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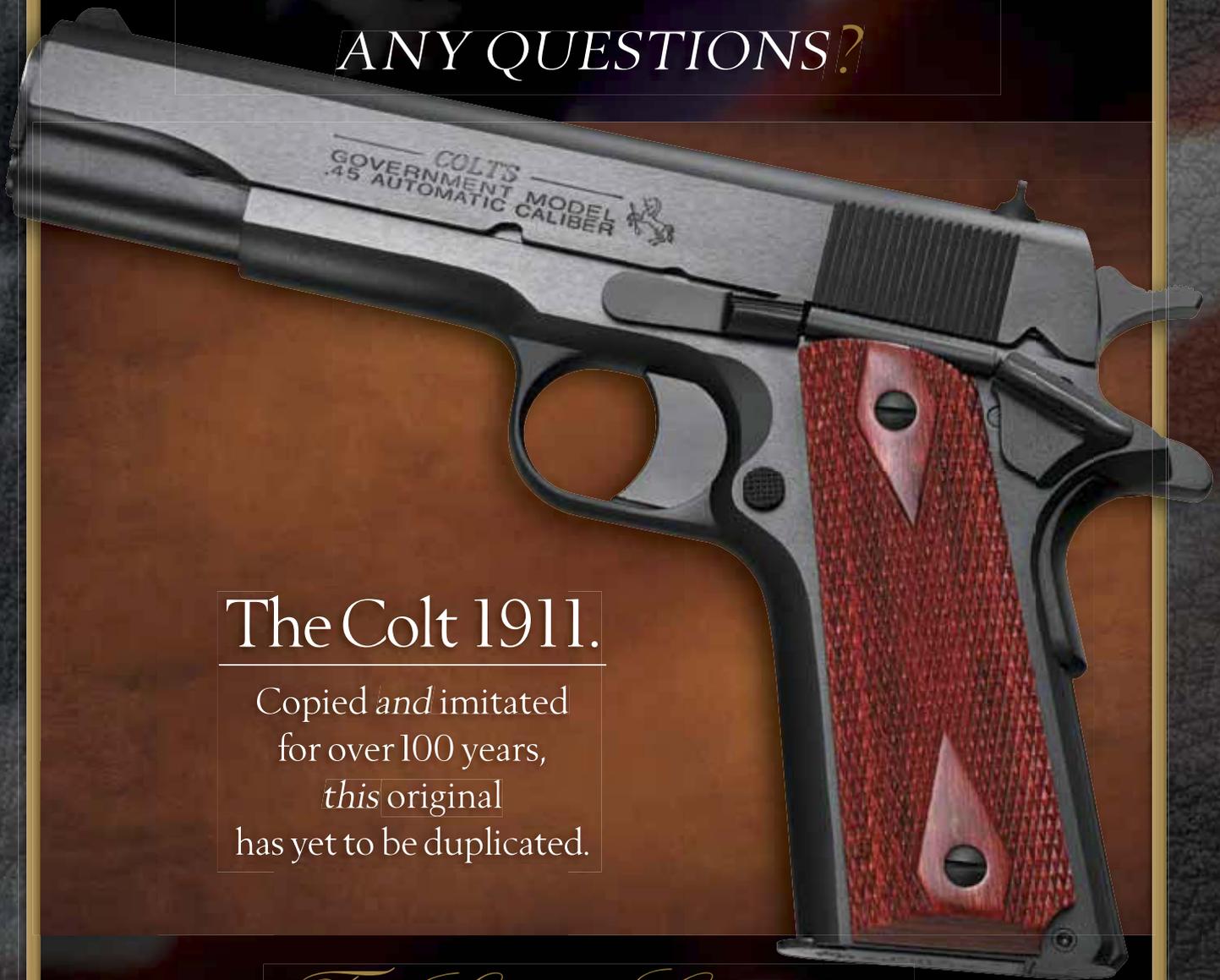
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CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO GUNS

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Carcano Buckshot Load

In the September issue there was an item in Q&A on the 7.35 Carcano. Ammo is difficult to find, and I have a novel approach. I use 00 buck. I disassemble shotshells loaded with 00 buck, then seat them over 5 grains of Unique. Do not flare the case mouth so that the mouth will shear off the excess lead. Double-ought buck is .33" and the 7.35 is .300". This results in a bearing surface. The bullet weighs 52 grains and travels at 1,286 fps. It is a good 50-yard gallery round, fun to shoot and economical. There is no recoil.

