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OCTOBER 2011

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PRODUCED IN THE U.S.A.



Warfighters from C-CO LRS 1-134th R&S deployed in Afghanistan who evaluated Pride-Fowler optics (August issue) took a break with GUNS.

Remington 1911

I have greatly admired John Taffin's articles in your magazine. But, on page 57 of May's article on the 1911 he writes, "My personal shooting life with the 1911 began with a Remington Rand surplus in the mid-1950s, and today Remington is back in the 1911 business with a modernized version known as the 1911R1."

While working as a patrolman and later watch supervisor in the Navy as a Master-at-Arms, I too was issued a .45 manufactured by Remington Rand. Remington Rand was a typewriter manufacturer retooled to make .45s along with Singer during WWII. Singer is still in business making sewing machines. I believe Remington Rand made more 1911's than Colt as they are the most common. John has confused Remington Rand with Remington. Remington is and has always been a gunmaker. My Remington Rand .45 rattled like a baby rattle as the parts fit so loosely but, still, I qualified "Expert" with it. My Para and RIA fit tighter than a pair of tights.

Don Roberts Sr.
MACS, USN Ret.

*Don Thanks for writing and the kind words. I only meant to convey the name "Remington" was back on 1911s. It is all quite confusing with the names. Remington Arms also made typewriters and then the Remington Typewriter Co. was set up separately in 1886. With a merger in 1927 Remington Rand emerged. So they are all connected.—
John Taffin*

MP 44

I just finished reading Mike Venturino's article on the MP44 in the August issue. My wife and I were invited to a machine gun shoot at Racine County Line Rifle Club, in Racine, Wisconsin. Among the MP-5's, select-fire AR's, Uzi's, and various other weapons, one older gentleman had brought a Sturmgewehr. I surprised myself by recognizing what it was, and was very honored when the owner offered to let me fire it. While I only put one magazine through it, it was very easy to control and was a pure joy to shoot. If I ever move to a State that allows it, I would certainly love to acquire one for my own collection. Out of all the firearms I've had a chance to shoot, the Sturmgewehr stands out in my mind as the most memorable. Thanks, Mike, for the great article.

Tom Ropers
via e-mail

Press 1...

Connor hits another home run. And who knew he was erudite? But I'll bet that BBC Standard English is rapidly blurring many local British distinctions. By the way, Churchill might have had an advantage in speaking "American" by being the son of an American mother, Jenny.

Jack Seward
(cor blimey if I'm not a fan!)

Higgins Model 50

In the August Handloading article by John Barsness, he makes it seem like the J.C. Higgins M-50 made for Sears, Roebuck was made by FN. It used an FN action but was made by Marlin. The barrel and stock were supplied by Marlin. They were quite inexpensive back in the 1960's. I try to find them at gunshows to salvage the FN actions.

Wayne Raquepaw
Frankenmuth, Michigan



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• MASSAD AYOUB •

THE GLOCK'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The 1911 isn't the only pistol to celebrate a milestone this year.

In all the hullabaloo about the 100th anniversary of the 1911 pistol, we shouldn't forget that another, more modern classic is having a milestone year in 2011, too. It's the 25th anniversary of the Glock pistol in the United States. The original Glock 17 was introduced in 1986.

The Glock has since become ubiquitous. Some 70 percent of police departments use Glocks. Glock didn't make the first polymer-frame autoloaders—that was HK, with their VP70Z and the P9 series—but they most certainly popularized the concept, laying the groundwork for today's Springfield Armory XD's, S&W M&Ps and many more.

The 1911 wasn't commercially available in any caliber but .45 ACP until Colt's introduction of the .38 Super in 1929, nor in any but its original size until the Commander of 1949/50. Within five years of the

Glock's introduction in the USA, it could be had in standard size, compact, longslide or even large frame; in calibers .40 S&W, 10mm Auto and .45 ACP, in addition to its original 9mm Parabellum chambering. The hugely popular "baby Glocks" would follow in 1996. Today, they are also available in .357 SIG and .45 GAP, with .22 conversion units readily available. Some countries can buy Glocks in .380, though they're not imported into the US in that caliber for general consumption.

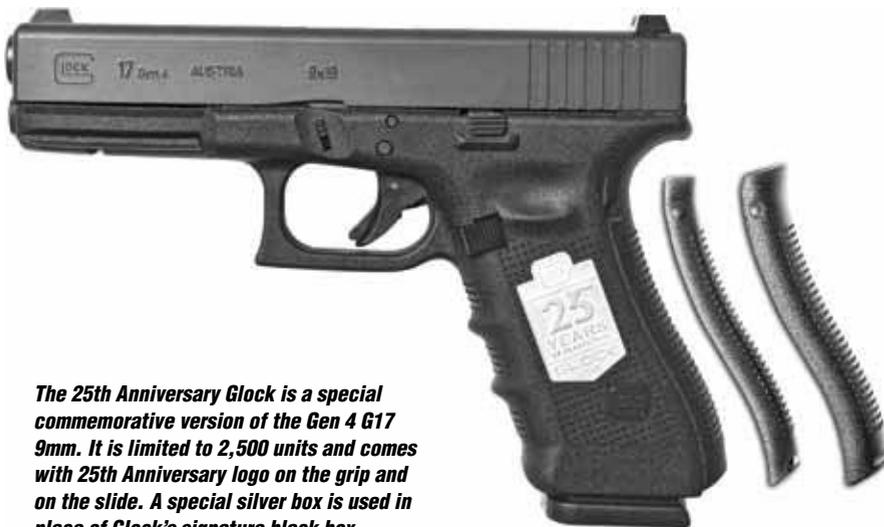
The first Glock 17, now known as



Evolution of the basic design came quickly with the appearance (from top to bottom) of the flat-front Gen 2 G17, Gen 3 G22, and Gen 4 G17.

Gen 1, was distinguished by a smooth grip-frame with subtle cobblestone surfacing. Some found it a little too slick in wet hands, so within those first five years we had Gen 2. Its frontstrap was still straight, but it had a molded-in coarse checkering that fit many hands better. Soon, Gen 3 was introduced, with fingergrooves on the frontstrap, but its frame still displayed the sleekly tapered dust cover of the first two generations. Next, it was time for a gun-mounted light and Glock went with a molded-in light rail.

Finally, the Gen 4. The 4th generation guns have all that plus double-captive recoil spring systems, and grip-frames with interchangeable backstraps. If you leave the backstrap pieces off and take the gun as it comes from the box (as most seem to do), the reach to the trigger is shorter than on any of the preceding equivalent models. The Gen 4 also has little projections all over the grip that allows the hand



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The "Proven" Factor

What endeared the Glock to police and armed citizenry alike was its extreme reliability. More important than its ability to endure mud and drop-out-of-helicopter torture testing was the fact that if you fed it good ammo, and cleaned and lubed it a little bit, occasionally, it was extraordinarily reliable. When some of us criticized the gun, the initial response tended to be "you're limp-wristing it or something, it's not our fault," but from inside the company, the chief exec and engineers responded. Complaints about accidental discharges were answered 20 or so years ago with a subtle redesign. Complaints about too easy trigger pulls were answered before 1990 with the N.Y.1 trigger spring option, which gave a firm resistance to the trigger finger from the beginning of the pull. (Target shooters' complaints that the original 5.5-pound trigger pull was too heavy were answered with a 3.5/4.5-pound connector, which, the manufacturer insisted, is used only for target shooting. It is factory approved today for more serious business only in company with the N.Y.1, which brings total pull weight to a very sweet 6 pounds or so.)

There were malfunctions on some .40 and .45 models, particularly when lights were attached; Glock responded with new springs and the recommendation that screw-



Glock 9mms in five sizes. From top: 6" barrel G17L, 5.3" G34, 4.5" G17, 4" G19, and 3.46" G26.

on lights not be screwed too tight, which appeared to have cured the problem. High-mileage .40s and .357s were sustaining some battering due to their rounds' high pressure and slide velocities, until users learned to change the recoil springs more frequently than with 9mms. (I now change the assembly in my .357 Glock 31 every 2,000-2,500 rounds. I change the same spring in my 9mm G17s... uh... whenever.)

The early plastic sights were crap. We learned to order them with night sights, or Glock's little known plain steel sights. Problem solved. Some Glock USA executives went through the roof when I mentioned the bad with the good in a magnum opus on the gun in this magazine in 1990; today, Glock USA has different execs and great confidence in their pistols, and they don't seem to fear critical gun writers.

I've been carrying 1911s a lot to commemorate its centennial this year... but I've been carrying Glocks more. Also, so have the cops, but most of the general handgunning public.

The reason is simple: the product has earned it.

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• HAMILTON S. BOWEN •

INSTALLING A RIFLE TRIGGER

Some guns are pretty easy, some aren't.

Thanks to the depredations of the tort bar, firearms manufacturers have been forced to make their production handiwork ever safer by dumbing down trigger quality, and hiking up pull weights and sear engagement. True, cost plays a certain part in trigger-pull quality but most of us would pay a little extra to have a safe trigger for our favorite Winchester or Ruger bolt-action, big-game rifle that didn't feel like a Glock trigger lubricated with sand.

Luckily, there is help in the form of aftermarket parts. Just peruse the Brownells catalog and, chances are, you will find a trigger (or several) for your favorite rifle that you can install with a few simple tools on a quiet Saturday morning. Some triggers are quite complicated and must be installed by an experienced gunsmith, such as most anything that requires machine work. Ruger No. 1, Remington 700 and M98 Mauser double-set triggers are probably beyond the ken of most hobbyists. On the other hand, many Ruger, Winchester M70 and

AR-15 triggers are near drop-in and really require only disassembly and reassembly to install. Many have a fair range of adjustments lacking on factory units and will yield surprising improvements in trigger-pull weight, felt creep and over travel without recourse to spending the week's beer money.

For example, the shop's safe yielded a couple of likely victims on which to demonstrate—a seedy Ruger 10/22 .22 semi-auto kept to repel varmints, and a handy M77/44 .44 Magnum bolt-action carbine. As always, it is well to

lay hands on some sort of disassembly guide if you are not familiar with the entrails of your gun. Though most bolt-gun trigger work requires the simple removal of barreled actions from the stocks, some autoloaders may have action disassembly. My greasy, dog-eared disassembly guides written by J.B. Wood will usually have the information needed to get me through.

The 10/22

While a beautifully designed and handsome .22, the 10/22 has a moderately heavy and slushy trigger out of the box and cries out for improvement. Like many Ruger products, the 10/22 has spawned a cottage industry of firms, making barrels, triggers and everything in between. Indeed, like the Ford Model T, you can build one complete with aftermarket parts. There are several sear kits, triggers and whole trigger units available for the ubiquitous Ruger .22. Since the existing trigger already has an over travel stop screw in place, all we really need is a sear kit to lay in the Power Custom parts.

The Power Custom Pre-Travel Adjustable Hammer & Sear kit includes a heat-treated, EDM-machined hammer and sear of proper geometry to provide a crisper, lighter pull with little work beyond swapping the parts. Working from the front of the trigger group towards the rear (reversing the procedures on re-assembly), the job of replacing the hammer and sear is quite straightforward. Just be sure to examine closely the relationships of the parts, noting what they do and how, before drifting out the pins. There are only a couple of tricky points. Thanks to the provided slave pin, shimming the sear and trigger isn't difficult (but you must hold your mouth just right).

If there is anything that requires a bit of fussing, it is adjusting the pre-travel take-up screw. You want the sear/disconnector to reset and can't cut the adjustment too close. Took me at least a couple of ins and outs of the parts to get it right. Some guns will require a bit of fitting on the sear leg to produce proper safety function, a simple procedure performed with a



For those of us who do not work on specific guns everyday, a takedown guide is invaluable. This one, by GUNS contributor J.B. Wood, is priceless.

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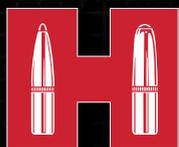
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308 Win 168 gr. A-MAX	2870 / -1.5	2647 / 1.7	2462 / 0.0	2284 / -7.5	2114 / -21.6	1951 / -43.6
308 Win 178 gr. BTHP	2780 / -1.5	2609 / 1.8	2444 / 0.0	2285 / -7.6	2132 / -21.9	1985 / -43.9

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Most of us can work with a 6- or 7-pound trigger but there is no need to do so.



Don't be intimidated by the 10/22-trigger group. If you can walk and talk at the same time, you can install these parts.



The M77 has a very accessible and simple trigger that requires little, in the way of tools, to replace.

stone or belt grinder. The provided instructions and a takedown guide should get most of us through this project. If I had any complaints, it would be for more precise instructions. One of the difficulties of dealing with genius is that the smart people—like Ron Power—assume us 40-watt types can fill in the blanks. Needless to say, the resulting 3-pound trigger is far more to my liking.

The 77/44

The M77/44, a derivative of the Ruger M77, was almost child's play after the 10/22. Our example had an even heavier pull weight than the 10/22, approaching 7 pounds out of the box. However, it was quite crisp and creep-free. Perusing the Brownells catalog turned up a couple prospects by Spec-Tech and Jard. Since this is a working hunting and utility rifle, we settled on the simpler, standard Spec-Tech Trigger. Both Spec-Tech and Jard make more sophisticated triggers with sear and over travel adjustment,

which should be the berries for the M77/22 rimfires and Hornets. Bear in mind the M77/44 and M77/22 may use the same trigger but sears differ on some models. A chat with the friendly techs at Brownells will clear up any questions.

Removing a couple of action screws freed up the barreled action, which carried the trigger system. Installation starts with removing the factory trigger, retained by one pin. The Spec-Tech trigger had a boss around the pivot hole, which is intended for filing-to-fit for a wobble-free, best performance. Filing into a blind corner is a pain, but can be done. This operation would be a snap on a milling machine but not everybody has one.

Once the trigger was running free with the new return spring in place, all that remained was to make sure the safety pad was fitted. If the safety does not engage once the trigger is installed, a few licks of a file on the safety-fitting pin will do the trick. Weight adjustment can be made externally, but the adjustment screw needs to be Loctited before adjusting. Even using the factory sear, creep in my gun was minimal. While the over travel stop on the fancier triggers would have helped performance a bit, the factory and standard Spec-Tech triggers stop on their own without a great deal of over travel. I set the pull weight at around 4 pounds, perfect for clomping around the woods and farm.

If I haven't already said it, we are living in the golden age of do-it-yourself gunsmithing. Not only do we have "smithable" guns of good quality, we have the parts and tools, too, thanks to Brownells and the coterie of manufacturers who make them.



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• CLINT SMITH • PHOTOS: HEIDI SMITH •

YOU MIGHT BE A BRAIN SURGEON But

Since I shoot on a daily basis, I see and hear some strange things. Some people, wishing to do well, get performance anxiety. Some people know it all, and some know nothing. As part of this learning process, I qualify each lecture I give with a couple of things. First, I don't know everything. Second, while at school their brain and a parachute have something in common—they will both work best if they are open.

Actually, I did have a brain surgeon in a class. Besides being a nice guy, he was a little naïve about some aspects of shooting. He felt he could align the sights on the target, yank the trigger and the bullet would be clear of the barrel before his push affected the bullet strike. We bantered this about some, and then I showed him a few things he wasn't aware of.

Correctly, this is a pre-ignition push. So, with our doctor weighing in at 180 pounds and the pistol at a about 2 pounds, who do you think wins the pushing contest?

When we push in anticipation of the pistol being fired, we move the sights off the point of aim before the bullet leaves. This is the reason so

many right-handed students have hits in the lower left of the target. When the pistol is recoiling and the push is happening at the same time, there is often no sense of pushing the pistol. I know this because I've done it.

Trigger Control

The lack of trigger control is actually the biggest reason people don't shoot well. Trigger control is an acquired skill. Once the brain surgeon was shown what to do (and understood it), life started down the road towards a happy place. Keep in mind repetition is, indeed, the mother of skill.

In this quest of the trigger, I often take non-believers and have them



Low-left shots on the target are indicative of a mash or jerk on the trigger in right-handed shooters.

hold the pistol sights on-target while I press their trigger. This often results in over-lapping holes in the target. This proves they are looking at the sights, and it also proves they are leaning on the trigger. Once they see this, they are on the path to better marksmanship.

The "surprise break" is a simple theory often mugged by a gang of facts. This puts a steady, rearward pressure on the trigger with the understanding the pistol is about to fire—without going "now!" Moving targets, headshots, surgical placement and application under duress can cause a shooter to lean on the trigger—or apply the "now" element. Watch for the low-left shots in these cases. I think finger placement is a consideration here, with the best being the center of the first digit in or on the middle of the trigger. This is like the ignorant vs. stupid adage. Ignorance is cured by education—stupid is forever. Try it.

Our last visual control over the projectile before it leaves the pistol is the sight picture. This also confirms why so many shots fired, even at short range, don't strike the target. This week, I had a student roll-in, clearing a corner on a tactical exercise, point his pistol and fire a shot at a target only 8' away. He completely missed. Stunned, he responded with the normal "I can't believe I missed." Followed by "The target was so close I couldn't miss." To which I promptly added, "But in fact you did miss, and wouldn't it be better to work from the premise? The target



If you have the opportunity, practice some awkward positions to see how they affect shot placement.



Proper placement of the finger on the trigger helps to achieve a smooth rearward press.

is so close you better *not* miss?"

Low light, movement and awkward firing positions could affect our ability to see the sights. Without visual contact and control of the sights, the chances of missing increase no matter what the range. Could you nurture techniques like point shooting? Sure, but I also think it's an acquired skill after much practice and many years of hard work. The late Bill Jordon had the remarkable, natural skill of pointing, shooting and hitting efficiently. Many pilots fly airplanes—not many pilots fly fighter planes. There are some with special gifts of hand and eye coordination, but they are few and far between. And the people who will really work to acquire this skill are even fewer and farther between.

Flash Sight Picture

This is simple—and simply—misunderstood by many. We all know the regulation Camp Perry sight picture and what it looks like. A flash sight picture is a gross sight picture. It's often not perfectly aligned, but very close to correct, superimposed over the target mass. It's not surgical in application, but it's darn sure as precise as it can be, based on what the range and the volume of incoming rounds will allow. It's often not perfect, nor was it intended to be. Get the muzzle between yourself and the threat, pick up the sights as well as you can, then "p-r-r-e-e-e-s-s-s-s" the stinkin' trigger.

If you practice this well enough, you too may qualify to be a doctor of sorts—not of brain surgery—but perhaps a doctor of sight alignment and the all-important trigger control.

Doctor of sights and triggers? Sorta' catchy, huh?

Editor's note: Clint is rehabilitating from knee surgery, so we bring you this "Best Of Reality Check" originally published in our sister magazine American Handgunner in the Jan/Feb 2007 issue.

GUNS

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RIFLEMAN

• DAVE ANDERSON •

RIFLE STOCK FIT What's it all about?

Rifle fit is less critical than shotgun fit. With a rifle there is either a rear sight or an optical sight. Generally, there is time to move the head around if necessary so the eye can align the sights or reticle on the target.

With shotguns, the shooter's eye is the rear sight. The target is usually moving quickly, so the shooter must rapidly position the gun, index it on target and deliver the shot. A proper fit is essential for the eye to be consistently and quickly positioned.

Mostly, we can get by with even a badly fitting rifle stock. Nonetheless, it's better to have one that fits. We don't always have time to carefully position the head to align the eye with the sights. In still-hunting for example, opportunities can be sudden and fleeting.

Following up wounded game, shots can also be close and fast, making stock fit important. And, if the game being followed up is potentially dangerous, it can be *really* important.

Previously, I've talked about factors such as weight, balance and

length of pull. Briefly, for cartridges of the .270 or .30-06 class, I like a rifle weighing around 7 or 8 pounds, balancing around 4-3/4" or 5" ahead of the trigger and with length of pull from 13" to 13-1/2".

The Drop

This time I want to talk about drop at comb, heel and (if present) Monte Carlo. Early rifles measured by current standards have tremendous drop at heel, obviously meant to fire with the head upright not touching the stock. The idea may have been to keep the eyes away from flame and sparks, or maybe no one considered the concept of steadying the head against the stock.

Early cartridge rifles continued to have considerable drop, even as the practice of bracing the stock against

the face became standard shooting technique. The path to straighter stocks has been a slow and painful one.

My postwar Savage 99s, rifles I love dearly, have considerable drop. In fact, their drop is more than I like even for use with the standard iron sights. Likewise, I fit receiver sights on my Winchester 94 and Marlin 336 rifles. You can accommodate a scope on such a rifle with a lace-on leather cheekpiece, or by holding the head up, but I find both to be dreary solutions.

Early bolt-action rifles such as the Remington 30 and Winchester 54 and 70, likewise, had stocks with considerable drop at comb and heel. Such stocks do a couple of things: they support the face so the shooter's eye aligns approximately with the iron sights; and during recoil, they rotate the rifle around the point of support (the buttplate) so recoil is directed both back and up.

Monte Carlo

After WWII, factories slowly and reluctantly began adapting stocks as riflescopes became commonplace. One solution was to adapt the Monte Carlo design (which had been used on shotguns by trapshooters) to rifle



This 1946 Savage 99R .250 has 1" drop-at-comb, 2" drop-at-heel. Not at all adapted to scope use, in fact, it is barely adequate for use with iron sights. Nice piece of wood, though.



A custom pre-'64 Winchester 70 stocked by Keesey Kimball in classic style; 3/8" drop-at-comb, 5/8" drop-at-heel. For many years, the only way to get a straight stock designed for scope use was from custom stockmakers.



This stock shape follows the original Weatherby Mark V design, in synthetic. Comb is high and straight (actually higher at Monte Carlo than at comb), but retains considerable drop at heel.



The Winchester 94 stock was designed for iron sights, long before optics became widely accepted. For iron sights it works fine, though the considerable drop at heel does increase muzzle jump, making even the mild .30-30 cartridge kick more than it should.



In the 1960s, custom stockmaker Len Brownell designed this relatively straight stock for the Ruger 77. The acceptance of the Ruger 77 by shooters forced other gunmakers to redesign their stocks.



Unappreciated at the time, the Remington 600 introduced in 1964 had a very straight stock (drop-at-comb 1/2", drop-at-heel 3/4"), minimizing muzzle jump and directing recoil straight back instead of into the face. Just had to include the ugly Monte Carlo notch, though.

GUN (MAKE, MODEL)	DROP AT COMB (INCHES)	DROP AT HEEL (INCHES)
Savage 99	1	2
Winchester 94	1	1.7
Weatherby Mk V	.81	1.5*
Remington 600	.5	.75
Remington 700 Mountain Rifle	.5	.63
Ruger 77 (1st Model)	.5	.81
Ruger Hawkeye African	.38	.75
Winchester 70 Featherweight**	.5	.75
Browning A-Bolt Hunter	.63	.5
Kimber 84	.43	.54

Notes: * Drop at Monte Carlo .69". ** Current production.

stocks. Roy Weatherby was an early proponent. His glamorous rifles strongly influenced shooter demand. By the mid-'60s even BB guns had Monte Carlo stocks.

The Monte Carlo stock isn't a bad solution, though it still has considerable drop at heel to rotate the rifle higher in recoil; generally whacking the face in the process. Maybe because it is what I grew up with I can get along with Monte Carlo stocks, though it would never be my first choice.

A couple of times I've read how the Monte Carlo stock is ideal for shooters with sloping shoulders. Makes me wonder if the writers ever actually shot a rifle or looked at a photo of one being fired. I happen to have sloping shoulders myself, when my arms are hanging at my sides.

Oddly enough, I don't shoot rifles with my arms hanging at my sides. The right arm is raised so the elbow is pointing out at roughly 90 degrees, and as the arm is raised, the shoulder also rises. If you can round up two acquaintances; one with sloping shoulders and the other square-shouldered and have them hold a rifle in shooting position, you'll see the shoulder position is about the same.

The Fix

Custom gunmakers such as Al Biesen built straighter stocks better suited to scope sights. In the 1960s, two rifle manufacturers finally began building straighter stocks. One was Ruger, who engaged custom stockmaker Len Brownell to design the stocks of the No. 1 and 77 rifles.

The other was Remington's Model 600, a rifle many considered odd-looking, if not downright ugly. People noticed the dogleg bolt handle and ventilated rib and didn't appreciate the straight stock. Someone at Remington realized this light rifle in powerful cartridges was going to kick and designed a straight stock to direct recoil into the shoulder.

It wouldn't be until the 1980s till



An early 1950s Savage 99EG in .300 Savage has 1" drop-at-comb, 2" drop-at-heel. With buttplate properly in place on shoulder and face pressed against stock, the eye aligns fairly well with the iron sights. This custom pre-'64 Winchester 70 (below) stocked by Roger and Al Biesen has 3/8" drop-at-comb, 5/8" drop-at-heel. The stock is in same position, relative to shoulder and face, but Dave's eye is aligned with the scope reticle.



other manufacturers joined Ruger in making relatively straight stocks; my personal favorites are on the early Remington 700 Mountain Rifle and Winchester 70 Featherweight.

