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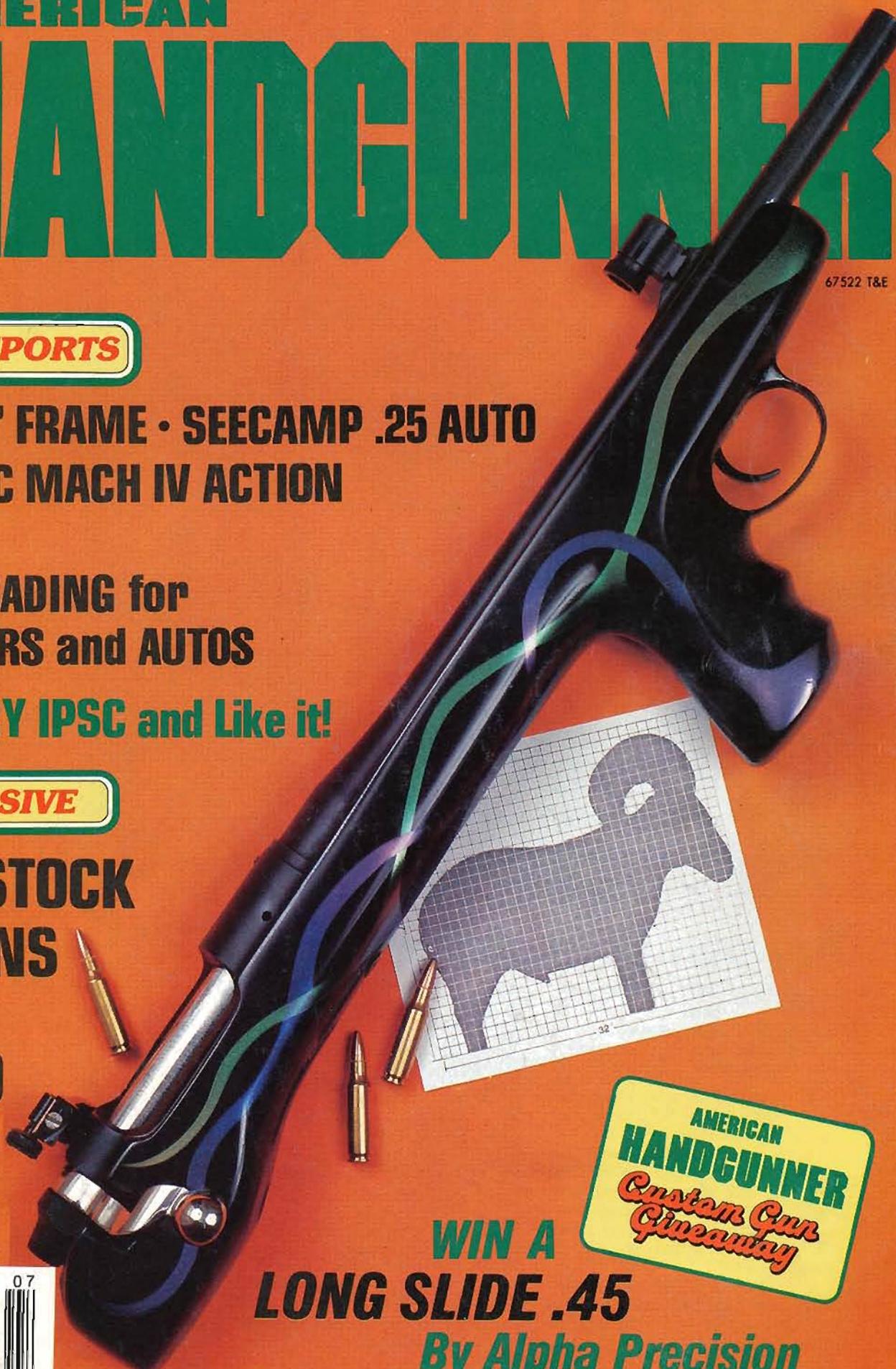
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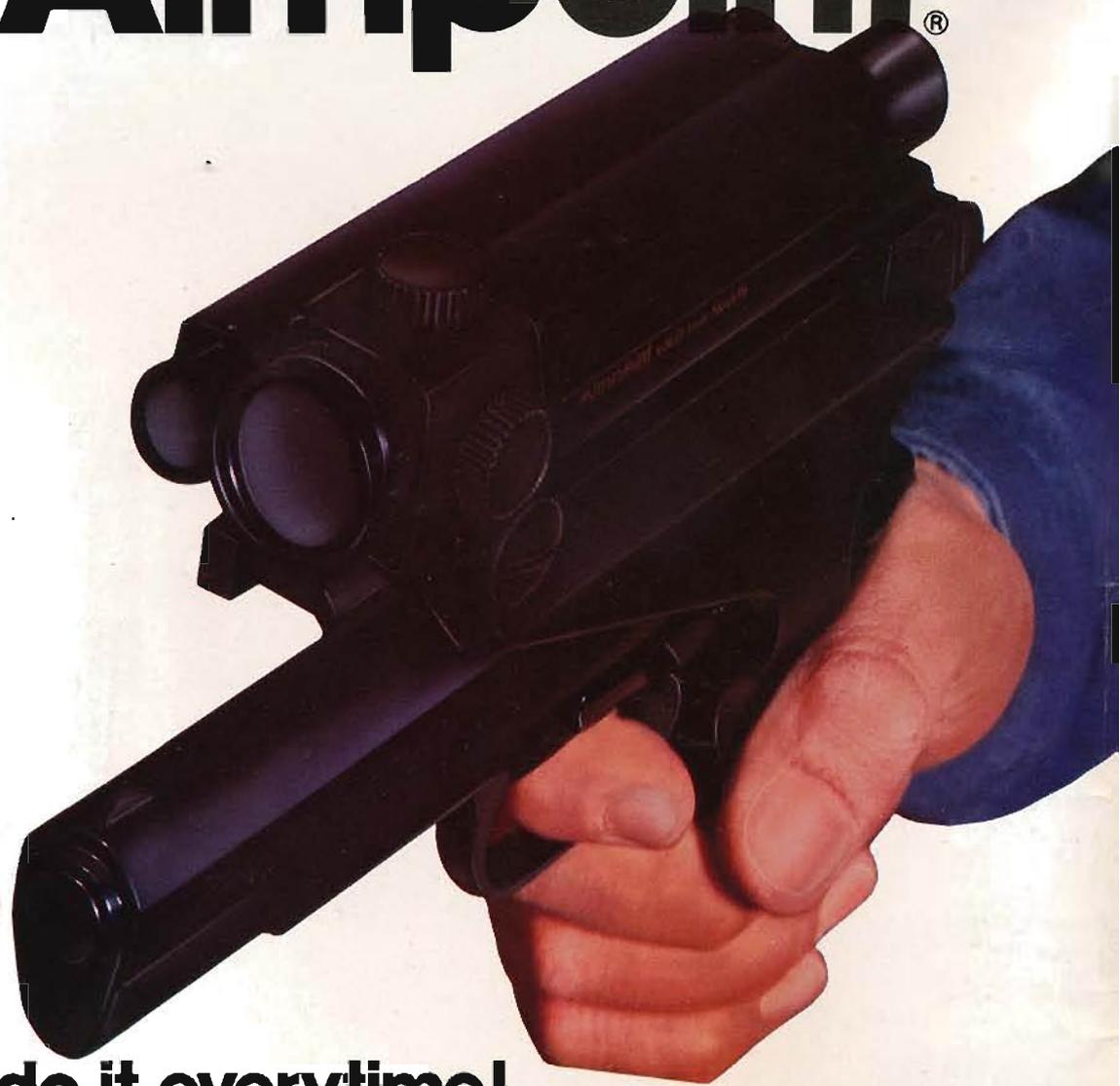


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# AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

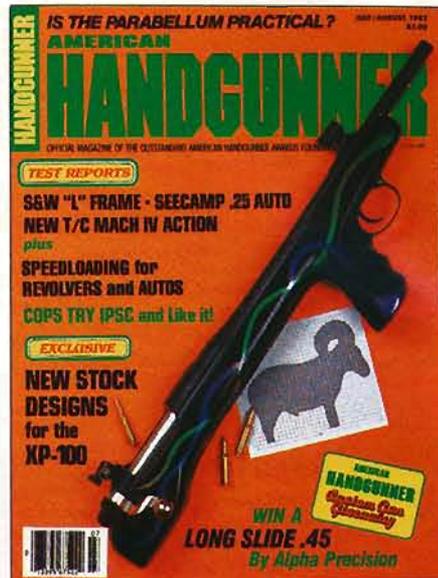
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COVER: Master craftsmen develop practical, exotic stocks for XP-100. Photo by Nick Karras.

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# INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

## ARMY DROPS 9mm AUTO SEARCH; STICKS WITH THE COLT .45 M-1911

On Friday, February 19, the Pentagon announced that its plans to replace the .45 Colt auto with a new 9mm double action have been canceled. A spokesman was quoted as saying: "It was not possible to make an award, because the submitted weapon samples of all offerers have substantially failed to meet the essential requirements contained in the procurement solicitation." One concern, he said, "was the ability to operate in mud and sand."

This announcement will bring cheers from the hard-core supporters of M-1911, and dismay from the manufacturers of 9mm D.A. pistols who were banking on military acceptance of the 9mm to bolster sales of guns of that caliber on the civilian market.

There are questions that still remain, such as: Is there still a possibility that the

military will consider conversion of the present stock of .45s to 9mm and double action? Will this move bolster the efforts of those who are proposing the .40 caliber, or 10mm cartridge, as a replacement for the .45? Just how will the civilian market react to the bursting of the 9mm bubble?

We hear that several gunsmiths have offered unsolicited proposals to the military to convert existing .45s to 9mm at costs running from about \$9. to \$12 per gun. Interesting, but that would leave the U.S. with a 9mm auto that does not have some of the requirements the military requested—double action, ambidextrous safety, large-capacity magazine, etc. What price NATO compatibility?

### S&W "No"

Several people called saying that they

heard that S&W has a .40 caliber auto in the works. This came from a recent police equipment show in Los Angeles. A S&W spokesman said that what these reporters heard was the question, but not the answer. He tells *American Handgunner* that "No, S&W does not have such a gun in the works."

### Look Alikes

Ever wonder why the Taurus revolvers look so much like S&W's? Simple, they are built in what once was the S&W plant in Brazil. Ever wonder why the Taurus PT-92 auto pistol looks so much like the Beretta? Simple, they are made in what was the Beretta plant in Brazil.

### Ban the Bad Bullets

A recent issue of "Gun Week" reported seeing a copy of a Justice Department draft of a bill which would amend the U.S. Penal Code to establish sanctions for the manufacture, importation, sale, transfer, possession or use of armor-piercing handgun ammo. The "Gun Week" article concludes; "As has become standard with such bills, the person drafting them doesn't know what he/she is talking about and is unable to define (handgun or bullet-proof vest, in this instance). So he leaves that up to the secretary or the attorney general in this case. Which means that since he doesn't know either, it will be left up to some bureaucrat of the future. The final result could be to legislate every pistol or revolver out of existence . . . via some distorted and improper 'armor-piercing' reasoning."

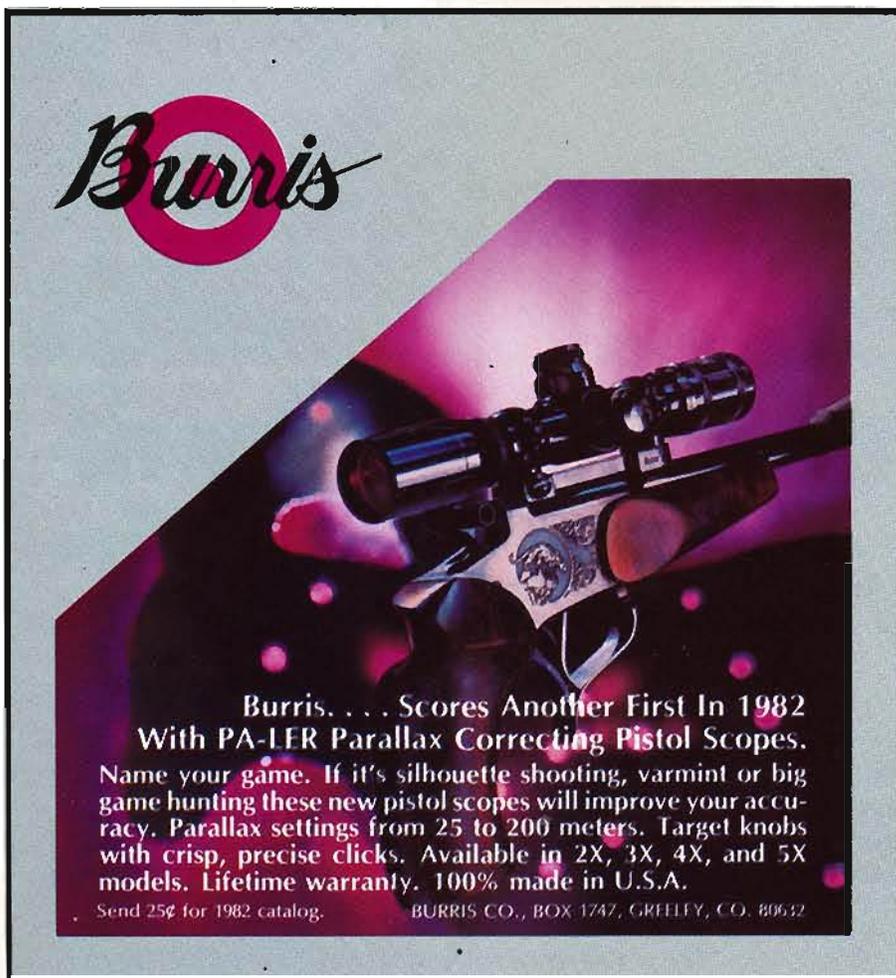
### So What Else is New?

The story on the TV news was that a classy shop on Rodeo Drive in Los Angeles was offering "designer guns." While they did not show the actual gun being offered, they did say that it had gold decorations and exotic leather grips. How about that? The *American Handgunner* has been showing "designer guns" for the last five years, and some of them would, I am sure, put those offered by the posh boutique to shame. I don't think, however, that we will change from our practice of calling them custom guns, executed not by Jordache or Calvin Klein, but by some of the finest custom pistolsmiths in the world.

### Nyclad Lives

When Smith & Wesson announced that they were going out of the ammo business, the most asked question was: "What will become of the Nyclad ammo?" Many felt that these handgun rounds were just reaching a high plateau of acceptance, and that their demise at this time would be unfortunate.

Well, worry not. On March 3, Federal Cartridge Corp. announced that they had purchased the exclusive rights to manufacture the Nyclad line of handgun ammo. So watch for the Nyclad rounds bearing Federal headstamps in the near future. 



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## PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN G. LAWSON

### FIELD TESTING A NEWLY-ACCURIZED .45 IS UP TO SHOOTER, NOT 'SMITH

Field testing a newly-accurized pistol is up to you, because most gunsmiths do not have the proper facilities to perform a critical 200-round field test, without which accuracy, functionality and reliability are question marks.

Before firing any pistol, field strip it carefully and remove grease or other preservative compound and visually check for readiness to fire. Before removing the recoil spring plug, press the slide back ½" and use a properly-fitting bushing wrench, if it is required. It is important not to "wring" the closely fitted end of the barrel and bushing together where they normally

should be solid and impact should not have drifted during the firing of 200 rounds, after initial sight-in. If the front blade has worked loose, it was improperly installed and should be replaced with a new sight. Never attempt to re-tighten a loosened front blade without proper tools. Loc-Tite alone will not retain a blade; it must be swaged in place. If the rear mount is loose, it is either improperly anchored, or it needs an adhesive on the screw threads. On low-mounted BoMar sights, a screw may be too long, causing interference with the striker spring. Grind it off and re-set.

If grip screws are loose, you can tighten them with a properly-fitting screw driver. Should the grip screw bushings or the frame be stripped, preventing proper tightening, you will have to obtain new screws and bushings. Set the bushings with LocTite or Epoxe, especially in alloy frame weapons. Do not reef on the screw driver as a substitute. Grip screws are put in dry after the adhesive has set in the bushings.

If the pistol does not feed, try some other magazines. The usual feed problem with a new accuracy job is failure to lock up all the way into battery. This becomes



**Altering spring tension will reduce long trigger inertia/hammer follow-down.**

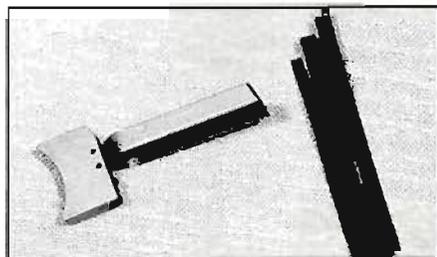
come to rest in battery. Most barrels are slightly relieved to allow easier bushing removal, but this may not be apparent.

Always unscrew a solid rod follower, should your pistol be fitted with one, to allow bushing removal in the position ½" to the rear of the critical fitted area. Never forget this simple precaution, because a single wringing together of barrel and bushing could destroy your accuracy potential, or at least lower it considerably.

Brace your wrist on a sandbag rest, depressing the bag so that you are supported in a natural firing position with free upward movement. Do not brace any part of the pistol on the bag. Pistol rests, such as the Lee and Ransom, are valuable for testing handloads and small batches of factory ammo; but they will not give you the precise, actual firing conditions that a sandbag will.

After firing 200 rounds of your match loads you will have put yourself on familiar terms with your new accuracy job. Any problems that are going to show up will float to the surface in this session. Better now than during a critical match.

First, check your sights. Front and rear



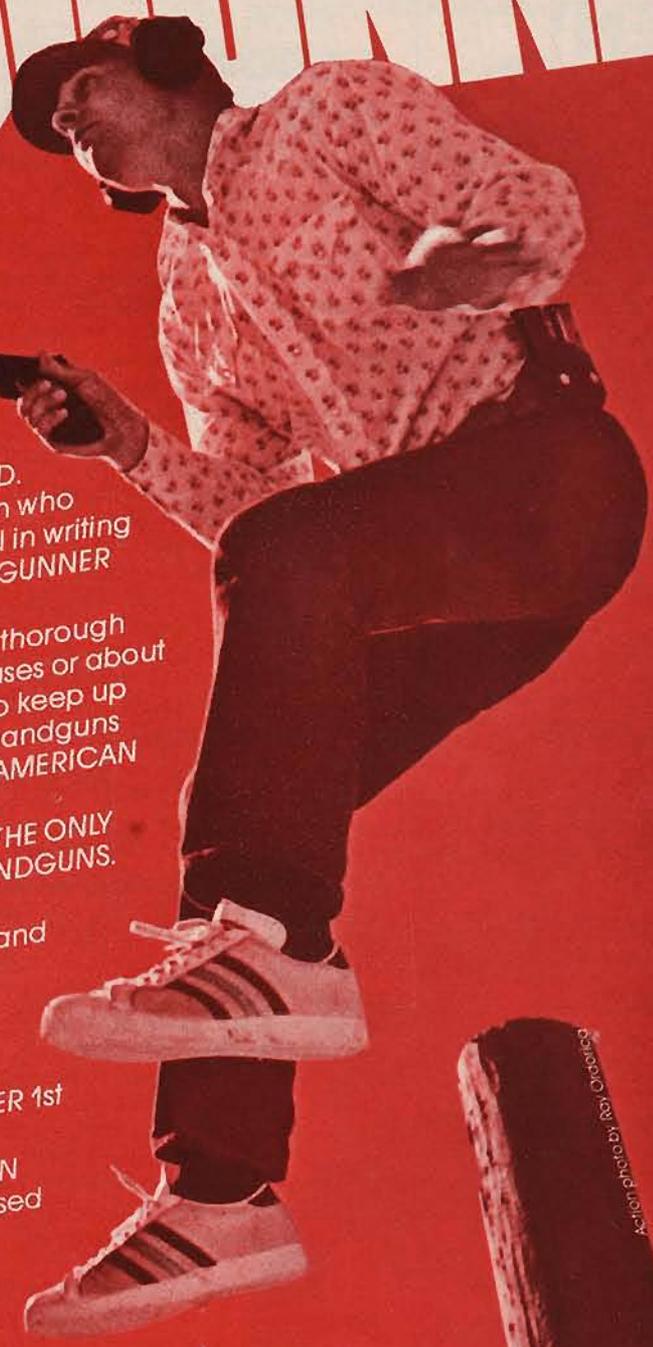
**Slide must draw bushing clear of fitted portion of barrel at tip of wrench.**

apparent when you apply some 35 pounds of trigger pull and nothing happens. Click the slide forward into battery, then extract the loaded round. Check the forward portion of the extraction canneler for extractor marks. If present, the extractor needs a very light stoning to remove the rough spot, usually the bottom edge of the extractor hook and possibly a ridge on the side corresponding to the rim. Do not remove appreciable metal and use only the finest Arkansas knife stone. (Stoning also solves most ejection problems.)

If the pistol grates when being cocked, cycling the slide, check the recoil spring

*Continued on page 28*

# HANDGUNNER



The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine is written for the competitor, sportsman, collector, hunter, combat shooter and lawman. If you're one of these or just enjoy fine handguns, you can share in the knowledge and experiences of men like Massad Ayoob, Mason Williams, J.D. Jones and James Mason. They're men who really know handguns and who excel in writing about them in The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine.

If you're a man who wants to gain a thorough knowledge of handguns and their uses or about reloading and pistolsmithing, and to keep up with the latest action concerning handguns today, it's time to subscribe to The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.

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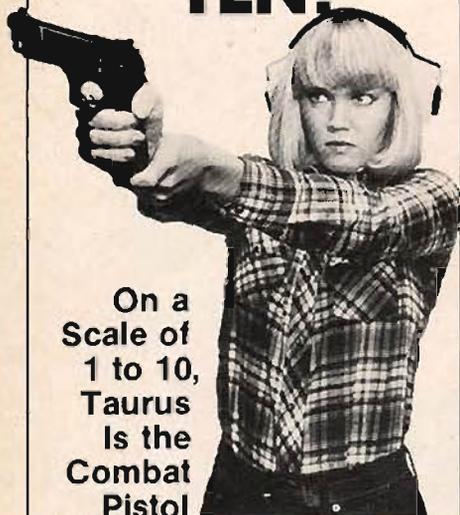
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# The PERFECT TEN!



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Compare three top combat pistols—the Colt Government Model, Beretta 92S and Taurus PT-92/PT-99. You'd want all of them on your side. Big, tough, they pump out the rounds during the most miserable field conditions. But Taurus is the only one that's a perfect 10—a slim margin over the nearly-identical Beretta, but a perfect 10 makes the difference. Check these 10 important points.

	Taurus	Beretta	Colt
Large-Frame Semi-Automatic Used by the Military World Wide	X	X	X
9MM Parabellum Cartridge	X	X	X
Plastic or Wood (extra) Grips	X	X	X
Double Action Lanyard-Style Hammer	X	X	X
15-Round Magazine Capacity	X	X	
Chamber-Load Indicator	X	X	
Combat Trigger Guard Rear Sights	X	X	
Adjustable for Windage/Elevation			

You can bet your life on the performance of your Taurus pistol, and it costs substantially less. Two models—PT-92 (fixed sights, thermo plastic resin grips) and PT-99 (walnut grips, adjustable rear sight).



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## COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

### EX-BORDER PATROLMAN BILL TONEY GETS CREDIT FOR PPC DISCIPLINE

In the February, 1960 issue of GUNS Magazine the cover story featured the national police combat pistol championships. Back then, it was a 50-shot FBI course, sponsored by the police science program at the University of Indiana at Bloomington, and financially supported by Colt.

Bill Toney, an ace Border Patrol hand-gunner and one of the top combat revolver shots of the period, wrote the article. Re-reading it now, 20 years later, is more than just a trip down memory lane.

It's the fashion today to mock PPC ("Practical Police Course") shooting as irrelevant. You have to read that copy of GUNS to understand how far the game has come in two decades.

In the 1960 article, most cops shot their service guns. They were limited to 6" maximum barrel length, .38 caliber minimum. The big winners shot S&W model 14's, then known as the K-38 Masterpiece, with some also using the now-obsolete Colt equivalent, the Officer's Model. A few Pythons were on the scene, too.

Toney, writing of the event (in which he placed a creditable fifth), made some telling points. He didn't care for the fact that at seven yards, officers were required to shoot from the hip. As he put it, "pointing from shoulder level without use of sights is more accurate, and requires only a fraction of a second more time. Also, the firing position, "from the hip," is difficult to define for competition. Instead of arbitrarily

### It's the fashion today to mock PPC shooting as irrelevant

The course was fired on the Colt FBI target, the silhouette with the bowling pin-shaped kill zone, in which any hit counted as a full five points. I was amazed to read that only 2 of the 300 shooters who participated scored a full 250 points (they were firing 50 shots in 5-shot sequences). It dawned on me that if I had been born early enough, I could have been national champion; the last time I fired PPC on the Colt silhouette, I was using a stock Colt Python service revolver, and I scored 300 out of 300 with 56 of the 60 shots in the tie-breaking X-ring.

Am I that good? Hell, no! Thousands of cops routinely shoot that well. Out of the thousand or so cops who show up for the Nationals every year at Jackson, I figure 850 could have won the 1960 championships, if they had been there *then*, with the skills they have *now*.

Double action revolver shooting was a very young science in 1960. By 1980, the techniques developed by the sort of police pioneers who shot that Indiana match had been refined, and had been trained into even the basic recruits. Never mind the Douglas barreled BoMar ribbed PPC guns of today. I'm talking about ability with an out-of-the-box double action revolver.

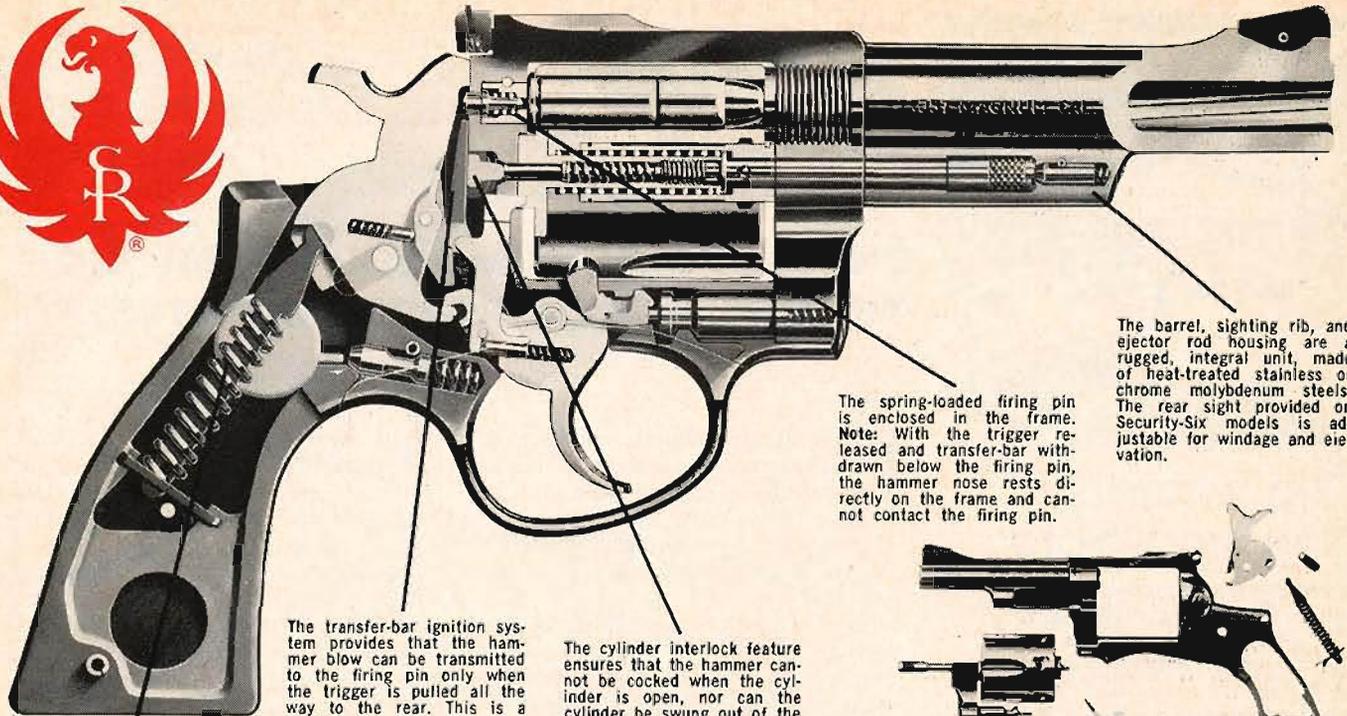
imposing a position, which may or may not be wise and which is difficult to enforce, a shorter time limit for drawing and firing is suggested. Let the competitor choose the most effective position."

Some of Toney's advice took hold. It wasn't long before they went to point-shoulder at seven yards in police combat competition, and soon, they were using the sights. When speedloaders were permitted, that stage became an automatic twelve-in-the-same-hole for anybody who was into the course. Street confrontations have proven the wisdom of Toney's advice. The cops who survive close-range gunfights are usually the ones who point the gun with their eyes, instead of from the hip. Why do they call that "instinct shooting?" There is no human instinct to point from the hip; what is instinctive is to point at eye level!

At Bloomington in 1960, Toney clocked the shooters in the prone position stage. He found it took them an average of 9.3 seconds from the starting signal to get belly-down and fire the first shot. I've run a lot of PPC shoots, and today's competitor takes more like twelve seconds before he fires his first shot from the braced position at 50 yards. In IPSC, by contrast, you figure on three to five seconds between the starting whistle and the first bang, when a shooter

Judging by the pictures that accom-

*Continued on page 21*



The barrel, sighting rib, and ejector rod housing are a rugged, integral unit, made of heat-treated stainless or chrome molybdenum steels. The rear sight provided on Security-Six models is adjustable for windage and elevation.

The spring-loaded firing pin is enclosed in the frame. Note: With the trigger released and transfer-bar withdrawn below the firing pin, the hammer nose rests directly on the frame and cannot contact the firing pin.

The transfer-bar ignition system provides that the hammer blow can be transmitted to the firing pin only when the trigger is pulled all the way to the rear. This is a positive internal safety feature designed to prevent firing if the revolver is dropped accidentally, or if the hammer spur receives a sharp blow.

The cylinder interlock feature ensures that the hammer cannot be cocked when the cylinder is open, nor can the cylinder be swung out of the frame when the hammer is cocked.

Music wire or stainless steel coil springs are used throughout the Ruger double action revolvers.



FIELD STRIPPED VIEW

# RUGER® Double Action Revolvers

These are the revolvers created by Ruger engineers who started with a fresh sheet of paper and an unlimited budget! There is nothing in the design of these Ruger double action revolvers which is there simply because "it has always been done that way"; nothing which reflects a commitment to outmoded production methods or obsolete factory facilities. Representing a significant improvement in design, these revolvers incorporate creative Ruger engineering, sophisticated manufacturing techniques, and superior materials.

The Ruger design philosophy of strength, simplicity, and ease of maintenance has been applied throughout the design of these revolvers. Composed of a series of integrated subassemblies, the Ruger double action revolver can be field stripped to its basic components in seconds, without the use of tools. The entire lock mechanism is installed through the bottom of the grip frame as a unit, permitting the use of solid frame side-walls which contribute to the great strength of these revolvers. The complex milled-out frames and delicately fitted side-plates of other double action revolvers, and the difficulties of maintenance and weaknesses inherent in older designs are eliminated entirely.

The finest materials are used in Ruger double action revolvers. Music wire or stainless steel coil springs are used throughout and frames, cranes, cylinders, and barrels are of heat-treated stainless or chrome molybdenum steels. Most of the small internal parts of *all* models of Ruger double action revolvers are made of stainless steel.

In addition to traditional Ruger quality and dependable performance, the shooter enjoys the advantages of the durable stainless steel mechanism parts, even in standard blued models.



Ruger Security-Six Revolver in 357 Magnum caliber with rear sight adjustable for windage and elevation. Choice of 2 3/4", 4", or 6" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.



Ruger Police Service-Six Revolver in 357 Magnum, 38 Special, and 9 mm parabellum (blued model only) calibers with fixed sights. Choice of 2 3/4" or 4" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.



Ruger Speed-Six Revolver with compact round butt in 357 Magnum, 38 Special, and 9 mm parabellum (blued model only) calibers with fixed sights. Choice of 2 3/4" or 4" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.

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# SILUETAS

PHILIP C. BRIGGS

## THE .357 MAGNUM MAKES COMEBACK TO LONG-RANGE SHOOTING MATCHES

The handgun silhouette game started with magnum revolvers, but it wasn't long before the smallest magnum, the .357, fell from favor for the long-range game.

Nowadays, the smallest mag revolver is outnumbered at least 10-to-1 by the biggest, the .44.

The .357 mag has many advantages on the silhouette range. It's chambered in some high-quality revolvers, recoil is manageable (minimal for a magnum) and it's cheaper to feed, having a reduced appetite for powder and lead. But it's not reliable on the rams, losing from 10 to 40% of the targets hit, depending on the range and the condition of the rams and the stands.

No matter what your class or score, losing a well-hit target rankles. So, most have

Early on in the Production wars, when the single shots began to dominate, .30 Herrett Contenders came in out of the field, and were the hot setup. Then, in 1980, Thompson/Center adopted a nicely balanced cartridge, a 7mm wildcat on the .223 Remington case, christened it the 7mm TCU, and overwhelmed Production. This pistol/cartridge combo is now far more common on the line than ventilated pants cuffs; it's everywhere.

The 7mm bore has always fascinated riflemen, as bullets in this diameter offer perhaps the best balance of weight and efficiency. Yet, if you look at the down-range performance of a similar weight bullet in .30 caliber, launched from the old champ, the .30 Herrett, you'll find there's

### LOAD DATA

#### .357 Magnum Contender

Bullet	Powder		Velocity		Average Group Size	
	Type	Charge (grains)	Average (fps)	Spread (fps)	25 yards (Inches)	100 yards (Inches)
146gr Speer HP	296	16.6	1616	55	1.01	—
150gr Speer FMJ	CCI	Factory	1736	57	1.42	5.36
158gr Hornady FP	Frontier	Factory	1323	43	.96	4.33
160gr Hornady FMJ	296	16.6	1570	46	1.07	3.21
180gr Speer FN	296	13.7	1337	120	1.43	—
180gr Speer FN	296	16.0	1545	20	—	—
182gr SSK FN	680	17.1	1479	33	1.63	—
200gr SSK FN	680	17.1	1482	22	1.23	—
200gr RCBS FN	296	12.5	1314	36	.74	—
200gr RCBS FN	296	13.5	1420	37	—	3.77

Velocities are instrumental, for one five-shot string, measured ten feet from the muzzle with an Oehler Model 33 Chronotach and skyscreens. Group size data are the average of three five-shot groups fired from a sandbag rest from a ten-inch bull barreled Contender with a Thompson/Center 3X RP scope. The indicated weights for the SSK bullets are the manufacturer's designations. In the alloys used, they weigh closer to 200 and 220 grains. The RCBS weighs close to 200 grains.

given up on the .357 mag and gone on to bigger magnum revolvers.