Larry Nevins
North Carolina

Editor's note: Hornady offers 00 buckshot in 5-pound boxes for reloaders. Also, Holt Bodinson suggested lubing with a little Lee Liquid Alox to reduce leading.

No More Sixguns

I realize you are following in the foot steps of a revered gun scribe but you really are giving too much coverage to sixguns. Sixguns here, there, everywhere. I've never seen mention of a onegun, a twogun, a fivegun or my favorite, the eightgun.

John Cruse
Des Moines, Wash.

It's your lucky issue! Check out Holt Bodinson's Rimfire column. It's about an 8-shooter.—Editor

Welcome Aboard

I haven't had a subscription to a gun magazine in about a decade. With the Internet and all of the fine forums out there containing so much information, I thought I had no use for an "old-fashioned" magazine. Then, for Christmas, my sister gave me a subscription to your magazine as a gift.

I have thoroughly enjoyed every issue! I was even pleasantly surprised

to see Mike "Duke" Venturino had a column. He frequents the Black Powder Cartridge Rifle competitions down here in Arizona in which I occasionally attend with my father.

While perusing your magazine, I realized why I enjoyed it so much. Every issue features so many different aspects of the shooting world that I normally wouldn't even know to search for on the internet. Semi-auto versions of WWII machine guns? Who knew? A kit to convert a Ruger 10/22 into a Thompson clone? Very cool.

Thank you for producing such an interesting, well put together, and diverse magazine; I have thanked my sister and will continue my subscription indefinitely!

Travis Tonn
Prescott Valley, Ariz.

Just Skip Them

I have to say I really enjoyed the recent letters from readers tired of 1911 and AR articles. I'm in the same shoes. I never read the articles on guns and hunting, as I have no interest in them. And, while I have a 1911, I have no interest in reading 1911 articles, mainly due to the near-religious zealotry of the authors. (Hey Forty Fivers! The SEALs just adopted a new pistol! And it's a 9mm! Ha!) Similarly, although I own several ARs, I grew tired of AR articles about two years ago. And most recently I wearied of articles on the seemingly endless variations of the Springfield XD series.

But I simply skip the articles I don't care to read, and go on to the ones that do interest me. A magazine cannot be all things to all people, after all. So keep up the good work, even with articles on shotguns, hunting, 1911s, ARs, and XD's. You have a great staff of writers, and I'm a loyal subscriber. Thank you.

Ed Rudnicki
Dingmans Ferry, Penn.

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HANDGUNS

STORY: Massad Ayoob

“WILL THAT BE PAPER, METAL OR PLASTIC?”

It's the time of the polymer pistol, but metal-framed handguns ain't dead by a long shot.

“The 1911 is a whiny thing,” said my girlfriend The Evil Princess. She then did her best imitation of Elizabeth Taylor's nasal bray in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

“My chamber's too tight! My bushing's not tight enough! Does that arched mainspring housing make my butt look big? I'm too dirty to work today! Waah! Don't take me out shooting in the rain, I'll ru-u-ust!” Then she rested her elbow on the polymer-framed 9mm Springfield Armory XD(M) in her White Dog Kydex holster, and glared pointedly at the Old School hardware on my hip.

I was wearing a Springfield Armory pistol, too, but it was a 1911 Range Officer .45 in a Safariland

scabbard. The 1911 and I both did the logical thing.

We surrendered... but we survived.

