained on a silhouette range is mighty handy in hunting. You know that distances are involved when you see an animal. You know your own capability. You know either to shoot, pass or what your odds are. You have learned self-discipline as applied to shooting. In short you have become a more efficient killer. And that's what it's all

about. Any animal worth hunting deserves a clean kill. Just about everyone takes a shot or two that he regrets. Becoming proficient at silhouette will go a long way toward minimizing those regrettable shots.

Now, you've become a AAA shooter in all classes—on stationary targets. What do you do on moving game? Beats me; I just do what feels good and it seems to work. I don't have the opportunity to bust running jacks very often and simply haven't really studied the problem. In essence, rolling tires downhill with cardboard centers in them may help some but probably not much.

The question of lead at normal handgun ranges is probably over-emphasized. I

“The question of lead at normal handgun ranges is probably over-emphasized.”

tend to lead too much with a shotgun. On moving targets with a handgun, I try to hold where I want to hit and maintain the hold while I squeeze off. I do not stop my swing to shoot. On occasion when a very fast shot is necessary, I “wipe” the gun across the target, firing when it feels good. I do not shoot when it doesn't “feel good.”

In any event I'd like to hear from you about moving target shooting with a handgun and explore the problem through Handgun Hunters International (P.O. Box 357MAG, Bloomingdale, OH 43910). I would also like to have you as a member—and subscriber to The Sixgunner. Send

Handgun Hunter International is a good organization... for \$12.50 you can't go wrong

\$12.50 to join. Maybe someone can come up with a simple, inexpensive, speed controlled target. For more info on Silhouette—try Box 1609, Idaho Falls, ID 83401.

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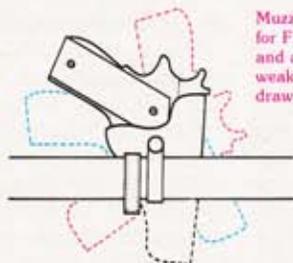


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Industry Insider

JEROME RAKUSAN

Appearance of RUGER's "Redhawk" is the big news in handgunning right now. Big and rugged, it is exactly as described by Massad Ayoob in this column several months before the veil was lifted. Those who have seen and fired it feel that it will steal much thunder from Smith & Wesson's model 629 stainless .44 Magnum. Ruger engineers we've brainpicked on the Q.T. swear that the new internal design will allow adjustments for smoothness and lightness that will go beyond anything previously possible in a large frame, double action revolver.

The Redhawk is distinctively more massive than S&W's .44 Magnum, yet has a pleasant feel, and surprisingly good balance. Recoil comparisons are highly subjective. Most agree that the greater weight does indeed soak up more of the mighty .44's recoil in the Redhawk. Grips feel a bit trimmer than those on the Smith, and only your hand size and shape will determine if that's good or bad for you. In any case, a proliferation of custom grips should be available almost as soon as the guns are. Guy Hogue is starting to turn them out already...

Though gun magazines would have you believe that 9mm. and .45 autoloaders are all the rage amongst lawmen, observers close to the police community say that, if anything, more cops are turning away from automatics than toward them. The average policemen's general distrust of automatics, and some bad experiences with certain double action autos, are the main reasons why.

The big trend instead, police insiders say, is away from the .38 Special and toward the .357 Magnum. The .357 was for decades considered only a highway patrol gun, because its penetration, while good on auto bodies, was too excessive for urban areas crowded with bystanders. Sophisticated hollowpoint projectiles eliminate this problem, while also delivering dramatic stopping power.

A major midwestern city is a classic example. There had been several cases of .38 Special slugs failing to put criminals on their backs before they could shoot policemen, so in 1975 the department went Magnum, issuing a 140-grain softnose Mag load. Unfortunately, softnose .357 slugs are toughly jacketed for big game hunting, and tend to penetrate human targets com-

pletely, while expending little force. At least two officers were shot to death after hitting their murderers in vital areas with these bullets.

The department undertook an exhaustive series of tests, and settled on the Federal 125-grain jacketed hollowpoint round in .357 Magnum. Since that time, there have been ten shootings by police in that city... and every one has been an instant, one shot stop! This included "peripheral hits" in arms and legs. Ten gun battles isn't enough to develop a statistical data base, but the 100% performance thus far is superior to even that of the legendary Colt .45 automatic. In all ten shootings, the bullets expanded perfectly, and none exited the felons' bodies. Forty percent of the "victim offenders" survived, albeit with some degree of permanent impairment.

The ultra potent 9mm. Parabellum Nyclud ammo from Smith & Wesson's ammunition branch, despite much heraldry in combat shooting circles, isn't yet ready for mass manufacturing. The load will indeed move the International Practical Pistol Confederation's ballistic pendulum as much as a 230-grain full metal jacket .45 ACP slug. The trouble is, as 9mm. Luger handloaders have long known, very hot loads in that caliber deliver poor to mediocre accuracy. Nycluds from the experimental batches that are moving the pendulum sufficiently are shooting sloppy groups, and loads that are grouping adequately aren't quite pushing the pendulum past the "major caliber" mark.

The man who conceived and fostered that load, Tom Campbell of S&W, isn't using it in matches yet. His competition load, which has brought him unassailably into the position of one of the world's finest combat shooters, is Federal 115-gr. JHP, which out of his one-of-a-kind S&W 9mm. prototype is said to give close to one-inch groups at fifty yards. Neither Campbell nor S&W ballisticians have given up on their super 9mm. load, however, and our readers may yet be able to purchase blue-tipped S&W 9mm. rounds that will "hit like .45s"...

One of the hottest new gun companies around is SAFARI ARMS, PO Box 28355, Tempe, Arizona 85282. Their bobcat Enforcer in 1911 pattern is selling well, and

their full size combat version, the MatchMaster, is getting a lot of interest from savvy handgunners. For several months, Safari has been advertising their components separately in this magazine, for .45 fans who want to do their own work. We've gotten back comments from involved amateurs and professionals alike... and their consensus is a positive one.

Especially in for plaudits is Safari's ambidextrous safety. It's ten bucks cheaper than anything else on the market, is available much more quickly, and does its job as well or better. We'll give you a no-holds-barred report on their pistols as soon as our

Safari Arms has a great new .45 auto that is causing quite a stir

testing is complete, but we can say at this point that the component parts are getting a good reputation. In a day when young gun companies have a high mortality rate, it's heartening to see Safari Arms come up looking like a winner, and we wish them the best...

Lately several complaints have crossed our desk, concerning both gun customers and manufacturers. There's only so much we can do about it. Your most effective course of action, when you buy handguns or firearms related hardware that doesn't measure up to standards, is to contact the nearest Better Business Bureau to the firm you bought it from, and make a complaint formally. Even more effective is to write to the attorney general of the state where the product is made (you can get their number and usually their address from telephone information), and address a formal, written complaint to that agency's Consumer Protection Division.

HECKLER AND KOCH has come out with a fascinating new projectile-launcher that, according to BATF, isn't a firearm.

H & K is out with a unique flare gun

It's an ultra-compact, magazine fed, barrel-less flare pistol that fires five shots more or less semi auto (it ejects its own empties and brings the next round up, but you have to cock it single action to fire each one). There is also a manual safety.

It's a state of the art emergency signaling device, in a world where virtually everything else that does this job is single-shot. For what it does, it's less than a C-note price is quite reasonable.

H&K does not sell it as a weapon and doesn't consider it one any more than BATF does. Still, its defensive applications are intriguing. If you live in a city like Chicago, which doesn't issue concealed weapons permits even to law abiding citizens, it would be a good thing to have with you. If jumped by a mugger or rapist, you could shoot a flare high in the air to burn

with incredible phosphorus intensity for several seconds, summoning help. Massad Ayoob is now testing one for a complete report. Those of you into boating and backpacking should appreciate this unit for its intended purpose; like we said, it's the best flare pistol ever designed, and its \$2.00 apiece flares will completely extinguish long before they come to earth, eliminating fire hazard...

As you've probably gathered by now, there isn't too much news coming from the gunmakers themselves at this time of year. It's August '79 as we write this, and the next wave of newies has yet to be announced, while the last wave has shot their wad already, and in any case wasn't anything you didn't read about in this column months before it was announced.

One thing we should reiterate: we are a bi-monthly national publication, and that means we have a long lead time. A case in point is the column in our September/October issue in which we remarked that the Bianchi/Chapman combat holster set would be improved with no increase in price. That story went to press in April '79. We knew before anyone else that Bianchi prices would take a steep increase due to the vagaries of the leather market, and we had the scoop set up in type before anyone else... but by the time that Sept/Oct issue came out, the price rise had already gone through. It's something that won't improve until we go weekly, and we hope you understand.

Late flash for those of you who are into shotguns: ITHACA is alive and well... or at least, alive. Production of the model 37 pump gun and the Mag-10 automatic is back underway. Toward the end of previous production, before the company went Chapter Eleven, some really scuzzy stuff got out of the factory, and the present management team is doing its darndest to make good on that. The Mag-10 manufacturing process now underway incorporates changes in the extractor and feeding system for greater reliability. Also, the company is now producing the time-honored model 37 pump in 3" Magnum for both 12 and 20 gauge. At least one industry insider thinks the day may come when all Ithaca pumps come chambered for long Mag shells. It gives more flexibility in the duck blinds, especially with the steel shot situation, and the longer receiver actually improves feeding. It seemed that there were occasional complaints about dumped rounds with the standard size Ithacas produced just before the bankruptcy. S&W, Savage, and Mossberg already make all their 12-ga. pumps in 3" chambering, which feeds the standard 2 3/4" shell perfectly, so Ithaca may be on the right track.

Ithacagun is one of the classic American armsmakers, and despite that bad period before they went briefly under, their name was a synonym for firearms quality. The team now running Ithaca promises a commitment to that same tradition, and we wish them the very best.



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Sight Settings

LUCY CHAMBLISS

WHAT'S INVOLVED GETTING TO THE OLYMPICS

I was reading a report from the International Competitions Committee recently and with it was a detailed "After Action" summary of the 1976 Olympic shooting team. Looking at the 1980 Olympics as we are now, I thought the high spots of getting 17 shooters to Montreal and back might be of interest. The complexity of taking a team to Moscow will be greater, but fortunately, we seem to come up with experienced and dedicated people to do the job for the shooter.

After the 1976 team was selected, came getting everyone in proper and fitting uniforms. From the appearances of recent International teams, I would say uniforms have improved 100%. Next, our team managers met with USOC and were given details on administration, duties, food, housing, transportation, finance, medical services, training and competition schedules. Four years ago, Quantico was our pre-Olympic training site, the 1980 team will assemble at U.S. Olympic Training Center, Colorado Springs. From Quantico, the team moved to Plattsburg, N.Y. The essential detail of getting large quantities of ammunition necessary for the team can be a problem. So some of the team members hauled ammo by their personal trucks from Virginia to New York, to avoid a clash with F.A.A. regulations regarding "excessive" amounts of ammo on airlines. When the team arrived by plane, they were housed at the State University in Plattsburg. Clothing was issued there and two days were spent with physicals, photos, custom details and orientation. During this time Pres. Ford visited and met all Olympic team members, a very nice gesture; wonder if Pres. Carter will do the same.

When the team left Plattsburg for Montreal, excess baggage and again, ammunition were sent separately in a truck, driven this time by the Assistant Team Manager. The meals at the Olympic Village were good; tickets to other Olympic events were scarce and time consuming to acquire. There were other forms of entertainment and services to relieve the boredom and pressure of waiting to do your very best. Travel to the range by van took 25 minutes, range lunches were good and a team room with lockers for members equipment was provided at the range. Practice was adequate, though range time limited, the 25 meter pistol range officials

required constant pressure on them to be sure everyone had a chance to use it. (Never seems like there are enough pistol ranges anywhere.)

Match competition appeared to be fair and without problems. The team members fired consistent scores compared with practice, tryouts and competition leading to the Olympics. What more can you ask?

REPORTS CONCLUSIONS

□ Urgent need to raise U.S. performance in International Pistol events. This must be instituted by the NRA. Positive action is needed to actively guide and supervise a program to begin better International Pistol effort. These events must be on a nationwide basis, if necessary, subsidize sponsors until the entry makes the match self-supporting. Public information and promotion all year should be designed to interest the young shooter in international competition. I am afraid not enough of this positive action has been accomplished to help us in 1980—hopefully by '84. There are still no Women's events in Olympic shooting. It could be a factor that both boys and girls are attracted to the co-ed sports, track, swimming, diving for sharing interest rather than to shooting which is presently without designated women's events in the Olympics.

A specific detail pointed out in the report was that more coaches were needed for Olympic shooting teams. Assigning other shooters to this duty is unsatisfactory as it diminishes his stamina and concentration for his own shooting performance. The administrative burden on the team manager is said to be terrific.

The International Competitions Committee is working on the national shooting team concept and has adopted a goal of the U.S. becoming one of the top 5 in world events, and maintaining our present position of #1 in all rifle events. Rifle shooters began interesting their young shooters in International type shooting 10 years ago and it has evidently paid off. Another goal is to build a suitable training center where world class competition can be held year around. Such a center would have at least 8 bays of turning targets for pistol and room for more if needed. All ranges would be built to protect both shooter and target from the effects of wind.

Some kind of wind protection needs to be required at our present preliminary tryouts where for instance, in Florida, you can get eliminated from further tryouts by 40 mph winds, even though NRA rules for tryouts state "adequate" wind protection will be provided for the shooter. Hoped for budgeted annual expenses in this national team idea include as much as \$3,000 per civilian to cover costs of ammo, targets,

Match competition appeared to be fair at the last Olympics

guns, transportation and fees. There are also expenses for training seminars, European training trips, and coaches. The decisions of distributing among mediocre athlete, or outstanding only, must be made. Feeling is also, if individual has some of his own money always at stake, his performance improves. I definitely agree with that, being one of those pure amateurs never subsidized by regular service, Reserves, or National Guard. Donations and various fund raising projects are in the

Taking a team to Moscow is going to be a complex thing

works for both the Training Center and subsidies.

A good sub-committee of the NRA Pistol Committee has upgraded our Mayleigh Cup International Pistol Team Match. This is a prestigious postal match shot at our national championships each year, between Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, Australia, and the United States. It has never been properly pub-

"Pistol shooting must be healthy, look at all the national championships we have now."

licized, or recognized, like the postal rifle matches. When I made the team in 1953, it was the top 10 shooters in the .22 slow fire match. We fired the actual team match at 7 AM, before the .45 matches, were given an emblem and I don't remember ever hearing, or seeing the results anywhere. The pistol entry that year at Perry was 2,542; 1978 entry was 831 and I'm proud to say my qualifying score of 188 would still have placed me on the team. I placed 4th in the team match with another 188x200. Beginning this year, team selection will be made from the 15 high scoring shooters in .22 slow fire and the .22 NMC Slow Fire. Members will receive cap, jacket and bras-

(Continued on page 70)

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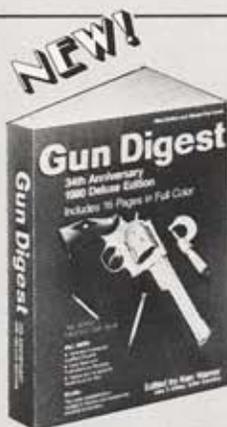
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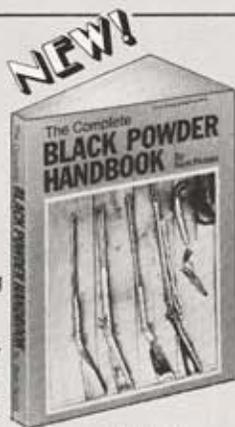
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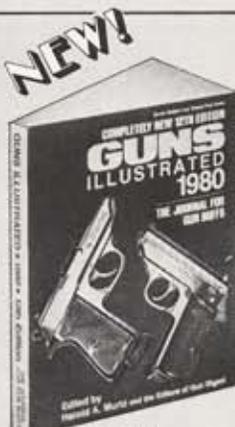
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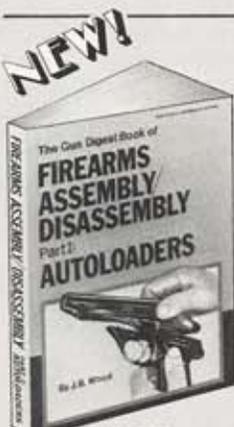
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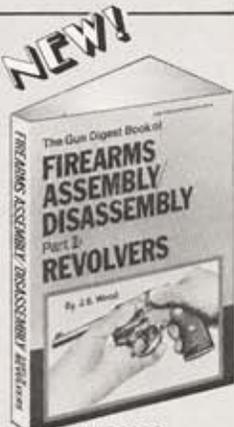
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AmmoScene

EVAN P. MARSHALL

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Unless you've spent the last six months on the dark side of the Moon, you are certainly aware of the new handgun ammunition offerings on the market. In addition, we've been apprised of a couple of new items that will soon appear, and as usual American Handgunner will tell you about it first.

The new loads are listed by manufacturer, rather than by caliber so you can compare the extent of their new products.

CCI/SPEER

The good ole boys from Lewiston, Idaho, have been keeping kind of a low profile producing some of the best handgun ammo available. The only new offering they'd admit to is a 150 grain fmj load for the .357 Magnum. It's designed for the metallic silhouette gang, but will be excellent for those who need a lot of penetration.

Load	2½"	4"	6"	50 yd accuracy
1. .357-150 gr fmj	1103fps	1234fps	1335fps	3½"

FEDERAL

There was a time when a handgunner would just as soon admit to leprosy as to using Federal ammunition. Those times, of course, have changed. Currently Federal is not only producing some of the best handgun loads, but also one of the most extensive lines. The new loads are listed below:

Load	2½"	4"	6"	50 yd accuracy
1. .38-125gr jsp	902fps	1045fps	1133fps	4½"
2. .357-158gr jap	1134fps	1216fps	1306fps	5"
3. 9MM-95gr jsp		1345fps		3¼"
4. .45 Colt-225gr lhp		967 fps		6¼"

FRONTIER

In case there's anyone out there who isn't aware of it, Frontier is part of the Hornady family. Steve Hornady is in charge of Frontier, and is producing some accurate loads. A few small test runs of full metal jacket-semi wadcutter .44 Magnum rounds were enthusiastically received by metallic silhouette shooters. Frontier only has one new regular production offering this year, but it's a real dandy! It's a 230 grain full metal jacketed semi-wadcutter offering at normal hardball velocities. Not only is it extremely accurate, it will feed in unaltered .45s just like round nose .45 loads. I've got an old, unaltered Model 1911 that is extremely finicky about what I feed it. It gobbled up these new loads without a hitch, even when I dug an old battered clip out of my junk box and used it.

Load	4¼"	5"	50 yd accuracy
1. .45ACP-230gr-swc	803fps	841fps	3"

*weapon used—Colt Gold Cup in Lee Pistol Rest

H&H CARTRIDGE CORPORATION

H&H is the producer of the Super Vel line of ammunition, and has found themselves back ordered since they reintroduced this

line. They don't have anything new at this time, although they're offering their loads in special eighteen rounds packs that are easier to carry than the traditional fifty round boxes. Bob Hamilton, however, does have some new loads in the works that will really cause a stir. He's working on a load for the .38 Special that looks like a standard load, but will expand like a hollow point. Whenever these and other new loads are ready for production, you'll read about them here first.

REMINGTON

There are a number of new offerings from the Bridgeport gang this year. I was able to obtain samples of the .38 and .357 loads, but their new .38 Super load isn't available yet. It will be a 115gr jhp load at 1300fps. That may not excite too many readers, but like Bill Corson says, "Sonny, you got no business calling yourself a handgunner unless you own at least one .38 Super!" It's an excellent although widely unappreciated cartridge, and Remington is to be highly commended for offering a new load in this caliber.

Load	2½"	4"	6"	50 yd accuracy
1. .38-110gr jhp	922fps	1056fps	1211fps	4"
2. .357-110gr jhp	1267fps	1487fps	1631fps	4¼"

SMITH & WESSON

The biggest news in S&W handgun ammunition is the new Nyclad process. It not only cuts down on pollution, but allows a much softer slug to be used, so that the potential for expansion is much greater. The most fascinating rumor to come from S&W, is that a 158gr Nyclad semi-wadcutter load will be offered for the 9MM. This load is supposedly loaded to a high enough velocity to make the 9MM a major caliber under IPSC regulations! S&W is also offering a target load for the .45 Auto that produced excellent results in my Carniak accurized Gold Cup.

WINCHESTER

The big news, of course, from Winchester is the new 9MM and .45 Winchester Magnums. They, however, will be covered in depth elsewhere. Somewhat more routine, but still exciting, is the "Silvertip" hollow point loads for both the 9MM and .45 ACP. Their unique jacket material allows superb expansion and higher velocities with lower pressures.

Load	4¼"	5"	50 yd accuracy
1. 9MM-115gr jhp	1235fps	1267fps	4½"
2. .45-185gr jhp	904fps	948fps	3"

All the loads tested produced consistent velocities, and good performance. The revolver loads all ejected easily from the revolvers used (Colt Diamondback with 2½" barrel, S&W Model 19 with 2½" barrel, S&W Model 10&66 with 4" barrel, S&W Model 14 & 66 with 6" barrel, and Colt New Service with 4" barrel), and fed reliably through the semi-automatics used (Colt Commanders with 4¼" barrel, and Colt MKIV and Gold Cup with 5" barrel).



