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MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2011

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• **JOHN CONNOR**

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Vague Terms

A quality technical publication should strive for clear and accurate language. Now you are even using the vague term "sixgun" on your cover. I'm disappointed.

John Cruse
Des Moines, Wash.

Considering Sixguns is the title of the most iconic book on the subject written by none other than the father of the .44 Magnum, Elmer Keith, I feel we're on good ground using the term.—Editor

Get It Right

In the June issue on page 70 in the caption for the right hand photo of Spc. Michael Scarsbrook, It states that: "his unit had been attacked by an Improvised Explosive Device two days earlier." Spc. Scarbrook was attacked by the Taliban or enemy combatants using an IED.

An IED in an inanimate object with no will of its own. As distasteful and devastating as IED's are, they are just not capable of attacking people without being placed by someone.

David Lundeen
via e-mail

Victoria Cross

Aren't the Aussie's a class act? An "Investiture Ceremony" for Australia's highest honor for valor sounds so much classier to my ear than an awards ceremony which sort of sounds like a paper from the principal for good handwriting. Thanks for carrying the story. It's too bad our newspapers won't carry stories of such heroism. Things sure have changed since WWII. Keep up the good work.

Chuck Voigtsberger
Ventura, Calif.

Someone Goof?

Just received my June issue today. This is the first issue as far back as I

can remember that the cover didn't show some version of a 1911 semi-automatic. The handgun shown is actually a "revolver," although it is reminiscent of a Jeep with a Hemi engine.

Vernon E. Bang
Plano, Texas

Devil Dogs

Mr. Connor wrote the Germans gave the Marines their nickname "Devil Dogs" or Teufel Hunden after the Battle on Belleau Wood in 1918.

The Marines gave themselves that sobriquet according to Bob Aquilina of the Marine Corps history Division. He wrote that there is no credible evidence German troops dubbed their adversaries "Devil Dogs."

Mr. Aquilina continues "The term very likely was first used by Marines themselves and appeared in print before the Battle for Belleau Wood. It gained notoriety in the decades following World War I and still has become a part of Marine Corps tradition."

Bill Pooley
via e-mail

Bill, this one sent me back to the search engines for a couple of hours. There are hundreds of source citations "proving" pro, con and "far-out other" theories on the origin of "Devil Dogs." As a longtime subscriber to Leatherneck Magazine, I'm familiar with and have great respect for Mr. Aquilina's research. Before presuming the Marines absolutely gave themselves that sobriquet, however, consider this quote from Stars & Stripes on the subject: "Indeed, a Marine Corps magazine, reported in April 1918 that Germans referred to Marines as "teufel hunden," two months before Belleau Wood, according to Aquilina."

The deeper you look, the murkier the waters. It seems as though every claim or statement has to be prefaced with "allegedly" these days, and this one's no exception. Thanks for weighing in, Bill. —Connor

GUNS

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SHOTGUNNER

• HOLT BODINSON •

CZ'S UPLAND ULTRALIGHT A delight to carry afield.

If you're an upland game hunter, you'll know the truth of the comment, "You'll be carrying your gun a lot more than you'll be shooting it." Gun weight matters, particularly when you might cover miles of cover during the day. Age, stature and physical conditioning count, too, when selecting an upland gun. So when a pleasantly light, stackbarrel, 12-gauge made its appearance at the recent SHOT Show, I just had to wring it out. I say there is no sense wearing yourself out by toting more gun than you need for the job. Meet CZ-USA's latest, the Upland Ultralight.

Based in Kansas City, Kan., CZ-USA was formed in 1998 as the exclusive US importer for Ceska Zbrojovka and Brno products from the Czech Republic. It is also the holding company for the Dan Wesson revolver and pistol line. Today, CZ-USA imports a line of shotguns from the prominent Turkish shotgun-manufacturing center, Huglu, which has been the source of every quality of shotgun from the finest-grade trap gun to the least expensive repeater. Huglu makes the Upland Ultralight to CZ's specifications, and the result is a nice-handling field gun at a most attractive price.

I vividly remember when I saw my first "ultralight" shotgun. Then in my teens, I had restored a



A flushing quail would be hard pressed to fly through this pattern of 7-1/2s. The Xs mark spots with three or more pellets inside the clay.

Remington derringer for a neighboring doctor. In return, he would invite me from time-to-time to go pheasant hunting with him, his wife and their two English setters. In those days, I was shooting my father's 12-gauge Fox Sterlingworth with 30" barrels bored modified/full and stocked with a splinter forearm. The Fox wasn't exactly a 6-pound English game gun, but I was young and strong, and I could get it on target in a microsecond. It was his wife's 20 gauge that fascinated me.

I had seen it once in Stoeger's wish book of a catalog. Advertised as the "World's Lightest Automatic," it was the 5-pound, 2-ounce Franchi Hunter model and, as I recall, she had a



The Upland Ultralight is a non-ejector (above), which saves hulls and eliminates trash in the field. The red, polymer front bead (below) is easily picked-up along the ventilated rib. To save weight, the rib between the barrels has been eliminated.

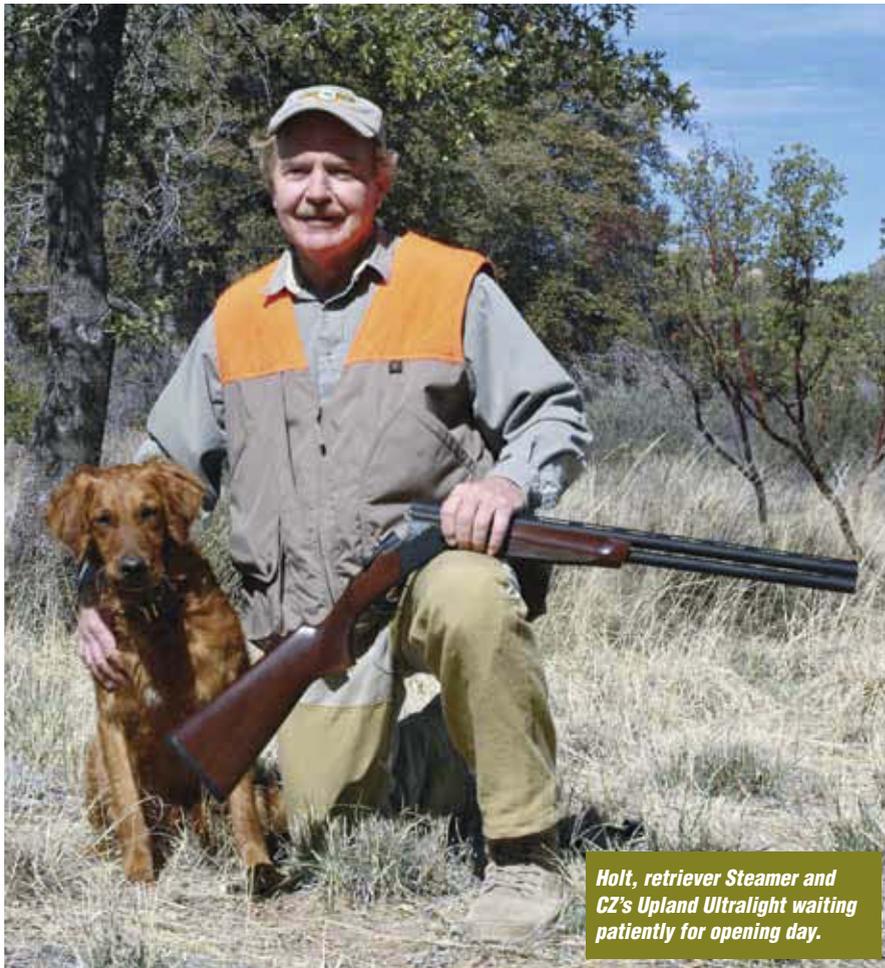


heck of a time keeping it feeding, firing, ejecting and hitting something when we were afield. Yet, when she handed me that Franchi to try, and I felt that little feather of a gun in my hands, I would have traded off the Sterlingworth in a New York minute if it had been mine.

When Jason Morton of CZ-USA told me he had a new 6-pound O/U, 12-gauge Upland Ultralight, I was intrigued. The Upland Ultralight is available with both 26" and 28" ventilated rib barrels and a full complement of screw-in choke tubes. I requested the 26" model



The Upland Ultralight was really light, weighing only 5 pounds, 13 ounces, and is well proportioned with pleasing lines. The rakish forearm of the CZ is de rigeur these days. The pistol-grip stock enhances control of these ultralight shotguns.



Holt, retriever Steamer and CZ's Upland Ultralight waiting patiently for opening day.

as a reasonable balance between portability and momentum of swing. When the CZ arrived, I weighed it on my Sunbeam scale. It certainly was an "ultralight" weighing in at 5 pounds, 13 ounces.

I was curious to determine how the weight reduction had been achieved. A magnet applied to the receiver proved it was not steel, and in the catalog, the receiver is described as being an "alloy." All the working parts of the action, of course, are steel, including the two trunnions that support the steel monobloc. Another significant design feature that reduced the weight of the CZ is that the barrels are joined only at the breech and at the muzzle. The typical mid-rib used to join O/U barrels was eliminated, as was its weight.

The CZ action is nicely put up. The Upland Ultralight is a non-ejector which suits me fine because I want those empty hulls to reload and, more importantly, trashing good hunting grounds with fired hulls is unethical and in many states today, illegal. The single selective trigger of the CZ is controlled by a sliding latch on the safety. Pushed to the left, the upper barrel is fired and to the right, the lower barrel. The selective trigger is

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ACTION TYPE:

O/U

GAUGE:

12 gauge (3" chamber)

CHOKE TUBES:

IC, IM, M, F

CAPACITY:

2

BARREL LENGTH:

26"

OVERALL LENGTH:

43-3/4"

WEIGHT:

6 pounds

FINISH:

Matte black

SIGHT:

Red polymer bead

STOCK:

Walnut

LENGTH OF PULL:

14-1/2"

DROP AT COMB:

1-1/2"

DROP AT HEEL:

2-1/4"

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SHOTGUNNER

reset by recoil, and on my Lyman electronic trigger scale, its weight-of-pull was consistent at 5 pounds, 9 ounces.

The stocking was in plain-grained walnut. I didn't think there was a plain-grained piece of walnut in all of Turkey. Anyway, the forearm features a slanted back, racy form that's fashionable these days. The buttstock carries a pistol grip, which I believe is important to firmly control the swing of an ultralight shotgun. English-style, straight grips are often associated with lightweight guns and definitely create a streamlined appearance, but what you gain in good looks, you often lose in subtle handling qualities.

The buttstock of the CZ is terminated with a thin, rigid, rubber pad with a hard, polished, snag-proof heel section designed to glide the butt over your clothes as you mount the gun—a nice touch and very European. After shooting the Upland Ultralight though, I would have to say that the factory pad is too thin and too rigid for a 6-pound 12 gauge. The CZ needs a pad like the Pachmayr Decelerator or the Limbsaver to soak-up recoil in this light a gun. I think Huglu planned it that way by putting a very generous 14-1/2" length-of-pull on the gun.

Wood-to-metal fit throughout the gun is excellent.

The overall finish of the CZ is subdued. The exposed metal is finished in a dull, matte black and the stocks in a low sheen.

I was pleased with the balance of the CZ, even with its 26" barrels. The balance point is about 1/2" forward of the trunnions, so the weight is well distributed between both hands, making the Upland Ultralight fast and smooth to get into action.

The first thing I did at the range was to test the gun's point-of-impact. The CZ was dead-on center, which says they know something about regulating O/U field guns in Huglu, Turkey. I then patterned the gun at the



While too thin to be effective, the buttpad did sport a snag-proof heel. The CZ's barrel selector switch is integrated into the sliding safety.



reasonable upland game distance of 30 yards using improved cylinder choke tubes and firing Remington 1-1/8-ounce STS Light Target loads of 7-1/2s. The pattern pictured is typical of the results on the clay-sized vitals of game birds hit (X'ed) with a minimum of three pellets and speaks well for the future performance of the CZ in the field.

Following patterning, I shot a half a case of Trius-thrown clays to evaluate my ability to hit with the gun and to judge the relative comfort of shooting light-to-heavy loads in a 6-pound 12 gauge.

Hitting clays flying at different angles and heights was easy. The Upland Ultralight handles like a champ.

Recoil was another matter. I selected four loads for evaluation. From light-to-heavy, they were: Winchester's 1,180 fps, Xtra-Lite target load of 1 ounce of 7-1/2s; Remington's 1,145 fps, STS Light Target load of 1-1/8 ounce of 7-1/2s; Winchester's 1,250 fps, Super-Handicap, heavy target load of 1-1/8 ounce of 7-1/2s and Winchester's 1,300 fps, Double X Magnum turkey load of 1-1/2 ounce of 4s.

The first two loads were very pleasant to shoot. Moving up to Winchester's 1,250 fps heavy target load, I began to be conscious of recoil. The 1,300 fps, 1-1/2-ounce turkey load was simply too much of a good thing. It was painful. And to think that this gun is supplied with a 3" chamber!

The Upland Ultralight was designed for upland game, and 1- to 1-1/8-ounce loads will get the job done and done pleasantly in this 6-pound 12-gauge gun, particularly with the factory installed recoil pad, which I would still change out regardless of loadings.

I enjoyed working with the Upland Ultralight. It's a great concept gun by CZ and a tribute to the workmanship of Huglu. All my retriever and I needed was an open season to really put it through its paces.

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OPTICS

• JACOB GOTTFREDSON •



Tony Burkes looking through Premier's tactical offering. The illumination and parallax adjustment knobs are integrated. A revolution indicator keeps the shooter aware of where he is, which extends when moved to the second revolution. Extremely useful reticles as well. The Lever Lock system allows removing the turret to re-zero without wrenches.



The Zeiss Victory Diavari 6-24x56 T FL scope is on a Nesika sniper rifle. The glass is excellent with superior light transmission, resolution, contrast and color balance.



The Hensoldt is a true long-range tactical scope with superior optics like its Zeiss cousin. It is shown here aboard a Barrett .338 Lapua Mag at a recent tactical match.

THE FAR SHOT

Using tactical long-range riflescopes.

Optics used by tactical long-range shooters should be reliable, tough and highly flexible as well as possess superior optical glass. Those specifications don't often come with an inexpensive price tag. On the other hand, if you are faced with an enemy, or even competing, you want the best that can be had, either from your department, your unit or your wallet.

You're on the 400-yard line. Each competitor has been given a number, and one of the many targets on the line has yours written on it. You squint at the targets, trying to decide which is yours. The numbers seem light, gray and almost indistinguishable. The event is timed, and you are getting a bit antsy, then nervous and, finally, downright frustrated trying to find yours.

That scenario indicates a lack of fine resolution as well as poor contrast. And it is not an uncommon situation. But for those willing to put out the bucks, and depending on your visual acuity, there are manufacturers who have taken the time and effort to produce "best in class glass." Among them are Leupold's Tactical Mark 4 ER/T series, Nightforce's NXS, US Optics' T-Pal series, Premier Reticles' Tactical, Schmidt & Bender's PM series, Zeiss' Tactical and Hensoldt.

These world-class offerings range in price from about \$1,600 to as high as \$3,500 retail and up, depending on model, reticle, illumination, front or rear focal-plane reticle, zero stop and objective size. All have parallax adjustment.

You will see any or all of these at any tactical-rifle match that includes police, military and civilians. It might be difficult to say one of them is more prominent than any of the others. However, since Zeiss, Hensoldt and Premier Reticles' tactical scopes are so new to the market and relatively more expensive, there are fewer of them.

Targets at such matches are shot from as little as 11' to 1,000 yards and beyond. Such shooting is more difficult to do with a fixed-power scope, thus I would venture to say all are variables, ranging from 2-10X to 8.5-32X. However, for very close work, the smaller end of the range suffers from a blurred image at very close range at anything above about 3.5X to 5.5X. Most use variables with a low end of about 3.5X to 5X and a top end of about 15X to 25X.

Parallax adjustment is essential. Precision work is often required, and when it is, the scope has to be parallax free.

Most of these scopes, if not all of them, use some sort of hashmark or bar system as part of the reticle. Most of the hashmark systems are mils and

SOME OF THE MORE POPULAR RIFLESCOPES UP TO THE TASK FOR TACTICAL SHOOTERS

MAKER	MAGNIFICATION	WEIGHT (OUNCES)	LENGTH (INCHES)	ADJUSTMENT RANGE*	EYE RELIEF (INCHES)	FOV** (FEET)	PRICE
Zeiss	6-24x50mm	29.1	14.84	+576"/576" @100y	3.54	18.7 - 5.1	\$3,000
Hensoldt	6-24x56mm	30	15.16	+80/35cm @100m	3.6	20 - 5.6	\$3,500
Leupold	6.5-20x50mm	22	14.5	70"/70" @100y	3.6	14.3 - 5.5	\$1,625
Schmidt & Bender	5-25x56mm	38.1	16.14	+26/6 MRAD	3.35	17.4 - 4.9	\$3,200
Premier	5-25x56mm	39	16.34	108"/43" @100y	3.54	20 - 5	\$3,300
US Optics	5-25x58mm	40	18	60-68"/24" @100y	3.5	17 - 5.5	\$2,640
Nightforce	5.5-22x56mm	32	15.2	100/60 MOA	3.9	17.5 - 4.7	\$2,353

Note: *The first number is the elevation adjustment, the second number is the windage adjustment.

**FOV is field of view at 100 yards. These are not the only powers or models available.

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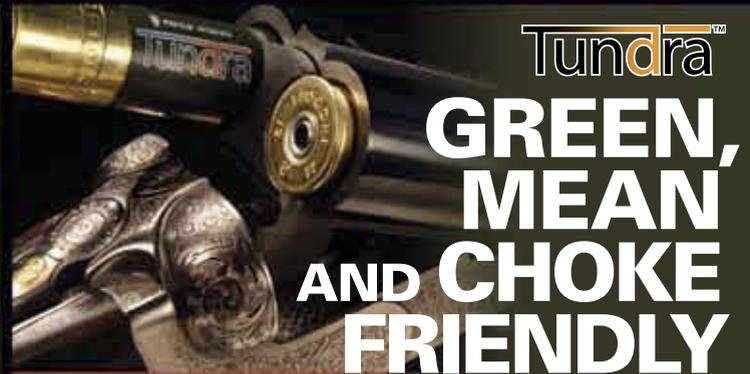
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some MOA. A few are in inches and some are progressive like the Zeiss RZ1000. Shooters are good about spotting for other shooters and they normally make their calls in mils. For example, the spotter calls .3 mils right. If you have a reticle like the one from Schmidt and Bender, you can move



This Leupold LR Tactical 6.5x20 with TMR reticle represents the firm's top of the line and is used by numerous military units. It provides 70-MOA adjustment for both elevation and windage. Jacob used this scope on his .50 BMG for several years. Very rugged and reliable. The mil-bar reticle is extremely useful over Mil-Dots for very long range.



Nightforce NXS is a popular tactical scope. This particular model has the NP-R2 reticle and is 5.5-22x50mm with sunshade mounted on a Nighthawk .308. It has illumination in the parallax adjustment knob. Jacob used both the 5.5x22 and the 3.5x15, and gave them hard use for 10 years without problems.



US Optics has made great strides in the long-range tactical market. This rifle is owned and shot by George Gardner, owner of G.A. Precision. Jacob believes the one pictured is the 3.5-17x44mm. The one chosen for the chart is the 5-25x58mm. Dual elevation and windage rebound springs make this scope very reliable.



Schmidt & Bender is one of the top riflescopes among shooters who are willing to put out the money for top-quality glass, function and reticle usability. Note that the turrets are marked in 1 click = .1 MRAD. Also, the elevation turret is color coded so the shooter knows what revolution he is working with and the 100-minute adjustment range can be covered in just two turns of the knob.

right .3 mils easily. If you have a scope with inch or MOA hashmarks, you will soon be able to make the conversion quickly to your own hashmark system. For example, 1 mil at 100 yards is 3.6". Thus, .3 mils is 1.08" or approximately 1 MOA. The shooter moves 1 MOA right.

These scopes all have both tactical or target turrets as well. If you prefer not to change distances using the hashmarks, you simply dial. That can become a bit confusing since the turrets might be marked in inches, MOA, cm or MRAD. That requires a scope with internals precise and reliable enough that turning the turret continues to give you what you want.

That is also true because the shooter moves from one target distance to another constantly and is thus turning the turrets constantly. There would be little value in that if the amount differed each time. Thus, the shooter must have faith that when he turns the turret to 16, it gives him 16 every time. And when turned back to zero, the bullet will center the bull at 100 yards or meters every time. Also, if the turret is marked 1/4" per click, it should be just that for every click. Although the scope might be perfect, the conditions are forever changing, resulting in slightly different settings over time.

Look for a scope that is rugged and works satisfactorily year after year. I have two Nightforce and several Mark 4 Leupold scopes I have used for about 10 years in many matches, training and tuning sessions, and to evaluate rifles and ammo. After having shot thousands of rounds, I have yet to note any fault with them, and I am confident that when I turn the turret to hit at 100, 600 or 1,000 yards, that is what I am going to get.

Resolution

The quality of the glass is equally important. The Hensoldt scope in the accompanying table is advertised as being at or below 3 arc seconds of resolution. Most of those in the table are at or near that range. They all have very good contrast and clarity with no fringing or bleeding at the edges of objects.

At the risk of being redundant, let me say again that besides optic quality, reliability is at the top of the list for a tactical scope. Shooters are constantly moving the elevation turret. Some hold off for wind, others dial. In any case, those clicks have to produce at every range, every time. For most small calibers in the range of .338 Lapua Mag and below, most shooters zero at 100 yards. He may have to shoot at several ranges from 11' to 1,000 yards or more during the day. But when he returns to

the 100-yard line, the rifle and scope must hit center bull again after many turns of the elevation turret.

Many shooters also include a 20-MOA Picatinny base rail to mount quality rings, thus extending the range of their scopes while keeping the reticle closer to center for all ranges. Some tactical actions, such as the Surgeon, provide an integral Picatinny rail.

In a phrase: You get what you pay for. For most hunters shooting in the 250-yard range and less, almost any scope will do. But if you extend that range and shoot hundreds if not thousands of rounds a year, most lower-priced scopes are not up to the task. I have heard it said by manufacturers of the average scope for the average hunter that you can expect about 3,000 rounds before it is time to replace it. Personally, I wonder if it is anywhere near that many. In any case, that represents more than a lifetime of hunting. For the tactical shooter, 3,000 rounds come and go pretty quickly.

De Oppresso Liber.

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RIFLEMAN

• DAVE ANDERSON •

AIRY THOUGHTS

Shoot simply, shoot a lot.

“But how is it done?” asked Kim in the classic book by Rudyard Kipling. Lurgan replied, **“By doing it many times over till it is done perfectly—for it is worth doing.”**

In this modern era of education, learning such basics as spelling and arithmetic through repetition (“by rote” the modern experts say derisively) is considered outdated if not downright abusive. Which is why so many high school, even university graduates can’t write a coherent sentence or figure a restaurant tip without a calculator.

I suppose it’s understandable for people to think skills can likewise be acquired without serious effort. It’s just a matter of knowing the right tricks. Well, there is such a thing as proper form. Certainly lessons from a capable coach can save a lot of trial and error. But for true skill—unconscious skill, to perform under stress and on demand—the neural paths must be trained through repetition.

If you want to shoot a rifle well, you have to shoot. I know, it sounds obvious. It surprises me how many people I meet who like rifles, like hunting with rifles, yet don’t enjoy shooting. Or at least, they don’t shoot enough to be really capable.

This isn’t unique to firearms. I had an uncle who was very knowledgeable about photography. He owned a succession of high-quality cameras, both 35mm and large format. He loved to handle them, talk about them, compare makes and models. On topics such as shutter accuracy and lens resolution his knowledge was profound. But in the last 25 years of his life I doubt if he used five rolls of film.

Christmas at age 11 was a lucky one for me. My parents gave me a spring-piston, barrel-cocking pellet rifle – a “Liberty,” made in Czechoslovakia. Whether by accident or design, it was exactly what I needed. It was a single-shot so I learned to make each shot count. It was quiet and virtually recoilless, so I never learned to flinch. Unlike my old BB-gun, it was extremely accurate. And unlike Dad’s .22, I could afford to shoot it.



This TechForce TF Jet barrel-cocking, spring-piston rifle shoots .177” pellets at a bit over 1,000 fps. Cocking the powerful spring takes considerable effort, it certainly is not a rifle for youths.



This is an adult-sized .177” spring-piston rifle by Cometa. Velocity is around 600 fps making it relatively easy to cock and pleasant to shoot.



This Liberty spring-pistol rifle was made in Czechoslovakia. It was a present Dave got for Christmas 1960. Fifty years later he still takes it shooting once in a while.

Rimfire .22s were out of my price range. Even .22 Shorts were .49¢ a box. But for less than a buck I could buy a tin of 500 pellets. Moreover, I could shoot most anywhere on the farm; in the basement in winter, around the yard in summer. I could shoot sparrows in the barn or machine shed without punching holes in the roof.

And shoot I did. From that Christmas until I left at age 17 to attend university, it was very seldom a tin of 500 pellets lasted a week. Over roughly a 6-year period, I shot around 150,000 pellets, and that is a conservative estimate.

We don’t get a do-over on our childhood years. But whatever your age, if you like to shoot and want to shoot better you need an air rifle. I don’t know how anyone who loves to shoot rifles can do without one, or would want to.

Air With Style

Today we have a wealth of splendid choices. Pre-charged pneumatics (PCP) are the most sophisticated. The best of them, such as Daystate and Air Force, are simply amazing. Because they are so advanced they tend to be on the high end of airgun costs. Velocity can be adjusted for specific needs, from basement targets to hunting. They are extremely consistent and accurate, with little recoil.

Pump-up pneumatics have similar advantages, the downside being they need several pumps to build pressure, rather than drawing compressed air from a tank or bottle.

My personal preference is for spring-piston designs. I recognize their disadvantages; greater recoil than pneumatics (hard on scopes), single-shot capacity and the more powerful models tend to be long, heavy and take strength to cock.