Modernity Vs. Tradition

The scene of the discussion was the Power Line gun club range near Ocala, Florida. We were shooting an IDPA match run by champion shooter Deon Martin. I had happened to walk up to where The Evil Princess, behind the firing line, was chatting with another “shooter chick” (again, her term, not mine). Something old and



Springfields, modern and traditional, include (left) the XD(M) 9mm and (right) the 1911 Range Officer .45 ACP.

obsolete had inadvertently entered the discussion, and just happened to be carrying a 1911 pistol on his hip.

IDPA, the International Practical Shooting Association, focuses on “street guns.” At this particular match, there was exactly one double action revolver, and some 1911s, all absolutely swamped in a sea of Glock pistols, Smith & Wesson M&P autos, and XD-series Springfields. That's pretty much the lay of the handgunning land these days.

Familiarity Factor

I had just come off of carrying one or another flavor of Glock for six months, and was due for something with some tradition to it, so I had chosen the 1911. I had worn one for a good bit of the previous year, that being the centennial of the gun and all, and had been shooting one since I was 12. I wasn't wearing it just for tradition. Heck, my granddad carried a .32, but I ain't that traditional. A part of it went beyond tradition and into habituation: I'd been shooting a 1911 for more than half a century, and it wasn't a cliché to say that it felt like the handshake of an old friend. Yeah, I know, “familiarity breeds contempt.” But familiarity also breeds, well, familiarity. The old cocked-and-locked Colt and its clones fit my hand well, carry flat and comfortable inside the waistband, and point naturally for me.

Two-Sided Argument

There's an old saying, “Beware the man with only one gun; he probably knows how to use it.” Not always true, but true most of the time. Of



The 1911 shows its controllability: arrow shows .45 hardball brass in the air, but the Springfield Range Officer's muzzle is already back on target.



You might just be more accurate with the gun you've used longer. Mas won this head-shot stage with his 1911 Springfield .45.

course, you can also argue that life is too short to drive only one car, or shoot only one handgun. In the spirit of total disclosure, this writer has been called a gun slut, though he prefers to think that he "celebrates diversity in firearms." The simple fact is, there is more than one good gun. An instructor needs to be sufficiently familiar with their foibles to teach them all; an enthusiast simply enjoys shooting them all.

If the older ones work for you, well, use 'em and consider the whole nostalgia thing as icing on the cake. On the day in question, that Springfield 1911 won me "most accurate shooter" honors, and second place overall when accuracy and speed were factored together. I'd say "advantage: old metal," except that Deon Martin beat me for first place with his 9mm Smith & Wesson M&P. That would be "advantage: new polymer." Except that I know darn well Deon would still have beaten me if he'd shot one of his 1911 .45s instead, so maybe the real takeaway lesson is, "advantage: whatever works best for you."

The Evil Princess and I walked back to the car. She had her plastic XD(M) on her hip and her iPhone 4S in her hand. I had my "OI' Skool" steel gun on my belt, and felt like I should have had a carrier pigeon on my shoulder to stay in character, and "in period." But, ya know, at the end of the day, we were each carrying something with which we were confident, competent, and comfortable, and that may be where the real "advantage" is found, after all.

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MONTANA MUSINGS

STORY: Mike "Duke" Venturino
PHOTOS: Yvonne Venturino

FINDING A PATH My 40 years as a gun'rter.

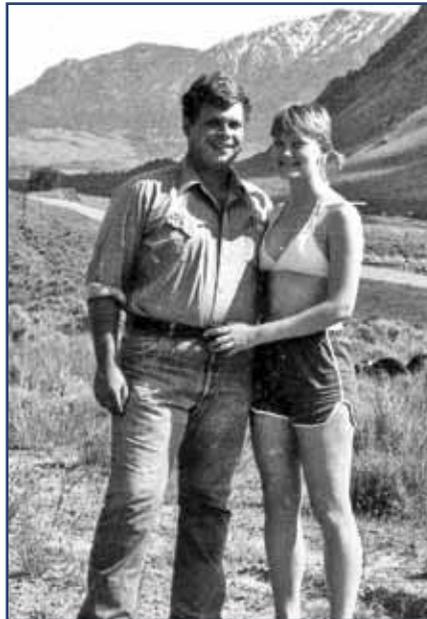
By the time this column is in print I will have celebrated my 40th anniversary as a "gun'rter." It's been a long haul, distressing at times, but overall challenging, satisfying and successful. The bottom line is that it's a life's work that I chose for myself so there's no room for complaint.