But the .357 mag is returning to the long range game, and in what seems an unusual category—Production.

IHMSA's Production class originally lumped revolvers and single shots together and it wasn't long before the single shots dominated the category. NRA's Conventional category still forces the two to shoot together, but the IHMSA recognized the inequities, and last year separated the two, creating a separate Revolver category.

not that much difference at handgun silhouette ranges.

Comparing Speer bullets of similar weight (145-grain SP 7mm, 150 grain SP .30 cal) at say a 1900 fps launch velocity, which is reasonably attainable from either cartridge in a 10-inch tube, you'll find momentum at 200 yards is substantially the same, 1.02 pound-seconds for the 7mm, and 1.03 p s for the .30 cal. Both are adequate levels for reliable knockdown on rams. (Not 100%, but close.) Midrange

*Continued on page 26*

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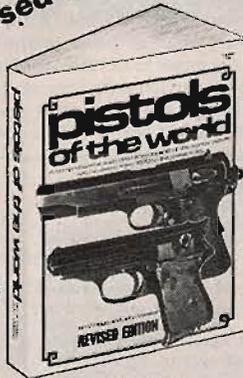
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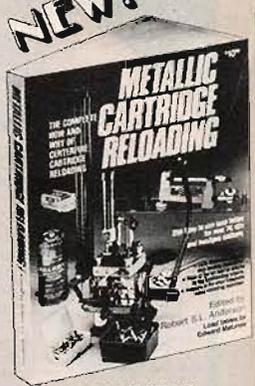
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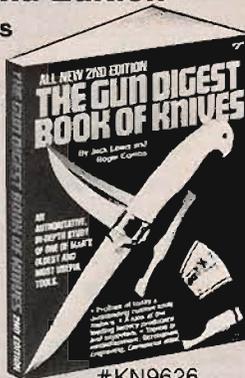
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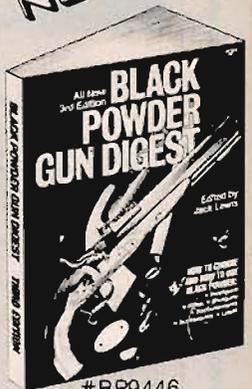
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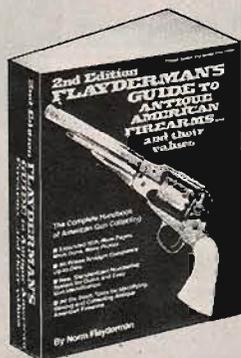
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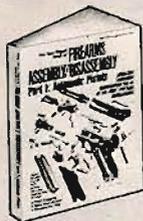
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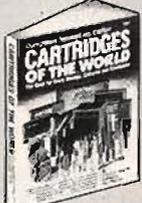
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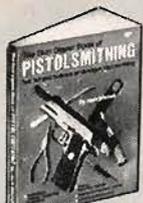
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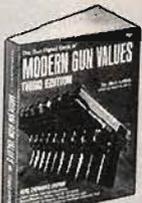
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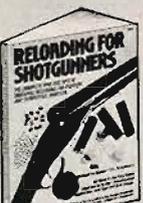
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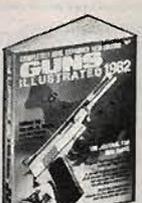
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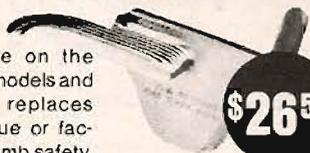
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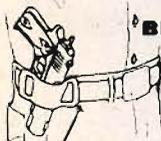
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LUCY CHAMBLISS

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The Daisy 777 Match Air Pistol .177 caliber, is a disappointment to me, but then I had hoped for something more comparable in quality to a Feinwerkbau or Beemans M-900.

I will admit to prejudice, but consider that I have been shooting a top-quality air pistol made out of good steel for five years, a yearly average of 7,680 pellets, with no repairs required. Most important, no change in the excellent trigger pull or sight mechanism.

I believe anyone interested in shooting should try an accurate air pistol. Consider the cheap "fodder" for it, and how convenient it is to practice in the hall, or backyard. There are no ventilation or firearms legality problems with these little pop guns.

If you are a serious International handgunner, and by that I mean you want to eventually shoot a Tryout and Phoenix, an air pistol is too big a part of both to be ignored. Open National Sectional Championships for air pistol are getting more numerous. Awards provided by the NRA are generous, and entry fees are reasonable, ranging from \$4-\$8 and only \$4 a team. Awards are divided fairly for Juniors, Women and Open classes. The 60-shot match is fired in 2 hours and 15 minutes; ranges that don't have target carriers are using the new four-bull targets.

If you shoot bullseye or combat, an air pistol is an invaluable training aid for 50-yard firing. The air pistol requires absolute adherence to each basic handgun marksman principle: Concentration, sight alignment, trigger control and the hardest for me, but so vital, follow-through. I have

found follow-through has to be instinctive with the air pistol; it never was for me in any type handgun shooting. Friends told me I was practically jumping up and moving from prone before the last round was out of the barrel at 50-yard combat. I knew in bullseye 50-yard slow fire, I followed-through only when I remembered to; of course those were the good shots.

The long sighting radius of the air pistol and the 40 or 60 shots, all slow fire, seems to require more concentration than other handguns; concentration on the sights, not the exaggerated wobble we see, and concentration on repetition of fundamentals, no matter how tiresome. I have also found I can't shoot the air pistol once a week and do well with it. Three to four practice matches a week, year-round, with postal or regular matches added when I can find them, are what it takes to make me shoot acceptable scores, something I have only started doing the last two years. Try some of the things I have suggested; I'm certainly not the best, but I've improved and, most important, I know what I must do to produce a 10. Now, the challenge comes in doing it every time I release the trigger.

### Basic Training

I recently received a rather elaborate folder on a Personal Safety Course, 4 days training for \$335. Courses 1 and 2 deal with the pistol, Course 3 with the rifle and shotgun. Saw an ad for Ray Chapman's branch in Clewiston, Florida. He calls it Practical Pistol Shooting Academy South. My favorite course and the one I think has the greatest potential for home-study is Frank Green's Basic Pistol Markmanship Semi-

*Continued on page 19*

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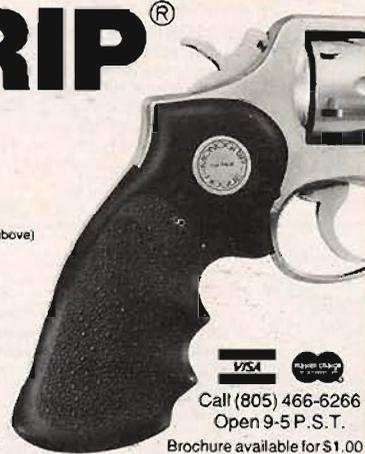
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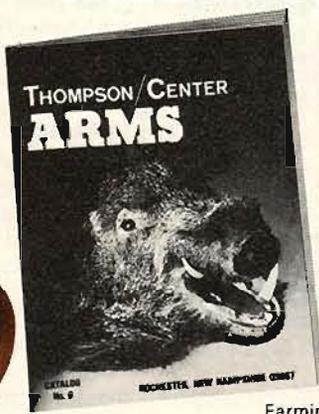
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nar, by mail, (Frank Green, 530 W. Grove Rd., Montrose, CA 81401 - Price \$28.50). It is two 60-minute tapes with a simple, but entirely adequate, flip chart instruction book. I think anyone—and I have in some 20 years of teaching seen almost many types of training aids—could take Frank's tapes and book and fire a handgun safely and with practice, accurately, even if they had never seen one before. This course is the biggest value for \$29 that you will find.

The question of continuing liability of one who teaches self-defense with firearms courses, is of continuing interest. With our courts handing down decisions, mostly in favor of criminals, and giving large settlements in cases of carelessness or stupidity, I don't teach firearms classes outside police departments any more. What protection can you get against the student who, negligently or justifiably, shoots someone, including himself, and the court decides it was your fault for teaching him, or not teaching him correctly self-defense type shooting?

I think teaching skill with a handgun is great, and believe I could make some money doing it, but I'd be jeopardizing everything I own doing it. The NRA Insurance, and the Carpenter Insurance Agency in Washington, used by many clubs, are no help at all in such liability. I have gone into it thoroughly with them. My local insurance agent thinks straight accident liability insurance during the teaching process could be obtained, even if you had to use Lloyds of London (which, as you may know, offer some of the most reasonable rates). But he is vague on what we do on the continuing liability question. Judging from calls, letters, and conversations I've had, particularly from police officers who'd like to teach, it is a problem. Many had not thought of it until I asked them how they are going to protect themselves.

You just have to shut your eyes and take a chance; I have done it. The cause is excellent and firearms skill is a very marketable item now. Many Americans waited too long to learn to shoot. However, until our judicial system returns to verdicts that won't penalize the God-fearing, law abiding American, count me out of teaching self-defense with firearms to civilians.

I think you are reasonably safe teaching handgunning as a sport, particularly an International event. Finally, getting Women's pistol shooting in the Olympics adds lasting credibility to that sport. Teaching a recognized sport would have many angles for your defense in legal action. Again, I recommend Frank Green's course; his skill as an Olympic medalist comes out in every word. I had not gotten through the first tape before understanding several fundamentals in a way that made them very applicable to the demanding air pistol. Try both, an accurate air pistol and Frank's course.



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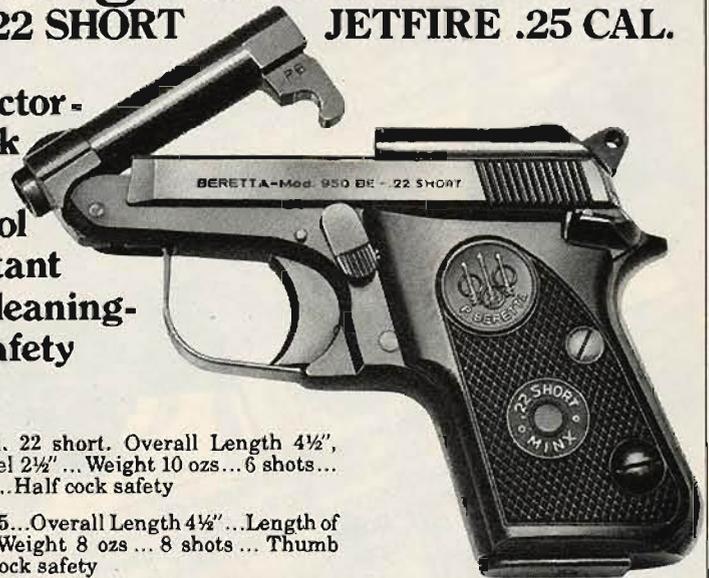
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## COP TALK

Continued from page 10

goes to prone. "A lot can happen in that (much) time," Toney noted. "An officer choosing such a position swaps time for added accuracy and takes a calculated risk of being hit while getting into it."

Without knowing it, Bill Tracy in 1960 had articulated the manifesto of the Comstock Count developed years later, in which elapsed time is divided into score on one's target, in IPSC free-style combat shooting.

Toney thought the barricade phases should be eliminated, since no cop on the street could ever count on having a wall to hide behind. This was sensible, though it was never translated into changes in the police combat format. The official rationale, which also makes sense, was that you run for cover and fire while doing so to keep the other guy's head down. They never put *that* into the National Police Championship match program.

Toney also wanted to eliminate reloading under time, stating that this "would add to the safety of a tournament with no loss of practical value." He based this on the theory that if at 7 yards you had emptied your gun and still had something dangerous and alive to shoot at, you should either run away or engage in hand-to-hand combat. He predicated this on a 15-second

reloading time, which was about par back then. With speedloaders, it takes a trained man two or three seconds to reload if he doesn't have the shakes. Speedloaders existed in 1960, but they weren't widely known and probably wouldn't have been allowed in the match Toney wrote about.

Toney wrote that double action vs. single action should be geared to distance. Today's PPC shooter fires double action throughout, to take advantage of the DA-systems quicker lock time, and the fact that the rolling double action pull gives you the best surprise trigger break you can ask for. Toney implied that the officer should be allowed to shoot all single action if he could make the time. Last year, I shot an FBI-style police combat match in England, where state of the art is only a little ahead of what it was stateside in 1960, and the best-known British shooter used a S&W single-action K-38 at 7 yards. I annihilated him. I was using a Power Custom PPC gun, and was the only one of 300 shooters firing double action at 50 yards. I took a gold medal out of that, and the British cops figured the gun had won it. They were wrong. The modern American technique took that medal.

Toney didn't even mention it, but I doubt that anyone shot double action at long range in the 1960 Nationals. DA wheelgunning was a new science back then, one that was developed in the mid-70s to its utmost for PPC shooting, although in the early 60s Paul Weston wrote

the police combat shooting manual that remains the ultimate guide to double action combat shooting for the street cop.

Toney recommended to Colt and I.U. that the course be stretched to 150 shots, to be more representative of skill over luck. Under the NRA, a 150-shot format was adopted, although not with the sequences the Border Patrolman had suggested. He would have had the cops shooting fast and furious: five seconds to empty the gun at 7 yards, the same again on multiple targets. Although IPSC went that way, and beyond, PPC never did.

PPC has come a long way since Bill Toney critiqued that first big match. Some of the changes have been positive, some less so. The speedloaders and the specialized guns have made it more "game" oriented (even NRA doesn't call it "combat" shooting anymore, using the designation "police revolver" instead). Nonetheless, the skill in double action shooting that PPC has fostered *has* filtered into training programs even at the recruit level, giving the average policeman a degree of survival skill that he just didn't have in the old days.

If you hear me, Bill Toney, thanks for a "blast from the past" that made me feel better about the state of PPC shooting today. Thanks, too, for the positive changes in the discipline that you helped to bring about.

I only wish they had listened even more closely to your good advice.



# on target

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# HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

## FLAT SHOOTING CALIBERS GOOD FOR ANTELOPE AT LONG RANGES

Are antelope realistic big game animals to hunt with handguns? After reading of the trials and tribulations of most rifle hunters in pursuit of antelope, one gets several impressions about them. One is that they are never, never shot at under 400 yards and always running. Their eyesight is super good—I've read at least 8X magnification many times. Antelope are very, very wary—always ready to run at the sight of a man at 2000 yards.

Wyoming literally had an explosion of the antelope population over the last few years due to mild winters and the resultant very light winter kill.

In most heavily populated antelope areas last year, hunters were legally able to harvest one buck and two does. Well, that sounds great for riflemen, but how about handgunners?

First off, a good antelope buck is one of the finest trophies in the world. He is usually hard to find and like good whitetail bucks probably a little harder to get than the average. Everyone looks for the good bucks and shoots them when possible. This makes it more difficult for a good buck to live long enough to grow exceptional horns and there is a resultant kill of the bucks whose genes would produce other exceptional bucks. I'm told that a hunter should be satisfied with 13-inch horns and 15 inches are really good. Over 15 inch horns are quite rare in most areas.

The antelope is a small, thin skinned animal whose vitals are easily penetrated. He is an animal that is easily killed with a well placed shot. He will go for miles gutshot with a high powered rifle. As in any game shooting, shot placement is of paramount importance.

Frankly, I think a 4X scoped T/C or XP is the most practical way to hunt antelope with a handgun. Any good flat shooting caliber from .30 Herrett on up through the powerful wildcats will kill 'em dead at unbelievable ranges with a good shooter on the handle.

Revolver shooters may or may not have good luck. If limited to a 100-150 yard maximum range with a revolver, a hunter would be greatly lessening his chances of scoring. A revolver shooter would be better off in most places to hunt over a water-hole, or sit near some other well traveled area and let the antelope come to him. A .30 carbine, .357 magnum or any larger caliber would probably do well in this type

hunting. The hunter would have to be patient and have plenty of time.

Last fall, while hunting in the foothills of the Story Mountains, I could have gotten my buck and two does on the first day of the hunt with a .357 wheelgun with no sweat, but I didn't have another antelope inside revolver range in the next several days.

Yes, the antelope is a prime trophy for a handgunner. Even though easily downed, I feel the handgun caliber should be .30 or



This antelope buck (15") was taken with this .358 JDJ/SSK barrel at 190 paces.

larger, but if the 7BR or 7TCU have any use at all in the field for anything larger than varmints, antelope would be the animal to try them on. Obviously, with heart or lung shots they will kill.

I hunted with a group using a variety of calibers from .30-40 Krag to .411 JDJ last fall and all of them performed well. I made the closest shot on a lucky-to-find 15-inch buck at 199 steps with a .358 JDJ T/C by SSK Industries.

The longest shot was with a .30-40 Ackley Improved T/C using a 165 grain Hornady BTSP bullet. The shooter, Gary Geraud, paced it at 748 steps on a flat, rocky ground. His steps are a little shorter than mine. Just call it around 700 of mine. I was on the spotting scope and the animal dropped with one through the chest and an insurance shot placed about 4 inches from the first. The bullets penetrated completely but the wounds looked as if there was some expansion. Gary sights in at 400, lives in the area, knows his distances, proper hold-over and most importantly—knows how to shoot.

The antelope is a fine handgun trophy and well within the capability of a decent hunter, good shot and patient man.

I had mine ground and made into salami and it's delicious.



# .357 MAGNUM

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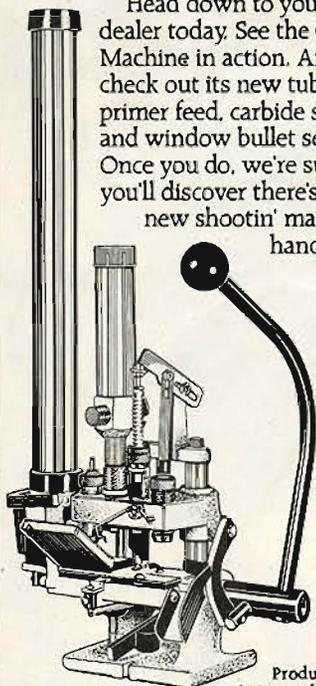
# On Target

If you've had your eye on progressive loaders—but found them out of your range—the Good Ol' Boys at RCBS have one you can set your sights on. The new Green Machine progressive loader.

Now, you can turn out upwards of 600 rounds per hour with the Green Machine. And it's priced right around \$500. So it makes high volume production of reliable, accurate pistol ammunition available to a lot more shooters.

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## SPEAK OUT

### Proper bullet seat will aid accuracy

As to Mike Venturino and his story, "Learning Loads," in the July-August issue of *The American Handgunner* last year, his experience with .44 and .38 Specials in magnum guns and relative inaccuracy from their use: I believe the phenomenon is related to overall cartridge length and resultant bullet jump when using .44 Special cases in .44 Magnum cylinders; same for .357 Magnum and .38 Special loads.

If he would try seating the bullet to the same overall length, that would increase the accuracy of the shorter hulls.

Since with ALOX lube and low velocities only one lube ring is usually necessary to prevent leading, he won't even get greasy!

Thanks for the best type magazine on the market.

Paul C. Charbonneau, D.D.S.  
Laurel, Miss.

### "I shoot better with one hand than two"

I read with interest Mr. Ayoob's column in the March issue, and enjoyed it very much, with one exception.

I am the proud owner of a brand new Government Model, in .45 caliber, and am enjoying it more than I anticipated. It is the first firearm I have ever owned, and the first pistol I've ever fired. It's great. As you imply in your column, there is a savage joy available in going into a range where other folks are firing small- to medium-caliber weapons and busting their eardrums with something on the order of a magnum or a .45.

I had been warned by a friend, an owner of a .357 magnum, that the .45 would kick. Well, the only explanation I can think of is that, when my friend last shot a .45, he was twenty years younger and about forty pounds lighter; I don't find the recoil bad, at all.

In fact, John Browning's best is such a pussycat, that I found one thing exceptionable in your column: the use of two hands. I've tried both grips, and have come to the conclusion that, had God intended for man to shoot two-handed, He wouldn't have invented pistols. I shoot much better with one hand, than with two.

This conclusion, by the way, can't be influenced much by my size.

### USAF produces new Sky-Cop 'Shorty'

With custom pistolsmiths hard-pressed to fill orders for "shorty" .45 auto hideout guns, it was only natural that somewhere along the line the U.S. Government would get into the act.

It seems that Air Force Security personnel require a handgun with the stopping power of the .45 ACP, along with the concealability of the issued .38 Spl.

To fill the requirement, gunsmiths at Lackland Air Force Base have modified existing Colt 1911-A1s in a manner akin to the Detonics .45.

The new "shorty" Government models feature a slide and barrel trimmed to 4¼-inches, an ambidextrous safety mechanism, improved fixed combat sights, a squared trigger guard to facilitate the "two-hand" hold, beveled magazine housing, a reduction in grip length by ½-inch, a shortened magazine with finger rest, and a stippled front strap.

The pistols have also been improved to reduce trigger pull, and the entire pistol is coated with a non-reflective finish.

Due to the limited number of pistols modified, it is expected the guns will acquire collector status in future years.

The "shorty" .45 auto is a good concept; we wonder why it took the military so long to figure it out. Perhaps the Air Force will field a team in future IPSC competitions?



either: I'm only 5'8", and about 180 pounds; further, the only exercise I get which might develop my hand and wrist muscles is hammering the keyboard on a computer terminal.

Keep up the good work. I enjoy reading your magazine. I've just subscribed to *The American Handgunner*, and look forward to reading future issues.

Eric C. Sanders  
Belleville, MI

### Wheel weights get boost from reader

Reference John G. Lawson's Pistolsmithing column in your March-April issue.

I must take great exception to his statement regarding the use of present day wheel weights as being worthless for bullets.

During the last two years I have cast over 31,000 .45ACP bullets for my own use. All were from pure wheel weights. During this same period I fired over 17,000 of these bullets.

When new, one .45ACP set up by Hogue of California would group under 3 inches at 50 yards (benchrest) using these bullets and 7.2 grains of Unique. The weapon now has over 18,000 rounds through it and group size has opened up to around 4 inches.

A second .45 by Dave Walters of Dallas with over 9,000 rounds through it will still give 3½ inch groups using the same bullet and 6 grains of 231; 4.3 of Bulleye will give under 3 inches, but being a "dink" load it's not of much use except to the target shooter.

In this part of the country, these above groups are considered pretty fair accuracy, especially for practical type shooting.

If any of your readers have a supply of weights they are hesitant to use because of the article and reside within a couple hundred miles of Victoria, Texas, please let me know. Our club will be most happy to take them off their hands.

Jack Bryant  
Victoria, TX

### Fairbairn said to advocate 1-hand only

I write with reference to Massad Ayoob's remarks concerning Lt. Col. W.E. Fairbairn, as published in the March-April 1982 issue of your magazine.

Someone has badly misled Mr. Ayoob, who states that Lt. Col. Fairbairn... concluded that (his men) would win more shootouts if they took their .45 automatics in

*Continued on page 81*

# A choice of one.

## DAN WESSON'S .357 magnum!

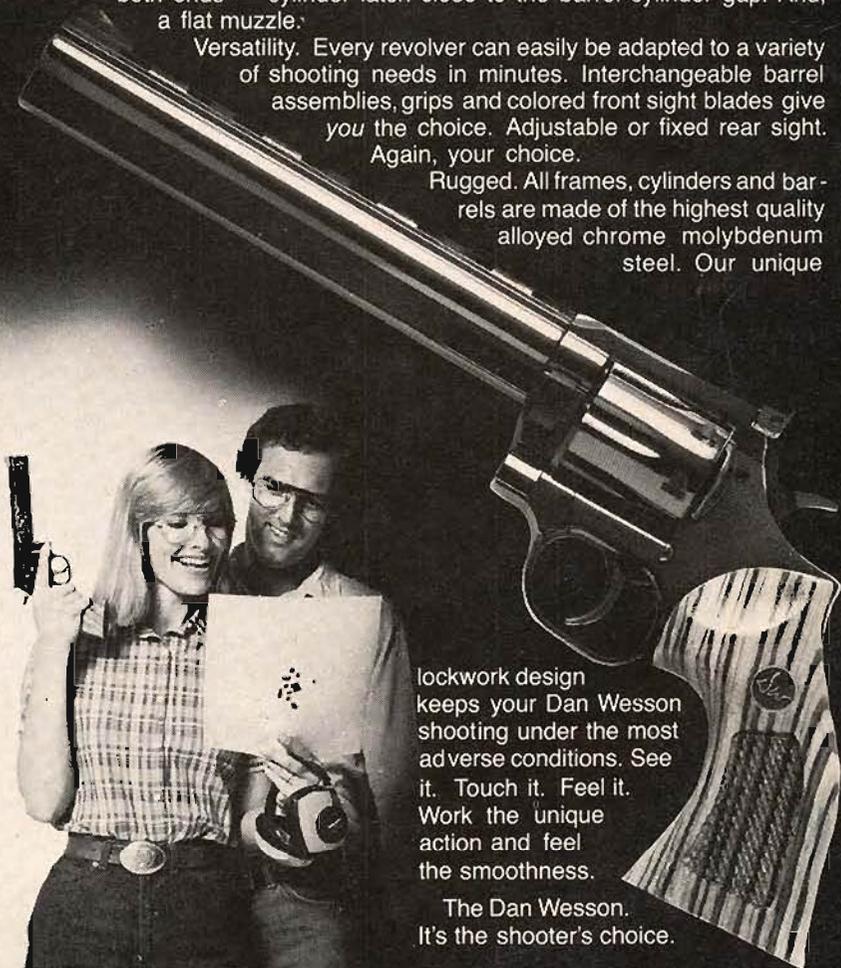
The standard in quality, ruggedness and accuracy. Recognized by more and more SERIOUS shooters each year. Last year, more .357 revolver winners of metallic silhouette matches used Dan Wesson's than any other competitive design.

Whether you are into competitive shooting or not, you can recognize obvious superiority in metal work and design. Do yourself a favor and visit your local dealer — pick up a Dan Wesson. The look. The feel. The craftsmanship. See it. Feel it. And you know that you don't want just a handgun. YOU WANT A DAN WESSON!

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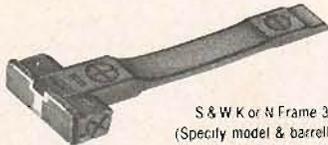
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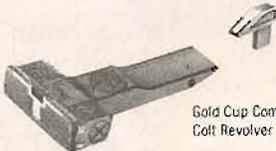
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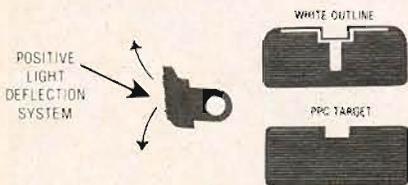


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## SILUETAS

Continued from page 22

trajectories, (5.0 inches, 5.2 inches), drift in a 10mph crosswind (5.2 inches, 6.2 inches) and time of flight (.34 sec, .35 sec) are also substantially the same for the 7mm and .30 caliber, respectively.

Then why is the 7mm TCU so popular? Inherent accuracy is a possibility, but I expect it's because everybody else has one, and most of all, because the cases are easier to form.

Overlooked by all but a few is a cartridge with renowned inherent accuracy, that uses less powder and cheaper bullets (and better yet works well with even cheaper cast bullets) and, with the right loads, hits the rams just as hard. The cartridge? Our subject, the .357 magnum. This underpowered revolver cartridge, in the Contender or the Merrill, becomes downright respectable.

Let's look at the numbers. I've included a table of load data for a 10-inch Contender for your reference. The first half of the table is to get you oriented, to show you how much extra muscle the cartridge gains in the longer, gapless barrel; while that's okay on the front three, it's not enough to make much difference at 200 yards with these stubby pistol bullets. That's what the last half of the table is for. Using heavier or heavier and more efficient bullets, the little magnum becomes a real ram-slammer.

For example. The top load with the 180-grain Speer FN comes from their manual. It's pleasant enough to shoot, and provides 200 yard values as follows: momentum—.90 p s; midrange trajectory—9.3 inches; drift—12.4 inches; time of flight—.46 sec.; check back—the knockdown is not much different than our hot dogs, and the rest isn't too important over known ranges—unless you live in Kansas. Although it's not in the table, you can easily toss the 200-grain Hornady SP at 1400 fps, which at 200 yards provides: momentum—.99 p s; midrange trajectory—10.6 inches; drift—10.0

inches; time of flight—.48 sec.

Now these big jacketed bullets cost more than 7mm or .30 caliber pills—50% or so more. But you only need ten-per-round.

The best of both worlds are the big cast bullets. Cast yourself, they're inexpensive, and .35 caliber bullets are easier to cast and shoot than 7mm or .30 caliber. We're talking real cast bullet applications here, big and slow. Should you decide to give this approach a try, be sure to stick with RN or FN designs in 200- to 250-grains with gas checks, and experiment with sizing diameters to get the best accuracy. Seat them out to lightly engrave on closing, and use a hard (wheel weights are marginal) alloy.

The 200-grain RCBS FN (gas check) load shown groups well, with no development to tailor it to the test gun. Out at the ram line it should group within eight inches (the ram's body is twelve inches deep) and provide: momentum—.92 p s; midrange trajectory—11.0 inches; drift—16.5 inches; time of flight—.49 sec.

This bullet, designed for rifles, has done well in the variety of pistol/cartridges we've tried, including .35 IHMSA XP and a .358JDJ T/C. Jim Betush, Phoenix area cast bullet aficionado, fine-tuned a load using this bullet for a 10¾-inch .357 mag Merrill to where, from a Ransom rest, he was averaging five-inch, five-shot groups at 200 meters. Accuracy with this bullet was better in this pistol than with the 200-grain Hornady.

That load was 17.0 grains 296 (this is on the warm side, so start low and work up slow if you try it); muzzle velocity is a healthy 1600 fps. That pumps the 200-yard momentum up a bit to .96 p s.

Jim and I have just started to work with a couple of SSK Industries heavy bullets. Nominal weights are 182- and 220-grains. Our's, however, tipped the beam closer to 200- and 220-grains in the alloy used. The heavier one looks good so far; it's a gas check, with a long multiple grease groove body, and a stubby truncated-cone nose. (It would load up short enough for a revolver.) I've not tailored the indicated load to the pistol either, nor shot it beyond 50-yards, but it looks good so far.

Walk the firing line, and you'll see a few .357 Magnum single-shots, either in the hands of a beginner or an expert. I noticed Jim Rock, and the rest of the Rock/Merrill bunch, shoot .357 mags, even in their longer tubed guns. I think they know something most people don't.

If you were considering obtaining a Production gun, and after sorting through the array of available cartridges, from the dazzlers to the duds, you found one that—had minimal recoil, used readily available brass, had a modest appetite for powder and lead, was widely regarded for its inherent accuracy, worked well with easily cast bullets, had ample knockdown with appropriate bullets—would you buy it, even if it was a .357 Magnum?

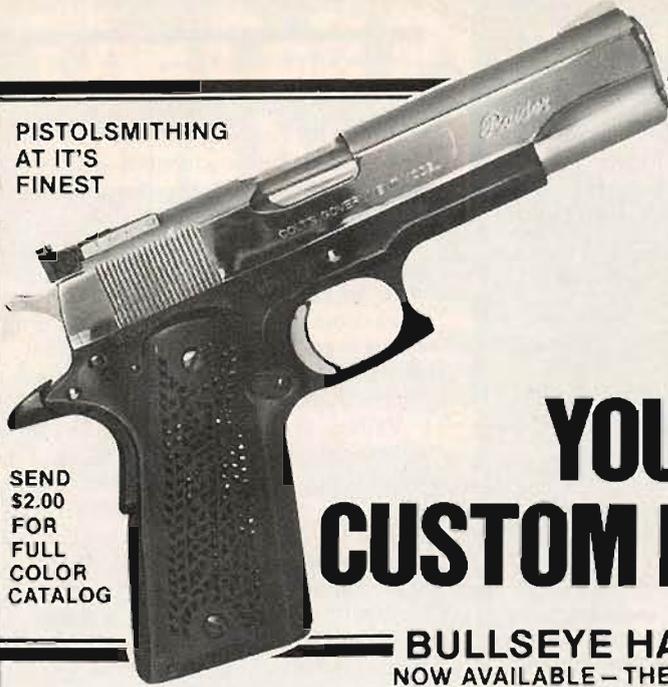


LtO: 158 gr. cast RN; 160 gr. Hornaday, FMJ; 180 gr. Speer; 200 gr. RCBS/FN.



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## PISTOLSMITHING

Continued from page 8

follower for rough spots. You can polish the follower with crocus cloth or a rag buff until the spring slides into its fully compressed position without friction.

Check the rearmost movement of the slide with the spring removed and again with the recoil spring in place. The slide must come to rest at the same point or the spring is packing and will probably have a short, violent life. Grind a part of a coil from the spring until it is the proper length.

Failure to fire can be caused by a too tight overtravel screw. Back it off until the pistol fires every time. Not all triggers are fitted with an overtravel screw, so it could be that the hump on the grip safety needs careful stoning to allow slightly more rearward movement.

Jar-off, or double firing, is a sleight-of-hand act usually caused by too casual a grip on the pistol. Lighter trigger pulls and lack of overtravel can allow the pistol to recoil into the soft flesh and muscle and be rebounded into the trigger finger, causing a second shot to be discharged. Use a proper, firm grip when sandbag testing and firing normally.

Follow-down, a condition where the hammer follows the slide down without firing, is caused by inertia of the trigger bumping into the sear and releasing it to allow hammer follow. This makes an effective single action pistol, but it is easily corrected to proper function again by merely flexing the middle leaf of the sear spring to give more spring tension against the sear. Mainspring tension and angle/fit of the sear and hammer usually do not enter into the cure for follow-down, provided that the trigger job has been properly accomplished. If a long "target" style trigger has been installed, you may have to drill two or three lightening holes in it to lessen the inertial bump on the sear.

After firing, properly clean your pistol. The only really acceptable solvent for removing metallic fouling, from jacketed bullets, is an ammonia preparation. G.I. bore cleaner is as good as any. Always use a bronze brush to scrub in the solvent, follow with dry patches and swab the bore with Rig or a similar specially prepared gun grease. Do not use oil, since it will oxidize or run off and leave the surface dry. Follow with a dry patch. More good barrels are ruined by use of improper solvents than any other cause. Most solvents will do the job with hard lead alloy bullets, but it takes ammonia or an abrasive paste preparation to remove metallic fouling.

