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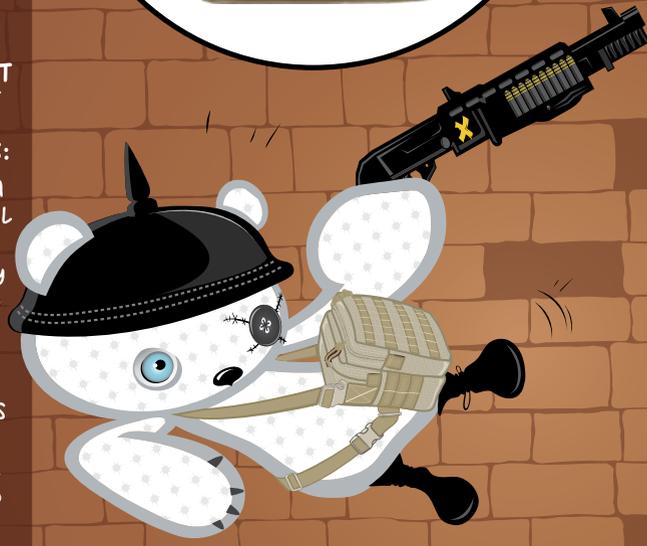
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“ JUST THE BASICS

I enjoyed Dave Anderson's comments (*Better Shooting*, Sept/Oct 2012) about people wanting to learn the fancy stuff, but not the basics. It doesn't matter whether it's handguns, power tools, or checkers, if you want to skip the basics and go to the fancy stuff you're wasting your time, and worse — your teacher's time and talent. Keep it up, Dave!

Robert Caraway
Liberal, Kansas

Scammers Strike

I noticed you've been running a warning in each issue ("Roy Alert!") about your concerns regarding subscription scams directed at your magazines. I thought you may be interested in one I received and have attached it to my e-mail. Alerting your readers allowed me to see this one was a fraud! Keep up the good job. Yours is the only gun

magazine I buy, and I read from cover to cover — and than back again.

Robert Neiningger Jr.
Via e-mail

Going Digital?

So I'm sitting next to the campfire, thoroughly enjoying the latest issue, when I note in the *Speak Out* column, a

comment about the availability of digital editions of *American Handgunner* on your webpage. I couldn't wait to get to a location with internet access where I could check it out. It was great, but do you have any plans in the works for offering *American Handgunner* subscriptions for the digital version? I would really appreciate the ability to "take" the issue with me on my Kindle

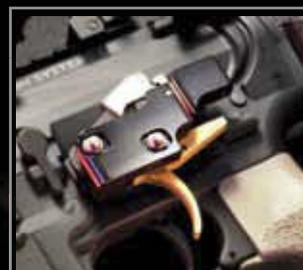
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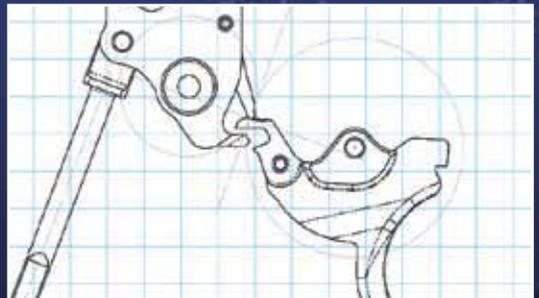
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SPEAK OUT

to read at my leisure — say, sitting next to the campfire — rather than only when I have access to the internet. Some of the other gun magazines are available in this format, but they're not worth the bytes they're printed on.

Not that I like your magazine, mind you. Too gun-oriented for my tastes, with too many facts, too much free, unfettered thought and way too many talented contributors. But I understand your difficult position, and realize you have to play the cards you're dealt.

Bob Walker
Via e-mail

Bob, glad you don't like the magazine. Lord knows we get into trouble printing letters from people saying they do, so thanks for helping out. We're working toward a "take it with you" digital version, but I honestly don't have a time-line on it right now. Too many irons in the fire already, but I promise it will happen, so keep that Kindle battery charged! RH

Oops ...

Your Esteemed Editorship: I messed up! In the Sept/Oct 2012 issue ("Dave Lauck, Fancy But Functional BBQ Guns") I listed the top sixgunsmiths whose work I have experienced firsthand, and left off the name of one of the top sixgunsmiths of all time, Andy Horvath. My sincerest and deepest apology goes out to him and our readers. Andy not only created two of my finest custom .44 Specials, he also originated the L'il Guns concept, which caught the eye of Hollywood when I wrote of them. In fact they were the only good thing about a movie made way back then.

Good Shootin' and God Bless
John Taffin

Tools For Shooters

I'm new to shooting and have found your magazine to be a great resource of information. In fact, you have inspired me to learn everything I can to become a true enthusiast. I am considering setting up a firearm work area in my basement, and would like to see an article on the subject. It would be nice to have a general idea on how to set up my workbench and the types of tools needed. Keep up the good work!

Mark Lonzo
Via e-mail

Mark, glad we're turning you into a gun-guy! I took your question to heart and asked Dave Anderson to look into it and write it up for a column. Until then, you'll need a decent set of dedicated

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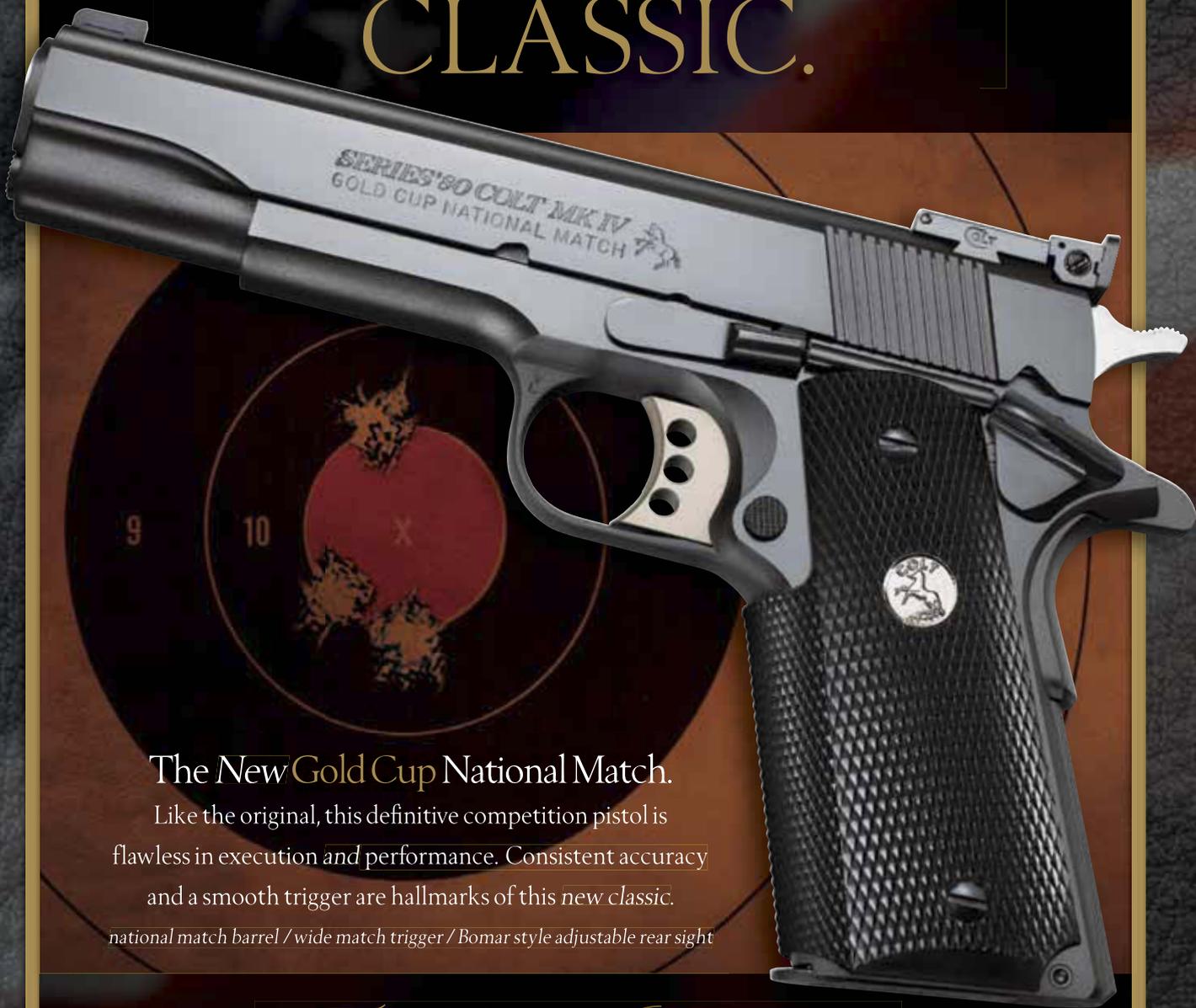
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COLT

SPEAK OUT

gunsmithing screwdrivers (a handle with bits works well), a small soft-face hammer (brass or plastic face so it doesn't mar), good cleaning gear, some of those carpet sample squares work well for the bench top, a good pin punch set, a good set of smooth-face parallel pliers, a plastic bench block with holes so you can knock pins out easily, an assortment of surgeon's hemostat-type clamps (amazingly useful), plenty of Q-Tips, some good gun grease, oil and solvent, and I like to use those red mechanics shop rages you can buy at the box stores (but paper towels are handy too). But maybe the most important thing is to get yourself a set of the firearm assembly/disassembly books by our own J.B. Wood. Amazon has them, and buy the titles applying to your interests, like semi-autos, .22 rifles, etc. Just as importantly is to "stop" doing something to your guns if you're getting in over your head. There are about a thousand other tools you could use (files, etc.) but it depends on what you'll be doing. Try checking out www.brownells.com to see 32,000 tools and parts you can wish you had! RH

We Need To Hear This

Here's a letter to the editor you won't print, but I don't care because you need to hear this.

You missed an opportunity to grow our body of gun rights advocates when you wrongly discounted pro-gun rights advocate Frank Mallory's argument against extreme pro-gun rants in your magazine (*Speak Out*, July/August 2012). Your statement that being "too much in the center, then you don't stand for or believe in much" was hogwash. That excuse for uncivil behavior was a poorly conceived platitude to justify what many, including me, believe hurts our cause.

I too am "disgusted by the depths of idiocy that has befallen our pro-gun ranks in the past few years." I'm a decorated Army veteran and have owned guns since 1961. I know your ill-advised response to Frank's letter was pandering to the small faction that think "showing your tail" is expressing passion for the topic, but you are not going to increase sales of your magazines or add supporters to our cause by dissing the majority of level headed, civil gun owners.

Just consider the numbers. There are estimated to be over 50 million gun owners in United States. How many subscribe to your magazine? How many belong to the NRA (only 4 million) that recently adopted the "inflamed rhetoric" approach to win friends and supporters.

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SPEAK OUT

How can we win if you are turning off the 46 million of the gun owners who don't like inflamed rhetoric? And what about the other 250 million who don't own guns? You think we, acting like fools, or political tools, will bring them to our side?

Half of the people in the country are Democrat and voted for the president. The anti-Obama rhetoric is disgusting by any measure. The constant lying about him coming to take away our guns has long played out. I have several liberal friends and all have guns and are pro-gun rights. Why slam them with the rhetoric? Perhaps hate has blinded

you to the real issue of who is currently hurting the future of gun rights.

You would be wise to learn a lesson you obviously missed growing up in your household: The way you communicate your message often means just as much as your message. Get on the right side of this rhetoric issue before it's too late for us all.

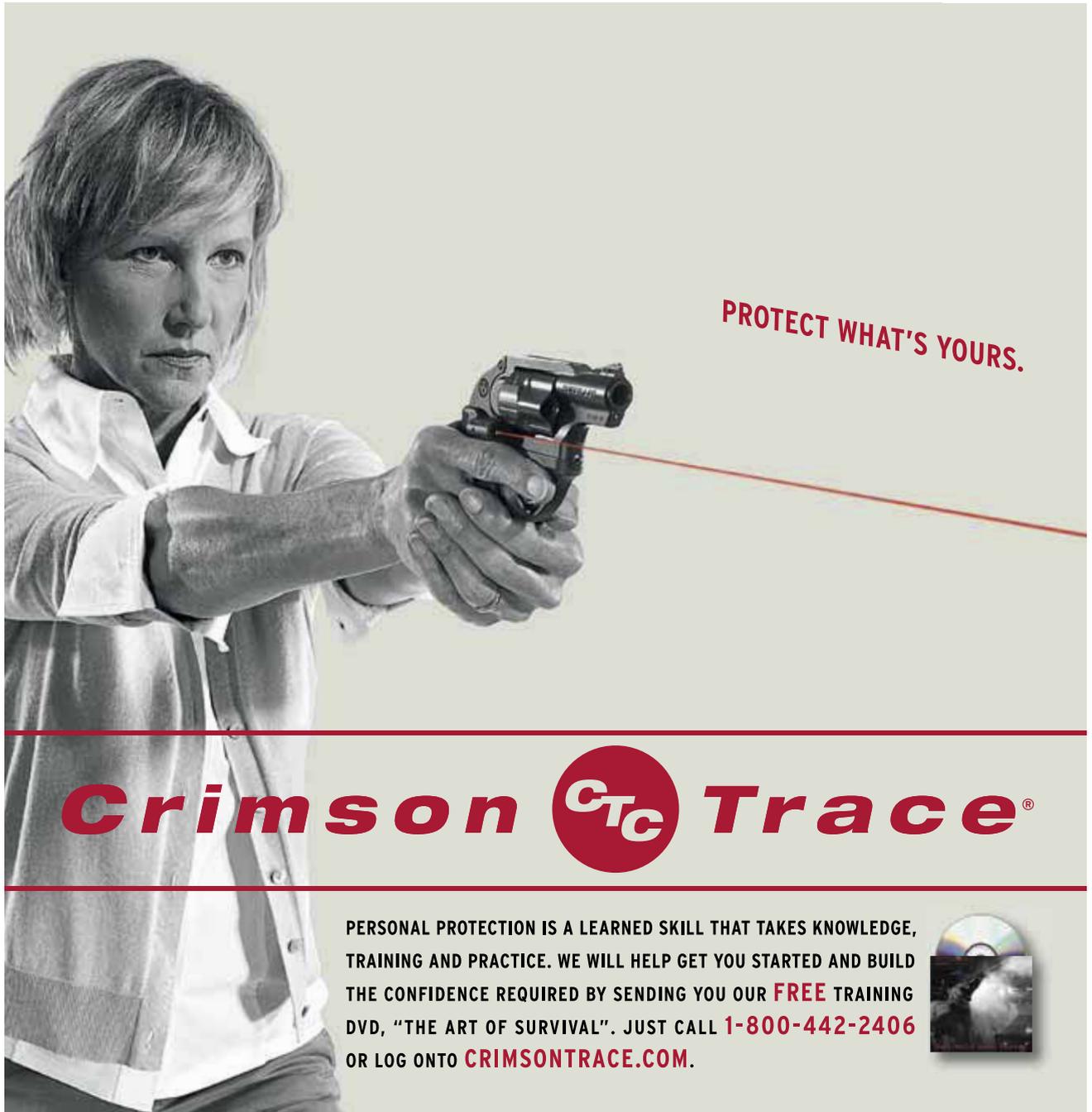
K.C. Keaton
Via e-mail

Thanks for your note. I confess you take a pretty hard-line tone for someone advising us to moderate our strong pro-gun, anti-gun-grabber stance. Your way or the highway? What about our way or the highway? With some 80 million gun owners, owning approximately 250 million guns (give or take some millions

I'd imagine), I too am saddened not more subscribe to our magazines or are members of the NRA. Yet, people being people, these are the same ones who also fail to turn out in droves to vote. It's difficult to organize today's population to pick-up free \$100 bills, much less get involved in anything that might actually take time or energy or money. We're hard-pressed to tear them away from their videos games and Starbucks' coffees, I fear.

But not everyone. Which brings us to the topic at hand.

We'll remain staunchly opposed to the hysterical gun-grabbing tactics of the likes of the Brady Campaign and others of their ilk, and will refuse to be bullied. They resort to personalized attacks and name-calling, and skew



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stats to their liking (“How many children must die!”), yet many more children are killed each year in tricycle accidents than by firearms. Where’s the “Brady Campaign for Safer Tricycles” I wonder?

It’s amusing to note if we raise voices — even a tiny bit — it’s called hysteria, war-mongering and worse. But if the other side has marches, threatens lawsuits (or does sue, thank you very much), calls us bullies, baby killers, gun nuts (you know the drill), we’re supposed to sit and politely smile and respond reasonably to their unreasonable attacks — and say thank you too? I don’t think so.

We’ll likely never convince you otherwise, so we won’t try. But as far as gun rights go, you only have to look at the sort of mess California is in to see what happens when gun owners stand-by and act politely and don’t rock the boat.

It’s the reason I moved out of that silly state. RH

Double-Barreled 1911

Just got your latest issue (Sept/Oct 2012) and as usual I couldn’t put it down until I read the whole thing. Those BBQ guns by Dave Lauck were fantastic. But after seeing the double-barreled 1911s by Arsenal, I’m reminded of the old saying: “Just because you *can* doesn’t mean you *should*.” Anyway, you keep printing them and I’ll keep on reading them.

Lee Luckman
Boise, Idaho

Reeder Rocks

I will have to admit I bought the July/August 2012 issue just to read about Gary Reeder’s guns (“Skorpions And Grim Reapers”), but as always your publication was full of other interesting stuff. I’ve been reading about Gary’s guns for 30 years and have always wanted one, but my old .41 Blackhawk has handled any chore I’ve put in front of it. But I finally did it and am sorry I waited so long. My American Hunter arrived yesterday, and the quality of fit and finish of this spectacular piece of art-work is nothing short of amazing. Your article was on the money about Gary’s guns, but I would like to add something from a customer’s point of view. The level of customer service is just like the quality of guns Gary builds — flawless. From the two months prior to sending him my gun until I received it, I spoke with Gary personally (because he actually answers the phone) no less than twice a month. I asked the same questions I’m sure he has answered hundreds of times, but he never seemed tired or impatient to give me reassurance for all my questions.

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SPEAK OUT

is how he made it possible for me to afford it. After providing the down payment and gun, I would call or email every week and pay on my project so I didn't have a big bill at the end. I'm putting together another project for Gary to build (a .41 GNR) and renewing my subscription to your magazine.

Tim Fossett

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Arsenal Of Democracy

I'm sorry, but psychoanalysis just goes too far. On the other hand, I'd read weather reports from Ayoob any day. It's just a pleasure to read clear and coherent prose in this day and age. But what really prompted this letter is a sort of kumbaya moment where I actually tried to see it from the *other* guy's perspective. If you come from some place like, say, Chicago, you likely will associate guns with gang colors and brutality often involving firearms. If you come from God's Country, you likely think of guns as tools and art, and as part of the Arsenal of Democracy. There is truth in both views. Go ahead and admit it.

The Second Amendment needs defending, and what especially needs defending is the interpretation of the Second Amendment as an individual right. Not just for now, but forever. I think we may have lost sight of that ultimate goal. We have become more adept at demonizing the opposition rather than trying any other tactic. In

the long run, there is a great probability it will have an effect opposite to the intended one. What we need to do is to find ways to change the *society*. That won't be as easy as the negative approach, but it's more likely to have the desired outcome.

Despite the commercially oriented hysteria from the NRA, there really hasn't been a well-motivated plan on the part of the current administration to repeal the Second Amendment. Certainly no legislation of that sort could get past the House. So here's an idea. Write a note to the President. Everyone. Be civil, and plain-spoken. Tell him why you know the right to keep and bear arm is an *individual* right under the constitution, and it's there for a reason. No rant, no diatribe, just explain it like you'd explain it to someone from a foreign culture. Be friendly even.

In the meantime, how about doing things like getting shooting activities back into the schools, and stuff like that. One of the problems we have is we've turned the Second Amendment into a commercial venture. We've gotten into the habit of sending money and having a lobbyist war instead of putting in the personal time and effort to mold a society where Second Amendment rights aren't even questioned.

I'm an NRA member, and I vote. But I also think.

John Wilson
Via e-mail

Cute Nightmare

After reading Mr. Anderson's article on the little Browning 1911-.22 (*Winning Edge*, July/Aug 2012) I reflected

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SPEAK OUT

on how cute my wife's Shih-Tzu was, the cute decorative floral arrangement on our dining room table and the antics of the cute kittens in the front yard. I wandered what cute accessories could be had with the cute little Browning .22? Maybe a floral carved holster and belt with a tasteful extra magazine pouch and matching boots.

Suddenly I awoke from this stupor with a scream and rushed to my gun safe. I took out my Springfield GI 1911A1 .45 ACP and my S&W 629 Classic .44 Mag. and sprinted to my Harley, almost colliding with my Jeep! I reread Mark Hampton's article on the Gary Reeder Skorpion and Grim Reaper, in the same issue, three times — from my motorcycle seat. Whew ... that was a close call!

It is cute though. Dang it ... there I go again ...

Mark McClintock
Madison, NC



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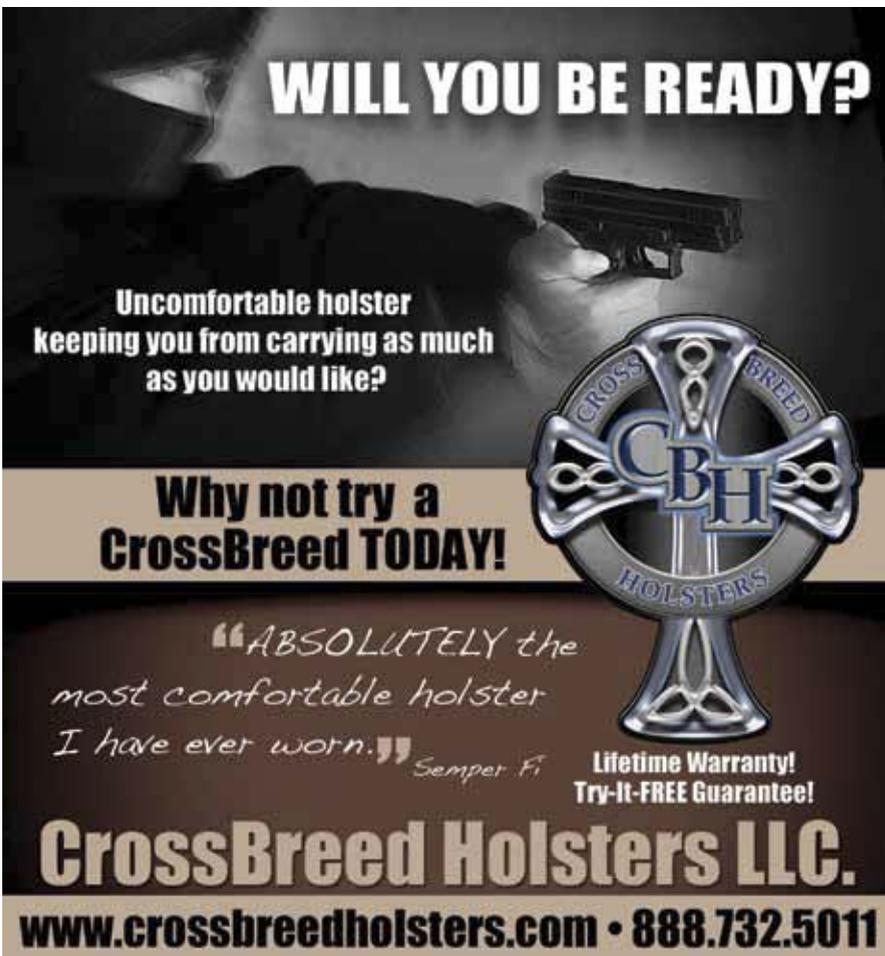
*xoxo
Candy!*



Hexagonally Thinking

The short version is I have an eight-foot workbench in my cellar, and it's nice down there with the woodstove going during the cold months. Slowly but surely, I kept adding gizmos to the bench, all neatly done in linear fashion. First a vise, then a sizer/luber, then a reloading press and pretty soon I had about one foot of workspace. I thought about it a while, and since I had six devices, I designed this hexagonal "bench" and mounted the six items on it: A sizer/luber, two Lee Turret presses, an RCBS Rockchucker, a Lee single stage press and a Lee 20 ga. press.

The unit has wheels and a swing-up handle so when I'm done reloading, I merely roll it into a handy corner. I sit on a computer station-type chair when I reload so can move from station to station easily if I need to. Overall, I think



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the project turned out pretty good, if I do say so for myself!

Finally, keep up the good work with the magazines. They are the best on the market. I've read 'em all — and cancelled a bunch.

Bob Johnson
Via e-mail

Rusty Kel-Tec

I gave my wife a Kel-Tec pistol to have as a companion on her walks. She stuffed it into her backpack, where it was rusted solid when she reached for it one day. I sent it to Kel-Tec for repair if possible.

Kel-Tec replaced the frame and refinished the whole gun like new, sending it back without a word or a charge. I protested the damage was my fault, I would gladly pay for repair and that I should at least pay for shipping but no dice.

Kel Tec customer service is way better than reasonable persons expect. You hear lots of complaints these days about cheap products and lousy customer service. Thought you should know about an advertiser that goes the extra few miles without comment or question.

Dave Licht
Via e-mail

Despicable Rant

Frank Mallory's despicable rant (*Speak Out*, July/Aug 2012) seems typical of the new phenomenon wherein anti-gun/anti-freedom terrorists claim they're "gun owners" and "Second Amendment supports" while their diatribes are remarkably like something you'd read in a Sarah Brady propaganda pamphlet. Beware, these deceivers are wolves in sheep's clothing!

Not surprisingly, Mallory hails from "The People's Republic of California." It saddens me my native state of California has become the most repressive, Marxist-like state in America. California is a stench in the nostrils of free men everywhere.

It's incontrovertible truth, not paranoia, that Barack Obama wants to destroy the Second Amendment and disarm the American people. Look at the recent move toward gun bans, etc. after the Aurora, Colo. movie house debacle. Do Mallory and others of the same ilk really think they're fooling anyone? I may be suffering from the "idiocy" of the "pro-gun ranks" but I'm bright enough to recognize treachery when I see it.

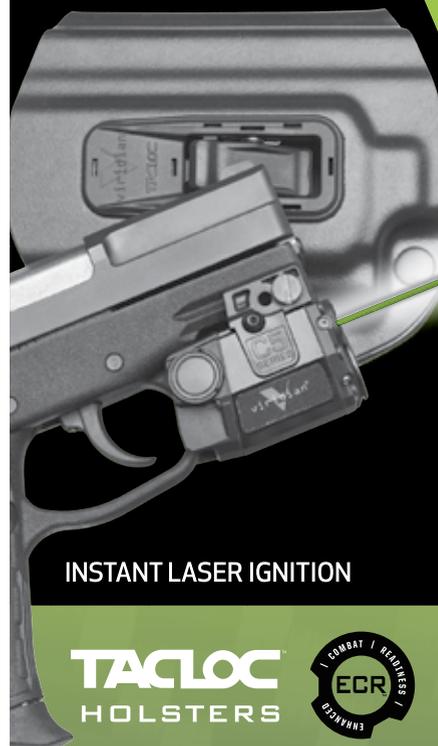
Curtis E. Stone
Colville, Wash.

Since that massacre in the movie house in Colorado, not a day has gone by when I haven't wished I'd been inside, armed, to fight back. And I know the

Continued on page 77

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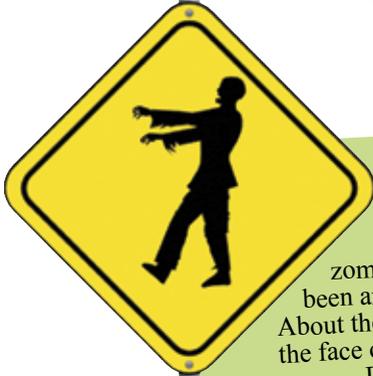
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ZOMBIE CROSSING

ZOMBIES

I note with mild interest the intrigue with all-things zombie now running on the verge of rampant. Even the Department of Homeland Security talks about a Zombie Apocalypse. If that isn't enough, we have zombie targeting, and major manufacturers are producing zombie ammo and anti-zombie equipment. I only hope this is a bit of tongue-in-cheek, yet I've been around long enough to know marketing people will come up with *anything* to sell a product. About the time one thinks of this as a joke, then some buck-naked guy is shot repeatedly while chewing the face off another naked guy in Miami. What a zoo.

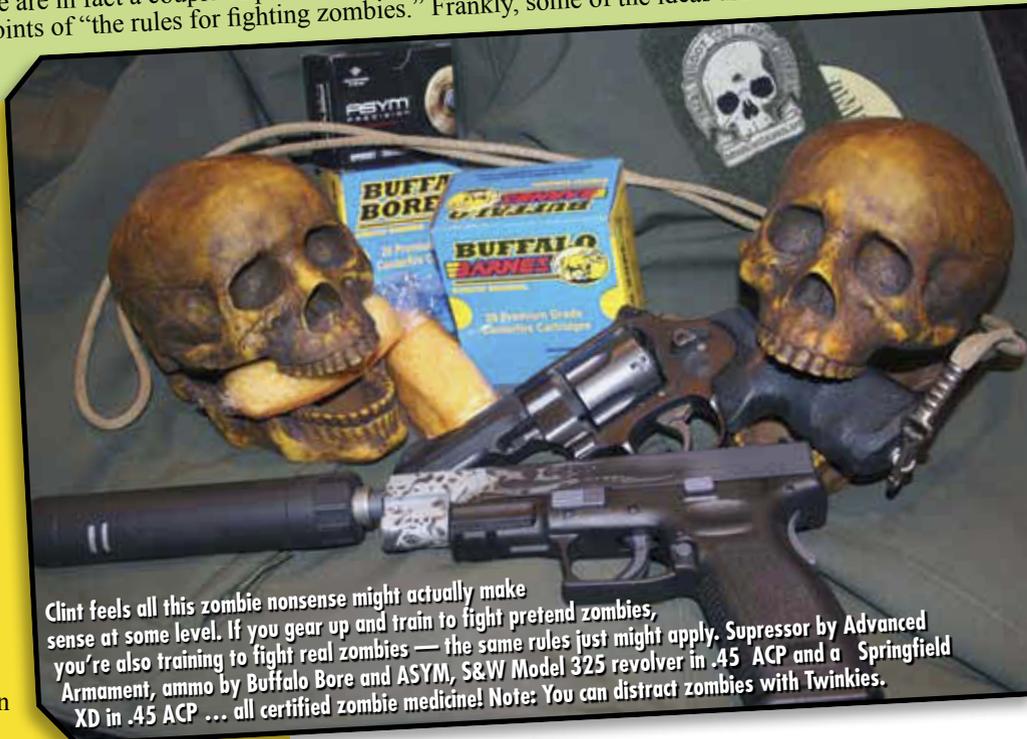
Doing research, I watched the zombie movie thing, and interestingly enough, through the fog of bull, there are in fact a couple of points that caught my interest. So, let's try to address some of the salient points of "the rules for fighting zombies." Frankly, some of the ideas are not bad ones.

SOME RULES

CARDIO: Physical fitness is a point of interest to me and I'm always pointing out to my students physical conditioning is not a bad idea. If you're overweight or somehow otherwise impaired, you can anticipate the zombies — as well as other types of bad guys — would take advantage of you. Remember, prime animals in a herd are not generally the ones the wolves or zombies attack. The old, weak, young, infirmed or injured are primary targets. In warfare, even damaged bombers over Germany that fell from formation were pounced on by swarms of fighters. Easy marks are eaten.

DOUBLE TAPPING: Conceptually I get it; make sure the threat is down in a fight. The only problem with this is what if two rounds are not enough? I say, shoot the threat until the fight is over. If it's one round, so be it. If it's two, three or five, stay behind the gun and sights and shoot until the problem is solved. You brought the ammo, use it.

KICK-ASS PARTNER: Always have friends who have guns, always travel with friends who have guns. If I could go to dinner with Robbie Leatham I would. If you have friends who don't have or carry guns get rid of them. If you have friends who know you carry a gun and they don't, trust me — some day in a public place they'll volunteer *you* for a fight you don't want to be in. Get a good partner, practice and train. Make sure your friends have guns, and they know how to use them



Clint feels all this zombie nonsense might actually make sense at some level. If you gear up and train to fight pretend zombies, you're also training to fight real zombies — the same rules just might apply. Suppressor by Advanced Armament, ammo by Buffalo Bore and ASYM, S&W Model 325 revolver in .45 ACP and a Springfield XD in .45 ACP ... all certified zombie medicine! Note: You can distract zombies with Twinkies.

When In Doubt?

The actual statement is: "When in doubt, know a way out." Most excellent advice, if you ask me. If you go to restaurants or public places have a route of escape, have the same thing for your car and your place of work. Remember, zombies — and bad guys — attack places like malls, churches, restaurants and more. They attack schools and old people in wheel chairs in homes, for crying out loud, how low is that? So the wise and prudent would have a route out of wherever you are.

A few more to leave you with: Check the back seat. Have some modicum of personal awareness. Hone your personal tactics and skills. Always have a backup. Watch for zombies. And don't be a hero. 

