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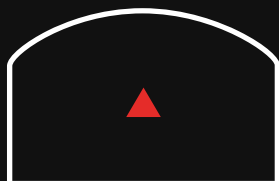
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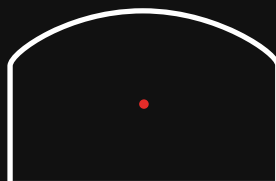


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10 GREAT CONCEALED CARRY GUNS FOR 2016

Now that SHOT Show 2016 is behind us, here are all of the best new introductions for 2016. Come take a look at the latest and greatest here!

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FIRST LOOK: SMITH & WESSON SW22 VICTORY

One of the most revolutionary introductions this year is the SW22 rimfire pistol from Smith & Wesson. Find all of the details on our site.

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Last Stand

In the April/May issue you reference as the “Last Stand at Sabre River” as a Colt 1873 SAA .45. It is a customized Colt 1860 Army used by Paul Cable’s (Tom Selleck) wife in the movie. The movie takes place toward the end of the Civil War, almost nine years before the Peacemaker went into production. Enjoyed the article but could not overlook the glaring error. Tom Selleck always takes pride in the accuracy of his firearms on screen and would never have used a weapon that was not correct.

EDWARD T. WASHINGTON

ELLISVILLE, MO

The 1873 Colt SAA on display in the NRA Museum (and pictured above) is actually from the 2003 film “Monte Walsh,” also starring Tom Selleck, and not “Last Stand at Sabre River.” The gun was incorrectly labeled on the NRA website as being featured in “Saber River.” Neither I nor the editor had actually seen the movie, so we didn’t catch the error. According

to Kenny Howell, who converted the Colt 1860 Selleck carried in “Saber River,” the Colt 1873 shown in the photo was carried by George Eads, who played Shorty Austin in “Monte Walsh.”

It’s interesting to note that both the 1873 SAA on display in the NRA Museum and the Howell conversion carried by Paul Cable in “Last Stand at Sabre River” bear similar grip designs. The conversion kit that allowed Colt 1860 blackpowder revolvers to be modified to fire cartridges was patented in 1871.—Brad Fitzpatrick

Cry U.N.C.L.E.

How can you put together a list of iconic handguns from the motion picture/television industry without including the U.N.C.L.E. Special/Carbine from the 1960’s TV spy series “Man from U.N.C.L.E.”? These pistols were modified Walther P38s (shortened barrel with integral silencer) that could quickly be converted into an effective carbine

with the addition of a stock, scope, and extended magazine and barrel. These weapons received nearly as much fan mail as the human stars of the program, often simply addressed to “The Gun” c/o NBC-TV. I get it that your article was meant to deal with real guns included in the NRA Museum’s Hollywood collection, but if the museum doesn’t have a prop Special/Carbine in that collection, they are missing out on arguably the most famous handgun in television history.

CHARLES JARRELLS

DAYTON, OH

Goldilocks

I am fairly new to defensive handguns and decided to subscribe to three publications this past 12 months and then re-subscribe to the most helpful one. Now I feel a little like Goldilocks and the three bears. One has too little training. The other has lots of training and information about concealed carry, but I really get tired of being forced to read writers’ half-baked political opinions before I can get the information the articles were supposed to be about.

Handguns turned out to be just right: No captive audience politics and a useful balance of insight and training with technology. I look forward to reading you next year.

PHIL KOUSE

REDMOND, WA

Biggest Bang

Although I can’t afford the high-end guns you review in some of your articles, I like to take note of the features these guns have and then try to find similar features in the guns I can afford. This ensures I get the biggest bang for my hard-earned bucks. Thanks for a great magazine!

ROBERT STEIN

LUTZ, FL

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THE WORLD'S MOST BATTLE-PROVEN FIREARMS.

RED HOT

FEDERAL CHANGES THE FACE OF RANGE AMMO WITH SYNTECH.

By J. Scott Rupp

FEDERAL PREMIUM HAS INTRODUCED

what could be a game-changer in range ammo with its new Syntech, which is sold under the company's American Eagle economy brand. Federal developed Syntech to appeal to new shooters, but it has advantages that should be attractive to newbies and veterans alike.

If you shoot a lot, unless you're made of money, you're not using your very best defensive ammo. You shoot full metal jacket, total metal jacket, plain lead roundnose or perhaps plated lead. One problem with all these, especially plain lead, is they're dirty. And Federal believes newcomers would rather not spend a lot of time cleaning their handguns, either at the range or when they get home.

The company is probably right. Few people enjoy scrubbing out lead, copper and powder fouling after an extended practice session. And new folks are less likely to have dedicated gun cleaning areas in their homes, which adds to the time and hassle it takes to clean a gun.

Syntech doesn't eliminate the need to clean a gun, but it does make life easier. The bullet's soft lead core is enclosed in a polymer jacket—the company calls it a TSJ or total synthetic jacket—that eliminates metal-to-metal contact with the bore. The result is no copper or lead fouling, which is more than half the battle in terms of cleaning.

I shot 200 rounds of Syntech out of three different 9mms, and not only does it run flawlessly, the guns were much less of a hassle to clean when I was finished. But you still have to



▲ Syntech's promise is clean-shooting range ammo aimed squarely at the growing market of new shooters. Not only does it feature a new bullet but also a new primer and new propellants as well.

clean the gun at some point, and one of my first questions was whether the red polymer coating was going to build up in the barrel (think plastic deposition from wads in a shotgun) or require special cleaning solutions. Federal senior product-line manager Mike Holm says we can rest easy.

"We've fired thousands of evaluation rounds and have noticed no substantial residue from the polymer coating," he says, adding that the usual brass brush and powder solvents should be all you need.

Syntech also uses new propellants and a new primer. More on the primer in a second, but the new primer/powder combination really reduced powder-related fouling—to

the point I didn't see a need to wipe the barrels or slides of the three pistols while shooting Syntech. Even more striking was the difference in the condition of the fired cases when compared to the FMJ ammo I later shot. The Syntech spent cases were still bright and shiny, an advantage any reloader will appreciate.

Now, about the primer. There are indoor ranges that require ammunition to have lead-free primers, and because Syntech is particularly targeted at indoor range users, Federal decided to develop a new lead-free primer, the Catalyst.

Federal ammunition product specialist Dan Compton explained to me that not only is Catalyst a cleaner-firing primer, unlike other



▲ The Syntech's Total Synthetic Jacket encloses the base like a TMJ does, and the polymer eliminates metal-to-metal contact in the bore.



▲ Federal tested Syntech against jacketed bullets on steel targets to demonstrate how much less splashback Syntech (l.) produces.

lead-free primers it's not hygroscopic. It won't absorb ignition-robbing moisture and will always deliver consistent performance no matter how long it's been sitting on the shelf. Federal asserts Syntech is the least expensive lead-free-primer ammo on the market.

And because of the Catalyst's improved performance, you're also getting a more complete powder burn, which translates to consistent velocities, as you can see in the accompanying chart. (The range I was using is not set up for accuracy testing, but in the drills I ran and in chronographing the ammo I found it to be accurate in all three guns.)

There's another Syntech advantage indoor range shooters will certainly appreciate. Some facilities require not only lead-free primers, but also TMJ bullets, whose jackets cover the bullet's base to eliminate lead vaporization during firing.

Syntech's TSJ bullet accomplishes the same thing, only with polymer, and Compton says the company has received positive feedback from indoor ranges regarding Syntech.

This new ammo probably going to come in a bit higher per box than economy FMJ ammo. So if you're a high-volume, veteran shooter and cleaning doesn't bother you a bit,

why would you use Syntech?

For one thing, the polymer jacket not only eliminates copper and lead fouling, it reduces bore friction (Federal testing in a .45 found 12 percent less friction than copper-jacketed lead bullets). This means it takes a slightly lower powder charge to achieve a normal velocity—translating to a little less recoil. I did find this to be true, although I can't quantify it other than to say it shot "softer" than the FMJ loads I was comparing it to.

The reduced friction also means longer barrel life. Friction and heat are barrel killers, and in addition to less friction, Syntech tests conducted with a 9mm showed 14 percent less heat than a comparable FMJ load.

Want another reason? Splashback. If you've shot any amount of steel in competition or plinking,

you've felt the sting of tiny pieces of lead pelting your face or bare arms or legs. Federal conducted a controlled test by firing FMJ, TMJ and Syntech into a steel target 23 feet downrange. Results showed Syntech produced 51 percent less recoverable fragment weight than jacketed bullets between five and 15 yards of the target; 91 percent less weight in fragments traveling more than 15 yards from the target; and at least 77 percent fewer fragments over 10 grains in weight.

I think there are a number of clear advantages to Syntech. We shooters are a funny bunch, though, and we're not always big on change. If Federal can attract all the new people it hopes to reach and also appeal to longtime shooters—especially those who spend a lot of time on indoor ranges—the company should have a hit on its hands. ○

PERFORMANCE RESULTS | AMERICAN EAGLE SYNTECH

9mm Luger	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Extreme Spread (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)
SPRINGFIELD XD TACTICAL, 5 IN. BBL.				
Syntech TSJ	115	1,204	21	7
CZ-75, 4.6 IN. BBL.				
Syntech TSJ	115	1,185	48	14
FNP9, 4 IN. BBL.				
Syntech TSJ	115	1,131	26	7

Notes: No accuracy tests were conducted. Velocities are averages of 10 shots 12 feet from the muzzle on a Shooting Chrony. Abbreviation: TSJ, total synthetic jacket

SHOOTING NEWS

STI INTERNATIONAL, well-known for its high-end 1911s, is taking on an investor, Westwind Investors. "Westwind is the kind of partner you look for to achieve long-term goals," said STI CEO Greg Mooney. "We have aggressive plans for growth, and Westwind can not only support those goals financially but also through their management strategy and brand development capabilities." While the deal had not yet been finalized at press time, a news release indicated the transaction would be completed by early April.

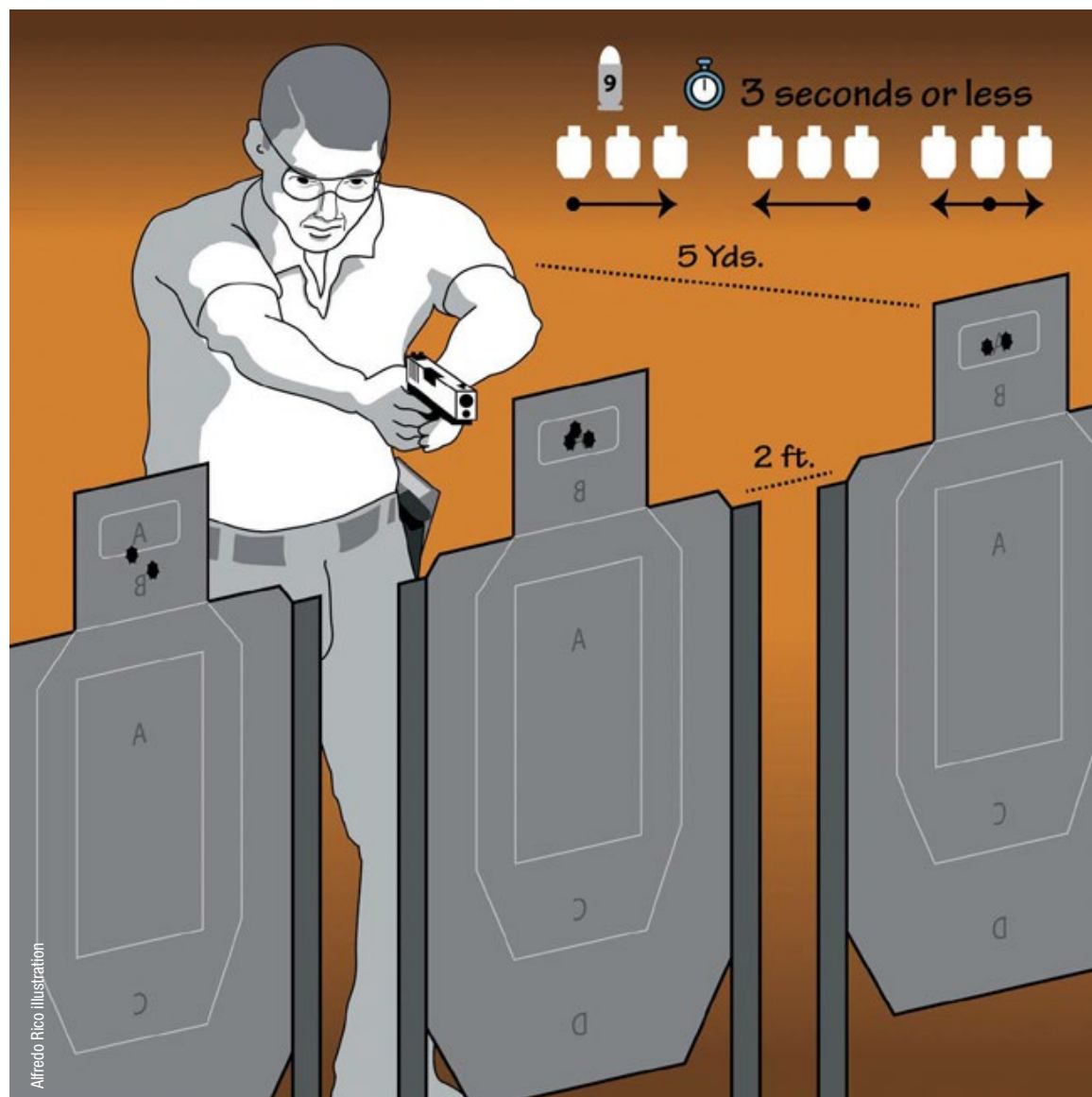
Recognizing how popular optical sights have become for pistol shooting, the board of the **U.S. PRACTICAL SHOOTING ASSOCIATION** announced its provisional Carry Optics division will expand (although still remain provisional). For the remainder of this year, the division will permit expanded stippling and contouring, expanded slide profiles to include serrations and cosmetic cuts not completely through the slide, and an increased weight limit of 45 ounces (including optic and empty mag). Guns without a slide-mounted optic will be prohibited.

NSSF has announced the host for this year's NSSF Rimfire Challenge World Championship will be Cavern Cove Competition Range in Woodville, AL. The match will be held October 14-16. This is the third year NSSF has run the Rimfire Challenge (formerly Ruger Rimfire), a family-friendly rifle/pistol competition that includes divisions for both optics and open sights. For more, information, visit NSSF.ORG/RIMFIRE.

Although at press time it's impossible to say whether he'll make the **USA SHOOTING** squad that will compete at this summer's Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Will Brown of Twin Falls, ID, captured a silver medal in air pistol at a World Cup event in Thailand. An up-and-coming athlete, Brown's silver can only bolster his chances of earning his first Olympic team berth.

SKILLS DRILLS | BY DAVE SPAULDING

HEAD-SHOT STANDARD



THE THREE-SECOND HEAD SHOT STANDARD was created by instructor Ken Hackathorn as a test of essential pistol shooting skills. It teaches target transition as well as front sight focus and trigger control.

GEAR Gun, holster, nine rounds of ammo, shot timer. Can be fired with revolvers because there's time enough between runs for a reload.

DRILL Three IDPA or IPSC targets placed at least two feet apart, five yards downrange. Set your timer for a par time of three seconds. On the signal, fire one shot at the head of each target. Shoot left to right on the first run, right to left on the second run, and on the third run shoot the center target first,

then the left and right targets in any order.

SCORING A shot anywhere in the scoring zone for the head (both A and B zones for the IPSC target) counts as a hit. Shots fired after the three-second par time count as misses.

TIPS Try the drill first from the Ready position of your choice: Low, High, Chest and so forth. Once you can get all hits within three seconds, try it from a holster. If you can get your hits from the holster within the par time, try drawing from concealment. Hackathorn considers a passing score to be seven hits, but your ultimate goal is a clean run of all nine hits.

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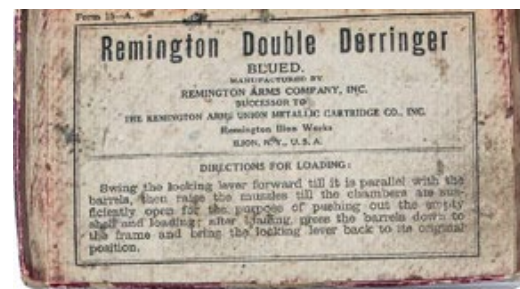
MODEL 95 DOUBLE DERRINGER

ALTHOUGH KNOWN FOR ITS LONG GUNS, Remington has turned out a multitude of handguns—including single-shots, revolvers and semiautomatics. But one of its most popular and prolific handguns was actually none of the above. It was a diminutive close-range gun first cataloged as the Model 95 Double Repeating Derringer Pistol, which soon became simply known as the Remington Double Derringer. The “double rr” spelling was a concession to potential lawsuits by gun maker Henry Deringer, Jr., who was known for his small percussion pistols and was adamant about protecting his name.

Between its introduction in 1866

until its discontinuance in 1935, more than 150,000 Model 95s were produced in a period that began in post-Civil War frontier America, proliferated throughout the raucous Wild West, served (unofficially) in World War I and survived the gangster-ridden years of the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression.

The longevity of the Model 95 resulted from its compact design, with twin-stacked three-inch barrels perched over a spur trigger that flowed into a palm-friendly bird’s head grip. Rotating a lever on the right side of the frame unlocked the barrel assembly, permitting it to be pivoted up on a hinge for loading.



▲ One of the author's two Model 95 Derringers came in its own box, which is even rarer than the gun.

