

SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW .45

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1981 \$2.00

HANDGUNNER

AMERICAN

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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

67522 T&E

SPECIAL

POLICE FEATURES

**The .38 Special
DEADLY...to Whom?**

**WHAT ARE TROOPERS
CARRYING?**

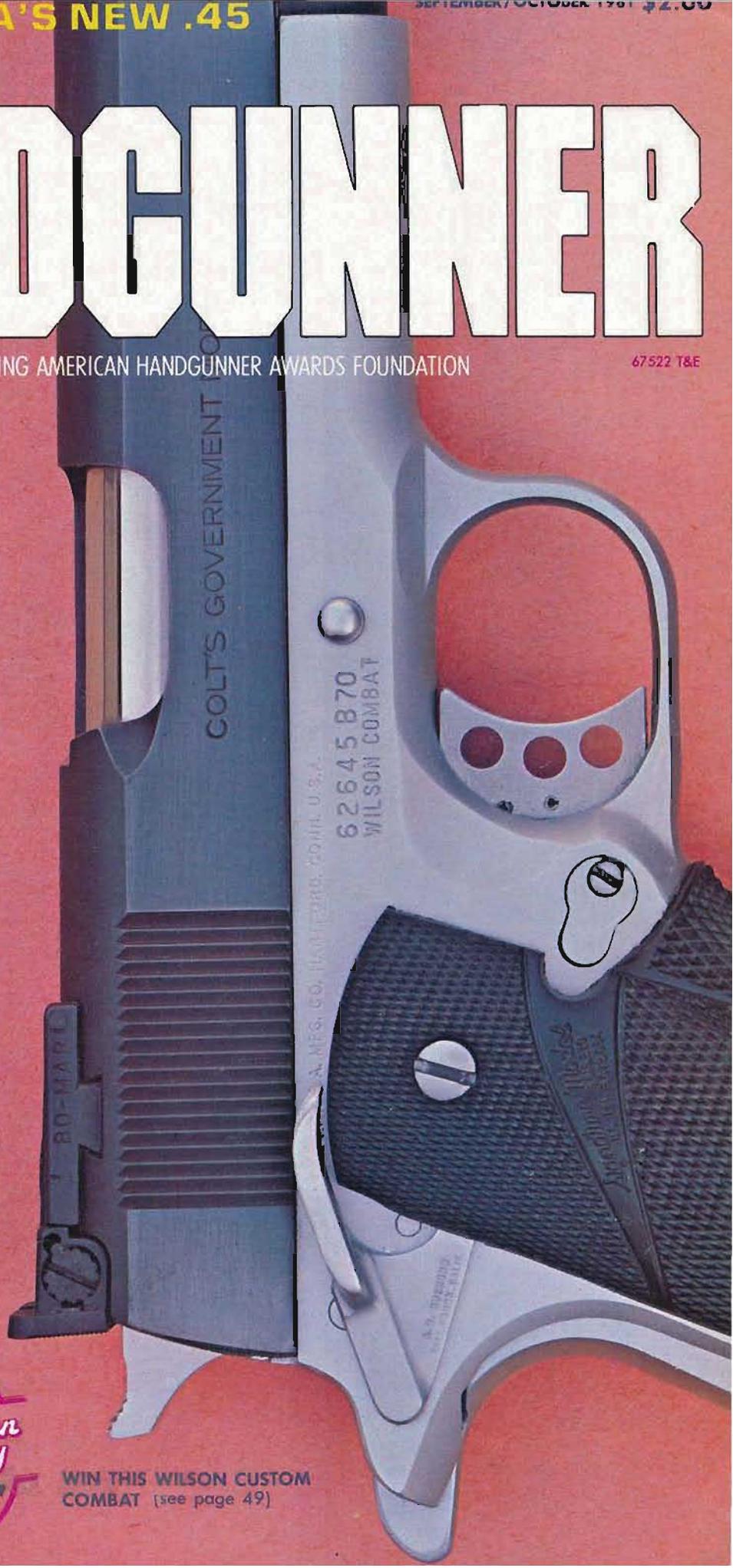
TEST REPORTS

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.44 MAGNUM**

**CHARTER'S .38
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**MAKING A 3 CAL.
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COMBAT (see page 49)



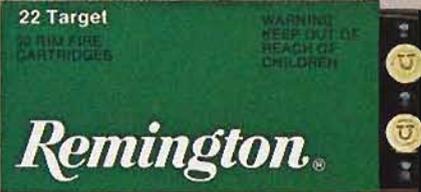
Serious ammunition for fun and game.



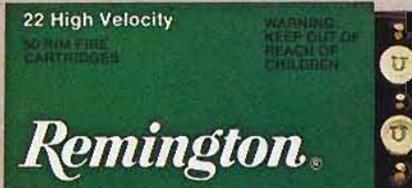
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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 1981, Vol. 6, No. 30

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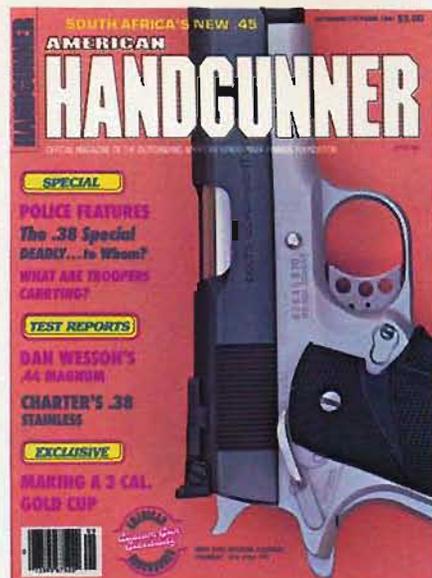
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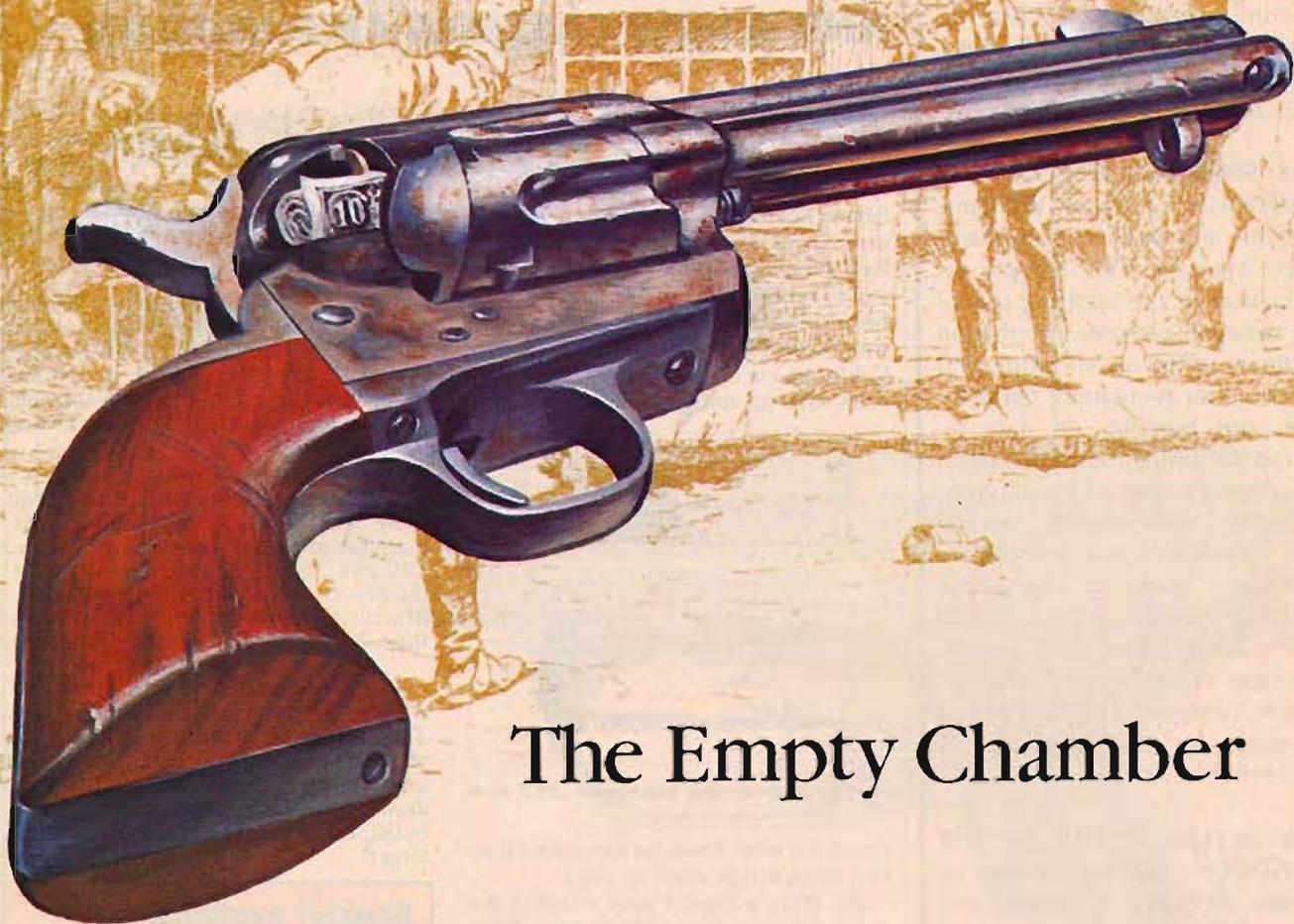
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The Empty Chamber

From the earliest frontier days of the old west, the mechanical characteristics and limitations of the single-action revolver have been well understood, as the writings of the day amply demonstrate. The safety precaution of loading the "six-shooter" with only five cartridges and resting the hammer on the empty chamber was universally practiced. According to folklore, some cowboys habitually carried "burying money" or their last bank note rolled up in the empty chamber. These old-timers understood that the notches in the hammer provided only limited protection, and that an accidental discharge could result if a fully loaded revolver were to be dropped, or if the hammer were to receive a sharp blow.

Despite the lessons of history, there are still

people who get themselves in trouble by ignoring the following common sense rules of gun handling:

1. The shooter should thoroughly understand the mechanical characteristics and rules for handling the particular type of firearm he is using.
2. The safest way to carry any old style* single-action revolver is with five chambers loaded and the hammer resting on the empty chamber.

**The Ruger "New Model" single-action revolvers are not subject to this limitation and can be carried safely with all six chambers loaded. Some other manufacturers have added various manual safety devices to old style single-action revolvers, but no manual safety can ensure against accidents if the shooter fails to use it properly. Remember: There is no such thing as a foolproof gun!*

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

THE INTRODUCTION OF STATE LAWS AND A NEW CASELESS AMMUNITION

New! WEAPON RETENTION TECHNIQUES FOR OFFICER SURVIVAL by **Robert J. Downey**, *San Luis Obispo Police Dept.*, and **Jordan T. Roth**, *California Specialized Training Institute, both of San Luis Obispo, California.* '81, 120 pp. (6 3/4 x 9 3/4), 207 il., \$14.75

THE SPORTING USE OF THE HANDGUN by **Mason Williams**, *Firearms and Ballistic Consultant, Libby, Montana.* This in-depth examination of the sporting use of the handgun presents information pertinent to the use of pistols and revolvers for recreation, competition, and hunting. All data required for competition in handgun shooting—courses of fire, targets, accuracy requirements, mental and physical conditioning—are thoroughly reviewed. The author also offers suggestions concerning ammunition, ammunition testing, handgun selection, and ways to match handguns to specific ammunition lots and types. '79, 288 pp., 119 il., \$14.75

THE DEFENSIVE USE OF THE HANDGUN: For the Novice by **Mason Williams**, *Firearms and Ballistic Consultant, Libby, Montana.* This text presents fundamental information on the safe and effective defensive use of handguns by private citizens. The author offers basic instructions for purchasing, loading, and firing pistols and revolvers; handgun cleaning and care; evaluating the condition of the handgun; and practicing. '78, 240 pp., 106 il., cloth-\$12.75, paper-\$7.75

Fundamentals of MODERN POLICE IMPACT WEAPONS by **Massad F. Ayoob**, *Police Officer and Weapons Instructor, Hooksett, New Hampshire.* '78, 168 pp., 72 il., \$15.50

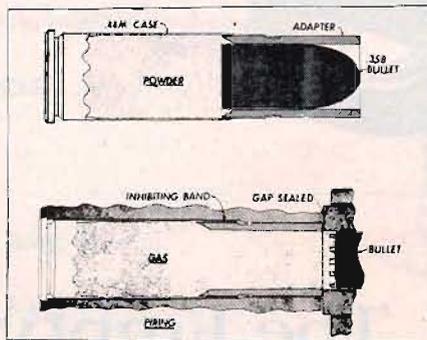
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Las, my predictions in the last column are coming true. I said that we handgunners had best watch out for attacks from the states, and here we go. In Hawaii, Senate Bill 651 calls for all handguns to be turned over to the police by March 1, 1982; New Jersey has SB 3169 coming up which would require that all handguns bought before 1966 (when the permit-to-buy law was passed) would have to be turned in; California has a Senator who let one of his aides write an anti-gun bill, then when he

A 19403) and it uses a .44 mag cylinder, and an adapter that goes around the bullet and that moves with the bullet just up to the face of the barrel. It is claimed to increase velocity mainly by having the adapter close the barrel/cylinder gap. We'll have a report soon.

Just as a point of interest, the FAA reported that they investigated 21 incidents of handguns going off in airline passenger luggage in the past six years. Rough handling by baggage crews, yes, but also some pretty stupid gun handling by the owners.



Invicta conversion increases .357 m.v.

found out what it said, he retreated. I'll bet that there will be more to come.

But there is hope. I have a feeling that some of these nincompoop lawmakers may just bumble their way into real anti-crime measures—not on purpose, but by accident.

FLASH!!!

Believe it or not, our sources tell us that a well-known foreign manufacturer of handguns and rifles is ready with a line of guns for caseless ammo. Production will commence within 6-8 months, and they say that it will open a new era in military, law enforcement and sporting firearms. How about an auto pistol with 20-round magazine, where the present model holds only seven? We've got a couple of bottles of 12-year-old truth serum ready for their representative's next visit, and hopefully be able to bring you more details in the next issue.

There's a new attempt at increasing the velocity of the .357 Magnum. It's called the Invicta, it's made by Olsen Development Lab (307 Conestoga Way #37, Eagleville,

Iver Johnson reportedly found that their existing plant was too small for manufacturing both the carbines and the .380 and .25 auto pistols, so they are in the process of relocating the pistol manufacturing facilities. Good response to their .25, and the .380 Pony is a hot seller.

I wish the press would get a gun expert when they run a story. Here we have Time magazine, in writing about the attempt on President Reagan, illustrating an article about the Devastator. The drawing shows the case complete with bullet, exploding within the target!



Booklet available on handgun basics

Appropriate for anyone involved with handguns, *Set Your Sights* is designed to teach the basics of handgun construction, types of ammunition, shooting safety and procedures, cleaning, storage and other information essential to safe handgun usage.

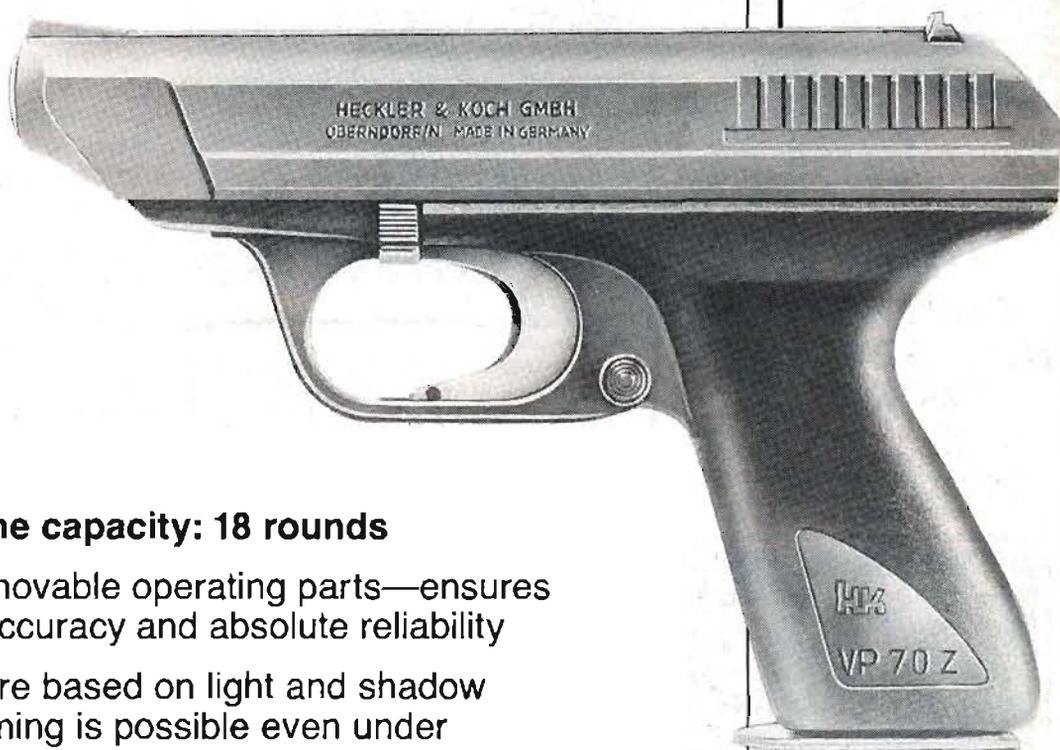
Published by the publishers of *Hunter Safety* handbooks used nationwide for hunter safety training courses, *Set Your Sights* would be an asset to handgun training instructors in youth training, community education and law enforcement. And the investment is minimal, 100 books cost 47¢ each, so every student could keep their copy for reference.

Available directly from the publisher, Outdoor Empire Publishing Co., 511 Eastlake Avenue E., P.O. Box C-19000, Seattle, WA 98109. Contact Nancy Clark, (206) 624-3845 for quantity discount prices or more information.

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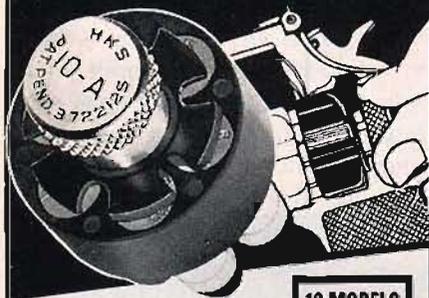
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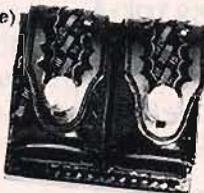
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SIGHT SETTINGS

LUCY CHAMBLISS

**NEW SERVICE REVOLVER EVENT
ADDED TO '81 NATIONAL POLICE MATCH**

The NRA is adding a new service revolver event to the 1981 National Police Revolver Championships! It will be fired with a 4 inch barrel service revolver, fixed sights, and Distinguished type grips that may be modified only to fit your hand or speed loader. Forty-two rounds of service ammunition only, will be fired double

yours, mine, and some we were not aware of, helped get this new match, so congratulate yourselves. Also, the larger range being used for the '81 championships is allowing several events the NRA has wanted for several years but space at Jackson did not permit. I told you the NRA listened, and most particularly, G. W. "Elliot" Ness, Director of the Police Activities Division, listens.

When the National Police Combat Championships moved from the cramped range at Bloomington, Indiana, the wide plains of Jackson, Mississippi looked good to us. You entered the range at Bloomington down a steep one-way road that opened into a flat space where 30 targets were available. The competition grew and prospered in Bloomington through 1968, as combat took on the sport status that would in 10 years practically dominate it.

The NRA accepted the Mississippi Law Enforcement Academy's invitation and moved the matches to Jackson in 1969. The range area was large, parking space plentiful, and range and stat help were supplied from the academy. Several relays were required even the first year, due to only 60 targets. More targets would be added "next year" we were told. Next year and several more came through 1980, still there were only 60 targets and sometimes 15 relays were necessary. In excess of 700 to 800 competitors and numerous merchandisers overflowed (literally), the range ready area.

Statistical operation with computers and similar equipment made fast computation of some 7,200 scorecards possible. Award ceremonies could be held within 2 to 3 hours after the last match. I never thought the awards barbecue was as appropriate as a dinner or auditorium presentation, and that Jackson could have done better. However, the hospitality of the academy people was overpowering.

The Jackson sponsors announced during the 1980 nationals that they would not conduct the championships again. Unfortunately, they notified the NRA later, they would not even mail a competitors Final Match Bulletin. The Police Activities Division and the Law Enforcement Assistance Committee immediately began receiving offers to host the '81 matches. Raton, Memphis, Philadelphia and Des Moines were some locations inspected by the NRA

Continued from page 10

**"Hopefully the NRA
will buy service
ammo and issue it on
the range"**

action over the following course: 3 yards: 1 hand, 6 shots in 10 seconds; 7 yards: 2 hands, 12 shots in 25 seconds; 15 yards: 2 hands, 6 shots in 12 seconds; 25 yards: 2 hands, kneeling, firing from either left or right side of barricade, using barricade for cover and support, 6 shots standing left hand barricade and 6 shots standing right hand barricade in 90 seconds. Emphasis is on getting those shots off quickly at 3 yards, with one hand. Ten seconds is not a short time limit, but a good one to start with and remember, only one hand. The 7-yard stage puts pressure on fast reloading, from the practical short distance. Fifteen yards brings in accuracy for the longer distance with a good training time of 12 seconds. Twenty five yards gives probably all the position shooting necessary, kneeling and barricade shooting with both hands.

Hopefully, the NRA will buy the service ammunition and issue it on the line. Letting competitors load their own to certain specifications won't work. Everyone should be competing with the same make ammunition under the service/no custom standards we are trying to build on.

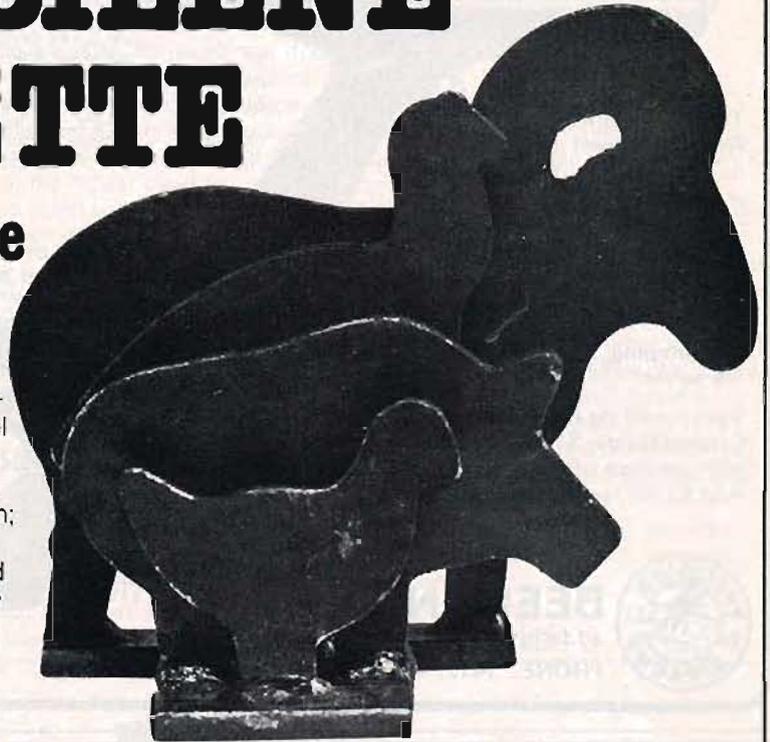
These scores should be interesting the first year. It is just a beginning, a separate non-aggregate event, but could be popular enough to be enlarged. New shooters interested in training and competition will receive more support from department heads for this type match. All our efforts,

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The un-tapered target barrel is a full .840 inches in diameter and 10 inches long with a counter-bored muzzle. The top surface of this barrel and the top strap is serrated to eliminate distracting glare. We use the top quality Elliason adjustable rear sight and undercut partridge style front. Adjustments are adequate to handle most magnum loads out to 200 meters. The front blade is .100 inches wide and the rear notch is just .090 inches wide. This allows you to see a ram at 200 meters, not hide it. The overall weight (empty) of 3 lb. 8 oz. (56 oz.) gives it the heft



needed for a solid hold on chickens, pigs, turkeys or rams. This Abilene meets all the requirements for hunting too, and with the exclusive anvil system, permits carrying the cylinder fully loaded.

If you're not shooting an Abilene Silhouette by the time the INTERNATIONALS are held in August, you're going to wish you were.



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Continued from page 8

before the January 1981 deadline. Each range had to meet the check list of requirements. A city more or less centrally located, adequate airline service, ample, convenient accommodations and inherently good shooting conditions, (not 5,000 feet altitude with 30 mph winds), were musts before you get to the actual range. One hundred targets were a requirement, not a promise. Computer equipment and people as Jackson had supplied, sufficient parking space and a firm commitment from a responsible agency were all necessary. After much work by Ness, and the LEA Committee chairman Harry Reeves, and a careful poll of each LEA Committee member, Des Moines was selected. With its five year contract for the matches, I think the entry will double during the time in Des Moines. Particularly, now that the service revolver is being re-introduced and with the growing popularity of the Distinguished Match.

I feel I had a small part in urging the shooters to take an interest in changing what they want changed with the NRA, so now I want to rest the service revolver subject in this column until after the 1981 nationals.

Next month—among other things, the match jury system compared to the NRA Official Match referee. **Lucy**

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REMINGTON RECALLS .38 AMMO

Remington Arms Company, Inc., has found that the cases of a quantity of .38 Special cartridges, manufactured in July, 1980, may separate at the case cannulure with the result that a part of the case could lodge between the cylinder and the barrel of a revolver. This could damage the gun or cause it to malfunction.

Accordingly, the Company is recalling those .38 Special cartridges which have the following identification markings on the packages:

Caliber: .38 Special
Bullet: 158 grain lead hollow point + P

Index No.: R38S12 (on outside of end flap)

Lot Nos.: P28A and P29A

Lot numbers are printed on the inside of the end flap on the package. Those who have purchased any .38 Special ammunition since July, 1980, marked with these lot numbers, are cautioned not to use it, and to return any unused cartridges to:

Remington Arms Company, Inc.
Attention: J. H. Chisnall
939 Barnum Avenue
P.O. Box #1939
Bridgeport, Conn., 06601

SPEAK OUT

NO HUNTING WITH HANDGUNS

I have enclosed the answer to two questions I asked of the Washington (state) Dept. of Game. One question was related to their confusing Big Game Map and directions. The other question asked when hunting with big bore handguns would be allowed. Many special interest groups such as black powder, bow & arrow, etc. have been allowed big game privileges. The following answer indicates to me that this official does not belong in game management. This guy should not be in charge of anything above a bird feeder.

R. E. Vibbert
Tacoma, Washington

"Dear Mr. Vibbert:

"Regarding your postcard of 18 December 1980, our game management unit map is only meant to give general boundaries and locations. I agree with you that its small size makes the

background illegible. I also agree that some of our legal descriptions are difficult to follow; however, some are quite simple. Since you do not identify a particular unit, I cannot refer its mystery to the appropriate region for corrective action.

"Hand guns are dangerous in most hands. We do not have pistol seasons because it would encourage "fast draw" artists to shoot themselves and their hunting partners. Also, the pistol was not designed as a hunting weapon. It is used for law enforcement and self protection. Most pistols are extremely inaccurate, except at very close range. I am not familiar with the "spear chucker" season to which you refer, so I assume you are making an over-statement with a tinge of sarcasm."

L. D. Parsons, Manager
Big Game Management Program
State of Washington

SCOPED .22 RUGER FUN TO SHOOT

The article in the March/April issue on scoped handguns intrigued me. I had just constructed a .22 rimfire pistol with scope combination similar to the Ruger auto pictured. However, I used a T/C Contender base which makes a much

neater package. The pistol is a Ruger Standard auto, 6-inch barrel, with T/C Contender base (Leupold) and Leupold 2x scope and rings. There are no problems with functioning and it is *fun* to use!

Hope this helps someone.
Michael Anderson
Pennsylvania

IHMSA MEMBERSHIP LOYAL & GROWING

It is time to thank you once again for the support and coverage you have given to the IHMSA silhouette game. Bert Stringfellow's piece on our .22 silhouettes in the May/June issue is excellent.

New members are pouring in at a rate now in excess of 700 per month, and we are stretched to the outer limits, physically and in every other way just to stay "even" with this influx. We passed 18,000 this week, and still retain a renewal rate of 74 percent. We have nearly 3000 sanctioned match dates in the computer now, and I have no idea where it is going.