With bolt-action rifles, drop-at-comb can't be much less than 1/2" in order to allow bolt withdrawal. One of the handsomest and best-handling stocks is found on the Kimber 84 rifle, with drop-at-comb of .43" and drop-at-heel of just .54". The Browning A and X-Bolt Hunter stocks actually have more drop at comb than at heel.

On most current production rifles the standard seems to be drop-at-comb 1/2", drop-at-heel 3/4"—the same as appeared on the unloved and unappreciated Remington 600 nearly half a century ago.



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OPTICS

• JACOB GOTTFREDSON •

BUSHNELL FUSION 1600 ARC

**This bino does it all
(except squeeze the trigger).**

I was quite excited when I first heard about the Bushnell Fusion 1600 ARC. My first encounter with it was at a sniper match. Tom Fuller, Bushnell's National Military Sales Manager, had brought it along. I immediately began badgering Bushnell that I needed one — stat — for evaluation. So what was the catalyst for all my excitement?

Little by little, the glass makers of the world feed us small bits of fruit. "This is great, but if I just had..." A sentiment that keeps us buying the next generation of technobabble shooting gear. I keep waiting for that *last* innovation that fills my needs. Is the Bushnell Fusion 1600 ARC it?

Nobody wants to carry several pieces of gear to solve a problem. For example, a binocular to see it, a rangefinder to know how far it is, and finally a chart or iPhone App of some sort to know how high above the target to aim. Alternatively, we might want to know the MOA or mil come-ups, to turn on the elevation turret or which bar to use. Would it not be significantly better to have it all in one package? Now you know my excitement: Bushnell has it all in one binocular; and they brought it out in the most popular power and objective lens size to boot: 10x42mm.

The Bushnell Fusion 1600 ARC has two red buttons on top of the chassis. The one on the left (as you look through the binocular) is used to program the computer chip to your needs. For example: Yards or meters, the ballistic flight of your bullet, which gives inches required above the target to make a hit, or the MOA come-ups on the turret. So, you look through the bino to see what it is, push the button on the right to find out how far away it is, and then, looking in the lower, left-hand corner, note the MOA come-ups you need on the scope to make the hit. This still leaves two problems: You have to lower the bino to bring the rifle up and either aim high, or put the necessary come-

ups on the turret and aim dead center. Still, it offers a significant advantage over previous years and different ways to solve the same problem.

But Wait! There's more! (Do I sound like a TV commercial?) There is also a



The Bushnell Fusion 1600 ARC's red buttons are used for ranging, and to program it for either a bow, a muzzleloader, or the flight path of the bullet in your rifle. The functionality of the unit is quite amazing. The knurled knobs in front, between the barrels, houses the CR-123 battery. The Fusion is also heavily armored and waterproof.

bow version that is programmed using the button on the top, called the mode button. And get this, the algorithms incorporated in the on-board chip also tells the shooter the angle to the target and makes the necessary adjustments in the holdover or MOA setting to put on the scope.

The range finder is also relatively powerful. I have ranged objects as far as 1,745 yards. Unfortunately, the unit

will not tell me the comeups required at such a range, but it will at 1,000 yards or so.

That is where I found a small rub. Instead of having a computer on board that would take any data I entered and then give me the ballistic information I needed, Bushnell has chosen several popular ballistic curves based on what they believe are often used hunting cartridges and designated them with letters. The letters A through H designate the bullet's fall at 300 and 500 yards. For example, F would describe the following bullet drops: 300 yards = 10" to 12" and 500 = 47" to 55". Using a place to test the fall of your cartridge at those ranges, giving that it was sighted in at 100 yards, might tell you to use the letter F when programming the bino. As you can see, this leaves a significant gap. A drop of 47" to 55" at 500 yards is an 8" difference. But, there are ways around that. The letter H is anything less than a 39" drop at 500 yards.

And by the way, you can program the unit to be sighted in at four distances: 100, 150, 200 or 300 yards or meters.

Letters I and J are used for muzzleloaders. The bow mode is good for 10 to 99 yards with a maximum angle of +/-90 degrees.

The unit incorporates scan mode, allowing the shooter to note the distance as the bino is passed over objects. It also has a bull's-eye feature, which tells the shooter the distance to the closer object, say a deer standing in front of trees. Like many other rangefinders, it will disregard brush that might be in front of the target, which is opposite of the bull's-eye mode.

I used the binos on several occasions, ranging objects from about 1 mile. These were, of course, large objects, some reflective and some not. The unit hit them without problem. The laser information in the image has four levels of brightness. At level four, I still found it a bit difficult to see the information on certain objects without moving to some other object.

My 7mm SAUM Surgeon Razor is loaded with a 140-grain Barnes TTSX BT bullet. At 7,000' elevation, 50 degrees F to going 3,160 fps, the

drop is 54.2" at 500 yards when sighted in at 100 yards; which suggests I use the letter E or F and find out which gives me the best fit. I entered the letter H, and it hit my 7mm SAUM perfectly. Lucky? Maybe. In any case, I could not complain. I set the unit on brightness 4 and MOA. I ranged objects at 600 yards, and the unit gave me 10.5-MOA come-ups. Perfect! For angles, the instruction manual said to hold the power button (the one on the right) down for 2 seconds to give the inclinometer time to measure the angle. Unfortunately, where I live it is so flat I can stand on a brick and see Cuba. I will have to try it in the fall in the Rocky Mountains.

The roof prisms are BAK-4, phase coated, and then phase corrected with Bushnell's PC-3 system, which compensates for phase shifts of light rays. Light transmission is enhanced with their XTR, which are multiple layers of anti-reflective coatings.

The image has a slight blue tint because, "One of the minor trade-offs we encountered while engineering the Fusion was a modest blue tint. A blue tint is actually quite normal in optics with a red display (e.g. red dots), because it's necessary in order to offer high contrast and a bright display in sunny conditions. As with all our

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OPTICAL COATINGS:
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EXIT PUPIL DIAMETER:
4.2mm
FIELD OF VIEW:
305' at 100 yards
EYE RELIEF:
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WATERPROOF:
Yes
WEIGHT:
31 ounces
RETAIL:
\$899

products, Bushnell continues to look for ways to advance our engineering while providing consumers with cost-conscious optics. In the case of the Fusion, we're continually looking

for ways to optimize the coating and improve the viewing experience."

My next exercise was to test the unit against my reference binos. I have 8x32mm, 10x40mm and 12x50mm binos that are the best I have seen in 25 years of writing optics articles. I use them as my reference binoculars, and when I test new binos like these Bushnell's, I judge the optic quality against one of my reference standards of similar power and objective lens. My reference bino scores a 10 on the optics chart I use. The Bushnell only scores a six. What this means is the Bushnell is not as good as my reference standard. However, a six is not bad. The contrast was good, and the Bushnell was still focused at the edges. Some of the best and most expensive binos in the world don't meet that standard. Testing against color charts, there was no bleeding or fringing. I could detect no curvature of field, only slight barrel distortion and no pincushion or rolling distortion.

Bottom line: The Bushnell Fusion 1600 ARC is not the best glass in the world, but it is far from the worst. The beauty of the unit is the information it provides the hunter. That said, I can't let this one go back to Bushnell.

P.S. They just announced a new 12x50mm.



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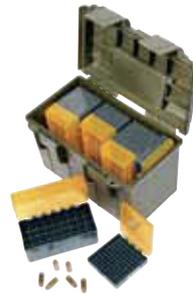
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MONTANA MUSINGS

• MIKE "DUKE" VENTURINO • PHOTOS: YVONNE VENTURINO •

WHY I DON'T WORK ON GUNS

It's better for all of us — really.

Occasionally, I'll meet an old acquaintance at the post office, bank, or wherever and they will ask, "Do you still work on guns for a living?" Emphatically, I reply "No! I write about guns for a living." I'm emphatic about this matter for good reason. I have learned through hard and expensive lessons that I should never, ever, work on guns: anyone's or mine. When I have, a disaster is generally the result.

Oh, I can certainly dismount most guns far enough to clean, although, I'm not famous for scrupulously clean firearms. But, I can take things like my M1 Carbines apart for a scrubbing when they get dirty enough to cease functioning. I can even change broken springs in Colt SAAs. However, I once took a Ruger New Model Blackhawk apart and spent an entire afternoon putting it back together. Back in the '70s, I took apart a Smith & Wesson Model 27 .357 Magnum. Somewhere around here I still have the one part that was left out when it was reassembled. The gun worked OK so I didn't worry about it much, but after that continued to happen, I ceased dismantling guns.

My problem is I have just about no small motor skills with my hands. In college, a fellow dorm resident decided to try to teach me to play the guitar one evening. After a short while he took it away from me saying something about hopelessly stiff fingers. Also, I have no intuitive mechanical ability. It's always a wonder to me how mechanical things work. The first time I changed my own oil in my pickup, the oil ran out onto the ground because I forgot to put the plug back in. Just the other day I put

more windshield washer fluid in our mini-van, but halfway through the gallon jug realized I was putting it in the radiator overflow container!

The first time I decided to "work" on a firearm was when I tried to put a 7-1/2" .45 Colt barrel from Christy Gun Works on a 1880s vintage Colt SAA. I made such a mess of it that only the efforts of a good Montana gunsmith saved it from a total savaging.



Firing pins on Japanese Type 14 Nambu pistols are drop in items but in doing so, Duke managed to stretch one of its springs from its original 1-1/4" length to about 4".

When I got into varmint shooting in my early years as a Montana resident, a nice Remington Model 700 .25-06 with a varmint-weight barrel came my way. That rifle showed a tendency to string shots vertically, and everything I read said glass bedding the action

would likely cure that. So, I mixed up a glass bedding kit on Yvonne's antique oak dining room table. The first disaster came when the mixture bled through the paper towels I put down to protect the table. That resulted in paper glued to it. Even today when eating on that table I try to cover the spot with my plate so she won't see it and get mad again. The second disaster came after my bedding job was done. The Remington's barreled action was firmly glued into the stock, although, I still swear I swabbed release agent on every metal part before (literally) sticking things back together. The rifle did shoot better and, being honest, I told the fellow it was eventually sold to about what I had done.

More recently, I super glued the adjustment screw for the double set triggers on one of my Shiloh Sharps rifles in place. What I needed was Loctite, but Wal-Mart was out so I figured, "super glue would suffice." I put a drop on the screw, stuck it in its threaded hole, but when I went to turn it where desired it snapped off. That stuff really does dry fast!

Luckily, my friend Tom Sargis lives about a 5-minute drive from me. I took my Sharps to him. He drilled out the broken screw, retapped the treads and fitted another screw. All while I watched with a proper hangdog expression on my face. He did mumble something about "... some people shouldn't be allowed to buy super glue."

My most recent fubar came with a World War II, Japanese Nambu, Type 14 pistol. It came at a very reasonable price in very fine condition *except* its firing pin was broken. Through the Internet I found a fellow that sells parts and even re-pins

Nambu firing pins. Type 14 firing pins were evidently known for breaking because the Japanese issued a spare one with each pistol, and the issue holster even has a slot for storing it. For that reason they aren't too hard to take out. I managed to get mine out



Duke decided he should stop taking guns apart when he started accumulating an assortment of leftover parts.

after about an hour's fiddling, so that means they are *really, really* easy to get out. No disaster there!

The disaster struck when I went to put it back in. Along with the firing pin, there is what I'll call a striker bar and a spring that rides on it. So they wouldn't get lost, I put those two parts back in the Nambu. Everything was still OK at that point. The problem started when I then released the Nambu's bolt to slide forward. That forced the spring forward where its end snagged on something inside the pistol. To put in the re-pinned firing pin, that spring had to come out. It wouldn't. I then got the bright idea to fish it out with a hook fashioned on the end of a paper clip. That worked: except for one important matter. The spring started out about 1-1/4". When I finally got it free it was about 4" long.

I Called Tom

Looking over the Nambu, all he could say was "Why couldn't you call me first? I'm only 5 minutes away." Anyway, he found that Wolff Springs makes brand new spring sets for the Type 14 Nambu. While waiting for them, he stripped the pistol all the way down and detail cleaned it of the hardened oil that looked as if it had been there since it was made in January of 1944. After he installed the new springs, my Nambu has been working perfectly.

However, I may be getting better.

Just last week I decided to install some "no gunsmith" scope mounts on a couple of my vintage military rifles. (I'll detail them in the future.) These mounts require removal of the issue barrel sight. Then the new mounts fit into their bases. I got the old open sights removed and the new mounts installed and only broke one \$2 spring when I insisted on hammering it out in the wrong direction.

Not bad, I'd say.

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HANDLOADING

• JOHN BARNES •

THE .300 WEATHERBY MAGNUM

No longer the “King of .30s,” this powerhouse is still a capable round.

Until recently, the .300 Weatherby held the reputation as the most powerful .30-caliber Magnum in existence. It was so famous (or notorious, take your pick) that its reputation often exceeded ballistic reality.

Many years ago, I was a guide on a ranch in central Montana. One year, during mule deer season, my client, a guy named Tom, was one of those globetrotters who’d hunted many places, from Alaska to Africa. There were three other guys in camp, all from the same small town in Michigan, and the only place they’d ever hunted outside the Upper Peninsula was this very ranch in Montana.

Late one evening, everybody was sitting around talking and the conversation drifted to hunting rifles. It turned out all the fellows from Michigan were shooting 7mm Remington Magnums. The leader of their pack even made the comment that they all used to hunt with .30-06s, but the Big Seven “made the ought-six look sick.”

I shrugged. “It’s a good round, but not exceptionally powerful.”

The guy raised an eyebrow and asked, “So, do you use something bigger?”

“Sometimes. Lately I’ve been hunting with a .338 Winchester Magnum quite a bit.”

The guy nodded. His buddies didn’t even blink, perhaps because of the hour, and perhaps because of several Budweisers. The guy then turned toward Tom. “So what do you use in Alaska?”

“Well, the last time I hunted brown bear, I used a .300 Weatherby.”

Huge?

One of the half-asleep Michigan guys suddenly bolted upright and half-shouted, “That’s *huge!*” All three then bombarded Tom with questions and comments: “Boy, it must have knocked that bear on his butt.” “How long did it take your shoulder to heal?”

“Is it mounted in a turret?” etc., etc.

In reality, of course, most experienced hunters would consider the .338 Winchester to be somewhat more powerful than the .300 Weatherby, if only because it can use heavier bullets of slightly larger diameter. But the .338 was never the beneficiary of Roy Weatherby’s promotional genius, he made sure his rifles ended up in the hands of Hollywood actors and globetrotting trophy hunters, none shy about publicity themselves.

Today the .300 Weatherby isn’t exactly forgotten, but it’s lost its glow. The .300 Remington Ultra Magnum is a little bigger, hence it’s capable of a little more velocity; friends at Weatherby tell me that Roy’s .300 isn’t even the best-selling .30 chambering in their line anymore, coming in behind the .30-.378.

Despite all that, the .300 Weatherby remains relatively popular, partly because it’s chambered in Weatherby’s “affordable” Vanguard rifles, including the least expensive model, the Synthetic. All the Vanguards have the reputation of being very accurate, and it no longer takes the income of a movie star to purchase a .300 Weatherby.

In fact, all the Weatherby rifles are more accurate than they used to be. Partially due to tighter throats, especially the long “freebore” throats in the chambers of most Weatherby rounds, including the .300. Over the past decade, my experience is that Weatherby rifles shoot extremely well. I’ve shot several extensively, both Vanguards and Mark Vs, chambered for the .257, .270 and .300 Weatherbys; all have been capable of putting 3 shots into well under 1" at 100 yards with the right ammo, including Weatherby factory ammo.

One advantage Weatherby magnums have over some other factory rounds is Norma loads their ammo in Norma cases; it is some of the most consistent brass made. Some handloaders have complained that Norma brass is “soft,” and while that may have been true in the past, at least in some cartridges, I use a lot of Norma brass and generally find it plenty hard, especially the Weatherby line.



Presently, the .300 Weatherby is available in affordable, accurate rifles, such as the Vanguard Sub-MOA.



This Colorado bull was taken with the .300 Weatherby topped with a 200-grain Nosler Partition, a superb long-range load for open-country hunting of larger game. The gun is a Sub-MOA Weatherby with a Leupold scope.

One problem in handloading the .300 Weatherby, however, arises from the Norma ammo. It's pretty warm, so it's often difficult to match factory velocities, though it's still pretty easy to safely beat the velocities of the .300 Winchester Magnum, even in a 24" barrel. (I also suspect Weatherby ammo is chronographed in 26" barrels, though their website doesn't say.)

These days there are two diverging schools of thought about flat-shooting magnums. One school believes that with today's bullets, especially monolithics such as the Barnes TSX, there's a big advantage in using lighter bullets at much higher muzzle velocities. This flattens trajectory over "normal" hunting ranges, generally considered as anything out to 500 yards. Lighter bullets also kick less, and allow their fans to brag about muzzle velocity, just as they used to brag about the top speed of the '57 Chevy they rebuilt in high school shop class.

Weighty Thoughts

The other school thinks muzzle velocity is almost irrelevant, since ballistic reticles and scopes with "tactical turrets" allow us to compensate for trajectory beyond 500 yards. This school tends to use bullets on the heavy end of the spectrum, with boattails and really pointy noses, because sleek bullets retain more velocity and drift less in the wind. These folks sometimes call ranges under 500 yards "chip shots." (Luckily, the .300 Weatherby



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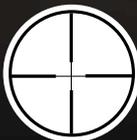


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can make hunters from both schools happy, along with hunters who don't really go to school. They often stick to 180-grain bullets in any .30 caliber, and still take game.)

I've owned a couple of .300 Weatherbys and have leaned toward the heavy-bullet school, partly because when I started hunting, there weren't 729 brands of premium bullets for every imaginable use. Instead there was the Nosler Partition and the 200-grain .30 caliber. They did a great job on any game, both up close and far away. Consequently, I've taken more large big-game animals with the 200-grain Partition than any other .30-caliber bullet.

The listed ballistic coefficient of .481 isn't bad, and is also not an exaggeration, unlike the BCs of many bullets. Today, however, Nosler also offers their 200-grain AccuBond, with an even higher BC. It's proved about as tough as the Partition in

.300 WEATHERBY HANDLOADED AMMO PERFORMANCE

BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
Barnes 130 TSX	RL-22	89.0	3,588	1.50
Nosler 150 E-Tip	AA3100	85.0	3,413	1.16
Barnes 168 Tipped TSX	Magnum	91.0	3,269	.70
Norma 180 Oryx	Norma MRP	83.5	3,161	1.28
Nosler 180 E-Tip	Magnum	87.0	3,154	.98
Sierra 180 GameKing	H4831SC	83.0	3,107	.82
Nosler 200 AccuBond	Magnum	86.0	2,997	1.10
Hornady 220 Interlock RN	Retumbo	84.0	2,818	1.05

Notes: All loads fired from a Weatherby Vanguard Sub-MOA with a 24" barrel.

my tests, and in some rifles shoots more accurately, though the Partition also tends to shoot very well in .300 Magnums. There are also less-stout but even sleeker big game bullets, such as the 190- and 210-grain Berger Hunting VLDs.

But there also isn't anything wrong with using one of the tougher, lighter bullets. One of the most accurate

.30-caliber hunting bullets I've tested, in several rifles, is the 168-grain Barnes Triple-Shock. It penetrates very deeply, and at .300 Weatherby velocities shoots very flatly at "normal" ranges, while drifting only slightly more than a 200-grain Spitzer.

Despite being eligible for Social Security, the .300 Weatherby remains one of the top .30-caliber magnums, with excellent brass and ballistics, and a long history of working extremely well on big game around the world. **GUNS**

.300 WEATHERBY FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
Hornady 165 Interlock Spire Point	3,397	.93
Nosler 200 Partition	3,015	.83

Notes: Both loads fired from a Weatherby Vanguard Sub-MOA with a 24" barrel and Weatherby factory ammunition.

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SHOTGUNNER

• HOLT BODINSON •



THE TIP-TOP “TOPPER” More than an entry-level trap gun.

Coming off the trap line, he was grinning from ear-to-ear. My shooting partner, Alan Fauser, had just shot a perfect first round with H&R’s Topper Trap model. “You know,” he said, “I shoot Perazzi and Krieghoff trap guns, but I can’t say they perform any better than this little H&R Topper. Yes, it’s too light, not long enough, but it comes up really, really nice. The person who designed this trap gun was a trap shooter. He knew what he was building. Can you imagine what a joy it would be for a 12-year old getting their hands on a neat, entry-level trap gun like this?” My thoughts exactly.

When the Topper Trap gun was first handed to me two years ago on a shoot hosted by Remington during



Alan Fauser was all grins after smoking the first 25 with the Topper. After the round, Fauser observed he couldn’t have performed any better with his Perazzi or Krieghoff.

the annual SHOT Show, I didn’t quite know what to make of it. Twenty-five clays later, I was top man with a clean score, and I immediately became fascinated with the design and thought incorporated into this remarkable and remarkably inexpensive shotgun. Because of production delays, I’ve waited two years to report on the Topper, but the wait’s been worth it.

That same day, when Fauser and I were shooting at Tucson’s ultra-modern Trap and Skeet Club, avid trap shooting members would come up and say, “Where’d you get that gun?” My response was always, “Would you like to shoot a round with it?” The H&R Topper Trap got a workout that day. The resulting response from seasoned trap shooters changed from highly skeptical to consistently positive. What was interesting was how well this factory, out-of-the-box, single shot fit everyone.

Now, less you think an inexpensive single shot can’t be competitive, let me remind the shotgunning clan that a plain, break-open, exposed hammer,

The H&R Topper is an entry-level trap gun of modest cost, yet is strong on performance. The line is currently made at the Remington factory in Ilion, New York.

single-shot Winchester Model 37 was used to win the 16-yard class championship at the 1938 Grand American. That Model 37 had none of the bells-and-whistles H&R has built into their new Topper Trap. Let’s take a look.

The Essence

If I had to distill the essence of the Topper’s successful design, it would be in the stocking. Trap shooters are fanatical about proper stock fit and make up the perfect cientele base for a mountain of adjustable combs, buttplates and recoil pads.

The single, most critical element of stock design is the line of the comb. The comb establishes the eye-to-comb position of the eye which serves as the rear sight of a shotgun.

The slope of the comb is commonly defined by the drop in inches at the nose of the comb and heel of the stock from the line-of-sight established by the top of the barrel or rib. A very common measurement seen on factory field shotguns is a 1-1/2" drop-at-comb and 2-1/2" drop-at-heel. Ideally, the top of the comb should position the shooter’s eye to the line-of-sight vertically, and the thickness, contour and taper of the comb and side of the stock should position the eye horizontally.

Straight Stock

The Topper trap stock features a 1-3/4" drop-at-comb and a 1-3/4" drop-at-heel. In short, the full length of the comb is parallel to the line-of-sight so that wherever the shooter’s cheek is placed along that comb,



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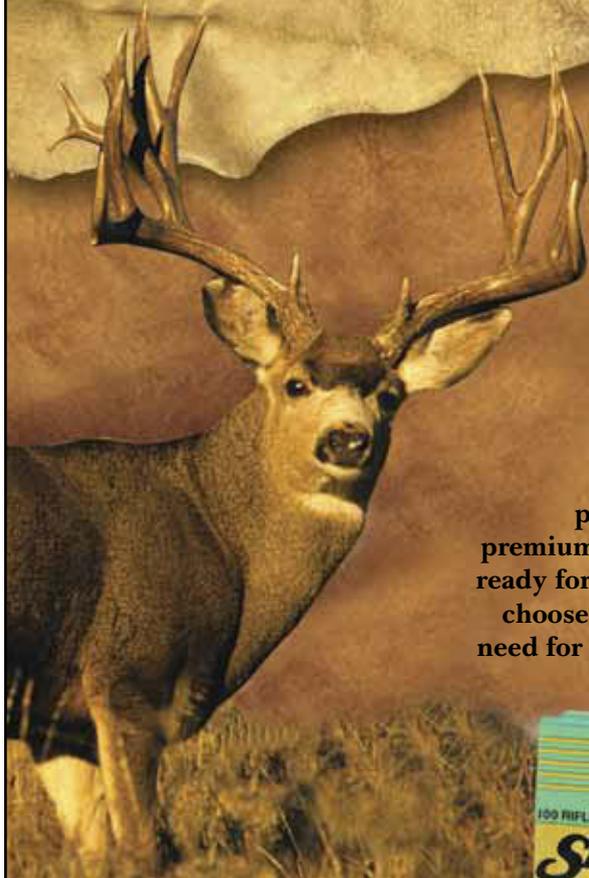
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SHOTGUNNER



Great trap-gun stock lines, sporting nicely figured walnut in the buttstock (above), ending in a Pachmayr Decelerator Pad and a checkered fore-end of correct proportions (below).