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The Double Derringer was chambered for only one caliber, the .41 Short, but the most innovative feature of the Model 95 was its single oscillating firing pin built into the hammer. Upon firing one of the barrels, the pin automatically positioned itself up or down, depending on which of the barrels had just been fired. When the hammer was cocked again, it fired the other barrel. Thus the shooter had two instantaneous shots.

Another factor that contributed to the Model 95's popularity was its small price tag, which complemented its compact 11-ounce, 4⁷/₈-inch size. In the 1870s, when a Colt Single Action Army was selling for \$16.50, the Remington Double Derringer listed for \$8 blued, and a fully nick-

eled version was just 50 cents more. Rosewood, ivory, or pearl grips were extra cost options. However, factory engraved guns are rarely encountered because these were available for the substantially higher price of \$11.

The Model 95 found immediate favor with those desiring an easily concealable pistol for close-range self-defense, including women traveling alone, businessmen, gamblers, dance hall girls, and anyone who did not want to be seen packing a large revolver. It was even carried by a few World War I officers and flying aces as a last-ditch backup weapon.

Of course, the assurance of having a Model 95 in one's pocket or purse was somewhat mitigated by the cartridge it fired, which was woefully

underpowered. The .41 Short fired a 130-grain soft lead bullet at 425 fps with a muzzle energy of 52 ft.-lbs. Still, looking into a pair of .41 caliber muzzles at poker-table distance could be reason enough to deter dealing from the bottom of the deck. And that was the Model 95's greatest trump card.

I own two Model 95 Derringers, which are the only Remingtons in my collection I've never fired. Ammo for them hasn't been made since the 1930s, except for a brief run by Navy Arms a few years ago. One of my 95s is a silver-plated, factory-engraved version that represents the epitome of a frontier gentleman's carry gun, while the other came with its own box, which is even rarer than the gun.—Rick Hacker

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FORGED IN THE USA

WINCHESTER'S NEW STEEL-CASE 9MM DELIVERS THE GOODS AT LOW COST.

IF YOU WANT TO GET GOOD AT SHOOTING, dry-fire practice is useful, but it will only get you so far. While it is an integral part of getting better, it is not a complete exercise of your skills. Even airguns can take you only so far. You have to shoot real ammo to solidify your skills. And that costs money and time.

The big obstacle for most shooters is the cost of ammo, especially during recent price increases due to commodity price spikes. Winchester was well aware of that and looked into every avenue it could to reduce costs because practice ammo is particularly price sensitive—a product shooters choose primarily by cost.

Enter Winchester's new steel-cased USA Forged 9mm ammunition meant for practice and competition. I talked to Winchester's Laci Warden, who told me it's simply the company's "white box" ammunition—the USA 115-grain full-metal-jacket load—stuffed into steel cases. "It's the same bullet, powder and primer," she said.

If you don't know white box, it is common, inexpensive, reliable and accurate, and for many competitions it makes the minimum power level. Since it's already an accepted load, Winchester's challenge was to make it cost even less.

When it comes to FMJ loads, the largest single expense is the cost of the case—making up two-thirds to three-quarters of the final cost, which is why many shooters take up reloading. Copper-based case production has been refined over more than a century, and there are no more economies to be wrung out of it. Aluminum costs about a third as much as copper, but it's



▲ USA Forged uses steel cases made in Winchester's Mississippi plant and is otherwise the same load as the company's economical USA "white box" ammo—but at even lower cost.

still relatively expensive. Steel, on the other hand, is dirt cheap. At the moment, the cost of steel is about four percent by weight of the cost of copper.

Winchester has been looking at steel cartridge cases for more than a decade, and Warden noted that research and development on the 9mm load specifically has been underway for three years. And one of the key areas the ammo folks focused on was ensuring the steel-case ammo wouldn't cause any problems due to added stress on the extractor, although I can tell you that steel-cased ammo is within the same extraction force range as brass/copper-cased ammunition.

"We work hard to keep our firearm inventory current with industry trends in new pistols," Warden said, and engineers tested USA Forged in every gun in the company's inventory until they were satisfied.

That's not to say USA Forged will work in every single 9mm pistol ever made. No one can make that promise, even with brass-case ammo.

The cases are not imports. They're made in Winchester's brand-new plant in Oxford, Mississippi—giving the company complete control of production. If the USA Forged ammo-loading supervisor has a question, he or she has only to walk over to the next building and buttonhole the case-manufacturing supervisor.

The bullet is a lead-core, gilding-metal-jacket bullet. There is no steel in the bullet, so those of you who frequent indoor ranges need not worry about backstop damage. Likewise, the ammo will be fine at outdoor ranges where steel is prohibited due to fire danger. The bullet is not a plated design; it has a regular, tough, jacket, and it will →

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As Warden mentioned, powder type and charge are the same as the 9mm white-box loading, and USA Forged uses good old Winchester Small Pistol primers. But just because the cases are Boxer-primed doesn't mean they're reloadable. They're not. It just made more economic sense to design a case that uses the same primers Winchester already manufactures and uses in other loads.

To test reliability and accuracy, I checked the performance of USA Forged in two pistols: a high-end Nighthawk T4 1911 and a medium-cost Walther PPQ M2. I could have saved myself a bitterly cold range trip, as they both not only consumed all the ammo I fed them without a fault, they both delivered excellent accuracy results as well.

The best group with the Nighthawk was 1.95 inches; with the Walther, it was 2.10 inches. And as a bonus, it exceeds the power threshold for competition, so you can use this in matches and not regret your lost brass.

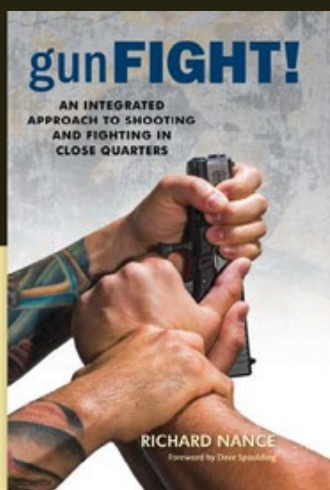
Winchester has saved even more money in the packaging. If you're like me, you view packaging as simply stuff to be tossed into the trash bins at the gun club. Fancy, multicolor printing doesn't really do much except help me find what I want on the shelves at the gun store. And I do not practice in mere boxes of 50, let alone mini-cartons of 20 or 25.

Winchester took the same at-

PERFORMANCE RESULTS | WINCHESTER

9mm Luger	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)
WALTHER PPQM2		
FMJ	115	1,176
NIGHTHAWK T4		
FMJ	115	1,191

Notes: Accuracy results are the averages of four five-shot groups at shots measured by a LabRadar chronograph 15 feet from the muzzle.



gunFIGHT!

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titude, and USA Forged is packaged in boxes of 150 rounds. Each box is a minimalist exercise in “get from the shelf to the range.”

The box is plain brown paste-board with black-ink printing, tough but not heavy. Inside are three foam trays of 50 rounds each. The box will take up a minimal amount of space in your range bag—and a minimal amount of space in the firing line trash can, which those who own or maintain gun ranges will appreciate.

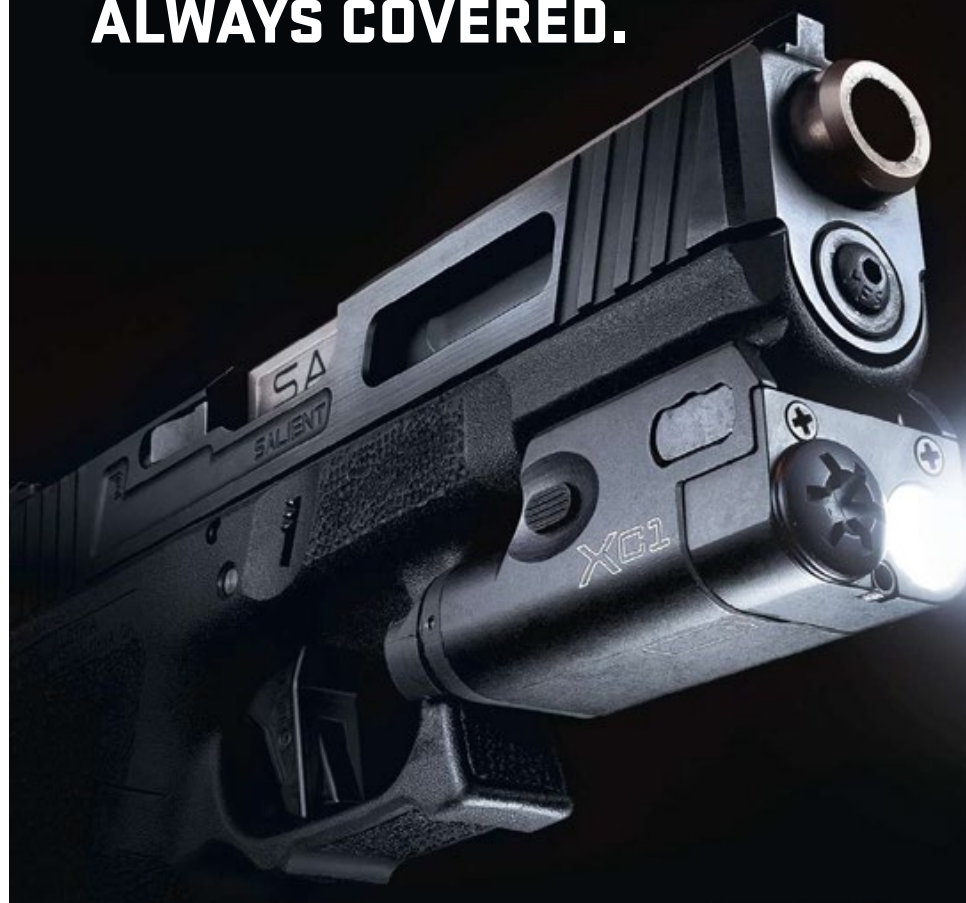
PRICE CHECK

“We anticipate a retail price of \$31 to \$33 per box, or less,” Warden told me. That’s not much more than \$10 per 50 rounds, a price point we haven’t seen for a long time. I did a quick price check, and I found you can buy the regular USA white box ammo for about \$15 per 50 rounds. That means you can, roughly speaking, buy a 150-round box of USA Forged for what a 100-round box of white box costs you.

I don’t know about you, but getting half again as much practice ammo for my hard-earned dollars sure appeals to me. So peruse the ammo shelves until you find a plain brown box with the stock number WIN9S. That’s the stuff you want.

Will Winchester expand the line to other calibers? “We are currently monitoring the potential for future expansion of the USA Forged technology and brand,” Warden said. I expect if this flies off the shelves as expected, we’ll see more. 

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60	21.7	2.65
42	14.9	2.30

60

21.7

2.65

42

14.9

2.30

25 yards over a Sinclair shooting rest. Velocities are averages of 10
Abbreviation: FMJ, full metal jacket

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TO SURVIVE ANY ATTACK, IT OBVIOUSLY

helps a great deal to see it coming. To be able to recognize the threat is based, to a great extent, on your ability to read the other person's intentions. What do you do if the assailant is mentally disturbed?

If anything can be considered "common" about most violent offenders, it is they are rational in the sense that they have a specific game plan—to rob, rape, kill or whatever—but they are not clinically crazy. They sort of reason out the pros and cons of what they're going to do. Faced with this type of threat, training and "street smarts" should enable you to avoid or overcome the problem.

This all goes to hell in a handbasket, however, if you run into a person who's truly mentally ill and dangerous. Before we go any further, I want to be clear that I'm speaking only of those who are criminally insane, a tiny minority of those afflicted with mental-health problems. The type I'm thinking of is best exemplified by Charles Manson, the organizer and ringleader of the gang that murdered Sharon Tate, et. al., and the subject of the book, *Helter Skelter*.

This type of person acts one way, you react as if he's normal, and you lose because he's just not in your world. And you can't prepare for it because you could run into a mentally ill dangerous person anywhere at any time. It could take only an otherwise trivial incident or problem to trigger violent, aggressive behavior in such a person.

When interacting with this threat, there are three primary considerations. First, as previously men-



tioned, truly understand you are not going to be able to reason with this person. Second, in an altercation, they may well be almost impervious to pain. Third, they can be capable of almost superhuman strength to go along with the aforementioned insensitivity.

Your options here for self defense are limited, as they often are, to run, hide or fight. When it comes to "fight," if you think you can duke it out with them, make sure you have a good medical plan.

If you do have to use deadly force, shoot until the threat ceases to be one. They are most likely not going to react to whatever super-slammer slug you happen to be using. The stop will come only when their system shuts down from a central nervous system hit or loss of blood, and the latter can take from five seconds to 30 or more seconds.

Obviously, using a gun in self-defense should be a last resort. Avoidance is the best choice, and to

be able to avoid a threat, you need to recognize the warning signs. If, for example, the guy in the fender-bender accident gets out of the car screaming at the top of his lungs, wild-eyed and swinging a crowbar, you've certainly gotten enough signals of irrational behavior. The problem lies in the grayer areas.

There are some basic warning signs that are usually ignored. Many folks take the attitude toward someone who lives or works with them that, "Well, he's a little odd, but it's a free country." Another problem is that many bizarre-acting individuals don't even register on your consciousness other than someone to be reflexively avoided when you are near them.

I found this to be the case for me when I was appointed to defend a homeless and disturbed woman accused of attacking a middle-class woman who was shopping in the downtown Philadelphia area in the early evening hours. The

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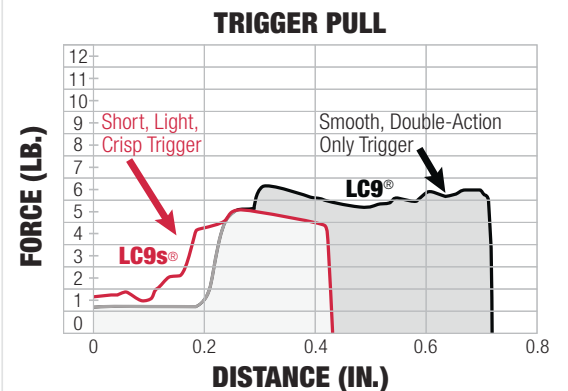
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← only witnesses were the various homeless “street people.” I found that when I began looking for them, I had trouble “seeing” them, and I realized why: I’d spent my life ignoring their existence. Like most large-city dwellers, they were blocked out of my consciousness.

I think it would be highly beneficial to take some time to study just how those “different” from us act. In any large city, a casual walk downtown will yield a kaleidoscope of behavior patterns as you take a good look at those unfortunate souls wandering and panhandling on the streets. From a safe distance, try to get a feel for their mannerisms and actions.

TOUGH TO READ

This will be a good first step in the learning process. The tough ones to read are the “loners,” who pretty much act like everyone else, with few telltale signals of their aberrant and potentially violent behavior. In most cases, after a set-to with someone like this, usually by the police, the witnesses always say, “Yeah, he did seem a little odd, but nothing you could put your finger on.”

My first real eye-opener to this type of person was when I was in the U.S. Secret Service special agent training school. Our class was taken to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C., where we were told we were going to learn something about the criminally insane. We were gathered in a large amphitheater where a doctor sat. Two orderlies quickly brought in an unidentified, well-dressed and well-groomed male a patient and seated him across a table from the doctor.

The doctor began what turned out to be a lengthy conversation with the patient about his last, and final, release from the hospital. The doctor led the patient through his first (and only) day of release, in what

quickly became an exercise in the minutiae of it.

Upon his release he went to a bar, met a woman and after a few drinks together, they went to dinner at a nearby restaurant. The patient explained how they continued to have a few drinks and then ordered, with both main course and salads arriving together. They ordered steaks.

The doctor then asked, “Well, what happened next?”

The patient replied, “Our food was served.” The doctor again prompted with, “What happened next?” The patient answered, saying, “I picked up my fork and my knife and...I cut and I cut and I cut and I cut.” The orderlies then removed the “very nice” patient from the room.

As we sat in stunned silence, the doctor explained that the patient was totally harmless to anyone—unless he had a knife in his hand. With one in hand, he would kill whomever he could get to and, yes, he did murder the woman right on the spot. He was confined to the institution for life.

The point is, based on his demeanor, there was no way to tell he was a homicidal maniac. I don’t have any great secrets for dealing with this problem, other than telling you that if you have the slightest inkling you’re dealing with someone who’s a few cards short of a full deck, don’t waste time reasoning with them. Get away.

You aren’t being disrespectful of anyone if you just choose to keep your distance or not engage in a conversation with someone who makes you feel—and the operative term is “feel”—uneasy. You’ve got to go with your gut on this.

And if the interaction can’t be broken off and you have the misfortune to encounter someone who’s truly criminally insane, you have to be fully prepared to solve the problem immediately.

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TIPS FOR CRITICAL-SPACE FIGHTS AND DEALING WITH NON-HOSTILES.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL HAVE

known for decades the majority of gunfights involving police occur inside 10 feet. There is nothing surprising about this, really. If you take a moment to consider a cop's "real world of work," he or she does not kill the enemy like the military; the officer seeks out criminals to take them into custody. That's a huge difference.

The military is always looking for ways to increase distance—the dissatisfaction of the long range killing power of the 5.56 in Afghanistan, for example—while cops will always have to close in with those they confront, interview, arrest and handcuff. Even common citizen contacts will be within earshot as interaction with police is something most want to keep private. Can you imagine the uproar if officers stood back 10 or 15 yards and yelled their commands: "Sir! Give me your driver's license! We have a report you are flashing yourself at children!" Yep, that would be a real crowd-pleaser.