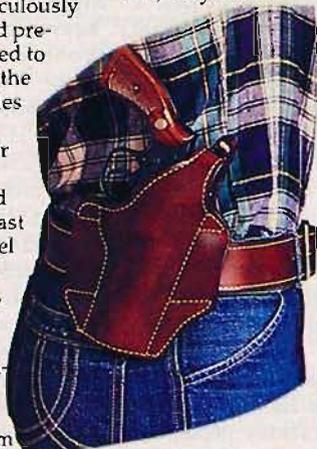
Let me again express my sincere appreciation for all your coverage of the sport.

Elgin T. Gates
President, IHMSA

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Smith & Wesson understands the way a shooter feels about leather. You can see it in the attention to detail, the perfect combination of function, comfort and rugged good looks of each holster. Just check the facts on these outstanding models. **FACT:** You'll hardly know you're wearing our new Slimline (Model 29L and 29). The Slimline stays snug, tight and out-of-sight, thanks to its rugged construction and wide concealed belt

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Special, Model 38 Bodyguard® and automatics.) **FACT:** Shooters who prefer a shoulder holster will appreciate the maximum concealment and comfort of Smith & Wesson's Model 43. It's a fast draw, breakout spring tension design. With a soft, glove leather shoulder strap and an adjustable, elasticized nylon harness. An offset belt strap pulls the gun

and holster tight against the body. There's a removable belt strap on the opposite side and a removable hammer strap. This holster is available fully lined as Model 45. Both handle small, medium

and value. Smith & Wesson, Springfield, Massachusetts 01101.

and large frame revolvers with barrels to 6½" and large frame automatics. **FACT:** Each S&W holster, belt and accessory is crafted in our own leather factory to provide unmatched quality, performance



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SILUETAS

PHILIP C. BRIGGS

BOLONEY, BULL AND BULLETS

Whether you slice it or shovel it, there's a great amount of misinformation passed around by silhouette shooters (and some gun writers) about bullet selection for the damn ram. Knock-down effect, energy transfer, mudball analogies, FMJ's, light and fast versus heavy and slow, long bullets, fat bullets, match bullets, boat tails, round noses, all sorts of semi-scientific mumbo jumbo gets tossed around.

Not that the physics of the process of a bullet toppling a target is that hard to describe; or that good, solid experimental

tattered high school physics text and read the parts on work and energy, and impulse and momentum, you'll find that collision problems such as this are analyzed using the concepts of impulse and momentum and that Newton's law of conservation of momentum is used to describe the collision.

Specifically, the momentum possessed by the moving object will be transferred to the stationary object, in what is termed an inelastic collision (the bullet does not rebound).

Momentum, rather than the commonly quantified kinetic energy, is therefore the property of the moving bullet that describes its ability to knockdown a target. Any of the popular bullet manufacturers loading manuals list energy remaining at various ranges, but never momentum. Expressed in units of pounds-seconds momentum is the product of the bullet's mass and pushbutton wonder by multiplying the bullet weight (in grains) by its velocity (in fps) at the distance of interest and dividing by 225, 400 to get the units straight. Or even quicker, divide the manual's indicated energy by one-half of the velocity at that same range.

Once you calculate down-range momentum for your favorite load you'll need to compare the value to some minimum level required for reliable knockdown to determine the loads suitability. That limiting value will vary with targets (bent, heavy, warped, sets), stands (soft, rough, wobbly, solid) and hit (high, low, center, end). My tests and observations indicate that about .6 pound-seconds is the limit—which is about what the usual .357 Mag load (158 grain soft point) fired from a eight inch revolver delivers at two hundred metres. If you or your friends are leaving too many rams standing on your range with such a pistol/load, then the limit for your range is obviously higher. You can observe what works and figure backwards into your local limit to allow selection of the best load for your conditions.

The Hornady data shows that momentum transfer is not dependent on bullet construction. Ratio's of the bullet's momentum to that transferred to the target are statistically the same for bullets of the same weight of different construction (swaged, FMJ and SP), for different bullet weights for most calibers tested, and even for different striking velocities. The tests

Continued on page 14



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.357 is effective with both cast and FMJ bullets in the T/C Contender gun.

data isn't available. It's just that the average shooter, and some self-styled experts, aren't paying attention. Unless you're the shooter that has never rang a ram, you should be interested in learning how to assemble that sure-fire load, so at the risk of boring the five or ten percent of you that have been paying attention, I'll review what's been learned these past few years.

It wasn't too long after I started handgun silhouette shooting that I began to ponder the question of what it takes to slam a ram. Late in 1977 I conducted some limited experiments to confirm the conclusion I reached using my rusty education and dusty texts. The results of that endeavor were reported in the March 1978 issue of the IHMSA publication, *The Silhouette*.

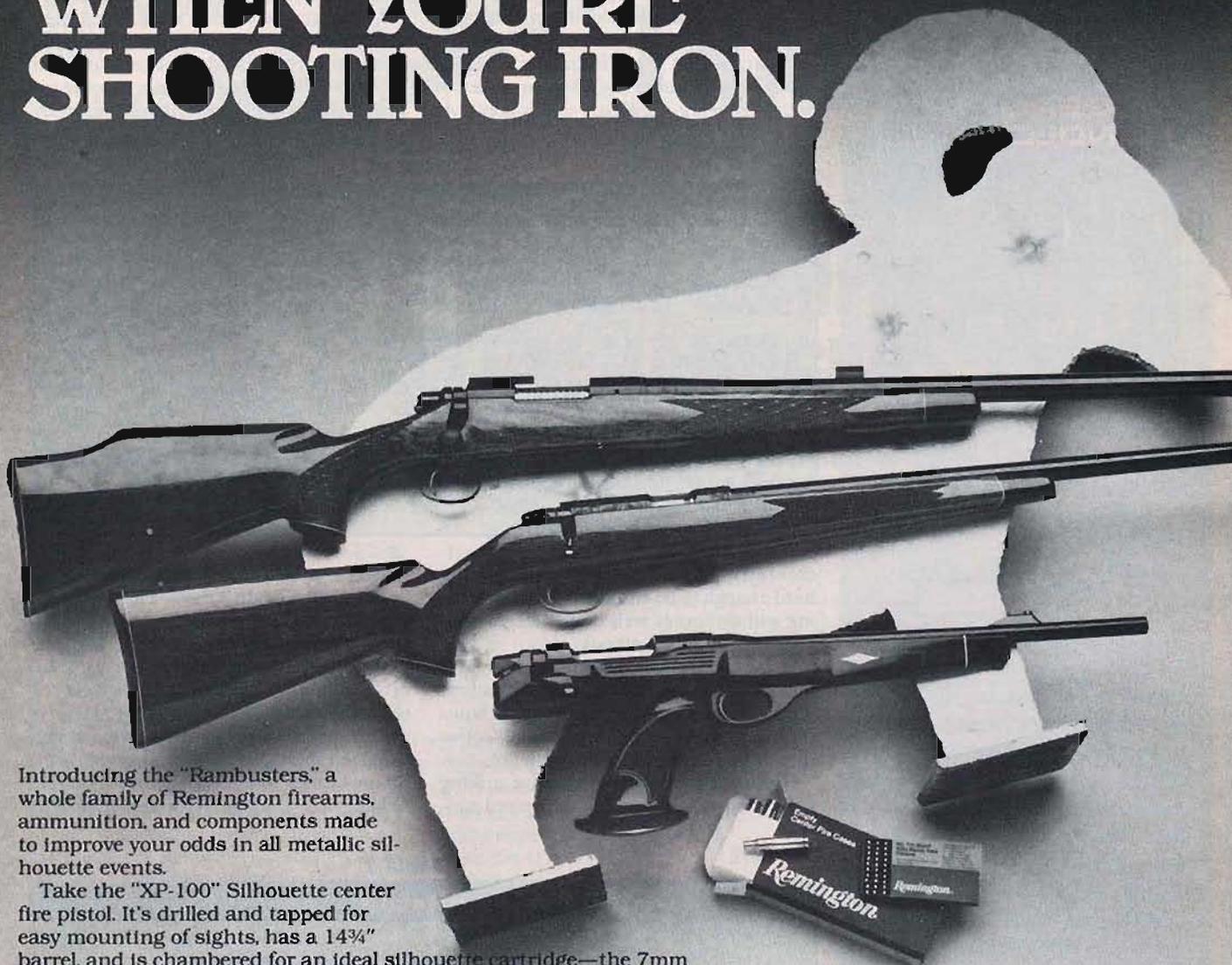
Almost two years later William C. Davis, in an article in the January 1980 issue of *The American Rifleman* presented an excellent treatment of the subject (that means he came to the same conclusion I did) and presented the results to some definitive experiments conducted at Hornady's facilities by the late Ed Heers.

Nothing exotic in either article, though, as the physics were worked out by Newton some years ago. If you'll turn back to that



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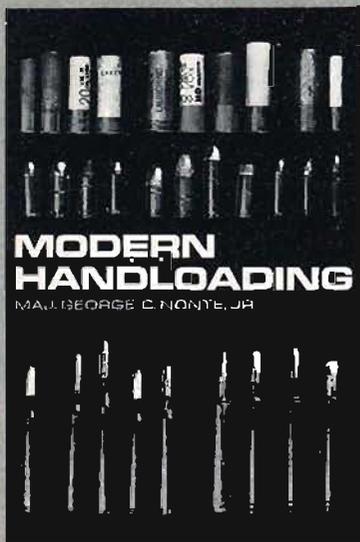
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do show that back splatter, even on hardened targets, will raise the transfer ratio to about 110%, and indicate that bullets that crater soft targets will transfer even more. (So light fast bullets that heavily crater soft steels provide better knockdown—but only in that situation.)

What the data shows is that the .357, .41, or .44 Mag shooter using FMJs or jacketed bullets is being needlessly extravagant. A

nady bullets launched from modest sized cases, what happens down range. The ten-inch barrel data is representative of attainable performance from a Contender in 7mmTCU or .30 Herrett, the 15 inch barrel data similarly represents the 7mmBR XP-100. Muzzle velocities were calculated using the Powley Computer to provide some uniformity, as data taken from test firings would probably contain some inequities due to one's inability to uniformly

Table 1

Down Range Doin's

Hornady Bullet	BC	Muzzle Velocity (fps)		200 Meter Velocity (fps)		200 Meter Momentum (lb-S)	
		10"	15"	10"	15"	10"	15"
7mm							
120 gr SP	.378	2320	2510	1870	2030	1.00	1.08
139 SP	.396	2180	2360	1780	1920	1.10	1.18
162 BTSP	.520	2040	2200	1730	1870	1.24	1.34
30 cal							
130 gr SP	.299	2160	—	1630	—	.94	—
150 gr SP	.358	2000	—	1570	—	1.04	—
165 gr BTSP	.459	1940	—	1610	—	1.18	—

carefully selected bullet cast of an alloy hard enough to be accurate and resist leading will do just as well on the target—and better in your pocketbook.

It also shows that the shooter that can't find a FMJ for his unlimited needn't worry about giving something up, and that hunting-type bullets aren't any more effective than thinly-jacketed match bullets.

The tests do show that increase striking momentum will provide increased mo-

judge pressures. The 200m data was computed using Ingalls tables. The velocities are representative of attainable values from top loads though, based on my tests of the 7mmBR as reported in the last issue of *Handgunner*, and Hornady's data for the .30 Herrett. What the table shows is simply that the heavy bullets arrive at two hundred meters with more momentum. Shape comes in here too as the heaviest bullets were slipper BT's, and their effi-

Table 2

Recoil

The force that bites the hand that feeds

Bullet	Muzzle Velocity (fps)		Recoil Energy ft-lbs	
	10"	15"	10"	15"
7 mm				
120 gr SP	2320	2510	16.7	12.3
139 gr SP	2180	2360	19.2	14.0
162 gr BTSP	2040	2200	21.8	16.0
30 cal				
130 gr SP	2160	—	17.1	—
150 gr SP	2000	—	18.9	—
165 gr BTSP	1940	—	20.1	—

mentum transfer and hence, better chances to topple the targets.

There's a growing body of popular opinion that for a given cartridge, the heavier bullets give better knockdown than light ones. The Hornady data does not show any higher momentum transfer ratio's for low and slow, but a little more physics (the ballistics branch) does show that this is one bit of popular opinion that's correct. But it's not correct for the reasons usually given.

Table 1 shows, for a selection of Hor-

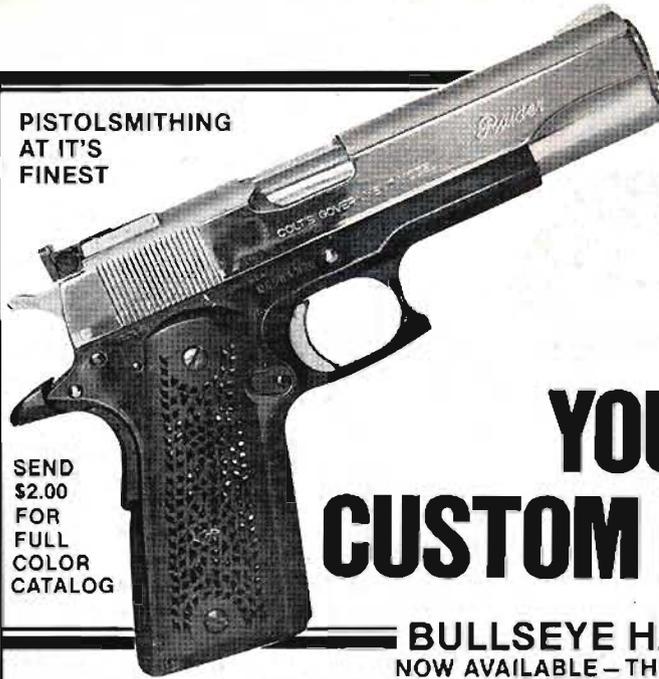
ciency provides the difference. (Note how the 7's shine). The gain in momentum is about twenty-five percent from light to heavy, and that's significant on any range. That gain doesn't come free though, as shown in Table 2. Again the 10 inch data was computed for a Contender (standard barrel) and the 15 inch data for a XP-100.

These top loads bite in the Contender, as the indicated recoil levels are as much or more than a typical .44 Mag revolver's six-

Continued on page 16

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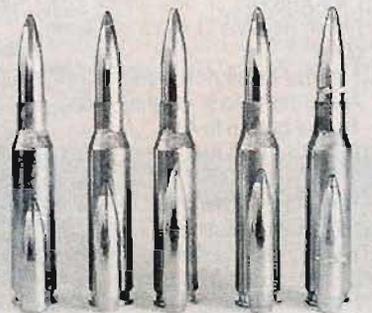
teen ft/pounds. Comparing the two tables you'll note the 7's deliver more on target for less in the hand, but the difference is small. Lower recoils can be obtained with less powder, but I'd stay around a momentum level of 1.0 pound-seconds just to make sure of kills when you need every target (but that's only if the load shoots



Both the 7x47mm and the 7mm BR provide good knockdown on the dam rami. Included is the 115 gr. Speer hollow point; the 139 gr. Hornady Soft point and Speer's good old 160 gr. B.T.S.P.

well, and you can handle the bite and bark without developing a flinch, or becoming fatigued).

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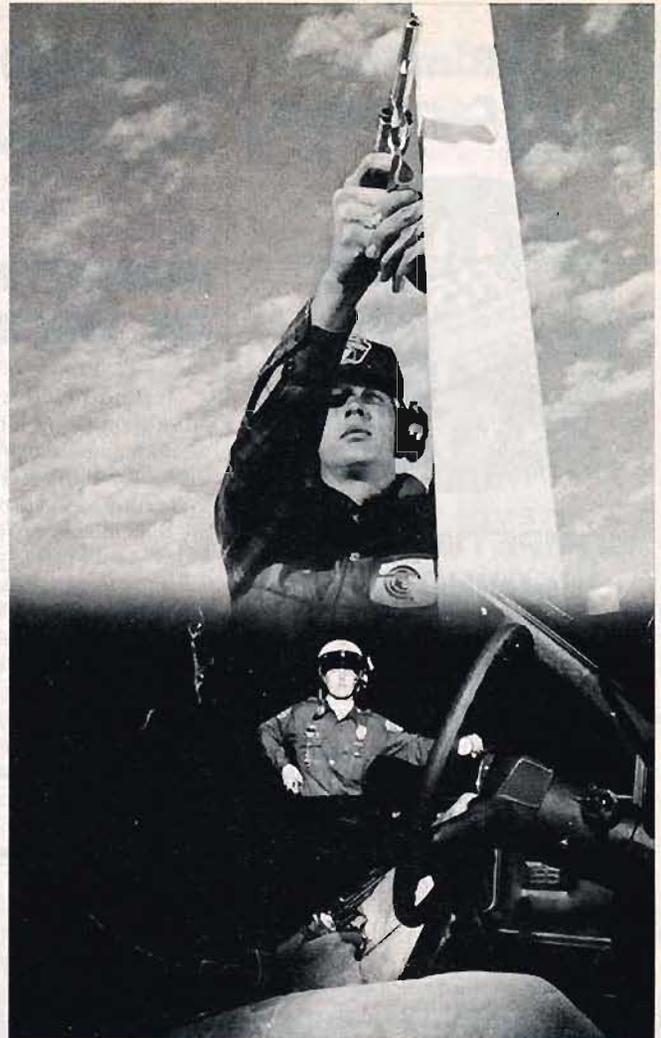
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DAN COTTERMAN

HOW TO MAKE RELOADING DANGEROUS OR, THE 2.7 BULLSEYE SURPRISE

Certain practices are inimicably set upon us by force of habit. Conspicuous among these practices is the use of ludicrously light charges of dense nitroglycerine-based powders in voluminous .38 Special cases. This practice-become-habit—and I refer specifically to loading 2.7 grains of Bullseye—constitutes an outright dangerous act.

I do not profess to be academically or occupationally credentialed as a chemist or physicist; neither, however, do I intend to feign humility by de-emphasizing the value of my experience. The overpowering aspect of danger associated with the 2.7 load has, by reason of its importance, been

by a 2.7 charge. This, they inform us repeatedly, creates a situation wherein the burning rate of a small-flaked, dense powder can quicken drastically. It is significant, parenthetically, that no such explanation was offered before numerous blow-ups had occurred.

Jeff Cooper, a respected authority among handgunners, detailed his reasons for withdrawing from the use of Bullseye in revolvers several years ago (See November/December, 1977, issue of AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.) His experiences reinforced mine. I, too, abandoned its use as an economy target charge in the .38 Special or, for that matter, in any circumstance that brought about a serious disproportion between charge volume and combustion space.

No problem is caused by quitting the dangerous misuse of Bullseye, save that of finding an accurate substitute. The loading of substantially larger quantities of Bullseye being beyond the limits of safety, I began by loading quantities of Blue Dot charges behind standard 148-grain cast wadcutter. This slower burning powder can be loaded in charge weights ranging up to 6.5 grains with wadcutter and burn fairly well in six-inch barrels. Results, at least in my guns, were not entirely satisfactory because, although chamber pressures seemed nominal, accuracy was lacking.

The substitution of Unique in 5.0-grain charges proved somewhat more satisfac-

"Bullseye is an excellent propellant . . . provided it is used properly"

moved from the realm of academic conjecture to a point that demands abstention. Reports of exploded revolver cylinders and, in at least one instance, of personal injury most certainly support the foregoing as a matter of pure, indisputable fact.

There has not, to my knowledge, been a single account of a blow-up involving a Bullseye charge in an autoloader, obviously because autoloader cases and the Bullseye charges they utilize present a better proportionate balance between powder volume and the space available for proper combustion. I am not, therefore, advocating the abandonment of Bullseye. It is an excellent, time-tested propellant—provided that it is used properly.

The problem lies, not with the powder, but with its mis-application in a situation that tends to defeat its progressive-burning properties and cause it, instead, to act as an explosive. The problem, as it has been explained by countless savants, lurks in the enormous disproportion between the amount of room in the .38 Special hull and the quite small amount of space occupied

"one reader suggested that Unique be taken off the market"

tory. I had been using Unique as a target charge for many years, so it was a matter of relying on it more heavily rather than one of actual first-time substitution. I've had bad reports on Unique's potential for accurate loading. An Illinois reader, for example, went so far as to suggest that

Unique be taken off the market. "Any writer that recommends Unique for a target load is nuts . . ." he stated. So be it. I must confess to obtaining good accuracy with Unique. It is, in fact, one of the most versatile of all propellants.

I turned also to further experimentation with Hodgdon's HP38, a propellant that

HP38, being more difficult to ignite, is less susceptible to the acceleration of burning rate that is likely to attend the use of small charges of Bullseye in voluminous cases.

Charges of HP38 have been varied in my experiments from 2.8 to 3.5 grains (using regular small pistol primers) with target wadcutters. Best accuracy results have been experienced from the lighter range of charges. I have, for example, had quite good results with both 2.8 and 3.0-grain charges while shooting off-hand at 25 yards. All this, by the way, with a cherished old K-38 Masterpiece with a six-inch barrel.

It has not been as if Bullseye were the only sugar in the kitchen. I finally worked around to more than merely dabbling with Winchester-Western's spheroids, 231 and 630, as propellants for target wadcutters. I've had my best loads using 630 in charges weighing from 6.4 to 6.7 grains. With 630, I can simply change the charge setting and go to heavier loads in the .357 Magnum, .45 ACP, or .44 Magnum.

I've worked up to 3.5 grains of 231. This powder, like HP38, provides a measure of economy. A 12-ounce tin of HP38 yields 1875 2.8-grain charges, while the larger one-pound quantity of 231 provides about 2000 3.5 grain charges. Of course, 2.7 charges come more to the pound, as I am sure the penny-conscious among us are aware. However, it is appropriate for the dollar-conscious and safety-minded indi-

vidual to take stock of the entire situation. It should be apparent to even the most obtuse handloader that the preferred practice is to spend a couple of dollars more on powder in order to avoid the danger of blowing up a valuable revolver, or, worst yet, of injuring one's self or a bystander.

The traditional 2.7-Bullseye charge,

"Spend more on powder and avoid blowing up a valuable target revolver"

"The danger can no longer be glossed over by layers of scientific jargon"

might more accurately be called a spheroid than a spherical, since its shape is something other than ball-like. The recommended light target load, 2.8 grains, puts us once again against the volumetric proportions that are said to bring about the difficulty with Bullseye. However,

swirling in space like snowflakes at the mercy of flame and thus ignited erratically, has too often resulted in disaster. The danger no longer can be glossed over by layers of scientific jargon or shrugged off by statements of statistical rarity.



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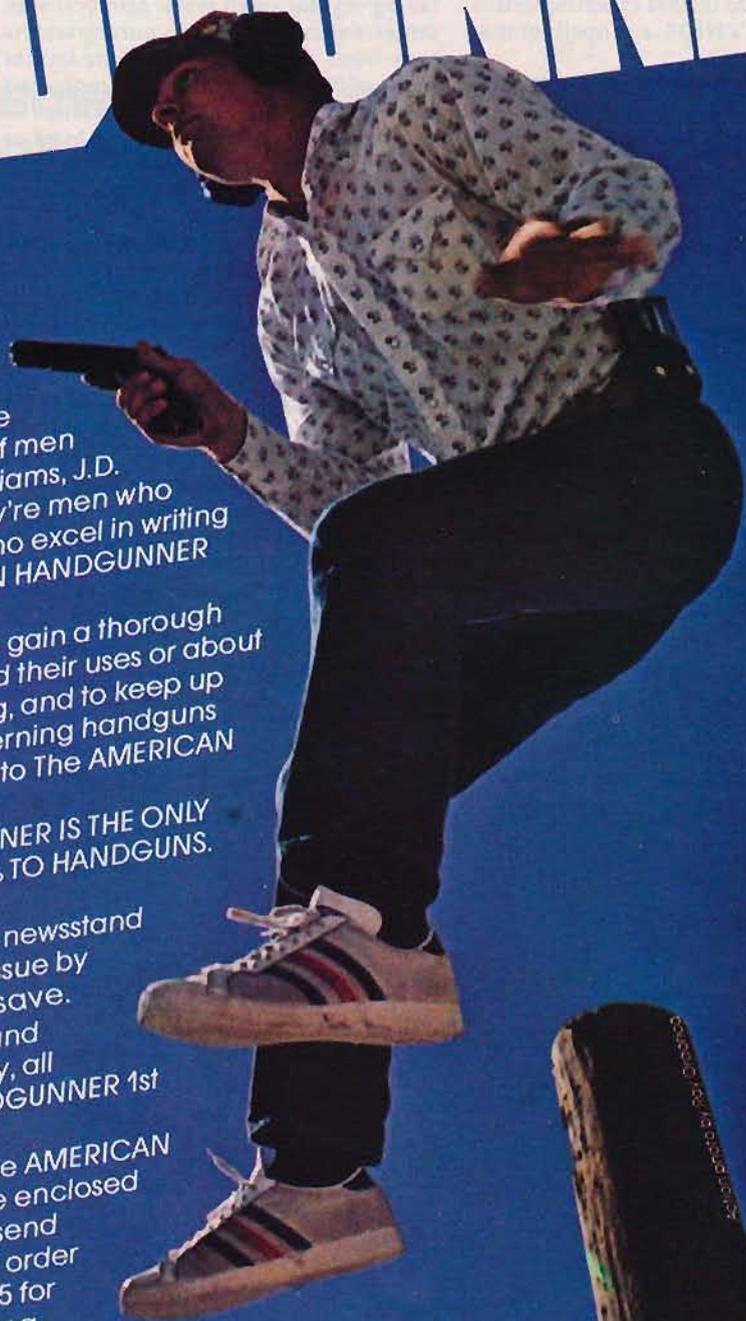
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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

MAGNA-TRIGGER SAFETY DEVICE BETTER THAN SNATCH-PROOF RIG

A little over five years ago, a fella named Joe Smith started advertising something called a Magna-Trigger Safety in the police professional journals. As a working street cop who was into evaluating hardware, I thought, "Good Lord, another entry in the Gimmick of the Month Club, designed by somebody who's never done the job." Then sold only to cops, the Magna-Trigger was a conversion of an S&W revolver to fire only when held by an officer wearing a magnetic ring.

International Association of Chiefs of Police gave Smith a \$5,000 award for designing it, but I still wrote it off. Two things later brought it to my serious attention, simultaneously.

One was a major test for a police professional journal of so-called snatch proof holsters. The evaluation, which I headed, lasted for several months and involved both gun people and highly qualified martial artists, who played the roles of the bad guys. Prior to the finals, two holsters had emerged as the most snatchproof.

One was worn by a sixth-degree black belt in Aikido. He had just come off duty when we started, was still in uniform, and challenged me to get his loaded model 66 S&W .357 out of his rig; he was going to stop me and rip my arm off. I managed to evade his trapping counterattack with a *chi sao* maneuver, tore the loaded gun out of his "snatchproof" rig, and said "bang" when the muzzle crossed his groin.

Shortly thereafter, the roles were reversed: I was the cop, wearing what I considered the best police security holster on the market (hell, I wore it on the job), and Jim Arvanitis, founder of the Mu Tau fighting system, was the aggressor. He went for my gun and I didn't even try to defend it, though I had taken the precaution of unloading it. As Jimmy went for my gun, I threw him against the wall with an armarbar across the throat (thinking I was *finally* going to win a sparring session with him after all these years), and the next thing I heard was "click, click". He had torn my empty 66 out of its "snatchproof holster," put it to my neck, and pulled the trigger. And he's not even into guns.

One lesson was that overconfidence kills, but another was that you can't trust any holster to release the gun only to you. One cop in five who's murdered, gets it with his own snatched gun or a brother officer's. In 1978, Joe Smith tried to warn a police department of that. They scoffed at

him because their men were trained in the martial arts. Less than a year later, a punk got a police gun out of its holster and two of their men were dead.

My other concern, early in 1980, was that I had finally agreed a few years before to have a kid. I didn't want any, but my old lady wanted *litters*, so we compromised on a single trial model. It meant no more



Magna-Trigger device fits into grip.

loaded guns laying all over the house cocked and locked. I figured that was cool; when the little rug rat got mobile, I replaced my .45 with a Remington 870 folding stock pump, equipped with Santiago Day-Night sights and extended mag, beside the bed. The slide was pumped over an empty chamber and locked on safe. Wasn't no kid gonna figure out the slide release, and then work the pump, and then find the safety button and pull the trigger.

But shortly before Cathy turned 3, I realized I was kidding myself. She was going to be as athletic a female as her mother, and just as cunningly bright. If she could carry a gallon of milk across the kitchen and back, and do an instinctively decent job of tuning the stereo, I figured it wasn't going to be long before she could function that pump gun. Every time she was in the master bedroom, after all, she had seen me nervously open it to check the chamber.