Lube the top of the barrel with light oil with you put your pistol together, and it will be ready to go.



# The Colt Python. No one puts more handwork into a handgun.



Colt Python with 4" barrel and Royal COLTGUARD™ finish.

The Colt Python. Its degree of workmanship and quality is pure luxury. All major parts are hand fitted and assembled, signed, tested, and reinspected because that's the only way to create a revolver this smooth, this accurate.

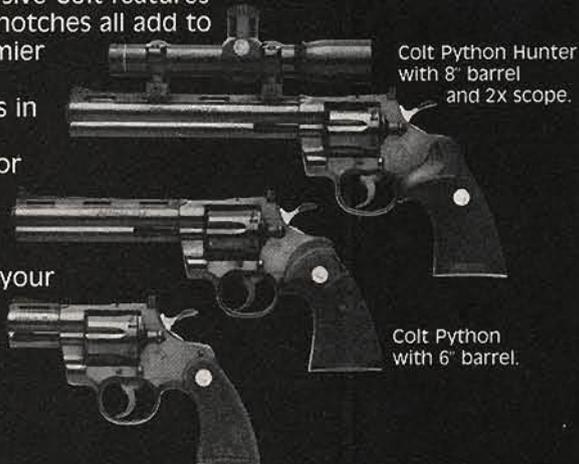
You'll recognize the Python's classic look, vent rib, flawless finish, solid feel and velvety action as unmistakable signs of superiority from the first time you lay hands on it. Then when you fire it, you'll realize how the hours of handwork that went into each detail have paid off.

A heavier barrel and thicker cylinder walls mean added strength and reduced muzzle jump. Effortless cocking action and an almost unbelievably smooth, steady trigger pull result in more confidence and better scores at the range. Fully adjustable rear sight gives you a full, clear sight picture. And other exclusive Colt features like a heavy duty crane and offset bolt notches all add to Python's reputation as the world's premier revolver.

Available with 2½", 4", 6", or 8" barrels in 357 Magnum or 38 Special calibers with checkered walnut grips in blue, nickel, or Royal COLTGUARD™ finish, it is well suited for police, target shooters and sportsmen.

Pick one up the next time you're at your Colt dealer. The minute you do, you'll know just what we're talking about.

Because only Colt makes a Colt.



Colt Python Hunter with 8" barrel and 2x scope.

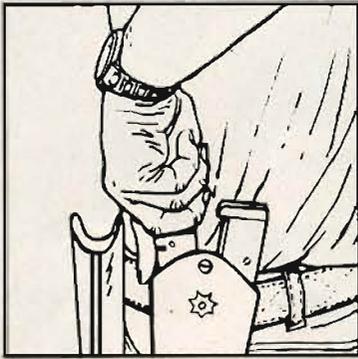
Colt Python with 6" barrel.

Colt Python with 2½" barrel.

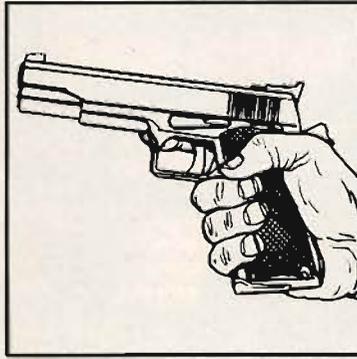
**COLT** An Investment in Precision

Be a safe shooter—Never chamber a round until you are ready to shoot. Always read and follow the instruction manuals which accompany each firearm. Free instruction manuals are also available from the factory on request.

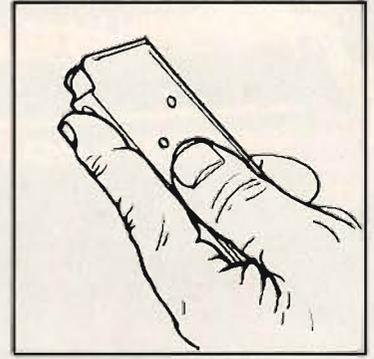
## Speed Reloading



Low-cut, tension-adjustable magazine carrier is worn on point of left hip with magazines pointing forward. Bumper pads are essential for proper seating of magazine.



After last shot, safety is left off and pistol is twisted in hand, allowing thumb to depress magazine release button.



Index finger of weak hand is positioned along forward edge of magazine, just below tip of bullet.



**1.**

A quick, smooth reload reduces out-of-action time, allowing more time for shot making. Here's my technique:



**2.**

Empty magazine is released while weak hand simultaneously sweeps toward magazine carrier.



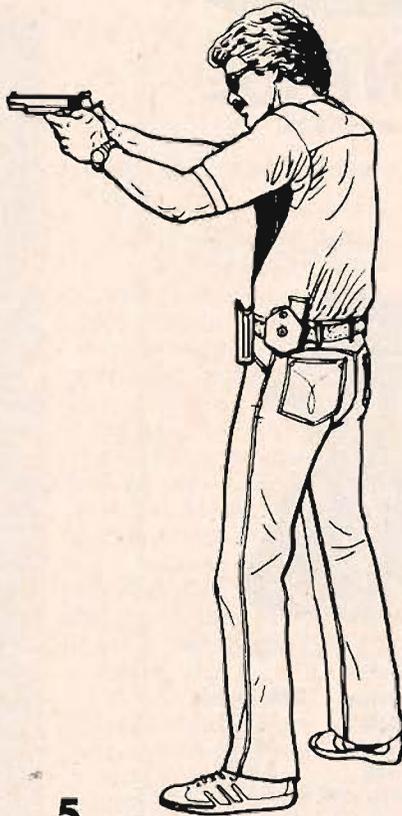
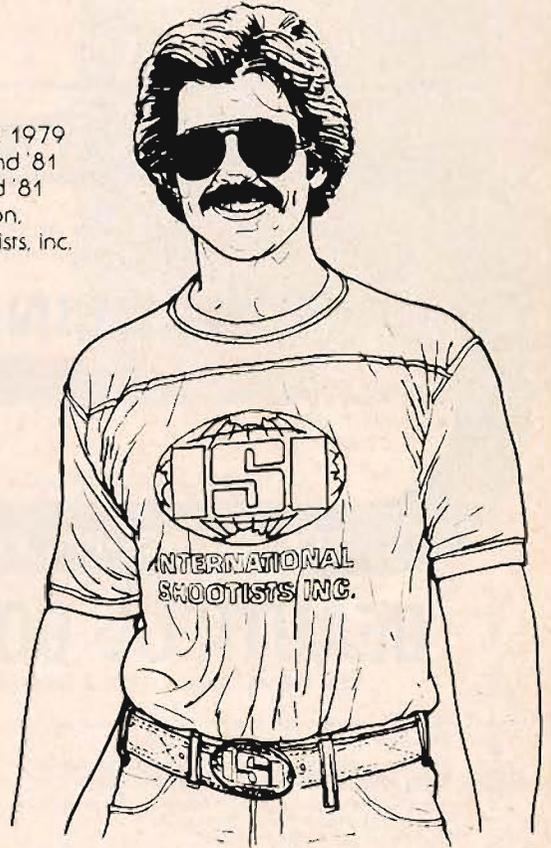
**3.**

Pistol is held at eye level while fresh magazine is placed heel-first into magazine well.



Heel of magazine indexes on front of mainspring housing.

MICKEY FOWLER, Combar Master, 1979  
 IPSC National Champion, 1980 and '81  
 Bianchi Cup Champion, 1979 and '81  
 Southwest Pistol League Champion,  
 co-founder of International Shootists, inc.



4.

Fresh magazine is thrust home in one solid motion with palm and heel of weak hand. Pistol is held high to allow magazine to be "looked into" magazine well...

5.

and enables a quick return to firing grip and stance.

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## S.W. Pistol League has new classification

The Southwest Pistol League has announced a new classification system for its Combat Master status.

To help maintain its leadership role in IPSC shooting, the league's board of directors has developed the following criteria:

- (1) The individual must have earned Combat Master status under 1977 criteria; and
- (2) Must have gained at least four points since 1977, in any combination, by the following steps:
  - (a) Finish in top five in IPSC National Championships: two points.
  - (b) Finish in top ten in IPSC World Championships: two points.
  - (c) Finish in top ten in IPSC National Championships: one point.
  - (d) Win IPSC World Championship: four points.
- (3) The individual must have contributed to the development of the sport through activities such as teaching, writing or administrative service, and must have developed a high level of commitment, skill and sportsmanship.

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## Gals form national shooting group

Fifteen women, representing ten states, have banded together to form the Women's Practical Shooting Association, according to Beverly Chapman, director.

All matches are held by mail and patterned along the lines of IPSC regulations.

Each month, WPSA members receive a newsletter describing that month's match. Each member shoots the match within a specified time period and returns her results to the WPSA office (POB 7035, Columbia, MO 65205).

WPSA has special IPSC affiliation. Goals of the association include special women's events at IPSC regional and state meets.

Chapman said WPSA plans to field a team to the next IPSC World Shoot in 1983.

Eight women shooters participated in the association's first match, the Bianchi-Practical. The highest score, out of a possible 400, was 371, followed by 348 and 312.

If you would like to be a part of what promises to be a strong force in the women's practical shooting realm, send \$20 for annual membership fee to the above address in Columbia.



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Patridge sights on these revolvers provide excellent sight pictures. Shown here, top to bottom, are Models N, L and K.

# S&W's "L" Frame .357 Magnum

Bigger than a "K" but smaller than an "N" this new Smith offers Distinguished Service

*By Dave Reynolds*

When Smith & Wesson announced the production of the L frame .357 Magnum revolver, I wondered what all the whooping and hollering was about. All it needed to do was make more guns; I couldn't see how adding another model was going to help. The new gun was a strange looking beast by previous S&W standards, but some of what they said about it seemed to make sense.

Rationale for the L frame design is based on the belief that the N frame is larger than needed for the cartridge, and that the K frame is too light for a steady diet of full house .357s. This is particularly true since the advent of light bullet, high velocity loadings. These have lower felt recoil and are popular with shooters, but they cause extra problems for the gun, especially in the barrel throat area. Consequently, the L design offers a beefier barrel and heavier cylinder than K, to handle these stresses.

The gun provided by Smith & Wesson for this report was a Model 586, 6-inch blue. At first, I wasn't much impressed. Its double action pull was heavy and rough. Of weak fingers, here, is more accustomed to a couple of gentlemanly .357s, N and K frame revolvers of 1935 and '55 vintages, respectively. The new kid's single action

pull, though, was excellent—an ounce over three pounds, with the barest perceptible trigger movement after sear release.

In the interest of fairness, it must be stated that no new gun will ever be as smooth as one that has been cycled a few thousand times. A characteristic of S&W actions is that they get smoother with use, and mine are well used. Most certainly, they're more civilized now than when they were new.

Since the L frame is visibly smaller than the N, I was surprised at how heavy it felt. A consultation with Mr. Fairbanks-Morse quickly revealed that, at 46 ounces, the 6-inch L is 2 ounces heavier than my 5-inch N model, and weighs 9 ounces more than

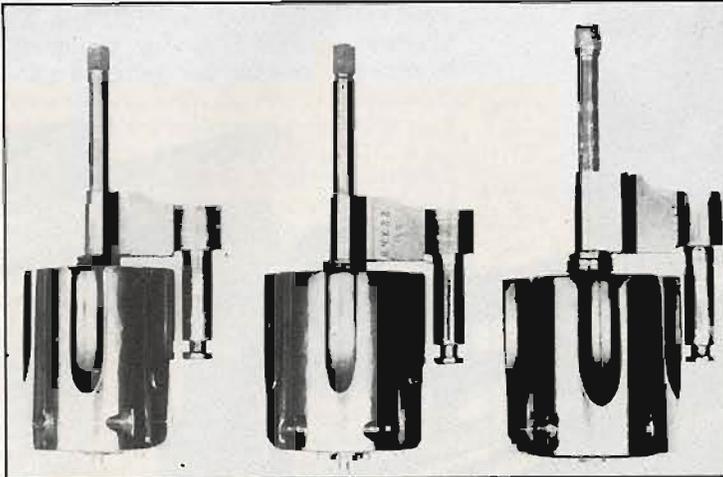
ger is smooth and wider than the regular S&W trigger, but not as wide as the extra cost target or combat models. It is also thick and chunky looking, as if they took a wide trigger blank and just tapped it with the forging hammer so it didn't get mashed as much as it should have been. The trigger works fine, it just doesn't have the classic S&W look.

The hammer's unusual appearance stems from the fact that the cocking spur is placed low. This makes the nose proportionately longer than on K or N. But the low spur is there for a reason. L's grip frame is exactly the same as K's. This exactness is carried to the location of the hammer spur and even the thumb latch,

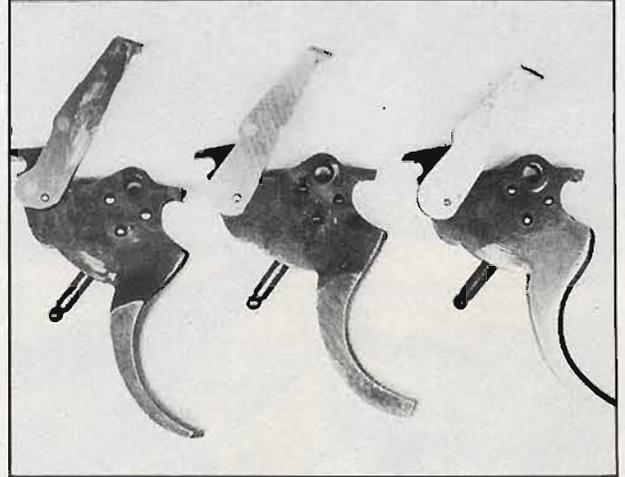
ing. This gives a clue as to what the Smith & Wesson folks had in mind for the new frame size. More on this subject later.

The final departure from previous practice was noted in the serial numbering system. The test gun's number is AAB0024. A call to S&W gave me the key to the new procedure. The first L frame gun produced was No. AAA0001. Gun No. 10,000 was AAB0000. Thus, the test gun was the 10,024th L frame gun built.

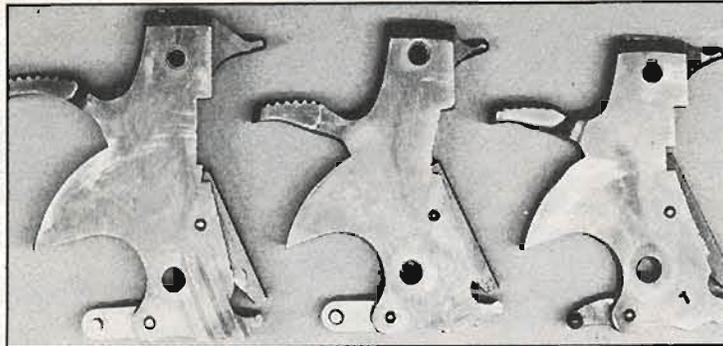
While taking the gun apart for detailed comparison photos, I gently touched a few spots on the L's action parts with a hard Arkansas stone to hurry the aging process. After the photo session, when the L was reassembled, its DA mechanism was better.



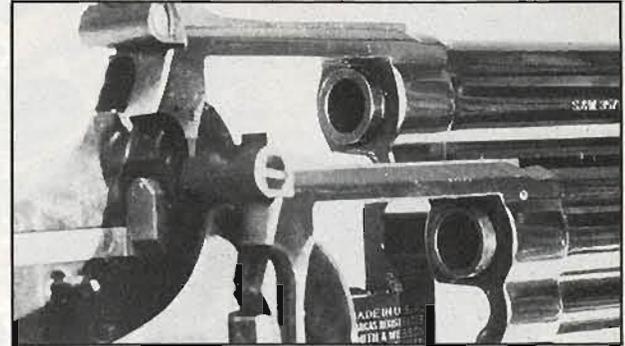
**These S&W cylinders fit, from left to right, Models K, L, N.**



**Triggers/hands: N (longest), L, K (shortest).**



**Hammers, Models N,L,K (left to right), are slightly different.**



**L barrel has nearly twice metal thickness at throat.**

the 4-inch 19, which tips the scales at a mere 37. The extra weight, of course, is in the barrel, which gives the gun a distinct muzzle-heavy balance.

Except for the full barrel length underlug, the L looks almost like any other Smith & Wesson, but there are differences. Though the cylinder is larger in diameter than K's, it is shorter, because case heads are not recessed. This reduces weight and cost, but the wide gap between cylinder and breech face is a departure from normal S&W practice.

The L's hammer and trigger, too, look "different." The trigger is a new one, first offered on L guns but usable on any K or N frame. In fact, it may become the standard trigger on K and larger guns. The other day I saw a Model 13 that came from the factory with this trigger. The new trig-

ger is also set slightly lower than the usual position. These deviations from the norm were made for the express purpose of duplicating the feel of the K frame grip. Many folks believe that the K grip is ideally sized for most people, that larger or smaller won't do.

The L's frame is a little taller than K's, but the same length. The window, or cylinder opening, is necessarily larger, to accommodate the greater diameter cylinder. At the front, the L frame is wider than the K, to handle the thicker barrel.

For the first time that I can recall, the instruction sheet with an S&W revolver includes sighting information. Instructions for Models 586 and 686, carbon and stainless steel versions of Distinguished Combat Magnum revolvers, list sight settings for Practical Police Pistol Combat shoot-

The first time at the range the 586 didn't give a "Distinguished" performance. Fired single action from the bench while sighting in, it performed okay. But the DA mechanism was still a little stiff for good rapid fire work. The extra ounces out at the end of the barrel didn't seem to help or hinder in any manner. I decided that the action would have to be smoothed some more before the gun could reach its full potential.

Another couple hours of shop time and the L began to blossom. McGivern always preferred the N frame for his "Fast and Fancy" double action shooting exhibitions, because the big gun would run faster than the K. The L has the same fast-flicking roll; the cylinder seems to develop a momentum of its own that adds power and rhythm to the shooter's efforts.

*Continued on page 73*

# HOME-BUILT .45 AUTO



# Can a parts-built .45 compete with a factory or custom job?

By Ken Hackathorn

How feasible is it to assemble a .45 auto pistol from the current available supply of parts. A casual examination of this magazine will show any number of firms selling parts for the 1911 pattern .45 pistol. Here are my experiences in just such a project.

Since the frame is the serial numbered part, it must be purchased from a dealer and requires the same paper work as if buying the complete pistol. After careful consideration I decided to assemble a pistol on one of the commercial frames and use a variety of spare parts commonly available. Going one step further, I decided to make the final product as functional and fancy as any custom combat .45 used by the practical shooters of the day.

This project requires more than general knowledge of the 1911 pistol. The Colt 1911 auto pistol seems to invite home gunsmithing, and the number of pistols butchered and mutilated by well meaning owners is astronomical. If your skills in gunsmithing are minimal, I strongly suggest your pistol work be left to a qualified technician. Since my project would require hand fitting of the pistol, some basic gunsmithing skills would be necessary. Fortunately, I have as a friend an extremely skilled armorer, who often takes pity upon my pet projects and gives me the guidance necessary to turn out acceptable results.

The key to my project was the fact that like most devotees of the 1911 pistol, I had a number of spare .45 parts already in my possession. A World War II vintage Colt slide as well as slightly used barrel have been sitting on a corner of my gun cabinet for years. A careful search for other parts turned up just the items I needed to complete my "parts .45 auto."

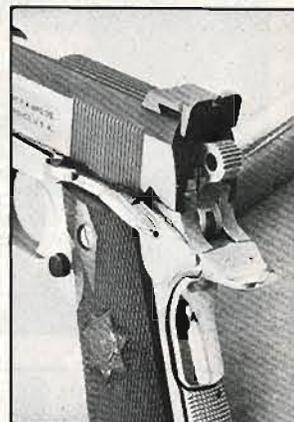
The first and most critical part needed was a frame. I chose the Safari Arms 'Enforcer' frame. While more expensive than the other frames on the market, it offers distinct advantages. The Safari Arms frame is stainless, comes with a squared trigger guard, finger-groove front strap plus checkering, and has a beveled magazine well. The optional Safari Arms grip safety was also used since it is mated to the 'Enforcer' frame. The frame supplied to me was of fine quality and re-

quired very little modification. Most of the other major parts assembled on the Safari Arms frame were made of stainless, such as the mainspring housing, Swenson Ambidextrous Safety, slide stop, grip safety, and grip screws. Sear, disconnector, springs, pins, and other minor parts were of normal carbon steel. A long National Match style trigger was fitted to the frame with only a small amount of stoning necessary. A stainless commander style burr hammer was also used, but the sear notches were out of place and required very careful recutting and adjustment. I mated the Swenson ambidextrous safety to the related parts and carefully rounded the corners to prevent any sharp edges from becoming a problem. With the stainless parts, any change of profile or changing of angles posed little difficulty. The spur of the grip safety was shortened to reduce the overhang. With the use of various grits of

abrasive paper, starting at 120 and going to 320, then 400, all the rough surfaces were carefully polished to a smooth appearance. With the aid of Simichrome Polish, a shiny finish was applied to the stainless parts.

When attempting to build a .45 pistol out of parts, one rule should be understood. As long as Colt or G.I. parts are used, fitting will be very minor. But, if any parts other than the original Colt or G.I. parts are used, the amount of fitting will be extreme. Critical parts such as sear, hammer, disconnector, safety, barrel and bushing, must be chosen with care. Only those parts with a top reputation should be considered in such a project.

Slide to frame fit was very close and only a small amount of lapping compound was used to get the slide to frame fit suitable for a reliable combat gun. After lapping, a little sideways and up and down movement could be felt. I would eliminate much



Top, author shows 10-shot group at 15 meters with homemade .45. Above left, the final product—Colt and GI parts assembled on an M-S Safari frame—shows careful fitting. Above right, Swenson safety, Natchez extended slide stop and M-S Safari beavertail grip safety all were reshaped. Stocks are by Bianchi.

of this in the hard fit of the barrel.

Starting with my G.I. barrel, the hood over the rear of the chamber was extended by silver soldering a piece of steel strapping material onto the existing barrel hood. This was then carefully filed down and contoured to match all of the original dimensions except the length. This over-length barrel hood was stoned and then lapped to match the fit between the barrel hood and breech face. A close fitting barrel bushing was selected and mated to the slide and barrel. The last step in the barrel

lowered the bottom edge to clear the ejection of the fired cases so that they do not have the dent in the side after firing. Slow accurate use of a Dremel tool was necessary for this application. Next I took the slide to my local gunsmith for a 1/8" slot to be milled for my front sight installation. Using a piece of cold rolled 1/8" steel plate, I cut out a front sight blank and silver soldered it into place. For a rear sight I chose the new high fixed sight by Armand Swenson.

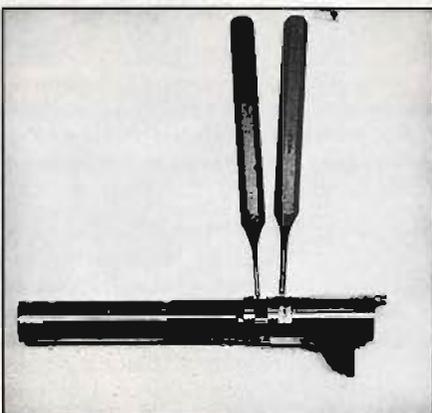
Once the sights were installed, the gun

much more funnel-like area. With a 20-line-per-inch checkering file, the main-spring housing was cross checkered to give added grip security. After all the final polish and mating of parts, the trigger was adjusted to a crisp 4 pounds. I had a local gunsmith reblue the slide. Other parts of stainless were hand polished with Simichrome.

A pair of the new Bianchi .45 stocks were modified so that the front panel was cut off. With just the side panels of the Bianchi stocks in place, the front strap



**Left, barrel hood, after silver soldering of strapping materials, is filed and shaped to original configuration. Above, 10-shot group fired at 25 yards with Federal 230-grain hardball ammo is tight and in the black. Obviously the home-crafted handgun is (1) a testimony to skill and (2) an accurate shooter.**



**Positioner's fit shows increased contact area on the back locking recess.**

fit was to soft solder a piece of shim stock into the rear locking recess of the barrel. This shim was then filed and carefully mated to the slide as the pistol is hand cycled so the barrel is forced down solid against the slide stop each time the pistol goes into battery. This is a slow and deliberate process. Impression blue is used to insure good contact between slide/barrel/slide stop.

I carefully relieved the ejection port and



**Disassembled, the "from-scratch" .45 displays exquisite finish and detail.**

was taken to the range and test fired. A small bit of adjustment was necessary. The rear sight is easily drifted for windage, and the front sight was filed down for a proper 25 yard zero. I prefer that my pistols be sighted in for a six o'clock hold and 25 yards. This way the pistol will be right on for a dead on hold at fifty yards.

A great deal of time was lavished on the final fit and finish. The magazine well was already beveled, but I enlarged it to a

finger groove standard on the Safari Arms frame provided a secure gripping surface. Using one of Bill Wilson's modified Laka magazines, the pistol was tested with a number of bullet shapes and loads. The barrel and feed ramp were carefully throated as part of the handy work, and my "parts .45" works like a champ.

I now have a .45 auto that equals many of the expensive combat pistols used by the practical shooters of the day.

It should be noted however, that this work may be well over the head of most gun buffs. Unless you have above normal working skills, it may be wise to use a competent gunsmith for many of the difficult fitting operations.

It is possible to assemble a pretty fair .45 out of components, especially if you have a supply of spare 1911 pistol parts. Cost will, of course, depend upon the amount of spare parts you have to purchase. If all the parts must be purchased from the various parts and surplus dealers, the final price tag can be very close to that of a new Colt.



## NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE



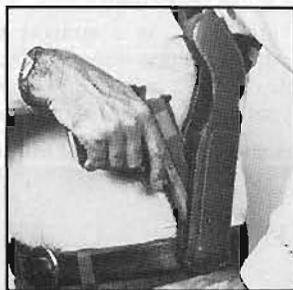
### Taurus Holsters offers cut-down-front model

Taurus Holsters make a cut-down-front model that reduces the height of the draw by more than two inches, yet is designed to protect the rear sight. Handmade and wet-molded, it features a fast, positive thumb break; has a molded front sight channel, is double-stitched, has an open bottom and is made from heavy, top-grade cowhide. Trigger and hammer are covered. The belt loop is 1¾-inch wet-molded and is FBI tilt-designed. It is available for both revolvers and autos; price: \$39.50. For more information, write Michael P. Taurisano, Taurus Holster Co., 163 Oxford Road, New Hartford, NY 13413.



### Custom gun cases are built to specs

Plumbuilt Products builds solid wood presentation cases designed to gun owners' specifications. For \$1.98, the company sends its Spec Kit, which includes handgun and accessories templates. Follow simple instructions and return tracings to the factory; your guns or equipment never leave your hands. The cases, covered in heavy, durable, leather-textured vinyl (top grade), are lined in either royal blue or ruby red velvet. Each bears a brass nameplate. The price of the Spec Kit is deducted from the price of the case (\$100). Shipping charges are included. For more information, write the company at POB 303-D, Chalfont, PA 18914.



### New holster fits 10½"-inch Ruger

American Sales & Manufacturing Co. has designed a new holster (Model K-88) to fit the Ruger Super Blackhawk with 10½-inch barrel. Made of choice saddle leather, it features double-chrome buckles, full-felt construction and leg-and-hammer tiedowns. For more information, write the company at POB 677, Laredo, TX 78040.

### In-pants holster is worn on both sides

Roy's Custom Leather Goods offers a new right-left, in-pants holster (Model 123). It features a slot for the belt clip on each side, which allows the holster to be worn on both sides of the body. It comes in black, plain and suedelined and fits a 1¾-inch belt. For more information, write the company at POB G, Magnolia, AR 71753.



### Bianchi offers new shoulder holster

Bianchi offers the auto shooter its model X-2000 "Phantom," a highly refined shoulder holster in the popular vertical carry design. The gun is held securely by a carbon wire spring of special design and draws quickly through the front. Made of premium quality leather and workmanship, its full silicone lining protects the guns' finish. A sight cutout provides rear sight clearance. Its flat shape hugs the body and conceals well. An adjustable harness distributes weight on both shoulders; no straps show across chest. Suggested retail price: \$66.50. For more information on this model and the Bianchi line, write Bianchi Gunleather, 100 Calle Cortez, Temecula, CA 92390.

### Alco introduces aluminum pistol case

Alco Carrying Cases, Inc. announces the introduction of an aluminum handgun case designed for the target shooter. The strong, 18x14x8-inch case features a three-point, no-wobble scope mounting system that eliminates the need to carry a separate scope stand. It holds up to five handguns and has a weather-tight gasket and full-length piano hinge. Locking closures are heavy-duty. The cases comply with Federal Aviation regulations as baggage on commercial airlines. For more information, write the company at 601 W. 26th Street, New York, NY 10001.



### New handgun case holds up to 8" barrels

Schulz Leather Co., Inc. has introduced its "Range Case" model for handguns with 8-inch barrels or less. The case comes in both brown, expanded vinyl and sueded leather. Both cases have imitation fleece lining. Cases have storage pockets on each side for cleaning gear, ammo, extra magazines—even an extra gun. All cases are double-stitched around the trim and feature tough luggage handles. For more information, write the company at 16247 Minnesota, Paramount, CA 90723.

**STURDY, FEW PARTS:**

# SEECAMP INTRODUCES UNIQUE .25 AUTO

**Features include double action, simple operation, stainless steel finish, ultra-compactness, foolproof safety and no-snap hammer.**

*By Dave Reynolds*

I've learned from my ranching days that .25 cal. pocket pistols aren't the best guns to shoot rattlesnakes from horseback, although they do have considerable practical value.

When Larry Seecamp sent me one of his first production guns from the L. W. Seecamp custom shop-turned factory, I was pleased at having the opportunity to look it over and do some test-firing.

Louis Seecamp, Larry's dad, has been a custom pistolsmith for many years, producing some highly innovative weapons. Louis' most widely known modification is a double action conversion on the Colt .45 auto, combined with a chop job to reduce

the pistol to near .380 size. (The rights to this conversion have been sold to ODI in New Jersey.)

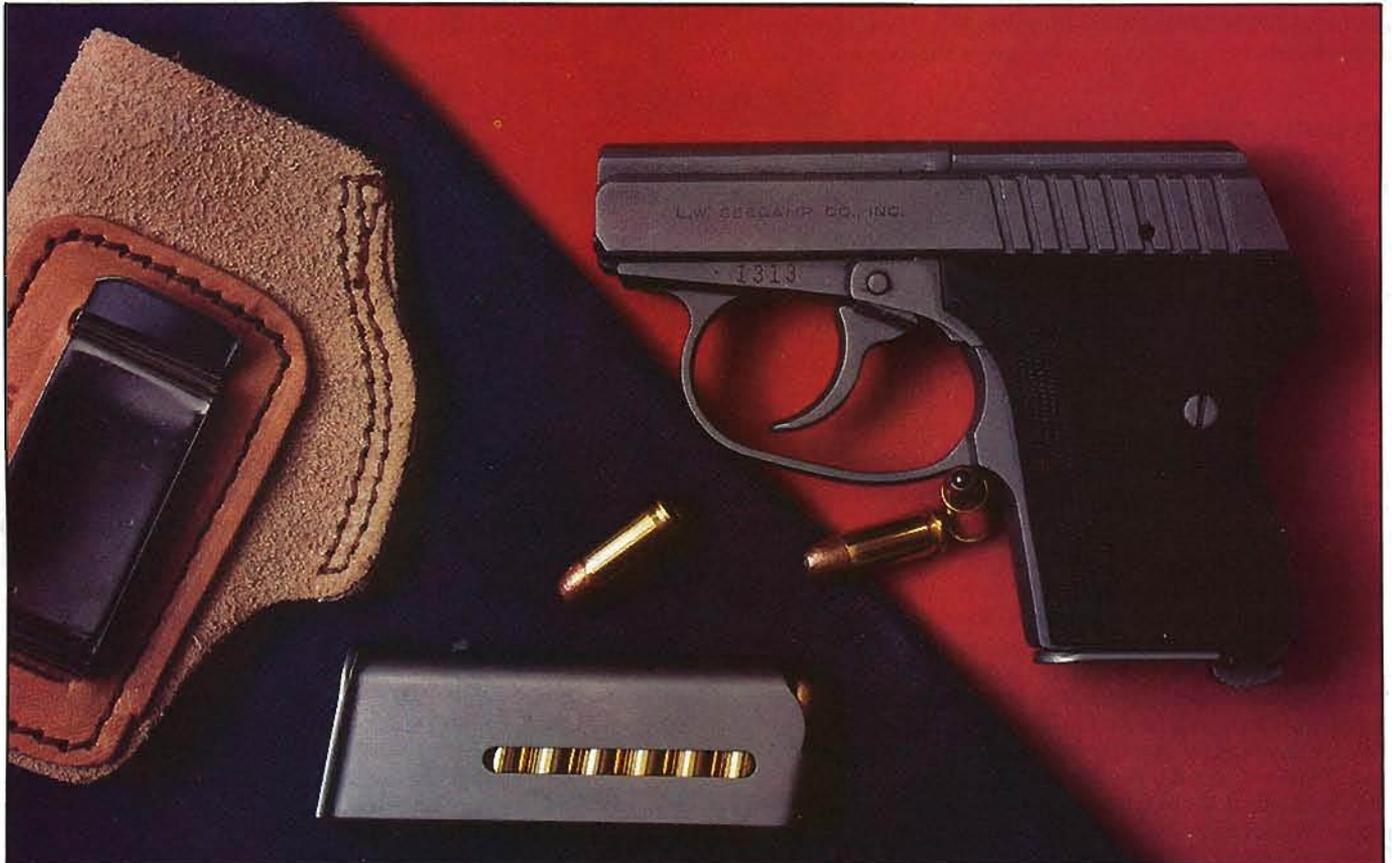
People who know Seecamp well are generally surprised to learn that he selected a lowly .25 auto pistol for his debut into manufacturing, because he has a number of larger, more exciting designs on hand. Why would Louis want to build grass huts when he is capable of building skyscrapers? Well, there's a lot more need for grass huts. That's why.

Our "grass hut" is a straight trigger cocking, double action only, stainless steel automatic. With its inertia firing pin, it is perfectly safe with a round in the chamber.

It has the absolute simplicity of operation of a double action revolver, for every shot. If you pull the trigger, it fires; if you don't, it won't.