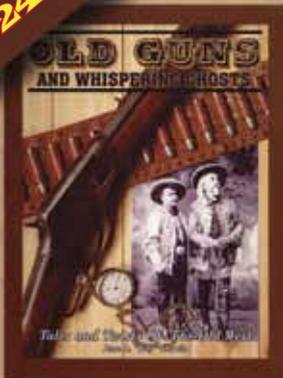
The improved and modified extended choke tube (supplied), is perfect for smoking clays from the 16-yard line.

his eye is aligned with the line-of-sight. This high-level comb line tends to place the center of the pattern slightly high, which is beneficial when shooting rising clays from the traps. The ventilated rib of the Topper also helps in this regard since it is designed to be higher at the rear than at the muzzle. The advantage to a slightly higher patterning trap gun is that you don't have to blot out the rising clay with the muzzle of your gun to hit it. You can both keep it in sight above the end of the barrel and smoke it.

The fore-end of the Topper is shaped to a very classic trap style, being both wide, shallow and tapered so that it becomes wider towards the muzzle. Being shallow, the fore-end provides that proper hand-to-barrel relationship essential for good shotgunning. While being tapered, it facilitates recovery from recoil. Both the buttstock and the fore-end are nicely checkered, and a large Pachmayr Decelerator helps to smooth out those strings of trap loads.

After watching several shooters wring out the Topper, some full-faced, others with flatter cheeks, the Topper stocking seemed to be universally accepted.

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- SS166 Blade Only.....12.95
- SS166K Cobra Kit.....14.95

Sportsman

- 7 3/8" overall, blade 3 1/2", 1/8" thick.
- SS164 Blade Only.....12.95
- SS164K Sportsman Kit.....14.95

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- KV605 605 Original.....39.95

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- Black Anodized Stainless overall is 7 5/8", 4 1/2" closed, cutting edge 3 1/8". Is supplied with reshaped, drilled Quincewood handle material. Use a torx wrench T10 and a T6.
- SS652 Black Widow.....19.95

Hi Tech Folder

- 8A stainless steel blade with satin finish. It is supplied with reshaped, drilled Quincewood handle material. Length 7-3/4" opened, 4-5/8" closed, the cutting edge 3-1/8". Use torx wrench T10 and T6.
- SS3520 Hi Tech Fighter.....19.95

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- High Carbon Stainless blade, NS bolster, belt clip. Supplied with reshaped, drilled Quincewood handle material. Overall length 7 13/16" 4-1/2" closed. 3-1/4" cutting edge. Use Torx T10 & T6.
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Pattern 21

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- J210 440C Steel.....24.95
- J212 D2 Steel.....29.95
- K214 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT103 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 22

- 8 3/8" overall, 3 1/2" blade, 5/32" thickness
- J220 440C Steel.....24.95
- J222 D2 Steel.....29.95
- K214 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT103 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 23

- 9 9/16" overall, 4 5/8" blade, 5/32" thickness
- J230 440C Steel.....24.95
- J232 D2 Steel.....29.95
- K214 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT111 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 25

- 9" overall, 4 3/16" blade, 5/32" thickness
- J250 440C Steel.....24.95
- J252 D2 Steel.....29.95
- K214 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT111 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 31

- 7 5/8" overall, 3" blade, 5/32" thickness
- J312 D2 Steel.....24.95
- J314 154CM.....29.95
- K314 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT104 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 36

- 7 5/8" overall, 3" blade, 1/8" thickness
- J362 D2 Steel.....24.95
- J363 CPMS 30V.....32.95
- K364 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT103 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 37

- 6 5/8" overall, 2 5/8" blade, 1/8" thickness
- J372 D2 Steel.....22.95
- J373 CPMS 30V.....29.95
- K374 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT116 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 38

- 7" overall, 2 1/2" blade, 5/32" thickness
- J382 D2 Steel.....22.95
- J383 CPMS 30V.....32.95
- K384 Stainless Bolster.....6.95
- KT104 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 39

- 6 1/2" overall, 2 1/2" blade, 1/8" thickness
- J390 440C Steel.....19.95
- J392 D2 Steel.....24.95
- KT103 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 40

- 7 3/16" overall, 3 1/4" blade, 1/8" thickness
- J400 440C Steel.....19.95
- J402 D2 Steel.....24.95
- KT103 Leather Sheath.....14.50

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The Frisco



- SS204 Frisco w/ Engraving.....7.95
- SS205 Frisco without Engraving.....7.95

The Burlington

This new opener is easy to customize. Nickel Silver bolsters are pre-pinned and ready to finish, the mirror finished stainless blade is 9-1/4" overall, 5-1/2" below the bolster. Kit includes blade, handle material, and pins.

- SS203 Letter Opener.....9.95
- SS203K Letter Opener Kit.....12.95

The Pacific

The mirror finished stainless blade has 3/32" holes and is 8-1/2" overall, 4-1/4" blade. Kit includes blade, handle material, and pins.

- SS201 Letter Opener.....7.95
- SS201K Letter Opener Kit.....9.95

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- SS106 Cook's Blade.....11.95

Steak Blade

- 7-1/2" overall, 3-1/2" blade, .058 thickness
- SS108 Steak Blade.....7.95

Santoku Blade

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- SS110 Santoku Blade.....14.95

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Experienced trap shooters like Mack Pearson (left) and Alan Fauser (right), were at first a bit skeptical about the Topper.

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ACTION TYPE:

Break-open, single-shot, transfer bar safety

GAUGE:

12-gauge, 3" chamber

CHOKE TUBES:

Extended IM

CAPACITY:

1

BARREL LENGTH:

30", ventilated rib

OVERALL LENGTH:

44"

WEIGHT:

7 pounds

FINISH:

Blued barrel, electroless nickel receiver

SIGHTS:

Muzzle and mid-rib white beads

STOCK:

Select walnut

LENGTH OF PULL:

14-3/8"

DROP AT COMB:

1-3/4"

DROP AT HEEL:

1-3/4"

PRICE:

\$424.25

The big surprise was the walnut used in the Topper Trap stock had some pleasing grain and figure. I have seen pictures of other Topper Traps in which the wood was simply gorgeous. So if you go shopping for one, try to inspect several for the quality of the factory wood.

The 30", ventilated-rib barrel comes supplied with an extended IM choke tube which is an excellent choice for the 16-yard line. While it's fired by an external hammer, the Topper action incorporates a transfer bar system and is noted for its safety.

The Topper weighs 7 pounds in its trap dress, which is about a pound or a pound and a half lighter than most trap shooters would use for 100-, 200- and 300-a-day shoots; but shooting 1-ounce Winchester AA Extra-Lite and Remington 1-1/8-ounce STS Light Target loads, no one felt recoil was a factor of concern.

I'm totally enthusiastic about the Topper Trap model. It's very well designed for its intended purpose and, being inexpensive, will hopefully serve to recruit more youths and novices into the sport. When an accomplished trap shooter can say the Topper performed as well as his Perazzi or Krieghoff, you know there's a lot more to this gun than meets the eye.

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OUTTM of the BOX

MASSAD AYOOB

CHIAPPA'S RADICAL RHINO .357

It looks odd, but the design
is truly functional.

Inspired by the underbarrel Mateba pistol, the Chiappa (pronounced key-YAH-pah) Rhino debuted in 2010, and like Charlie Brown's Christmas tree, it's an ugly little thing that wins the hearts of those who get to know it. The low-slung barrel drives recoil straight back into the hand, reducing muzzle rise, and absorbs that rearward impact with a super-cushy, saw-handle grip whose radical angle almost forces a locked grip.

The result for shooting is hot .38 Specials feel like mild target rounds, and a full-power .357 Magnum feels like you're shooting hot .38 Special. A downward press of the lever mounted on the left side of the frame opens the hexagonal cylinder (how's that for an oxymoron?). I discovered by trial and error the speedloader, which fit it best, was the 3A size from HKS, designed originally for the Ruger Security Six and the Colt Mark III.

What looks like a hammer, isn't; it's a leverage device that, when brought to the rear, cocks an "underhammer" hidden inside the mechanism. The hammer-lookin'-non-hammer then comes forward, even though a short,

relatively light trigger pull will still fire the gun. A red-tipped projection on the top left of the frame rises up in line of sight to remind you the gun is cocked, even though it doesn't look that way.

On my test gun, thumb-cocking required extremely heavy pressure. Double-action pull was moderately heavy but quite smooth, and 1" groups at 7 yards at PPC speed were easy despite the 2" barrel. Due to the comfortable grips and Luger-like grip angle, pointing was very natural for most on the test team who shot it.

The test sample worked fine with lead bullets but wasn't particularly accurate with them, though, 4" and



The design of the Chiappa Rhino (left) makes for a shorter overall length in this comparison of two 2" .357s (at right is a S&W J-frame 340 M&P).

5" groups at 25 yards with lead is still no mean feat for a snubnose .357. With jacketed ammo, however, this snubby's accuracy was absolutely extraordinary. The best group I've gotten with it so far was 1.30" for five shots, with Mag-Tech Gold 125-grain .357 Mag; three of them in one ragged hole and about 1/4" apart center to center.

Testing with Remington-UMC 125-grain semi-jacketed hollowpoint .357, one shot went astray from the rest of the group fired from the 25-

RHINO

MAKER: CHIAPPA GROUP
BRESCIA, ITALY
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8611-A N. DIXIE DR.
DAYTON, OH 45414
(877) 425-4867
WWW.GUNSMAGAZINE.COM/CHIAPPA-FIREARMS

ACTION TYPE:

Double-action revolver

CALIBER:

.357 Magnum

CAPACITY:

6

BARREL LENGTH:

2"

OVERALL LENGTH:

6-1/2"

WEIGHT:

24 ounces

FINISH:

Matte black

SIGHTS:

Fixed

GRIPS:

Rubber

PRICE:

\$730



With the barrel at the unusual 6 o'clock position and high grip angle, the Chiappa Rhino is odd looking, but a totally functional 6-shot revolver. The cylinder lever (right) is at the top of the frame.



The Rhino is at height of recoil in the hands of the 120-pound Owen Davis, with 125-grain, .357 Magnum full-power ammo. Yes, the low barrel tames recoil! Note the position of Owen's hands. You don't want a digit alongside the bottom of the frame as that's where hot gasses from the low-mounted barrel's cylinder-gap exit.

yard bench. Probably unnoticed error on my part, that errant bullet hole extended the 5-shot group to 3.15". The other four hits were in 2.80", and the best three—a measurement that tends to compensate for human error and give a better idea of true inherent accuracy—was a mere 1.35". Given the sight radius is only 4-1/4" or so, I'm very happy with that.

One thing to watch: a thumbs-forward position puts a vulnerable

digit right in line with the 6 o'clock barrel cylinder gap, and can do some serious damage. You definitely want to shoot the Rhino with the thumbs well back. Curling mine down has worked well for me, and for my friends who've shot the Rhino.

The Rhino snubby comes with a well-made Italian pancake-style hip holster, and the flat sides of the cylinder help to conceal it. A friend of mine in New Mexico is carrying

his .357 Rhino regularly in a neat little clip-less Remora inside-the-waistband holster, and swears it feels as if he's packing his .38 Detective Special.

I was so impressed with this modern landmark in revolver design that I bought the test gun (with a credit card, just so I could say, "I charged a Rhino"). The \$700-plus-range retail looks steep... until you realize what the Rhino gives you in accuracy and .357 Magnum controllability. **GUNS**

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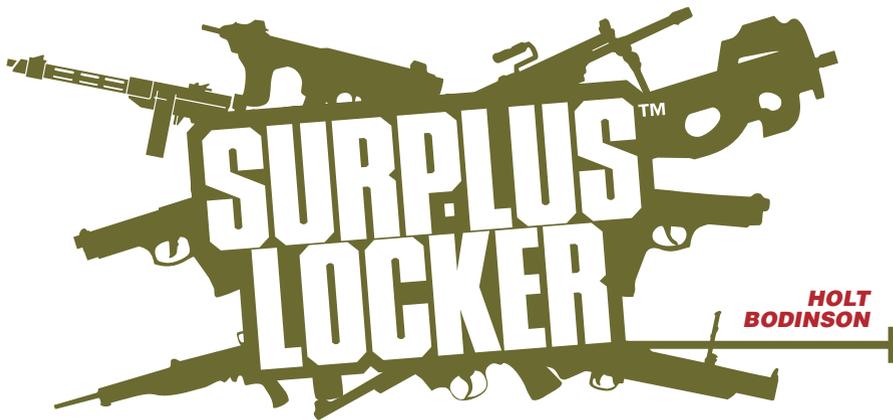
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THE C39 7.62X39MM Century's intriguing AK Pistol.

When it comes to Kalashnikov variants, Century International Arms has the field surrounded. They offer: under-folders, side-folders, bullpups, high- and low-capacity models, wood stocks, metal stocks, synthetic stocks and calibers 5.45x39 as well as 7.62x39. Making its debut is their 100-percent American made, C39 Pistol, a family offshoot of their Centurion 39 Sporter Rifle, which raised the bar on AK accuracy, performance and quality last year.



Shooting with the sling as a brace (above) gives this loud, little beast enough support for the longer ranges. In such handling, the 20-magazine is preferable (below). The C39 AK pistol is derived from the Centurion 39 Sporter Rifle.



An AK pistol? It does seem strange at first, but the concept goes back to the 1970s when the Russians designed the diminutive AKS-74U in 5.45x39 as a submachine gun for use by armored and helicopter crews. The AKS-74U combined an AKS receiver with an 8.26" barrel and a side-folding stock. With the stock folded, it has an overall length of 19.29", and weighed 7 pounds fully loaded. The AKS-74U hit the ground running during the Russian-Afghan war. The Russians gave it the nicknames "cigarette stub" and "little bitch." The mujahedeen gave it the name "Krinkov" or "Krink," and regarded it as a Class A1 Russian war trophy. It was certainly handy, concealable and very cool looking.

Scrolling up to the present, true AK/AKM-type pistols in 7.62x39 without an AKS-74U type folding stock emerged in Iraq. According to Frank Iannamico in his definitive work, *AK-47: The Grim Reaper*, "the Iraqi pistols, so far recovered, seem to be of local manufacture and basically, modifications of existing stores of AKs." As pictured in his book, they are essentially short-barreled, 7.62x39 versions of the AKS-74U; highly concealable and probably somewhat marginally useful for close quarter combat in an urban setting.

Machined Receiver

Century International Arms had been importing the "Draco" model 7.62x39 pistol, made in Romania, until they decided to manufacture an AK pistol themselves. They've done it right. The C39, AK-type, semi-automatic receiver is machined from an 11-pound billet of 4140 ordnance steel. After it's cut and shaped into a rigid AK receiver, the end product weighs a mere 1-1/2 pounds and radiates quality and durability.

The barrel measures 11-3/8". With its birdcage compensator, the C39 pistol has an overall length of 21-3/8".



Slung from a 1-point sling, the pistol can be concealed and be ready immediately.

With TAPCO's excellent, 30-round, synthetic magazines shipped with the gun, the C39 registers 6 pounds, 14 ounces on my Sunbeam scale. The Century catalog indicates a weight of only 5.4 pounds. Must be a typo. Add 30 rounds of 7.62x39 to the kit, and the weight of the little pistol jumps to 8 pounds, 11 ounces, hardly a 1-handed handgun.

TAPCO Trigger

It's hard to find a better AK-trigger group than TAPCO's G2 model. It slips right into a standard AK receiver and eases the trigger-pull down to 3 or 4 pounds. Century agrees. The pistol is fitted with the G2, and it is a real delight to use.

Another refinement that improves the usefulness of the C39 is its fully adjustable rear sight. Century's rear sight is graduated and adjustable for windage as well as elevation from 100 to 800 yards. Gone is the traditional, and bothersome, screw-in, front post sight of the AK. In its place is a fixed, "shark fin" front sight, reminiscent of those found on the Remington Model 66 and 600 rifles. While the open sights are entirely functional, the C39 cries out for the addition of a laser or red-dot-type sight to make the handgun practical. There are lots of mounting possibilities!

Century's proprietary upper and lower handguards are a revelation. Formed from a high-strength polymer, they provide four Picatinny rails—top,

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SURPLUS LOCKER



The three faces of the C39 when fitted with the 30- (top), 20- (middle) and 5-round magazines. The 5-round mag is easiest to shoot at the bench, as you might imagine.

bottom, right and left—just the thing for mounting sights, lights, lasers and fore-end grips (be sure to get the ATF tax stamp for the fore-end grip through a Class III dealer—it's not available in every state). The lower handguard is particularly well designed for comfort. Just behind its right and left rails is a generous checkered panel for securely grasping the fore-end. One of the typical problems with side-mounted Picatinny rails is that, if they are left uncovered, they bite the hand that holds them. Not so with the new Century design, and believe me, this is one pistol you want a firm, 2-handed grip on.

What you don't see until you disassemble the C39, is its stainless steel piston and a bolt that reveals some interesting lightning cuts.

How does it shoot? First, those

big, curvaceous, 30-round magazines are just a bit much for a pistol you might want to conceal under an outer garment. The C39 looks, balances and handles much better with a 20-round magazine and for shooting off the bench, a 5-round magazine is perfect.

Good hearing protection is essential! The muzzle blast emanating from an 11-3/8" barrel firing the 7.62x39 round is concussive. The muzzle flash, even in broad daylight, is impressive. At night, it's simply illuminating.

On hand were some 122- and 123-grain FMJ from Wolf and Silver Bear, plus, some 122-grain HP by TCW. Although the broad fore-end of the C39 snuggles nicely down into a front sandbag, you must place your hand between the fore-end and the front bag when shooting groups,

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SURPLUS LOCKER



Century's handguards sport four Picatinny rails and a comfortable, grasping panel. The C39 begs for good optics like this Aimpoint CompC3, which easily mounts atop the rails.

otherwise the C39 will string its shots vertically. I know from experience! Three brands of ammunition and 15 shots later, I had a 50-yard group measuring 1-1/2" wide and 5" high, strung-out between 12 and 6 o'clock.

Changing my bag manners, all three brands of ammunition were capable of cutting 2-1/2", 5-shot groups at 50 yards with the open sights. Standing, offhand, with a Weaver-like, 2-handed hold, I found you could rain some havoc on a B-27 target at 100 yards. The pistol has some long-range potential, but it does need optics to realize it. In terms of recoil and noise, my impression is that it closely resembles a 4"-barreled, .44 Magnum revolver.

Velocities from the 11-3/8" barrel were impressive, indeed. Over a PACT Professional chronograph, the Wolf 122-grain FMJ averaged 2,311 fps; the TCW, 2,240 fps and the Silver Bear,

2,221 fps. With those velocities, the C39 is delivering a lot of foot-pounds down range.

The C39 does sport two sling swivels, one at the rear of the receiver, the other just below the front sight. Yes, you could sling the pistol over your shoulder in a conventional manner, but better yet, I believe, would be the use of a single-point sling attached to the rear swivel. BLACKHAWK!'s Sub-Gun sling would do. I jury-rigged one up and found slinging the pistol over one shoulder positioned it for immediate action while keeping it concealed under an outer garment. Slings the pistol around your neck was an effective concealed carry, as well. Plus, the neck sling adds additional stability when shooting with a 2-handed hold. Which brings up the question, what's an AK pistol good for in the civilian world anyway?

First, Century's C39 pistol is an intriguing AK variant in its own right. Having made its legitimate debut on today's battlefields, the AK pistol is a worthy, milsurp collectible. Short and compact, it could be a useful firearm to carry and maneuver in a car, airplane or boat. It also has some potential as a survival tool. Mounted with a properly licensed, tactical fore-end illuminating grip like Century's high intensity MTL-225 model and a laser sight, it could be a formidable and intimidating home defense firearm.

When all is said and done, the C39 is a refined, unique, well-made, cool-looking, powerful pistol that's fun to shoot.

GUNS

AK-47: THE GRIM REAPER, BY FRANK IANNAMICO, HARDCOVER, 868 PAGES, ©2008, CHIPOTLE PUBLISHING, LLC, 631 N. STEPHANIE ST., NO. 372, HENDERSON, NV 89014 (702) 565-0746; A&J ARMS BOOK SELLERS, 2449 N. ORCHARD AVE., TUCSON, AZ 85712, (520) 512-1065, WWW.GUNSMAGAZINE.COM/AJ-ARMS-BOOKSELLERS

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DELRAY BEACH, FL 33445
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ACTION TYPE:

Gas-operated, semi-auto

CALIBER:

7.62x39

CAPACITY:

30

BARREL LENGTH:

11-3/8"

OVERALL LENGTH:

21-3/8"

WEIGHT:

6 pounds, 14 ounces (unloaded)

FINISH:

Parkerized gray

SIGHTS:

Adjustable for elevation and windage

STOCKS:

Polymer

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

• JEFF JOHN •

Corrosive Primer Fouling

Q: John Connor in his column “Cleaner Guns & Sweeter Shooting” doesn’t mention what brands we can “count on” to clean fouling left by corrosive ammo.

Roberta Mills
Sheridan, Wyo.

A: Sometimes we forget the tried and true. Hoppe’s No. 9 says right on the packaging it will remove corrosive primer residue. Newer and primarily a black powder solvent (one of the best and fastest I’ve used) is Birchwood Casey’s No. 77



Both good ol’ Hoppe’s No. 9 and Birchwood Casey No. 77 will remove corrosive primer fouling.

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.40-70 WCF

Q: I am a long time subscriber to *GUNS*, *American Handgunner* and *American COP*. I am trying to

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find ammo, reloading components and load information for an 1886 Winchester in .40-70. Any information you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Chuck Macchietto
via e-mail

A: Most books call for reforming .45 basic brass to make the 2.4" .40-70 WCF. You should be able to just run .45-90 WCF (which is also a 2.4" case) into the .40-70 sizer and trim to 2.4" if needed. Starline makes .45-90 brass currently. Both RCBS and 4D offer dies. The RCBS 2-Cavity Bullet Mould .406" 41-300-FN will drop a bullet of about 320 grains cast from 1:20 mix, which should be perfect for your 1886. Buffalo Arms generally has all of this in stock, but there have been long stock outs on some product. Buffalo Arms also offers .45-90 brass redrawn from .45-70.

I'd stick with black powder, but dimensions and smokeless data are given in *Cartridges of the World* and the *Handloaders Manual of Cartridge Conversions*.

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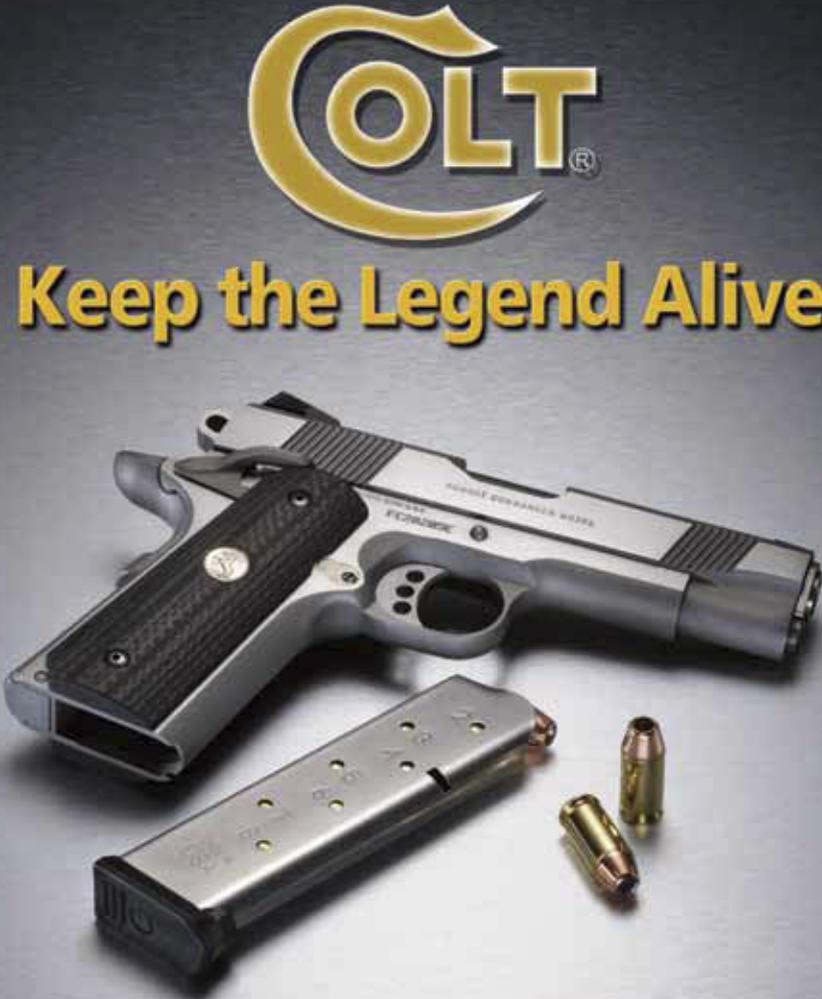
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To start the shooters meeting each morning, Denny Wilcox blew a "call to arms" with his bugle.