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FRED MASSEY

BOTH BIANCHI AND SAFARILAND SAY DAVIS MAKES A REALLY TOP-QUALITY HOLSTER

There aren't all that many people making really great custom gun-leather out there. You can count them on your fingers and have a few digits left over. One of the first fingers you want to reserve is for G. William Davis.

The "G" stands for Gordon, which is what his friends call him; what his customers say about his leather is still more affectionate. Gordy's been building holsters professionally since 1964. That's when he started with Safari Limited, the first joint venture between Neale Perkins and John Bianchi. When those two

him well. John Bianchi told us, "Gordon Davis was one of only two or three people I trained completely in holster-making. He has a natural talent for it. He does extremely fine work." Adds Safariland president Neale Perkins, "Gordon is a gifted person. In addition to that, he has the custom craftsman's advantage of being able to take pains that a manufacturer can't. For instance, he can cut a whole rig out of the same hide for a perfect match, which would be impossible for any manufacturer. His quality is top-rate."

When the two biggest names in holster-making talk about someone that way, it's worth your while to look at the guy's catalog. Add to those plaudits the kudos from satisfied top-rank shooters: aces like Jerry Usher, Keith Hamilton, Ron Lerch, and former US champ Kirk Kirkham swear by Davis rigs for IPSC competition, a demanding game where only the best equipment stays around long enough to earn a reputation.

It's not that he has one-of-a-kind designs. There is little new under the sun in holster-making, and few designs are patentable. Almost anything Davis makes resembles something someone else has built. "My products aren't unique in design," he explains, "so much as they are in workmanship. The main thing I try to put into my holsters is craftsmanship. We're talking about double thicknesses of leather — two pieces cut identically, bonded perfectly with great care given to finishing the edges. I spend a lot of time stitching them just so, and making sure that every item in a rig — belt, holster, ammo carrier — is perfectly matched and mated. Almost everything I make is double-stitched, and almost all my holsters are steel reinforced."

Many of Davis' holsters resemble similar rigs by other makers, but usually with his own refinements. His "Security" waistband holster looks much like a Sparks Summer Special, which in turn is a Bruce Nelson design; the Davis unit is improved with built-up leather to shield the safety and hammer. He says many of his concepts are attributable to Andy Anderson, the original pioneer of modern speed leather, whom Davis reveres. His clip pouch, for instance, is a direct copy. (Continued on next page)



At the moment, this is the biggest seller . . . the Usher International. Unique, adjustable tension device holds securely but allows for fast Cross draw speed.

famed leather mavens parted company, Davis went with Perkins and helped design the first Safariland holsters. He cut the original patterns for some of Safariland's most popular designs, including the classic Sight-Track.

Eighteen months later, Gordy went with Bianchi, and a year and a half hence, struck out into other areas — saddlery and bridlemaking, among others — to broaden his mastery of professional leathercraft. In 1976, he started his own shop, in the garage of his Los Angeles home.

The men he started with remember

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Davis is too modest for his own good. He does have proprietary designs. One is the soft plastic roller-type retention device that began with the Usher International holster, a rig he named for world-class combat shooter Jerry Usher. Its quasi-sticky pressure holds the gun in place against momentum, yet allows a smooth, quick draw. In very hot climates, the plastic can melt and lose its holding power; California combat shooters, who have taken to Davis leather the way Beverly Hills residents took to saunas, simply keep extra rollers on hand and change them as needed, a simple procedure. Tension on the Usher and other IPSC holsters is adjustable via a hidden screw. He does have one version of the Thunderbolt style, with an outside screw, but that type of carry "looks cheaty" and is falling out of favor with IPSC competitors.

The plastic roller, again at Usher's suggestion, is being incorporated into Gordy's new line of police holsters. These are thick, rugged thumb-break rigs. Those for revolvers have the roller just under the front of the frame, while auto holsters keep it under the front of the slide. This allows a policeman to run with an unsnapped gun in his holster without fear of it falling out, yet still affords very fast access. I tested one for a .45, and it worked out very well. It was so secure that I ran a Cooper Assault Course with it, using a 9mm. Browning Hi-Power. The Browning, with its tapering front slide, will fall out of almost any holster made for a slabside .45, yet this one held it perfect, thanks to the plastic roller. The thumbsnap proved superfluous.

Davis, who worked with Perkins on the historic Safariland Sight Track, offers his own version. His "track" is leather, 3/8" wide and the same dimensions deep, and it is inside the holster so the front of the rig is pleasingly smooth and round. It works fine, and accommodates the highest target-type sight.

Has Davis' leather ever failed? Well, yes and no. In the Cooper Assault phase of the 1978 National IPSC championships, two .45s were lost from Davis' Usher International holsters. Defending champion Kirk Kirkham and Memphis hotrock Wayne Umberger both spilled their pistols when emerging from a 6-foot tunnel they had run up on and dived through. Witnesses weren't sure that Wayne had screwed his tension device all the way down, and it was said that Kirk flung himself through the tunnel so quickly and forcefully that no strapless holster could have held the gun against the inertia. Suffice to say that both men had a powerful chance at the US title, both were disqualified in the Cooper stage because of the gun drop . . . and both plan to stay with the G. William Davis holster.

Davis has other rigs available. He

makes top-quality single action rigs for both fast draw competition and routine carrying tasks. "The market isn't that big for SA rigs," says Davis, who does 90% of his work for freestyle combat shooters, "but I just like to work on 'em." His Liberty holster, a concealment high-ride, has a good future. He has a breakfront rig coming out for bull-barrel PPC guns that combines fine leatherwork with even spring tension to



Here's the High Noon with forward rake. This one rides high. The Epitaph is similar but rides lower. Holsters have tie-downs but are really not needed as the unique design keeps it from moving during fast draw.

assure a smooth and easy draw that won't bind down on the barrel, a concept that would sell well for police service revolvers if Gordon could find the time to produce it. He even has a semi-shoulder version of the Usher, built for the sole purpose of winning "concealed carry" combat shoots.

I wear Davis leather, and I'm here to tell you, Neale Perkins wasn't kidding: you *can't* get this sort of workmanship from anyone but a master craftsman like Davis who works alone to handmake eight or so rigs a week. He uses the same quality leather as Bianchi and Safariland, which is to say top quality, but his difference is that he does it by hand. He is also a ranking IPSC shooter in his own right, with his finger tighter on his customers' collective pulse than perhaps any other holstermaker. This is why he is backordered on Usher International rigs for \$115 when a similar and very good Bianchi outfit sells for \$55.

In the end, when you analyze G. William Davis' work, you have to go back to his customers. Many IPSC gunners think nothing of travelling across the country or around the globe, and can put up with a lot of questionable courses to pursue their unique sport. One thing they will

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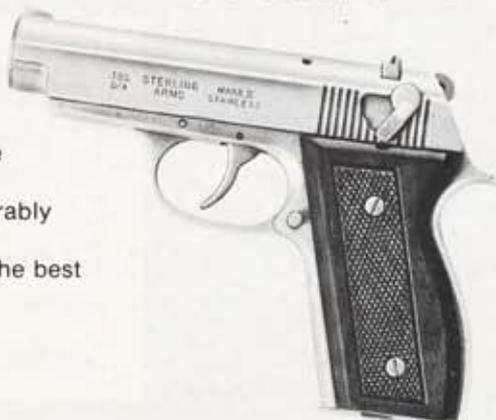
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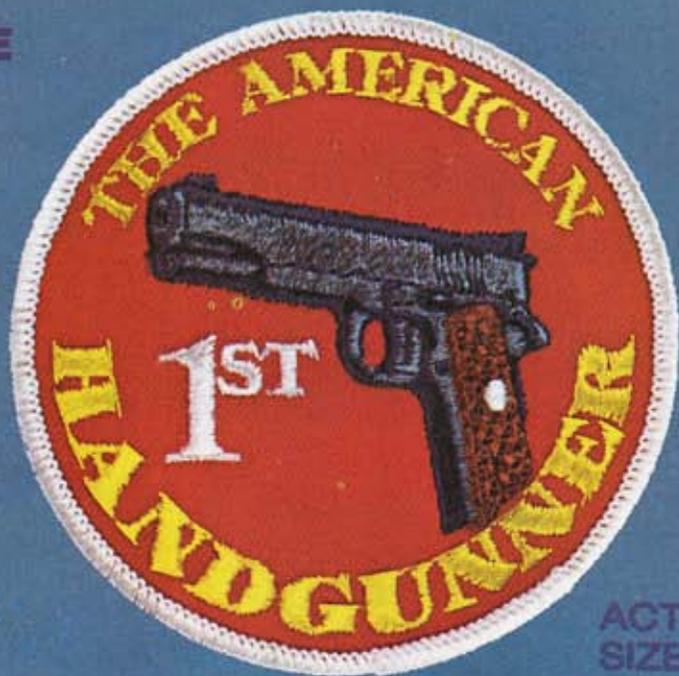
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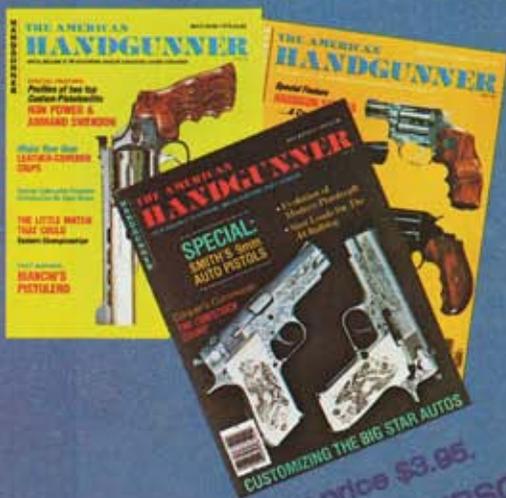
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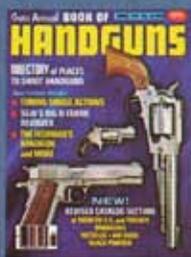


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DAVIS LEATHER

(Continued from page 18)

not tolerate is inferior equipment.

At the last nationals, four of the top ten shooters used Davis leather. In California, Davis' rigs are almost as ubiquitous as the .45 automatic. The

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product has made inroads in other parts of the country as well. Two of the top three Southern IPSC gunners, Wayne Umberger and John Shaw, are using



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Davis rigs, and Massad Ayoob, ranked #3 in northeastern United States IPSC shooting, recently switched to an Usher International crossdraw.

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Leather by G. William Davis is kind of like that.



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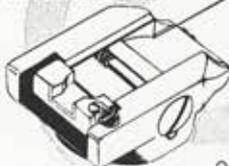


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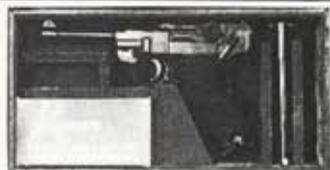
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Cooper's Column

THE ULTIMATE AUTO-PISTOL

The following is a reprint from GUNS Magazine (September, 1979) that we thought was significant enough for our readers to be informed about due to the important message at the end of the article.

THIS IS a nifty gun. Pending the completed evolution of the PSP, this piece, modified to major caliber, will be Number One, finally displacing the 1911 Colt! It's a pity that it had to originate in the slave world, but as the slave masters

is located right under the inboard swell of the thumb, and its symmetrical shape lets it work both ways with admirable ease, yet still without any awkward protrusion. As it comes out of the box, this excellent safety cannot be simply plugged in on the star-



stole most of its elements from free men, free men can blithely steal it back and perfect it. Whether they will do so or not depends upon their wit. Time will tell.

The Czech 75—called the "Brünner Pistol" in Germany—may be considered the ultimate development of the Browning/Colt system. It takes the best Browning features, combines them with a couple of Pettev innovations found in the best French and Swiss designs, and adds a few original touches of its own to put the whole together in the neatest package in the world.

(The fact that it's only in nine is unimportant. We can make it up in 45, and later in 10mm, just as soon as someone with the money decides to do so.)

Essentially the Cz 75 is a heavy-duty auto using a short-recoil locking system, selective double-action, and a double-column magazine. It is thus tactically identical with a number of other pieces (principally the Mamba) but it is by far the handsomest assembly of good features to come along so far. Its trigger-cocking action is the only one I have tested that can really be called smooth, *plus which it is entirely optional*. Here, at last, is a pistol on which the thumb-safety needs no modification, since it was designed from the beginning with the human hand in mind—a thing one cannot say about the others. It

board side for us by a southpaw, but only a little cutting is necessary to make this changeover work. (On our proposed domestic version, this will be corrected.)

But the finest thing about the Cz 75 is that elusive quality called "feel." It *feels* better in the hand than any other pistol—and not just in *my* hand. Everyone I've shown it to so far has agreed. Naturally people with tiny or freakishly large hands may not find this surprising comfort; but for the 80% in the middle, the Bohemians seem to have found the answer. Perhaps the ghost of Good King Wenceslaus had a hand in all this.

In my Austrian class last summer, seven out of the twenty students showed up with 75's, most of which had been somewhat "cosmeticized" by Seidler of Vienna. Since each student expended some 400 rounds, I have a fair idea about the pistol's reliability of functioning. I saw no misfunctions in those 2800 rounds, so I conclude that the action works.

Intrinsic accuracy seems perfectly OK—much the same as that of any other quality service sidearm, which is quite good enough for serious work. We may assume that "accurized" versions may be set up as easily for this as for any other piece of its type—for those who have use for them and can shoot well enough to know.

The fourteen-round magazine is re-

leased by a conventional Browning-button rather than a European heel-clip, but the released magazine is held in a half-ejected position by a detent in the magazine well—this to please European departmental types who have a horror of magazines dropped into the mud. This device is easily altered, without recourse to a gunsmith, at the owner's option.

Several sorts of sights have turned up so far, varying from unacceptable to excellent. (Most are "de-horned," indicating that the fabricators are somewhat ahead of their U.S. counterparts.) Evidently the factory has not settled on a specific sight design. (We can fit a good combination to the American model, right?)

The Cz 75 is entirely a "cash crop" for the communists, since it does not use their 380 Makarov cartridge, and personal choice is not permitted in their empire. It is designed to be exported; to Germany for

Features that exclusive quality called "feel"

Deutschmarks, and to South Africa for gold. (The Russians do not share our moralistic commercial inhibitions.) It is doubtless intended as a short-term product, since it will be stolen and reproduced outside the red bloc as soon as its obvious virtues are appreciated.

I think the "Brünner" is the best of the conventional nines as it stands, and the best conventional pistol, if it is modified to major caliber. The race will be between it and the major caliber version of the PSP (not yet admitted)—a contest between the culmination of the proven and a "great leap forward."

As of now—and for the immediate future—you can't take personal possession of either contender, since the 75 is forbidden and the PSP is not in production. And both are available only in minor caliber at this point.

I think Heckler and Koch will announce a 45 PSP in 1980, and I think some bright party will build an American version of the Cz 75 in the same year.

May the best man win!



EDITOR'S NOTE

After we printed this column in *GUNS*, we learned that the Czech Model 75 is available to U.S. shooters. Walter Pomeranski, dba Walter's Enterprises, P.O. Box 209, Massett, British Columbia VOT 1M0, will accept orders from U.S. (with proper import forms) FFL holders. The price quoted for the M-75 is \$416.50. There is, of course, a lot of red tape, and duty on the pistol will run close to 50%, but perhaps it may be worth it to those who want the latest
—Editor

Richard Heinie

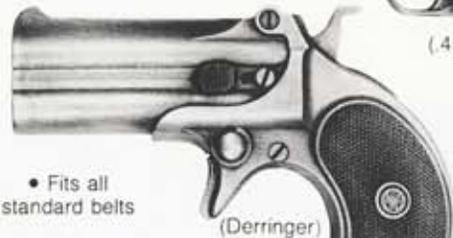


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IPSC

1979 Nationals

By Seth Nadel

On the Fourth of July, two hundred of the nation's best practical pistol shots gathered in Park City, Utah, for the 1979 International Practical Shooting Confederation National Championships. Starting with the firing of two black powder cannons, the shoot-

ers tested their speed, power, and accuracy over four demanding courses of fire. The top sixteen shooters settled up in a man-on-man test of speed and skill.

The shooters came from all over the country, and ranged in age from 13-year-old Shawn Dexter to the amazing

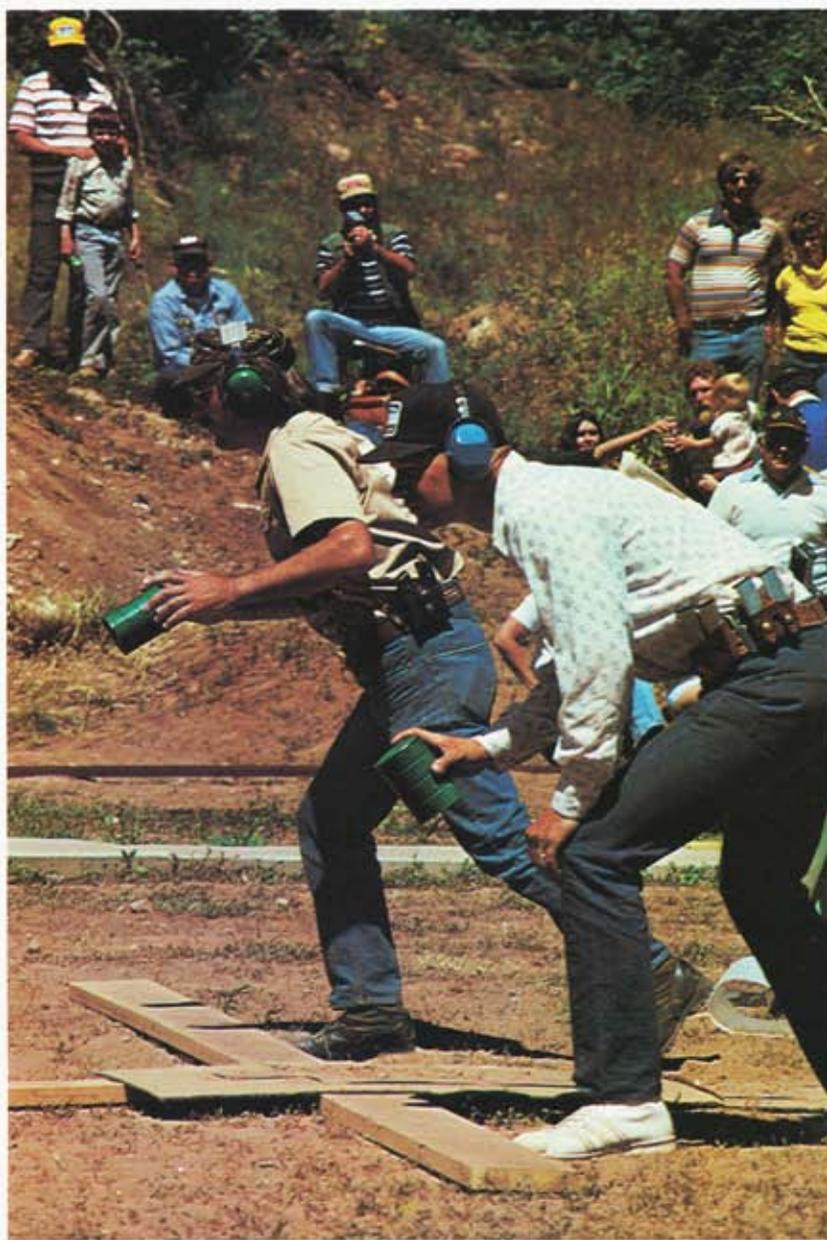
63-year-young Howard McCarty. Every occupation was represented, with a goodly number of Law Enforcement types "making payments on the life insurance." The female of the species expanded their participation, from 1 entry last year to six contestants in '79.



L.A.'s Mickey Fowler wins title; U.S. International Team chosen

THE WINNERS

1. Mickey Fowler, CA	342.660	9. Jerry Usher, CA	289.848	18. Ron Lerch, CA	268.520
2. Ross Seyfried, CO	339.563	10. Mike Fischman, CA	287.413	19. Pentti Kumpulainen, CA	267.035
3. Craig Gifford, CA	328.918	11. Mike Horn, CA	283.147	20. Dennis Tueller, UT	266.798
4. Tom Campbell, MA	328.412	12. Mike Dalton, CA	282.757	OPEN CLASS	
5. Leonard Knight, CA	313.046	13. Jim Scordato, AZ	281.764	1. Paul Walker	274.978
6. Ray Chapman, MO	307.618	14. Ken Hackathorn, OH	275.762	2. Lewis Chang	273.4450
7. Chuck Taylor, AZ	307.274	15. Steve Blankenbiller, CA	274.954	3. Tommy Morris	236.349
8. Ron Sharp, ID	293.386	16. John Shaw, TN	274.662	4. Fredrick Morrison	231.4120
		17. Ray Neal, CA	272.801	5. Ralph Butler	228.3140



Two principal factors apply to all contestants in IPSC competition—power and holster retention. As shooters prepared to fire, they were suddenly told not to touch their gun or holster, and perform a backwards roll. Anyone who lost his gun was disqualified from the match. Similarly, anyone who lost his gun during any stage of the match was disqualified, and several names were erased from the scoreboard for this violation.