This left me in a hellacious quandary. I hadn't slept more than three nights without a loaded gun in reach since I was twelve, and with two attempted housebreaks in the past few years, one by a certified psycho with officially diagnosed homicidal fantasies, plus a couple of job-related death threats, I had no intention of giving up the practice. But what about the kid?

I went down the list of technological

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Continued from page 21

possibilities, and when I was finished, I called Joe Smith in California. The following morning I shipped him a Smith & Wesson Combat Magnum on which Andy Cannon had already done a custom action.

I got back the modified gun, three rings, and a set of special Pachmayr grips made for Joe with aluminum instead of steel reinforcing the rubbery composition. Steel



Device does not affect normal firing.

causes a problem with the magnetic rings, through factory wood stocks by S&W give no hassle. If you've got custom wood grips on your gun, you may have to experiment with grinding down the inside washers around the holding screw. I'd rather not mess with it. You ain't gonna beat Pachmayr's anyway, for function.

Joe can only do his conversion on double action Smith & Wesson revolvers, but he can handle all frame sizes. What he does is cut out the front of the grip strap and insert his "module". Exactly how that module works is something I'd rather not commit to print. This magazine is read by about 130,000 people who are into doing some of their own modifications, and trying to duplicate it without Joe's unique knowledge could not only ruin a costly gun, but could get somebody killed in an ultimate use situation.

I've got enough debits on my karma already.

Let's just talk about how it works. I haven't tried it on an N frame, but on a K frame Smith, your best bet is either his special non-steel Pachmayrs or factory target grips, and then you want the ring on your middle finger. Standard stocks that come only to the edge of the grip frame may or may not need a ring that fits your third finger; you'll have to determine that by trial and error. On a wee J frame, it'll have to go on your ring finger.

The ring itself is not super-ideal. It's ugly, but I can live with that. I don't care if it makes me look more like a banded duck than a male model for Gentlemen's Quarterly, 'cause I'm into function. My first concern was whether it would slip around on your hand to the point where the magnet that lets the gun fire would no longer work.

If it rotates much off of the flat inside of your finger, my tests show that no, it *ain't* gonna work. The good news is that it probably won't slip that bad. Have a local jew-

eler take your ring size, and mail that info to Joe when you order the work.

Is it going to turn away by itself? It doesn't look that way. I tried some rassin' and sparring, and it stayed with the flat, magnet-loaded side in where it should be. My rings, however, fit well. The good news is that with the flat bottom Joe designed into it, they ain't gonna move as much as a dress ring, which is concentrically round all the way, inside. Joe deliberately left his flat inside as well, to keep it from turning.

It can turn, however, if your hands are very wet. Not just "soapy shower" wet, but as if you'd been in a rainstorm. Perspiration didn't allow them to turn that much in my tests, but cold water saturation allowed it.

I used to be in the jewelry business. I took the ring to one of the top people in the trade. He told me, "It's ugly, but your magnet's not going to fall off." This would have been comforting if Joe hadn't said, "While the magnet will last for a hundred years, the epoxy bonding won't." He is very careful about warning users not to twist the ring around when trying to take it off, nor letting someone with bigger fingers try it. If the epoxy bond that holds the vital magnet in there worries *him*, it worries *me*.

The gun module itself does not present any problems. You can slide it right out of the frame for cleaning, and after a hun-

"hey man, sumthin's wrong with this .357 cause it won't shoot"

dred fast rounds of Federal's hot, primo 158-grain Semi-Jacketed Soft Point .357 Magnum ammo, I detected no loosening and no handling difficulties. The fit of the module to the front of the frame isn't glass-smooth in terms of mating surfaces, but on my test gun wouldn't cause any problems even with standard stocks.

So far, there've been two "saves" with Magna-Triggers that I know of. In one case, a kid got his hands on a security guard's model 10, and couldn't make it go off. The gun was finally removed from his precocious fingers by a guy who's very grateful to Joe. In another encounter, two officers in a department that had Joe modify all issue guns got caught off guard, and disarmed. The bad guy left them alive, booked to Florida, and there went into a gunshop and said, "Hey, man, sumthin's wrong with this .357 cause it won't shoot."

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He left it, and the gunsmith realized instantly when he took the grips off that this wasn't that guy's gun. He called the heat, and when the hood went to pick it up, the gendarmes met him with their own .357s. Case closed.

For street cops? I can see it, but I won't endorse it 100 percent. In wet weather, the rings could *maybe* get moved around enough that the officer couldn't make his gun go off, especially after a tussle, though it doesn't seem too likely under other circumstances.

But there are a lot of dead cops in the ground who would buy Magna-Triggers if you could let 'em come back to life.

The only way somebody who *isn't* wearing the special ring can make a gun go off when so modified, is if the officer has cocked the hammer before it was taken away from him, or if the bad guy is so strong he can turn the gun on the policeman while it's still in the cop's hand. I don't know of that ever happening, and I don't see it as a concern with trained people. Your best bet would be to drop the now-harmless gun and let the sucker who's trying to murder you grab for it, while you kick his face in.

For me right now, and for the most of the readers of this magazine, I think the greatest advantage of the Magna-Trigger lies in the ability to keep a loaded revolver instantly available to grownups in a household where kids are running around.

A kid who is bright enough and has the time to unscrew the grips, could probably figure out how to bypass Joe's system with a paper clip. But if your kid is that smart, you've already taught him about guns and he'll be smart enough not to have an "accidental" with it anyway. Hell, there are grown-up cops carrying guns with Magna-Trigger safeties who don't know how they work, and don't care; they only know that they *do* work.

I used to say that you can't child-proof your guns, you can only gun-proof your children, with common sense practices and safety education in the home. Joe Smith's Magna-Trigger is the closest thing I've seen to childproofing your guns, and it's the system I now use. The Combat Magnum Joe modified for me is now locked to my bedstead in a "snatch resistant" holster; my wife and I put the rings on before we go to bed, and in the morning, the rings go in the jewelry box and the gun goes into a high closet shelf next to that still-ready 870.

Joe is thinking about selling franchises to gunsmiths and furnishing them with his patented modules. If I was in that business, I'd grab for it. There are a lot of people out there who think it is more than worth it to have a gun nobody can make go off but them.

If you're interested, write to Joe Smith, Magna-Trigger Safety, 10090 N. Blaney, #6, Cupertino, CA 95014.



COMBAT COURSE

JERRY USHER

THESE STEEL TARGETS REACT WHEN BULLET HITS OFF CENTER

There is nothing new about using steel targets for pistol shooting. Arizona and California practical pistol shooters have used steel for years, both in practice and matches. I have used steel for training purposes for over fifteen years. When I received this assignment, I expected something totally new and revolutionary. As it turns out, this target is not really new at all,

standard and most magnum loads. We tested hot .357 magnum loads out of a six inch Python on the smoothest of the two plates. The resulting indentations are easy to locate, but were very slight. One of the targets was covered with strike marks and Fred estimates over 1000 rounds have hit it. There were no dents and no signs of the "dishing" that usually results with steel



Smith's new steel silhouette (human) target will pivot when shots hit off center, making the target an excellent training aid for police shooters.

but it is a very real improvement over similar attempts at the same thing.

Using steel targets has certain definite advantages and disadvantages. Any successful steel target system will have to expand the advantages and eliminate most of the disadvantages of the existing systems.

Shooting on steel is a tremendous time saver and greatly increases shooting enjoyment due to hearing the hits. Immediate reinforcement of correct technique is valuable in learning. Many of us feel that working on steel is the best way to get that important balance between speed and accuracy.

There are problems with steel, however. It's difficult to tell a good hit from a poor one. Improper use can cause splatter, steel is heavy and expensive and easily ruined by little men with big guns when targets are left unguarded on the range.

The target system patented by Fred Smith has incorporated the advantages of existing steel targets and eliminated most of the disadvantages. Fred has used a stressed steel alloy that will stand up to all

targets. The combination of hard steel and the stressed shape of the target works. However, the target will not stop penetrating rifle rounds nor repeated use of rifled slugs. And don't expect these targets to remain in good shape if you leave them where the "ammo testers" can find them.

One of the best features of Fred's targets is the ease in which the whole set up comes apart for carrying in a normal auto trunk. The heaviest part is 70 pounds and is reasonably easy to handle. There are no fasteners to lose and it is virtually impossible to assemble incorrectly. The elastic devices are common bungie cords available in most sports stores. Neither lead nor steel-jacketed rounds will ricochet back from the targets. This design is one of the safest I have seen. Only a fool, however, will ever shoot on steel without wearing glasses.

Beyond the handiness or strength of the target, its real value is that it allows the shooter to "read" hits. Off-center hits cause the target to turn toward the hit (and return). Even a thrown one inch diameter

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO 38 SPECIAL SHOOTERS.

We have recently learned that a quantity of our 38 Special cartridges, manufactured in July 1980, may separate at the case cannellure which could cause part of the case to lodge between the cylinder and the barrel of a revolver. This could damage the gun or cause a malfunction. While the possibility of a personal injury is unlikely, any obstruction in a gun barrel should be considered potentially dangerous.

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DAVE SHEER'S SOUTH AFRICAN .45

South Africans like Dave Sheer, prohibited from importing arms, turn to their own ingenuity—the result: a 12-shot .45 ACP with proven reliability



By Al J. Venter



WHEN YOU ASK South African engineer, Dave Sheer, why he's building guns from chunks of hardened steel, he looks you squarely in the eye and quotes United Nations Resolution 148, which effectively imposed an arms embargo on his country several years ago.

He also knows that, while Resolution 148 prohibits the sale of weapons to South Africa, there is nothing in the decree which says he cannot take the best qualities inherent in the firearms of the world and incorporate them within a design of his own. Already he has built two prototypes for a revolutionary new pistol in .45 ACP caliber.

The difference with Sheer's gun, is that instead of carrying a magazine which holds seven cartridges, his innovation carries a dozen shells in staggered rows—plus one in the chamber.

"Lucky twelve," he calls it, and then goes on: "In the kind of hostilities—extended guerrilla warfare and urban terrorism—we're likely to find ourselves in Southern Africa, you need a volume of fire. This gun of mine gives it!"

Sheer, a gunsmith of considerable professional note, customized and maintained several guns used by members of the South African team that took world honors during the 1979 International Combat Shoot in this country.

You have to take a close look at Sheer's

hand-finished cannon to appreciate what he has achieved. He started nine months ago shaping a slide and frame out of 4140 steel, the standard molychrome steel used by many brands of the American firearms industry. He used strip steel for the smaller parts. His first prototype off the workbench was completely fabricated in this way and, where necessary, argon welded.

"I had to do it like that because if something did not work or function properly, I could machine it off and start again," he told me with self-sufficient candor.

That was late last year and almost \$10,000 ago. Now both guns are complete and when he fires them at a demonstration range you can see what he means by firepower: He can let off a clip containing a dozen rounds in seconds—and place most of them onto a man-sized target seven or eight meters away.

Work has been hard. Sheer reckons that he spent about 120 hours fashioning the frame out of a solid block of metal. All this time loss has been reflected in his business; every moment spent on the prototypes meant that he could not get on with the regular gunsmithing work.

Why a gun based on the .45 automatic Colt pistol? Why not something similar to the Browning Hi-Power in 9mm caliber, especially since South Africa produces its own 9mm ammunition? All .45 ammo available locally is imported from the

United States.

Sheer was quick to answer: "Because the .45 is still the world's best defensive caliber. There is nothing to beat it in hand-held weapons.

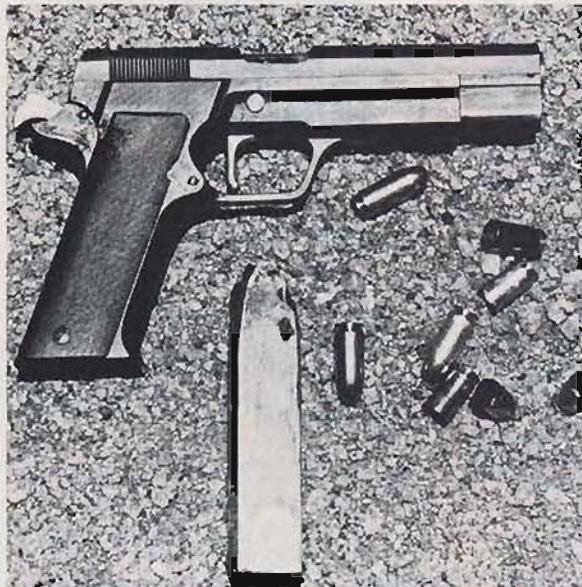
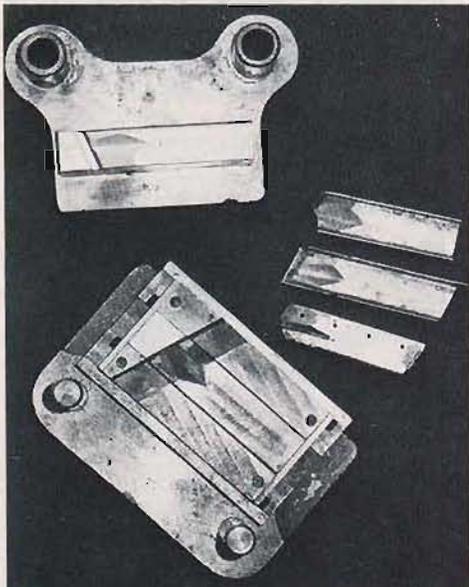
Even the barrel is an original Colt .45 ACP product. Only this one has been substantially built up around the muzzle to allow for the larger sized frame.

Yet, the gun produced in Sheer's garage workshop on the outskirts of Johannesburg's northern suburbs is about 7 ounces lighter than the original. Also, there are fewer parts in Sheer's gun; about 30 compared to more than 40 in the original Colt.

Where does he intend going from here? Sheer is not sure. He has proved that his gun works well. It has had several thousand rounds through it without hang-ups. Also, he gave it to Springbok shootist, Dale Guthrie, to test and he put several hundred rounds through the pistol without a single malfunction. Guthrie came 11th in the World Combat Shooting Championships.

Now he's looking for someone to back him to show that South Africa can build a pistol that works well.

Since completing the .45, Sheer has built another prototype, same gun, same size, which shoots 9mm Parabellum ammunition. The magazine holds 20 cartridges plus one up. It works like a charm.



Dave Sheer .45 auto shown completed, disassembled, in block form and with dies for the magazine cut and ready. Prototype was carved out of a single block of metal, and based on Colt. Sheer gun has fewer parts than the Colt version and 12-shot firepower.

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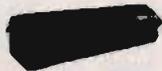
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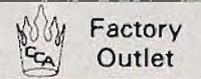
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OUT OF THAT ANKLE HOLSTER: THE LIFE-SAVING FAST DRAW

I used to think that anybody who wore a gun in an ankle holster was either working Vice, or had James Bond fantasies. In 1975, my good friend Dick Marple, a police equipment rep, wheedled me into trying out a new ankle rig he was thinking of selling. As a favor, I did so.

For the first day, I felt like a fool, and a gimpy one at that. By the second day, I was getting used to it. By the end of the week I told him he wasn't getting his sample back. I still have it, and wear it frequently. I've become an ankle holster convert.

The ankle holster seems like a ridiculous idea. It is slow. From a standing position, it is awkward. And the idea of walking around with a pound or more of metal strapped to your leg is likely to turn you off. Until you try it.

To become adept with the ankle holster is to develop a whole new set of reflexes, and to learn a radically different mode of drawing one's firearm. You should realize up front that no matter how much you practice, the very best you'll be able to do is equal or slightly beat an average rookie cop, you with the ankle holster and him with a service scabbard and conventional safety strap. At worst, it will take you two or three seconds to get it out, if not longer.

That's not nearly as quick as clearing a good carrying rig on your belt or even under your arm. On the other hand, it's better than not having a gun at all. Convenience and visual concealment for a small gun are what the ankle rig really offers, and you pay for that with slow access. In the years I've been carrying one, I've learned a few ways to improve on that trade.

First, plan on a two-hand draw: the left to haul the pants leg up, the right to go for the gun. You can draw standing faster than you think, but the secret is to do it *quick*. The longer it takes you, the more likely you are to lose your balance. It is often easier to drop into a kneeling position as you draw. You should also practice drawing while on your belly, on your back, and while seated behind a steering wheel or in a chair. These are all situations where the ankle rig may actually be *better* than a belt holster for quick access.

The ankle holster is the most personal selection in all of gunleather, since it wraps around one of your limbs. What's comfortable for me may be agonizing for you, and vice versa.

First off, where do you pack the ankle

rig? I'm assuming in this article that the reader is right handed, so southpaws can simply reverse the techniques. The inside of the right ankle is awkward. You're pulling the right pant leg up with your left hand, and it ruins your balance. Outside the right ankle? Nope; while you'd think a flex of the right leg would pull the cuff up over the gun, it won't. You'll be fumbling for the gun butt through your slacks material at least once out of three tries, if not *all* three. On the inside of the left ankle is the logical place. You can reach it with your left hand about as easy as that fist can close over the gun on your right hip, and it's the best for a strong hand draw. It also conceals best, since all ankle holsters have a forward tilt.

What gun to strap to your ankle? I go with small frame snub revolvers, either Colt or S&W .38s loaded hot, or the discontinued Security Industries .357 soon to be resurrected by Mossberg. Ankle holsters and trouser pockets are the only places where you'll appreciate the weight-saving of an aluminum-frame gun, but I prefer stainless steel since it better resists the perspiration a leg gun will be subjected to. Double action .380 autos are nice, but you sacrifice power and you don't really need their flatter silhouettes under anything but the tightest pants, which won't slide up smoothly over the holster anyway.

Thumb-breaks are what you're stuck with. Nobody makes a nonbulky ankle rig that can hold the gun without a buttoned strap when you run. A pity; I wish somebody would come up with a way you could draw the gun snaplessly and silently, since so many ankle holster wearers count on sneaking the gun out unobtrusively when danger begins to threaten, rather than making a speed draw.

Like I said, a smooth draw mandates the use of the left hand to pull the left trouser leg up, even if you're wearing bell bottom slacks (which, of course, conceal the ankle holster much better than anything else). This means that when you sense danger coming, your left hand should stray to the front of your thigh and unobtrusively take hold of the material.

Here are some of the techniques I practice:

GAYLORD STANDING DRAW

Left hand goes to pant leg, pulling it upward. As shooter raises left knee, torso tilts forward. This is both to ensure con-

tinued balance under stress, and to give gunhand quicker access to weapon. As the gun begins to clear, torso goes more forward, and left foot begins to move down into "advancing crouch" position. The gun comes up in a one-hand hold on target, with left hand partially outstretched for better balance. As the left foot slams down, the left hand is free to reach up and support the gun, and is near enough to it to do so handily.

KNEELING, ADVANCING

To execute the kneeling position properly with an ankle holster, the left foot has to be forward. If there is room enough between you and your antagonists, or if you are moving ahead with bodily momentum, you should slide your left foot forward as your left hand pulls the trouser leg up. Start pulling material before you flex your knee. As your right hand goes for the gun, your torso tilts forward and your right knee drops toward the ground. Your gun will be up on target one-handed almost as soon as you hit kneeling position, and your left hand will be in a position to take supportive hold.

KNEELING, RETREATING

Same as above, but you set the left leg forward by stepping back with the right leg. As you move, the left hand again pulls the trouser leg up, while the right goes for the piece. You'll wind up sitting on your right foot, with your torso more erect than in the previous position. It's not as quick to move out of, but it's more stable and more accurate. You'll find that the two-hand hold comes more quickly in this position than in any other mode of drawing from an ankle holster.

This position should be practiced for two reasons: you may be in too close to your assailant to step forward or raise your leg, and if the other guy gets the first shot off, your natural "body alarm reaction" is

Left top: Left foot slides forward as left hand hikes up pants leg to clear gun. Do this before you bend knee as drawing hand moves down or you can fail to get cuff up over gun in time. Right: This standing draw variation for close quarters, like in a parking lot between cars, is called Gaylord Standing Draw. As shooter raises left knee, torso tilts forward for better balance. Foot slams down after gun is drawn. Above: when blows or bullets put you on your back, ankle holster may be the fastest way to get at your firearm. This is one to practice. Note lashing out with foot to keep attacker away until gun is drawn.

going to throw you backward anyway. Once you move backward into this position and fire your ankle-holstered gun, your body will probably no longer have anything to be alarmed about.

PRONE POSITION

Whether you hit the ground to shoot or because you've been dumped by your assailant's first strike, your legs are no longer supporting your body weight, and the gun

will come up to meet your hand much more readily.

SUPINE POSITION

If you're being attacked via bludgeons, knives, or multiple assailants, your best bet is to roll a bit onto your left side, using your shoulders and hips; as the left leg flexes up toward the reaching gun hand, your right leg lashes out and up to move assailants away.

SITTING POSITION

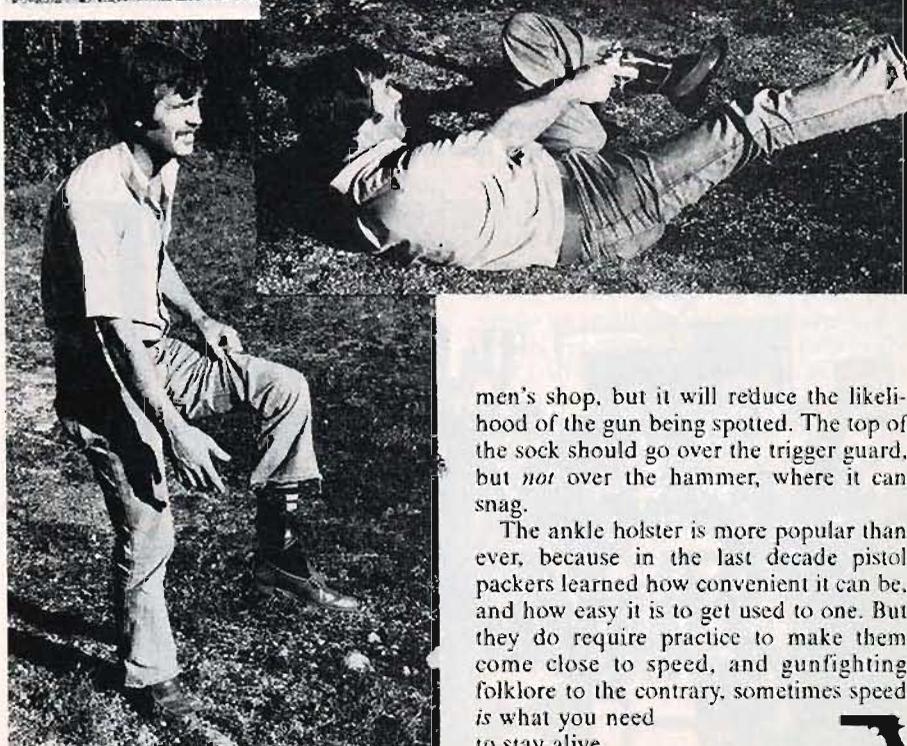
Whether it's a barstool or driver's bucket, you'll find sitting position extremely handy for an ankle draw. You won't be able to pull your pant leg up, since the fabric will be drawn too tight over your knee, so make sure that you hiked up your trousers when you sat down.

'CONSUMER HINTS'

Small butt guns work better for this kind of carry. I prefer a small grip, like the round butt J-frame Smith or the Colt Agent, for ankle wear. Tyler-T grip adapters will make up much of the difference in "shootability."

Bobbed hammers will reduce chances of the gun snagging on your sock or pants cuff. Trouble is, few such holsters (other than Bianchi) will hold a spurless gun in place.

Always pull your sock up over the holster! It will increase your bill at the



men's shop, but it will reduce the likelihood of the gun being spotted. The top of the sock should go over the trigger guard, but *not* over the hammer, where it can snag.

The ankle holster is more popular than ever, because in the last decade pistol packers learned how convenient it can be, and how easy it is to get used to one. But they do require practice to make them come close to speed, and gunfighting folklore to the contrary, sometimes speed is what you need to stay alive.



Escapades of a Pistol Team

During the Thirties, the Los Angeles Police Department had a pistol team—and what a team it was!

By Lee E. Echols

Oliver Wendel Holmes once wrote, "Boston State-house is the hub of the solar system." It would have been difficult to make the old Los Angeles Police Pistol Team buy that. They thought the hub of the solar system was the newly-built Los Angeles City Hall, which, in the thirties, towered above everything else in the city and was the place from which they operated.

And the Los Angeles cops thought the very core of the hub was their team of ten-ring-hitting, shenanigan pulling, three-gun pistol shooters, brought together by Chief of Police James E. Davis.

For he was the catalyst. He was the far-seeing man who set up a graded pay scale for every man on the department to try for and he paid as much as sixteen dollars a month for master-shooters and down to four dollars a month for those who fired marksman scores.

The L.A. team after successful shoots in Tampa and Havana showed by their trophies that they had the talent to win matches. The smiles came later.

Nowadays, that master-shooter emolument wouldn't be enough to tip a waitress in a high class restaurant, but back during the Great Depression, it helped buy drinking material and food and made things a little easier on a gang of cops who, along with their shooting proclivities, had to get out among the burglars, muggers, murderers and bank robbers to earn their regular pay.

Along with the pay incentive, Chief Davis also called on the immense movie colony in Hollywood to assist him in building one of the finest academies and pistol ranges in the United States and they did it with fake rocks, water falls, and restful little parks with barbecue facilities and plenty of shade for the women folk of the army of western shooters who attended the great matches held there at least once a month.

The Los Angeles Police, like the U.S. Marines, could field four or five teams at any given occasion, any one of which might beat the livin' be-jesus out of you if you weren't careful. They might even do it if you were careful.

And along with it, they certainly had their share of fun. There was big, rough, Mark Wheeler who had swum the channel from Catalina Island to the mainland. He had hands on him like first-baseman's mitts and he was quick and nimble as an otter. Before a pistol tournament began, we would sidle up to one of the top shoot-

ters from another team and engage him in a little game he called "Hot Hand". The way it would work, Mark would allow the other shooter to hold one of his hands out; Mark would then place his hand on it and have the man place his other hand on top of Mark's. Then the fall-guy, or gudgeon, would try to pull his bottom hand out, remove the top one quickly, and lambaste Mark's hand before Mark could extricate it.

As quick as Mark was, the prospect never could do it, and then it would be Marks' turn. He could get his top hand out of the way, bring his bottom hand around and smack the man's pistol hand such a crashing blow with his ten-pound paw as to almost break every bone in it, obviating any chance he'd have of even entering the tournament, let alone winning any of the matches.

Then they had another little sporting gentleman, Walter Stark. They'd acquired him from the Navy and he was a ring-tail-tooter with all three guns. He lacked about a half an inch of being tall enough to pass muster as a Los Angeles Police Officer, but that was alleviated quite easily when they put him in a pair of elevated shoes just prior to his physical examination. This put him up there with the rest of them and gave him a couple of inches to spare.

Walter's stock in trade was bringing a few hen eggs out to the range on opening day. He'd get in a very serious conversation with a shooter and surreptitiously slip a hen egg in one of his front pockets. Then, just as the man's relay was being called to the line, Big-Hands Wheeler would walk by and whack the egg a resounding blow with one of his huge paws. By the time the shooter would be on the line with his paraphernalia assembled, the egg would be running down the inside of his leg and if you've never tried shooting under a handicap like that, you should try it sometime. I have, and found it totally unexhilarating.

Lieutenant Joe Direks and Sergeant Al Strand had a little Jim Dandy of their own. It seems that the maintenance crew at the facility never quite quit pouring concrete sidewalks which wound around through the park complex and Joe and Al would remove the "fresh concrete" signs from them and steer a shooter into them, up to his knees in slurpy concrete before he realized what was happening.

But when it came time for the Los Angeles Police to get up on the line and shoot, they did so with a great deal of de-





An L.A. team to reckon with; Left to right: "Fuzzy" Farrant, Basil Starkey, Emmett Jones and Walter Stark.

termination. They were case-hardened and unemotional and their two top men during the thirties were Emmett Jones and Jacob Engbrecht. With them on the line with almost any other pair from a group of fifteen or twenty in a four-man team match, trying to beat them was sort of like trying to pitch alfalfa hay with a sledge hammer.

They had a shooter who was a traffic officer called "Killer" Kane and he'd get up on the line in an individual center-fire match, with a .45 Army single-action Colt revolver. He'd have the damnable thing loaded with black-powder bullets, and when he eased one of them off, it would sound like one of Braxton Bragg's wheel-guns in the Seminole Wars. And the smoke from it would zoom out about ten feet and then billow off to each side, completely covering the area where two or three shooters on either side of him were trying to take aim.