VIMBAR/VIMSAR

A FUN GAME BY ANY NAME.

Mike "Duke" Venturino

Photos: Yvonne Venturino

VIMBAR/VIMSAR? Those acronyms stand for "Vintage Military Bolt-Action Rifle" and "Vintage Military Semi-Auto Rifle." Shooting competitions are springing up around the country centered on such firearms.



Part of the "walk-about" is handgun shooting. Denny Wilcox is firing a Browning Hi-Power in this photo.

I've just returned from my first one and see much potential in this type of shooting match, not to mention much fun. First off, it's relatively inexpensive to get into. Although there is no set rulebook for these shoots around the nation, the VIMBAR match I attended allowed any military bolt action of any nation still in its "as-issued" state. At the match there were US Krags, 1903 and '03A3 Springfields, 1917 Enfields, various vintage Mausers from around the world, Mosin-Nagants from

both Russia and Finland, British SMLEs and No. 4s, and possibly others I didn't notice. The honor for most unique, however, had to go to a Nevedan named Andy Willey. He showed me just how fast a straight-pull Swiss Model 31 can be operated.

For ammunition, any suitable load was allowed, excluding tracer and armor piercing. Most of the competitors used inexpensive military surplus stuff. (In the other shooting sports in which I have participated such as cowboy action and BPCR Silhouette, for the bucks you spend to fire the first event you could just about buy one each of the above VIMBARs and a year's supply of mil-surplus ammo for each.)

My invitation to attend this match came from a couple of fellows with whom I've been acquainted for years. In fact, if you have had any experiences with Browning or Winchester firearms in the last few years, you have also been acquainted with them in a distant sort of way. They are Denny Wilcox and Peter Sodoma, both employees of Browning in Morgan, Utah. I got to know them back in the 1990s when Browning was developing their Model 1885 BPCR Silhouette rifle. We discovered we shared a fondness for single actions, lever guns and now vintage military firearms.

Friday before the match at the Golden Spike Range was sighting-in day and many competitors took advantage of the practice.



To digress briefly, I'd like to say something about these two characters. Some people are "doers." By that I mean they don't go along with the flow in their lives but take control of it. These guys could be poster boys for "doers." Denny decided early on in life that he was going to be a US Naval Aviator and did so, flying both rotary and fixed-wing aircraft. After 11 years active duty he remained in the reserve and retired with the rank of commander.

Movies have been made about people like Peter. He was born in what was then known as the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, a country under the heavy thumb of the Soviet Union. To make a long story short, he escaped communist rule, made his way here and became a citizen. When he speaks of individual rights, freedom and governmental oppression, he knows first-hand what he's talking about.

The Range

Utah is a firearms-friendly state with a considerable hunting tradition, but there isn't an abundance of shooting competition there. Over a decade back, Denny and Peter decided to do something about that. They found land to lease, which appropriately for historical oriented shooting, was very near a significant site in American history.

The range they developed is literally within shouting distance of the Golden Spike National Monument. That's in northern Utah where the transcontinental railroads joined in 1869. So logically, they have named their location the Golden Spike Range. Denny and Peter have invested much personal treasure and sweat into furnishing a myriad of steel targets, and in upkeep of the property and its fences. I won't go into all the different types of matches they put on during the warm months. The details can be seen on their website. But let me say this: with the enormous mountain that is their backstop, they can safely shoot .50 BMG rifles.

I do want to say this: none of the events put on at the Golden Spike Range are moneymakers for Denny and Peter. All entry fees go back into the range in one form or another. These guys go to this effort and expense so that there are shooting competitions in their part of the country.

Not having a solid idea of what a VIMBAR or VIMSAR match consisted of, I drove to Utah with six .30-06 rifles and several GI ammo cans of handloads and military surplus ammo. Rather intelligently, I thought, my timing was to arrive at the range a day early so I could expend some of



Some of the variety of VIMBARs and VIMSARs (above) Duke witnessed at his first match included (from left to right around the cable spool) US Model 1903A3, Finnish Model 39 Mosin-Nagant, SKS semi-auto carbine, US Model 1903A3 and unknown Model of Mauser. On top of cable spool is a Mosin-Nagant Model 44 carbine. The top three shooters in Duke's first VIMBAR match were (below, left, from left) Reynold Brown (third place), Joe Brennan (first place) and Chris Billings (second place). The top three shooters in the VIMSAR match were (below, right, from left) Shayne Ramsey (third place), B.J. Pendleton (first place) and Kasey Ramsey (second place). Note the rain suits!



At the Golden Spike Range on sighting-in day before the match, one shooter (left) is firing a Finnish Model 39 Mosin-Nagant and the other is shooting what appears to be a Swedish Model 1896 Mauser.

that ammo in getting sight settings for whatever distances we might shoot. That Friday, many others were doing the same. It was definitely a good idea.

Here's what a VIMBAR match consists of as put on at the Golden Spike Range. In the morning, Denny gets out his bugle and blows a call that strangely sounds like Yvonne's burro when hay is being forked out. That brings everyone together (there is camping at the range), whereupon they are divided into Group 1 or Group 2, each being ramrodded by Denny or Peter. Shooters are assigned a numbered position and firing is done in turn from right to left.

The targets are armored steel plates of various square, rectangular, or round shapes placed in 100-yard increments from 200 to 800 yards. At 200 yards, the shooting position was offhand. At 300 yards it was sitting or kneeling, and thereafter it was freestyle. Most shooters go prone and shoot over bags or packs but some prefer sitting. Five rounds were fired at each distance except 300 yards where 10 shots were required. There was no time limit except for that last mentioned stage. Those 10 had to be fired in 90 seconds. As most competitors had stripper clips, a reload was only a matter of seconds.



Duke chose to fire his Smith-Corona US Model 1903A3 in his first VIMBAR match. Here, he is at his home range getting a good zero on it at 100 yards.

Denny was firing a US Model 1898 Krag with its side-box magazine requiring each cartridge to be dropped in individually. He even got it loaded and all rounds fired with a dozen seconds left on the clock.

To me, one of the enjoyable parts of the VIMBAR match was watching the manipulations required by the various types of vintage military rifles. For instance, one fellow demonstrated the battlefield advantage of the British

SMLE. Its detachable box magazine holds 10 rounds so he didn't need to reload during the 300-yard stage.

One thing I picked up on by the time we shot at the furthest targets was this: If you have fired many speed-oriented events in your life, it takes a conscious effort to slow down when shooting VIMBAR. In the beginning, when the fire command was given, I tried to shoot my five rounds as quickly as possible. That was silly and

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Three rifles Duke saw in use at his first VIMBAR match include a US Model 1903A3 Springfield (top), US Model 1917 Enfield (middle) and US Model 1898 Krag (bottom).

several times I made only one or two hits out of five. My last target was the 800-yard one and by then I was shooting slowly and carefully so it was hit 5x5 with my Smith-Corona '03A3.

After a lunch break came the walk-about. Again, if you have fired an IPSC or Cowboy Action match, the walk-about will be familiar. We fired six stages; all required a bolt-action rifle and three also called for a handgun. When a stage included a handgun, five rounds were fired at targets fairly close. After that, the rifle came into play: the shooter assumed any position in which he could get comfortable and went to work on the steel. This time the ranges were

“unknown.” I’d estimate they were from 200 to 500 yards, and brothers let me tell you none of those steel plates were overly big. Also, it was springtime in Utah so green steel plates matched the grass. You definitely had to be focused to see them.

The walk-about stages differed at the Golden Spike Range from other matches I’ve fired. At most timed shooting events there are a certain number of targets you must hit while “on the clock.” Then the score is the time, plus penalties of a set number of seconds for each miss. Denny and Peter do things differently. A stage has a time limit: they run from 45 to 60 seconds. After (or if) the handgun was shot, the competitor could fire the rifle as many rounds as he/she could get off before a cease-fire command was given. In this manner, there might only be five rifle targets but you could receive six, eight, 10 or more points. That is, if you could reload and work that rifle bolt fast enough. Again, relying on my memory, I think one young fellow firing a Mosin-Nagant scored 11 points on one stage although there were actually only five targets out there. I’m telling you plain and simple—that walk-about was a lot of fun!

At the end of the day the points from both events were totaled and the top three shooters were recognized. They were: Jim Bennett of Nevada in 1st place with 75 points, second place was Chris Billings of Utah with 65 points and third, Reynold Brown of Wyoming with 61 points. This gun’rter only placed about in the middle of the pack, and that was OK. It was my first match and I had a lot to learn. Rules at the Golden Spike Range VIMBAR/VIMSAR events don’t require shooters to stick with the same rifle throughout

the day, so I didn’t try to tabulate what types everyone was shooting.

Sunday was to be the VIMSAR match, meaning the same courses of fire but this time with vintage military semi-auto rifles ranging from M1 Garands to Soviet SVT 40s to SKS carbines and Springfield M1As. I was pumped, and not being an overly serious competitor, had decided to shoot my 22-pound Ohio Ordnance Works BAR.

Sadly it was not to be, for on Sunday morning we awoke in northern Utah to a steady downpour. About half the shooters said, “adios” and headed home. A few die-hards who had brought full rain gear wanted to shoot anyway. Not having such rain gear and having been plenty wet and cold previously in my life, I rested in Denny’s travel trailer with heat and a good book. However, for that day of semi-auto shooting, B.J. Pendleton won with a 68, Kasey Ramsey was second with a 63 and Shayne Ramsey was third with a 62.

I haven’t fired my last VIMBAR match. (And have yet to shoot my first VIMSAR one.) Just as I learned from decades of shooting BPCRs, vintage military rifles can be capable of amazing precision at long range. Previously, most of my shooting with ones in my collection had only been to 300 yards (as far as possible here at my home range). I don’t know how often time constraints and finances will allow me to travel back to Utah for more of these matches, but I definitely want them to be a part of my warm weather shooting regimen from now on.

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Duke believes the majority of shooters at his first VIMBAR match were firing rifles chambered for (from left) the .30-06, 7.62x54R Russian and 8x57mm.

The Kimber Solo Carry 9mm is designed to run on quality ammo. Federal Premium would be a good choice. A quality light such as the Streamlight NIGHTFIGHTER X and knife such as the Escala Industries Patrol Defensive Tool (PDT) (which has numerous tools a uniformed police officer might use) compliment the gun nicely.



Going Solo

WITH SLEEK LOOKS AND AN ERGONOMIC FEEL, THIS ALL-NEW KIMBER 9MM PISTOL IS A MOST IMPRESSIVE COMPANION.



Massad Ayoob

Photos: Joseph R. Novelozo

Born in customer feedback, the Solo pistol is Kimber's approach to the currently, super-hot market segment for a 9mm concealed carry pistol: slim, light and shootable. The company reached out to the people who bought their products, who replied, they wanted slim-line pistols that fit in pockets. Kimber decided to comply, and gave their engineers something pretty close to carte blanche.

The result was one of the absolute stars of the 2011 SHOT Show, gathering cover pictures across the panoply of firearms magazines. How to describe the Kimber Solo? Picture the "generic automatic pistol" wielded by Dick Tracy in the decades-old version of that comic strip. Imagine a "hammerless" 1903 model Colt Pocket Automatic that actually is hammerless, i.e., striker-fired. Picture it with the edges rounded as if by a "radical melt job" from a custom gunsmith. Picture it fitting your hand just right... and picture it firing full-power 9mm Luger.

Imagine ambidextrous thumb safeties placed just where they'd be with a 1911 or a Browning Hi-Power. Imagine them set just right, too: firm enough resistance that they won't wipe down from "safe" to "fire" from the brush of a forearm against the holstered pistol, but will easily go into fire mode when your firing-hand thumb tells it too. Imagine sights

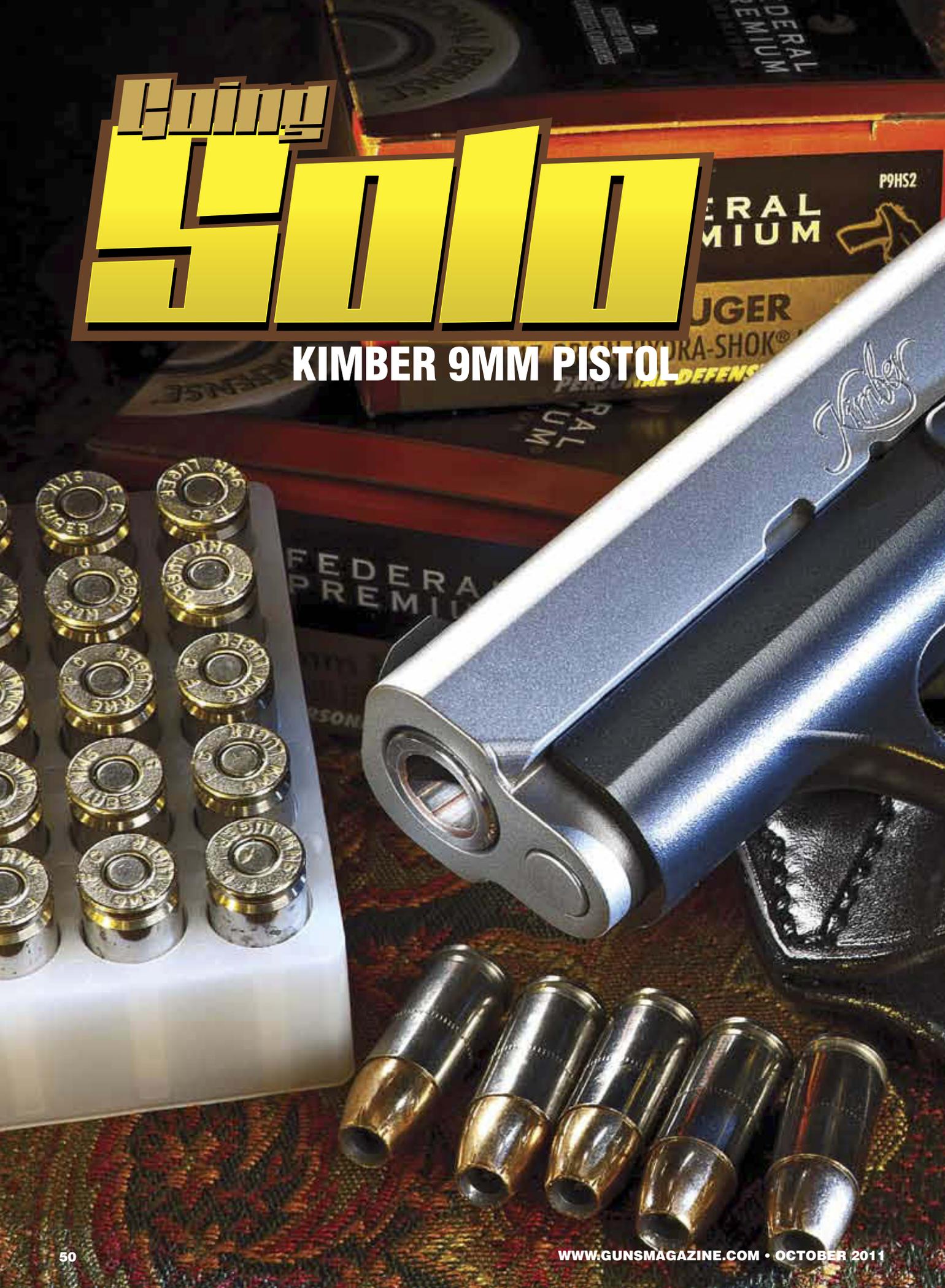


Jon Strayer (above) finds some muzzle jump with the Solo, but overall still found it very comfortable to shoot. Mas (below) did the accuracy testing of the Solo at 25 yards off a Caldwell Matrix shooting rest.



Going 4010

KIMBER 9MM PISTOL





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actually big enough to see in a high-stress situation where you might be focusing on the deadly threat instead of the tool you're using to deal with it.

Voilà! We've just given you an idea of the Kimber Solo. Not enough to conceptualize without feeling the gun? No, it isn't. All of us who tested it didn't appreciate it—'til we *felt* it and *shot* it.

A unique cross between the feel of a baby 1911 and the design of a contemporary striker-fired pistol, the Solo is all metal in a time of polymer. An all-steel "upper" and aluminum frame assembly bring heft up to just over 17 ounces before you put the cartridges in.

The trigger system isn't quite like anything else. The pull is long enough some would say it was equivalent to double action, but double action doesn't properly describe it. The pull is lighter than some single actions—in the low 7-pound range—but doesn't feel single action. In the time of Glock's "Safe Action" and the Springfield XD-series "USA action," the old definitions don't work as well as they used to.

But trigger pull isn't about words so much as it's about feel, and in this, the engineers who designed the Solo for Kimber succeeded admirably. Kimber's

SOLO CARRY

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ACTION TYPE:

Locked breech, semi-auto

CALIBER:

9mm

CAPACITY:

6+1 (8-shot mag available)

BARREL LENGTH:

2.7"

OVERALL LENGTH:

5.5"

HEIGHT:

3.9"

WEIGHT:

17 ounces

FINISH:

Stainless slide, matte black frame

SIGHTS:

Fixed 3-dot

GRIPS:

Black synthetic

PRICE:

\$725

current policy is the engineers who do the design don't get the credit for it. I suppose they can invoke the currently popular catch-phrase, "There's no 'I' in 'team.'" Whoever among you Kimber folks designed the trigger, please hear this from me: "My compliments to the chefs!"

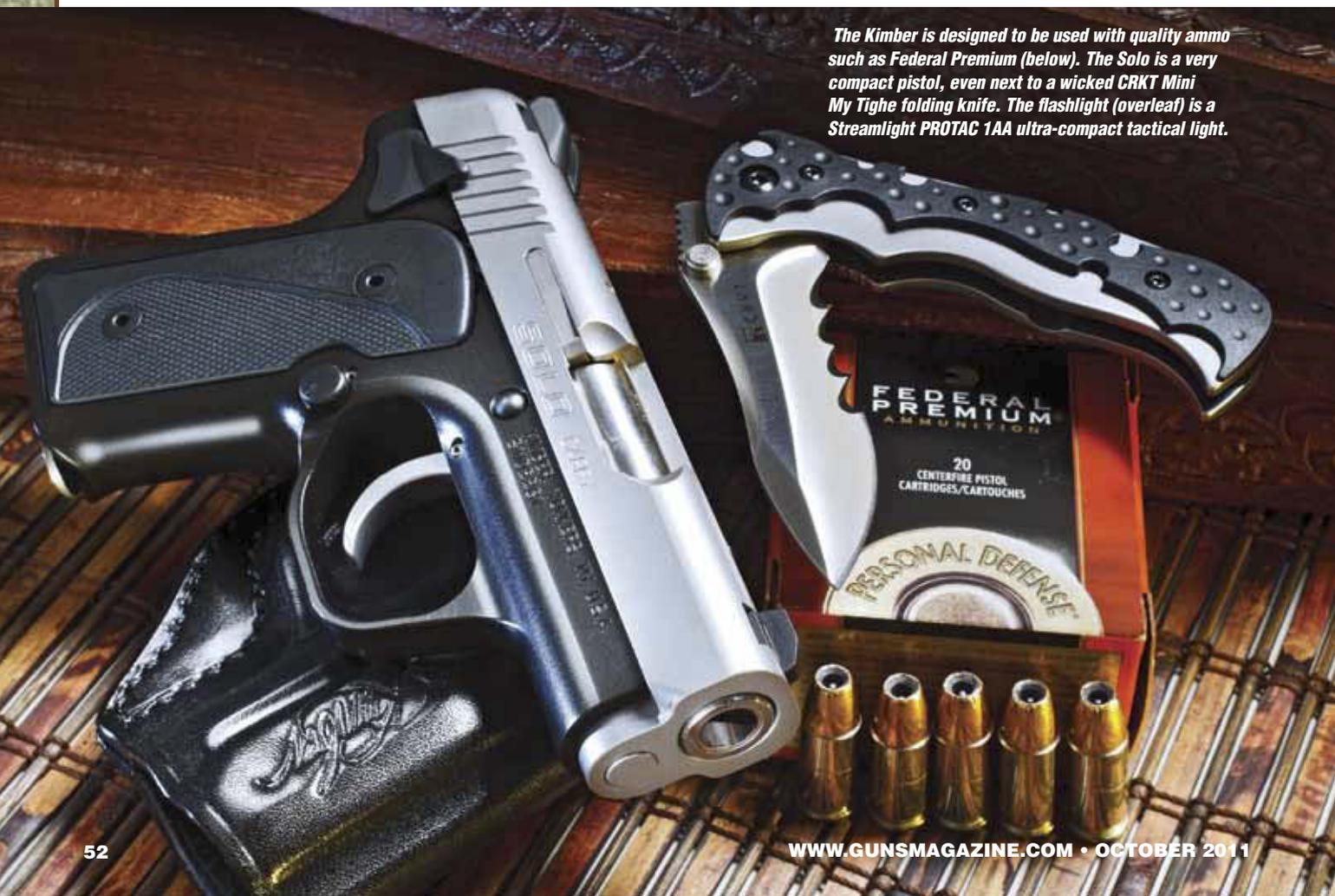
The trigger pull on the Solo is a smooth roll, which releases with the very definition of the marksman's ideal of "a surprise break." Yet it's firm enough that in a high-stress situation, that "surprise" won't be the gun going off, it will just be the exact small fraction of a second in which the intended shot discharges. Suffice to say, everyone on our test team thought the trigger pull of the Solo was high on the list of its most desirable attributes.

From the 25-yard bench, the Solo was tested with three loads, two fitting Kimber's description of factory-approved ammo. Nothing in the 115-grain category is on that list, but MagTech 115-grain full metal jacket ran flawlessly through the gun, as did similar brass-case loads under the Winchester USA label. The Mag-Tech ball put a quintet of bullet holes into a group measuring 3.6" center to center. The best three shots in that group measured 1.95". (All groups were measured center to center, to the nearest .05".)

Black Hills' red box series (virgin factory ammo), with 124-grain jacketed hollowpoint at standard velocity is normally very accurate. The Solo put five rounds of it into 3.65", and the best three into 1.8".

The 147-grain subsonic is

The Kimber is designed to be used with quality ammo such as Federal Premium (below). The Solo is a very compact pistol, even next to a wicked CRKT Mini My Tighe folding knife. The flashlight (overleaf) is a Streamlight PROTAC 1AA ultra-compact tactical light.

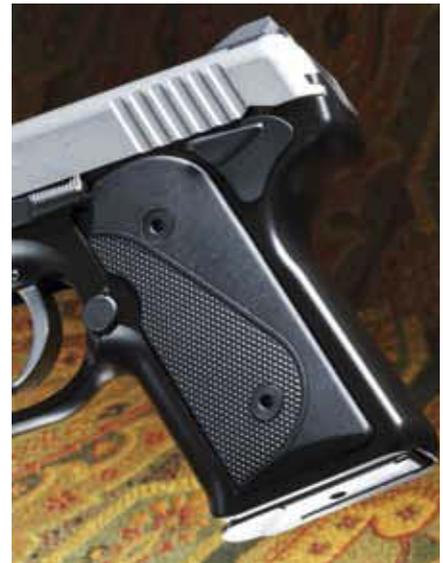




The Kimber Solo Carry 9 is a true hammerless design being striker fired. The slide and barrel are stainless steel with a unique captured twin recoil spring. The aluminum frame is finished in matte black KimPro II.



The large, easy-to-see rear sight (above) is dovetailed into the slide. Note the "melted" appearance of the sight, slide and frame. The rear sight (below) is also set into a dovetail. White dots are standard.



The grip of the Kimber Solo Carry is slim and trim with an angle similar to the 1911's. The thumb safety is firm and easy to use and the magazine release is ambidextrous.

generically one of our most accurate 9mm loads, and for this test I chose Remington-UMC, a low-priced jacketed truncated cone configuration that I've won several IDPA matches with in other guns. One errant shot more than doubled the group size to 4.25"; the other four measured 2.05". The best three delivered 1.8" grouping. The pistol did not exhibit any "4+1 syndrome," in which the first hand-chambered round goes to a somewhat different point of impact than subsequent automatically-cycled rounds aimed at the same spot.