Truth be told, as a law enforcement officer (or an armed citizen for that matter) you are far more likely to become involved in a confrontation requiring less than deadly force. While it might offer comfort to think of every threat faced as a gun problem, this is not reality. Yes, there are suspect/officer factors that come into play, like age, sex, skill level or disabilities that may make the gun relevant, but the majority will require repelling an attack without shooting.

This means having some skill in open-hand techniques, also known as hand-to-hand combat. In reality, it is quite possible open-hand skills will be necessary even if shooting is "rea-



▲ Because law enforcement officers interact with people at close distances, skills such as gaining critical space are vital. In addition, officers have to learn to deal with non-hostiles who may be present during a confrontation.

sonable based on the circumstances at hand."

At extreme close quarters you will have to create the space needed to deploy the firearm, meaning your gunfight might start as a fistfight. A gun will be only useful if you have the time to use it without deflection. Time equals distance, distance equals time, and time equals prevail.

The draw stroke should be the same physical action regardless of the contact distance involved. Keep in mind a fast draw is not spastic action; it is an exercise in lack of unnecessary motion, better known as smoothness.

Consider the physical action required to draw a handgun. The

shoulder rotates, the elbow folds and the hand travels to the handgun, wrapping around it in a solid shooting grip (while releasing any retention devices) that must not vary from the moment it is drawn until it is returned to the holster. It should also be understood this must take no more than two seconds regardless of what position the body is in, which could be anywhere from standing to kneeling to supine or anywhere in between.

Additionally, the shooter might be involved in intense open-hand combat as the draw occurs, which makes me wonder why anyone would want to place their carry pistol anywhere other than the strong side. In

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HANDGUNS | ON PATROL

← close confines, reaching across the body to a shoulder or cross-draw rig places the arm in a position it can be easily fouled by an attacker. Also, the gun is pointed in a direction that is potentially more accessible to the attacker than the wearer.

The critical-space draw is an essential skill much like grip, trigger control and body position. It should also be understood the draw should be the same regardless of the distance. It doesn't matter if the critical space is 2.5 feet or 25 yards.

Another consideration when engaging at critical-space distances are non-hostiles in the battle space. Do you take such incursions into consideration during your training? Moving in and around people who are panicked and scared by the

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Being attacked while on the ground can be the most dangerous. If you're on your back, here are some things that can help.

- Identify the location of the threat. It could be anywhere around you in a 360-degree environment, and you might be disoriented after hitting the ground.
- Use the strong-side foot to push the body up and over enough to get your hand on your holstered handgun. Secure a solid shooting grip and release any retention devices. If the holster requires a rearward movement to release the pistol, make sure you give the gun enough room to clear the holster.
- Draw the gun and direct it straight to the threat, much like a punch. Make sure the threat is clear of non-hostiles. Keep in mind this might

require you to take the gun over your head to the rear. Be careful not to unnecessarily "muzzle" non-threats.

If you find yourself facedown on the ground, do this.

- Identify the location of the threat, keeping in mind it could be anywhere around you.
- Roll over onto the non-gun side to make room to draw the holstered handgun. Punch it in the direction of the threat and engage if clear of non-hostiles.
- If time permits, get your arms tucked under your upper torso and then push your body off the ground much like doing a push-up. Once on your knees, engage the threat in the same fashion as you would standing.—DS



fight happens more often than many believe.

Cluttering the range with targets designated as non-hostile and shooting in and around them add an interesting dynamic to the training environment while also offering some interesting lessons, like experiencing tunnel vision. Many will focus on the threat target and not even see the non-hostiles. I see this in many of my classes.

I'm not talking about a typical hostage target scenario where the threat target has a non-hostile target standing in front of it. When working in and around non-hostiles, 3D targets work best and should be spread out around the range with the shooters moving around them to shoot.

Trainees should be pushed—with verbal commands like “Move, move,


move; they are killing people!”—to move rapidly but in control, which is harder than it sounds. Jostling the shooters as they move (holding on to their shirt or jacket and the shoulders while standing behind them and pulling them back and forth) can simulate panicked people bumping into them.

FLAT ON YOUR BACK

Ending up in an unconventional shooting position is also a part of critical-space engagements (see sidebar). Several times during my law enforcement career I began a confrontation with a suspect on my feet only to find myself flat on my back after being violently shoved. If the suspect drew a weapon, would you be able to draw and shoot while lying down? Will the chosen secu-

rity holster allow you to draw when in such a position? How do you get quickly back up?

Do you have the physical capability to do so? Are you fit enough for such a situation? Abdominal strength will play a role here. Do you have it? These are things everyone needs to know before they face it in the street.

Critical-space shooting techniques take into account the close proximity police must operate in with both citizens and suspects. Keep in mind it won't always be just you and them. It might be you, them and a bunch of everyday citizens who were nothing more than in the wrong place at the wrong time. It is your obligation to protect them while you fight for your own life. And remember, in this day and age, the media and citizenry will judge any mistake harshly. 

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PULL!

TWO HANDY CLEANERS TO KEEP YOUR HANDGUNS CHUGGING ALONG.

THERE ARE TWO BASIC WAYS TO CLEAN

the bore of a firearm: push something through it or pull something through it. The push-through cleaning kits are the more traditional, so in this column I want to talk about the pull-through types, which are newer and fewer in number.

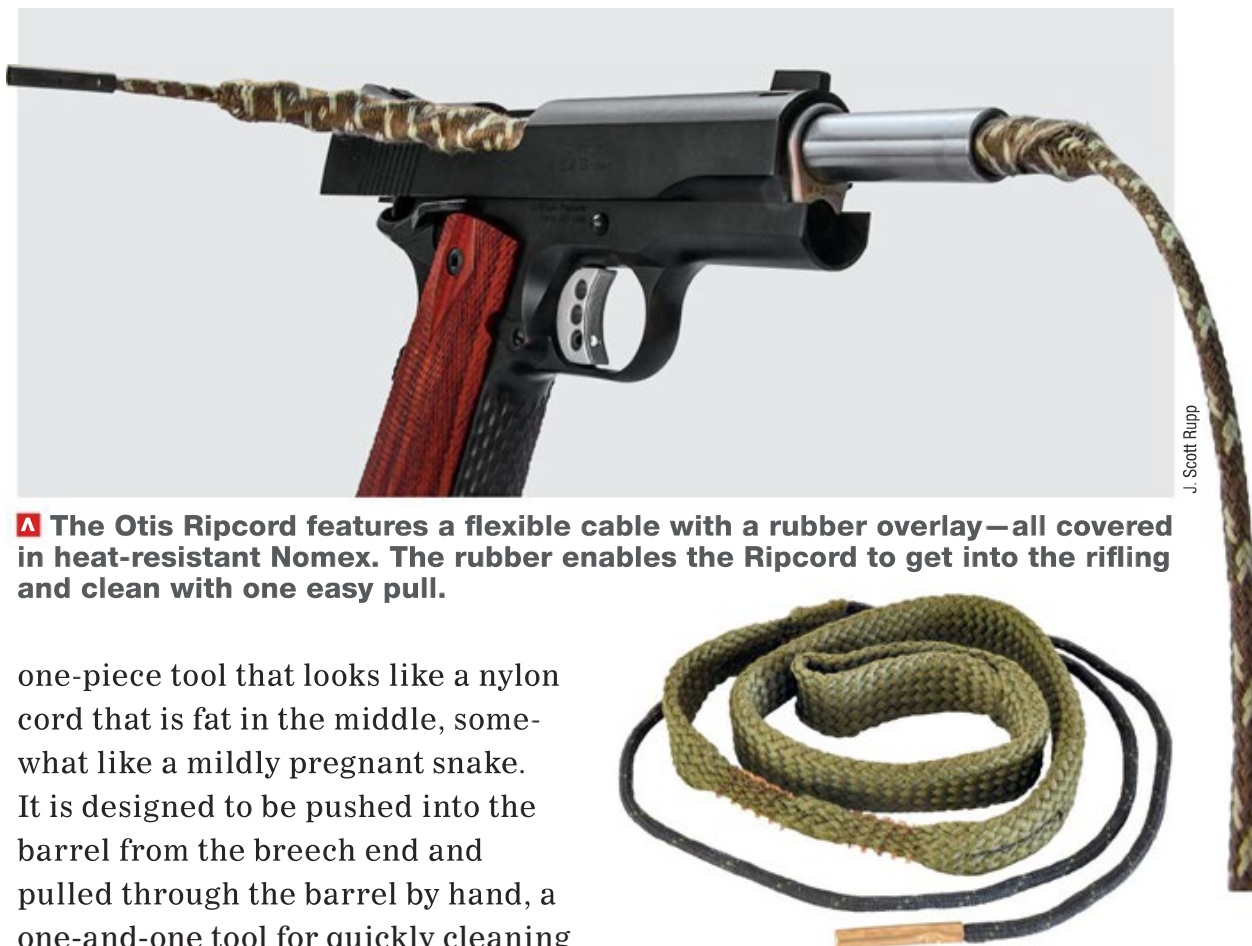
Shooters have been using rods to shove cleaning patches through their barrels since there have been barreled firearms. While pull-through cleaning kits are a newer invention, they aren't as new as you might think. I know someone who has an official Sharps/Spencer carbine pull-through pig bristle brush (on a leather thong) from the Civil War, and pull-through cleaning kits were standard issue for most armies in World War I.

Pull-through cleaning kits are smaller, lighter and more convenient for travel and storage. They do have a big disadvantage, though. If there is dirt or a bullet in your barrel you can't push it out; you can't use them to clear an obstruction. As they say, "You can't push a rope."

Currently, there are well over half a dozen big name companies offering pull-through cleaning kits of various types, including Outers, J. Dewey, Real Avid and Gunslick, but let's just take a look at two of the newest pull-through cleaning tools from two of the biggest names: Otis and Hoppe's.

While Otis (OTISTEC.COM) didn't invent pull-through cleaning, it is the biggest name in pull-through field cleaning kits in this country. Its kits are so well thought out they are issued by the U.S. military.

Most of the Otis pull-through products are in fact kits, with coated cables and bronze brushes, but I'm going to focus on the Ripcord. It's a



▲ The Otis Ripcord features a flexible cable with a rubber overlay—all covered in heat-resistant Nomex. The rubber enables the Ripcord to get into the rifling and clean with one easy pull.

one-piece tool that looks like a nylon cord that is fat in the middle, somewhat like a mildly pregnant snake. It is designed to be pushed into the barrel from the breech end and pulled through the barrel by hand, a one-and-one tool for quickly cleaning a barrel at the range or in the field.

The Ripcord is built in layers. The center comprises the Memory-Flex cable, which has 8-32 threaded brass sockets at either end if you want to attach a brush or T-handle for better cleaning/leverage. Around the cable is a rubber helix core that has some give to it and keeps the exterior cleaning surface pressed against the bore. The helix shape is meant to engage the rifling. Around the rubber helix core is a Nomex surface providing 10 inches of cleaning surface.

Nomex is known in military circles, and while it looks like a nylon weave it is in fact heat resistant up to 700 degrees. The Nomex is weaved perpendicular to the line of travel, and while it isn't as aggressive a surface as a true brush, it does work surprisingly well. Remember, the Ripcord is designed as a quick way to clean your barrel in the field; it is not meant to

▲ The Hoppe's BoreSnake drops easily through the bore and has an integral brass brush and a large floss area to make quick work of cleaning.

replace a cleaning kit. The Nomex doesn't just act like a brush, but the weave in fact helps to trap the loosened particles, so it works a bit like a brush and a patch. You can spray it with lube, but if all you have is the Ripcord, it works dry as well.

The downside to this type of design is that it is caliber specific. The Ripcord is offered in 9mm, .40, and .45 in a 22.5-inch length for handguns (longer, caliber-specific Ripcords are available for rifles and 12-gauge shotguns as well). The caliber is stamped into the brass sockets at either end. Suggested retail on all caliber Ripcords is only \$15.

Hoppe's (HOPPE.COM) offers a tool similar in function to the Ripcord called the BoreSnake. Actu-



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LASERLYTE MIGHTY MOUSE

Year in and year out, a substantial percentage of bad guys shot by law-abiding citizens are shot with .22 pistols because most people who own one or more handguns are likely to own a .22—and in a defensive scenario any gun is better than no gun. And while this is true, *Handguns* doesn't review sub-caliber guns as defensive tools because we don't want to encourage people to carry guns that have a very small chance of stopping a threat.

But people do it, and the most common dedicated self-defense .22 handgun I've seen over the last few years is the North American Arms mini-revolver. Offered in .22 Short, Long Rifle and .22 Magnum, these are five-shot single-action revolvers with various barrel lengths. One of the more popular models is the Pug, a one-inch model chambered in .22 Magnum designed specifically for the concealed-carry crowd. These pistols are equipped with the XS Big Dot sights with either a plain white front or a tritium insert.

However, the gun is so small that the Big Dot isn't so big, and due to the single-action design of the pistol you can't even use the sights until

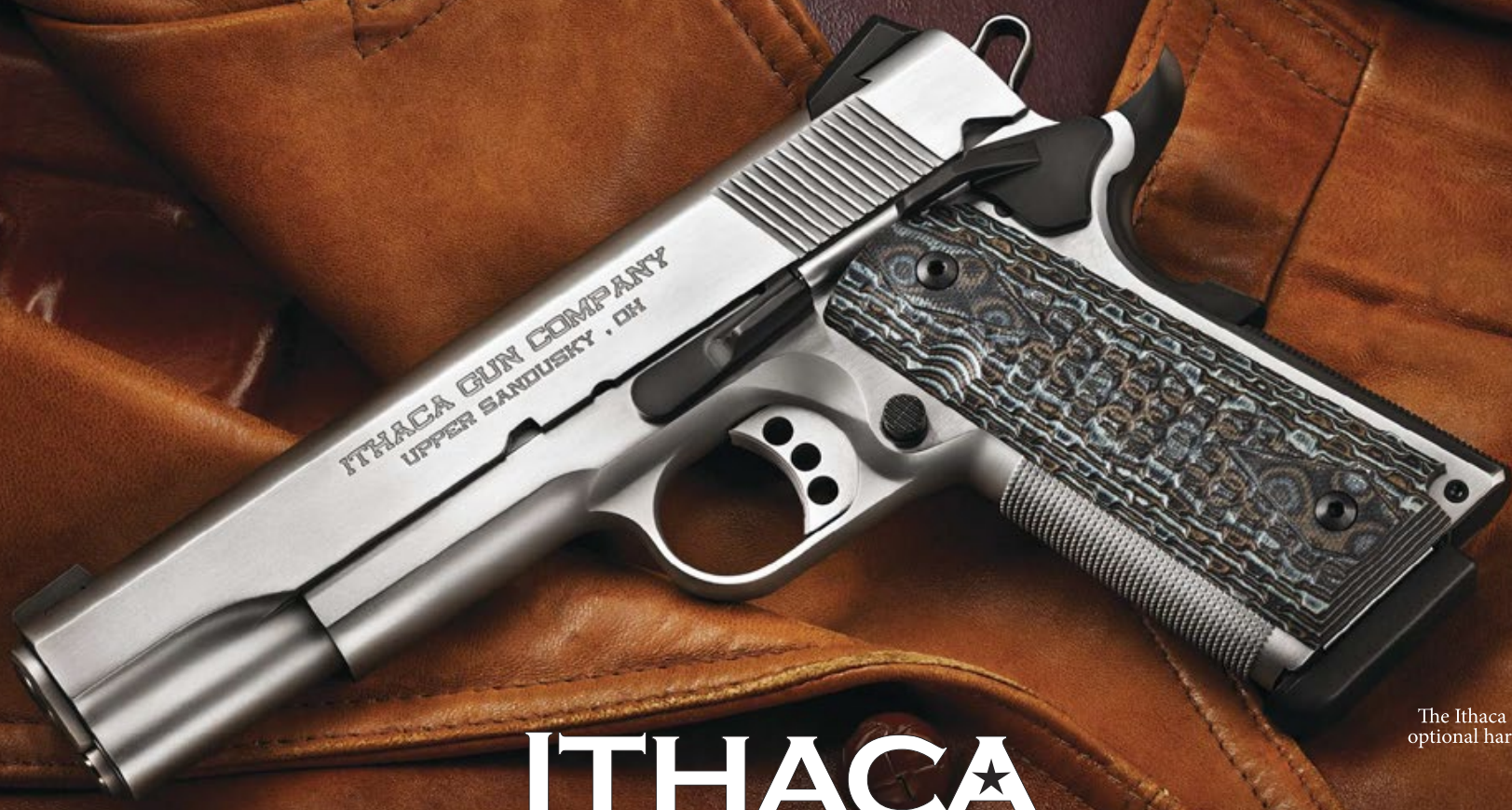


you cock the hammer. Even though the XS sights are an improvement, sight radius is a mere two inches. LaserLyte is now offering a replacement grip laser called the Mighty Mouse that fits all the .22 Magnum NAA mini-revolvers. The teardrop-shaped grip is made out of black polymer, and the laser beam comes out high on the right side of the frame, above the cylinder, about the only

spot it won't be blocked by the shooter's hand. The laser is activated by depressing a pressure pad on the front of the grip, and it works with all existing holsters for the pistol.

At \$130 the Mighty Mouse is over a third of the cost of the handgun itself, but I've found it does help more accurate shooting, especially in marginal light. In a dark parking garage a bad guy will definitely be able to see the laser and hopefully won't notice you don't have a "real" gun in your hand. *Handguns* doesn't want you carrying something as small as a .22 for self-defense. At a minimum we think you should go with a .380 ACP. But for those of you who are going to do so, the Mighty Mouse makes the best of a less-than-ideal situation.—JT

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← ally, Hoppe's has two versions, the original BoreSnake and the BoreSnake Viper.