Down south of Los Angeles, the San Diego Police had constructed another excellent range and it was run by a policeman named Rodney Pease, who was also one of their top shooters. The fifty-yard firing line was about twenty-five yards west of the twenty-five yard line, and Rodney

had a way of getting a small amount of "edgereeno" on the other shooters by taking the No. 1 firing position. Now, the fifty-yard line was numbered from east to west, while the twenty-five yard range was numbered from west to east. This meant that when Rodney Pease was through firing his fifty-yard string and was moving up to timed and rapid fire at twenty-five yards, he only had to carry his equipment a short distance while his competitors had to go much further, and as any shooter knows, when you're packing a big gun box full of ammo and pistols, it soon gets about as heavy as a bucket of hog livers, which, of course, makes your heart start pumping like a Borger, Texas, oil well.

The Los Angeles cops saw through this immediately and, as everyone finished firing at fifty yards, Al Strand talked very earnestly to Rodney Pease back of the firing line about a pistol Rodney had for sale. And while he was doing it, Emmett Jones nailed Rodney's gun box to the firing line bench with four huge nails, bending them over and bradding them stoutly underneath the bench.

Al kept talking about the gun to Rodney until the range master called everyone to the twenty-five yard line. Pease hurried up

to his gun box, grabbed on to it and started running toward his position on the twenty-five yard line. He got almost three steps before he realized all he was doing was pulling his arm out of its socket.

And those playful fellows didn't draw the line at putting the sting on one another either. They were always putting on shooting exhibitions all over town on the rubber-chicken and bill-board-paste-gravy circuit, as it is whimsically called and Chief Davis was always watching them to see to it that none of them were doing any promiscuous imbibing. Mark Wheeler had a phony spotting scope which he'd carry along, with a few dollops of 7-Up, sluiced with some sort of alcoholic drinkable in it, and as one of their trick shots involved his shooting a piece of chalk out of the right hand of another of their funsters, "Pop" Ward, he'd sneak himself a small potion of it in order to steady his hand. He must have gone a bit too far with it however, at an exhibition they were putting on for a Rotary Club downtown instead of hitting the chalk, he took off Ward's middle finger at the first notch.

"He was no sort of sport about it at all," Wheeler said later. "The way he cried

Continued on page 70

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CUSTOM PISTOLSMITH PROFILE Fred Schmidt

Jim Weller

I've seen a lot of PPC revolver conversions in the past few years, and while all were nice and most shot good to excellent, it got to the point where someone would show me his gun and I would automatically reply that it was indeed a nice piece of work. However, while my mouth was forming those words, my brain was silently thinking, "Ho-hum, another heavy barreled revolver." Yes, I thought I had seen just about everything there was to see along those lines, until the subject of this test came along.

The test guns in question come from Fred's Gun Shop, 5904 Signal Hill Rd., Mechanicsville, Va. 23111. I was first attracted to Fred's idea of a short-cylinder PPC gun after reading about it in the AMERICAN HANDGUNNER list of custom pistolsmiths. I phoned Fred, and he agreed to ship me a gun for testing. As a matter of fact, Fred sent me not one, but two of his creations. One was serial #000 and was the original prototype of this innovative idea, while the other was one of the finest looking creations of this type that I've ever laid eyes on. This one carried serial #002 and sported the traditional Bo-Mar rib, full-length underlug, wide combat trigger polished smooth, bobbed hammer, and a beautiful beaded blue finish which is absolutely glare proof. The action pulled at about six pounds and had plenty of snap in the hammer. This isn't one of those that's so light that it runs away with you, but is just right.

However, what makes this gun so different is the length of the cylinder, which is just long enough to contain a .38 wadcutter, and nothing else. If you try to put anything other than a target

load in this gun, you won't be able to close the cylinder. The cylinder gap in these guns is so slight, that you can barely see daylight no matter what angle you hold it at. In fact, the bullet, on firing, will be in the case and the barrel at the same time. There isn't any wide forcing cone for the slug to beat itself around in before moving into the rifling. The result of this is a gun that delivers X-ring accuracy *without leading up!*

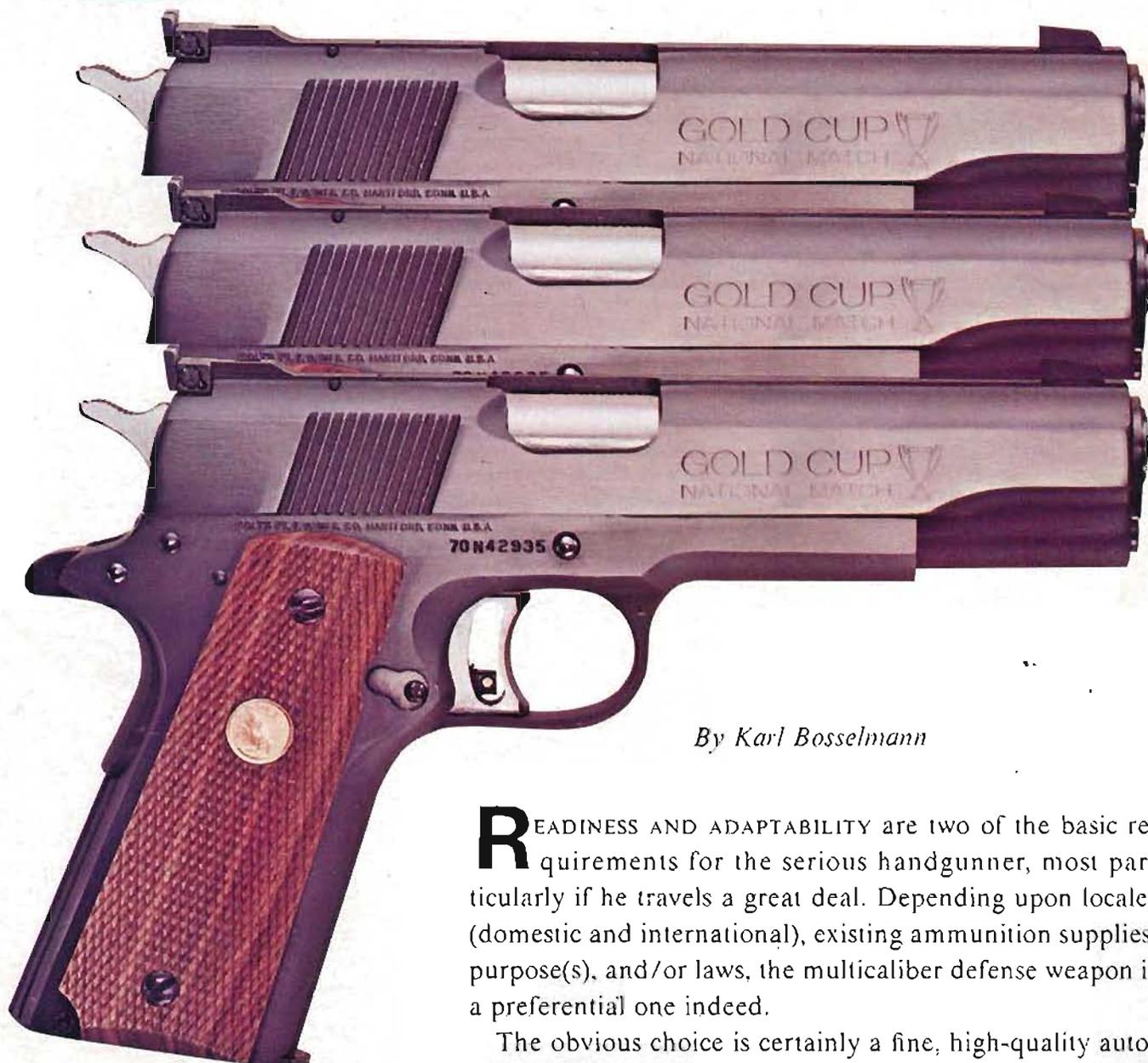
I found the part about the leading a little hard to swallow, so I went to the range with some of my home handloads which are notorious leaders in my own match Colt, and proceeded to fire 200 rounds through the original prototype gun. This particular piece, incidentally, had over 1400 rounds through it without any cleaning whatsoever. After firing the two hundred rounds, there was absolutely no trace of leading anywhere. I fired some Precision Ammo reloads for group at 50 yds., and managed a perfect score on Match 3 of the NRA Police Course. Not all X's, but a 240 nevertheless, something I'd never done with my current rig.

I certainly have to rate the work by Fred Schmidt, AAA PLUS. I showed it to all the shooters at the last match I went to and they went ape over it, which is something I certainly can't say for any other PPC gun I've ever seen. The price of the conversion pictured is \$288. Along with that, you get your choice of either 4" or 6" underlug which is machined individually for each gun. The conversion cost, by the way, is on the customer supplied gun. If you're looking for a worthwhile investment for either PPC or NMSS matches, you should definitely drop Fred a line.

3 caliber

GOLD CUP

Here's the answer to survival when ammunition is limited.



By Karl Bosselmann

READINESS AND ADAPTABILITY are two of the basic requirements for the serious handgunner, most particularly if he travels a great deal. Depending upon locales (domestic and international), existing ammunition supplies, purpose(s), and/or laws, the multicaliber defense weapon is a preferential one indeed.

The obvious choice is certainly a fine, high-quality automatic pistol, and the best is the ingeniously designed and

3 caliber GOLD CUP

American countries where it is illegal for civilians to possess weapons of military caliber.

.45 ACP: the great one! In some global areas, ammunition is difficult if not impossible to obtain—it is not unheard of to pay over \$2.00 (U.S.) per cartridge due to scarcity and demand.

As produced in the Government Model series pistol, the same frame is used for all the above calibers—the variance being only a substitute of ejectors (the one for the .45 ACP is the smallest (due to the large diameter of the cartridge), the .38 Super part is wider, and the one for the 9mm is also wider but much longer). The primary differences in the guns of the various calibers are found in the slide assembly, and most especially the various dimensions of the breech face section.

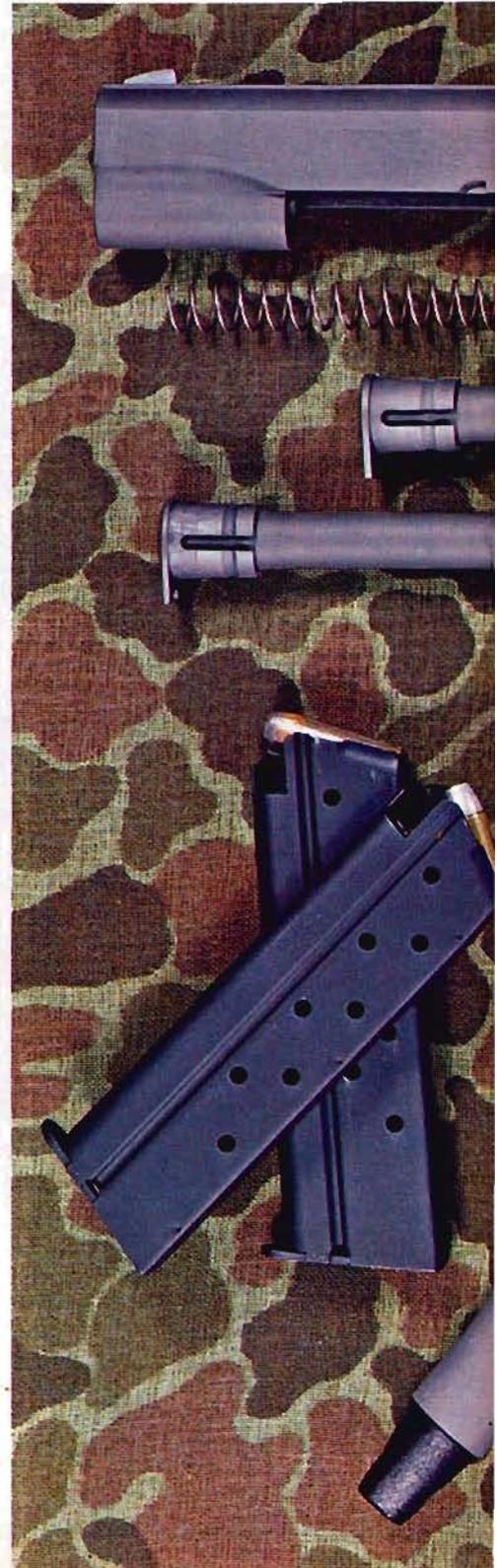
What follows is a breakdown of the work involved to convert the Government Model pistol to a three-caliber unit. On the government model, purchase a new pistol in .45 Auto caliber. (One cannot be certain

ultra-reliable 1911 Colt .45 Automatic, especially convincing after examination of its excellent service record, consideration of parts availability, and, of course, its relative ease of repair. As in current production the 1911 Colt Government Model is supplied in three (rimless) centerfire defense-category calibers:

9mm Luger (Parabellum): the world's most popular service auto cartridge. Its defense performance is not highly impressive as the round is on the weak side in 'stopping' power. However, being armed with a weapon of this caliber is certainly far better than not being armed at all.

.38 Super: virtually a rimless .357 Magnum in performance when properly loaded. It is distinctly ignored in the United States, but very popular in Latin

of the extent of adversities encountered by a used weapon). Purchase all parts necessary to assemble a complete .38 Super slide assembly: barrel assembly complete—barrel, bushing, link, and pin supplied as a unit from Colt—firing pin, firing pin spring, and retainer, extractor, rear sight, and slide stop—front sight installed by factory in slide. A 9mm caliber slide cannot be used as is because the breech face is cut too small for the larger .38 Super case rim. Purchase 9mm barrel assembly com-



PARTS LISTING COMPARISON

PART	9mm	.38 SUPER	.45 ACP
BARREL LINK	50143	SAME	SAME
BARREL LINK PIN	50144	SAME	SAME
EJECTOR	51044	50215	50169
EXTRACTOR*	50217	SAME	50184
FIRING PIN	50218	SAME	50185
FIRING PIN SPRING	50186	SAME	SAME
FIRING PIN STOP	50219	SAME	SAME
MAGAZINE ASSEMBLY**	51032	50225	53355
MAGAZINE CATCH	50155	SAME	SAME
RECOIL SPRING***	50204	SAME	SAME
RECOIL SPRING GUIDE	50205	SAME	SAME
RECOIL SPRING PLUG	50206	SAME	SAME
SLIDE STOP	50277	SAME	50195

*—Factory production Govt. Model and Gold Cup parts are currently the same.

**—Difference between the 9mm and .38 Super magazine assemblies is a shim staked in the rear of the former so as to compensate for the shorter 9mm cartridge.

***—Despite identical parts catalog listing, the same Colt's 16 lb. spring is used in guns in the above calibers. However, the springs are shortened for the Gold Cups and the 9mm and .38 Super Govt. Models as well—only the Government Model in .45 ACP utilizes the unshortened factory spring.

Author's Note: Series 70 (collet) barrel bushings are not interchangeable—factory tolerances vary a great deal, and each has to be fitted to the individual barrel.

MAGAZINE ASSEMBLY**

plete (supplied as a unit from Colt). Purchase 9mm-.38 Super slide stop. Fit barrels to slide. Fit barrels and slide to frame. Check extractor thoroughly and fit if necessary. Purchase, and check for fit, a 9mm ejector. Purchase, and check for fit, a .38 Super ejector. Check and cut recoil spring(s) to length. Check and cut firing pin spring to length if necessary. Buy minimum three magazines for each caliber.

I chose the Gold Cup pistol and accessory parts for this project from the

standpoint of numerous personal preferences, not the least being aesthetics.

On the Gold Cup: Purchase new pistol in .45 Auto caliber. (The .38 Special caliber slide should not be advocated as this part does not possess barrel locking lug recesses). Purchase separate .45 Auto slide only (not complete). Purchase .38 Super caliber firing pin, firing pin spring and retainer, and rear sight complete (front sight installed by factory in slide). Purchase 9mm barrel assembly complete (supplied

as a unit from Colt). Purchase .38 Super barrel assembly complete (supplied as a unit from Colt). Purchase a 9mm-.38 Super slide stop. Silver solder shims into place at sides of breech face to achieve proper dimensions for the .38 Super cartridge case rim. Dimensions will be slightly larger than those required for the 9mm rim, but the larger tolerance will not cause functioning problems when firing the 9mm ammunition.

Continued on page 53

Author's 3-caliber job has seen its share of use and keeps on clicking.



A NEW LOOK AT THE NEW

DAN

WESSON .44

ACCURATE & TOUGH!



With some unique factory features such as modular trigger group, Power Control to reduce muzzle flip, and interchangeable barrels, this new firearm rates high in out-of-the-box performance.

By David Bradshaw



Trigger and sear attach to trigger guard and may be cycled out of gun.

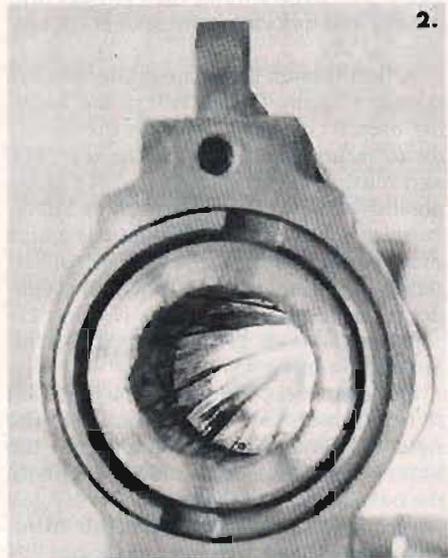
The Dan Wesson Arms .44 Magnum revolver is upon us. Internally, it is a new firearm. Unique among revolvers, it has a modular trigger group that permits cycling of the trigger/hammer out of the firearm.

The M44 shares an advantage of Ruger's Super Blackhawk and Redhawk: it was preceded in conception by the .44 Magnum cartridge. In other words, the gun was designed around the cartridge. The .44 Magnum, unlike every other handgun cartridge, was designed as a defense against big game. The qualities by which a .44 Magnum must be weighed are, therefore, reliability and performance.

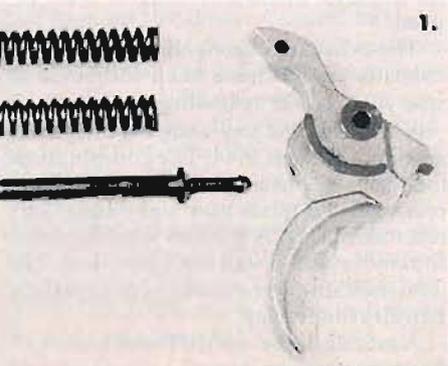
Fortunately, we have a game that will try the stamina and accuracy of powerful handguns. Competition in IHMSA (International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association) matches tends to eliminate guns that don't perform. Handgun Silhouette exposes a firearm to quantities of near-to-maximum charged ammunition while, at the same time, always placing accuracy first.

Silhouetters and hunters will be quick to identify these features:

- (a) Big strong cylinder, secured fore and aft.
- (b) Heavy, solid-type frame with thick barrel socket and careful heat treatment.



2.



1.

- (c) Modular trigger assembly that allows trigger/hammer to be cycled outside gun.
- (d) Single action may be tuned down to 2 lbs., while preserving full DA reliability. Fast lock time.
- (e) Heavy (VH) barrels 4, 6, 8 and 10 inch. Lighter (V) shrouds also available.
- (f) Rear sight has back-drafted slide and 12 clicks per revolution elevation adjustment. 6-clicks per rev. windage.
- (g) Adjustable trigger stop.
- (h) Interchangeable stocks.
- (i) Lowest recoil of any .44 Magnum.
- (j) Outstanding accuracy.

Handling characteristics differ from those of other DA revolvers. Initial SA cocking is stiff. DA pull begins to lift the hammer at 6 lbs. and stacks to 10½ lbs. before break. Two pounds of that pressure is consumed rotating the cylinder. Failure to fully release the trigger after firing will prevent DA cycling; the bolt does not reacti-

vate until the trigger has returned to battery.

I mention this because DA starting pressure is light. In cold weather, particularly, the shooter may feel the trigger has returned, when ¼-inch of rebound still remains.

Some handgunners will shrug, "DA on a .44 Mag—who cares? You don't harvest venison DA. You don't shoot silhouettes DA!" Which is true. For the most part. Nevertheless, when a piece has self-cocking capability it should work. Double action mechanisms are considerably more involved then single actions. It makes no sense to entertain the complexity of DA if the pull is rough as a cob.

DA stroke on the M44 is deceptively smooth and easy on first try. Out-of-the-box I found it superior to the 29/629. It soon becomes apparent that a progressive effort is required to trigger-cock the M44.



3.

- 1. Shortened rebound spring lightens trigger let-off.
- 2. Holes for Power control are bored into grooves.
- 3. Accurate loads, L to R: 240 gr. Sierra, 21 gr./2400; 240 gr. Hornady, 23 gr./296; 220 gr. Sierra, 25gr/296 (all with CCI 350 primers).
- 4. Proper way to install trigger module.



4.

Bore axis, measured to middle of thumbknuckle, is higher on the DWA than either 29/629 or Redhawk. Despite the high bore axis, the M44 wins my prize for having the least felt recoil and muzzle hip of any .44 Magnum revolver.

Barrels are thick and tensioned within a heavy shroud that, in Vent Heavy configuration, sports a full length solid underrib. (Shroud for the 10 inch VH silhouette barrel is not full length solid—prototypes rough the gun to 4 oz. over the 4 lb. limit in IHMSA Production guns.) Barrel assemblies are available in 4, 6, 8 and 10 inch. Silhouetters will select either 8 or 10 inch, depending on which the individual can better hold. Sight radius with the 10 inch is an advantageous 12.5 inches, and any even load will hit the 200 metre rams harder when fired from the longer barrel.

Continued on page 40

barrel assemblies. Eight holes are drilled radially into the 8 respective rifling grooves of the barrel, .780 inch back of the muzzle. Since the barrel is enclosed in the DWA shroud, the shroud has a counter-bore, one-inch long, milled inside it to channel gas emitting from the holes about the muzzle. The gas then exits through ports on either side of the ventilated rib. In shooting both braked and unbraked barrels of the same length it is apparent that PC helps snub muzzle whip.

Shooters are cautioned against firing lead bullets through Power Control barrels, lest the barrel nut become soldered to the barrel.

I had painted silvery, bronze-based Anti-Seize lubricant (available from truck and tractor dealers), on the barrel threads before ever firing a shot. Good thing. After 350 jacketed silhouette loads the barrel nut came off easily enough. The shroud, however, had to be driven off using a length of bar solder seated behind the ejector shroud and slugged soundly with a leather mallet. Jacket fouling had to be removed from the outside of the barrel with a wire wheel.

Silhouetters will not subscribe to the PC barrel, rather they will choose the optional plain barrels. Silhouetters do not like doing things that alter the zero on a straight shooting piece. Removing the barrel may or may not change the point of impact. One thing is certain—you don't want to find out during a match!

For the gun's inaugural exposure to competition I brought it to an IHMSA match in Goliad, Texas. Were it not for the fact that I had to learn the sight settings as I went along, Jerry Moran's record for a 6 inch barrel (shot with a Python) might have fallen. Shooting from Creedmoor, 30x40 critters bit the dust. According to individuals with spotting scopes, the last 5 rams (200 metres) were hit behind the shoulder in an area about 8 inches in diameter.

When it comes to 150 and 200 metres, 6 inch barrels are usually found wanting. No matter. The DWA possesses a very sobering muzzle heft. Add to it (when tuned) the lightest SA break of any DA revolver, and we have the marriage of PPC steadiness and silhouette power.

Barrels are available in any combination of heavy (VH), standard (V), Power Control and unbraked. Go for the VH shrouds and pass on the Power Control barrels. Lightly lube contacting lockwork surfaces with molybdenum disulphide, especially the ratchet and the cylinder-bearing surface of the crane. Turn the trigger stop around so that it may be adjusted without stripping the gun. Dry fire it all you like (check to be sure it is unloaded first).

Try these silhouette loads: (1) Sierra 240 JHC; 21 gr./2400; CCI 350; S&W, Win., or Federal case. (2) Sierra 220 Silhouette; 25 gr./296; CCI 350; S&W, Win., Fed. case. (3) Hornady 240 FMJ; 23 gr./296; CCI

- Continued on page 53

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desired, the entire gun can be coated, which will provide exceptional corrosion protection. Parts coated with Lubri-Bond Gun Lubricant will be grey in color. The Gun Lubricant Kit comes with two 3 oz. aerosol containers. One of the aerosols contains a degreaser which is used as a pre-treatment before applying the gun lubricant. The other aerosol can contains the gun lubricant. Electrofilm also offers a service whereby you send us your gun and we will parkerize the entire gun (with the exception of the bore) and put on a topcoat of heat cured Lubri-Bond Solid Film Gun Lubricant. Dealer inquiries invited.



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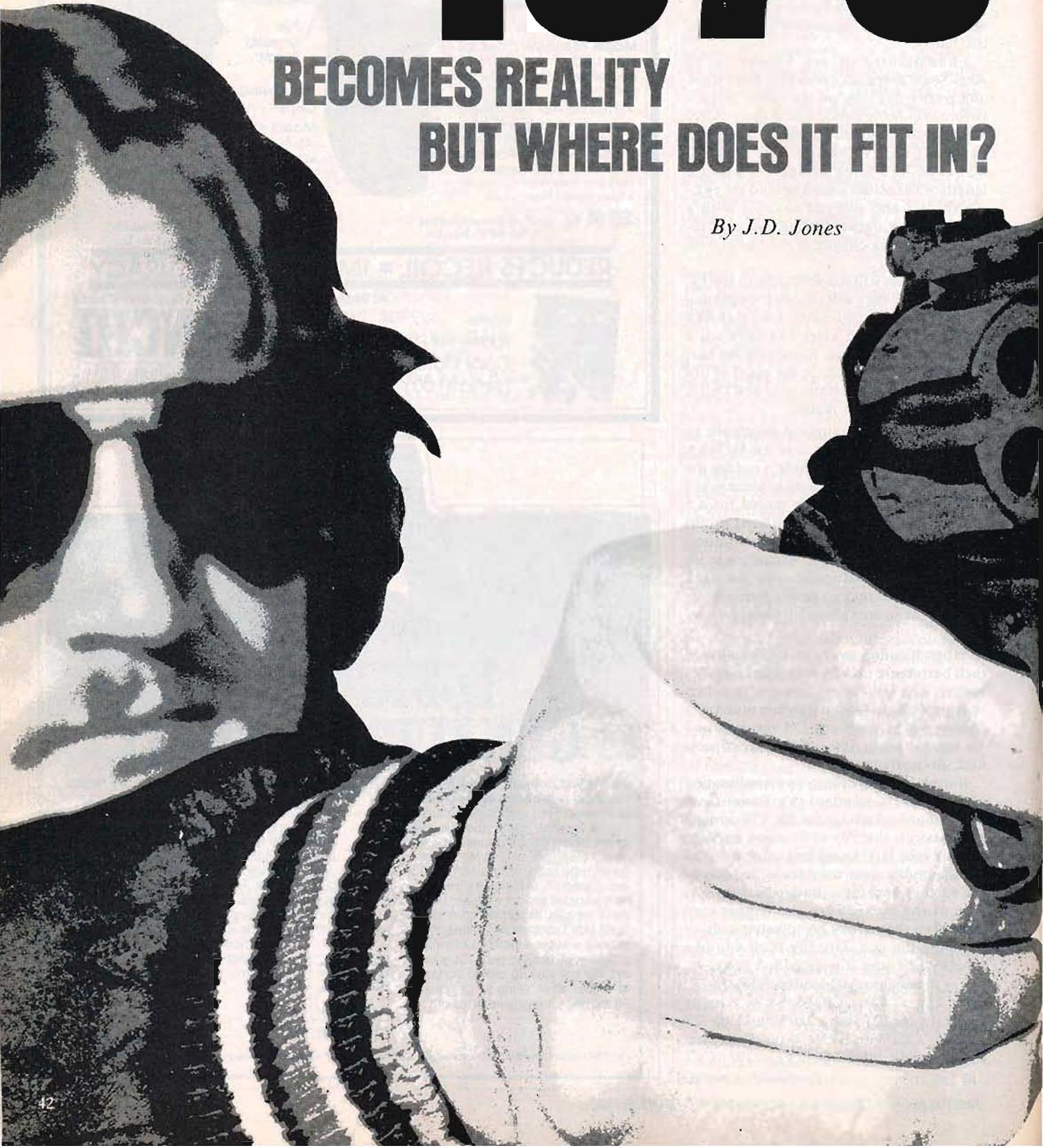
**THE
IN-BETWEEN
CALIBER**

375

BECOMES REALITY

BUT WHERE DOES IT FIT IN?

By J.D. Jones



EVER WONDERED WHY there are no .375 caliber pistols? I have; and my books on both domestic and foreign cartridges do not list any .375 caliber cartridges for handguns. I cannot find any reason for this "caliber gap" as there certainly isn't a "gap" to be found in any other bore diameters. I think it particularly strange though, as the .375 bore has been both popular and delivered excellent performance world-wide in rifles.