The Seecamp .25 has only one safety device. When the magazine is removed, the trigger is blocked and the slide will only retract about a half-inch, not enough to eject or load a round. The block becomes effective when the magazine is pulled out about 3/8." The only way to load the chamber is from the magazine. To carry a full load of eight rounds, put one in the magazine, charge the chamber, then remove the magazine and load seven rounds.

**Seecamp .25 Auto showing double-action trigger and stainless steel magazine.**





**Screwdriver points to trigger block. Note hammer is flush with slide and frame. There are no sights on this auto.**



**When slide is dropped about 1/8 inch, trigger block engages trigger. Note that hammer moves back only about 1/8 inch.**

Unloading the chamber is a little tricky. Depress the magazine release button and the clip will drop about 1/8," enough to prevent another round from chambering, but not enough to block the slide. Operating the slide will empty the chamber.

The beauty of the little gun is its simplicity of operation and lack of gadgets. But one gadget that I think it should have is a loaded chamber indicator, so you can check to be sure it is ready, in case the situation starts getting sticky. A slight change in extractor design would let it give a tiny, but comforting bulge when a round is in the chamber. I mentioned this to Larry and he said they were already considering such a change, but new tooling takes time, so it probably won't show up for a while.

Barrel and frame are cast as a single unit, so there's no quick barrel change, but it won't shoot loose, either. The magazine sits high in the frame for almost straight line feeding. The slide is open all across the top to facilitate ejection. The gun has a minimum number of parts. The magazine catch serves the second function of being the base anchor for the mainspring. The mainspring, in turn, provides spring tension for the magazine catch. The entire design is simple and sturdy.

The hammer lies in a well at the back of frame; its surface is contoured to match those of frame and slide. You couldn't snag it if you tried. Removal and replacement of slide is difficult; I haven't tried it yet, but it isn't necessary for cleaning. Action is easily exposed by removing left grip panel and action cover plate. You can run the action and watch it work; the parts don't fly away.

Seecamp designed his pocket pistol as an easy-to-carry, safe, and quick-to-use personal defense weapon. The gun has no sights; for most purposes, it doesn't need them. I think I'd prefer some kind of sights on the gun, maybe just a bead front and a mark at the back of slide.

In spite of its small size, the Seecamp .25 handles nicely. It has a smooth and easy



**Author fires stainless Seecamp .25 Auto at an aerial target—with good results!**

double-action pull. First firing was into a pile of phone books the day the gun arrived. It went through a full clip with no problems. The DA pull was so nice I started thinking about trying some aerial target work with it.

A couple of days later we set up shop out in the pasture. Five rounds fired into a .25 yard pistol target at a distance of seven yards produced a nice tight group that was about 6" above and a little to the right of aim point. At 15 yards, the group was larger, still high and right. All shots were on the paper. Without sights, it isn't possible to determine the gun's absolute accuracy, but a look at the seven-yard target should convince anyone that it's good enough.

With fundamentals out of the way, I was ready for some fun.

The plan was to begin aerial target shooting at gallon plastic milk jugs, but the wind was so strong it blew them out of the safe zone before I could shoot. I switched to coffee cans with slightly better results. But about a dozen shots resulted in only one hit, and that was just on the edge of the can. On a more favorable day, I'll try this again and expect better results.

Point shooting at stacked coffee cans at distances from 10 to 15 feet produced a satisfactory number of hits. In fact, I was so impressed with Seecamp's .25 that I suggested to Larry that they consider scaling it up to handle larger cartridges. Using a variety of Winchester, Remington, and Federal ammo, I put about a hundred rounds through the gun with only two malfunctions. In both cases, the last round failed to feed. The problem was caused by a twisted magazine spring, which was easily corrected.

Initial marketing is handled by Sile Distributors, 7 Centre Market Place, New York, NY 10013. Dealers may inquire as to availability. Sile has established a suggested retail price of \$199.95. For more information, contact Sile or L. W. Seecamp Co. Inc., P.O. Box 255, New Haven, CT 06502.



# NEW SILHOUETTE

# PISTOL STOCKS



*By Philip C. Briggs*

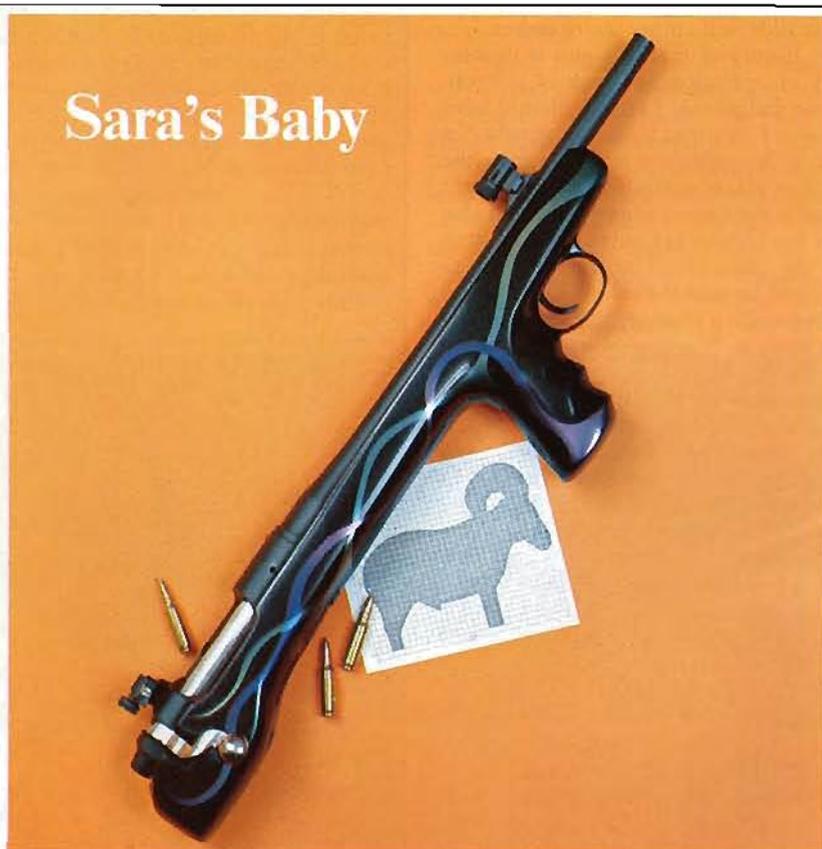
The booming popularity of the handgun silhouette sport has created an ever-expanding market for products and firearms for which there previously had been only a limited demand, or which hadn't even existed. The list is long, but take the Remington XP-100 for example; or more to the point, its stock.

As the number of custom XP-100's chambered for ever bigger cartridges grew exponentially, the demand for stocks that would provide more shooter comfort and better accuracy expanded accordingly. New materials and construction techniques were employed to inexpensively produce stocks that closely fit the complex shapes of the shooter's hand to better distribute recoil forces, and hence reduce felt recoil. These same materials also provided the added benefits of being more stable than wood, while providing equal or better accuracy with less weight.

Fiberglass was the first option tried, often by the same firms that had been building fiberglass rifle stocks for benchrest, varmint or silhouette rifles. The first stocks were lighter than wood, although not always by much. Some I've seen weren't that much more comfortable to shoot than Remington's stock; reshaping them to fit the hand by filling adds weight, and removes strength.

There's a second generation of replacement stocks coming out now made of new materials, with new designs to solve old problems. One, a new stock from H-S Precision (P.O. Box 512, Prescott, AZ 86302), uses a material new to pistol stock manufacturers.

The stock is injection molded of polyurethane foam that is reinforced with chopped fiberglass fibers. Called "Fiberthane," the foam mix is one of a



The forward grip pistol on our cover, a radical new departure in silhouette pistols, is designed to be shot prone, and to effectively use that most efficient of iron sights, the peep.

The unusual fiberglass stock was designed and built by stockmaker Gale McMillian (Box DY 72, Cave Creek Stage, Phoenix, AZ 85020). The finish, twelve coats of hand rubbed lacquer, starts with black pearl and is overlaid with several layers of tinted iridescent and clear

lacquers. It was applied by Jim Gebhart (8045 N. 12th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020). Metal work was done by Dan Carey (112 Condor Circle, Darlington, South Carolina 29532), who developed the design for the far-forward trigger. The E.R. Shaw barrel (Thoms Run Road, Bridgeville, PA 15017) is chambered in 7X47mm.

The pistol shoots as good as it looks. It swept Sara, Briggs' wife, into triple A and it appears that her first 40 is not far off.

family of structural foams commonly used to mold large, complex items, such as furniture or fake wood trim. The foam is light, but a lot denser than the foams that most of us are used to seeing; cut a stock apart and you'll find the foam will dent slightly with a fingernail. The foam is the same density throughout, except for a hard, smooth skin that forms against the mold. This outside surface comes out nearly flawless, requiring only minor filling of an occasional gas bubble before painting.

The primary advantage of the foam stock is light weight. The stock I've been testing, bedded, with trigger guard and paint, weighs 11 ounces, the same as a factory nylon original.

H-SP has been producing rifle stocks made with this material for about three years, and the pistol stock for about two. Complex shapes are easily formed with this process, and they've taken advantage of that property to incorporate finger grooves and a thumbrest on the pistol stock.

The foam is easily shaped with wood-working tools, so that carving clearance for a thumb knuckle takes but a few minutes with a rasp, and there's no need to worry about weakening the stock by cutting through the shell. Refinishing the carved spot is easily done with epoxy or lacquer putty. Putty can also be used to add material where needed to get that custom fit necessary to comfortably shoot the arm-wrenchers. Duratite wood dough (by DAP Inc.) works well; it's light, and will stick to the stock, (not your hand) while you mold the mess to fit.

The ultimate strength of the foam stock is less than that of a wood or fiberglass version. You could break it if you used it for a hammer, and I expect you wouldn't have to strain too hard to bust it in half with your bare hands. Still, it wasn't designed for that sort of abuse, but rather for the forces exerted by the recoiling action and the resisting hand. There's a piece of aluminum tubing in the grip for reinforcement, and recent stocks incorporate a strip

of fiberglass cloth around the recoil lug/trigger hole.

I've heard of two early stocks that were broken in that area, the thinnest and hence weakest portion of any stock. One was broken in the struggle to remove the action from the bedding compound; the other, on a friend's 7mm-08, failed while we were

## Master craftsmen develop practical, exotic designs for XP-100

chronographing some loads. However, as the crack propagated from the top of the stock down I suspect it was damaged by prying the rear of the action out of the compound first, which forces the barrel down on the forend.

### Craftsman Tom Houston

I took that stock back to H-SP owner Tom Houghton, and although his company probably wasn't responsible, he replaced it. That's nice, but more importantly for the rest of us, Tom decided on the spot to add some glass cloth to that area to eliminate the problem.

I had my stock bedded to my 8mm IHMSA pistol by H-SP. They do nice work. I'm prone to clean out the excess bedding with a Dremel Moto-Tool and a chisel, but they set the stock up in a milling machine and milled out the excess material. Even though most customers wouldn't know the difference, Tom feels it's the best way to do it, and I guess that's what "Precision" means.

I shot the stock for six months or so and my scores went up immediately, starting with a 59X60 in our state shoot. After about 500 rounds or so, neither the stock nor the bedding show any sign of distress, but the tail of the action began to float off of the bedding.

I'm inclined to snug the action in extra

firm, and as I had only an half-inch or so of the barrel bedded, I expect that with this limited support I've over-stressed the foam in this area. Either that, or it's warped due to our hot summers. You can't pillar-bed an XP because of the trigger bar, so I recommend that the bedding extend down the barrel a couple of inches, and that the inletting be opened up, so that a lot of compound can be placed around the recoil lug to spread the clamping force over a larger area. That, and drilling and tapping the action for a rear action screw, should eliminate the problem of an over-zealous wrench or the relentless sun.

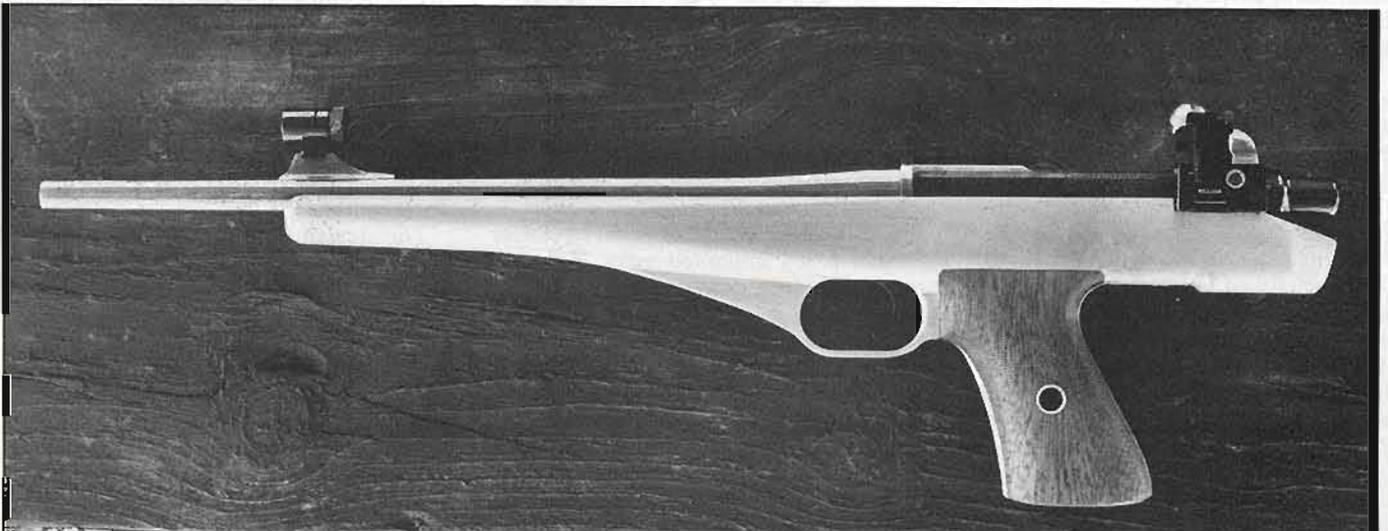
More recently, Tom has added a new XP stock (FRP-1000, left or right hand available) to his line that eliminates the problems of total bedding, and has the added benefits of a more secure anchoring of the action to the stock and a better fit of grip to hand.

The stock is molded around a precision-machined aluminum V-bedding block. The block is drilled through for the XPs large front action screw, and tapped for insertion of the small rear action screw. New, high-strength hex-head capscrew replacements are provided for both action screws, as are an appropriately sized pair of hex wrenches.

The stock is a one-size-fits-all type. Unbolt your 7mmBR from the plastic-fantastic brown-dirt original stock and bolt it into the new H-SP version and it's ready to shoot. That's it, and there's no reason why you can't swap it around among your other XP pistols—like your .221 stocker, or the .223 varmint getter, or the .308 deer slayer. This may well be the last XP stock you'll buy!

Tom obviously had some input from top silhouette shooters on the stock's shape. The grip fits the hand well and offers good control of the pistol with heavily recoiling cartridges. These shooters must have been Creedmoor fans, as the left side of the butt (right-hand version) is cut away to allow your wrist and fingers to solidly contact your thigh and the forearm is chamfered to

***This Binkley stock is eye-pleasing, has benchrest accuracy and eternal stability.***





*The Brown Precision Stock when smoothed up, drilled out and painted is ready to shoot.*

provide a flat surface to rest against your calf. (Those stocks that have fat or flared butts, such as the nylon number, perch on that high point, and require you to cock the pistol to get your fingers to touch the thigh, and the normally-found rounded forearm shape provides little contact surface on the sloping calf and slides down.) Subtle touches, but useful aids to shooting top scores.

The stock shoots as good as it looks. I slipped my 8mm IHMSA into the one I got to test, and with the aid of my Siebert-modified 6X Leupold pistol scope (converted from an I2XAO) I shot several three-quarter to one-inch groups with my hunting load while getting ready for a Wyoming antelope hunt.

#### **Chet Brown's Mid-Grip**

The problem of fitting the stock to the shooter's hand has been addressed in a direct fashion with a new stock from Brown Precision Company (P.O. Box 270W, Los Molinos, CA 96055). Chet Brown was one of the first to build fiberglass stocks and was also probably one of the first to hear complaints that his stock didn't fit the shooter's hand. Hands, as you might expect, vary in size and shape and satisfying everyone with one handle is an impossible task. What you'd have to do is mold the handle to fit each hand, and that's what Chet has done.

Chet now offers a version of his regular mid-grip stock with an undersized peg for a handle that comes with a bottle of epoxy resin and a bag of lightweight filler. The intention is that the shooter/gunsmith bed the pistol's action in the stock in the usual fashion, and then bed the pistol to the shooter's hand.

The catalysed resin and filler are mixed together into as stiff compound as possible and then the goo is spread over the peg. The shooter, with a generous coating of release agent on the appropriate hand, grips the goo and assumes the favored shooting position. Depending upon the temperature and drops of catalyst added, in ten to fifteen minutes the shape of the hand has been permanently committed to epoxy

and hopefully, has solidified in the required position and angle on the pistol.

When me memorialized my hand we added too much resin and the goo was fluid enough that, even though I tried to hold the correct position, I shifted my wrist angle enough so that when I shot the smoothed up stock I found that it bit just as bad as the factory version. No big deal I figured, I'll just mold some more. Eventually, I got the stock to a very comfortable level using Duratite wood dough. A lightweight epoxy putty would be better than the goo; it wouldn't be so apt to shift, but I don't know of any such.

Unfortunately, the wood dough over-grossed the stock, and even after a liberal drilling and a change to an aluminum cocking piece of the action, the complete pistol was an ounce over weight. Barrel's too heavy, I guess.

Still, the stock fits so well. It'll be my hunting stock for my 8mm IHMSA pistol, and with my custom converted 6X Leupold long-eye-relief scope, will be useful on the prairie and on the rifle silhouette range (those 220 grain Sierra at 2000 fps do generate some recoil) when we set out to show the rifle shooters who's the best.

#### **McMillan Prototype**

A new approach to shooting that elusive straight has been taken in an experimental stock built by Gale McMillan. (Box DY 72, Cave Creek Stage, Phoenix, AZ 85020.) Gale has been building fiberglass-reinforced epoxy-resin rifle stocks for benchrest shooters and other riflemen interested in the benefits of synthetic stocks for sometime. This past last year, he's had time to turn his talents to pistol stocks for XP-100 based unlimited guns. He's currently molding conventional mid-grip stocks, using either graphite or fiberglass fiber reinforcement, but at the request of a shooting friend built a front-grip stock.

The stock is ambidextrous, and utilizes some exotic fibers to provide the necessary strength between grip and action while maintaining the thin shell construction necessary to produce a lightweight stock. Gale's intention was to save as much

weight as possible in the stock, so the extra weight could be put to better use in the barrel to provide increased rigidity and safety.

Today's unlimited pistols are assembled with the care and quality of a lightweight benchrest and are capable of a straight any day, but the targets are still tiny and the shooter must cope with iron sights, a less than solid hold and variations in point of impact induced by changes in grip pressure.

What Gale has done is to recognize the human factor in the process of sending a bullet down range. Accomplishing this requires developing a different kind of pistol stock, one that is designed as a complimentary part of the shooter/pistol/ammo system.

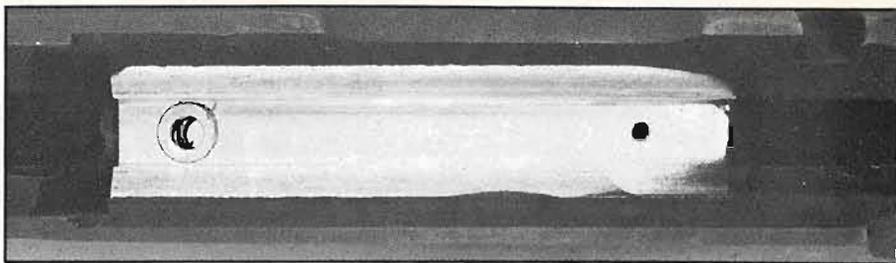
The primary discriminator between those who shoot 40s every match and the rest of us is eyesight. The limitations posed by open, iron sights were soon noticed by the early competitors and the solution many turned to was to install the iron sight rifleman had long ago developed to eliminate these problems: the peep sight. Unfortunately, they overlooked the human factor. The peep sight just doesn't work at an arms length from the eye. Fired from a supine position, the self-centering action of an aperture close to the eye is lost and the rear sight is reduced to being a circular, open notch that must be consciously aligned with the front sight. Fired prone, the eye-to-sight distance is reduced, but not enough to change things if the conventional rear or mid-grip pistol is kept a safe distance from the face.

The design solution to the eyesight problem is the same one everybody else has tried, the peep sight, but the approach selected moves the peep to the proper distance from the eye, so that the aperture is effective. This is accomplished by moving the sight rearward in relation to the grip and by having the shooter fire prone. Control of the pistol in recoil, even with a full length .308, can be achieved by using a locked elbow hold with the shooting arm. Use of a cartridge of modest recoil, such as

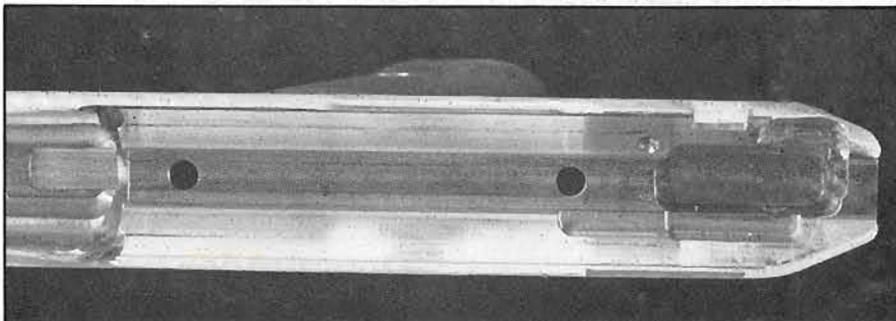
the 7X47mm wildcat we used in our test gun, further facilitates control efforts and allows a long armed shooter to bend the elbows to achieve proper sight-eye separation—both before and after pulling the trigger.

The stock also allows the shooter to take an exceptionally solid hold, which becomes critical when locked into a shootoff on 200 meter chickens. The specified hold puts the shooting hand on the mat, with a little finger curled under the grip to maintain a legal separation between the mat and the pistol; the other hand cups the rear of the stock in the web between thumb and forefinger and is adjusted to achieve the desired vertical sight alignment. Loosely held, the pistol wobbles much like a conventionally stocked, unlimited supported gun held over a leg or by a gloved fist. However, exerting a moderate push at the rear, and a counterbalancing pull on the grip, dampens the wobble down to unnoticeable levels. A few two-handed stocks, designed to provide a solid hold, were seen early on in the game, but BATF opinions on their legal status as a pistol eliminated them from the sport. The new stock meets the BATF test.

Finally, the selected design effectively eliminates vertical stringing of hits on the target due to variations in grip pressure, thereby relieving the shooter of the chance of a miss due to relaxing at the wrong moment. The forward location of the grip also allows it to be placed closer to the bore centerline than a mid- or rear-grip location, which tends to reduce rotation of the pistol about the grip. More importantly, the forward grip placement provides a downward force due to the weight of the shooter's hand and arm, which counteracts the lifting of the muzzle during recoil. Muzzle jump is reduced to a barely perceptible amount, even though the 7X47mm generates recoil energies up to .41 Magnum level in the test pistol. Further benefits of this reduction are the ability of a competitor to shoot bullets of different



**H-S Precision's new stock (above) features a cast-in-place aluminum v-bedding block for one-size-fits-all convenience, plus accuracy of an individually bedded stock. Looking into Binkley stock at V-block (below) for locating and bedding action.**



weight (of substantially the same trajectory) without making sight corrections and the pistol's seeming indifference to who shoots it; the same holds and sight settings seem to work well for a wide variety of shooters.

#### **Russ Binkley: Wood-Metal**

The last stock tested is the most unusual and is in many ways the most appealing. Russ Binkley (1SW, 166 E. Cairo, Tempe, AZ 85282) is one of those custom craftsmen who serve the needs of a small, specialized segment of the shooting fraternity. Russ makes stocks for benchrest shooters out of—aluminum. Not cast, or extruded shapes, but rifle-like stocks machined from a solid plank of the shiny stuff. The action sets in a V-block, with the recoil lug precisely positioned against the front surface of the block and the rest of the stock is designed to interface with the shooter and the rest. The resulting stock is a stable as the bench itself, and no doubt if bolted

down, would serve as an adequate machine rest.

Russ was approached by local shooter Rod Moyer about the possibilities of carving out a pistol stock for the XP. Russ felt it was worth trying and his first effort (model RM) is a gorgeous *tour de force* sculpture of wood and metal. The fit of wood to metal on the mahogany grip panels, and the detailing, such as the specially made escutcheon, are exquisite.

The exterior shape of the first effort was selected with looks in mind and ended up eight ounces too heavy for silhouette competition. Russ has developed a competition version to meet the weight limit by leaving off the forend and providing a flat bar that's adjustable for angle for those who like to rest the pistol on or along their leg. The RM-C version weighs about 10 ounces, an ounce or so less than the factory nylon stock.

*Continued on page 76*

**H-S Precision's newest handgun stock is the FRP-100.**



# COMBAT SHOOTING

## Australian Style

*By John Robinson*

Organized pistol shooters in Australia now represent one of the strongest and most respected shooting groups, with 14,000 members.

American influence on the Australian shooting scene has always been significant, especially with equipment and more recently with the development of other forms of shooting of a more practical nature than the formal matches previously sanctioned here.

I have followed the growth of all the handgun related matches in the USA for several years and PPC, IPSC, IHSMA and Second Chance activities all seem to be gaining ground, while the NRA courses don't get much publicity or have reached a static stage of development.

One thing that bothers me is the attitude of gentlemen like Jeff Cooper, who continually emphasize how "relevant" IPSC shooting is and how all other pistol matches are not.

There are only two kinds of pistol shooting. One is done by police, military and paramilitary personnel to gain competence in gun handling. The other is competition, where handgunners gather to see who is best at that particular discipline.

No matter what the match is called, whether IPSC or ISU Free Pistol, the top shooters will be those having the best equipment and an aggressive drive to excel, not those who have to do it for a living.

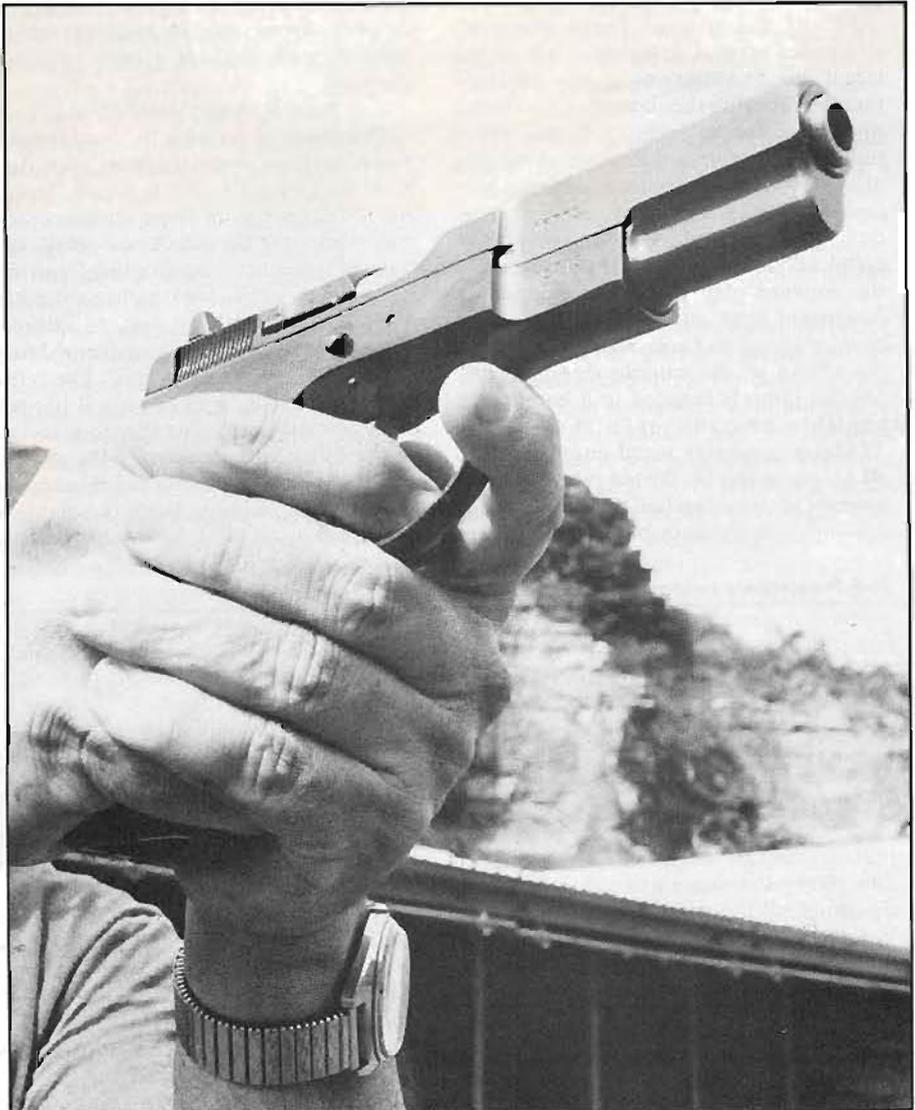
People will shoot whatever turns them on. All matches are relevant to whoever shoots them. Comparing one with another is pointless.

Our local Service Match bears some similarity to the PPC but is somewhat more difficult and is a 90-shot course.

I believe that in any match "possibles" should be impossible. This is not the case with PPC.

Our best shooters are firing scores in the Service Match in the 870s out of 900. They

Downunder handgunners are progressive and greatly influenced by American technology and procedures.



**Brien Towler of Australia reports excellent accuracy with full-jacketed military ammo in this CX75 9 mm combat pistol with its fine single- and double-action trigger system.**

are also shooting highly specialized handguns, all autoloaders.

The original Service Match rules were written to permit any ISU center fire pistol to be used in the match.

These specifications set the caliber at 7.62mm (.30) to .38 (9.35mm), establish minimum trigger pull of three pounds (1360 gm) and require a maximum weight of the pistol at 3.1 pounds (1400 gm).

For the Service Match, caliber range was increased to include .45, allowing .45 autos to be used for the match, and more importantly making it legal for shooters to own a big-caliber handgun, which they do in considerable numbers.

#### AUSTRALIA'S SERVICE MATCH COURSE OF FIRE

Target: International Rapid Fire Silhouette

50 yards	24 shots in 2 min., 45 secs. 6 shots prone 6 shots sitting 6 shots right-hand/barricade 6 shots left-hand/barricade
25 yards	6 shots, right-hand, barricade, 15 secs. 6 shots, left-hand, barricade, 15 secs. 12 shots (6 right, 6 left, barricade), 35 secs. 6 shots, 2 targets, 6 secs. 6 shots, 3 targets, 6 secs.
10 yards	6 shots, one target, 4 secs. 3 shots left-hand, 3 shots right-hand, one target, 8 secs.
7 yard	6 shots, two targets, 4 secs.
	12 shots from crouch position, 2 targets, 15 secs.
Total rounds fired: 114	

GUN AND LOAD	AVERAGE OF 4 GROUPS
Colt New Service Speer 200gr JHP, 6.4 grains Bullseye powder	1.89 inches
Hornaday 230gr FMJ, 15.2 grains 630 ball powder	3.15 inches
Sierra 240gr JHP, 8.1 grains Unique powder	1.70 inches
Hornaday 250gr JHP, 16 grains 2400 powder	2.02 inches
Remington-Peters factory, 255gr LRN, powder unknown	2.35 inches
Colt Govt. models .45ACP, all loads	2.22 inches (overall av.)

Those who like winning matches went for the most competitive equipment. This has proved to be the SIG-Hammerli P240 in the .32 S&W Long (the same pistol comes in .38 Spec.), or the Walther .32 S&W Long and the Sako .32 S&W Long autos.

The .32 autos, shooting wadcutter-only ammo, are very accurate and have low recoil. They can be reloaded quickly in those series that require it, and control of these pistols in the 6 and 4 second series is considerably easier than with the larger calibers.

Every loophole has been explored and one shooter developed his Service Match pistol on a Walther .32 GSP using the char-

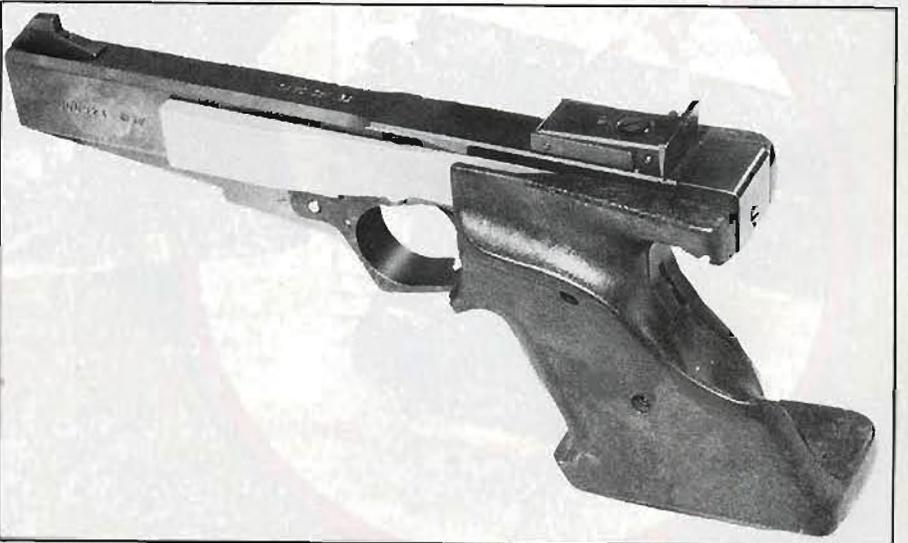
*Continued on page 76*



Australian shooters report that this 9 mm SIG P210 is one of the few autos capable of handling full loads out of the factory box with exceptional accuracy. High cost and inferior handling, compared to the .32 target autos, are factors limiting its popularity.



Listing for more than \$1,000, this P240 in .32 S&W Long justifies its price tag as one of the most competitive pistols for combat shooting in Australia. It fires wadcutter ammo only.



This new Sako .32 auto is a blowback action design and has performed well in combat competition in Australia. Standard orthopedic grips have to be altered for Service Match competition.

# Win this .45 LONG SLI



# DE by Alpha Precision



**H**ere's a Long Slide .45 with character, and a couple of special features not found on every custom gun. Customized by Jim Stroh of Alpha Precision, it exhibits craftsmanship of the highest order. Jim did all the work himself, from start to finish.