Groups centered well away from point of aim at 75', low right. Aiming at the center of the head from the right-hand barricade position at the 25-yard line with a post-in-notch sight picture, I ran a 6-round magazine from the Solo. One shot apparently went over the target's shoulder and harmlessly into the backstop. A couple might have cracked the edge of the skull as they skidded off, and one or two would have messed up my opponent's ear or blown off an earring, while another clipped the shoulder. Suffice to say that head shots weren't guaranteed with the sights as they came out of the box. Fortunately, that's easy to fix.

Reliability

Kimber warns us all up front that this will be a picky pistol in terms of selecting a diet on which it will thrive. (Not for nothing is ammunition colloquially called "fodder.") Kimber's word on this is, 124- to 147-grain premium quality ammunition is all you should load it with for what the firearms world has, for decades, euphemistically called "serious social

purposes." Plus-P ammo? In our tests it worked fine, and Kimber doesn't seem to say "no." +P+? I asked a guy in a position to know, and he said the jury was still out, because the gun hadn't been tested enough with ammo that hot.

In the end, the test Solo passed through nine or 10 sets of hands. Small and large, male and female, 20-ish to near Social Security age. Ammo included stuff on the recommended list, and stuff that wasn't.

Two or three of our shooters ran Sellier & Bellot economy 9mm ball through the gun in quantity. That included 124-grain, which is a factory approved bullet weight, and 115-grain, which isn't. Nonetheless, both fed fine.

One tester tried 115-grain Blazer. No-go. This aluminum case ammunition, which is not on Kimber's recommended list, exhibited repeated extraction failures in the Solo.

One shooter ran it extensively with standard pressure Speer Gold Dot, Federal Hydra-Shok, and Winchester +P Ranger. He used 124-grain bullets with all these brands. These JHPs ran well. It was another story with the Winchester BEB practice ball, with the same shooter. I've encountered BEB ammo that ran soft for its caliber, and this shooter experienced numerous feed and cycle failures with it.

The "works with some, not with others" experience continued through more than 350 rounds, with multiple take-downs, reassemblies, and cleaning and oiling. The Solo comes standard with one magazine; I ordered it with three. An armorer among the test group noted, "Almost all the malfunctions occurred after the first magazine. It was when we were rapid-firing, reloading and rapid-firing some

Galco already has several models of holsters available for the Solo Carry 9. This one, the Stinger, fits the Solo like a glove.



more that the malfunctions occurred. I think heating up during early break-in had something to do with it.”

At this writing, with 600+ rounds through the test Solo, the function problems have disappeared by themselves. Some other reviewers have reported 100-percent functioning from the starting gate. I can't rule out the possibility that our test gun simply required a much longer than usual break-in period. Whenever you're reading a test review of a firearm—or

any other product—remember: the test specimen is just one individual sample.

The Kimber Solo is a subcompact 9mm pistol with a wonderful feel and a perfect overall “shape” for concealed carry. It has an exquisite trigger pull for defensive handgun needs. It is extremely comfortable to carry (We tried it with Galco holsters, the first available for it, and were happy with the light weight and lack of sharp edges.)

Mine didn't group as well as some of the other gun writers' reported, but was on par with the rest. In perspective, at 25 yards on an IPSC silhouette with its 6"x9" center zone, all loads would have easily shot perfect scores if the groups were centered.

Did you ever own a sports car that was temperamental as to its fuel or its tires, but handled so fast and so sure that it was your favorite vehicle? Did you ever love someone who was temperamental as to food or circumstance, but was so good for you that you could change your diet or ignore your favorite restaurant to be with that person? In guns, it's the same. Kimber recommends a particular range of ammo for the Solo.

That's no different from the hugely popular Seecamp .32, whose manufacturer insisted on only Winchester Silvertip or Glaser ammo; the first generation of Ruger SP101 revolvers which the factory said should only be fed 125-grain or shorter .357 Magnum rounds, or certain S&W super-light revolvers stamped on the barrel as to their bullet weight

requirements. Those guns all stayed popular, and saved lives because they worked fine when fed as specified. In the end, I don't see that factor as something to hold against a Kimber Solo, whose manufacturer says should be used only with a certain range of ammo specification.

Of our test team, one member has already ordered his Kimber Solo as a carry gun, another says he's likely to do so, and I am about to write a check to Kimber to buy this test sample Solo pistol. Rule of life: you accept the limitations for the greater good of something that fits your needs. **GUNS**

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The gun shot low and right at 25 yards with everything, including Black Hills 124-grain JHP. Mas' group also tested the Solo with inexpensive MagTech ball, which worked fine despite its “not-Kimber-recommended” 115-grain weight.

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Contrary to what most bolt-action shooters think, both the Browning BLR (above, top) and Remington 760/7600 are usually quite accurate. The original version of the first modern lever action, the Savage 99 (below, top) appeared in 1895. It easily adapted to spitzer bullets and scope mounting, unlike tube-magazine levers such as the Winchester Model 71, the last traditional lever Winchester introduced.



John Barsness

If magazines and websites are any indication, few hunters use anything except a bolt-action rifle these days. Oh, once in a while there's a photo of somebody with a single shot of some sort, or an AR-type autoloader, but 99 percent of "hero shots" show a bolt rifle.

This is a little odd. I've hunted big game in 16 states and seven Canadian provinces and territories, and have seen far more lever and pumpaction rifles than single shots or autos. Admittedly, bolt actions predominate, especially among people who pay for guided hunts, but among citizens who are "self guided" (that really strange term), there are still quite a few pumps and, especially, levers.

It's almost as if two separate hunting worlds exist in North America. One is filled by a camo-uniformed-army carrying, bolt actions chambered for the latest "in cartridges" and fitted with expensive "tactical" scopes. On their backs are internal-frame packs containing energy bars, a high-megapixel digital camera and a Camelback water bladder. Around their necks hang Leica, Swarovski and Zeiss binoculars. The conversation in their Suburban will be about sub-MOA groups and ultra-long G2 tines.

The other world is unevenly inhabited by disorganized volunteers who mix red plaid shirts, camo pants and orange sweatshirts. Actually, they don't much care what they wear as long as there are enough pockets for a PB&J sandwich, a few rounds of ammo and a can of chewing tobacco. Their camera (if any) is the same single-use film-box they plan to use on Christmas morning. The rifle might be a bolt action, but it might be a Winchester lever action or a Remington pump, and the scope came in a blister-pack, perhaps along with a "free" binocular. You can bet ammo

icad

for the rifle is available at Big Marts everywhere. There'll be more laughter in their pickup than in the Suburban, where game-faces prevail.

This is an oversimplification, but to a certain extent there are two diverging hunting societies in North America, the urban/suburban, where life itself is a competitive expedition focused on one of several distant but distinct goals called "success." The other is more rural, where life is month-to-month with an immediate goal of comfortable survival. I know this because to a certain extent, I live in both worlds.

There are, of course, shades of gray between these two worlds. There are urban/suburban hunters who choose to hunt with lever action rifles and wouldn't know a G2 from a g-string. They prefer old Winchester and Savage lever guns because they hunt to get away from the success-race, and might even be retired.

Oddly, perhaps, these "in-between" hunters rarely use pump-action rifles. The exception is in the northeastern US, where hunters who carry pumps have a tendency to dress in green wool plaid. This is due to the legendary Larry Benoit of Vermont, who became famous for wearing green wool and carrying an iron-sighted Remington 760 while tracking huge whitetail bucks.

His fame came from magazine articles and books detailing the hunting methods of Benoit and his sons; none written by a Benoit. Larry is now in his mid-80s and still hunts, and the family deer hunting tradition now has its own website. The site shows him still wearing green wool plaid, but his rifle is now an official Benoit Trophy Tracker Signature Rifle, a custom-camo Remington pump with a Trijicon scope.

Whether used by average guys, retro-hunters or Benoit admirers, lever and pump rifles are the victims of some misconceptions. Just about any bolt-action addict claims levers and pumps aren't accurate, have really bad triggers and don't come in cartridges suitable for serious trophy hunting (whatever that is). The truth is less definite.

The 99

Many early lever and pump-action rifles weren't particularly accurate, but that changed quickly, especially with



The first six rounds from this Browning .30-06 BLR were from two different factory loads, and went into a little over an inch on a breezy day.

levers. The all-time most popular lever action rifle is the Model 94 Winchester, introduced in 1894, the last of their tube-magazine, outside-hammer models. Only a year later the Savage Model 1895 appeared, with a rotary magazine allowing the use of spitzer bullets, and a side-ejection, hammerless action easily adaptable to telescopic sights. With minor changes, this rifle eventually became the second-most popular lever action ever produced, the Savage 99.

Savage quit making 99s in the late 1990s, though a few purists even claim the real 99 ceased to exist in 1970, when Savage started making a cheaper-to-manufacture version with a tang safety and, in some models, a detachable, staggered-round box magazine. The bottom line, however, is that all the versions of the 99 were accurate—or could be, with a little tuning, something required with many factory bolt actions.

My first was a used 99EG, probably most abundant of the pre-1970 models, chambered in .308 Winchester. My father bought it for me in 1966, after I'd taken my first deer with his lever-action "Glenfield" .30-30, a cheaper version of the Marlin 336 made for Montgomery Ward. With an off-brand 4X scope, even a skinny 13 year old could group three shots in about an inch with Winchester factory loads.

Since then I've owned a couple dozen other Savage 99s, and even a couple of Model 1895s. Most had scopes, but several only had iron sights. Almost all those rifles would group three shots into 1-1/2" or less at 100 yards. The lone exception was a takedown model (a popular option before World War II), chambered in .300 Savage. The standard lore is



This Remington 760 in .270 Winchester shoots just as accurately as most factory-made bolt actions.



Lever rifles (above) are slower to operate than pumps partly because the initial movement is away from the shooter, encouraging the tendency to drop the rifle from the shoulder. This can be overcome with practice, but pulling a pump rifle's fore-end back is quicker and more natural (below).



(again) that takedown 99s aren't very accurate—but over the years I've owned five, and the others shot right alongside solid-frame models.

There have been other modern lever actions made since the Savage appeared, including the Winchester Model 88, the Sako Finnwolf, and the only one still being produced, the Browning BLR. I have owned or fooled around with all three, and they also tend to shoot very well—especially the BLR.

Apparently the BLR sells pretty well, since Browning offers nine different models, including two takedowns. They're chambered for a wide variety of rounds, including most of the usual suspects (.223 Rem, .243 Win, .270 Win, 7mm-08 Rem, 7mm Rem Mag, .308 Win, .30-06 and .300 Win Mag) along with all the Winchester Short Magnums from .270 to .325 and, that darling of many lever-lovers, the .358 Winchester.

I'd heard for years about the accuracy of BLRs and finally couldn't stand it anymore. One day in Capital Sports & Western Wear in Helena, Mont., there was an almost-new BLR Lightweight '81 in .30-06 resting in the used rack, at a very attractive price, complete with Leupold mounts. Back home I mounted an old 4X Leupold that was lying around loose, then gathered a few boxes of factory and handloads and went to the range.

After one shot at 25 yards to make sure the collimating was reasonably

close, I fired a 3-shot group at 100, using Hunting Shack factory ammo loaded with 168-grain Berger Hunting VLDs. Despite a fairly stiff quartering wind, the shots went into a little over an inch. Hmm, I thought, then opened a box of Federal Premiums loaded with 150-grain Nosler Ballistic Tips. Three of those landed in the same cluster as the Berbers in a 3/4" group. This was so astonishing I walked up to the target with the rifle and took a photo.

Finally I tried some handloads with 180-grain Nosler Partitions and 58 grains of Ramshot Hunter. They also landed in the same place, and in the end the entire 9-shot group measured 1.69" horizontally and .77" vertically, no doubt strung-out due to the wind. Now, quite a few .30-06s will put different bullet weights in the same general groups, but I've never seen one do it quite so precisely, especially with a barrel measuring only .575" at the muzzle.

I hadn't measured the trigger pull yet, though it felt like less than 4 pounds, with a very crisp pull. Back at home it measured 5 pounds. Very crisp triggers have fooled me before, and I have no plans to change this one.

Winchester & Marlin

This isn't to say that traditional lever actions aren't accurate. I've owned several tube-magazine Winchesters and Marlins made from the 1890s to very recently, and with iron sights, all would group three shots into 2" or less

at 100 yards. With scopes, some broke the magic inch.

The one failing of the lever action is that it really doesn't offer super-fast repeat fire. This is rather odd, since one of the reasons so many Northeastern deer hunters carry lever-action carbines is supposedly so they can shoot repeatedly at running deer. But with practice, a bolt action can be run about as fast.

This is because most hunters make the same mistake with lever actions as with bolt actions, lowering the rifle's butt from their shoulder when jacking in another round. (Normally, I'm not fond of the word "jacking" to describe the manual cycling of a repeating rifle, but it perfectly describes working a lever action.) The jacking starts by pushing the lever (and hence the entire rifle) away from the shooter—and the longer the cartridge, the longer the lever-throw.

I once took part in a contest on a practical hunting course in South Texas, sponsored by a custom rifle maker. He supplied the rifles used, and a bunch of us shot at paper animal targets, strategically placed anywhere from up close in brush to 400 yards across the prairie.

One of the stations involved putting three shots into a "charging" Cape



Some older pump action rifles shoot very well. This 62A Winchester will put five .22 Long Rifles into an inch at 50 yards—with iron sights.

buffalo as quickly as possible, starting with the rifle held below the shoulder. Several contestants chose a lever-action .45-70 to shoot the buffalo, figuring it would be the fastest repeater. I came in second overall, but placed first in Cape buffalo—using a bolt action chambered for the .450 Marlin, putting three well-placed rounds in the target in 5 seconds. Working a bolt action correctly only involves two motions of the bolt hand, back and

forward—but the first motion of the bolt is backward, helping hold the butt of the rifle into the shooter's shoulder.

Speedy Pump Action

This is also true of the initial movement of a pump action, and afterward pushing the fore-end forward tends to bring the rifle onto the target again, with the shooter's finger remaining on the trigger during the entire cycle. The British shotgunner



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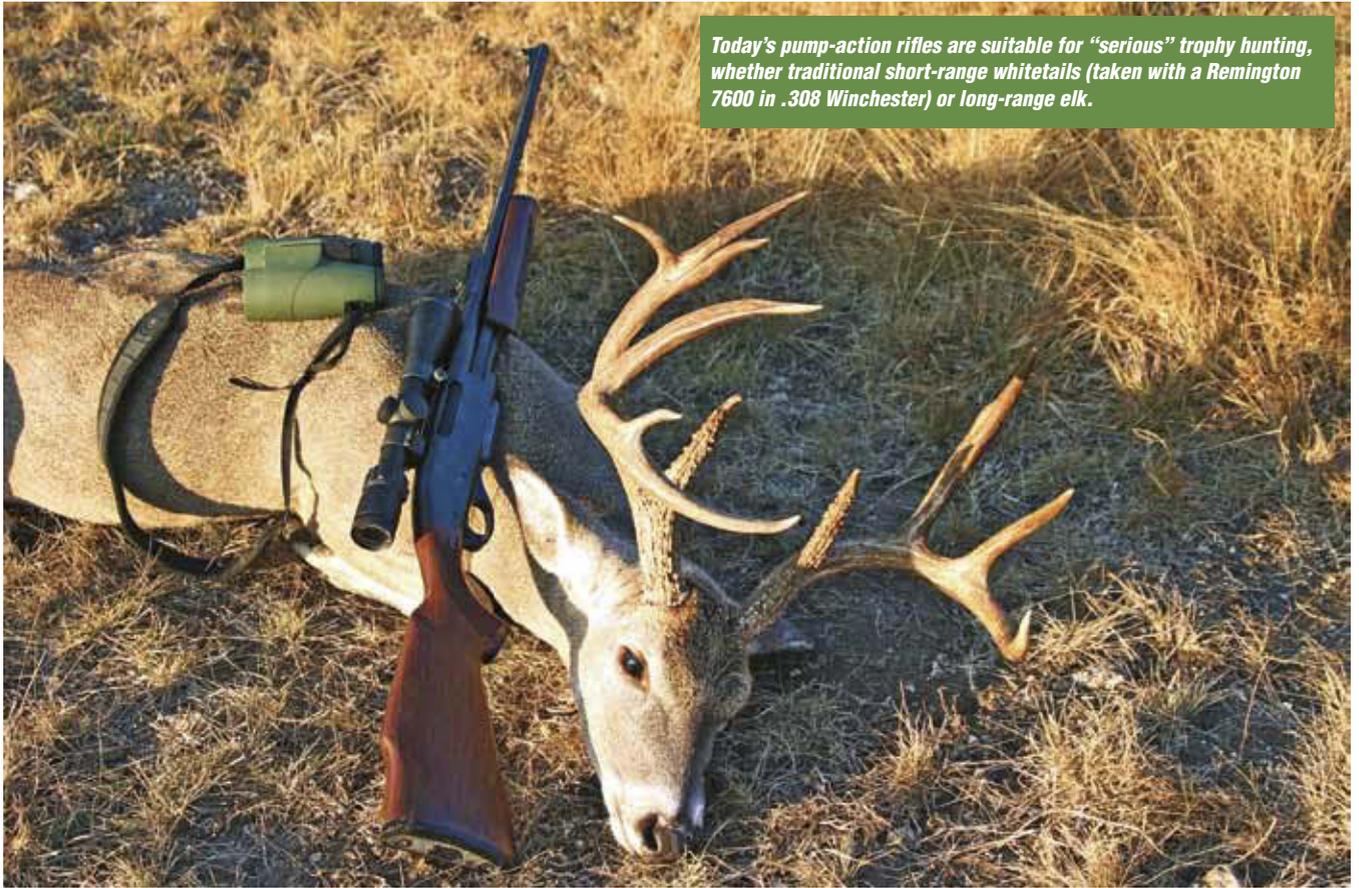


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Today's pump-action rifles are suitable for "serious" trophy hunting, whether traditional short-range whitetails (taken with a Remington 7600 in .308 Winchester) or long-range elk.



who wrote under the pseudonym Gough Thomas called this pumping action "eumatic," a word he coined that means "works naturally with the body."

A practiced pump shooter can often match the speed of a semi-auto. In fact, with a really fast pump-gunner, you don't really hear the action working, because the pumping takes place so quickly after the sound of the shot itself. This is exactly why Larry Benoit prefers a pump to any other rifle when tracking deer in a Northeastern forest, where a second or even third quick shot can come in very handy, and wet snow can render a semi-auto less than reliable.

I've owned a bunch of pump centerfires over the years. Most have been more accurate than the average lever action, and some are as accurate as bolts. Right now I have two, a Remington 760 in .270 Winchester. It's standard handload, the 140-grain Nosler AccuBond and 54 grains of Ramshot Hunter; averages around 3/4" for 3-shot groups at 100 yards.

This isn't uncommon with 760s, even the older models that had a brace at the front of the fore-end tube, contacting the barrel. Later models, like my .270, have a free-floated barrel, though sometimes it takes a little rasp-work on the fore-end to keep the barrel from contact during firing. The latest

version, the 7600, is perhaps even more consistently accurate, due to consistent free-floating. Since the 760/7600 uses the same barrels as Remington puts on the 700 bolt actions, and the action is even stiffer than the 700s, it's no wonder they shoot. (The triggers aren't bad, either. My .270s pulls right at 4 pounds, with just a hint of creep.)

My other pump is a discontinued Savage 170, a model built on the same action Savage once used for their inexpensive pump shotguns, with a tube magazine. Most 170s were .30-30s, but mine a more rare .35 Remington. I mostly use it with iron sights, but scoped it while working up handloads, and it grouped about any bullet into 1-1/2" or less at 100 yards. Initially the trigger truly sucked, but it was really easy to fix since like many pump triggers, the entire assembly could be popped out of the action and worked on separately.

There are also a pile of rimfire pumps and levers, including a bunch of semi-reproductions of older Winchester models. One of my favorites are .22s, a Winchester Model 62A, the last version of a long line of slender rifles that looked like Winchester lever rifles with a "Tootsie Roll" fore-end, while my wife Eileen likes her modern Henry lever-action with the large Chuck Connors lever-loop. We shoot both with iron sights, mostly

on the abundant Richardson's ground squirrels that nibble our neighbor's cattle pastures and hayfields. A tube-magazine rifle full of Long Rifles is both practical and traditional for such use in the rural West.

So yes, there are alternatives to the bolt action—and they are quite accurate, despite what some people claim.



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THE SR1911 .45ACP

AFTER YEARS OF RUMORS, RUGER'S GOVERNMENT MODEL IS FINALLY HERE IN THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THIS STORIED PISTOL.

John Taffin

By the time I appeared on earth's terra firma, Colt had been producing sixguns for over a century, while Smith & Wesson had been at it for over 80 years. During my lifetime, some of my greatest shooting pleasures have been afforded by Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum, .44 Special, and .44 Magnum double actions. At the same time, I have looked upon the Colt Single Action and New Frontier as virtual single-action sixgun perfection. A large part of my sixgunning heart and soul belongs to sixguns from these two old-line companies. However, my feelings about Ruger are slightly different.

While Colt and S&W were already legends long before I was born, Ruger's first pistol did not arrive until I was 10-years old. I did not pay much attention at the time, however the .22 Single-Six of 1953 would be my first sixgun in 1956. Then came the Blackhawks in .357 and .44 Magnums, both of which I had by 1958. So, it is easily concluded that I grew up in sixgunning style with Rugers. I learned to shoot with the .22 Single-Six and to reload using the .357 and .44 Blackhawks.

Everyone surely knows we are celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Colt 1911 .45 ACP this year. Ruger's first .45 ACP arrived more than 40-years ago, however, it was not a semi-auto pistol but an auxiliary cylinder for the magnificent .45 Colt Blackhawk. It would be another 20 years before Ruger produced their first semi-automatic .45. Ruger's P90 was nowhere near a 1911. Instead, it was a larger and bulkier double action. Like all Rugers, it was built to be bull strong and reasonably priced.

My early P90 fed virtually anything; it's totally reliable, shoots accurately and, if there is a downside, it is harder to conceal than the much flatter 1911. No less an authority than the late Colonel Askins who opined the Ruger P90 as the finest .45 semi-auto ever produced. It may not be easily concealed, however as a rugged outdoor pistol for use in all kinds of weather and situations, I find it hard to beat. It's just not a 1911. Ruger has produced several variations on the basic P90 theme and then with the arrival of the polymer-framed P345 in 2004, Ruger's .45 ACP was downsized considerably making it an excellent choice for concealed use. Although it still was not a 1911.

Rumors abounded for many years about whether Ruger was actually going to produce a 1911. Dan Wesson, Taurus, even Smith & Wesson had a 1911—all God's children had a 1911—except Ruger. Now, after all the speculation and guesstimating Ruger has officially joined the 1911 family fold. The historic announcement on April 18, 2011 made it one of the only good



Ruger's first 1911, the KSR1911, has been long anticipated and comes in the centennial of the 1911. The left side of the Ruger SR1911 (below) exhibits all the standard operating controls.





Ruger's roundabout path to the 1911 started with the somewhat bulky but tough P90 (left), the smaller, lighter P345 (middle) and now the SR1911.

things about Tax Day. Ruger had a choice as they set about designing their own 1911; namely would they do something radically different or follow the time proven path of John Browning's basic design? I am happy to report Ruger chose the latter. Ruger's SR1911 (or KSR1911

if you wish to emphasize the fact it is stainless steel, which Ruger identifies by the "K" in their model designations), strips just like a 1911, feels just like a 1911, shoots just like a 1911, handles just like a 1911,

holsters just like a 1911... well you get the picture. It is a basic 1911 with "RUGER" on the slide.

John Browning's basic design was pretty near perfection. Two shortcomings were very small sights and the often-occurring hammer bite. The latter being caused by the back of the hammer pinching the area of the back of the hand between the thumb and trigger finger. When I was 17, the original sights were no problem, however, I did get bit on the very first shot ever fired from a war surplus 1911.

To me, the most important feature on any handgun is the sights, and now that the digits in my age have been reversed I appreciate better sights even more. So, we will start with this feature of the new Ruger. Simply put, the Ruger 1911 sights are excellent. Both the front and rear sights are set in a dovetail and can be adjusted for windage. They are Novak-style set low, and there are no sharp edges on the rear sight to injure the hand when a quick positive operation of the slide is used to chamber a cartridge. Sights are black with white dots and provide a good, square, easy-to-see sight picture.

Second only to the importance of the sights, again speaking subjectively, is the trigger. Ruger's 1911 trigger is skeletonized aluminum with an adjustable over-travel stop.



The Ruger 1911 comes with two magazines, one 7-shot flush fitting, and the other an 8-shot with a bumper pad, as well as a barrel bushing wrench.