After having developed the .375 JDJ—a .444 Marlin necked down with a 25° shoulder and one caliber neck length for use in the T/C, I became interested in putting together a wheelgun in .375 and had a couple ideas of what I thought might work reasonable well when Dale Kelling entered the picture. Dale had no interest in the T/C, or XP conversions. He had, instead, a burning desire for an S&W "N"

frame. He had already ordered the cylinder sizing and chamber reamers.

After filling me in on what he was doing and offering me the opportunity to use the gun when he had completed it, I decided to wait and see how Dale's conversion turned out.

Six months later a box bearing the .375 DAK, dies, cases, and a custom bullet mould from NEI (2516 Wyoming Street, El Paso, Texas 79903 (915) 532-8344) arrived. NEI manufactures the most extensive line of bullet molds in the country and will make custom molds to your specifications. My dealings with the company, as well as

their molds, have been quite satisfactory.

In the letter that accompanied the gun, Dale mentioned a couple minor problems with the gun/ammo combination he had encountered.

The .375 DAK is a derivative of the basic .30-30 case. Cases can be made from .30-30, .25-35, .32 Special, or .375 Winchester. It is necessary to shorten the case to 1.280 inches, and to inside neck ream to provide adequate and straight walled seating space for the bullet. Without inside reaming the case is quite thick and becomes thicker near the base. Seating a bullet without inside neck reaming results in the bullet base jamming into the case walls. This causes a multitude of problems from excessive, erratic pressures, leading, inaccuracy, cylinder rotation failures and failures to chamber. I used a modified Forster tool to inside ream the cases.

In addition, the .30-30 case family is set up for rifle primer. Large rifle primers and large pistol primers are the same diameter, not length. You cannot use a large rifle primer in a case such as a .44 Magnum without deepening the primer pocket. Conversely, you can use pistol primers in rifle cases. The result is that the face of the primer sits

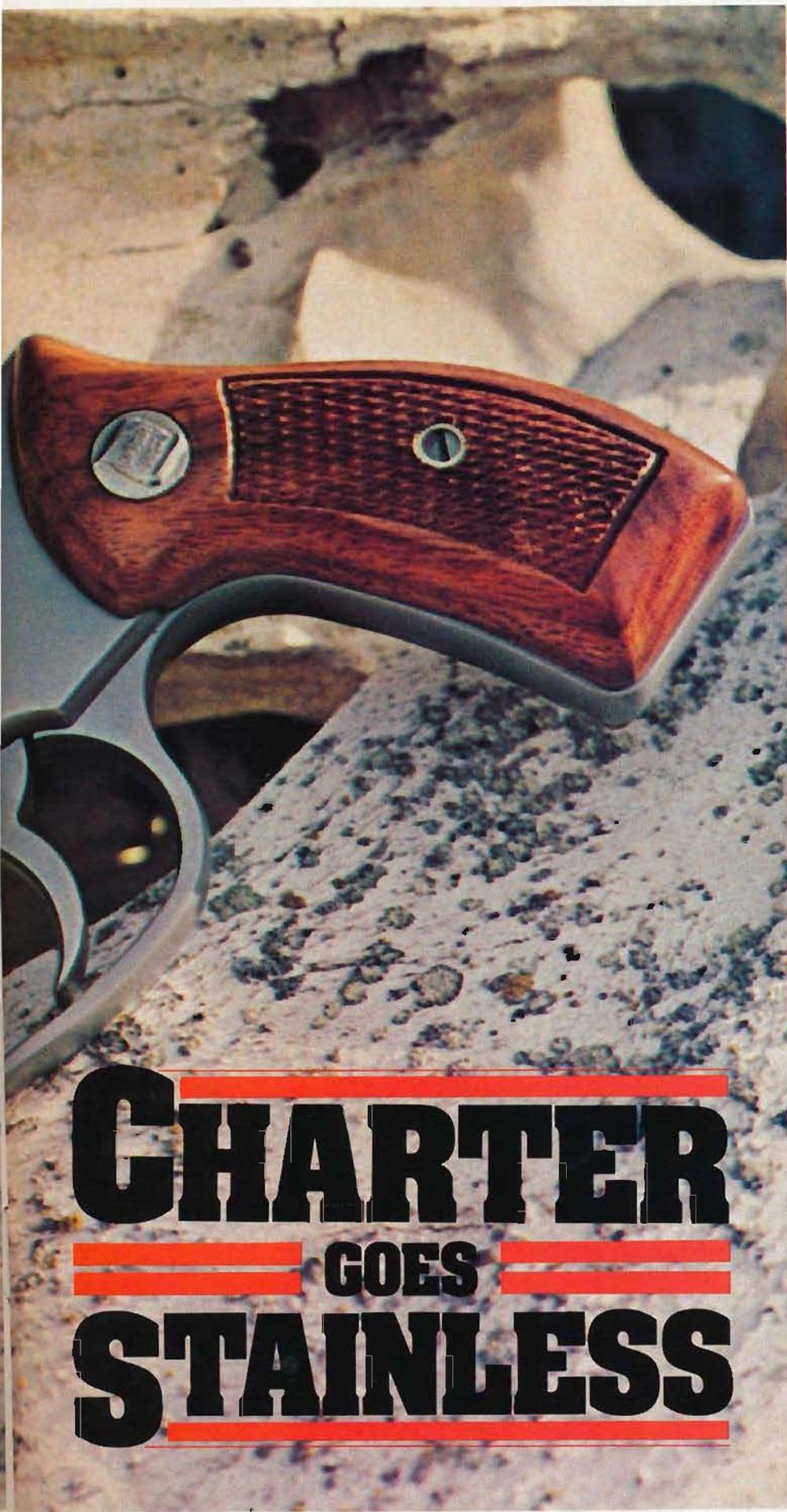
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Top, left: Inside of case must be reamed to allow bullet seating. **Top, right:** The 375 DAK fills the gap between .357 (left) and .41 and .44 Magnums (right). Max loaded .375 DAK at 1430 fps recoils mildly.







CHARTER GOES STAINLESS

ACCORDING TO A recent survey conducted by the Police Activities Division of the National Rifle Association, 92 percent of those police officers "permitted" to carry off-duty handguns will opt for a revolver. Obviously, most of these will be .38 Specials in the snubby class. Interestingly the survey indicates that 20 percent are required to carry only revolvers off-duty. One agency with such a requirement is the huge New York City Police Department where it is reasoned that by limiting the police to revolvers it can be assumed that any dude racing down the street with an

"The highest quality .38 snubby I have yet come across..."

autoloader is probably the enemy. I worry about this kind of thinking but, then again, New York is another world. I am even more concerned about the 16 percent of U.S. police departments who forbid their officers from carrying any firearms off-duty.

I would guess that a very large percentage of civilians contemplating the purchase of a handgun for legitimate defense, will mimic the arms of the police, real or TV image, in the belief that all officers are intelligently armed by their respective administrations. My own preference for larger caliber guns notwithstanding, I'll certainly be among the first to admit that the snubby revolver has its place, especially among those with only moderate training and little real exposure to constant danger. I'll even go a little further and say that a highly skilled shootist, using properly selected or handloaded ammunition,

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Whether you're a cop, an MP, a dick, or a guard, you'll do a lot worse than by heeding the guidelines herein

Guidelines for Police Officer's Use of his Sidearm

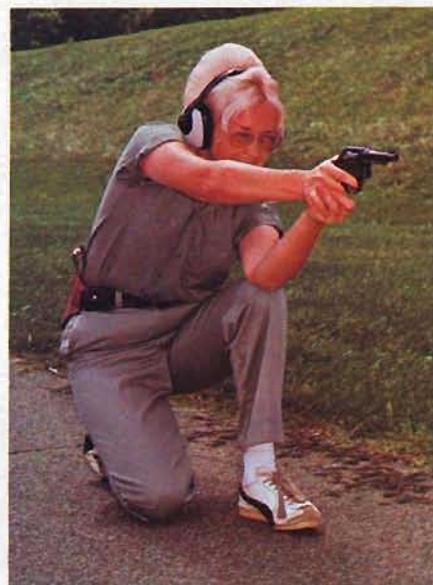
By Bradley J. Steiner

A HANDGUN IS AN instrument of *finality*. Once, long ago, when this Nation had a sharper distinction drawn in its consciousness concerning who the "good guys" and "bad guys" were, this statement was standard instruction for the Elite of law enforcement professionals—the men of the FBI:

"Do not draw your gun unless your life, the life of a fellow Agent, or the life of an innocent bystander is endangered; but if you *must* shoot, *shoot to kill!*"

Today, many are fond of re-phrasing that to read: "Shoot to *stop*". "Kill!" is too tough a word to swallow today. Besides, technically speaking, when an officer of the law does shoot, he does so to stop the felon. I do not think, however, that the cause of righteousness is served by attempting to evade the fact that shooting to stop more often than not means killing. After all, if a criminal must be *stopped* because his action is threatening innocent life, then it matters little if he is killed when we stop him.

The terribly serious problem for the police officer is not whether he ought to go "all out" with his sidearm, when it becomes necessary to employ it; for I am sure that no one advocates (with a straight face) shooting the gun out of a criminal's hand. What the officer requires, once his academy training has done its job in making him technically



Above: Training in the Practical Pistol Course at the FBI Academy provides officers with the technical know-how required to employ their weapons in a gunfight. FBI Guidelines make it clear that the officer fires with but a single intention: To stop the felon—dead!

capable with his weapon, is a realistic, sane and just set of guidelines for the proper use of that weapon.

The following guidelines, For The Officer's Use of His Service Weapon, reflect above all a reverence for *innocent* life, and an effort to see to it that the police officer will not hesitate or delay when called upon by circumstance to use his sidearm in its defense:

Guidelines

1. Just as it is imperative that a law enforcement or investigative officer *never*

bring his weapon into action for less than adequate cause, so it is *equally imperative* that the officer's weapon be *unhesitatingly* brought into immediate action when his life, the life of a fellow officer, or the life of a civilian is clearly endangered by a violent perpetrator.

2. An officer's weapon should remain holstered *until he is fully prepared to use it*. He should be "fully prepared" when and if the presence of a potentially lethal threat is anticipated. If such a threat is anticipated, the weapon should be *drawn and ready*. (No quick-draw ability beats an already drawn and readied gun. The police officer owes it to the community he is sworn to protect, as well as to his family and himself, to be as ready as it is humanly possible to be, when the threat of possible gun play is present.)

3. The service weapon must never be used as a threat or as a bluff. Its presence in the hand of the officer means that the officer is unhesitatingly prepared to fire, if necessary. (Violent types can "smell" hesitation and doubt. In an almost mystical way a criminal will feel when an officer is bluffing or when an officer has no intention of using his weapon. By the same token, a criminal can sense when an officer means business. This can't be faked; and it shouldn't be tried—the sidearm is there for when shooting is called for.)

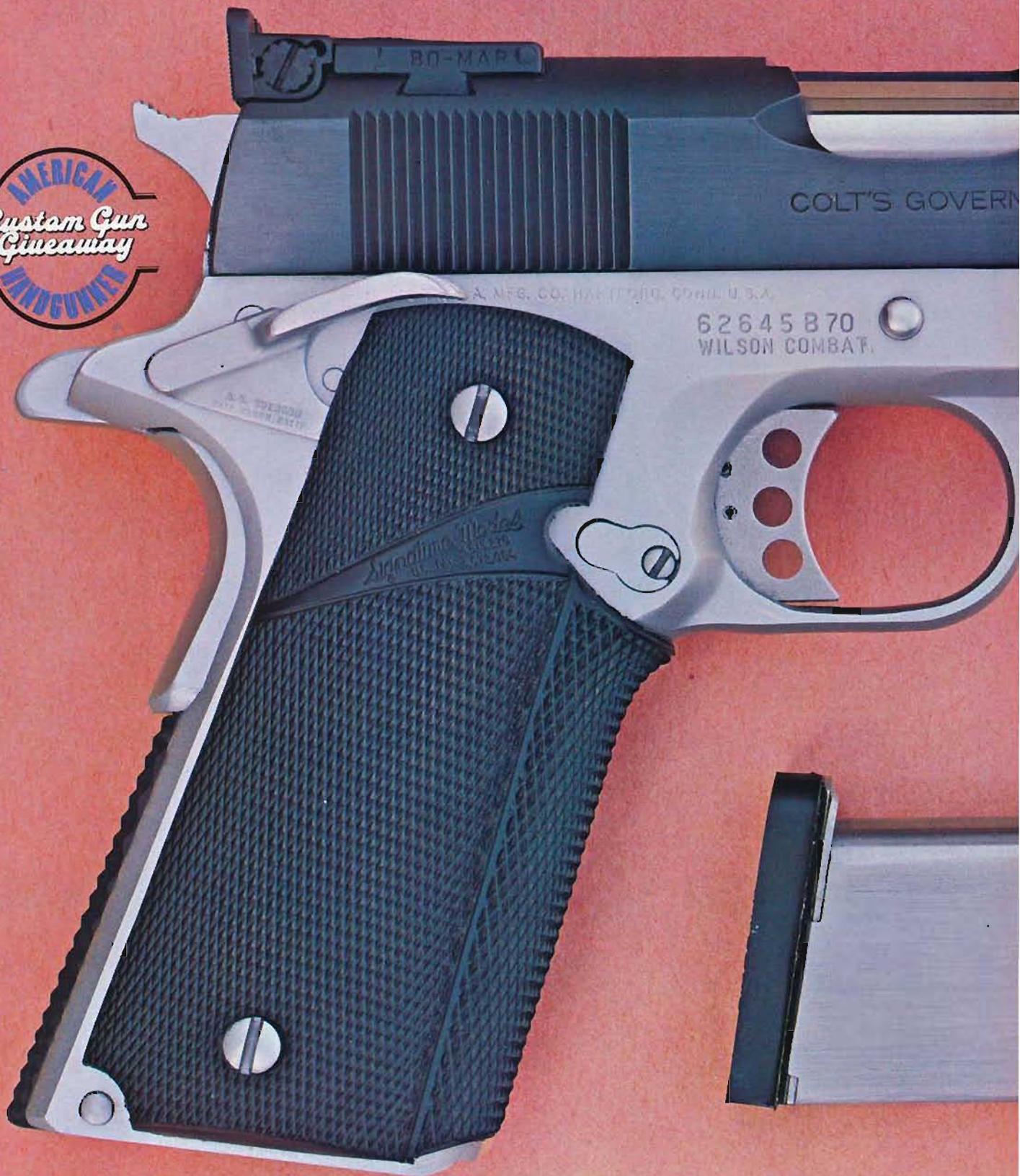
4. When it is necessary to fire, the officer fires *decisively*—for an instant stop. It is not relevant if the criminal is killed once the situation is desperate enough to call for stopping him by shooting him. Shooting to "warn" or to "wound" is *out*. The officer fires his initial burst into the center of mass—anywhere from stomach to sternum.

(Obviously, in the case of a perpetrator

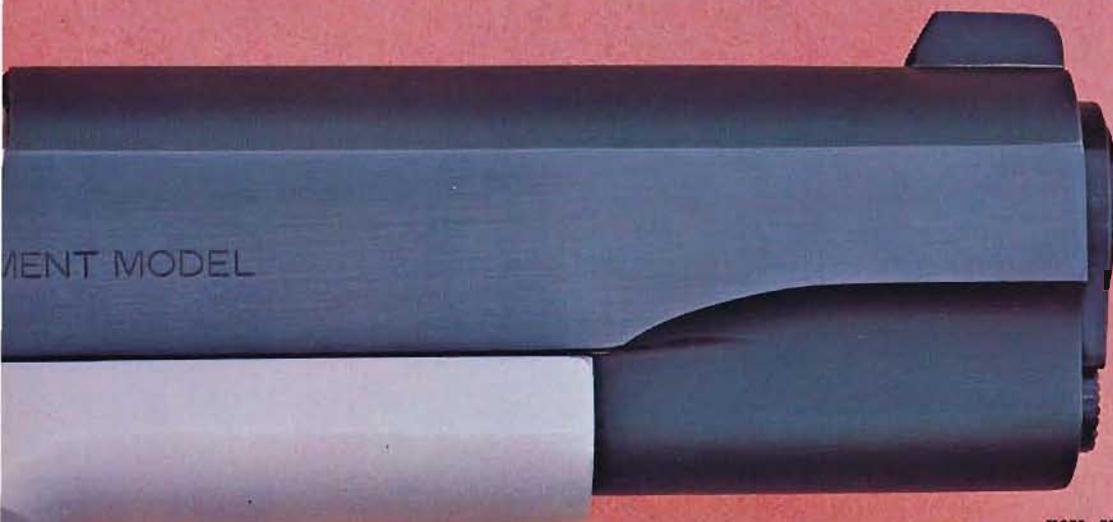
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Left An FBI Special Agent demonstrates the Bureau's current "point-shooting" position. Note that the agent directs his fire toward the vital body-center. Agent's non-shooting arm guards the chest area, providing a degree of protection for the heart. When an FBI agent shoots, he shoots to kill!

WILSON COMBAT



.45ACP



This is Bill Wilson's "Competition Grade" Combat .45. It starts out as a MK IV Colt, and gets the following work: Trigger job; bobbed hammer; tightened slide; funneled magazine well; polished feed ramp and throated barrel; polished and adjusted extractor; and Metaloyed frame.

The accessories on the gun include: Swenson ambidextrous safety; National Match long trigger; Dwyer Group Gripper; heavy duty recoil spring; Pachmayr Signature grips and mainspring housing; two magazines with pads.

For the lucky winner of our Giveaway,

there is no cost or obligation. If you don't win, Bill said that the price at time of shipment was \$768, and the approximate waiting time about 20 weeks.

We have featured Bill Wilson and some of his guns in past issues of AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, and we are proud to offer our readers a chance to win a fine example of this craftsman's artistry.

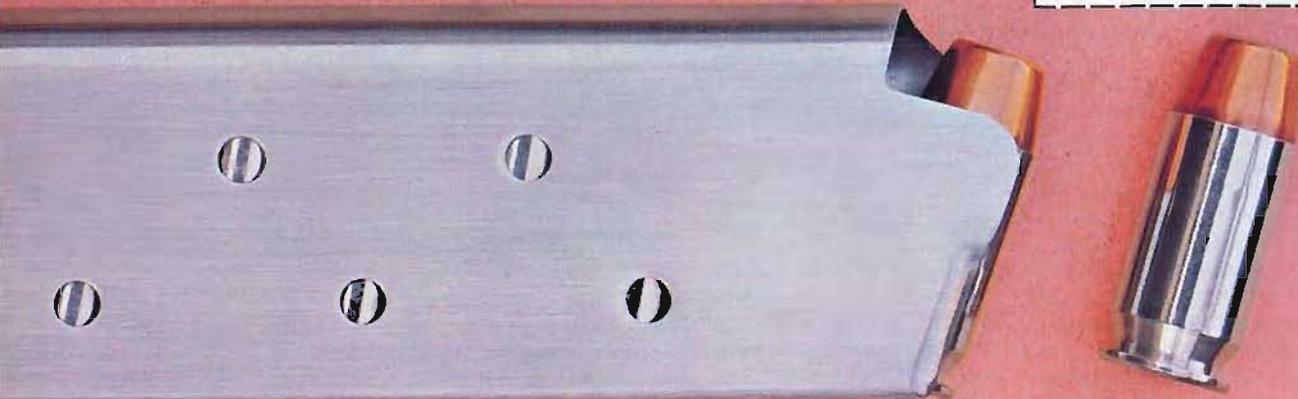
If you are interested in Bill's work, \$1 will get you an illustrated brochure featuring all of his custom work and a whole raft of .45 accessories. Write to: Wilson's Gun Shop, Route 3, Box 211-D, Berryville, AR 72616.

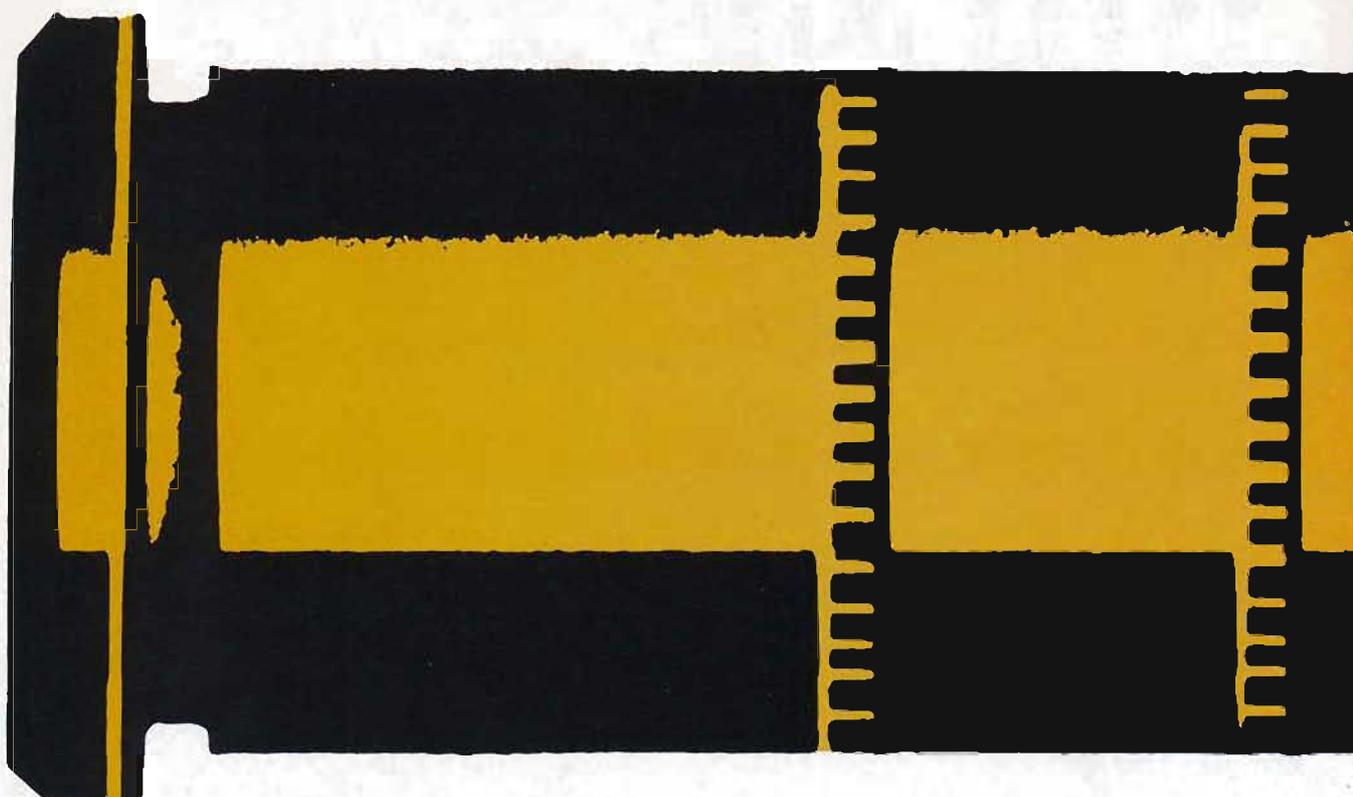
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SAMPLE





It's still a good cartridge

PRO... By Massad Ayoob

I am not an apologist for the .38 Special. When I was a cop, I almost always carried either a .45 ACP or a .357 Magnum, occasionally packing a .41. Today, I still normally carry either a .357 Magnum revolver or a .45 auto, each with state-of-the-art anti-personnel ammo. I wouldn't do that if I thought the .38 had all the potency I might need. But I've paid my dues in learning to handle powerful guns under combat circumstances.

I spend a lot of time with cops and their firearms instructors. And when you get into a big agency, you find that the average cop isn't going to fire his gun in practice when he isn't assigned and/or paid to. *And that guy isn't going to be able to handle a powerful, hard-kicking gun with speed, accuracy, and control when he has to fire through the narrow corridor of a "fire lane" surrounded by innocent bystanders under the stress of facing an armed, homicidal criminal.*

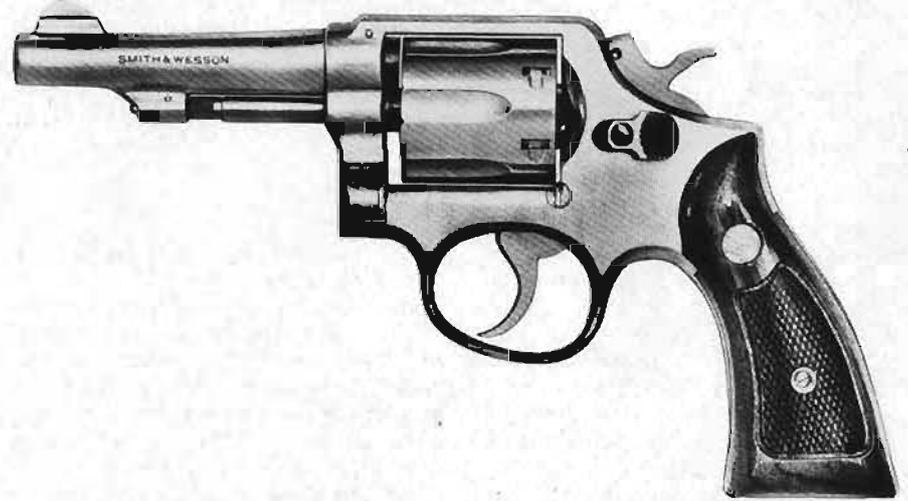
Controlling a .357 in rapid, combat fire requires a considerable familiarity with the gun, a degree of confidence, and knowledge of isometric firing holds. Pachmayr-type grips don't hurt, either. If the agency doesn't guarantee that the

officer has all or most of these advantages, the high-powered handgun's life-protecting power won't be applied at fast enough or accurate enough a rate.

"A hit with a .38 is better than a miss with a .357." Paul Weston, who retired from NYPD as a deputy inspector and who has

written numerous, excellent police training manuals, feels that for the average guy, four accurate .357 hits can be fired in the same time frame that six such hits could be delivered with the .38. In a world where the officer increasingly faces multiple opponents, there is something to be said for this.

Continued on page 52



WHY ARE WE STILL USING THE .38?

Why not something better?

CON...

By Evan P. Marshall

The 158 grain round nose lead .38 Special has been totally inadequate for its intended purpose. It can safely be said that more officers have lost their lives by depending on this load than by the combined efforts of all the militant anti-police organizations. There are, of course, reams of horror stories about the failures of this round. I've personally seen them bounce off a person's head when fired from a four inch barrel!

There have been a number of attempts to upgrade this caliber. Super Vel was the first to offer high performance, expanding bullet loads. These loads did increase the .38 Special's stopping power, but they are not the universal panacea many have claimed they are. The original hollow point loads were considerably hotter than those commercially available today. I have not found a current offering in high performance .38 Special that matches the chronograph figures of the earlier versions. Another problem is that because of the .38 Special's relatively low velocity, the bullets are generally too fragile to ensure expansion. Because of this, they've been known



to blow on belt buckles or expand and stop before incapacitation.

More recently, we've seen the development of +P+ loads for the traditional police round. While many think this approach is the greatest thing since sliced bread, I can't agree. First, pressure testing of some lots have shown psi figures substantially above authorized levels. Secondly, these loads do not really produce

that big an increase over +P loads. Third, these loads are meant to be fired in .357 Magnum revolvers, and several departments using them in medium frame .38 revolvers have found severe wear problems.

The biggest problem with the .38 Special is that most departments issue it with the 158 grain round nose lead load. While there has been a trend toward hollow

Continued on page 52

PRO...

Consider the NYPD experience. Their two top weapons men—Lt. Frank McGee and Lt. Tom McTernan—have brought tactical combat training up to what may be state of the art. By tactical, I'm talking cover, movement, "being where you can shoot him but he can't shoot you." They both defend the .38 as issue in their department; the present load is a standard-velocity, 158-grain, Keith-style lead semi-wadcutter. They say their experiments show that the average cop isn't even competent with +P .38 ammo.

Do I buy that? For others, not necessarily. For them, yes. NYPD budget constraints are notorious; a few years ago, layoffs, coupled with attrition brought their number from 33,000 to only 22,000 cops to protect a city of eight million. Those cops get in-service firearms training for only two days a year. Given that time, neither Evan Marshall, nor I, nor anyone else, could teach control of a high-powered handgun, especially when half that time is devoted to tactics instead of combat shooting.