Advantages: simplicity of operation (no air bottles or tanks needed), 1-stroke cocking, moderate cost and durability. Given reasonable care they last almost indefinitely.

Of course everyone wants power. More power! For training purposes I think a super-powerful spring-piston rifle is a mistake. A 1,000+ fps spring-piston rifle is necessarily long and heavy to contain its powerful spring, which in



The TechForce TF87 is an underlever-cocking, spring-piston rifle with velocities over 1,000 fps in .177. It's a man-sized rifle weighing around 9 pounds and takes considerable effort to cock. Velocities can exceed 1,100 fps with light pellets. A fine hunting rifle but the weight and cocking effort are more than Dave desires for casual plinking.



turn takes a lot of strength to cock.

Something in the 500 or 600 fps range is lighter, much easier to cock and more pleasant to shoot. It's just hard to convince people this is what they need. It seems invariably people start reading about "magnum power!" or "smashes through the 1,000 fps barrier!" They forget their good intentions and buy the biggest and fastest.

Soon they get tired of the weight, develop a hernia from cocking the powerful spring and realize they likely aren't going to hunt rabbits and crows with it anyway. The rifle gets sold, or stored away and forgotten, and the shooter goes back to searching the net for the "secret" of becoming a better shot.

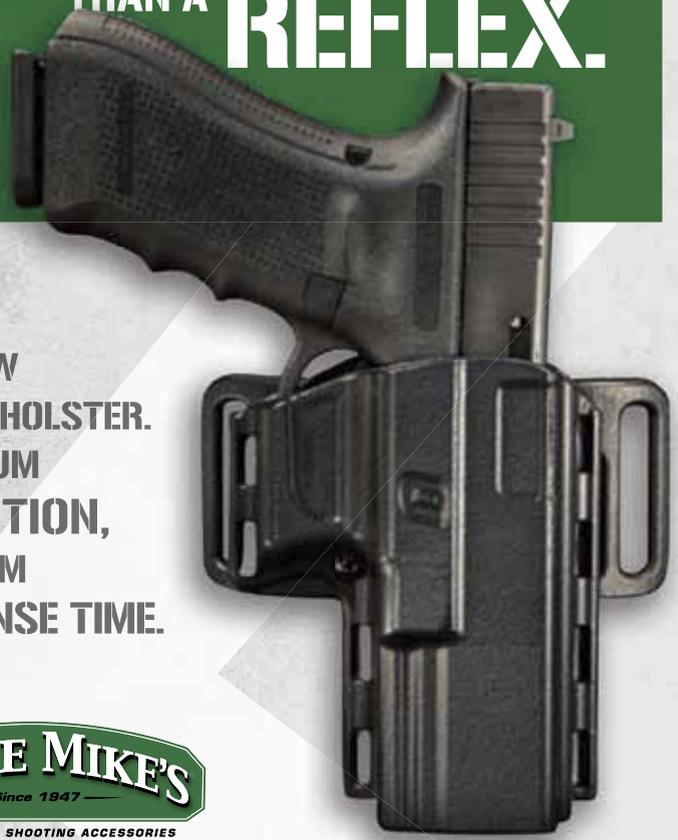
Here's what you do: get in touch with the airgun enthusiasts at Pyramid Air. Tell them you want a rifle you can shoot a lot. If you don't mind the cost they may recommend a PCP, or for less money they'll set you up with a moderately-powered, spring-piston rifle you will actually use. If you don't enjoy shooting it, all I can say is you don't enjoy shooting.

As for me, I'm going outside to shoot my Christmas air rifle. Fifty years old, never a nickel spent on repairs, and it shoots as well as ever. **GUNS**

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GOOD GEAR

These are very solid items.

I have been fortunate to have jobs I liked all of my adult life. This writing—using the term loosely on my part—is fun and, although I am not great at it, I think most of the time I can contribute something to the folks who might read my columns. Part of the fun aspect is getting to use really good gear.

Starting his business in 1983, Craig Spegel is quickly approaching three decades of stock making for handguns. His work and designs are copied by many and stolen by some, but in neither case are they ever equaled, in my opinion. Craig has made over 20,000 pairs of stocks over the years and the revolver stocks made by him are unmatched in fit, function and quality of wood. Spegel's absolute forte is the revolver stock, and I hardly own a revolver that doesn't have a pair of stocks either of the boot-grip or full-grip design. The boot-grip design is a personal favorite, even on N-frame Smith & Wessons and they provide a degree of concealment while providing a positive, solid, grip area.

Spegel's stocks come in smooth or checkered formats; the smooth are prettier, but the checkered are more functional as the smooth versions are finished so well that they can be a bit slippery sometimes. Grips are offered for J, K, L and N frames for round or

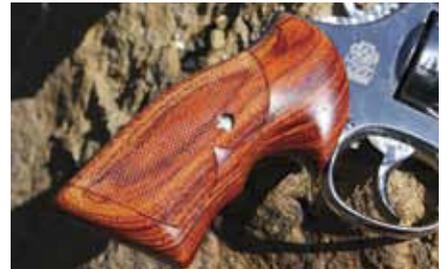
square butt. There is also a conversion setup that allows for round-butt guns to be fitted to wear a square-butt set of stocks.

So the pistol people don't get a lip on, Spegel also makes stocks for auto-loading pistols, with the bulk of them being for the 1911 or Browning P-35 Hi-Power. These are set up to use either single-sided or Swenson ambi-type safeties.

Broad spectrums of woods are available including Ebony, Rosewood, Kingwood and Pau Ferro, to name a few.

Talking to Craig, I asked what wood he liked most and "a high-grade cocobolo" was his reply, almost before I got the question out. This Central American hardwood comes in a variety of shades and textures. With these creations of nature, Craig Spegel produces some spectacular looking and functional products. I can recommend them without reservation.

With the price of ammunition



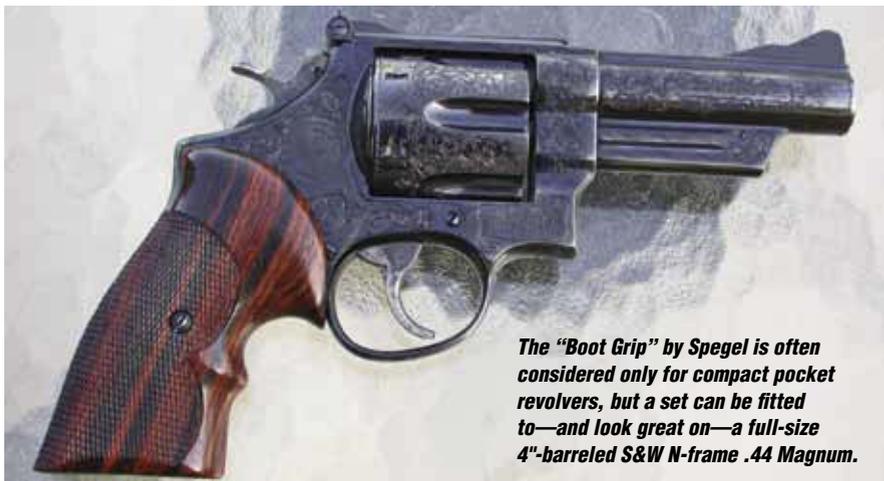
If you desire a little more gripping surface, Spegel also makes an "Extended Boot Grip" (above) to give a little more purchase to larger hands. The Loading Tray from CNC shooters (below) is a well-made, heavy-duty unit of aluminum and come marked for a specific caliber.



today it is probably wise to consider loading ammunition or, more properly put, reloading ammunition. I have a nominal six presses set up to load my favorite calibers, or the calibers for which I prefer to generate my own "type" of loads.

The calibers I load for in the greatest volume are rifle calibers; those being .308 and .338 Lapua because of costs considerations. While loading rifle cartridges on my Redding press with Redding dies, I set up a system where I load 50 cartridges at a time in an assembly-like line; sizing, re-priming and so forth. When the time comes I put the powder in all the cases before moving them to set the projectile in place.

Therein lies the hitch. On more than one occasion I have "bumped" the tray on the table or dropped it and, if you load, you know the next joyful event is the act of the powder being spilled all over—which means a complete do-over for all the charges dropped into the cases. It is often a test of will as mutterings of profanity are suppressed while cleaning up 4,500 grains of powder off the floor.



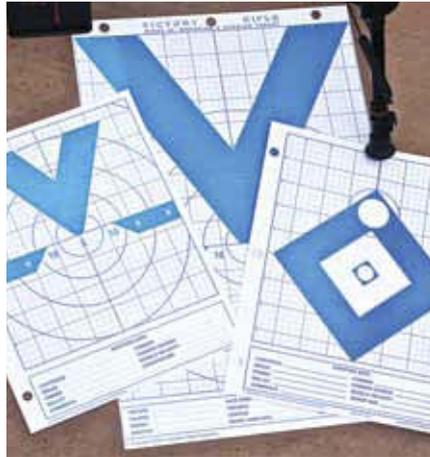
The "Boot Grip" by Spegel is often considered only for compact pocket revolvers, but a set can be fitted to—and look great on—a full-size 4"-barreled S&W N-frame .44 Magnum.

So, my SF friend Pete introduces me to a guy named Tom Sziller. Tom created a well-made, very heavy, functional loading block tray that preempts me dropping stuff all over the floor. The CNC Shooter 50-round loading blocks are precisely cut, the holes are deeper for extra support, they are heavy and won't slide around. Each tray is made of aluminum and is marked caliber-specific. I bought a bunch of them and they are one of the best reloading tools I have had in a very long time. In short, they work great! If you load you should take a look at these trays.

Targets

Often small things help make our lives a bit easier and, even in shooting, teaching and writing (so to speak) this is a truism. While you can use about anything for a target when shooting including road signs—my biggest pet peeve about gun owners (preempted only by unsafe handling). Trust me, it is still pretty cool to have targets that are solid and well founded in design and construction.

Even though steel is good, it probably works out most of us can shoot paper more than anything else, due to the environment/location of where we shoot or by the rules of the range we use. One of the really good targets I



Mountain Plains Ind. targets come in a wide variety of shapes designed for broad spectrum of sights, from coarse iron barrel sights to high-magnification scopes.

use, often take for granted and forget to mention in the articles I do are the targets by Mountain Plains Industries based in Lynchburg, Virg. Based on two major systems, the Precision Plus series and the Victory Series, the targets allow for a broad spectrum of applications for all kinds of firearms.

The Precision Plus series are primarily designed for scoped firearms, while the Victory Series addresses open-sight firearms. Printed on the

highest-quality, heavy-grade paper, the targets come in a 25-count pad and they are pre-punched with binder holes for people into serious documentation and record keeping. A color-coded system allows the shooter to select the correct target for the shooting task at hand. One of the reasons I personally like the Mountain Plains targets is the consistent repeatability of hold, based on the targets design. Even though I can't say the MPIs make me shoot better, I can say I sure can't blame the target when the shots don't come out the way I'd like! Try some MPI targets; I think you'll like them. **GUNS**

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GUNSMITHING

• HAMILTON S. BOWN •

NEW LIFE

The art of barrel reboring.

Barrel reboring is one of those obscure but vital services to the gun trade that gives life to all manner of restoration, repair and custom gunmaking projects. This short column will hardly do the subject justice but it is important just to touch on it. Reboring, as opposed to making a rifled tube from scratch, is simply removing existing rifling and cutting new rifling in a larger caliber. Believe me, use of the word “simply” is highly misleading because the process is a complicated art that takes a lifetime to master. Which is why, important as it is, there are few successful practitioners.

The reboring process is simple in theory but equipment-rich and heavily nuanced, requiring a sophisticated understanding of machine-tool processes. A barrel is fixtured on a lathe-like machine. Then, a piloted counter-bore (a guided, square-ended drill) is run into the barrel to remove the bulk of the material between the existing bore and the new rifling.

To smooth this cut and bring it to final size, an unpiloted reamer is run through next. At this point, reborers may hand lap the barrel, a precision polishing process to smooth out imperfections and tool marks and to ascertain a consistent bore diameter all the way through—critical to good accuracy in a barrel.

Last, the tube is rifled with a special cutting head with an adjustable cutter. Multiple small, progressively deeper cuts are made until the target groove depth is achieved. The last step is to lap the finished product. The process may involve two or three precision machines with high-pressure tool lubrication systems and countless bits of specialized tooling in the form of reamers and cutters, each dedicated to a specific caliber.

Why?

Only someone with a hopelessly stunted imagination can fail to see the possibilities in this “simple” process. One of the most basic and common reasons to rebores is to save a gun with



The rifling machine is at work on an octagonal rifle barrel. Quite a lot of machinery and skill is required to rebores a rifle barrel.

a rotten bore. No trouble to take a tired .30-06 and turn it into a new .35 Whelen. Other reasons would include simply wanting a .35 Whelen and not wanting to go to the trouble or expense of making and fitting a whole new barrel. Plus, what if the original barrel was some cool form like a half-round, half-octagon with a full rib seen from time to time on Continental sporting magazine rifles? One of the guys in my shop didn't like having 300-grain .44 Mag bullets going through the target (or deer) sideways, thanks to a very slow rifling twist rate in a Marlin lever gun, so he found a .30-30 barrel and had it rebored with a faster twist to stabilize these projectiles.

Rebores projects are hardly confined to long guns. We build numerous custom revolvers every year around rebored barrels. One of the most popular revolver caliber



This fancy .44 Special Old Model Ruger features a rebored .357 Magnum barrel. A very popular caliber conversion.

conversions of all times, thanks to Skeeter Skelton, is turning a .357 Magnum Ruger Blackhawk into a .44 Special. Even though Ruger finally got into the act, there are countless vintage guns still seeking treatment. A particular favorite with our customers is reboring a Smith & Wesson K22 .22 rimfire barrel to .32 and modifying it to fit a Ruger Single-Six. Speaking of S&Ws, countless M28 .357s have been converted to .44 Special; many more .38/44 Heavy Duty models to .45 Colt. Consider the time and treasure required to produce an accurate replica of a pre-war Smith & Wesson 4" round barrel with an ejector shroud and integral front sight. Thinking about the necessary contoured milling cutters alone, to say nothing of the cost, gives me a headache.

We are blessed to have a first-rate reboring operation to assist with shop projects. Founded by American Custom Gunmakers Guild member Jim Dubell, Clearwater Reboring, a division of Delta Gun Shop, offers a wide variety of reboring and relining services under the capable tutelage of Allen Baker. Jim and Allen took over the machinery of Cliff LaBounty, a real pioneer in the world of high-quality reboring, when Cliff retired in 2004. Since then Clearwater Reboring



As you can see, this tapered, ribbed Smith & Wesson N-frame .357 barrel displays numerous complex compound curves and would be a nightmare to make without specialized tooling. Easy to rebores, however.

has continued in the tradition. Not only can they rebores ordinary rifle and revolver barrels, but also double rifle and combination-gun barrel sets.

I have a hammerless, sidelock Lancaster rook-rifle project underway that now sports a lustrous .300 Rook-caliber liner, helping to revive this lovely little gun. Finally succumbing to constant badgering from the vocal vintage single-shot rifle community, there are occasionally even tubes emerging from the shop with Henry- and Metford-style rifling. Makes one giddy at the mere thought of it. Jim and Allen have produced countless beautiful and accurate rebores for us

over the years that have enabled us to offer a greater, unique variety of custom handguns. Without their skills and capabilities, a lot of gunmaking operations would be much diminished.

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HANDLOADING

• JOHN BARNES •

THE .270 WITHOUT H4831 Is it possible?

The combination of Hodgdon H4831 and the .270 Winchester is as common as french fries and ketchup, and works so well many handloaders never bother to experiment with any other powder. To tell the truth, they aren't exactly wrong. My loading notes indicate I've handloaded for 14 .270s over nearly 40 years, and almost every rifle shot 130- to 150-grain bullets at high velocity with good-to-excellent accuracy when loaded with H4831. So why change?

Well, in a way we already have. The original H4831 was a World War II military-surplus powder for 20mm cannons. After the war, a young salesman named Bruce Hodgdon started marketing mil-surp powders, at first the IMR4895 developed by DuPont in the 1930s for the .30-06's new 152-grain military load. Hodgdon packaged both 4895 and the slower-burning H4841 in everything from paper bags to small kegs at really affordable prices, helping to make handloading the popular pastime it is today.

The supply of mil-surp H4831, however, ran out in 1973, and Hodgdon

started selling newly-manufactured H4831 made in Scotland. In 1974, I found two dust-covered cans of the old powder in a hardware store in Culberson, Mont., priced at \$2.25 apiece. This was the middle of the first American "oil crisis" and the price of most smokeless powder had gone up to near \$4 a pound. I'd just started handloading for the .270 and thought I'd lucked onto a lifetime supply of cheap powder—of course burning it all up within a year and having to buy new H4831 at \$3.95 a can.

Over the next couple of decades, H4831 changed yet again. One of the problems with the original powder (including its replacement) was the granules were so large that running them through a powder measure was like chopping kindling. Eventually Australian Defense Industries not only produced a "short-cut" version called H4831SC that measured pretty well, but turned H4831 into a much more temperature-resistant powder, one of Hodgdon's "Extreme" line. So even if we use H4831SC in our .270, it isn't the same H4831 that our father and grandfather used.

In the meantime, other new and improved powders will do just as well, if not better. Some .270s just don't "like" H4831 the way they should. Sometime ago I acquired one of the "J.C. Higgins" FN Mausers made for Sears Roebuck from my stepfather-in-law who, after his 80th birthday, decided to give up hunting. This rifle turned out to be one of those rare .270s that just didn't perk very well with H4831, so I decided to try a



Eileen Clarke took this spike elk with a load combining Ramshot Hunter and a 140-grain Barnes Triple-Shock X-Bullet, both new on the market at the time. Obviously it worked great!

bunch of newer powders and see what happened. The winner, with 130-grain bullets, turned out to be Alliant Reloder 19, while the top powder with 150s was Ramshot Magnum. Several other powders also did well, including Reloder 22, H1000 and IMR7828.

That was a dozen years ago, when Ramshot didn't have a powder in the H4831 burning-rate slot. Magnum works pretty well in the .270 even though it's noticeably slower than H4831, but in some factory rifles you just can't get enough in the case to reach normal velocities, even with 150-grain bullets. (This is probably due to the occasional slightly oversize bore, which does turn up now and then—and doesn't necessarily harm accuracy.) The next slowest Ramshot powder was Big Game, noticeably faster than IMR4350, leaving a performance gap in the line.

Ramshot Hunter

The Ramshot rifle powders soon became more popular among reloaders, because unlike many traditional ball powders they burn cleanly and are pretty temperature resistant. Customers started demanding something between Big Game and Magnum, and the slot was



Most .270s work very well with H4831, but this FN Mauser didn't like it much. This Wyoming mule deer was taken with a 130-grain Nosler Partition and Alliant Reloder 19.

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HANDLOADING

.270 HANDLOADED AMMO PERFORMANCE

BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
--	-------------------	---------------------------	-------------------	------------------------

RIFLE: REMINGTON 700, 22" BARREL

Hornady 130 Spire Point	RL-22	61.0	3,101	.72
Nosler 150 Ballistic Tip	RL-22	58.0	2,938	.56

RIFLE: FN MAUSER, 20.5" BARREL

Hornady 130 Spire Point	Magnum	64.0	3,078	.97
Hornady 130 Spire Point	H1000	61.0	2,950	1.03
Nosler 130 Ballistic Tip	RL-19	57.0	3,021	.79
Nosler 130 Ballistic Tip	RL-22	60.0	2,985	1.07
Nosler 140 AccuBond	Hunter	54.0	2,924	.94

RIFLE: NEW ULTRA LIGHT ARMS MODEL 24, 22" BARREL

Hornady 130 Spire Point	IMR4350	56.0	3,002	.50
Nosler 130 Partition	IMR4350	55.0	3,059	.97
Barnes 140 Triple-Shock	Hunter	56.0	3,025	.82

RIFLE: REMINGTON 760, 22" BARREL

Nosler 130 Partition	IMR4350	55.0	2,979	.96
Nosler 140 AccuBond	Hunter	54.0	2,902	1.04

eventually filled by Hunter. In most lots Hunter is somewhere between IMR4350 and H4831SC in burning rate.

The first .270 Winchester I tried it in was my wife Eileen's New Ultra Light Arms Model 24, pairing it with the then brand new Barnes Triple-Shock X-Bullet. This rifle had also turned out to be another of those rare .270s that didn't sit up and pay attention to H4831, but shot pretty darn well with IMR4350, an even older powder. This was OK, most of the time, but IMR4350 can lose a considerable amount of velocity in cold weather, and Montana hunting often takes place in real cold. Hunter proved to be much less affected by cold, and also capable of fine accuracy and top velocity. Groups with the 140-grain TSX averaged under an inch at a muzzle velocity of just about 3,000 fps, and the load soon proved itself on a late-season elk hunt.

The problem with velocity loss in cold weather isn't that bullets bounce off big game when started at 100 fps less. Instead, the point of impact sometimes changes drastically, even at 100 yards, just as it often does when we're working up handloads. I've seen some powders change point of impact up to 3" at 100 yards when the same rifle was sighted in at 70 degrees and then shot at zero.

My tests are run, by the way, in actual zero-degree weather, rather than just chilling the ammunition—the most common method of cold testing. The ammo and rifle are left in an unheated garage overnight to make sure they're well chilled, simulating hunting conditions common in the

northern US and southern Canada during big-game seasons. Most of the time there isn't enough point-of-impact change to matter, especially at normal woods-hunting ranges, but once in a while there will be a major shift, enough to make the difference between a solid lung hit and a gut shot at 250 or 300 yards. I prefer to know rather than hope, especially when out there in the cold, and modern temperature resistant powders (whether Hunter or H4831SC) have never shown those drastic impact changes.

If your hunting takes place in more moderate and consistent weather, then many powders will work great in the .270. My recent tests have also shown some powders previously known to be very cold-sensitive have gotten much better in recent years, thanks to modern technology. So these days, there are enormous varieties of powders that work in the ever-popular .270 Winchester.

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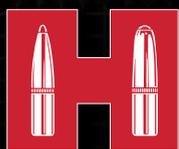
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	Velocity (ft/sec) / Trajectory (inches)					
	MUZZLE	100 yds	200 yds	300 yds	400 yds	500 yds
223 Rem 75 gr. BTHP	2930 / -2.4	2694 / 1.2	2470 / 0.0	2257 / -6.9	2055 / -20.7	1863 / -42.7
5.56 NATO 75 gr. BTHP*	2910 / -2.4	2675 / 1.2	2452 / 0.0	2240 / -7.0	2039 / -21.0	1848 / -43.5
308 Win 168 gr. A-MAX	2870 / -1.5	2647 / 1.7	2462 / 0.0	2284 / -7.5	2114 / -21.6	1951 / -43.6
308 Win 178 gr. BTHP	2780 / -1.5	2609 / 1.8	2444 / 0.0	2285 / -7.6	2132 / -21.9	1985 / -43.9

* Test bbl length of 20". 5.56 NATO ammunition is not for use in rifles chambered in 223 Rem.



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HANDGUNS

• MASSAD AYOUB •

MASTERING MULTIPLE HANDGUNS

Different platforms bring different skills to the fore, and additional satisfaction to handgun enthusiasts.

In first quarter 2011, I was asked to present the International Defensive Pistol Association's (IDPA) Five-Gun Master plaque to David Maglio. The presentation took place at the Saukville, Wis., Police Headquarters in Ozaukee County where David is a career lawman with the Sheriff's Office. The first Five-Gun Master presenting the award to the newest seemed to be a good fit.

We've all been warned to "beware the man with one gun, he probably knows how to use it," and advised to follow Bianchi's Law ("same gun, same holster, same place, all the time"). I won't argue with either piece of long-standing conventional wisdom. At the same time, there's something to be said for developing skill with different handgun platforms.

For one thing, if you're an instructor, you're cheating your students if you're only adept with one gun, which is not necessarily the same one all your students use. A firearms instructor on his own time, and an excellent one, Maglio knows this well. For another thing, the different formats are fun, and learning the subtleties of each gives you more satisfaction from exploring our firearms heritage.

Stock Service Pistol (SSP) encompasses double-action autos, such as the Beretta 92F David once carried (and successfully used in the line of duty), and the Glock 17 his agency now issues. Can you be a "gun guy" if you're not familiar with the most popular handgun in this country, and with your nation's standard issue military service pistol?

Custom Defense Pistol (CDP) is geared around that century-old American classic, the 1911 .45 Automatic Colt Pistol. Other .45 ACP platforms are eligible, and David used

a Glock 21 to make Master there.

Enhanced Service Pistol (ESP) encompasses single-action autos: the 1911 in .38 Super, as carried by Texas Ranger Frank Hamer the day he shot Bonnie and Clyde, or in 9mm; the classic Browning Hi-Power in any of its calibers but .30 Luger; and the ergonomic Springfield XD. Double actions can also be used there—Maglio made Master in ESP with a Glock 9mm.

Stock Service Revolver (SSR) is for .38 Special and larger revolvers with rimmed cartridges, the required IDPA power factor recently reduced to allow for standard over-the-counter .38 Special practice ammo. Craig Buckland won this year's SSR National Championship with a Smith & Wesson Model 19 .357 Combat



Deputy Maglio mastered his former duty gun, the Beretta 92F.

Magnum, paying homage to the great Border Patrol revolver master Bill Jordan, who inspired it.

Enhanced Service Revolver (ESR) is the newest category, introduced in 2005 to create a home for moon-clip revolvers such as S&W's Model 625 .45 ACP. These big N-frames seem to channel the spirit (and the feel) of the .44 Specials preferred by such American handgun legends as Elmer Keith and "Skeeter" Skelton.

The Joy Of Multiple Guns

Switching between multiple platforms seems to reinforce the general basics of good handgun shooting. Since we've been on the



Arrows show brass in the air as Maglio shoots an off-duty qualification with his Glock

same teams (Team EOTAC for some years, Pantaeo Gun Team now), I've watched Bob Vogel win the National Championships in SSP, ESP and CDP. I wouldn't be surprised to see that Five-Gun Master switch to sixguns and make it a grand slam sometime in the future.