Targets shot with Hornady, Remington and Speer (above), Black Hills, CorBon, Federal Premium (below), all at 20 yards, show off the accuracy of the Ruger 1911.



Of greater importance to me is the fact the excellence of the sights are matched by a clean, crisp trigger which measures 4-3/4 pounds. With such a sight/trigger combination (although it is not quite that simple) I expected the new Ruger 1911 to perform well and that is exactly what I experienced.

Two other major factors involved in just how well a 1911 will perform are: slide-to-frame fit and how tightly the barrel and bushing mate up. Ruger's frames are cast by their sister company Pine Tree Castings and then CNC machines are used to provide a precise slide-to-frame fit. The result is a tight fit between frame and slide. Ruger advises the stainless steel barrel and bushing are produced from the same piece of bar stock on the same machine which also helps accuracy.

Some of the other features of this all stainless steel pistol include the now virtually mandatory (and bite-free) beavertail grip safety with a cut out to accept the back of the skeletonized hammer. The beavertail is not as wide as found on most 1911s today, however it performed its function without increasing felt recoil. The beavertail grip safety as well as the slightly extended thumb safety, slide lock and magazine release, are all blue steel providing a nice contrast to the stainless steel slide and frame. Ruger provides two magazines, as well as a bushing wrench with each 1911. I much prefer the old standard flush-fitting, 7-round 1911 magazine. The Ruger 1911 comes with one such magazine, as well as one of the more modern 8-shot, bumper pad magazines. So everyone should be happy. Any standard 1911 magazines will fit the Ruger 1911.

The firing pin of the Ruger 1911 is titanium and is matched up with a heavy firing pin spring which mediates the need for a firing pin block. Ruger says this offers "...an updated safety feature to the original 'Series 70' design without compromising trigger pull weight." One of the mild arguments these days is whether the old original internal extractor should be used or should we go with an external extractor. Ruger has stayed with the tried and true original design. It certainly worked flawlessly during my testing.

Another old original design concept I prefer is the flat mainspring housing as found on the 1911 before it became the 1911A1 with the arched mainspring housing. The reason for the change in the 1920s, was the tendency of the flat version to cause

SR1911

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ACTION TYPE:

Locked breech, semi-auto

CALIBER:

.45 ACP

CAPACITY:

7+1 or 8+1

BARREL LENGTH:

5"

OVERALL LENGTH:

8.67"

WEIGHT:

39 ounces

FINISH:

Stainless steel

SIGHTS:

Fixed Novak 3-dot

GRIPS:

Checkedered cocobolo

PRICE:

\$799

the pistol to shoot low. The arched mainspring housing supposedly changes the shooter's grip enough to compensate for this. The choice is purely subjective and I prefer the checkered flat backstrap as supplied on the Ruger 1911. Grip panels are nicely checkered with the diamond pattern and the Ruger emblem; material is cocobolo.

One of the problems inherent with fixed sights is the fact that all loads do not shoot to the same point of impact. With adjustable sights, it simply requires a few clicks of the rear sight screw to compensate for this. With the Ruger 1911 I found

most loads shot 1" to 2" high at 20 yards for me, which can easily be addressed by replacing the front sight with a taller version. However, with the sights, just as they are with this 1911, shoots right to point of aim

with 230-grain roundnose cast bullets at 850 fps. Decisions, decisions, decisions.

The Ruger SR1911 was test-fired with 21 different loads from seven manufacturers. It never failed to feed, fire, or extract—performance was absolutely flawless. If there's anything wrong with the basic design or functioning of this welcomed new 1911 I certainly can't find it. It won't go back to Ruger as I will find it very easy to write the check. Ruger has done just about everything right including placing the "lawyers label" not only in very small letters, but also in a spot on the underneath part of the frame in front of the triggerguard where it would normally not be seen. No whining necessary on this feature.

Ruger continues to provide the firearms the shooting public really wants. CEO Mike Fifer says of the new pistol: "We are very proud to offer a 1911 pistol, an icon of American gun design and manufacturing. In this 100-anniversary year of the introduction of the Government Model 1911, it is only fitting that such a firearm be completely manufactured in America with all American-made components." **GUNS**



John found the Ruger 1911 reliable and accurate. He wrote Ruger a check for his test gun.



The Ruger 1911 strips like any standard 1911 from the past century.

.45 ACP FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
Black Hills 230 RNL	854	1-3/8
Black Hills 230 JHP	940	2
Black Hills 230 JHP	775	2
Black Hills 230 FMJ	763	2-1/8
Black Hills 230 JHP +P	951	1-1/2
Black Hills Tactical 185 JHP	891	2-3/4
CorBon 165 PowRBall +P	1,180	1-1/4
CorBon 165 JHP +P	1,297	1-1/2
CorBon 185 JHP +P	1,069	1-3/4
Federal 185 JHP	879	2
Federal 230 FMJ	781	1-5/8
Federal Premium 230 HS HP	872	1-1/2
Hornady 185 XTP JHP +P	921	1-5/8
Hornady 200 XTP JHP	859	1-1/4
Hornady 230 XTP JHP +P	904	2-1/8
Remington 185 JHP	1,009	1-1/4
Speer 200 JHP	961	1-1/4
Speer 230 Gold Dot HP	820	3
Speer 230 TMJ	787	2-1/8
Winchester 185 SilverTip HP	923	1-7/8
Winchester 230 FMJ	796	2-5/8

Notes: Groups the product of five shots at 20 yards.
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TECHNO-RUNT DUO

Mantis Knives' stubby MT tacticals are long on looks.

Short, stubby knives, or "runts," have been all the rage in tactical knife circles lately. So it was only a matter of time before Jared West, founder of Mantis Knives, added his futuristic thinking to the fray. West built Mantis by filling a void in the tactical knife market, offering designs with youthful, "hi-tech" appeal, and building his customer base through the Internet.

Mantis' techno-runts come in two models: The MT-9 sporting a wicked clipped Wharnclyff blade, and the MT-9r dressed out in a more traditional drop point. The blades are 2.5" in length and roll out via ambidextrous radiused cutouts just fore of their spines, which also incorporate notching for added purchase. Blade steel is 440-V stainless and lock-up is provided by a sturdy line-lock mechanism inside the handle. The handles (identical on both knives) are pure Mantis. The scales, made from machined, black, G10 composite, are



Mantis Knives beams up a pair of robotic runts here. On the top is the MT-9r drop point, at bottom the straight-edged MT-9.

MT-9 & MT-9R

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BLADE MATERIAL:

440-V stainless steel

BLADE LENGTH:

2.5"

OVERALL LENGTH:

5.25"

WEIGHT:

5 ounces

HANDLE:

Machined G10

CARRY:

Pocket clip

PRICE:

\$65 (black)

a bionic blend of channels and angles. Milled cutouts (which actually serve as index finger and palm grooves) and bright red anodized pivots reinforce the futuristic character of the handles. The MT's pocket clips can be mounted on the front or backside (see photo) for right- or left-hand carry.

In true runt fashion, the Mantis MT folders are overbuilt. The blades are made of thick .18" (3/16") thick steel and handles are a full 1/2" thick. All this in a package only 5.25" fully opened. Think of a Mantis MT as a knife with the guts of a sturdy tactical folder that fits in the palm of your hand. The price is right on these cool little meanies — only 65 clams! If you like tricked out handguns, this is your knife!

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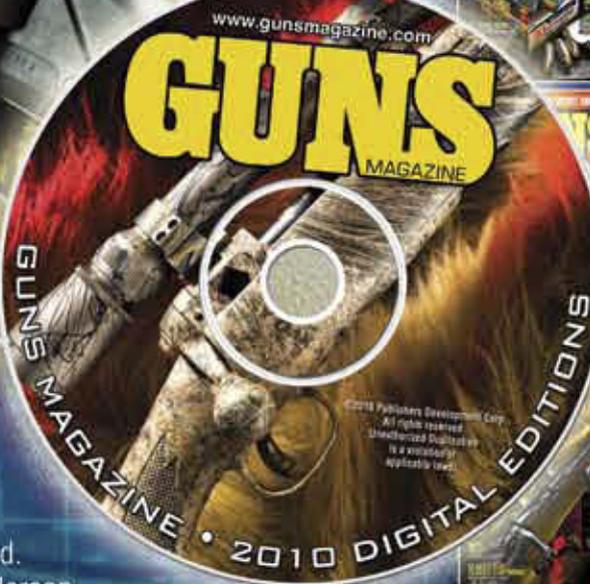
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Homeland Security's "Active Shooter" Instructions Betray Founding Intent

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) raised a few eyebrows... when Assistant Surgeon General, Ali Khan posted on CDC's official Public Health Matters blog, 'Preparedness 101: Zombie Apocalypse,' gun rights columnist Kurt Hofmann informed his readers.

"I know Khan's... article was a tongue-in-cheek bid to bring attention to general disaster preparedness," he noted. "It's what is not on [the response list] that gives one pause," meaning, of course, firearms as defensive tools are nowhere mentioned.

"CDC's anti-gun bias comes through yet again," Hofmann concluded.

That's hardly surprising. After all, Mark Rosenberg, the head of the UN-affiliated Task Force for Global Health, said he wanted to see guns "dirty, deadly and banned," back when he worked at CDC.

What's also not surprising is that the Department of Homeland Security would exhibit the same bias in their deadly serious online FEMA "home study" course: "IS-907-Active Shooter: What Can You Do?"

"This course provides guidance to individuals, including managers and employees, so that they can prepare to respond to an active shooter situation," it claims. "By the end of this course, you will be able to... describe how to manage the consequences of an active shooter incident."

Really? How about instead of describing how, actually managing such an incident?

We're given an active shooter profile, an accompanying booklet,

a description of active shooter incidents and understanding them and something DHS/FEMA calls "Good practices for response," which boils down to "Try to evacuate. If you cannot evacuate, then hide. As a last resort, take action."

And what kind of action will the successful government-trained graduate be prepared to take?

"As an absolute last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter: Act as aggressively as possible against him/her. Throw items and improvise weapons; yell," we are instructed.

Everything but, "Return fire."

That's even more useless than similar guidance promulgated by the Illinois State Police, who advise sexually-assaulted women that fighting back may "cancel any other options," since your attacker may only wish to "degrade and humiliate" you.

"Use of a firearm to protect yourself or property," they maintain, "is not recommended. Not that most people have that option under Illinois' current draconian gun control restrictions, at least outside of the home (or even inside, until Chicago is forced to adhere to the intent of the McDonald decision).

"Fighting would probably be futile," they caution.

So what does the ISP recommend?

"Telling an attacker that you have VD or AIDS can discourage him," they advocate. "It may sound disgusting, but putting your fingers into you [sic] throat and making yourself vomit usually gets results... Use your imagination and you can think of others," they encourage.

It's enough to make one gag. Especially considering the wisdom of the Founders, who understood and told us what was truly "necessary to the security of a free state."

That government, at all levels, encourages defenselessness, impeding and even criminalizing an armed citizenry; it tells us everything we need to know about the true state of "homeland security." **GUNS**

Visit David Codrea's online journal "The War on Guns" at waronguns.blogspot.com or visit DavidCodrea.com to read his Examiner column.

Due to the importance of this column, GUNS will begin posting "Rights Watch" at www.gunsmagazine.com on the 1st of the month—long before it appears here.—Editor

S&W's Military Appreciation



Smith & Wesson announced the company is expanding its "Nation's Finest" rebate program, designed to provide qualified military personnel and disabled veterans with discounts on select S&W firearms. The program is just one way the company shows its appreciation toward members of the United States Armed Forces community.

Until Dec. 31, 2011, any current active duty, retired or disabled member of the US Armed Forces or Reserves is eligible to receive a rebate with the purchase of any qualifying S&W firearm*. The Nation's Finest program offers eligible military personnel and disabled veterans a \$100 mail-in rebate for the purchase of a qualifying M&P15 rifle, and a \$50 mail-in rebate for the purchase of a qualifying M&P pistol or Smith & Wesson revolver. The incentive program is limited to the purchase of one model per firearm category.

"It is with a great sense of pride and deep appreciation that we have expanded the Nation's Finest program in order to give something back to the men and women of the US Armed Services," said James Debney, President of Firearms for Smith & Wesson. "While we can never thank them enough for their services or the hardships they have endured, we hope this program will help them enjoy the shooting sports both on a professional and recreational level."

Smith & Wesson's "Nation's Finest" program is available to all active duty US Military, Retired Military with Retired Military Status, active National Guard Reservists and Disabled Veterans of all US Military branches, including the US

Coast Guard. Customers wishing to take advantage of this offer should visit the S&W website at www.smith-wesson.com/nationsfinest for redemption coupons and complete details.

*All M&P15 Sport rifles, M&P15-22 rifles, M&P22 pistols, and all used firearms are excluded from the "Nation's Finest" program.—
Courtesy Matt Rice, Blue Heron Comm.

New Gun Mount For The Chinook

Three Picatinny engineers recently received US flags flown by the 10th Mountain Division helicopter crews over Afghanistan for designing better gun mounts for door and window guns in CH-47 "Chinook" helicopters.

Receiving the tribute were David Javorsky, chief of the Weapons Technical Support Branch, Adam M. Jacob, project officer for In-Station Gun Mounts and Michael Colonnello, mechanical engineer.

The men, who work for the US Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering

Center, or ARDEC, also received certificates of appreciation.

Javorsky's (who has applied for a patent), M24E1 machine gun mount for the new M240H machine gun, features a swinging arm to allow easier passage through the CH-47's openings, holds 400 rounds of ammunition and collects spent links and cases; replacing the M24 armament sub system in use since the 1960s to hold the M60 machine gun.

The Army began replacing the M60 in 2005. In 2007, the Army documented a requirement for improvements, including a mounting arm easily moved from "deployed" to "stowed."

Because the old mount was fixed in the aircraft's passageways, Soldiers needed to climb over or slide under the arm to pass into and out of the helicopter.

In addition to slowing troop movements, Javorsky noted the arm's position was a safety concern if troops need to quickly pass through the openings during emergencies. Additionally, the M24 held only 200 rounds. Troops wanted greater capacity, as well as something to catch the spent links and rounds.

In March of 2007, when the Army's project managers for Crew-Served Weapons and Cargo Helicopters agreed to a proposal by ARDEC to design the new mount, Javorsky had already been mulling over ideas.



David Javorsky (far left) holds the legacy M24 mounts as he, Adam M. Jacob and Michael Colonnello stand behind the new M24E1 machine gun mount for CH-47 "Chinook" helicopters. The new mount provides greater safety and firepower for soldiers. Photo: Todd Mozes



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T-ad1H

Javorsky, Jacob and Colonnello needed to travel to the nearest Chinooks for the form fitting, taking so many 2-hour trips to Fort Indiantown Gap, Penn., and 5-hour trips to Fort Drum, N.Y., eventually they lost count.

They typically departed Picatinny carrying either metal or plastic mockups of the preliminary design to test fit them into Chinooks. They met Army testers and flew on training missions with Soldiers to get their feedback on ways to improve the design. The Picatinny trio found soldiers very willing to analyze their design and offer suggestions.

Competing for whatever space was available near the aircraft's door and window openings, were objects like a crew chief's seat, a folding step ladder and new things "that always seems to be going in there."

"We did a lot of tweaking with the design to make sure the pintle was in the right place," said Javorsky, referring to the arm's pivot point. In August 2008, Javorsky completed his technical design and contracted with a firm to produce four prototypes, beginning the next phase of engineering and flight testing. Modifications to resolve several design issues were incorporated and, upon successful completion of flight tests, a decision was made to build mounts for a long-term user evaluation. As the evaluation hardware was delivered, Jacob and Colonnello would conduct new equipment training with the soldiers, first on the ground, then by participating in aerial gunnery training.

On May 11, 2011, the team was involved in the packaging and delivery of the 120th new M24E1. "It's been one of the most rewarding experiences in my career," said Javorsky.— *Timothy Rider, RDECOM*

Round-Up Donations Surpass The \$6 Million Mark

MidwayUSA, a catalog and Internet retailer, is pleased to announce Customer donations for the NRA Round-Up program have surpassed the \$6 Million mark.

"We can't thank the Potterfields and MidwayUSA customers enough," said Wayne LaPierre, NRA Executive Vice President. "In the history of the NRA, no other company has given so generously to support the Second Amendment.

Larry and Brenda's idea for the Round-up program was pure genius by itself, but their additional support of other NRA programs is inspiring. We are deeply grateful for their friendship and trust."

Established in 1992, the NRA Round-Up program allows every MidwayUSA Customer to "round up" their total order amount to donate to this program. Each week, MidwayUSA sends a check to the NRA which is then deposited in the Endowment for the Protection of the Second Amendment. To ensure the fund continues to grow, no donations are spent. Instead, NRA-ILA utilizes the interest from the account for fighting anti-gun legislation across the United States.

Larry Potterfield, Founder and CEO of MidwayUSA stated, "We're proud the Round-Up Program has been so successful. It's an easy way to offer Customers the opportunity to make a big difference in the protecting the Second Amendment for our children and grandchildren." For more information about MidwayUSA and the NRA Round-Up, visit www.midwayusa.com or call (800) 243-3220.—*Courtesy Aaron Oelger, MidwayUSA*

Weatherby Announces \$299 Sweepstakes Winners

Weatherby announces the winners of its "\$299" online sweepstakes, which offered the chance to win four hunts, home defense training and an assortment of rifles and shotguns.

"Congratulations to the winners, and many thanks to all those who participated," said company President Ed Weatherby. "As a result of the sweepstakes, more people know that Weatherby has a gun for many different types of hunts or threat response situations—and budgets."

Each top-prize winner receives the hunt/home defense training and a gun. Runners-up receive a gun only. And the winners are:

Turkey Hunt/PA-08 Pump Shotgun

Winner: Peter Walker, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Runner-up: Jeff Johnson, Gainesville, Fla.

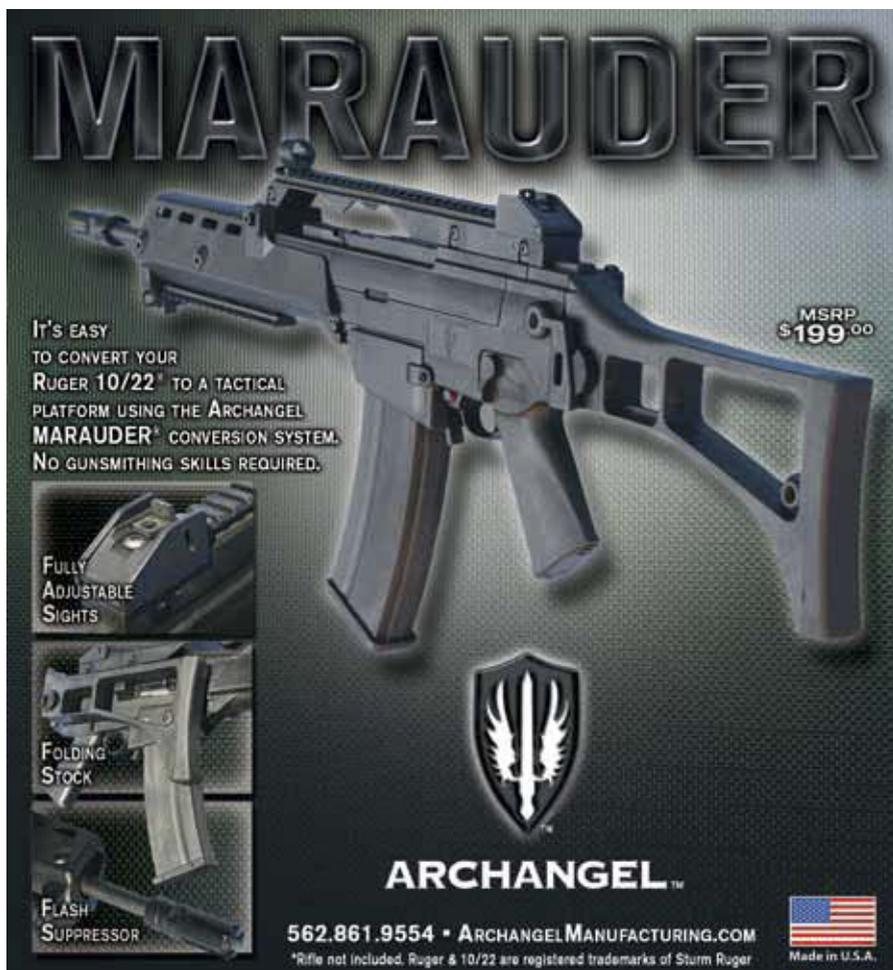
Home Defense Training/PA-459 Threat Response Pump Shotgun

Winner: Jim Baker, Hebron, Ky. The training occurs at Gunsite Academy in Arizona.



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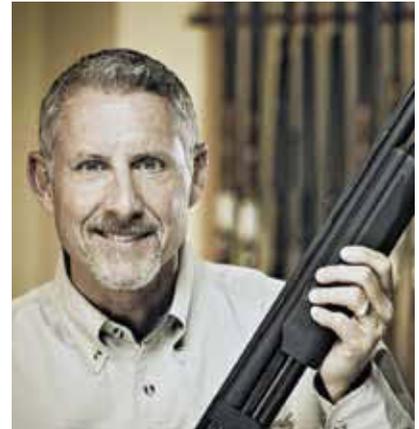
Runner-up: Gary Seraphine,
 Westfield, Wis.

Upland Bird Hunt/SA-08 Semi-
 Auto Shotgun Winner: Carl Adams,
 Jackson, Mich.

Runner-up: Joseph Domblesky,
 Brookfield, Wis.

Antelope Hunt/Vanguard
 Synthetic Rifle Winner: Paul Orand,
 Anniston, Ala.

Runner-up: Charles Urquhart,
 Eufaula, Okla.



Ed Weatherby was pleased to announce the winners and runners-up in the 2010 Weatherby Sweepstakes.

African Safari/Mark V Accumark
 Rifle Winner: Michael McCune,
 Butte, Mont. Runner-up: Joshua
 James, Westland, Mich.

Conducted June 1 through Dec.
 31, 2010, the sweepstakes promoted
 "as low as" prices on the \$299 PA-
 08 Synthetic pump shotgun and
 other Weatherby firearms. A random
 drawing determined the winners.—
*Courtesy Jeff Patterson, Swanson
 Russell Assoc.*

Swiss Army Selects Glock

Glock Ges.m.b.H. located in
 Deutsch-Wagram, Austria,
 announced the Swiss Army has
 chosen Glock as the new service
 pistol for the Swiss Army Special
 Forces. The evaluation process was
 conducted by three independent
 elements of the Swiss Army. The
 Army Reconnaissance 10 (AAD 10:
 Armee Aufklärungsdetachment), a
 specialized unit of the Swiss Army
 (Special Forces) and the Swiss
 Military Security Agency (MilSich)
 tested the capabilities and efficiencies
 of the Glock pistol in the field of
 operations, while the technical
 evaluation was handled by the
 national evaluation and procurement
 agency "armasuisse."

The Glock Pistol models

ultimately selected were the Glock 17 Gen4 and Glock 26 Gen4 9x19 semi-automatic pistols, as well as the Blue Glock Training pistol, the Glock 17T Gen4 and Glock 26T Gen4 which will have the ability to fire both FX and ATK Force on Force marking ammunition.

"Our firearms are designed for these individuals to succeed and survive in any situation."

The Swiss Army began their search for a new duty pistol in 2009. "Glock is very proud to have been competitively chosen by the Swiss Army over all other competition," said Glock Vice President Josh Dorsey. "Glock was chosen for this project due to the reliability and durability that have made Glock pistols famous. Glock's focus remains on providing safe, simple and fast pistols to those that go in harm's way. Our firearms are designed for these individuals to succeed and survive in any situation."

The first round of Glock pistols will be issued to replace the existing SIG 220 and SIG Pro pistols being de-commissioned.—*Courtesy Megan Harvey, Leader Ent.*

Glock's Donations To SOWF Reach \$600,000

Glock made a \$100,000 donation to the Special Operations Warrior Foundation during the Special Operations Forces Industry Conference (SOFIC) held in Tampa, Fla., last May 17-19. Glock, Inc. Vice President Josh Dorsey made the presentation to SOWF in the Glock booth on May 18.

During the past six years, Glock has donated a total of \$600,000 to SOWF, a non-profit organization providing college scholarships to the surviving children of Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps special operations personnel killed in combat or training.