Hoppe's claims the BoreSnake is the fastest bore cleaner on the planet. Each BoreSnake features a brass weight at one end of a long narrow cord designed to slip easily through the barrel. The caliber of the BoreSnake is stamped into the weight. My 9mm BoreSnake was stamped "35" and was 48 inches long. It rolls up into a ball smaller than your fist.

The first cleaning section of the BoreSnake is the "first floss area," a thick polymer weave similar to a very fat shoelace. This area is designed to remove foreign particles prior to the next section of the BoreSnake, which contains a two-section bronze bore brush embedded in the cord. Past


the bore brush section is the "main floss" area, which is over a foot long. Hoppe's says the fat weave of this section has 160 times more surface area than a patch.

The BoreSnake can be used dry, just like the Otis Ripcord, but seeing as it has a built-in brush, putting a few drops of bore cleaner on the bristles seems to me to be the most efficient way to use it. The BoreSnake Viper is a bigger, more aggressive version of the original BoreSnake, with 50 percent more brush area and a cone-shaped nylon bore guide on the leading end and an area of fabric at the tail end designed for lube.

Hoppe's advertises the BoreSnake is machine washable, which answers the question I had about how to remove all the particulates from the fibers after it (or the Ripcord) has

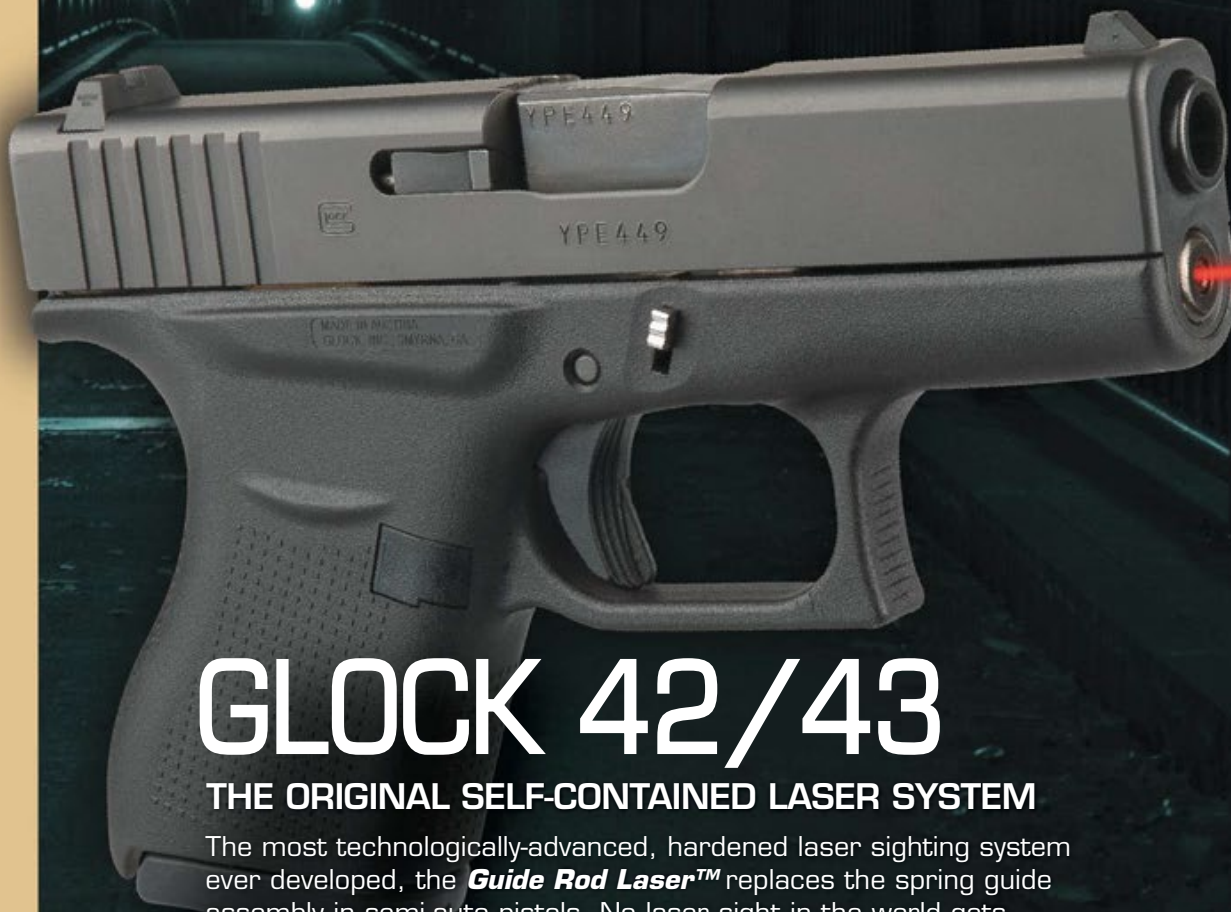
been used a few times. Considering the Nomex in the Otis Ripcord can handle 700 degrees, I'm guessing putting it through the dishwasher once or twice won't hurt it, either, although Otis doesn't specifically say it's machine washable.

Depending on the size/caliber, the BoreSnake starts at \$21 and goes up from there to \$47 to handle your 37mm and 40mm grenade launchers. The BoreSnake Viper is not offered for as many calibers, but you can find one for every common caliber, and prices start at \$26.

Hoppe's BoreSnake is larger than the Otis Ripcord, and more expensive, but you get more features and surface area. Both of them work, and considering how little space they take up, having one in your range bag might be a good idea. 

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> COLT COMPETITION GOVERNMENT

It only makes sense that the company responsible for the Gold Cup National Match, which ruled NRA Bullseye for decades, would bring out a 1911 for action shooting. The Competition Government is a Series 80 gun available in 9mm (shown) and .45, and it features custom G10 grips, upswept beavertail and an undercut trigger guard for a high grip. It uses a dual recoil spring system to reduce felt recoil and sports Novak adjustable fiber-optic sights. National Match barrel and a three-hole aluminum trigger round out the features. Comes with two mags and spare light pipes.

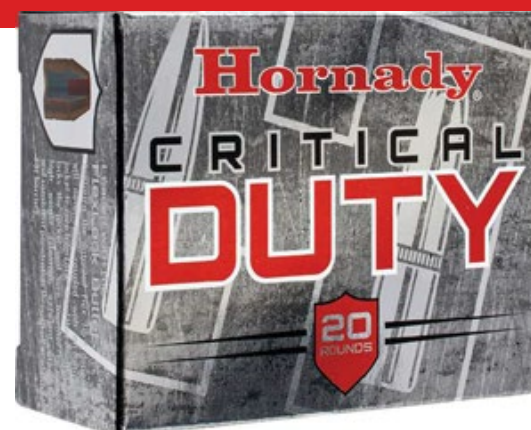
{ \$899, COLT.COM }



> HORNADY CRITICAL DUTY 10MM

Critical Duty is the ammo you want if you're a law enforcement professional or anyone who has to contend with barriers, and now Hornady has added a 10mm load that propels a 175-grain FlexLock bullet at 1,160 fps for 523 ft.-lbs. of energy. The FlexLock is a hollowpoint that produces consistent expansion and won't clog thanks to its polymer insert, and it also features the firm's InterLock bullet design that locks the jacket to the high-antimony lead core. Nickel-plated cases feed smoothly and make for easier chamber checks in low light.

{ \$31 (20 box), HORNADY.COM }



> GALCO BLAKGUARD

Combining center-cut steer hide with injection-molded plastic, the BlakGuard has two tension adjustments for an easy draw and a tension-locking unit at the trigger guard for security. It's a neutral-cant rig with a trench-style sight rail that can handle extra-tall suppressor sights, and the front of the holster is cut low enough to accommodate most carry-style red dots. The tunnel-style belt loop is easy on/off courtesy of Velcro. Fits belts up to 1.75 inches.

{ \$50, GALCOGUNLEATHER.COM }



V TACTICAL WALLS PISTOL SHELF

I checked these out at a recent trade show, and it's a pretty intriguing concept: quick, relatively secure firearms access that a thief would likely overlook. The 12-inch pistol shelf (shown) is a surface-mounted unit (10.25x7.75x1.5 inches) with a drop-down, foam-lined 8x12-inch shelf that easily holds a full-size pistol. The foam pad can be customized, and the shelf is available in five different stains and two trims to match any décor. The unit is opened with a magnetic key. A 25-inch handgun version and two rifle versions are available as well.

{ \$179, TACTICALWALLS.COM }



V STREAMLIGHT TLR HL

The TLR-1 and TLR-2 have gotten a power boost and now carry an HL (high lumen) designation—with both now delivering 800 lumens of white light in a wide-beam pattern. The TLR-1 HL is light only while the TLR-2 HL also incorporates a red laser (there's also a green-laser version, the TLR-2 HL G). Featuring shockproof C4 LED bulbs, the TLRs attach to MIL-STD 1913 and Glock-style rails. Powered by two CR123A lithium batteries, they're 3.4 inches long and weigh less than five ounces.

{ \$239 (1 HL), \$533 (2 HL), \$580 (2 HL G); STREAMLIGHT.COM }





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Smith & Wesson's new version of the incredibly popular M&P Shield pistol offers three improvements on the existing model. The obvious feature is the barrel porting, which is intended to reduce recoil, particularly muzzle jump. Additionally, the model is built in the Performance Center and features fiber-optic sights and a lighter, crisper trigger pull with short reset.

There are a few potential drawbacks, too. Porting the barrel causes burning gases to be directed upward when the pistol is fired, reducing recoil but potentially creating a bright upward-angled flash that, when shooting in low light, could temporarily blind the shooter. On a lesser scale, muzzle porting makes the report of any gun somewhat louder, and the lightening cuts and barrel porting make the piece more susceptible to collecting lint and other crud.

What's the difference in damage to the family finances? Surprisingly, only \$70. The standard model's suggested retail is \$449, the Performance Center version is \$519. →

A PORTED PAIR

**S&W'S NEW PORTED
M&P SHIELDS IN 9MM
AND .40 UP THE ANTE
FOR CONCEALED-
CARRY GUNS.**

BY JOSEPH VON BENEDIKT



A PORTED PAIR

← I’ve been carrying a standard Smith & Wesson M&P Shield as my primary concealed carry gun ever since I had the opportunity to attend the company’s pre-launch seminar at the factory in Massachusetts. While there, I put almost 1,000 rounds downrange through my issued test pistol with only one malfunction, and that was caused by a visibly defective cartridge.

In addition to the impressive reliability, I found the light, slim pistol shockingly accurate. After an inside look at the rigorous demands that Smith & Wesson puts on any firearm that achieves the “Military & Police” designation, I came to the conclusion

there is no finer hard-using concealed-carry handgun, an opinion I still hold today.

Point is, I’ve got years of practical, everyday experience with the M&P Shield, and the chance to review both 9mm and .40 versions of the new Performance Center model—contrasting feel, shootability and performance between the two and comparing it with the standard model—was a welcome one.

The Shield itself is a polymer-framed pistol designed expressly for concealed carry, a slender gun—less than an inch wide at its widest point—weighing in at about 18 ounces. A hybrid magazine is mostly

single stack in its design, and two are included with each gun: a flush fit and an extended version.

In 9mm Luger, the flush-fit magazine contains seven rounds, the extended magazine eight. With one up the pipe, the little pistol holds either eight or nine cartridges total, depending on which magazine you choose to carry. In .40 S&W, capacity is one cartridge less, so six in the flush-fit mag and seven in the extended version.

Both the slide and barrel are constructed of stainless steel and finished in Smith & Wesson’s über-hard (68 HRC), corrosion-resistant black coating. The barrel is 3.1 inches long, and in the case of the ported version it has an oval port measuring 0.175 by 0.08 inch at about 10 o’clock and two o’clock 0.66 inch south of the muzzle. Three weight-reducing cuts grace the top corner radiuses on each side of the slide just behind the front sight, and the front cut serves double duty to vent the gas escaping from the barrel port.

While there’s nothing wrong with the three-painted-white-dot →



▲ The fire controls on the new Shield feature two significant changes over the standard version: a thumb safety—which some will want and some won’t—and an excellent Performance Center trigger.

ACCURACY RESULTS S&W PC PORTED M&P SHIELD				
Cartridge	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
9MM LUGER				
Barnes TAC-XPD +P	115	951	11	1.66
Black Hills JHP	115	1,197	7	1.71
Hornady Critical Defense	115	1,065	8	2.22
Federal Hydra-Shok	124	1,004	12	1.57
Winchester Target FMJ	115	1,081	19	2.05
.40 S&W				
Winchester Kinetic HE	155	1,049	17	2.52
Hornady Critical Defense	165	1,038	13	2.67
American Eagle FMJ	180	903	12	2.21
Hornady American Gunner XTP	180	915	11	3.87
Winchester JHP	180	897	13	1.97

Notes: Accuracy results are the averages of three five-shot groups fired at 15 yards from a sandbag rest. Velocity is the average of five rounds measured 10 feet from the muzzle with a Shooting Chrony chronograph. Abbreviations: FMJ, full metal jacket; JHP, jacketed hollowpoint



▲ Von Benedikt likes the visibility provided by fiber-optic sights but is suspicious of them on carry guns. Those on the Ported Shields calmed his fears due to the robust frame protecting the rods.



▲ The ported Shield 9mm exhibited a touch less recoil than the standard version with some loads; it’s likely the difference would be felt more with the .40.

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A PORTED PAIR

← sights on the standard Shield, they don't perform well in low light, and many shooters end up replacing them with night sights or fiber-optic versions—or purchase a night-sighted version to begin with.

While I'm a fan of fiber-optic sights for fast work where increased visibility is an advantage, it has to be the right set of fiber-optic sights. All too many are not robust enough to take the abuse caused by extensive shooting, and rare indeed are the fiber-optic sights that can take years of everyday carry inside a trouser waistband. My impression is that the sights on the Performance Center Shield will go the distance. The fiber-optic rod is supported and protected at the midpoint and down the top by steel ribs, and it should last.

Scalloped slide serrations at the rear of the slide offer a non-slip surface that makes for positive functioning with sweaty, shaking or bloody hands yet isn't abrasive on clothing.

At the top left side of the grip sits a small, unobtrusive thumb safety, offering additional security to the hinged trigger shoe. Said trigger shoe functions much like the Safe Action trigger on a Glock, preventing the firearm from being fired unless the trigger is pressed rearward.

When the M&P Shield was first introduced, some shooters decried

the additional thumb safety, claiming it's not necessary and could cause life-threatening delay if a shooter not used to a thumb safety on his or her primary duty gun forgot to disengage it in a fight.

Eventually, Smith & Wesson added a variation of the Shield without a thumb safety. However, the fact that it's present on the Performance Center version suggests more pistols are sold with a thumb safety than otherwise.

As for the trigger pull itself, it also has received an upgrade in the Performance Center. While the trigger on the standard M&P Shield is rated at 6.5 pounds—and measures exactly that on my 9mm—the triggers on the test Performance Center models weigh significantly less: five pounds, three ounces in the case of the 9mm, and five pounds, eight ounces on the .40 S&W version. Additionally, the trigger pulls on both ported models are a bit crisper than on my standard model.

Frame-oriented features that the Performance Center ported version share with the standard model are the 18-degree grip angle, which research engineers determined to be the optimum angle for the average human hand, and a high undercut at the top rear area of the frame that positions the hand close to the axis of



A The pistols come with one extended and one flush-fit magazine, and the capacity difference between the 9mm and the .40 is one round. Feeding was flawless in all instances.

the bore and enhances recoil control.

The mainspring assembly powering the slide is a dual-spring affair, the outer spring being a flat-wire version. Compact pistols work springs hard, and this system shrugs off the punishment and keeps on functioning.

Let's move on to practical performance, comparing the 9mm to the .40 S&W version and both ported versions to the standard model.

Bad weather meant I had to test the pistols at Rangemasters of Utah indoor range, and here I've got to insert a disclaimer. While the two handguns turned in acceptable accuracy, I discovered that in the artificial indoor lighting my middle-aged eyes struggled to resolve the sights.

Just like with a camera lens, the wider you open the aperture of your lens (in this case the pupil of your eyes), the shallower your focal depth of field becomes. I'm satisfied with the results of my accuracy tests, but have little doubt that had I performed them in bright, outdoor conditions they would have been even better.

At first blush, the ported guns made two distinct impressions. The sights are indeed quite a lot more visible than the three-dot version on the standard model, especially in low-light conditions, and the trigger is, as expected, significantly better. In fact, the improvement in the trigger →

SMITH & WESSON PERFORMANCE CENTER PORTED M&P SHIELD

TYPE: recoil-operated semiauto

CALIBER: 9mm Luger, .40 S&W

CAPACITY: 8+1 (9mm) 7+1 (.40)

BARREL: 3.1 in., stainless

OAL/WIDTH/HEIGHT: 6.1/0.95/4.6 in.