Either kind of revolver teaches you to roll the trigger smoothly without disturbing the sight picture, a harder skill to learn with a self-cocking pistol's lighter trigger that lends itself to anticipation and jerking if you're not careful. It teaches you to "keep



Instructor mode: With a Glock 17L, Maglio shows a class how to take a "wedge hold."



From first to latest: Mas (wearing Glock 30, left) presents Five-Gun Master Award to Dave Maglio (right, wearing Glock 26). Mas actually sorta broke into a smile.

the trigger alive" in the words of ESR national champ Jerry Miculek: That is, keeping it always moving either forward or back in a fast string of fire. Learning to watch the sights despite the recoiling slide of an auto, in turn, reinforces that good habit with the revolver.

It definitely makes you a better instructor with the different guns your students will bring. I'm proud that SSR champ Buckland is one of my graduates, and as good with an auto pistol as he is with his trademark revolver. I'm likewise admittedly smug about the fact that those 13 Five-Gun Masters encompass three who teach with Massad Ayoob Group: David Maglio, John Strayer and me. (Yes, "braggin' rights" come with that whole five-gun thing.)

You can find out about the demanding Classifier course, and view the lists of who "Mastered" in what, at the IDPA website, which can also direct you to IDPA competition near you. If you haven't already, consider diversifying into multiple handgun platforms. Despite the conventional wisdom, there's a lot the different guns can teach you about overall skill.

Congratulations to David Maglio, a dedicated policeman and instructor, and thanks to Saukville Police Chief Bill Meloy for hosting the presentation of David's well-earned award. **GUNS**

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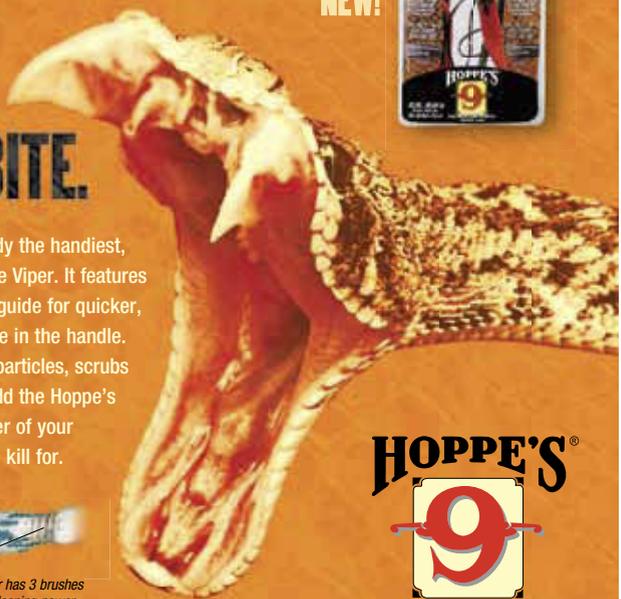


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MONTANA MUSINGS

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

COLT US MODEL 1917 .45

An ingenious solution to a handgun shortage.

When countries can't supply the number of weapons needed by their armed forces for the wars in which they engage, most must resort to buying them from other countries. America has never had that problem. Besides having a robust firearms industry, it has also been an ingenious one. A prime example of that would be in the manner by which the shortage of 1911 .45 Auto handguns for the US Army in World War I was satisfied.

Back then, the premier American handgun manufacturers were Smith & Wesson and Colt. Both were set up to make large-bore revolvers, including .45 caliber ones. However, that .45 caliber was the .45 Colt, which used a rimmed cartridge case, as had all revolver chamberings up to that time. The US military's standard .45 Auto handgun cartridge was designed around a rimless case, so there was no flange on it to provide a surface for extractors to push against when ejecting fired cases.

Therefore some bright thinker at S&W, whose name has been long lost to history, came up with the idea of "half-moon" clips. These were simply stamped out pieces of steel, each holding three rounds of .45 ACP. The clips' arms slipped into the extractor

groove of the rimless cases, holding them solidly. So solidly, in fact, that the empty cases are a pain to remove if you want to reload them—a factor of no consequence whatsoever to the military. (These 3-round clips also were the first revolver speed loaders.)

Colt's large-frame revolver at that time was named the New Service. First introduced in 1899, the New Service had actually already served as an official US Army sidearm. That was the Model 1909 for which a special version of .45 Colt ammunition was also issued. It differed in having a wider diameter rim than commercial .45 Colt loads so as to insure case extraction. For the commercial market Colt sold New Service revolvers with 4-1/2", 5-1/2" and 7-1/2" barrel lengths. Grips



For both Colt and S&W 1917 revolvers, the WWI holsters were meant for right-side carry but reverse draw as with the original at left. For World War II that was changed. Still the revolver was worn on the right side but now butt was to the rear.

were checkered hard rubber and finish was the highly polished blue so typical of that era. Also typical were very crude sights consisting of no more than a blade-front silver soldered on the barrel and a thin groove down the revolver's topstrap for rear sight. Also standard on New Service commercial revolvers was a lanyard ring on the gun butt.

In essence the New Service was already a military revolver just waiting for more service. The changes needed by the US Government to turn Colt's big commercial sixgun into the US Model 1917 were few. Checkered hard-rubber grips were replaced with smooth walnut ones. The shiny commercial blue was dispensed with in favor of a dull blue finish. For barrels, only the 5-1/2" length was used on US Model 1917s. They were stamped "U.S. Army Model 1917" on the butt and "United States Property" under the barrel along with an inspector's mark at the top left rear of the frame.

Sources vary to exact numbers, but Colt furnished more than 150,000 to the US Government in 14 months between October 1917 and December 1918. With about 355,000 Colt New Service revolvers made between 1899 and 1944, the government's purchase of US Model 1917s amounts to over 40 percent of the total.

The M1917's service didn't end with World War I. According to Bruce Canfield's *U.S. Infantry Weapons Of World War II*, over 96,000 surviving Colt '17s were kept in government hands between the world wars. Many



The Colt 1917 .45 at left still has the dull blue as issued for WWI. If the revolver was put into service again in World War II, (right) the phosphate finish called Parkerizing as was applied. Note the half-moon clips.

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

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- SS164 Blade Only.....12.95
- SS164K Sportsman Kit.....14.95

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Pattern 37

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- KT116 Leather Sheath.....14.50

Pattern 38

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Pattern 39

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PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE



In World War I, ammunition for the Colt (and S&W) 1917 revolvers was issued already "clipped" in boxes like this.

thousands of those were pulled from storage and issued again in World War II. A sure way to discern if a Colt US Model 1917 was used again in WWII is if it now has the phosphate finish we commonly call Parkerizing instead of the original blue finish. Whenever possible, frontline unit members who were issued handguns received 1911s. The .45 ACP military revolvers mostly saw secondary service in the hands of MPs, POW Camp guards, etc. Still plenty of photos exist of combat troops in both the Pacific and European Theaters of Operations with Colt US Model 1917s in their holsters and/or hands. American troops are nothing if not good scroungers.

I've managed to land a sample of both blue and phosphate finished Colt US Model 1917s for my collection. Both are fine shooters and, to my constant pleasure, both place their bullets directly at their fixed sights', point of aim at 50', when fired single-action standing, with a 1-hand hold. However, I must admit I can hardly hit a barn door with any New Service revolver when firing double action.

For handloads, I almost always rely on either 5 grains of Bullseye or 5.4 grains of HP38 under either 230-grain Oregon Trail commercially cast bullets or 220-grain home poured ones from Lyman mould 452374. Velocities for both loads are right about 800 fps. Military surplus .45 ACP loads dated 1966 give about 840 fps.

Along the way at a gun show I found an original WWI ammo box issued specifically for the 1917 revolvers. It held 24 rounds of .45 Auto already loaded in the 3-round "half-moon" clips. Also found was one of the Model 1909 leather holsters issued during WWI. They are simple to discern because they are meant for the old cavalry reverse draw, i.e. worn on right side with butt forward. WWII holsters for the same revolvers were still meant for right-side carry but with butt rearward. I've only found a replica of one of those.

The Colt US Model 1917s and accouterments that I've gathered are perhaps a view into my personality. I say I'm searching for more to learn and Yvonne says I'm searching for more to buy.

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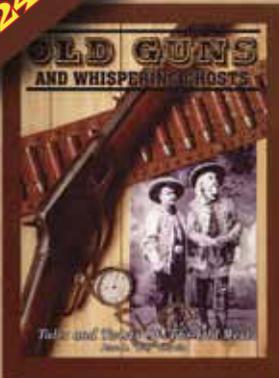
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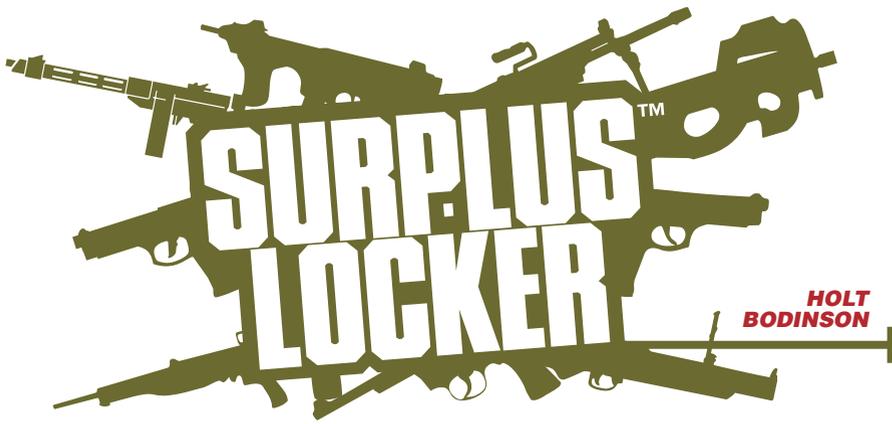
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The receiver and barrel are new and most other parts are from original Spanish CETMEs. The long operating handle opens the bolt and when released, feeds a round into the chamber. The operating handle lies flat against the handguard until needed (below).

ROLLER LOCKING WONDER

Century International Arms' Outstanding CETME.

A delayed, blowback, roller-locking system for small arms was a radical concept in its day. Invented by Mauser engineers during WWII and incorporated in part as the locking system for Germany's superb MG42 machinegun and a prototype assault rifle, the StG-45, some of those same Mauser engineers with their roller-locking designs next popped up in Spain in the 1950s at the government's Centro de Estudios Tecnicos de Materiales Especiales (CETME) in Madrid.

CETME, as a preeminent Spanish research facility, has been the hotbed of many intriguing firearms and ammunition designs over the years, most of which were never placed into full commercial production.

By 1952, the Spanish and German engineers working at CETME had developed a prototype for a new rifle made largely from stampings and incorporating the Mauser retarded blowback, roller-locking action of the StG-45. In 1954, after developing the initial design, Spain turned to the German firm of Heckler & Koch to assist them in setting up production and refining the CETME design for international licensing.

Heckler & Koch GmbH was formed

in 1949 by three former Mauser engineers: Edmund Heckler, Theodor Koch and Alex Seidel. Ironically, at the time of the discussions with CETME, H&K was housed in a former Mauser Works factory building and was manufacturing sewing machine parts, that is, until Germany ordered 400 CETMEs in 7.62x51 NATO in 1956. From that initial order, the rest is history. The Bundeswehr adopted the CETME in 1959 as the G3, replacing the German G1, which was the FN-FAL, following a breakdown in negotiations between Germany and FN Belgium regarding a satisfactory licensing agreement.

The importance of the involvement of Heckler & Koch in the story of

the CETME and the retarded roller-locking system can't be overstressed. It was H&K that aggressively marketed the rifle and the system. The H&K G3 version of the CETME has been adopted by at least 50 countries and manufactured under license in 14 of those. In addition, H&K went on to incorporate the roller-lock in such well-known designs as the MP5 and P9, and to introduce semi-automatic versions of the G3, the HK91 in 7.62 NATO and the HK93 in 5.56 NATO. In fact, in my part of the country, if you drop over the Mexican line, you will find the Mexican Army still carrying homegrown G3s.

Century International Arms' outstanding CETME is composed mostly of original CETME parts with the exception of a new barrel and new semi-automatic receiver and fire control system. It's a tough, robust rifle and simple to fieldstrip. With a lineage stemming from the German MP43 and StG-45, it makes use of extensive stampings in its production. The receiver is a heavy stamping with a trunnion carrying the locking recesses welded into the front end. The barrel is a press, fit into the trunnion and pinned.



Holt favors a battle-rifle shooting full-power cartridges. CIA has replicated the famed CETME in 7.62x51 NATO.



The CETME is a tough, robust battle rifle adopted by 50 countries. The flash hider also serves as a mild muzzlebrake.

There are fewer than 20 parts in the rifle that require machining, and CETME claimed the overall production time for all the components and the fully assembled rifle was only 9 hours. The combination of those factors made the CETME and the G3 ideal for local production in the less industrialized world.

Being a recoil operated, rather than gas-operated rifle, the CETME's retarded, roller-locking system is simplicity itself and reliable. The roller-locking system is simple but deceptively complex from an engineering perspective.

The roller-locking bolt is composed of two, interlocking pieces—a hollow front unit that incorporates the bolt face, extractor and two rollers, and a

heavier rear unit that retains the firing pin and sports a tapered-nose section that slips into the hollow housing of the front unit.

The rear part of the bolt's tapered nose is free to move back-and-forth inside the front section about 1/4". That's just enough play to activate the roller locking system.

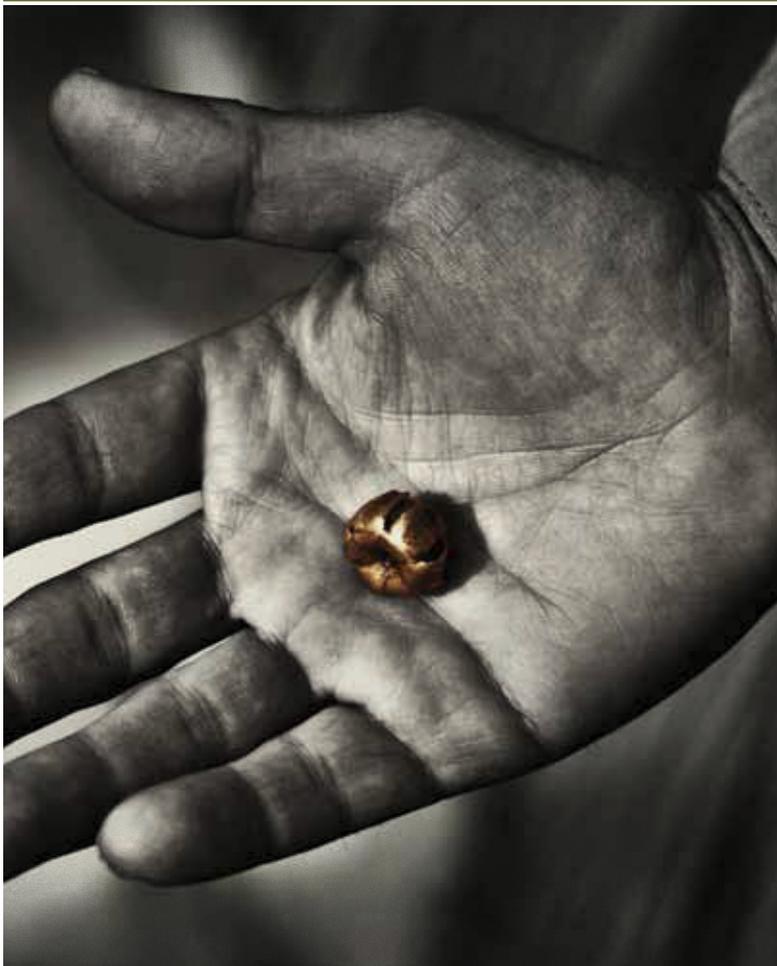
As the front section of the bolt picks up a cartridge and chambers it, the heavier rear unit is slammed into battery by the mainspring and its tapered nose moves forward, camming the rollers out into their respective locking recesses in the walls of the receiver trunnion.

At the instant of firing, the rollers are firmly locked into their recesses. At a millisecond point in the pressure-



The safety is awkward and mounted too far forward to be activated by a shooter's thumb.

time curve following ignition, the pressure has dropped and the case, floating on a film of gas, pushes sufficiently back against the head of the bolt to force the bolt head backward. This moves the rear section of the bolt held in place only by the



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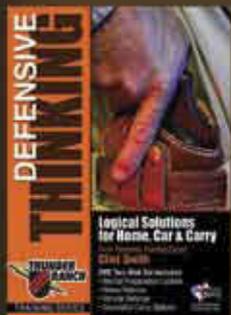


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pressure of the mainspring rearward, thereby camming the rollers out of their respective locking recesses.

The extraction cycle is fast, abrupt and, since the fired case is not rotated or eased back slowly during the initial phase of extraction, the engineers had to come up with a solution so that case heads were not readily ripped off. The solution was to flute the chamber so the case was loosened from the walls of the chamber during extraction by a film of gas. A fired CETME case clearly exhibits the fluting in the chamber and the carbon deposited from the expelled gas.

Although it looks grubby, CETME brass can be full-length resized and reloaded—however—because brass temper varies from make to make, every CETME case should be inspected before being reloaded, particularly in the area of the case head.

Handling qualities? Like most big-caliber, main-battle rifles of its era, the CETME is robust. The CETME weighs 9 pounds, 11 ounces unloaded on my Sunbeam scale and 10 pounds, 13 ounces when fully loaded with 20 rounds of 7.62x51. That weight, plus the birdcage flash suppressor, makes the CETME very easy on the shoulder. It's a pleasant rifle to shoot.

Ejected cases land 10' to 20' in front of the shooter.

The only poorly engineered parts of the operating cycle in my opinion are the safety, which is too far forward to reach with the thumb; the forward mounted cocking lever on the left side of the forearm which is awkward to operate, particularly if you're left-handed; and the lack of a magazine hold-open device to indicate when the last round has been fired. Speaking of magazines, two come with the rifle. They're steel, heavy walled, durable, hold 20 rounds, and they're priced for less than a \$1 at “Cheaper Than Dirt,” plus the company also has CETME slings and scope mounts.

The trigger's a bit on the heavy side ranging from 9-1/2 to 10 pounds on my Lyman electronic gauge, but after the initial, gritty slack is taken up, it breaks quickly and cleanly.

The sights of the CETME consist of a flip-over rear with leaves for 100, 200, 300 and 400 meters and a pointed post for the front. The 100m leaf of the rear sight is open while the other leaves are peep sights. Frankly, I find the 100m leaf useless since it's too close to the eye and out of focus. I simply use the 200m peep and adjust the elevation for 100 yards by elevating or depressing the front post.

Disassembly

The CETME is one of those wonder guns that just falls apart in your hands.

1. Remove the magazine, cock the action, check the chamber is empty and set the safety on “S.”
2. Punch out the two takedown pins at the rear of the receiver.
3. Pull the buttstock straight back and remove it with the attached mainspring.
4. Remove the bolt carrier and bolt from the rear of the receiver.
5. Rotate the pistol grip down and remove the complete fire control system.
6. Reassemble in reverse order, *but* insert the bolt before reinstalling the fire control system.



Removing these two pins (above) is all that's needed to disassemble a CETME. The CETME simply falls apart in your hands (below).



CETME SPORTER

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CENTURY-INTERNATIONAL-ARMS

ACTION TYPE:

Roller locked, semi-auto

CALIBER:

7.62x51 NATO

CAPACITY:

20

BARREL LENGTH:

16-1/2"

OVERALL LENGTH:

40-1/2"

WEIGHT:

9 pounds, 11 ounces unloaded

FINISH:

Flat black

SIGHTS:

Flip-up rear aperture, eccentric, front-tapered post

STOCK:

Polymer and steel

PRICE:

\$479.87

The front-tapered post is eccentric so as it is adjusted up-and-down for elevation, it also changes the windage. It's a practical design. The only drawback is it's inconvenient to adjust without a special sight wrench. Fortunately, a CETME sight wrench was contained in the accessory tube of my FR-8, and that's what I used. You can also use a small screwdriver and pick.

Accuracy? With Black Hills 168-grain .308 Win Match ammunition, the CETME averages between 1-1/2" to 2". Firing either current commercial or surplus 147-grain NATO ball, the CETME averages between 3" and 4" at 100 yards. Using one of the readily available G3-type, clamp-on scope mounts and a decent optic, I'm sure I could cut those groups down considerably. The CETME is inherently a very accurate platform. It just needs better sights.

Some of the best advice on shooting and maintaining the CETME comes from Century International Arms' Product Development Engineer, Steve Kehaya. Kehaya observes that "as with any semi-auto firearm that does



Holt found the 100m open-leaf sight (above) less than ideal and used the 200m aperture sight (below). By adjusting the elevation of the front sight, the 200m aperture can be zeroed for 100m.



The roller-locking bolt unlocked (above). When the rear of the bolt is in battery, the rollers extend and lock in place in the receiver (below).



not have a gas regulator, the choice of ammunition is critical. Try various brands to find which one runs best in your firearm. Also keep your firearm clean and lubricated. The chambers (especially the flutes) on this type of system tend to foul quickly, which will affect cycling." I might add that I've experienced no cycling problems in the CETME, but I keep it cleaned and lubricated.

The CETME is an intriguing military surplus with a fascinating, evolutionary history. I like it because it's a rugged rifle, firing a full-power service round. The CETME is no whimp! Century International Arms has a limited number available, so get 'em while you can.

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OUTTM of the BOX

JOHN TAFFIN

HERITAGE ROUGH RIDER .45s A pair of fun, accurate sixguns.

I've been a big fan of Western movies ever since I saw my first "B" Western back in the 1940s; however, I have never been able to warm up to what is known as "Spaghetti Westerns." There are several reasons for this. The acting is usually terrible and overly dramatic, story lines are almost impossible to understand (I never have figured out *Once Upon A Time In The West*), but most of all it's the firearms. Today, replica manufacturers do their best to produce authentic reproductions of historical sixguns and leverguns. This was not always the case and every time I saw a brass-grip frame on what was supposed to be a Colt Single Action Army, the movie was over as far as I was concerned.

Sometime around the early 1990s we started seeing Western movies all with very authentic-looking domestic and Italian replicas of historical American firearms from the frontier period. There have been several men and several manufacturers responsible for this and one of those manufacturers is Pietta.

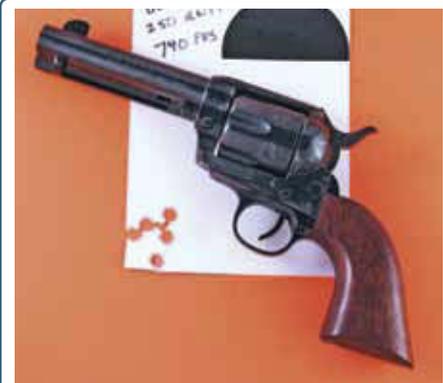
Heritage Manufacturing is importing Pietta parts and assembling "Rough Rider" .45 Colt single-action sixguns in this country that don't even come close to looking like those Spaghetti Western sixguns from the 1960s. In fact, at first glance these Rough Rider .45s look quite authentic.

The only thing which gives them away initially is the fact that due to the use of a transfer-bar safety, the trigger rides farther forward in the triggerguard than found on original single actions from the 19th century. Once the hammer is cocked, you also see the lack of a firing pin on the hammer.

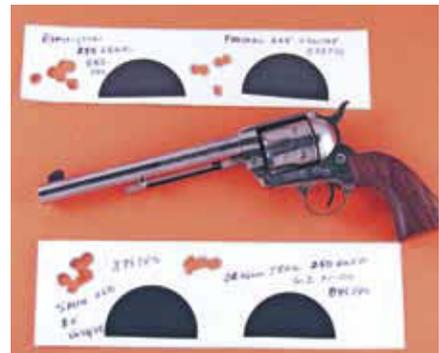
Most of the form of these sixguns is quite right. The hammer spur follows the proper curve, the front sights are not only shaped correctly, they are also made easier to see by the fact that they are not tapered to the top and are also matched up with a rear notch cut square. The sights are traditional single



John found the Heritage Manufacturing Rough Rider .45 a pleasant and accurate sixgun.



The 4-3/4" Heritage Manufacturing Rough Rider .45 in blue with optional case-colored frame shot well with Black Hills ammo. The 7-1/2" Rough Rider in full nickel plate finish shot just over the front sight and a little to the left for John.



action following the hog-wallow trough through the top of the mainframe. The base pin is of the proper configuration, while the ejector-rod head is of the half-moon variety. The front of the cylinder is nicely chamfered in the old black-powder style as is the front of the ejector-rod housing. For me the only thing that detracts from the eye pleasing character of these revolvers is the warning labels found on both sides of the barrel. I understand why they are there, however, I am not happy with a world which causes such a situation.

Grips are 1-piece cocobolo, fitted very well, and although they are a little wide for my taste, they could easily be reshaped. As far as finish Heritage offers a choice of full blue, blue with a case-colored frame and full nickel plating, as well as a choice of the traditional barrel lengths of 4-3/4", 5-1/2" and 7-1/2". Test guns consisted of a 4-3/4" blue/case-colored version and a 7-1/2" full nickel example. Both guns are finished quite nicely with excellent metal-to-metal fit as well as metal to wood.

Finding a sixgun with fixed sights that shoots to point-of-aim with your choice of ammunition, eyesight and method of gripping a revolver, is pretty much hit and miss. Any time one is found the owner should feel very fortunate. The Rough Rider manual mentions the front sights on these sixguns are made tall to be filed in by

.45 COLT FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE 7-1/2" BARREL

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
Black Hills 250 RNFP	816	2
Federal 225 LSWC-HP	833	1-1/8
Remington Express 255 LSWC	897	3/4
Winchester 250 LFN	749	1-1/8

Notes: Groups the product of best 5 of 6 shots at 20 yards.
Chronograph screens set at 10' from muzzle.