For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/product-index and click on the company name.

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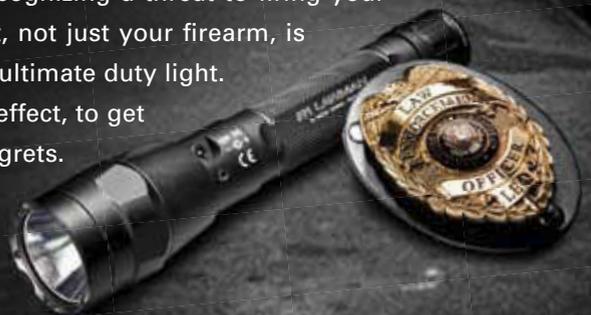


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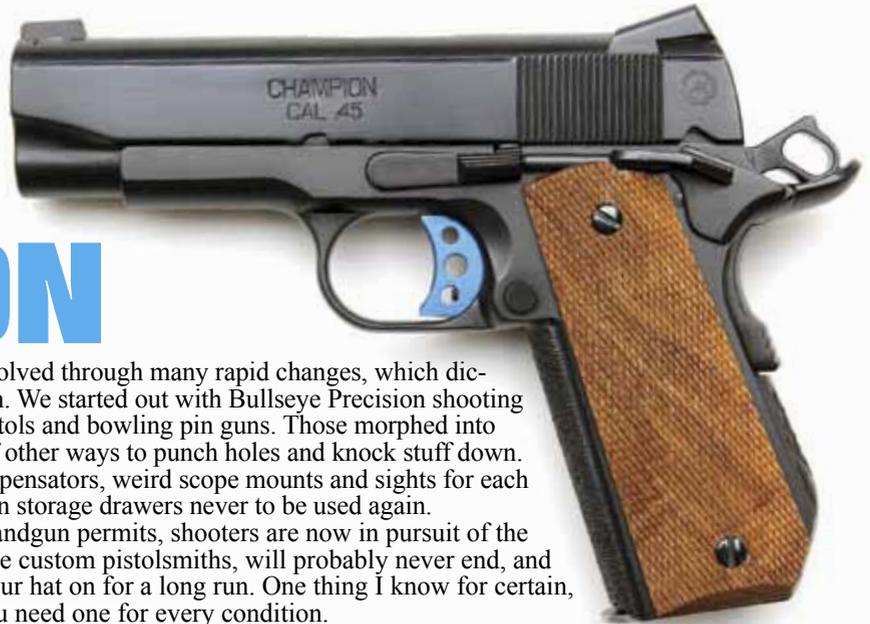
SUREFIRE.





The Champion base gun from Springfield Armory (in between a Commander and Officer ACP size) got spiffed up a bit more according to the client's wishes.

CUSTOM HANDGUN EVOLUTION



Beginning in the late 1960s, shooting sports evolved through many rapid changes, which dictated what work we gunsmiths had to perform. We started out with Bullseye Precision shooting and then to building long-range silhouette pistols and bowling pin guns. Those morphed into IPSA and then steel plate guns, IDPA and scores of other ways to punch holes and knock stuff down. We stocked specialized parts and supplies like compensators, weird scope mounts and sights for each of these disciplines. Today, most of those parts sit in storage drawers never to be used again.

With the majority of states issuing concealed handgun permits, shooters are now in pursuit of the perfect concealed handgun. The quest, lucky for we custom pistolsmiths, will probably never end, and has finally given us a shooting discipline to hang our hat on for a long run. One thing I know for certain, you likely can't get by with just one carry gun. You need one for every condition.

For instance, when my wife drags me to some highbrow medical convention or symphony concert I like to carry an efficient little Kahr 9. You don't need much firepower to put a raging bleeding heart liberal down. On the other hand, rodeo cowboys, when out of control, are a tough bunch, so I pack a .45.

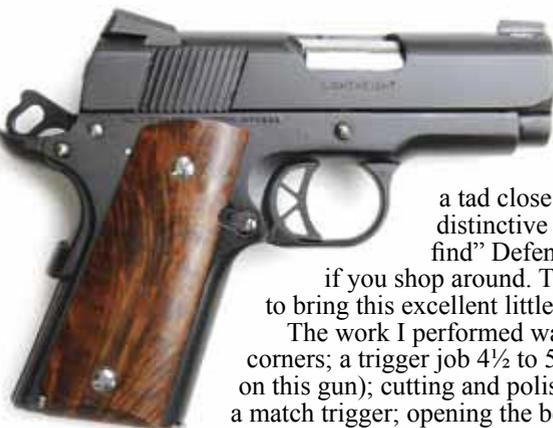
Custom Colt Defender

I built two new custom carry pistols for customers who wanted what I believed would be closest to the perfect carry gun. I started the first pistol using a lightweight Colt Defender in .45 ACP, which is just

a tad close to the Colt Officers ACP in size. The customer wanted a small, reliable, distinctive little pistol, with minimal custom work to keep the cost down. The "hard to find" Defender retails for around \$1,100, but you may be able to find it a little cheaper

if you shop around. The work completed was as follows and is pretty much the minimum needed to bring this excellent little pistol up to modern carry standards.

The work I performed was fairly basic, but important. Tuning the extractor; removing razor-sharp corners; a trigger job 4½ to 5 pounds; beveling the slide rails; opening the port (absolutely necessary on this gun); cutting and polishing the feed ramp; installing Novak low-mount, white-dot sights; fitting a match trigger; opening the bevel in the magwell; coating with a flat black polymer finish; polishing the pin heads for a minute custom touch and installing a beautiful set of extra fancy walnut Wicked Grips was what the build sheet looked like. Total cost for this work, including the Defender, rang the bell at \$1,845.



The Colt Defender Alex used to create a "perfect" carry gun for a client. It's more "duty" than "fancy," and is exactly what his client wanted.

SPRINGFIELD CHAMPION

The second pistol was built using one of my favorites, a Springfield Armory Champion model, which is just a little shorter than the Colt Commander, but a touch longer than the Officers ACP. The work performed on this little pistol was extensive, as the customer's order was to, "take it to the limit" — and that's what I did. If you would like your favorite pistolsmith to build a gun for you, it's always a good idea to stick with quality parts and practical modifications. Here's an idea of what we did.

To complete this customer's idea of his "perfect" gun, we installed an Ed Brown beavertail; match trigger; 4½- to 5-pound carry trigger; Brown bobtail, hammer and tactical safety; beveled magwell; bevel all edges; 45-degree bevel on slide rails; "V" grooves on slide; stipple grip with concave borders; lower port; tune extractor; SDM low-mount rear sight; front Novak white dot; flattop and serrated slide top; cut and polish barrel ramp; undercut trigger-guard; serrate rear of slide to match sight; soft glass bead everything; polish all pin heads and blue and topped it off with fancy checkered walnut grips. Tripp Research in Bastrop, Texas created the flawless feeding magazines in both pistols. This fine carry pistol rings

the cash register at \$3,183.

Both of these pistols will set you back a couple of weeks of food stamps and Obama unemployment, but if you're like me, there is just nothing quite like owning, showing, shooting and carrying the finest American-made custom pistols money can buy. If you go for a custom gun for yourself, make sure to get an idea of whom you're dealing with when it comes to a gunsmith, before you put your money down, and trust your gun to him. You'll never lose when you buy the best.



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SIXGUN HAMMERS AND HANDLES

Close-up of King Gun Sight Co. wide, low hammer.



None of these Ruger sixguns started life as Bisley Models. Bisley grip frames, hammers and triggers have been fitted to, from top right clockwise: Ruger .45 Blackhawk blue and stainless steel versions, and custom Rugers in .45 Colt and .44 Magnum.



Variations on the Keith #5 grip frame by Bill Grover, David Clements and Gary Reeder, left to right.



This custom Ruger .44 Special and Freedom Arms .45 Colt Model 97 both have round-butted grip frames. Note the custom hammer on the Ruger.

CHANGE 'EM TO FIT

Stopping in at Buckhorn Gun I spotted an old 7½" Single Action Army on display. It was a 1st Generation Colt, which had been fitted with a 2nd Generation .38 Special cylinder and barrel; it also had very attractive stag stocks. However, what really caught my eye was the hammer. This was not the traditional upswept hammer found on hundreds of thousands of Single Actions but rather was of the low, wide target-style. From the period of time after World War I until the early 1950s King Gun Sight Co. was the premier supplier of custom parts for handguns. King accomplished all kinds of wonderful transformations, especially on Colt and Smith & Wesson revolvers including custom sights, ribbed barrels, short actions, and special hammers.

Here before me was a King hammer, and while I wasn't in the market for a .38 Special Single Action I was sorely tempted to buy that sixgun just to get the hammer. The fellow who purchased the .38 Special Colt did not like the "funny looking" hammer so it was replaced with a period correct hammer and the boys at Buckhorn were told to give the King hammer to me. One of my most cherished Colts is an early 2nd Generation .44 Special with faded case colors, bluing worn on the ejector rod housing, barrel cut to 4¾", and one-piece Pau Ferro stocks. The King hammer dropped in perfectly and the action functioned flawlessly.

Since the introduction of the Ruger Super Blackhawk all those decades ago, I have been regularly looking for better hammers and better handles, or if you please, grip frames for single-action sixguns. To shoot a single action sixgun successfully, or at least easily, requires an easy-to-reach hammer with enough surface area on the spur for easy cocking, matched up with a grip frame which helps to diminish felt recoil.

This search of mine probably started when seeing pictures of Elmer Keith's Colt Single Actions which he had built up prior to WWII and which I was eventually able to handle. These favored Single Actions of his consisted of a 7½" .44 Special Custom Colt with adjustable sights by King Gun Sight, a 4¾" Single Action .45 also with adjustable sights, and his favorite, the Number Five, or as he called it the No. 5 S.A.A. All three of these sixguns had low, wide, target-style hammers and started my personal quest for personalizing sixguns by changing hammers and handles.



This Ruger Super Blackhawk has had the original grip frame replaced by an Old Model Blackhawk grip frame. Custom work by M-N-P and leather by Andy Horvath.



Installing a longer Colt 1860 Army grip frame on a SAA helps reduce felt recoil.

HAMMERS

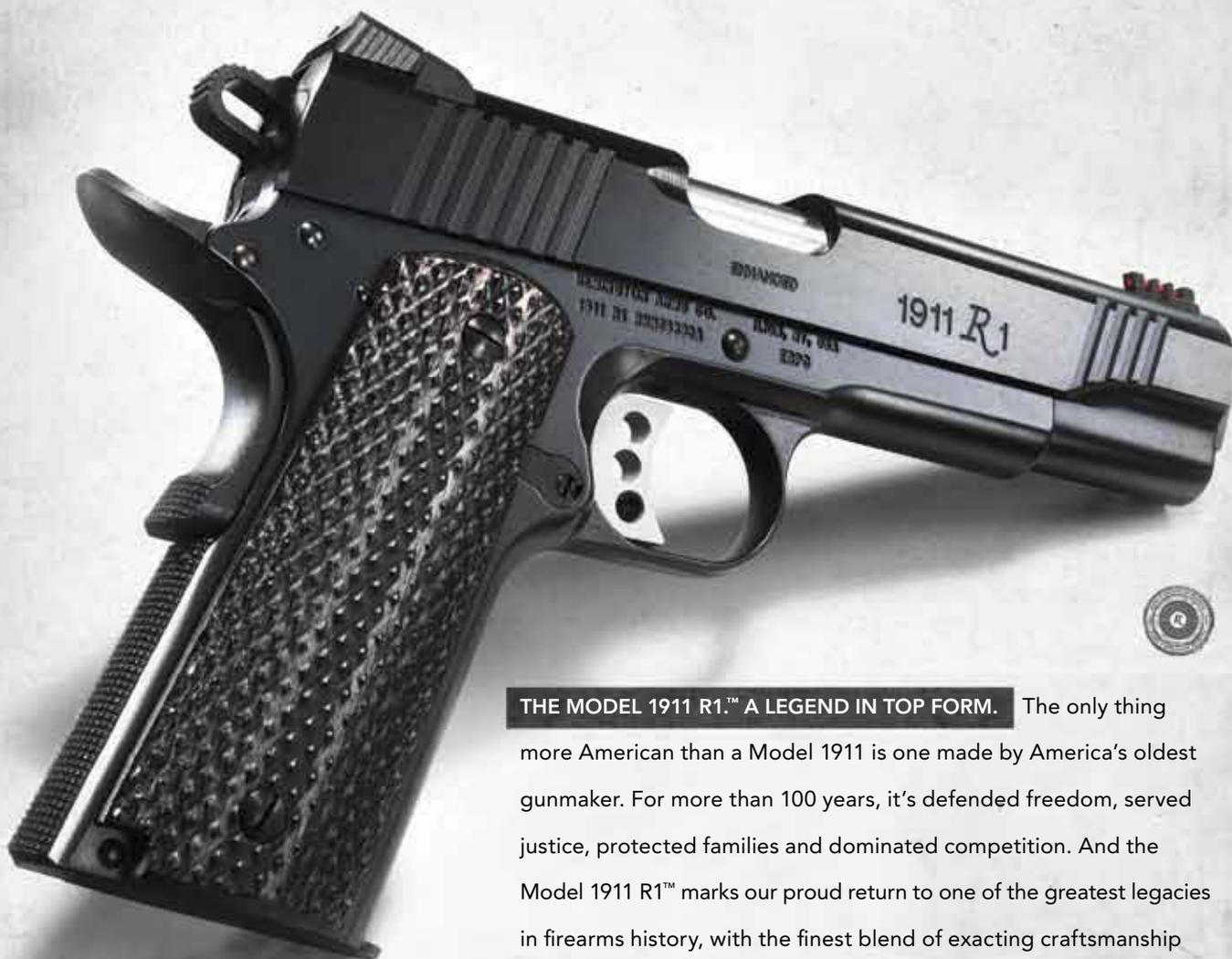
Colt hammers are not so easy to come by these days except through the hands of a custom gunsmith. But, once Ruger had established the Super Blackhawk and made parts available, I purchased several of the wide target-style hammers for use on other Rugers — a circa 1955 4¾" .357 Blackhawk and circa 1956 6½" .44 Magnum Blackhawk. Both were definitely improved with the addition of Super Blackhawk hammers, and I took it a step further and had a 7½" Super Blackhawk

Continued on page 78

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NO BRASS GONGS, NO GOLD & GLORY...

BUT HE DIDN'T LET ANYBODY DOWN.

Each year on Veterans Day we are regaled with tales of heroes — typically, those awarded our nation's highest decorations — and indeed we should and must honor their sacrifices and celebrate their acts of gallantry. But between those draped with honor in public ceremonies and the virtually anonymous souls entombed under government-issued grave markers, there exist legions of those who silently serve unheralded and unknown. This Veteran's Day I'll lift a cold one to Matt Garst, once unknown, now little known, still shouldering his rifle daily and doing his best not to let anybody down.

I first wrote about Matt in the March

Sergeant Matt Garst, at right, with three of his Marines.

Photo courtesy Leatherneck Magazine



2011 issue of *GUNS Magazine* in my *Odd Angry Shot* column, a piece called "The Two Americas."* I had found a brief blurb about him in *Leatherneck Magazine*, and contrasted him with two of our society's trendy, metro-fashionable types, apparently devoid of any real talent or accomplishment

except being famous; famous because they're celebrities and celebrities because they're famous. It was easy to get info about those two. Web searches returned over 10 million hits, and each had their own Wikipedia pages. I had never heard of them before — and then wished I never had.

DOES THAT QUALIFY FOR FLIGHT PAY?

June 23, 2010, Helmand Province, Afghanistan: 23-year-old Corporal Matt Garst led his squad on patrol, scouting an abandoned compound. Two of his Marines had already walked a narrow trail beside a high wall, but as it turned out, they weren't heavy enough to set off a large IED planted there. Matt's a big muscular guy. At 6', 2" and weighing over 260 pounds including rifle, ammo and gear, he outweighed his men by 30 to 40 pounds. That was enough. The blast launched him and a yard of earth into low orbit.

Matt's troops were on the other side of that 10' wall when the deafening roar

thundered. They looked up in horror and saw their corporal's flailing legs kicking out of the dirt column rocketing skyward. He was blown over ten feet vertical and 15' downrange. They ran around the wall fearing the worst. Matt was standing in the smoke still clutching his rifle, cursing as he batted off dirt — and highly ticked off.

"What the ##### are you lookin' at?" he barked. "Get back on cordon!" He called in the incident on the radio, refused air evacuation, and led his squad four rocky miles back to their base.

"I wasn't going to let anybody else take my squad back after they'd been

there for me," he told a Marine journalist. "That's my job." He grumbled as Corpsmen checked him out, reluctantly took an ordered day of rest, then picked up his rifle and got back into the fight.

There were lots of *Ironman* jokes, and "Did you qualify for flight pay?" also, "Gimme your armor — you don't need it." He shrugged 'em off, and except for his growing respect and reputation among his fellow grunts, drifted back into American obscurity. His final words on the incident were, "I'm just happy it wasn't any of my guys."

EOD later determined the 3-liter explosive was huge, but had been buried too deep and the earth compacted too hard. Lucky for Matt.

"I HADN'T LET ANYBODY DOWN."

Another year, another chapter. Matt later rotated stateside, was promoted to sergeant, spun up more Marines, and returned to Afghanistan. Late the night of Dec. 2, 2011, he led his squad and several ANA (Afghan National Army) troops on a gravel road beside a deep, swiftly flowing canal near Kuchiney Darvishan. It was believed Taliban had mined the road, and an Afghan soldier named Zaheed swept it with a metal detector. Suddenly a speeding truck rounded a bend, and Zaheed tried to wave it down, fearing it would hit a mine. The truck struck him, went out of control, and both splashed into the canal.

Sergeant Garst rapped out perimeter security orders to some, shouted, "Follow me!" to others, and leaped in. As the truck sank, Matt saw struggling people through the rear window. He dove deep, reaching into the truck, coming up

with two women and an infant. Clutching all three to his chest, he flutter-kicked them to shore against the current, turned, dove back in and pulled out a drowning man. Other Marines got to Zaheed and saved him and several others.

Using his limited Pashto, Matt questioned the men and determined all the truck's occupants were alive and accounted for: two men, three women, two kids and an infant. Zaheed suffered a broken ankle and deep lacerations. Matt deployed more security, figuring the noise might attract Taliban, then bandaged Zaheed and fashioned him a splint from two antennas. Garst arranged transport both for Zaheed to a military medical facility, and home, for the shivering Afghan civilians. Can you guess what he did next? Yup. He formed up his troops and led them back to their patrol base, where he said, "Once we got the family out and on the shore, I felt good — like I hadn't let anybody down."

No, you didn't, Matt. *Semper Fi, Marine.*



*Link to "The Two Americas" article in GUNS Magazine: <http://fmgpublications.ipaperus.com/FMGPublications/GUNS/GUNS0311?page=95>

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DoubleTap's test load proved reliable, like the Buffalo Bore loads provided, with both showing solid reliability in the test guns. Shown with a LW Commander.

If we live long enough everything, and I do mean *everything* — changes. This was brought home to me dramati-

cally with an e-mail we received from a reader. He related he was about to turn 67 and found he had lost a lot of muscle mass. Tell me about it! I've got 6 years on him. He also said 30 years ago he could handle his S&W and Ruger Flat-Top .44s as well as his Lightweight Commander. He wanted to still be able to carry his Commander, however he found himself barely able to handle 200-grain cast bullets at about 825 fps — with the emphasis on barely.

There was a time I was like the second baseman who plays every game. Now I'm more like the pitcher. He can only throw that hardball so many times and then he needs several days rest. I have no doubt the problem related by the reader is widespread. What can be done about it?

The question for us was could we come up with low recoil .45 ACP loads that would also be accurate and function perfectly. Most current factory loads for the .45 ACP tend to higher muzzle velocities, and I don't want to shoot 300 +P loads in one session. Would it be possible to tone these down (even the "standard" loads) and still have reliable performance?

LOOKING FOR LOADS

First I went to the loading bench with WW231 as my powder of choice. Trying 4.0, 4.5, and 5.0 grains with 185-grain JHPs and a variety of 200-grain bullets I found 4.5 grains was the lower limit for perfect functioning and 5.0 grains yielded 720 to 800 fps. For my test guns, since the query was about comfortable loads in the Colt Lightweight Commander, I went with my 45-year-old Lightweight

Buffalo Bore's Prototype loads were tested in a Colt Lightweight Commander, and this lightweight Kimber CDP II. All test guns had standard weight recoil springs.



Commander and a 5" Kimber Custom CDP II with an alloy frame. I found the 200-grain loads over 5.0 grains of WW231 quite comfortable, and felt like I could shoot as many rounds as I wanted to without having to spend several days resting my hands.

While I don't want to get into the argument concerning carrying handloads in a self-defense pistol I felt factory loads *should* be an option. I carry handloads in the field but factory loads on pavement. Would it be possible to come up with factory low recoil .45 ACP loads, which would reliably function in a standard 1911 or Commander — without replacing the recoil spring?

To this end I contacted Tim Sundles at Buffalo Bore and Mike McNett at DoubleTap. Both men agreed to see what they would come up with, although they were skeptical about the possible results. Both men also went the extra mile, and I thank them both for their willingness to work with us.



IT WORKS!

Buffalo Bore went with Hardcast Flat Nose bullets at 180- and 200-grain weights, and to make sure they would work in factory 1911s Tim used three test guns with 20-pound springs. The loads work perfectly in all three of his test guns. In my Kimber Custom CDP II and Lightweight Commander, these loads clocked out at 895 fps and 769 fps respectively, while the shorter-barreled Commander registered them at 818 fps and 728 fps. Recoil was quite mild and should not be a problem for anyone with any kind of experience shooting 1911s.

DoubleTap went with a 200-grain JHP. In the Kimber this load clocks out at 771 fps, while the Commander came in at 692 fps. I also tested all three loads in a full-sized, all steel current production Colt Gold Cup National Match. Muzzle velocities were very close to those experienced with the Kimber, and just as with the Kimber and Colt Commander, functioning was perfectly flawless. All three .45s had standard production recoil springs, no light springs allowed.

So, it seems it's possible to come up with low recoil .45 ACP loads, which are quite comfortable to shoot in alloy-framed .45s, while still providing accuracy and reliable functioning. Ever shot much hardball in one of the Compact .45s? That certainly is not much fun either and these loads could be the answer for those little big bores.

All three loads tested are prototypes to see if they would actually work. The next step may be to develop thinner-jacketed 185- and 200-grain HP bullets to aid expansion. However, when compared to .380s/9mms, .45s are not only heavier — they are already pre-expanded! If you are interested in having Buffalo Bore and DoubleTap offer Low Recoil .45 ACP loads contact them with your wishes. If they hear from enough folks they will take the next step.

For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/buffalo-bore, (406) 745-2666; www.americanhandgunner.com/doubletap-ammunition, (866) 357-1066

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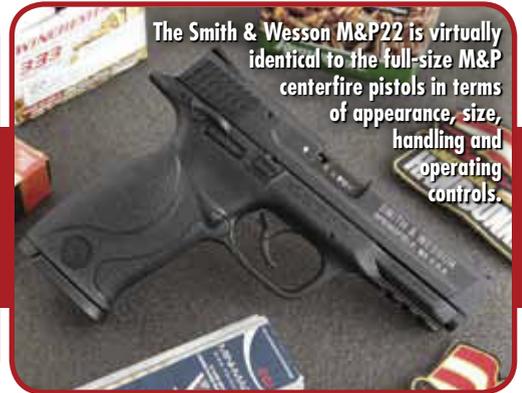
Marc Morganti, President
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S&W's M&P22



Note the collar on the muzzle of the M&P22's barrel, which protects a threaded portion of the barrel.



The Smith & Wesson M&P22 is virtually identical to the full-size M&P centerfire pistols in terms of appearance, size, handling and operating controls.

Smith & Wesson's M&P22 is a high quality pistol, a fine choice for plinking, small game hunting, casual target shooting and training. It's particularly suitable for shooters of the very popular M&P centerfire series. It's not quite a dead-ringer for the full-size centerfire model, but comes pretty close. Weight empty is similar to a full-size 9mm (both around 24 ounces). Loaded, obviously a magazine loaded with 17 9mm cartridges weighs more than one with 12 rounds of .22 LR. The MP22 doesn't have the interchangeable backstraps of the centerfire version.

But operating controls are in the same place, trigger pull is very similar, and the .22 even has the accessory frame rail for practice with lights/lasers. The magazine release button is reversible. The .22 version also has the same high quality components and workmanship as the originals.

Carl Walther in Germany makes the M&P .22. It has an ambidextrous thumb safety, which no doubt helped earn the points needed to be approved for import. The centerfire version is available both with and without a manual safety. A law enforcement buddy kindly loaned me his M&P 9mm duty gun so I could shoot the two side by side. His pistol has a manual safety, and allowed me to get a feel for shooting both guns.

500 Rounds Later

The M&P22 magazine holds 12 cartridges, with a 10-round magazine available for states that limit capacity. One magazine is provided, and for a plinking/hunting .22 I can get by with one magazine. For training purposes, a shooter really should have two magazines for use in reloading drills. Currently, extra magazines in either 10- or 12-round versions are listed as being available at \$32.

I really enjoyed shooting the M&P22, and running around 500 rounds through it — mainly CCI MiniMags, some Federal and Winchester match, plus value pack cartridges from Remington and Winchester. This was without disassembling for cleaning, though I did use a boresnake at about 250 rounds. I had one failure to feed (frankly, not uncommon with a .22 auto); otherwise function was flawless. Trigger pull was consistent and fairly smooth with weight-of-pull at 6¼ pounds.

Disassembly for routine cleaning is fast and simple. Remove the magazine and check the chamber to be certain the firearm is unloaded. With the slide forward, rotate the takedown lever to point down and pull it about ½" out from the frame. Then retract the slide, lift the rear of slide, and move it forward off the frame. There's no need to pull the trigger on the empty chamber prior to takedown. In fact, the hammer should remain cocked throughout.

FINAL COMPARISONS

The M&P22 barrel comes threaded to accept an adapter, so a suppressor can be fitted. As delivered, the threaded portion has a thread protector tightly screwed in place. Those who don't use a suppressor can just leave it as-is. For those who do, a wrench to remove the thread protector collar is provided.

The rear sight is adjustable for elevation, and both the front and rear sight can be moved in their dovetail cuts to adjust windage. As delivered, the pistol on consignment shot several inches to the left. The front sight was off to the right rather than centered in the slide, so I used it to adjust for windage. Groups (five shots at 25 yards) averaged a whisker under 2".

Compared to the 9mm, trigger pull was very similar in terms of both weight of pull and trigger movement to fire and reset. While a .22 understudy is a useful training aid, it obviously is cannot completely substitute for centerfire training, especially in terms of learning recoil management and timing.

On the other hand, a .22's lack of recoil lets the shooter concentrate on technique, with less chance of learning bad habits (such as flinching and blinking), and at considerably lower cost. Searching on the Internet I see 9mm practice ammunition priced around \$12 for 50, or 24¢ a shot. Yet, .22 LR ammo can be found for around 5¢ to 7¢ a shot. The savings from four or five bricks of .22 ammo would pay for the gun, and teach a lot about shooting in the process.



For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/smith-wesson. Watch Dave's video on the gun at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuSnsYzbtB4

Top is a full-size S&W M&P 9mm, bottom the M&P22.

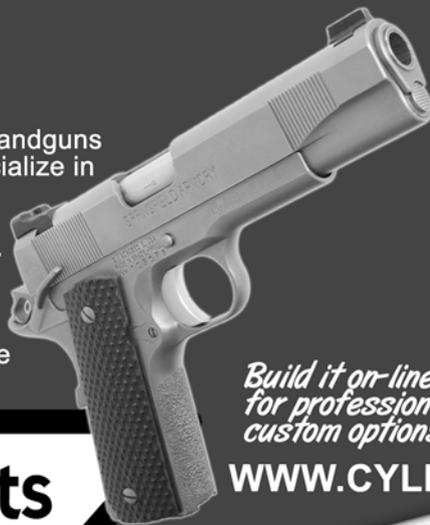


The M&P22 lacks the tritium night sights and interchangeable backstraps of the 9mm, and adds a magazine safety.



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NEW INFO ON NEWHALL

SITUATION: 42 years later, the shootout that changed the face of police firearms training comes under new scrutiny.

LESSON: Stories can be altered as they're passed down over the decades, but those who ignore the lessons of history are still doomed to repeat them.

On April 5, 1970, a gunfight occurred shortly before midnight in the parking lot of a restaurant and gas station in Newhall, California that would send shockwaves through law enforcement and change the face of police firearms and tactics training throughout the nation. I wrote about the Newhall Incident, sometimes called the Newhall Massacre, many years ago in these pages. That particular *Ayooob Files* became a chapter in my 1995 collection *Ayooob Files: The Book* published by Police Bookshelf (P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH 03302). It has been more than 42 years since that incident, yet new information continues to emerge to the public. For that I thank Michael Wood, about whom you'll hear more shortly.

The Incident

It began when the California Highway Patrol received a phone call from a motorist about what we would now call a "road rage" incident, in which the driver of a red 1964 Pontiac had waved what appeared to be a snubnose .38 at him. The caller had fled and gotten to the first available telephone. It was broadcast to CHP officers as a gun-brandishing incident.

Highway Patrolman Roger Gore, driving the black and white Dodge Polara patrol car, and his partner Walter Frago, spotted the vehicle and requested backup. The closest available CHP unit, containing Officer James Pence, Jr. at the wheel and George Alleyn in the "shotgun seat," radioed back they were responding.

The suspects saw the flashing red lights of Gore and Frago's marked car and exited the freeway on the Henry Mayo off-ramp, suddenly pulling into a truck stop that comprised a Standard gas station and J's Restaurant. The backup car had not yet arrived when the lawmen emerged from their vehicle, Gore taking a cover position with his .357 Colt Python drawn and leveled over the hood and engine block of the police Dodge, and Frago standing behind the "curtain of light" from their headlights with the patrol car's Remington 870 at port arms. Gore loudly and repeatedly ordered the suspects out of the car. They did not comply.

Gore moved forward toward the suspect vehicle, and Frago followed. The dominoes were beginning to fall. The two highway patrolmen had no way of knowing that Bobby Davis, in the driver's seat, and Jack Twining in the passenger, seat were hardcore cons on parole, both of whom were stone killers who hated cops, and both of whom were armed.

Gore, on the left side of the Pontiac, ordered Davis out. Davis, seemingly meek, complied and put his hands on the side of the car when Gore ordered him to do so. Gore holstered his revolver to do a pat-down frisk. As Frago approached on the right, his shotgun butt on his right hip and the muzzle in the air as he held the gun in his right hand, he reached down with his left for the door handle.

Suddenly, Jack Twining swung the door open. Frago tried to bring the shotgun down into firing position, but Twining already had a 4" Smith & Wesson Highway Patrolman in his hand, and he shot the officer twice in the chest. The two .357 Magnum slugs tore through and through Walter Frago, and he instantly collapsed, dying.

On the other side of the car, Roger Gore turned his attention from his suspect to the new and deadly threat, redrawing his .357. He fired one shot at his partner's killer, which missed, and Bobby Davis was now able to whip a 2" Smith & Wesson Bodyguard revolver from his waistband and shoot Gore twice in the chest. Reports would later say Gore was killed instantly.

It was then the backup car with Pence and Alleyn aboard swept into the scene. They pulled up to the left of the first patrol car, with Pence urgently broadcasting that officers needed assistance and shots were fired. Then he dropped the radio mic and drew his own Python, as Alleyn exited the vehicle from the right. Exposed to the perpetrators, Alleyn began maneuvering to use the first patrol car, on his right for cover.

Continued on page 85

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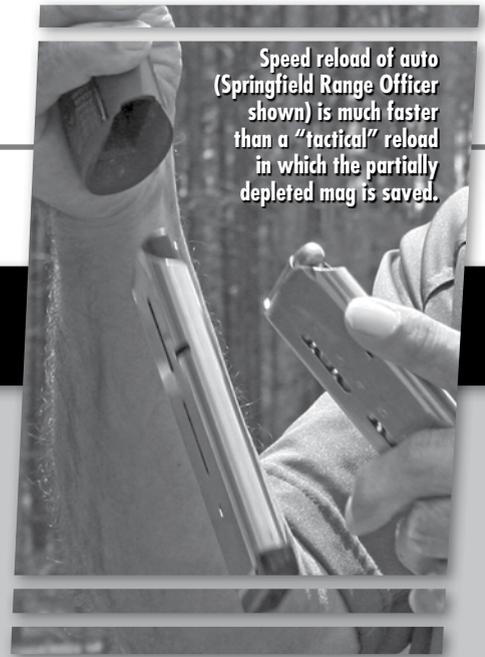
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RELOADING SPEED: A POLICE SURVIVAL SKILL



Speed reload of auto (Springfield Range Officer shown) is much faster than a "tactical" reload in which the partially depleted mag is saved.

Notice the title of this month's column doesn't have a question mark after it. That's because there's no question about it. The ability to reload swiftly is a well-recognized survival skill — for cops, military personnel, armed citizens or any of the other Good Guys and Gals who might be involved in a protracted gunfight.