WEIGHT: 18.2 oz. (9mm), 17.9 oz. (.40)

CONSTRUCTION: stainless slide, polymer frame

SIGHTS: three-dot fiber optic

SAFETIES: manual thumb

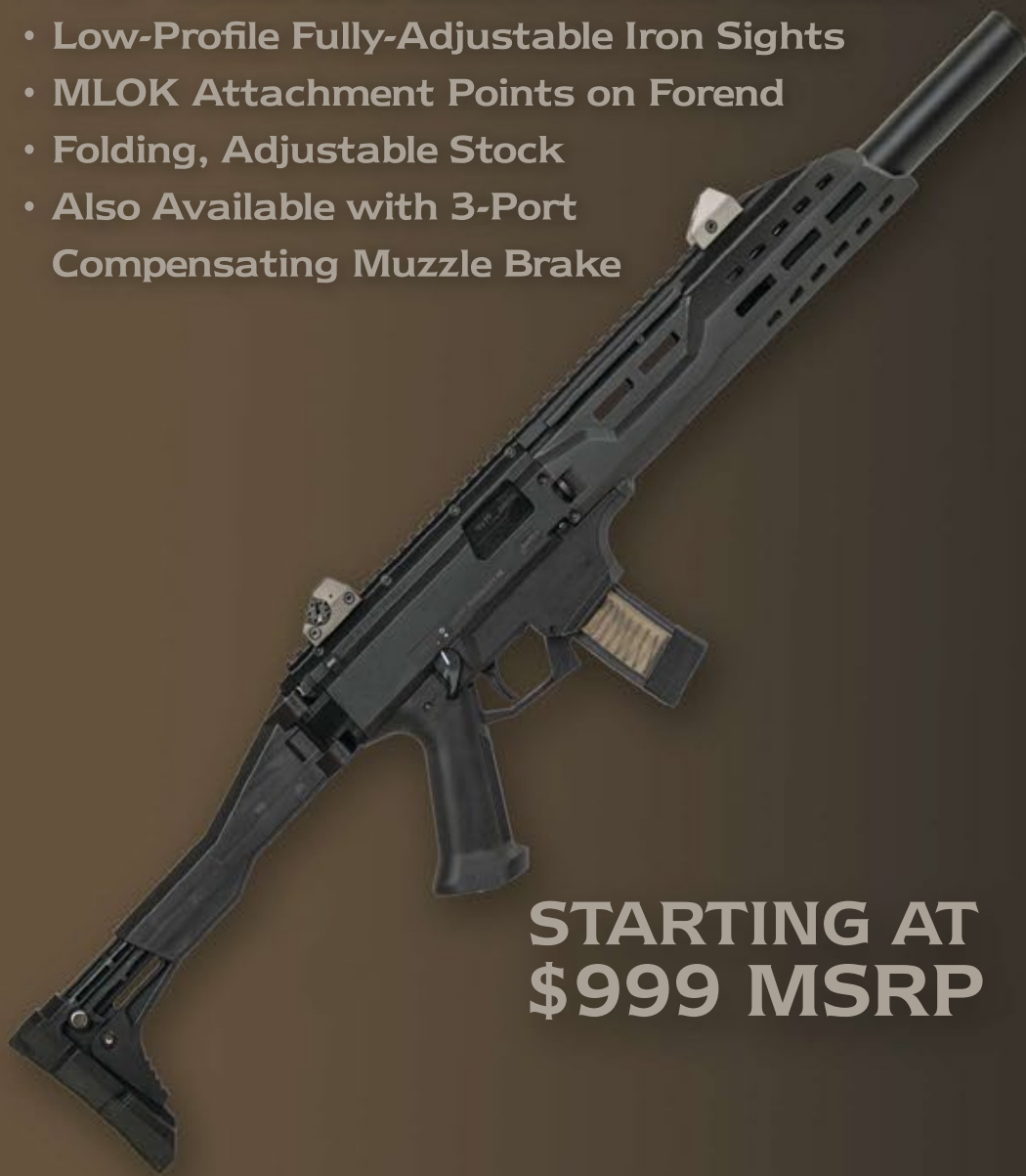
TRIGGER: 5 lb., 3 oz. pull (9mm); 5 lb., 8 oz. pull (.40), as measured

PRICE: \$519

MANUFACTURER: Smith & Wesson,
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A PORTED PAIR

← was the single greatest difference in my opinion. It alone is worth the extra \$70.

I began with the 9mm, shooting Winchester's 115-grain white-box full-metal-jacket target load, and was pleased to find minimal flash from the porting. Next I tested the Black Hills 115-grain JHP load, which isn't rated a +P load but produced the highest velocity of all the loads tested. Accuracy was excellent and velocity impressive—and so was the flash from the barrel ports. Flame jetted like a high-end firework, clearly visible even under the LED lighting.

Of the five 9mm loads I tested, three produced visible, consistent flash driven upward through the barrel porting. When I really focused on it, I could occasionally pick up a trace of flash from the other two loads, but it was far less dramatic. I quickly came to the conclusion that were I to

carry a ported M&P Shield as my everyday sidearm, I'd test self-defense loads for both accuracy and low flash.

Statistically, most deadly threats occur in the dark, and I wouldn't want to be blinded by the tool that was supposed to save my life. Most top-drawer ammunition manufacturers are currently making ammo engineered for use in short-barreled sidearms, touting maximized velocities and minimized flash out of the abbreviated tubes. I'd want to focus on such loads when choosing my carry and home defense ammo.

Predictably, the .40 caliber Ported M&P Shield recoiled noticeably harder than the 9mm version. Still, it wasn't uncomfortable to shoot. With the very ergonomic grip design and just enough weight in the gun, it was controllable.

With accuracy testing complete, I put up fresh target faces at seven yards and began rapid-fire testing.

Fast double-taps were possible with both calibers, but when I began dumping magazines into the target I found—no surprise—that times were faster and accuracy slightly better with the 9mm version.

The 9mm vs. .40 S&W controllability/capacity debate is one that has fueled many a gunshop argument, but we're not here to solve that. Suffice it to say that in the Ported M&P Shield, the 9mm hits faster and the .40 S&W hits harder. Take your pick.

Setting the .40 caliber version aside, I shot my standard M&P Shield 9mm against the new ported version with identical ammunition and began comparing practical performance. Immediately, the improvement in the trigger and the better sights on the Performance Center pistol stood out.

Reduced recoil was not so apparent. I fired both pistols two-handed and one-handed using both strong-side and weak-side hands, dumped

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magazines, ran double-taps, fired slow-fire, and compared feel and accuracy throughout. Frankly, I felt little difference in recoil. With the heavier loads, such as the Black Hills 115-grain jacketed hollowpoint that produced such impressive velocity in the ported pistol, it was discernible—but just so. With lighter loads I honestly couldn't tell much difference. I didn't have a standard .40 caliber version on hand to compare, but conceivably the porting offers an increased advantage there.

To my delight—but not surprise—both pistols chugged through all ammunition types and all testing without a single hiccup. But then, I've never heard of an M&P Shield that was unreliable.

Prior to my pistol test, the editor passed along a letter from a reader wanting to know about the effect of the barrel ports—specifically the heat, gases and fouling produced by

them—on the fiber-optic front sight. As the round count accumulated I kept an eye on it, and, sure enough, fouling slowly accumulated, and brightness dimmed. I don't think the ports direct significant heat at the fiber, even during full magazine dumps, so distortion shouldn't be an issue. However, to maintain optimal performance shooters will want to wipe down the fiber-optic rod occasionally.

One other minor issue with the porting and fiber-optic sights concerns maintenance. When carried day after day inside one's pants, dust, lint and other crud is likely to accumulate in the slide and barrel ports and around the fiber, particularly if carried in an open-type holster such as the Versa-Carry I prefer for my standard M&P Shield. If neglected, such crud could conceivably cause a malfunction or reduced sight clarity, so while you should periodically

clean any carry gun, the ports and fiber optic on this Shield model make the practice a little more important.

In the final analysis, is the new Performance Center Ported M&P Shield worth the extra \$70 required to step up from the standard version? Absolutely. I don't think there's another pistol of its type that's as comfortable to shoot and carry, or as reliable, whether in its price category or higher. As I mentioned, the improved trigger alone is worth the price, plus you get better sights and a bit better recoil control. And finally, the pure cool factor of the "Performance Center" rollmark.

The one drawback worth being aware of is the potential for the porting to cause a bright flash that can impair your low-light vision. To overcome that, choose ammunition loaded with low-flash powder geared for optimum performance in short-barreled handguns.

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COMPACT FIREPOWER

BY JAMES TARR

THREE “LONG GUN HANDGUNS” THAT REALLY PACK A PUNCH.

It wasn't so long ago that AR-15 pistols were a curiosity of dubious utility and not very common. Today there are so many models it wouldn't be possible to cover them all in a single article. Why the sudden interest? The SIG SB-15 pistol stabilizing brace. For those of you who haven't opened a gun magazine since 2012, the SIG brace revolutionized this “long gun handgun” segment of the market.

The SB-15 brace was designed by Alex Bosco to allow a disabled veteran who had the use of only one arm to safely shoot an AR-15 pistol. It is designed to slide on the buffer tube of an AR-15 pistol. The rear rubber section straps around the user's forearm and provides stability while shooting.

Responding to questions about the design, a letter from the ATF held that putting the brace on a pistol and using it as intended does not alter its definition as a firearm. In other words, it doesn't make the pistol a Short Barreled Rifle and therefore subject to National Firearms Act regulation. However, a quick glance at the SIG brace shows how much it resembles a stock, and many people immediately began using the SIG braces as improvised stocks on their AR pistols. The ATF was subsequently asked about this usage and initially issued a letter stating that using the brace in a manner in which it was not intended or designed—i.e., as a stock—did not alter the legal definition of the firearm.

Last year, though, an open letter posted on the ATF website reversed the bureau's course. The letter opined that while the brace itself remains legal to install on a pistol, shouldering a brace-equipped pistol is a felony. *[Ed. note: In other words, if you buy an arm brace for your pistol or get an arm-brace-equipped gun, use it as an arm brace and not as a stock. Also, this was the latest on the situation at press time. It's your responsibility to check on the current legal issues surrounding this issue and act accordingly.]* Most companies selling brace-equipped pistols provide a copy of the original ATF approval letter with it, and you'd be wise to keep it with the gun in case you run into a law enforcement officer not quite up on the latest firearm craze.

Zastava PAP M85 NP

The Zastava PAP M85 NP, imported by Century Arms, is basically a shortened version of the venerable AK. The PAP M85 NP is unique in that instead of being chambered in 7.62x39 and fed by standard AK-47 magazines, it is chambered in 5.56 and fed by standard AR magazines.

This pistol features a cold-hammer-forged 10.25-inch barrel. It is 29.5 inches long overall and weighs seven pounds, 10 ounces, unloaded, with the SB-47 accessory brace installed and six pounds, seven ounces with it removed. It has a stamped steel receiver, and the safety features a bolt hold-open notch. There is a polymer mag well attached to the receiver to allow feeding from AR magazines.

Because AKs don't have buffer tubes, the SB-47 accessory brace is a rubber piece that has been slipped over a steel tube. That tube is connected to an angular piece of steel that fits flush to the rear of the receiver and is held in place by the pistol grip.

Trigger pull on my sample was a long 5.5 pounds. As this is a two-stage trigger with only a little bit of grit at the start of the pull and a crisp two-pound break, it was possible to shoot up to the gun's potential, which was limited only by the sights, which have been modified from the standard AK design. The rear sight has been moved back into the middle of the pivoting dust cover, and total distance between the sights is 13 inches, so it has a sight radius close to that of a full-size AK.

Felt recoil was soft. Velocity of most loads out of the 10.25-inch barrel ran between 2,400 to 2,500 fps. I was curious how reliable an AK fed by AR mags would be, but reliability was 100 percent with all ammo. The polymer mag well opening is slightly beveled, and the well holds magazines rather snugly. The bolt will not lock back on an empty magazine. The magazine release button is round and steel and positioned on the right side, just forward of the trigger guard. The rifle comes with one Tapco 30-round magazine.

Most of us are just teenagers stuck in adult bodies, so you should understand when I say that this pistol looks pretty darn cool. Shooting it, I had visions of myself →

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← holding it above my head screaming, “Wolverines!” (If you don’t get that classic movie reference, shame on you.)

There are a lot of sharp edges on the SB-47 brace and pistol grip that would be unacceptable on an expensive rifle, but the great thing about the Zastava is that the pistol by itself retails for only \$479; the SB-47 brace sells for an additional \$119.

CZ Scorpion EVO 3 S1

While the name CZ Scorpion may sound familiar to those of you who read Cold War spy novels, the 1960s-era Skorpion machine pistol is not the same as the modern Scorpion EVO. The former was chambered in .32 ACP; the new sci-fi-looking Scorpion EVO 3 submachine gun (which was introduced in 2009) is in 9mm.

CZ-USA has just introduced a

semiauto pistol version: the Scorpion EVO 3 S1. Apart from the lack of a stock or select-fire capability, the EVO 3 S1 pistol is identical to its full-auto brother. This is a straight blowback design, chambered in 9mm Luger, with a 7.75-inch barrel and tipped with a proprietary flash hider. It comes with a nice set of fully adjustable steel sights.

The rear of the receiver comprises



▲ The Zastava’s polymer magazine well allows it to be fed by standard AR-15 magazines. The safety incorporates a bolt hold-open notch.



▲ The Zastava’s distinctive muzzle device works more as a pressure chamber to ensure reliability than as a flash hider.



▲ The CZ Scorpion’s bolt release is forward of the safety, and the ambidextrous magazine release is a lever that runs along the front of the trigger guard.



▲ The rear of the Scorpion’s polymer receiver has built-in mounting options for various types of sling attachments.



▲ The MPX, SIG’s long-awaited pistol-caliber weapon, has a free-floating handguard, AR-15 style folding sights as well as a handstop that’s secured to the underside of the handguard.



▲ The MPX operates via a short gas-stroke piston, and it has the same controls as an AR-15, so it’s easy for anyone familiar with the AR to operate.

two polymer halves that are connected by screws, and the entire frame of the pistol is fiber-reinforced polymer, resulting in an empty weight of just five pounds. The pistol is fed from translucent polymer 20- and 30-round magazines.

Short-barreled pistols chambered in rifle cartridges are loud and lose a lot of their velocity. Pistols like this Scorpion EVO that are cham- ➔

ZASTAVA PAP M85 NP

TYPE: gas piston AK
CALIBER: 5.56
CAPACITY*: 30 rd. AR
BARREL LENGTH: 10.25 in.
OVERALL LENGTH: 29.5 in.
WEIGHT: 10.6 lb.
MUZZLE DEVICE: none
REAR SIGHT: notch
FRONT SIGHT: fixed post
TRIGGER PULL: 5.5 lb.
PRICE: \$599

Notes: *Where legal; other capacities available.

CZ-USA SCORPION EVO 3 SI

TYPE: blowback
CALIBER: 9mm
CAPACITY*: 20 rd. CZ
BARREL LENGTH: 7.75 in.
OVERALL LENGTH: 16 w/o adapter in.
WEIGHT: 5 lb. (w/o mag)
MUZZLE DEVICE: flash hider
REAR SIGHT: 4-aperture adj.
FRONT SIGHT: post adj.
TRIGGER PULL: 8 lb.
PRICE: \$849

Notes: *Where legal; other capacities available.

SIG SAUER MPX-P

TYPE: gas piston recoil
CALIBER: 9mm
CAPACITY*: 30 rd. Lancer
BARREL LENGTH: 8.0 in.
OVERALL LENGTH: 16.85 in.
WEIGHT: 5 lb. (w/o mag)
MUZZLE DEVICE: A2 flash hider
REAR SIGHT: folding AR
FRONT SIGHT: folding AR
TRIGGER PULL: 6.25 lb.
PRICE: \$1,576

Notes: *Where legal; other capacities available.

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bered in pistol cartridges and have longer than standard barrels usually see improved ballistics. Most

rounds averaged 100 to 200 fps faster out of the Scorpion than out of a typical pistol.

ACCURACY RESULTS

Gun/Cartridge	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
ZASTAVA PAP M85 NP/.223 REM.				
Hornady V-Max	53	2,590	10	1.6
Hornady FMJ	55	2,478	71	2.1
Wolf Gold FMJ	55	2,432	29	2.0
Wolf SP	55	2408	36	1.8
CZ-USA SCORPION/9MM LUGER				
Black Hills FMJ	115	1,298	13	1.7
Hornady American Gunner +P	124	1,301	11	1.8
Winchester Ranger +P +	127	1,377	19	2.1
Winchester Defend FMJ	147	1c156	22	2.0
SIG SAUER MPX-P/9MM LUGER				
Black Hills FMJ	115	1,301	13	1.8
SIG Elite FMJ	115	1,238	16	1.6
SIG Elite JHP	124	1,144	15	1.4
Hornady American Gunner +P	124	1,308	13	1.5
Winchester Defend FMJ	147	1,133	24	1.9

Notes: Zastava accuracy results are averages of four five-shot groups at 50 yards. CZ and SIG accuracy results are averages of four five-shot groups at 25 yards. All velocities are 10-shot averages measured with an Oehler Model 35P 12 feet from the muzzle. Abbreviations: FMJ, full metal jacket; JHP, jacketed hollowpoint; SP, softpoint

The non-reciprocating charging handle of the Scorpion is forward on the left side, and the bolt locks back on an empty magazine. The charging handle is reversible, and the bolt can be locked to the rear by hand. The barrel is surrounded by a polymer housing/handguard with MIL-STD 1913 rails on all sides.

The safety level is polymer and ambidextrous. Pushing it down/forward moves the weapon from Safe to Fire, marked respectively with a white circle and a red dash. Its design is really the only negative I found: The right-side safety pushed into the top of my trigger finger with each shot, which was annoying.

The magazine release is a serrated polymer paddle on either side of the front of the trigger guard. Move it forward to drop the mag. Trigger pull was an unimpressive eight pounds, although it did feel lighter than that.