.45 COLT FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE 4-3/4" BARREL

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
Black Hills 250 RNFP	740	1-1/8
Federal 225 LSWC-HP	752	2-1/4
Remington Express 255 LSWC	852	1-3/4
Winchester 250 LFN	675	2-1/8

Notes: Groups the product of best 5 of 6 shots at 20 yards.
Chronograph screens set at 10' from muzzle.

.45 COLT HANDLOADED AMMO PERFORMANCE

BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (4-3/4") (FPS)	VELOCITY (7-1/2") (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (4-3/4") (INCHES)	GROUP SIZE (7-1/2") (INCHES)
Oregon Trail 250	N-100	6.2	768	845	2-1/4	1
Speer 250 LFN	Unique	8.0	787	879	2	1

Notes: Groups the product of best 5 of 6 shots at 20 yards.
Chronograph screens set at 10' from muzzle.

each individual shooter with the load selected.

The 4-3/4" example shoots about 6" low for me with most loads, while the longer barreled version shoots to point of aim or slightly higher; again this is with my loads, my eyes and my grip. These results will not necessarily be the same for every shooter. Both guns also shoot 2" left for me. This is an easy fix as it just requires the barrel to be tightened slightly. This is so commonplace with fixed-sight single

actions that I have a barrel vise which fits in the trailer hitch of my pickup for adjusting barrels in the field. Just about any gunsmith could perform the same operation easily.

Both sixguns shot very well with quite a few groups in the 1" category. This is especially heartening as testing was done in January. There was a time I could shoot outdoors no matter what the weather, however, January in Southwest Idaho no longer matches well with my fragility. I prefer the temperature to be equal to my age or at least matched up with the caliber of the sixgun tested. All this is just a way of saying I tested these guns indoors where it is a little harder for me to see the sights and I really expect the results to be even better in natural light. They may also shoot closer to point-of-aim with different lighting.

With their transfer-bar action, the Rough Rider .45s can take full advantage of a 6-shot cylinder. Trigger pulls on both guns were right at 3 pounds and are just about where a single action of this style should be set. They seem to be very well built sixguns and the cylinder lock up is exceptionally tight with no wobble whatsoever whether the hammer is cocked or in the down position. The timing has been done correctly. Rough Riders carry a suggested price of \$500 plus \$50 extra for nickel. They should give good service, whether chosen for Cowboy Action Shooting or just as an everyday working sixgun, and they look a whole lot better than those original Spaghetti-Western revolvers.

GUNS

ROUGH RIDER

MAKER: F.LLI PIETTA, ITALY
IMPORTER: HERITAGE MANUFACTURING
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HERITAGEMFG

ACTION TYPE:

Single-action revolver

CALIBER:

.45 Colt (tested), .357 Magnum

CAPACITY:

6

BARREL LENGTH:

4-3/4", 5-1/2", 7-1/2"

OVERALL LENGTH:

13-1/4" (7-1/2")

WEIGHT:

39 ounces (7-1/2")

FINISH:

Blue, blue/case, nickel

SIGHTS:

Fixed

GRIPS:

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MATTHEW BRACKEN

Author of *Enemies Foreign And Domestic*,
and *Domestic Enemies: The Reconquista*

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Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

• JEFF JOHN •

Meriden Rifle

Q: My father has an old .22 rifle and I was wondering if you could give me some information regarding its age and value. It is a Meriden Model 15. The rifle has an octagon barrel, and stamped on it is "Meriden, Conn. patented 1912," serial number 18XXX. Most of the bluing has turned to patina, but it is otherwise in very good working condition. Any information you could give would be much appreciated.

K.C. Fish
via e-mail

A: The Meriden was one of the inexpensive rifles made around the turn of the last century by a company wholly owned by Sears, Roebuck & Co. The Model 15 was a slide-action .22 made when Sears acquired a Savage patent. The Model 15 was made from around 1913 to Meriden's closure in 1918. Meriden rifles in the condition you describe may sell for \$250 to \$350, according to a recent Internet survey of prices.

Ammo Shelf Life

Q: In various articles, I notice old ammo in original boxes pictured with the appropriate firearm. For example, Holt Bodinson once showed a box of Yugoslav 7.92 ammo dated 1955, and "Duke" often shows a WWII vintage box of ball ammunition. Is ammo this old dangerous? What is the shelf life of ammo?

Russ Shinn
via e-mail

A: It really depends on how well the ammunition was made and stored. The longer the ammo has been around, the less you really know about its storage.

I once bought 50 rounds of surplus .303 British and, upon firing the first round, it kicked like a mule, the head blew off the case and the case body fragmented. Going back to the dealer,



Some of the 1943-dated British .303 Jeff bought cheap in the early '80s had badly corroded cartridge cases and shouldn't be fired (it also has corrosive priming). However, the ammo came in original stripper clips, which were hard to come by back then, and sweetened the deal. Photo: Jeff John

he admitted he mixed up good ammo with some ammo sold to him "for salvage only" (he was supposed to pull the bullets and dump the powder). The salvage ammo had been stored in the Arabian Desert and the powder had dried out, raising chamber pressures dramatically. Fortunately, my Enfield held.

In the mid 1990s, an acquaintance decided to shoot up several hundred rounds of 1890-dated US .45-70 ammo picked up from an estate. About half went off.

If corrosion is present on the brass or bullets I wouldn't shoot it unless it is very minimal and can be wiped away with a little 0000 steel wool. Be very wary of corroded bullets as the corrosion will be injurious to the rifle's barrel.

Another problem as ammo ages is primer decay, leading to duds or hangfires. If a round fails to go off, keep the weapon shouldered and safely pointed downrange! Wait a minimum

of 60 seconds before opening the breech and ejecting the cartridge. You don't want the cartridge case exploding and sending dangerous brass fragments everywhere. If you begin to experience duds and hangfires, I would discontinue shooting such ammo.

If you want a hard and fast rule, consider ammo 50 years or older could be turning into the hangfire and dud stage. However, some ammo made prior to WWII is still OK. Holt shot some pre-WWII Peters .41 RF in last month's Surplus Locker, but I found a partial box of .22 WRF from the same era was mostly duds.

The value of a full box of unfired ammunition as a collector's item is a consideration. I wish my acquaintance had offered to sell me that old .45-70 ammo.

Just remember the personal safety of you, the people around you, and the gun you're shooting are always going to be much more valuable than the cost of the ammunition. **GUNS**

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ONESHOTONEKILL

They say having a rabbit's foot brings good luck. Explain that to the unlucky bunny that has four of them on the wrong end of a Savage rimfire.



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Savage Arms

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POCKET POWER

The Ruger LC9 9mm.



John Taffin

If I had to guess as to what the best-selling handguns are today without looking at any records, I don't think I could go very far astray by picking those firearms designed for self-defense use and especially for concealed carry. And guessing once again, I would say only their counterpart in semi-automatic form supersedes the small pocket revolvers. Once again I will probably be right on the mark. When I was a kid, we basically had very few choices when it came to dependable firearms for concealed use; actually only three, the Smith & Wesson J-frames, the Colt Detective Special/Cobra, all of these in .38 Special and the Walther PPK .380, if one could even be found.

Sometimes with these choices it was tough to figure out which was the best. Now today, we have a long list of both foreign and domestic semi-automatics and revolvers to choose from, making the choice even more difficult. For many years Ruger was only concerned with what we would call firearms for sporting use; hunting, target shooting, plinking, competition and just plain fun. However, in the past couple decades we have seen 48 states now having some vehicle for issuing concealed weapons permits, even though a few states' regulations are so complicated, cumbersome and designed so the great unwashed masses can never qualify they may just as well not have them. Perhaps that will change in the future.

In recent years Ruger has offered several excellent choices for concealed use including, but not restricted to, the SR9, SR9c (both in 9mm), the LCR .38 Special and the LCP .380. As good as all of these are, I think their latest addition is the best yet offered. It is the LC9. Chambered in 9mm, it is smaller than either of the SR9s and much easier to handle

John found the Ruger LC9 thoroughly reliable in his test, but the recoil of the 17-ounce pistol became a little tiring during long shooting strings.

LC9

MAKER: STURM, RUGER & CO.

200 RUGER RD.

PRESCOTT, AZ 86301

(928) 778-6555

WWW.GUNSMAGAZINE.COM/RUGER

ACTION TYPE:

Locked breech, semi-automatic

CALIBER:

9mm

CAPACITY:

7+1

BARREL LENGTH:

3.12"

OVERALL LENGTH:

6"

WEIGHT:

17 ounces (unloaded)

FINISH:

Blue steel slide, black polymer frame

SIGHTS:

3-dot, rear adjustable for elevation

GRIPS:

Monolithic black checkered polymer

PRICE:

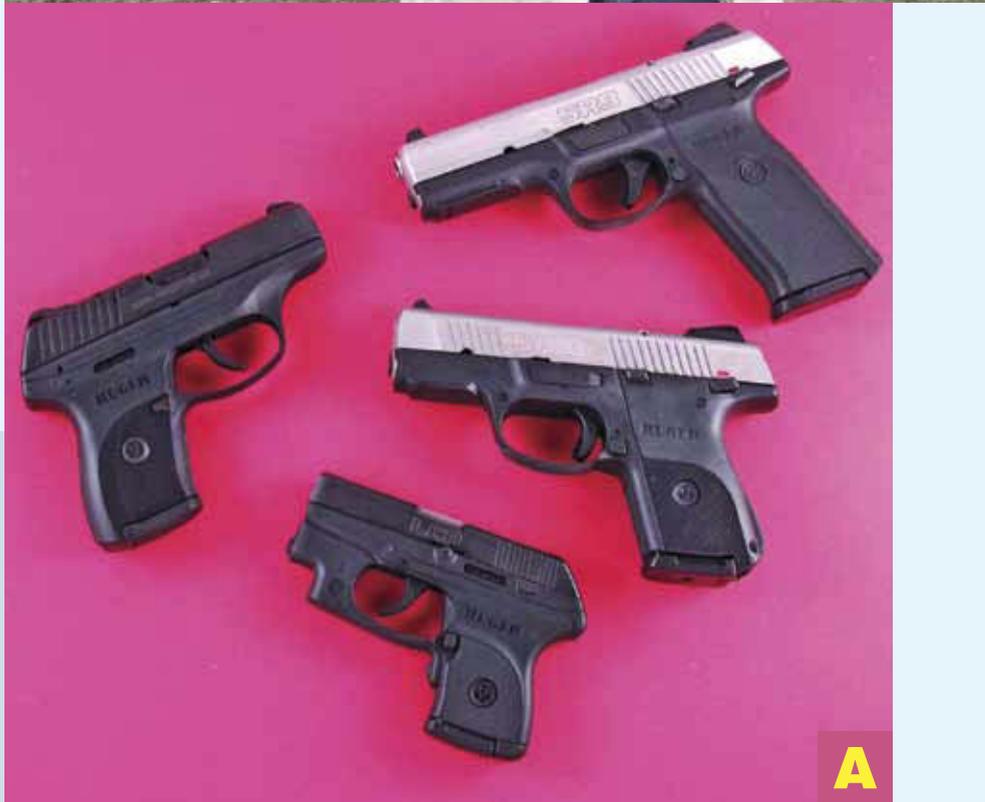
\$443

John found this pistol very compact and nigh on to perfect for pocket use.



than the LCP. The latter is definitely not a pocket pistol designed for those who have very little experience shooting small pistols as the recoil is quite nasty; however, I found the LC9 relatively pleasant to shoot with all manner of 9mm ammo tested.

The LC9 is not rated for +P loads and none were used. I expected its felt recoil to be much heavier than it turned out to be. Do not get the idea this is a pistol you will spend an afternoon pleasantly shooting several boxes of ammo. Although the felt recoil was milder than anticipated, my trigger finger did take a beating by shooting 100 rounds. This is a gun to find a good load for, make sure it is sighted-



A) The Ruger LC9 (right, facing right) is shown for size comparison with three other family members from Ruger: the SR9 (top right), SR9c (middle) and LCP .380, which is also fitted with a Crimson Trace laser. **B)** The Ruger LC9 comes with this zippered bag all ready for a trip to the range. **C)** The LC9 has a capacity of 7+1 rounds of standard pressure 9mm. No +P or +P+ should be fired. Note the collar on the end of the barrel. **D)** With the Ruger LC9, shooters have a choice of a flush-fitting magazine or the use of a finger extension for a more full grip. John prefers the flat one for concealment purposes and wishes it came with more than one mag.





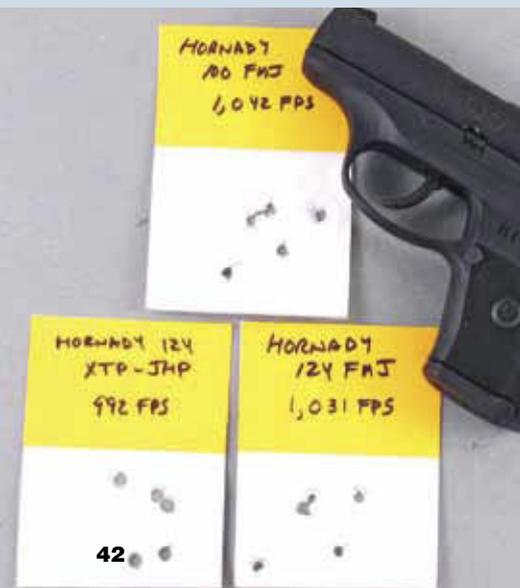
The Ruger was test fired with a wide variety of 9mm ammunition.



In rapid fire, the Ruger LC9 and Black Hills 147-grain ammo delivered centered groups at 7 yards.



At a more leisurely pace, targets shot at 7 yards with the Ruger LC9 were quite good with a wide variety of ammo.



9MM FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
American Eagle 115 FMJ	1,084	1-3/4
American Eagle 124 FMJ	1,032	2
Black Hills 147 JHP	895	1-1/8
Black Hills 147 FMJ	908	1-3/8
Hornady 115 Critical Defense	1,021	2-1/8
Hornady 90 XTP-JHP	1,255	1-5/8
Hornady 100 FMJ	1,042	1-3/4
Hornady 124 FMJ	1,031	1-7/8
Hornady 124 XTP-JHP	992	1-1/4
Remington 115 FMJ	1,030	1-7/8
Remington 147 JHP	926	1-3/4
Speer 124 Gold Dot HP	1,068	1-5/8
Speer 147 Gold Dot HP	857	1-1/4
Winchester 115 FMJ	1,052	1-1/2

Notes: Chronograph set at 10' from muzzle.
Groups are the product of 5 shots at 7 yards.

in, and then at least once a month put a magazine full of the desired load through it.

Taking a close look at the LC9 we find a semi-automatic pistol with a 3" barrel, weighing 17 ounces. The slide is steel while the frame is typical black polymer/glass-filled nylon with integral grip panels. Both the backstrap and frontstrap have molded-in checkering as do both sides of the grip area, all of which makes for a secure hold. Sights are excellent, black with a square-notch rear mated up with a post front and are of the 3-dot configuration and quite easy to see. Both the front and rear sight are set in dovetails and thus can be adjusted for windage while the rear sight is also screw adjustable for elevation.

Both the thumb safety and magazine release are located on the left side and there is a loaded chamber indicator on the top of the slide. This is basically a double-action pistol and, although fairly easy to operate as stated above, my trigger finger did take a minor beating while firing a long string of test ammunition. The trigger pull measured just under 7 pounds on my Brownell's High-Range Trigger Tension Scale. There is no second-strike capability and if the pistol fails to fire it is necessary to work the slide to re-cock the hammer and chamber a new round. Since this pistol performed flawlessly with every type of ammunition tested it doesn't appear that second-strike capability would ever be necessary.

The LC9 (Lightweight Compact 9mm Pistol) comes with two magazine base pads. One is extended with a hook in the front which fits between the last two fingers on the firing hand, while the

other is designed to provide a fit flush with the base of the grip frame. The LC9 came with the extended base pad in place, however I quickly removed it for the more compact choice and never went back to the original. Although it is larger than the LCP .380, the LC9 easily fits in to the front pocket of my jeans. Due to its lack of sharp edges, it is very easy to draw and to control.

Certainly anyone has to admit the 9mm—especially with all the choices of ammunition we have today—is well above the .380 in effectiveness.

Takedown of the LC9 is quite easy. First comes a mandatory make sure it's empty warning and then a key supplied by Ruger is inserted into a slot on the right side of the frame above the trigger which pushes out the takedown pin. The slide assembly is then moved forward and separated from the grip frame. Compressing the recoil spring allows it to be disengaged from its seat and then the barrel can be removed. No further disassembly is recommended.

Not only was the felt recoil less than expected, I also experienced better groups and higher velocity than I thought possible with this little pistol. Some loads such as the Black Hills 147-grain JHP (895 fps), Black Hills 147-grain FMJ (908 fps), Hornady 124-grain XTP-JHP (992 fps) and the Speer Gold Dot 124-grain JHP (1,068 fps), all got down very close to 1" for five shots at

7 yards. It looks like Ruger has another winner with this Lightweight Compact 9mm Pistol. The only complaint I have is the fact it came with only one magazine. I have since ordered two more.



The rear sight of the Ruger LC9 is adjustable for elevation and windage. Note a loaded chamber indicator is present, too.

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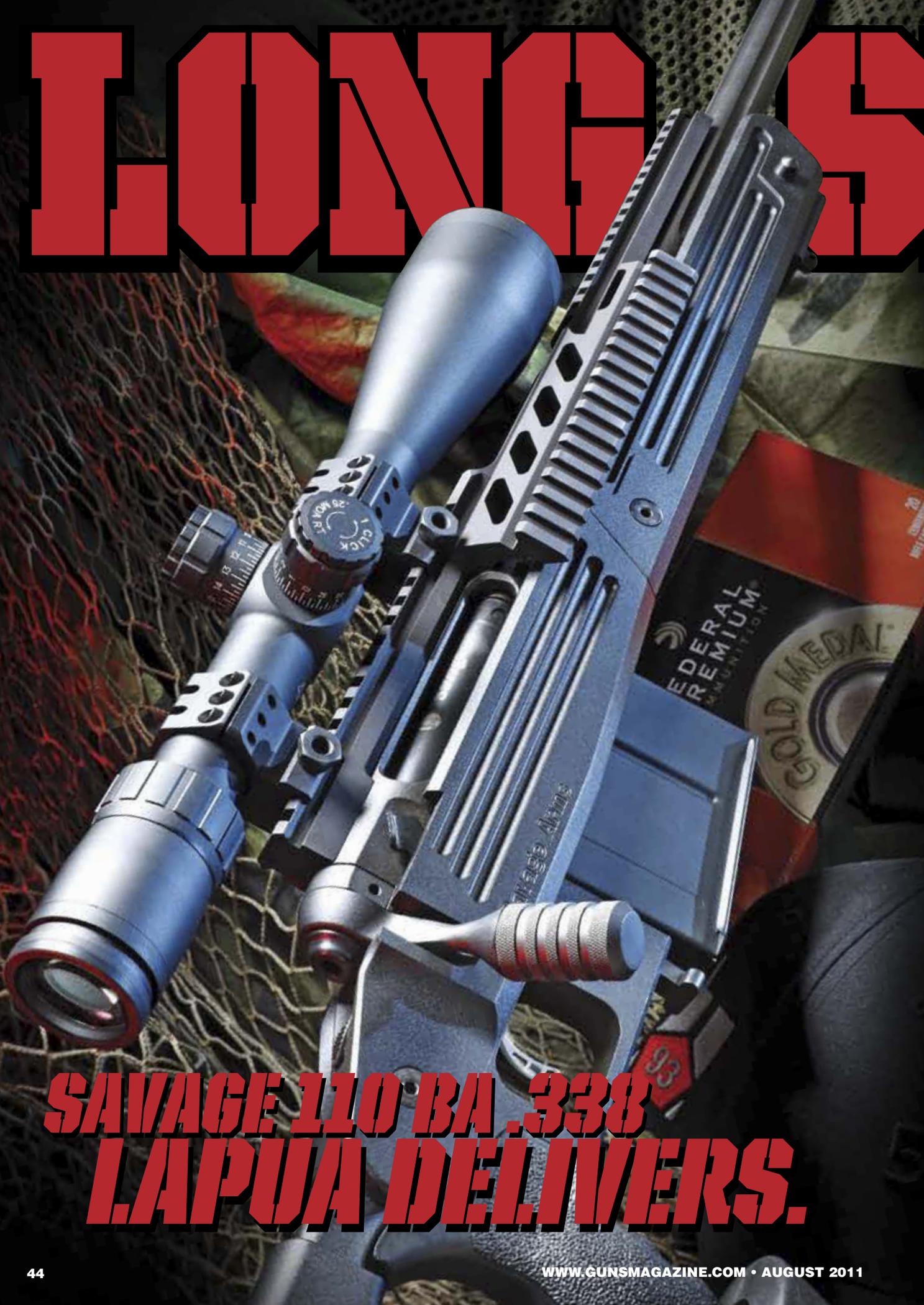
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**SAVAGE 110 BA .338
LAPUA DELIVERS.**

NOO THER



Dave Anderson

Photos: Joseph R. Novelozo

The Savage 110 BA .338 Lapua is an impressive rifle in many ways. It is impressive in appearance; over 4' long, and weighing nearly 18 pounds with scope, rings and Harris bipod. With its powerful cartridge and huge muzzlebrake it makes an impressive noise, too. If you want to stay on good terms you'll set up at the far end of the range, away from other shooters.

How about performance? I'm glad to say it is impressive as well, with flawless functioning and excellent accuracy. The rifle feeds smoothly from a 5-round, single-stack detachable box magazine. A similar Savage .308 I shot a while back had too light a spring on the magazine latch, and would drop the magazine if the latch were bumped inadvertently. On this rifle the spring is nice and strong. The latch only released the magazine when I wanted it to.

The barrel length is 26". Including the muzzlebrake, barrel length is 29.5". Twist is 1:9", making it suitable for heavier and longer bullets. Thank goodness it is fluted to reduce weight. Chronographed velocities (see chart) were close to (or exceeded) factory claims with the three brands of ammunition I had on hand from Black Hills, Federal and Hornady.

Savage barrels in my experience always give good accuracy—though some seem to copper foul quickly—at least until they've fired a couple of hundred rounds. The .308 mentioned earlier was one of those. This .338 Lapua has been very good about copper fouling. I noted no deterioration of accuracy after the first 40 rounds. After cleaning with powder solvent (I used 50 BMG copper solvent from Montana Extreme—one of the more aggressive copper solvents). Patches came out a pale blue after the first treatment and with only traces of blue on the second.

The adjustable buttstock is the Magpul PRS2, and a fine stock it is. Adjustments for length of pull and comb height are made by turning large, easily accessible knobs so no tools are needed. Length of pull is adjustable from 13-1/2" to 14-3/4" (measured from center of recoil pad to center of trigger). The comb is adjustable over a range of nearly 2". The adjustable comb allows fine-tuning to suit both different shooters and different scope heights.

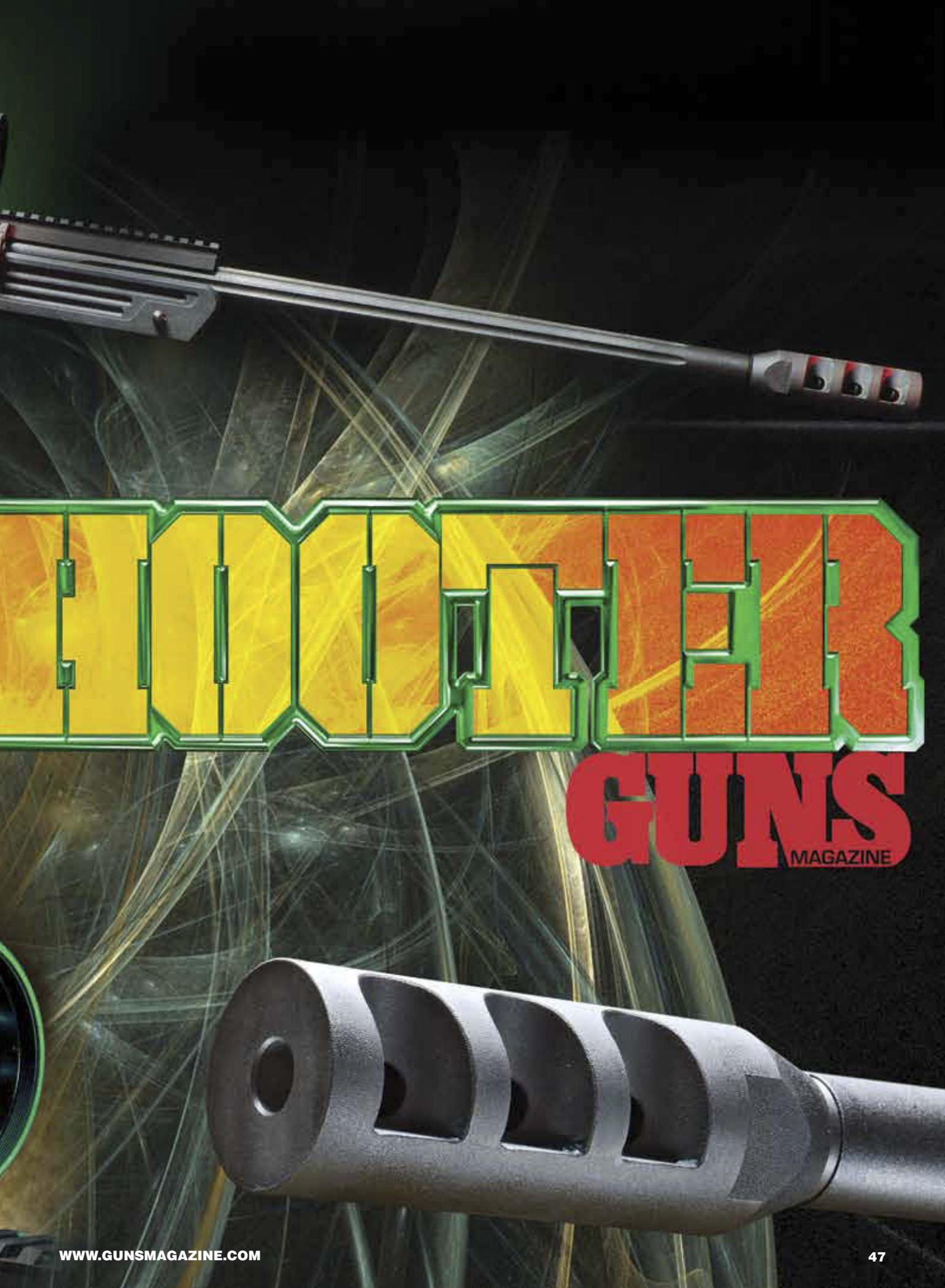
The Savage AccuTrigger on this rifle was excellent out of the box, with virtually no movement and a clean break at 2-1/4 pounds. The long bolt handle provides good scope

A) A Picatinny rail with a rise of 20 MOA is provided so you don't use up all of your scope's elevation capability at the longer ranges. B) As normal with Savage rifles, a top tang safety is provided. C) The big, beefy bolt knob gives incredible lift, although Dave found no problems in cycling. The justly famed AccuTrigger is provided.