"Glock is proud to contribute to organizations such as SOWF, which play such a vital role in providing aide to the families of America's

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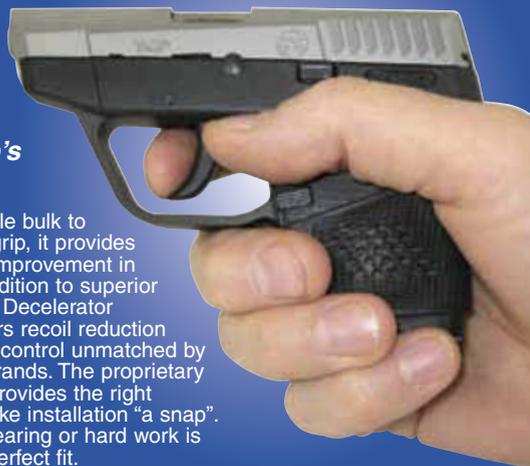
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fallen heroes," said Glock Vice President Josh Dorsey.

Accepting the donation on behalf of SOWF was Col. John T. Carney Jr., the founding father of Air Force Special Tactics and current President of SOWF; Edie Rosenthal, Director of Public Relations of SOWF, and former recipient of the SOWF Scholarship, Melinda Petrigani.

"Glock's continued support to SOWF over the past six years demonstrates their commitment to supporting the families of wounded and fallen special operations personnel," said Col. John T. Carney Jr., SOWF President and CEO. "With more than 500 children in our program who have yet to reach college age, this gift helps us assure those widows or widowers that the foundation will be around when that young girl or boy reaches college age."



Glock VP Josh Dorsey (left), presents a plaque to Col. John T. Carney Jr. (middle right), founding father of Air Force Special Tactics and current President of SOWF. Col. Carney Jr. is flanked by a former recipient of the SOWF Scholarship, Melinda Petrigani (middle left) and Tony Musa of Glock (right).

Melinda is one of more than 800 children of fallen special operations personnel to whom SOWF has provided aide. Her father, Army Ranger Private First Class Michael Ruddess, was killed in a training accident in 1986 when she was only 8 months old. Through the financial assistance from SOWF, Melinda graduated from DePaul University in 2008 with a degree in Business Administration. In September 2010, Melinda joined SOWF where she works with families and students as a financial aid counselor.

Glock, Inc. donates more than \$500,000 each year to causes that benefit those who put themselves in harm's way to defend the freedom that Americans enjoy.—*Courtesy Megan Harvey, Leader Ent..*

GUNS



The team engaged in a fire fight with insurgents last April 20 included (from left to right) Staff Sgt. Yobani Tejada, platoon sergeant for 3rd platoon, Co. E, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, Cpl. Samuel E. Sirman, combat engineer for 3rd platoon, Petty Officer 1st Class Joshua I. White, corpsman for 3rd platoon, Lance Cpl. Luis

Maldonado-Santiago, Light Armored Vehicle 25 gunner for 3rd platoon, Pfc. Tyler A. Nikkel, LAV25 driver, Lance Cpl. Levi R. Hale, rifleman for 3rd platoon, and (center) Lance Cpl. Jesse K. Knerr, section leader for 3rd platoon, stand in front of their LAV25 at Forward Operating Base Payne, Helmand province, Afghanistan. Photo: Cpl. Adam T. Leyendecker

Portland Marine Engages Enemy, Leads Team To Safety

For much of their deployment, Marines of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion have found an insurgent force which was reluctant to fight them toe to toe. Rather, the enemy has relied more on improvised explosive devices and indirect fire.

However, on April 20, Lance Cpl. Jesse K. Knerr, section leader for 3rd Platoon, E Company, 3rd LAR, and native of Portland, Ore., found that when insurgents have their backs against the wall they are left with no choice but to fight.

The mission of the day was to conduct a search of an area that hadn't been explored by coalition forces, but was suspected of being a site for possible insurgent fighting positions.

When Knerr and his fire team patrolled the area, they found structures made of rock, which blended into the ridge of the mountain. This was different than the buildings they were accustomed to seeing, which were

mainly mud huts.

Knerr signaled for his team to search the structures, where they found battery packs, rocket-propelled grenades, enemy propaganda and half-eaten meals that were still warm.

After radioing in the intelligence, Knerr and his fire team followed a trail outside the buildings, which led up the ridge of the mountain to a small cave with an even bigger cave about 100 meters above it.

As they walked up the ridge, the fire team found fighting positions all along the ridge. Suddenly, they began taking small-arms fire from insurgents in the bigger cave, only about a football-field length away from their positions.

The fire team immediately found cover. It was around 4:30 p.m. when Staff Sgt. Yobani Tejada, platoon sergeant for 3rd Platoon, received a radio call from Knerr stating that his team was engaged by enemy fire on the mountain ridge.

Tejada, who was in a Light Armored Vehicle 25 at the bottom of the mountain, told the Marines to find cover so they could provide fire from their turret and call in air support.

Knerr realized he had to come up with a plan which would get his Marines out of there safely. Spotting an area which supplied sufficient cover, Knerr directed the Marines to suppress the enemy's fire while each of them advanced toward the area.

After the Marines were clear, Knerr radioed back to Tejada, who had two vehicles simultaneously suppressing the enemy's fire. The insurgents returned fire with rocket-propelled grenades, but came no closer than 100 meters of the vehicles. Air support arrived in the form of F-18s, which destroyed the enemy positions.

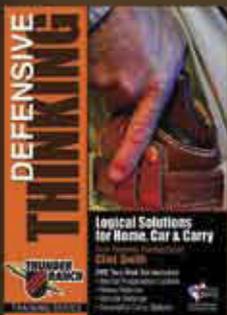
In this particular battle, the strong mental awareness of Knerr and his fire team made all the difference in successfully getting the team out of a dangerous situation.— *Cpl. Adam T. Leyendecker, II MEF FOB Payne, Afghanistan*

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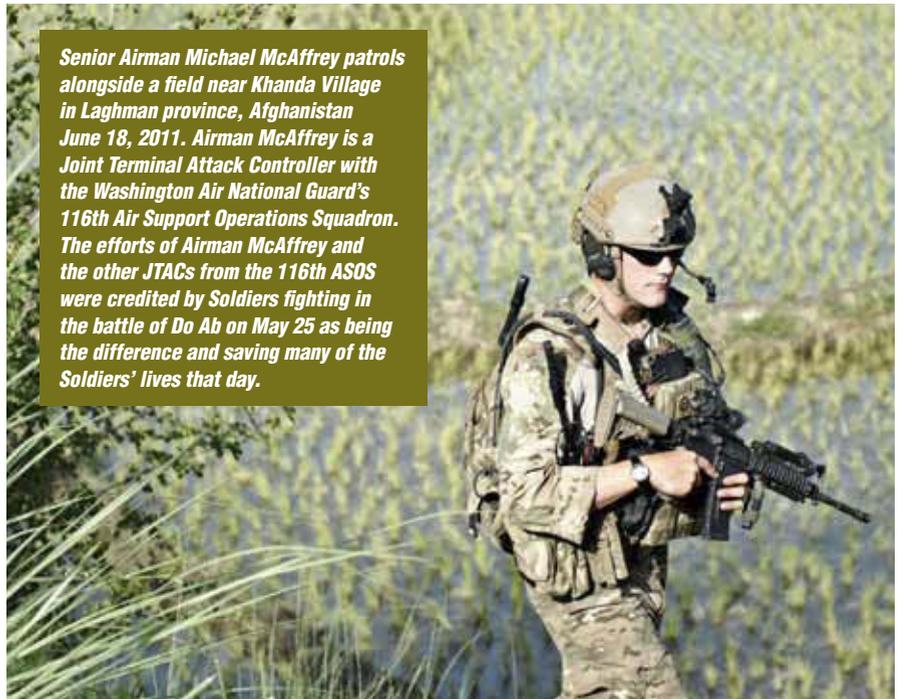
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Senior Airman Michael McAffrey patrols alongside a field near Khanda Village in Laghman province, Afghanistan June 18, 2011. Airman McAffrey is a Joint Terminal Attack Controller with the Washington Air National Guard's 116th Air Support Operations Squadron. The efforts of Airman McAffrey and the other JTACs from the 116th ASOS were credited by Soldiers fighting in the battle of Do Ab on May 25 as being the difference and saving many of the Soldiers' lives that day.

Ambush Stymied

Airmen from the Washington Air National Guard directed multiple airstrikes last May 25 helping a significantly outnumbered US Army and Afghan National Security Force unit fight through an insurgent ambush and free Do Ab, a tiny village in Nuristan, Afghanistan.

Approximately 40 Soldiers from the 133rd Infantry Regiment, Task Force Ironman, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry

Division, TF Red Bulls, including two Joint Terminal Attack Controller Airmen from the 116th Air Support Operations Squadron, and about 20 of their ANA counterparts went to Do Ab after intelligence reports indicated insurgents had overrun the district center. They fought through a massive ambush from an enemy force numbering in the hundreds, killing more than 100 insurgent fighters in an intense 72-hour battle. The most amazing part of the whole conflict, though, was there was not one



Senior Airman Michael McAffrey gives Afghan children bottles of water after completing a mission in Khanda Village in Laghman province, Afghanistan, last June 18. Airman McAffrey is a joint terminal attack controller with the Washington Air National Guard's 116th Air Support Operations Squadron.

coalition force casualty.

JTACs Tech. Sgt. Tavis Delaney and Senior Airman Michael McCaffrey boarded CH-47 Chinook helicopters with the platoon. The helicopters touched down in the narrow canyon floor next to a rushing river. "This was some of the worst terrain," Delaney said, "and exactly where I would choose to place an ambush if I was the enemy." The Soldiers and Airmen were in a valley surrounded by steep canyon walls. However, it was the only suitable landing zone in the narrow canyon.

"As soon as we got off the helicopters, we started taking fire

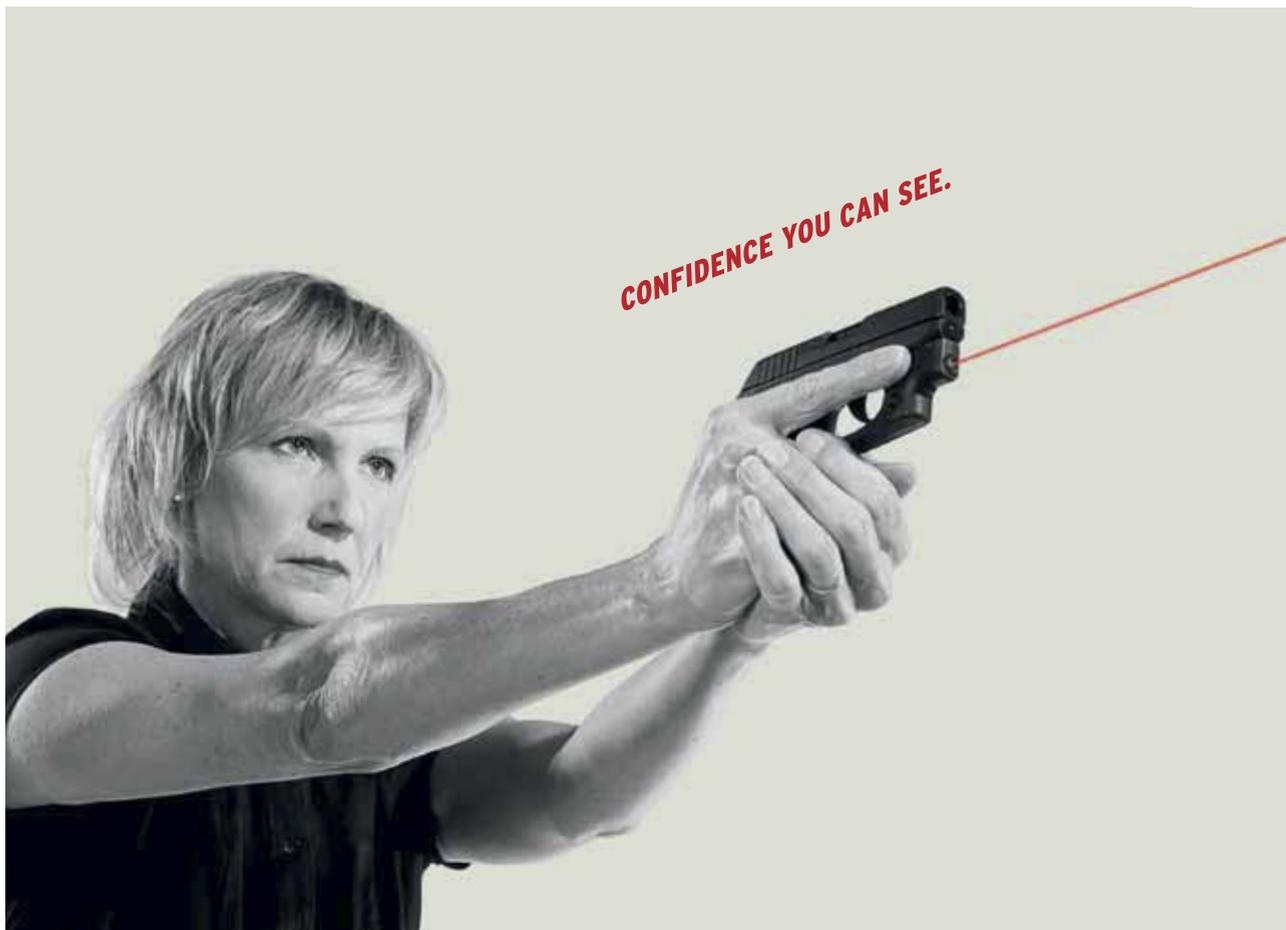
from every direction ... rocket propelled grenades, AK-47, machine guns and mortars," McCaffrey said. "They held all the high ground surrounding the landing zone." There was nothing to do but seek cover and return fire. Nonetheless, cover was sparse, and the enemy was so high above the coalition forces they could use plunging fire to shoot over what little cover the Soldiers had. The JTACs, knew these first minutes were critical for their unit's survival.

The Army laid down suppressive fire while Delaney and McCaffrey hastily requested airpower. Under fire, Delaney began to guide jets to

drop bombs onto the heavily-armed enemy surrounding his embattled unit for the next 7 hours.

Meanwhile, Apache and Kiowa attack helicopters joined the fight. With Delaney and McCaffrey guiding bombs onto the enemy, the small infantry force escaped the open landing zone, taking cover in a nearby series of abandoned Afghan mud huts and rock-walled animal pens.

For six hours, Soldiers and their ANA counterparts, fought. The enemy swarmed around them in the mountains above in heavily fortified fighting positions, with trenches dug



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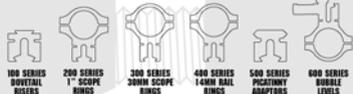


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chest-high in solid rock.

Despite a deadly hail of bullets kicking up dust at their feet and RPGs exploding nearby, Delaney and McCaffrey continuously ran between the huts to figure out where the greatest threats were coming from and then control airstrikes on the advancing enemy fighters. "Every time Sergeant Delaney lifted his foot, a bullet kicked up dust in the footprint he had just left," McCaffrey said.

Meanwhile, Airmen at FOB Mehtar Lam did their best in support. "We loaded a bunch of emergency helicopter resupply 'speedballs' full of more ammo, water and food for the guys," said Master Sgt. Dave Glisson, a 116th ASOS member. "But only a few were successful getting dropped off due to the heavy amount of gunfire in the battle. Several aircraft were shot up in the effort."

The enemy maneuvered within 200 meters of the team. Said Sgt. Jaime Medina, another 116th ASOS JTAC, "Delaney made the gutsy call to recommend a danger-close mission." Dropping massive bombs that close to US forces, just outside the bomb's maximum effective range, left no room for error by the pilots, and was a very difficult decision to make.

"It had to be done, however," Delaney said. "We were in direct danger of being overrun."

The bombs shook the entire team. "We felt it hit, rocks flew by our heads, dust erupted everywhere and all sound seemed to stop for several seconds," McCaffrey said.

"I give a lot of credit to the pilots, both helicopter and fighters," said Army Staff Sgt. Luke Chatfield, a joint fires observer who worked hand in hand with the JTACs during the battle. "They came in under fire each time we needed them to, and they were getting shot at and still were able to get on target time and time again and didn't hesitate. We had fixed-wing come down the valley lower than any fixed wing I've ever seen before, and they were getting shot at there, too, and they didn't care."

After a final burst of enemy resistance, the battle ended, almost as suddenly as it began. "For the next several days, we secured the district center and conducted patrols through the villages," Delaney said. "We didn't receive any more gun shots."

All of the men of the platoon were pulled out three days afterward, exhausted and humbled by their good fortune. —Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Matson, 210th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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News From The Front

A combined force killed numerous armed fighters in a gun battle last May in the Doshi district of Afghanistan's Baghlan province, military officials reported. Security forces were searching for a Taliban leader and bomb expert who reportedly commands 30 insurgent fighters. The troops came under fire at what intelligence reports indicated was the leader's compound, but were able to repel the attackers with small-arms fire, officials said.

Afghan and coalition forces killed an armed combatant and detained two suspected insurgents while searching for a senior Taliban leader in Badghis province's Murghab district.

In Helmand province's now Zad district, troops captured numerous suspected insurgents, including a Taliban weapons trafficker.

Forces killed an insurgent leader responsible for kidnappings and weapons trafficking after he attempted to evade security forces in Helmand province's Nad-e Ali district.

Drugs & Weapons Seized (midhead)

Combined forces found several



Pfc. Aaron Birmingham, an infantryman with 1st Platoon, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Task Force Duke, keeps on eye on a wadi in Andar, Afghanistan, April 21, 2011. The area is known as a Taliban stronghold and is where the unit received small-arms fire earlier in May. Photo: Staff Sgt. Andrew Guffey

weapons and drug stockpiles throughout Afghanistan. Operations resulted in seizure of 600 assault-rifle rounds, 441 pounds of dry opium, 330 pounds of morphine, 30 pounds of black tar heroin and 18 quarts of liquid opium.

Combined operations resulted in seizure of 1,100 pounds of ammonium nitrate—a banned fertilizer used in explosive devices—as well as 900 assault-rifle rounds, 535

pounds of dry opium, 300 rockets, 225 blasting caps, 125 land mines, 100 mortar rounds and 15 anti-tank mines.

Security forces found several weapons and drug caches throughout the country, which included 900 pounds of dry opium, 110 pounds of marijuana, 58 electrical detonators, detonation cord and assorted bomb-making materials.—ISAF Joint Command

Hone Those Shotgun Skills

Training does not stop just because Marines are forward deployed. It is the goal of many companies to continue to hone their Marines' skills on various weapons systems in between operational commitments and offensive missions.

Marines with Charlie and Weapons Companies, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, Task Force Belleau Wood, demonstrated proficiency while qualifying on the M1014 combat shotgun during range training at Camp Leatherneck on June 4. Ranges are often conducted on Camp Leatherneck for M16 rifles, M9 pistols and crew-served weapons systems, but this was the first time shotgun qualification training had been conducted here.

"The Marine Corps gives us all these tools, so it's up to us to make sure Marines are proficient with those tools," said 1st Lt. Jeremy Wood, the platoon commander for 1st Platoon, Weapons Company, 1/23, TFBW.

The day began with classroom instruction, including functions and components of the shotgun, and assembly and disassembly procedures. Once the Marines had received their verbal guidance, they headed out to the range for some hands-on, practical application.

Some Marines were already familiar with firing shotguns. Lance Cpl. Brandon Walker, a tow gunner with 1st Plt., Weapons Company, 1/23, grew up hunting with shotguns in Leon, Kan., but said even he benefited from the training.—Lance Cpl. Katherine M. Solano, II MEF (FWD)

GUNS



Lance Cpl. Brandon Walker (front), a tow gunner with 1st Platoon, Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, Task Force Belleau Wood, fires an M1014 combat shotgun during a training exercise at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, last June 4. Marines from Charlie and Weapons Companies qualified on the range to ensure comprehension of all the weapons' conditions, functions and abilities in various combat scenarios. Photo: Lance Cpl. Katherine M. Solano

QUARTER MASTER

JOHN CONNOR

COMBAT OPTICS AND SIGHTS

OK, you've invested in a high quality rifle and realize *actually hitting* anything with it quickly and surely can be a challenge. Check out some of the scopes and other gear to make your task easier, and add a little more fun into your shooting experience.

The details of each of these "Masters of Middle-earth" scopes would require an article of their own, so you've still got some homework to do. All three are eminently qualified for snap-shooting at across-the-alley distance to precision shot placements out to more than 400 meters; kind of the utility fielders of combat optics.

The Rapid Reticle Illuminated by Pride-Fowler Inc. boasts crystal-clear brightness and one of the fastest reticles ever devised. Calibrated for both 5.56mm and .308 Win, it virtually eliminates manual adjustments for range and windage to 10 mph, and its 3-sided boxes, enclosing about 9 pounds—the size of a human head—make range estimation fast and easy. Quality is superior and handling is simple under stress.

Leupold's Mark 4 CQ/T has a cult-like following among some serious operators, especially those who splash around in salt water. Its bright, gold, circle-and-dot reticle shows up brilliantly against virtually any background. The integral 1913 rail sections allow mounting accessories like an IR illuminator, or a LaserMax Uni-Max Green laser. Combat-tough and heavily sealed, it is a picky professional's dream optic.



The variable-power Rapid Reticle 1-4x24 Illuminated (top) is easy and quick to see with and use. Leupold's Mark 4 CQ/T 1-3x14mm (middle) has generated a solid following, especially since it has its own integral M1913 rails. The SN-4S (bottom) is a 1-4x30mm scope by U.S. Optics; Connor found it solid, clear and easy to use.

U.S. Optics is a small and growing firm building some of the best all-American made scopes extant. They offer so many options of scopes that essentially, each is custom-made to your needs and specifications. I found the SN-4S to be fast, solid, clear and



Streamlight's TLR-VIR (above) combines visible and IR illumination, while the OTS-17 (below), by ATN, is a high-tech, multi-role thermal imager.



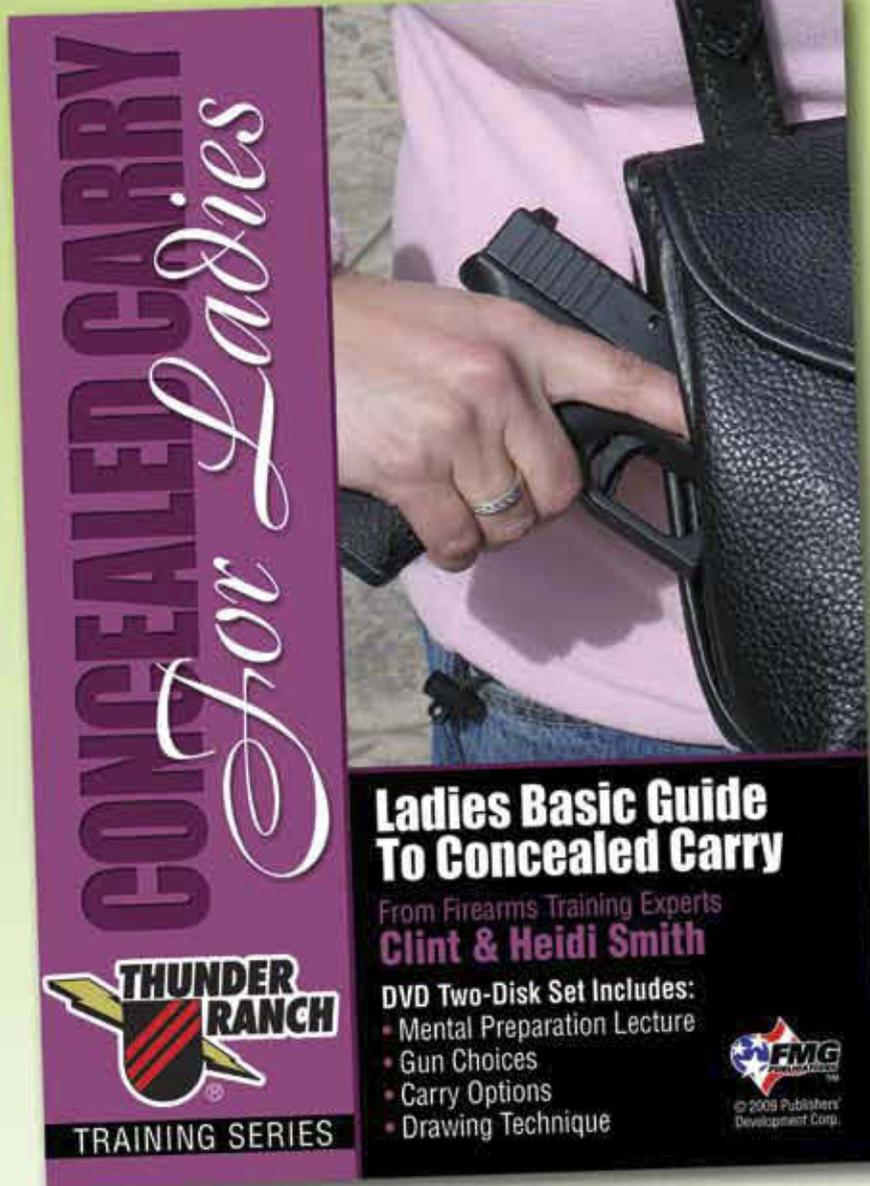
very easy to operate with gloved hands in the deep cold. I highly recommend checking out their lineup; just don't be overwhelmed with all your choices.