Gun-savvy officers on NYPD begged for more firepower than the standard 6-shot .38 revolvers and dump pouches, but it wasn't until the death of Officer Scott Gadell in 1986 they got speedloaders for their six-shooters and finally, less than 20 years ago, 16-shot 9mm semi-automatics. Caught up in a shootout with a fleeing felon, Gadell ran dry and was trying to reload his revolver from a dump pouch when the suspect, still with plenty of ammo, scuttled up and killed him execution style.

Some 3,000 miles away, in Newhall, California, West Coast cops had seen it happen earlier. The 1970 cataclysm in Newhall is discussed in this month's

Ayoob Files section of *American Handgunner*, and revisits among other things the question of whether or not one of the four California Highway Patrolmen slain that April night in Newhall had put his spent casings in his trouser pocket. James Pence was just closing the cylinder when his killer closed in, snarled, "Got you now," and shot him in the brain with a .45 auto.

As you'll see elsewhere in this issue, whether or not the martyred Patrolman Pence put his spent casings into his pocket before trying to reload has been a matter of debate. What is *not* debated is that (a) he ran out of ammo after six shots; (b) he had to take individual cartridges out of a dump pouch to reload, after already having been shot three times with a .45; (c) he reloaded a full six rounds as trained and (d) was just closing the cylinder when he ran out of time and was brutally murdered.

For 42 years now, it has been suggested in such a situation, a good guy with a revolver might be better served

to just load a couple of rounds, close the cylinder, and get back into action. That became standard doctrine after Newhall. It was suggested if Pence had speedloaders, his cylinder would have been closed much earlier and about the time his killer was starting to say, "Got you ..." Pence could have put a .357 slug through *his* head and changed the outcome of the incident profoundly. Subsequent to the Newhall Incident, CHP authorized and then issued speedloaders, and in 1970 adopted the 12-shot .40-caliber S&W 4006 auto, an updated version of which remains standard issue with that agency.

The Relevance Today

The semi-automatic pistol has long since replaced the revolver in American police service, but the fact remains an officer caught with an empty gun can be fatally vulnerable, and the ability to reload swiftly is still critical.

How long does it take to close the cylinder of a Colt Python revolver such as Pence's, swing it perhaps 90 degrees to engage the oncoming attacker, and fire? I tested that with a Colt Python and an electronic timer for this article. It averaged about .86 of a second. The investigation shows Pence was in the act of closing the cylinder when he was killed. This means a *one second faster reload* could have saved his life! "But that was revolver speed." How does it relate to the autoloaders we wear to protect the public and ourselves today?

Are your spare magazines in flapped pouches that have to be unsnapped, or in open-top, friction-tight pouches? I just took the same electronic timer to the range with my department issue duty belt. Reloading time from slide-lock with flapped pouches was more than a whole second (1.046) slower than from an open-top mag pouch in the same location. Think about it.

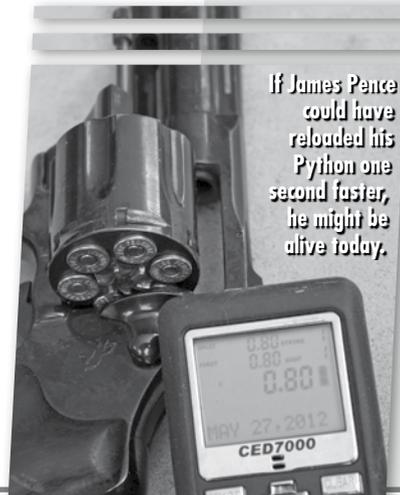
SHAVING SECONDS

Are you using a speed reload or a "tactical" reload, dumping the depleted magazine in the first case, or saving it in the second? With a Springfield Armory 1911 .45, the timer showed I was almost a full second (.858) faster with the speedload than the taclod to the next shot, firing 1-handed before the depleted mag was stowed.

Waiting to secure the partial magazine and return to 2-hand hold would have been much slower yet.

If your service auto has run completely dry to slide-lock, do you recharge the chamber by tugging the slide to the rear, or thumbing down the lever, releasing the slide? For me, the timer showed I was an average of .6 of a second faster with the thumb on the lever than manipulating the slide with the whole hand.

With yesterday's revolver *or* today's auto pistol, a second — or even a fraction — can mean the difference between life and death. The lessons we all learned from that tragic night in Newhall still resonate today, even if the hardware has changed.



If James Pence could have reloaded his Python one second faster, he might be alive today.



X²M-5.25

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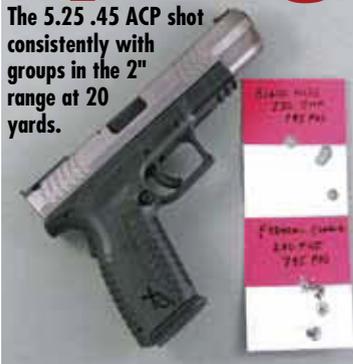


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The XD(M) 5.25 9mm proved more accurate than the .45, with a solid 1" group being Taffin's best effort.

A "Do-Everything" Auto

With firearms being so expensive these days, the best possible solution when we purchase any firearm is to have one, which is suitable for many tasks, especially if you're on a budget. That brings us to the Springfield Armory XD(M) 5.25s. These latest Springfield Armory polymer-framed semi-automatics are designed first and foremost for competition, however they also serve well as a self-defense pistol for concealed carry, home defense, hunting — within reason — target shooting, and for the fine old gentlemanly sport of plinking. They will kill tin cans with the best of them.

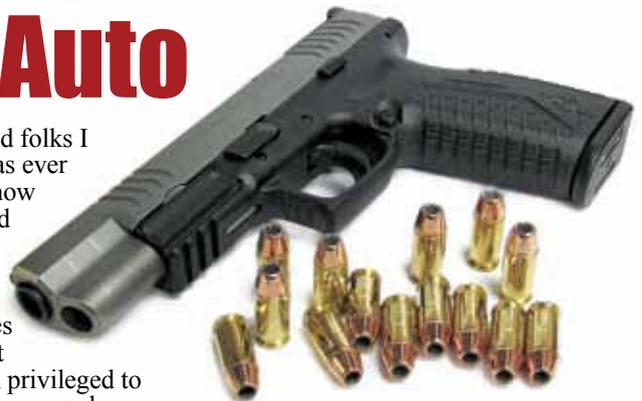
The older I get, and especially the older my eyes get, the more I appreciate a longer barrel and the subsequent longer sight radius. The Springfield Armory XD(M) 5.25 title comes from the fact it has a 5¼" barrel. This allows a sight radius of 7¼", which is maximized by the fact the rear sight is flush with the back of the slide.

I have often said the best thing about being a gunwriter is not all the firearms

I get to test, but all the grand folks I meet. Two of the finest it has ever been my good fortune to know are the Leathams, father and son. For many years father Nyle was a photographer specializing in pictures of firearm competition matches and he was one of the finest gentlemen I have ever been privileged to meet. He was just a joy to be around.

Nyle has now gone on to his reward, but anyone who doesn't know of his son Rob is certainly out of the loop when it comes to shooting handguns. About 20 years ago, I attended Rob's shooting school outside Phoenix, Ariz. and received a most warm welcome — 115 degrees F warm. The shooting was hot, but the temperature was much hotter and the only thing that saved me was regularly scheduled trips to the air-conditioned blockhouse and plenty of Gatorade.

As we were shooting, doing double taps, I was not satisfied just to get two shots on target, but I wanted them to

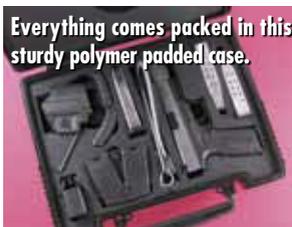


The .45 XD(M) 5.25 has a capacity of 13+1 rounds, but the grip inserts still allow a comfy feel.

be right close to each other. Rob said it wasn't necessary but he made me feel awfully good when he said, "I didn't know gunwriters could shoot!" That made my day. I also later attended a Springfield Armory seminar, where Robbie provided many tips for shooting and a signed diploma. The reason I bring up Rob is the fact he has not only been connected with Springfield Armory as a sponsored shooter for years, he also had much to do with this latest XD(M). This is the pistol Rob Leatham *wanted* for competition.

ROBBIE'S BRAINCHILD

Since I've already mentioned the sights, let's start there. The front sight, set in a dovetail, is a post with a red fiber optic insert. The rear sight is set low in the slide and the back of the rear sight blade is flush with the back of the slide. The rear sight is fully adjustable for windage and elevation, has a square notch, which fits perfectly for my eyes with the front sight, and the blade is serrated to cut down glare. Both the windage



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The view of the top of the slide reveals the sights and the cutout behind the front sight.

and elevation screws are clearly marked as to direction, and there are reference marks on the top of the rear sight assembly matched up with one line scribed on the rear sight itself for a setting reference. These are excellent sights.

As we look at the slide itself the first thing we notice is a

Continued on page 90

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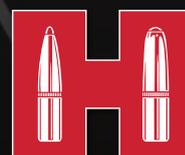
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NO BIG DEAL

Rifles with short barrels are becoming very commonplace. Standard for many AR-15s in .223 is a barrel length of 16".

That's the shortest you can legally own without a Short Barreled Rifle (SBR) Federal \$200 tax stamp. The special purpose SSK Hoaginator M16 sports a 6" barrel, and 55-grain ball does about 2,150 fps. AR rifles in .308 are often 16" for civilian rifles, and shorter for military and LE, and are generating a great deal of interest. Riflemen have suddenly realized a 16" barrel gives away literally nothing to a 24" barrel in accuracy or power.

The .30-06 was the US round of choice in WWI, WWII and Korea and found usage in Springfield bolt guns, Garands, BARs and Browning machine guns, and is still in military use in many countries.

Somebody realized the .30-06 case could be reduced in size without reducing ballistics due to improvements in powders. That turned out to be the 7.62X51 or .308 Winchester in civilian jargon, initially championed in the M14. No doubt about it the military version easily beats the .30-06 by a considerable margin ballistically. Normally the military 150-grain 06 gives 2,700 fps from a 24" barrel. I've chronographed some .308 military 150-grain ammo (usually about 144 grains) at an average of 2,975 fps from a 24" barrel.

You might think the larger .30-06 case loaded with modern powders, to the same pressures as the .308, might well surpass it ballistically — and you would be correct. Note though, firing just *one* high pressure round through an M-1 Garand will probably bend the operating rod and drastically reduce accuracy. Continued use of over-pressure .30-06 ammunition can break the rear of the receiver. I've seen about 20 of those.

A .30-06 and .308 with the same weight bullets. The .308 exceeds the velocity of the .30-06 by over 200 fps with military ammunition.



SHORTER BARRELS

What happens when we take a .308 in a 22" or 24" and cut it to 15"? Not much. Handgun Metallic Silhouette shooters using rifle cartridges such as the .308 in short-barreled custom XP 100s have been shooting phenomenal groups since the late 1970s.

What about velocity? I ran about 20 factory loads in .308 and about 15 in .30-06 in 15" T/C Encores and appropriate rifles. In normal factory hunting ammo, figure about 5 percent average velocity loss between pistol and rifle. Ballpark that at about 130 fps or so. Some "lots" of the same manufacturers ammo may vary more than that, so who cares?

What does it actually mean in a hunting situation? A big difference in trajectory? Nope, at hunting ranges the difference is unnoticeable. How about bullet performance? Most of them will loose more than 100 fps per hundred yards. Lets say, when fired from a pistol, the bullet will give the same performance, but at 50 yards less than when fired from a rifle.

So, a good pistol shot with a .308 has a very effective 300-plus-yard deer killer. A hunter shouldn't need more than that. The 06, which has a larger case capacity and is loaded by factories to lower pressures than the .308, separates the pistol and rifle with a percent or two higher than the .308. Going to the magnums in short barrels, the difference doesn't change much.



The smaller cartridge, the .222 Magnum JDJ, provides .22-250 ballistics in the Contender — which is not capable of handling the .22-250.



The .222 Mag JDJ, .22-250, .458 SOCOM, .45-70, .308, .30-06. In each case the smaller cartridge has superior performance ballistically, or at least in the gun it can be used in.

Is Handloading Better?



Can't a handloader use pistol powders in those rifle cases and beat the velocities generated by rifle powders? Nope, not likely to happen, as the pistol powders are too fast burning and would give excessive pressures with far less velocity. Generally speaking, the powders that do best in the rifles also do best in the pistols.

One trend I noticed was longer barrels seem to give slightly more uniform velocities with the same ammunition. However, certainly not always, and other factors other than barrel length could also be at work. In hunting calibers, depending on what is on the trophy list, even a 10" barrel can be very effective. A 300-grain bullet at 2,000 fps in a properly set up .45-70 Contender is safe and effective. Many other calibers gain little going from handgun to carbine barrel lengths. Place the bullet in the right place and barrel length isn't going to be noticed by anyone or anything.

Forget those "I put that XXX-grainer from my '80-ought-'80 Hong Kong right through the lungs of that 86-pound whitetail and she walked off like she wasn't even hit. Gonna get a '90-ought-'90 next year." Because it just didn't happen that way.



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SUB-CALIBER SENSE

So you have a quality centerfire handgun for personal defense. Should you have a .22-caliber version as well? The obvious advantage is the lower cost of ammunition. Cost aside, the mild report and light recoil of a .22 handgun is an advantage. It takes many repetitions to learn the basics of handgun shooting and muzzleblast and recoil tend to encourage bad habits.

I see a lot of new faces at the range lately, often shooting 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP auto pistols. I also see a lot of flinching, blinking and yanking of triggers. Judging by their grimaces and the way they hold the gun (as far from the face as possible), a lot of shooters seem to find the whole experience unpleasant. In my experience, novice shooters progress more quickly when shooting a .22. They enjoy shooting more, practice more often and learn basic shooting skills at a faster pace.

BAD THINGS TOO

But there are a few negatives as well. The .22 cannot completely replace the centerfire, and can in fact teach a bad habit or two itself. The .22 can be managed with a light grip. Shooting a centerfire, the shooter needs to grip the gun strongly enough it won't shift in the hand during recoil. In my experience, this hasn't been a problem. Most new shooters hold a handgun with about the same grim determination they would hold onto a rope keeping them from being swept over Niagara Falls.

Fast, accurate shooting with a centerfire requires the shooter to learn recoil management and timing. Recoil management is the process in which the gun fires, lifts in recoil and tracks smoothly back to initial position, ready for the next shot. Timing means the gun indexes back on target with the trigger reset and prepped, ready for the next shot.

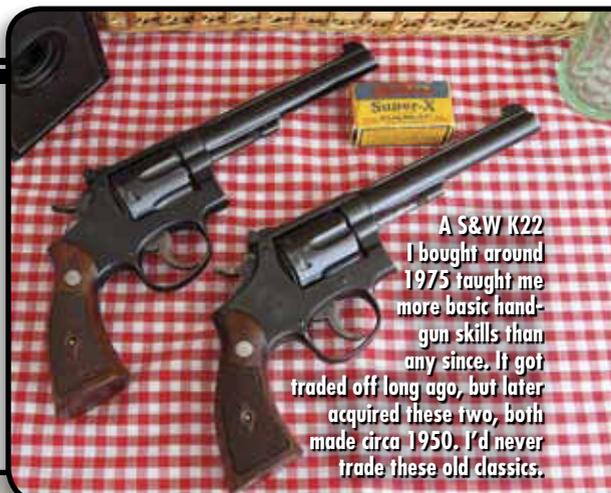
The only way to learn management/timing with a centerfire is to shoot a centerfire. But keep in mind, management/timing with a .357 Magnum revolver doesn't translate well to a 9mm semi-auto. You need to practice with what you carry. Nonetheless, when you reach the stage where it starts to really matter, you're already shooting at a high level of competency, and the .22 will help get you there.

Another minor drawback of .22s is reliability. I love my .22s, but it's unrealistic to expect the same reliability from a .22 you would from a quality 9mm. The .22 LR cartridge has a rim, and its proportions are long relative to diameter. Both factors make feeding less reliable. Even in a revolver, where reliable feeding/extraction isn't an issue, .22s require a solid firing-pin strike and strong mainspring, meaning a heavier double-action pull.

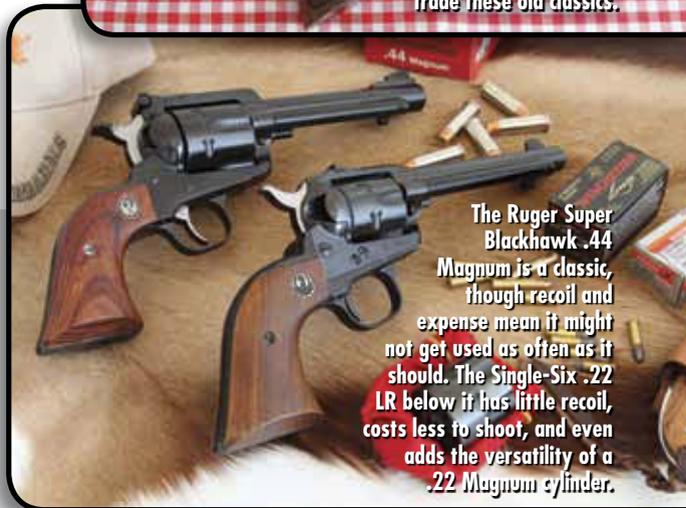
Rimfire ignition is also less reliable than centerfire ignition. A dud round is extremely rare with factory centerfire ammunition but I'm not surprised to get a dud or two in a brick of 500 .22 LR.



A couple of good .22s from S&W. The M&P 22 in the foreground is an excellent trainer for a shooter owning one of the very popular M&P centerfires, while the Walther P22 in background is a nicely made compact .22 pistol.



A S&W K22 I bought around 1975 taught me more basic handgun skills than any since. It got traded off long ago, but later acquired these two, both made circa 1950. I'd never trade these old classics.



The Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum is a classic, though recoil and expense mean it might not get used as often as it should. The Single-Six .22 LR below it has little recoil, costs less to shoot, and even adds the versatility of a .22 Magnum cylinder.

Alternate Ideas

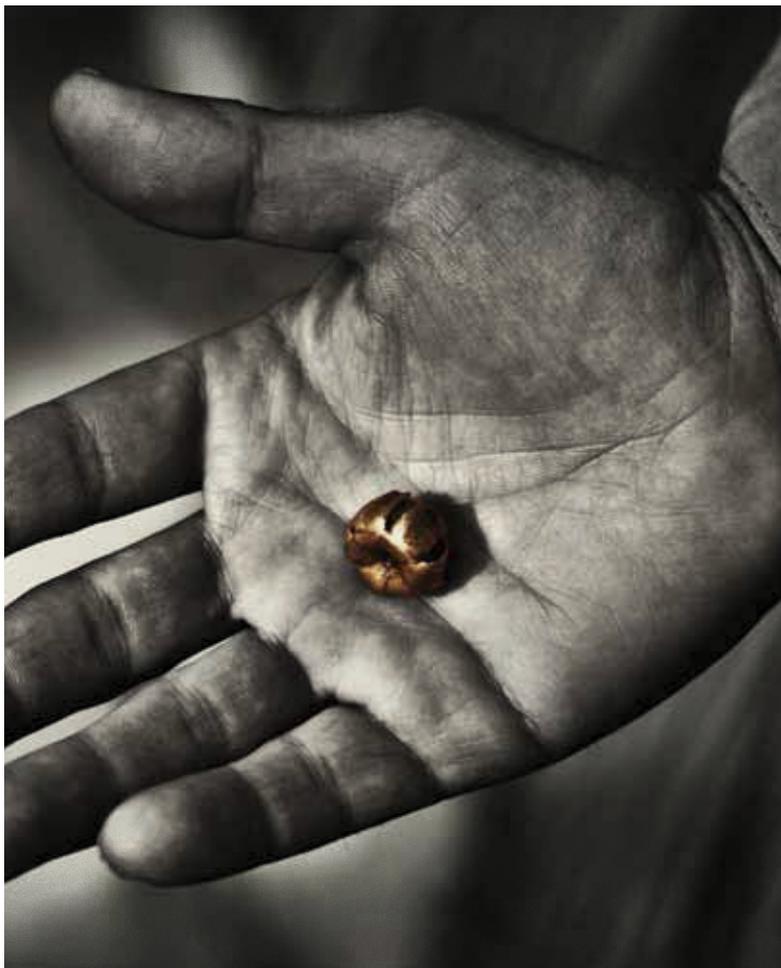
Conversion units (if available for your centerfire) are an excellent choice.

If not, select a .22 similar to your centerfire. Both handguns should have the same basic trigger action: single action, double action or striker fired. I'd consider grip angle next in importance. With every shot, the neural paths are learning to hold the gun a certain way, and it should be the same for both guns. Nice to have, though not deal breakers to me, are similar weight and balance, similar operating controls (manual safety if present, magazine release, slide stop), and similar sights.

I appreciate some people only want one handgun for personal defense. They may have stretched the budget to purchase it and aren't really keen on buying another. If so I suggest buying a .22 (new or used), shooting a brick or two of ammunition a month with it for 6 months or so, then selling it.

With a quality .22 you aren't going to lose a lot of money, especially if you bought used, and your gun handling and shooting skills will be greatly improved. You'll still have to shoot regularly (and possibly dry-fire, but that's another story) with your centerfire to maintain a reasonable skill level, but you'll have saved a lot of money getting there.





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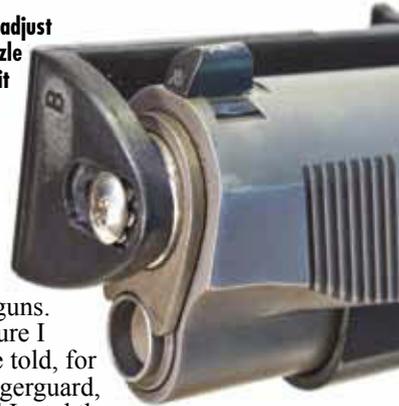
Here you can see how it works.

Last summer at the Shooting Industry Masters, my good friend Richard Mann walked up to me and handed me his Versacarry holster. “Ever seen one of these?” he asked in his hillbilly drawl. I had no idea what the small piece of plastic was. I’m smart enough to know it had a belt clip on it, but I couldn’t figure out its purpose. I’m guessing it was the 100 degree temperature with 100-percent humidity causing my lack of comprehension.

Richard saw my confusion, “It’s a neat little holster and it works!” Richard produced his Diamondback .380, clipped it in the strange holster, slid it in his waistband and proclaimed, “It’s not for training at the range, it’s for stuffing a gun in your pants as you head out the door.” I was intrigued, but my radio went off and I had to go solve a problem on the line. I forgot about the Versacarry until I saw their booth at the NRA Show this year and spent some time with Justin, learning about how the simple, yet effective, system works.

A NEW POCKET HOLSTER

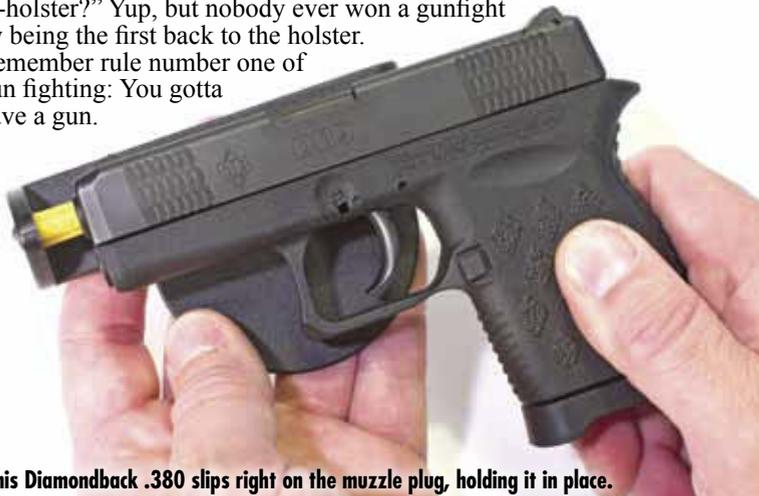
You can adjust the muzzle plug a bit if you need to.



I began to experiment with the Versacarry holsters after NRA, using a wide variety of my handguns. I even read the directions to make sure I set-up the holster correctly. Truth be told, for my first attempt at attaching the triggerguard, I put it on backwards. Only then did I read the directions and get it right. What can I say, I’m a guy! From my smallest LC9, Glock 26 and Kahr P45, to my full-sized 1911 — with a Glock 19 and Commander in the middle — I found the Versacarry worked as advertised. Different models fit different “families” of guns, and they’ll supply the one you need to fit your guns.

Is this an all-day, working-the-range rig? Nope, but that’s not what it’s for. The holsters give you a secure place to conceal your gun, so you can be well-armed while going about your daily business. I treat this holster like a pocket holster. After drawing the gun and doing what you need to with it, take the holster off your belt, reattach the gun and put it back in your pants. “Sammy, isn’t that a slow, non-tactical way to re-holster?” Yup, but nobody ever won a gunfight by being the first back to the holster.

Remember rule number one of gun fighting: You gotta have a gun.



This Diamondback .380 slips right on the muzzle plug, holding it in place.

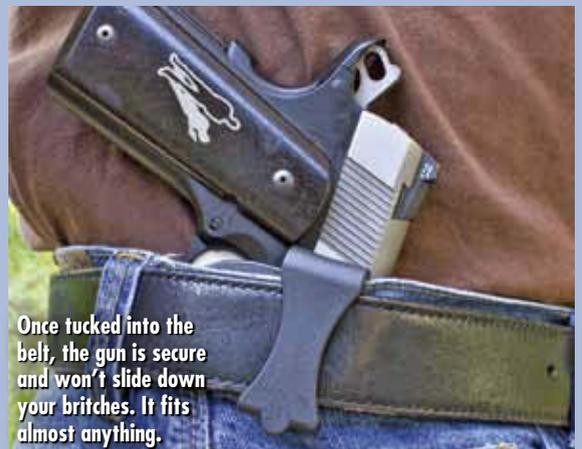
Bang For Your Buck

I get calls and emails every year from readers asking me if I could recommend a quality holster at an affordable price. After some discussion, I can usually find a holster maker to suit everyone’s needs. The hard part is everyone has a different definition of affordable. Quality gear usually costs more money than most want to spend, until now. The Versacarry sells for \$24.99 and is worth every penny — and then some.

If you’re looking for holster to securely carry your concealed pistol and have it instantly accessible, then look no further. If you are looking for a rig to use at Thunder Ranch or a Gunsite 250 class, this isn’t it. The Versacarry takes away the excuse of “I’m not carrying my (fill in the blank) because I don’t have a holster for it.” This isn’t a custom, hand-carved BBQ rig for you to show off to your friends. It’s a simple solution to the problem of ensuring you have a gun on you. And the key word is on.



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Duke's Hungarian PA63
9mm Makarov using
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POWDERS FOR PISTOLS

For the first time in 45 years as an avid handloader I find myself loading more cartridges for pistols than for revolvers. At this moment I'm set up to reload these nine pistol calibers: 7.62x25mm Tokarov, .32 Auto (aka 7.65mm Auto), 7.65mm French Long, 8mm Japanese Nambu, .380 Auto (aka 9mm Kurz), 9mm Parabellum (aka 9mm Luger), 9mm Makarov, .40 S&W and .45 Auto.

You might think it would be easy to settle on one propellant to use in all nine cartridges, but nope, it's not. Granted all those autoloading cartridge cases are of small volume, so the slow-burning powders associated with magnum revolver rounds can be discounted immediately. Still, we're left with dozens from which to choose. Lyman's *Reloading Handbook 49th Edition* has a fairly comprehensive list of today's available propellants. Generally speaking those suitable for autoloading pistols range in burning rate (fast to slow) from Norma's R-1 at number one to Alliant's Blue Dot at number 43.

Even someone as enthusiastic as me cannot claim to have tried every one of those propellants. I can say I've used the majority of them at one time or another and to one degree or the other. In 1968, when I started handloading for my first



Duke uses these five powders for reloading his nine semi-auto pistol calibers.

pistol cartridge, the .45 Auto, the only handgun propellants available to me where were Bullseye and Unique. Therefore, I've burned scores of pounds of those two over the decades, with much of it fired in autoloading pistols. Conversely, the only time I've used Western Powder's Accurate #2 in autoloading pistols was a reloading project on pocket pistols a couple years back. To my pleasant surprise Accurate #2 gave best results in .32 Auto, .380 Auto and even 9mm Makarov.

LAZY RESEARCH

With two of the listed calibers, I've only ever tried one propellant. Those were the 7.65mm French Long for a Model 1935A, and 8mm Japanese Nambu for a Type 14. Why have I not tried others? Mostly because of fear. You see, there's just no data available

for reloading those two very oddball cartridges. In fact one of the powder companies contacted me to see what I was using for my 8mm Nambu.

The sole propellant I've tried with them is Hodgdon's Titegroup, and what I did was start out low and then work up a couple tenths of a grain at a time with my chosen bullet weights until perfect functioning was achieved. That happened with 3 grains under 81-grain

.313" cast bullets in the French round, and 3.5 grains under 106-grain cast bullets in the Japanese round.

A natural question would be, "Duke, why did you start out with Titegroup in the first place?" Simply because it was the closest suitable powder can to where I was sitting, and I was too lazy to get up and hunt for anything else! I've been perfectly happy with the results and doubt if I'll ever bother to experiment further.

LEAST FINICKY



Duke is currently handloading for these nine semi-auto pistol cartridges. Left to right: 7.62x25mm Tokarov, .32 Auto (aka 7.65mm Auto), 7.65mm French Long, 8mm Japanese Nambu, .380 Auto (aka 9mm Kurz), 9mm Parabellum (aka 9mm Luger), 9mm Makarov, .40 S&W and .45 Auto.

Opposed to that has been the work I've done with .40 S&W using my Kimber 1911. I've tried many powders with a wide variety of cast and jacketed bullets in that pistol, with considerable test shooting done from my machine rest. I've yet to find a powder in burn rate between Bullseye and Unique that didn't give fine accuracy and perfect functioning. I think the .40 S&W has to be one of the least finicky autoloading cartridges I've ever experienced.

The same can be said for .45 Auto. There must be at least 40 powders good for the old .45. I started back in '68 with 5 grains of Bullseye and 225-grain cast bullets, and still like that load. However, upon dedicating a bench to a pair of Dillon Square Deal B presses in 9mm Luger and .45 Auto, I settled on W231 (aka HP38) for both. With 115-grain jacketed 9mm bullets and 120-grain cast ones, 4.4 grains is my *always* charge, and with lead 220- to 230-grain FMJ .45s, it's 5.4 grains.

One Powder? Never.

My autoloading "handgun" for 7.62x25mm Tokarov is a semi-auto only copy of the Soviet PPs43. It has a rather heavy bolt needing high-pressure loads to get it to cycle 100 percent. Perfect functioning only came when I coupled 6 grains of Unique with Hornady's 86-grain jacketed soft point bullets.

Those five powders cover my autoloading pistol needs. Still, a fellow asked me, "Duke, what would you do if limited to only one powder for all, as is the case in some highly restricted European nations?" My immediate answer was, "I would leave there."



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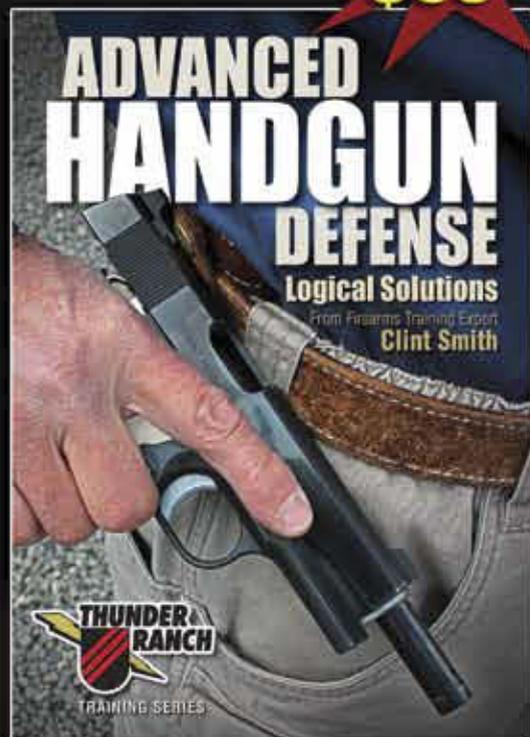
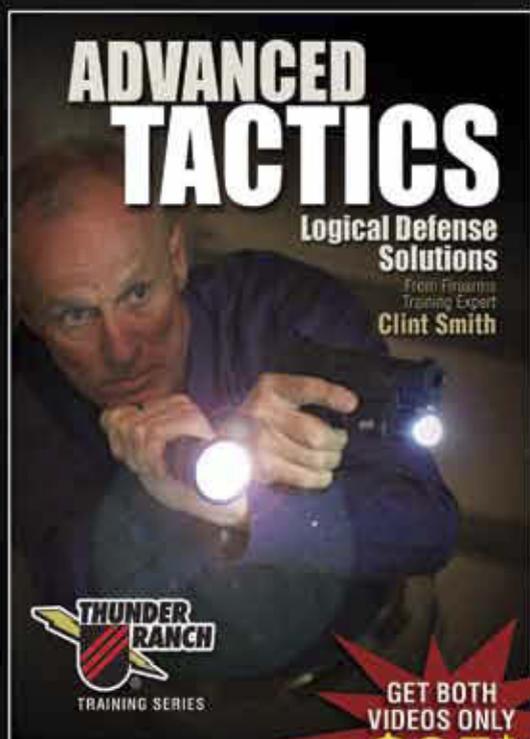
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The Canik 55 is a 14-shot 9mm with adjustable sights. Note how the Classic CZ lines show the lineage of the Canik.