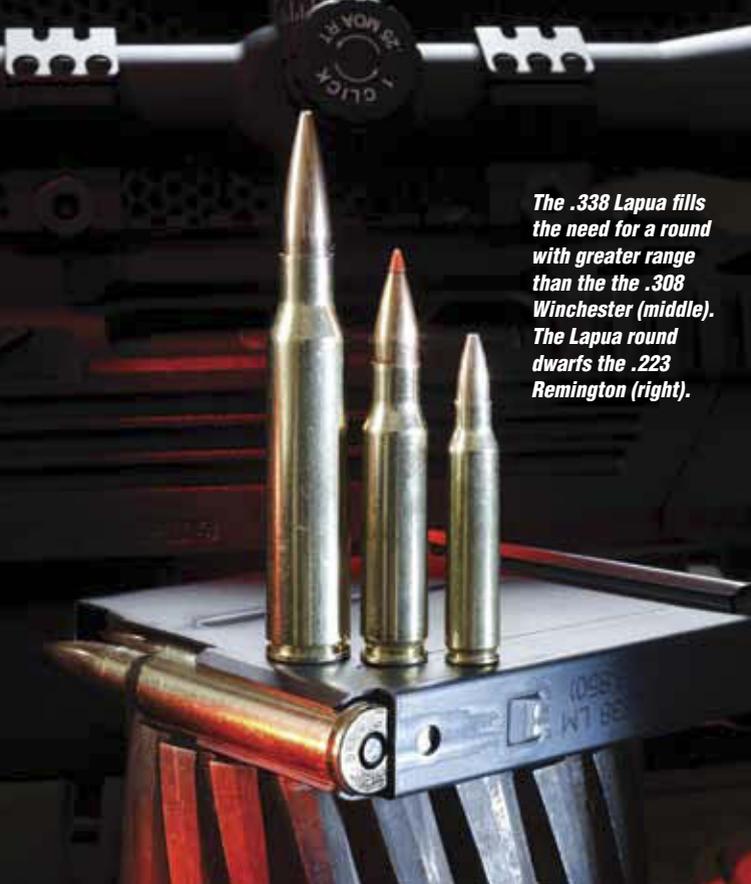
LONGER





EPOCH

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The .338 Lapua fills the need for a round with greater range than the the .308 Winchester (middle). The Lapua round dwarfs the .223 Remington (right).

.338 LAPUA CHRONOGRAPH RESULTS

AMMO (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, GRAINS)	FACTORY VELOCITY (FPS)	ACTUAL VELOCITY (FPS)
Federal Match 250	2,950	2,921
Black Hills 300	2,800	2,801
Hornady 285	2,745	2,840

clearance and extra leverage (which wasn't really needed as bolt operation was very smooth).

The barreled action is bolted to an aluminum "stock" which is really more of a chassis. At any rate, it is strong and rigid. The barrel is free-floated. Bolted to the action (with big 8-40 screws, incidentally, rather than the more commonly used 6-48 screws) is a Picatinny-style sight rail with 20 MOA of up-elevation. This makes more of the scope's vertical adjustment range useable at longer ranges. There are also accessory rails ahead of the receiver, and on both sides. With so many accessory options already, you wonder why they didn't add a bayonet lug.

The scope I used was a Weaver Super Slam 4-20x50 with side parallax adjustment and 30mm main tube. I mounted it on the rifle with Weaver heavy-duty rings, which use six screws per ring. These appear to be very strong; they certainly held the scope rigidly in place.

The Need For The .338 Lapua

The .338 Lapua was developed as a military cartridge. The armed forces of the US and most other nations had been using cartridges on the order of the .308 Win and .30-06 in sniper rifles for decades. When greater range and power was needed, the .50 BMG cartridge was used in rifles such as the Barrett light .50.

Military tacticians felt there was a role for a cartridge with greater effective range and more power than the .308, in a rifle more portable than a .50 BMG, and .338" bullets seemed a logical place to start looking. The goal set was for a 250-grain bullet at 3,000 fps. The two commercial .33" cartridges at the time, .338 Win. Mag. and .340 Weatherby, didn't have the case capacity.

Much of the initial experimenting and development of the cartridge was done by Lapua of Finland along with Accuracy International, a British-based manufacturer of long-range rifles. The cartridge dimensions came from the .416 Rigby case, but internally the .338 Lapua is different. It isn't just the Rigby case necked down.

Lapua made the case head heavier and thicker. Any centerfire case needs to be hard at the case-head area to avoid stretching, then progressively softer towards the case mouth so the brass can expand and seal the chamber to contain high-pressure powder gas. Lapua makes good brass, and it seems they are taking great pains with .338 Lapua brass to control case hardness. This probably explains why brass and ammunition are expensive.

The .338 Lapua has been adopted as a military cartridge by a number of nations including the US. It has rapidly earned a reputation for doing exactly what it was designed to do—delivering accuracy and power at ranges of 2,000 yards and more, from reasonably portable rifle **GUNS**

CASE CAPACITY

(of water, with case filled to the case mouth)

.338 Win Mag	86 grains
.340 Wby Mag	98 grains
.338 RUM	113 grains
.338 Lapua	114 grains
.338-.378 Wby	125 grains



The Magpul buttstock is fully adjustable for both length of pull and the height of the comb.



Weaver Super Slam 4-20x50mm scope

The Weaver Super Slam on the test rifle is a well-designed and well-built scope, with a 30mm main tube, 50mm objective lens, and a 5X power range, from 4X to 20X.

The elevation/adjustment turrets are very convenient to use. There are no caps, but pushing the turrets to "down" position locks them against being turned unintentionally. Lifting them up allows adjustments to be made.

Some turrets are secured with socket-head screws. Adjusting them to zero takes a small Allen-type wrench which (in my case at least) is never there when needed. With this Weaver scope, the shooter first sights-in at the desired range; then unscrews the turret top cap, lift the turret, set it to zero and replace the cap. Simple and fast.

In testing, the scope easily handled the warm water dunk/deep-freeze cycle with no fogging. Actually the weather at the range was a fairly severe test, as spring came late to North Dakota and it

was cold even at the end of March.

Reticule adjustment worked accurately when clicking up from 100 to 700 yards and back. Normally I'd shoot a square of 3-shot groups to test the reticle but with ammunition at 6 bucks a pop, I decided to do it later, with the scope on a different rifle—preferably a rimfire. I'll report more on this scope in a future Rifleman column.

Certainly the scope handled recoil well. Though the rifle's weight and the muzzlebrake tamed recoil, there's still a fair bit of commotion involved in accelerating a 250-grain bullet to nearly 3,000 fps.

The lenses are fully coated, the manual says the exterior coatings are especially hard to resist scratching. I didn't deliberately try to scratch them, but I didn't baby the scope or use lens caps either and at the end of testing, the exterior lenses looked like new. The optics are very sharp, adjustments crisp and reliable.

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SUPER SLAM 4-20X50MM

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POWER:

4X-20X

OBJECTIVE DIAMETER:

50mm

MAIN TUBE DIAMETER:

30mm

EYE RELIEF:

4"

FIELD OF VIEW

@ 100 YARDS:

25.1' (4X) – 8.4' (20X)

ADJUSTMENTS:

1/4 MOA

ADJUSTMENT RANGE:

55" elevation & windage

LENGTH OVERALL:

14.9"

WEIGHT:

28 ounces

RETICLE:

Mil-Dot, first focal plane

RETAIL:

\$1,199.95



Winter came early and stayed late in North Dakota. The longest range I had available was 700 yards which really doesn't let the .338 Lapua stretch itself out much. Since I couldn't shoot at really long range, I initially sighted at 100 yards, zeroed the adjustment turrets and then ran my elevation tables based on a 100-yard zero. When ranges get to 1,000 yards and further, it would be better to initially sight at 250 or 300 yards.

Groups at 100 yards don't interest long-range shooters much, but for the record 3-shot groups while sighting-in

ran from .53" to .66". Why three shots instead of my usual five? Well, it wasn't the recoil or the cold. No, it was the cost of ammunition. There's something about \$125 box ammo that outrages my thrifty upbringing. Each 3-shot group cost more than what I paid for my first centerfire rifle back when I was 14, which is going on half a century ago. Plus I wanted to save ammo to shoot at long range.

Recoil in fact was very mild, due both to the 18-pound weight and the efficient muzzlebrake. However, you can't launch a 250-grain bullet at nearly 3,000 fps without a certain



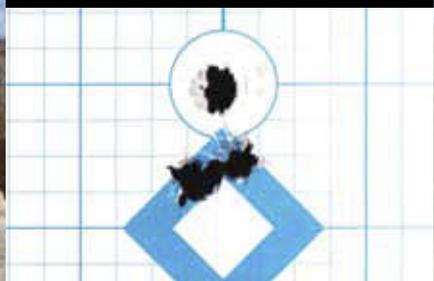
Dave couldn't resist setting up a camera downrange with a wide-angle lens to focus on the big muzzlebrake. Between the brake and the weight, recoil was relatively mild.



The .338 Lapua cartridge (above, left) is similar—though not interchangeable—in dimensions and case capacity to other super .33s such as the .338 RUM.



These 3-shot groups were fired while sighting-in at 100 yards with Federal Match 250-grain ammunition. It's no test of the cartridge, just a starting point—and a good one at that.



Learning To Shoot At Long Range

Sub minute-of-angle accuracy used to require careful handload development and most likely a knowledgeable tweaking of the rifle. A hunting rifle which would average 1" or less for five shots at 100 yards was one to boast of, a treasure to be carefully guarded.

Today, such accuracy is routine. I'm not much surprised when a new, moderately priced, bolt-action rifle gives sub-MOA accuracy with factory ammunition. I'm more surprised if it doesn't. A few years ago the very first 5-shot, 100-yard group from a heavy barrel Savage in .223, using Black Hills ammunition, measured just under .2". Subsequent groups showed it wasn't a fluke.

I think the single biggest improvement is in bullets and factory ammunition. Barrels are not necessarily better, but are more consistently good. Synthetic stocks are more stable, and in general there is a better understanding of accuracy requirements.

I still sometimes read witticisms such as "Most sub-MOA groups are shot with a typewriter" (what's a typewriter?) or "Other writers must get all the sub-MOA rifles, I never seem to get one." This is supposed to tell the world what an honest person the writer is. What it tells me is they need more shooting practice.

A small, but rapidly growing, segment of the rifle-shooting community is putting this accuracy to use by extending the definition of "long-range" shooting. I recall a feature article on long-range varmint shooting from around

1964. The varmints were groundhogs. The long shot of the day was at 425 yards, leaving the narrator bug-eyed in amazement. These days, boasting of a 400-yard shot is about like boasting how you once rode in a vehicle at 60 mph.

For those wanting to get past the shallows and into deeper water, the best cartridges are probably the .223 Rem and .308 Win, using bullets with high ballistic coefficients. Ammunition is relatively inexpensive, recoil moderate and accuracy outstanding. When you can shoot sub-MOA groups at say, half a mile with these rounds, you've learned a lot about long-range shooting.

As ranges get to 1,000 yards and beyond, bigger cartridge cases and slipperier 6.5mm, 7mm and .30" bullets help with the increasingly difficult wind problem. Quite a few long-range enthusiasts are going for still higher performance levels. Currently the hot cartridge is the .338 Lapua.

Most shooters who choose the .338 Lapua likely do so for its performance at extended ranges, say from 1,500 to 2,000 yards. Even at ranges of 500 to 700 yards it does have a significant advantage in resisting wind drift. Compare a .223 loaded with Hornady 75-grain A-Max bullets at 2,800 fps, a .308 with 168-grain A-Max at 2,700 fps and the .338 Lapua with a 250-grain BTHP at 2,900 fps.

At 600 yards in a 10 mph crosswind the .223 and .308 loads will drift nearly 31". The 250, .338 bullet will drift just 18.2". In practice an average wind reader (me, for example) with a .338 can hang in there with expert wind readers equipped with .223 or .308s. Even if we crank the 168-grain bullet up to 3,200 fps in a .30 Magnum it will drift about 24" under the same circumstances.

GUNS

amount of violence. Both report and muzzleblast are ferocious. Bystanders said they felt the muzzleblast pressure from 10 or 15 yards away.

After sighting-in I shot at various targets from 300 to 700 yards. Immediately noticeable was the excellent accuracy, which held at MOA or less at all ranges; the speed with which bullets got to targets and the authoritative "whack!" on impact; and the amazingly flat trajectory. With my .308s I'm used to dialing in 62 to 65 clicks elevation from a 100-yard zero (depending on load) at 600 yards. The .338 Lapua gets there with 45 clicks.

The .338 Lapua has established itself as a successful military cartridge. For law enforcement it's harder to justify a need. At least such was the opinion of the county sheriff, who is incidentally an excellent competitive shooter. He felt it was almost impossible to imagine a scenario in which civilian law enforcement would be justified in shooting at ranges beyond what their current rifles (.223 and .308) already encompass.

As a hunting cartridge the .338 Lapua would certainly be as effective as any of the other super .33s, assuming of course a good game bullet is used. Personally, I don't care

to shoot at unwounded big game at ranges much past 300 yards. It's not a question of accuracy or power, but

the time of bullet flight. Even if we control all other variables, we can't control whether the animal decides to move.

But target shooting, whether with air rifles at 10 meters or this Savage at 2,000 yards, is a great challenge in its own right and needs no further justification. If shooting tiny groups at 100 yards is starting to pall, try long-range shooting. It's a challenge to keep you occupied for quite some time.

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ACTION TYPE:

Bolt action

CARTRIDGE:

.338 Lapua (tested), .300 Win Mag

MAGAZINE CAPACITY:

5 (6 in .300 WM)

BARREL LENGTH:

26" (29.5" with muzzlebrake)

BARREL TWIST:

1:9"

SIGHTS:

None, 20-MOA Picatinny rail

BUTTSTOCK:

Magpul adjustable

STOCK:

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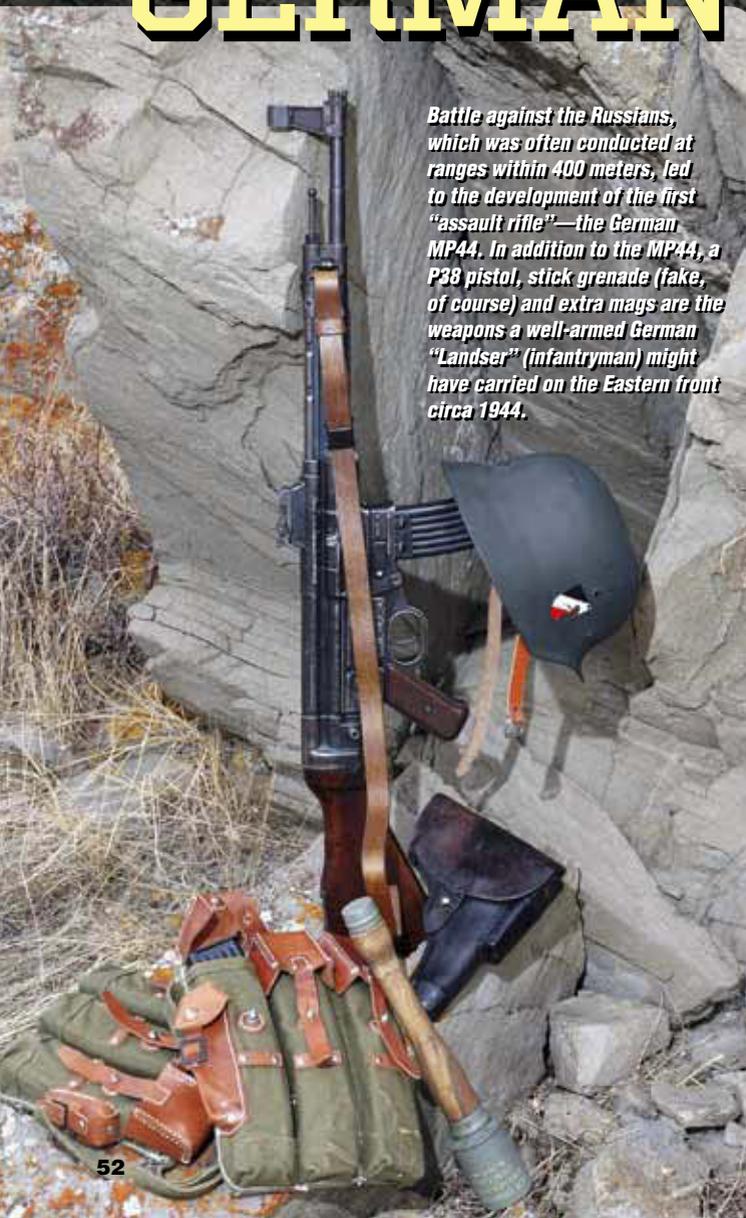
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Brass flies as Duke shoots the 7.92x33mm Kurz MP44 Sturmgewehr.

STURMGEWEHR: THE FIRST ASSAULT RIFLE GERMANY'S MP44.



Battle against the Russians, which was often conducted at ranges within 400 meters, led to the development of the first "assault rifle"—the German MP44. In addition to the MP44, a P38 pistol, stick grenade (fake, of course) and extra mags are the weapons a well-armed German "Landser" (infantryman) might have carried on the Eastern front circa 1944.

Mike "Duke" Venturino

Photos: Yvonne Venturino

When the Russians overran the eastern part of Germany at the end of World War II, hundreds of thousands of its citizens were taken in captivity back to the Soviet Union. Not all of these captives were soldiers. Many were civilians with special talents or knowledge. One such was Hugo Schmeisser, who was director of the weapons manufacturing plant named C.H. Haenel located in Suhl, Germany. He was also the firm's chief designer.

One bit of irony is that Schmeisser's name has been forever connected with the German MP38 and MP40 9mm submachine guns, with which he had little or no part in designing. On the other hand he was the father of the entire assault rifle concept and gets little credit for it. His design evolved through many names but most firearms enthusiasts today prefer the last one bestowed on it by Germany's military—the Sturmgewehr. That's German for "storm rifle" or "assault rifle."

Germany's Wehrmacht began hostilities in 1939 with two basic shoulder-fired personal weapons for its front line units. They were the MP38 9mm submachine gun and the K98k 7.92x57mm (8mm Mauser to Americans) bolt-action rifle. Shortly thereafter German ordnance officers recognized most infantry rifle combat occurred at ranges within 400 meters. Therefore, the 1,000 meter-plus effective range of the standard 7.92x57mm as fired from bolt-action rifles was unnecessary. On the other hand, the 100-yard effective range of the 9x19mm pistol cartridge in submachine guns wasn't enough.

Therefore, a compromise round was developed. Bullets remained 7.92mm (.323") but weighed only 125 grains



The German Wehrmacht's intent was for the MP44 "Sturmgewehr" (middle) to replace the the K98k 7.92x57mm rifle (top) and the MP40 9mm submachine gun (bottom).

compared to 198 grains for the standard S-Patrone 7.92x57mm cartridge then in use. Case length was reduced from 57mm (2.244") to 33mm (1.299"). Overall cartridge length came down from 3.17" to 1.89". The new cartridge's nominal velocity of 2,300 fps was considered sufficient. It was named 7.92x33mm Kurz—German for Short.

Two German companies began developing a select-fire weapon around the new cartridge and had them ready for testing by 1942. They were Walther and Haenel and their prototypes were labeled MK42(W) and MK42(H). MK stood for *maschinenkarabiner* (machine carbine). As with most full-auto weapons of that era those prototypes fired from an open bolt. This feature allows air to circulate through a full-auto's barrel, helping to keep it from overheating. However, as anyone who has fired a shoulder arm with open-bolt operation, that heavy device sliding forward at the pull of the trigger definitely hinders precise shot placement.

Therefore Germany's military, rather intelligently, decided on a closed-bolt system by which the new weapon could deliver accurate fire in semi-auto mode. Early in 1943, the Walther submission was dismissed and designation of the Haenel design was changed to MP43, this time meaning *maschinenpistole* (machine pistol). For reasons not fully understood today, the new weapon's stamping was changed to MP44 early in 1944, but by October manufacturers were ordered to change their stamps again. This time the guns were labeled StG44, which is where the famous name *Sturmgewehr* came into play.

At this point, I'd like to briefly relate some personal stories. In 2010 Yvonne cashed in some inherited stocks for fear the value of "paper" would become nil in today's shaky economy. Then she asked if I'd like to invest the cash in a couple more full-auto WWII weapons for my growing collection. One that I found at a decent price (relatively speaking) was a *Sturmgewehr* made when the MP44 designation reigned. It appeared a bit worn, but it was guaranteed by the seller to function 100 percent. We did the government paperwork and early in September of 2010 I took possession of it. The seller was correct. Its condition indicates it did see field use but still functions perfectly both in full- and semi-auto fire.

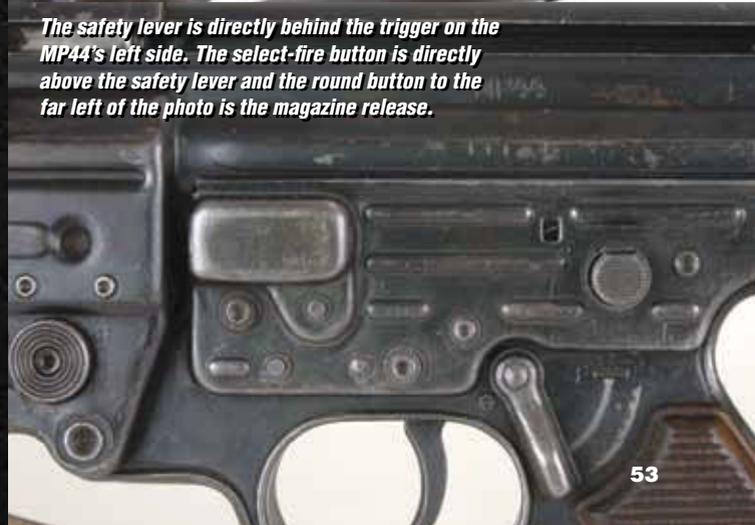
Then winter set in and shooting stopped. However, at our big winter gun show a group of friends set up a display of WWII firearms and artifacts. Since I was sitting with them behind the table, I brought my MP44 for display. The



Because the MP44's gas system sits atop the barrel the sights must be placed very high also. No windage adjustment is provided, although the front sight may be drift adjusted.

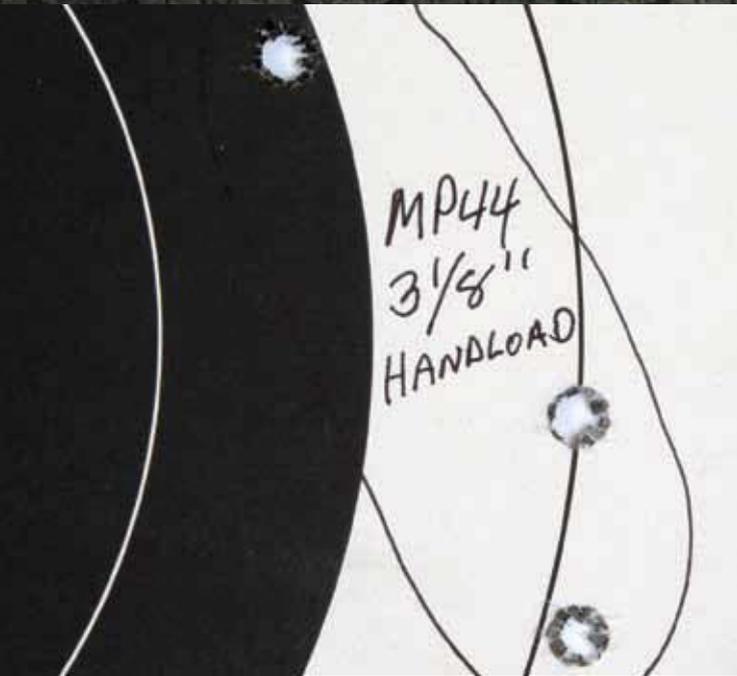


The safety lever is directly behind the trigger on the MP44's left side. The select-fire button is directly above the safety lever and the round button to the far left of the photo is the magazine release.





Duke loading the very first MP44 he laid eyes on. He knew thereafter he had to have one.



Despite its 75-plus-year age and wear, along with an inherent difficulty of shooting off of a sandbag rest, Duke's MP44 will still group like this at 100 yards.

For Graf & Sons, Hornady is loading 7.92x33mm Kurz factory ammo.



public's response to it was very humorous and split into three basic groups. The first group of people would pass by completely ignoring it. They were the avid big-game hunters and varmint shooters. The second group had a more modern frame of mind. As they passed by the MP44 you could hear them comment to each other something like this, "That old AK has sure seen better days."