The Scorpion EVO 3 S1 pistol is

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offered with an adapter and tube CZ specifically designed to mount the SIG arm brace. The adapter replaces the unit on the back of the pistol and is a quick two-second push-button install. The pistol itself retails for only \$849, which is quite a bargain for something this unique. The adapter is \$80.

SIG MPX-P

One of the most long-awaited long-gun handguns has been the semiauto pistol version of SIG's new MPX submachine gun. While the gun is now available with the SIG brace as the MPX-PSB, when I started only the MPX-P was available, and that model doesn't feature the brace and tube.

The SIG MPX-P is chambered in 9mm. It does not have straight blowback operation like many traditional submachine guns but rather a gas-piston-recoil system. The MPX pistol features an eight-inch barrel


and is fed by translucent polymer magazines with steel feed lips made by Lancer. Additional magazines will cost you \$55 apiece. Flip-up AR-15 iron sights are standard.

SIG designed the MPX to compete with the HK MP5 and gave it controls that replicate those found on the M16/AR-15. The charging handle, safety and magazine release are similar in position and function to what you're going to find on an AR. In fact, the MPX-P has an actual AR fire-control system, so if you don't like the slightly heavy and gritty mil-spec MPX-P trigger, you can drop in any aftermarket AR trigger parts you like.

Trigger pull on my sample was a relatively crisp 6.25 pounds. Both the safety and magazine release are ambidextrous. The pistol comes in a lockable hard case with foam cutouts for the pistol, magazine and accessories—and it comes with a lot of ac-

cessories. In addition to the 30-round magazine, you get a military-style cleaning kit, two two-inch rail sections for the handguard, a QD sling socket designed to attach to the handguard, even a nice tactical single-point sling. The sling has a QD swivel on it, and there is a QD socket on the pistol at the bottom rear of the receiver.

At \$1,576 it is the most expensive pistol I reviewed, and this model doesn't even come with the added cost of the SIG brace/adapter. While it's stylish and I like it, it's twice as expensive as the CZ Scorpion EVO (as are its magazines). But it was completely reliable with every sort of ammo we tried.

Its gas piston operation provides slightly less recoil than the CZ's straight blowback design, and it is a hair more accurate, but, in my opinion, I don't think the SIG provides twice as much performance. 



Few decisions are as important as selecting your personal defense ammunition. Winchester developed the W Train & Defend system with full metal jacket training ammo [T] ballistically matched with jacketed hollow point Defend ammo [D]. Winchester Train & Defend ammunition offers less recoil with the threat-stopping power needed when it counts.



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RUNNING AND GUNNING

BY BRAD FITZPATRICK

JOGGERS DO RISK ATTACK, BUT WITH THE RIGHT HOLSTER BEING ON THE TRAIL OR ON THE ROAD DOESN'T MEAN BEING UNARMED.

Like many millions of Americans, I enjoy running long distance. Over the course of the last two decades, I've covered thousands of miles, mostly on trails and back roads, and I've had my share of frightening confrontations. Most have involved aggressive dogs, and a few have been run-ins with strangers who presented some type of a threat, minor or otherwise.

Unfortunately, I'm not alone in this arena. Statistics show runners are the subject of assault and robbery, and I've spoken with several other runners who have had similar encounters. Some of those runners have concealed carry permits, but none of them was actually carrying a gun during their encounters.

From a criminal's standpoint, runners are easy targets. For starters, you're often alone and you're always (at least if you're like me) exhausted. That leaves runners largely defenseless, making them an easy target. In addition, more runners than ever carry valuable items—cell phones, iPods and so forth—and that makes them an even more appealing target to thieves.

I'd estimate half of the runners I encounter on the trail are wearing headphones, reducing situational awareness and making it even easier for someone to approach unnoticed. There are few activities where we are so exposed and so vulnerable, and that's why runners are prime candidates for concealed carry. →



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RUNNING AND GUNNING

← But running is not conducive to concealed carry, which is why so few people take their guns on the trail. For starters, most runners dress in light clothes—shorts and T-shirts—which can make carrying a real challenge. The constant movement limits the methods by which you can comfortably carry, and few people want the added weight of a gun when they're covering many miles. Runners are minimalists, and that doesn't translate well to carrying a handgun.

Fortunately, a growing number of companies are designing holsters specifically for active life-

styles. The idea is to make running with a gun more comfortable and secure so that if the need to defend yourself arises you won't be left sweating, breathless and without protection. Here is a look at several different items that allow you to hit the trail without missing your gun.

UnderTech Undercover Belly Band (\$30)

The UnderTech Original Belly Band (UNDERTECHUNDERCOVER.COM) is made of four-inch-wide, surgical-grade elastic and features Velcro closures, and the holster

is stitched into the elastic itself. The low-profile design and instant custom fit make it a good choice for runners. In addition, the gun can be positioned anywhere you'd like it to be—appendix, hip, or small of the back—allowing you to choose the position that works best for you.

The band is sufficiently wide so the gun doesn't bounce or jump when you're running, even when you're sprinting, and it's extremely easy to conceal under the lightest running clothing. One constant when running is perspiration; any holster you choose has to be capable of withstanding constant exposure to moisture, and the Belly Band dries quickly after a run.

Over the course of several miles, I didn't feel any chafing, and the on-the-hip position was most comfortable to me. With a compact revolver in place (Ruger SP101 Spurless), the wrap stays put and doesn't print, so you can truly conceal the firearm when you are on the road or trail. With waist sizes range from 24 to 60 inches, there's likely a Belly Band that will fit you properly.

Flashbang Capone (\$60)

The Capone (FlashbangStore.com) is an inside-the-waistband holster with heavy-duty clips that don't require you to wear a belt, a great option for runners who are trying to keep weight to a minimum. Based on its size, I had low expectations of the Capone as a running holster, but to my surprise, it was one of the most comfortable holsters I carried in the test.

Flashbang says the suede backing helps promote airflow, and when properly adjusted, the holster rides against the body without pinching or rubbing, and it is relatively easy to conceal. It's a thermoplastic holster molded specifically to each firearm, resulting in a secure fit. →



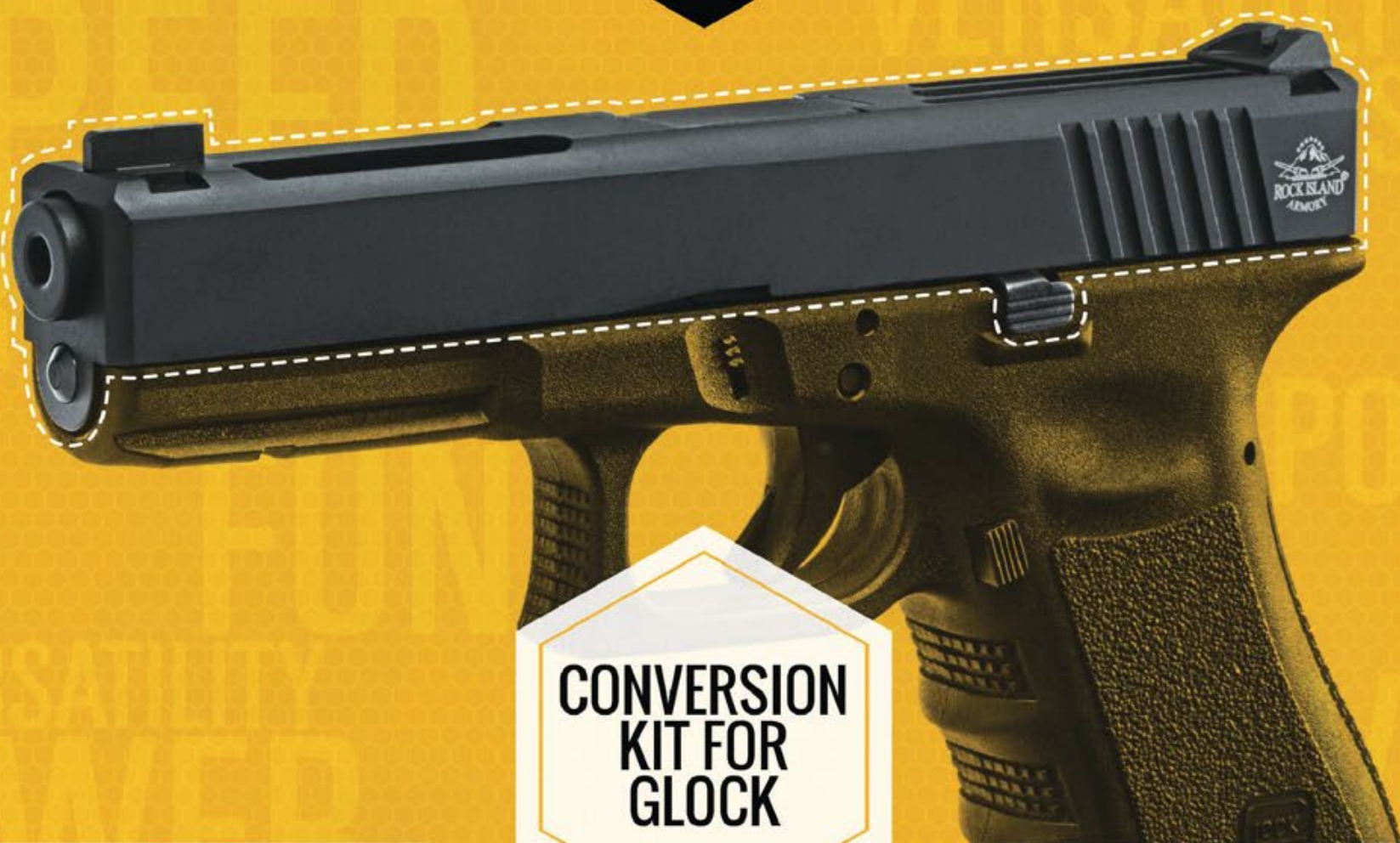
▲ Undertech Belly Band



▲ Flashbang Capone



▲ DeSantis Roadrunner



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RUNNING AND GUNNING

← Additionally, you can adjust tightness as needed, so if you feel that your gun is shifting on hard trails or steep inclines you can adjust screw tension for a tighter fit.

I managed more than a dozen miles total in the Capone, and at the end of the run, I simply pulled

the holster off my running shorts and it was ready to be instantly transferred to other clothes—a real bonus. For this test I was running in mid-July in typical Midwestern heat and humidity, but in colder climes I think this would be a logical and convenient choice for serious runners.

DeSantis Road Runner (\$40)

While many of the running holsters listed here are designed for ultra-concealment and utilize

minimalistic designs, the Road Runner (DESANTISHOLSTER.COM) goes in another direction. It hides your gun in plain sight.

A large nylon pouch is held in position on the abdomen with two shoulder straps that, when properly adjusted, keep movement to a minimum. The firearm rests in a pouch that can be easily accessed at any time, and the nylon does a fine job protecting your gun and other contents from moisture.

One advantage of the Road Runner is it provides storage space for additional items: keys, credit cards, cell phones, CCW permits and so forth. Despite being compact and lightweight, the Road Runner is large enough to accommodate a full-size semiauto, though you'll find that, as with other carry methods listed here, a smaller firearm is lighter and easier to manage.

The soft backing makes this sur-



▲ UnderTech Undercover Tank



▲ Flashbang Marilyn

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prisingly comfortable, and the fact that the Road Runner is perfectly visible may not be a bad thing. If criminals don't target you because they think you may have a gun, that's a win.

Flashbang Marilyn (\$50)

The Marilyn is engineered specifically for women, a compact thermoplastic holster designed to be drawn through the neckline of a sports bra. It's compact and lightweight, and the rugged constriction (aside from a leather security strap) is completely impervious to the effects of moisture and perspiration. The female runner in the test, a serious road and trail racer, found the holster was comfortable and secure when properly positioned.

"It was easy to conceal, and when you needed the gun, it was instantly accessible," she wrote in her notes. Plus, the Marilyn, like

the Flashbang Capone, is versatile enough to be worn with a variety of different clothing options, so it doubles as a daily carry holster.

Instant access is also a major plus for any holster designed specifically for runners—when you round a corner on a trail and come face-to-face with trouble you don't want to find that your holster is hard to reach and requires fumbling with clothes. The Marilyn is available in either right- or left-handed models and is designed to fit a variety of compact firearms.

UnderTech Undercover Coolux Tank Top (\$60)

The Coolux Tank Top is a breathable athletic shirt with a built-in holster that rides under the arm. The shirt itself is perfect for athletic activities. It's lightweight and wicks moisture away from the body, and it can be worn

as a running top by itself if you don't need to conceal your gun—or underneath another shirt in colder climates or when concealment is required.

UnderTech offers a variety of compression shirts with underarm holsters, so if you prefer a standard T-shirt or long-sleeved T, those are also available.

For this test, I ran with the tank and carried a thin semiauto, a SCCY semiauto in 9mm, in the holster. With the SCCY's narrow design (it's about an inch wide), there was no rubbing or chaffing, and when I was wearing the tank there was instant access to the firearm.

The gun rode securely against my side with no flopping or bouncing while I ran, which is an important consideration because a gun that is too loose is not secure and, over the course of long miles, becomes irritating. Best of all, →

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RUNNING AND GUNNING

← when I was finished I could simply wash the shirt.

Sneaky Pete Nylon (\$40)

The Sneaky Pete holster (SNEAKYPETEHOLSTERS.COM) is made of tough ballistic nylon, making it impervious to sweat. It's tough to conceal under running clothes unless they're bulky, but the beauty of the Sneaky Pete design is it can be worn on the outside of the pants and doesn't immediately scream holster. In fact, one person who saw me wearing the holster asked me if it was a heart monitor. A small semiauto fits easily inside and a magnetic top latch keeps the gun secure.

Admittedly, when I started running with the Sneaky Pete I was worried it would bounce and slap against my hip for miles, but it doesn't thanks to sturdy clips that secure in place on the top line of your running shorts. It does require your running shorts or pants/

tights have a fairly sturdy elastic top that won't droop when you're running, but the holster itself is lightweight and doesn't pull your pants down—provided you aren't carrying a large, heavy, full-sized semiauto.

The positioning on the outside of the waistband means you don't need to reach under your running clothes to retrieve your gun. When you need it, it's right there.

Galco Underwraps (\$62)

The Underwraps (GALCOGUNLEATHER.COM) is a lightweight belly band that keeps your firearm (and other items, thanks to a multitude of stitched-in pockets) close to your body, secure and within easy reach. The stretch design and elastic fabric mean this belly band offers a custom fit, and the dual-holster option is a great feature because it makes the Underwraps ambidextrous.

The additional storage space is

a bonus for anyone that runs long distance because it allows you to store other items like a car key, credit card, flashlight, or CCW permit in your belly band.

Many dedicated running shorts don't have pockets or they aren't secure enough to hold these items in place without the fear that they will bounce out along the trail. On one long run I carried a pistol in one holster and a gel pack in the other.

Plus, like other belly bands, the Underwraps is easy to conceal even under light clothing. It's an unobtrusive carry method, and after a few runs you'll forget it's even there. Should you need your gun in a hurry, though, it's easy to reach. It's an excellent choice for any outdoor activity or daily carry, and it was a favorite of everyone in the test.

DeSantis Stowaway (\$80)

The Stowaway was designed as a carry option for women and features a wide neoprene waist belt that keeps a small revolver or auto securely in place on the belly. It's ambidextrous, and the holster comes with an extension that allows it to fit a variety of body types. Two over-shoulder nylon straps keep the unit in place and allow for a custom fit.

There's virtually no bounce when running with this unit, according to the women who tested the Stowaway, and the neoprene design is comfortable and doesn't get excessively hot.

It can be worn as an open-carry model, but a T-shirt or light sweatshirt allows you to conceal the holster when you are running. The unit earned high praise for comfort, concealment and security, and one female runner said it "disappears and you completely forget you've got a gun." Until, of course, when you need to access the firearm. At which point it is readily available.



A Sneaky Pete Nylon



A Galco Underwraps



A DeSantis Stowaway

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MODEL OF DISCRETION

BY JOSEPH VON BENEDIKT



DAN WESSON'S THREADED, RAILED 9MM DISCRETION IS A SUPER-PRACTICAL, CUTTING EDGE 1911.

I've long appreciated a modernized 1911 equipped for mounting a light and suppressor as a particularly suitable pistol capable of just about any type of task, but for the most part I don't care for how they look compared to a really nice traditional 1911. This one is different.

When I opened the Discretion box at Gunnies in Orem, Utah, I became worried I'd shortly be kicked out for distracting the gun-department employees, who flocked around with "oohs" and "ahs" that reflected my own impression of the startlingly attractive pistol. Then I decided it was okay: Most of

the customers were peering over my shoulder, too.

Only once before have I picked up a 1911 I could find no fault with, a pistol so perfect in configuration and feel that I'd change nothing about it. That was a Nighthawk Custom Falcon, a superb .45 Auto relatively traditional in configuration. Like the Falcon, the Discretion balances perfectly in my hand and points like it grew from my palm. And with its light recoil spring, the 9mm Discretion's slide functions even more smoothly than the Falcon's. Darn thing feels like it's on ball bearings.

I've often steered friends in search of the

MODEL OF DISCRETION

← perfect home-defense gun toward a pistol that would accept a light and threaded for a suppressor because those two characteristics make a pistol particularly suitable for protecting hearth and home. The first, a light, is vital to finding intruders and, perhaps most importantly, for identifying the potential threat as legitimate or as old Uncle Waldo raiding the fridge for a midnight sandwich. With correct use, the light also makes effectively incapacitating that threat—should doing so become necessary—a probability rather than a literal shot in the dark.