Power was measured on a pendulum, with each shooter declaring if his load was major or minor. Again, as shooters waited for the start signal, they were sometimes told to remove their magazine and provide three rounds for testing. Rounds were also taken at random from magazines dropped by shooters as they progressed through a course. One internationally known shooter was moving through a stage when a match official took three rounds from a dropped magazine over to the test area. Although the shooter had declared major caliber, his handload failed to make minor, and he was immediately disqualified from the entire match. The IPSC principles took precedence over the shooters' reputation.

There were the usual number of me-

(Opposite page) Even though Mickey Fowler was the over all winner, he placed second in the shoot-off with Tom Campbell. Seyfried is shown here on the highest pedestal. (Left) With all mental and physical faculties straining . . . Ross Seyfried (foreground) is ready to do battle with Tom Campbell. This was the final, or shoot-off, stage. Photos by Rick Miller.



Author Nadel caught in mid-air just after clearing barricade and heading for the tunnel. Photo by Greg Moats.



This year there were 6 women contestants. Here's one performing the very difficult "Tarzan" rope-hanging feat.

With next year's Nationals in Newport News, Va., in early October, and planned once again as a surprise shoot, we hope to see even more shooters test their power, speed, and accuracy in the 1980 IPSC Nationals.



chanical problems that plagued the Utah Handgunners Assoc. who hosted the match. All those devices that had performed flawlessly in the past developed those electro-mechanical elves that interrupted the normal flow of the stages. But the match staff soldiered on, providing as fair a match as possible for all. Of course, it would be easy to sit at my typewriter and snipe away, but I had the chance to see Dennis Tueller and his staff close up, working long hours so the rest of us could concentrate on the match. To all those who worked, the thanks of the shooters. John Farnam brought down the newest ATS radio controlled target system, and the elves promptly took over, causing lots of headaches for John and his crew. There was even talk of dropping this stage, but a vote of the majority of the shooters kept it in.

The tension mounted as the scores went up on the "wailing wall." Hand calculators came out as the shooters figured their scores, their friends, and those of the big names. Everyone was awaiting the names of the top sixteen who would compete for the number-one spot. Familiar names such as Jerry Usher, Ross Seyfried, Tom Campbell, and Ray Chapman vied with relatively unknowns such as Ron Sharp and Craig Gifford. Friday night, and the top sixteen still had not been announced! Saturday it was back to the range, with all eyes on the list of who would shoot in the "J" ladder. When the list went up, the tension doubled. After Match Director Jeff Cooper announced that the standings in the

shoot-off would determine the winner, things got impossibly tense.

The last shoot was a test of the basic skills—start 3 meters behind a post with a tin can in the shooting hand. Upon the signal, put the can on the post, hit a target at 5 meters, a target at 8 meters, reload, and hit a steel plate with a balloon in front. Fired as a double elimination, the pressure got to be too much for the ATS hit-sensitive targets, and they had to be locked facing the shooters. Now it was down to break the balloons with 5's on the targets! At the peak was the man-against-man duel of Colorado's rancher, Ross Seyfried, against store-fixture maker Mickey Fowler from California. After several tie decisions, Ross won the stage—but he did not have enough points to win the match, and Mickey Fowler came in first, the new National Champion, 342.660 points to 339.563.

At the awards banquet that night, trophies went to the top twenty, and merchandise down as far as #70. But the highlight was the naming of the first (red) and second (blue) teams. The members were selected based on their performance in the 1978 and 1979 Nationals, and they will represent us at the world shoot in Roodeport, South Africa, in September. The best wishes of all the Handgunner Staff go to:

FIRST TEAM	SECOND TEAM
Mickey Fowler	Steve Blankenbiller
Ross Seyfried	John Shaw
Tom Campbell	Leonard Knight
Jerry Usher	Ron Lerch
Chuck Taylor	Ray Neal

HANDGUNNER INTERVIEW:

Dave WESTERHOUT

by Massad Ayoob

At the time you read this, the World IPSC Championship will have been decided and we will cover that in detail in a later issue. This article is about David Westerhout of South Africa, who will have defended his title he won two years ago. David Westerhout is a charismatic figure that few Americans know well, though they may have heard a lot about the 1977 World Champion. During a recent professional speaking tour, Westerhout met with the author for the following exclusive interview. We think it will give our readers a new prospective on the World Champion, the role of firearms in Rhodesia, international handgun competition, and the nature of IPSC shooting itself.

AYOOB: Dave, what's the situation on firearms ownership in Rhodesia?

WESTERHOUT: It has always been a fairly liberal thing there. In the sense that if you could show good reason to use and own a firearm you've always been allowed to do so. There are very few restrictions. Firearms registration certificates do sometimes state that certain firearms be used only in certain situations. A target pistol may be limited to ranges, but high power rifles, large caliber defense pistols, and shotguns have no restrictions. People can carry them anywhere.

Carrying handguns on your person, which in America seems to be a rather difficult situation, is actually quite easy in our country. Rhodesians are in fact encouraged to carry them concealed rather than openly, since it tends to make people feel uncomfortable to see someone walking around with a pistol on his belt. We don't have a problem with concealed handguns.

AYOOB: Americans often visualize Rhodesia as an embattled frontier, an armed camp.

WESTERHOUT: Nothing could be further from the truth. People come expecting to find an Alamo situation, and it's nothing at all like that.

People who return to our country

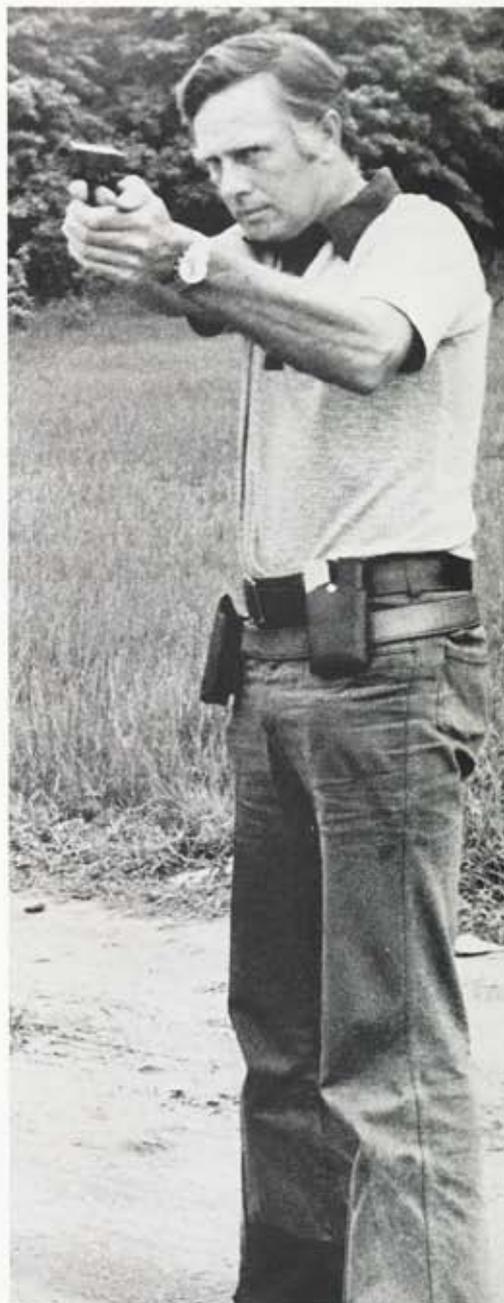
after, say, a 6-year hiatus can see no change, except in the rural areas where some threat does exist. I think an illustration of how tranquil things are in the major cities is the fact that our policemen do not carry firearms. They have a tradition of not entering into armed confrontations, and this is maintained today. Even in areas where there is some degree of terrorist threat, very few people go about armed, which I think certainly gives the lie to many Americans who literally step off the plane expecting to have to fight their way to the terminal building.

AYOOB: There has been a lot of speculation among stateside shooters as to why you use a BoMar-ribbed Browning in competition.

WESTERHOUT: I use a High Power, completely standard, no trigger job. It does have a built up thumb safety. I do have a BoMar rib, but not for the reason attributed to me. I read in American gun magazines that I use this design so as to control recoil better. Quite frankly, I don't have a recoil problem with any gun. The only reason I have the rib is that we don't have people here capable of the custom pistol work you can have done in the states. I wanted adjustable, high profile sights, and since there was no one here who could install them, I simply ordered a BoMar rib and bolted it on. If we had pistolsmiths like yours, I would shoot either a Browning with standard BoMar sights, or a Colt .45 similarly equipped. I have a Mk. IV that jams at least once every clip; there's no way I'll use it in a match, because there is no one in my country capable of fixing it, and there is no way I can legally bring or send the pistol to your country.

AYOOB: Why is the 9mm. so popular among Rhodesian shooters?

WESTERHOUT: Our IPSC competitors are split about 50/50 between the 9mm. and the .45 ACP. Ammunition availability is the main problem. Rhodesian citizens are not allowed to have their own reloading equipment, and fac-



tory. .45 ACP ammo sells for \$1 US per cartridge. The 9mm. is the military round, and is somewhat more available.

Only clubs can get licenses for reloading, and there are usually only 3 or 4 members allowed to use the equipment. We have no progressive loading machinery, either, and these people are loading for 250, 350 shooters a week. Incidentally, Rhodesians are allowed to buy only 50 rounds of handgun ammo at a time, no more than 200 rounds a year, and may be in possession of no more than 60 rounds at any one time. These rules are relaxed only when you are on a firing range using club ammunition.

AYOOB: With practice ammo so hard so hard to come by, how did the Rhodesian team manage to win the last two

(Continued on page 60)



CHARTER ARMS REACHES MILESTONE

Charter Arms Corporation has just reached a milestone in its 14-year history . . . the 500,000th handgun mark!

To commemorate this important event, company President Dave Ecker (above, left) recently presented the National Rifle Association with the actual half-millionth handgun produced by Charter Arms, a .44 Bulldog Special. The gun was presented to NRA Board Member Harlon Carter (above, right) and will now be on permanent display in the NRA Museum.

To further commemorate this occasion, Charter Arms has produced an additional 50 copies of the .44 Bulldog Special (shown in full color on opposite page). Each of these "commemorative" handguns will bear an ornate engraving of a country milestone and the pathway leading to it. According to Mr. Ecker, the "Milestone" motif was chosen to represent the great strides Charter Arms has made over the past 14 years.

CHARTER .44 BULLDOG

The Lightweight with the Big Bite

By Seth Nadel

It seems that every year or so, someone decides that the best personal defense gun would be a lightweight number around 40 caliber. They even go so far as to build a special modified something-or-other to show how ideal it would be. Some of them seem to have overlooked the fact that Charter Arms, snuggled back in the hills of Connecticut, has already done the job with their .44 Special Bulldog.

The usual reason for advocating a .40 caliber is bullet diameter. They claim that .38 caliber bullet expansion is a sometimes thing, so they want to start with a bullet of .40 diameter and build a system to deliver it. (Of course Colt has re-introduced their accurate .44 Special in a Single Action but even the 4¾" barrel isn't the last word in lightness or concealability). New calibers like a .40 are always interesting but you're going to need dies, bullets, cases and loading data. How we love to create something new as a personal sidearm. But a good .44 Special already exists in the Charter .44 Bulldog.

Let us now presume your need for a personal defense weapon or a back-up piece if you wear a badge. What problems will this sidearm need to solve? The range will be close, as the only justification for shooting a person is to





Author feels that his Mag-Na-Ported Bulldog is not the perfect showcase for demonstrating dramatic "felt" recoil reduction as would a larger Magnum demonstrate.



A close look at the Bianchi 9R Special Agent leather shows the body-hugging concealment capability.

save a life; the perfect cartridge would have ultimate stopping power. Power, without the regard for lethality, is a must and it has to be weightless and invisible and 100% reliable. The Bulldog is nearly all of these things except it's not quite invisible. But here again it's very concealable.

In order to say all this about the gun, I obtained a Bulldog from Charter to test, and test it I did. I've read other authors who think 100 or 200 rounds through a piece qualify them to write volumes about it. I put 32 pounds of lead through my test sample.

The Bulldog, all of it in front of factory equivalent powder charges. I used up a pound of Unique to fire 1000 rounds at bullseye, PPC, and IPSC targets. I shot strong hand, weak hand, and two hands, both for accuracy and for speed. The result: A tight fitting, tight shooting gun that is accurate, powerful and reliable, all that you can ask for in a defense gun.

Out of the box, the Bulldog is very light (19 oz.), tight fitted, and finished in a service-quality blue. The test gun came with two sets of grips, the larger square butt, and the more concealable round butt which pointed so naturally in my hand that I never did try the square butt grips. The trigger pull was very good, letting cleanly off just after the maximum pressure has been applied. In fact, the trigger was good enough to make me suspect that I had been sent a gun that had been tuned up, a "gun writer's special." So I closely checked a dozen other .44's at several local dealers, only to find that the fit, finish, and trigger of my sample are typical of the quality of Charter Arms work. Either that, or they

tuned up every gun in the county just to trap me.

While canvassing the dealers, they all commented the two most common questions about the gun. Does it hold up with a lot of shooting? How bad is the recoil? I shot a lot of rounds in a short time, starting with several groups on bullseye targets at 25 yards, and ending the same way. This gun would consistently group 3 shots into one hole, low and a bit left on the target. After 900 more rounds, it would do the same, with no real looseness to the gun. As defense guns are carried a lot and shot only a little, I figure mine will outlast me and be as accurate as I can hold it. Recoil is another matter. I shoot a lot, so I tested the recoil in two ways; shooting weak hand only, and giving the gun to my 'occasional shooter' friends to try. The reaction was that the gun does recoil, but not excessively. Everyone thought it was not much harder to control than a 2" .38 with full bore factory +P loads, while delivering a lot more on-target effectiveness. After about 300 rounds, Larry Kelly kicked in one of his Mag-Na-Port barrel venting jobs. My 2½" M19 service gun is modified in the same fashion, and based on that experience I anticipated a considerable reduction in felt recoil. Much to my surprise, the reduction was quite small, possibly because the .44 Special is a low intensity load, with very heavy bullets. I'm still sold on the value of Mag-Na-Porting, but the .44 Special is not the best showcase for it.

A defense gun is useless unless you carry it, and the best way I found to carry and

(Continued on page 49)

OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS

NEWSLETTER

★ O.A.H.A. FOUNDATION, INC. 30016 S. RIVER ROAD · MT. CLEMENS, MICHIGAN 48045 ★

The members of O.A.H.A. Foundation have already been notified, so the following is for those who (we hope) are about to become members.

Larry Kelly stepped down as Chairman on July 17, and has handed over the reins to J. D. Jones. Many pages of copy would be needed to write of all of the contributions Larry made to the Foundation; suffice to say that they were many, and that everyone associated with Larry during the 3½ years he presided as Chairman was swept up in his enthusiasm and dedication. Members of the O.A.H.A. and the handgunning fraternity as a whole owe Larry (and his wife, Barb, who did a magnificent job with the clerical tasks) their heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

J. D. Jones, I hope, does not require an introduction to our readers; his features, and his new Handgun Hunting column have been well received. Given a little time to get all of the paperwork

organized, I feel certain that he will be a respected leader and an able administrator of O.A.H.A. Activities.

Catching up on past business, let us take this opportunity to thank all of the firms and individuals who contributed prizes to the 7th Annual O.A.H.A. Banquet. There were 150 door prizes given away, and while it is impossible to list every donor, they all know that their support was greatly appreciated. The raffle prizes were the best ever, with quality merchandise that sold one heck of a lot of tickets. Those who donated raffle prizes—American Sportsman Club, Beretta Arms, Lyman, Marlin, Remington, Browning, Crown City Arms, Mag-Na-Port, Sterling and Winchester—had representatives at the banquet who saw the attendees examine each prize with a critical eye and then rush over to one of the hostesses to buy a handful of tickets. These prizes alone made the banquet a memorable affair.

OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS

P.O. BOX 45-70, BLOOMINGDALE, OH 43910

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

YES, I want to become a member of the
OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER
AWARDS FOUNDATION

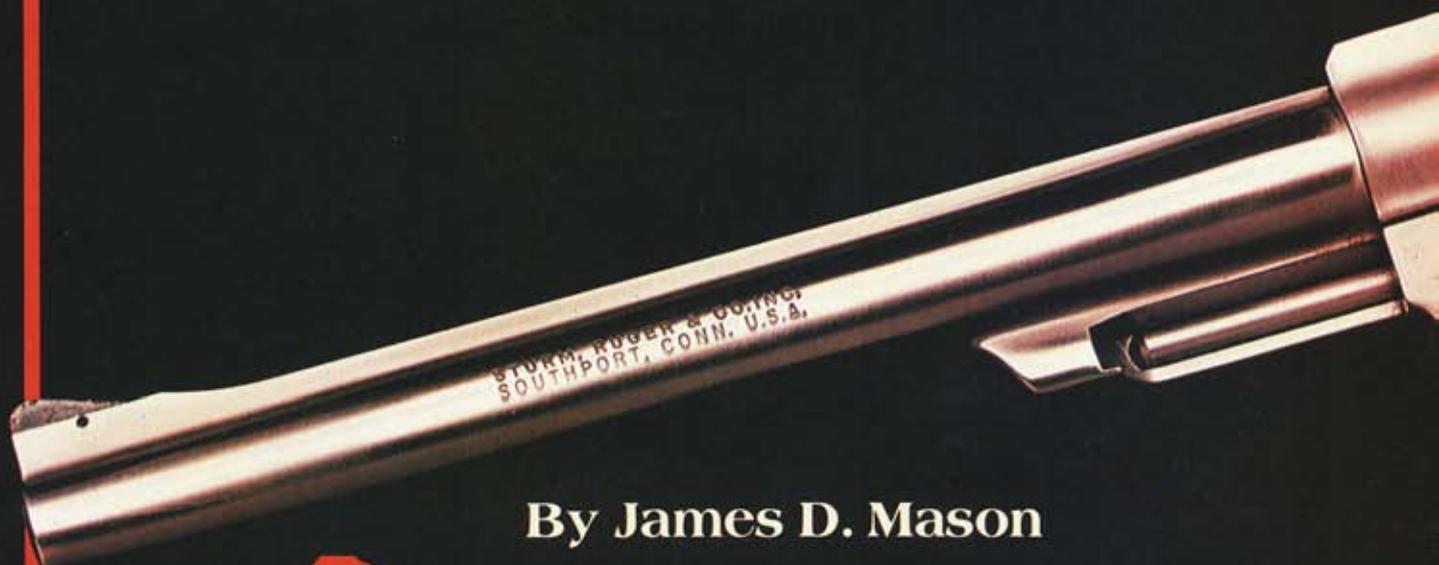
Enclosed is \$15.00 for annual membership which includes a year subscription to the AMERICAN HANDGUNNER Magazine.

I am already a subscriber to the AMERICAN HANDGUNNER; enclosed is \$10.00 for my annual membership.

(Note: Life and Endowment memberships are available, please write for details)

RUGER[®]

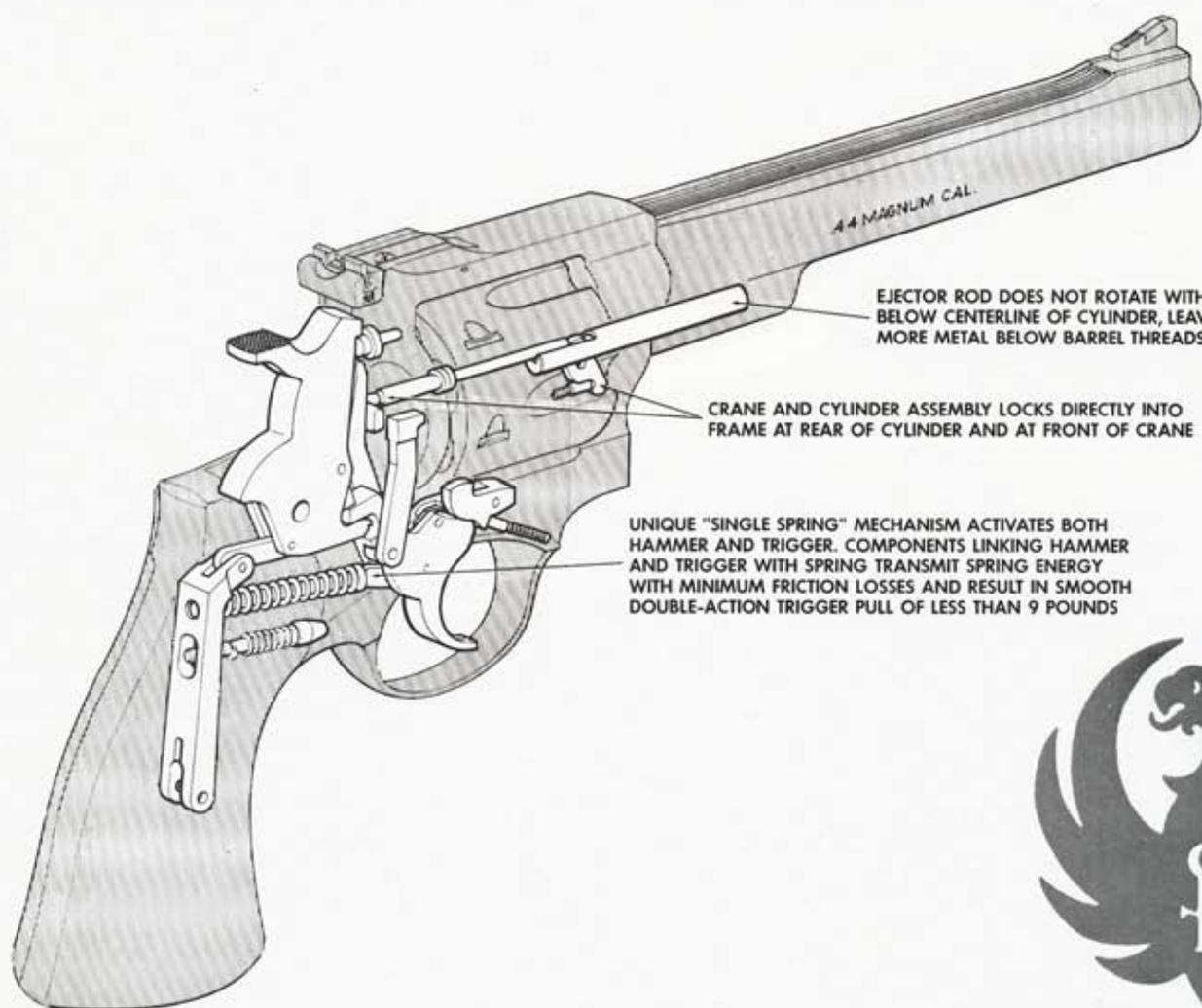
Redhawk[®]



By James D. Mason

Really new revolver designs are few and far between. The leading manufacturers' models are based on turn-of-the-century concepts. Many models have been updated only with cosmetic or superficial alterations. The advent of S&W's short revolver double-action lock in the 1950's represented one of the latest functional changes in mechanical concepts for wheel guns.