Lastly there were the truly knowledgeable. As they passed by, their glance took in the MP44 and they stopped dead in their tracks. Pointing at the Sturmgewehr they would look at us sitting behind the table and say, "Is that real?" I would say "Yep." Then they would ask, "Does it work?" Again I would say "Yep." Invariably then they would ask something like "Can I just pick it up for a minute?" Of course I again said "Yep." Then they would examine it with an aura almost of reverence. The reason for that is because MP44s, aka Sturmgewehrs, are very rare. Even someone as oriented towards historical firearms as I had never personally seen but one other before buying mine.

At this point an uninitiated person might be asking, "Why would someone mistake it for an AK?" That's because the AK obviously grew from Hugo Schmeisser's initial work. In fact, it is very interesting to note that in the late 1940s and early 1950s captive Hugo Schmeisser was put to work by the Soviets at the Izhevsk Machine, Engineering and Motor Plant Complex, one of the Soviet Union's largest arms making factories. And guess who else was there at the same time: Mikhail T. Kalashnikov to whom the Soviet Union gave sole credit for designing the AK-47. In fact, Kalashnikov has even been quoted as saying he had never even seen the German's MP44/Sturmgewehr before dreaming up his own assault rifle. Funny then how outwardly similar the two weapons are.

Propaganda As History

Soviet propagandists had difficulty in telling the truth, even when it would have been easier than lying. So would they prefer saying that an ordinary man from the working class developed their revolutionary new infantry rifle all by his communist self or that a captive German had been instrumental in the work? It's hard to blame Kalashnikov for going along with the party line because he reaped great lifetime rewards along the way. Besides he had already been sent to Siberia once. For a great read with documented detail about Mr. Kalashnikov and the development of the AK-47, I would refer readers to a new book titled *The Gun* by Pulitzer Prize winning writer C.J. Chivers.

(This following information was especially interesting. In *The Gun*, Chivers credits this magazine with being the first American publication to reveal the Soviets new rifle and cartridge with a cover story in the September 1956 issue. The article was by William B. Edwards who actually got his hands on an AK-47 with Soviet military ammunition. Incidentally, he also likened it to the Sturmgewehr.)

Here's another concept Chivers pointed out in his excellent book. America came close to having the first true assault rifle without realizing it or meaning to. That was the M1 Carbine, which was actually developed with the intent of replacing pistols in US military inventory. Consider these facts: The .30 Carbine round fired a 108-grain roundnose bullet at 1,900 fps; the German 7.92x33 Kurz fired a 125-grain spitzer bullet at 2,300 fps; and the Soviet's 7.62x39mm fired a 123-grain spitzer at 2,330 fps. (Figures quoted from *Military Small Arms Of The 20th Century 7th Edition*, by Ian V. Hogg and John S. Weeks.)

If the .30 Carbine developers had made the cartridge just a bit more powerful and the M1 Carbine a bit more robust and kept its magazine capacity high, they could have trumped the Sturmgewehr. But then it wouldn't have

The MP44, P38 pistol and stick grenade (fake, of course) would have been used to slow the Russian advance circa 1944.



been a replacement for pistols, which it never managed to do anyway.

Regardless, let's return to the physical aspects of the MP44. It has only a 16" barrel with 37" overall length. That's actually only 1" longer than an M1 Carbine. However, look at unloaded weights of the two. An M1 Carbine scales at 5-1/2 pounds. The MP44/Sturmgewehr is twice that. The buttstock is wood, as are the pistol grip panels. The rest of the weapon is steel—mostly stamped steel. Because its gas operating system is above the barrel it is necessary for its sights to also be rather high. The rear sight is an open, tangent type with graduations to 800 meters. The front sight is a simple blade protected by a large hood. The only way windage can be adjusted is to remove the hood and drift the front side in its dovetail.

Ammunition capacity is nominally 30 rounds in the banana-shape magazine so commonly seen today. The magazine release is a button located just behind the magazine housing on the frame's left side. There's a 2-position safety aft of the triggerguard and a select-fire button, too. It is simple in the extreme: when extending to the left the rifle is in semi-auto mode; when extending to the right side it is in full-auto mode. Rate of fire is nominally 500 rounds per minute in full-auto.

Ammo

This question has been asked of me many times. "Duke, it's cool to have such a historical gun in your collection but where in the world do you come up with ammo?" That's the easy part. Hornady actually produces a factory load now, exclusively for sale by Graf & Sons, Inc. It uses a



The 7.92x33mm Kurz (above, center) is flanked by its contemporary, the US M1 .30 Carbine (above, left) and the 7.92's direct descendant, the Soviet 7.62x39mm (above, right). The 7.92x33mm Kurz (below, left) was born of the need for an intermediate-power round between the longer-range pre-WWI era 7.92x57mm Mauser and 9x19mm pistol and sub-gun round.



.323", 125-grain hollowpoint bullet rated at 2,265 fps. Furthermore, Graf & Sons sells those bullets as a separate reloading component and imports newly made 7.92x33 Kurz brass from Prvi Partisan located in Serbia.

Hornady not only sells proper reloading dies but also has a data section in their new *Handbook Of Cartridge Reloading, 8th Edition*. My chronograph reads the Hornady factory load at 2,341 fps. The only handload I've tried in it thus far has the 125-grain Hornady bullet over 20 grains of IMR4227. That load clocked at only 1,956 fps. My PACT Model IV timer can also count rpm (rounds per minute). It rated the Hornady factory load at 483 rpm and the handload at 501 rpm.

Performance

Thus far, eagerly aided by several friends, I have fired about 500 rounds through what I love to call "Yvonne's present." Here are my impressions: recoil is negligible as might be expected with such a mild cartridge and heavy rifle. Also, if you load the original magazine with more than 25 rounds you're just asking for stoppages. Otherwise it functions 100 percent just as it was advertised. Shooting it for group size at 100 yards in the traditional manner from sandbag rest is difficult. The magazine extends so far that it hits the bench top. With just a muzzle rest I can get about 3" groups in semi-auto. At 300 yards it is easy to keep all shots on a PT-Torso armor steel plate measuring 18"x24", likewise in semi-auto. So far my "effective" range in full-auto on those same steel plates is 100 yards.

Is the AK-47 a better assault rifle? Undoubtedly. Although, admittedly, I can count the number of 7.62x39mm rounds I've fired through semi-auto AK-47s on my fingers. And I've never seen a genuine full-auto AK-47. But, as an addition to my collection of World War II firearms, the MP44/Sturmgewehr shines!

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Illuminated reticles are most useful on dark, big-game animals, such as this truly black, black bear, taken in Alaska.



DO YOU SEE IT?

*Illuminated reticle **and** night-vision scopes.*



This Zeiss Victory Diavari with illuminated reticle helped a lot when aiming at a mostly black wild boar. It is mounted on a J.P. Sauer 303 self-loading rifle in .30-06.

John Barsness

Humans evolved as omnivorous hunter-gatherers, eating roots, fruits and a few seeds, plus whatever animals we could catch or kill. Each kind of “hunting” had its own problems to solve, whether catching fish from deep water or slaying mammals weighing more than a ton.

One major problem in hunting mammals was that many were primarily active in dim light or even darkness, while humans are primarily diurnal. We can't see very well in the dark and normally fall asleep not long after the sun goes down (unless, of course, we're in Las Vegas). When hunting was our only source of meat, we initially solved this conflict by setting traps for nocturnal animals, but the long-term solution was to domesticate some animals, raising them for food.

After that, hunting became less essential and more formal, though today it still provides substantial amounts of protein even in some “civilized” societies. An urban friend hunted elk with me a couple of years ago. He's from a part of the East where most people get paid a lot, and was astonished to learn the average income in Montana ranks just above the Deep South. “How do people survive on that?” he asked.

“An elk in the freezer helps,” I answered. He nodded, but I don't think he really got it.

Even in primitive hunting societies like Montana, however, Americans long ago started limiting the legal methods of taking game, especially at night, partly as a result of brighter portable lamps and more sophisticated firearms. Kerosene lamps made night-shooting practical by the mid-1800s, but late in the century smokeless powder and carbide lamps turned night-hunting into a profitable business. The take of market hunters increased to the point where restrictions were not only enacted but enforced, and indiscriminate night-hunting came to an end.

Night Hunting

One of the constants of humanity, however, is that ethics vary from place to place. Most countries ban polygamy, but not all. Similarly, attitudes about night-hunting vary considerably. Many countries in Europe, for instance, allow wild boar to be shot all night long. These are not the feral



Trijicon's Mil-Dot reticle helped take this big mule deer (above) at close to 400 yards. The control switch for illuminated scopes (below) is located in various places by different manufacturers. This Zeiss 2.5-10X Victory Diavari's is on the left side of the scope. Pulling out the knob turns the reticle on, and twirling the knob controls the brightness.



domestic pigs that are becoming a problem in much of North America, but the native, truly wild ancestors of domestic pigs.

European boars have been hunted by humans for tens of thousands of years, and long ago became very wary of daylight, so the laws of several countries allow night-hunting—with some restrictions. Artificial lights are normally banned; the reason Germany is well known for big, bright scopes with highly visible reticles. These scopes were primarily developed for hunting boars on moonlit nights, but European regulations for other game

also tend to allow shooting well into what most humans consider “night.”

In North America many hunting laws still reflect century-old restrictions against market hunting. Night hunting is often illegal, though some states make an exception for certain varmints, including feral pigs. Texas allows night hunting of any “exotic” animals not native to the state, including numerous game animals imported from all over the world.

In most states the legal shooting hours for big game are half an hour before sunrise to half an hour after sunset, though in South Carolina



Trijicon AccuPoint scopes have a sliding window to adjust the brightness of the fiber optic reticle (above). The system has proven to be waterproof too. The AccuPoint reticle showed up nicely on this Alaskan grizzly even on a dim, rainy day.

its legal to shoot deer a full hour before sunrise and after sunset (the same rule some European countries have for game other than wild boar), partly because whitetailed deer are so numerous and nocturnal. Alaska has interesting rules as well, because there's so much sunlight during many hunting seasons.

Know The Law

This variety of laws means any hunter must check out local regulations, not only for legal shooting hours, but also for specific restrictions on scopes. Most states allow illuminated reticles but don't allow actual night-vision scopes. The same states may also allow just about any hours or equipment for varmint hunting, but not always. After a pronghorn hunt in New Mexico a few years ago, a local friend and I decided to do some coyote hunting. Near sunset we set up in what looked like a good spot and started calling. Just as the light started growing dim, my friend stood up and said, "That's it." It turned out the legal hours for hunting coyotes in New Mexico are the same as for hunting deer: half an hour before sunrise and after sunset. This was absolutely astonishing to me, but it was right there in the regulations.

There are three basic levels of "enhanced aiming" in scopes: non-electronic illuminated reticles, electronic illuminated reticles and night vision.

Probably the most popular non-electronic illuminated-reticle scopes right now are made by Trijicon. Their ACOG is primarily intended for the military, but can be very useful for some hunting—especially close-range coyote calling or deer hunting, but Trijicon's AccuPoint scopes are more flexible.

AccuPoints are conventional, variable scopes except for the aiming point of the reticle, made of a combination of fiber optic and tritium. This point glows nicely even in absolute darkness, due to the tritium, but in any level of light the intensity can also be adjusted by a sliding window on the outside of the scope, allowing more or less light to strike the fiber optic. (And yes, the AccuPoint still is waterproof, despite the window. I've dunked several in warm water to make sure.)

The first AccuPoint reticle was a basic post with a glowing, triangular tip. This is a great reticle for general big-game hunting at "normal" ranges, and far more accurate than most hunters will believe. I've used the 1.25-4x24 model extensively on a couple of my rifles, and it's easy to group three shots inside an inch at 100 yards—



Wild pigs are among the most nocturnal big game.

A Night Optics USA D-740-3AG 4x82 helped take this feral boar with a clean ear shot. Note the Wilson Combat Tactical Custom is also equipped with a suppressor. Neither is legal for taking game in most states, so check your local game laws.



or take big game at 300 yards. Mine has proven very useful for a variety of hunting, from thick-cover African antelope to Alaskan bears.

For longer ranges, Trijicon also offers plex-type crosshair and Mil-Dot reticles with a fine illuminated dot in the middle. I used the 3-9x40 AccuPoint to take a big Wyoming mule deer at almost 400 yards a few years ago. Presently I have the latest 5-20x50 AccuPoint on one of Savage's new .338 Lapua rifles for shooting at really long ranges, since the scope is equipped with the typical modern "tactical" turrets for dialing-in

precisely at longer ranges.

AccuPoint aiming points come in three colors: amber, green and red. None is really superior to the others if the shooter has the normal range of color perception, but about 8 percent of men have some kind of color blindness, and having three choices helps them considerably. (Oddly enough, less than 1 percent of women are color blind. Some scientists hypothesize that color blindness has some advantages in typically male activities, including hunting and war. Otherwise it would be extremely rare, just as it is in women.)

Bushnell offers a phosphor-enhanced, plex-type reticle called the Firefly on some of its Elite 3200 scopes. When the Firefly is “charged” with a flashlight, the edges of the reticle glow for at least a couple of hours; and, since the reticle itself is pretty heavy, it works very well for dim-light aiming. My wife Eileen used a 3-9X 3200 with the Firefly on a last-light black bear a few years ago, and the reticle helped a lot.

Actually black black bears (they also come in colors from blond to brown, even brick-red) are one of the toughest targets for a conventional reticle, because the center of the reticle is often lost against the bear, especially in dim light. The same thing happens with dark pigs, the reason many European scopes come with electronically illuminated reticles.

Illuminated reticles have recently become more popular in North America, both for pigs and quasi-night whitetail shooting, but some of the first electronic reticles in “American” scopes didn’t have any means of finely controlling the intensity of the lighted aiming point. These days almost all are almost infinitely adjustable for brightness, helping enormously as light conditions change. A really brightly-lit aiming point is handy in typical forest cover, especially on a cloudy day, but the same intensity overwhelms the sight picture when aiming in near-darkness.

Many of the early scopes also had problems with battery life, partly because the intensity couldn’t be controlled. Better batteries have helped enormously, and many newer scopes also shut off automatically after several hours. I recently used a Zeiss Victory Diavari 2.5-10X on a pig hunt in Texas and left the reticle turned on much of the time for three days, and still didn’t come close to using up the battery. I’ve also used several other electronic reticle scopes, mostly for pig hunting. They help enormously in any really dim light, but can even help in dim woods, where a fine point can help when trying to precisely put a bullet between twigs.

A few brands offer an entirely illuminated reticle. For a while I owned a 5.5-22X Nightforce with a multi-point reticle that lit up like a burning bush. These reticles obviously require more battery power, and also really aren’t all that useful in hunting, since it’s rare to shoot at an animal at ranges where an illuminated “ballistic” reticle might be useful. You just can’t see animals that far away at night, even in a very big, bright scope.

When shooting in real darkness, however, a true night-vision scope

beats any illuminated-reticle scope. They’re only legal in a few places, but when night-vision can be used it makes a real difference.

The night-vision optics available to the civilian market are normally described as Generation 1, 2 or 3—or more popularly as Gen 1, 2 or 3. The numbers indicate a rough level of performance and cost. A typical Gen 1 scope enhances the available light about 1,000 times, Gen 2 about 20,000 times and Gen 3 up to 50,000 times. (There are night-vision optics beyond Gen 3, but right now they’re almost entirely military.)

The differences in view aren’t just in brightness, but sharpness. A Gen 1 scope, like the ATN MK 410 5X Spartan I’ve been testing for a while, definitely allows shooting in much dimmer light than any conventional scope. One of my first tests was on a starlit night, with a cardboard pig silhouette placed 100 yards out in a field. It was impossible to aim at this pig with even the brightest conventional scopes in my collection, including \$1,000+ models from Leica, Leupold,

Schmidt & Bender, Swarovski and Zeiss. But with the \$600 Spartan the fake pig could not only be seen, but also shot accurately.

I don’t night-hunt enough to justify buying something like the \$4,000-plus Night Optics USA D-740-3AG 4x82 scope that Bill Wilson has on one of his AR-15s for hunting pigs on his Texas ranch. But Bill is Wilson Combat, and justifies the cost both because of the research he has to keep up with trends in combat firearms, and because he loves to hunt pigs.

I spent a few days with Bill in the winter of 2010, “field-testing” some of his ARs in 6.8 SPC not only on pigs, but one coyote. The hunting took place at all times of the day, from stands and on the ground. On the second evening Bill picked me up from a stand an hour or so after sunset, and asked if I’d like to do some “real night hunting.”

“Sure,” I said, assuming that meant spotlighting. Instead it meant real night vision.

We drove to a wide valley along a tributary of the Sulphur River, then got out and started toward the creek.



Even this Gen 1 night-vision scope is superior to the brightest illuminated-reticle scope in true darkness. This ATN Spartan scope proved capable of resolving this fake pig well enough on a cloudy night at 100 yards in an open field for John to put 3 shots into it.



This Night Optics Gen 3 scope costs more than \$4,000, but really lights up the night. It is shown mounted to a Wilson Combat Tactical Custom in 6.8mm Remington SPC.

The sky was partly cloudy but enough stars peeked out to allow us to walk without tripping. Bill also had along his Night Optics binocular, and a few hundred yards from the truck we stopped while he scanned the cattle pastures that sloped gently down toward the creek. "There are some cows," he whispered, "and some deer." Then he suddenly stopped scanning. "And there are some pigs."

He handed me the binocular and the view was astonishing. I've been around night optics since the first crude monoculars went on the market in the 1990s. The first ones weren't quite capable of differentiating a deer and a benchrest at 100 yards, but through Bill's binocular we could tell the difference between cows and pigs at half a mile or more.

A light breeze came from the wrong direction for a direct stalk, so we made a big circle, eventually moving very slowly and silently up a slight rise to where we'd seen the pigs. As we crested the rise Bill stopped frequently to scan the ground ahead, then leaned close and whispered, "There they are." I set up the AR-15 on a pair of shooting sticks and pressed my right eyebrow

into the collapsible-rubber eyepiece of the scope, activating the night vision.

About 100 yards away a black-and-white boar fed on the lush grass, so precisely visible that I could not only see his spots, but his ears. He was angling away, not providing any sort of broadside shot, so I aimed under the near ear and pulled the trigger. The suppressed rifle made a little whonk and clatter, and the other pigs in the vicinity immediately ran into the nearby brush, but the boar dropped straight down and never moved again. Night-vision scopes may not be legal for German boars, but they sure work in Texas.

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Most hunting reticles light up in the center, rather than illuminating the entire reticle.

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-- Roy Huntington, Editor

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ROY ALERT!!

THE MODEL 48 LEGACY



The "Legacy" is John A. Nosler's concept of the ideal big-game rifle.

THE RIFLE ACCORDING TO THE LATE JOHN NOSLER.

HOLT BODINSON

What if you were able to sit down with one of the titans of the industry and ask him to draw up the specifications for what he personally would consider to be the ideal big-game hunting rifle? Well into his 90s at the time, bullet and rifle maker, the late John A. Nosler, did just that sitting down at lunch one day with his grandson, John R. Nosler. It is reported he would mimic mounting his ideal rifle, working the action, loading a round and taking the shot.

From his notes, sketches and daily counsel, the custom gunsmiths of Nosler crafted steel and wood into a completely new addition to the growing Nosler rifle line. It's called, appropriately, the "Model 48 Legacy," and it incorporates all the features Nosler thought important in a well balanced, fast handling, highly

accurate, big-game rifle. Fortunately, before his passing in October 2010, John A. Nosler had an opportunity to handle and fire what would become his rifle legacy.

What's exciting about the new "Legacy" model for 2011 is that it's the second least expensive model in the Nosler custom rifle line, and it's

available in right- or left-hand actions, in three very intriguing chamberings—the .257 Roberts, .280 Ackley Improved and .35 Whelen, as well as the more familiar .270 Win, .308 Win, .30-06, .300 Win Mag and .338 Win Mag. Fed with Nosler Custom ammunition, the Legacy is factory guaranteed to deliver 3/4-MOA accuracy for 3-shot groups at 100 yards.

There's something very special about being able to hunt with serial numbers N0004 and N0005 of the new Legacy line, and the opportunity came during a December whitetail hunt at the Nail Ranch just outside of Albany, Texas. Number N0004 was chambered in .300 Win Mag and N0005 in .338 Win Mag. Joining me on the hunt was fellow scribe, John Barsness, and we agreed to switch the two rifles back-and-forth on a daily basis. As it turned out, N0005 in .338 was the lucky number claiming two deer and two boar between, us with four rounds of Nosler Custom 200-grain AccuBond ammunition.

The Legacy

A particular Model 70 Winchester in .300 H&H plays strongly in the story of John Nosler's development of superior hunting bullets. It was the failure of 1946-era .300 H&H ammunition in his Model 70 on a moose hunt that inspired Nosler to invent the Partition bullet; and it was



The Legacy is available with a short or long action in eight effective big-game calibers.

a Hail Mary shot on a mule deer with that same Model 70 years later that lead Nosler to develop the Ballistic Tip. And it was a design element from the Model 70 that caught my eye when I first picked up Nosler's Legacy model.

It was the bottom metal. Other models in the Nosler lineup typically feature an inside-the-triggerguard release for the floorplate. Not the Legacy. John Nosler could not have sketched out a better rendition of the Model 70's exterior button release. There it was with John A. Nosler's engraved signature stretched across the length of the floorplate. In fact, being in one piece, Nosler's bottom metal is a distinct improvement on the multi-part Winchester design which typically takes two hands and three tries to reassemble. The magazine itself will hold four standard rounds or three rounds of either belted or short magnums.

The heart of the new Legacy is its barreled action. The custom-made action is squared off and flat, not round on the bottom. It's a push-feed design and features a button ejector and Sako-type extractor in the bolt. In fact, the bolt disassembles like a Sako by simply depressing and turning the cocking piece/firing-pin assembly. The bolt is fluted to better handle dust and dirt. The fully adjustable trigger is by Rifle Basix. It's factory



A Winchester Model 70 user, Nosler specified a Model 70-type floorplate release (above) for the Legacy. Nosler Trophy Grade and Nosler Custom ammunition set a high standard for accuracy and performance, delivering Holt this nice buck (below) at the Nail Ranch.

set to 3 pounds and is provided with a 2-position safety. The free-floated, 24" barrel is a match grade, chrome-moly by Pac-Nor and was quite capable of maintaining 3/4 MOA when tested at the Nail Ranch range.

The exterior finish on all the metal parts is a pleasing matte black, baked-on ceramic coating called Cerakote by NIC Industries. It's one of the most durable and weatherproof finishes available for firearms. Another NIC product, Micro Slick—a dry film ceramic coating that cures at ambient temperatures—is applied to all internal working parts. In short, the Legacy is protected and lubricated with high-tech ceramics to stand up to the worst rigors of a hunt and to function without fail.

In fact, as you will see in the pictures, I purposely did not clean the action at all during the dusty hunt. The bolt never bound up. The trigger maintained its setting. The action was as slick on the last day of the hunt as on the first. There's a lot to be said for dry, bonded, self-lubricating metal finishes on working firearms.

John Nosler specified a walnut stock for his Legacy. The upgraded wood of the Legacy is nicely figured, checkered with 20 lines per inch and glass-pillar bedded. It's a classic and classy looking stock and, being walnut, it accentuates the custom quality of the Legacy.



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By any measure, some of the offbeat calibers chambered in the Legacy are intriguing. The .280 Ackley Improved is about as sensible and well balanced a 7mm cartridge as exists. When you can get 3,266 fps with a 140-grain Nosler Partition or AccuBond from a standard size, improved case that's highly efficient with modest charges of powder, you can crow a bit. Nosler even supplies formed brass and/or ammunition for this sensational, but now slightly tamed, wildcat.

Promoted for decades as the mythical "all-around" cartridge for varmints, light and medium-size big game, the .257 Roberts has nine lives. It simply will not give in to the modern 6mms, and there's something to be said for that. If Nosler would give the .257 Roberts the "Ackley Improved" treatment, then we really would have an efficient, hot 25-caliber cartridge.

Col. Townsend Whelen deserves a bit of a drum roll for necking up the .30-06 case to .35 caliber. Pushing a 250-grain Partition at 2,506 fps, the .35 Whelen is treading right on the heels of the .358 Norma Magnum and is fully the equal of the .350 Rem Mag—plus the Whelen fits in standard actions with standard bolt faces. It's a neat cartridge as is, but it, too, could stand a dose of "Ackley Improvement" to bring out every foot-pound the case has to offer. Nosler thinks highly enough of the Whelen to offer both formed brass and loaded ammunition for the caliber.

Speaking of Nosler brass, known as "NoslerCustom" brass, it's a

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ACTION TYPE:

Bolt action

CALIBERS:

.300 Win, .338 Win (tested), .257 Roberts, .270 Win, .280 Ackley Imp, .308 Win, .30-06, .35 Whelen

CAPACITY:

4 (standard), 3 (magnum)

SAFETY:

2-position

BARREL LENGTH:

24"

OVERALL LENGTH:

44-1/2"

WEIGHT:

7-1/4 to 8-1/4 pounds

FINISH:

Black Cerakote

SIGHTS:

None, drilled and tapped

STOCK:

Walnut

PRICE:

\$2,195



The Legacy's massive gas ports are an additional safety feature of the Nosler actions.



The Cerakote-finished fluted bolt just shrugged away dust and dirt on the hunt, of which there was plenty.



The Model 48 test rifles came mounted with custom-designed scopes by Leupold. The Leupold Custom Shop can provide a wide variety of reticles matched to the drop of the your cartridge and load, as well as custom finishes.

handloader's dream. Available in calibers ranging from the .204 Ruger to the .375 H&H, and the cases are weight-sorted to +/-1/2 grain into 25- or 50-count boxes and are fully prepped with deburred flash holes and deburred and chamfered necks. Just open up the box and load them up.