The record of the 158-grain service load in NYPD, quite frankly, stinks, and that's flat-nose *and* round-nose. But relatively few NYPD officers tell me they'd rather have .357s, .45s, or 15-shot 9mm's; instead,



they tell me they think the .38 is right for their job, but they'd rather have harder hitting ammo. Interesting thing, though: in 1979, New York cops fired 853 rounds of .38 ammo at perpetrators, and in those gunfights, *the cops won by eleven to one.*

Why? First, the good tactics developed and taught by McGee and McTernan. The cops were behind cover or otherwise bulletproof, and they were able to control their .38s in rapid combat fire. That outpointed a lot of punks with high-powered handguns and sawed-off shotguns who didn't know how to shoot straight, or how to take care of

themselves in a gun duel.

I know New York cops who got shot after they had nailed a bad guy pretty good with one or more of their impotent 158-grain solids. There's a few more who weren't alive for me to interview. Sgt. Johnson died with a knife in his heart, when nine roundnose .38 slugs failed to stop the Bowery punk who charged him. The hero cop Bilodeau put a .38 Keith bullet into his opponent's K5 zone; the killer shot him dead, and was arrested later when he walked into the hospital by himself.

Continued on page 64

CON...

points in some areas of the country, it is not as yet that widespread. Furthermore, hollow points are often selected on a cost basis rather than a performance basis. One department I'm familiar with switched from the high velocity version of the 158 grain round nose lead load to a 158 grain jacketed hollow point offering. A month after switching, they decided to chronograph it and found that the new load averaged fifty to sixty feet per second lower than the old load!

Another point against the high performance .38 Special loads, is that they're rarely used by departments for qualification. They are expensive, have heavy muzzle flash and blast, and qualifying with light target loads does little to prepare the officer for a lethal confrontation in the street.

Lastly, these +P loads produce increased pressure on .38 Special revolvers. Continued use with these loads will accelerate wear and increase repair costs. With

a large department this can be a significant part of the armory budget.

The obvious question, then is if the .38 Special should be replaced, what should take its place? Well, there are several logical choices. As a long time advocate of the .41 Magnum, I can only wonder how such a superb law enforcement cartridge can be routinely ignored.

Another alternative is the .357 Magnum. I'm sure Massad will make much of its stiff recoil and muzzle blast, but it should be pointed out that he managed to qualify his entire department with the 4" Model 66 with Remington .357 Magnum 125 grain hollow points. In case you've never fired this load, its muzzle blast is something to behold.

While I like the .41, .45ACP, and .357 (in that order) for law enforcement purposes, I'm not so naive as to believe that departments will rush out to convert to these calibers. In fact, recently I've seen a trend away from the .357 by departments that were issuing it. Three requested that I recommend a +P .38 Special load to replace the Magnum ammo they've been using.

What then is left as a moderate recoil, small bore weapon, that's available in both revolver and semiautomatic pistol? Why the 9mm, of course. When the introduc-

Continued on page 66



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Continued from page 41

350; S&W, Win., Fed. case. (4) Federal 240 JHC—the only factory ammunition I've found accurate enough for Silhouette.

Try these deer loads: (1) Hornady or Speer 200 JHP; 25.5 gr./296; CCI 350; S&W, Win., Fed. case. (2) Hornady 240 JHP; 23 gr./296; CCI 350; S&W, Win., Fed. case.

I should emphasize that the M44 I am using is—except for cutting 2 coils off the trigger rebound spring and filing the full cock dog on the trigger for a 2 lb. break—an out-of-the-box production handgun.

How shall we rate the Model 44?

Tough. Tough enough for bear. Tough enough for silhouette. Damn accurate. It is not perfect. No *thing* is. Nature is considerably in advance of science on that point.

Value of the arm may be expressed thus: I will be carrying the Dan Wesson .44 to the IHMSA 1981 International Championships. Suggested retail: \$348.50—\$377.50



GOLD CUP

Continued from page 37

Should one prefer, heliarc weld can be built-up on each side instead of using the silver soldered shims—added metal must then be shaped to proper dimensions. Deepen and widen ejector slot—use firing pin stop for guide. Fit barrels to slide. Fit barrels and slide to frame. Purchase and fit 9mm-.38 Super extractor. Purchase and fit 9mm ejector. Purchase and fit .38 Super ejector. Drill, tap, then permanently install a bushing in forward section of firing pin hole. Ream to proper dimensions for utilization of the 9mm-.38 Super firing pin. This firing pin and firing pin hole requirement is smaller than the corresponding for the .45 ACP. This work is necessary as the 9mm and .38 Super cartridges operate at much higher pressures than does the .45 Automatic. Primer flow into the firing pin hole as well as pierced primers sometimes are the results if this is not done.

Check and cut recoil spring(s) to length. Check and cut firing pin spring to length if necessary. Buy minimum three magazines for each caliber. The above work to produce this three-caliber Gold Cup was time-consuming, and should not be attempted by a novice nor a gunsmith unfamiliar with this type weapon.

I believe this defense unit to be a very worthy and most efficient product, and heartily recommend such a creation to anyone who even remotely envisions merit in it.



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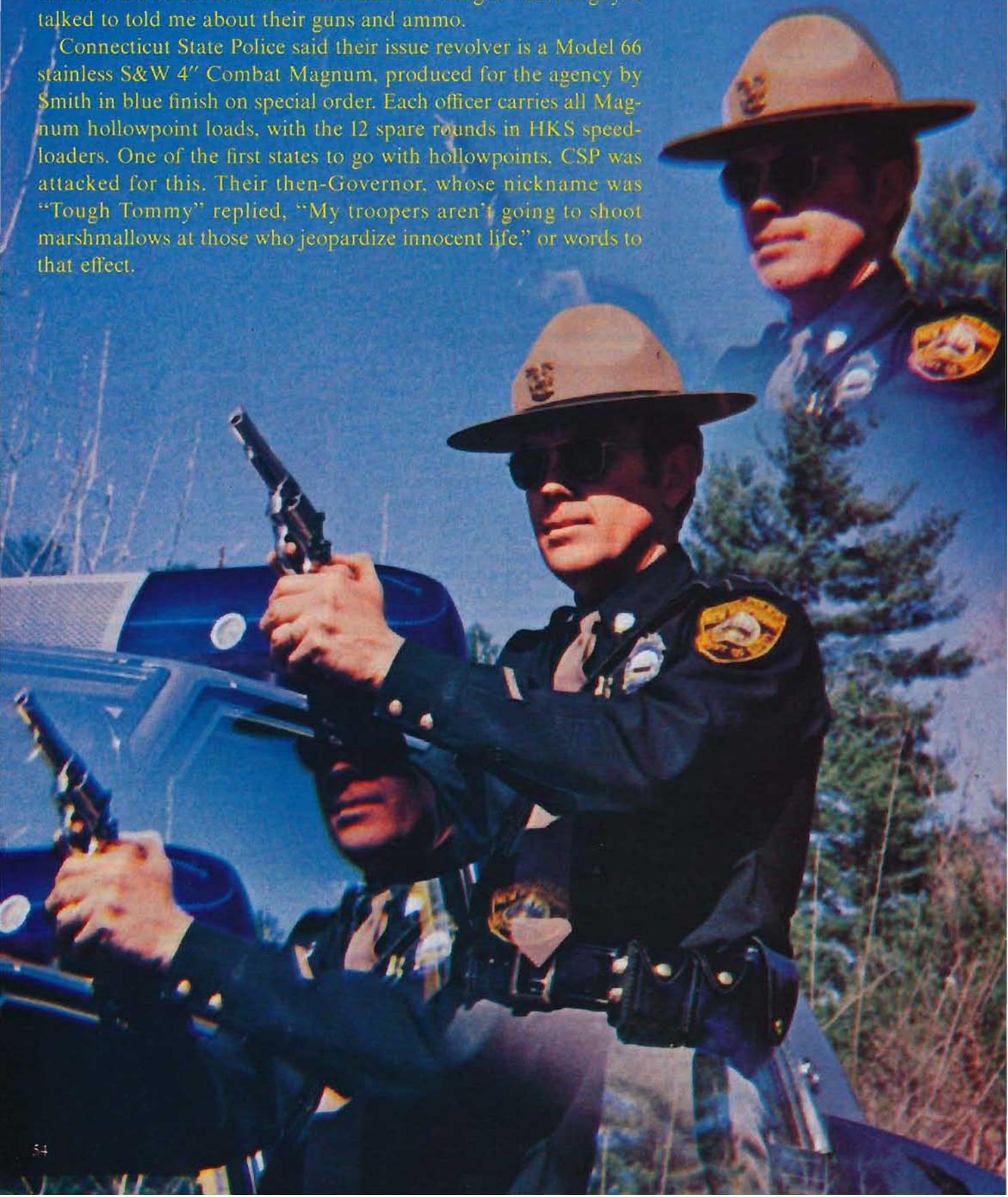
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I had recently returned from a nationwide meeting of the National Troopers Coalition, an organization formed of state troopers' and highway patrolmen's associations from around the country. Note that this group represents their unions and professional associations, not the agencies themselves; the spokesmen are completely free of politics, and can tell the truth about their hardware. The following is what the guys I talked to told me about their guns and ammo.

Connecticut State Police said their issue revolver is a Model 66 stainless S&W 4" Combat Magnum, produced for the agency by Smith in blue finish on special order. Each officer carries all Magnum hollowpoint loads, with the 12 spare rounds in HKS speedloaders. One of the first states to go with hollowpoints. CSP was attacked for this. Their then-Governor, whose nickname was "Tough Tommy" replied, "My troopers aren't going to shoot marshmallows at those who jeopardize innocent life," or words to that effect.



Connecticut troopers not only carry guns off duty (their own choice, "within reason,") they get to use a plain state-furnished car on their own time, too.

Wisconsin State Patrol's standard issue is again the 4" 66, this time in bright finish. Department load is 125-grain softnose .357 ammunition. Spare loads are carried in dump pouches. They don't have to carry a gun on their own time, but backup guns are allowed with the captain's permission.

Michigan State Police issues an assortment of fixed-sight, 4" Smiths and Colts in .38 Spl., but this is one of the very few state police agencies that allow a trooper to carry the gun of his choice, provided that it

low bid for the police equipment. At one time—we're told by the Highway Patrolman's Association—armor-piercing .357 ammo was standard issue. Predictably, they say, it didn't work out well in fire-fights, and was replaced with .357 hollowpoints.

Iowa State Patrol, in about six years, went from Model 10 .38s to Model 13 .357s to the present Model 66 S&W. A special round nose, 125-grain softpoint .357 round is issued. The guns are carried in awkward crossdraw holsters, and the troopers' association is presently suing the state over this; even left-handed troops must wear the right-handed holster, which is also true for Michigan troopers.

holsters are actually carried almost half the time as Jordan recommends, that is, with the strap off the hammer.

Massachusetts State Police's Jordan holsters for decades held 4" Model 10 S&W's with flat-nosed 158-grain ammo. After a recent shooting with this load, in which a suspect took nine rounds and still shot a trooper (and survived himself), the Union says the troops are getting 66's with hollowpoints. Replacing the Chief Specials they were previously issued for off duty, we're told, will be a special run of round-butt, 3" S&W's model 65's in .357 with the same load.

Florida Highway Patrol, traditionally

Continued on page 72



Troopers Lewis and Clark pose with C.W. McCall. Flap holsters are not liked by most Iowa State Troopers.

chambers the department ammo. In this case, I'm told, it's flat-nose 158-grain .38. This conflicts with reports I'd heard that Michigan had their own .38 +P+ hot load.

The gun is carried in a crossdraw flap holster. Unique among major agencies, MSP also issues a snub .38 (Smith & Wesson Bodyguard or Colt with hammer shroud), that *must* be carried in the right front pants pocket, which is suitably reinforced on all issue uniform trousers. As might be expected, nobody seems to try to disarm Michigan troopers and get away with it.

At Utah State Highway Patrol, heavy frame S&W .357s are standard, in Border Patrol holsters. You get a deluxe Model 27 or a spartan Model 28 Highway Patrolman, depending what year you were issued your gun and what year-what company got

STATE TROOPER SIDEARM

By Massad Ayoob

Here's what the state troopers are carrying, from a survey recently conducted by our roving police reporter

The troopers can carry backup guns provided that they chamber the issue .357 cartridge, a bone of contention among many veteran troops who would rather have something more compact and hideable.

At Illinois State Police: S&W 9mm Model 39 enters its 14th year here as standard, to be replaced by July with the new 439 series. After a dramatic, but arguable, failure with 115-gr. hollowpoints, issue load is now Winchester's 95-gr. JSP. Carrying of the 9mm. off duty is encouraged, but .357's and .38s are allowed for this or for backup, after passing the qualification course. Duty holster is a Safariland forward tilt thumb-break.

Indiana State Police carries 4" 66's in Jordan holsters, with 158-gr. softnose .357 loads in drop pouches. A wide variety of backup and off-duty hardware is allowed. One of the few agencies where Jordan



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.375 DAK

Continued from page 43

deeper in the primer pocket and ignition problems occur with short firing pins. With pins long enough for ignition, the primer gets a running start at the bolt face, standing breech or recoil plate, depending on the action type and usually gives excessively flattened and erratic appearing primers with perfectly good loads. I do not believe a hell of a lot can be told with certainty by primer examination particularly in pistols. The .375's action had been lightened and wasn't strong enough to light the fire with the tougher rifle primers. CCI

**"The bullet closely
resembles several
Lee bullet designs"**

Mags Large Pistol were used exclusively and were ignited uniformly by the S&W's normal, long firing pin.

Bullets were cast from a variety of metals using a Lyman bottom pour Mould Master XX and the NEI mould. Bullets cast of a tin base babbitt, although very hard weighed only 164 grains. Those cast with a linotype-like mix weighed 185 grains. Design of the bullet closely resembles several of the Lee designs for pistol cartridges.

The gun started out as a "N" Frame S&W. Kelling had Redmans Gunshop (3015 S. Ill., Caldwell, ID 83605) rebores a six inch .38-44 barrel to .375 groove diameter. I'm not sure of its twist rate. Kelling obtained custom cylinder sizing and chambering reamers from Clymer Mfg. (14241 Will Mile Road, Oak Park, MI 48237). Kelling did the rechambering, action work, and fitting.

As the .375's case capacity to bore diameter relationship is similar to that of the Magnums I limited load development to WW-296, WW-680 and Hercules 2400.

Although the strong .375 Win cases measure an average of .414 inches just ahead of the rim and fired cases measure about .405-.406 O.D. at the case mouth; the slight taper should give sticking problems earlier than the same case with straight walls. I decided to use the ability to eject six cases simultaneously with only minor sticking with dirty chambers on extraction as practical maximum loads.

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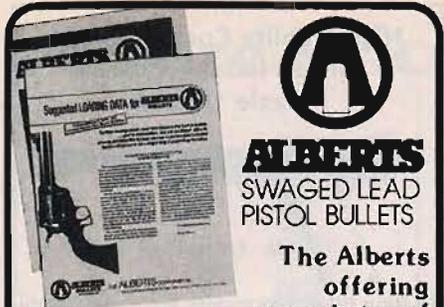
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Starting out with WW-296 as it is an easy powder to work with and usually gives maximum performance in straight wall pistol cases I found it operated as usual, giving excellent results when loaded properly and poor when treated poorly. For example, 16.0 grs. of WW-296 with the 164 gr. bullet averaged 1343 fps with an extreme spread of 267 fps. 17.0 gr. averaged 1449 fps with a spread of 78 fps. This isn't bad for a revolver but it isn't good either. 17.0-WW-296-185 gr. lino bullet averaged 1437 fps with an extreme spread of only 33 fps. This is excellent performance from a revolver. It's also a good example of how and how not to use 296. I cringe when I see

"When you reduce loadings, velocity and uniformity simply goes to pot"

Winchester's recommended .44 Magnum load of 24.0-296-240 reduced to 20 grains or so. Velocity and uniformity simply goes to pot.

WW-680 does some fantastic things when properly applied but the 185 grain bullet just wasn't heavy enough for excellence in the .375 DAK. Powder capacity peaked at about 19.0 grains of 680 for 1333 fps with an extreme spread of 41 fps. Good, useful performance but not great. 680 would probably be the best powder for the 220 Hornady jacketed bullet but I couldn't use it as the Forster inside reaming tool didn't ream deeply enough to allow its use. I figure it would do about 1100 fps but it was simply too much trouble to further modify the cases.

2400 peaked at 15.0 grains under the 185 grain bullet for 1322 fps and an extreme spread of 41 fps.

The loaded cartridges fills the cylinder to its mouth quite nicely. It would be possible to add another 15-20 grains weight to the bullet nose by going to another design and not further reduce power capacity.

As it is, the .375 DAK is a nice, light, accurate little gun that ballistically falls right in between the .357 and .41 Magnums. Its trajectory and penetration is very similar to the Magnums in revolvers when bullets of similar shape and construction are compared. Its maximum energy level of 850 ft. lbs. also is logically where it should be—in between the .357 and 41.

As in loading for the DAK, shooting it didn't give any surprises. Recoil is more like a heavily loaded .357 than a heavily loaded .41. Muzzle blast isn't—at least doesn't seem—as sharp as a .357's and not as heavy as a .41's.

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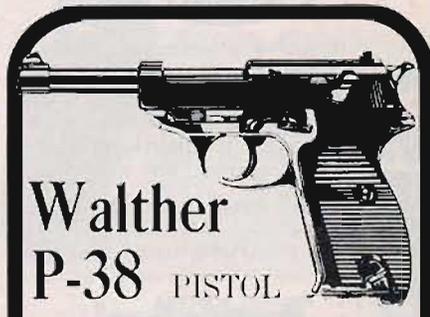
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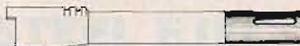
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its overall performance identical to that of the magnums. It's generally somewhat more muzzle light than now favored due to the slim 38-44 barrel contour but it's pleasant to shoot and accurate.

After fooling around with it for awhile I settled on the 17.0-296-185 load for a standard. In popping a few Silhouette targets it visibly appeared to hit slightly harder than 158 grain .357 loads and not as had as 200-210 grain .357 loads. The usual water can, wood, mud and ice shooting was just fun with no startling revelations.

It's a nice little cartridge but unfortunately it doesn't do anything the .357 or .41 can't do except make .375 diameter holes.

From a cost standpoint, I doubt if a gunsmith could do the conversion for less than \$250-\$300. Most would be considerably higher. "N" frame Smiths, Ruger Single Action .357s and Mossberg .357s could be used for the conversion.

In essence, the .375 DAK isn't needed; but it is nice. Kind of fits into the same category as the .41 Mag in that respect. Frankly, it's interesting enough that I'd like to own one and maybe if I can scrounge up another .357 and borrow Dale's reamers, and I get enough time and ambition to put it together there will be two; not one .375 DAK.

CHARTER STAINLESS

Continued from page 45

can turn a quality snubby into a formidable defensive weapon. The key is in the combination of skill, proper ammo, and "quality".

The highest quality .38 Special snubby I have yet to come across is the new Charter Arms Undercover in stainless steel, their Model 7382. Over the years I have owned, or been issued, every major brand small .38 including Charter's own early Undercover which hit the market in 1965 in blue steel. None have ever even come close to comparing with the test Model 7382 recently supplied by Charter for evaluation.

The gun, when it arrived, showed no outward signs of having been specially selected or smoothed up. There were no tell-tail score marks on the cylinder, an indicator that shows up almost immediately when a gun has been used. Actually there was an obvious silver solder spill from the process of fixing the front sights to the barrel. Although an aesthetically minor blemish, it was proof to me that no one had hand selected this gun. The point is important, as you will come to appreciate.

The Stainless Steel Undercover is a five shot .38 Special with an advertised barrel length of two inches. For some unexplained reason my barrel measured out at a shade less than one and seven eighths

Continued on page 60

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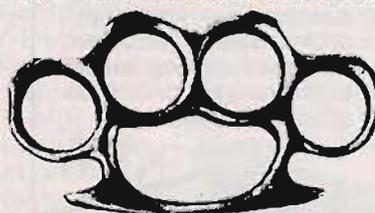
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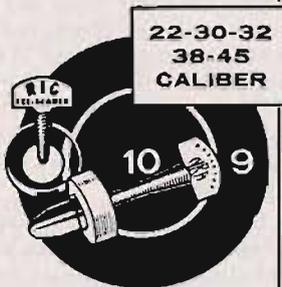
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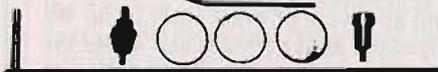


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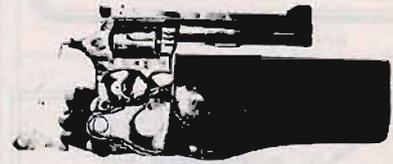


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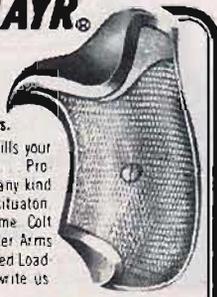
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Continued from page 58

inches. It weighs a scant 16 ounces and measures six and a quarter inches overall. Sights are ramp front and fixed square notch rear. The checkered walnut grips make a pleasing contrast to the silky stainless steel finish. I found the sights just the right size and dimensions for quick, accurate pick up on the target although I would have preferred, even on a snubby, red front sight inserts.

Initial dry firing, both double and single action, proved the gun to have an almost unbelievable smooth action right out of the box. I have paid over \$100 to have new S&W K frame actions worked over to a

**"Single action trigger
pull was 2½ pounds
without take-up"**

degree of smoothness equal to this gun and I have never, no matter how much work was done, seen a J frame that could come close to it. Single action trigger pull was 2½ pounds with no take-up whatsoever. Double action was smooth all the way through and brought an uncontrollable smile to my face every time I tried it. Here was a gun responding with pure class!

Grabbing a half dozen bags of Hodgdon commercial reloads, my wife and I headed out to our ranch where I maintain several ranges for different courses of fire. The Hodgdon reloads were about nine years old and were a mixed case brand lot of once, or more, fired brass. The loading was 2.8 grains of Bullseye behind a 148 grain wadcutter. Primers were listed as Hodgdon brand and were of brass coloration. We dumped out all the reloads and sorted the cases by brand in an attempt to wring out maximum accuracy. Had I not been overly anxious to try this new Charter Arms Undercover, I would have taken the time to reload some of my own with meticulous attention to uniformity of components.

Sitting down at the 25-yard bench, a distance far in excess of the average police shoot-out, I more or less rapidly squeezed out a five shot cylinder full to determine point on impact in relation to point of aim. This is always a worry with a new fixed sight gun. As it was, I delivered a 3¼ inch group surrounding the one-inch square black paster I had used for point of aim. Next, settling down for a serious try at group, I slowly squeezed off my second five shots at a different paster. I must have

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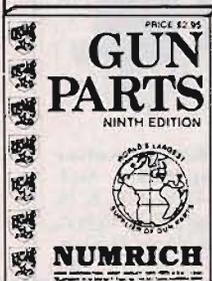
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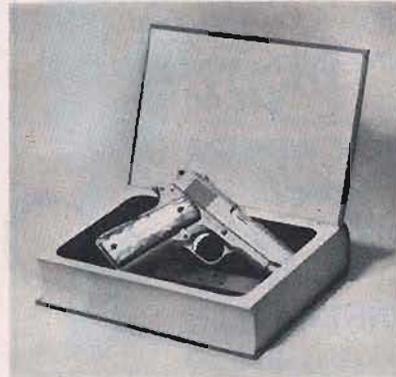
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really looked pretty silly checking this next target as I was leaping in the air when I found the group was inside the paster and measured 3/4 of an inch! I very prudently quit for the time being and handed the gun to my spouse, and chief shooting buddy. She shot off a few bags of ammo with groups from several two-inchers, on up to 4 1/4 inches.

We next tried double action shooting from seven yards, on back to 15 yards, with uniformly excellent results. Every shot of the 200 fired at a silhouette were in the center mass area, with a few in the head when we got bored with the lack of challenge. All this latter shooting was done from ranges of 25 yards down to seven yards in a modified PPC.

It was decided to try the next to impossible, considering we were using a snubby of less than two-inch barrel length. As a fun target, we have an old five gallon cylinder-shaped tank suspended from a tree on "yonder hillside". The distance is somewhere between 80 and 100 yards at an elevation of about 45 degrees. Aiming at the neck of the tank, to compensate for the low

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ability, a fine gun can
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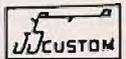
powered reloads as well as provide a finer point of aim, we were both able to ring a resounding "gong" with better than half our shots. The tank, incidentally, presents a target of roughly human chest size. To be perfectly honest, we returned home in exceptionally good moods. The shooting of the day was considerably better than our average performance and proves that if you have any ability to begin with, a fine gun can only enhance the final results.

I guess, in the hundred or so articles I have penned thus far about combat arms, I have developed a reputation of being quite critical. Bearing that in mind, I give an A+ to Charter Arms of Stratford, Connecticut.

For an off-duty, back-up, or civilian carry gun, all that remains is matching a proper combat load to the Model 7382. I intend to cover this fully in a future article but will make a few preliminary suggestions for those of you wishing to experiment with your own reloads. The 146 grain Hydra-Shok bullet, as manufactured by The Alberts Corporation, P.O. Box 157, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417, is a devastating projectile, even when fired in a very short

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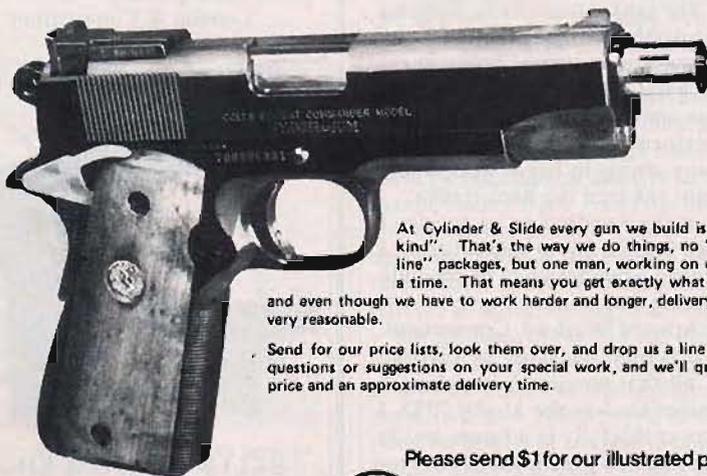


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barreled revolver. The trick is in using a very fast burning powder, such as Bullseye, yet at a modest velocity for assured controllability. The Alberts people will send loading data for the asking and this data, when using specialty bullets, is an absolute must.

We began this article with some facts gleaned from the recent NRA survey. I think this survey also hit on the reason so many of my fellow officers perform poorly with their off-duty pieces. The survey shows that considerably less than half our policemen are required to qualify with their off-duty guns! Maybe the pure shooting pleasure offered by Charter Arms new stainless Undercover will reverse the trend. 

GUIDELINES

Continued from page 47

who is armed with a weapon other than a firearm, and who faces the officer but does not move to attack, a "warning" is in order. However, the officer *must* be mentally conditioned to realize that if the mere presence of his sidearm leveled at the perpetrator does not cause the criminal to drop his weapon, it will probably be necessary to shoot.)

5. The officer must *not* fire his weapon to summon assistance when there is no immediate danger to the officer.

6. The officer must *not* fire his weapon from or at a moving vehicle unless occupants are firing at the officer, or using other deadly force.

What is probably the most important factor in conditioning the officer to be effective in a combat situation, is making him positively aware that the taking of a human life may indeed be required during the course of carrying out his duties—and when and if it is, he'd damn well better act fast! This is the most difficult of things to teach a normal person, because all of us, to the precise extent that we are truly human, wince at the thought of terminating an individual's existence. Too often, that costs decent lives.

No good cop "wants" to kill. But unless the fact that this is precisely what he is training to be able to do—if it is necessary to do it—when he is on the training range, he is being sold out by his training program.

When I am instructing an officer I never fail to hammer home this crucial point: The armed criminal has two basic advantages: (1) He has initiated the action, and you, the officer, are a reactor; (2) He has already made up his mind to shoot you. There is simply no way that such an advantage can be offset except by a ruthlessly-efficient mental set that triggers the officer into instantaneous and lethally-directed counteraction.

Continued on page 64

FIREARMS INSTRUCTION

Training for Security Officers

By Jerry Usher

Starting with California legislation, new laws are mandating badly needed training requirements for the security industry

SEVERAL YEARS AGO when I was teaching law enforcement classes at the College Of The Desert I had two long-time security officers bring their guns in to me. One wanted me to show him how to unload his gun. It was a S&W Model 10 that had been loaded when assigned to him and he didn't know how to unload it. The gun and ammo were in sad shape. The other officer handed me a super clean revolver and asked me how to clean out the "ridges" in each cylinder. He was surprised to learn that they belonged there.