Metallurgical and other engineering improvements have allowed increasing the energy level for shooting Magnum cartridges in revolver frames designed for turn-of-the-century ballistics.

Sturm, Ruger and Company, celebrating thirty

years as gunmakers, have brought out the most innovational gun since the early 1900s. The new Redhawk revolver, chambered for the .44 Magnum cartridge, represents a truly innovative product, incorporating

dimensional and metallurgical factors that match the power of the .44 Magnum ballistics. Cylinder locking at both the front and rear and a new departure in double-action lock work round out the most notable engineering achievements.

Comparison of the new Ruger offering with the Smith & Wesson Model 29 is inevitable. Many judgments will be made on subjective bases, but a great deal of information can be generated from objective comparisons. From such



From left to right: Ramp-front sight is easily removed with Allen wrench. Author feels that a sky-blue insert is better than the traditional red. Redhawk's nominal cylinder diameter is 1.781 with minimal wall thickness at chamber ends of .109 S & W is 1.725 and .080 respectively. Spent cases eject in Redhawk when barrel is pointed straight up and hit smartly with the hand. Slow ejection does not clear.

comparisons, shooters will more readily see Ruger's design philosophy and the criteria for designing the Redhawk in particular. The object of such comparison is not to put value judgments on each of the handguns' characteristics. Individual

decisions are still the main arbiters in the marketplace. However, the Redhawk is destined to have its own group of boosters among big bore handgunners.

Arguments for or against sighting radius and overall balance tend toward subjective evaluation. The heavier overall weight of the Ruger (53 ounces versus 49 ounces) places the point of balance approximately at the front of the cylinder face, the same as with the Model 29 8 3/8-inch.

Added weight of the Ruger moderates recoil velocity. Combined with a slightly lower bore line (1 1/4 inches versus 1 3/8 inches) and a wider recoil shoulder (.675-inch versus .650-inch) tend to make felt recoil less sharp and stinging in the Ruger. The differences again tend to be subjective and probably negligible to an experienced shooter.

The Redhawk has thicker and heavier journal sections in the frame and barrel where these two elements join. The threaded section is 3/4-inch by 20, allowing the barrel to be tightened fully without danger of collapsing the shoulder. Combined with heavy top strap and crane sections, plus the front and rear lockup of the cylinder, the Redhawk is a gun that can digest many thousands of full bore factory or reloads without loosening up. Some of these critical parts dimensions exceed those of the Super Blackhawk single-action revolver, for years considered to be the strongest revolver ever made.

The large physical dimensions of the barrel journal are made possible by the design of the ejection rod system. The rod does not rotate on the axis of the cylinder, but is actually offset below the cylinder center line. This arrangement allows for the larger diameter of barrel journal dimensions. The ejection rod serves only to eject cases and acts as a conduit for operating the front locking bolt located in the crane. The front locking bolt is a pivotal lever of

.080-inch flat stainless steel stock. This bolt engages a milled notch in the frame section adjacent to the crane. This arrangement securely locks the crane and frame together, thus stabilizing the location of the front of the cylinder. Crane looseness has been a concern of Model 29 owners, it can be due to wear or poor fitting of the forward locking bolt which engages the front end of the ejection rod in the shroud on the Smith & Wesson gun.

With heavy loads, inertia can cause the S&W front locking bolt to back out of its engagement with the ejection rod. This action momentarily leaves the rod without forward support. Could it be that this comparative design edge of the Redhawk will influence Smith & Wesson to reintroduce the Triple Lock, heeding the decades-old pleas of knowledgeable handgunners?

The front/rear cylinder locking on the Redhawk is a major plus for a heavy caliber revolver. Both front and rear attachments disengage when the thumb depresses the cylinder latch. Pushing the center locking pin forward at the rear of the cylinder moves the pin projection forward in the ejector rod. The pin then engages the upper half of the front locking lug lever, causing the lever to pivot out of engagement with its notch in the forward section of the frame.

The Redhawk's heavy cylinder walls also add up to increased weight and pressure resistance where it is needed for high-pressure loadings. Redhawk nominal cylinder diameter is 1.781-inch with minimum wall thickness of .125-inch at the front of the chambers and minimum walls of .109-inch at the chamber ends. The Model 29 figures are 1.725-inch, .115-inch, and .080 respectively. This is not meant to cast aspersions on the Smith & Wesson product, or to imply that it is unsafe. Design factors and metallurgical quality control assure that the Model 29 is a product with more than adequate safety margins for

.44 Magnum ammunition. The point is that the heftier Ruger Redhawk dimensions assure even higher safety margins, all other things being equal.

In the area of comparative design philosophy, cylinder stop notches of the Model 29 are machined into the smallest cross-section, while Ruger has chosen to follow the Colt approach—placing the cylinder bolt off-center and notching more nearly into the heavier web stock between cylinder holes.

One of the biggest news items is the design of the Redhawk double-action lock. This mechanism does not resemble any other commercial design and utilizes a series of efficient spring levers to produce a low maximum initial pull pressure (approximately 9 pounds) with a smooth, constant DA pull. There is no perceptible letoff or spring gain toward the end of the pull. There is about a 5 degree "plateau" in the DA pull just before letoff, after all timing movements of the action are locked up. The trigger can be held comfortably at this poise of the hammer arc which will allow sight refinement before dropping the hammer with a coordinated movement of the tip of the finger.

I have never experienced a more efficient or better feeling tension profile on any factory DA trigger. With the two-hand hold, deliberate trigger manipulation can produce very nearly the same accuracy results as single-action hammer manipulation. This DA action will be a boon to the handgun hunter, who cannot cock a revolver hammer for fear of spooking the quarry. The Model 29 comparison gun had a honed trigger that let off at 2 1/2 pounds SA. The Ruger factory trigger required nearly 4 pounds for the SA letoff. Overall Ruger field performance would be enhanced by smoothing and reducing the factory level of single-action letoff.

In the new Redhawk trigger, the mainspring is compressed between both

(Continued on page 48)



LOADS FOR THE .223 CONTENDER

T/C'S .222 BARREL CAN BE
CHAMBERED FOR THE .223
AND THE RESULTS CAN
BE MORE THAN GRATIFYING

By Wayne Blackwell

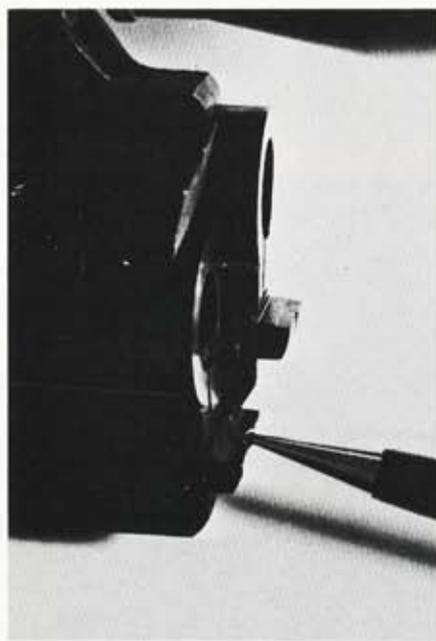
The large selection of barrels available for the Thompson/Center Contender has made this handgun one of the more popular firearms around today. However, I guess there are always a few of us who are never really quite satisfied in the calibers offered. Thompson/Center has never offered the Contender chamber for the .223 Remington cartridge. I asked Tim Pancurak, who heads up the Customer Service Department, why Thompson/Center hasn't offered Contender barrels chambered for the .223 Remington cartridge. Tim stated that, "In our testing of the various rounds (.223 Rem.) we noticed considerable pressure indications, especially with military ammo. Due to the readily available supplies of GI ammo we know that most shooters would be using this inexpensive ammo. We decided not to offer this chambering as it may have produced untold problems with shooters, dealers, and distributors."

I have found that reasonable handloads worked beautifully in the .223 Contender. I tried a few military rounds in the Contender for comparison purposes and found that both velocity and accuracy were good, though the loads were pretty stiff and I would not recommend using this ammo as a steady diet for the Contender.

The .222 Remington barrel offered by Thompson/Center is easily rechambered to the .223 Remington by any competent gunsmith that has a .223 Remington reamer. In the last few months several distributors have advertised custom T/C .223 barrels for the Contender. Hawkeye Distributors, 115 South Main, New Sharon, Iowa (50207) lists a custom .223 barrel. Ingram barrels are available from J & G Sales, 442 Miller Valley Rd., Prescott, Arizona (86301), in .223 caliber that fit right into your existing T/C frame without modification. The Ingram barrels are available in either 12- or 14-inch length, with accuracy and workmanship guaranteed by Ingram.

The Contender has a reputation for being hard on brass, particularly the rimless type. The break-open action of the Contender is not as solid, or was it intended to be, as that of a bolt action rifle. Consequently the firing of high intensity cartridges, such as the .223 Remington will produce some stretch in the case and a small amount of vertical play in the barrel. As expected, high pressure loads will cause more stretch than normal loads. However, a simple bolt alteration can be made that improves lockup, reduces case stretch and can make a noticeable improvement in the grouping ability.

The bolt on the Contender factory barrel is contoured so that it locks-up reason-



the action. This is a cut and try operation. The job is complete when no vertical play is detected upon application of force to the grips and muzzle. If too much metal is removed from the bolt the barrel won't lock-up and a new bolt will be required.

Unless you fully understand what you're doing, send the barrel and action to Jim Fox of Fox Custom Guns (2122 E. Belt Line Rd., Richardson, Texas 75081). Jim can mill the bolt and stone the hammer, sear and trigger to give a very smooth trigger pull if desired. Write Jim Fox for prices.

Several Contender shooters experience

Barrel play can be eliminated by bolt alteration. Foreground photo shows before alteration and background photo shows bolt milled almost flat.



Author chronographing loads for the .223 TC Contender. Over 1,500 rounds were fired in working up load data.

ably well with all Contender actions. After a few stiff loads the barrel will usually develop vertical play in the action.

Your Contender can easily be checked for vertical play by grasping the barrel, near the muzzle, with one hand and gripping the stock with the other hand and trying to force the breech end up and away from the action. If your barrel has developed play, a slight clicking sound can be heard and a small gap can be seen between the breech and receiver as the barrel is flexed.

This problem is eliminated by milling the bolt flat, or nearly so, and fitting it to

ignition problems with ammo, such as the .223 Remington, that require rifle primers. Usually the ignition problem can be traced to either excess cartridge headspace, a weak hammer spring or in rare instances faulty operation of the Contender safety device or bent firing pin. Headspace problems can be greatly reduced by either partial sizing or neck sizing fired cases. Full length sizing of cartridge cases can cause a partial head separation in as few as four or five firings.

Weak hammer spring problems are readily cured by replacing the old spring with one of the newly designed springs

LOAD DATA FOR THE .223 T/C CONTENDER

CHARGE (GRAINS)	POWDER	BULLET	AVG. VEL. (FPS)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	REMARKS
-----------------	--------	--------	-----------------	-------------------	---------

22	WWV-680-BR	50gr. Sierra Spitzer	3,041	1027	Maximum-Hot!
23	IMR-4198		2,845	898	Good Velocity
22	RL-7		2,610	756	Target Load
25	H-335		2,615	759	Accurate
26	BLC-2		2,531	711	Target Load
27	IMR-4895		2,757	844	Compressed Load
25	IMR-4064		2,317	596	Mild Load
27	IMR-4320		2,645	777	Accurate
28	H-380		2,470	677	Target Load

21	WWV-680-BR	52 gr. Sierra H.P.B.T.	2,925	988	Maximum-Hot!
23	IMR-4198		2,876	955	Target Load
21	RL-7		2,522	734	Accurate
24	IMR-3031		2,490	716	Accurate
25.5	WWV-748		2,321	622	Target Load
26	H-335		2,393	661	Accurate
26.5	BLC-2		2,651	811	Accurate
23	IMR-4895		2,232	575	Unstable
27.5	H-380		2,373	650	Mild Target Load

22.5	IMR-4198	53gr. Hornady H.P.	2,738	882	Target Load
21	RL-7		2,440	701	Accurate
24	IMR-3031		2,316	631	Accurate
25	BLC-2		2,345	647	Target Load
25	IMR-4064		2,325	636	Accurate
25	IMR-4320		2,360	655	Accurate
26.5	H-380		2,276	610	Target Load

22.5	IMR-4198	53gr. Sierra H.P.	2,711	865	Good Velocity
20	RL-7		2,424	691	Target Load
24	IMR-3031		2,410	683	Target Load
27	WWV-748		2,481	724	Accurate
27.5	H-335		2,675	842	Good Accuracy
27	BLC-2		2,600	795	Target Load
23	IMR-4895		2,267	605	Target Load
24	IMR-4064		2,158	548	Accurate
27	H-380		2,300	622	Target Load
22.5	IMR-4198		2,684	880	Good Velocity
21.5	RL-7		2,501	764	Fair Accuracy
22	IMR-3031		2,157	568	Mild Target Load
25	WWV-748		2,255	621	Accurate
26.5	H-335		2,573	808	Accurate
25.5	BLC-2		2,471	746	Target Load
24	IMR-4895		2,344	671	Target Load
25	IMR-4064		2,261	624	Fair Accuracy
27	IMR-4320		2,596	823	Full Case
26	H-380		2,161	570	Mild Target Load

27.2	Unknown Ball-Type	TW-71 Military (55 gr.)	2,680	876	Good Accuracy
------	-------------------	-------------------------	-------	-----	---------------

available from Thompson/Center. All Contenders manufactured since late 1977 have this new spring. The cost is nominal (35 cents as of this writing) and is easily installed.

If your hammer spring is in good shape, all cartridges are properly headspaced and you are still experiencing misfires, take a good look at the Contender safety. The safety may not be clearing when the hammer is cocked. If not, check the safety spring.

Small pistol primers should not be used in the .223 Remington cartridge. The pistol primer seats deeper into the primer pocket than rifle primers and only aggravates the misfiring problem. Also the pistol primer cups are too soft for this high intensity cartridge and upon firing partially extrude into the firing pin hole, making it difficult to open the action.

Once fired military brass was used for all load data development in the .223 Remington Contender. This brass is plentiful and quite frankly I could determine little if any difference in accuracy or velocity between this brass and commercial cases. All military brass were tumbled in crushed walnut shells for cleaning.

After cleaning they were partially sized, by adjustment of the full length die in the reloading press, until the Contender action closed with a little feel; the case creating a "crush fit" between the receiver and the shoulder of the case. This is a trial and error adjustment on the sizing die, but once the proper height is found the lock ring can be set and the die can be used for all future sizing of cases. I used a neck sizing die for all subsequent sizing and reloading of cases fired in the Contender.



The new Contender hammer spring (in foreground) is heavier than the old design and may just cure ignition problems.

(Continued on page 62)

THE SCORPION STORY!

MAXIMUM SHOCK, MINIMUM PENETRATION

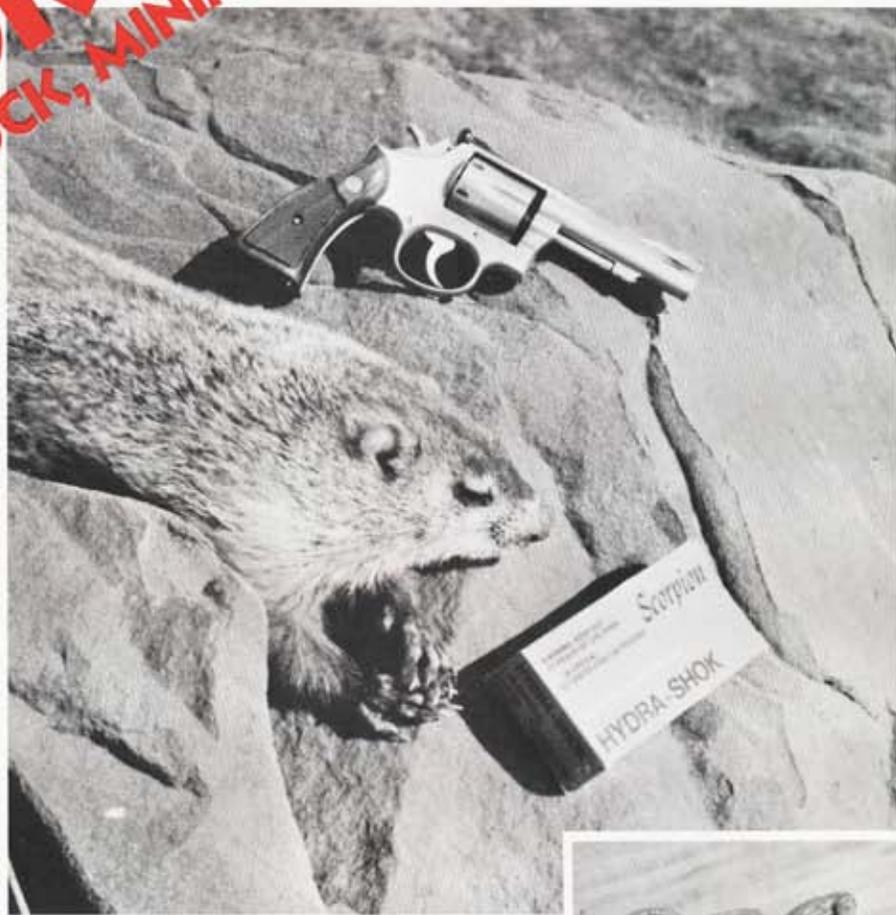
By J. D. Jones

Hydra-Shok Corporation (Ballistic Research & Development, R.D. 2, Coykendall Rd., Watkins Glen, N.Y., 14891) has introduced a new .38 Special factory load applying new concepts to an old idea. I feel this new round will become highly controversial at the very least, and am very anxious to get results from the field.

Hydra-Shok quite explicitly outlines their claims in their literature, and I feel their exact words are appropriate in this case. *Law enforcement has been searching for ammunition that will give ultimate performance where armed force is necessary, while not subjecting a secondary individual to danger. Testing has proved that a Scorpion will expand to .60 caliber while retaining 98 to 100% of its mass. The answer lies neither in ultra-high velocity nor in the opposite approach. It is bullet design coupled with controlled velocity that causes Scorpion loads to obtain maximum results through the medical principle of hydrostatic shock. Also the ricochet factor has proven negligible.*

I agree with a considerable amount of the above but have my doubts about some of it. It surprises me that Hydra-Shok fails to capitalize on three very important qualities of their ammunition that in my opinion are quite important in police or private defensive use. These are (A) Absolutely minimal muzzle flash, (B) Minimal muzzle blast and (C) Minimal recoil. The above "absolute minimums" are, of consistent with what should be attained with reliable power.

Muzzle flash. Ever been blinded by your own muzzle flash at night? I have, and it isn't a pleasant feeling . . . could



Here's the Combat Masterpiece with 4" barrel and a groundhog taken with the Scorpion ammo at 20 feet. Three Scorpion bullets recovered from close range shots into groundhogs.



even cost you your life in the wrong situation. The Scorpion flash is practically nothing. No concern on that score.

Muzzle blast. Any of it is unpleasant. Some of it just plain hurts. It is very detrimental to accuracy, even under stress conditions. Many individuals try to avoid it by closing their eyes and yanking the trigger. Scorpion is about as easy on your ears as is possible to attain. Some .22 L. R. guns bother my ears more than a Scorpion does.