Aside from the obvious length, the most notable custom feature is "Joe's Mag Well" (see inset). It was made by building up the lower 1/4" of the frame by heliarc, then contouring and polishing to final dimensions. Without altering the outside dimensions of the gun, this super-beveled magazine well increases the magazine opening 150% and decreases the magazine change time by one-third.

The barrel was made from a Douglas Premium blank with 1-16 twist. The hood and lugs were machined oversize and fitted to the slide. Jim mounts the Bo-Mar sights low, and the higher position of the lugs permit use of a normal front sight.

The checkering of the metal follows not only form, but function. The bottom of the trigger guard is checkered for those who place their weak-hand index finger there. Checkering on the mainspring housing extends over the frame for additional coverage.

The stocks are Hogue diamond-checked rosewood. Not visible in the photo are such niceties as Jim's master trigger job; polished ramp and throat; jewelled hammer and barrel hood, and many other features.

A fine example of American craftsmanship made especially for some lucky American Handgunner.

If you'd like to know more about Jim Stroh's work, write him at Alpha Precision, 1231 Sunderland Ct., Atlanta, GA 30319, and tell him you saw his work in *The American Handgunner*.

## TO ENTER CONTEST

Use a postcard, follow sample; include name and address, HOM-J-A, local dealer name and address. Mail before August 1, 1982. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Box 16025, San Diego, CA 92116

Name	_____	
Address	_____	
City & State	_____ Zip _____	
<b>HOM-JULY-AUGUST</b>		
If I win, please ship my gun through the following dealer:		
Dealer	_____	
Address	_____	
City	State	Zip

Contest void where taxed or prohibited by law. No purchase necessary. Winner must comply with all federal and local laws. Employees and agents of Publisher's Development Corp. not eligible.

## WE HAVE A WINNER

Jack Whisenhunt of Offutt AFB in Omaha, Nebraska won the January-February American Handgunner Custom Handgun Giveaway, a "Ruger Supreme," made by Tom's Gun Bluing Shop in Carroll, Iowa.

# IS THE PARABELLUM PRACTICAL?

By Robert Shimek



Where does this Old World design fit into today's defensive shooting picture?

If, in freestyle combat shooting, experimenting with what is new can be revealing, then revisiting what is old, to check and verify what we think we know, can be absolutely devastating. Take the "Luger" pistol, for example—or, better yet, the Mauser Parabellum 06/70, since this is as close as we can come to Luger's original design without dealing with an antique. Popular wisdom holds this weapon to be little more than an unreliable semi-curio, useless for any practical purpose, horrendously overpriced, a decided bottom choice as a defensive sidearm. Indeed, many say that when, several years ago, Mauser Werke A.G. ceased production of this probably final Luger variant, the event made no impact whatsoever on the world of practical shooting.



Maybe it should have. Lugers are troublesome, and there is little point in denying the 70 plus years of experience that tells us so. And the 9mm cartridge will never approximate a .45 ACP (White Laboratories notwithstanding). Furthermore, the pistol will always remain too dirt-sensitive to constitute an optimum choice for military and police service.

But useless? Unreliable? A last choice? No, most emphatically a *good* Parabellum—and there are such guns—is not that! I know because I own one and have shot it in everything from local IPSC-style matches to *Siluetas Metallicas*, all with a degree of reliability that has put some customized Colt autos to shame. Indeed, in a recent club championship, my 4-inch 9mm merrily gobbled its way through

a full 120 rounds with never a bobble; perhaps some 20% of the 1911s in attendance didn't. To what degree do I trust the pistol? To a point where I, a police officer whose department limits him to ".38 Special factory non-expanders only," would prefer to carry the Para, were that alternative available! And this comes not from "sour grapes" or from a total lack of DA firing ability: I shoot Police Distinguished and usually place in club revolver events; only rarely do I place in auto events against the Colt. Still, when I compare Comstock counts, in events where reloading is not a factor, scores with the Mauser are roughly equal to scores shot with my tuned and honed 6-inch K-38—and this without a touch of custom work on the German pistol. A good Parabellum is one of the better 9mm auto-loading pistols available!

You may argue, "My Mauser is the classic jam-prone stereotype of Luger legend. What can I do?" Perhaps plenty. While not all Parabellums can be adjusted to achieve satisfactory reliability, many of them can, without resorting to custom gunsmithing. Indeed, with most Mausers, 100% feeding reliability is attainable; not with reloads in fired casings—the Mauser's extractor claw is very sensitive to burrs—nor with today's popular stubby defense loads—cartridge over length *must* be at or near 1.169 inches—but with some factory FMJ and defense loadings, the pistol is one you can entrust with your life. W-W and Remington FMJ function the action flawlessly and are ideal staples for competitive use; Remington's 115 JHP works equally well and is optimum as a defensive load. For practice, Speer's 158 grain .358 swaged RNL bullet, intended for .38 Special revolvers, can be loaded ahead of 4.2 grains Unique for 4-inch accuracy at 50 meters and perhaps 95% reliability.

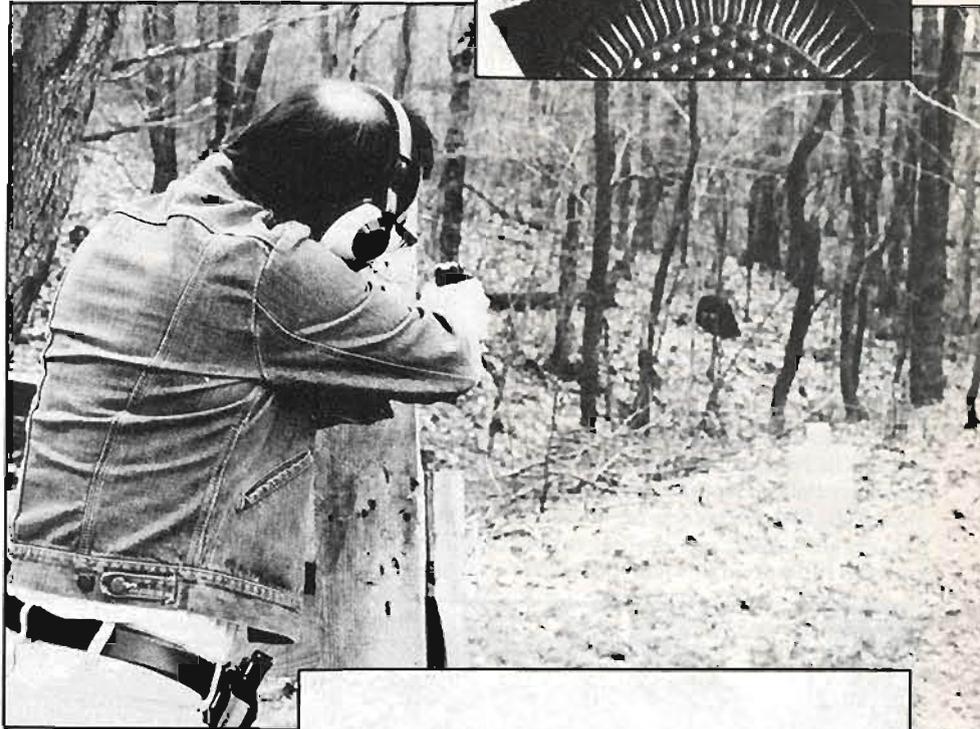
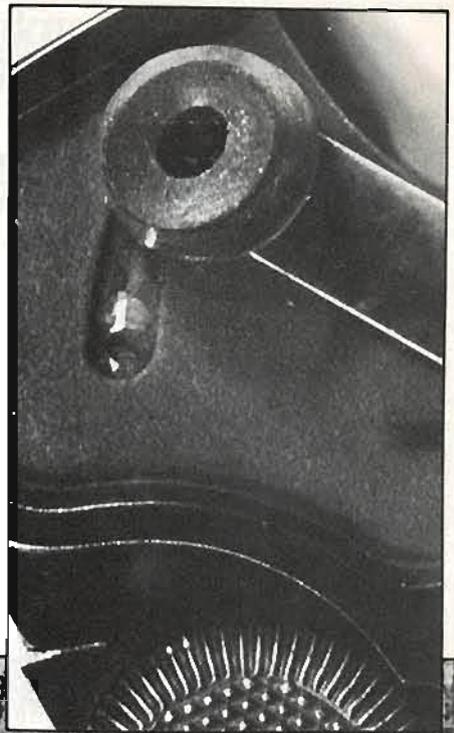
In attempting to ensure reliability in a Parabellum, bear in mind the following. (1) The magazine's powerful follower spring actually scrapes bullet noses against the feed ramp as cartridges move upward in the magazine—with a resulting rapid accumulation of lead, lube, and crud on the magazine's feed ramp and on the face of the follower. Magazine cleanliness is thus a critical matter. (2) Forget the old "Lugers must be loaded super-hot" balderdash. Most Paras function beautifully with ammo loaded to SAAMI specs—if that rigid cartridge OAL requirement is met. If you find your pistol simply must have warmer fodder, increase charges very carefully. An overloaded Mauser often acts like one being underloaded—failing to lock open occasionally, catching the second cartridge somewhere along the case body, etc. Misreading these signs can lead to disaster.

Assuming functional reliability can be attained, the Parabellum itself presents few other problems. Nothing in my Mauser has broken or gone awry over the course of several thousand rounds, and the pistol shows little wear. One headache that

the practical shooter does soon encounter, however, is that of leather: to my knowledge, no manufacturer builds a true combat holster for this gun. The original Wehrmacht issue flap holster is suitable for nothing other than carry under abominable weather conditions. Safariland's creation is modernistic and appropriate for duty wear but it is cursed with a safety strap (which IPSC insists *MUST* be fastened for each draw). The custom holster makers may undertake the project, but only after they have stopped laughing and then at a price one might be reluctant to pay. The solution to this problem was uncovered in the back of my shooting cabinet, where I stored the soft leather Bucheimer-Clark clip-on holster which had once carried a .380 H&C. You guessed it: a near perfect fit which, when worn in

*Continued on page 66*

**Right: High profile thumb safety as crafted by the author from rubber tubing and held on by instant glue.**



**An altered Bucheimer clip-on rig is a good fit for the Parabellum and a practical carrying holster.**

Combat shooting provides survival training for these law enforcement shooters

# COPS TRY IPSC AT PPC MEET

*By Jim Pettigrew Jr.*

A PART FROM THE SERIOUS reasons behind the August 1981 NRA Regional at Glynco Georgia's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, a T-shirt logo spotted on an attending cop pretty much summed up the event's mood: "Feel Safe Tonight. Sleep With A Deputy." The two-day competitions were held on the spartan but functional FLETC ranges, presently the only facility of its type in the U.S. and where all federal law officers except FBI and CIA are trained.

We saw a lot of excellent shooting, several national records tied, and more than a little companionship in a relaxed, hassle-free setting. Over 100 contestants showed up from all over the Southeast, representing law enforcement agencies as disparate as rural county SO's, the Secret Service, U.S. Customs, the IRS Criminal Investigation Division, the Border Patrol, and U.S. Park Police. For some of the Police Pistol Combat (PPC) entrants the affair also represented an introduction to the International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC)-style of competition, which stresses officer survival and safety in combat.

During the Regional, co-sponsored by FLETC's Recreation Association and the Georgia Police Combat League, a total of nine PPC matches were held, including six aggregate individual events, two team matches, and an NRA Police Dis-

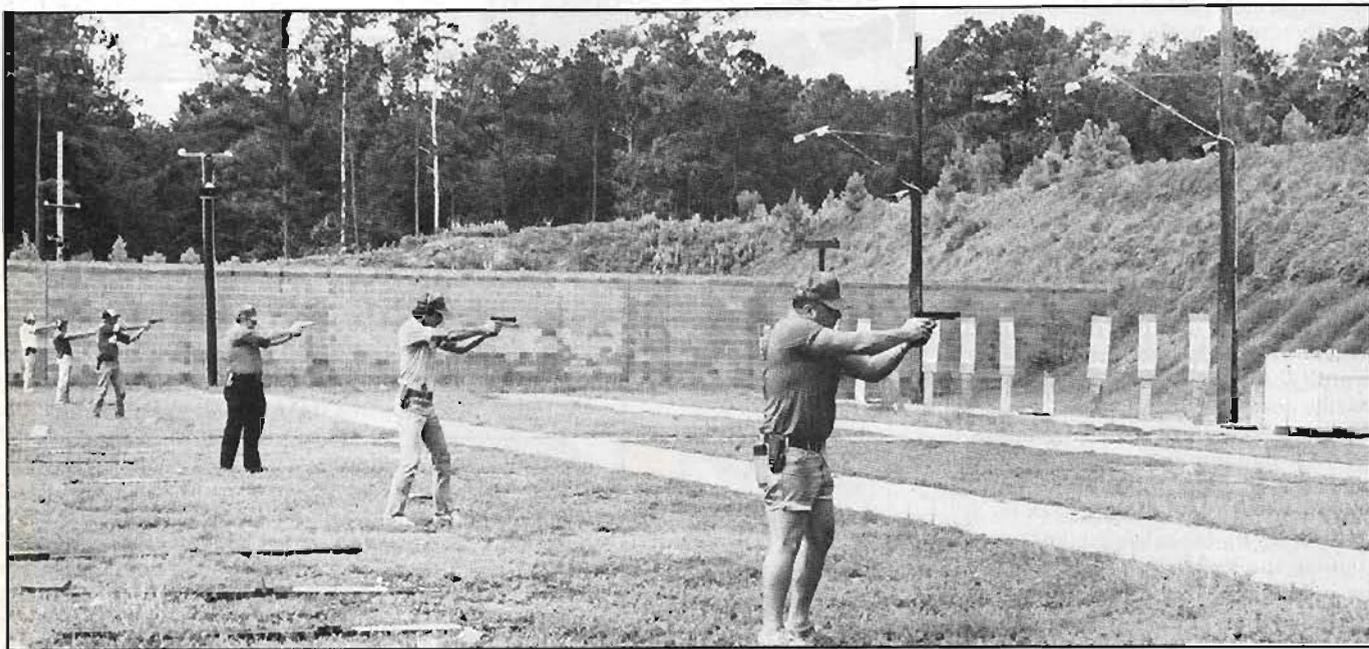
tinguished Match. Individual aggregate entries were divided into NRA's High Master, Master, Expert, Sharpshooter, and Marksman slots, with a New Shooter class for those who had never competed in a PPC ("in-house" matches and department qualifications didn't count).

Saturday's relays opened at 9:00 A.M. under overcast skies and muggy, sticky conditions. Throughout the morning and early afternoon the action was kept at a steady, quick pace by Chief Range Officer Charles Nester and continued straight through intermittent wind and brief showers, because as one entrant observed, "Street gun battles don't stop simply because it's raining." Line discipline and strict NRA safety precautions caused one older wit to mutter under his breath, "Y'know, felons don't shout at you, 'Is the line clear? The line is clear. Officers, load and ready to fire!' They throw you down and try to blow your head off..."

Through the various matches a variety of distances, positions, and attacks were utilized: crouch position, DA, 12 shots at seven yards unsupported, 25 seconds including reloading time, and 50 yards, SA or DA, six shots each—sitting, standing left hand behind barricade, and standing right hand behind barricade, with a two-minute, 45-second limit, reloading inclusive. Legal ammunition for the event was

either handloaded or factory, roundnose or wadcutter, with no high-speed or magnum ammo allowed. The matches were limited to revolvers only, .32 and larger, with NRA-legal modifications allowed in all but the Police Distinguished. That match was limited to "department-issue" weapons with SA capability, trigger pull of 2½ pounds, and taking 158-grain .38 Special service rounds, which were issued by officials after inspections.

The predictable milieu of hardware was on hand, with custom-built S&W .38s being the most visible, notably by Strahan and Jim Tatum. Winchester-Western and Star Master-Match ammo were noted among certain of the major winners. As opening day shooting wound up, Jim Cirillo, an outspoken FLETC firearms instructor and IPSC advocate, had several comments. "In PPC shooting, the fellas have learned little tricks to help them get their score higher," he said, disdainfully looking at one of his day's targets, where one lonely shot had strayed to the left of his intended group. "They've learned to hold for the head, using that as a reference point, instead of shooting at the whole body. It gives them a much tighter, more definite pattern. Now, in IPSC shooting, what happens if all you see is a shoulder? You've already switched your sights for a head-hold, so you're thinking, 'Well, I've



Many of the shooters, who were familiar with PPC, had their first try at IPSC-style courses—and they liked it!

gotta hold about five, six inches above that shoulder? They will never do it. Guys can practice this with PPC, because they know in advance what sort of target and distance to expect. In IPSC-style, you *don't know* what to expect. So, it's kind of gotten out of hand."

Sam Yarosh, a member of the Secret Service Uniform Division, dominated the meet, taking the Open Winner with a score of 1497-121x, and also nailing matches two, three, five, the Police Distinguished (593-36x). He also shot in both team events, each of which was won by the USSS. For his troubles, the quiet SS agent toted away a Ruger Redhawk, a Rogers' holster, Ambermaster glasses, and a Bianchi holster, and promptly split to resume fishing. A very proud Kate Broyles, of DeKalb County, Georgia PD, took the High Woman slot with a 1418-52x, winning a CVA Black Powder piece. New Shooter honors were captured by Gerald Kavanaugh, an officer at the Atlanta Federal Pen, with a 1397-42x.

Four entries tied national records during the events: J.R. Fiveash, Waycross, Georgia, PD; Larry Householder, USSS; and Myles Knight, U.S. Customs, Savannah—all with 240-24x in match one; and Yarosh, who popped a 180-18x in match two.

Sunday's PPC competition was concluded by early afternoon and Chief Stat Officer Margaret DeFino was able to put away the carefully compiled reams of score data. Afterwards, several officers dropped by the range hosting the IPSC shooting to try a hand at its mysteries, swap anecdotes, and compare weapons. With a background of pistol fire for emphasis, Cirillo, who's also a NYPD Stake-Out Unit veteran, gave his views on the considerably tougher course. "To us, the IPSC-style shooting more closely resembles actual situations, and I personally consider this vital in officer survival training, especially after a rookie has mastered the basics in PPC.

"Here," he went on, "the shooters don't know what is going to be required of them, and the starts are all different, hands at surrender, hands behind back, and several others." Behind him, several entries tried the "Vice-Presidente," 12 shots at seven yards in ten seconds, including reloading—at three different targets, from a surprise start. FLETC instructor Kent Williams was the IPSC Open Winner.

Winding down the event in his office a little after 1:00 P.M., FLETC instructor and top Georgia shooter Doug Young echoed Cirillo. "We think the introduction of IPSC-style was very successful this weekend," he noted, looking over the 109-person entry list for the PPC matches, "and we consider it quite valuable in survival training."

Back at the IPSC range during one of the last relays, an official remarked with typical federal law officer humor, "I don't know why they call for so many starts from the hands-at-surrender position— we never surrender."

## JIM CIRILLO: A SHOOTER'S SHOOTER

James Cirillo spends a lot of time thinking about law officer survival. One of the reasons he does so is because he knows first-hand of the deadly situations a cop can find himself drawn into—in the blink of an eyelash.

Known as "Jim" to his friends, the 50-year-old Cirillo is now a firearms instructor at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia.

"One of the many reasons I came here," Cirillo says with a wink in his office while showing off the mighty .44 "Dan," a revolver that incorporates some of his design suggestions, "is that they use only the best, and they do things right. The people here at FLETC, and this is very important to me, are willing to listen."

The road to becoming an instructor at the elite federal academy was not an easy one for Jim. As a youngster of Greek descent growing up on New York's east side, Cirillo was appalled by the injustices he saw daily on the city streets. He joined the NYPD in 1954 and stayed with the force for 22 years. Quickly overcoming an early fear of firearms, the young officer's fascination—and subsequent proficiency—with handguns began to grow. After he'd been an NYPD weapons instructor for some time, an economic austerity program in the late sixties closed all the firing ranges in New York and put instructors like Cirillo back on the street. At the same time, certain subversive groups in New York were advocating the robbing and killing of helpless victims. With all those weapons experts now on the street, city hall reasoned, we should use them to counter this ghastly



robbery-murder trend, and thus the notorious NYPD Stakeout Unit was formed. Cirillo was talked into joining the paramount group by his partner and suddenly gunfights became a way of life for him. During his first confrontation, which happened on his very first night on stakeout duty, the merits of police competition shooting became immediately clear. The control accuracy, and "shoot-under-stress" experience of PPC shooting paid off, and he got out alive.

"I knew it was a hit right away," he remembers, "and suddenly it felt like my entire body turned to water. My conscious mind was gone, and I started cursing myself—you *candyass!* But, my subconscious took over. I could hear the gun going off *bingbingbing* and feel

*Continued on page 60*

### MAJOR WINNERS, 1981 Southeastern PPC Championship

#### Open Winner

Sam Yarosh  
U.S. Secret Service,  
Washington, DC ..... 1497-121x

#### High Woman

Kate Broyles  
DeKalb City, GA. PD ..... 1418-52x

#### 1st High Master

Reed Knight  
Vero Beach, FL. PD ..... 1491-90x

#### 1st Master

Paul Henry  
FLETC, Glynco, GA. .... 1486-93x

#### 1st Expert

Don Kaderbek  
DeKalb City, GA. PD ..... 1478-88x

#### 1st Sharpshooter

Keith Bragg  
Brunswick, GA. PD ..... 1432-48x

#### Match #1

Larry Householder  
Secret Service ..... 240-24x

#### Match #2

Sam Yarosh  
Secret Service ..... 180-18x

#### Match #3

Sam Yarosh  
Secret Service ..... 238-15x

#### Match #4

Craig Lazzaro  
Broward City, FL. SO ..... 240-19x

#### Match #5

Sam Yarosh  
Secret Service ..... 599-51x

#### 4-Man Team

U.S. Secret Service ..... 2374-71x

#### 2-Man Match

U.S. Secret Service ..... 1185-70x

# The .45 Colt-

## Is It Really Obsolete?



By Claud S. Hamilton

Basic nostalgia and technological developments have created new interest in the old caliber.

For many years, experts have claimed the 107-year-old .45 Colt cartridge is inaccurate and obsolete.

After World War II, Colt discontinued both of its revolvers chambered for .45 Colt: the Single Action Army and the New Service. Yet now we see a sudden resurgence of interest in the .45 Colt, so much so that both Ruger and Thompson Center have chambered massive guns to handle high pressure versions of it, a number of the imported copies of the Single Action Army are chambered for it, and Smith & Wesson has come out with a new version of the Model 25 (.45 ACP) in .45 Colt.

The reason for all this renewed interest can be traced to a reawakening awareness of our past. No other handgun cartridge made today conjurs up so much nostalgia as the .45 Colt. It and the Single Action Army Revolver together undoubtedly "won the West."

The .45 Colt was the standard U.S. Army handgun cartridge from 1873 to 1886. Many officers and enlisted men continued to use it throughout our turn-of-the-century flirtation with the .38 Long Colt in Cuba and the Philippines.

In 1870, the metallic cartridge had made possible the development of revolvers which, unlike the cap and ball, could actually be reloaded on horseback. The Army in the West was engaged in a "Cavalry War," and the revolver was fully as important to the trooper as was his carbine; no longer was the saber the main weapon for close, mounted combat.

Is the .45 Colt obsolete and inaccurate? It depends on how you answer two questions:

- Is there a legitimate niche for it today?
- How does it perform in terms of basic efficiency and accuracy?

There is little doubt that the .45 Colt is a viable alternative to the .44 Special and .45 Auto for personal defense and law enforcement for those who favor the big, heavy bullets over the small, faster ones. One thing that it is *not* is a new magnum.

(The very heavy loads you will find in some loading manuals are intended *only* for use in the massive Ruger Blackhawk revolver and the Thompson Center Contender single shot.) The .45 Colt cartridge case, even the modern versions, are just not up to magnum pressures. The older rolled head or balloon head cartridges are extremely weak.

When it comes to basic efficiency, the .45 Colt takes a back seat. It is half again as bulky to carry as the .45 ACP, and weighs 25 percent more in most loadings. With its large case capacity, the old Colt requires about 2 full grains more of most powders to push a bullet to the same velocity as the .45 ACP, using identical projectiles.

On the plus side, the .45 Colt can handle any .45 caliber bullet from the light 185-grain JHPs to the big 250-grain versions with equal ease and over a wide range of velocities. The .45 ACP pistol requires lighter bullets in the 230 grain range, and needs a set level of pressure to function reliably.

I tested a fine old New Service Colt off the Ransom Rest and compared results with the average group sizes I have obtained from guns of comparable caliber over the last year. I have kept all my test targets.

One problem with the .45 Colt is that there is very little good factory ammunition made for it, so that any fair test would have to include a number of handloads. Here are the loads I used and the results achieved:

GUN AND LOAD	AVERAGE OF 4 GROUPS
Colt New Service Speer 200gr. JHP, 6.4 grains Bullseye powder	1.89 inches
Hornaday 230gr. FMJ, 15.2 grains 630 ball powder	3.15 inches
Sierra 240gr. JHP, 8.1 grains Unique powder	1.70 inches

Hornaday 250gr. JHP, 16 grains 2400 powder	2.02 inches
Remington-Peters factory, 255gr. LRN, powder unknown	2.35 inches
Colt govt. models .45ACP, all loads	2.22 inches (overall av.)

The overall average of all the groups fired on the test stand, for all calibers and types of load, was 2.3 inches. The old New Service held up well, not only with guns of comparable caliber, but across the board.

I used grits to serve as a filler and help hold the powder in place. Test loads were light (my New Service is 63 years old and I don't like to "strain" the old fellow).

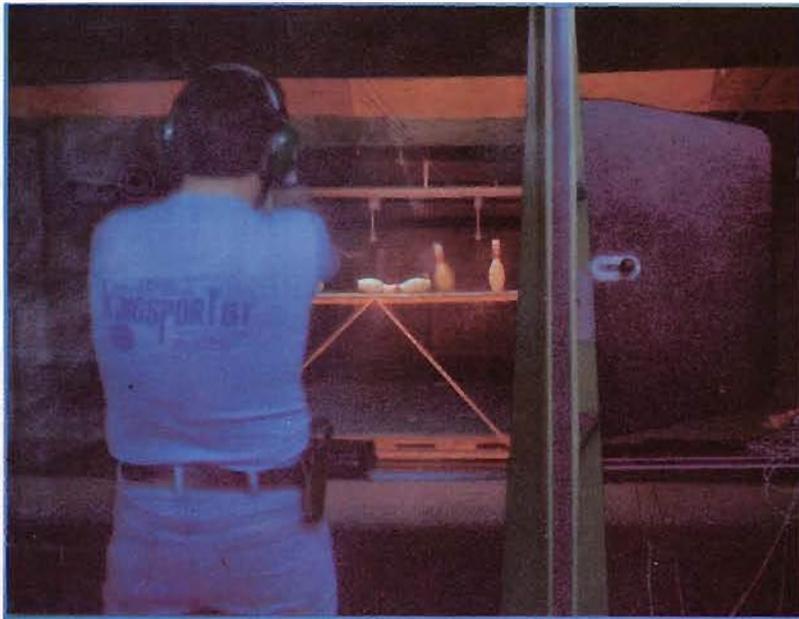
There certainly is a role the .45 Colt can play as a heavy caliber defense handgun in the medium power range. It is *not* a magnum and thus not much of a hunting handgun. There is, quite literally, *nothing* it can do that the .44 and .41 Magnums cannot do better.

The old lead round nose .45 Colt bullet is not very accurate, nor very effective for all its size and weight. This can be easily improved by hollow pointing the old soft lead bullets. They travel at just about the velocity where lead hollow points outperform most of the modern bullets in flesh and bone targets. If one loads his own, this disadvantage disappears for all the bullets available in .45 can be used to produce some very nice loads.

As to basic efficiency, the .45 Colt is a loser. It's too big and too heavy for the job it does, and uses too much brass and powder. But I cannot agree with those who say the .45 Colt is not an accurate cartridge, when properly loaded.

In summary, I'd have to rate the .45 Colt as "obsolete." I would not go out and buy one, but if I had a good .45 Colt I would certainly hang on to it and shoot it for fun, and view it as a valuable link with a particularly colorful time in our nation's history.





**Marvine Exline, a triple "A" class silhouette shooter, tries his hand at the bowling pins on the "Shooting Match" range in Terre Haute, Ind.**

# INDOOR PIN SHOOTING

**Advantages outweigh disadvantages. And it'll sharpen shooting skills outdoors at longer ranges.**

*By William R. Langman*

Most people think of bowling pin shoots as outdoor affairs. I did, until this past year, when I learned that pin shoots were held at an indoor, commercial range in Indianapolis. Then a new range opened in Terre Haute, called the "Shooting Match." I visited that one.

Starting from a cleared lot, Byron Lorey and his son, Mark, built and opened the "Shooting Match" as a family business. New from the ground up, it has twelve firing points, with individually controlled electric target carriers. Each point is partitioned from the next. The range proper is partitioned from the lobby by large, double-paned windows, which give good spectator viewing. In the lobby is the range counter with its store area.

The "Shooting Match" has a 50-foot range, which is twice the distance from shooter to bowling pins, so there is plenty

of room.

There are advantages to shooting on an indoor range. The weather is always the same—never inclement. And the light doesn't change from one competitor to the next.

Another advantage is the ease of finding your brass, unless the range has the rule, "brass on the floor belongs to the store." Lorey has no such rule at his facility.

Other advantages are spectator comfort (no ear protectors needed) and ease of policing the range; a broom and shovel work fine.

Some disadvantages are apparent. Firing line space is limited. At the "Shooting Match" they run only one table. They could run another, but one is sufficient with the present number of competitors they've had so far.

Another disadvantage is splatter and

ricochet. I found a spent .45 slug just ahead of the firing line while collecting my brass. Of course, if it's going to bounce back at you inside, it would have done so outside. You just notice it more inside.

A new twist at the pin game I saw at the "Shooting Match" is a .22 shoot. For this shoot the pins were placed along the rear edge of the table. Any hit solid enough and high enough to rock the pin back usually dropped it off the table. If a pin rocks forward onto the table, it's difficult to drive it off with .22 ammo. Since it is mostly a matter of just hitting the targets, the actual shooting time at these small bore matches is shorter than the big bore matches on the same range.

Try shooting bowling pins indoor. It's fun and will help sharpen your shooting skills when you take to the outdoors at longer ranges.



# SPEEDLOADING

By Massad Ayoob

## Techniques are varied and require practice

Whether you're using your handgun in the game fields or packing it in a Sam Browne belt, the odds are that when the situation you brought the gun for occurs, you won't have to reload it until everything's all over. Of course, it's a good idea to hedge your bet in case the odds are against you, by knowing how to make your empty gun full again, quickly. And if you shoot in any kind of combat pistol match, quick reloading is an essential skill.

Let's start with the double-action revolver. The first thing to do is dump the empties, then position the piece so you can fill the chambers one or two at a time, or six at once with a speedloader.

The technique taught at most police academies, and used by most police revolver competitors, is to press the cylinder latch with the right thumb and let the fingertips of the left hand come up on the right side of the cylinder and push it open. The left hand is now ideally positioned for the fingers to wrap inside the cylinder cut-out (see photo), and the right hand is now free to dart toward the belt for the fresh loads. Meanwhile, the left thumb is ready to punch the ejector rod. As the right hand comes up with the ammo, the left pulls the gun snug against the front of the body, for

a more solid and dextrous operation. The left thumb is now alongside the cylinder, ready to swing it shut and back into action once it's loaded again.

This system works great in a PPC match, but I see a couple of potential problems with it under stress. One is that the thumb doesn't have enough leverage to clear the rounds if they're stuck from dirt, an overload, or a bad case or rough chamber. This screws up your whole reloading cycle, and can possibly screw up your whole life if some latter-day Dillinger is out there in the shadows waiting to run up and snuff you while you're reloading. The second thing that most shooters do is hold the gun *loosely* in the left hand, so the thumb can more easily turn the cylinder to accept each fresh round. That can lead to the gun being knocked out of your hand if, for instance, your hand bumps a car fender while ducking for cover, or if you stumble while reloading on the run.

For this reason, I came up with my own system. It doesn't look as smooth and it may take a fraction of a second longer, but it is a more *positive* technique. The left hand flips the cylinder open, but the right hand maintains a solid hold on the stock. The gun is turned muzzle up (to make

gravity work for you and prevent empties catching inside the ejector star), and the left palm then slaps the tip of the ejector rod once, smartly, straight down. This will clear all but the stubbornest tight cases. Try it, and you'll see what I mean.

As seen in photo, the fingers of the left hand form a "V," with three extended tightly together and the index finger extended outward. Into this "V" goes the ejector rod, right where it meets the crane. The fingertips lock inside the frame, and either the ball or the tip of the thumb can turn the cylinder as you feed your ammo.

**SEE  
"MASTERTIPS" IN  
THIS ISSUE FOR  
MICKEY FOWLER'S  
AUTO PISTOL  
SPEED LOADING  
TECHNIQUES**



Left hand forms a "v" into which goes ejector rod (left); fingers of left hand wrap around cylinder, freeing right hand for loading. Note index finger support.

You can hold on for dear life, and it'll still work great. Once you've practiced it a little, it's a lot more fumble-proof, no matter what you're reloading from (pouches, loops or quickloaders). Another happy bonus is that the palm is automatically cupped under the cylinder to catch any loose rounds that may drop. In the standard PPC reload position, loads are likely to slip through to the ground, unless you've taken the precaution of pulling the web of your hand right up to the ejector rod; even then, there's less space to catch dropped rounds.

What sort of speedloaders to carry, whether you should use speedloaders instead of loops or drop-pouches, and what kinds to use, are all topics enough to warrant full-length articles of their own. In fact, I'm finishing up a two-part column for GUNS magazine on where to carry your spare handgun ammo.

Suffice to say here that the weak hand should hold the gun, while the right hand stuffs in the ammo. In theory, and sometimes in training, it is possible to save an instant by keeping the gun in firing position and using the left hand to eject and re-

# HANDGUNS TAKES SKILL

load. Under stress, however, that goes against all human instinct and will screw you up, royally. Nature made you strong handed on one side so *that mitt* could take care of dextrous tasks, such as stuffing tiny cartridges into revolver chambers. Take advantage of it. Your reloading will be smoother and quicker in the long run.

Single action revolvers? If you even remotely think you might have to reload quickly, you've got the wrong gun. It's a trick to fire 12 shots in 25 seconds out of a Peacemaker. Although you can crack 30 with a bit of practice. Believe it or not, it seems to go quicker and smoother if you eject six and load six, rather than try to eject-load, eject-load cycle.