I'm sure when John Nosler started designing the Partition in 1946, he had no concept of how diversified the Nosler company might become 65 years later. It is remarkable that today the Nosler brands encompass bullets, brass, reloading manuals, ammunition and production-custom rifles. It's quite a legacy. **GUNS**

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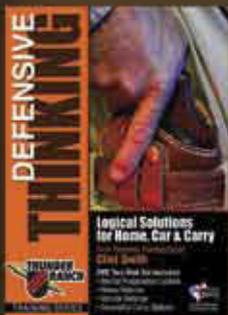
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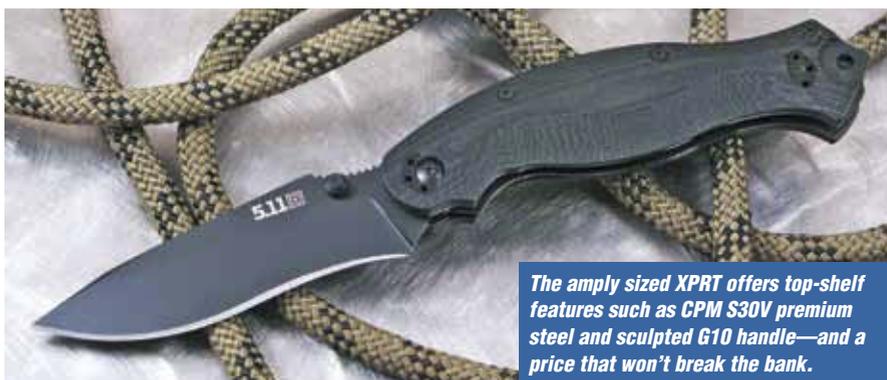
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• PAT COVERT •

BLACK BEAUTY The 5.11 Tactical XPRT is big on features, and the price is right.

The firm 5.11 Tactical, a leader in the law enforcement apparel industry for over three decades, began adding knives to their growing line of gear and accessories two years ago. To get their feet wet, the company turned to another industry insider, Blade-Tech, to design and supply their first line of tactical knives. Spearheaded by Blade-Tech veteran Mike Vellecamp, who also represents Fox Knives USA, 5.11’s first offerings were well received and their second round of designs appear equally exciting.



The amply sized XPRT offers top-shelf features such as CPM S30V premium steel and sculpted G10 handle—and a price that won’t break the bank.

The new 5.11 XPRT model, designed by Vellecamp for Fox Knives USA, is a large-size tactical folder with more curves than a bag of Ramen noodles and all the right stuff to put it at the head of the class. This knife features a slick 3.75" recurved clip-point blade made of top-shelf Crucible Industries CPM S30V

stainless blade steel and rolls out on dual, ambidextrous thumb studs; a welcome sight for southpaws who are often overlooked in the tactical-folder arena. The blade, flat ground to keep a durable edge, has a black oxide coating for low reflectivity and added corrosion resistance. On the backside of the blade a notched thumb ramp has been added for enhanced purchase.

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BLADE MATERIAL:
S30V

BLADE LENGTH:
3.75"

OVERALL LENGTH:
5.25" closed, 9" opened

WEIGHT:
6.5 ounces

SCALES:
Contoured G10

CARRY:
Pocket clip

PRICE:
\$149.99

The XPRT’s curvaceous all-black, 5.25" handle will please those with the largest of mitts and has a positionable 2.25" pocket clip that can be mounted at any end of the knife for tip-up or tip-down carry in either pocket, and a Torx wrench is included to handle the locating chores. The handle has comfortable, sculpted G10 scales over a Michael Walker-style liner-lock frame. At the tip of the base you’ll find a glass-breaker point and hole for a lanyard loop.

Whether you’re in law enforcement or just need a highly capable pocket carry for self-defense, there’s a lot to like about this knife. Better yet, the 5.11 Tactical XPRT’s \$149.99 retail price tag offers up a ton of features at a very affordable price.

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Patrol Rifles Good, Assault Rifles Bad?

“Two police officers, training on patrol rifles... suffered injuries Wednesday morning when one of the firearms exploded,” a recent news account reports. Fortunately, the injuries were not life-threatening.

It was reported the rifle in question is widely used by law enforcement. An initial inspection shows the gun was not defective.

But here’s the thing about that rifle: It’s a semi-automatic rifle and includes features such as a pistol grip, a 30-round-capacity magazine, collapsible stock... the very features anti-gunners use to define an “assault rifle.” The very features the anti-gunners demand banning from private ownership.

Something else the antis are counting on is media and public ignorance about the difference between a semi-auto so demonized, and a select-fire/full-auto weapon. Josh Sugarmann of the Violence Policy Center spelled out a strategy calculated to exploit that. “The weapons’ menacing looks, coupled with the public’s confusion over fully-automatic machine guns versus semi-automatic assault weapons—anything that looks like a machine gun is assumed to be a machine gun—can only increase the chance of public support for restrictions on these weapons,” he wrote back in 1988, outlining a misdirection strategy that is still used to gin up such support.

So when is an assault rifle not an assault rifle? The newspaper called the rifle involved a “patrol rifle.” Does anyone think it would have been referred to as anything but an “assault rifle” had just plain folks been involved in the mishap?

Gun rights advocate and writer

Kurt Hofmann illustrated how such terminology is used to manipulate public opinion. Citing a *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* editorial calling for a ban on “civilian” possession of semi-autos, Hofmann showed us how that works.

“What makes this editorial special is the slick rhetorical gymnastics,” he wrote in “The Difference Between ‘Assault Weapons’ And ‘Patrol Rifles,’” showing how the *Sun-Sentinel* wordsmiths crafted their arguments.

“[T]here is one unmistakable truth—the average person has absolutely no need for an assault rifle. They have one purpose—to hurt or kill people, namely cops,” the editorial began.

“[T]HERE IS ONE UNMISTAKABLE TRUTH—THE AVERAGE PERSON HAS ABSOLUTELY NO NEED FOR AN ASSAULT RIFLE. THEY HAVE ONE PURPOSE—TO HURT OR KILL PEOPLE, NAMELY COPS,”

“Understandably, officers in more South Florida police agencies have been arming themselves—at their own expense—with patrol rifles to be on more even footing with criminals—particularly gangs—they encounter,” it concluded.

Words have meaning and power, and can be used especially insidiously when the intent is to prompt opinions from people who don’t even know they’re being manipulated—and that can include naïve journalists.

Being aware of the “patrol rifle/assault rifle” sleight of mind is important, because it does just that, and carries with it the sense that citizens so armed are threats to public safety, and only the police can be trusted. Anyone spreading such a gospel of citizen untrustworthiness and authoritarian salvation has an agenda, and freedom isn’t on it.

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

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

NEWS

Precision-Guided Mortar Rounds Arrive In Afghanistan

Mortarmen from Company C, 1-506th Infantry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Forward Operating Base Kushamond, Paktika Province, Afghanistan, fired a 120mm Precision Guided Mortar Munitions round for the first time last March 26, which hit within 4 meters of its target.

A mortar is an indirect fire weapon system infantrymen at the battalion level use for immediate fire missions. Normally a mortar fires a “dumb” round—one that does not have an on-board guidance system.



Spc. Nicholas Ketchen and Spc. Colt Corbin, mortarmen from Company C, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, achieved a first in US Army history by firing a 120mm Mortar Precision Guided Munition for the first time in Afghanistan, and hitting within four meters of the target, on Forward Operation Base Kushamond, Afghanistan, last March 26. Photo: Spc. Zachary Burke, 55th Combat Camera

“The 120mm precision guided munitions will allow Task Force Red Currahee to provide even more effective fires with increased lethality,” said Lt. Col. David Womack, commander of the 1st Bn., 506th Inf. “The accuracy of the 120mm PGMM (Precision Guided Mortar Munition) also reduces the potential risk of any collateral damage, (and) as a commander I have another tool available to fight the enemy.”

“A 120mm mortar is a fairly accurate weapons system (with the dumb round), it is however not as accurate as the Howitzers,” said Maj. Gary Pina, brigade fire support coordinator, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Div. “It was built for immediate fire suppression or support for the infantry battalions.”

Pina said the Howitzers are a brigade-level asset. The 120mm PGMM mortar round offers a more capable weapon system at the battalion level.

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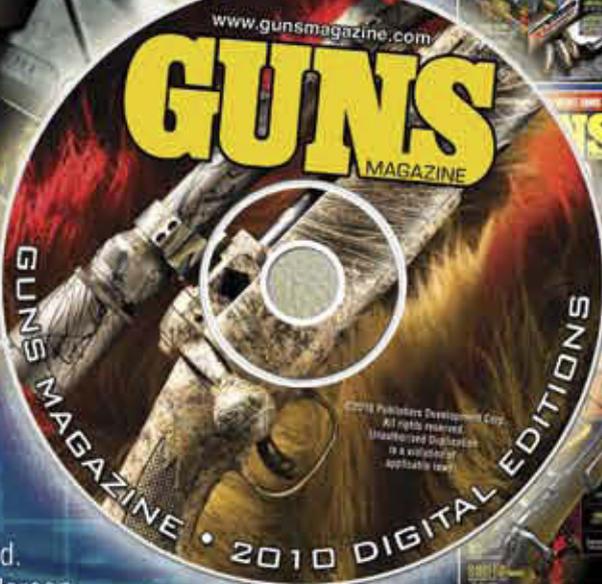
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Unlike the regular mortar round, the 120mm PGMM has a Global Positioning System and can hit a target location within 10 meters or less. This will help mitigate collateral damage and offer greater accuracy and first round fire-for-effect helps to reduce the number of rounds required to successfully defeat high-value targets.



The Accelerated Precision Mortar Initiative XM395 cartridge uses a standard M934 high-explosive 120mm projectile body. In the nose, a GPS receiver and computer controlled aerodynamic directional fins keep the round on its programmed trajectory. Folding fins in the tail provide stability. Photo: US Army

“Our Soldiers on the ground have capabilities that were unimaginable when the war on terror started,” said Womack. “I am pleased how quickly our Soldiers and NCOs trained and employed the new system which is a tribute to our incredible NCO Corps. It is not lost on our Soldiers that there is nothing our Army cannot accomplish.”—Staff Sgt. Todd Christopherson TF Currahee

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Ruger Wows Buyers in 2010

Sturm, Ruger & Co., which reported fourth quarter and year-end results Wednesday, said new product introductions represented \$62.3 million or 24.8 percent of sales in 2010. Ruger reported total sales of \$255.2 million in 2010, compared with sales of \$271 million the year before. For the fourth quarter of 2010, sales were \$64.1 million, compared to \$63.9 million in the fourth quarter a year ago.—*Courtesy NSSF*

Steel Challenge

The 2011 Steel Challenge World Speed Shooting Championships will take place August 18-21 in Piru, Calif. This marks the 30th anniversary since

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the first Steel Challenge and the final year the match will be held in the Golden State.—*Courtesy NSSF*

Lawsuit Over Import Barrel Ban

The Firearms Import/Export Roundtable (FAIR) Trade Group has filed suit against the federal government, challenging ATF's revised interpretation of the Gun Control Act. Despite any change in language to the existing regulations, ATF has begun enforcing their new interpretation of the GCA affecting the importability of certain firearm barrels.—*Courtesy NSSF*

Pride-Fowler In Use By Warfighters

Team Lakota and Crowe of the US Army C-CO LRS 1-134th R&S deployed in Afghanistan took a break and had a range day to test and evaluate Pride-Fowler's Rapid Reticle tactical optics. The RR-900-4, RR-CQLR-1, Action-4, and SOPS-Compact were all fully tested and proved to be outstanding optics giving the teams the ability to range and engage multiple targets at variable distances faster without manual adjustments or even the use of a spotter. They are excited to use the PFI optics as their primary sighting systems for the rest of their deployment.



Warfighters from C-CO LRS 1-134th R&S deployed in Afghanistan evaluate Pride-Fowler optics during a break in the action.

C-CO LRS 1-134th R&S has been deployed to Bosnia, Iraq for 22 months and currently re-deployed to Afghanistan since July 2010. This unit conducts reconnaissance missions for the US Army and mentors Afghan soldiers. Together, they have recovered over a \$1 million in stolen US assets and countless caches of weapons from raids of Taliban strongholds. Team Lakota and Crowe among other teams of the unit are due back stateside this coming July.—*Courtesy Pride-Fowler, Inc.*

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Disrupting Drugs In Afghanistan

Thanks, in part, to the efforts of an RAF police officer there has been a 6-fold increase in the disruption to narcotics production in Helmand province in the last year.

Squadron Leader Brian Daly deployed to Afghanistan in April 2010 for a 12-month tour. He has been mentoring the Helmand division of the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) based in the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah.

Between April 2009 and March 2010, the Helmand CNPA disrupted the production and distribution of heroin with a UK street value of £47m (\$76,715,781).



These are some of the narcotics and arms seized in Helmand province by RAF Police and their Afghan counterparts. Photo: Crown Copyright/MoD 2011.

After Squadron Leader Daly helped to introduce new targeting strategies and intelligence development, this figure rose 6-fold to £301m (\$491,307,449) in the following year.

Over the same timeframes, intelligence-led operations also resulted in an increase in arrests, up from under 100 to nearly 160.

Despite the CNPA investigators facing an increased workload, the quality of their investigations also improved, achieving an impressive conviction rate of 94 percent.

The CNPA is part of the Afghan National Police and the lead unit for countering narcotics in Helmand, where over half of Afghanistan's opium is produced.

They target those who transport, refine and sell drugs (particularly opium and heroin) as well as those who smuggle the chemicals needed for the refining process.

From a counter-insurgency perspective, opium and its subsequent production into heroin is an essential source of funding.

Of those arrested by the CNPA for drug-related offences, nearly half were also charged with insurgent activity, whilst from a domestic perspective, over 90 percent of the heroin found on UK streets originates in Afghanistan.



Squadron Leader Brian Daly has been developing new policing techniques to help cripple the Afghan drug trade. His efforts have led to a 6-fold increase in drug seizures and arrests in Helmand Province. Photo: Crown Copyright/MoD 2011

Outlining his mission over the past 12 months, Squadron Leader Daly said, "During my tour, I have been able to help them revamp their targeting strategy, delivered practical support to the unit's intelligence-gathering team and provided specialist advice on collecting evidence. RAF Police NCOs are often employed on counter-IED and Afghan National Police partnering teams on the front line and face the daily threat of insurgent attack."

After his return to the UK, Squadron Leader Daly will take up his next post commanding the Special Investigations Branch, the RAF Police's equivalent of the civilian CID, targeting criminal activity within the Services.—*Courtesy MoD*

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To some industry execs and marketing mavens, "tactical" means a device finished in matte black or earth tones, photographed on a bed of wet leaves and perhaps adorned with the image of a tiny ninja. To engineers and operators, it means "designed and intended for sustained, effective operation under combat conditions with minimal maintenance in the harshest environmental extremes."

Often the differences aren't immediately apparent, and found in seemingly small touches. For example, the ability of Leupold's Mark 4 CQ/Tactical scope to retain seawater-tight integrity and operation even with the battery-cap off; a folding knife with an open frame to facilitate flushing mud, sand and congealed blood out with a swish in a rice paddy, are all tactical touches.

SIG SAUER

SIG SAUER's first entrant in the burgeoning world of Stoner-type AR's is the SIG516 Patrol Rifle, and they hit a home run on the first pitch. Essentially, their engineers took the half-century old design, and while retaining its basic dimensions and operating ergonomics, improved on it significantly. A flawless piston system, free-floated quad rail, beefed-up barrel nut, machined-in QD sling swivel mounts and a spring-loaded plunger to provide constant pressure between the upper and lower receivers are only a few of the signature SIG

refinements. Performance is superb; a "best buy" for the bucks.



SIG SAUER's SIG516 (front) and the SIG556 Patrol (rear) both spell "Tactical" with a capital "T." Photo: Robbie Barrkman

One big difference between sporting arms and tactical weapons is, with the former, several years or seasons pass before new designs are truly "wrung out" and de-bugged. New tactical designs are plunged into torture-test tanks immediately, and their evaluators often take dark delight in puttin' the screws to 'em. Such was the case with the PWS MK2-series and its variants.



Power, range and precision means the MK214 rifle (top) by Primary Weapons Systems and the Infidel bolt rifle (below) by Underground Skunk Works.



Primary Weapons Systems of Boise, Idaho, has combined the reliability of the AK-47 gas system with the ergonomics of an AR-style, SR-25-type platform to create a cool-running, rugged, mechanically simple 7.62x51mm NATO rifle. The operating rod is attached to the carrier, and a floating-head piston is attached to the op-rod, resulting in an extremely accurate weapon with no unnecessary gas adjustments and just one moving assembly. The best part? This highly rated hybrid is priced competitively with production direct-gas-impingement semi-autos.

Finding a successful balance between exacting accuracy and smooth operation under grungy conditions requires the best efforts of master machinists and hardcore tactical shooters. The crew at Underground Skunk Works in Columbia Falls, Mont., packs that into seven models of dedicated tactical rifles like the Infidel shown here. Their own virtually bombproof Model 911 action is mated with a premium barrel, modified Timney trigger and an Accuracy International Chassis System. Offered in five calibers from .223 Rem through .308 Win to .338 Lapua Magnum, UGSW guarantees 3/8 MOA—or better!—accuracy based on five 5-shot groups. It doesn't get better than that, folks.

Is your plain-Jane stock Glock 17 "tactical"? By any standard, *yes it is*. We tend to forget it was designed and has excelled as a military sidearm, passing the most grueling tests with flying colors. For my money, two of the best tactical pistols Glock produced are the G17, and the G21SF .45 ACP (Slim Frame) models made with a 1913 rail.

The respected SIG P220 was upgraded for the now-suspended SOCOM pistol trials with a flat Dark Earth finish on the alloy frame, a 1913 rail, vertical frontstrap serrations, black Nitron-coated stainless slide and enhanced anti-corrosion and friction-reducing internal treatments. The result is the P220 Combat, and

Kahr's Most Popular 3" Barrel 9mm Model is Now Available in a **Value Priced Package** featuring Kahr's seven patents

Kahr Arms is pleased to kick off their newest series of Kahr pistols - the CM series. The new line begins with the Kahr CM9093 which is based on Kahr's most popular 3" barrel 9mm model the PM9093.

The CM9 slide is only .90 inch wide and machined from solid 416 stainless steel slide with a matte finish, each gun is shipped with one 6 rd stainless steel magazine with a flush baseplate. Magazines are USA made, plasma welded, tumbled to remove burrs and feature Wolff Gunsprings. The magazine catch in the polymer frame is all metal and will not wear out on the stainless steel magazine after extended use.

Kahr offers the CM series at a great value price but did not compromise on the features, accuracy or reliability found in all Kahr pistols.

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you won't find a more durable tactical pistol. The TB—threaded barrel—variant has raised sights to clear a suppressor, and extended mags are available.

Cylinder & Slide's Bill Laughridge sat down with a career SpecOps warrior, who is also a fine pistol mechanic. The two hammered out a list of the 'smithing operations required to turn a basic mil-spec 1911 into the most reliable, grit-eating, user-friendly 1911 possible, then added Fail Zero's superhard no-lube, no-grease EXO coating. Especially in dry, dusty environments the Trident is an excellent choice.



Built for battle (top to bottom) are the SIG P220 Combat with extended mag and suppressor, Cylinder & Slide's no-lube-needed 1911 Trident and Smith & Wesson's M&P45 with threaded barrel and protective collar.

The S&W M&P45 was another top contender for the SOCOM trials for good reasons. Light, tough, and well balanced, its innovative changeable grip inserts allow great latitude in fitting to differently sized hands. A threaded-barrel model is available, as are extended mags with bases which smoothly match the lines of the grip frame. Pressed for cash, I thought about selling mine once. Then I lifted it, pointed it—and put it away again. It's a keeper.

Barrett REC7

While DGI (direct gas impingement) carbines are by no means terminally flawed, and continue serving well, it's also true that gas-

piston systems run cooler, cleaner and thus longer and more reliably under dirty, low-maintenance conditions. When DoD signaled interest in a "reliability-enhanced" 5.56mm carbine, Ronnie Barrett of .50 BMG sniper-rifle fame jumped on it. The REC7 employs a 1-piece, hardened stainless steel piston system, chromelined gas block, a trigger designed for absolute dependability and much more. DoD's interest faded, but we got the benefit in the REC7.



The Barrett REC7 "Reliability Enhanced Carbine" is a case of "truth in advertising."

Magpul & SureFire Mags

A high percentage of AR failures are attributable to substandard magazines: bent feed lips, jammed followers and poor-quality springs are common culprits. The very best include those made by Magpul, Fusil USA, Brownells' military-contract magazines, and Israeli-made Countdown mags distributed in the US by EMA Tactical. Magpul's MagLevel model and the Countdown both offer visual confirmation of your remaining rounds, a valuable feature.



Magpul's MagLevel P-Mag (left), EMA Tactical's Countdown mag (middle) and SureFire's new 60-round MAG5-60 magazine (right) are top choices in aftermarket mags.

When SureFire recently introduced their 60- and 100-round capacity MAG5-60 and MAG5-100 super-capacity magazines, they asked "Do you want to fight—or reload?" Not just extended-length AR mags, they pack 60 or 100 rounds in relatively short bodies, their size and smooth feeding enabled by unique internal geometry, non-binding coil springs and nesting polymer followers. While attempts by

others have failed, SureFire's design has performed flawlessly in extensive testing.

Handles & Slings

Here are two of the best upgrades you can make to a tactical AR. In the photo at above left, note the BCM "Gunfighter" charging handle on the AR. Compare it to the standardized charging handle on the right-hand AR. When wearing gloves, or just under the effect of an adrenaline spike, the Gunfighter is much easier to grab and manipulate. Also, note the folded Magpul backup rear sight. If you have backup iron sights mounted to the rear of your top 1913 rail, you'll really appreciate the Gunfighter's extra clearance. But it's not just a big latch; inside, the geometry has been changed to redistribute torque to prevent possible shearing of the charging handle's weakest part—the pin. It's an easy swap-out, and perhaps worth your life. Brownells usually has them in stock.



Vitor/Bravo Company's Gunfighter large charging latch (top, left) compared to a standard latch, and the versatile RUSH sling (below).



For years I considered AR slings a necessary evil, because I just couldn't find one to please me. Many, I firmly believe, are so clumsy they cause accidents. In fact, some training centers forbid the use of many 2-point and virtually all 3-point slings because they've been responsible for trips, falls, entanglements and accidental discharges. I've found two which offer comfort, security, mobility and speed: Magpul's MS2 Multi-Mission Sling System, and the one shown above, the RUSH—Rapid Urban Sentinel Hybrid sling by Urban ERT Slings.

The RUSH is supple, comfortable and so versatile in use, you really need to see the demo video on their website to view its capabilities in securing your

weapon, going both hands free while retaining control, and more. It has just enough bungee section to “give” and provide for strikes and blows, but not enough to sag uncontrolled or give an attacker too much slack. A prime feature for me is the snap-on, snap-off end assemblies, compatible with QD swivels, loops, mash-hook setups and all manner of sling-mounting systems.

For example, it is shown in the photo on a Barrett REC7, requiring a rear loop connection and a front QD connection. I had been using the sling on a SIG516 Patrol, which has QD mounts front and rear. All I had to do was unsnap the rear QD section, snap on a loop-mount section and I was good to go with the REC7. Multiple weapons, one sling. And, it’s 100 percent made in the USA of all-American materials. Cool, huh?

If you have a DGI AR, and you want to increase its tactical efficiency and really cut down your cleaning time, check out FailZero’s EXO-coated bolt and carrier group. EXO technology creates a greaseless, permanently lubricious surface that’s harder than the substrate itself. Films, conventional coatings and lubricants tend to rub off, thin out, spall away and build up carbon fouling and burnt crud. During testing of a FailZero



FailZero’s EXO-coated, no-lube AR bolt and carrier group eliminate lube mess.

bolt and carrier group in a standard anodized AR upper, over 20,000 rounds were fired with no lube and no failures. Even the carbon fouling deposited on it by a DGI system is far more easily cleaned up; usually requiring just wiping it off.

FailZero AR upgrade kits are available through Brownells, and well worth the money. 