Perhaps the best way for a 20 year old, nearly "lost soul" to find his path, is to set out driving across the vast plains of this country at night, in January, with temperature dropping to 30 below. That's what I did in 1970 shortly after getting a high draft-lottery number and dropping out of college. School wasn't doing me any good because after five semesters, I still didn't have a major. Also my grades were so poor I would have flunked out if schools were not hesitant to throw males out during the Vietnam era. Flunk out and the draft boards would nail you, like right now!

Never in my life had I felt an urge to write anything but during those lonely nights of travel with no distractions my mind turned to firearms magazines. The only thing I rated higher than reading about guns was shooting them and handloading for them. Heck, I even enjoyed casting my own bullets—a chore most others considered obnoxious. So after much cogitation I determined to return to college the next fall, take up journalism as a major and see where things led me. Never again did I make a poor grade, graduating with the bare minimum of credits in May 1972.

That August, my first magazine article appeared. It had been written as part of a journalism "magazine writing" course and submitted to *Guns & Ammo* in the spring of 1971. Since no response was heard from them I figured they just tossed my manuscript and photos in the trash. That they did not do so, I learned at Christmas '71 when they informed me its publication had been delayed until next summer. I didn't care—it was a start!

That's not to say I was on a roll. Over the next few years, I wrote about



Duke and Yvonne (above) shortly after their marriage in 1978. A much older and contemplative Duke during his favorite pastime—participating in a BPCR Silhouette event (below).



a dozen pieces, all published except for one still sitting in my file cabinet. (At least two editors told me they would take it but the photos had to be better.) Instead of pecking at a typewriter during those first years of freedom from schools I preferred bumming about the country from coast to coast while working seasonal jobs. Even now four decades later when traveling with friends to BPCR Silhouette matches in the West, they are amazed when I can tell them how far the next rest area or scenic turn out is. I visited more gun stores in those days than most people see in a lifetime. Alas most of those are gone now. I know for I have attempted to revisit many of them over the years.

Settle Down

Anyway, after marrying Yvonne in 1978 I needed to establish a career instead of just working seasonally, so set myself to writing steadily. In the beginning, I feared who I had little to offer. After all, I didn't have a background in the military, or law enforcement, or some other occupation that gave a sort of bona fides to my ambition. I was just a guy who loved shooting, handloading and bullet casting with a sort of contagious enthusiasm.

At least I assume that latter thing because so many wives have accused me of causing their husbands to spend too much money after reading my articles. Just a week before writing this column I received what I consider the ultimate reader compliment of my career. On some website or another someone wrote to the effect that I peddle "passion and not products" in my articles.

At the time it seemed progress was slow. Looking back today it went fairly fast. By 1981 I made gun'rting my "day job" and ran a small town movie theater at night. Starting in 1986 I worked on contract for one magazine or the other for 18 years. Now my gig is on a gentlemanly basis. I write the amount I'm supposed to and these magazines pay me what they're supposed to. It's a wonderful relationship.

After 40 years, I am the first to admit I'm not your stereotype of a



Duke now in his career's 40th year at his desk in his Montana home.

gun'rter. That would be of a squinty-eyed fellow with his wide brimmed hat, riding the ridges with a six-shooter on his hip ready to blast any critter that jumps out of the bushes. I used to wear hats when I got paid to ride other peoples' horses but not anymore. I also worked on a road paving crew for several years but I don't pack a shovel around with me anymore either.

In fact, since my own 300-yard shooting range is here on my Montana property and I shoot from a small heated house some days I don't bother to get dressed. I just shoot in what passes for my pajamas — a pair of thin sweat pants and a well-worn Thunder Ranch T-shirt. (No, I won't show a photo of me like that.)