When you plan on a high volume of fast shooting you will inevitably be attracted to auto pistols, which were designed for that sort of thing. The technique is completely different than what you'd use for a wheelgun.

For starters, you keep the gun in your shooting hand and let the weak paw grope for the spare magazine. In IPSC freestyle combat shooting, students learn to always keep one round in the chamber, to (a) have a round ready to go if you're jumped while reloading, and (b) to eliminate the added movement of thumbing the release latch to drop an empty pistol's locked-back slide. This is a really great theory, but doesn't seem to work out in real-life, high volume firefights, where no one ever remembers to count their shots.

For a match, by all means practice counting your shots and reloading with a live one in the chamber. If you are working to develop *street* combat skills, however, you'd be wise to do at least half your reload training with the slide locked back empty. There is another divergence between match practice and street practice; that we will cover later in this column.

It is to be hoped that you won't have to unsnap your magazine pouch. There are many excellent designs that hold the clips friction-tight, with enough of the magazine exposed for a quick and instant grasp. Even law officers, who have to maintain a low-key uniform look, can often get away with Bianchi's fine Clip-Grip carrier.

The magazine should be carried with bullet noses toward the front. Whether the magazine is vertical or horizontal, you want your hand to come down on it so that the extending lip of the mag's floorplate is right in the palm of your hand. This makes it natural for your extended index finger to

lie parallel with the front of the magazine, the fingernail just below the top round in the clip.

This extended index finger is a wondrous guide that helps bring the magazine more smoothly and unerringly toward the pistol's magazine well. As the clip goes in, the finger folds clear by itself, and the palm is in position to slap the clip in for a positive lock, indeed, it has been ready for this since your hand touched the magazine. As the clip locks in, the hand continues its upward movement, sliding over the fingers of the shooting hand to take its position for the rock-solid interlocking two-hand hold. An extension of rubber or leather on the floorplate will make quick reloading much more positive; on most .45 autos, the clip has to go in a little deeper than just "flush with the bottom" to make sure it engages. The magazine extension, commonly thought by amateurs to be some sort of cushion that keeps the clip from getting hurt when it is dumped, actually was developed almost exclusively for surer clip seating.

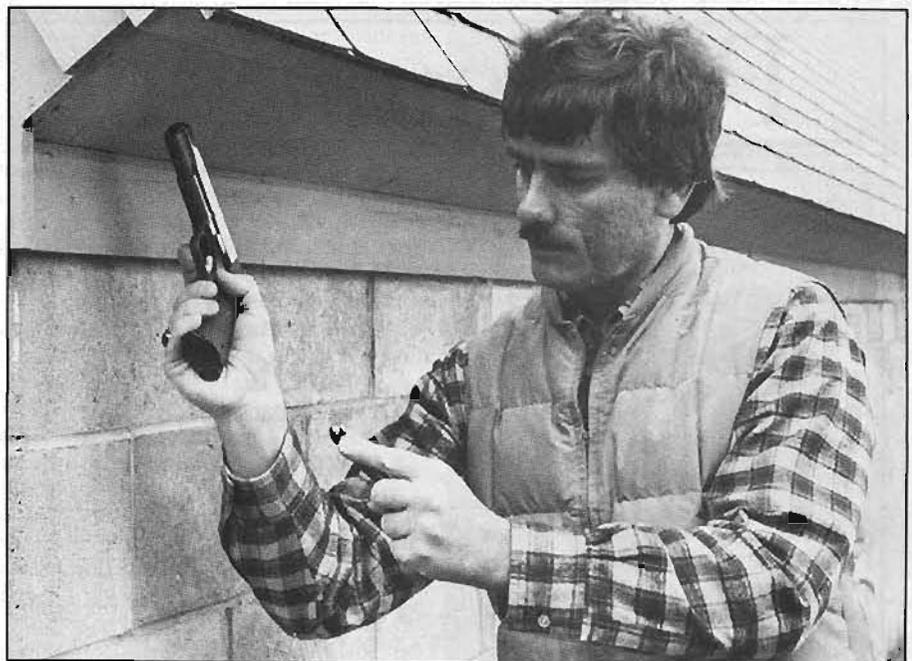
Of course, the new magazine must have a place to go, which means that the spent one has to leave the gun first. When I was a young puppy, I would press the mag release on my .45 with my left thumb as it came off the two-hand hold, on the theory

that it would save me having to break my strong-hand hold on the pistol. Jeff Cooper broke me of that habit years ago, at the fa-

*Continued on page 68*



**Top view, proper speed loading. Note fingers around cylinder, index finger.**



**This is the proper position of hands in loading the magazine in a semi-automatic pistol. Turn right hand slightly outward; keep eyes glued on point of entry.**

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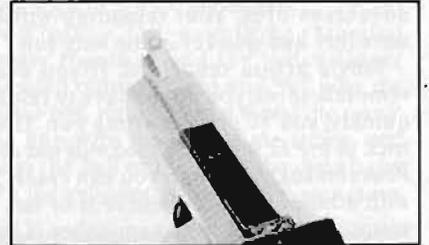
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### Holster

The Don Hume H735 Holster is designed for Ruger and Colt medium-frame handguns and Smith & Wesson large and medium frames. The holster's overall length is 8½-inches, allowing for car seat clearance. The 2¼-inch belt loop, which is reinforced with 18-gauge galvanized sheet metal, is offset from the body for a jacket slot. The thumb-break holster is fully lined with top grain cowhide and treated to resist dust and moisture.



The suggested retail prices are: plain, \$29.95; basketweave, \$34; and clarino, \$36. Additional information is available from Don Hume Leathersgoods, P.O. Box 351, Dept. AH, Miami, OK 74354, telephone (918) 542-6604.

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# MATCH-WINNING .45 AUTO BARRELS

Made of stainless steel by Bar-Sto,  
they last longer and are easy to fit

*By Dave Arnold*

The range of different sights, grips, springs, safeties and other components that are available for the Colt .45 Auto is mind-boggling.

There is also an ever-increasing number of pistolsmiths who specialize in chopping and extensively modifying the old war horse to make it more suitable for the types of competition in which the big Colt excels.

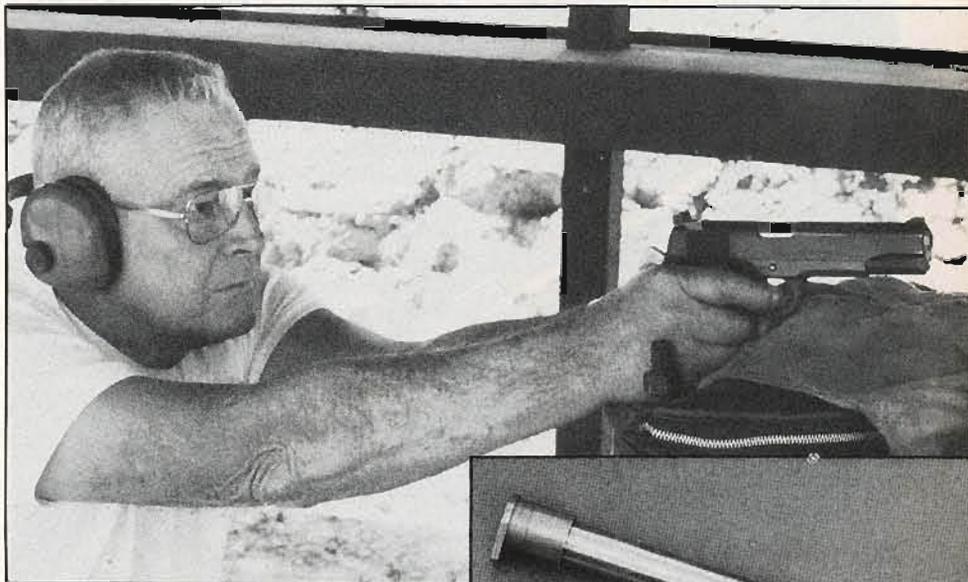
Near the top of the accessory list you will always find the name of Bar-Sto, who for a decade has produced precision-made stainless steel barrels for the M1911.

The man behind Bar-Sto barrels is Irv Stone, a master machinist who got into the gun business just after the end of World War II. Irv, or Stoney as he is known to his friends, was then living in Detroit and making highly accurate custom rifles for sportsmen and hunters. The rifles were successful, guaranteed to shoot one-inch groups at 100 yards; but there was not enough demand to make the business worthwhile. So after a short time, Irv returned to the tool-making trade and eventually moved to California where he opened a machine shop in Burbank.

In 1971, the bottom fell out of the aircraft industry and Irv's machine shop was seriously affected. With business slack and time on his hands he decided to embark on a venture he had wanted to do for many years—build a stainless steel copy of the Colt Government .45. Irv had long been an admirer of the pistol ever since he was introduced to it before the war when serving with the military.

After obtaining a supply of stainless steel, Irv started work on his pistol. While the frame was beginning to take shape, Irv managed to obtain an inexpensive broaching table with which to rifle his barrels. The stainless steel .45 was never finished. After several barrels had been made, Irv found that many .45 enthusiasts were interested in buying them.

Word about his barrels quickly got around and the demand was so great that the little machine shop was soon back in business. The interest in the sport of Practical Pistol Shooting had much to do with

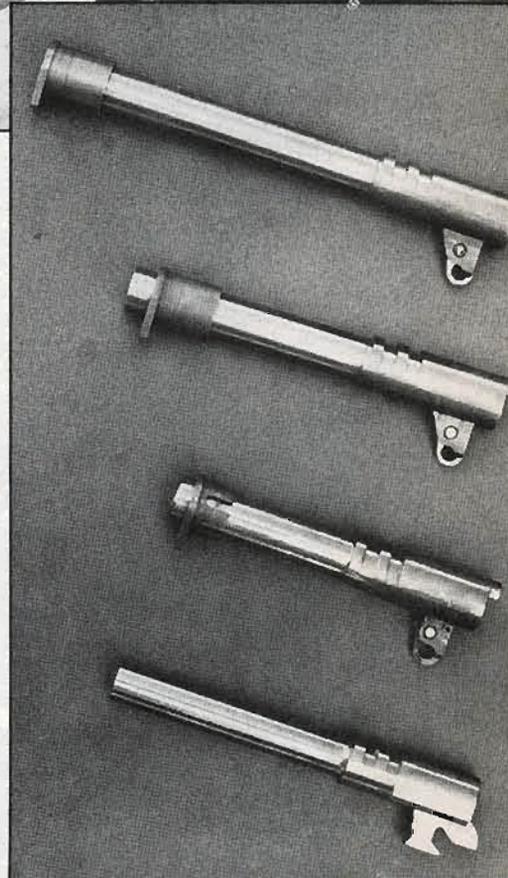


**Irv Stone is shown firing a .45 auto fitted with one of his barrels.**

the success of Bar-Sto barrels. Although accuracy initially was not a major factor in the sport, it became increasingly important as the competition got tougher. When scoring rings appeared on the targets, the ability to print tight groups often could make the difference between winning or losing a match. The fitting of a Bar-Sto barrel to a stock .45 will noticeably improve its accuracy. When this word got around, everyone had to have one.

The popularity of Bar-Sto barrels is not confined to the sport of Practical Pistol Shooting. Considerable interest has also been shown by law enforcement personnel. Since their introduction, the variety of barrels has been increased. Today, Bar-Sto barrels include one for the standard Government model in both .45 and .38 Super, a six-inch version and a shorter length for the Colt Commander, and the 9mm Browning Hi-Power. Coming up is one for 9mm S&W double action automatics.

The barrels, complete with bushings, can be fitted to the gun without special tools, although having a bushing wrench



**Barrels, top to bottom, are six-inch, Govt. mod., Commander, Browning HP.**

*Continued on page 63.*

# Classical? No, innovative.

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## CIRILLO

Continued from page 53

it bucking in my hand, but my conscious self was asking, 'Who's firing that pistol?' It was like there were two parts off my brain up there, but my subconscious kept control and all my shots were accurate. I had to shoot three men."

During Cirillo's stint with the Stakeout Unit, they took part in over 250 gunfights, so when he offers an opinion on armed confrontations, he knows what he's talking about. After retiring from NYPD service with several commendations, Cirillo worked for U.S. Customs as a firearms instructor and then joined FLETC in early '81. Over the years, this man, who is also a weaponry inventor with several patents to his credit besides being a published gun writer, developed a distaste for police training methods that he considered inadequate or obsolete. He is also an advocate of civilian combat training.

"The greater amount of police training today," he advises, "is not adequate to pull an officer out of the woods. They're going on the wrong premise. They don't realize that more than half the time, you only get a *quarter* of a target. The time allotments are much too liberal. They say 'Well, it's only training,' but they don't realize the conditioned reflex syndrome. If they don't shoot fast, quick, and properly, they're gonna be in trouble."

"My ideal training course," Cirillo muses at home, while demonstrating one of his favorite guns, a Devel Model 59 autoloader, in front of his trophy-laden case, "would be so diversified that I couldn't explain it in one day. I'd have people shooting from almost every conceivable position, at almost every conceivable target, and I would decrease the time allotments—teach the police officer to shoot more instinctively, and quickly. And at the same time show him the various positions that would give him the most security and the best concealment. I would also stress tactics—don't rush up into a scene, don't expose yourself, take whatever available cover you have, and this allows you time to decide who's the enemy. A lot of law enforcement training teaches that anyone with a gun in his hands is the enemy. That may not be so."

Cirillo then demonstrates another of his position innovations. It is unlike FBI-style, wherein when firing around a left-hand barricade, the shooter places his gun in the weak hand to gain better geometric stance. Cirillo recommends keeping the gun in the right hand (or vice versa for lefties) and tilt-

ing it about 90 degrees to port. Thus the weapon remains in the familiar hand, and photo studies even show that less of the shooter's body is then visible behind the barricade. "Training is a helluva good investment," he says. "There's no half-way with guns. If you don't devote a lot of time to training, then you're better off taking the guns away. Too many people don't realize the finality involved. If you make a mistake typing, you can use whiteout. There's no eraser on the end of a gun muzzle."

## ONLY 1,000 M51s FOR SALE IN U.S.

The "World of Lugers" has added the Helwan M-51 pistol to its line of firearms.

The M-51 is the official sidearm of the armed forces and police of the United Arab Republic. It is an 8-shot 9mm.

Manufactured at the Helwan Arms plant in Egypt, under direct license from Beretta, the "World of Lugers" has made available a limited number (100) for sale in the United States.

With serial numbers from 1 to 100, the M-51 is priced as follows:

No. 1-25 \$450.  
No. 26-50: \$400.  
No. 51-100: \$350.  
Cutaway model: \$600.



An additional \$3.50 is charged for shipping and insurance.

Each gun is individually boxed and comes with a spare magazine, cleaning rod and instruction booklet written in both English and Egyptian.

An official Egyptian government certificate accompanies each gun, vouching for its quality and workmanship, and is numbered to each pistol.

The trigger pull is greatly improved over the old M-51s made in Italy, according to Ralph E. Shattuck of the "World of Lugers."

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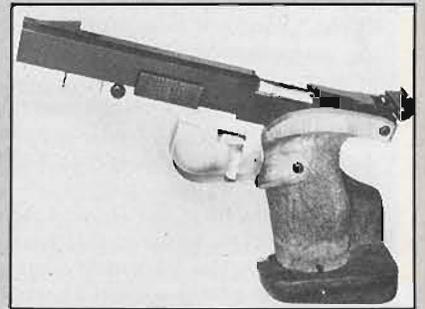
## BRITISH .22 AUTO INTRODUCED HERE

A new .22 target pistol for the competitor and collector has been introduced to the U. S. market.

It's the Britarms 2000 Mark 2, said to be the ultimate for either NRA-type or International standard pistol competition.

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The choice of champions in international competition for several years, the 2000 Mark 2 has been manufactured in England since 1977.



Each pistol is completely hand-assembled from start to finish by a single master gunsmith, and is fired over a complete course of competition by an expert marksman before being released by the factory.

If the slightest problem is encountered, the pistol is returned to the original assembler for correction.

A centerfire version, chambered for the .32 S&W Long cartridge, is in production and is expected to be available shortly.

Sales of the 2000 Mark 2 will be promoted in nationwide advertising by Action Arms, which will sell to dealers through its authorized list of independent distributors.

Action Arms will also maintain a complete parts and service department.

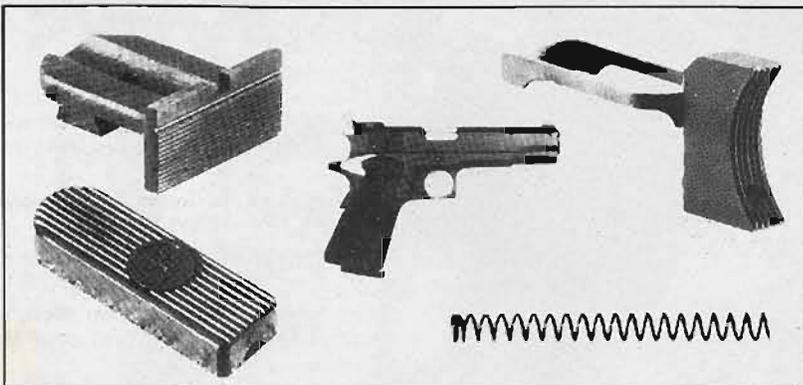
## NEW POWDER SCALE

The Blue Ribbon Metric Scale now is available from Bonanza Sports Manufacturing Company. The scale has a total capacity of 36.1 grams, 35 grams on the middle poise with graduations in 10ths on the right, 100ths



on the left. Suggested retail price is \$46.95. For more information contact Bonanza Sports, Manufacturing Co., 412 Western Ave., Dept. AH, Faribault, MN 55021.

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# BAR-STO

Continued from page 59

helps. In the past, buyers had the option of either ordering their barrel with a standard bushing, or the collet type like that fitted to the Mark VI Series 70 Colt Automatics. In the future only the standard bushing will be sold with Bar-Sto barrels.

The Bar-Sto product line has also broadened in other areas. There is now a complete set of stainless steel springs for the Colt Auto, as well as a recoil buffer. Most M1911 shooters are familiar with the latter item, which consists of a spring-loaded plunger fitted to the recoil spring guide and plug, all manufactured in stainless steel. As the slide moves back after firing, the spring-loaded plunger helps cushion the recoil, reducing wear and tear to the slide and frame.

At present, Bar-Sto products are manufactured in Irv's old shop on Victory Boulevard in Burbank.

The barrels start off as blanks of 410 stainless steel barstock. They are first cut to the correct length and then have two of the four sides machined flat. After this, a rough profile of the barrel outline is cut on a bandsaw.

The next stage is turning down the outside of the barrel to its rough dimensions. Once this has been done, the barrel is sent

out to be heat-treated. This has the effect of making the steel much harder which, while difficult to machine, produces a superior finish.

On its return to the shop, the bore is drilled out and final finishing machine cuts are made on lathes and milling machines. The last operation is the cutting of the rifling on the broaching table. Once this is done, the barrel receives a complete quality check to make sure that its dimensions are within the rigid tolerances set by Irv. If it passes, it is then ready for packing and shipping to the customer.

The production of the Browning Hi-power barrels follows basically the same procedure, although there are a few significant differences because of the design. One of the most striking features of the whole operation is that everything is hand-machined by a small staff of expert craftsmen closely supervised by Irv. In spite of the total absence of computerized machines, the little shop is able to turn out a surprisingly large number of barrels and other items each month. Being hand-machined is the prime reason why the barrels and other products are of such superb quality.

Perhaps the best sales feature of Bar-Sto barrels is their accuracy. Out of the box, the Colt .45 will shoot groups close enough for practical purposes, but it is not designed to shoot out the X-ring of an NRA target.

One way to tighten groups is to fit a

Bar-Sto barrel and bushing. The job requires no special skills and you have the added advantages of longer barrel life and ease of cleaning.

To prove the truth of this claim, I met Irv one Saturday at Wes Thompson's range in Canyon Country, north of Los Angeles. We took a standard .45 Mark IV Series Model 70 and replaced its barrel with a Bar-Sto picked at random from a box.

Firing reloads at 25 yards from a makeshift bench-rest position, I took careful aim and shot five rounds at the target. The result was a clover-shaped group clustered together with most of the holes cutting one another.

This pin-hole accuracy can be improved even further by sending your .45 to Irv and having him fit one of his barrels to the gun.

When Irv first started making his barrels he anticipated that the demand would last for only a few years. After all, he reasoned, it will only be a matter of time before everyone has one. The demand has grown to such an extent that he is now in the process of moving his entire operation to a larger shop (73377 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, CA 92277).

Much of the success of Bar-Sto barrels is due to the workmanship that goes into their manufacture. This, almost certainly, is because Irv Stone is a stickler for perfection and it has more than paid off. The way things are going it will be a long time before he finishes his stainless steel Auto.



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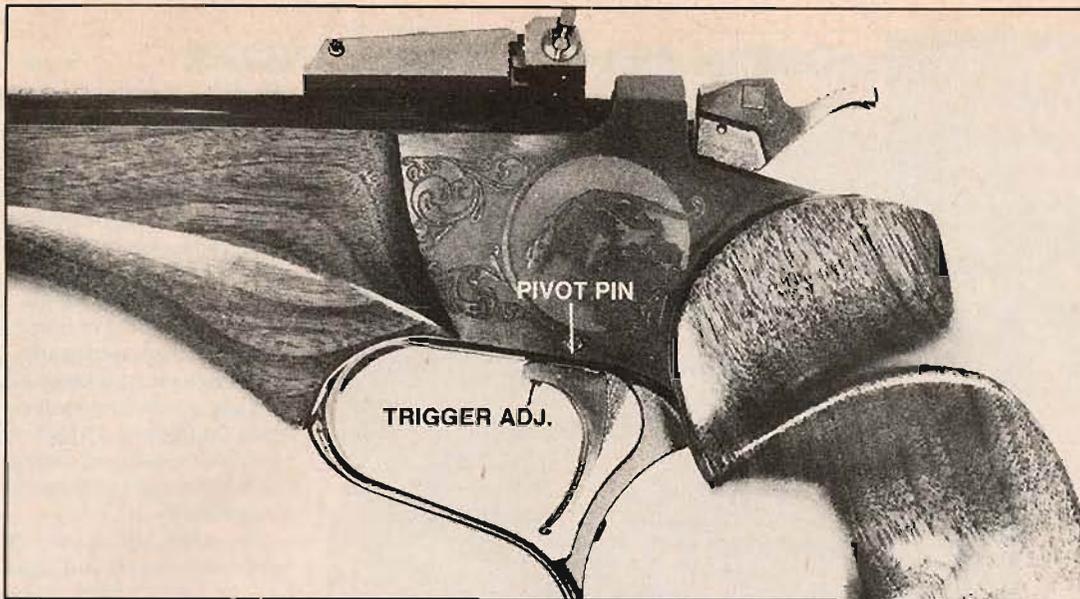
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## **SINGLE-SHOT PISTOL DEVELOPMENT:**

# **T/C CONTENDER GETS FACE-LIFT**

**New Mach IV features tighter lockup, redesigned action, easier barrel release, newly-shaped trigger; old barrels now fit better.**

**By Dave Reynolds**

Thompson/Center has just introduced the latest variation of its popular Contender pistol. Called Mach IV, this is the fourth version of the Contender frame, and incorporates the most radical change in action design since the gun's inception. The main reasons for the change were to make the action easier to open, and to reduce problems in fitting old barrels.

When the Contender was introduced in the late 1960s it got off to a fairly slow start. Like many other shooters, I thought that a single-shot pistol was a giant step *backward*. But about ten years ago at a gun

show, I came face-to-face with a Contender in a presentation case with an extra barrel. A sign on the box indicated it came in .357 Magnum and .22 Jet calibers. A couple of my favorite revolvers (a S&W M19 and a S&W M53) fire these cartridges. The idea of having a long-range gun as a companion piece was intriguing. I bought the Contender and I've been hooked on it ever since.

The Contender's original grip didn't do much (or maybe it did too much) for shooters who were brave enough to fire the model with a .44 Magnum barrel. The original clip-on forearm was left hanging loose in the air, while gun and shooter recoiled violently.

The second model Contender had a screw-on forearm, a different grip style, and internal lock work changes. The only visible differences in the action were a trigger stop screw in rear surface of trigger guard, and a small change in the etched pattern of the cougar that decorates the frame. Also at about this time, the rear sight design was changed. The most significant effect of the action redesign was that many early production barrels wouldn't work. Some wouldn't lock up; others would lock and not unlock. Thompson/Center fixed all that were sent back to its factory.

Next came the bull barrels in 10" and

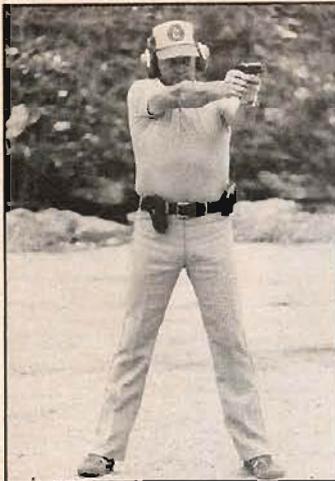
*Continued on page 87*



**The first model Contender (top) has a snap-on forearm; the second model (bottom) has a screw-on forearm, a different grip and internal lock work changes.**



**Third model, left-hand grips (left); standard grips (right); Mach IV (bottom).**



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## LUGER

*Continued from page 51*

the IPSC-style crossdraw position, easily survives a slow forward or backward role, yet involves no retaining device. Magazines fit well into most .380 pouches.

Sights on my pistol are dead-on at 25 meters and the front blade is of high profile and adequate for any purpose. The rear notch, alas, is an abomination. Fortunately, room does exist on the rear sight blade for filing to a wider, more acceptable patridge-type square, though I'll confess to lacking the courage to assail a pistol valued at over \$600.

The safety, which I for one like and find reasonably convenient, is unfortunately of too low a profile for rapid cold-weather manipulation, though it suffices in summer. I've found a partial (and not unattractive) solution to this problem through use of a carefully cut bit of rubber tubing and a few drops of instant glue, as seen in the photograph. Thumb safety release is quick, once the procedure is learned.

At the draw, the hand sweeps down and the safety is located with the thumb, but not released, while the pistol is still in the holster. The Para is then drawn and the lever pulled down as the muzzle rises; the hand then, admittedly, must shift position on the gun to depress the grip safety and obtain a proper hold—an easily learned routine which becomes innate over time. Practice for economy of motion and for sure location of the safety; speed comes only later. How much speed? Certainly not as much as with a competition .45 in a no-holds-barred speed rig—but surprisingly close! Fully as fast as any revolver from any thumb-break; faster by far than a locked DA auto from any holster—all the above assuming operators of equal skill.

Using the Mauser in an IPSC-style event is a revelation; indeed, I'm often amused to observe the reaction of fellow competitors to the gun. Some seem shocked that the thing actually fires when the trigger is pressed; one would think that a First Model Dragoon had somehow materialized on the firing line of a PPC event. But what seems to be heralded as an absolute divine miracle by almost everyone is that the pistol is indeed competitive—at least as much as any other small bore pistol or revolver.

Its magazine release button is superbly placed; the one second reload with a Parabellum is not difficult to achieve. Should you lose count and forget to speed load, no pistol is more forgiving than the Mauser. That upright knee-joint makes its condition obvious to you, even under stress.

Shooting characteristics of the Mauser are mixed; intrinsic accuracy is absolutely superb, but practical accuracy is more difficult to achieve. The barrel is indeed the wisp it's claimed to be, which tends to

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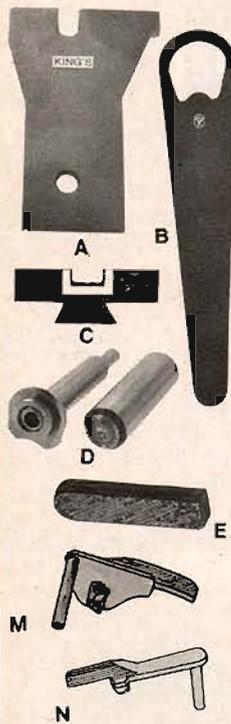
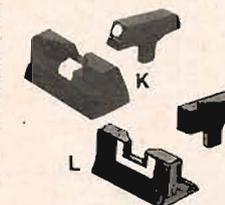
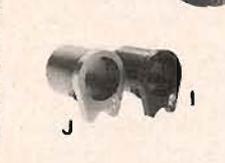


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create groups somewhat larger than those I get with my more muzzle heavy K-38. Still, the pistol performs quite nicely, even with a quick, combat style press, 2½–2¾-inch five-shot groups being commonplace at 25 meters despite the rapid trigger manipulation. More deliberate fire has yielded 4-inch groups at 50 meters, though the effort, with that horrendous rear sight, makes the eyes water. Recoil, which is nothing significant in a 9mm, is even less in a Parabellum; that toggle action absorbs what little kick there is splendidly. Muzzle lift is consequently minimal, despite the total lack of weight “up front,” making very rapid controlled fire possible.

The stereotype Luger trigger which can run 20 pounds or more in classic Lugers and is most difficult to reduce, seems to have been avoided in the Mauser Parabellum production. Take up remains long and gritty, but pull weights are reasonable, not exceeding eight pounds in any example I have seen or read of; mine breaks at a feather-light 3 pounds (which has actually improved since the pistol was new) and release is crisp and free from backlash. In purchasing any Luger-style pistol for shooting, however, check the trigger action.

The Mauser does offer several design advantages to be found in no other pistol. It utilizes the strongest action ever produced in a semi-automatic handgun; and yet such strength is in no way purchased at the cost of beauty or compactness. Similarly pointability is a unique advantage of the Luger design, at least for most persons. True, the skilled practical shooter finds no need for it, but there are many, many more duffers than accomplished practitioners in all endeavors. Concealment is excellent, so much so that I find that I can hide the piece under a buttoned sport coat with ease. The Bucheimer-Clark is clipped on behind the hip bone; the toggle rides exactly at belt level while the sharply raked butt rests snugly against the rib cage. The slender barrel similarly poses no concealment headaches—in marked contrast to the full-length slides of Browning designs. Indeed, the Mauser represents the only full size service automatic I can conceal.

This, then, is Mauser's Parabellum—in good examples, anything but a lemon. Indeed, worse guns ride daily in police holsters everywhere, as anemic and dirt-sensitive as any Luger pattern pistol, and don't offer nine shots, one second reloading, an accurate SA first round, excellent concealment, pointability second only to one's forefinger, and a safety system almost guaranteed to frustrate a gun grabber's evil designs. Incredible and tragic: the German infantry Lieutenant of 1914 may have been better armed than the American metropolitan police officer of the 1980s. But, then again, how about the U.S. frontier lawman of the 1870s, with his big-bore revolver and ever-available lever-action rifle? He just may have been better armed than both



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## SPEEDLOADING

*Continued from page 57*

cility that was to become the famous Gun-site, in Arizona.

On most combat pistols—any full-size Colt, the Browning and S&W Parabellums—the clip release is a button behind the trigger on the left, ideally located for a right-handed man's thumb. The gunhand can drop its own magazine while the weak hand is journeying back to the belt to make a short-term ammo run.

Cooper teaches pivoting the pistol in your hand, so you can more surely reach the release button. You'll have to do that if you've got short, stubby fingers. My own digits are long and slim, and I can stretch the thumb to hit that button solidly without shifting the rest of my grip. This I like, because that twisted magazine-drop position is a weak hold, and will slow you down if you *do* ever need that chambered round in a hurry.

An alternative is a built-up magazine release button, but this won't work for everybody. It can make a magazine drop *too* easily, if your support hand catches the gun wrong in a quickly taken two-fisted grip; or if you've just got chunky mitts, you can accidentally eject a full magazine.

All good combat pistolsmiths bell out the *sides* of the magazine well to create a funnel effect for smoother reloading. Surprisingly, some fail to funnel it out in *front*, and that's where you need it. One British pistolsmith even welds on an extended guiding lip at that location.

There is sound thinking behind this. You can't always count on the magazine going in straight. If it comes up so the back part of the loaded clip hits the frame first, the topmost cartridge can be pushed forward, tying up the gun. The more cutaway the front part of the magazine well is, the less likely that particular screw-up will occur.

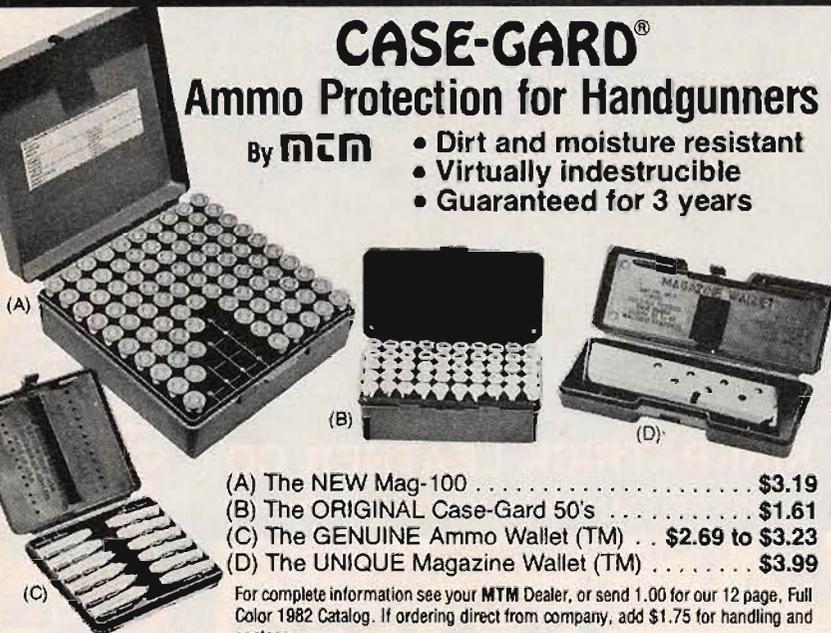
Since we've mentioned the SA revolver, we can touch briefly on some other oddities of handgun design. One is the top-break DA revolver, which handgun buffs still often insist is a more practical system than the solid-frame, swingout cylinder design, even though no one in the world has produced it in a practical caliber for many years. The London Metropolitan Police taught me how to reload a Webley quickly: Keep the muzzle level with the target, wrap your left fist around the barrel as you thumb the release latch, and slam the handle forward and down. The automatic ejector usually throws all brass clear. Using my Mk.II Enfield .38 with HKS speedloaders sized for the Ruger Security Six, I found that reloading time was indeed remarkable with this technique.

Some otherwise excellent combat automatics—the SIG and the Heckler and Koch—have magazines that release by a butt-latch. This is painfully slow, since you have to pull the spent mag out by hand and

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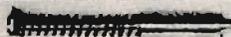
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then reach for the spare clip. IPSC ace Jerry Usher has worked out a quick reload for the H&K, but it involves a bit of sleight-of-hand; sort of like watching Tom Campbell shoot a quick match, grabbing his magazine with his left hand as he draws his pistol with his right, holding them together in a two-hand grip, and then shifting magazines without having to reach for his belt. It's a nice trick if you can do it, but not the most practical thing in the world.