J. B. WOOD

THE CANIK 55 STINGRAY-C

AFFORDABLE 9MM POWERHOUSE

Some of the new polymer-frame 9mm pistols are marvelous, and their light weight is great for all-day carrying. But, have you ever wished for the feel of something all steel that would sit solidly in your hand? How about a compact CZ75 clone, with a 13-round magazine and ambidextrous controls, at a modest price? Thanks to Century International Arms, here it is.

It's the Canik 55 Stingray-C, made in Turkey at a factory with an ISO-9000 rating, and it's beautifully made. The only non-steel parts are the finely checkered grips and the magazine follower. The magazine, I noticed, was made by Mec-Gar in Italy, and is of the highest quality. The cold-forged barrel is chromed, and the over-all finish of the other parts is a durable matte black.

Controls

In addition to having manual safety and slide latch levers on both sides, the magazine release button can be easily reversed. The well-shaped trigger has no annoying vertical ridges, and both

the DA and SA trigger pulls are excellent. The manual safety lever blocks the sear and the slide, and can be applied in all hammer positions. The off-safe movement is a natural downward movement. An automatic internal safety, cleared in the last fraction of trigger movement, blocks the firing pin.

The extended slide latch is accessible without changing the shooting hold, and the square-picture sights have three white dots, with the rear sight fully adjustable. On top of the slide, an indicator rises when the chamber is loaded. This part is clearly labeled "INDICATOR" in white, and, for those of limited literacy, a picture of a cartridge at the front.

Ran Fine

I tried the Canik 55 with four different loads, three of them hollow-points, and functioning was perfect. The cartridges were from Black Hills, Winchester, Cor-Bon and Hornady. Firing was at 7 yards and 25 yards standing, mostly with a 2-hand hold. Groups were 3.25" to 3", well centered, all in the black of the Champion

VisiShot targets.

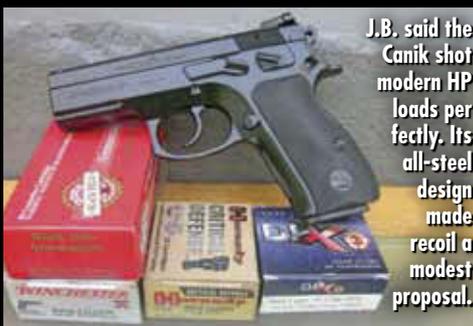
There was one remarkable 25-yard target, fired with a 1-hand hold, using the Black Hills 147-grain subsonic load. It measured just a hair under 3". I will note I have always found this load to be supremely accurate. And, the Canik 55, as noted earlier, sits very solidly in the hand. Actually, all of the cartridges (Cor-Bon DPX, Hornady Critical Defense and Winchester Silvertip) did well.

Even with the high-performance loads, the felt recoil was moderate. Not surprising, as this compact 9mm weighs almost the same as a .45 GM-1911. After that comment, one of the big-bore guys might suggest you should just carry a 1911. But my answer would be the Canik 55 holds 14 rounds, and has a suggested retail price of just a little over \$500. Among all of the other new stuff, it's a standout. 

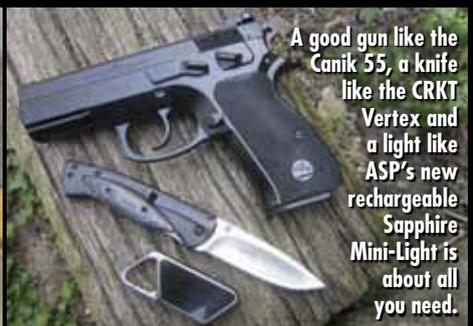
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Takedown is classic CZ75 and shows the robust design.



J.B. said the Canik shot modern HP loads perfectly. Its all-steel design made recoil a modest proposal.



A good gun like the Canik 55, a knife like the CRKT Vertex and a light like ASP's new rechargeable Sapphire Mini-Light is about all you need.

GIFTS FOR GRUNTS

A CLOSE LOOK AT



JOHN CONNOR



THE GRUNTS GIFT GUIDE FOR 2012 FROM THE HOME FRONT TO THE TIP OF THE SPEAR

I started writing a plea to remember our troops deployed overseas at Christmastime — and then paused and thought about who I'm talkin' to here. With you folks, there's no pleading necessary: you know, you remember and you give. For many of you, sending "CARE Packages" is routine, and as December approaches, the only difference is you tuck a Christmas card into those parcels.

If you're sending to family or friends, you know what they need. If you want to send to "friends you haven't met yet," I strongly urge you to go to *AnySoldier.com*. It's a family-operated 501c3 outfit dedicated to getting the most-needed support to our deployed personnel from

all the services: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. Requests come directly from the troops and, believe me, their needs vary wildly depending on exactly where they're deployed under what conditions, and the makeup of their units. Pay special attention to *AnySoldier's* "What to Send," "What *not* to Send," and holiday shipping info.

Please be aware too in 2012, for the first time in *AnySoldier's* decade of service, they've run into debt. It's a straight up worthy outfit, so I hope you'll consider a donation to them as well. That's what I want for Christmas, so never mind sending me those fuzzy slippers! Connor *OUT*

1 Jim Toner is a hardcore handgunner, head honcho of Toner Machining Technologies, and a big supporter of our troops. Jim had them in mind, along with cops and outdoorsmen, when he designed the TMT Wallet. Made of a rugged proprietary polymer, it's O-ring sealed, it floats, and is packed with features like a pen, tweezers, toothpick, compass, a glass breaker, hidden compartments and more; too much to list here. The TMT Wallet is light and compact, but has lots of room for a grunt's most cherished goodies.



4 The troops love their iPhone 4s and so do I. Great device, but I quickly went through three "skins" — cases for 'em — and they were too flimsy or too bulky, too slippery, or they interfered with the controls. Then I tried the Battle Case from Strike Industries and haven't taken it off. Slim but tough and grippy, even the feature I thought might be cheesy — the "rapid reload" loop — turned out to be extremely handy. Available in black, OD and FDE, each comes with two screen protectors and there's even an optional Kevlar insert, not to stop bullets, but for increased shock protection. If your grunt giftee has an iPhone 4 or 4S, it's the perfect add on.

2 Built virtually "grunt-proof" for use in the harshest environments, Tuff-Writer's Frontline Series Tactical Pens make great gifts. Precision machined from 6061-T6 aluminum and hard anodized to military specs, they're smooth writers and tough defensive tools too. Pressurized Fisher cartridges perform at any angle, even upside down, just like some soldiers we know!

5 The quality and effectiveness of cleaning kits from Otis Technologies is unquestioned, and their new MSR/AR Cleaning System is the most complete compact dedicated setup for M16s and M4s I know of. Here's everything a trigger puller needs for a fast field cleaning or deep maintenance back at base, including specialized tools like the BONE Tool for cleaning the bolt and

3 "A Grayman knife for every Grunt" is a great goal, and this trio offers three terrific options. You've seen and read about their tank-tough titanium folders, the 4" blade Satu and 3" blade Dua in past issues of *Handgunner*, but don't overlook the newly redesigned 6" fixed-blade Ground Pounder. The 1/4" thick 1095 steel blade and heavy duty G10 handle scales make it tough enough for any field or fighting task.





carrier and the Mongoose G2 brush for effective cleaning of copper deposits and other fouling. Neat, complete and priced sweet!

6 Beat the ban on lithium batteries! Buy your grunt the most versatile compact lighting system designed for combat use — Streamlight's Sidewinder Compact II, which runs on either a lithium CR123A, a lithium AA, or a standard alkaline AA battery! Then, send lots of alkaline AAs before they're banned too. Four separate light sources including IR and ergonomic controls easily operable without "eyeballs-on," low to high output and a double-click strobe mode, all in a shock-suppressed unit which attaches to helmets, headstraps or any MOLLE gear.



7 Weird picture, huh? That's a Povidone-Iodine swabstick and prep pad. Just about everywhere we have boots on the ground, even the smallest nick or cut can lead to a nasty infection, and Povidone-Iodine is the best preventative treatment — but hard to get. The best and cheapest source I've found is Allegro Medical online, offering 50 individually sealed PVP-I swabsticks (#560407) and 100 PVP-I prep pads (#560405). Keep some and send lots! Go online and check out my "Connor's Med Kit" Web Blast for more info.



8 The CQB Tool by Spartan Blades USA was developed at the request of USSOCOM as a "Get Offa' Me!" knife for use when a warrior is locked in mortal combat so close that neither combatant can get a muzzle between them, and it's the perfect tool for the job. Thin but strong and superbly ergonomic, it's 7" of 154CM steel and a terrific Christmas gift!

For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/product-index and click on the company name.



VERBOTEN!

FORBIDDEN BECAUSE...
WELL, BECAUSE
THEY SAY SO!



Pork Or Pork By-Products: The administration has banned sending any pork products of any kind to our troops deployed in any country with a significant population of, um ... people who may be offended. That covers just about everywhere we have boots on the ground. So, no more bags of bacon-bits, no fried pork rinds, none of those juicy 1-pound canned DAK hams, and none of the "golden fleece of grunt-gifts," Yoder's canned precooked bacon strips! We could say who the possibly-offended folks are, but naming them as possibly offended may possibly be offensive, and even you reading this could also be offensive, so stop reading and forget it if it scares you, okay? As for me offending someone by writing it, I'll take my chances with a death-decree fatwah. On the bright side, looking forward to coming home to a big BLT — heavy on the "B" — is excellent survival incentive, ain't it?

Lithium Batteries & Devices with Integral Lithium Batteries:

This prohibition applies to all mail going to our APO and FPO addresses worldwide and includes just about any device preceded by a lower case "i" like iPhones, iPads, iPods etc., computer batts, GPS devices, cell phones, most charging devices, MP3 players, most handheld games, Bluetooth headsets, portable DVD players and just about anything else that offers our warriors personal communications, recreation and a little diversion. Government spokes-organisms say this "brings USPS into compliance with the regulations of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Universal Postal Union." Never heard of 'em? They're tentacles of the — who else? — United Nations, which collection of highly polished football bats in New York.

PIHP (Persons In High Places) assures the troops they can still purchase lithium batteries and lithium-powered devices at their local PX/BX stores. Yeah, right. Ask a grunt on a rock in WhereZitStan 40 clicks from Wats-dis-Place how that works for him.

There's lots of argument pro and con on the potential hazard factor, but to my knowledge, no credible evidence of an air disaster linked to transport of properly packaged lithium batteries or devices. I smell some kinda "follow the money" situation. At this writing, the ICAO says limited transport of some lithium battery devices may be allowed in early 2013. We shall await the ruling with bated breath —



I DON'T HATE THE 9MM ANYMORE

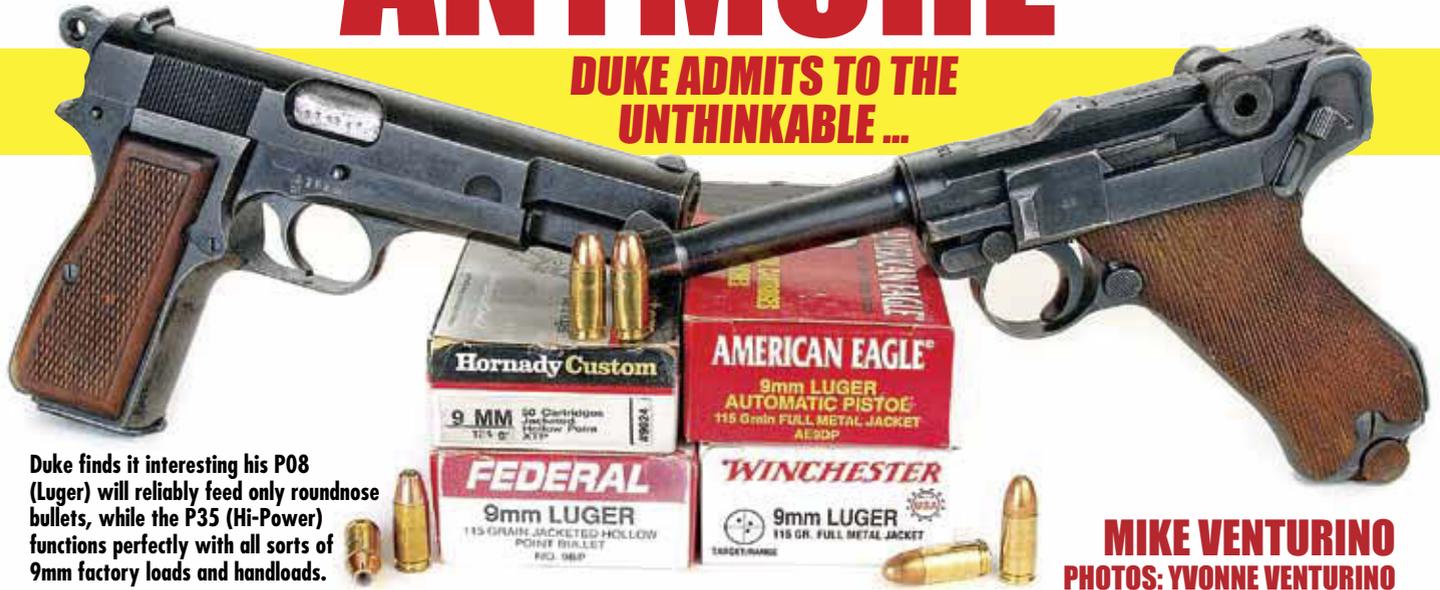


Here's Duke actually shooting one of his Inglis P35 (Hi Power) 9mms.



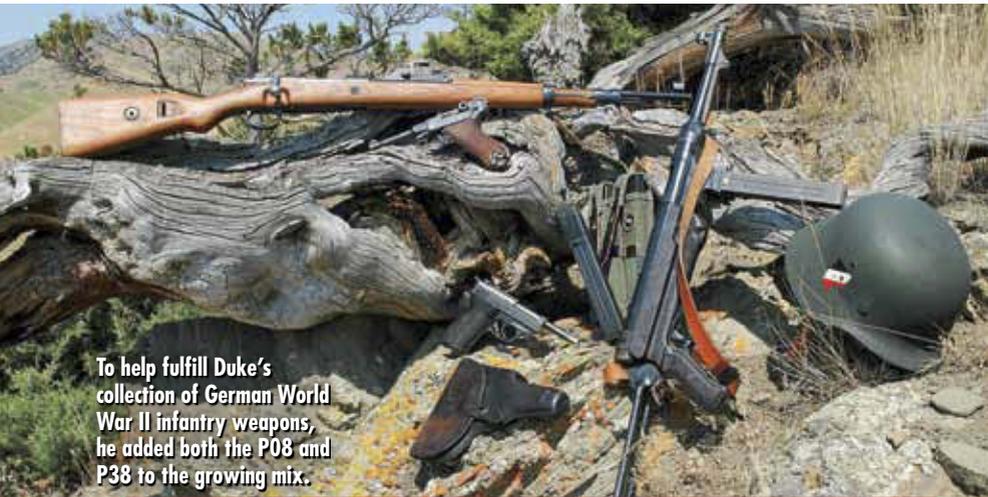
Duke in another silly hat shooting his World War II MP40 submachine gun.

DUKE ADMITS TO THE UNTHINKABLE ...



Duke finds it interesting his P08 (Luger) will reliably feed only roundnose bullets, while the P35 (Hi-Power) functions perfectly with all sorts of 9mm factory loads and handloads.

MIKE VENTURINO
PHOTOS: YVONNE VENTURINO



To help fulfill Duke's collection of German World War II infantry weapons, he added both the P08 and P38 to the growing mix.

Like many of you, my firearms formative years were the 1960s. In gun magazine articles back then big bore revolvers reigned supreme, .45 Autos were accepted and 9mms in general were despised — so were .38 Specials. As best I can remember about the only American made 9mm pistols then were Smith & Wesson's Model 39 and Colt's 1911 Commander. Otherwise 9mm pistols floating around in our country were military souvenirs brought home from two world wars or military surplus stuff from the same countries, with a handful of rare imported specialty pistols. Most were made in Germany or Spain. In

Duke has taken the trouble to sight in his 9mm pistols. This group was fired offhand at 50' with one of his Inglis P35s. The flyer was the last of the five shots fired.

Inglis
Hi POWER
9MM
4-492 12492
HP35 OREGON TRAIL



These are some of Duke's current 9mm handloads shown with a 115-grain FMJ factory load at far left. Next is a 120-grain RN cast bullet from Lyman mould #356242 and a loaded round. Middle is a 124-grain cast bullet (Oregon Trail) with a loaded round. At right is a 115-grain FMJ from Zero Bullet Company with a loaded round.



These are Duke's World War II German 9mm pistols. Left is P38 (Mauser 1943) and P08 (Mauser 1938).



After the P08 and P38 Duke added these three P35s (Hi Powers) to his collection. Top and middle are Inglis (Canadian) production. Bottom is Fabrique Nationale (FN) production.



fact, the only two 9mm pistols I actually held in my hands in the '60s were German: a Luger and a P38. They came home with American GIs.

Between 1966 when I bought my first handgun and 1985, I owned only two 9mms out of slightly over 100 handguns purchased in that time frame. They were a Smith & Wesson Model 39 and a German Walther P1 (the P38 with aluminum frame). Both reinforced my feelings of disgust with 9mms. The Walther shed its extractor twice, the last time in a foot of snow. I had it fixed and peddled it.

The S&W wasn't at fault when it scared me twice. I got sloppy in handloading both times. First a cast bullet somehow was pressed deeper into a case. Pressures skyrocketed, blowing out the case wall and splitting the wooden grips. Otherwise the Model 39 or myself were not hurt. I glued the grips back together and continued shooting. Next, I experienced a "slam-fire" which is when you let the slide slam forward

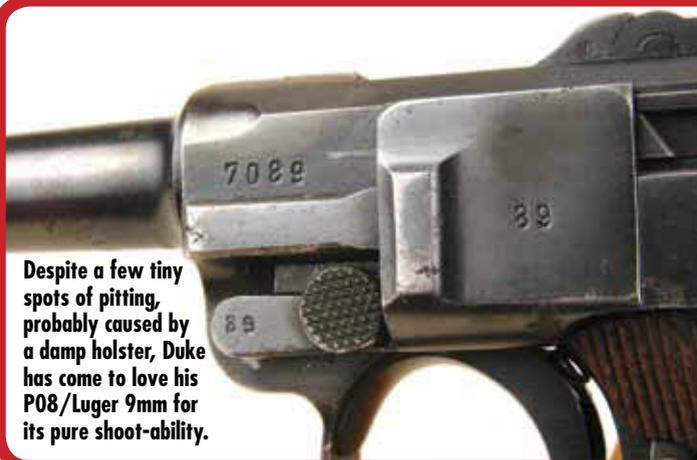
and the pistol fires. It was pointed in a safe direction but the occurrence still shook me. Checking my handloads, I saw in my hurry to get ammo loaded and go shooting a few primers weren't seated flush in their pockets. Regardless, I traded my 9mm for a Smith & Wesson .38 Special revolver and didn't buy another for over 20 years.

More Unhappiness

In the late 1980s, I was on contract as a writer for another gun magazine and they were on a pro-9mm rant to the point of silliness. People I hardly knew would come up to me and say mockingly, "Well what sort of 9mm

Continued on page 99

Duke has centered his Luger's point of impact for windage. It hits slightly high at 25 yards but that doesn't bother him.



Despite a few tiny spots of pitting, probably caused by a damp holster, Duke has come to love his P08/Luger 9mm for its pure shoot-ability.



Due to his own sloppy handloading Duke had a 9mm case head blow out in a Smith & Wesson Model 39. It scared him but did minimal damage to the pistol.



Here a standard FMJ 9mm Luger factory load (center) is shown for comparison with a .380 Auto (9mm Kurz) at left and a .38 Super at right.

BENCHMADE KNIVES

SOARING STEEL!

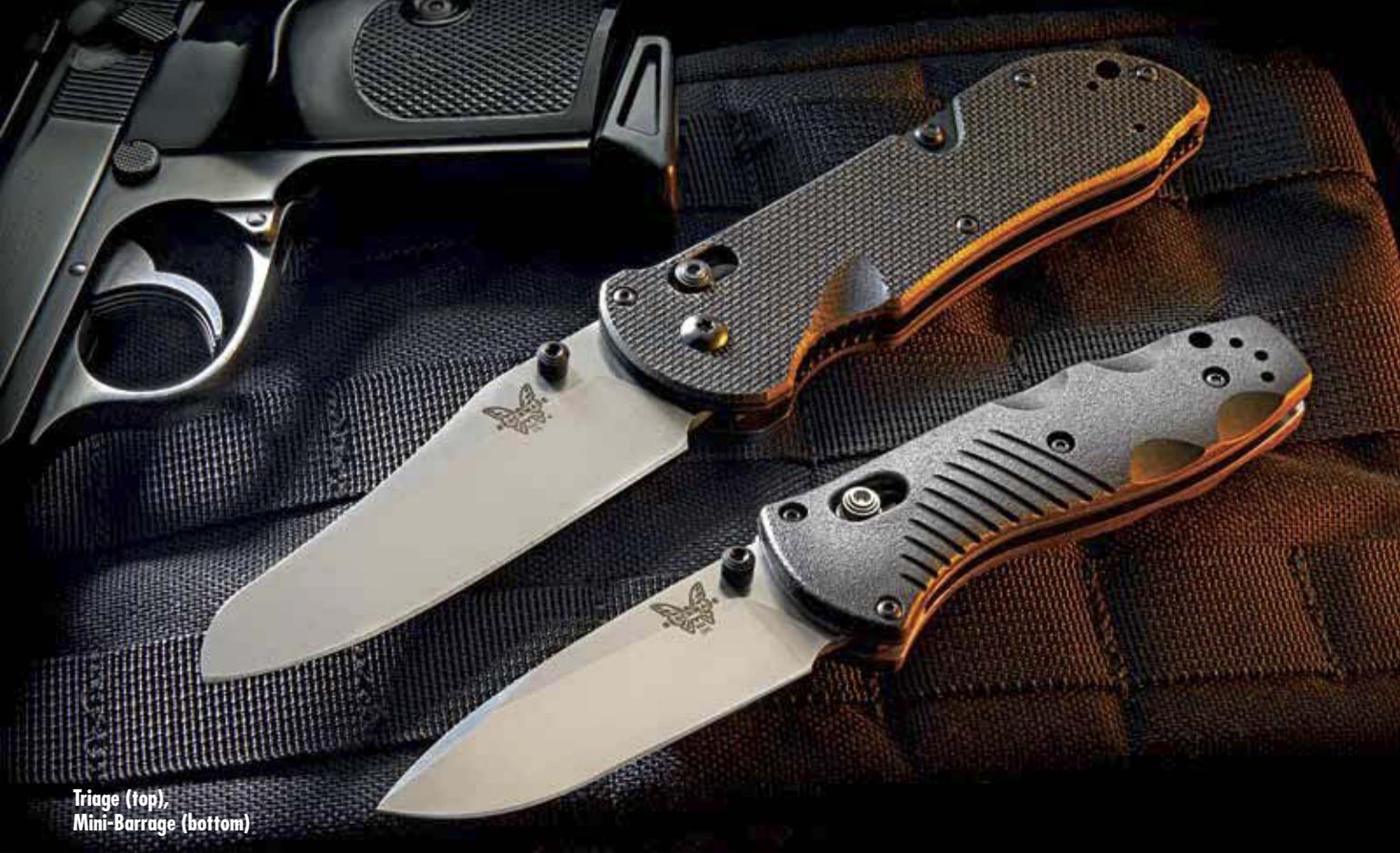
PAT COVERT
PHOTOS: CHUCK PITTMAN, INC.

AN AMERICAN SUCCESS STORY

It began, innocently enough, with a butterfly knife. Les De Asis just liked it. Actually, he liked it a whole lot. The Filipino butterfly knife, or Balisong, is unlike any other folding knife in the cutlery kingdom. Rather than having a blade rotating out of a handle, the Balisong has two handles counter-rotating around the blade. So popular is the knife an entire martial arts culture has sprung up around it with enthusiasts worldwide. It's a fascinating knife, especially in action, and Les De

Bali-Song
Butterfly
Knife

Infidel
Auto



Triage (top),
Mini-Barrage (bottom)

Asis got drawn into this fascination like a moth to flame.

In 1979, while attending the University of Southern California working as a freelance investigator on the side, De Asis took a chance and opened a company that he named Bali Song, trade marking the name. The company would fail due in large part to a decline in the economy and stricter customs law prohibiting the import of butterfly knives. However, the experience, along with De Asis' determination, would serve as the impetus to build what we know today as one of

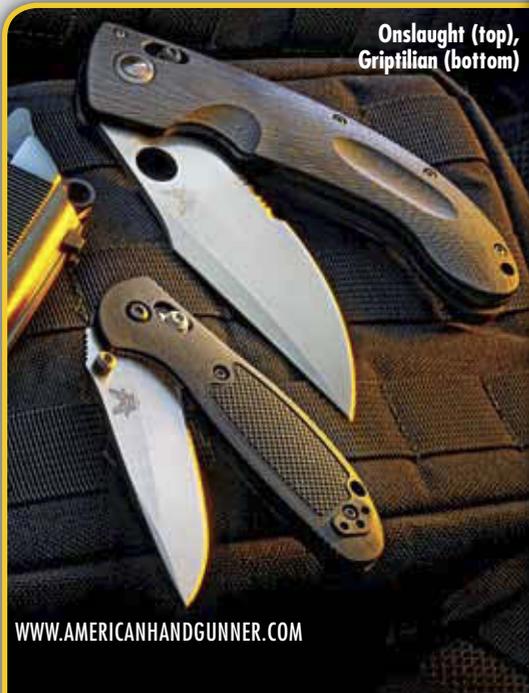
America's premier cutlery manufacturers: Benchmade Knives. And the butterfly still holds a special place in Les De Asis' heart. In fact, it's been an integral part of the company's logo ever since Benchmade was founded in October 1987.

Benchmade took flight at an ideal time. A few years after its inception, the first Gulf War hit and the parentage of the modern-day tactical knife genre took root. Les expanded his line to

include combat folders (as they were referred to at the time) and in 1992 he launched the AFO (Armed Forces Only) knife, an aluminum-handled automatic, geared toward military users. The AFO has proven to be so popular it remains in the company's lineup to this day.

The enterprising De Asis was also

Continued on page 95



Onslaught (top),
Griptilian (bottom)



McHenry & Williams



Presidio (left),
Auto Stryker (right)



Another adverse effect of water on ammunition is the cases and bullet will likely tarnish. These rounds had been under tap water for 46 hours. Tumbling in appropriate media can salvage cases and bullets.



FLOODED?

YOUR AMMO IS GOING TO LOSE ...

DAVE EMARY

This past summer saw unprecedented flooding over large regions of the country. This flooding caused untold property damage and grief to hundreds of thousands of people. Those affected probably lost substantial investments in ammunition and components. Ammunition has some resistance to water for very short periods of time if it's not in very deep water. The good news is there are ways to store ammunition and components that will protect them if you live in a flood risk area.

Primers

The explosive mix in primers starts as several dry powder components. These components are mixed together as water is added and you wind up with something literally looking like a ball of cookie dough. This stuff is all mixed together in a blender that for all practical purposes is a heavy duty Kitchenaid mixer with a bread hook on it. The ball of primer dough is then measured out volumetrically into each individual primer explosive pellet, placed in the primer cup and finally the anvil is inserted.



As long as the primer mix is kept wet it's virtually impossible to get it to do anything. At this point in the process you have the exact same assembled primer you purchase, except the explosive mix is wet and won't go off. The primers are then placed in tightly controlled temperature and humidity cabinets to dry. The drier the mix becomes the more sensitive and energetic it becomes.

Primers are tightly controlled for the amount of residual moisture left in the explosive mix. Once the primer mix is completely dried, it's now sensitive



The setup for testing the effects on ammunition being submerged in water for varying lengths of time was very simple: a 5-gallon plastic bucket with 13" depth of water.

to impact and heat and you have your live primer for your cartridge. However, get the primer mix wet again and it becomes virtually impossible to get it to do anything.

If primers are exposed to any water at all, even for a short period of time, they will absorb water and go back to their insensitive state. They can be dried out again and will once again become sensitive and explosive. But without some very expensive equipment it will

CHART

TYPE	TIME UNDER WATER (HOURS)	VELOCITY (FPS)	PRESSURE (PSI)
UNSEALED	0	1,129	33,300
UNSEALED	4	997	24,900
UNSEALED	8	944	22,200
UNSEALED	46	515	TOO LOW TO MEASURE
WATERPROOFED	46	1,127	33,600

Data for non-water proofed ammunition versus the same ammunition with sealed primers and case mouths, when submerged for various times. Factory 9mm Luger 115-grain ammunition exposed to 13" depth of water.

be impossible for you to tell how much moisture is in the mix. The primer sensitivity and explosive output is strongly determined by its moisture content.

You really don't know what you're going to get trying to dry primers in terms of their output or sensitivity. Never expose even wet primers to any kind of heat source. That's asking for it. The minute you start disrespecting primers you're going to get burned, literally. If you have primers that have been exposed to water, I would suggest soaking them in oil or powder solvent to inactivate them and dispose them.

Water Pressure

The deeper the water the greater the water pressure at the bottom of the water. It's the effect you feel when you dive to the bottom of the deep end of the pool and you can feel the pressure on your ears. The deeper the water loaded ammunition — or any container it's stored in — is exposed to, the higher the water pressure, and the more likelihood of water getting into things. Obviously, the longer things are exposed to deep water, there's more potential for water to seep into things. Deep water, say water measured in feet, will compromise unprotected ammunition very quickly.

Powder Hates Water

The easy answer with loose propellant is to store it in the original container with the lid tightly closed. This will provide adequate water protection for short periods of time for anything other than 20' or 30' of water. Propellant is actually manufactured in large kettles — under water. It's done this way for safety and for the water to provide a means of carrying other chemicals into the grains of nitrocellulose making up the propellant.

The propellant is essentially cooked in a water solution with other chemicals at very specific temperatures and lengths of time. This gets the correct chemical composition to maintain the proper performance. After this cooking

phase is done, the propellant grains are dried in temperature- and humidity-controlled cabinets to very exacting amounts of residual moisture.

Most propellants are typically dried to about one percent residual moisture and volatiles. The amount of residual moisture and volatiles has a very strong effect on the burn rate of the propellant.

Depending on the propellant and the cartridge a one percent change in the residual moisture and volatiles content of a propellant can change the peak pressure from 5,000 to 10,000 psi, either up or down. The higher the moisture content, the slower the burn rate, and the lower the pressure the propellant will produce, and vice versa. The moisture content can eventually get high enough to prevent propellant burning.

As a side note, this effect is one of the reasons you don't want to expose propellant or ammunition to high temperatures for long periods of time. The propellant will dry out and the pressures will go up. The propellant will also start to chemically break down after long-term exposure to heat, driving the pressure even higher. Sometimes dangerously so. Don't store ammunition in the garage, or your closed car or trunk in the summer.

Loaded Ammo

In loaded ammunition there's a press fit between the primer and the case, and the bullet and the case. This press fit by itself will provide some protection against exposure to moisture and very short durations of being submerged in water. It's enough to prevent



Fortunately protection for ammunition and components is readily available and inexpensive.

Tightly capped original containers will provide long-term protection for propellants from moisture or water. Plastic containers work better and are corrosion-proof.



any significant performance degradation from exposure to light rain or dew. By short duration of submersion I mean maybe well less than an hour. The shallower the water, the longer it will take for water to seep into the case. The greater the depth and the longer the exposure, more water will seep into the ammunition. At this point it should be pointed out almost all military spec ammunition is waterproofed and will resist exposure to water quite well.

I set up a test to show the effects of water on unprotected ammunition. The test was very simple, and used nothing more than a 5-gallon plastic paint bucket and tap water. For test ammunition, I used a commercial 9mm 115-grain load. The unsealed ammunition was submerged in the bucket of water, and the same type of ammunition, but with the primers and case mouths

Continued on page 80

When sealing the primer and case mouth makes certain the sealant goes completely around the primer and mouth. The 9mm cartridge was sealed with finger nail polish and the .40 S&W was sealed with Threadlocker. The finger nail polish is much easier to see.



A GREAT BUT UNDERAPPRECIATED
CARRY GUN GETS A DESIGN UPDATE.



The .357 SIG Model 32 compares with the Model 21 .45 for size. The Model 32 offers near .357 Mag performance in a compact, controllable package.

GLOCK 32 GEN4



VERSATILE .357 SIG PERFORMER

MASSAD AYOUB • PHOTOS: CHUCK PITTMAN, INC.