As for the can hanging off the end of the barrel, it also protects you—specifically, your ears and your sensory perceptions. Have you ever turned loose a powerful centerfire handgun inside a room

without hearing protection? Don't. You'll suffer irreparable long-term hearing damage and, courtesy of the blast, be temporarily deafened. In a deadly encounter, being deafened can adversely affect your ability to keep track of, communicate with and, if necessary, shoot the attacker again.

Dan Wesson's new Discretion model is available in both .45 Auto and 9mm. I chose the 9mm version for several reasons. The light recoil and smaller powder charge of the 9mm cartridge make for an incredibly shootable pistol, one on which suppressors are very effective. Plus, it holds 10 rounds in the magazine. With one in the pipe, that's 11 on tap—two more than most .45 caliber 1911s offer.

Don't get me wrong. I'm a staunch .45 Auto guy when it comes to 1911 pistols. But in certain cases

even I must admit other calibers have merit.

Because it's designed to take a suppressor, the Discretion's sights are tall enough to allow use with fat, round cans and feature lollipop-type tritium inserts; stack the front dot atop the single rear dot for accurate shooting in low light. A good deep ledge is machined in the front face of the rear sight to enable the user to hook it on a belt or flat surface to rack the slide with one hand—should the support hand be disabled or occupied fending off an attacker.

Even though it's tall, the rear sight isn't particularly snaggy. It's been dehorned so it doesn't catch and tear clothing. Its rear face has fine grooves machined across it to create a non-reflective surface, enhancing sight-picture clarity. Both sights are dovetailed into the slide, and the rear has a hex-head setscrew that locks it into place. Loosen it to drift-adjust for horizontal adjustments.

The top of the slide from the rear sight to the front is machined flat and has fine grooves milled down its length, eliminating glare. The serrated flat is flanked by a shallow groove on each side.

At first glance, the ports machined into the front of the slide make the pistol appear compensated, but it's not. The ports serve to lighten the slide, reducing overall pistol weight and—with the light-recoiling 9mm cartridge—aiding reliability. While there are no slide serrations machined into the forward end, they aren't needed because the ports make it easy to grip.

Tasteful, modest serrations are present on the rear of the slide. As for the ejection port, it is lowered and flared to increase ejection reliability, and on its forward end, the port is lengthened with a radius cut to allow easy ejection of loaded rounds.

With its extended, 1/2x28- ➔



▲ As a suppressor-ready pistol, the Discretion comes with extra tall tritium sights in a two-dot configuration. The rear has a ledge that allows you to rack the slide by hooking it on a belt or flat surface.



▲ The G10 grips and finely serrated frontstrap and mainspring housing combine to keep the gun securely in your hand, and the mag well funnel is a big help in quick reloads.

ACCURACY RESULTS DAN WESSON DISCRETION				
9MM LUGER	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
Barnes TAC-XPD	115	1,125	12	0.97
Winchester USA Forged	115	1,207	15	1.36
Black Hills JHP +P	124	1,392	26	1.16
Hornady Critical Duty	135	1,165	7	1.48
Hornady TAP	147	1,076	15	1.28
WITH SILENCERCo OSPREY 45K				
Hornady Critical Duty	135	1,146	14	1.41
Hornady TAP	147	1,057	11	1.02

Notes: Accuracy results are the averages of three five-shot groups fired at 15 yards from a sandbag rest. Velocities are the averages of five rounds measured 10 feet from the muzzle with a Shooting Chrony chronograph.

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XS



MODEL OF DISCRETION

← pitch threaded portion, the Discretion's stainless barrel measures 5.75 inches in length. As a result, muzzle velocities should approach those produced by long-slide 1911s. A knurled thread cap protects the muzzle when a suppressor isn't in use.

"MATCH" is rollmarked on the side of the barrel, and "9mm" atop it. Now, lots of pistols have "match" marked on their barrels, and relatively few live up to the promise. As you'll see by the accuracy test results, this one does.

As John Browning intended, this 1911 is fit with a GI-length recoil spring guide rod rather than the full-length rod present in so many match-labeled 1911s. The stainless bushing around the barrel is fit snugly, but not quite too snugly to disassemble by hand (although a bushing wrench is included with the gun). The guide rod plug is also stainless and is checkered on the front end.

While the rear face of the slide is well blended with the frame and rear of the extractor, it's just a whisker off from perfect. Likewise, the grip safety is beautifully fitted but not blended to absolute perfection. Frankly, this is the only place I've found a slight reduction in

attention to detail when comparing the Discretion to top-crust, true custom 1911 pistols. But it's entirely excusable: The Discretion is a production model, and the fact that it comes so close to honest custom quality is admirable.

As for the fit between slide and frame, it is excellent. I can't find even a trace of play between them, yet the two don't bind in the least, resulting in the ball-bearing feel mentioned earlier.

According to Dan Wesson's Danae Hale, the Black Duty color on the slide and frame—and everything but the barrel, barrel bushing, recoil spring plug and trigger—is a molecularly bonded finish similar to Melonite.

At the forward end of the frame, the dust cover is machined with a rail, a feature commonplace among today's crop of polymer pistols but still somewhat unusual on a 1911. On the right side of the frame, a divot is machined around the end of the slide stop, the end of which is cut flush with the plane of the frame and nicely rounded—a fine touch sometimes seen on custom 1911s.

Both frontstrap and mainspring housing are finely checkered at 25 lines per inch, and the frame is just a bit undercut where the rear of the trigger guard joins it, fostering a good, high, recoil-controlling grip.

To aid shooters in slapping a magazine into the pistol with minimum fuss and fanfare, a broadly beveled mag well is fixed to the frame bottom and swallows fresh magazines with gusto.

Grip panels are machined out of G10 and feature coarse, square, flat-topped checkering on the forward portion complemented by three half-hex cuts on the rear side. The result is a grippy surface that should defy even sweaty or—heaven forbid—bloody hands to slip, yet it won't upbraid the lining of your Harris tweed.

The fire controls are designed →

DAN WESSON DISCRETION

TYPE: 1911

CALIBER: 9mm Luger (tested), .45 ACP

CAPACITY: 10+1

BARREL LENGTH: 5.75 in., stainless

OAL/WIDTH/HEIGHT: 9.5/1.5/6.0 in.

WEIGHT: 40 oz.

CONSTRUCTION: stainless steel

FINISH: Black Duty

GRIPS: black G10

SAFETIES: wide, extended thumb; grip w/ memory bump

SIGHTS: extra-tall Tactical Ledge with tritium inserts

TRIGGER: 4 lb. 6 oz. pull (as measured)

PRICE: \$2,142

MANUFACTURER: Dan Wesson,
DANWESSON.COM

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MODEL OF DISCRETION

← for performance. The slide stop is broadened and serrated, and the safety is extended, widened and also serrated.

The hammer is a modified combat type, skeletonized to reduce weight and to offer a secure two-finger pinch for safely letting the hammer down, something shooters rarely do with a 1911 anymore. It also features a small flat upper surface that's serrated for easy one-handed cocking (few do that anymore either, but it's nice should you ever want to ear the ol' gal back for a second attempt on a stubborn primer).

The lightweight trigger is machined out of aluminum, skeletonized to reduce weight and, unlike

most its face, is cut with aggressive side-to-side serrations and one deep vertical serration. Shooters far more accomplished than I have argued that sticky trigger faces inhibit great shooting, but it works for me. In fact, I shot this Dan Wesson gun more accurately than I've ever fired another 1911. As measured with a Lyman digital trigger gauge, pull weight of the crisp trigger is four pounds, six ounces, with almost no variation over a series of measurements.

With my initial examination out of the way, I collected a hodgepodge of 9mm ammo, including my favorite accuracy-standard by Black Hills, a 147-grain subsonic load by Hornady, my favorite

135-grain personal defense Hornady Critical Duty load (which I hoped would be subsonic) and a couple of 115-grain loads. Not only do the latter offer light recoil and favor fast follow-up shots, I was interested to see how quiet the new SilencerCo Osprey 45K (see sidebar) could make their supersonic velocities.

I tested the pistol on a day with temps hovering in the low 20s, and not only was accuracy excellent but reliability was flawless as well. An old-timer who knew his stuff once told me 1911s needed 500 rounds worth of break-in to become perfectly reliable, so any time a brand-new one chugs along without a hiccup, I'm impressed. And in an unusual turn, point of impact with every load was right on the money at 25 yards.

The Discretion might be the most accurate 1911 I've ever fired. As you can see in the accompanying chart, all loads averaged less than 1.5 inches, and the Barnes load averaged less than an inch. (And with the suppressor attached I fired a 0.61-inch group with the Barnes but

SILENCERCO OSPREY 45K

Unlike most suppressors, SilencerCo's Osprey features offset baffles and, as a result, puts most of the sound-dampening inner capacity below the line of the bore. This allows it to work with standard pistol sights. Unlike typical round cans, an Osprey doesn't stick up much above the top of your pistol's slide. No longer do you have to swap out the regular sights along with that neat threaded barrel you just fitted to your favorite sidearm.

The Osprey has an indexing system for proper alignment. Screw the suppressor tight onto your muzzle, pry out the hidden lever at the back of the can, and rotate it until it's aligned. Clamp the lever back down and you're ready to shoot.

At 6.4 inches long and weighing eight ounces, this is the new, shortened K version of the original Osprey. It was designed for submission to the U.S. Military's Modular Handgun System competition. Unlike the full-length version, which is engineered for maximum effect, the Osprey 45K is designed to be as short and compact as possible while still reducing the sound of a gunshot to nearly hearing-safe levels.

As most suppressor fans know, a can designated for .45 caliber use is also suitable for smaller calibers. Mounted on the 9mm Dan Wesson Discretion, it served yeoman's

duty in dampening the report to comfortable noise levels. I anticipated it would be noticeably louder than full-size silencers, but I was impressed at its effectiveness.

Constructed of machined aluminum and steel, the Osprey 45K's mono baffles are rated to reduce the sound of .45 Auto to 139 dB or less and typical 9mm loads to 135 dB. (Ed. note: Hearing damage begins to occur over 85 dB, so hearing protection is still the wise play here.)

The Osprey 45K is also rated to be fired "wet," with 5ccs of water injected into the sound chamber. It's messy, but it makes the silencer even quieter. Some shooters use wire-pulling gel, since it's less likely to run out the end of the can when the muzzle is pointed downward. Suggested retail price is \$865.—JVB



SilencerCo's Osprey 45K is shorter than the original version, and its design permits it to be used with almost any standard-height sight system.



▲ Von Benedikt found the Discretion to be one of the best shooting 1911s he's ever tested. It functioned flawlessly, and the slide cuts help with that by lightening the slide.

then I ran out of ammo, which is why this load isn't included in the suppressor portion of the chart.)

With the SilencerCo can screwed on, the pistol was even easier to shoot groups with, the added weight and length stabilizing the pistol. And though the movement of a pistol suppressor's internal Nielson device booster can increase perceived recoil, the Osprey 45K seemed to dampen kick on the Discretion.

There's almost always a point of impact discrepancy when shooting with a suppressor versus without, and with the suppressor mounted all three loads shot about two inches low.

I also ran a bunch of Winchester's 115-grain bulk full-metal-jacket ammo through the Discretion, shooting casual drills and attempting to thump rocks at 100 yards. The pistol continued to chew through ammo without malfunction, and as I wrapped up the session, I caught myself wondering what guns I could sell to finance the purchase of the Dan Wesson. It's going to be painful to send this test gun back to the company.

Because of the extra length of the threaded barrel, the extra bulk of the rail, and the added height of the sights, the Discretion won't fit in most 1911 holsters. You'll need to purchase a holster specifically made for its type, and several makers offer appropriate models. One of the most versatile—and the one I've been using—is Galco's Yaqui Slide holster.

If you want a superbly shootable semiauto pistol mounted with a weapon light and a suppressor with which to defend your castle, one that shoots better than you ever will and looks finer than Elizabeth Hurley hanging on your arm, I can't think of a better recommendation than Dan Wesson's new 1911 Discretion. Me, I can't wait to get out to the local steel-plate duel-offs with it.

Actual size
is 40.6 mm



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TRISTAR T-100

I RECENTLY RECEIVED A T-100 FROM TriStar Sporting Arms. As a CZ-75 derivative the T-100 had familiar lines to me, but I realize a lot of readers may not have heard of Tri-Star or even of the vaunted CZ-75. TriStar imports a number of firearms from overseas, especially Turkey. It specializes in proven designs such as the T-100, manufactured by established companies that most Americans may have never heard of. The T-100 is manufactured for TriStar by Canik, which is actually a division of Samsun Yurt Savunma—one of Turkey's biggest defense contractors—and its factory is

NATO approved. Like seemingly every gun maker in the region, it makes a number of CZ-75 clones, including the T-100. (If that seems weird to you, it's all a matter of perspective. They might ask you, "Why does everybody in America make 1911 clones?")

The CZ-75 is one of the most proven and popular handgun designs ever because it's accurate, reliable and ergonomic. In fact, I believe the CZ-75 is a more inherently reliable design than the 1911, but that's a bit like comparing apples to oranges. The CZ-75 was designed 60 years after the 1911, and

TRISTAR T-100

TYPE: DA/SA semiauto

CALIBER: 9mm Luger

CAPACITY: 15+1 (where legal)

BARREL LENGTH: 3.7 in.

OAL/HEIGHT/WIDTH: 7.3/5.4/1.3 in.

WEIGHT: 26.25 oz.

CONSTRUCTION: aluminum with black Cerakote finish; steel slide with Cerakote finish

SAFETIES: manual, firing pin block

SIGHTS: steel, three-dot

TRIGGER: 11.5 lb. DA, 6.25 lb. SA (as measured)

PRICE: \$459

IMPORTER: TriStar Sporting Arms,
TRISTARARMS.COM

manufacturers had learned a lot about making semiauto pistols in those years. Jeff Cooper himself thought so highly of the design he based much of his dream gun, the Bren Ten, on the CZ-75.

The T-100 is a compact version of the CZ-75 design, and it has an aluminum frame. The pistol has a 3.7-inch barrel and weighs just over 26 ounces empty (full-size, all-steel versions can run over 40 ounces). The T-100 is a traditional double-action/single-action design, with a long double-action pull. It comes equipped with a manual safety on the left side and can be carried cocked and locked. The safety works with the hammer in any position.

The pistol is fed by 15-round magazines, and two magazines are provided with the gun. The magazines are manufactured by Mec-Gar in Italy, perhaps the most respected magazine manufacturer in the world. Apparently, the 9mm and .40 S&W magazines for this size pistol have the same dimensions, down to the feed lips, because the left side of each magazine was marked for .40 S&W—with corresponding witness holes for five, eight and 10 rounds. The right side was marked for 9mm with witness holes for five, 10 and 15 rounds.

The pistol has a black corrosion-resistant Cerakote finish. There is a version with a titanium Cerakote finish available for \$20 more. Sights are basic: steel with white dots. The top of the slide has a narrow band of serrations, and the frontstrap and backstrap of the frame are vertically serrated as well.

The fit and finish of the pistol were excellent, and I could barely find any machining marks on the inside of the slide. It wears rather thin black plastic grips, but even so the reach to the trigger is not short.

CZ-75-type pistols have long double-action trigger pulls, and the T-100 is no different. I have medium-size hands and could just barely get my trigger finger where I wanted it on the trigger with it all the way forward. The trigger itself is

steel with a smooth face. Measured at the tip of the trigger, the double-action trigger pull was 0.95 inch long and 11.5 pounds. The pull is smooth with no grit or stacking. The single-action pull was 6.25 pounds, with 0.33 inch of trigger travel (and most of that take-up).

If you don't like the sound of an 11.5-pound trigger pull and aren't a fan of cocked-and-locked carry, the T-100 does provide an alternative because it has a half-cock notch. Put the hammer at half-cock and the trigger does not move, but now the first 0.4 inch of travel is take-up with only a 0.55-inch trigger pull—about what you'd find on a striker-fired gun—and total pull weight is reduced by two pounds to 9.5 pounds.

The T-100 the slide rides inside the frame, as opposed to most pistols—such as the 1911, where the slide rides on the outside of the frame rails. As a result, the slides on CZ-pattern pistols tend to have a tighter fit, but there is less of them to grab onto. This is doubly true on the T-100, whose slide is narrower on the top; you'll need to use the fish-scale-like slide serrations at the rear to cycle it.

Recoil wasn't bad, and the pistol was nicely accurate for its size. I fired several hundred rounds through the pistol without a single malfunction. This was not surprising to me, given that it's made by a NATO defense contractor. So why are these guns so inexpensive? Simple. It's wage imbalance. A well-paid skilled factory worker in Turkey makes the equivalent of \$12,000 a year. The labor savings are passed on to you.



A The T-100 is a DA/SA semiautomatic with a thumb safety, allowing it to be carried cocked and locked. The front of the trigger guard is squared off and serrated.



A Because the slide rides on rails the inside of the frame, the T-100 has a slim slide top. It gives the gun a unique look and also means slide manipulation is limited to the rear serrations.



A The T-100 has a half-cock notch, which provides an alternative to cocked-and-locked carry and reduces both weight and trigger travel on the DA pull.