Sometimes you need light, and sometimes you need "dark light." The new TLR-VIR weapon-mountable unit from Streamlight combines a 160-lumen visible white light with an IR illuminator delivering 1,000 mW/sr radiant intensity, effectively replacing two larger units with one compact package. A 3-position toggle selects visible light, safe-OFF, and IR illumination; an ambidextrous paddle switch selects constant-on or momentary modes. A double-tap on the paddle activates a disorienting strobe function in white-light.

ATN's new OTS-17 is an incredibly sophisticated and effective thermal imaging system, which in many ways far outperforms conventional night vision devices. Compact and lightweight, it provides excellent visual imagery through fog, total darkness, smoke and most visual obscurants. Neither camouflage nor bright lights effect its sensitivity.

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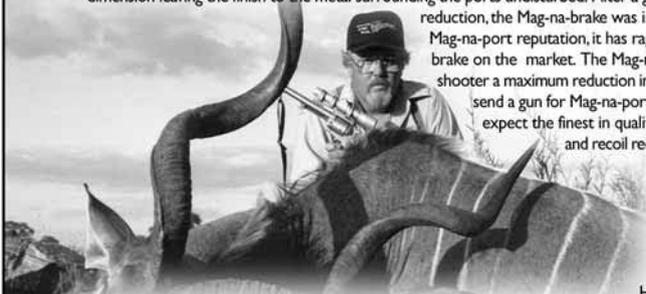
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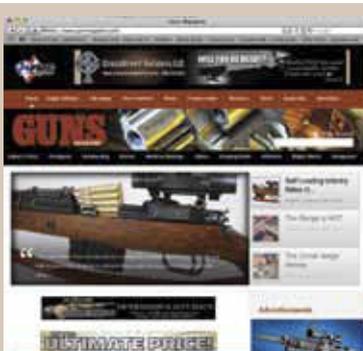
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Two innovative takes on BUIS systems (aka: backup iron sights) are the Diamondhead folding backups (above), and SureFire's angled RTS Rapid Transition Sights (below).



as a handheld viewer or mounted on a weapon, helmet or headset-harness assembly. The unit is waterproof up to 10 meters submerged, operates for 4 hours on one battery pack—and even comes with an RCA video/power hookup! The RTS-17 can be a soldier's best buddy....

When batteries fail or optics break, backup iron sights are critical. Thanks to their intuitive eye-orienting shape, Premium Diamond Sights by Diamondhead USA are blazing fast and amazingly precise. Strong but quick, push-button locks keep them rigidly folded or deployed.

Brand new and designed by Barry Dueck, chief of SureFire's suppressor division, RTS sights attach to your 12 o'clock, 1913 rail at a 45-degree angle. If your optic fails, or you must make a close-quarters snapshot, just tilt your weapon slightly, aim and fire. Quality and strength are synonymous with SureFire; superior and rock-solid.

Quality, close-quarters optics have proven their worth in military and law enforcement use. Standouts include the Meprolight M21 Reflex, distributed in America by Kimber. It has been issued by the Israeli Defence Forces for urban combat for over a decade. That speaks



The Meprolight M21 Reflex has been in use by the Israeli Defence Force for over a decade (top). The Leupold Tactical Prismatic (middle) has a reticle etched on the glass in case of electronic or battery failure. Rapid Reticle Special Ops Auto (bottom) gunsights have eight standard and two NVA compatible red-dot intensity settings.

volumes about its durability. Fiber optics illuminate the reticle in daylight, and tritium takes over in low light.

When Leupold says their Tactical Prismatic is "the toughest tube we've ever made," that's really saying something! Another great feature is when the removable illumination module is off or the battery dies, the reticle is etched into the lens so this scope is never "down."

Finally, the Special Ops Auto 33mm electronic red-dot sight by Rapid Reticle/Pride-Fowler, is tough

as a tank with eight standard and two night-vision-compatible light-intensity settings, plus, an auto setting engages a proprietary photocell, which rapidly and continuously adjusts intensity for ambient light conditions. Bright, clear and great gear!

Too many great accessories and too little space! We haven't even gotten into top tactical weapon upgrades or user-replaceable superior products to take your weapons to the next level—but perhaps in a future issue? Until then, Connor *OUT*.

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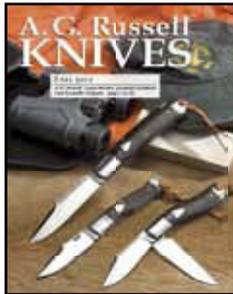
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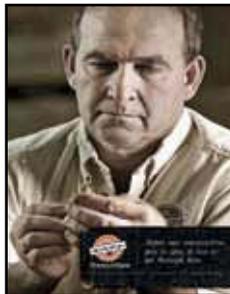


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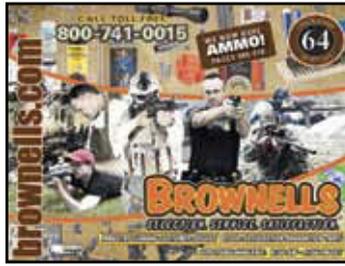


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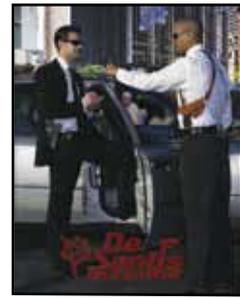


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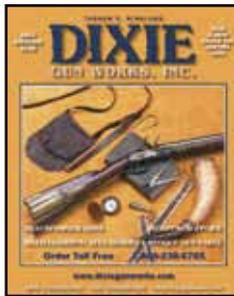
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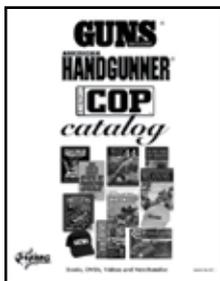


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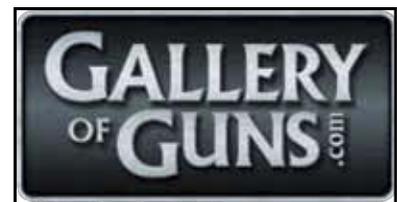
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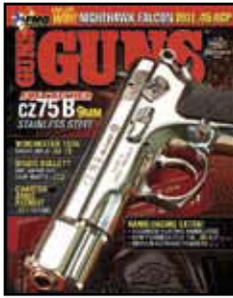


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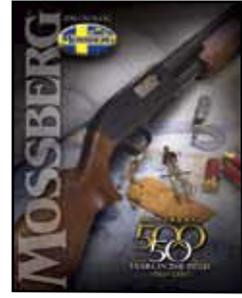


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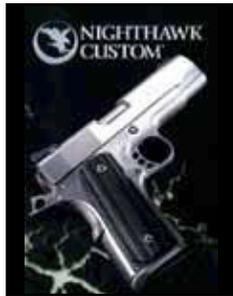
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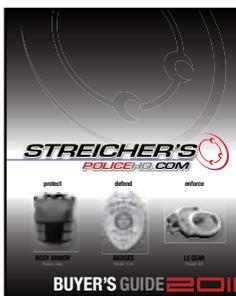


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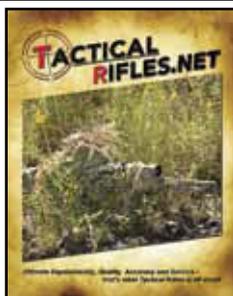


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ODD ANGRY SHOT

• JOHN CONNOR •

JUST ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE

If you're a Gurkha soldier, maybe....

On Wednesday, June 1, 2011 a handsome young man with a nut-brown complexion stepped into the inner sanctum of Buckingham Palace and into a mob of photographers. Resplendent in his scarlet-piped pillbox cap and black-ink tunic, he flashed a rare, self-conscious smile, and held up a gift from 'Er Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Cameras flashed; voices respectfully murmured. Jaded journalists made no jokes or jibes. Simple, unaffected heroism sometimes has that effect.

Sergeant Dipprasad Pun, of the Royal Gurkha Regiment, had just been "gonged" by the Queen: awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross, Britain's second-highest decoration for bravery in combat. It is unknown how many generations of "Sergeant Dip's" family have served in Gurkha regiments, but he knows he represents the third generation of his immediate family to have been highly decorated for valor. With a modesty typical of Gurkhas, he felt his actions were all in a day's work; doing one's duty.

Meantime, at a barracks in Kent, another young Gurkha was keeping a low profile, somewhat confused about being "notorious" to the outside world and "an embarrassment" to British diplomats. His fellow Gurkhas were equally nonplussed. He had only done his duty.

In India, a Gurkha sergeant who had been "RIF'd" into early retirement was back at work with a promotion, three new decorations and a 50,000-rupee award in his bank account, wondering what all the fuss was about. He saw his duty, and simply did it.

"I was definitely going to die, so..."

Dip's unit, a platoon from the 1st Battalion of the Royal Gurkha



The Conspicuous Gallantry Cross, Britain's second-highest decoration for valor.

Regiment, operated from a remote outpost in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Sited in an area thick with Taliban, the unit's prime duties included aggressive patrolling, and manning a critical checkpoint on the road east of a small village. The outpost had been attacked several times. One evening, the then-Corporal Dip was one of four Gurkhas left at the base while the rest of the platoon pushed out on patrol.

Dip was alone at the checkpoint, an elevated structure in the center of the compound, when just after dark, he heard noises. Investigating, he found Taliban planting an IED in front of the gate. Dip grabbed two radios, his SA80 rifle, and a GPMG—General Purpose Machine Gun. As the Taliban moved into assault position, Dip advised his commander by radio that the outpost was under attack, fired a grenade, and kicked off the firefight. His three comrades were pinned down inside and couldn't respond.

Under attack on three sides by 15 to 30 Taliban, he kept moving, emptying all six mags from his SA80, launching 17 grenades and firing 250 GPMG rounds. Some fell, but others kept coming, and trying to scale the wall. Screaming, "Marchi talai!" (I will kill you!) in Nepalese, he hammered one down like a nail with the GPMG



Sgt. Dipprasad Pun, CGC, Royal Gurkha Regiment. Photo: Crown Copyright, MoD 2011

tripod, and swept another off the wall with a sandbag. When the survivors regrouped, Dip triggered a claymore mine blast. They fled, leaving three bodies behind.

Taking out a skeleton-staffed outpost should have been a slam-dunk. Instead, the Taliban got slammed and dunked.

Afterward, he explained, "I thought I was definitely going to die so I thought I'd kill as many of them as I could before they killed me." Just another day at the office.

One Head And 40 Bandits

Another Gurkha unit from 1st Battalion was tasked with hunting down a certain Taliban warlord. The orders were to positively identify their target. They found him, surrounded by his pals, and in a ferocious firefight, he was killed. Still under heavy fire, they could not carry the body away. One Gurkha drew his kukri knife and removed the warlord's head. They fought their way back out. He was positively ID'ed.

The diplomatic community went nuts. The Gurkhas simply couldn't comprehend the problem. Absent orders to the contrary, they did what they had done in countless past conflicts, often times commanded to

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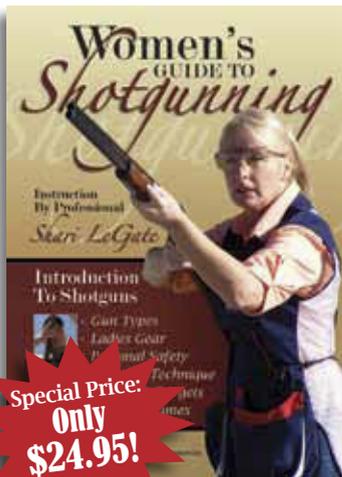
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bring back proof of important kills. Citing “international embarrassment,” the young Gurkha was sent back to the barracks in Kent.

Rolling through jungled country in West Bengal, India, several passengers of a train suddenly revealed themselves as bandits; seizing control and stopping the train to let waiting bandits aboard. There were 40 of them, armed with pistols, swords and knives. Loud and threatening, they stripped passengers of money, jewelry and other valuables. One passenger, Bishnu Shresthra, sat calmly and watched.

Faced with a cutback in personnel, Sergeant Shresthra had voluntarily taken early retirement from his Gurkha regiment in the Indian Army to save the billet for a younger Gurkha.

He didn't make a move until bandits grabbed an 18-year-old girl and threatened to rape her in front of her parents. That's when he stood, drew the long, curved, ever-present kukri concealed at his side—and attacked. Conditions were perfect for a Gurkha's hacking and slashing fighting style with the kukri: in the train's narrow passageway, only two or three bandits at a time could face him. And the odds were on his side: just 40 *dacoits* against a veteran Gurkha! The fight raged on for 20 minutes.

Shresthra suffered knife wounds to his hand and arm, later requiring extensive surgery. He killed three dacoits, seriously wounded eight, and literally chased the others off the train and into the jungle—alone. Police recovered 400,000 rupees, 40 gold necklaces, 40 laptops and 200 cell phones dropped by the fleeing bandits. He did not boast of his actions. The girl told police what he had done. He explained that fighting enemies in battle was his duty as a soldier. Fighting the dacoits, he said, was “my duty as a human being.”

The Indian government invited Shresthra to rejoin his regiment.

The Gurkhas: Asia's Spartans

Unfortunately, we've no space here to tell the long, distinguished history of Nepal's Gurkha warriors, who have been “contract soldiers” of the British Army since the early 1800s, and of the Indian Army since independence. If you don't know it, you'll enjoy researching it.

I first saw a Gurkha as a boy in the Pacific. My father had described them as some of the world's bravest, most honorable soldiers. “But he's hardly bigger'n me!” I observed.

“In battle,” dad said, “That man is about 9' tall.”

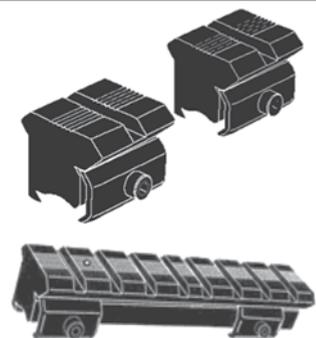
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GUNS

MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2011

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produced the original boards, they used a center painting to depict the usefulness of their particular firearm and ammunition.

With his love of hunting, firearms and history, Bob Auth set out not to duplicate the originals, but rather to commemorate them in his own fashion. "My intent was not to fake or falsify, rather my intent was to use a beautiful, historical, aesthetically pleasing, captivating art form as my model. This was the manner that I've chosen to display a lifetime of collecting cartridges rather than file cases, drawers or wall frames, devoid of graphics. All five cartridge boards have followed one artist's passion." All have been created by this exceptionally talented man using his cartridge collection accumulated over many decades, and highlighted by a painting in the center of the board depicting a hunt he experienced sometime during his more than six decades living in his beloved Idaho. My favorite is his Sharps cartridge board depicting a buffalo hunter. A math teacher was used for the model, making a long-range shot using cross-sticks, something Bob has done himself.



Bob Auth commissioned Montana engraver, Jerome Glimm, to embellish these Winchester and Remington firearms.

In addition to the Sharps board, there is a Winchester version with a cowboy in the snow pitted against a mountain lion. "A shot rang out to break the quiet and the stillness of that Saturday morning. My view of where the shot came from was obscured by heavy brush. I froze in my tracks certain that Don had shot an elk. In just a minute he yelled, 'Hey Bob come on over here!' I wasted no time in breaking through the brush, crossing Wardenhoff Creek and was awestruck by the scene before me. Don was still perched on his rock, before him, no more than a dozen or so feet lay a dead, motionless cougar. I will never forget the brilliant tan body against the pure whiteness of the snow."

A UMC board is highlighted by Idaho elk, the Remington features two hunters making a crawling stalk after antelope in sagebrush, and finally a second Winchester board with elk

hunters. Bob's artistic nature also carries over to his love for firearms, which has resulted in commissioning Montana engraver Jerome Glimm to engrave and gold inlay the beautiful Winchesters of the past, including Models 1873 and 1876, as well as the Remington Rolling Blocks. These rifles were first restored mechanically and the barrels relined. His Winchester Model 1876s chambered in .50-95 and .45-60 are fitting companions to his paintings.

Bob Auth and his artwork is a part of our history, which must not be lost. So many times I've tried to get older men to record their life work before everything was lost. Bob is accomplishing that feat by finishing up his autobiography. Like so many of us, as we get older he has found his mind getting younger while his body gets older; it is a terrible struggle. (My body pretty much tries to ignore everything my mind tells it to do!)

I have been privileged to read the rough draft of one chapter in his book and I am certainly looking forward to the entire story as Bob is not only a shooter and artist he is also part of the Greatest Generation. The one chapter I have read talks of his early days collecting and hunting and as one who certainly does not believe in coincidence it was most interesting to read in this chapter of his first Smith & Wesson which just happens to be the .44 American. (Diamond Dot purchased that .44 from him to surprise me with a few years ago.) As long as I have this ivory-stocked .44 I will always have a bond with Bob Auth artist, collector, and friend. Bob Auth has now passed on. He went to his reward in early May. I visited him a week before and he was still passionate about his artwork. He will be missed.

Anyone interested in purchasing one of these cartridge boards or restored rifles can contact our mutual friend and Bob's personal representative for his estate, Tony Kojis at (208) 376-2256, tkojis@msn.com.

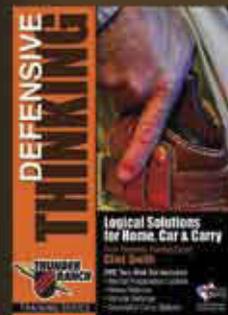


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CAMPFIRE TALES

BY JOHN TAFFIN

ROBERT AUTH A unique American artist.

The first article I ever wrote was on the .44 Magnum; it was published in 1967. Since that time, there have been over 2,000 articles and five books, so in the past 44 years I have come very close to shooting every handgun (especially every .44 sixgun ever offered from the original S&W .44 American, through the other Smiths, Colts, Rugers, etc.), plus a lot of custom .44 sixguns, not to mention all the other chamberings. You might think with having such experience, I would rate being able to shoot all these great handguns as the best part of being a gunwriter. I don't. Actually, for quite a while, I led two lives — from 1965 to 1995 I was also a public school teacher. In both careers, the number one factor which stood out was not things, but people; all the wonderful people I have met, including hundreds upon hundreds of great teenagers.

When I began writing, it was very frustrating trying to take decent photographs. Everything was black and white in those days, and my pictures were mostly hit-and-miss. I did a freelance article for editor Jan Libourel and he pointed out the problem was not me but the processor. The only answer was to develop my own pictures; that's where my dear friend and fellow teacher Jim Stoehr entered the picture.

Jim had the room across from me for over 20 years and taught me how to process my own pictures. Even more importantly, he was a great, upbeat guy to be around. Jim was extremely talented as an artist and probably would have become very well known, had he chosen to live in a larger market. Instead he chose to stay in Idaho and enjoy the easily accessible great outdoors. Jim was in his early 50s when he took a fishing trip to Alaska. He didn't feel well when he left, contracted pneumonia,

and did not survive the life flight home. His passing left a big hole.

Jim is high on my list of great folks I have known. It is also because of him that I met Robert Auth. Bob Auth, as he is better known, was the district art supervisor and another man of tremendous artistic talent who chose to stay in Idaho for the same reason as Jim. We all lived in the same valley, yet could virtually be in the middle of nowhere on the backside of a mountain by going one direction, or in the middle of a sagebrush desert heading the other way. Such a rural lifestyle does not carry a price tag.

Bob Auth is a veteran of WWII. He entered the Navy in 1944, long-time artist, teacher, calligrapher, historian and Old West collector. His art is highly influenced by his love of



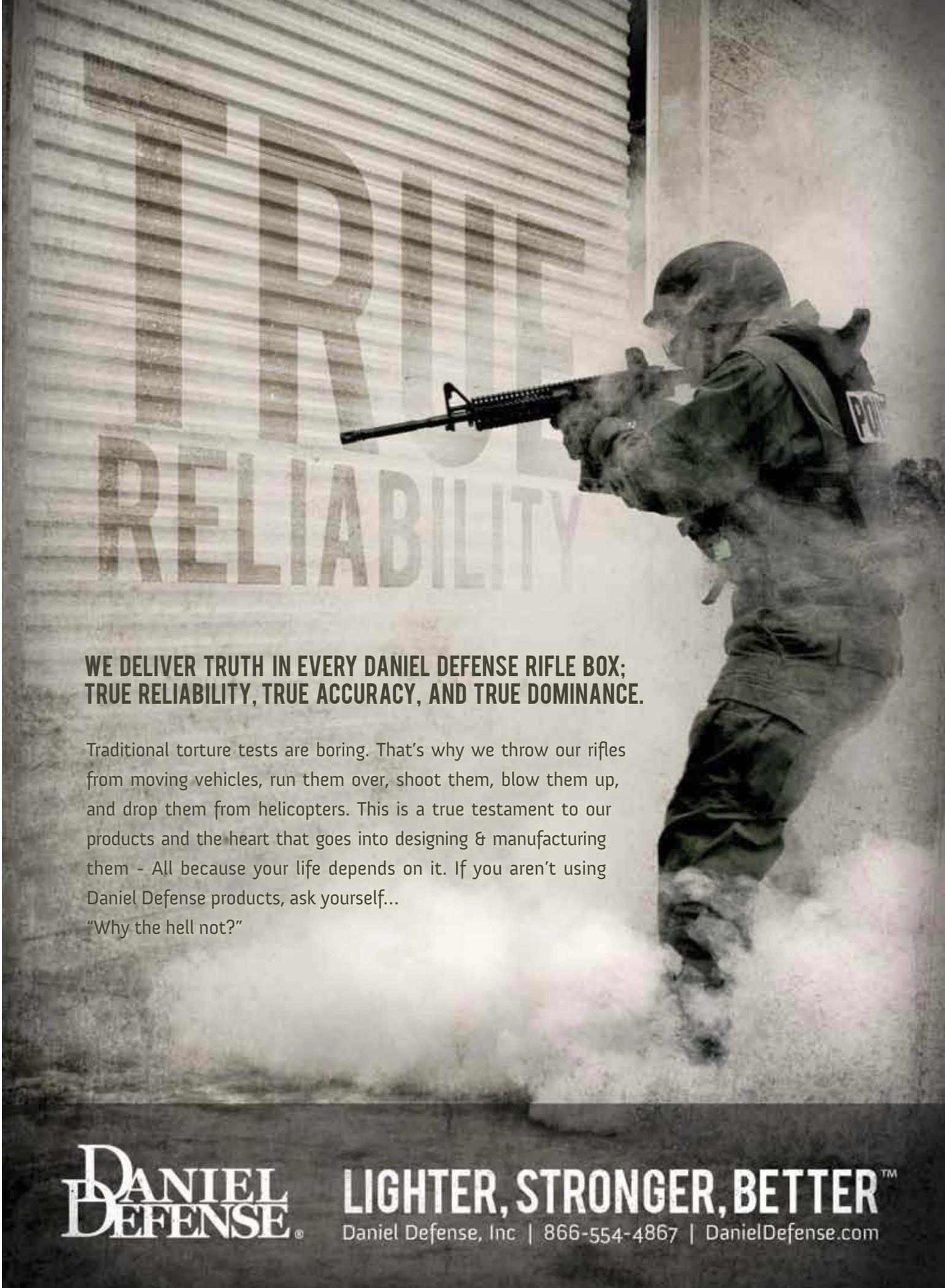
Old West artist Bob Auth painted and assembled his own versions of the famous bullet boards put out by ammunition makers in the late 1800s.



history, which can be seen in his paintings and drawings of the men that built the West, mountain men, trappers, buffalo hunters, cowboys, cavalry soldiers, pioneers, as well as the American Indians. In addition to his love of the Old West, he has also shown a long time fascination for old trains and airplanes. Many of his paintings depict hunting scenes such as the buffalo hunter with his Sharps, a cowboy matching his levergun against a mountain lion, or a cavalry soldier making his last stand. Ever since I can remember, Bob has made the advertising posters for our local Ee-Da-How Gun Show, held twice a year. These advertisements always featured drawings in a humorous vein of either Western character or airplane pilot.

A unique part of firearms history can be found in the old cartridge boards put out by such companies as Winchester, Remington, and Union Metallic Cartridges. Long before there was electronic or magazine advertising, the ammunition companies put out beautifully detailed cartridge boards with a painting in the center and individual examples of their cartridges attached. These were displayed in outdoor sporting goods stores throughout the country. When the ammunition companies

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