A mating of the “compact” size Glock pistol with the .357 SIG cartridge, the Glock 32 is seen as an enthusiast’s pistol, not as a contender in the handgun popularity sweepstakes. The fact is its lower sales figures placed it so far down in the Glock pecking order it’s only now getting the Gen4 factory update. To appreciate the G32 Gen4, we have to look at its configuration and its cartridge as well as the new features.

The platform comes from the Glock 19 of 1988, half an inch shorter in the snout than a full-size service Glock, and chopped two cartridges worth at its butt. This still allowed a full grip in most hands, but made the gun more concealable, allowing the department to issue a single model to all personnel, whether uniformed or plainclothes. Some big departments in particular appreciated this. NYPD offers its cops

a choice of three service 15+1-round 9mm pistols to buy themselves, but the odds-on choice is the Glock 19. This is bolstered by the fact thousands of them came under the NYPD patch after the city police absorbed the large Transit Authority and Housing Authority police forces, both of which issued the G19. Boston cops are issued the compact Glock 23 as standard, carrying 13+1 rounds of .40 S&W. The Glock 32 is essentially identical to these guns, except it takes 13+1 rounds of .357 SIG.

The Introduction

The .357 SIG cartridge was introduced in 1994. SIG executive Ted Rowe had noticed representatives of many departments, which were trading in their .357 Magnum revolvers for SIG autoloaders had appreciated the fire-power and shootability of the SIGs, but didn’t think any auto pistol would equal the power of the 125-grain .357



GLOCK 32 GEN4

.357 SIG

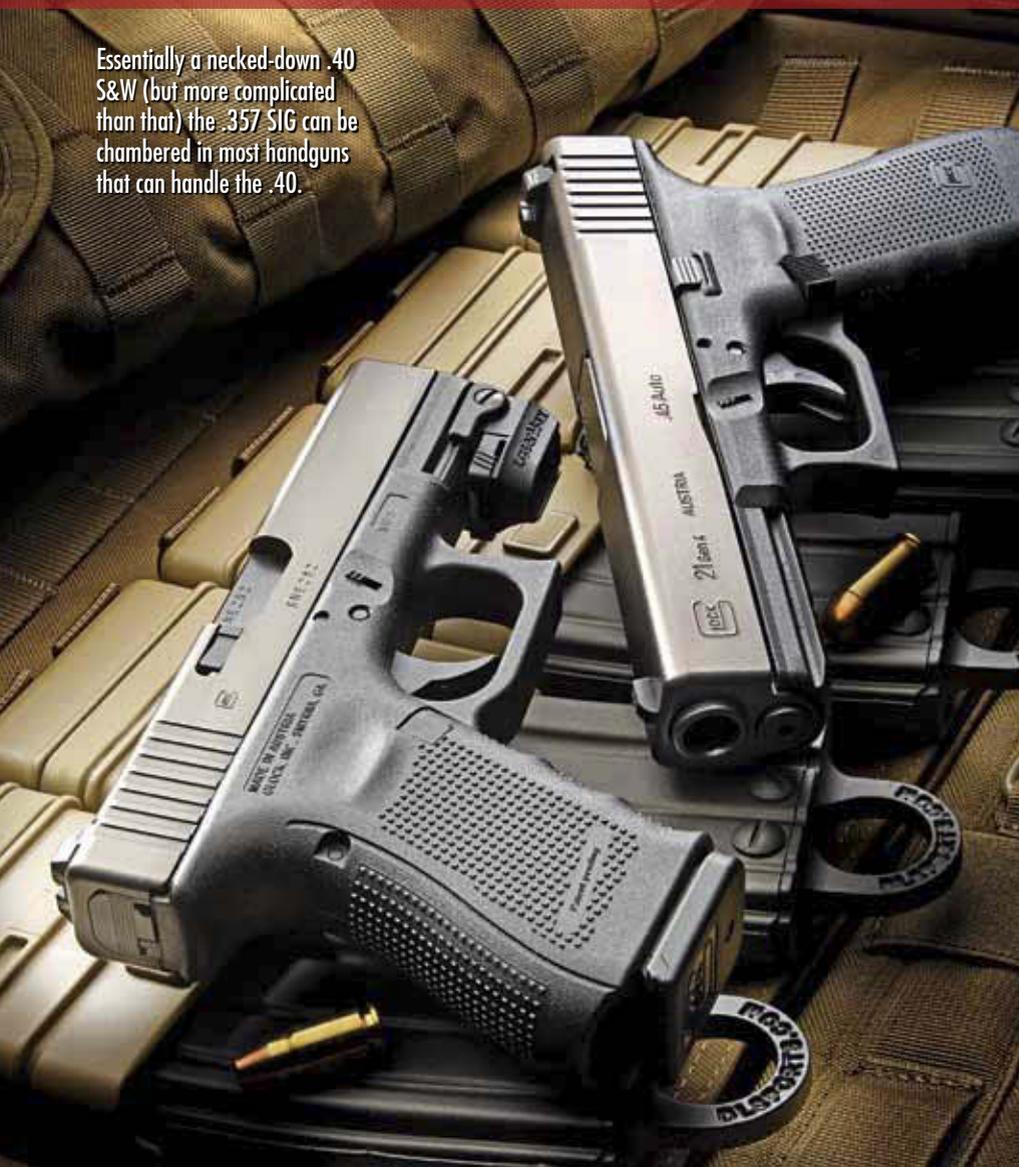


AMERICAN
HANDGUNNER



GLOCK 32 GEN4 .357 SIG

Essentially a necked-down .40 S&W (but more complicated than that) the .357 SIG can be chambered in most handguns that can handle the .40.



Size perspective. Top is Gen3 G31; center Gen4 G32; and bottom is Gen3 G33 ... all in .357 SIG.



Magnum hollow points they'd carried in the old six-shooters. Texas Highway Patrolmen spoke wistfully to Rowe about the "lightning bolt effect" the 125-grain Magnums, with nominal velocities of up to 1,450 fps, delivered on the street in their actual gunfights.

Rowe reached out to Federal Cartridge in hopes of creating an auto pistol round that could do the same, and the .357 SIG was born. Resembling a necked-down .40 S&W (though the construction is actually more complicated than that), the result was a jacketed hollowpoint that weighing 125 grains and actually delivering 1,350 to 1,400 fps.

Because of the different bullet construction, the .357 SIG created a different wound profile from the .357 Mag, distinctly deeper and somewhat narrower. However, when the actual shooting reports started coming in, it was clear users in the field were raving about it. And with bonded bullets, the .357 SIG

was second to no other duty pistol round for piercing windshields and auto bodies.

The Glock 32 is of a pleasing size, and its ammunition has earned accolades from real-world sources. Now comes the fourth generation version.

Gen4 Treatment

Glock introduced their first pistol chambered for the .357 SIG, the full-size 15+1 Glock 31 with 4.5" barrel, circa 1996. The compact G32 with 13+1 followed not long after, as did the Baby Glock 33, with 9+1-round capacity. The Gen4 version of the G32 was announced officially at the SHOT Show in January 2012.

The most obvious of the Gen4 characteristics is a reshaping of the grip-frame, which brings the backstrap forward and "allows the shooter to get more finger on the trigger." This is of particular importance, obviously, to those users with smaller hands and

GLOCK 32 GEN4 · 357 SIG



shorter fingers. Two backstrap inserts come with the gun. The pistol as is, out of the box, has what might be called a “size small” grip. One provided insert extends the backstrap rearward, giving the shooter essentially the same dimensions and feel of the Gen3 Glock pistol in the same configuration. The other insert will adapt the pistol to extremely large hands. (A tool to effect the change is part of the package.)

I don’t know of any agency that has adopted the G32 Gen4; it’s just too new. However, the feedback I’m getting from police departments that have adopted this-or-that Gen4 Glock in other calibers is the vast majority of their officers are carrying the guns as they come out of the box, without inserts: in effect, with the grip in “size small.”

A couple of years ago, Glock brought out their RTF2 series pistol, with aggressive raised “polymids” to dig into the hands and guarantee a sure



Economy WWB 125-grain JHP gave this 2" group at 25 yards.

grip when the palm was wet with rain, snow, sea-spray, sweat or blood. Some users found them a little too aggressive. The Gen4 has a “just plain” RTF treatment, in which the little protrusions aren’t as high or sharp. When carried deeply concealed against bare skin, there’s a slight chafing that bothers some but not others. When carried inside the waistband with a shirt

between grip and skin, we found the Gen4 to be no problem at all.

I carried mine IWB with a SureFire 200 light attached, in a Black Mamba holster from Jason Christianson at Concealment Solutions for more than a week and found it comfortable, concealable, and fast to draw and not hard to re-holster. When worn outside the waistband,

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DIAMONDBACK FIREARMS



TRIPLE POCKET PROTECTORS IN

9MM & .380 ACP

ROY HUNTINGTON

Diamondback's DB series is made up of the DB380 (top and bottom) and DB9 in the center. Either model can be had with several optional finishes. Groups from either the DB9 or DB380s tended to be around 3" to 4" at 12 yards (shown above), regardless of the ammo used.



Diamondback's DB380 and DB9 really are tiny. I mean, not just "these are a handy size" type small, but "Oh man, can you really build 'em that small and have them work?" The answer is yes, you really can build them that small, and yes, again, they really do work.

While we all have visions of never being without our all-steel 5" 1911, regardless of weather or dress, the reality is, um ... not. Unless you're a working cop or a die-hard CCW person, most of us tend to try to find a middle of the road someplace. And while our own Clint Smith certainly says carrying a handgun should be comforting, not comfortable,

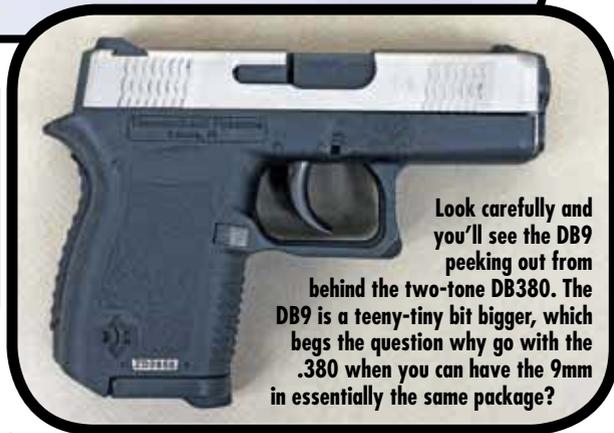
Takedown is fast, like a Glock. Here we've shucked the slide and bits from the frame of the DB9. Simple to do and shows the basic makeup of the guns.



The DB380s (EXO black finish on the left, 2-tone nickel on right) liked anything we fed them. Nope, they don't shoot 12 gauge too, that's there for size. They're tiny



Pocket guns need pocket holsters, like this one from Thad Rybka. Keys and such can catch on triggers and make things get suddenly loud. Knife is a new folder from PUMA.



Look carefully and you'll see the DB9 peeking out from behind the two-tone DB380. The DB9 is a teeny-tiny bit bigger, which begs the question why go with the .380 when you can have the 9mm in essentially the same package?

Clint is one of those rare people who seem to be able to do it. He really does carry a 4" steel Model 29 in a pocket holster sometimes, otherwise, a 5" all-steel 1911 rides in an IWB holster the rest of the time. But, not me. Call me lazy or call me a risk-taker, but I tend toward lightweight J-frames, polymer frames on bigger guns and on rare occasions, a older Les Baer 5" 1911 with an aluminum frame when I feel daring.

All of which brings us neatly back to the Diamondback trio at-hand.

Teeny Tiny

Yes they are, as in hide-it-in-your-palm tiny for the .380s and about the

same for the DB9 I have about medium sized-hands and I can essentially completely hide either the .380 or the 9mm behind my hand. No peeking out — you can't see it, kind of hidden. So that firmly establishes both the DB380 and the DB9 as definite pocket-carry material. Which is mostly how this sort of thing gets carried.

But first, let's put stopping power and all that to rest. Would I choose to rely on a .380, complete with short-barrel velocities as my only personal

protection handgun? Not me; but mostly because they are tiny and hard to manipulate well for me. In the real world, the .380 seems to work fairly well at convincing bad guys to stop doing what they are doing. Ditto for the 9mm. So, in the *real* world, you're *probably* fine with either. As long as they work, and you put good ammo in them, and actually hit your target.

Some Details

The DB380 and DB9 are both locked breech, recoil-operated, DAO, striker-fired autos with 6-round mags ... say *that* three times fast. The striker system is not pre-loaded, so it's a true DAO, with a slightly harder trigger press than the other pre-loaded designs out there. But, since there are no external safeties, that makes things just a tad safer. There is a firing pin safety however, so the trigger has to be pressed all the way before the firing pin will clear to strike. Also, the slide has to run in order for the trigger to reset.

Even though the DB380 is only around 8.8 ounces (the DB9 is about 11) the trigger pull was still easily manageable and frankly, very nice feeling. What's good about this striker system is there is no energy stored in the striker, so if you drop it there is much less chance of the firing pin being driven forward accidentally. Nice.

Continued on page 82

"KEEP IN MIND MEN TEND TO BUY 'CUTE LITTLE GUNS' FOR THEIR WIVES AND GIRLFRIENDS — BUT THEY SHOULDN'T."



The DB9 likewise seemed to shoot anything we fed it; although the heavier ammo tended to group a tad tighter ... for what that matters.

A FRUSTRATED RETRO-GUY



Andi Cristi

GUN-OWNING PITFALLS IN ROMANIA

As someone who is fascinated by all-things firearms, I've always admired *American Handgunner* magazine. Alas, I'm also someone who lives in what could only be called a country distinctly not firearms — friendly — Romania. Trust me when I say it's like seeing a tasty meal put in front of you, but just out of arm's reach. I am constantly amazed at the freedoms enjoyed by Americans. In most states, you can simply walk into a gun store (something we essentially don't have here), buy a gun, and walk out with it! That's unheard of here ... only a wild fantasy!

Some years ago, I took a chance and wrote a letter to Roy Huntington, the editor at *Handgunner*. I told him of my admiration of the magazine, and my wish one day to come to America to experience the freedoms you have with firearms — and to actually be able to

shoot some of the very guns I see on the pages. I was stunned when I received a package, and in it was a wonderful surprise of magazines and other goodies the staff at FMG had sent to me, along with a very kind note! Because of this kindness, I was able to have new copies of the magazines, to enjoy the wonderful photos and articles, and to make new friends.

The fact they took the time to take interest in one, very lonely "Retro-Guy" (what I like to call myself after reading Roy's editorial some years ago about good old-fashioned conduct) in Romania shows me the kind of people Americans really are. Over the years, Roy has continued his friendship with me, and we often exchange letters or phone calls. He's heard me voice my sadness at the state of my country, and the silliness at the fact it's virtually impossible to own a firearm here.

And in my case, as one who has such a strong interest in everything about guns, it's particularly frustrating. It's simply a hobby for me, and I would love to be able to take a .22 to a range and shoot a few rounds. But that will never happen here.

A Challenge

Recently, Roy challenged me to write an article about what it's like to be someone who enjoys guns, but is not allowed to actually own any; to tell *Handgunner* readers about what it takes to own a gun Romania, or if it's even possible. I said I would, although I had never written an article before. It's important shooters in the states realize what a gift they enjoy, and to never let it slip out of their grasp. We "gun-guys" as Roy calls us, are almost always upstanding citizens, people who help their neighbors, sup-

port their military, law enforcement and are always the first to offer help in times of turmoil like natural disasters. We are the very people who are not the problem, yet we suffer the consequences of the actions of the few who do abuse the law. And it's not right.

In Romania

Early in the 1900s, the times and laws were definitely different here. Certainly there were fewer guns than today, but the gun laws were also less strict and you could own guns more freely, without our modern day neo-communist restrictions.

Roughly 50 years ago, just after World War II, things changed dramatically when communism was in its bloom, and it engulfed all the eastern European countries, including Romania. Firearms were exclusively used by the military and law enforcement, and civilian ownership was unthinkable. In those times, prior to 1989, I distinctly remember just *possessing* foreign currency, (US dollars) could net you a trip to jail. That's how "flourishing" our communism was.

Nowadays you can own guns, but it's next to impossible for most "regular" people. It's very expensive and time consuming, a lot of paperwork, all kinds of ridiculous authorizations, and lastly — a "good reason." If you are a businessman, or handle a lot of cash, if you are a politician or a lawman, you might have a few more chances to get that license. But if you are a simple worker, or a taxi driver — "What the hell do *you* need a gun for?" And personal protection is out of the question.

Owning guns in the not-too-distant past was difficult, but today our gun legislation couldn't be worse. That was perfectly understandable in the former communist regime, until December 1989, but what about now? Things didn't change much; we still have some of that old mentality. Our "democracy" now is a neo-communist one, in which we have all kinds of new laws, technological thingies, cell phones, laptops, Internet and some other semi-useful



There are just a few models of "real" handguns available. For instance, a Walther P99 in 9mm is approximately \$1,400. Not only very expensive, but virtually impossible for anyone here to own!

A "rubber ball" pistol may cost \$545 to \$760. The round has a standard metallic case and powder, but it fires a rubber ball, around 10mm in diameter. I think an American handgunner would laugh out loud at the thought of putting down a 220-pound attacker with a rubber ball pistol, am I right? A "rubber ball" Steyr MA1 is \$820 and a Walther P99 costs around \$420. Silly, isn't it?

You could find guns on the black market, or in our neighboring states like the Republic of Moldova or Ukraine, but it's very dangerous. You may come



across an undercover cop — and then you're fried.

Our gun culture here is almost non-existent. People have *heard* about some types of guns and their names, like our Commie AK-47, RPK assault rifles, those old, ugly Tokarev TT30 and Makarov pistols, and maybe Beretta or Glock, but that's about it. A few more kids may know some types of firearms from their stupid video games, in which they fancy themselves "real" fighters who enjoy killing their enemies — but who would poop in their pants if they would ever fire a real gun.

We used to even have a couple of gun magazines a few years ago, but they ended their publication. Either due to the lack of readers or the terrible quality of their articles I suppose. Likely both.

Ownership

Gun ownership here is one of the toughest in Europe, and probably in the world. In order for citizens to obtain

a *non-lethal* weapon, they must get a permit from the police, and must register their "toy" once they purchase it. In order for a hunter to get a hunting-gun license, they must spend a certain "practice time" with a professional hunter, and jump through all the hoops regarding licensing and such. The use of "hunting" guns for self-defense is also simply not an option.

Continued on page 94



"To put it straight: I live, feel and breathe other people's guns. Don't let it escape between your fingers and leave guys like me in the dust."

gadgets — except that much-craved freedom to keep and bear arms.

Prices

Even looking at AirSoft "non-guns" is eye opening. A Colt 1911 Gold Cup clone costs around \$450, a Colt 1911A1 is \$270, a Winchester Model 94 costs \$560 — keep in mind these are toy guns!



Dr. Davis Bronson

BIG BOOMERS

Bad News For Your Median Nerve?

I'm a shooter. I'm also a plastic, reconstructive and hand surgeon. Because of these facts, I have some insight into the kinds of injuries that can be sustained from the use of big-bore handguns or even repetitive shooting — think: competition shooters. Let's define the situation.

The hand is a marvelous but delicate instrument. From the moment we tie our shoelaces in the morning to the time we take our shoes off at night, we use our hands. We use them without even looking at them. The hand can conduct a symphony orchestra, comfort a child, swing a pickaxe and shoot a firearm. Our nerves are so sensitive, we can tell a quarter from a dime in our pocket (stereognosis) and can tell where our fingers are without looking (proprioception). We also have very fine 2-point discrimination on our fingers (the ability to feel two points as separate and distinct).

What this tells us is we have an instrument also subject to injury. These injuries can be direct, as the result of force (barotrauma) or they can be the result of repetitive stress. Large-bore handguns can give us both, as can the simple acts of chambering, reloading, drawing and firing — thousands of times.

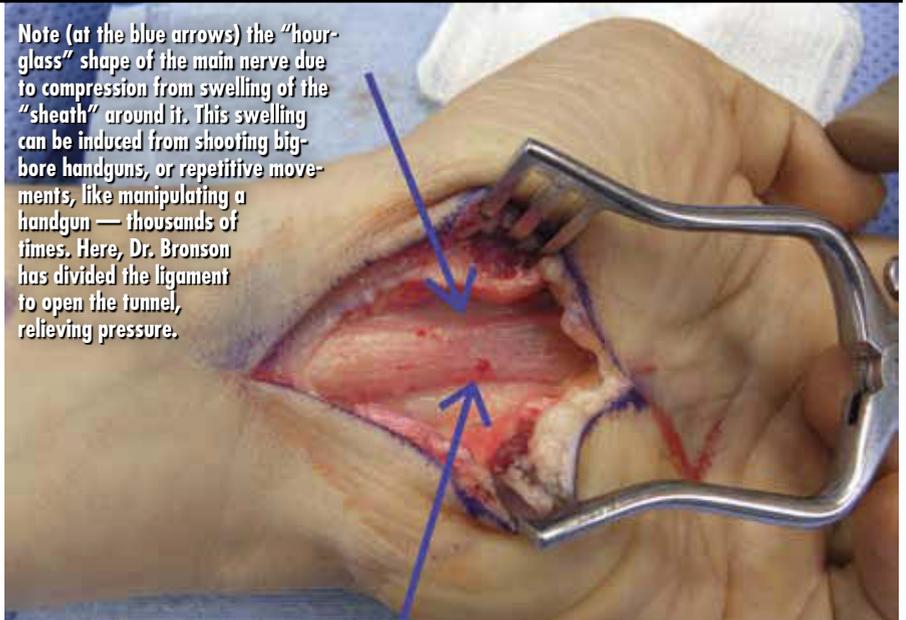
The Parts Involved

The hand contains a few muscles (mostly in the heel), many tendons and some major nerves. The muscles allow us to oppose our thumb, that magical maneuver making us so special. However, when pressure is applied, the cells in these muscles can be injured, and may heal with scar formation. This can cause firmness — that interferes with mobility. Hence, long-term abuse from shooting can create permanent dysfunction.

There's a structure in the base of the hand we call the Carpal Tunnel. This is a canal leading from the wrist into the hand. It's formed on three sides by bones, and on the roof by a thick ligament. Through this tunnel pass eight tendons (the ones flexing our fingers) and the Median Nerve. This nerve gives sensation to the thumb, index, long, and one half of the ring finger, as well as motor function to those opposition muscles I mentioned earlier.

When these structures are subjected to repetitive stress, the sheaths around the tendons swell. This increase in volume has no place to go, so the most delicate

Note (at the blue arrows) the "hourglass" shape of the main nerve due to compression from swelling of the "sheath" around it. This swelling can be induced from shooting big-bore handguns, or repetitive movements, like manipulating a handgun — thousands of times. Here, Dr. Bronson has divided the ligament to open the tunnel, relieving pressure.



Handgunner's Mark Hampton grimaces his way through full-recoil of a high-performance .45-70 load. Even though makers like Buffalo Bore, Double-Tap and Garrett make stout loads like this for many calibers, take stock of your own physical state and decide if moderation might be a good idea.

structure (The Median Nerve) suffers. Prolonged *compression* of the nerve can cause significant symptoms such as pain, numbness, tingling and ultimately loss of opposition of the thumb. We call this Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

What It Looks Like

I have included an intra-operative photograph of a hand showing the result of prolonged compression. You can see the tendons and nerves going from wrist to the hand. The large structure in the middle is the nerve. You can see the *hourglass* deformity that has occurred from compression. In the picture I have divided the ligament to *open* the tunnel and that is why the structures are visible. This is the surgical treatment of the injury.

Enthusiasts who shoot frequently can subject themselves to injury, and even permanent damage. There are those of us who shoot hundreds of rounds of 9mm and .45 ACP, and those who hunt with larger and more powerful rounds. The future-fix is going to be found in better grip design, innovative grip components and an awareness of what we subject our hands to. We have to pay attention to all these things in order to preserve



Photo: Mark Hampton

our ability to enjoy our sport. The major manufacturers are aware of this and are beginning to take these factors into consideration as they design new guns for us.

What Can You Do?

You just did a good thing by simply learning what goes wrong and why. If you're already suffering, see your doctor. While surgery is an option sometimes, there are other methods to help alleviate pain and to help with swelling. If you don't suffer (yet) take rest periods, experiment with grips, cushioned shooting gloves, shoot less and contemplate giving up the heavy recoiling guns, or at least shooting them in moderation.

Other than that, if you insist on continuing to abuse this delicate system, you will likely suffer at some point. Is it worth it?



THE HUNTER'S KNIVES

As a hunter, I'm a part of the nature and, though I usually no longer need to hunt in order to survive till tomorrow, I leave the computer world behind me when I grip my rifle and leave for the woods. Should I get lucky enough to get a kill, rest assure that I have both the experience and the sharp tool to take care of the prey.

Usually, any knife will do but of course, it's something special to use a well designed hunting knife where the blade shape and steel characters are well combined in a safe, hygienic knife design. Having spent more than fifty years in the woods, we actually know what you're looking for. So, check these knives or visit our website for more inspiration.

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 E-mail info@fallkniven.se Internet www.fallkniven.com

PRODUCT DETAILS	PHK	HK9	TK6
Total length (mm)	239	195	158
Blade length (mm)	126	90	67
Blade thickness (mm)	5	4.5	4.5
Steel	3G	3G	3G
Hardness (HRC)	62	62	62
Handle material	Thermorun, Micarta, Thermorun		
Sheath	Zytel	Leather	Leather

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PERSONAL

A CLOSE LOOK AT



TOOLS TO TAME THE TERRIBLE

Personal defense has several aspects. An obvious one is the law, but laws vary from state to state. It's important to have at least a basic understanding of the laws pertaining to personal defense, what weapons may be used and where they may be carried — in *your* state.

We all know the cliché, “Better to be tried by twelve than carried by six.” It's even better to be exonerated by twelve than to spend a lifetime in prison. Better still is to have police and prosecutor decide no charges are warranted. Best of all is to never get into a situation where the law becomes an issue.

Avoiding danger doesn't mean pretending it doesn't exist. It means being aware and alert. De-escalate. Defuse. Laugh off the minor indignities inherent in modern society. Walk away from a loudmouth. Holding yourself to a higher standard isn't cowardice, it's common sense. Remember the old wisdom: “A soft answer turneth away wrath”. In a 1942 Raymond Chandler novel, private detective Philip Marlowe counsels a man in his office, “A gun-toter oughtn't to insult so easily. Better ditch it.”

Use your imagination. Play the “What would I do if...?” game. You're at a bank machine, it's late and the streets are deserted. A scruffy looking man enters the little cubicle. What do you do? If he's a mugger he'll be on you before you can react. So do you produce a weapon and tell him to get lost? Maybe he's just a guy looking to get out of the cold. Maybe he's an undercover cop concerned for your safety. Not many good choices, are there? How about this: we do our banking in the daytime, when there are lots of people around.

Somewhere I read an article on advice for sailors. Paraphrasing, it said “The worst possible situation for a sailing vessel is to be caught in a gale on a lee shore. The only way to survive such a situation is as follows: (1) never allow your vessel to be caught in a gale on a lee shore.” See how it works?



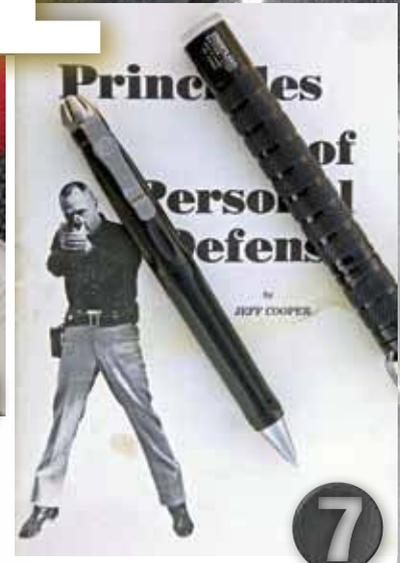
DAVE ANDERSON

1 I don't believe in keeping a gun under the pillow, but I do keep this LockSAF close by. I unbolted it and cleared the firearm before moving it for this photo. When leaving the house I close the lid to lock up the firearm, and at night use the fingerprint recognition pad to open it again. Insight Systems M6X light/laser, J-point red dot sight, and a couple of SureFire flashlights provide lots of lighting/aiming options.

2 On iron-sighted pistols used for home defense, I like tritium night sight inserts. Trijicons are as the saying goes, “good as any; better'n some.” Here they are on a Nighthawk T3. And remember, you still need a light because just because you can see your sights doesn't mean you can see the target.

3 A peace officer friend over for coffee let me photograph the Taser X26 he wears on his duty belt. Private citizens can purchase (where local laws allow) the similar M26 model. Unlike hand-to-hand combat, stun guns, or batons, Tasers let you stop a threat at a distance. Tasers are very well made, they aren't cheap,

DEFENSE



and there are plenty of experts to tell you they are either too effective or not effective enough. All I know is several peace officer friends carry them. As part of their training they had to "ride the lightning" as they put it. Having experienced the receiving end they have a lot of confidence in Tasers. Good enough for me.

4 In a defensive situation there is a very real chance you or someone with you may be shot or cut. Or you could be involved in a traffic accident or come on an accident scene. The typical first aid kit is fine for cleaning and bandaging small wounds but for really serious bleeding you need something better. Jeff Hoffman of Black Hills Ammunition gave me this kit and said to always have it available when traveling or at the range. This First Aid Kit/Pouch is available from Larue Tactical. It contains a package of Celox, to pour into a bad wound and provide clotting in a matter of seconds. There's a Cavarms tourniquet, Emergency bandage, gauze, and nitrile gloves. This kit or one like it can give even a badly wounded victim a chance of hanging on until the EMT professionals arrive.

5 Pepper sprays are a popular less-lethal option. They allow you to keep some distance between yourself and an attacker, they are relatively compact and inexpensive, and for most people in most situations are very effective. This is a small, handy unit made by Sabre. There are downsides as well; some people under some circumstances are relatively unaffected, and there is the chance of spray-drift affecting the user. Having watched some police training in the effects of pepper spray, and accidentally (at least, they said it was accidentally) catching a bit of the drift, I have a lot of respect for pepper spray. This trio of knife, pepper spray and light should be in any woman's purse, or man's pockets. Knife is a 5.11 model, light is a SureFire.

6 I like knives but don't like the thought of knife fighting. Ask a cop who has seen the results of knife wounds (and I have too). Often they'll say they'd rather be shot than cut. If you're close enough to cut the bad guy he's close enough to cut you. In movies and on TV it may be okay to take a cut to give a cut, but in reality getting cut is a Very Bad Thing. As Massad Ayoob once wrote, the idea of combat is not to take the bad guy with you, but to send him on ahead. Nonetheless a trained knife fighter will beat an untrained one every time. Having carried a pocketknife of one sort or another virtually every day for over a half-century, I tend to think of knives more as tools than as weapons. On my personal "force chart" I tend to think gun/Taser/pepper spray/stun gun/baton/knife/pop bottle/finger in the eye/.25 Auto. But I do respect knives. A peace officer friend who has attended autopsies of knife victims, and seen training



videos on knife attacks, said if a suspect 8 or 10 yards away advances in a threatening manner with a knife, he's going to shoot him. Just to show his respect.

7 Long ago Jeff Cooper wrote this little essay on principles of personal defense. Its purpose is not so much weapons and tactics, but to help mentally prepare. At some point in time you'll have to answer the question, "Am I prepared to fight, to injure and possibly kill someone in order to defend my life, or the lives of my family?" It's best to think it through ahead of time, not after a home invader has kicked in the back door and is coming down the hall. The pen on left is a SureFire EWP-01, machined from aluminum, and with a steel "glass-breaking" insert on the top. If you carry a pen anyway, may as well have one that could save your life in an emergency. It writes beautifully too. Streamlight makes "baton lights" though current ones are improved somewhat over my old model. Same concept, if you are going to carry a flashlight anyway, this one does double duty.

8 You can't have too many knives or flashlights. Flashlights are vital defensive tools. You absolutely must identify your target; plus a bright light shone in the eyes of an assailant gives a huge advantage. Somewhere I read of an NYPD policy where every officer gets a surprise "flashlight check" at regular intervals. If an officer doesn't then and there produce a flashlight, or if it doesn't work, it's a week's suspension without pay. Don't know if the story is true or not, but officers I know consider their flashlight second in importance to their sidearm. A flashlight should be available wherever you are. I'd bet many readers of this magazine have a light in their pocket right now. There are many good makes and models. I gathered these up with a quick roundup of the nightstand and kitchen drawer. Lights are by Leupold, Streamlight and SureFire; knives are by Spyderco, Gerber, Browning and Beretta.

9 Keep in mind body armor isn't just for cops or the military. U.S. Palm's Defender line is affordable and specifically designed for homeowners to be part of a home defense plan. It's light and offered in several models to suit your specific needs. They can be configured to hold accessories like lights, spare mags, medical kits and more. Give this idea hard thought, and keep in mind the U.S. Palm gear is top quality.



For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/product-index and click on the company name.

WIN!



AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

HANDGUN OF THE MONTH



A HARRISON DESIGN CUSTOM



1911 .45 ACP

AND ACCESSORIES!