ACCURACY RESULTS | TRISTAR T-100

9MM LUGER	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
SIG Elite FMJ	115	1,133	20	3.4
ZQI FMJ	123	1,089	9	3.0
Hornady XTP	124	1,008	15	3.0
Black Hills JHP	124	1,032	11	3.1
Winchester JHP	147	918	22	2.8

Notes: Accuracy results are the averages of four five-shot groups at 25 yards from a sandbag rest. Velocities are averages of 10 shots measured 12 feet from the muzzle with an Oehler Model 35. Abbreviations: FMJ, full metal jacket; JHP, jacketed hollowpoint



SPRINGFIELD XD MOD.2 SERVICE

THE BIGGEST BENEFIT OF THE SATURATED market for polymer handguns is that it breeds excellence through market competition. Springfield's new XD Mod.2 Service is a prime example of that. It's one of finest, most affordable handguns on the market.

The XD Mod.2 Service is a locked breech semiautomatic pistol chambered in 9mm Luger. It feeds from a staggered, capacious, detachable box magazine that holds 16 rounds of ammunition (where legal). The frame is constructed of high-impact black polymer. The slide is forged from either stainless steel or steel with a black Melonite finish, and both options are extremely effective at resisting corrosion and scratching.

The specs for the Springfield semiauto read like a wish list for desirable features

on a defensive sidearm and clearly demonstrate Springfield isn't content simply to make just another polymer 9mm. For starters, the 7.3-inch overall length of the new Service model is an interesting choice, striking a balance between compact and tactical models. This is great for shooters who enjoy the features of Springfield's compact and subcompact XD Mod.2 pistols, but want a full-size gun.

For those unfamiliar with the Mod.2 improvements to the design, they consist almost entirely of ergonomic changes—the most evident of which is the addition of the Grip Zone. I have to admit when I first saw the Mod 2's grips, I chuckled and shook my head, wondering if the new grip is so impressive that it's worthy of having its name molded on it. The

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY XD MOD.2 SERVICE

TYPE: striker-fired semiautomatic

CALIBER: 9mm Luger

CAPACITY: 16+1 (where legal)

BARREL LENGTH: 4 in., hammer-forged steel

OAL/HEIGHT/WIDTH: 7.3/5.5/1.2 in.

WEIGHT: 27.5 oz.

CONSTRUCTION: stainless slide; black polymer frame with Grip Zone grip

SIGHTS: low profile, two-dot rear; fiber-optic front

TRIGGER: Ultra Safety Assurance, 6.1 lbs

SAFETY: trigger, grip

PRICE: \$618

MANUFACTURER: Springfield Armory,

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answer is yes.

Instead of utilizing more common serrations or cross checkering, the engineers at Springfield developed

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LOT 62774/94555 shown

Customer Rating ★★★★★

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HANDGUNS | FIRING LINE REPORT | SPRINGFIELD XD MOD.2 SERVICE

← their own molded stippling. This has long been a popular modification to polymer handguns by gunsmiths (including Springfield's own Custom Shop) and DIYers using a soldering iron.

As the name suggests, the grip is broken into zones. Zone 1 is the frontstrap and backstrap and features a nonslip texture, while Zone 2—just behind the



▲ Springfield's Grip Zone features different texturing in different areas for a superb and ergonomic grip that will meet the needs of a lot of different shooters.

frontstrap on both sides—has a more aggressive texture for maximum control with your firing hand. Zone 3, the rest of the grip, is modestly stippled.

Measuring a tenth of an inch thinner than previous models, the Mod.2 is much more ergonomic for smaller-handed shooters. This not only allows for a more comfortable grip, but also allows users



▲ A red fiber-optic sight comes standard and pairs with a low-profile two-dot rear. The four-inch Service model includes front cocking serrations.

to reach every control on the XD with less effort and, in many cases, without shifting their grip.

The Service model hosts several other notable features that elevate it above other polymer pistols. The slide is cut to allow shooters to install any sights with a dovetail interface, although the gun's sights are already superb. They consist of a serrated black rear notch with two white dots, and a high-contrast, red fiber-optic front post—a great setup for low-light shooting.

The XD's dust cover is railed for accessories, featuring three trenches for multiple mounting points. When paired with a high-quality, bright tactical light, the XD Mod.2 Service 9mm makes an excellent home-defense choice.

Like all XD pistols, the grip also features a grip safety; this one is located underneath the company's High Hand

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beavertail that permits a high grip on the gun, which gives the shooter more recoil control.

The only less obstructive safety is the trigger found on the XD pistol. The trigger safety consists of a small plastic blade in the center of the trigger itself. It's automatically disengaged when you place your finger on the trigger. Last but not least, the disassembly lever on the Mod.2 is slimmer, which produces a more streamlined gun that will draw smoothly from the holster.

In testing, the Mod.2 proved exceptionally accurate and controllable, thanks to the superbly ergonomic Grip Zone and, of course, the minimal recoil of the 9mm round fired out of a four-inch barrel.

Simply put, the XD is one of the most ergonomic polymer handguns. First-time buyers and frugal shooters alike will appreciate the fact that all XD pistols

ship with a Kydex holster, magazine carrier, two magazines and a loading tool. It's perfectly suitable equipment for defensive uses, and shooters who are considering taking the plunge into IPSC, IDPA or other shooting sports have a few less pieces of equipment to purchase.

In fact, I think the Mod.2 Service is a perfect first handgun for defense or competition. When you combine all of its features plus the accessories and realize the pistol has a suggested retail price of just over \$600, you can't go wrong. 



▲ One of the great things about XD pistols is they come with pretty much everything you need in terms of accessories: holster, twin magazine carrier and a mag loader.

ACCURACY RESULTS | SPRINGFIELD XD MOD.2 SERVICE

9MM LUGER	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
Federal American Eagle FMJ	115	1,161	4.2	2.2
Hornady Critical Duty	135	1,067	4.5	1.5
Winchester PDX-1 Defender	147	977	6.1	1.6

Notes: Accuracy results are the averages of five five-shot groups at 15 yards from a machine rest. Velocities are averages of 10 shots recorded on an RCBS AmmoMaster placed 15 feet from the muzzle. Abbreviation: FMJ, full metal jacket

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RUGER 2.75-INCH REDHAWK

WHEN THE ORIGINAL RUGER REDHAWK debuted in 1980, it was a milestone for the company. It was Ruger's first large-frame, double-action magnum revolver. Critics praised the Redhawk's design, exceptionally smooth trigger, stout action and accuracy, and it has remained one of the brand's flagship firearms for 35 years.

The original version of the Redhawk was chambered in .44 Magnum and had barrel lengths of 5.5 and 7.5 inches, which was fine for hunting, but the gun also found favor among those who work and play in bear country. Ruger's wheelgun became a staple of Alaskan guides and fishermen who carried it as a defensive sidearm to protect them from brown bears.

Over the past several years, the Redhawk's offspring, the Super Redhawk, began stealing some of the original gun's bear-busting thunder. The Super Redhawk's jumbo-size frame

allowed it to be chambered for powerful cartridges like the .480 Ruger and .454 Casull, both of which offer ample energy to stop a big bear. The Redhawk is still carried by some guides, but the bigger Super Redhawk in the short-barreled Alaskan configuration became the brand's go-to bear gun for the Great North.

In 2014, at the request of a Ruger distributor based in Alaska, the company began to rethink the Redhawk's potential as a short-barreled, easy-to-carry defense handgun. That collaboration led to a new version of the Redhawk that is available only through TALO Distributors. It features a barrel length of 2.75 inches and rounded wooden grips. This smaller package makes the new Redhawk easier to carry all day, but it retains the structural strength of the original and still packs .44 Magnum punch.

The Redhawk 2.75 shares the basic

RUGER REDHAWK 2.75

TYPE: double-action revolver

CALIBER: .44 Magnum

CAPACITY: 6

BARREL: 2.75 in.

OVERALL LENGTH: 8.25

WEIGHT: 44 oz.

GRIPS: red-stained hardwood

METAL: satin stainless

TRIGGER: SA, 5.75 lb.; DA, 11 lb. (as measured)

SIGHTS: Adjustable rear, fixed blade front with red insert

PRICE: \$800

MANUFACTURER: Ruger, RUGER.COM

DISTRIBUTOR: TALO Distributors, TALOINC.COM

design features you'll find on any other Redhawk, including a triple-locking cylinder (front, rear and bottom) that is both durable and precise, providing positive alignment shot after shot. The front and rear of the cylinder and crane assembly are locked into the frame for the utmost durability. →

BAD NEWS FOR SURVIVAL FOOD

Something just happened that explains why tons and tons of survival food are literally flying off warehouse shelves. We've never seen anything like it before. Right now, our truckers can barely keep up with the rapidly rising demand. We have even been getting reports that this food is actually sold out in many parts of the country – and unfortunately, may be for a while.



WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?

We were determined to figure out why so much survival food has been disappearing... and where it was going. So we did some digging around on our own and it paid off. Wait until you see what we found out. It caught us totally by surprise because it involves a well-known agency that is responsible for aiding Americans in times of crisis. The possibility that they could have something to do with a potential survival food shortage made no sense to us ... unless they knew something we didn't. We were determined to discover the truth for ourselves – and for you.

IT GETS EVEN BETTER - WE HAVE THE PROOF IN WRITING!

Just as we were beginning our investigation, our warehouse manager was shocked to receive a request from an official of that very same agency. They wanted to know:

- How much survival food did we have on hand?
- How quickly we can produce more?
- Where is inventory kept?
- Just how fast could they get their hands on it?

We don't know about you, but any time outsiders starts prying into the affairs of private businesses like ours, we can't help but get concerned – and frankly, we are. After all, here's an agency we never heard from before suddenly asking questions about foods intended solely for emergency use in a disaster. Certainly makes you think, doesn't it?

KNOW WHAT WE HEARD? NOTHING.

It's like talking to a wall. But we're going to keep the pressure on until we get some believable information. The truth is, revealing a plot like this could land us in some serious hot water. There's a reason they're not going public with any details. But we are absolutely convinced they are up to something. And we think you and every other American deserves an explanation.

Listen, we all know most people will be woefully unprepared when disaster strikes. The smart among us prefer to take steps to ensure that in a crisis, we won't be relying on someone else to take care of our families. That's our job.

Anyone not taking action will find themselves in the same boat as millions of other brainwashed

souls who go through life thinking everything is fine. Until one day it is definitely not fine and they are OUT OF LUCK!

GO TO GETFOOD43.COM RIGHT NOW.

We just posted a free video presentation that exposes the truth. You can view it right now at GETFOOD43.COM. We have to warn you that you'll probably think what it shows is really disturbing. Because it sure seems like the American people are being kept in the dark about something that could threaten not only our way of life, but even our very lives.

Go to GETFOOD43.COM now and you'll also learn what is the #1 item to hoard in a crisis and why supplies of this critical item are so low in some places or even completely gone – unavailable at any price.

SEE THIS VIDEO WHILE YOU STILL CAN.

Watch the controversial video that thousands of smart patriots have already seen in recent days. Go to **GETFOOD43.COM** and discover the #1 item most critical in a crisis. Go watch this important video now at **GETFOOD43.COM** before they force us to shut it down. What you'll learn could literally save your family's lives.

LOG ON NOW TO **GETFOOD43.COM**

HANDGUNS | FIRING LINE REPORT | RUGER REDHAWK 2.75

← The grip and frame are machined from a single piece of steel, which adds to the overall strength of the gun's design. Ruger's single spring assembly provides a very smooth trigger pull, a great aid in accuracy. Gone are the blued versions of the Redhawk from years past; the new guns are all stain-

less steel.

"The new Redhawk 2.75-inch version was built to our distributor's specifications, which included a short barrel and a wooden grip with a rounded butt," says Ruger product manager Kurt Hindle. "The grips are red-stained hardwood and are produced by Altamont

in Illinois, and the gun is easy to carry backpacking, hunting or fishing."

The adjustable rear sight has a white outline, and the ramped front sight has a red insert for easy visibility even in low-light conditions. The finish is satin stainless, and like the larger Redhawks, it has a capacity of six rounds of .44



▲ The TALO Distributors-exclusive revolver reimagines the Redhawk as a bear-defense gun that's not as massive as the Super Redhawk and therefore handier to carry.



▲ The diminutive 2.75-inch barrel is tipped with a red-ramp front sight for good visibility in low light. Accuracy was more than acceptable.



▲ The well-designed grip on the Redhawk 2.75 makes the gun a lot more controllable than you'd expect for such a short-barreled .44 Magnum.

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WHY LASERS RULE

Magnum ammunition. Overall weight of the new Redhawk is 44 ounces—still a handful but lighter than the other members of the Redhawk clan and on par with the Super Redhawk Alaskan.

The new Redhawk is compact, but it certainly packs a punch. At the range, I tested the new gun with five different .44 Magnum loads, all of them (by virtue of availability) weighing 240 grains: Hornady XTP, Federal Power-Shok JHP, Winchester JSP, Remington UMC lead and American Eagle JHP. I could have used .44 Special, but since the gun was born a bear revolver, I decided to go ahead and shoot the full-power stuff.

The Redhawk produces a big flash, and I wouldn't ever want to shoot it without muffs unless a bear was trying to eat me, but the recoil wasn't unmanageable. There's considerable muzzle flip (it's a good idea to wear gloves

if you have them), but the rounded, smooth, wooden grip made recoil surprisingly manageable.

Accuracy was good for a short-barreled big bore, and any of the loads are certainly minute-of-bear and pretty impressive for a stubby defensive revolver. The accuracy was aided by a smooth trigger; the Redhawk in single-action mode has a trigger pull of just under six

pounds, and in double-action mode it's just over 11 pounds.

I like that Ruger has reinvested time and money into Redhawk production. It's an excellent revolver with a long and successful lifespan, and it's still as relevant today as it was 30 some years ago. If you're looking for a classic wheel-gun with the goods to keep you safe in bear country, this is it.

ACCURACY RESULTS | RUGER REDHAWK 2.75

.44 Magnum	Bullet Weight (gr.)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Standard Deviation (fps)	Avg. Group (in.)
Hornady XTP	240	1,148	10	1.82
Federal Power-Shok JHP	240	1,137	14	2.04
American Eagle JHP	240	1,165	15	2.17
Winchester JSP	240	1,071	15	2.25
Remington UMC Lead	240	1,093	19	2.88

Notes: Accuracy results are average of four five-shot groups at 15 yards from a fixed rest. Velocities are averages of 10 shots recorded on a ProChrono digital chronograph placed 10 feet from the muzzle. Abbreviations: JHP, jacketed hollow-point; JSP, jacketed softpoint

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December 2, 2015, terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California, I was assigned to a weeklong police Shoot House Instructor course hosted by the San Bernardino County sheriff's department. The course was taught by Phil Singleton, formerly of the SAS, and he focused not on advanced or complicated movements but on simple techniques that work under less-than-ideal conditions.

Singleton began the course by making sure every participant had the requisite safe gun handling and marksmanship to proceed. For starters, we fired at small colored and numbered discs on the periphery of a target. We were encouraged to take our time and ensure absolute precision.

During one particular evolution, after firing several rounds there was a pregnant pause. Those of us on the firing line began glancing over our shoulders at Singleton, assuming he had forgotten to tell us to holster. He hadn't. Suddenly, Singleton yelled, "Gun!" This forced us to reacquire our target and reengage. His point was that you can't relax too soon or take for granted that your rounds will have the desired effect.

Next, Singleton had students walk toward their targets while shooting. Students were told they could walk as fast or slow as they wanted and shoot from whatever distance they could absolutely guarantee accurate hits. Some students walked slowly and fired from farther away while others moved quickly initially then slowed their pace to fire.

The lesson to be learned from this drill was that when you're firing at an adversary, it does you no good to

move faster than you can accurately shoot. Singleton emphasized linear movement, which was critical inside a shoot house, particularly when moving through a structure with team members.

Conversely, moving laterally could place you at risk of being shot by your own teammate, should you move left or right and unexpectedly into your partner's line of fire. Singleton also emphasized the psychological effect that closing distance with linear movement can have on an assailant—particularly when two or more good

a doorway, or to the sound of gunfire as in the case of an active shooter, slowing down enables you to better negotiate obstacles, locate assailants and deliver accurate fire.

Since the mission dictates the appropriate tactics and agencies have different standard operating procedures for team movement, clearing techniques and so forth, the focus of the course was on conducting safe and meaningful live-fire shoot house training as opposed to the nuances of a particular tactical response.

The goal was to get officers to think

Concentrating too much on speed can be detrimental because you can fail to locate an adversary or miss a shot.

guys are approaching the assailant from different directions. This tactic creates a dilemma for the bad guy and can cause him to hesitate, giving the team the upper hand.

The square range drills culminated with students using their peripheral vision to avoid empty ammunition boxes and traffic cones and stepping over brooms suspended by five-gallon buckets while engaging various targets. These makeshift range props simulated the types of obstacles one will likely encounter while moving through a structure.

Singleton stressed that clearing a structure at breakneck speed while shooting known targets was no way to prepare for a gunfight. In fact, concentrating too much on speed can be detrimental because you can fail to locate an adversary or miss a shot. While there are times to pick up the pace, such as when moving through

rather than merely shoot. Therefore, there was a good mix of "no-shoot" targets interspersed with hostile targets. And regardless of the tactics being employed, communication was paramount. Often times this communication was from one team member to another but at times, communication from officer to suspect or officer to hostage was required.

While you may not have access to a world-renowned instructor like Phil Singleton, a live-fire shoot house or a team of highly trained police officers, you can and should supplement square range drills with this type of training. Shoot house training can be conducted safely affordably—and realistically—in the comfort of your own home with airsoft guns and appropriate protective gear. After all, what's the point of being a proficient shooter if your skills don't hold up under real-world conditions?

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