Until recently the security industry has been sadly neglected. California has been attempting to remedy this as the potential

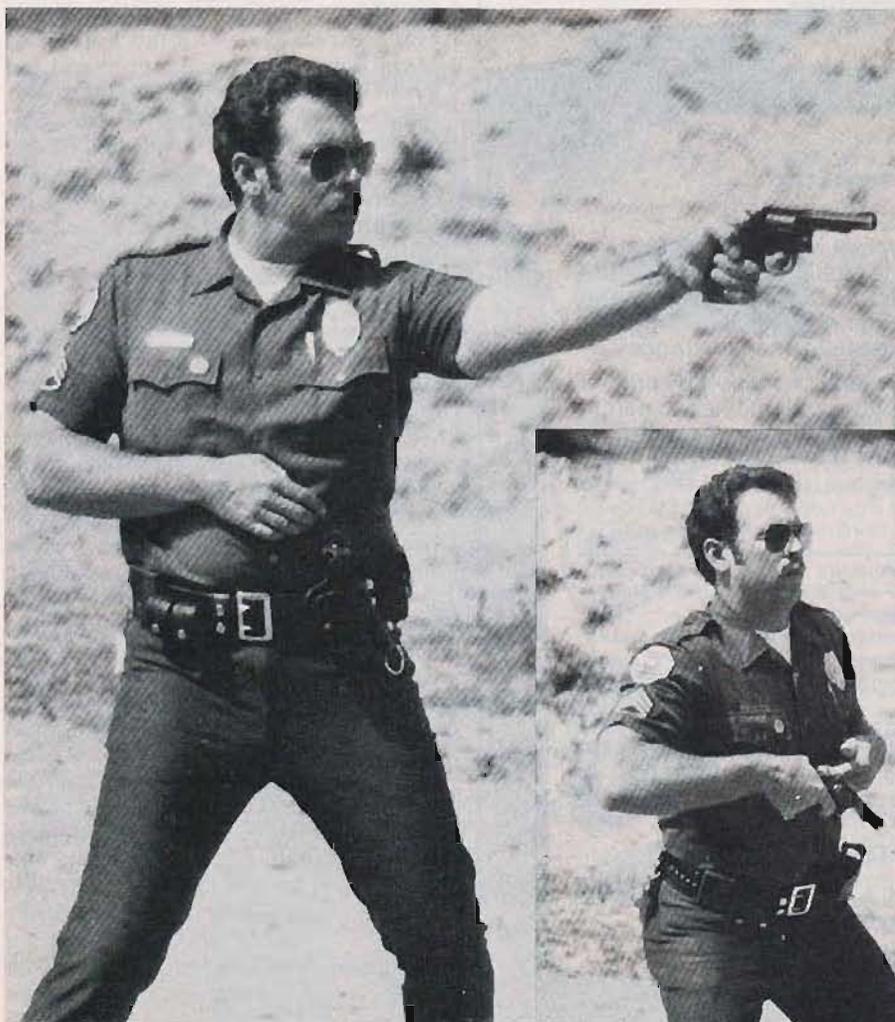
danger and liability of minimum wage, untrained guards carrying a loaded gun is enormous. To the credit of The Bureau Of Consumer Affairs, which controls the security industry, there have been some major changes.

Until July 1981, the firearms training in California was inadequate and the enforcement was even worse. A 70-year-old arthritic with trifocals and determination could qualify on the 15 yd. slow fire course after just a few hours of instruction. Only the better schools would also spend the time to teach the decision-making process. The biggest problem in getting qualified was the application process which took from two to four months before the firearms card was returned. Many companies simply did not wait and worked their people illegally. I estimate that 10 to 20 percent of applicants that came to us from other agencies had worked illegally for these agencies. One company near us "arms" their people with replica or deactivated guns rather than getting their employees qualified.

The new program and qualification course is something else and was de-

Continued on page 73

Weak hand firing, draw while in motion, and stepping right while 2-hand firing. All are part of the security officers course at Westec.



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Effective guidelines for the police use of deadly force are hardly compatible with the bleeding heart ideas of the critics, who scream to high heaven whenever a murderer is shot. Such negative public outcry can indeed be disheartening to the professional officer. But law enforcement is not a profession that can be dominated by emotion. And the thinking citizens will gratefully accept a strong and able department policy, which is, after all, benefiting primarily themselves. For it is they whom the officers serve.

When it becomes a choice—a choice made necessary by the violent criminal himself, by virtue of his own heinous actions—between that violent perpetrator's welfare, or the welfare of his victim (be he a fellow officer, oneself, or an innocent civilian), then it is incumbent upon the sworn peace officer to choose in favor of the victim, every time—without hesitation.



.38—PRO

Continued from page 52

An NYPD weapons expert once told me, "Mas, you've got your act together in every respect except for this bull about Magic Bullets." Forgive me, my friend, but I believe in those magic bullets. I understand what you're teaching your non-gun-oriented cops, and if I were you, I'd issue .38 Special ammo, too. But some things that are happening on the street with other law enforcement agencies make me think that there might be better .38 loads.

I've done a lot of research on what really happens in gunfights. I am utterly convinced of two things. First, *any solid, non-hollowpoint bullet of .357 diameter, in a .38 Special or a Magnum loading, is an inefficient manstopper.*

Secondly, *for the average cop, .38 Special recoil is about all that can be controlled within the typically limited police weapons training cycle.* You who read AMERICAN HANDGUNNER are into firearms; you can control a .357, .41, or whatever. But ask yourself deep in your heart if that is true for the guy who would never fire his gun if the department didn't make him do it twice a year.

In police firearms training, you seek a balance between excellence as perceived by experts, and what really works in training masses of largely disinterested men and women. One man who knows both sides of that is Bill Groce, head of firearms training for the Ohio State Law Enforcement Academy. A solid fan of the .45 auto for himself and others who are into handguns, Bill's research—based on both range training experience, and monitoring every shootout that occurs in his state—indicates that the average cop is better off with a .38 Special

revolver, loaded with a good hollowpoint.

There are enough documented shootings on file to indicate that most of the time, a good hollowpoint .38 will do the job if it hits pretty close to the right place. There are two loads of choice. My favorite is the 158-

"The average cop is better off with a .38 loaded with a good hollowpoint"

grain, all-lead, semi-wadcutter hollowpoint at +P velocity. This was adopted by the FBI (with 7,000 agents, tied with LAPD for the third biggest American law enforcement agency) in about 1972. They were followed shortly by Chicago Police Department, the second biggest in America.

FBI agents get into about 20 gunfights a year, and Chicago training for the Bureau, tells me that their .38 loads have performed

superbly in combat. The Fraternal Order of Police, union representatives of Chicago cops, tell me the same is true there. FOP president John Dineen told me, "Our guys used to beef about having to carry .38 ammo, but they don't anymore; when they shoot somebody, he goes down."

That's the bottom line, folks. The union representatives don't take kindly to their member cops getting blown away because of inferior firepower. The PBA (NYPD's street cop's union) and the equivalent BPPA in Boston both claim credit for forcing their bosses to upgrade from roundnose to flatnose bullets. The Los Angeles Police Protective League, according to recent reports, has borne fruit from its lawsuits and perhaps finally forced the switch from round-nose to the hi-speed hollowpoint. I hope it's true.

Softnoses and roundnoses and flatnoses don't do nearly the job hollowpoints do when you have to stop a felon from twitching his trigger finger. New York's experiences prove this, and LA's, and everybody else's. My respected colleague Evan Marshall hates the .38, because in his experience in his department, it didn't work. No kidding. *In his department, hollowpoints are forbidden.* If his bosses ever get their act together and approve hollowpoints, those ".38 failure horror stories" will wind down considerably.

A well-selected .38—the "FBI Load" or

the "Treasury Load"—will protect you fairly well in a gunfight. The hell with ballistic pendulums and holes in blocks of Jello, I'm talking about documented, investigated, adjudicated gunfights in the real-life streets. Stay with a non-hollow-

"Evan Marshall is correct . . . the .38 Spl. is a death trap"

point, though, and Evan Marshall is right: the .38 is a death-trap.

If you couple modern, hollowpoint .38 police ammo with the "Police Special's" controllability in rapid fire against multiple opponents, and the ease of training someone with it under the constraints of "Proposition 13" budget cutting, you've probably got the optimum gun for the average cop.

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oretically, automatics are better, too. But both those things are only true if you've got the time and money to intensively train people who are seriously committed to mastering the combat handgun.

In today's real world, police departments often *don't* have that good material to work with . . . and if they don't, a properly loaded .38 Special probably *is* the best defensive tool they can issue to "the average cop."



.38—CON

Continued from page 52

tion of S&W's Model 547 9mm revolver, the police officer who prefers the wheelgun can still rely on what I consider the best of the small bores.

While earlier versions of the S&W semiautomatic pistol have suffered from inconsistent reliability, the "second generation" 9s have solved those problems. The fifteen shot semiauto offers obvious advantages of the six shot .38 Special, but the 9mm requires closer examination.

The first advantage of the 9mm revolver is a critical one for a law enforcement handgun—stopping power. The 4" Model 547 comes within 20% of the .357s performance out of the same barrel length. To understand the superiority of the 9mm revolver over the .38 Special, I chronographed a number of loads for both weapons. Both guns were in new condition with 4" barrels. Wherever possible, I obtained loads with the same weight bullet by brand. The results are listed below:

BULLET WEIGHT	BRAND	9mm
a. 95gr jsp	W-W	1356fps
b. 100gr jhp	W-W	1305fps
c. 115gr jhp	W-W	1187fps
d. 125gr nhp*	S&W	1179fps
e. 125gr jsp	CCI	1123fps
f. 124gr fmj	Fron	1139fps
g. 123gr fmj	R-P	1108fps
h. 115gr fmj	W-W	1149fps

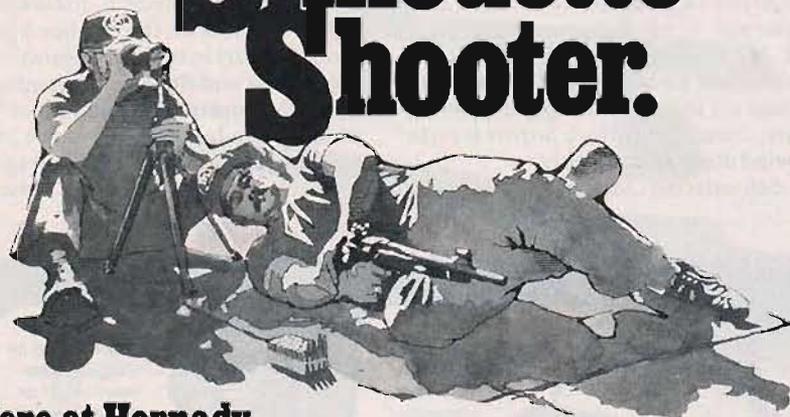
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b. 110gr jhp	W-W	1045fps
c. 125gr jhp	W-W	1056fps
d. 125gr nhp*	S&W	1038fps
e. 125gr jsp	CCI	1013fps
f. 125gr jhp	Fron	934fps
g. 125gr jhp	R-P	1023fps
h. 158gr rnl	W-W	728fps

*Nyclad hollow Point

The second area where the 9mm shines is recoil and muzzle flash. Even the hottest 9mm loads are mild compared to +P or

Continued on page 70

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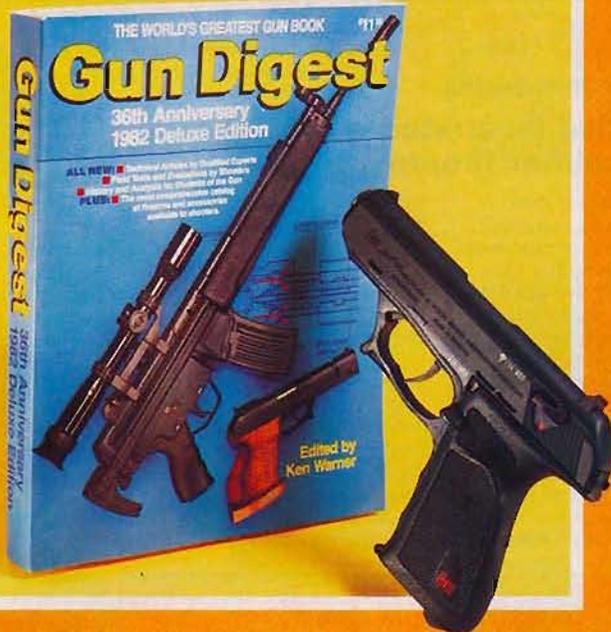


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Long Rifles With Smooth Bores by Ashley Halsey, Jr. Examines the little considered phenomenon of smooth bore rifles, both percussion and flintlock, of colonial and pioneer times.

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A Fresh Look At Old Standards by Layne Simpson. Provides many surprises for those students of the American rifle who have long dismissed the Standard Automatic-Slide Action rifles as terrible turkeys.

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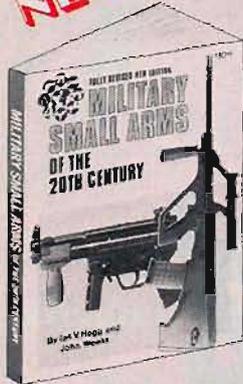
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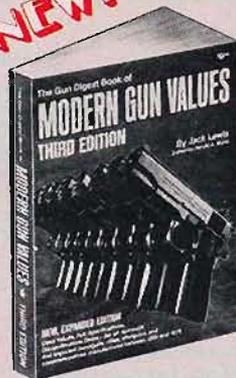
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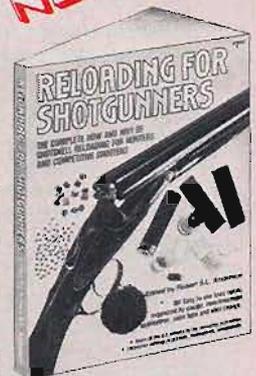
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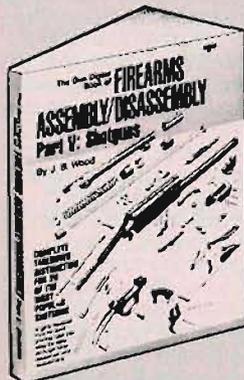
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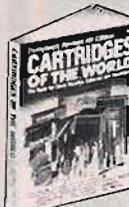
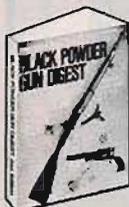
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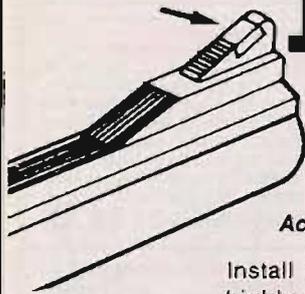


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Continued from page 66

+ P+ offerings out of the four inch .38 Special. When you compare the 3" Model 547 to the 2" or 2½" .38 snub the difference is even more dramatic.

A third advantage is the compact size of the 9mm round. Today's police officer is loaded down with a multitude of items, anything that can save weight is a God-send. While I'm more than willing to lug a .41 Magnum and other assorted items for eight hours of patrol, most cops are not so predisposed.

Another advantage of the 9mm, is that it allows the department to offer its officer a choice between the revolver and pistol without stocking two calibers of ammunition. It would make the armors job much simpler, while giving the officer the freedom of choosing the handgun system he feels most comfortable with. I've been carrying my 3" Model 547 off-duty and it's an excellent concealment piece for those who prefer the wheelgun.

Massad and I have been known to spend hours arguing on whether the day in question was partially sunny or partially cloudy. I'd be amazed if we agreed on the .38 Special. I guess it all boils down to whether you want to stay in the dark ages of policeweapony or turn the corner into the world of modern police cartridges.



PISTOL TEAM

Continued from page 33

around and complained, you'd have thought it was his trigger finger!"

Once after the Indian Hills Ranger's matches near Cincinnati, a group of us were at the Cincinnati depot, awaiting our train to Camp Perry. Joe Dircks walked up to a water fountain to get a drink and one of the railroad police told him, "There's another of these fountains about thirty-yards, and through some fault in the construction, you can yell in this one, and it comes out loud and clear from the other one."

Joe looked down the platform at the other fountain and another member of their team, Lee Young, was just walking up for a drink.

Now Lee Young was a very fancy dresser . . . always in his traffic uniform and neat as a pin. Just as he leaned over to get a drink of water, Joe Dircks yelled in his fountain, "Get away from that water fountain, you damned flat-foot cop! Stand back from there and don't even touch it! We don't allow you rat fink policemen to use any of these facilities!"

Lee clenched his fists and jumped back from the fountain as though there'd been a cotton-mouthed water moccasin snake in it. He whirled around, seeking his tormen-

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tor. He finally concentrated on a big, burly janitor who was sweeping with a huge, bristly broom about ten feet to the right of the fountain. Lee rushed up to him, both fists in a striking position. "Are you the bird that's been ordering me around and calling me all those names?" he demanded.

The janitor raised his broom and aimed it at Young, "You git two feet closer, you belligerant ignoramus," he said, "an' You'll git a face full of these bristles!"

About then, Joe Dircks cut loose again, "You heard me, you big, flat-footed

**"Are you
the bird that's
been calling me
all those names?"**

grafter! Get away from that fountain and do it right now!"

Lee Young wheeled back toward the fountain as he had determined by then the noise surely was coming from that direction. As he could see no one, however, he finally unclenched his fists, shook his head in disbelief, and slowly walked back to where the rest of us were waiting. The janitor watched him warily, "How'd he ever git a police suit?" he asked no one in particular.

"There's some damn smart-aleck down there," Lee Young told us, and he pointed toward the other fountain, "that sure hates cops! Gave me the damndest dressing down I ever got in my life! Never did find him, either!"

"The place is full of them," Joe told him. "One of them forbade me to drink out of this one. Let's not make a scene, Lee. Let's just wait until we get on the train. They've probably got us outnumbered and we don't want to put our department in a bad light."

Lee Young sat down, still shaking his head and didn't have any more to say until the train pulled in. As he was boarding it, he looked down toward the far fountain. The huge janitor was still there, sweeping lazily and there was no one else around the fountain. "Fine way to treat your visitors!" Lee squalled out, shaking his fist as he went aboard.

The old Los Angeles Police Pistol Team . . . The curtain is falling on them too quickly. There are not many of them left. Joe Dircks still lives in Los Angeles, Al

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Strand in Hawaii. Chief Davis is dead, as are Wheeler, Ward, Engbrecht, Emmett Jones and Walter Stark. One of the giants of their team, both from a shooting standpoint and from his size was Bill Barkley. He is alive and well after a heart by-pass operation, and is living in Carson City, Nevada. Another stalwart, Basil Starkey, was alive the last I heard of him, as was another black-ring shooter, Earl "Fuzzy" Farrant.

But they were something to remember . . . they'd "hot hand" you, break an egg in your pocket, nail your gun box to the bench, shoot black-powder bullets off right when you were aiming, walk you into a fresh concrete walkway, and then beat you so bad in the next match you'd wonder what in the world you were doing up there.

If they hadn't been the very quintessence of high-quality triviality and the finest gang of outrageous bums in the shooting world, I don't believe many of us could have stood it.



TROOPERS

Continued from page 55



Colt department, took a fling with S&W 66 and then the Highway Patrolman, and has since decided to once again standardize on the Colt. Old guns are 5" nickel Trooper .357s; new ones will be 4" nickel Pythons. Load is 158-grain Keith bullet, Mag velocity. The crossdraw holster is a bone of contention among the troopers, who re-

**"NJSP's issue holster
is the S&W snatch
resistant Security
Plus"**

cently voted to replace it with a straight draw, we're told.

New Jersey State Police recently replaced an amalgam of Colt, S&W, and Ruger guns with the stainless steel Ruger Security Six, chambered for .357 but loaded with .38 Special hollowpoints. NJSP's issue holster is the snatch-resistant S&W Security Plus, we were told.

New York State Police had Military & Police .357s that were the fore-runner of today's Model 13. Insiders say that the guns didn't stand up to constant Magnum

pounding. Result: the issue gun is now the 4", N-frame Highway Patrolman. For this agency, supposedly, S&W developed that rare modern collector's item, the Model 520, a fixed-sight Highway Patrolman resembling the old .38/44 Heavy Duty.

158-grain flat-nose Magnum ammo is standard, and worn in belt loops; the hol-

using Duelatrons and cars, etc. for barricades.

At Delaware State Police, a Model 10 S&W heavy barrel .38 in high-ride holster with conventional safety strap is standard. Duty load is jacketed +P hollowpoints.

Rhode Island State Police showed their gratitude to S&W, who designed the Model 68 (6", stainless Combat Masterpiece .38) for these guys, by adopting the 6" Model 66 in .357 instead. Sorry, S&W and Gun Collectors of the World. Good for you, Rhode Island troops.

Rhode Island's 66's are carried in crossdraw, fingertip-release Audley holsters of pre-WWII design, with lanyards. Make of it what you will, but none of the troops can remember a brother officer getting his gun taken away. 158-grain SJHP Magnum ammo is issued.

Virginia State Police's S&W's Model 64 (heavy barrel, 4" .38 Military & Police in stainless) is slowly replacing conventional Colt and Smith .38s in the armory. Flat-nose 158-grain lead bullets are standard and Jordan holsters are issue.

Maryland State Police troopers are issued 4" S&W Model 13 fixed-sight .357 Magnum revolvers loaded with 110-grain semi-jacketed hollowpoints. Twelve more of those rounds are carried in a pair of HKS speedloaders. The gun itself rides in a snatch-resistant breakfront holster by Bucheimer. A union rep tells us that most

troopers wear high-powered automatics—.45s and 9mm.s—off duty, and a high number carry them for backup as well.



COMBAT COURSE

Continued from page 25

rock caused a reaction. Hits near the center result in no movement by the target. The sound of a hit with little or no movement means a good hit. The larger the movement, the poorer the hit. The reaction of



Pivoting targets are securely mounted to the deck, but allow movement when hit anywhere but dead center of chest.

the target is too slow, however, to indicate two or more hits fired very fast unless they

"The duty load for Delaware Troopers is a jacketed hollowpoint +P"

ter is a Border Patrol style.

Minnesota State Patrol uses a Border Patrol holster on a super-wide Sam Browne belt and carries a 4" Model 66 loaded with flat-nose Magnum ammo. These people have a super combat course

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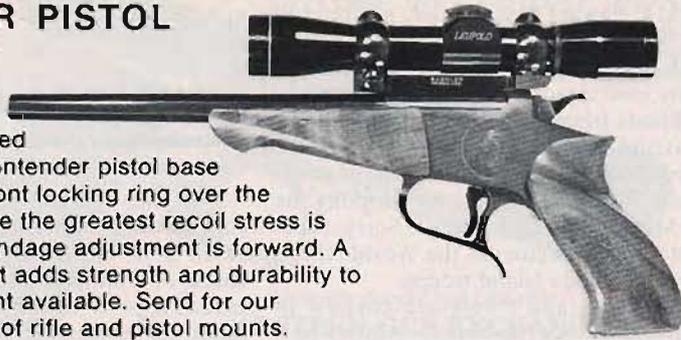
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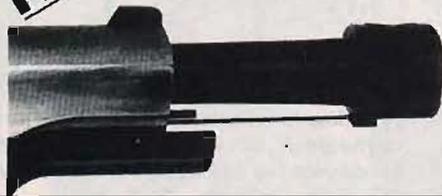
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are on the same side of the center line.

One target design has a slight weld bead in the shape of scoring rings. By painting the target after each contestant, scoring could be done for matches.

The design and workmanship is excellent. Fred has built a special pivot and has developed an important balance and strength feature into the target stressing that copiers will not be able to duplicate.



Rings in steel can be used for scoring.

While worth the \$450 price tag, I feel most individual shooters will unsuccessfully attempt to copy this patented target rather than buy it. Law enforcement and training groups, as well as match directors, will do well to consider buying these targets as they work and have many applications.



SECURITY

Continued from page 63

veloped after considerable committee work. Proposals varied from one hand, single action bullseye programs including only target training to a fully comprehensive program as used by Westec Security. The actual program is probably a reasonable compromise. It stresses the specific teaching of practical and legal considerations in the use of firearms in security. This point is the major reason police-type programs are not used in security. The use of the weapon in security must be only in self defense, and lethal force situations should be avoided by security personnel. Safety, first aid and gun handling are stressed as well as shooting ability. The majority of the training and shooting is at the short ranges where defensive action is most likely. Fortunately the desire to develop PPC competition shooters has not slanted the training as it has so many police programs. The course does not yet, however, reflect an understanding of the defensive roll of the handgun. Single action shooting

is allowed and holster work is not taught nor required. I wonder when police and security companies will learn that guns are drawn prematurely when officers are not taught to draw quickly when required.

As this is written the new program has not started, but from all indications it will

“Police-type training programs are not used in security”

be a tremendous improvement backed by tough enforcement. The course will take at least two days, will require qualification on each of the two days and will limit the “shoot until they make it” concept. It will

“Better security firms consider the State requirements the minimum level”

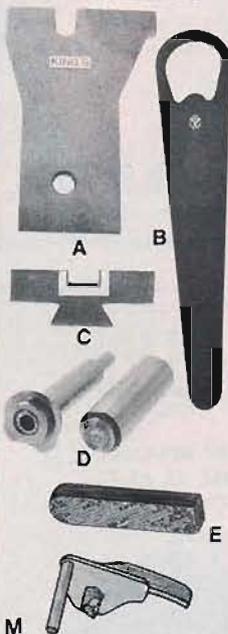
also be a great deal more expensive. Hopefully two distinct groups of security personnel will develop; low-paid, unarmed personnel and well paid, well-trained armed personnel.

The new requirements will also include the requalification process which is still just once a year. Officers leaving the employ of one company will have their permit become inactive. It must be reactivated by the next employer. This will stop the current practice of many companies of taking the firearms permit at face value, handing the guard a gun and putting him to work without checking his skill.

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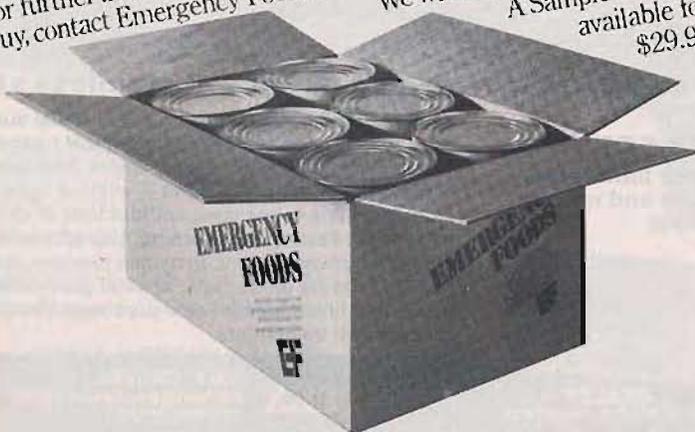
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“The initial firearms training covers both day and night shooting”

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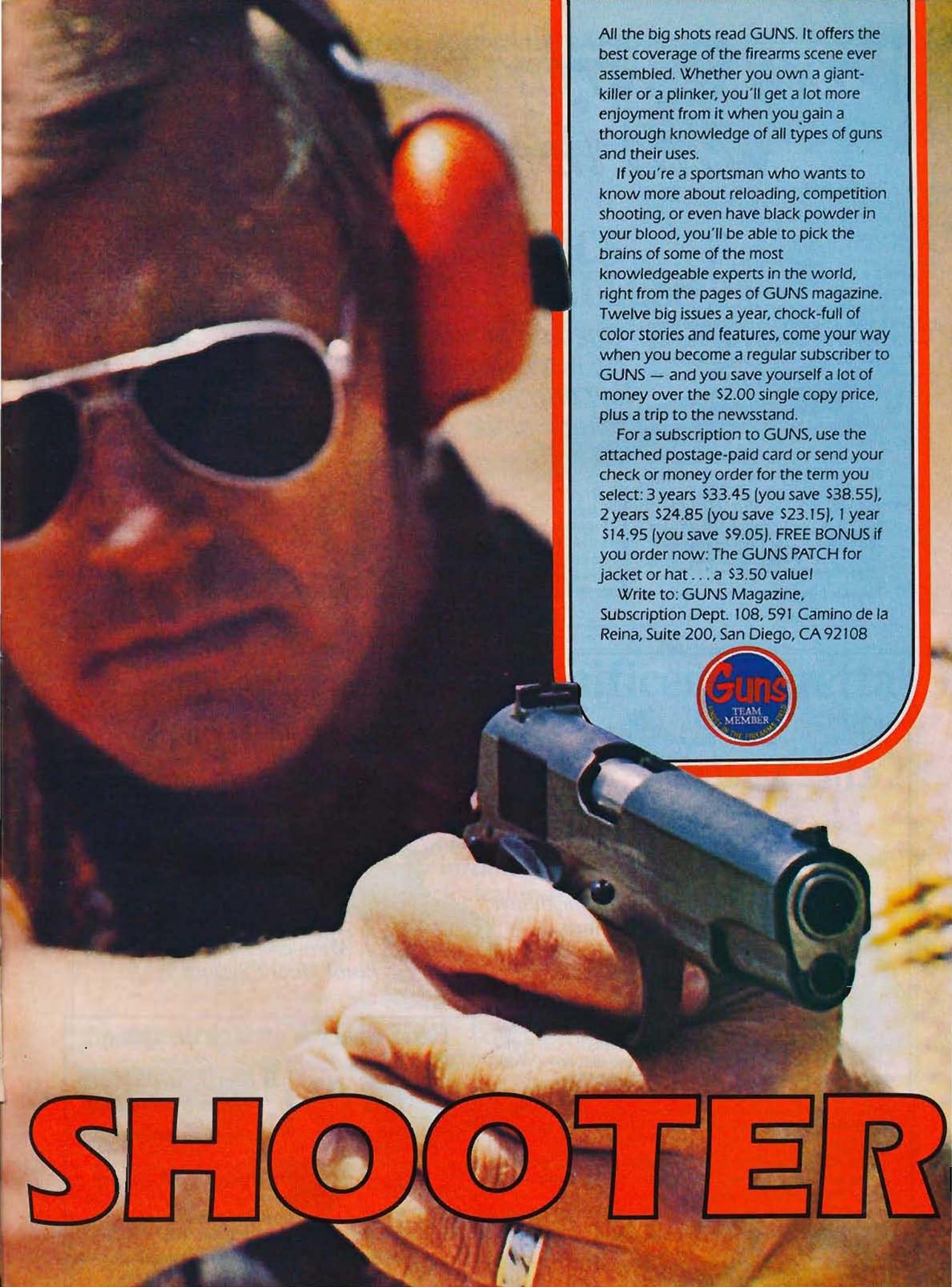
“All shooting involves speed draw from a locked holster”

portunities for competition and must re-qualify each quarter. All of our shooting involves a speed draw from a locked holster.