BONUS



1 The Hinderer XM-18 folder is known the world over as one of the toughest tactical folders, regardless of your mission. Rick's focus when designing the XM-18 was a no-nonsense tactical tool ready for the simplest or most challenging cutting tasks. The XM Series CNC flat ground Spanto blade is the best of both worlds, offering maximum cutting potential in a blade that has a durable tip for prying. Blade thickness on the 3.5" XM-18 is a full .165" retaining its thickness right out to the tip. The blade locks up on a solid .25" diameter thumb stud, which is press fitted into the blade. The knife has a pocket clip for easy carry and deployment. **2** The Pro Ears Predator Gold NRR26 has the lowest profile cup for maximum comfort and concealment, is lightweight for extended use, is scanner-compatible for motor sports spectators and the cup size even fits youthful shooters. The plug-in jack allows you to take

advantage of and iPod or other portable radio devices using a 3.5mm jack. You can enjoy high fidelity sound while hunting or shooting, and be protected from gunfire noise, while still hearing range commands or your hunting partner's conversation! This is high performance, electronic hearing protection of the best quality. **3** From NcStar, the AQP1MG tactical green laser features all-aluminum construction, quick-release attachment via Weaver or Picatinny systems, a green laser, is fully adjustable for windage and elevation and uses a compact 1CR2w lithium battery. The 532nm laser at <5mW is easy to see! **4** NcStar's ACPRLS laser offers compact red laser performance in a package perfect for your compact or subcompact pistol. Fitting a Weaver-style accessory rail, it's fully adjustable for windage and elevation, and easily activated with the trigger finger. It's tiny, but capable!

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2. Do you price-point shop for ammo, or are you more concerned with quality? A) Price-point B) Quality
3. Do you buy ammo online for direct shipment to you? A) Yes B) No C) Sometimes
4. The caliber of your daily carry or home-defense handgun is:
A) .380 ACP or smaller B) 9mm or .38 Special C) .40 S&W or .45 ACP
D) .44 Mag, .45 Colt, .44 Special E) Other

Limit 1 entry per household. This contest is open to individuals who are residents of the United States and its territories only. Agents and employees of Publishers Development Corporation and their families are excluded from entering. Contest void where prohibited or restricted by law. Winners must meet all local laws and regulations. Taxes and compliance with firearms regulations will be the responsibility of the winners. Winners will be notified by CERTIFIED MAIL on official letterhead. ATTENTION DEPLOYED MILITARY: USE STATESIDE ADDRESS! No purchase necessary to enter. Giveaway guns and accessories may have minor handling marks or evidence of being test-fired.

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NEW!
TO ENTER:
SCAN WITH YOUR
MOBILE DEVICE

Custom pistolsmith John Harrison has been practicing his craft since 1992, over 20 years of attentive creativity with the 1911 platform. His obvious focus on careful craftsmanship shows in this custom 1911 created especially for *Handgunner* readers.

According to John, "Pistols I build have to first: function reliably; second: be accurate for the intended purpose; third: have the best 'feel' in handling that can be achieved (with the customer specified components); and fourth: have my best effort in styling and cosmetics. This philosophy results in a gun you know will function reliably and will be able to trust your life to."

What more could you ask for? Our sample gun shows the kind of attention to detail John has become known for, and we're proud to feature it. Beginning with a basic Springfield Armory 1911, John has crafted this compelling fighting pistol.

CUSTOM FEATURES:

- Harrison Design Custom Carry package as a foundation
- H-D Extreme Service 3-dot night sights
- H-D logo barrel bushing and interlocking spring plug set
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- H-D slotted Commander ignition set
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- Fitted beavertail grips safety
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- H-D barstock plunger tube
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WHEN DARKNESS REIGNS

JUST BLAST IT WITH THESE LIGHTS!

JOHN CONNOR

One evening, in his first year at Fancy-Pants University, my son was halfway up the crowded interior stairwell of the Sciences Building when the grid went down and the lights winked out. There was a moment of silence and someone whispered, "The emergency lights will kick in" — but they didn't.

Then, he said, "It was like tossin' a hand grenade into a chicken coop! They were about to stampede!" He unclipped a Streamlight Microstream from the collar of his T-shirt and shined it on the wall for maximum reflection. The chickens calmed down. Then

he took an old SureFire G2 Nitrolon out of his book bag and commenced "traffic control" on the stairs.

"Thanks for bein' such a pain about always having lights, Dad." That's my job: Being a pain. Now take a look at this assortment of photon-tossers, and just imagine me twisting your arm, okay? And remember, according to Roy-Boy, "His Editorial Immenseness" — you need "more 'en a hundred" flashlights until you have enough. So keep countin'. Connor *OUT*



1



5

6



7



2

4

1 At only 3.8" and three ounces, the DarkEnergy 214 from SOG Knives is a stout, stubby little powerhouse blasting out 214 lumens for 80 minutes from a single CR123 battery. A half-tap on the tailcap switch delivers momentary 40 percent power and another tap delivers full-power strobe. A push-to-click provides constant-on. Sometimes "blindingly bright" is just enough light.

2 SureFire's R1 Lawman LED is a rechargeable multi-mode multi-power practical tactical light that doesn't require a 2-semester course to operate! Three outputs from 750 to 15 lumens are selected by the head switch, while momentary, constant-on and strobe modes are controlled by the tailcap. It uses a Li-ion rechargeable battery pack or two rechargeable or standard disposable CR123A lithiums.

3 Fans of Viridian Green asked for a micro-light that wouldn't protrude beyond the muzzle — just a nice, bright multi-programmable 100-lumen light with a 140-lumen dazzling little strobe. They did it. The CTL is tiny, tough, and its ECR technology integrates with Viridian's TacLoc holsters so you set it, holster it, and when you draw, it's on!

4 Try the TK70 from Fenix Light, a stunning searchlight with three Cree XM-L LEDs pumping out 2200 lumens in a beam with 720 meters of reach that will blister paint, fry spiders and quick-dry wet waterfowl in flight! It runs for over seven days on four D-cell batteries. With three lower light levels, a strobe mode, and it's waterproof to IPX-8 standard.

5 The people at TerraLux went out and watched cops, firefighters, EMTs, utility workers and engineers actually using lights on the job. They saw 'em popping penlights into their mouths to put the light exactly where they wanted it. They also listened to the usual complaints about dim, fragile lights that alter colors. Then they designed the LightStar80, a heavy-duty penlight running on two AAA batteries, has a soft rubber BiteGrip and a high CRI (Color Rendering Index) LED. Go ahead, bite one.

6 LED Lenser's Magnetic Recharging Station means you can just stick it up and it stays — and charges, from a USB charger or the wall-charger. It's a tiny powerhouse and it knocks out 200 lumens on high (3 hours), 15 lumens on low (7 hours) and has a strobe. It's also got a nifty "1-thumb" beam focus.

7 Brite Strike's Camp Alert Perimeter Security System (CAPSS) is not much bigger than the 9-volt battery running it. It has a flashing LED system (red or blue), comes with fishing line and attachment options for setting your trip-wire and if the pin pulls, screams out with a 135 dB alarm. Also comes with two APALS, tiny waterproof LEDs you can set to constant on, or two flashing modes.  The military has gone nuts for the CAPSS and so should you.



4

For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/product-index and click on the company name.

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Alan Korwin



NO LAW ... OR KNOW LAW?

As a general rule, people don't know their laws. You hear "news" about laws, but those stories avoid the actual laws because (critics suspect) reporters aren't bright enough (or are too lazy ... or both) to read and understand them. What's the actual law on taxes you owe? Quien sabe? Oops, press one for English. Who knows?

Could you answer even basic questions about real estate law (you have a home, right?), zoning law (your home is in one place, factories in another, right?), education law? (Your kids are in government schools but the laws that control them are a mystery to you, right?) Yes, citizens of America in the early 21st century know squat about their laws.

With one exception: Citizens know their gun laws. More than any other field of law, people know and want to know and seek out and recognize the need to know their gun laws. They're honest people. Gun people are honest? Yes, they are. They don't want to run afoul of the law. They know the way laws are set up; it's easy to commit a minor infraction and end up in more trouble than a crook, so they guard against that.

This is a good thing. Can you imagine if the public wanted to know *all* the laws that are limiting their freedoms, controlling their lives, empowering their leaders and elites, protecting the ruling class? What a different country this would be.

But that's hope against hope. The public isn't going to study the fine points of immigration law (well, actually they might and are), or abortion law (well, actually they might and are), or federal reserve law, or election law, or ... maybe there *is* hope the wise example gun owners set will be adopted by others.

Controversial?

Is it controversial to know the laws? Some of our leaders think so. They really don't want you to know when you can use deadly force (or that there's a 50 state guide on that). They'd rather you remain ignorant of the carry laws (every state is different). Heaven forbid if you found out anyone who can legally own firearms is qualified to (gasp) own a machine gun (not valid in all states, how about yours?).

The gun-rights issue (never the "gun issue") is the only one where we people know and are *very* concerned about the law. This is exemplary. It is civil involvement in a way we don't see elsewhere. It's a model to be emulated, expanded, spread. You should be proud.

Gun rights are motivational like no other. Gun-rights advocates know the entire Bill of Rights depends on the right to keep and bear. "You can't arm slaves and expect them to remain slaves." If government has the power

Continued on page 84

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GLOCK 32 GEN 4

Continued from page 61

the RTF grip treatment does not seem to cause any great wear to the inner lining of cover garments, and it feels very solid and secure in the hand, which of course is the whole point of the RTF.

Engineering Details

A lot of thought has gone into the new magazine release on the Gen4, and I like it very much. Horizontally rectangular, it's easier to hit than the release button that has been standard since the '80s, but I've seen absolutely no tendency to prematurely release the magazine, even though I was looking for that. I like it much better than the extended release that comes on the target models, the 6" 17L and G34, and the 5.3" G34 and G35 of previous generations.

This Gen4 magazine release is reversible to the right side of the pistol for left-handed shooters. This keeps the button from being exposed to an impact that could release the magazine inadvertently if, for instance, the gun was in an exposed uniform holster and the southpaw officer was thrown left side first, into a hard wall during a fight that preceded his or her need to go to the gun. If the shooter leaves the mag release set up for right hand use, it will take older model Glock magazines of suitable caliber.

Speaking of which, the Glock .357s in all three sizes seem to work fine with Glock .40 magazines in the same three sizes. Moreover, the nominally 13+1 capacity Glock 32 will take the 15-round magazine of the Glock 31. And, I discovered by accident, the 15-round, .40 magazine for a Glock 22 seems to work perfectly in any size Glock .357 with 16 rounds of .357 SIG! While the case heads are of course the same size between the .40 S&W and the .357 SIG, the bottleneck configuration and narrower nose of the latter seems to alter how they sit in the cartridge stack inside the magazine.

Finally, the Gen4 array of features includes the double-captive recoil spring configuration Glock first proved on the Baby Glocks since 1996 and the Glock 30 in .45 ACP since 1998. It's theorized this will soften recoil, extend recoil spring life, and perhaps even improve accuracy. This design feature is partly credited with the surprisingly good accuracy of the little Glock 26 9mm, Glock 27 .40, and Glock 30 .45 ACP. Does it really do all this?

Subjective Factors

With no Gen3 G32 on hand, we put .357 barrels in a couple of Gen3 Glock 23s and shot them side by side with the Gen4 G32, using several brands of .357 SIG ammo. All four testers were experienced, competitive Glock shooters.

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Dave Chandler found the Gen4 G32 *very* slightly softer in recoil; Herman Gunter, David Rodgers, and I just couldn't tell the difference. What we did unanimously agree upon was the new double captive spring requires distinctly more strength and technique for racking the slide, than the earlier system required.

According to Glock, the Gen3 Glock 32 had an 18-pound recoil spring. The spring weight of the new Gen4 unit for this gun had not been specified at deadline. However, my source noted while the previous spring had a recommended replacement cycle of 3,000 rounds; the new Gen4 system is rated to go to 5,000. Both have gone longer in testing.

Less Popular Model?

Glock .357 sales are dwarfed by the volume of their 9mm and .40 output. American consumers being who we are, the question inevitably arises, "If it's not popular enough for everyone else to want it, why should I buy it?"

First, Glock .357 sales understate the popularity of the Glock in .357. I say that because a *huge* number of shooters have bought .357 SIG barrels for their .40-caliber Glocks (and other makes), and either liked them enough to keep them as an option or loved them enough to go to the .357 barrel for primary carry. Remember: with Glock or SIG SAUER (in *most* models of the latter), all you have to change is the barrel to swap between .357 SIG and .40 S&W caliber. About half of the people I know carrying SIG, Glock, Springfield XD or S&W M&P .357 pistols are carrying .357 barrels in pistols that left their factories as .40-caliber guns.

Second, remember it took longer for the .357 Mag cartridge to attain its widespread popularity, than the .357 SIG cartridge has been in existence. In the early days, well into the early 2000s, there were case neck separations with .357 SIGs, which was enough to turn me (for one) totally against the concept. The guns didn't blow up or anything, but you had to disassemble the gun to get that amputated brass collar out of the firing chamber.

The ammo industry has finally fixed that. As long as currently produced ammo and casings are used, I'm much more comfortable carrying .357 SIG pistols. Today, the .357 SIG is much like the 10mm Auto and .41 Magnum — appreciated more by the people who are seriously into shooting, than by those who follow the herd. As the old Ford commercial said, "Ask the man who owns one." Regarding the .357 SIG, ask the man who has shot living things with it.

Accuracy

I took the Gen4 G32 to the 25-yard bench with a Matrix rest and three different brands of the load the .357 SIG cartridge was created to be, 125-grain bullets at a nominal 1,350 fps. The

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Over the years, experience has taught me when you're shooting hand-held without a rest and have called no flyers, measuring the best three hits out of five will factor out enough human error to give a good approximation of what the pistol/ammo combination would have done for all five out of a machine rest. Charlie Petty and I proved the validity of that right at a decade ago in a test published here in *American Handgunner*.

Among the premium loads, the 125-grain Speer Gold Dot is by far the most street-proven .357 SIG round. It has long been used by Richmond (VA) Police, Virginia State Police, and the Texas Department of Public Safety. It has amassed an awesome reputation along the way for tactical penetration and for what is colloquially called stopping power. It also has an excellent reputation for accuracy. In the Gen4 G32, I had a 1.75" group going when I apparently blew a shot, extending the group's measurement to 2.80". However, the "best of three measurements" was a snug 1.30", strongly indicating this pistol is capable of some serious accuracy. For the .357 SIG aficionados (and their number seems to be growing) this particular flavor of Gold Dot was the dish-nosed, 5-petal hollowpoint, product code 23918.

The trio of loads was rounded out by another 125-grain model, the only training round of the test: Federal's American Eagle full metal jacket. This has proven to be the most accurate factory practice round I've yet shot out of my pet Gen3 Glock 31 with 4.5" barrel, and from the 4" barrel of the Gen4 G32, it delivered five shots into a 25-yard group that measuring 2.2" wide by .65" high. The best three measured 1.05".

Reliability

The bottleneck casing guides the tapered cartridge into the chamber beautifully. Departments using it report an extraordinarily high rate of reliability with it, no matter what the brand. It does, obviously, take some extra care by the reloader. In our testing, several hundred assorted factory FMJ and JHP rounds went through the sample G32 Gen4. There were no malfunctions of any kind.

Bottom line? If you're considering a pistol in this caliber for personal defense/concealed carry, the G32 Gen4 is definitely worth a look.



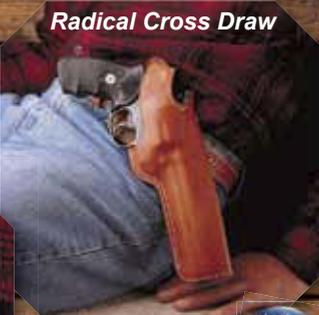
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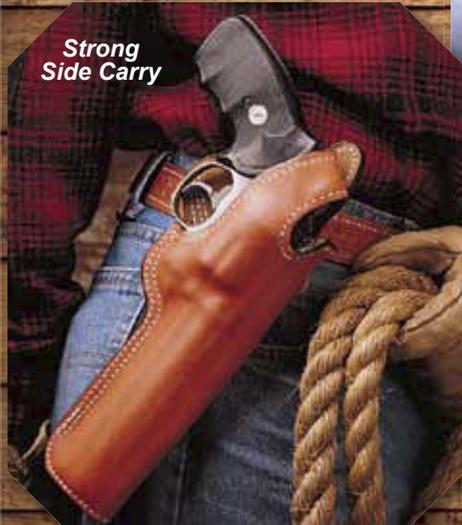
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SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 19

vast majority of you feel the same way. Do you recall the other Colorado shootings (both at churches as I recall) in which armed off-duty officers killed the shooters, preventing mass murders? I only wish there's been an armed citizen or off-duty officer in that movie who may have been able to take that murderer out fast. RH

S&W Kudo

I'm a gunsmith, and a customer brought a Walther PK380 he had purchased at a pawn shop into my shop that was misfiring badly. Knowing of Smith & Wesson's service and that they were Walther's US warranty center, I suggested he let me send it to S&W. I first called and was told there was only a one year warranty on Walther products, but to ship it to them with the caution there may be charges. I shipped it with a letter explaining we had no idea how old it was, or who purchased it originally. Also we had no owner's manual, no take-down key and, would they please return a second magazine at my cost. I heard nothing more from them for about three weeks.

Then, I received a package containing the gun, an owners manual a takedown key, an extra magazine and a letter explaining they had replaced the barrel and the slide. Fearing the worst I quickly looked for the bottom line. There was none. All that for no charge. Actually this didn't surprise me except I did expect to be charged for the extra magazine. I just didn't feel I could charge a customer for work that might be under warranty. I've dealt with S&W before and their service is unparalleled. S&W products may be a little more expensive, but you get your money's worth in quality and excellent service. I always recommend them to my customers.

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SIXGUNNER

Continued from page 24

barrel installed on my old original .44 Flat-Top.

Both of these sixguns are still providing great service after more than a half-century. Two more of those Super Blackhawk hammers went on custom .44 Specials. Super Blackhawk hammers are normally a drop-in affair, however you must know if you have an Old Model Three-Screw Blackhawk or one of the post-1972 New Models. For the former about the only sources now are gun shows and the Internet, while the latter is still in production.

“Speaking purely subjectively, I proclaim the Ruger Bisley Model grip frame as the best ever for handling heavy recoil. In fact, it even makes standard loads more pleasant to shoot.”

Most of the sixgunsmiths working on Ruger Blackhawks can provide custom hammers, and two of the best I know of are David Clements and Andy Horvath both of whom can supply wide target hammers on their custom sixguns. From time to time David also offers a custom drop-in Old Model Bisley hammer. At \$125 they're not cheap and you have to get on the waiting list. However, for me, they dropped in perfectly on a pair of Old Model 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ " Blackhawks, one in .45 Colt and the other a .41 Magnum. These are full-blue hammers and not only improve the handling qualities but also the appearance of these old Blackhawks.

New Vaquero

About five years into the new century Ruger dropped their Vaquero — which was built on the Super Blackhawk frame — and replaced it with the New Vaquero using the .357 Blackhawk 50th anniversary cylinder and frame. The originals handle heavier loads, however the downsized New Vaquero makes a more practical every day working sixgun, especially in stainless steel, and if one's situation can be handled by standard .44 Special or .45 Colt loads.

It has long been my contention

gun designers are nervous as they approach the goal of perfection often drawing back then doing something to make things less than perfect. With the New Vaquero it was the design of the hammer. They apparently tried to make it longer than normal to appeal to Cowboy Action Shooters and in the process managed to come up with a hammer that is not only harder, for me at least, to handle, but also the ugliest hammer I have ever seen on a single-action sixgun.

The Mounted Cowboy Shooting hammers and Fast Draw hammers found on special edition New Vaqueros for these two sports make more practical hammers, and that is what my .45 New Vaqueros now wear. For my .357 blued/case colored New Vaquero I turned to Ron Power for one of his Bisley-style hammers, which requires fitting, and this is also a grand improvement.

Gripping

Improving the Colt Single Action Army grip frame is not easy to do, as it's so near perfect to start with, but only with standard loads. When the recoil goes up the perfection of the original grip goes down. Somewhere back in frontier history some sixgunner attached a longer 1860 grip frame to a Colt SAA and found he had a much

more manageable revolver. VTI Gun Parts offers all the necessary parts, including both grip straps and 1-piece grips. The butt screw is also necessary as it is different than that found on standard SAA grips. Order a new trigger also just to be sure. These easily bolt onto any Colt Single Action or any foreign or domestic replica.

Harold Croft was one of the first in the 1920s to try to improve on the Colt SAA grip frame and after coming out to visit Elmer Keith on his ranch outside Durkee Oregon Keith came forward with his #5 grip frame which used a Bisley Model back strap and a SAA grip frame. Keith had very small hands and his grip frame is testimony to this. David Clements' #5 is slightly longer, while Gary Reeder's is even more so. These three grip frames give me the choice respectively of my little finger under the butt, half of my little finger on the front strap, or all of my little finger on the front strap.

Speaking purely subjectively, I proclaim the Ruger Bisley Model grip frame as the best ever for handling heavy recoil. In fact, it even makes standard loads more pleasant to shoot. In the past I have turned a pair of .45 Colt 4 1/2" Blackhawks, one blue and the other stainless, into Bisley Models simply by swapping out grip frames,

grips, hammers and triggers from Bisley Vaquero Models. David Clements and Jim Stroh have also installed Bisley Model parts on a .44 Magnum and a 5-shot .45 Colt, again making recoil much easier to handle.

Re-Contouring

As close to perfection as it is, the Bisley Model can be made even user-friendlier by slightly round-butting it. I am not a fan of extreme round-butted grip frames, however I do like to take the sharp edges off the front and the back of the butt. This probably does more to cut down on felt recoil than anything else, and can certainly be done to standard grip frames also.

Andy Horvath has over the past nearly 30 years now built a half a dozen L'il Guns for me on Ruger Single Actions. Five of these began as .22 or .32 Single-Sixes while the original was a .357 Magnum, which was turned into a .44 Special. All have slightly round butts in common. Finally, when it was time to come up with something special for Diamond Dot a Schofield Model was sent off to Gary Reeder who turned it into a Border Classic with a much shorter barrel and a round butt. Handles much easier now, thanks to the redesign.



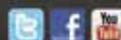
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FLOODED

Continued from page 55

sealed, was submerged at the same time.

Hornady's new ammunition waterproofing kit was used to seal both the primers and case mouths of the test ammo. Other products such as finger nail polish and blue Loctite, or a threadlocker, also make good ammunition sealants. Don't use red Loctite! The nail polish color that works best is the one your wife likes least; color doesn't matter. Actually, I really like nail polish as an ammunition sealant. It dries very quickly and comes in a lot of highly visible colors. The visibility of the sealant is important because you want to make sure you have it all the way around the primer and case mouth. The flat-type toothpicks work very well for applying the finger nail polish or threadlocker.

Check out the tables to see some of the results of this test.

What'd We Learn?

It's pretty obvious ammunition performance will begin to degrade rapidly with even relatively short exposure times to being submerged in water. It also shows it's very easy to make the ammunition virtually impervious to water just by using sealant. When the unsealed ammunition was test fired, it was very dirty, and left large amounts of unburned propellant in the case and barrel. The ammunition that was submerged for 46 hours showed a substantial amount of tarnish on the brass cartridge cases.

There is no doubt if loaded ammunition takes on water, the primer will become less sensitive and energetic and the moisture content of the propellant will increase, making the propellant slower in its burn rate. The end result will be a greater likelihood of misfires and steadily decreasing performance. If things are bad enough, the ammunition won't go off at all or perhaps even worse, you could get a projectile stuck in the barrel.

If you have ammunition that is not waterproof and it has been submerged for anything longer than 1 hour, I would recommend you break the ammunition down or dispose of it. If you are a reloader you can break down the ammunition and dispose of the propellant in your backyard as fertilizer, and fire any primers that will go off, then salvage the cases and bullets. You will likely want to tumble the cases and possibly the bullets because they will become tarnished. A little bit of testing with a chronograph will quickly tell you how bad things are.

What Can You Do?

The entire mess can be avoided by

storing your ammunition and components in waterproof cans or containers. Virtually any surplus military ammunition cans have a waterproof seal on the lid. There are also very good commercial waterproof plastic ammunition cans available. Make sure what you buy has a rubber seal in the lid. Anything stored in these cans, with a small packet of desiccant, will survive a substantial submersion in water for several days.

The other thing is to store things in Ziplock bags. I would especially look for the freezer bags because a lot of them have double seals and are a heavier plastic. They will seal out the water better and longer. If as much air as possible is squeezed out of the bag and a desiccant packet is placed inside, anything contained in it will be protected from a good dunking in water. Save the desiccant packs you get in most consumer electronics these days and put a packet or two in each plastic bag or ammo can.

Use the data in this article to give you some baseline for deciding on how bad ammunition or components might be that have been exposed to water. If you're in a flood-prone area, take some steps to protect your investment in ammunition and components. At today's prices it's an investment! As they said in the old days —  keep your powder dry.

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DIAMONDBACK

Continued from page 63

The frames of both models are the now classic glass-reinforced nylon so many of the plastic guns feature, but the slide and barrel of 4140 steel. Finishes are either Melonite (for extra hardness), nickel (our 2-tone DB380) or EXO (a nickel-boron treatment imparting corrosion resistance, natural lubricity and hardens the surface treated. Our DB9 is Melonite-treated, and the black DB380 is EXO treated.

Ergonomics are very good, even for tiny guns. The impressed grip treatment, slide serrations and "high" ride of the grip make them feel right at home in the hand. The DB9 has a slightly longer (front-to-back) grip frame to handle the longer 9mm loads, but is still easily manageable for anyone, regardless of hand size.

The 3-dot sights are excellent, and the closed rear of the slide will help keep dirt out. The magazine catch is in the right spot behind the trigger and the small beavertail helps to make the guns feel bigger than they actually are.

Disassembly is Glock-like, so after clearing the gun, press the trigger, then pull the slide back a bit, depress the twin buttons on the frame and pull the slide assembly forward and off. The recoil spring comes right out along with the barrel and you can clean and lube to your heart's content. It slides right back on easily, and presto, you have a gun again.

Shooting

I wanted to be bored with these little guns, but once I started to shoot them, I found myself saying, "Hey, these really work" and "Gads, I actually hit the target a lot too." I shot them at 12 yards, because I wanted to be different from the pack and push past the 7-yard point (what do we prove there regarding accuracy?); yet be realistic about avoiding the whole 25-yard accuracy thing (who cares?). Maybe it's silly, but to me, 7 yards seems way too close, 15 a bit far and, and 12 is "just right," as Goldie-locks muttered under her breath.

The photo with the DB380 (EXO finish, and note the nifty comp on the barrel) shows what ended up to be fairly typical accuracy for all three, with the 9mm shooting just a bit higher. I found the .380s to shoot about 6" low at 12 yards, so compensated by aiming higher to get this more centered group.

The nice triggers on all three made it easy to stage them, then finish the press to get a clean let-off. The .380s had a few hiccups early on, which is pretty common for this sort of little gun. But by the time about 250 rounds were run through both of them collectively, they were running fine.



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Recoil from the DB380s was nothing to note, and I've often wondered why people complain about recoil in these small .380s. It's simply not an issue if you hold on tightly — which you should anyway, because they need a firm-firing platform in order to run correctly.

I feel perfectly safe from errant predatory squirrels who lurk in the bushes here.

The DB9, even at only 11 ounces, was just as fun to shoot, and ran fine. None of them appeared to really care what ammo they were fed, and all groups hovered around the same sizes. These guns aren't about hitting jackrabbits at 25 yards, so let's be realistic.

So ...?

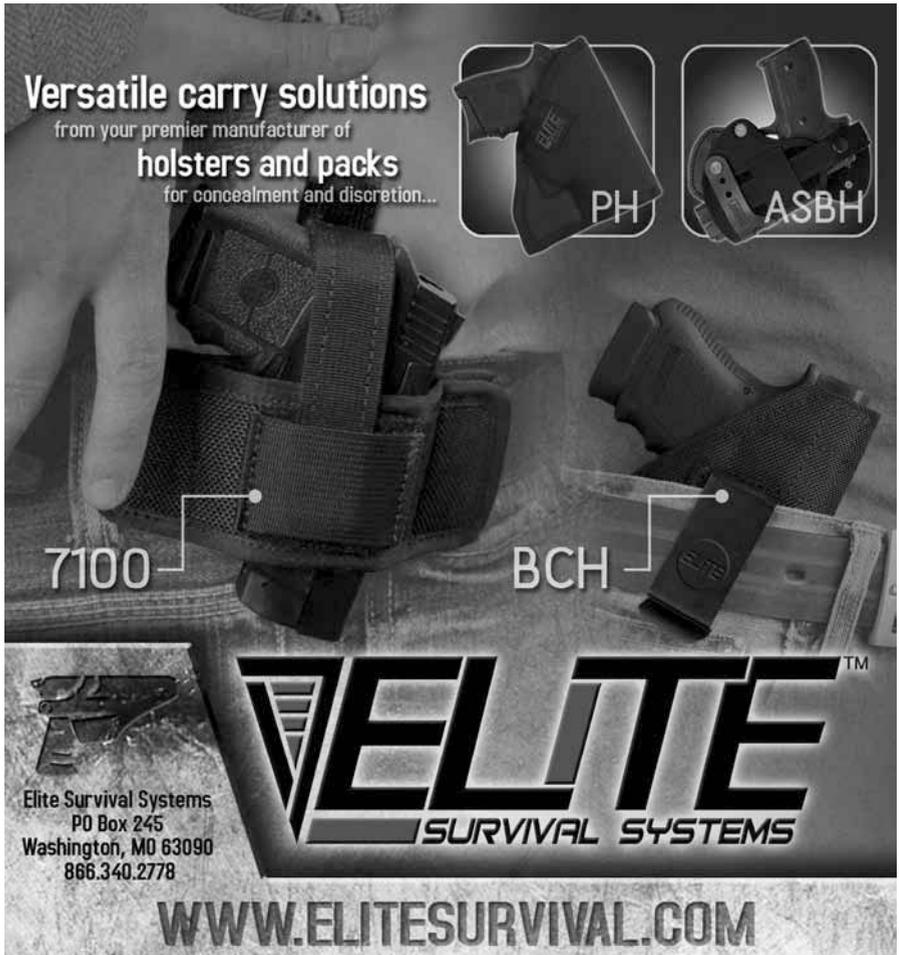
So, I liked them all. While I think the comp on the one DB380 is cute, I'm not sure it's needed. Yet, it does look slightly menacing, in a .380 way. Here's the final result of this foray for me. I look at them on my desk and say, "Nope, won't carry one." Then I pick them up and say, "Okay on the other hand, these are really cool little guns." Then I stick one of the DB380s in my pocket (in a pocket holster, thank-you-very-much) while I run the trash cans up to the dumpster we keep on our land, and I feel perfectly safe from errant predatory squirrels who lurk in the bushes here. Or the DB9 goes into a pocket when I run to the store in town, and I feel just fine about it. For me, the DB9 is as small as I feel comfy with as far as caliber goes. But that's just me.

Keep in mind men tend to buy "cute little guns" for their wives and girlfriends — but they shouldn't. Cute little guns are expert's guns and always will be. Like a J-frame revolver, they are not made for novices. So, resist that temptation, unless you're going to train her well. But for experienced gun people, who understand the limitations of small guns, I'd say you couldn't go wrong here.

Plus they are affordable, with the MSRP on the DB380 at about \$430 and the DB9 at about \$490, but you know the drill about shopping around. Oh, you can get them in some pretty colors too (teal, orange and pink for the frames) and, get this — you can even put a suppressor on some models if that's your thing and the law where you live says okay. But that's another story. 

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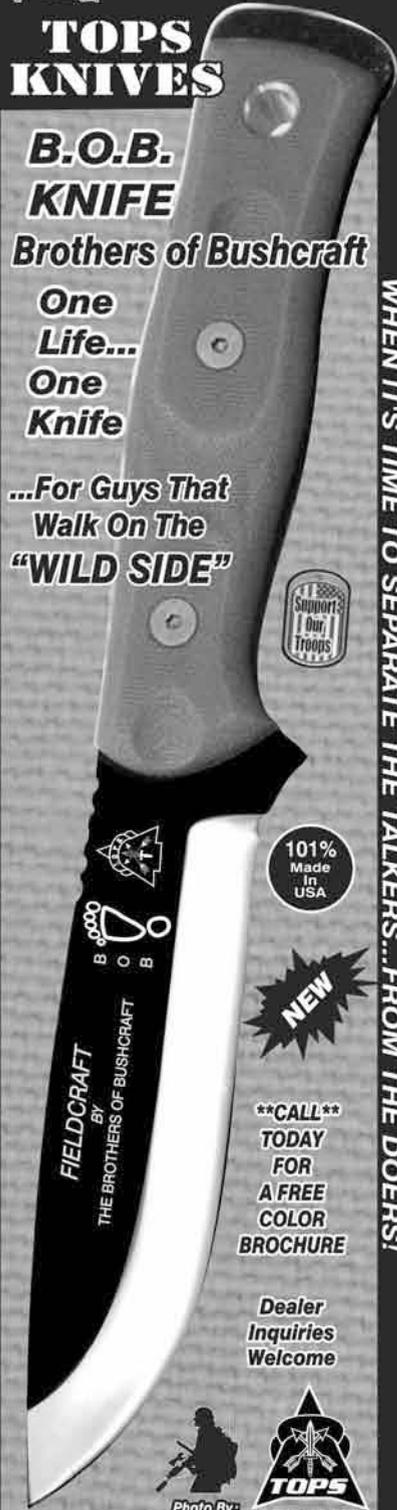
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GUN RIGHTS

Continued from page 73

to disarm you, then they're in charge, not you the governed, as it should be in America, land of the free. Half the world doesn't get that. They're sheeple.