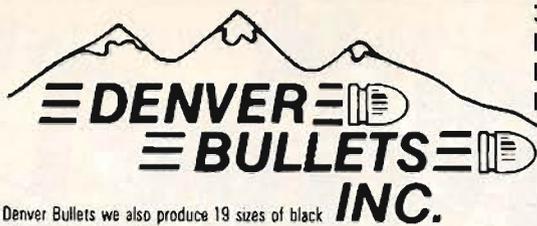
The last thing to remember with an automatic is a serious difference between match and street shooting: When do you drop the partially depleted magazine? In a tournament where you have six shots per string, you should load your .45 with eight, and count shots. That way, you have one in the chamber as a time saver, and one still in the clip adding weight for a smooth drop-out. On the street, when you've just fired five rounds in the initial stage of an encounter and are now behind cover, one of the first things you'll want to do is make your pistol full of ammo again.

In a match, you'll hit the drop button as soon as your weak hand starts toward the spare clip, to save time. On the street, though, a fast-breaking change in the situation could interrupt you with your hand halfway to your clip pouch. Better you should have kept the partially empty magazine (which now becomes partially full) in the gun until the spare magazine was already waiting by the gun butt.

In revolver speedloading, too, there are such distinctions. A certain group of nationally recognized police pistol instructors insists that speedloaders are useless for cops, because you have to empty the whole cylinder before you put in the six fresh ones. With loops or a pouch, they say, you can leave your two or three unfired rounds in the cylinder and only replace the fired ones. This is a really terrific theory, but I defy them to do it at night under stress. By the time they've found the empty cases by feel and started to pick them out of the cylinder one at a time, I've already thrown out the baby with the bathwater by dumping the whole cylinder, and my fully reloaded gun will be up on target before they've even started to reach for their fresh cartridges, and probably before my discarded, empty speedloader has stopped rolling across the pavement.

Rapid reloading is one of the more important aspects in the repertoire of skills that distinguishes the guy who carries, or wants, a Combat Master card. Plinkers don't need to bother. But if you ever have something riding on it—such as your pride in a tournament, or your life in an alley—it's worth taking the time to familiarize yourself with the advanced techniques of combat reloading.

*Editor's note: Speedloaders are not new. They were offered by Colt for its New Navy .38—in 1889. Made of wood, they are extremely rare today.*



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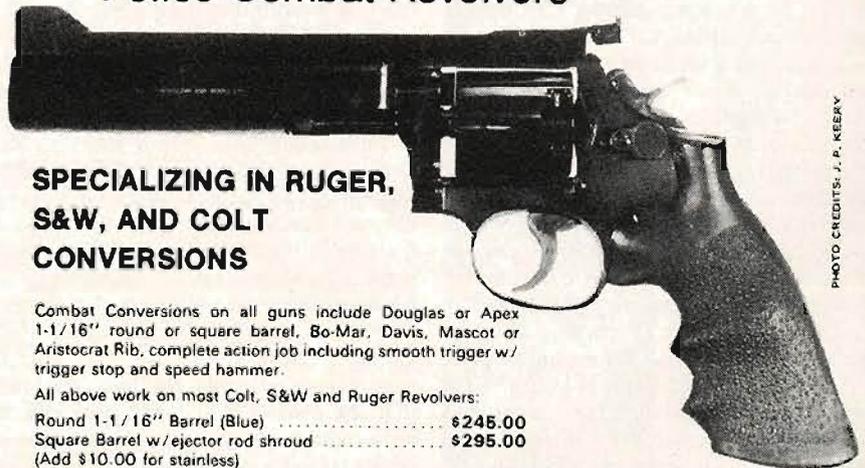


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# IGNITION 'AIN'T' ENOUGH!

By Massad Ayoob

You don't need to be a master gunsmith to know that if your hammer fall is too light to reliably bust caps, you're gonna have problems. What a lot of people don't realize, though, is that just because your light-actioned gun isn't getting misfires

gunners who figured "The lighter the trigger, the better the control." Experimenting toward that end, he found a point of diminishing returns that wasn't related to the way a shooter handled a light-triggered DA sixgun. He discovered the ignition

trigger, and still promise you uniform ignition. What you need is a solid and uniform firing pin strike on every primer, and it doesn't necessarily take a factory mainspring screwed all the way down via the strain screw to achieve that.

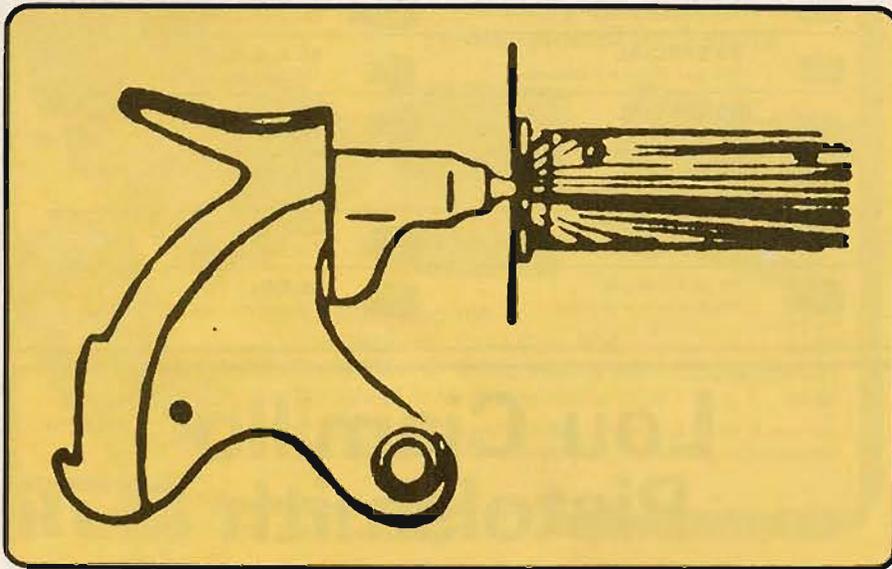
*Firing pin momentum* is the key. Though it had long been believed that grinding the spur off the hammer reduced its weight and lightened the impact—and that, conversely, a wide target hammer's extra weight gave a more solid hit—recent sophisticated research has shown this to be a half-truth at best.

Master Python fitter Jerry Moran (2275 E. Farrand Rd., Clio, Michigan) was the first to realize that properly trimmed, a de-horned hammer would actually zap the primer *harder*, all other things being equal. "Being lighter," he told me a few years ago, "it falls *faster* than a standard, heavier hammer when propelled by the same spring. This speed gives it more momentum. I can always get a lighter, 100 percent uniform ignition out of a de-horned hammer than a standard one."

Moran's counterpart among S&W aficionados, Ron Power (PO Box 1604, Independence, MO), came to the same conclusion after even more scientific tests. He told us, "We at Power Custom developed a method to gauge and determine positive ignition with certain ammunition. You pull the double action through very slowly, and when the hammer reaches its maximum travel before dropping off the double action sear, mark the frame at that point with a small scribe.

"We then take a pull gage graduated in ounces, put the wire end through the hole in the hammer nose pivot, and hold the trigger all the way to the rear. With the gage straight in line with the bore, we pull back until reaching the point where the frame is marked for length of hammer travel. This determines how many ounces of hammer pressure you have for your DA pull. We don't worry about single action, since virtually all revolver misfires are in double action mode, due to the shorter hammer fall."

Power found that on a K-frame Smith & Wesson, 46 ounces was about minimum hammer pressure to ensure positive, uniform ignition. Supporting Moran's contention, he found that while 46 ounces was



doesn't mean it's giving you ignition that really does the job.

The shooter who wants a light action wants it for a reason: usually, that means more hits in the tie-breaking center X ring. If his gun has a super light double action pull, and goes off every time, he often figures he's golden. If he finds himself getting sloppy groups, he often figures, "Heck, that's just 'cause I'm not used to this great action yet!"

There's probably another reason. Go too light on your mainspring with a double action revolver and you may compromise the *uniformity* of ignition. And if that gaseous fireball doesn't form the same way behind each bullet that zooms out of your barrel, then each of them is going to be travelling at radically different velocities.

Which means that even if your hold doesn't vary, each projectile will land at a distinctly different point of impact.

This has long been known to professional ballisticians. The first target shooter to spread the word on it was, to my knowledge, New York PPC ace Jim Cirillo. Jim had always been one of those police wheel-

gunners who figured "The lighter the trigger, the better the control." Experimenting toward that end, he found a point of diminishing returns that wasn't related to the way a shooter handled a light-triggered DA sixgun. He discovered the ignition

factor and spread the word to his fellow PPC shooters.

Gunners who've gotten the word have reacted in different ways. Bill House, a Distinguished Police Combat shooter from the Colonie P.D. and considered the top shooting cop in upstate New York, didn't buy Jim's theory until he chunked a couple of light-action guns into a Ransom Rest and observed the vertical stringing effect for himself. Today, Bill shoots what's probably the hardest-action gun you'll find on the line at the National PPC Championships in Jackson: a full-house M/64 by Joe Kassay that would make its maker cringe if he pulled the trigger. House has a mainspring in there that's gotta give a 13 lb. trigger pull. Happily for him, he found that the heavier pull made him lock his hold tighter and his scores have gone up since. He isn't sure how much is the enforced hard-hold, and how much is the elimination of stringing since he made sure of uniform ignition.

There are ways to have your cake and eat it too, but it takes a savvy gunsmith to build you a wheelgun with a light and easy

essential with the heavy S&W Target hammer, 44 ounces was as reliable with the lighter standard hammer . . . and when the spur was ground off, 42 ounces of main-spring strain brought the hammer forward with sufficient oomph for uniformly positive cap-busting.

N-frame Smiths need more tension. Figure on 52 ounces for a big-frame S&W with a target hammer. Power advises.

The very unpredictability of marginal firing pin hits makes it almost impossible to say how much velocity you can lose when you fail to achieve positive ignition, shot to shot. It's going to vary wildly, as are your hits on the target. The only thing you can generally count on is that less than positive ignition means less than full velocity. Figure a light hit that still makes the round go will give you, say, 740 feet per second when good ignition gives you 820, with the same powder charge and primer under the same 148-grain wadcutter, and you get an idea how far from point of aim you'll be wandering.

Ransom Rest tests, as conducted by Bill House and Ron Power (and many others) independently, indicate that vertical stringing will be the big problem. If you have a questionable gun, you should check it both on a machine rest and in your hands off solid sandbags. This is because the varying ignition factors can affect recoil, and gun movement shot-to-shot, something that won't show up when the test gun is embraced by unyielding steel.

Says Cirillo, "A Smith & Wesson official told me they conducted tests in which they backed off the strain screw of a K-frame revolver by increments of one-eighth of a turn. Groups eventually went from a bit over two inches to seven and eight inches. Interestingly, it was a concentric group, not just vertical stringing. I can believe that. The lighter velocity affects the torque also."

Cirillo's hypothesis makes sense. A slower-moving bullet dwells longer in the barrel, giving the gun more time to move in response to the cartridge going off before the projectile has been able to clear the muzzle. Cirillo's observations on the range indicate that less than positive ignition throws the bullet high left, which is in keeping with the rest of the hypothesis, since that's the direction the muzzle climbs in from recoil in a right-handed hold. (Logic would seem to indicate that lighter recoil would cause the bullet to go low, since heavy recoil throws you high. But if the faster bullet is already gone when most of the recoil hits your hand . . .)

Still, vertical stringing will be the most noticeable when your firing pin isn't hitting hard enough. The same symptoms may appear when your gun is out of time, and the hammer isn't hitting the primer dead center. If it misses a direct hit on the anvil, you are again going to get less than positive and uniform ignition. If this is due to poor timing, the resulting bad cylinder alignment probably means your bullets

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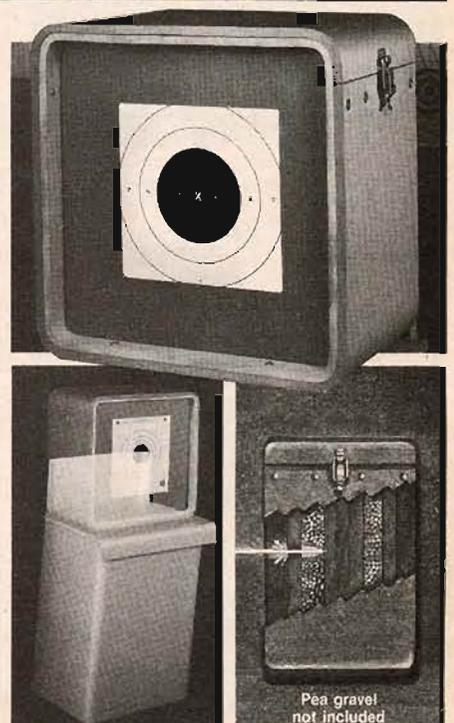
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will shave going into the forcing cone and ruin accuracy anyway.

How do you avoid this problem? There are a number of ways. It is often caused, in a Smith & Wesson, by the mainspring strain screw in the front of the grip being too loose. This can be due to an uninformed person backing it out to lighten the trigger pull, or it may have worked loose from recoil buffeting. It's a good idea to Loctite that sucker in place once you've got it adjusted properly.

Try Power's pull gage test of hammer pressure. If a light double action is a must for you, consider a revolver with a floating firing pin in the frame instead of a hammer-mounted one. This is why Model 53 S&W revolvers in .22 Jet caliber, collectors' items in their own right, are so much sought after by shooters who want to cannibalize them into PPC guns: the floating pin can, with the proper spring, translate a light hammer hit into full inertia by the time it impacts the primer.

On the Python, Moran uses a slightly overlong firing pin, coupled with a special light firing pin spring. This allows 100 percent uniform ignition of even hard Magnum primers with a mainspring tuned so light that the double action trigger pull is between five and six pounds, something probably impossible to achieve with any other .357 revolver.

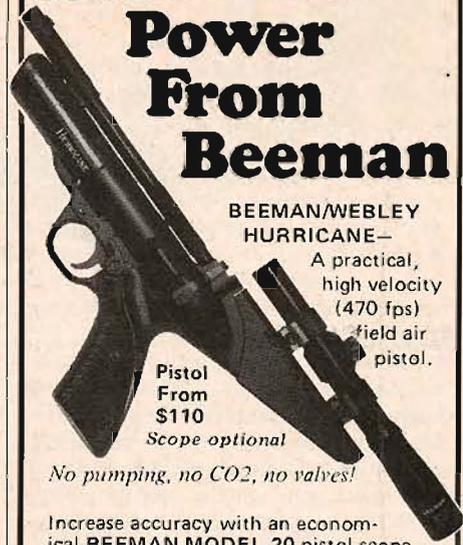


**Bending/ret tempering of mainspring lightens pull, retains hammer momentum.**

For the ultimate in double action trigger control, the bobbed hammer is also worth considering. Just remember that there, too, there is a point of diminishing returns. Moran went through a lot of Python hammers before he found the ideal contour for maximum momentum. Power lops off the spur and grinds the hammer into a sleek upward slope, lightening its body but moving its striking mass upward. Apart from being the most streamlined hammer bob in the business, Power's configuration also put the hammer's remaining weight where it's needed, to drive the hammer nose through its arc with maximum mechanical leverage.

For the performance oriented sixgunner, a piece that just goes "bang" isn't enough. That savvy shooter doesn't just want ignition, he wants perfect, uniform, full ignition. If he follows the advice of the master pistolsmiths quoted above, he'll have it—and a nice, light double action pull, too.

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## L-FRAME

Continued from page 35

To one who has every line, contour, and characteristic of the classic Smith & Wesson guns etched indelibly in his brain, first contact with the L is a shock. Many of the new gun's features aren't "right!" But after working on and with it for a while I've decided that it earns a place on its own merits.

Back in the thirties when the .357 cartridge was developed, S&W's large frame revolver was the only logical choice among existing designs, and they weren't about to tool up for a whole new gun then. The first move toward a smaller frame .357 came in 1955 when they introduced the K frame Combat Magnum, Model 19. But, during the past 25 years, a lot of changes have taken place. Today there are more shooters firing more ammo than ever before, and .357 is the most popular revolver chambering. Obviously, this is the time to offer a gun that is sized specifically for the cartridge, and for the kind of shooting that is now being done.

At present, nine variations of the L frame revolver are being made; all are chambered in .357 Magnum. These are 4-inch fixed sight guns called Distinguished Service Magnums, plus 4-inch and 6-inch adjustable sight models called Distinguished Combat Magnums. All three configurations are offered in blue, nickel, and stainless. Today, consumer demand for the guns is running higher than production, so don't look for additions to the line-up right away.

Perhaps the first change that will be offered will be lighter weight barrels. This could be a slimmer cross section underlug, or maybe even a barrel with classic S&W profile. For my purposes a lighter weight barrel would be welcome. In fact, if I can get my hands on a 686, I may just whittle the barrel down to the size that suits. With stainless steel, it should be a breeze. The color is the same all the way through; just polish to desired finish.

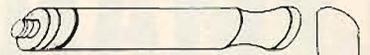
## The L frame would make a great .44

Will L frame guns ever be offered in other calibers? The L cylinder is about the same diameter as that of a Single Action Colt. It would make a great .44 Special, and maybe a .41 Magnum. Then there is also the possibility of extending the underlug L profile to some N frame models. The extra weight could be useful to shooters who like full house .44 stuff. But we'll probably have to wait a while for these or other developments. The factory is too busy trying to keep up with present demand.



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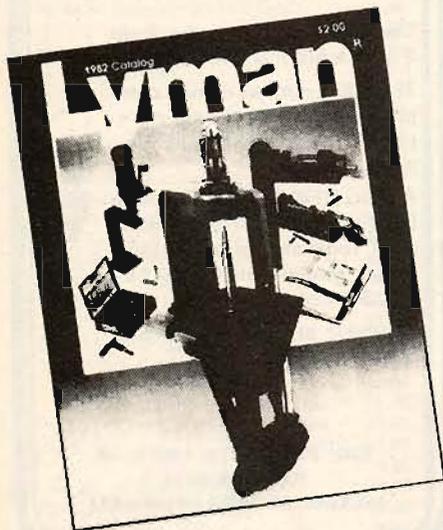
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## HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

### READERS REVEAL SOME HOT TIPS ON POWDER, CRIMP, BULLET PULL

There may not be any major change in the way hand-loading columns are conducted, but it's a sure thing that asking readers to chip in with ideas and experimental findings is paying off for everyone concerned. Letters are raining in from all across the United States, Canada, and, on occasion, Europe.

The upshot of all this much-appreciated response is successful establishment of a forum within which a considerable amount of truly valuable information can be exchanged.

There have been numerous requests for data on use of shotshell powders in handgun cartridges. Therefore, here's some useful input from Derk von Huls, Waffen Munition, Frankfurter St., 8, 6110, Dieburg, Germany. Derk states that, loading for the .45 ACP, he bought a Star production loader and wound up supplying his entire club with ammo stoked with a favorite shotshell powder. "My slogan," he writes, "became 'the cheaper, the better.'"

However, like the rest of us, this hand-loader demands accuracy. He casts Hensley & Gibbs bullets from pure Linotype metal and, for powder, he has settled on what he calls "a cheap and well-metering powder that is never mentioned in any article: it is W-W 452AA." And Derk adds, "It works so well that I hope never to be forced to change to another powder."

He continues: "For the .45 ACP, I load 5.6 grains. This gives a velocity of just under 1000 fps (992 was the last average I got out of ten rounds, clocked with no more than 23 fps of extreme spread.) With pure Linotype metal the H&G 68 weighs some 189 grains. This load makes major on anybody's pendulum, gives good penetration, extreme accuracy (ten rounds in 1 inch from Max Wiegand's P9S), and is extremely mild to shoot... recoil is less than from Federal's 185-grain wadcutter. I use standard-grade primers.

"Taper-crimping is B.S. in my opinion. In a normal Colt, as it comes from the factory, we have a built-in headspace problem and most loads are headspaced by the extractor, anyway. I just use a very light roll crimp to tuck any sharp edge away, but I seat the bullet out to be almost in full contact with the forcing cone. This practice has a very positive effect on accuracy.

"My load has been used in an enormous variety of pistols and the only problem is that I cannot turn out enough of the stuff to satisfy the demand. This load has won a

European championship, three German championships, and some two dozen international matches.

"For loading the 9mm Parabellum, I use W-W 452AA as well. The 9mm is a nasty round to reload with lead bullets, if one desires power and accuracy at the same time. Leading usually is severe. I have solved it by using a bullet that is today dubbed the H&G 275 and looks alarmingly like a drawing I sent these people about three years ago. Cast of pure Linotype metal and sized to .358-inch! it is the best. Loaded with 4.8 grains of 452AA, it makes a minor with good accuracy. Velocity is 1080 fps. The key for success with this load is sizing the bullet to the proper groove diameter! All 9mm Parabellum barrels I have measured, except Irv Stothe's tubes, are well over .357-inch. The CZ M75 usually is somewhere around .359-inch!"

This German correspondent goes on to say that he has worked up good loads for the .38 Special, .357 Magnum, and .44 Magnum, using W-W shotgun powders.

Meanwhile, Stan Floroski, 123 W. Seaview Ave., Norfolk, VA 23503, points to interesting discoveries associated with seating inverted hollow-based wadcutter in .38 Special cases.

"When loading HBWC bullets reversed in military cases (others as well), the thin skirt deforms and shaves lead when flush-seated and also bulges the cases. Seating the bullet out and roll-crimping in the bottom knurled groove does not bulge cases. But the skirt deforms, so the shell chambers hard, if at all."

Floroski's solution to the problem is as follows: "Run the loaded shell up into an RCBS .45 ACP seating die with an SWC insert. This tapers the skirt, which now chambers easily, especially out of a speed-loader. It does not affect the expansion ratio at all.

"I use a load of 3.5 grains of Bullseye with a CCI 500 primer and HBWC by Precision Products Company. It hits to point of aim at 25 yards out of my S&W M60 and Charter Arms Undercover. I can keep them in the black at 25 yards, offhand, with no key-holing, tipping, and so on. Loaded normally and taper-crimped into the top knurled groove ahead of 2.5 grains of Bullseye with the CCI 500 primer, it is extremely accurate and cases last forever."

Speaking of bullet pull in the .45 ACP, Richard Savino, Irasburg, VT 05845, observes: "It has to be tight. The trouble is that manufacturers' brass varies widely in

its apparent or effective wall thickness, especially at the neck . . .

"The best approach I've found is to check new brass, either with a micrometer or calipers. If feasible, one should try running a case into a regular sizing die: usually, it can take some sizing even when brand new, and this will help bullet pull.

"If lubed lead bullets are used, great care should be taken that the lube is in the grooves and not sloppily applied: I've found that cast bullets in one-groove design don't shoot a whole lot worse than multilube-grooved slugs, and the excess in the ACP isn't really needed. Using minimal—and one should stress that word, *minimal*—case-mouth bell, seat your bullet with as much bearing surface inside the case as possible. I have never had problems with a slight amount of taper crimp applied to .45 ACP rounds; but again, the particular brand and lot of brass makes variation a thing to watch for. Slightly long cases can get collapsed, if the die is set for crimping a different, and shorter, brand.

"The problem with bullet pull is that a lot of combat shooters are using hyped-up loads, like 200-grain SWC-Ls, moving around 950 to 1000 fps. To accommodate them and decrease gun wear, they use a heavy-recoil spring set. It seems that the heavier springs give the bullet of a feeding cartridge a harder whack on the way into the chamber, with the depressing result of a jam, if the pull is on the light side."

In concluding, Savino stresses the importance of pre-cleaning all brass, with special attention to the extraction cannelures. Along this same line, he also advises to keep the shell holder clean so that a



build-up of crud won't cause cases to tip as they are fed into resizing and seating dies. This is particularly critical with progressive loading rigs.

There's much more in the way of new loads and successful loading techniques, all of which will be exposed here in future issues.

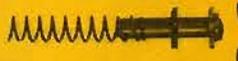




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## XP-100

Continued from page 45

The prototype pistol was chambered in the full length .308, and I spent a morning shooting a relatively mild load (150 grain Speer, 35.0 grains 3031) at the iron animals. Turkeys, the toughest target on the course, fell with disgusting regularity once I got the sight settings down pat. I expect it would do it every Sunday for the rest of your life. And it's so good looking!

The grip follows the pattern of a Colt .45ACP and was comfortable at modest recoil levels. Full snort .308 loads might be another story; but I never got a chance to try them.

There are many more new XP stocks out there than what I tested. Most are mid-grip epoxy and fiber molded variants on the same theme. To be satisfactory, they should fit the hand that feeds, be light enough to allow putting the weight where it counts—in the barrel—and be stable in both winter and summer. These stocks pass both tests.

Does yours?



## AUSTRALIAN

Continued from page 47

acteristics of the blowback action of the Walther to the limit by lengthening the bolt and using 85-grain wadcutter loads that function with only 1 grain of powder.

Because a lot of shooters find it difficult to reconcile a .32 caliber, wadcutter-only pistol having the recoil of a rimfire, with a Service pistol event, some moves are now underway here to introduce a true Service pistol division to the match that will make certain pistols of adequate power and performance are used.

In my club, most shooters use revolvers (K38s, Pythons, M19s) or .45 autos. A few use 9mm Brownings or S&W M39s; DA revolvers (such as Rugers and Dan Westons) are in the minority.

The move to establish some type of power rating in at least one section of the match has met with considerable support at the grassroots level.

The rationale is that the match was conceived as a practical style competition that would allow all levels of civilian and military shooters to fire service pistols, as well as conventional center fire target pistols.

Many civilian shooters, firing the course with the .45 ACP (and full power 9mm loads) for the first time, have found it to be a challenging and interesting exercise using realistic loads, rather than emasculated wadcutter-only target ammo.

My Walther .32 auto can produce scores of around 850; my K38 (3 pound trigger pull SA, 8 pound, DA) has shot an 830, while my fine-tuned Colt MkIV has managed to shoot around 800. I fire Master's grade in ISU Centerfire matches, using the

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Walther .32 (580-600 in a sanctioned match); the .45 auto demands an extra degree of skill to produce the higher scores that presently elude me.

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- Div. C: Autoloaders using 9mm and larger ammo equivalent to standard service loads.
- Div. D: Rimfire division open to woman and junior (under 18) shooters, who can also shoot in any of the above divisions, if they desire.

Whether this proposal will be accepted remains to be seen, but moves already have been made to establish a "high power" division.

My proposal is that shooters take 95 rounds to the line. The range officer takes five rounds at random from the shooter's ammo allocation, and this sample is marked with the shooter's name and sealed in an envelope.

The shooters who place in the event have their ammo tested on a chronograph, or ballistic pendulum. If it fails to meet specifications, they are disqualified.

This method puts the onus on the shooter to make sure that his ammo meets the power requirements and makes it virtually impossible to "beat the system." And it minimizes administrative hassles in testing the loads of all competitors.

Australia's pistol licensing laws make it obligatory that all matches be shot only on police-approved ranges that have been constructed to rigid safety standards.

This may cause some problems for IPSC activities, because of the mobile nature of the course of fire and spectator safety.

Our Service Match fits in to the existing range facilities that are abundantly available throughout the country.

While somewhat more rigid in its course of fire than IPSC, it is an advance on PPC as a practical exercise when full-power pistols are used over the more difficult courses making up the match.

Getting off six shots in six seconds at the ISU Silhouette bullseye at 25 yards with a .45 auto calls for a high degree of control. So does getting off six shots in four seconds over the 10-yard course.

It is an excellent course of fire and is an increasingly popular one here in Australia.

I'll be happy to send a copy of our basic rules to any USA clubs or individuals interested in trying the match. It can be shot on any 50-yard range and any PPC facility will be equally suitable.




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# WHAT'S NEW

## Dillon announces new volume reloading tool

Dillon Precision Products has introduced its Rapid Load 450 Progressive Loader, which evolved from the Dillon RL 300.

The company said the new loader is faster, stronger, better looking and easier to operate than the RL 300. It utilizes a four-position rotary shell plate to carry the shells through various die positions. As with all Dillon presses, the RL 450 loads a completed round with each stroke of the tool handle, loads both rifle and pistol calibers and uses standard 3/8 X 14 dies.

Cost for a caliber change is about \$45 and the change can be accomplished in about 15 minutes.

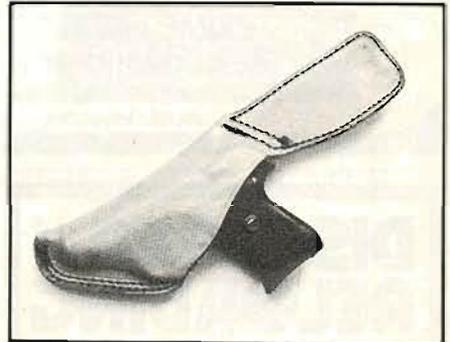
The new loader has a cyclic rate of 450 rounds an hour.

It is priced at \$365, complete with powder measure and both large and small primer feed.

Information is available from Dillon Precision Products, Inc., 7755 E. Gelding Drive (Suite 106), Scottsdale, AZ 85260.

## Armament Systems has new groin-type rig

Armament Systems Products, Unltd. has come out with a unique holster, its "Weeping Eye" model, which is suspended in the groin area from the belt by a harness that is said to be comfortable in most attitudes.



Due to the cut of men's trousers, it is not practical for left-handed shooters.

The "Weeping Eye" is designed for the new Seecamp .25 auto, the Walther TPH, the AMT Backup and the High Standard Derringer. It is made in black and brown leather and is priced at \$50.

Information is available from Armament Systems Products, Unltd., POB 18595, Dept. AH, Atlanta, GA 30326.

## Charter Arms Corp. announces new blue or stainless Bulldog .44 Spec.

Charter Arms Corp. has announced a new 3" Bulldog .44 Spec. to meet the requirements and special preferences unique to law enforcement and security personnel.

A pocket (spurless) hammer is featured for a smoother profile and compact carrying. In a quick-reflex situation, the pocket hammer allows for snag-free, fast response. Because the

hammer is serrated, it can also be cocked for single action.

Also featured is a neoprene grip, which is relieved for all speed loaders. The finger grooving aligns your grip for firm, consistent shooting. Unlike wood, it helps absorb recoil and take the "shock" out of firing. Interior reinforcing panels are nylon fiberglass having the strength of steel without the weight; this produces a slimmer, lighter and more compact grip.

To develop a Bulldog .44 Spec. that would meet all requirements of law enforcement personnel, Charter said it combined all of the elements preferred by them.

Other features include a full-length ramp front sight and square-notched rear sight, a virtually unbreakable beryllium copper firing pin, a hammer blocked for safety, and a chrome moly steel frame, cylinder and frame for extra strength. A swing-out 5-shot cylinder is released by either the ejector rod or thumb latch.

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For more information, write Charter Arms Corp., 430 Sniffens Lane, Stratford, CT 06497.



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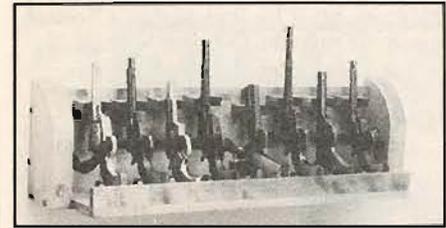
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## Prairie Design has new handgun racks

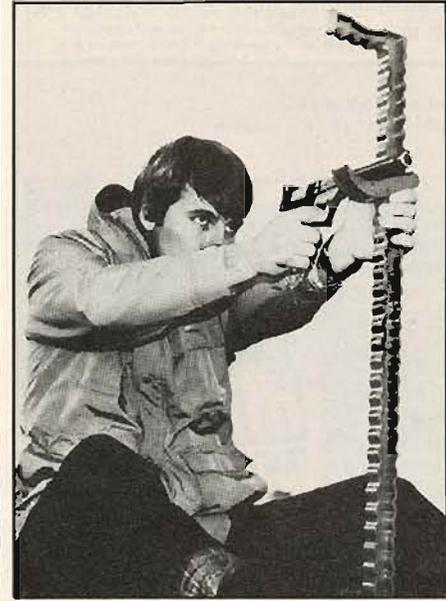
Prairie Design Company announces a new line of locking handgun racks, ranging in price between \$90 (4-gun) and \$100 (8-gun). There is an additional charge for felted and finished models. Made of top quality hardrock maple, the racks bolt to wall studs. An exclusive V-block mounting system provides a firm custom fit for virtually all model pistols and revolvers.



A deeply channeled base prevents gun movement while locking and unlocking the racks. Information is available from Prairie Design Company, Dept. HG, 113 Glenview Drive, Lawrence, KA 66044.

## MTM offers combo rest/walking stick

MTM Molded Products Company is now offering a combination shooting rest and walking stick, which provides the hunter-shooter with a strong, stable support and assistance in traversing difficult terrain.



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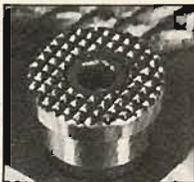
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## New, for collectors: .451 Detonics Magnum

Detonics .45 Associates announces the availability of its .451 Detonics Magnum 1982 presentation series pistols.

The company said it will produce 1,000 pistols (cased) this year. Each pistol will be engraved 1-of-1,000, 2-of-1,000, etc. for collectors' purposes.

The new pistol comes in an aluminum carrying case with a .45ACP barrel for caliber versatility, two stainless steel magazines, 50 rounds of .451 Detonics Magnum brass by Winchester, a Forster reamer to convert .303/.30-06 brass to .451, a Kleen Bore pistol cleaning kit, hearing protectors and handloading instructions.

The .451 Detonics Magnum has an average muzzle velocity of 1240 fps.

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Information is available from Detonics .45 Associates, 2500 Seattle Tower, Seattle, WA 98101.

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The new lubricant is available in 2-ounce containers.

Information is available from Fluoramics, Inc., 103 Pleasant Ave., Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458.

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# SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 25

both hands and shoved them straight out in front of their eyes . . . This is quite simply untrue. Colonel Fairbairn consistently advocated a one-hand noid for the one-hand gun, a point of fact brought forward in all his writings, published or unpublished.

For those who prefer the primary source, I recommend *Shooting To Live* by Messrs. Fairbairn and Sykes, to be read in company with the recently republished *Shanghai Municipal Police Pistol Manual*. The former is available from Paladin Press, the latter from Interservice Publishing Company. Both will serve as an accurate introduction to Fairbairn's thinking on the subject of close-quarter combat use of the self-loading pistol.