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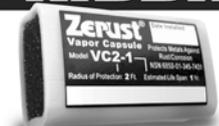
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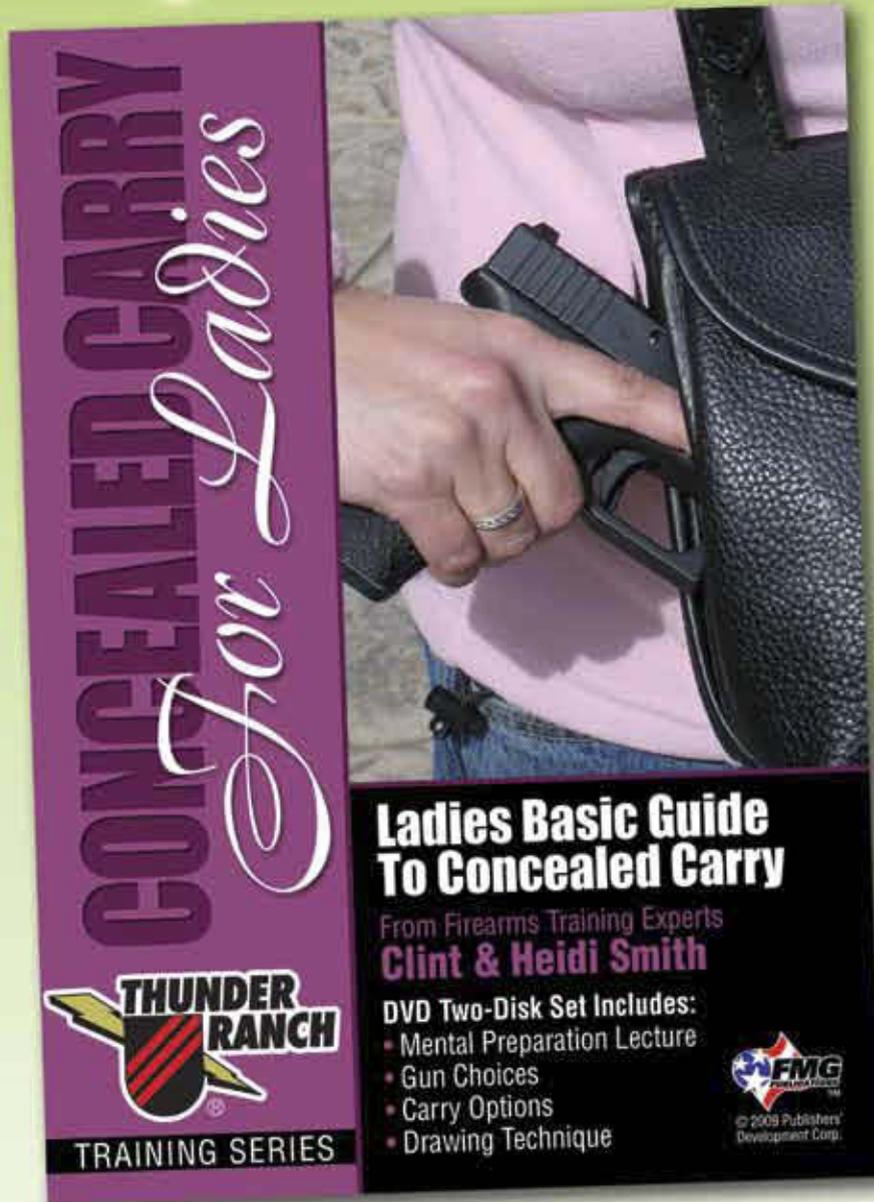
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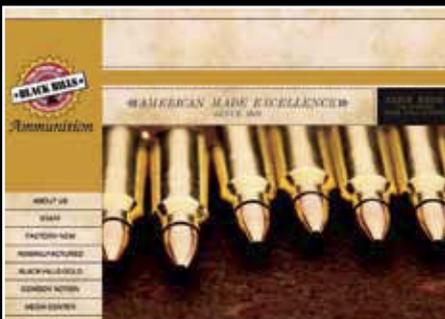
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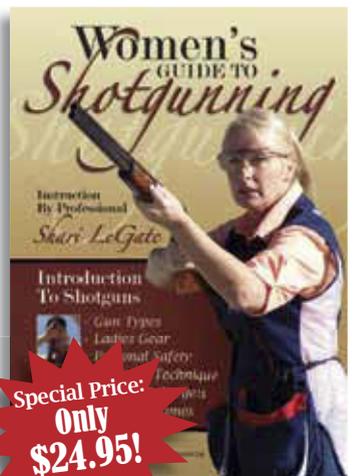
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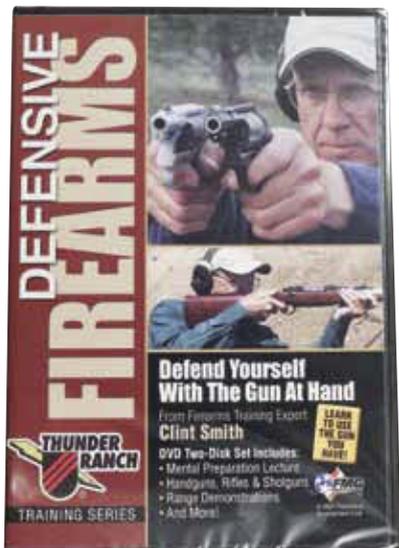


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ODD ANGRY SHOT

• JOHN CONNOR •

DO NOT PRESS 1 FOR ENGLISH!

Because you might get real English....

I grew up happily, even gleefully, a “functional illiterate” in several languages. I specially loved mixing dialectal debris from three languages into one unstructured sentence, stringin’ ’em together with Melanesian pidgin, which is sorta the Swahili of the islands, and now called “Tok Pisin.” Mipela likee distok velly-velly. My Dad, however, was not amused.

He was a language purist, devoted to serious study and fine fluency. Sorry, Pop; it never really took with me. Maybe not surprisingly, I’ve always done well with accents, dialects and quick, superficial skill with many languages—and mastery of none. The most problematic for me was *English*—not “American,” but real Brit-speak *English*. I think that’s because I mistakenly assumed they were closely related. Churchill was right. Here’s an illustration:

My old pal Nigel, now retired from the British Army, called to relate an incident to me. The scene was his club in London, a gathering place for old soldiers. A mutual acquaintance of ours was listening to another fella tell a “color-enhanced” tale of a long-past battle, and becoming very visibly upset. Nigel was concerned about Teddy’s health and “dicey blood pressure.” Now, Nigel’s an Oxford and Sandhurst man, but after 40 years in ‘Er Majesty’s kit, his speech includes bits of all Britannia’s dialects.

“Positively *shirty* he was!” Nigel described our pal. “Veins like dancing serpents on ‘is forred, Johnny-O! Verging on aggro, I daresay. This cheeky chap was nattering on as though he’d been Billy-no-mates slaying heathens by the score *sans* assistance, quite forgetting p’raps that Teddy’s the lad who fetched him out of that hotchpotch, bearing him away on his shield as it were. I thought, ‘He’s all but shot his cuffs’, and then he *did!* He shot his cuffs! Cor blimey! Oh, pardon that. I’ve been mucking about wi’ my East-Enders overmuch of late.



“Great Britain and the United States are nations separated by a common language.”—Winston Churchill, fluent English-speaker and semi-sorta OK at talkin’ American, too.

“I spirited poor Teddy away before he could brew up, and although it was chuckin’ it down on the cobbles, got him first a proper wife-beater, then stuffed ’im with some rather good toad in the hole. Fancied that, didn’t you always?”

Which Translates To....

“Shirty” is a condition of anger preceding a fight, dating from the days when men removed their shirts

before engaging in fisticuffs. “Forred” for “forehead” is one of maybe 9,000 words *properly* shortened by Brits and considered grammatically correct. “Aggro” is aggression or assault, and you prob’ly know “cheeky” means lippy, flippant or braggadocious. “Billy-no-mates” is a friendless chap or a bloke acting solo, on his own.

To shoot one’s cuffs is quintessentially British; the act of briskly extending an arm, grasping one’s shirt cuff from under one’s jacket sleeve and yankin’ it into proper position, rapidly followed by shooting the other cuff. This can be done *fiercely*. Among British gentlemen, this signals that one may be *miffed* or *cross*, if not positively *shirty*. You can even shoot your cuffs while shirtless, a symbolic exercise signaling that you’re *really* shirty.

“Cor blimey” is interesting. “Cor” is, as Brits say, “disused” these days, though you often hear just “blimey.” Cor blimey is the compressed Cockney form of *God blind me*, which itself is shortened from the Middle-Ages “May God blind me if this is not true.” Nigel’s East Enders are Cockney Brits, former soldiers from his regiment, from the East End of London; speakers of one of the most unique and sometimes unintelligible of English dialects. Most English people trying to imitate Cockney speech sound as silly as Americans trying to mimic English.

“Brewing up,” for British tank crewmen, means catching fire and blowing up. “Chuckin’ it down” refers to a heavy rain, and you can guess “the cobbles.” A “wife-beater” ain’t a sleeveless undershirt in England, it’s a potent form of beer, and “toad in the hole,” thankfully, has nothin’ to do with toads or holes. It is sausages baked in Yorkshire pudding dough, summat like a pie, properly graced with veggies and rich onion gravy. One of England’s handful of edible dishes, it incorporates no noxious, horrid, nasty bits of rubbish or too-long-dead critters. In fact, it’s *scrummy*—scrumptious-yummy—not to be confused with *Scrumpy*, a sometimes rock-hard alcoholic cider, named from “scrumping,” the act of

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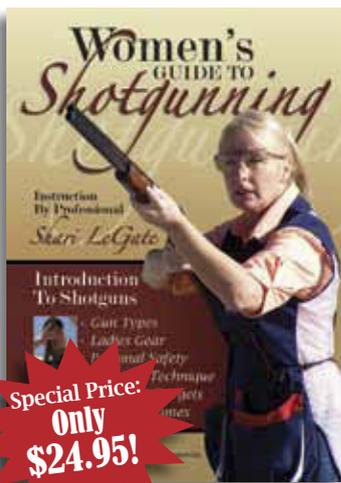
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stealing apples, which, if they're poxy little rejects, are called "scrimps."

If you're dining on English pub-grub and in doubt, order toad in the hole, bangers-and-mash or meat-filled pasties. Avoid the jellied eels, spotted dick and, at all costs, the black pudding (see "noxious, horrid and nasty bits," above). No offense, you suet, congealed-blood and pig-snouts fans; that stuff's just manky. And don't think you can order biscuits and fill up on them while you fake eating the black pudding, because in England, a biscuit is a cookie. Too, be careful to pronounce "pasties" with a hard "a" as in *hat*, not a long "a" as in *pastries*. Mispronouncing "nice plump filled pasties" to the wrong serving-lass could get you smacked silly, ya gormless sod.

Shoot, Fire & Tiffin

I got the impression lots of guys signed up for British military service just to avoid some traditional English dishes. When I voiced this to a long table of Tommies at mess, I got a rousing chorus of Oy's, Arr's, Aye's, a lone "roight-o!" and a thundering *Cor blimey!*

Some Brit military lingo makes more sense than American. In the Royal Navy, to discharge any weapon, from a pistol to an 8-incher the command is to *shoot!*, never, ever "fire," a word with only one meaning on a warship. Serving with Brits one should also know "directly" means *right bloody NOW!* whereas "presently," as in, "We shall presently move off to rendezvous at BangDaGonga" can mean we're moving tonight, next Tuesday or in a fortnight, depending.

Of the many terms for eating-times, "tiffin," meaning "lunch," always conjured up for me visions of neatly-dressed Brits serving tea and biscuits on fine china; sorta classy, y'know? When a Royal Marine tore open a cold field ration in the endless bleedin' rain and sighed, "Ah, *tiffin!*" he saw my eyebrows arch. Poking the contents with a spork he explained, "Lends a dash of elegance to this muck, don't it now?"

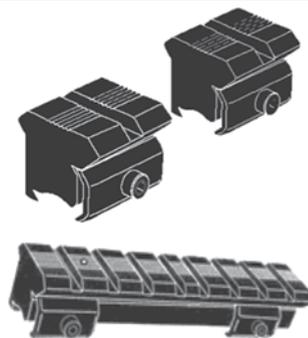
There are lots of terms for idjits and morons too, most of them unprintable. "Numpty," I was told, "Can be affectionate; someone a bit daft, p'raps; but of whom one is quite fond." So when a bootnecked old sarn't-major bonks yer on the bonce and laughs, "Arrh, y'great numpty, yiv shot on *my* target!" it means you screwed up, but he likes you. I don't mind bein' a numpty—as long as I'm a *great* numpty! Connor *OUT*. **GUNS**

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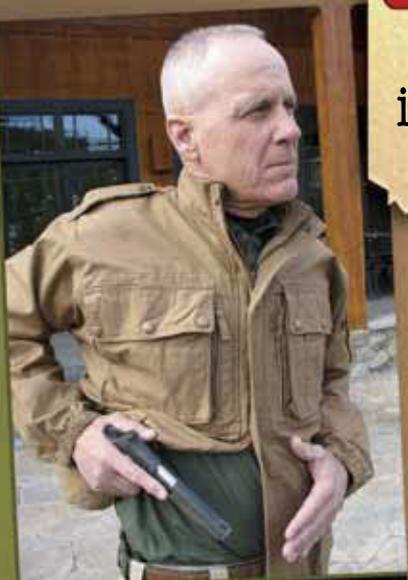
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Special and putting the deer down. He knew the circumstance—Keith trying to stop a deer, wounded by a rifle shooter—and he also knew it was a 6-1/2" .44 Magnum. I guess he just stretched literary license to the breaking point. I recently read Elmer Keith's famous long-shot was on an antelope at 600 yards. Can't imagine where that one came from!

How Fast?

Keith was informed of the advent of the .44 Magnum from Smith & Wesson in the closing days of 1955. After receiving his .44 Magnum and writing it up one year later he complained the original ammunition was too hot. A writer recently said: "Magazines in the 1950s had shooters back then believing it actually delivered a 240-grain bullet at nearly 1,400 fps. The actual performance was more likely 1,200 fps." What? My friend Brian Pearce recently worked out a trade coming up with not only a pre-29 .44 Magnum, but a case of 1957 ammunition as well. He clocked it through two 6-1/2" pre-29s this year and the average was over 1,450 fps—so much for lightly loaded .44 Magnums.

Speaking of Dick Casull, a writer recently said beginning in the late 1960s he blew up Colt after Colt to improve the ballistics of the .45 Colt. This is only partially true; it was not in the late 1960s, it was in the early 1950s. By 1957 Dick had given up on the Colt Single Action, even when fitted with his custom cylinders, and was now building his own single actions with larger frames and cylinders. This eventually led to the Freedom Arms produced .454 Casull which first appeared in 1983. I also read recently, by an editor no less, the .44 Magnum was introduced by Dirty Harry! Shooters were buying .44 Magnums in 1956 and Clint Eastwood's most favorite character did not appear until the early '70s.

Ruger has produced millions of firearms since 1949. Guns so popular certainly are written about often; and the more often they are written about, the greater the chance of making mistakes. One of the most common ones is "The very first Ruger firearm, the Mark I was a .22 LR..." or "The Mark I was the first Ruger firearm product." The problem here is the Mark I was not the first .22 Ruger, which is known as the Standard Model (when target sights were added it became the Mark I).

Switching to Ruger revolvers one finds many printed mistakes. I recently read the Blackhawk in .44



The first Ruger firearm and also their first .22 was the Standard Model (top) such as this early Red Eagle. The Mark I (bottom) is a different and later Ruger .22 semi-automatic.

Magnum was dropped when the Super Blackhawk was announced. Not so, they were produced side by side for three years. I also read the Super Blackhawk received the protective ears around the rear sight which had first showed up on the "improved" .357 Blackhawk in 1962. Here the horse is before the cart, as those ears first appeared on the Super Blackhawk of 1959; it did not show up on the regular Blackhawk until three years later.

Strange Tales

Here's a strange one. Just this month I read the original Ruger .357 Blackhawk frames were anodized. I thought the writer meant grip frames which were of an aluminum alloy and were anodized; however, he said the mainframes like the grip frames were finished this way. I have yet to find a .357 Blackhawk Flat-Top from the 1950s which does not have a blued frame. Speaking of Ruger frames, another writer wrote that unlike the Colt Single Action, because of the metallurgy, Ruger frames could not be color case hardened. That certainly must be news to many custom sixgunsmiths who specialize in converting .357 Blackhawks to other chamberings such as .38-40, .44-40, .44 Special and .41 Special. Doug Turnbull does a beautiful job case hardening the frames and hammers of many of these custom Rugers.

When the Bisley Model Ruger was introduced in the 1980s one writer said the grip frame was the same size as that found on Elmer Keith's custom No. 5SAA. It actually proved to be much larger. I also recently

read the frame size of the New Vaquero is the same size as the 50th Anniversary Blackhawk .44 Magnum. This is definitely not true! The New Vaquero frame is the same size as the 50th Anniversary Blackhawk .357 Magnum, however the 50th Anniversary .44 Magnum has the larger frame and cylinder of the Super Blackhawk.

Speaking of case hardening, I read a test between a Cimarron SA and Ruger Vaquero (if that isn't oranges and apples I don't know what is!) in which the writer stated the Cimarron was new out-of-the-box and had a cylinder which was not only free-wheeling but it was also case hardened. Now there are gunsmiths who specialize in freewheeling cylinders, which spin forwards or backwards, however, you will never find this on a new Cimarron nor have I ever heard of a case-hardened cylinder. I contacted the editor; he said no, it was new in the box and had a free-wheeling case-hardened cylinder. He definitely lost all credibility with me. One writer talking about Skeeter Skelton said his first article, which was about the Colt Model 1917 .45 ACP, was entitled "The Poor Man's Magnum," appeared in a 1962 issue of the now long gone *GUNsport*. At least three years earlier Charles A. Skelton was writing articles for this magazine.

Lest the reader think I am picking on other gunwriters I have to confess to being guilty of at least three, maybe even four, or more, of the foregoing mistakes. I do promise to try harder. But I am still looking for the Ruger factory Single-Six chambered in .32-20 I recently read about.

CAMPFIRE TALES

BY JOHN TAFFIN

GUNRIDER MISTEAKS

And no, we're never wrong. Well, maybe sometimes.

No one likes to be the bearer of bad tidings and I am somewhat reluctant to burst any bubbles; however, I must be honest. Gunwriters, like every other group of people, are not infallible; in fact we actually make mistakes! We are not alone in this as proofreaders are also not perfect, and, gasp, even editors make mistakes.

Sometimes errors creep in simply because of a not so perfect source. For example, the original Colt Single Action Army which started production in 1873 and lasted until the eve of World War II, still causes debates over just how many different chamberings were actually produced and also what serial number marks the beginning of smokeless powder guns. Brain fades also occur, I'm sure they are caused by signals from all the satellite dishes and cell phones

banging around the atmosphere; and all writers eventually get to the point where they have what someone has dubbed senior moments. None of us get out of here perfect!

Let's take a look at some of the things I have seen come from gunwriters. Mistakes used to be confined to the printed word, however, now with the *Outdoor Channel* we can see glaring mistakes in beautiful high definition. Recently a very well-known gunwriter was asked why .38

Special and .357 Magnum bullets were standardized at 158 grains. His answer was that was the weight of the round ball in the original .36 Navy Colt. What? Those little round balls only weighed approximately 90 grains and even when we get to the .44 Army Colt, the weight is still well under 158 grains. I wonder what this gunwriter was thinking?

Another well-known gunwriter trying to make a case against 9mm hardball related the old Elmer Keith story of a cop putting several shots into the back of a black cowboy hanging on a cattle car. The cowboy lived long enough to pull a .45 S&W, kill his assailant, and put all his affairs in order. The only problem with the story was it was not a 9mm Luger, but the smaller .30 Luger which was used.

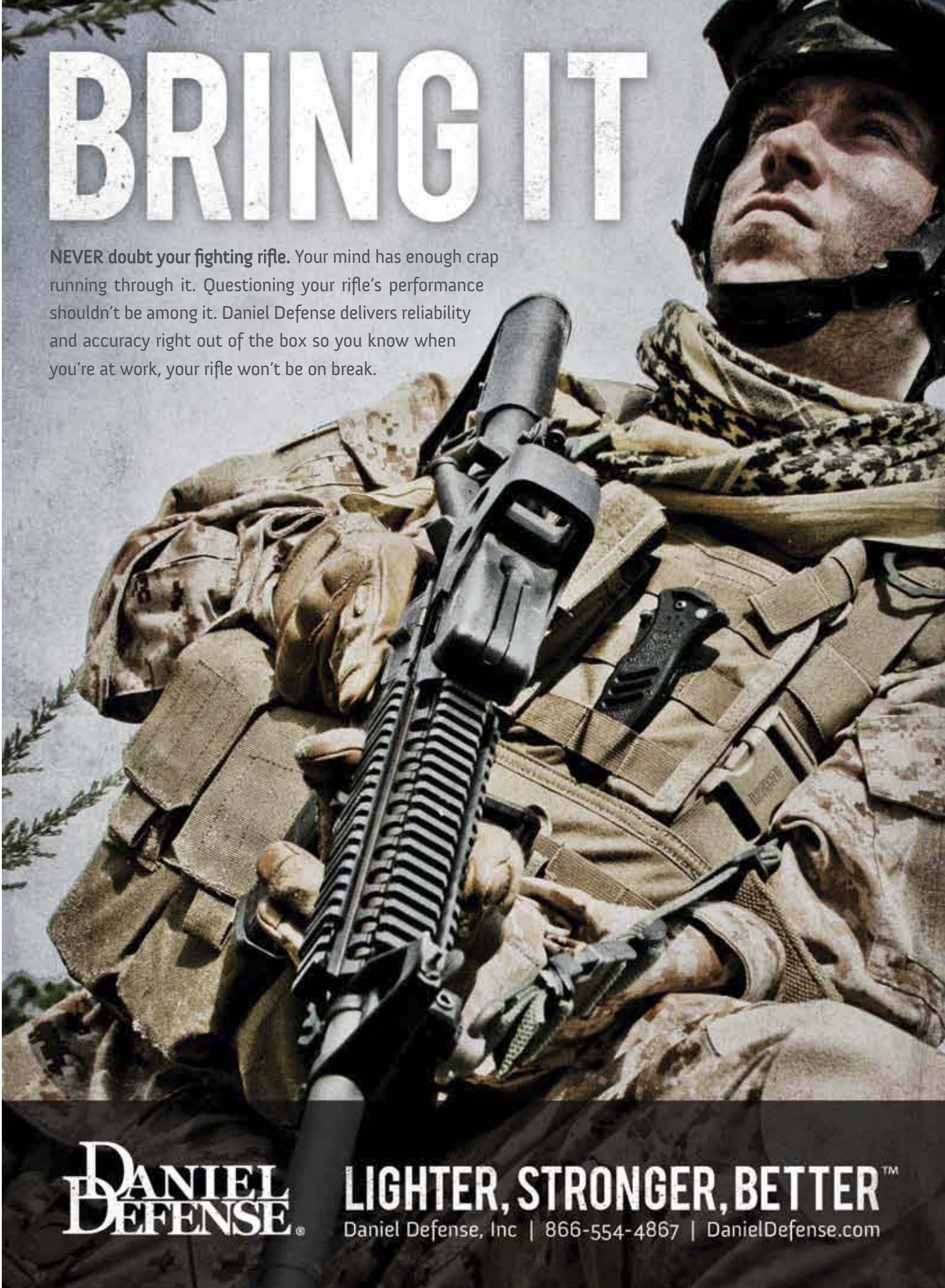
One mistake that shows up over and over again is the statement Elmer Keith invented the .44 Magnum. He inspired it, he was directly responsible for it, however he did not invent it. He spent years trying to convince ammunition makers to produce his Heavy .44 Special Load with a 250-grain bullet at 1,200 fps. They were afraid of older guns so he told them to just lengthen the brass case so it would only fit in newly produced sixguns. He was as surprised as anyone when the .44 Magnum arrived with loads 250 to 300 fps faster than he had asked for. Actually, in the late 1940s John Lachuk was using cut down rifle brass to create his .44 Lancer which turned out to be the same length as the .44 Magnum when it arrived; he used 22 grains of 2400 and special cylinders fitted to his .44 Special Colt Single Actions.

After Keith's well-known story of the 600-yard mule deer shot, a contemporary of his, mainly to stir-up controversy I'm sure, talked about Keith whipping out his 4" .44



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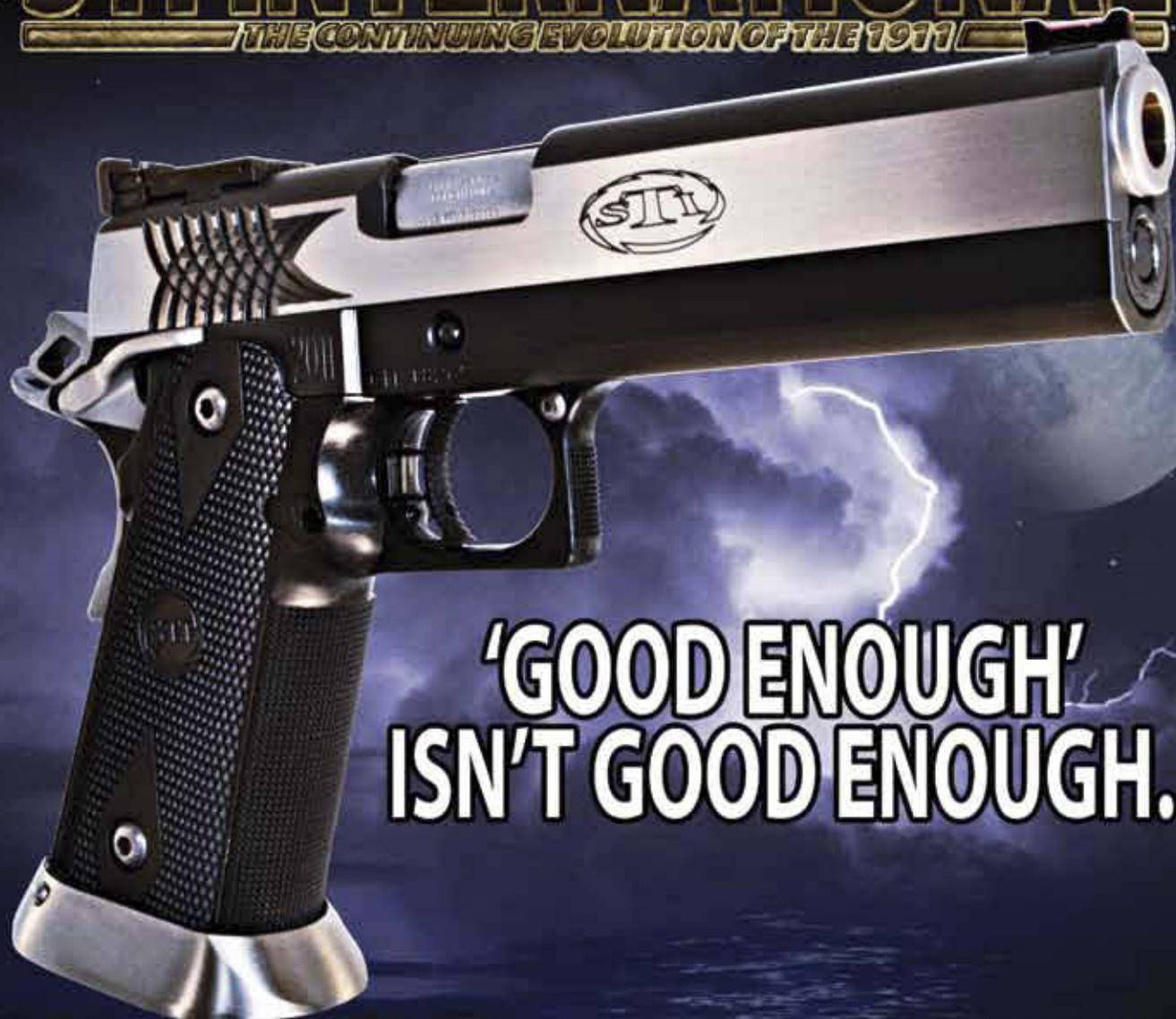
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