In California at least, fully accredited armed security officers will have been taught the basics, know when the gun should or should not be used and will qualify annually. These officers will also have been fingerprinted and checked for felony convictions. A client will know that a reasonable minimum has been maintained provided they check to see that the officers carry the required guard and firearms cards.

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SHOOTER

What's Wrong With the .45?

.45 ACP NEWS

By Gordon Stark

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, enough pages have been written about the .45 automatic to fill a very large book. This product of John Browning's genius should be so prominently displayed and hailed but is it the handgun to end all handguns as is so often stated? Maybe so, maybe no; let's see.

In order to allay any feelings of prejudice on my part, I ask that you consider the following:

1. My initiation to the field of centerfire pistols came by way of a Colt 1911 A-1. It was a lousy initiation.
2. The first, the very first, handgun to make its way into my modest heritage collection was a 1914 Springfield Armory .45 auto that to this day is highly revered.
3. The *sole* piece I have out of my safe,

*One man's opinion
... or are there more
out there who do not
think that the .45 auto
is the ultimate?*

ready for immediate action, is my lightweight Commander. Does that sound as if I'm about to embark upon a tirade against the most sainted handgun of this century? Hardly. However, I do believe the loudest noises made for its acceptance come from owners

who have poured substantial sums of money into their pieces. In other words, their guns are far cries from the out-of-the-box stuff we're speaking about.

For close-in combat or home defense, (these could be one and the same) pinpoint accuracy is not needed. A handgun that prints a 5" group at 25 yards will certainly be more than adequate for striking an attacker at 10 or 15 feet. Yes, I'm well aware that in some hands, some .45's will indeed produce tack driving accuracy. My circle of shooting friends does not include such masters, however. Most of us consider the one-gallon paint can to be a challenging target at 25 yards for the venerable auto. I'm also well aware that some unaltered .45's will print 2½" groups from a benchrest but then, we can't very well benchrest our shots at a mugger.

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Where size is important, the .45 auto really shines, particularly if it's nickle plated. (Sorry, I couldn't resist the pun.) Short and flat, very few revolvers can possibly match it for compactness. It is truly the answer to one's prayer for a pistol of modest proportions.

Power? Not even the most avid revolver hound would seriously question the power of our 75-year-old friend, especially at in-



The present Colt magazine is a pain in the butt to load with seven rounds.

close ranges. With round nosed, jacketed slugs, the .45 ACP is plenty adequate to stop that which needs stopping and do it right now. While I personally prefer semi-wadcutter, the old military stuff will do nicely.

From here on, the reasons for the .45's sainthood become a bit cloudy.

Upon firing, an auto pistol does kick out the empty shell, jack in a fresh round and cock the piece automatically. One merely keeps pulling the trigger until the gun is empty. Then what?

Auto proponents wax ecstatically over the fact that once empty, all the shooter has to do is slam in a handy magazine and he's off and running (shooting). Sounds so easy, doesn't it?

THE HANDY MAGAZINE

Just one of my gripes about the .45 auto is that handy magazine. Unless one has considerable money to blow, he will likely have the magazine that came with the gun and maybe a spare. Thus, the supply of fresh magazines is not limitless.

The point? Simply this: Those "fresh magazines" do not load themselves and loading one is a big pain in the neck. Forcing one .45 ACP on top of another gets more difficult with the addition of each round; so much that some folks I know stop at 5 rounds rather than risk temper & finger tips attempting the frustrating feeding of seven shells into the Colt box.

The Luger, in case you haven't looked at one in a while, has a beautiful button on the side of the magazine that lines up with the follower and is easily depressed with the left thumb while the right fingers literally drop each round in. Why Colt and

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other manufacturers haven't adopted this 80-year-old feature, I'll never know. Be that as it may, before we can enjoy those "handy magazines," we have to get the bloody things loaded. I've had any number of lady shooters and young boys candidly admit they couldn't load the clips and often gave up in disgust.

THE SLIDE

The most abominable feature of any American automatic, and the .45 in par-



The slide require more brute strength to manipulate than most people possess.

ticular, is the slide. As in the case with the "handy magazine," pulling the slide back is quite often a task that frankly embarrasses some shooters.

The very nature of the slide, i.e., a solid, tight fitting hunk of metal forced against a high tension spring, causes much grief. By cocking the hammer first, one can ease the burden but still, getting that first round chambered can be laborious.

That the .45 Colt isn't double action bothers me not. The double action feature of certain autos is, to my way of thinking, highly overrated. Most proponents of this system lead one, however inadvertently, to the erroneous conclusion the gun somehow manages to chamber the first round all by itself. Double action or not, the slide *must* be hand drawn and in that regard, we're right back where we started. There are simply too many non-athletic types out there who can't budge the fool things. Someday, perhaps, a genius from Canoga Park or St. Paul will give us a slide smooth as silk but for now, it is one of the two most disagreeable appendages to be found on our big autos.

THE TRIGGER

There is no nice way of putting it; triggers on most .45 autos are as crisp and clean breaking as the snapping of tree branches. Oh sure, you can always go to a competent gunsmith and have the action honed but why should you have to pay for all this when rightfully, the gun should come out of the box with a decent trigger pull? I, for one, don't appreciate seeing my knuckles turn white while awaiting that long anticipated event, the gun going off. It could be said, and quite accurately, that in the heat of an anxious moment, one doesn't give much thought to squeezing off his shots and a sloppy trigger won't even be noticed.

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By that same token, then, we must allow that a quality revolver fired double action is about the equal in firing speed. Feel perfectly free to disagree: I just can't stomach a sloppy trigger and resent having to pay for what the factory should have done in the first place.

SAFETY

Advocates of the Colt .45 auto point with great pride to the multiple ways in which their babies can be kept in safe condition.



This enthusiasm, however, is not shared by the good folks back in Hartford. Just look at the myriad disclaimers filling the owner's handbook. Colt makes no bones about the fact they cannot and will not guarantee any of their so-called safety features.

For personal reasons, I choose not to disclose, I keep my Commander stored in

**"Colt will not
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condition #3. This *does* require my pulling the slide back to get the gun into battery, a most annoying and time consuming task, but I can feel 100% safe in the knowledge the gun can't go off. In your own home, you *may* find condition #3 worthy of consideration if for no other reason than it makes fooling around by the very young almost impossible, a plus for the cumbersome slide. For "carrying," condition #1 is the only way to go. Just remember which situation you're operating under or the results could be disastrous.

If the four points just cited sound as if this writer is making a wholesale indictment against the .45 auto, forget it. I sim-

ply feel the grand old gun has been pushed into sainthood by too many writers who know better or choose to ignore the pistol's obvious shortcomings. After all, for every Jeff Cooper or Charlie Askins, there are



The joy of loading a .45 clip is something few look forward to.

hundreds of novices who *may* have no business whatever fooling around with the .45 auto. This would hold particularly in the case of the man or woman looking for the all-around handgun, which the .45 auto is not.

For the sake of fairness, let's quickly repeat that our subject is a fine, compact weapon with more than adequate power as



Those of us who are not musclemen may have a hard time pulling back the slide of the old war horse .45.

a man-stopper used within reasonable ranges. For military and police personnel, thoroughly familiar with the .45 auto, it makes a superb sidearm. In the hands of an adult physically endowed with strength sufficient to manipulate the crude loading process, it can be a truly great home defender. In highly accurized form, it has few peers on the target ranges. And that, my friends, is just about the end of the line.

For most hunting, the .45 auto is out of the question. Actually, its rainbow trajectory makes it poor for "down range" shooting of any kind. And, the mere process of getting the beast loaded and into battery is, I feel, the strongest reason for considering something more suitable.

So there you are. Make your own evaluation. Just don't get swept up in the aura of ecstasy put out by the macho types who eat and sleep with the .45 auto and have done so for years. Your handgun has to fit *your* needs and don't you



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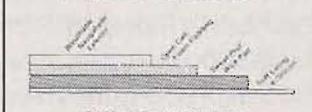
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HANDGUN M.V.

By Claud S. Hamilton

If the truth were known, I suppose factory claims for muzzle velocity have sold as many handguns as any other single feature. I think that there can be little doubt that this has been true since the beginning of "the age of the Magnums" after World War II.

Did you ever wonder just how close your favorite gun comes to delivering ad-



Shooting tests were conducted over a chronograph for positive conclusions.

vertised velocity with the loads you use? Until I began handloading two years ago, I never seriously wondered about this and assumed that the makers were giving me the "straight dope." Ah, but I am older and wiser now. When I took up loading seriously I also began to do a lot of reading and research and I found that the prevailing view was that no two guns even of identical make were very likely to produce the same velocity, and that ammunition was pretty uniformly advertised somewhat beyond its actual capabilities. That was the prevailing school of opinion, I found, and it was pretty well summarized in Speer's Number 9 Loading Manual where, on pages 348-350 the author explains "Why Ballisticians Get

Grey." The discussion culminates with a listing of thirty-one handguns and rifles made for the .357 Magnum cartridge, with barrels from 2½ inches to 24 inches, and shows the wide variations in velocity achieved with identical ammunition even by guns of identical make and model and with the same barrel length! It is a truly impressive listing and contains some spreads between guns of as much as 200 fps for identical models!

Well, this was the state of my education when I, dumbly, let myself get suckered into a bet recently. Not that I really was played for a sucker; I wasn't. It's just that I haven't got the money to be betting on things. I've got a friend with whom I work

"Don't bother him with the facts, he's already made up his head"

quite a bit. His one big fault is that whatever he's got is the best. You know what I mean? You learn quick not to argue about his new car or his new house, because you're never going to convince him. "Don't bother him with the facts, he's made up his head."

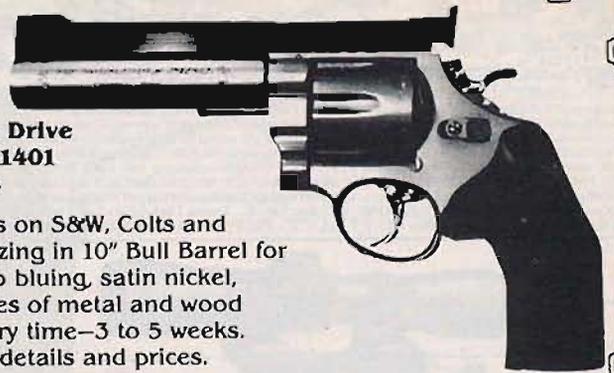
Well, George got himself one of these new stainless steel AMT "Hardballers." I've seen them. They're quite something all in natural brush finish grey, and they have adjustable sights and triggers like the Gold Cup. Well for a week all I heard was about that Hardballer, and in particular, about the high velocities he got with certain makes of full metal jacket ammunition in it. Now George hasn't got a chronograph, and he knows about 10% of what he thinks he knows about guns. He's got no idea what sort of velocity he gets out of that gun.

Well, I listened to this for a week and pretty well followed my old formula of "don't argue with George, it never gets you anywhere..." but then I lost my cool. One afternoon when everything was going wrong that could, George spoke up and before you know it I'd bet him that a new Colt Series 70/Mk IV would out shoot his Hardballer anytime. What's worse, I put up fifty dollars on it. Later on I got to thinking about why I had done such a dumb stunt; I hadn't anything better than a hunch to bet on. Just a gut feeling that Colt's quality control has been

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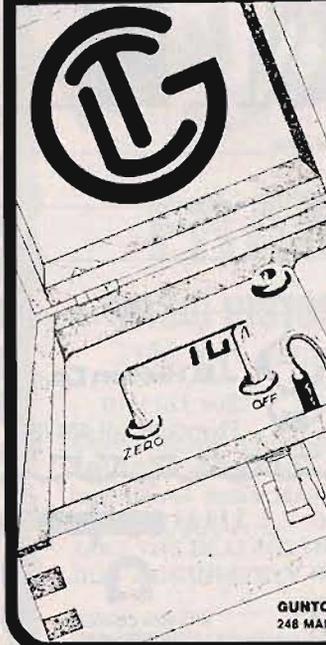
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real good lately, and they've been making that gun a lot longer than anyone else. Also, I had the unofficial word of a friendly police ballistics expert that their new barrels these days are very smooth and well finished.

On the other hand stainless steels have a long standing reputation for being cantankerous and hard to work with in the machine shop. The varieties of stainless used for gun barrels have a reputation for just about doubling the life of a rifle barrel, and to me that means toughness. And toughness means machining difficulty. Good as the Hardballers are, I was betting that their barrels were not quite as smooth



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as a new Colt, and that the added friction would cost velocity.

The other day I was singing the blues about my dumb bet to Haywood Nelms, a gunsmith friend, when to my complete surprise he agreed with me and volunteered to put up the new Colt for the shoot off... that was a load off my mind because I didn't have one and wasn't about to buy one just to win a bet. One thing led to another, and before I knew it Haywood had set up a side bet with a local gun dealer friend of his, and the two of them agreed to supply another Hardballer and Colt for the shoot "to give the test a little more validity." Outnumbered and outflanked at this point, I agreed to furnish the ammunition and the chronograph and they, trusting souls, agreed to let me do the shooting! Such trust is a rare thing these days!

First off I looked over all four guns very carefully. Three were still in the factory boxes, and George's Hardballer hadn't had more than 100 rounds through it, if that many. While I didn't expect to find anything wrong, if there were anything I wanted to find it and avoid later confusion and recriminations. Based upon their serial numbers, I decided to call the guns "Colt No 1, Colt No 2, AMT No 1 and AMT No 2." My visual inspection turned up absolutely nothing wrong anywhere. Interestingly, the two Colts turned out to be nickel, and they definitely felt a little "slicker" to operate than the Hardballers. All the bores were clean and sharp and I could detect no difference by eye.

Next I checked over the chronograph and loaded all of my junk for the trip to



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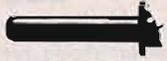
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the ranges at Quantico. The Marines there have been mighty kind to allow me the occasional use of their ranges when the training schedule permits.

Before taking off for the range, I selected three boxes of relatively new ammunition:

- Norma 230 grain JHP lot 09901
- Remington 230 grain FMJ lot LD20N
- Western 230 grain FMJ lot 32LE22

It seemed fairer to try all four guns with at least three different brands of ammunition.

I picked a particularly cold day for the shoot, though not intentionally. Upon getting to the range and setting up my M500D Chronograph Specialists instrument, everything checked out initially but no soap. No readings. I'd made the mistake of leaving the set with batteries installed in the car over night and those little "C" cells just won't take too much cold weather. Fortunately, a spare set of warm batteries was on hand and the shooting got underway under a leaden, snowy sky. It is an interesting thing but my chronograph seems to work best with that sort of lighting conditions. The one problem I sometimes have with it arises from the very small four inch slits looking upward in the skyscreens; I've learned to tape a pair of balsa sticks about eight inches long to the far end of each skyscreen to mark the right and left ends of the slit. In that way I can keep my shots well above and between the sticks. Unlike a well known gun writer I know, I try to shoot over the skyscreens, not at them . . . they seem to work so much better that way.

Shooting over the chronograph seems to go fast when you're not at the same time trying to make your finest groups as well. Here are the results I got, by gun and ammunition brand. (I won't take up space with a listing of all the ten shot readings but just give the resulting averages.)

Ammunition	Colt 1	Colt 2	Amt 1	Amt 2
Norma 230 grain JHP	737	739	734	742
Average: 738 fps				

I had no advertised data available on this load, but was not surprised by its relatively low velocity. It felt quite mild to shoot, and the weather was quite cold. What did surprise me was the amazing uniformity of results between the four guns.

Ammunition	Colt 1	Colt 2	Amt 1	Amt 2
Remington 230 grain FMJ	783	789	785	782
Average: 785 fps				
Western Super X 230 grain FMJ	801	793	799	795
Average: 797 fps				

Both of these loads are advertised at higher velocities . . . in the 810 to 850 fps range depending upon the age of your literature.

I found this closeness-of velocities to be

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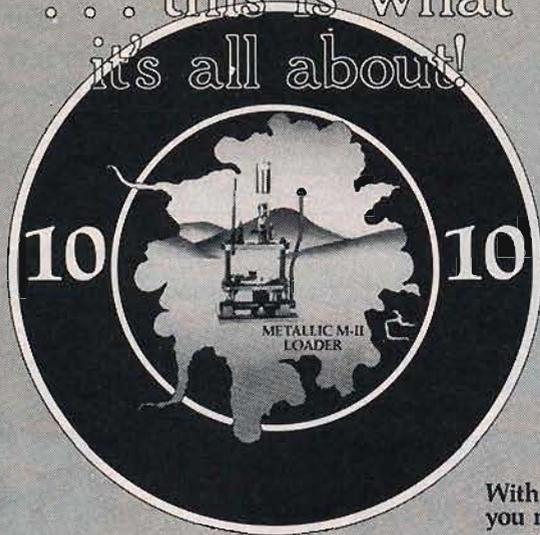
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a very interesting development. It seemed to fly in the face of all that I had learned so far about handguns, and it certainly did not fit in with the Speer results mentioned earlier. As I thought about it, though, I began to see it through the eyes of an old Field Artilleryman, and then it did not seem at all strange. Pistols, such as the 1911, are really very much like scaled down versions of howitzers, in their dimensions, velocities and even pressures. Small differences in muzzle velocity between howitzers of the same kind are common, not the exception. The last battalion of 105 mm howitzers I calibrated in Korea years ago came out with a total spread of between 2 and -39 fps when corrected to the firing table standard con-

**"Muzzle velocity
correlates very
closely to tube wear"**

ditions of weather. That was 37 fps differences between eighteen howitzers of very varied age and background.

For all intents and purposes, the four pistols I'd tested had been new. That made sense, too. New howitzers shoot very close to the firing table values, and we know that muzzle velocity correlates very closely with tube wear. The more rounds through a gun the less the velocity it will be able to achieve. One more good reason why the pistols tested should be so close.

As I've said, I wasn't much concerned about the seemingly low velocities recorded. For one thing, the factories use test barrels that are longer than those in handguns and their velocities can be expected to be somewhat higher . . . and who can really blame the maker for printing these? More importantly, I did my firing in near freezing weather with cold guns and ammunition. The guns were rotated in firing so that they would heat up evenly and together. Although we don't have any specific dope on handguns, as we do with artillery, it's only logical to expect cold powder and cold guns to add up to lower pressures and velocities . . . at least in most cases.¹

Just to confirm my test results, I refired two of the guns used, Colt 2 and AMT 2, to see if my small sampling of shots had been a fluke. No such luck. The new results were within ten feet per second of what I had gotten originally with these guns.

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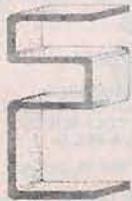
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Had I done this shoot with just one of each type gun I would have been surprised by the results. Shooting four off against each other was something else again, and I must admit that I was impressed. Quite evidently pistols are not subject to the same widespread velocity variations as are revolvers. And, thinking about it, I saw that this was not at variance with the Speer test results, either. All of the guns used in their shoot were revolvers except for one or two rifles and a Contender.

Thinking about this discovery, I began to wonder if there were not something remaining to be done. It occurred to me that to further reinforce my conclusion it would be good to be able to shoot off at

**"Barrel gap is
a hard dimension
to control during
manufacturing"**

least a pair of identical revolvers against each other using the same ammunition to see how the results might compare. Fortunately for me, in recent years I have managed to come by a pair of Smith & Wesson 1917 Army revolvers from Maryland's master gunsmith, Mr. N. F. Strebe. Mr. Strebe tells me that these guns came to him in 1950 as part of an Army rebuild contract . . . evidently even as late as the Korean War consideration was given to possibly using them as issue weapons again. Both passed to him when the Army decided to cancel the rebuild contract and sell the entire batch as surplus. Mr. Strebe bought the lot with an eye on their future collector value. One of mine his gun works rebuilt beautifully. The other, in his opinion, has never been fired since leaving Smith & Wesson's plant in 1918!

Now the effective barrel length of the 1917 Smith — the actual distance the bullet travels — is 5¹/₈ inches compared to almost exactly four inches in the 1911 pistol barrel. If the barrels were of the same type, one might logically expect the longer revolver barrel to generate slightly more velocity. The revolver barrel gap is the problem. This is an exceedingly hard dimension to control in manufacture, and it often varies not only between guns but between the chambers of a single cylinder! It is this variation in gap that I believe causes the wide variations in revolver velocities Speer identified.

The following Friday I made my way to Quantico again with the pair of 1917

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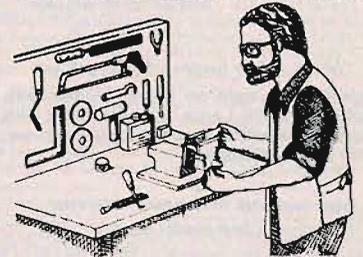
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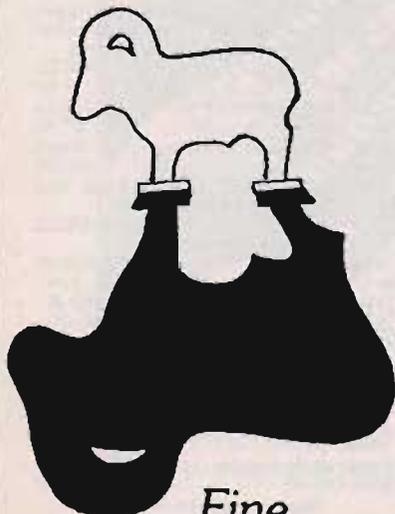
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Smiths and set up the chronograph as before. This time the weather was a little bit warmer and the shoot went even faster than before. Here's what I got:

Ammunition	1917-1	1917-2
Norma 230 grain JHP	792	733
Remington 230 grain FMJ	848	771
Western Super X 230 grain FMJ	855	805

I know. At this point the thoughtful reader will be quick to point out that I "changed the rules of the game" a little

**"This time the
weather was warmer
and the shoot went
even faster"**

this time, although not intentionally. Only one of the revolvers could qualify as "new" in the sense that the four pistols were. The other, 1917-2, had been rebuilt by Mr. Strebe's gun works. But the results do have a certain validity. I have reason to believe that Mr. Strebe installed a new Smith & Wesson barrel in that gun at the time of rebuild.

So, all in all, I think that my conclusion is pretty well supported. The revolvers

**"It wasn't a wasted
exercise, I learned
quite a bit from it"**

averaged a velocity difference of over 50 feet per second, much greater than that for the four new pistols!

Oh, yeah . . . no one won the original bet. After seeing the results we all agreed that it was a pretty even match and just too close to call! And it sure wasn't a wasted exercise for me. I learned quite a bit from it.

¹Neal Knox, of *Rifle and Handloader* fame, has pointed out instances in which certain ball powders used in loads made up for police officers serving in very cold temperatures have been known to detonate on firing. Very little seems to be known about this phenomenon; I mention it since ball powders are coming into such wide use these days.

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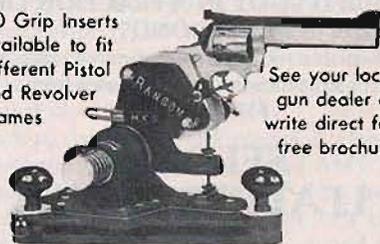
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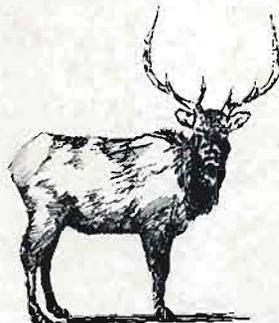
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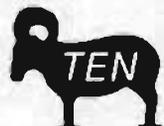
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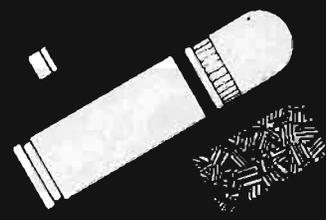
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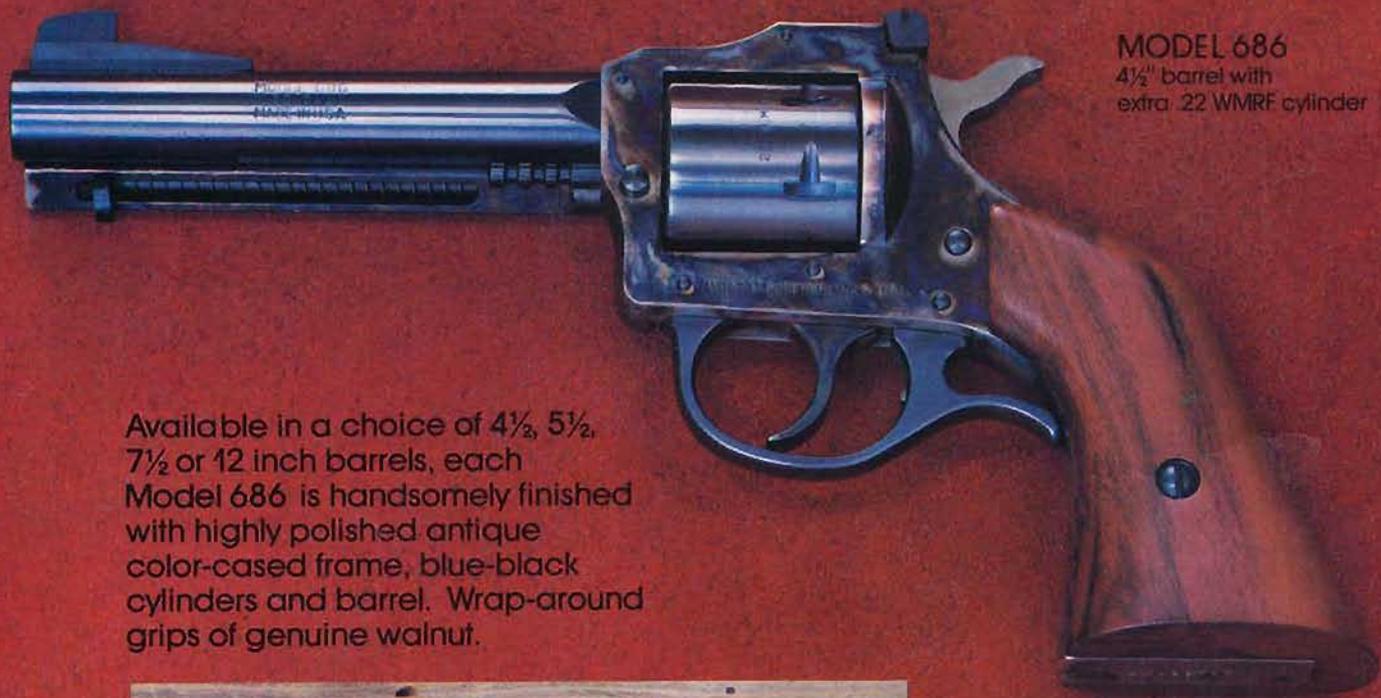
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