W.L. Cassidy  
Oakland, CA

## .38 Super to 9mm Mag.?

The .38 Super is a more powerful cartridge than the 9 mm, but not as popular. Why doesn't someone do what Remington did on the .244 Remington and the .280 Remington?

The .38 Super could be renamed 9 mm Magnum. I bet they would sell like hotcakes.

Clinton W. Green  
Smackover, Ark

## Prize "more exquisite than cover photo"

I have today received the Maryland Gun Works Custom Ruger per your Nov.-Dec. American Handgunner Giveaway.

To say that I am "pleased" with the custom Ruger Blackhawk would be a gross understatement. I am indeed ecstatic; moreover, may I say incredulous at my great good fortune in winning this altogether fantastic "AH 1-of-1." At first-hand, the piece seems even more exquisite than your cover photo, if such is possible.

As a shooter, hobbyist, and hand-loader of long standing I can appreciate such touches as the Douglas barrel, as well as the total artistry and execution by Messrs. Ciamillo and Shackelford.

I have owned an assortment of Rugers, Colts, etc. Among these is the Bill Davis custom "Couger" as featured in GUNS, Dec. 1979. I see now that I shall face something of a temptation to work up some of the Keith-type loads in .44 Special, despite a certain reluctance to fire

Continued on page 84

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## Robert A. Strong has new holster

WHAT ROBERT A. Strong Co., Inc., calls the First Chance Holster is being added to the firm's line of leather goods.

This compact highride concealable thumb break holster, which is made of full grain leather, is custom fitted for small-, medium- and large-frame revolvers and automatics up to 6 inches in length. The holster is double-stitched on inseams and stress points for durability, and the thumb break is recessed to reduce metal contact. The three slots give the wearer the choice of a conventional or crossdraw position; the holster can also be worn with Robert A. Strong's unique shoulder harness.

The First Chance Holster, which can be ordered with a fine suede lining, is available in black and antique cordovan color, plain, scalloped edge and basketweave.



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The company's Legend Holster, a highride single action holster, has a multi-width belt system that maintains proper holster angle on a 1 3/4- or 2 1/4-inch belt. The trigger cover, rear sight pocket, metal reinforcement welt and an optional snap provide safety and protection in the field.

The Legend, which is made for small and large frame single action handguns with barrel lengths of 5 to 7 1/2 inches, is available in black or antique cordovan and in plain or hand tooled basketweave.

The Preventor Holster has many of the Legend's features but is designed for handguns with barrel lengths of from 4 to 6 inches.



Legend Holster

For more information contact Robert A. Strong Co., Inc., 105 Maplewood Avenue, Dept. SI, Gloucester, MA 01930.

# Ruger Single Action Kit

Company will convert its "Old Model" single-actions at no charge

Modernizing "Old Model" Ruger single-action revolvers—at no charge—is the latest contribution to the world of handgunners by Sturm, Ruger & Company.

The company has announced a new invention for the owners of "Old Model" Ruger single-action Single Six, Blackhawk and Super Blackhawk revolvers. It is the Ruger Single-Action Conversion Kit, described by Ruger as "a major breakthrough in the technology of the single-action revolver."

The parts of the kit constitute a new mechanism which can be fitted at the factory with no permanent alterations to the revolver's frame, and without changing its outward appearance in any way.

Bill Ruger, president of the company, emphasized that installation of the kit will not affect the collector value of "Old Model" Ruger revolvers.

The kit has been designed to provide owners of "Old Model" Ruger single-action revolvers with the advantages of a modern "transfer-bar" type mechanism by the replacement of a few key parts in the revolver.

The seven new parts which comprise the kit are the hammer, pawl, transfer-bar, trigger, cylinder latch, cylinder latch spring and cylinder base pin.

The "transfer-bar" type mechanism of the kit prevents the kind of accidental discharge which can occur if the hammer receives a heavy blow while resting over a loaded chamber.

With the trigger fully forward, the hammer rests directly on the frame and cannot contact the firing pin. The new transfer-bar is positioned between the hammer and firing pin to transmit the hammer blow to the firing pin only when the trigger is pulled and held all the way to the rear.

Even though the "Old Model" Ruger single-action revolvers have always been safe to shoot when properly handled, the company has been plagued with lawsuits filed by people who managed to accidentally shoot themselves by keeping a live round under the hammer of Old-Model SA's.

The test case, in Alaska, went against Ruger with a seven-figure judgment. Subsequently, anyone who shot himself

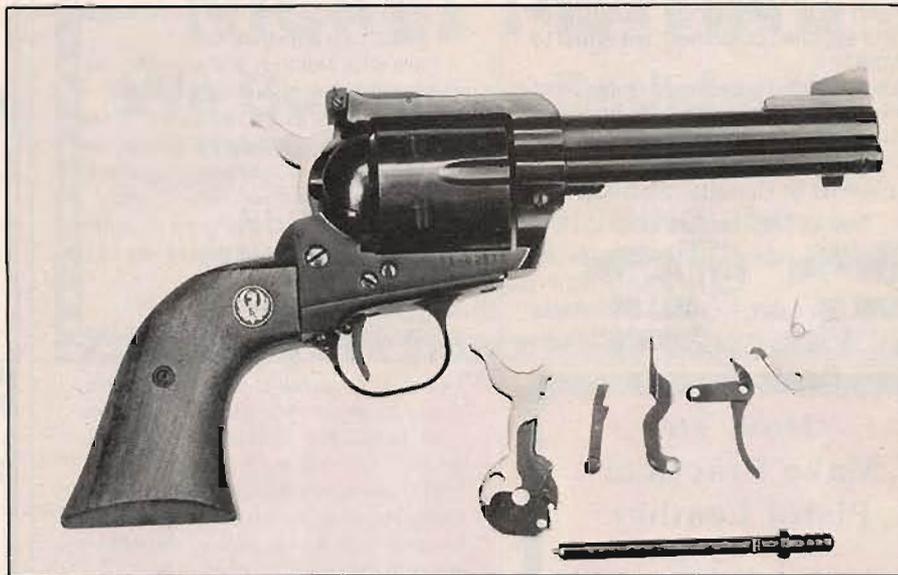
accidentally with an "Old-Model" SA Ruger immediately retained the services of a lawyer and filed a civil liability suit against the company.

There were only a few such suits prior to Ruger's introduction of its "New Model" in 1973. Some lawyers

apparently took the existence of the New Model as some sort of proof that the guns had been made negligently in the past.

Ruger told *The American Handgunner* that accidental discharges took

*Continued on page 94*



Here are the seven new replacement parts, left to right, hammer, pawl, transfer bar, trigger, cylinder latch and spring; and cylinder base pin (bottom).



Most of the seven new parts are shown in position, all set to make "Old Model" Ruger single-action revolvers safe to shoot, without changing outward appearance.



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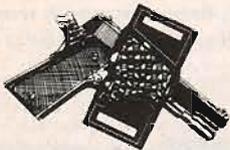
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Continued from page 81

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Again my sincere thanks for an outstanding gem and your fine accommodations, including the most welcome extra copies of Nov-Dec, 1981 issues.

Fred W. Hendee  
International Falls, MN

## NRA Director Greif criticizes Chambliss

In Lucy Chambliss' column (*The American Handgunner* Nov-Dec 1981), she lamented the failure of Harry Reeves, Michael Santanello and other "old" directors to regain their seats on the NRA Board of Directors.

Lucy is a victim of mental myopia when she says, "legislative power and a large membership are fine, but let's not have tunnel vision and funds for these two activities only."

I am shocked that she equates the critical defense of our right to keep and bear arms as an "activity!" If we hadn't built that legislative power, we might not have our handguns today! Building membership doesn't cost money, it makes it, giving us political leverage and greater acceptance by the non-shooter.

Lucy infers that the NRA is not giving the competitive shooters a fair shake. While she was on the Board I heard no complaints from her. I have a feeling she wasn't paying attention.

In 1980, the NRA spent a total of \$1,031,400 on competition. In 1981, we spent \$1,175,000. Competitive shooters comprise only about five or six percent of the NRA's membership, but proportionally receive more funding than other, larger groups. The association's 1,880,000 members have some needs, too. The NRA has spent, as of the end of September 1981, \$324,800 on range construction loans, in addition to large amounts spent on the Whittington Range and the recent appropriations to the Olympic games.

We have launched a massive public relations program wherein much of the money will be used promoting shooting among women and the youth of America.

On the complaint that we're spending too much defending our rights, if anyone is under the impression that we have no serious problems, take a look at Morton Grove's attempt to ban the possession of handguns and the anti-gun stance taken by the President's anti-crime Task Force. We are confronted with the most dangerous threats to take away our rights we have ever seen.

Lucy said, "It will be interesting to

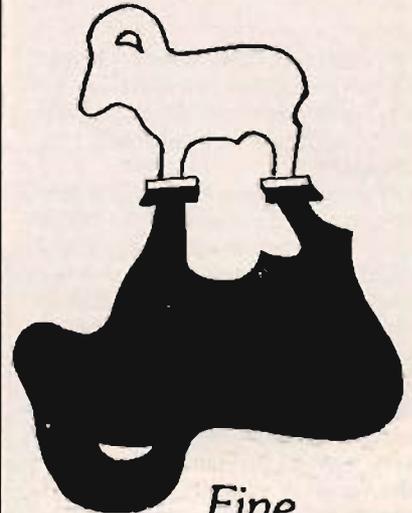
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see which of the "new" directors spends that much time working for pistol shooting (as Harry Reeves does)." Without denegrating Harry's fine contribution, the question is irrelevant. A Director has a responsibility to work for all members of the NRA, not only that small portion of competitors who are pistol shooters. As a member of that group that Lucy calls "new" directors, I put in 25 to 35 hours a week for the shooter, and I'm not retired. We have been vocal supporters of the competitors and their need for proper funding and inclusion in the decision-making process.

In the area of competitions, I have concern and a goal, to save some of the popular new shooting sports from destruction by our competition committees and the "hot shots."

For decades, Mexican silhouette shooters kept their sport simple. It was a hunter's game, where he competed with his hunting rifle and had a chance of winning. Significantly, their rules easily fitted on a single sheet of paper! When silhouette traveled north, we wound up with rules that distorted the original purpose and allowed the use of rifles having little resemblance to hunting rifles. Pistol silhouette shooting is another example of equipment that a hunter does not use in the field.

The result has been to turn away the vast body of hunters who might have come into the game, who are not NRA members and who don't compete in our standard shoots.

Then there's combat shooting. Many of the "old" directors shied away from having the NRA involved in civilian combat shooting because of what our enemies might say, resulting in another group being lost, when the vacuum was filled by several new organizations. We must popularize pistol and rifle shooting with competitions that are fun, have spectator appeal and won't cost a fortune to participate in.

It is simple theatrics to say that Reeves and Santanello are lost to pistol competitors. They are on the same committees and still serve as match officials. Indeed, at its October meeting, the Board appointed Mr. Reeves to serve out the term of a deceased director, over several candidates who had received more votes than he in the last election.

Being on the Board is not a sinicure or a reward. It is a position wherein one serves the members and the sport. It is proper that directors be nominated and elected by the members in a free democratic election, which we have had since

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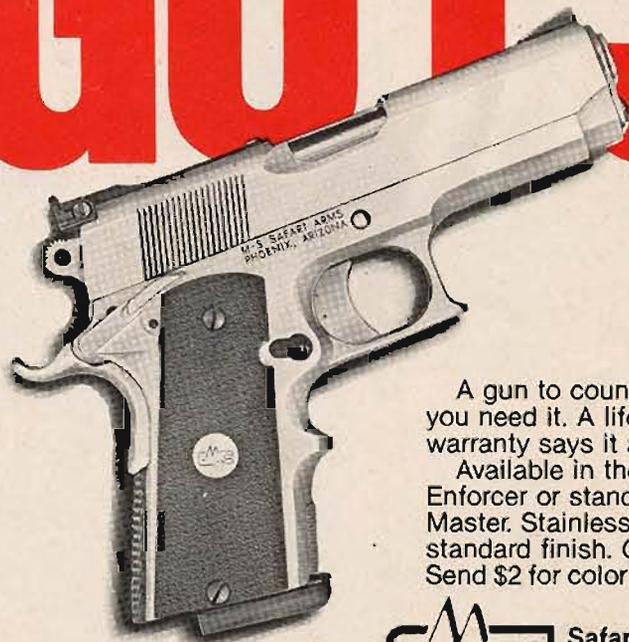
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Cincinnati. The only pity is that the  
NRA does not give its members any  
information about the Board and its  
actions.

I would like to note that the  
majority of the Board members are  
still "old" directors, some of whose  
re-elections have been supported by  
me and other "new" directors. I  
think that our members will reelect  
directors perhaps in part for their  
competitive activities, but mainly for  
their contributions in the battle to  
keep handguns in the hands of Lucy  
and you and me.

William R. Geif  
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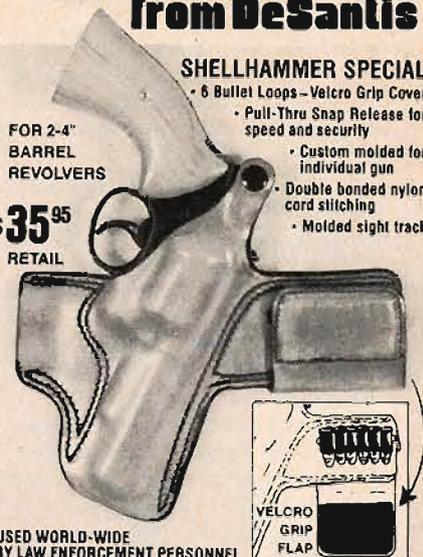
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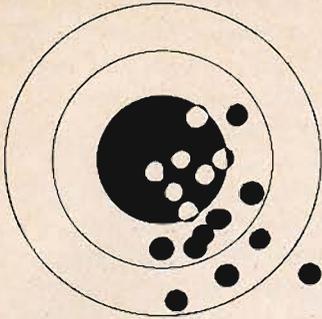
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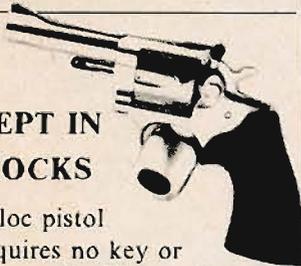


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## CONTENDER

*Continued from page 65*

14" lengths and the magnum grips, which were offered as standard equipment on 14" pistols. Shortly thereafter, Contenders began arriving with hammer safeties. There were other internal changes in the action and modification to the locking lugs at bottom of barrels. Bull barrels came out at about the time handgun silhouette shooting became popular. The combination of the gun and the game boosted consumer and dealer interest to new highs. For a while it seemed that everyone in the whole world wanted a Contender, and no one had any of them.

Gradually, the production pipeline got filled and things began to return to normal. Some of the folks who had climbed onto the bandwagon only to follow the fad began to drop off, and things got better for us true believers. T/C brought out the current style grips and forearms a little more than a year ago, and last summer, while I was visiting their plant in Rochester, N.H., I saw a toolroom model of the Mach IV frame.

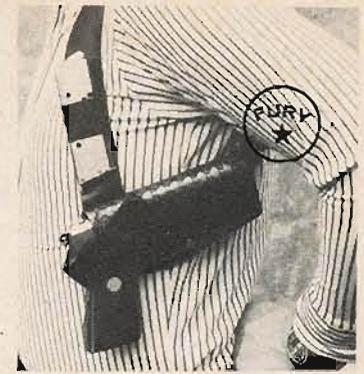
This newest version of the Contender frame differs in two respects from previous models. The pivot point for the trigger guard/action lever is moved from the front of frame to a position above the center of the trigger. This change enhances its mechanical advantage, so that even weak fingers can open the gun without using both hands. Internal changes permit tighter lockup and easier release on all T/C barrels.

The first thing I did was try my entire assortment of barrels, and they all functioned smoothly.

Another worthwhile change was to move the sear adjustment screw from inside the frame to the front edge of the trigger, so that adjustments can be made with the gun assembled. The Mach IV frame can be easily identified by the newly shaped trigger and the pivot pin positioned directly above the trigger.

I'm not sure, but I believe the only change needed in the frame to install the new action parts is to drill a hole for the relocated pivot pin, which appears to be the same diameter as the original one. When I quizzed the folks at T/C about converting older model guns to Mach IV innards, they were a bit hazy about whether they would offer the service.

The Mach IV frame brings us back to the smooth operation that was present when Contender began, but with several improvements, and vastly different accessory equipment. Originally, barrel lengths were 6", 8½", and 10", all octagon. Now they are available in 10" and 14", with a few calibers offered in 10" octagon. Most current sales are bull barrels. All the barrels, grips, forearms, scopes, and holsters for the older model Contenders can be used with the new Mach IV.



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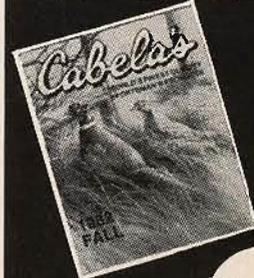
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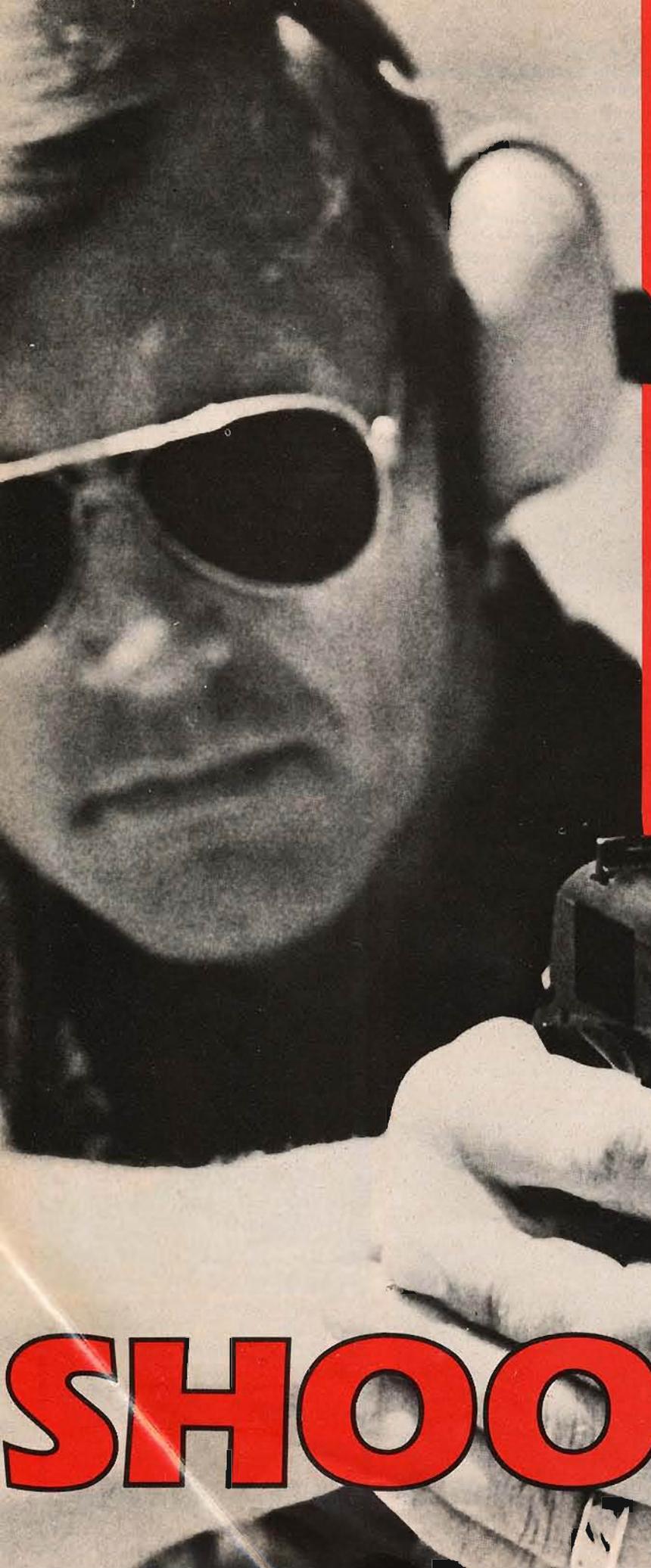
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# SHOOTER

# NEW MILITARY PISTOL—BY THE NUMBERS

As mentioned in our Industry Insider column, the military has, at least temporarily, called off the program to change to the 9mm pistol. The samples tested, an Army spokesman said, did not meet certain criteria. Here are the standards the military requested, and which will undoubtedly be unchanged should the program be reinstated.

## 1. ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS

### a. Physical Characteristics:

- (1) Caliber: Designed to fire the standard Nato 9mm cartridge.
- (2) Weight: Maximum, 2.77 lbs. with fully loaded magazine, without silencer.
- (3) Length: Maximum 8.7" without silencer.
- (4) Height: Maximum 5.8" with magazine inserted
- (5) Barrel:
  - (a) Minimum length 4.0"
  - (b) Bore and chamber shall be chromium plated.
  - (c) Rifling twist, one turn in not more than 20 inches.
- (6) Safety:
  - (a) Easily operated by shooting hand when holding weapon in firing position.
  - (b) Operable by right or left hand shooter.
  - (c) Shall lock, block, interdict or render inoperable the firing pin when in safe position.
  - (d) Shall operate quietly (inaudible at 5 meters).
  - (e) Shall require at least 1.0 lb. to move the safety.
- (7) Trigger pull:
  - (a) Single action—not more than 5 lbs. and not less than 4 lbs.
  - (b) Double action—not more than 14 lbs. and not less than 8 lbs.
- (8) Magazine must:
  - (a) Have a minimum capacity of 10 rds.
  - (b) Be interchangeable between weapons.
  - (c) Be designed to fall free when magazine catch is operated. If it does not fall free, it must be easily removed manually within three seconds.
  - (d) Be positively retained and capable of fast and easy insertion by non-shooting hand.
  - (e) Have a removable floor plate for cleaning and maintenance.
- (9) Magazine Catch: Shall be operable by the shooting hand of either a right or left hand shooter; may be ambidextrous or convertible in the field.
- (10) Sights:
  - (a) Front Sight:
    1. Appear as Square post to shooter.
    2. Approximately 1/8" wide.
    3. Approximately 1/8" to 1/4" high.
  - (b) Rear Sight:
    1. Appear as square notch to shooter and must allow sufficient light (approx. .032") on either side of front sight.
    2. A fixed sight is required which is adjustable for

## NEW SWING OUT 4's

For the Serious Plinker and Small Game Hunter

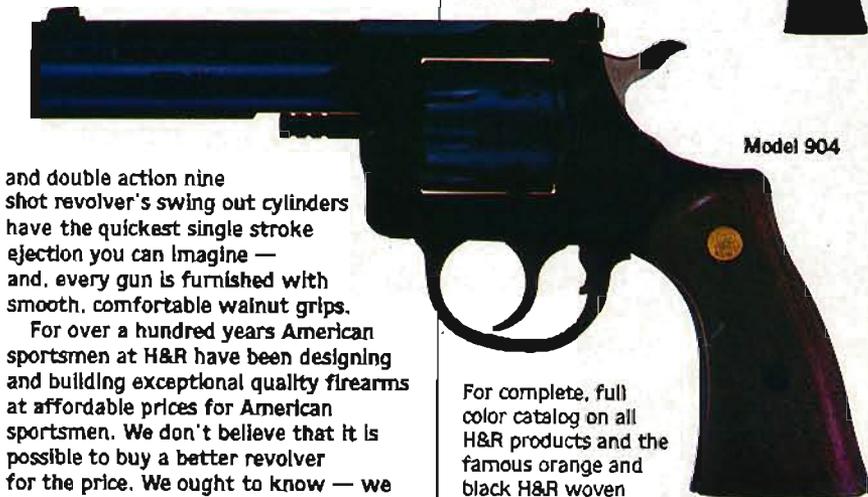
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Industrial Rowe Gardner, MA 01440

# MILITARY SPECIFICATIONS

deflection by drifting in a slot.

3. Must be capable of withstanding impact with a hard surface without damage or affect sighting if dropped from a height of 4 feet.
- (11) Slide Stop: With a magazine in place, slide must stay open after last shot. Slide must remain open after magazine is removed. Release of slide stop must cause slide to chamber top cartridge in magazine. Slide stop release must be either automatic (when loaded magazine is inserted) or manual. If manual, it must be ambidextrous or convertible in the field.



- (12) Lanyard Loop: A recessed, snag-proof lanyard loop or hole is required in the butt.
- (13) Grips/Gripping Area: Non-slip grips and gripping area of the frame are required.
- (14) Trigger Guard: Shall be large enough to permit firing while wearing heavy gloves or outer gloves and liners.
- (15) Parts: All parts must be interchangeable between weapons

- without hand or machine fitting and be replaceable without tools.
- (16) Threaded Fasteners: All threaded fasteners used shall not loosen during prolonged firing (5,000 rounds) and shall not require the use of any type of adhesive.
- (17) External Shape: There shall be no sharp edges or protrusions which could snag on body or clothes.
- (18) Field Stripping: Must be capable of being field stripped as quickly and easily as the M1911A1 pistol without tools.
- (19) User Size: Must be capable of utilization by personnel within the 5th percentile female size to the 95 percentile male size.
- (20) Protective clothing: Must be capable of operation by personnel in the CB Protective Ensemble or cold weather clothing to the same or better degree as the M1911A1 or .38 revolver.
- (21) Nuclear Survivability: Not required.
- (22) Trigger Pull Distance: Shall not be more than 2.75" in single action nor more than 3" in double action.
- (23) Headspace: Not less than .754" nor more than .761".
- (24) Final Protective Finish:
  - (a) All external surfaces shall be of dark, non-reflective, corrosion-resistant nature.
  - (b) All internal surfaces shall be of a corrosion-resistant nature.
  - (c) Final finish of metal parts shall be chosen from: (steel) Manganese Phosphate; Chromium Plate; Black Chrome, (Aluminum) Hard Anodic.
  - (d) Bearing surfaces with surface roughness of less than 32 RMS may be left bright.
- (25) Firing Pin Energy: Firing pin shall deliver a minimum of 22 inch ounces of energy to the primer.
- (26) High Pressure Resistance: Pistol shall withstand the firing of one high pressure test cartridge without evidence of defects.
- (27) Nonmetallic Materials: Shall not be adversely affected by standard government insect repellants or lubricants, preservatives or cleaners.

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(28) Magazine Disconnect: Pistol shall *not* have a magazine disconnect.

b. Operational Characteristics: Pistol shall be designed so as to:

- (1) Under adverse conditions, be at least as reliable and require no more time to clear stoppages as the M1911A1.
- (2) Function reliably with standard 9mm ball round.
- (3) Function reliably using standard DOD lubricants (CLP).
- (4) Function reliably under climatic conditions from +140 F to -60F.
- (5) Be capable of extended use in the field with maintenance limited to user level.
- (6) Be capable of disassembly without damage or undue wear.



- (7) Be corrosion resistant under field conditions.
- (8) Comply with applicable safety health hazards and human engineering criteria.
  - (a) Capable of loading or unloading without actuating the trigger.
  - (b) Capable of lowering the hammer from a cocked position without actuating the trigger and, insuring that a chambered round will not fire.

(c) Have a safety action that can be checked both by sight and feel with the firing hand.

- (d) Be made so that it is capable of firing only one round per trigger pull.
- (9) Be capable of being fired with one hand.
- (10) Be capable of being carried in a safe condition and then drawing and firing with one hand.
- (11) Be capable of single or double action.
- (12) Accuracy:
  - (a) Dispersion: Average mean radius for 10-round groups at 50 meters shall not be more than 1.4 inches greater than that for same ammunition fired from standard proof barrel.



- (b) Center of Impact: Average center of impact for 10-round groups fired at 50 meters shall not be more than 4 inches radially from the point of aim.
- (13) Performance Capabilities: Pistol must be equal to or better than the M1911A1 where hit probability is a function of time, against a standing man target at ranges to 50 meters.
- (14) Be rugged and capable of withstanding an impact with a

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# MILITARY SPECIFICATIONS

hard surface if dropped from 4 feet and continue to function without accidentally discharging.

- (15) Have an expected service life greater than the M1911A1 (5,000 rds. minimum life; 10,000 rds. desired).
- (16) Be capable of being fired without a magazine.
- (c) Reliability, Availability, Maintainability
- (1) The minimum acceptable value over a minimum service life of 5,000 rounds (10,000 desired) is 645 mean rounds



between operational mission failure. An operational mission failure is defined as any malfunction which results, or could result in any one or a combination of the following:

- (a) Cessation in operation requiring corrective action.
- (b) Inability to commence or cease a mode of operation.
- (c) A critical or catastrophic safety hazard.

- (2) The operational mean time to repair shall be no longer than 0.5 hours on an organizational level and direct support level.
  - (3) The operational maximum time to repair shall be no greater than 10 minutes at operator level for 95 per cent of all correctable maintenance actions.
2. DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS—those deemed desirable and could enhance the effectiveness of the weapon if practical:
- (a) 15 round magazine
  - (b) Corrosion resistance under marine environmental conditions.
  - (c) Function without manual assistance in such conditions as sand and mud.
  - (d) A method of indicating when magazine is full and when it contains five rounds or less.
  - (e) Not used
  - (f) A day/night tactile, loaded chamber indicator.
  - (g) Recurved front trigger guard for support by non-firing hand.
  - (h) A low light level sight capability.
  - (i) Effective range out to 100 meters.
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*Editor's Note—The American Handgunner will be following the course of the military's search for a replacement for the .45 auto. As news develops, you'll read about it here.*

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## RUGER

Continued from page 83

place because shooters of "Old-Model" single-action revolvers made by his company did not take the trouble to learn their mechanical characteristics.

The company came to the conclusion that most of the accidents occurred because the shooter had allowed the hammer to rest in its full forward position, with the firing pin contacting the primer of a live cartridge in the chamber aligned with the barrel. This was done in spite of specific instructions to the contrary, which were packed and shipped with all "Old-Model" Ruger single-action revolvers since production began in 1953.

Given the facts that a cartridge primer detonates by percussion—or a sharp blow—and that the basic single-action design dates back to 1873, and that it is possible to place the firing pin in contact with the primer of a live cartridge in many firearms, common sense should tell the shooter not to let the firing pin rest directly on a primer; even if he had not read the instructions packed with every "Old-Model" Ruger single-action revolver. Nevertheless, some shooters still experience tragic accidents by ignoring these well-known principles.

In 1973, Ruger was the first to build a Frontier-style revolver that couldn't fire if dropped on its hammer, or if someone hit the hammer a severe blow while a live cartridge was in the chamber.

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In addition, the old parts will be returned to the owner of the Ruger handgun so that its collector value is not lost.

Ruger insists that gunowners wanting their old single actions converted do *not* send them directly to the factory without first getting instructions on proper shipping.

For these, write to Safety Conversion, Sturm, Ruger & Company, Lacey Place, Dept. OM, Southport, CT 06490.



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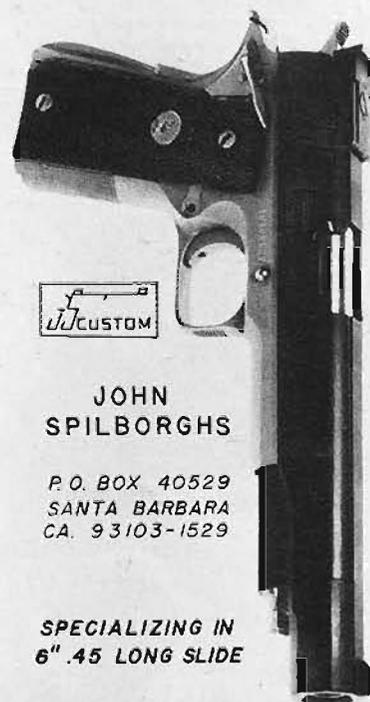


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**JEFF COOPER'S BREN TEN INITIAL ISSUE COMMEMORATIVE** — pays tribute to and honors the distinguished career of the father of modern combat pistolcraft — **JEFF COOPER**, and marks the kick-off of the production of the most desired pistol ever made — **THE BREN TEN 10MM AUTO**.

#### DESCRIPTION

This exquisitely crafted piece is a fully functional, finely tuned, commemorative combat pistol. It has all of the features of a standard production model Bren Ten including selective double/single action, reversible thumb safety, and replaceable front sight, plus all of the custom features that Jeff Cooper has personally and expressly designated for this pistol. The superb stainless steel frame and blue steel slide have been highly polished to a mirror-like finish, with specially selected detailing meticulously crafted in 22k gold plate. To complement our heritage, this fine pistol is completely made in America. A special manufacturer's seal will be placed on each commemorative after it has been personally inspected and test-fired by Jeff Cooper, with a registered serial number coordinated certificate of authenticity. Each commemorative is presented in its own custom fitted, hand-rubbed, specially selected dark wood presentation chest, lined with rich, plush, deep burgundy velvet, with the owner's name inscribed on the engraved custom plaque within. To further enrich this issue, twelve deactivated 22k gold plated, 10mm auto cartridges are included.

#### AVAILABILITY & SHIPMENT

Orders are now being accepted on a first come, first served basis. Requests for specific serial numbers will be honored if available; otherwise, you

will be assigned a serial number as your order is received. Once the minimum subscription level, necessary to justify production time, has been reached, production will begin. Two hundred of these fine pistols are scheduled to be produced per week, with shipments directly from our exclusive commemorative dealer, Gun Finders, Phoenix, Arizona. Because we have no control over how fast orders will be sent in, we cannot guarantee a specific delivery date. Although we will do everything within our power to deliver the commemoratives in a timely manner, we will not sacrifice quality and care in craftsmanship for a little time.

#### ASSURANCE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To guarantee commemorative production, all funds are to be sent directly to Sunwest Bank, where they will be deposited and held in a special Trust Account. The funds cannot be released until the necessary minimum subscription level is reached. If, for any reason, the minimum subscription level is not reached, then 100% of the subscriber's funds will be returned directly by the Bank. Upon receipt of your order, you will receive a formal acknowledgement package which will include your assigned serial number, a bank document showing your funds have been deposited in the Trust Account, a special discount coupon, a copy of "Jeff Cooper on Handguns," and much more.

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**Assured Order Plan:** The best and most direct way to assure your order is to make out your check for \$2,000, payable to: **Jeff Cooper Commemorative Trust Account**, and send it directly to Sunwest Bank.

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This is the only production pistol ever to bear Jeff Cooper's name. It is a special one-time issue, and when fully subscribed will never be available again, with production strictly limited to 2,000 pistols. This is the ultimate, absolute top-of-the-line, commemorative combat pistol. If there was ever one commemorative to get, this is it.

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