When you're armed, literally exercising the fact you're a free person, and you run into John Law, do you know how to answer the inevitable questions? If an officer tries to roust you, make you feel guilty, just based on woofing, can you come back with some snappy answer? Do you have any idea how good it feels to be able to retort, "I'm sorry officer, but my firearm here is protected under section 133102, so unless there's something else, I have an appointment to get to."

Made Up Law

You may have experienced the tendency of some police to make up law on the spot, and use that to juggle your freedom in power-hungry mitts. Knowing the law short circuits, this not uncommon abuse. Police do a lot of things right, but understanding gun law isn't always one of them. When I wrote my first book, *The Arizona Gun Owner's Guide*, not a single thing I got from police made it into print — because not a single thing they told me was accurate or true. Not one — in an entire year of research.

If that doesn't motivate you to get and learn your local gun laws I don't know what will. Your freedom is on the line when you go armed, facing those who enforce the laws. A gun owner who knows the law is a powerful force. You feel better when you're carrying, because you know you're legal. You shrink the chances of a spurious arrest. You help the entire gun-owning community by being scrupulously compliant. In that regard, gun owners are good countrymen because they *know* the rules, and follow them.

"We should get rid of all those gun laws, they're all illegal!" you hear some zealots shout. Certainly, many gun laws are treasonous, abusive infringements on your fundamental civil rights. But others serve civil society, by disarming crooks, criminalizing dangerous behavior and providing a most basic tenet of justice: Law gives fair notice to everyone of behavior that is banned, the penalties involved, and *law limits condemnation of behavior that isn't criminal*. Gun ownership is legal activity, and your laws help keep it that way.  You need to know that.

Alan Korwin's company Bloomfield Press is the largest publisher and distributor of gun law books in the country, featuring plain-English descriptions of state and federal gun laws, at gunlaws.com.

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AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 32

Pence fired all six rounds in his revolver at the perpetrators. None of the Magnum bullets struck their targets. The suspects were simultaneously firing at the officers, emptying both of the revolvers they had used to kill the first two CHP men. Twining and Davis dove into their car to retrieve more guns: they had some loaded in the back seat, and more in the trunk. Twining dug out a 1911 .45 and fired one shot at the officers, and the gun jammed, its slide locked back with a full 7-round magazine still in the gun, but now useless to him. He dropped it and grabbed another 1911. By now, however, Alleyn was returning fire, and one double-ought pellet from his 870 pierced the back window of the Pontiac and, its force blunted by the heavy safety glass, inflicted a painful but non-fatal wound to Twining's forehead. Enraged by the pain, Twining emerged from the vehicle with the second .45 and opened fire on Pence.

Meanwhile, Alleyn's shotgun had run dry. His weapon had been loaded with only four shells, and CHP policy of the time had required tape around the shotgun's barrel and slide to show supervisors it had been broken any time an officer racked a round into the chamber. Some believe the tape fouled the mechanism, because the evidence shows Alleyn fired only three rounds, and somehow ejected a live round uselessly onto the ground. Alleyn drew his Smith & Wesson Model 19 to continue returning fire.

But Davis had reemerged from the Pontiac with a sawed-off shotgun. From two car lengths away, he hosed Alleyn with it. One blast of buckshot caught Alleyn in the chest — it was the time before soft body armor, remember — and another hit him in the face. Alleyn slumped down behind the patrol car, mortally wounded.

Simultaneously, Twining was shooting at Patrolman Pence with deadly accuracy. He fired four shots, hitting the policeman with three bullets, one in the chest and one in each leg. Still, the young cop desperately tried to reload his Colt, one cartridge at a time from Highway Patrol-issue dump pouches.

Bystander Helps

As this was occurring, former Marine, Gary Kness, entered the scene, saw what was happening, and courageously moved in to assist. He picked up Alleyn's dropped shotgun, pulled the trigger, and realized the gun wasn't firing. He pumped the action and was returned with a measly empty "click." Realizing now the 870 was empty; he picked up Alleyn's dropped revolver,

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carefully aimed at Bobby Davis, and fired. However, the .357 Magnum bullet from Almey's S&W apparently encountered the Pontiac first, because all that hit Davis was a bullet fragment that caused a superficial chest wound. Kness triggered the dying state policeman's .357 again, but it clicked on a spent casing. Knowing he now had no way to fight back, Kness sprinted to cover.

At about this time, to Kness' left, Jack Twining cautiously approached around the left side of Pence's patrol car, behind which Pence had taken cover. He apparently saw the officer's cylinder was still open. Emboldened, he lunged forward and was heard by witnesses to say, "Got you now, (expletive deleted)!" and, as Pence was just starting to close his reloaded cylinder, Twining shot Pence through the brain at close range, killing him instantly.

The gunfight was over. Both cop-killers convened at their car, picking up the revolvers and the shotgun of the first two officers. At this point a third CHP vehicle, containing Highway Patrolmen Ed Holmes and Richard Robinson, pulled into the scene. Both wounded and apparently unwilling to continue the fight, one or both of the cop-killers fired at the third pair of CHP men and put a bullet into their patrol car, then sped away in the Pontiac as Holmes fired two shots at them from his revolver.

Bobby Davis would be captured that night after another encounter with an armed citizen who wounded him, and the next morning, Jack Twining would make his way to a home where he took hostages and had dialogues by telephone with police and even a radio personality. When police stormed the house, Twining killed himself with Frago's shotgun. Convicted of murder and sentenced to death, Davis escaped the electric chair when California declared a moratorium on the death penalty, and hung himself in prison in 2009, at the age of 67.

Lessons, Updated

To the agency's everlasting credit, CHP studied the tragedy intensively and in 1975 created a training film that recapped the incident and concluded with seven lessons, using the mnemonic "NEWHALL."

The Lessons were: Never approach (until you have control of the scene). Evaluate the Offense. (The call had come in as one man brandishing a gun. It turned out to be far more dangerous than that.) Wait for backup. (Had the first two officers done so, they would have had the perpetrators outnumbered, and might have escaped the "action beats reaction" advantage held by Davis and Twining.) Always maintain advantage. A proper felony stop would have had force of numbers on the officers' side, and would have included waiting until the officers had a more prepon-

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derant position of advantage. Look for the unusual. None of the four young highway patrolmen in this incident had more than two years on the job. It has been said Gore had never before had a suspect fail to comply with his orders. Veteran cops concluded the suspects' refusal to initially exit the vehicle would have tipped a more experienced officer to the possibility of an ambush plan on their part, which turns out to have been the case. Leave the scene when in doubt, maneuvering to a position of greater tactical advantage.

Lessons From Lessons

The quadruple cop killing at Newhall sent powerful ripples throughout the LE world. For instance, of the three officers who returned fire, all were shooting full power .357 Magnum ammunition none had trained or qualified with, at a time when CHP used primarily light .38 Special loads in the training/qualification function. The violent recoil and particularly the blinding muzzleblast of .357 Magnum ammo, even from the 6" barrel revolvers all of them were firing, could not have been conducive to accurate hits under stress in poor light.

It was later determined 40 shots were fired during the encounter, 25 by the perpetrators. Walter Frago had been killed before he could fire a shot. Roger Gore fired once at Davis before

he was murdered by Twining. James Pence fired six shots and was killed before he could complete his reload. George Alleyn went through three rounds fired and one unfired, but inadvertently ejected from his shotgun, and four from his revolver before he went down, mortally wounded. Highway Patrolman Holmes fired two shots at the suspects from his revolver, at the end of the encounter.

“All the rest of us had relied mainly on the CHP interpretation. LASD had never made their results public. Wood discovered some interesting things.”

Shortly after this incident, though the CHP had allowed its personnel to carry .357s loaded with Magnum ammo instead of the standard .38, .357 ammunition was forbidden for some time and all sworn officers of CHP were required

to carry the new standard 110-grain .38 Special +P+ load. This order was later modified to allow .357 Magnum ammunition to be carried at the local post commander's discretion. It's my understanding only a few CHP districts, primarily in the northern part of California, were ever actually given this option. In 1990, all CHP personnel were mandated to carry department issue .40 S&W autos.

Clearly, a mechanical inability to reload in time cost the seriously wounded James Pence his life. The last of the officers to fall, he might have been able to cut down his approaching executioner Twining if he had been able to close the cylinder of his Colt Python and return it to action even one second sooner than he did.

Standard issue ammunition carriers for CHP in 1970 were slim, low-profile “drop pouches,” sometimes called “spill pouches” because they spilled loose cartridges into the hand of the officer performing the reload. Not long after that, the California Highway Patrol authorized — and then became the first large American state police agency to issue — speedloaders. Anyone who has ever worked with rapid reloading of revolvers knows how much faster a speedloader is than refilling with loose cartridges one or two at a time.

Twenty years after Newhall, in 1990,



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The application of tape to the mechanism of the Remington 870s was done away with shortly after the Newhall incident, and CHP went to great lengths to teach and reinforce modern tactics of felony stops and officer survival tactics.

Mike Wood's Revelations

One of my graduates, Mike Wood, was intrigued by the briefing on the Newhall incident when he took my class, and he resolved to study it further. He did something the rest of us had not done: he went to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, which had conducted the actual investigation into this incident, since it had occurred in their jurisdiction. All the rest of us had relied mainly on the CHP interpretation. LASD had never made their results public. Wood discovered some interesting things.

One was that, though it was known from the beginning the cop-killers had used S&W revolvers to kill the first two officers, it was widely assumed only one of the four CHP men had a Colt and the rest had S&Ws too. This turns out to be incorrect. All of the CHP officers were carrying 6" revolvers, but only one — George Alleyn's Model 19 — was a Smith & Wesson. All three of the others carried Colts: Walter Frago was armed with a Colt Officer's Model Match .38 Special, which was not fired until Bobby Davis snatched it from his holster and fired it at Alleyn, without effect. It was recovered from him after his surrender; he had fired one shot at the armed citizen in the subsequent encounter, and run it empty, before his surrender. Only John Anderson's 1999 book on the incident mentioned Roger Gore's gun was a Colt Python, and not until Wood's research with LASD was it made public that Pence was armed with a Colt Python, too.

A Myth ... Busted?

Since the incident, it was said Officer James Pence was found with six spent casings in his trouser pocket, having been trained to pocket his brass before reloading. This would have slowed down his reloading process greatly, contributing to his inability to engage his killer before Twining shot him through the brain. This had

already become accepted doctrine when I came into police training in 1972, and I, like so many others, dutifully accepted it as gospel.

By the time I researched this case and wrote it up for *American Handgunner* the first time however, it had become a subject of debate. As noted in *Ayoob Files: The Book* in 1995, "Though official sources deny it, some CHP officers insist Pence was found with spent casings in his pocket, a legacy of range training." It would appear Mike Wood has resolved the debate through his research of LASD Homicide files.

In September 2011, Mike told me the LASD file included a scene photo of Pence's six spent .357 casings lying on the asphalt where he fell. By third quarter 2012, he was able to show me that evidence photo. I can now accept Pence did indeed eject his empties in his desperate attempt to reload and get back in the fight.

Whence came this story? On May 9, 2012, Mark Schraer wrote in the electronic journal PoliceOne.com he thought it came from the fact the CHP, in changing its training after Newhall, also made it clear putting brass in the pocket was no longer doctrine. This apparently led to a generation of CHP officers believing this mistake must have been made at Newhall.

Not putting brass in the pocket is, of course, still a good idea, and if the point seems moot in the time of the semiautomatic service pistol, remember some auto pistol instructors still insist every reload must be a tactical reload, with every depleted magazine pocketed, even if it's empty — and even if there's nothing to refill it with.

In the classic 1980 police training text *Street Survival*, we find on Page 22 the statement, "Some officers have been killed because they took extra time to catch the ejected cases and put them in their pockets, as they'd done when shooting targets on the range." We know this was a problem long before Newhall. Bill Jordan wrote in the 1960s of at least one Border Patrol gun battle in which officers found their pockets full of spent revolver brass when it was all over.

Summation

The lessons from Newhall — the slap in the face of American police training that began the "Officer Survival" training of today — endure. But the diligent research of men like Mike Wood reinvigorates those timeless lessons. Keep an eye out for Mike's forthcoming book on this case. It will be titled something like *Newhall: A Tactical Analysis*, and will come from FW Publications, the *Gun Digest* folks, with an electronic edition very likely preceding the printed version.



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TAFFIN TESTS

Continued from page 36

cutout measuring 2" long by 1/2" wide behind the front sight. This performs two functions; first it cuts down on the weight of the slide making cycling faster and easier, and with less weight reduces felt recoil. It also puts more weight to the rear of the pistol, which most shooters prefer. On the top of the slide we also find a loaded chamber indicator and a cocking indicator protruding from the rear of the slide.

There are grooves on both sides of the slide below the rear sight and also toward the front below the cutout to aid in manually working the slide. On the left side we find cutouts on the slide for the frame-mounted takedown lever and slide stop. The barrel is match-grade and melonite coated. The slide is available in black or a satin silver finish, as found on the .45 example. Previous to this particular XD(M) model, the longest barrel available has been 4 1/2". I much prefer the longer barrel.

Polymer

Working our way down the pistol brings us to the black polymer frame. Behind the trigger we find an ambidextrous, easily operated magazine release allowing a very positive release of the magazine. There are two safeties found on the frame; one is in the center of the trigger and must be engaged in conjunction with a grip safety, before the XD(M) will fire. The integral grip has molded-in serrations both front and rear for a secure hold.

The XD(M) 5.25 comes with three interchangeable backstraps, small, medium and large. They are held in place by a transversal pin across the bottom, which is easily removed with a provided tool. For my hand I went with the smallest backstrap as this gave me the best feel and easy access to the trigger, and to me also feels much like a 1911 grip.

The XD(M) also has a 3-slotted accessory rail molded into the frame in front of the triggerguard. The triggerguard itself is squared off, with a slight hook at the bottom front corner. The front of the triggerguard also has molded serrations for those who prefer to place the finger of their offhand in this position.

The XD(M) 5.25s tested both came in exceptionally sturdy plastic carrying cases which will accept padlocks. Accessories abound, including a magazine loader, a polymer paddle holster, adjustable for tension. In addition to the three different backstraps, each XD(M) also came with three magazines, plus a tension-adjustable, double-magazine pouch, also polymer. The XD(M) 5.25 is not only set up for competition, but



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FMG PUBLICATIONS

with the polymer holster and magazine pouch it's also ready for concealed carry or maybe IDPA competition.

Although it can be said, our own Editorial Highness, Roy, used a dead-stock loaner XD(M) 5.25 with the supplied paddle holster to compete in the recent Bianchi Cup media event side match! Let's just say he said he'll actually practice for next year's match, and was so impressed with the performance of the pistol, he bought the loaner XD(M) 5.25 to use again.

Plain Fun To Shoot

Shooting the XD(M)s was nothing but pure pleasure. Because of the weather conditions, cold and windy, I was able to chronograph outside but I'm not tough enough anymore to shoot serious groups outside in such conditions. So the indoor range is a godsend. However, I can normally see the sights better and shoot tighter groups outside. There's simply nothing that beats natural lighting. With that being said, all loads are more than adequate for action shooting competition, however I would expect the groups to be tighter when shot outdoors.

The .45 ACP XD(M) 5.25 was test-fired with 13 loads, both factory and handloads; while 15 factory loads were channeled through the 9mm XD(M) 5.25. Both pistols, as expected from Springfield Armory, performed flawlessly with no failures to feed. The .45 digested jacketed bullets from 185-grain JHPs to 230-grain FMJs, and cast bullets from 200 to 230 grains.

One of my favorite handloads for the .45 is the H&G #68 (or RCBS #45-201 or Oregon Trail Laser Cast 200 SWC). At 200 grains this SWC is loaded over 7 to 7.5 grains of Unique, for from 1,000 to 1,075 fps. The latter load came from Jeff Cooper and is about as much power as one should expect from a standard .45 ACP. Indoors this load places five shots in 2" at 20 yards and I'll bet it will do closer to 1" outside.

The 9mm

Turning to the 9mm XD(M) resulted in even better groups overall than the .45. This could be more a result of less felt recoil than actual pistol or load performance. The best group proved to be from the Winchester 115 FMJ, with a solid 1" group, even when shooting indoors. My preferred self-defense loads also have bullets that weigh in at 115 grains, with the Black Hills +P doing 1,335 fps, Hornady XTP-JHP at 1,200 fps and the Speer Gold Dot JHP also at 1,200 fps.

Before receiving these test XD(M) 5.25s I had been shooting a standard XD .45 with a 4.5" barrel and a 9mm with the 3.8" barrel. I have a strong feeling both of these will see less work, while the 5.25s will see much more. MSRP on the XD(M) 5.25s is \$795 to \$895. It's money well spent.



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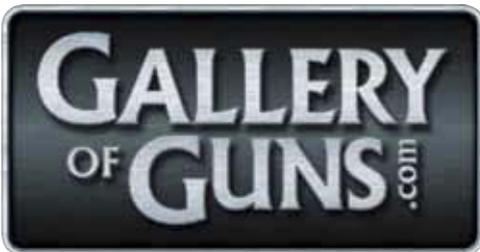


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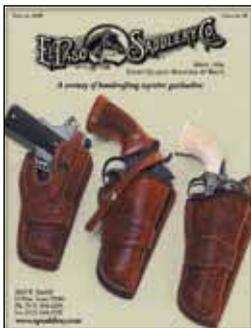
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RETRO-GUY

Continued from page 65

According to most sources, the country with the *most* firearms is America. Bravo-bravo! Kudos to the US! Stats estimate as many as 75 percent of citizens in the US own at least one firearm.

On the other hand, in Romania, with a population of around 23 million, the percentage of firearm ownership is about .7 to .8 percent of the population (less than 1 percent), quite a difference, isn't it? Today in Romania, there are roughly 62,000 non-lethal weapons; around 8,500 to 9,000 people have 15,000 to 15,500 "firearms" of all kinds (think rubber ball guns too), among which 6,000 are actual cartridge-firing guns. That puts us in exactly last place in Europe. And out of 178 countries globally — we are in 160th place. Yippee for us.

Final Thoughts

It's said God didn't make men equal, Samuel Colt did. It's known throughout history infamous criminals used guns for their dark purposes. But what about the good guys? What about the Wyatt Earps, Pat Garretts, James Hickoks, Bat Master-sons and thousands of other law enforcement officers and brave citizens? Should they have used nice words to fight crime? Or maybe they should have used pepper spray or rubber ball pistols against bad guys armed with 10-gauge shotguns?

Where is Romania's 2nd Amendment? Our right to keep and bear arms? Non-existent. Our government says it will protect us from terrorists, bad guys and criminals. Yet, I fear our government is infected with a communist virus, with an unfounded fear that a gun — any gun — is like an A-bomb, and it will blow us all to kingdom come. Besides, they can't protect us, and we know that. Who protects us from them?

Handgunner's own John Taffin once said: "I want you to buy a gun for America." Well, I say buy two, or three or more, not only for America, but for yourselves, for all of us who can't, and for the sake of it — to show those gun-control inquisitors we are still a power. The Navy SEAL quote saying, "Two is one, one is none," applies. 1, for one, may be *none*, but together we are *one*, (hopefully a *big one*) and we can make a difference.

To put it straight: I live, feel and breathe *other* people's guns. Don't let it escape between your fingers and leave guys like me in the dust.

As for being a handgunner in Romania? For the moment, that's just a sweet dream, far away from becoming a reality, but I still live with the hope. Virtute et Armis, from your friend Andi in Romania.



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SOARING STEEL

Continued from page 53

one of the first to collaborate with custom knifemakers for designs, a custom that is more the rule and not the exception among manufacturers today. Two of those early collaborators — Mel Pardue and Warren Osborne — are still very active members of the Benchmade design team to this day.

Built On Quality

From the very beginning Les De Asis has been a stickler for quality. Benchmade PR Coordinator Alicia Hunt tells *Handgunner*, “Benchmade caters to the knife user who is looking for high quality knives and edged tools that deliver superior performance and provide great value. Our customers appreciate the Benchmade philosophy of the three Ms: materials, mechanisms and manufacturing. Benchmade uses premium blade steels and strong durable handle materials built to last. We use patented locking mechanisms, like the AXIS lock, providing reliability and enhanced function. At our factory in Oregon City, Benchmade uses ultra-modern laser cutters and CNC machining centers offering precision and control. Consumers like Bench-

made knives because they are 100-percent manufactured in the USA.”

The Benchmade philosophy of bringing in talented custom knifemakers and other knowledgeable professionals, such as military experts, has only expanded over the years. “Benchmade believes working with custom designers and other experts creates the most innovative and functional designs in the industry,” said Alicia. “These skilled artisans and craftsmen pour their passions into their work and agonize over every detail. By collaborating with a selection of world-class custom designers, we’re able to tap into the newest locking mechanisms, modern materials and custom blending and finishing techniques. These designers include Mel Pardue, Bill McHenry and Jason Williams, Warren Osborne, Seiichi Nakamura, Shane Sibert, Ken Steigerwalt, Eddie Killian, Matthew Lerch, Charles Marlowe and Greg Thompson.”

Innovation has also helped spur the Benchmade brand to the top. In 1998 the company debuted the AXIS lock, a distinct break from the liner-lock system common throughout the tactical folder realm. The AXIS lock — which uses a locking bar actuated by springs located within the handle — offered several advantages, including strength, ambidexterity and ease of

use. Another advantage inherent in the AXIS design is its ability to adapt to automatic configuration.

Diversity Breeds Sales

Keeping an open mind and spreading their designs over a variety of talent has allowed Benchmade to offer a diverse line of knives, broadening their customer base. The 710 McHenry & Williams was the manufacturer’s first knife to feature the AXIS lock and it’s still going strong. One main attraction is the relatively flat cross section making for a comfortable, easy to conceal everyday carry design.

Typical of their modern tactical designs are the Onslaught, Mini-Barrage and Triage. The Onslaught is a tenacious Bob Lum (deceased) design featuring a swoopy-modified, clip-point blade mated to a curvaceous handle. Often the company will follow one of their popular tactical designs with smaller versions. The Mini-Barrage is a downsized version of their full-size release, featuring the same slick handle design; AXIS lock and spring assisted opening mechanism.

The Triage is a state-of-the-art rescue knife with few peers. Designed around the AXIS lock platform, the Triage series offers a choice of blade styles, from a workhorse sheep’s foot to a blunt tipped safety version along with textured, slip-



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Because their quality has always been of a higher standard than most production fare, Benchmade was pigeonholed as a high-end manufacturer for many years. The release of the Griptilian series folders in 2001, designed by Mel Pardue, helped change that perception. Here was an "everyman's folder" meeting the company's standards for quality, included their popular AXIS lock, and having a price tag well within the average knife user's means.

A Mini-Griptilian was released the following year, garnering the 2002 Shooting Industry Knife of the Year award, and proving every bit as popular as its bigger sibling. According to Alicia, "The Griptilian family of knives has been the most popular Benchmade knife to date. There are currently hundreds of different versions of the Griptilian, because of all the different blade styles and handle colors. We even have a Custom Griptilian program where you can pick blade steel, handle color, blade style and choose all the different components."

Benchmade's knives have been a popular choice among our military troops ever since the release of the AFO. The company supplies a wide array of knives and tools — such as their Tomahawk, and three variations of their rescue/safety hooks — through the MSN and GSA Advantage stocking programs, including the Auto Presidio, Auto Stryker and Infidel automatics. The Auto Presidio and Auto Stryker are both converted versions of popular AXIS lock versions released first as consumer knives, while the Infidel is a dedicated "out-the-front" model.

But There's More

As if the company didn't have enough on its plate, they also produce knives under several other labels, "In addition to knives manufactured under the Benchmade brand, we also have exclusive licensees to manufacture and market Harley-Davidson Knives, HK Knives and Lone Wolf Knives." The company also produces the Bone Collector line of sporting knives, in collaboration with *Outdoor Channel* hunting guru Michael Waddell.

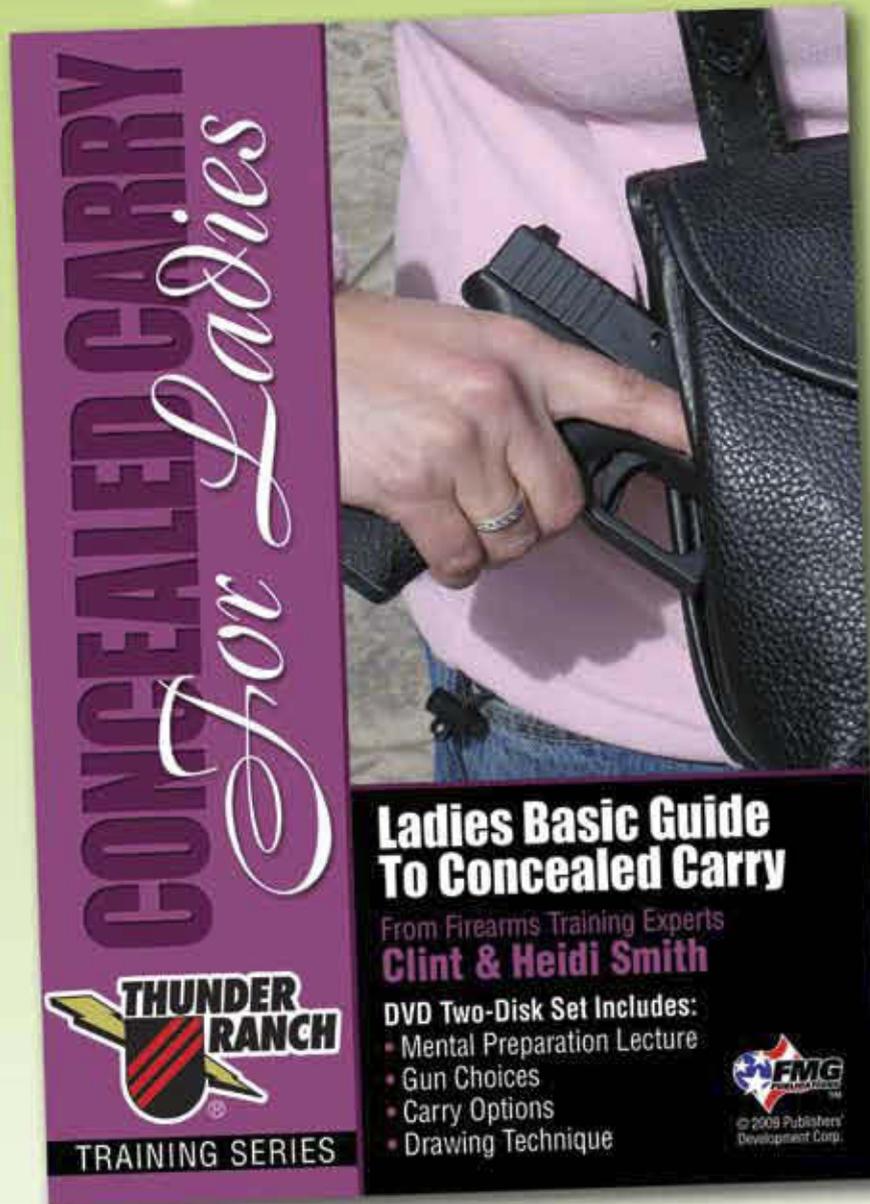
The Benchmade story is a classic example of why the American free enterprise system is the best in the world. Who could have predicted a young entrepreneur's passion for the simple butterfly knife would take flight and soar to such great heights? Reckon if you like something well enough the sky's the limit, which is certainly true in Les De Asis' case.

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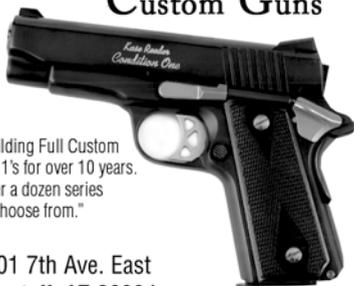
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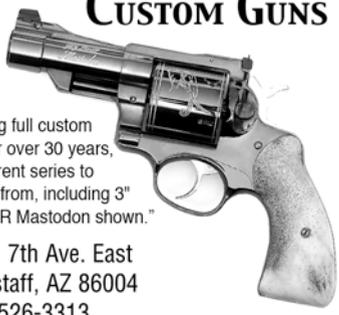
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I DON'T HATE

Continued from page 51

will your magazine have on the cover next?" I could only reply, "It will be one sort or another." That was true. Without actually bogging my head and totally refusing, I resisted writing about 9mms.

Even when I began amassing a collection of World War II firearms, 9mms were ignored at first. I even bought one of the extremely ugly Webley Mk VI .455s several years before adding a 9mm to the collection. Then in 2007, I had one of those epiphany things — I decided to buy a German MP40 submachine gun. Of course, it was 9mm and that seemed to break the dam. While I was waiting for the MP40's paperwork to clear and while I had some spending cash in my pocket, I figured an MP40 needed a Luger as a companion piece. Of course that decision was made while at a gun show where there were several to choose from.

The one I bought was made by Mauser in 1937 or '38 and typical of what the German Wehrmacht termed Pistole 08 or P08 for short. They have 4" barrels, checkered wooden grips, and a unique toggle action. Overall, mine is in great condition, albeit with a few tiny exterior pits likely from being in a damp leather holster. To my own surprise I fell in love with my Luger. It's accurate and hits to its sights, after I drifted the front blade slightly. It also functions perfectly as long as it is fed roundnose bullets. Nothing else works. With its mild recoil and rightly vaunted point-ability it's a true joy to shoot, and its beautiful craftsmanship is likewise a joy to behold.

The Slippery Slope

At the next gun show I rented table space in order to rid myself of a bunch of excess shooting and reloading equipment crowding my office. It sold like hotcakes, so with pockets full again I got to thinking about World War II P38s. Coincidentally a fellow across the aisle from me just happened to have several on display. The one I bought was made by Mauser in 1943, and in the beginning shot way low. No problem since P38 sight blades in various heights cost modestly, so it was easy to fit the proper one to bring the point of impact up with the same loads favored by my Luger.

I also ended up with three Hi-Powers. One made in Belgium while under German occupation and with Wehrmacht acceptance stamps. Another was made in Canada by the John Inglis Company and sold to China. It even has the original wooden shoulder stock/holster. And I also found a second Inglis, issued either to Canadian or British forces late in the war. Here's a fact I find interesting. My German Luger and P38 occasionally have a failure to feed or failure to eject,

both with factory loads and handloads. That has so far never happened with any of the Browning Hi-Powers. They work perfectly with every sort of ammo I've put through them.

Cheaper Shooting

That brings us to the topic of handloading the 9mm Parabellum, as the round is formally known. By this time I knew my expenditure of 9mm ammo was going to be considerable. Along with the pistols, my MP40 had arrived, a British STEN Mk II subgun's paperwork was being processed and I was beginning to eye those Browning Hi-Power pistols from World War II. It seemed proper to have a Dillon Square Deal II set up permanently for 9mm, with a seating die stem for roundnosed bullets. When mounted in the spring of 2008 its powder measure was set for 4.4 grains of HP38 (aka W231). To date, it has never been touched, although I confirm its settings using an accurate scale each time the press is used.

Also it's no secret to any of you handloading readers jacketed bullet prices are soaring upwards, so I searched the Internet for bargains. In regard to 115- and 125-grain full metal jacket (FMJ) types I found the best prices with a brand called Zero Bullets. Also on a trip I also stocked up with Oregon Trail's cast 124-grain RNs. Then too, being a bullet caster myself, I got a Lyman mould, #356242, for a 120-grain RN. All of these bullets over the said powder charge shoot accurately enough from my 9mms, but I admit the carbon fouling left from cast bullet lubricant does gum up the subguns much more quickly than FMJs.

Likes 'Em Now

In the last 4 years I've fired thousands of rounds through these five 9mm handguns and two 9mm subguns and have enjoyed it immensely. In fact I've fired more rounds through 9mm handguns lately than any other handgun caliber. That's quite a statement coming from someone who's written books on single action revolvers!

The 9mm is a fine, economical, accurate little cartridge. I don't hate it anymore. His eminence Roy, recently asked me to check out a couple of new semiautos and I didn't bog my head a bit. You'll read about them soon. He said, "Gads Duke, I detect a change in the force," — whatever that means.

A short time ago, some long-time friends called. Their 18-year-old daughter asked for a pistol for her high school graduation. Yup, that sort of thing happens in Montana. Her folks favored one in .40 S&W. When asked for an opinion I said, "Have you considered a 9mm?" Guess that force-thing His Editorship was talking about might be true?