Recoil. No doubt about it — the more recoil to contend with, the harder it is to shoot fast and accurately. Scorpion has minimum recoil allowing very fast and ac-

curate repeat shots.

Combine all three of the above and Scorpion ammo comes off very well on the score of shooter comfort and controllability which leads to effectiveness in a fight. Remember — only good hits count when the chips are really down.

The ammo has quite a few other advantages for police work. Low on the penetration scale, it won't zip right on through like a 158 grain R. N. The bullet configuration resembles a wadcutter, and velocity is about equal. Both the wadcutters used in training and Scorpion ammo have the same point of impact, trajectory and

(Continued on page 65)

The 9mm Why

...It's not some kind of super magnum, nevertheless it is an efficient, well designed .38 that's popular with millions throughout the world

By Charles J. Vanous

About 1900 George Luger developed a new cartridge for the autoloading pistol he invented, which was based on Hugo Borchardt's rather clumsy pistol-carbine. Luger patented his new pistol in 1902. The new cartridge was .38 caliber (9mm), and its 125 grain bullet left the muzzle at about 1040 feet per second (fps)—a phenomenal speed for a handgun in those days.

The cartridge was called the 9mm Parabellum, and today it is usually called the 9mm Luger. Or, just the 9mm. Or, according to Seattle Times columnist Rick Anderson, simply "The Nine." Anderson quotes a federal agent as saying, "You carry The Nine and you're macho."

According to Anderson, Police Chief Don Van Blaricom of Bellevue, Washington State, said his department adopted the 9mm because "we wanted to be as well armed as the criminal." Anderson credits the FBI with the statement that the 9mm is the most deadly handgun in America. A Seattle detective is quoted as saying, "It carries a quick, deadly load. An awesome thing."

George Jackson, for whom the radical George Jackson Brigade was named and who died while attempting to break out of prison during which he allegedly killed several people, is quoted as writing in his letters from prison: "9mm Browning High Power with 13-shot clip (is) one of the most terrible side arms in the world. I hit a jack rabbit with it once and found nothing at the point of impact but a few rabbit hairs and a mist of blood."

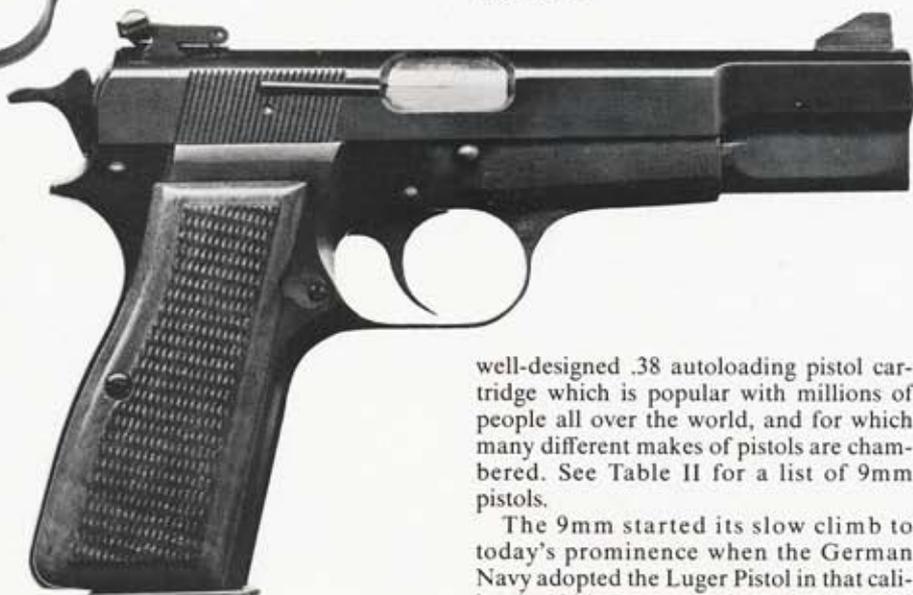
Jackson may have written this, and he





Here's one of the newest and best 9mm's. It's the Beretta Model 92 with a magazine capacity of 15 and 1 up the pipe.

When these three cartridges are factory loaded with 125 grain bullets, author says the 9mm equals the .38 Special, but falls behind the hotter .357 Magnum.



John Browning's 1935 creation, this Hi-Power is getting more popular on the combat-competition circuit because of the extra firepower. Custom smiths like Swenson and Hoag can do great things with this number.

may have actually believed it, but anyone who has shot a rabbit, even with a high-velocity rifle with many times the power of any handgun, knows that while a bullet may tear a rabbit wide open, it will not make the rabbit disappear. Perhaps Jackson's bullet only nicked the rabbit and it ran away, leaving a few hairs behind. The mist of blood was perhaps rhetoric.

Once a bullet has left the barrel, it doesn't act any differently because it came from a mystic 9mm than if it came from a mundane, ordinary .38 Special. A 100-grain bullet leaves the 9mm muzzle at 1300 fps; a 110-grain bullet leaves the .38 Special muzzle at 1200 fps. A 125-grain 9mm bullet has a muzzle velocity of 1100 fps; The Omark-CCI 125-grain .38 Special bullet has a muzzle velocity of 1425 fps. The .357 Magnum spits out a 110-grain bullet at 1750 fps and the 125-grain bullet at an unbelievable 1900 fps. The Colt Super .38 130-grain bullet leaves the muzzle at 1245 fps. See Table I which lists the ballistics of most of the commercially available 9mm and Super .38 cartridges as well as .38 Special and .357 Magnum cartridges with light-weight bullets.

This comparison shows that the 9mm is not some kind of magic super-magnum high-velocity load, since other cartridges propel similar bullets at similar or even higher speeds. Actually, the main thing that the 9mm handguns have going for them is a large magazine capacity. Does anyone really need a 14-shot gun? Only if his opponent has missed hitting him while he fired the first 13!

Nevertheless, the 9mm is an efficient,

well-designed .38 autoloading pistol cartridge which is popular with millions of people all over the world, and for which many different makes of pistols are chambered. See Table II for a list of 9mm pistols.

The 9mm started its slow climb to today's prominence when the German Navy adopted the Luger Pistol in that caliber in 1904. Four years later the Imperial German Army also adopted the 9mm Luger as its service arm.

Between the two World Wars, Germany replaced the Luger as its official side arm with the Walther H.P., officially designated as the Walther P-38, still in 9mm caliber. This gun has a double-action trigger so that the first shot can be fired from an uncocked pistol by merely pulling the trigger which raises and trips the hammer. In case of a misfire, the double-action trigger allows the shooter to rain more blows on the primer by repeatedly pulling the trigger. Subsequent shots are fired single action from a cocked hammer. The P-38 has an 8-shot magazine.

In the early 1930's Poland adopted the Radom autoloading pistol for its armed forces, also in 9mm caliber. This pistol was designed by John M. Browning, and is basically a combination of the Government Model 1911 Colt and the subsequently introduced 1935 F.N. High Power Browning. It is a simple and sturdy design with excellent balance and good instinctive pointing qualities. It was manufactured at the Radom Arsenal in Poland under direction of engineers from the Belgian Fabrique Nationalé Browning plant. After Germany invaded Poland, the gun was used extensively by the Germans and most specimens will be found with German proof marks.

In 1935 the last pistol designed by John M. Browning was introduced as the Browning High Power. Chambered for the 9mm cartridge, it had been designed by Browning ten years before. Superficially it resembles the 1911 Model Colt,

but it is entirely different inside. The feature that has attracted the most interest among the gun-carrying public, and contributed greatly to today's popularity of the 9mm in the United States, is the double-row magazine holding 13 rounds. This, with a cartridge in the barrel, puts 14 shots at the command of the shooter.

The Browning High Power was manufactured in Belgium prior to WWII and during the war was manufactured in Canada for use by Chinese, Greek, Canadian, and British troops. After Belgium was overrun by the Germans, the gun was used extensively by German S.S. troops.

Thus in the course of WWII the 9mm became the most widely used pistol and submachine-gun cartridge in existence. It achieved a reputation of sorts when it was widely stated that it had killed more men than any other handgun cartridge. This, of course, was pure surmise, based on the fact that so many 9mm handguns were used in WWII by both sides. In spite of the well-known fact that pistols account for only a tiny percentage of the casualties in any war, this reputation may be well deserved since many of the 9mm cartridges expended in WWII were fired from submachine guns. Some wartime cartridges were loaded specifically for submachine guns and gave velocities up to 1500 fps. Such cartridges should not be used in pistols.

After WWII G.I.'s brought home Lugers, Walther P-38's, Radoms, and Browning High Powers as well as other guns. For a long time the 9mm pistols were only a drug on the used-gun market and sold for \$20 to \$30. During that time I purchased two Lugers, two Radoms, a P-38 and a Browning.

The Lugers and P-38 seemed muzzle-light to me, while the Browning and Radom felt much like the Colt Model 1911. All the guns had heavy, and somewhat ragged, trigger pulls, but were surprisingly accurate. For example, my notes show that one day with the P-38 I fired scores of 95, 96, and 98 on the standard 25-yard target with reloads. All of the guns functioned well with full loads, but it took a while for me to find a lead-bullet reload that would make the guns function reliably. I loaded the Ideal No. 358402 123-grain bullet ahead of 4 grains of Bullseye. With this load the P-38 functioned satisfactorily, but 35 rounds literally lined the barrel with lead. Next I tried 3 grains of Bullseye, and while this load operated the Radom satisfactorily, the P-38 failed to function 50 percent of the time, and the Browning 20 percent of the time. The latter two guns would never remain open after the last shot. All of the barrels leaded badly, even with the reduced 3-grain load.

Next I switched powders to 4 grains of DuPont No. 5. With this load there was no leading, accuracy appeared satisfactory, but the P-38 slide would not remain open

(Continued on page 58)

9MM LUGER CAL. HANDGUNS

Make & Model	Mag. Cap.	Trigger	Frame	Wt. (oz.)	Bbl. (in.)	Total lgth.	Approx. price*
1. Benelli B76	8	DA	Steel	32	4	7.5	\$250
2. Beretta 92	15	DA	Alum. alloy	33.5	4.92	8.5	\$365
3. Browning High Power	13	SA	Steel	35	4.62	7.75	\$290
4. Browning Double Action	9	DA	Alum. alloy	29.3	4.4	7.8	\$320
5. Colt Gov't. 1911	9	SA	Steel	40	5	8.5	\$235
6. Colt Commander	9	SA	Alum. alloy	27	4.25	8	\$235
7. Colt Combat Commander	9	SA	Steel	36.5	4.25	8	\$235
8. Czech M75	15	DA	Steel	35	4.6	7.8	NA
9. Heckler & Koch VP 70Z	18	DA	Steel	32.5	4.5	8	\$225
10. Heckler & Koch P9S	9	DA	Steel	33.5	4	7.5	\$330
11. Llama XI	9	SA	Steel	38	5	8.5	\$215
12. Mauser Parabellum (Luger)	8	SA	Steel	32	4	8.66	\$400
13. Radom	8	SA	Steel	29	4.75	7.75	NA
14. Rogak	18	DA	Steel	35	5.5	10	\$289
15. SIG Sauer P220	9	DA	Alum. alloy	29.3	4.38	7.75	\$350
16. Smith & Wesson Model 39	8	DA	Alum. alloy	26.5	4	7.44	\$210
17. Smith & Wesson Model 59	14	DA	Alum. alloy	27	4	7.44	\$252
18. Star BM	8	SA	Steel	34	3.9	7.17	\$209
19. Star BKM	8	SA	Alum. alloy	25.5	3.9	7.17	\$209
20. Walther P-38 Commercial	8	DA	Alum. alloy	28	4.94	8.5	\$595
21. Walther P-38IV	8	DA	Alum. alloy	29	4.5	8	\$555
22. Walther P-38K	8	DA	Alum. alloy	26	2.75	6.38	\$545
23. Walther P-38 WWII Military	8	DA	Steel	34	4.75	8.5	NA

*Prices listed are approximate due to fluctuations in value of dollar and inflation.

9MM FACTORY AMMO

Manufacturer	Caliber	Bullet Type	Bullet weight grains	Muzzle velocity ft./sec.	Muzzle energy ft.lbs.
CCI-Omark	9mm	JHP	100	1300	375
	9mm	JSP	125	1100	335
Federal	9mm	JHP	115	1160	345
	9mm	FMC	123	1120	345
Remington	9mm	JHP	115	1155	341
	9mm	FMC	124	1110	339
Smith & Wesson (4-inch barrel)	9mm	FMC	100	1251	348
	9mm	FMC	115	1183	358
	9mm	MCSWC	115	1183	358
Winchester-Western (Power Point)	9mm	JHP	115	1128	325
	9mm	JSP	95	1355	387
	9mm	JSP	100	1320	387
	9mm	JHP	100	1320	387
	9mm	FMC	115	1155	341

Bullet type abbreviations:
 FMC — Full metal case
 JHP — Jacketed hollow point
 JSP — Jacketed soft point
 MCSWC — Metal case semi-wad cutter

ARE TAURUS



BULLETS BETTER?

By J. D. Jones

The ad says they are. I started using them before I read the ad and hadn't formulated an opinion.

At first glance the Taurus bullets are very obviously different. They look odd—no knurls or grooves. The lube is an odd color. They feel slick. After handling them a seemingly invisible film of lube coats the fingers for quite a while. After loading 300 .38s the thumb and forefinger of my left

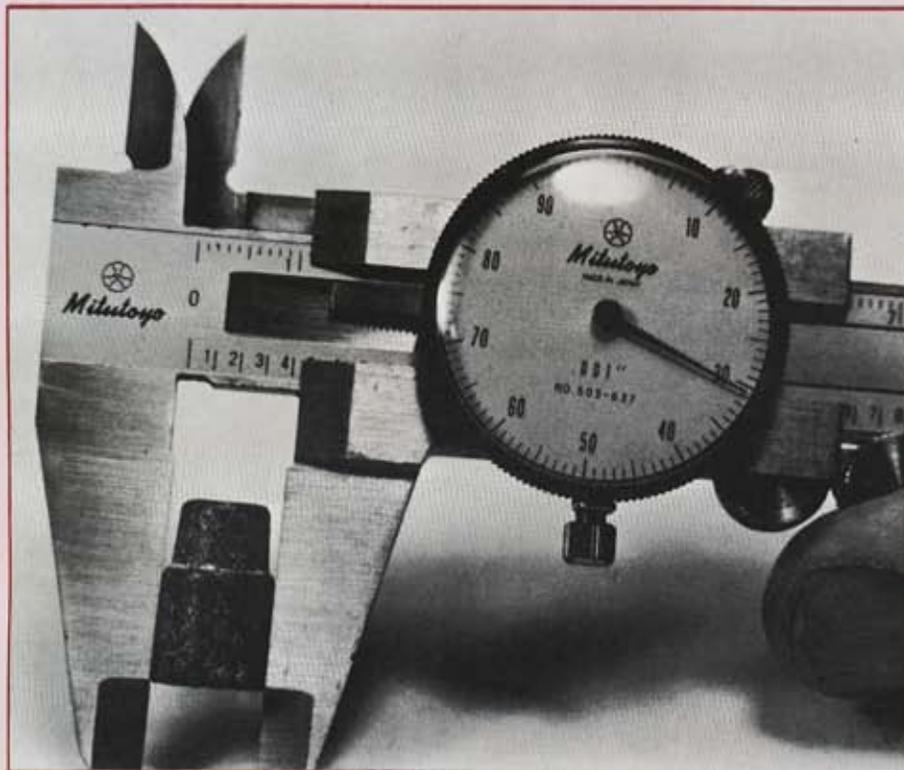
hand were still "beading" water a couple days later.

You have seen the "Taurus" full page ads in this and other magazines—maybe even read it. Taurus claims to make a better bullet for better scores. This is an obvious claim the bullets are capable of match grade accuracy.

The manufacturer claims five reasons for superior performance of his bullets.

Let's take a quick look at each claim.

1. "The bullets are made from the finest quality lead wire available today." No doubt about it. The better quality of wire (uniformity), the better the finished product. The only way to assure high quality wire if purchased from suppliers is to test each coil during acceptance of the shipment. Lead alloy wire can be very uniform. From past experience in having



swaged "a few" bullets—the suppliers have to be watched very closely. The final kicker is this. What do you do when you have orders to fill and no wire fitting your exact specs available but a 100 tons slightly different available. I've been there—you use what you can get. Purchasing in advance and reliable suppliers are important to the guy pulling the trigger.

2. "Precision manufacturing techniques deliver bullets of consistently high standard, box after box." The techniques of very high quality bullet swaging have been known since the mid-nineteenth century. If the equipment is right, is kept in adjustment and constantly checked, lot to lot variations should be held within two grains or less. Trying to find a variation of over one tenth of a grain in the bullets I have for test is strictly an exercise in futility. The lubed bullets all stayed within one-tenth of a grain variation on my Ohaus (now RCBS M-304) scale. Two were found to go heavy by 2/10th grain due to lubricant build up at the junction of the semi-wadcutter "cone" and shoulder. I weighed a bunch of all calibers finding the weight very close by my scale to what it was supposed to be and extremely uniform. Finally got tired of looking for a light or heavy one and quit weighing. In this area of uniformity, I don't feel any cast bullet can compete with swaged bullets. The bullets are of very high standard and very consistent in weight.

3. "An exacting quality control program rides herd over the entire production cycle. No lemons. That's important." If quality control does its job there shouldn't be any lemons. I didn't find any obvious ones in around 3000 bullets. I haven't been through the manufacturing facility but in conventional bullet making of this type the only real lemons should come during the start and end of each coil of lead wire. Simply no reason for a bad bullet any other time if someone has set up the machinery properly and keeps an eye on it.

4. "Most bullets for reloaders are not truly round. Taurus bullets are round and

(Continued on page 50)

1. Taurus .45's, 230RN, 210SWC and 200 SWC. All worked well in an unmodified Colt.

2. Taurus .44 bullet measures about .4305, about the same as Remington and Winchester lead bullets.

3. From left to right: a .44 in 240 grain, a 210 grain .45 Colt, .45 in 210 and a box of 230 grains bullets in .45.

4. Unfired and recovered 210 grainers from .45 ACP. Bullets were recovered from ice, an excellent medium for recovering low velocity bullets in undamaged condition.

COLT'S CUSTOM GUN SHOP

By Massad F. Ayoob



Colt's Custom Shop engraving, as written up superbly by Bill Jordan in the August '78 GUNS, is artistry in steel that can take your breath away. But the Custom Shop does other beautiful things to handguns that are more in the utilitarian than the aesthetic vein.

Under manager Walt Gleason and supervisor Al DeJohn, a staff of crack gunsmiths with decades of experience beneath the famous blue dome that dominates the Hartford skyline, are crafting Colt revolvers and autos for the most discriminating target shooters, hunters, and combat competitors.

Consider, for instance, the Custom Tune on the ever-popular Python. This used to be called the Tedford Action because the work was done only by Don Tedford, a factory expert whose skills were and are comparable to the best of the "outside" pistolsmiths. Ted has been promoted to supervisory capacity, and the Pythons are being done by Earl Giggey and Richie Tousignant. At the plant, I was allowed to check several at random, and

slick sixguns they are; "Ted" trained his proteges well, because the Custom Tuned Pythons now coming out of the plant are every bit as nice as the ones he crafted himself.

The super action job goes for a flat hundred bucks. The majority are done on brand new guns ordered by distributors, and will retail in the area of \$499, but private owners can get their own snakes slicked for the same C-note. In fact, this is one of the rare deals where the private consumer can actually get a better deal than the distributor ordering several guns at a time. The price is the same for either, but you see, demand has been so great that Colt has declared a moratorium on Custom Tunes for distributors until sometime in 1979. *Your* gun, however, will still get done in sixty to ninety days. Since Ed Warner became president of the Colt Firearms Division, a lot more emphasis has been placed on the ultimate user of the product; you can see this in the way the Custom Shop is handling orders, and also in what seems to be a more customer-

This work of the engraver's art went for \$30,000.00 at the recent N.S.G.A. show in Chicago. But did you know about the more utilitarian aspect of customizing Colts going on now under the famous Blue Dome?

oriented attitude in the repair section.

What's in a Custom Tune that would make anyone want to add a C-note to the already impressive Python? Well, the springs are subtly redesigned, and a super polish is put on all moving parts, plus contact surfaces on the inside of the frame. The trigger strut is altered to work on a rounded radius instead of its usual square edge, and related parts of the system are adjusted to this change in the "mechanical advantage." One can't merely round the trigger and leave everything else as it was. The Colt I-frame action is more complex than any other on the market, and alteration of one part seems to have a chain reaction effect. There are literally hundreds of people doing good Smith & Wesson slick-ups, but sources who can turn out a really primo Python can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Colt Custom Shop is one of them.

What you get out of the brown box with the special "Custom Tune" sticker and the big price tag, is a gun with an incredibly

light, one-stage double action pull, and a super crisp single action let-off that just barely makes the NRA limit in weight of pull. There is no discernible backlash in either mode. Double action only configurations, with hammers spurs lopped off, are not offered.

Custom Shop people are careful to point out that a Custom Tuned Python should be considered a .38 Special, not a .357 Magnum. The alteration of the springs and the rest of the action job is aimed at producing a superslick revolver for bullseye target or PPC shooting. It's great for that, and coupled with the Python's superb balance, an excellent choice for the competitor shooting in both offhand and two-hand police shooting events. Al Burnett of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center used a Custom Tuned Python to win the Police Olympics last year.

The guns are test fired with Magnum ammo as well as .38, but are not guaranteed to gobble a steady diet of hard pri-



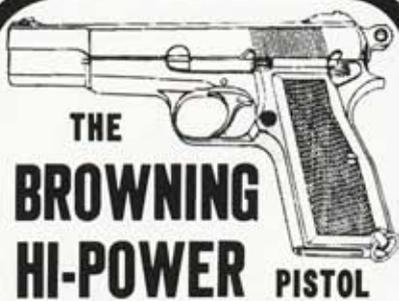
Here's the "slicked up" beauty. It doesn't look different on the outside but wait till you try the double action.

mers. For this reason, the supervisors don't recommend the Custom Tune for a police duty gun, or a hunting revolver to be used against dangerous game. When 100% Magnum reliability is mandatory, they'll try to steer the customer to the Hand Hone option. On the Python, this runs \$50 and is purely a super polish of contact surfaces in the mechanism. Springs are left at full tension, and the double action remains a two-stage. This option is little known, and there were none in the shop for me to try in the course of my two-day visit. (Continued on page 54)



Above: Ted Tedford, famed for his Python actions, now supervises a team that builds guns as slick as his own. Right: Richie Tousignant handcrafts a custom-tuned Python. He was one of the skilled team that replaced Tedford when he moved up.





THE BROWNING HI-POWER PISTOL

This volume thoroughly explores all the facets of the various military and civilian models, from use, disassembly, maintenance and detail repair to history and accessories. With nearly 50 pages and nearly 40 clear illustrations, this volume is undoubtedly the most comprehensive work in print on these pistols. Instructions on how to take it down to the last pin for inspection and repair, how to zero it, virtually every aspect of this arm is covered in finely illustrated detail. The best source of Hi-Power information available.

"The Browning HI-POWER Pistol", . . . \$3.95

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REDHAWK
(Continued from page 35)

the trigger movement and hammer rotation. Hammer movement accelerates through trigger leverage, but mechanical advantages change in favor of the trigger in ratio to the increase in spring compression. Trigger movement starts at about 9 pounds and remains constant to an uncanny degree throughout the pull. At the moment the trigger node rotates out from under the DA fly, spring tension transmits ignition force to the hammer through a second-class lever and stirrup arrangement that motivates the hammer. After ignition, small remaining mainspring tension performs the trigger recovery.

So outstanding is this DA design that I place it in League with S&W's 1954 introduction of their now famous short action. The Redhawk DA lock is outstanding in its pull characteristics. It should be noted that hammer arc travel, essential to transfer bar ignition, is relatively long compared to the same measurements on the Model 29.

The Ruger hammer rotates 41 degrees during double action and 50 degrees during single action, as compared to approximately 32 degrees and 40 degrees respectively on the Smith & Wesson gun. Lock time will be somewhat longer on the Ruger DA and will require a bit more shooter follow-through to maintain accuracy. It should be pointed out, however, that the favorable Redhawk trigger tension profile is accomplished with no lightening of the mainspring tension, a factor in many trigger jobs on all other conventional revolvers. With a general smoothing (stoning to get all machine marks to point in the same direction), the new Ruger DA will surpass in feel, function, and reliability the majority of the \$40-plus custom trigger jobs done on conventional revolvers.

Any new handgun imparts general impressions to the people who shoot it for the first time. I offer the following comments here principally to stimulate reactions of other shooters who will be trying the gun in the near future. The overall appearance of the Redhawk denotes the high quality standards consumers have come to expect from Ruger. Attention to detail in both design and manufacturing is apparent. Aside from the innovational elements already discussed above, the front sight blades are interchangeable with only an Allen wrench on the Redhawk barrel. Various light conditions require different front sight blades. Different loads also shoot higher or lower and require sight compensations greater than those built into the micrometer rear sight.

Various light conditions and shooter preferences call for either plain black, red, or yellow inserts. I would like to see a sky blue insert offered also for daylight ap-

plications on dark targets. The gun issues with a red insert, probably the hardest color (other than green) for the human eye to focus. Marketing reality dictates selling the gun with a red insert since so many shooters think red is the cat's pajamas; here is another case where popularity is a poor measure of excellence. The same is true of the white outlined rear sight notch; any direct light that falls on the white outline will enhance diffusion of light rays and make the rear sight notch fuzzy.

The Redhawk grip is designed with a fairly prominent backstrap "hump" to fill the palm, distributing recoil and reducing the effects of recoil velocity. The Redhawk has a shorter height of the recoil shoulder

Author likes a sky-blue front sight insert

than the Model 29. The shorter recoil shoulder promotes a high handhold, effectively lowering the bore line. Combined with heavier weight, greater frame width, the recoil moment of the Redhawk is more moderate than that of the Model 29. Recoil velocities are noticeably sharper with the S&W handgun.

However, no matter how good the gun's grip shape is, the Redhawk factory stocks do not provide ample gripping surface to stabilize for DA combat shooting. Forcing a deliberate combat DA cadence, the Redhawk's recoil inertia became too difficult to handle; recovery time for accurate shots is too long to sustain adequate combat cadences with full loads. This is no different from any other .44 Magnum revolver and it all happens in spite of the Redhawk's noticeably milder single-shot recoil characteristics. A set of combat grips designed to minimize recoil effects and to maximize recoil recovery would materially aid the rapid fire mode with this gun. Over the years, shooters have come to appreciate the advantages of Smith & Wesson's magnum target grips, sold as standard equipment on all their deluxe big frame handguns. While the design may not be perfect, it has a particularly good feeling recoil shoulder with adequate width and contour favorable to recoil control and recovery.

This is a handgun design well deserving for release during Ruger's 30th anniversary. The early release of any handgun with the potential of the Redhawk is call for some Commemorative action.

The technical achievements of this new Redhawk handgun crown years-long development efforts to incorporate features and solve many of the problems of large caliber revolvers. To this end, the Ruger design staff, including Engineer/designer Roy Melcher, are to be congratulated. And, for handgunners everywhere, the gods have been propitious.



NEW! BLANK-FIRING (STARTER) PISTOLS COUNTERFEIT GUNS

COMPLETELY SAFE! CANNOT BE MADE TO FIRE REAL AMMUNITION. Full-size, machined metal. They look, feel and weigh same as originals. Double-action, gun black finish, swing-out cylinder and ejector mechanism.



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CHARTER ARMS .44

(Continued from page 30)

hide the Charter is in John Bianchi's 9R Special Agent leather. First designed by Berns-Martin, whom Bianchi now owns, it can be used for either belt level, break front or upside down, shoulder wear; two holsters for the price of one! Sharp eyed readers will recognize this rig on Detective Crocker of the 'Kojack' T.V. series. The man has taste! But a word of caution about cheap imitations is definitely in order. Some years ago I was following a suspect and had to jump off a loading dock about 7' high. When my heels hit the pavement a cheap holster (upside down shoulder rig) dropped my Smith & Wesson on the deck. Fortunately no one saw, and I just scooped up the gun, tossed the holster in the trash, and kept on going. Naturally, I subjected the 9R to the 'Loading Dock' test, and it held the gun from anything I was willing to jump from. Used as a belt holster, it worked as well, and really made the gun impossible to spot under a sport jacket.

But the real test is how well it works in a practical situation. Going totally against all trends, I used the Bulldog for several IPSC type matches. One of the first stages called for five shots on a 24x24" plate at 100 yards. As a crowd gathered for the 'comic relief' of a fixed sight 3" .44, I made 3 consecutive hits! (With about 20 witnesses). It would be nice to say I won these matches with the Bulldog—nice, but not true. But inside of 30 yards, with 5 or less targets, the .44 could equal my best perfor-

Bianchi 9R shoulder rig passed with flying colors

mances with my competition .45. Of course the almost total absence of speed loaders for the gun wiped me out on any reloading stage. But knockdown targets really dropped when hit with that big 240 grain slug, as if I was using a club. And the Bianchi rig never let me bobble a draw, even when I had a short attack of "What do I do now, coach?" and managed to bump into a barricade at 1/2 speed. The gun stayed in place until I needed it to blast a balloon out of my way.

One problem did show up during my test, and I hope the factory will soon change it. The issue front sight is a pronounced hook shape, perfect for tearing up pockets and catching on every available piece of cloth. Fortunately my gun shot a bit low, so I performed a bit of "shade tree" gunsmithing with my file, and brought the point of impact up to the point of aim, ending up with a nicely ramped

front sight. Rather than bothering with rebluing this piece, I used the poor man's front sight light—fluorescent model paint over a coat of white. It shows up in any available light, and makes you think "front sight" before you squeeze one off. I use day-glow pink, but orange and lime green are also available—take your pick.

About the only available option I did not try are the Pachmayr rubber grips now available for the Charter Arms line. I do have a pair on my 2" M60, and they really take the sting out of shooting the little gun with the Treasury 110g W-W load. I'm sure they would do the same job of taming the bite of the .44.

Someone always raises the question of hot loads in the Bulldog. Since its introduction in 1973, over 60,000 3" and 10,000

Author used the poor man's front sight ... fluorescent paint

4" have gone out the factory door, with very few ever coming back. Some horrible hand loads have been forced through some of those guns. The factory says that when the upper limit is reached, the breech face will tend to set back before the rest of the gun lets go. But when loaded as a .44 Special, not a .44 Magnum, the gun can become a family heirloom, handed on and enjoyed by other members of the family.

The ultimate question remains. Is this the answer for a personal defense gun? It is light, powerful, and reliable. It does have more inherent accuracy than most shooters can use, and is chambered for a cartridge of proven stopping power. But it is only a five shot, and only lately has a reloader come onto the market. It remains a revolver when all trends are toward the semi-auto.

This can be the answer for those who want to (or must) carry a wheel gun without restriction as to caliber. The average police gunfight is 2.7 rounds (how do you

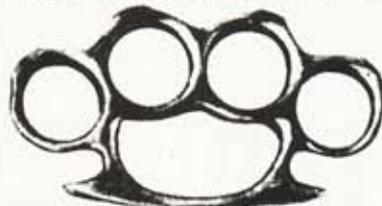
More stopping power and also more inherent accuracy

shoot .7 of a round?), so 5 should be enough for defensive, rather than offensive use. The .44 has a lot more stopping power than a .38 if you need it. Hidden away in the Bianchi leather, I have carried this gun, and put my life behind it. If a big bore, short barreled wheelgun is what you want, forget building a .40 and buy the Charter. It can do the job.

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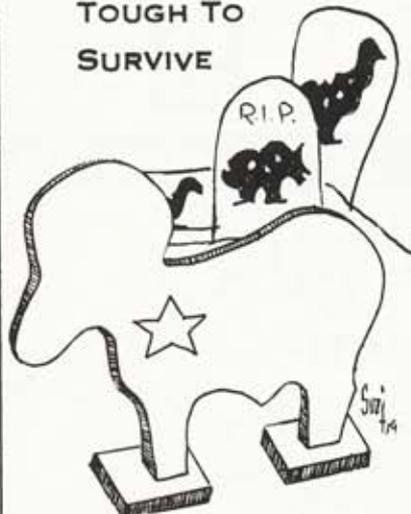
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TAURUS BULLETS

(Continued from page 45)

that makes a difference when accuracy is the name of the game. Ask any benchrest shooter."

I don't know about *most* bullets for reloaders not being truly round, but I've sure run into a lot of them that were out of round. It is difficult to drill and polish a round hole in a die—or barrel. Check the cases from several of your handguns or rifles with a dial caliper and you'll see what I mean. I would expect the round bullets within reason, to outshoot bullets badly out of round. I frankly don't know what is within reason and what isn't for accuracy. I have shot bullets more than .001" out of round with excellent accuracy. The Taurus bullets do vary somewhat. The amount is so slight I can't measure it and think some of it is attributable to lube. Occasionally, particularly with the hollow base wadcutters packed in 500 bulk packs, a bullet will be found that was obviously dented in shipping. Anyone loading for extreme accuracy should catch these and set them aside for more casual purposes. I feel round bullets are important though and the Taurus bullets are round. I suggest miking whatever you have on hand to see how they check out.

5. The big kicker in Taurus ads is an "Advanced lube system that *virtually eliminates leading of the bore*—a crucial point for accurate shooting. First the bullet is lubed for passage through the bore and then for proper seating in the case. The lube system permits a smooth bullet, one that doesn't require a knurled surface or grease grooves and the bullet is clean to handle and use."

Wow—that one is a can of worms. Getting rid of some of it; the sides of the bullet are smooth without grease or crimp grooves and the bullet is clean to handle and use.

Excessive leading is definitely detrimental to accuracy. The .357 Magnum with factory full charge lead bullet loads is a good example of a combination to stay away from.

I've seen .357 bores leaded up to the point the rifling could only be seen at the end of the muzzle due to lead. Accuracy was worse than a smoothbore would have done.

There is a difference between normal *conditioning* of a bore and excessive leading. In conditioning a bore to a particular load it is best to clean the bore as well as possible. Generally, if jacketed bullets have been used I use J. B. or Corbin paste mild abrasive bore cleaner. Very frequently, lead bullets will not shoot worth a damn through a really clean bore. I found in testing the new Hornadys a year ago it took about 30 rounds for accuracy to settle down. The Taurus bullets acted the same way. The first cylinder full with a very

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clean bore was a waste. Thirty rounds later fouling ahead of the forcing cone was visible and the rest of the bore was somewhat dirty. At this point groups settled down. At 200 rounds of the same ammo the bore condition had not changed. This was with the hollow base wadcutter and 2.8 Bulls-eye. Accuracy was excellent and the claim of lead free shooting was substantiated with this popular target load. Quite a few of the Hollow base and double ended wadcutters were fired through a Python (loads in .357 cases), a Crowley Custom PPC gun (S&W) and an S&W Combat Masterpiece. All three of these guns have been used a lot and the bores are slick. Excessive leading did not occur with target loads utilizing several powders at 750-800 F.P.S. velocity. A lesser number of full charge .38 Special loads were fired at around 800-900 F.P.S. velocity without excessive leading. I do not feel the bullets will take anywhere near full charge .357 Magnum loads without leading badly. As a guess, dependent on several other factors I would expect the wadcutters to perform as advertised at normal wadcutter velocities and the .38 RN and semi-wadcutter to perform as advertised up to 950-1100 F.P.S. at which point leading would occur in amounts detrimental to accuracy within fifty rounds. In other words—in unacceptable amounts.

Essentially—this means all of the Taurus bullets should perform adequately with the exception of the 9 mm 125 grain load. 9 mms would normally run around 1100+ F.P.S. from most guns with full charge loads. I haven't seen many smooth 9 mm barrels and would not expect lead free full charge loads to occur often in them. Most 9s will function with 125 grain bullets at 950 F.P.S. or so. As it is, the 125-9 mm is adequate for plinking or combat. As far as accuracy in the 9 is concerned; only the Colt MK IV is worthwhile considering as far as accuracy goes. The guns and even poor ammo are good enough for defense or close range recreational shooting but not much more than that. The 125 grain 9 mm is also useful in the .38 Auto and/or .38 Super. No problems with functioning. I feel confident it can be successfully used in .380 Autos by those few reloaders for that caliber. In short, the 9 mm is a hot little round. I'm not particularly in love with the Taurus bullet for it, but it does have a degree of usefulness. Likewise, the .38 bullets are capable of excellent performance in .357s; but only if the velocity is held to a reasonable level.

Most PPC shooters I've seen shooting .357s have used .38 Special brass. I don't. I refuse to gunk up the chambers in my .357s. Accordingly, I've developed a wadcutter load for .357 cases. It consists of 3.5 grains of P.B. behind a 148-grain hollow base wadcutter for around 770 F.P.S. from a six-inch gun in good shape. It is generally accurate although it may be necessary to test in one-tenth grain increments to obtain the best accuracy from a particular



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combination. The Taurus worked well from my custom Moran Python with this load. As with the PPC gun, the first 30 rounds merely conditioned the barrel and then things started shaping up. Thirty rounds for conditioning isn't much; the old Harvey zinc base pure lead cast bullets would take 100-200 rounds to condition a barrel. The thirty round figure can be used as a fairly good indicator for conditioning any barrel to a lead bullet load.

I suppose the double ended wadcutter is intended for custom loaders with automatic bullet feeds on their equipment, as the hollow base wadcutters are definitely more accurate.

The .38-158s, 9 mm-125, .41-210, .44-240, .45-200-210-230s all have a slightly concave base. Some of the bullets do have a very slight taper from front to rear; a practice of long standing. In theory it centers the bullet in the bore and aids accuracy.

Frankly, I haven't gotten around to shooting the .41-210 and .44-240 as I just received them. They look good. The .45s were given a workout in a Gold Cup and Ruger .45 Colt. The Gold Cup performed as expected—great. The .45 Colt revolver is quite interesting though. Loaded backwards over a healthy charge the .45 bullets are quite destructive and efficient defense loads. Loaded conventionally, they performed in a manner very similar to the .38 Special. You can jack up the velocity

enough to cause a lot of leading but factory equivalent loads are OK in my well worn Ruger.

I'm sure a lot more of the .45s will go through autos than revolvers. The 230 RN will feed in any gun that will feed hardball. The 200-grain semi-wadcutter will probably turn out to be the most accurate of the lot although I just don't like those short, stubby numbers. I like the 210 grain long nose job and it will definitely feed better than the 200 grain. The 210 and 230 both shoot better at long range than the 200 grain. One or the other of these (210 or 230) would be my choice as a combat competition bullet. The Gold Cup I used started leading undesirably at around 900 F.P.S. Recovery of the bullets disclosed gas cutting at the bases so a powder change would probably have jacked up the velocity a little before that started again.

Satisfaction and performance with these bullets will depend on your ability to load the ammo properly. I strongly suggest lead bullet expander plugs to open and bell the cases properly. Next, seat the bullets and crimp in a separate operation; preferably using a taper crimper. Improper adjustment of the dies will scrape lube and lead from the sides of the bullet and deposit it at the case mouth. Zero lubrication, a lump of lead, severe leading and lousy accuracy will result. In addition, case preparation is important. A Vibra-

Tech case cleaner does a dandy job of cleaning cases inside and out. Sorting by headstamp and trimming to a uniform length is very important to accuracy. Better still, buy enough unprimed cases, trim them and use them for "accuracy" loads only. Uniformly thrown powder charges, experimentation with promising loads in one-tenth-grain powder charge increments and properly seated primers will produce accuracy that is frequently quite respectable from handguns.

Quite obviously I've so far stayed away from giving group dimensions that the Taurus or other bullets should give. First, I seldom use a mechanical rest. Many of them are unreliable unless properly set up with ballistic lab precision. The Lee is simple to use and quite reliable with revolvers and some autos. It, and most others test Colt Govt. Models by affixing to the frame of the gun. The slide contains the sights and barrel. If the frame-to-slide fit is not nearly perfect a mechanical rest may well be worthless due to the slide and barrel pointing in a different direction than the frame. Quite obviously some of these guns will shoot better hand held than from some mechanical devices.

In shooting as well as most other things we all have good as well as bad days. Some individuals can't shoot under three inch groups at 25 yards from rest at any time. Others will shoot under one half inch with a good target .22. (Continued on page 60)

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COLT'S CUSTOM

(Continued from page 47)

(Some of our readers are unhappy about having to lay out an extra fifty or hundred bucks for an already premium-priced handgun that was advertised as having a hand-honed action back when it cost \$125. Costs of building guns have gone up steeply, especially at Colt's where the union has been very effective in dealing with management. The company didn't want to make hand-honing optional, nor price themselves almost out of the market. But the worked over Python does have the nicest action you can get in a factory revolver, and if you want the best...)

The Hand Hone is also available on the D-frame guns, for \$35. The trigger remains two-stage for double action, but is slick n' sweet, and no longer feels as if it's stacking. Got an old Detective Special, Cobra, or Agent with the long grip frame? Believe it or not, they take a slicking better than later models, due to changes in springs and ratchet design that favored production more than customizing. This is not to say that the \$35 hone is wasted on current guns, though; they did my late model Dick Special for me, and I'm extremely happy with it.

It should be noted, incidentally, that anything they'll do on a Python, they'll do on any other 1-frame gun: now discontinued Officers Model, Official Police, Three-Fifty-Seven, and Trooper revolvers trickle in now and then for the Custom Tune, and benefit just as much as a Python. The factory doesn't do much on Single Actions, though, or Mk. III series wheelguns.

The really exciting news is what they'll be doing with automatics. I reported their ambidextrous safety in "Industry Insider" a couple of years ago, and they're still waiting to get the go-ahead on it from upstairs. "The problem," Gleason explains, "is that when you modify a part related to safety of the gun, there are reams of red tape and enormous testing to be gone through before management is certain that there won't be any product liability problem." The two-way safety has sailed through all tests, and should soon be available. Price will probably be around \$40. The unit doesn't infringe on the patented Swenson ambidextrous safety, I'm told, and the one on the right will be a mirror image of the factory low-profile catch. Built-up "combat" safeties are also being looked at, and so is an extended slide release. The latter isn't definite yet. For one thing, free style combat shooters almost never run the gun all the way dry and lock the slide back, and there's little point in making a part easier to manipulate if it isn't going to be touched at all. An extended slide stop lever will also hang up

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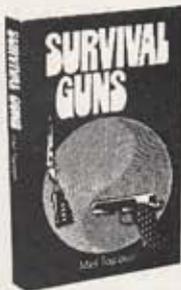
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on certain holsters. I'd still like to see it as an option, though; it's the one thing on the Custom Shop list that will appeal to bulls-eye shooters, who start every relay with a locked-open slide.