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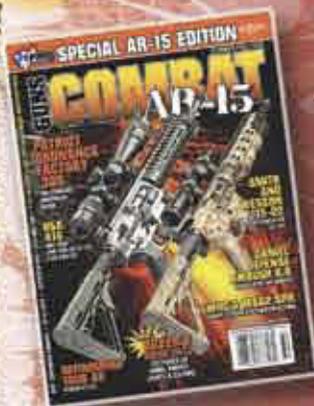
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CRIMSON TRACE

We're going to show you two goodies in the space of one; since they are both nifty and I couldn't wait to get both in front of you. The Rail Master (Model CMR-201) is your standard 5MW class 3R laser, but what helps to make it interesting is the fact it fits on virtually any gun with a rail (either a Picatinny- or Weaver-style). From rifles to shotguns or just about any handgun out there, the Rail Master clips on (using supplied adaptors to tailor the best fit), and offers handy "touch" on/off sensors on either side you reach with a finger, with a 5-minute auto shut off. It zeros to your sights using supplied tiny hex wrenches, and offers over four hours of "on" time with the supplied battery.

And now, drum roll please — you can get Crimson Trace Laser Grips (Model LG-487) for your full-sized Springfield Armory XD(M) series pistols. Thanks to the fact you can easily replace the rear gripstrap insert on the guns, Crimson Trace took advantage of that feature, allowing fast and secure installation of their laser by simply replacing the grip insert on the XD(M). Even though you'll lose the "custom" insert feature, the Crimson Trace, when installed, feels about like the small to medium one supplied by Springfield. It fit my smallish hand just fine, but also gives enough

"meat" for those beefier hands.

Unlike other models, this one activates the laser with a pressure switch on the backstrap. I found it easy to turn the laser on by simply squeezing my grip a tad. Once zeroed, this system allows you to mount a light on the rail, yet still have the option of a laser sight if you like. What will they think of next? *For more info: (800) 442-2406, www.americanhandgunner.com/crimson-trace*



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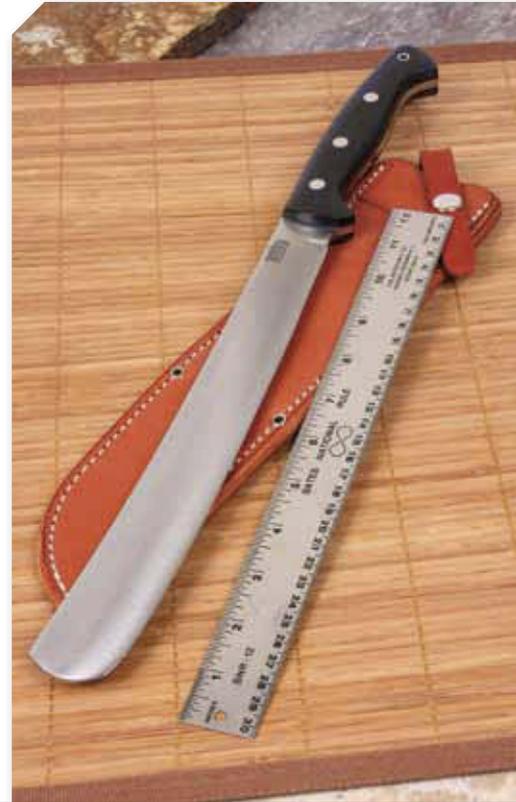
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BARK RIVER GOLOK

Bark River Knives of Escanaba, Mich. is a family-owned business, specializing in some of the most elegantly designed, simple, work/hunting/survival knives going. I see hundreds of knife designs every year, but only now and again do any really stand out to me. I confess most of that has to do with my family moving onto acreage in Missouri. Here, a bold, brawny knife, not afraid to chop, bang, dig and otherwise tackle big jobs, is what finds itself in my hand these days. Handgunner's own Pat Covert brought Bark River to my attention, saying, "Roy, this company makes the kind of knife you like!" He was dead-on.

Bark River is a "semi-production" shop, which offers the ability to turnout enough products to meet the high demands, but still offer custom features, and the kind of attention to detail a custom maker delivers. While it was difficult to pick one out to test, the Golok photo on their website jumped right out at me. With an 11.25" blade and .19" thickness, it's long enough to get some velocity going if you're swinging it, but doesn't turn it into a brick, like a full .25" blade tends to be. At about 16.25" overall, it's long and sturdy enough to chop, cut, notch, split wood, clear trails, use as a draw knife, build a shelter or a thousand other things you can think of.

The A2 tool steel the blade is made of just might be one of the best steels you can find. It's harder than 01, a bit more difficult to sharpen, but once sharp, holds that edge well. It can rust, so you need to take care of it with a bit of oil now and again. The sheath, supplied by Sharpshooter Sheath Systems, is one of the most practical I've ever seen. It holds the Golok high and tight to your body. I chose the standard (rounded) point, but there are other options. This is a "carry it all day" cutter, and I simply couldn't be happier with it. You'll be too. *For more info: (906) 789-1801, www.americanhandgunner.com/bark-river or jacque@barkriverknives.com and tell her we sent you.*



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SECURE FIREARMS PRODUCTS

While Secure Firearms Products have long been famous for their secure cases and remarkable array of steel targeting systems, they also like to dabble in accessories. They recently introduced me to two they developed, sure to come in handy for anyone with a 1911.

Their 1911 Firing Pin Stop Tool is just that — an easy way to remove and replace this often fidgety bit on the back of the slide. Every 1911 owner wrestles with this bit, and not always successfully. It usually involves using their own combination of homemade tools (or the wrong tools!), three hands and often plenty of time spent on hands-and-knees (the gunsmith's worship position), looking for bits that went "wang" when it got lose. The Stop Tool is simple and easy to use, and can keep things under control as you remove

the stop, freeing the firing pin, then keep things in control again as you put it all back. It also has the two common sizes of bushing wrenches.

The 1911 Recoil Spring Tester is a simple way to test to see if you either have the right spring installed for the ammo you're using, or if your existing spring is worn out. With springs available in all kinds of weights, factories tailor the recoil springs in stock guns to fit generic ammo likely to be used. If you opt for lower target loads, or gut-blasting powerful ones, you'll probably need to swap out recoil springs. And, indeed, springs do take "sets" and wear, so this tester is a fast and easy way to see if your 18-pound spring is still delivering 18 pounds of performance. *For more info: (800) 257-8744, www.americanhandgunner.com/secure*



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STREAMLIGHT TRL-4

Helping to light the way from the darkness, Streamlight has been there from the beginning. Their groundbreaking SL-20 full-sized duty light rewrote the book on police flashlights. I'm proud to have purchased one of the very first offered in the middle 1970s, and I still have it. When I pushed the button the first time in a dark alley, other officers took notice. Suddenly, they didn't think I was so nuts for paying \$75 hard-earned 1970s dollars for a light. Today, Streamlight still leads, and their TRL-4 gunlight is solid, reliable and, frankly, doesn't offer so many options its too confusing to use! I hate to get a new gunlight to test and realize I can't figure out how to put the battery in, or even turn it on, without reading a 40-page manual. Anyone listening out there?

The TRL-4 fits subcompact, compact or full-sized handguns (a nifty feat), and has an easy-to-use, quick-adjusting mounting system. It has an integrated laser sight you can adjust for point of impact, and you can select light, laser or light and laser. The body of the light is made of impact resistant polymer, keeping it light and rugged. By changing "keys" included, it will fit virtually any commonly encountered handgun with a rail, making it 1-stop shopping. At 110 lumens and about 1.5 hours of burn time, the TRL-4 also



puts its compact CR2 Lithium battery to good use. For more info: (800) 523-7488, www.americanhandgunnermagazine.com/streamlight

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The 100-lumen, rail-mounted Rail Master light from Crimson Trace is now available. Engineered to fit any firearm with a Picatinny rail, the Rail Master offers a 2-hour runtime on one CR2 lithium battery and instant, ambidextrous activation in a compact, snag-free package. Each Rail Master light is equipped with four interchangeable inserts to allow the user to custom fit it to their gun. The Rail Master light will be available through the regular dealer network or direct from the Crimson Trace website at an MSRP of \$139. For more info: (800) 442-2406 or www.americanhandgunner.com/crimson-trace

RANCH HAND HOLSTER

Grassburr Leather

Originally inspired by Steve McQueen's *Wanted Dead or Alive* TV Western from the 1950s, the Mare's leg is making a comeback. Grassburr Leather offers a new, lined belt-slide holster with adjustable buckle for leg tie down support. The holster comes in black, natural, mahogany or antique brown. MSRP: \$120. For more info: (210) 687-1717 or www.americanhandgunner.com/grassburr-leather



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With the focusing system on the ICON, you can acquire targets faster and more precisely. The interchangeable eyecup system allows you to choose between normal or flared to make it more comfortable and reduce the glare. The lightweight frame and short bridge design reduces the weight and creates a larger surface area for handling. It also has extra low dispersion objective glass which helps reduce chromatic aberration, giving true-to-life imagery with solid, crisp images. The steadfast shock, water and fogging resistance keep that view sharp and pristine. The true-grip, rubber-coated magnesium alloy frame eases long hours of glassing. For more info: (307) 857-4700 or www.americanhandgunner.com/brunton



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DTC 600 TRAIL CAMERA

Minox

Minox featured their new DTC 600 Trail Camera at the 2012 SHOT Show this year. The camera comes with a black IR-filter in front of the flash to make it completely invisible to wildlife. It's also invisible to humans, which makes it ideal for protecting property and personal safety. The powerful IR-flash has a range of more than 50' and a trigger speed of just over 1 second. The DTC 600 is password protected and lockable. MSRP is \$249. For more info: 49-0-6441/9170 or www.americanhandgunner.com/minox



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The Bold Action Folder by Bear OPS features a 3" blade made of premium quality CPM-S30V stainless steel and is .115" thick to handle the toughest assignments. OPS stands for Operational Precision for Superior tactical/survival knives and are backed with a limited lifetime warranty. For more info: (256) 473-9455 or www.shootingindustry.com/bear-ops

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SAIGA STRIKEFORCE ELITE PACKAGE ATI

Advanced Technology International (ATI), introduces the Saiga Strikeforce Elite Package with Scorpion Recoil System. The Saiga Strikeforce Elite is a 6-position, collapsible, Strikeforce Elite Stock with Scorpion Recoil System that offers an aluminum buffer tube and a redesigned slim line rear aluminum receiver mount. Recoil impact is absorbed by the Scorpion Recoil System when shooting anything from a 3" magnum turkey load to a door-breaching load with no pain being transferred to the shooter. The Elite Package comes with a non-slip, removable Razorback buttpad, an ergonomic, Sure-Grip textured recoil pistol grip and a removable, adjustable cheekrest. Other features include a slot for tactical sling attachment, one sling swivel stud and include a steel castle nut, steel locking ring and steel pistol grip bolt. For more info: (800) 925-2522 or www.americanhandgunner.com/advanced-technology *Editor's Note: The Saiga Strikeforce ran in the Sept/Oct 2012 issue with the incorrect company name and contact info. We apologize for the error.

TAC SIGHT FOR M&P .22

Advantage Tactical Sights (ATS)

ATS has just released the Smith & Wesson .22 sight, a companion sight in .22 for those who own a centerfire M&P. Like all the ATS's, it features a windage and elevation-adjustable, fixed-sighted system as well as five differently-colored rear sight inserts and five differently-colored front sights in each sight kit, for the individual preferences of each shooter. For more info: (310) 316-6413 or www.americanhandgunner.com/advantage-tactical-sight



INFORCE 6VX 200-LUMEN

Emissive Energy Corp.

Emissive Energy Corp. presents the Inforce 6vx 200-lumen lighting system, featuring a new multifunction tailcap switch that provides constant, momentary, high, low, strobe and lockout modes. The high power setting provides a 2-hour runtime and the low power setting of 40 lumens runs 10 hours. For more info: (401) 294-2030 or www.americanhandgunner.com/emissive-energy



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The ReVO line of hearing protection earmuffs is designed for smaller heads and ears. The passive muffs feature a Noise Reduction Rating of 26, an adult level of protection with smaller interior circumference ear seals, tighter, adjustable radius headband, super-sized ProForm leather ear cushions and a variety of youth-appealing graphics. Made in the USA. For more info: (800) 891-3660 or www.americanhandgunner.com/proears



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Vortex Optics

The Vortex Razor Red Dot is a reflex-style sight. Highly polished glass is clear and crisp edge-to-edge. Lenses are fully multicoated with premium coatings including ArmorTek, and are parallax free with unlimited eye relief. Unit includes a mount. Sight is made of hard-anodized matte-black finish, and is water-, fog- and shockproof. Available in 3-MOA and 6-MOA-diameter dot models. For more info: (800) 426-0048, www.americanhandgunner.com/vortex-optics



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The BladeLight features six LEDs with an output of 34 to 37 lumens. LEDs are molded into the GRN handle on each side of the blade, providing shadowless light. Light is powered by standard alkaline batteries and

features an IPX-7 rating for water resistance to full immersion. The blade is made of 9Cr18MoV stainless steel with a glass-reinforced nylon handle. Overall length is 9" and weight is 4.3 ounces. For more info: (888) 405-6433 or www.americanhandgunner.com/sog-knives

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Brush Research's Flex-Hone Oil has been specially crafted for use with the Flex-Hone Firearms System. This specially formulated oil contains a blend of honing and lapping oils, a lard oil to prevent galling of aluminum, a moisture dispersant and a nonionic surfactant wetting agent to assure complete lubrication of the surface. It also contains a special additive to help keep the metal cuttings and contaminants in suspension. For more info: (323) 261-2193 or www.americanhandgunner.com/brushresearch





DUTY LIGHT CAMERA Brite-Strike Technologies



Brite-Strike now offers the DLC (Duty Light Camera) to the hunting and outdoor markets. The DLC was originally designed to meet the unique demands of the police and military. Now with applications for hunting and outdoor use, the compact rechargeable duty light with built-in video recorder and audio provides the ideal vehicle to capture your next outdoor sporting event. MSRP: \$500. For more info: (508) 746-8701 or www.americanhandgunner.com/brite-strike

GS-44 TACTICAL TARGET RECOIL PALM SWELL

GripSwell Gloves

The GS-44 tactical gloves incorporate GripSwell's signature Palm Swell feature, which is designed to fill the anatomical curve in the center of the palm and allows hands to mold seamlessly to the grips. The proprietary blend of PFM memory foam used in the construction of the patented Palm Swell provides maximum recoil energy dissipation while creating a firm and confident grip. The GS-44 is constructed with premium goatskin leather on the front, which grants a high degree of tactile sensitivity, and a synthetic micro fiber fabric on the back, which is moisture wicking, breathable and is highly durable. For more info: (714) 379-9413 or www.americanhandgunner.com/gripswell



FORESIGHT CRKT

The new CRKT Foresight has a cold-forged aluminum handle that is purposefully styled and shaped with swept finger grooves and proper palm swell to provide a confident, comfortable grip no matter the use at-hand. Ken designed the 3.5" modified drop-point blade with a generous belly and re-curve cutting edge to maximize tool utility. The IKBS ball-bearing pivot system coupled with Interframe-style mechanism makes opening and closing the blade as smooth as silk. Precision ground of AUS 8 stainless steel and coated with Black Ti Nitride finish, the edge is plenty sharp. The Foresight knife manufacturer's suggested retail price is \$140. For more info: (503) 685-5015 or www.americanhandgunner.com/crkt



1716 TRITIUM KEY RING Maxpedition

The Maxpedition Tritium Key Ring is an excellent way to organize keys and other small items and easily deploy them, using two side-released buckles for easy access. The heavy-duty nylon webbing ensures an additional level of toughness and security that is standard with all Maxpedition products, large or small. The Tritium Key Ring comes in black, OD green, khaki and foliage. For more info: (310) 768-0098 or www.americanhandgunner.com/maxpedition



UNDEAD APOCALYPSE Crosman

Crosman introduces the Undead Apocalypse Airsoft category, which features Zombie Marking BBs and Zombie Fun Kit Targets. The Z71 Zombie Eraser is a metal-barreled AEG rifle with a 500-round, gravity-fed, see-through hopper. The Z132 Zombie Terminator shoots at up to 350 fps and features a pistol grip, adjustable hop-up system and high-capacity magazine. The CO2-powered TACZ11 is a tactical semi-auto. The Z11 Zombie Eliminator is a compact, heavyweight pistol with an underbarrel, Weaver-style rail. For more info: (800) 724-7486 or www.americanhandgunner.com/crosman



MOBILE RAD Caron Forensics

The Mobile RAD2 and Mobile RAD4 are tactical Rapid Access Defense systems that are agile, hostile and now mobile. Mobile RADs are ideal for safe, secure storage of guns and tactical items in vehicle applications. They are made of 18-gallon cold-roll steel. These cabinets will mount to the frame of a vehicle and include a robust locking mechanism. Weapons are stored inside of the cabinet on a patent-pending dual rail system with specially designed accessories that are meant for vehicle transportation. For more info: (740) 373-6809 or www.americanhandgunner.com/caron-forensics

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MTM Case-Gard



The MTM Handgun Concealed Carry Case is an excellent inconspicuous case that makes transferring a concealed carry handgun and related supplies to and from the range safe, simple and discreet. The gun is stored in the top of the case and is sandwiched by foam padding to protect and prevent shifting in the case. The case is molded out of rugged polypropylene plastic, has a heavy-duty latching system and contains molded-in stacking ridges for added versatility. MSRP: \$21.95. For more info: (800) 543-0548 or www.americanhandgunner.com/mtm-case-guard

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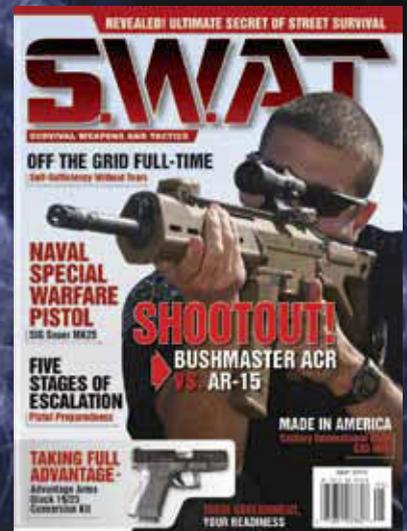
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I promptly gave it to my old friend, Don Hacklander (owner of San Diego Police Equipment Company), who needed it worse than I did. He "guarded" it for me for the next 28 years or so, until only recently gifting it back to me when I told him how much I wished that old gun was still around. "Hell, I still have it. It's been my bed-table gun, I'd be proud to give it to you." Just like that my first big-bore project gun came home.

I dug it out for this column and fired it a bit, along with a brand new S&W 1917 (5.5" barrel). I honestly forgot how good that little-big gun shot. I'm not sure why, but for some reason, it shoots under 2" at 15 yards all the time, and some groups chase 1.25"! The new gun actually shot about the same, with a 1.65" being one of the better groups. Interestingly enough, after firing six loads through them, an

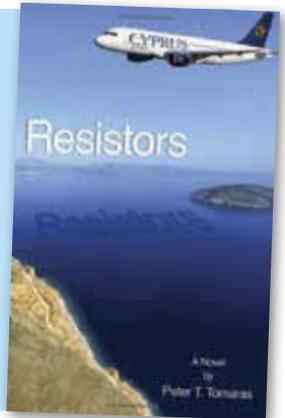
old box of Black Hills 230-gr. lead RN reloads delivered the winning groups. I've often heard 1917s don't like lead due to the shallow rifling in the bores, but these two liked it just fine. This also allowed me to compare some velocities of .45 ACP loads from a shorter-barreled revolver and a longer one. I thought we'd learn something, but actually the difference was barely noteworthy.

If I did this project again I'd round the butt, de-horn the edges, bevel the

front of the cylinder, nip the hammer spur off and maybe do a Hi-Viz front sight. Oh, and some different grips would help with that biting in the web of my hand. If you have the urge, and some basic tools, don't be afraid to tackle a project like this yourself. But don't try anything you're not confident you have the skills to manage. And practice on old broken guns first! As Clint Eastwood said, "A man's gotta' know his limitations."

Resistors

Friend and contributor to our magazines, Peter T. Tomaras, has published *Resistors*, his action/adventure novel featuring an erstwhile Huey door gunner and federal air marshal who entangles himself with sky-jackers, CIA operatives, Palestinian terrorists, an Aussie mercenary, the Israeli Navy and two women (one a covert commando) in Cyprus, Crete and the States. Read about multiple firearms and other goodies, and locales stretching from Sparta, WI to the Middle East. A real page-turner! Well done, Peter! Check out *Resistors* as a paperback or an e-book at www.amazon.com



ADD IT UP

473,479

Semi-auto production in 2010 by Ruger.

352,969

Semi-auto production in 2010 by S&W.

266,316

Semi-auto production in 2010 by SIG.

85,991

Semi-auto production in 2010 by Kimber.

29,331

Semi-auto production in 2010 by Colt.

2,285

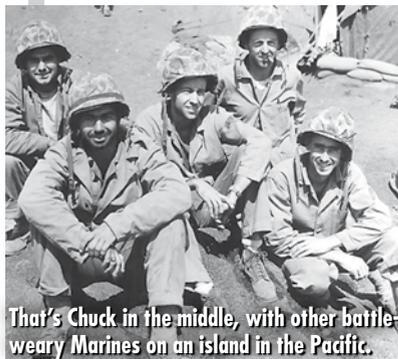
Semi-auto production in 2010 by Wilson's Gun Shop.

1,876

Semi-auto production in 2010 by Ed Brown Products.

2,817,377

Total handguns (all types) produced by all makers in 2010.



That's Chuck in the middle, with other battle-weary Marines on an island in the Pacific.

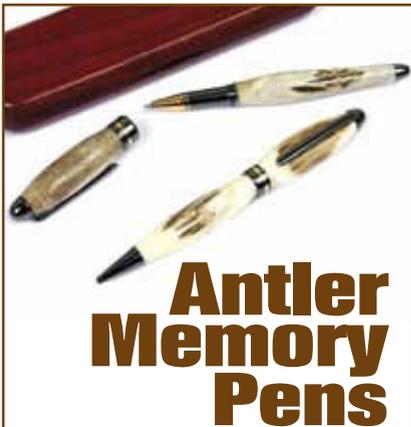
MEMORIES OF CHUCK

You might remember us featuring Tom Ables an issue or two ago posing at his battle station aboard a battleship; first as a young sailor and then, recently, some 65 years later, in the same spot aboard the U.S.S. Alabama, now a museum. Tom's family has a history of service, and we wanted to note with honor the passing of Tom's 91-year-old brother, Chuck. According to Tom: "He was my mentor, coach and inspiration. An Eagle Scout in his youth, Chuck joined the Marines right after Pearl Harbor and was in all those famous island battles, from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima. He never came home until the war ended. After the war, Chuck joined the San Diego Park and Recreation Department where his design skills resulted in wonderful parks people still enjoy today. My favorite, which I treasure every time I drive by, is the very special Mission Bay Park. When Tom Brokaw created the absolutely correct term, 'The Greatest Generation' I always wondered how it was he knew my brother Chuck, who personified that generation." Chuck was buried with appropriate Marine Corps honors at Fort Rosecrans. Thanks for telling us Tom, and thanks to Chuck for his heroic service. Rest easy old Marine.

BEAR OPS BOLD ACTION KNIFE

This is a genuine, 100 percent made in the USA knife, done-up by Bear in its plant in Jacksonville, Ala. So, if that's important to you, there you go. With a 3" blade of premium-quality CPM-S30V stainless steel (.115" thick), it's heat-treated to a Rockwell hardness of 58-60, which should really hold an edge. It comes with either a non-reflective black Ti coating or bead-blasted finish. It's an auto, so make sure your local laws are good with that design, or you qualify to own one. Handle materials are G10 with grip ridges for secure handling, or good looking cocobola. Closed, the Bold Action is 4 1/8" long, weighs 6 ounces and has a tip-down pocket clip. That's a .40 S&W round there for size. It's also got a limited lifetime warranty. MSRP is \$212. www.americanhandgunner.com/bear-ops, (800) 844-3034





Antler Memory Pens

Reader Gary Jones makes pens from deer antlers, but there's something special about his pens — he makes them out of your deer's antlers! The name Antler Memory Pens means just that; let Gary make a high quality pen using antler material from a special deer you've taken. Then, every time you use your pen, you remember that hunt! A great gift for a kid's first deer experience, or for any reason you like. Give Gary a call and tell him we sent you. *Ph: (402) 326-3302 or antlermemories@gmail.com*

FANCY WATCH

Cabot Guns introduced a lineup of no-holds barred, in-house manufactured 1911s a bit more than a year ago. To celebrate their first year, they've introduced an exclusive time keeper — the Cabot Guns Scrimshaw Watch. The antique ivory dial is hand-engraved scrimshaw by artist Darrel Morris, depicting the Cabot "Jones 1911" model. A high quality baseball leather strap and elegant but tough case complete the package. Each one is made to order, and takes 60 to 90 days to complete. At around \$1,000, it's time to put your birthday present order in now! *info@cabotguns.com or (855) 843-1911*



Hinderer Investigator Pen

At 1.6 ounces and 4¼" in length, Rick Hinderer's "Investigator Pen" is a real defensive weapon — but you can write with it. Using a Space Pen refill (writes upside down, under water and even in space if you're an astronaut), not only will the Investigator pen actually write, because of its solid copper and steel construction, it might also get you out of a jam. Using CNC and CAD-CAM technology, Rick's shop carefully crafts each pen (also available in titanium, stainless, brass and aluminum) using design ideas he originally developed for his full-sized pens. The Investigator is a modular design, so the stainless steel "bullet" on one end is threaded into the pen body and can be removed. You can then substitute other ends Rick has developed, like the Warhead and Strike Bezel, configuring it exactly as you like. The Investigator pen also comes with an extremely rugged pocket clip. That's a .45 ACP for size. About \$80, and super-high quality. *www.americanhandgunner.com/hinderer-knives*



THE INSIDER

CALIFORNIA GRIZZLIES



Most of the Grizzlies: Back Row L-R: Blake Eames, Dylan Lyons, Lane Ichord, Kevin Tandoc, James MacMillan, Conar Braly and Forrest Greenwood. Front L-R: Morgan Owen, Hollie Swenson, Kayla Swenson, Kasey Nelson, Sagen Maddalena, Jake Nelson, Shawn Bharadwaj

The California Grizzlies is a junior service rifle team based in Jamestown in Central California. The members (currently 19) come from all over the state. The four young ladies and 15 young men range in age from 13 to 20 years old. The rules allow juniors to compete through their 20th year so the team is constantly changing as rookies are groomed from the farm "cubs" team and veterans "age out." Veterans of the Grizzlies include Tyrel Cooper and David Bahten of the Army Marksmanship Unit; Cooper being the current Service Rifle National Champion. The Grizzlies compete with an accurized version of the M16/AR-15. Standard peep sights are required. They shoot from standing, sitting and prone in both rapid and slow fire. Their targets are engaged from 200, 300 and 600 yards. These kids do manage to clean their targets occasionally. That's 20 shots in the 12" 10-ring at 600 yards! With iron sights no less.

One aspect of living under California's draconian gun laws could be a handicap to this team of marksmen. The AR-15 is deemed legal here if its magazine release is only operable with a tool, not your finger as it was designed. The rapid-fire stage requires a mag change to fire 10 shots in 60 seconds. To watch these kids use their chamber flags to manipulate the "bullet button" on their rifles is remarkable! They've overcome this ridiculous burden with perseverance and practice.

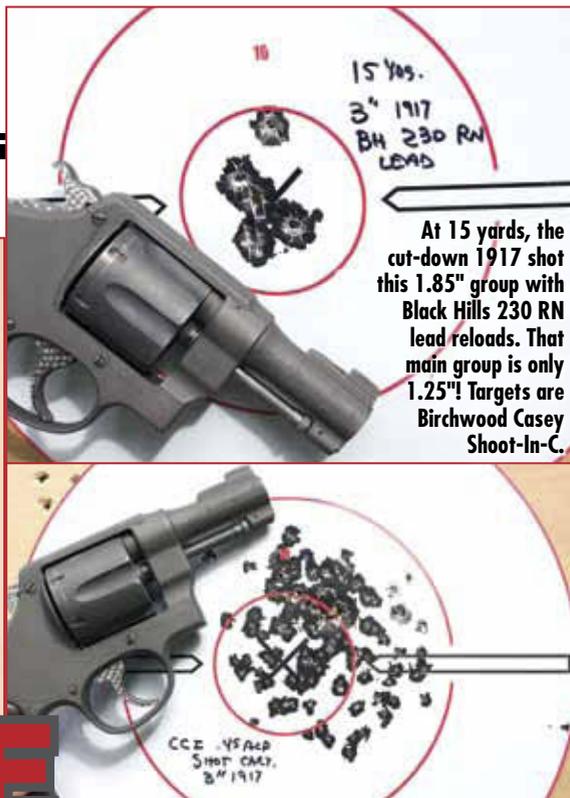
In 2009 at the National Matches at Camp Perry, history was made by six Grizzly junior shooters. These juniors had set a new junior record in the Infantry Team Match, and finished first overall. They had out-shot the Army Marksmanship Unit and the Marine Rifle Team! A civilian team had not won since 1930, and juniors had never taken the trophy! The Grizzlies did well at Camp Perry in 2011 too, bringing home many awards and prizes, including three rifles. The team took first place honors in the Whistler Boy, Junior Rumbold and Junior Infantry Team Match. They also took 2nd in the Minute Man and 3rd and 4th in the Junior Rumbold. Individually there were too many awards to list. Of the top five nationally ranked juniors on the CMP website, the Grizzlies can claim two: Sagen Maddalena (#2) and Lane Ichord (#4).

Here we have teenagers safely and expertly shooting what have been vilified as evil assault weapons. The Grizzlies compete against the finest marksmen in the world and bring home the trophies. Hard to believe they hail from the land of surf boards and movie stars. An *American Handgunner* "Hat's Off" to the California Grizzlies — well done!





New S&W 1917 on top with Roy's snubnie project gun below. He built it on a Brazilian contract 1917 in the early 1980s and found it shoots as well as the new one.



At 15 yards, the cut-down 1917 shot this 1.85" group with Black Hills 230 RN lead reloads. That main group is only 1.25"! Targets are Birchwood Casey Shoot-In-C.

Maybe a benefit of the shallow rifling is it doesn't tend to throw birdshot all over. The 3" gun delivered this tight group from a CCI .45 ACP shot round at about 3 yards. Perfect snake, rat or who knows what medicine?

BIG-BORE CUT DOWN

In the late 1970s I spotted a cut-down S&W 1917 .45 ACP revolver in a gun book that really caught my eye. This was long before there were any factory short-barreled big-bore revolvers, so if you wanted such a thing, you had to make one. Someone had taken a beater military 1917, cut the barrel to about 2.5", then hard-chromed it. They put a set of those early Pachmayr rubber grips on it, and to my eyes, had a perfect serious big-bore revolver for self-defense. Plus, it just looked cool. But in those days, even beater 1917s were hard to come by, and I moved on in life without making that dream come true.

Then the angels sang, and in the early 1980s, someone advertising in

Shotgun News started to bring in Brazilian S&W 1917 contract revolvers. As I recall, they were made by S&W for Brazil in the 1930s, but don't hold me to that. They were cheap too, around \$150. They didn't "grade" them so you took your chances. I bought three. One was fairly nice, one was okay and one was pretty tired, with pitting on the cylinder and outside of the barrel. But, the bore was shiny and the action decent. Looking them over, I decided my gunsmithing skills warranted I experiment on the beater — and save the better ones for later projects.

While the gun giving me the idea had a 2.5" barrel, it also meant a good deal of work to make that happen. After measuring, I found if I nipped the barrel off right in front of the front ejector rod locking bolt housing (on the underside of the barrel), it would measure right at 3" to the rear of the forcing cone. Good enough for me, and saved me no-end of work shortening the ejector rod, welding the housing back on and such. A minute or two with a hacksaw and the "pocket" .45 started to happen.

I've been a life-long hobby gunsmith and have amassed a good selection of tools. Even back then, I had a bead-

blaster, jewellery tools, drill press, belt sander/grinder and plenty of other hand tools. So, with some judicious thought, and even more careful handwork, it came together. The front sight was a problem, but I scrounged a generic one, filed/sanded it to fit the barrel contour, then silver-soldered it to the barrel. I also put a screw in it to fill the screw hole, just for looks. I also carefully widened the rear groove, squaring it up to fit the front blade width.

I slicked up the action (note the amateur jewellery on the hammer and trigger ... just had to try that), used different grits of wet or dry paper to work out some of the pitting (but most were too deep so stopped before I got into trouble), then bead-blasted the frame and parts. I was experimenting with doing Parkerizing then, thanks to chemicals from Brownells (it's actually easy to do — you should try it), so the blasted gun went into the pot. About ten minutes later everything was grey.

After reassembling it I hefted it and thought, "Hey, this is just as I imagined it would feel." I opted to leave the smaller standard grips, but when fired, it does tend to bite at the web of your hand. After some test firing and

lowering the front sight some, my new .45 ACP pocket-pounder was done.

While you can shoot .45 ACP without moon clips, it's easier to use Auto Rim cases or moon clips so you can eject the empties.



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Continued on page 112

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