Another option soon to be available is the duckbill grip safety. I couldn't photograph it for you due to company policy regarding information on non-production items, but the prototype I tried felt very nice, indeed. It spreads out over the web of your hand in an inverted "V." Who needs one? It cures hammer bite, for one thing, though there are other ways around that particular problem. Some .45 buffs swear it locks the gun tighter into their hold. Most will simply tell you, "It feels good!" In any case, it'll be a worthwhile option.

Sights are another thing. They're looking at several for the Government Model and the Commanders, and MMC is one firm that might get the nod. The Custom Shop has been known to install sights of outside manufacture on lot-orders of custom guns for distributors. Walt Gleason explains, "The sights that come on our O frame automatics are fine for 99% of gun buyers. Still, free-style combat shooters have a genuine need for bigger, easier to see sights, and they don't mind using a special holster if necessary. For that specialized clientele, we'll probably be installing fixed and adjustable, high-visibility combat sights here in the Custom Shop. It's only a matter of finding out what the IPSC shooters want, and what our technical people are happy with."

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Another popular 1911 modification is belling out the mouth of the magazine well, allowing quicker magazine insertion. Price is a reasonable \$17 minimum charge; Otto Zander of the Custom Shop did it for one of my .45s, and it came out real nice.

Finally, the collet-type Mk. IV barrel/bushing kit has been made available by itself for \$39.95. When the Mk. IV system was introduced in 1970, the factory announced that the only way to get one was to buy a whole "series 70" Mk. IV pistol. For a company in the business of making guns, that was only good sense, but the availability of the kit is welcome news to shooters. It's for full-size guns only, and needs special fitting on the tight Gold Cups, but the improvement in accuracy is almost astonishing. It's probably the best single investment you can make for, say, a GI surplus .45. I ordered one for a military

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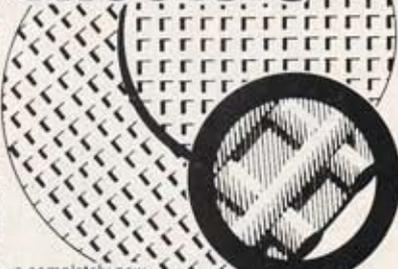
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1911 of 1917 production. Though loose as a goose, the pistol had been giving me good groups at 25 yards, adequate at fifty; with the Mk. IV barrel and bushing, these groups shrank to fine and very good respectively, with no compromise in reliability.

There are other Custom Shop goodies that fall between gunsmithing and hand-engraving. Colt is now offering photoengraving on autoloaders, and will have it soon for revolvers (which are much more difficult to do, because of the contoured surfaces). The midwestern commemorative .45 I looked at was dynamite, and these guns can be produced at a cost competitive with roll-engraving, which usually doesn't come out looking anywhere near as good.

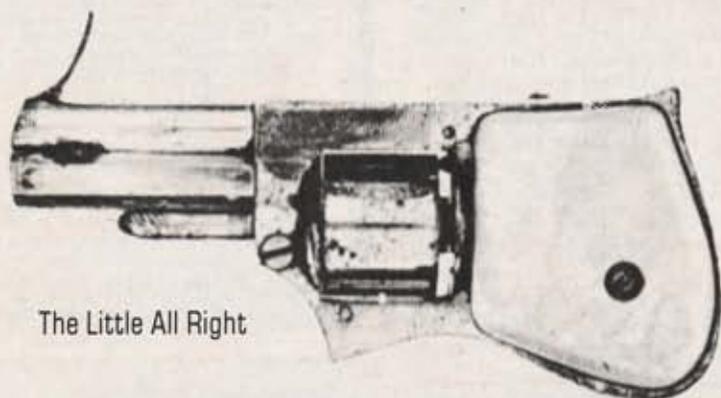
Fine looking Ivory stocks inlaid with Colt medallions were available at the time I was there; price was \$375 for target-size Python grips. The Ivory situation being what it is, investors may want to buy them while they can. Even if the supply isn't shut off, no one expects the prices to be going down.

More in the line of repair than customizing is the refinishing section, with one exception: in addition to the usual blue, nickel, S.A.A. case-hardening, and aluminum anodizing, you can have the luxurious Royal Blue finish applied to the Colt gun of your choice. Royal Blue is a function of polishing, not the bluing formula itself, and involves a lengthy workout with stuff as fine as 400-grit emery cloth.

Other goodies are in the works. Metallic silhouette shooters especially, but also California combat shooters and followers of Doc Burgess's big money NSL shoot in Laramie, Wyoming will be interested to know that an eight-inch barrel is tentatively planned for the Python. This will be strictly a Custom Shop thing, since production is not set up for forgings longer than 6". (Incidentally, we learned that 90% of Custom Tunes go on 6" Pythons, confirming the fact that most customers want them mainly for target work.)

New concepts are also in the works. When the auto loader modifications are going full out, shooters will be able to order the things they need on a smorgasbord basis, but the Custom Shop may also put together a package deal. One of the brightest points of my visit to Colt's was learning that Walt Gleason and Al DeJohn are eager to hear from shooters about the types of modifications they consider most valuable on Colt handguns. In view of the patronizing attitude some makers have to shooters offering suggestions or constructive criticism ("You . . . are telling us . . . how to build guns?"), it's refreshing to have a factory team that asks shooters, "Tell us how we should build guns!" Your comments are welcome, and you may direct them to Walt Gleason, Colt Custom Shop, 150 Huyshope Ave., Hartford, CT. (Continued on page 70)

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Interesting? This is just one of the 2000 pistols found in what is being called "The Ultimate Reference Manual of the Modern Day Handgun"—PISTOLS OF THE WORLD, by Hogg and Weeks. Every unique, exotic, rare, valuable and important handgun since 1870 is represented in this massive work. Many are guns that you may never have seen before but might want to start looking for. At 10"x14", 356 pages and over four pounds, it's quite a book. Cross index, ammo data and 600 pictures. \$24.95 from GUNS BOOK CLUB.

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9MM MYTH

(Continued from page 43)

on the last shot. I increased the powder charge to 4.5 grains of DuPont No. 5 and this turned out to be the best load for all four guns. The P-38 would sometimes fail to stay open on the last shot, but the Lugers, Radoms, and Browning all "worked okay every time" according to my notes. There were some streaks of lead, easily removed with a brass brush. The load was light, pleasant to shoot, and accurate. Still, without a good working over by a pistolsmith, my 9mm's could not match my accurized .45 on the target range, and so I gradually lost interest in them.

Meanwhile, interest in the 9mm's was increasing in the United States. There was some discussion about adopting the 9mm to replace the .45 Automatic as the U.S. Armed Forces official sidearm. Colt developed the aluminum-alloy frame Commander in both 9mm and .45 Automatic calibers, and Smith & Wesson brought out their double-action 9mm Model 39, also on a light-weight frame. Both guns had single-row magazines; Colt holding 9 rounds, Smith & Wesson 8 rounds. Although the U.S. Armed Forces stayed with the .45 Automatic, and did not switch to the 9mm, interest in that caliber continued to grow. Colt now produces the 1911 Government Model in 9mm, as well as the light-frame Commander, and the steel-frame Combat Commander.

Smith & Wesson next stirred the pot by combining a 14-shot magazine with the double-action trigger of the Model 39, and brought out the Model 59 which weighs only 1/2-ounce more than the 39. The Model 59 was an immediate success, and when I checked six of the largest gun stores in the Seattle area late in 1978, all were sold out of the Model 59, although several had Model 39's in stock. It is interesting that buyers apparently prefer to carry the additional weight (about 3 ounces) and bulk of the Model 59 over the Model 39 in order to have 15 rounds at their command instead of nine.

Nevertheless, the race to increase magazine capacity is not over. A recent entrant is the Beretta Model 92, double-action 9mm autoloading pistol with a magazine capacity of 15, putting sixteen shots at the shooter's command, one more than the Smith & Wesson Model 59. The Beretta has an action reminiscent of the Walther P-38 in that it uses a block to lock the slide to the barrel. When a shot is fired, the slide and barrel recoil a short distance together. Then the locking block drops down, releasing the slide, which continues to move back to the open position, ejects the empty case, and shoves a fresh cartridge from the magazine into the barrel as it slams shut.

Like the Beretta, the Czech Model 75 also has a 15-round magazine. It looks like a Browning High Power with a double-ac-

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tion trigger. Exceeding even the capacity of the Beretta, the Heckler & Koch Model VP70Z magazine holds 18 rounds. My letter to Heckler & Koch elicited no reply, so my information on this gun is incomplete.

Another new 9mm autoloading pistol is the Browning Double Action, which is also made in .38 Super and .45 Automatic calibers. Contrary to the trend toward larger capacity magazines, this gun has only a nine-round magazine. The Browning D.A. was designed by Schweizerische Industrie-Gesellschaft (SIG) at Newhausen am Rhinefalls, Switzerland and is manufactured by J.P. Sauer & Sohn in Eckenforde, West Germany. It was introduced for European sale in 1975 as the SIG-Sauer P220 and is being imported into the United States under that name by Hawes National Corporation.

Browning is also importing the Double-Action into the United States under its own name. The gun operates on the well-known Browning principle of locking the barrel directly to the slide. After a shot is fired, the barrel and slide move back together for about an eighth of an inch, and then the barrel drops down releasing the slide to move back into the open position. The frame is an aluminum alloy.

Among the many 9mm autoloading pistols being produced all over the world and imported into the United States are the Heckler & Koch Model P9S with a double-action trigger; the Llama XI which is similar to the Government Model 1911; and the two Stars. The latter three guns are imported from Spain. The Star Model BM with a steel frame, and the Star Model BKM with an aluminum alloy frame, both are similar to the Model 1911, but have 4-inch barrels. The Walther P-38 is imported from Germany and is available in a variety of barrel lengths, all with aluminum alloy frames. Manufacture in Germany by Mauser of the Luger pistol was stopped in 1975 but some are still for sale in the United States by Interarms. When these guns are sold, no more will be available. We must not forget the new Rogak P-18 with its large 18 shot capacity and stainless steel. Finally, the Benelli Model B76 double-action autoloader is being imported from Italy.

If you prefer a flat handgun that is easier to conceal and carries more rounds than a revolver, you have only to take your pick from the large array of 9mm autoloaders, both domestic and foreign, that are available. If your friends (and especially your enemies) will be impressed because you carry "The Nine," then of course you must carry one. If you think you need 15 shots to down somebody who is gunning for you, perhaps what you should get is not a new gun with a larger magazine, but rather some practice on a pistol range. And finally, if you prefer a revolver, don't forget that the .38 Special cartridge will give you the same ballistic results as the 9mm, and the .357 Magnum will considerably exceed them.



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• Roy L. Baker, creator of the famous Pancake holster, is no longer associated with Roy's Custom Leather Goods. The Magnolia, Arkansas, firm's new president, Calvin M. Porter, announced that several new products were introduced under the trademarked name of Hidden Thunder concealment systems. The line will include clip-on holsters, in-pants holsters, ankle holsters, small and large shoulder systems and an adjustable paddle holster. Field holsters, rifle slings and belts have been expanded also. Jim Buffalo has been named plant manager.

TAURUS

(Continued from page 52)

Occasionally, a revolver will be found that will shoot well under an inch at 25 yards. Personally, I do not feel groups of greater than 1.5 inches at 25 yards are very interesting from handguns in general. I

certainly can't shoot that well all of the time, but I have done it often enough myself and know enough individuals from one end of the country to the other who do it to feel somewhat sorry for those who never put a good handgun group together. There are also quite a few handguns around that will never shoot a good group as they aren't capable of it. You will seldom read about them and when you read a "gun" article pay attention to what is *not* in it also.

Most any good quality bullet can be made to shoot accurately. Most of my testing of the Taurus bullets was under severe winter conditions. No spectacular groups were shot. They seldom are under cold, windy conditions. Some of the tests were conducted in sub-zero temperatures. Quite a few interesting ones were shot however. The bullets are good, uniform and accurate. Various powders and barrels behave differently regarding leading. Unique, for example, is notorious for leading. In my opinion assuming all Taurus bullets are uniform in behavior from lot to lot, the .38s will handle standard loads for the weight and type bullet and provide a serviceable "light load" for .357s. The .44 is probably adequate for "44 Special" loads in any .44. (Charter Bulldogs excepted—some have very shallow rifling and stripping is to be expected.) Certainly .44 Magnum full power loads will badly overdrive it. The .45s are equally useful in .45 ACP and .45 Colts with barrels around .451-2 diameter. This generally means .45 Colt guns produced after WW II. In my 9 mm M-39, the 9 mm 125 grain leaded excessively with full charge loads. It does provide a low cost over the counter practice bullet for the 9 mm and .38 Super.

I like the shape of the semi-wadcutters. They will do a lot of damage at relatively low velocities. Their point is broader than most SWCs and the "point" has little taper.

In general, Taurus claims are valid—even the one that their lubrication system virtually eliminates leading of the bore—if you don't try driving them at too high velocities. I have no idea what the lube is; all I know is that it works well.

The Taurus bullets, as well as all other swaged lead bullets that I'm familiar with, all have one deficiency as far as I'm concerned. No crimp groove. I don't like the extra operation in loading to obtain the quality ammo I like.

ARE TAURUS BULLETS BETTER? Certainly, they are better than a lot of bullets on the market. I don't know which brand is the best and doubt if there is a "best." Taurus are capable of match grade accuracy and essentially lead free operation when velocities are held to normal for the caliber.

(For complete specifications and prices on the product line: TAURUS Alberts Corporation, P.O. Box 157, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey 07417.)

WESTERHOUT

(Continued from page 27)

World Team events, and you, the last World individual title?

WESTERHOUT: It's not easy. In 1975, we shot the world match in Austria with our 5 members using 3 guns borrowed back and forth, and weren't even able to change the sight settings. Some of our shooters envy the Americans, with their fantastic reloading machines that let them practice a thousand rounds a week; we are lucky to practice 20, 30 shots a week in some cases. I hadn't shot a pistol myself for 18 months until I came to meet you on this occasion.

I don't feel it handicaps us that much. I am very strongly of the belief that you can shoot too much. We can compete with the Americans. It has been my experience that a lot of people can fire 500 rounds in an afternoon without really concentrating on one of those shots. Shooting is only successful when concentration is absolute, every single time you squeeze the trigger. Many people don't have the stamina to concentrate on every shot for long strings. They should try shooting small numbers of rounds, frequently. I think frequent sessions of 30 or so rounds are more beneficial than a weekly 600 round session.

AYOOB: How do you respond to the comments from the '77 World Shoot, where some Americans felt the Rhodesians had "set up" the match for the Browning High Power?

WESTERHOUT: (Laughs). Well, the course of fire was approved by Jeff Cooper, and I don't think he would have sanctioned an event that discriminated against the .45 automatic! In fact, one of our team members ran a computer analysis of the match, and determined that the .45 automatic would have a 15% advantage. A couple of our team members switched to the .45 for that reason. And don't forget, 15 of the top 20 shooters used .45s.

AYOOB: Do you feel, then, that IPSC shooting is perhaps weighted against the 9mm?

WESTERHOUT: Not necessarily. If the 9mm shooter can keep his hits in the center ring, he'll score the same as the .45 man. We follow IPSC rules, so in Rhodesia as everywhere else, the 9mm is a minor caliber that scores fewer points than a .45 with hits outside the center ring. I might shoot a .45 if I had one that worked, but I'm quite happy with my Browning, which incidentally has well over 20,000 rounds through it without a single malfunction.

AYOOB: What do you use for leather?
WESTERHOUT: I use a Fickhinger rig that I won in a match. It's a German copy of your old Anderson rig, with a

tension screw on the side. It's the only holster I've got, and I'm quite happy with it.

AYOOB: Tell us about your personal techniques and training methods.

WESTERHOUT: I use the Weaver stance, with my right elbow bent slightly and my left elbow bent sharply. I used to almost lock my right arm, but find that I shoot better lately with both flexed. I don't put my left index finger in front of the trigger guard, and I tilt my head slightly when firing.

Rather than practicing intensively for the match I'm about to shoot, I get better results concentrating on standard exercises.

I would spend ammunition on one-shot draws at 10 meters in a second or less, 1.5 seconds maximum. Then the same in 2.5 seconds at 25 meters. I follow with what we call double taps, which you Americans call the double hammer: two shots each on two targets as quickly as possible, and repeated several times. I find the most helpful thing of all is learning an instant reaction to the sight picture, that is, being able to fire immediately when the sights are right.

To achieve this, I like to practice firing while walking toward the target. The sights are never still this way, and you are forced to learn to fire during the fraction of a second when the sights are in proper alignment.

Most marksmanship manuals stress a rhythmic cadence of fire, but I don't think there is any way you can win a practical match with that technique. I don't believe anyone has the physical ability to get exact sight picture in exact cadence, in practical shooting. The principle of this shooting is that you only squeeze the trigger when the sights are perfect. Sight alignment and a rapid, controlled trigger squeeze are what you need.

AYOOB: There has been some concern around the world that the 1977 and '79 world championships have been held on the African Continent, supposedly because Rhodesian and South African shooters would be unable to compete elsewhere. What's the Rhodesian view on that?

WESTERHOUT: We really feel that it is not good for the image of the sport to always have the world shoot in Africa. You can understand that some nations view the sport with suspicion after two consecutive world championships were conducted in African countries not regarded by the rest of the world as being particularly democratic. Obviously, this creates a problem in getting world acceptance of the sport.

Most Rhodesians would say—and in fact we did say this officially at the last world match—we would rather have the world shoot in a country such as the US

(Continued on page 69)



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.223 CONTENDER

(Continued from page 38)

The sized cases were trimmed to an overall length of 1.75 in. After deburring, inspection and a quick primer cleaning, the cases were ready for sorting and loading.

All military cases used for these tests were sorted according to headstamp. Since I had predominant amount of TW-68 brass these were used to work-up the data shown in the loading table. Other military cases used in the project for preliminary tests were LC-74, TW-67 and Commercial Federal cases.

In working up load data, nine powders were tested with five different jacketed bullet styles and three cast bullet styles were tested with six powders. Cast bullet 22-060-FN from RCBS was tried, but the 1 turn in 14 in. twist Contender barrel would not stabilize this bullet.

Generally the loads shown in the loading table were those that produced the best accuracy in my barrel. I also tried to include the top velocities that could be expected with each bullet. Powder charges

for initial load development were taken from loading manuals and adjusted up and down until either the desired accuracy was obtained or excess pressure signs were indicated. All powder charges were weighed.

Maximum velocity for the .223 Remington Contender was 3,041 fps with the 50 gr. Sierra Spitzer bullet and 22 grains of WW-680 BR powder. This is exceptional velocity for a 10-inch barrel pistol. However, it is a hot load and for any other gun I would strongly recommend this powder charge be initially reduced by at least twenty percent and the powder charge increased in 1/4-grain increments until pressure signs appear. In the Contender excess pressure is usually indicated by flattened primers and sticky case extraction. Pressure builds rapidly with WW-680 BR (and its replacement WW-680) as near maximum charges are approached, so work up all charges with this powder in small increments. Remember that high pressure not only greatly reduces case life, but is hard on the Contender action. Accuracy also may suffer at these extreme conditions.

Approximately 1,500 rounds were fired in the Contender in gathering data which

CAST BULLET LOADS

CHARGE POWDER (GRAINS)	BULLET	AVG. VEL. (FPS)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	REMARKS
------------------------	--------	-----------------	-------------------	---------

10	2400 Lyman No. 22596	1,896	377	Good Accuracy
13	SR-4759 (47.3gr.)	2,028	432	Accurate
12	IMR-4227	2,119	469	Accurate
17	IMR-4198	2,298	555	Target Load
20	IMR-4198	2,589	704	Max. Velocity

9.5	2400 Lyman No. 225-415U	1,825	354	Target Load
14	SR-4759 (47.9gr.)	2,144	489	Accurate
11	IMR-4227	1,861	368	Target Load
20	IMR-4198	2,558	696	Max. Velocity
17	RL-7	2,119	477	Target Load
20	IMR-4895	2,166	499	Accurate

9	2400 Lyman No. 225462	1,662	348	Target Load
14	SR-4759 (56.8gr.)	2,068	539	Accurate
12	IMR-4227	1,915	462	Accurate
16	IMR-4198	2,075	543	Target Load
19	IMR-4198	2,404	729	Good Velocity

Velocities are five feet, instrumental, as measured from muzzle to mid-point of chronograph screens. Temperature was 75 to 90°F. Chronograph used was the Schmidt-Weston Standard Chronograph. Primers for all loads were Remington 7 1/2 small rifle. Cartridge cases were military head-stamped TW-68. Cast bullet weight given is sized, lubed and with crimp-on check. Bullets cast of linotype metal and sized to .225-inch.

These loads were safe in writer's pistol but may not be in another gun.

Approach maximum loads with caution—especially these loads using WW-680BR.

NOTES: Fair Accuracy—1 1/2" groups
Accurate—1" groups
Target Load—less than 1" groups

HANDGUN BALLISTIC COMPARISONS

BULLET	BAL. COEF.	MUZZLE VELOCITY (FPS)	VEL. 100 YDS. (FPS)	MUZZLE ENERGY (FT-LBS)	ENERGY 100 YDS. (FT-LBS)	100 YD. DROP (INCHES) ²
.223 T/C						
50gr. Spitzer	0.261	3,041	2,670	1,027	791	2.0
55 gr. Spitzer	0.285	2,684	2,368	880	685	2.6
.38 SPECIAL¹						
125gr. S.J.H.P.	0.171	945	858	248	204	21.0
.357 MAGNUM³						
158gr. S.J.H.P.	0.125	1,235	1,015	535	361	13.5
.45 AUTO¹						
185gr. S.J.H.P.	0.153	940	846	363	294	21.5
.44 REMINGTON MAGNUM²						
240gr. S.J.H.P.	0.167	1,180	1,010	741	543	14.1

Notes:

- (1) Instrumental velocities taken 5 ft. from muzzle for .223 Remington.
- (2) Calculated bullet drop below line of departure.
- (3) Muzzle velocity and remaining velocities at 100 yds. taken from Remington 1978 Sporting Firearms and Ammunition Catalog. Ballistic Coefficient and bullet drop were calculated using the Speer Ballistic Calculator.

appear in the loading table. A large number of powder-bullet combinations gave very good accuracy. Generally the best powder for all jacketed bullet loads was IMR-4198 followed closely by WW-748, H-335, BLC-2 and RL-7. Even slower powders such as H-380 and IMR-3031 turned in very respectable results at somewhat lower velocities. Most jacketed bullets tried gave good results, with Sierra 53 gr. H.P. perhaps showing some advantage in accuracy. The 52 gr. Sierra H.P.B.T. tended to keyhole at low velocities but performed well at near maximum loads.

As expected the ball powders didn't burn as clean as the IMR powders but barrel fouling was no problem. Muzzle blast was quite pronounced with ball powders. Military ammo performance was duplicated with 22.5 gr. of IMR-4198 and the 55 gr. Sierra bullet. The type of ball powder used in the .223 Remington military ammo was unknown, but looked very much like H-335 powder. Commercial .223 Remington ammo was not tried in the Contender.

The handgun ballistic comparison table compares the ballistics of the .223 Remington T/C with several of today's more popular handgun cartridges. Because of its high muzzle velocity the .223 Remington T/C compares very well with the calibers shown. It packs more energy, both at the muzzle and at 100 yards, than any of the calibers listed and the bullet drop is also much less. Of course, I still wouldn't recommend the .223 Remington T/C over

the .44 Magnum or other large calibers for big game, but it should be a dandy for varmints and small game, even out to 100 yards or more.

Cast bullet accuracy in the Contender approached that of jacketed bullets at 25 yards. Good accuracy at 2,500 fps without leading was obtained with several loads. I attribute this to hard bullet alloy (linotype) and Alox based bullet lubricant.

Usually cast bullets for .224 caliber cartridges are difficult to cast without flaws and even tiny flaws on these small bullets can play havoc with accuracy. All bullets used for working up loads shown in the loading table were of the gas check variety, cast of linotype, lubed with Alox and sized to 0.225-inch diameter. All cast bullets were carefully inspected and weighed before they were sized and lubricated. Bullets which showed the slightest imperfection or had a weight variation of more than 0.2-grain were set aside for remelting at a later date. Bullets cast from one pot of metal were packaged and reloaded together. No new metal was added to the pot, only the sprue metal that was collected during casting was added back.

Bullets were cast using an electric furnace. I prefer the electric furnace since it maintains a constant alloy casting temperature and provides a cooler casting environment. The mould is held up tight against the spout during filling and the head of molten metal forms a sharp well filled-out bullet.

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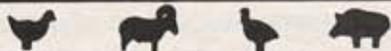
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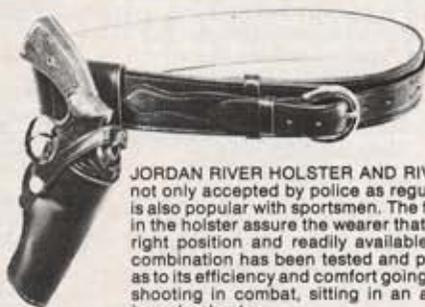
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large a hole in the sprue plate to produce good .22 caliber bullets with sharp, clean bases. To get around this I use the off-center sprue method. For this method of operation the sprue plate is moved over the edge of the bullet cavity during the pouring operation. This produces a bullet with a small, clean sprue mark along one edge of the bullet.

The bullet metal was stirred and fluxed approximately every fifteen minutes to maintain a uniform alloy composition. The use of smokeless/odorless flux such as Marvelux (Marmel Products, P.O. Box 97, Utica, Michigan 48087) allows this operation to be performed inside the house without undue concern from other family members.

Best cast bullet loads were obtained with the Lyman no. 225415U mould and Lyman no. 22596 mould. Powders giving the best performance with cast bullets were 2400, IMR-4227, RL-7 and IMR-4198.

Cartridge cases used with cast bullets were sized in the RCBS neck sizer dye using an oversize expander ball. The oversize expander ball allows seating of cast

At 25 yards cast bullets were same as jacketed

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bullets without shaving lead from bullets. An expander die can also be used to slightly bell the mouth of a case to allow easy seating of cast bullets. Once a case was used for cast bullets it was labeled as such and used with only lead bullets throughout the life of the case. All cast bullet loads used a small tuft (about 0.1 gr.) of Dacron wad over the powder charge to keep the powder near the bottom of the case. This provides for more consistent powder ignition and uniform burning rates.

For the pistol shooter who wants a pistol chambered for a high performance cartridge, the .223 Remington Contender may be the answer. Military brass is plentiful and inexpensive and accuracy can be very good. This cartridge can be loaded up or down to suit your own needs and will even handle cast bullets well. For the handloader, the .223 Remington Contender can be a real fun gun.



A WORD OF CAUTION: Tests by the SAAMI (Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturer's Institute) have confirmed that chamber pressures in a sporting rifle may be significantly higher when using military .223 rather than commercially loaded .223 cartridges. Throat configuration of military rifles may account for the increased pressure over the sporting chamber.

THE SCORPION

(Continued from page 39)

recoil. Some guns that shoot dead on with wadcutters at 20-25 yards will shoot 8-12 inches low at the same distance with a fast 90-110 grain H. P. round. This could be important as combat situations usually occur at short range and do not allow time to figure Kentucky elevation.

I agree with Hydra-Shok's claim that it is highly unlikely a Scorpion round would completely penetrate an individual to pose a hazard to an innocent bystander. In any event, the target is going to absorb all of the bullet's energy. I also agree with them about the bullet expanding to 60 caliber in ballistic media such as Duxseal or wet sand. However, these media do not approximate flesh and bone very well.

In my experience with hunting bullets (for handguns) at much higher velocities, a bullet must usually partially disintegrate and practically turn inside out at short range in Duxseal to be an effective expander in game such as boar or deer at normal hunting ranges.

There is no question, the Scorpion opens to the base of the hollow cavity in short range Duxseal and sand tests and the round is designed for short range close combat, the normal, violent police-self defense confrontation.

The element of hydrostatic shock that the Scorpion is expected to induce may or may not be effective on a man sized target. Hydrostatic shock itself is, in my opinion, still somewhat of a mystery at the velocities encountered with .38 Special revolvers. The theory of hydrostatic shock is simple: liquids cannot be compressed and the passage of a bullet through tissue violently displaces fluids creating a damaging effect on surrounding tissues. It is easily demonstrated — simply fill a couple cans with water and hit them with a .22 solid and hollow point. The cans will rupture at their weakest point. Essentially, the same thing occurs in tissue due to displaced fluids in tissue.

In scores of field examinations of animals downed by handguns, I have encountered what I consider the visual effects of hydrostatic shock on numerous occasions. The most vivid recollection of it was on a 200 lb. boar. I had hit him with a 1700 f.p.s. .44 Mag H.P. through the lungs and the bullet passed through the mass of large veins and arteries at the top of the heart. At the shot, he was running and went into a very wobbly condition and pulled up in about fifteen feet. Examination revealed a quite large hemorrhage in the large vein that returns blood from the lower extremities, just ahead of the hindquarters. I feel certain the pressure wave induced by the bullet's penetration caused the rupture of this large vein 14-18 inches from the actual path of the bullet.

Obviously, many of the effects of hy-

drostatic shock are *not* visible. For example, how can it be determined if a pressure wave damaged or paralyzed a portion of the body function due to nerve interference controlling that particular function?

I'm convinced hydrostatic shock does exist and is sometimes just as effective in impairment as if the bullet itself had struck the impaired portion of the tissue. However, I'm not convinced of its effectiveness on every shot and feel its effects are quite variable depending on its intensity, dissipation, and location. Its effects on truly large animals are considered negligible and seem to become more effective as the size of the animal is reduced. There is a lot of difference in ability to dissipate this effect between a Cape buffalo and a 150 pound Whitetail.

The hydrostatic shock effect, in my opinion, is in direct proportion to the velocity of the displaced fluids. I question the true ability of the Scorpion to displace fluids at high enough velocity to induce effective hydrostatic shock. Granted — if it opens to 60 caliber in the right place it will displace fluids quite rapidly. Fluids in the hollow cavity also create pressure to expand the bullet.

The inverted hollow base wadcutter has been known as an effective manstopper for a long time. However, it has usually been driven at velocities considerably higher than those of the Scorpion. The Scorpion bullet is simply an inverted hollow base wadcutter with a post in the cavity. The post should accomplish several things. The first would provide additional strength to the bullet nose in the event bone is struck. In theory, the post should channel pressure to the outer walls of the bullet to aid expansion and provide a stabilizing and cutting effect for the expanded bullet. In practice, I have no idea if that works or not.

The Scorpion round is designed for two and four inch barrels. Six inchers handle them OK but do not gain much velocity over a four inch. Running the Scorpions through the Oehler M-33 chronograph revealed outstanding uniformity from the 4" gun which was the best gun of the three used. A 2" M-60 that doesn't quite make 2" in barrel length averaged 625 f.p.s. versus the claimed 682 f.p.s. I'm sure a good 2" Colt would achieve the claimed velocity. A 4" Combat Masterpiece averaged 687 f.p.s. with only 20 f.p.s. extreme spread and a 6" P.P.C. gun averaged 731 f.p.s. I feel these velocities are consistent with the manufacturer's claims as they were recorded in quite cold temperatures from well worn guns.

Hydra-shok claims 28 yard accuracy of 2.5 inches or less and I certainly have no quarrel with that. I figure they are being conservative in accuracy claims from the way Scorpions grouped with my guns.

I also agree with the claim that Scorpion provides better expansion at low velocities than any other ammunition on the market and that it is excellent on the score

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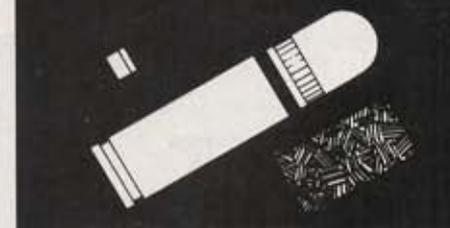
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of weight retention at impact.

The big question is — "Will it work?" Frankly, I don't know. I expect it will be as controversial as the fast jacketed Hollow points were when they were introduced and before they were understood. I expect excellent performance with good hits and poor performance from poor hits. There is no getting around properly placed hits being effective and poorly placed hits being quite ineffective. The physical and emotional status of the "hit-tee" also has to be considered.

For several months I've attempted to try the Scorpion on larger animals but the score so far is only three groundhogs. All were front end shots, well placed from within 20 feet and dropped them instantly. One head shot directly in front was recovered from the neck. Maximum penetration — 4". This bullet lost a portion of the cavity wall and is easily recognized in the photos. One groundhog was shot at about 25' from his left quarter. The shot was a typical raking shot — entered at about the last rib and quartered toward the off shoulder. At the shot he visibly expanded and bounced several inches off the rock he was lying on. He came down on his feet and quite rapidly got into his hole about five feet from him. I was quite impressed with the ability to see the groundhog "blow up" at impact. The only other times I've seen it was through binoculars or spotting scope when someone else hit them with a rifle. Why the shot didn't kill him instantly, I don't know. I feel he shouldn't have moved off the spot. Equally impressive was the ability to hear the "thunk" of bullet impact on all four of these close range shots.

Oakley R. Bauman, President of Hydra-Shok has quite impressive credentials in law enforcement and ballistics. I find his development of the Scorpion round quite interesting. He certainly is aware that bullet expansion and hydrostatic shock is directly dependent on impact velocity. Jacking up the velocity would enhance expansion and "shockability." It would also increase the detrimental effects of flash blast and recoil.

I'm not much impressed by bullet energy figures and apparently Bauman isn't either as he doesn't include energy information in his literature. Energy figures can be quite misleading. I'm quite sure a full metal jacketed metal piercing 158 grain .38 Special round possesses quite a bit more bullet energy than the Scorpion, but for manstopper purposes I would definitely grab the Scorpion in a hurry!

The limited penetration powers of the Scorpion seem quite important in police work. Excessive penetration can be quite dangerous and is a very real hazard in police work and in self defense situations. How strongly constructed and bullet resistant are the outer and inner walls of your home? County or State officers who may need the ability on occasion to pene-

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trate vehicle bodies may want to consider carrying a few limited penetration man-stopper effective rounds such as the Scorpion to come up first and the remainder of the cylinder filled with the best car penetrators made, the KTW, INC. (710 Cooper-Foster Park Road, Lorain, OH 44053) round which has an architectural bronze teflon coated bullet. (Sold to police only!) Bullet configuration of the KTW round enhances its capability of being a stopper also.

Hydra-Shok intends to introduce additional rounds in various configurations and calibers. Their claim of Scorpion being "The Ultimate Defense Load" is certainly optimistic. As far as I'm concerned it hasn't been developed yet and probably never will be. Scorpion is however, a round to certainly give careful consideration and evaluation.

The .38 Special's track record as an instantaneous fight stopper is somewhat less than desirable. With good hits, it is generally acceptable to assume the .38 Special to immediately incapacitate about 50% of the time. The .45 Auto is assumed to do this about 80% of the time. In modern realistic combat training this is recognized and trainees are taught "If it's necessary to shoot — shoot at least twice." I subscribe wholly to this theory and whole-heartedly recommend it. The Scorpion would be extremely controllable in this type of situation. Instant incapacitation is the key to close combat. It differs considerably from instant kill. Usual violent confrontations occur at extremely close distances, 5-7 feet would probably be as good a guess as any. At these ranges instant incapacitation is of extreme importance — and the ability to hit repeatedly — at least twice prior to recognition of incapacitation is of the utmost importance. It is really sort of silly to fire, watch for the result and make up your mind what to do next, viewed from a life or death confrontation.

From my experience, I cannot consider any .38 Special round capable of instant incapacitation at impact 100% of the time. Neither can I consider the .44 Magnum or 12 gauge shotgun even with rifled slugs 100 per-centers. There are just too many documented cases where they have failed to produce the desired impact.

The Scorpion round certainly has a lot going for it. It remains to be seen if it will be a commercial success in the highly competitive police market. Extensive testing of the ammunition and individual results will tell the tale. I've burned all but a few of the three boxes of test ammo and I'm saving them for future tests. In addition to its designed purpose it should make a dandy short range small game load. It is well worth buying a few boxes and testing yourself. Defensive ammo is highly personal but even "dyed in the wool" light bullet-high velocity fans should give it a fair trial. High velocity-lightweights in a .38 aren't the answer either.

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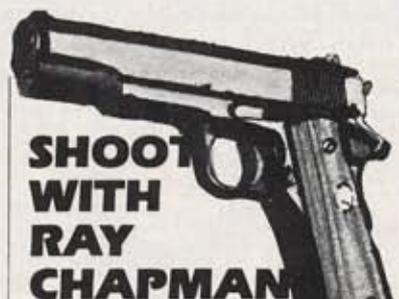
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WESTERHOUT

(Continued from page 61)

or England, where other nations would be happier to participate. If you're a shooter in England or Germany, you're going to have a problem coming to shoot in a nation that has been called "racist."

AYOGB: While Rhodesian passports are only recognized by a couple of countries, isn't it a fact that most Rhodesian team members have British passports which would enable them to travel elsewhere?

WESTERHOUT: Many have British passports, and this is no problem unless the given country requires a visa, as does the United States. Rhodesians would not be allowed a visa for the sole purpose of shooting in the US. There is a possibility that this will change with our new government. If it is recognized by Britain and the US, we'll be in a much happier situation when the next world match rolls around in 1980.

The Rhodesian bid for the '77 world shoot was accepted in Columbia, Missouri at the IPSC inaugural meeting by a unanimous vote of 32-0. At that world shoot, a majority voted to have the next world shoot in South Africa, even though we officially suggested holding it elsewhere. The general feeling was that since the Rhodesian team had won the title twice in a row, it was only just to run the next event in a country that would welcome their participation.

AYOGB: Apart from diplomatic recognition that would ease your passport situation, what else does the new government have in store for Rhodesian shooters?

WESTERHOUT: After the problems of the last ten years, including a war between terrorist groups and security forces, it would be understandable if the African Nationalist government coming into power would not be happy with the widespread ownership of firearms. It might prove much more difficult in the future for us to justify ownership of large bore handguns.

We are getting the feeling that while it might be all right for farmers to have shotguns and for an ISU competitor to own a two-two pistol, it would be unacceptable in our new society for citizens to walk around with a Cold Commander under their jackets. I fear that in the near future, this may become a serious problem, and I think most people in Rhodesia agree with that. I believe it's also true that you have to be guided by history in these matters; in recent African history, virtually all the emerging nations have, "after independence," made private ownership of firearms virtually impossible.

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SIGHT SETTINGS

(Continued from page 13)

sard and be presented with individual plaques during the National Award ceremonies. I was the first woman to make the team, and Gertrude Backstrom the second, and last I believe, in 1955.

Pistol shooting in general must be healthy, look at all the national championships we have now. Prior to the 1960's if you were going to the nationals, you were going to "bullseye" nationals, there wasn't anything else. Then came Combat; in 1962 US International Pistol Championships, now Long Range Pistol Silhouettes, Hunter's Pistol Silhouette and more I have probably missed. Still no national TV coverage, even in recent Pan-Am games. I have been thinking about a 5 shot shootoff easily covered by television for national and international championships. I can understand the argument that shooting takes too long to decide the winner compared to track, swimming. Follow me in my next column to see if we can't come up with a "quick shoot" winners match of 3 top in each event, decided by whatever lengthy aggregate preceding needed, to decide top three. I think it could be done. Also, I'll preview the new, improved NRA Police Match Rule Book, which takes effect January 1980. Lucy

WESTERHOUT

(Continued from page 69)

situation, and speaking as both a Rhodesian and the world champion of IPSC, what does practical shooting mean to you?

WESTERHOUT: I'm not a fanatic about it. I enjoy competition shooting, and like most Rhodesians, I view IPSC purely as a sport. Some may regard that as an odd comment in view of our security situation, but we are not really interested in what we call "the blood and thunder approach," what you Americans call "the martial arts approach." We enjoy the fun and the companionship; to us it is a game, and no more than that.

We see a practical application for it, since all Rhodesian males under 60 do some sort of commitment with the security forces, but it doesn't replace military training. Our actual combat situations are completely different from what you practice for in IPSC matches.

I wouldn't want to see our sport spoiled by too great an emphasis on "martial arts," which you must remember, are prohibited in many countries of the world. When you talk about using a weapon to kill people, even defensively, it is unacceptable in many coun-

tries, and it does our sport no good. I don't think IPSC should be reduced to a purely martial art competition.



COLT'S CUSTOM

(Continued from page 70)

The Custom Shop was officially organized three years ago, and while the engraving half has been going great, the gunsmithing section has been coming along slower. Gleason feels that the hardware section will eventually be sustaining more of the operation than the engraving, though they won't be backing off on the latter by any means. Employee selection is still going on to expand both sides.

The Custom Shop is being watched by the rest of the Industry as well. Only Winchester has anything like it on the gunsmithing side, I'm told, though several offer engraving. The success of the Colt operation may change that. A Smith & Wesson employee recently bet me a dollar that S&W would have a custom shop inside of three years. I turned down the bet, but one thing you *can* bet on is that the Colt Custom Shop is a winner! In fact, whether you lay your money down for an engraved collector piece or a hardworking competition firearm, you just ain't gonna lose by going the Custom Shop route.



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A second gun may be used, but no extended magazines. Any reasonably normal handgun may be used. We also have a special "Unlimited" Division for shotguns and submachine guns.

For complete information on the 1980 Combat Shoot write to: '80 Combat Shoot, c/o Second Chance Body Armor, Box 578, Central Lake, MI 49622. Or call toll-free 1-800-253-7090, in Michigan call 616-544-5721.

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