Many guys are attracted to the gun'riting business by the hopes of being invited on hunts to places like Alaska, Africa or Australia. I had some hopes for things like that too in my younger days. Didn't happen. I did go to Africa once but paid for the trip myself. The most exotic trip I was invited upon was a whitetail hunt to Canada. That's OK, after traveling over much of the planet I've decided the best place to be is right here in Montana. I stay home as much as possible except as mentioned when driving to BPCR Silhouette matches with friends.

At my 40th anniversary, I've written over 1,700 magazine articles—all printed to the best of my knowledge except for that one mentioned before. Nowadays, Yvonne does my photography and instead of my articles' photographs being criticized by editors they're now considered to be some of the best in the business. If I had to credit any one thing with making my life easier, it has to be digital cameras—in the hands of Yvonne of course.

It is simple truth that no gun'rter can succeed without a readership. Otherwise the editors will see no reason to pay you. Therefore, I thank all of you who have followed my writings over the decades. You have kept me gainfully employed.

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Introduced in 1950 to directly compete against the Winchester Model 12, the Remington 870 has become the best selling shotgun in American history with sales numbers racked up in excess of 7 million shotguns for both the LE and civilian markets!

Why A Pump Gun?

I own two 870s with the new one being 25 years old and the old one 30 years of age, and they have never given me a bit of trouble other than I split the stock on the old gun not long ago so—up front—I like the 870. Cutting to the chase, the 870 is arguably more dependable than many of the other shotguns in the marketplace be they semi-auto of gas or recoil operation or pump actions of a different maker. The twin-action bars and smooth action make the 870 just about as dependable as the next sunrise.

There is a subtle clue here by looking at what platform the custom

makers nationwide generally use as the basis for their shotguns. No brainer here, these guys take an already good gun—the 870—and then modify it to what they think a fighting shotgun should be. Maybe the only problem here is often some of these builders have never used a shotgun in a fight, so there is a tendency get a butt load of stuff stuck on the gun probably not needed other than to fulfill a marketing ploy.

The Rifle Shotgun?

Rifled sights are great for slug shooting and I recall as a young man working at API with Mr. Jeff Cooper who was a staunch believer of the shotgun being used with slugs (I would suppose because of his strong foundation in rifle marksmanship). The slug, of course, allows for a single projectile of rather large dimension to be placed on the target by a competent shooter.



The business end of the 870. For home defense, a high-base load of 12-gauge, 2-3/4" No. 4, 5 or 6 birdshot is devastating to the recipient and less penetrative of ordinary sheetrock walls.

Slugs historically have not been all that much fun to shoot, but with the advent of the reduced recoil tactical slug, an average human can shoot the shotgun pretty well and pretty often with the single ball load. Because of the 870's rapid barrel change, the ability to shoot slugs with a barrel if required is a breeze. And as they have for many years Remington has a broad spectrum of shotgun barrels and guns specifically designed to shoot slugs for hunting, defense or law enforcement (if you need or want a specialized shotgun).

Need A Bead?

Although there is considerable whining from the tactical side of the house when this conversation comes up, the average Joe or Jane homeowner would probably do pretty well in a personal defense mode with a regular old-style bead sight. Based on the fact many of you—and me—aren't shooting many of the rifled slugs to start with (if any at all) the bead may be workable.

In a parallel vein, much of the current buckshot offered is too heavy to shoot inside your sheetrock house because of possible or potential over penetration issues. As mentioned,



The Remington 870 in its plainest dress is just fine. The only criticism here is the magazine holds only four rounds. Plenty of fixes are available.



The XS sight (above) attaches right over the standard bead if a larger sight is required. Although ghost-ring sights are popular now (and necessary for precision shooting outdoors) most of us are ably served by a bead sight in home-defense situations. The TacStar (below) is the best way to mount extra ammo on the 870 and rim up is the best way to keep the shells in the saddle under recoil.



the advent of the reduced load ammunition makes the buckshot loads more manageable and maybe in reality a good No. 4, 5 or 6 shot load would rank pretty well centered up on the knothead home invader when delivered down the length of a hallway in the average home.

Really Needed?

Just going through a short list—and with the 870 it is a short list—the gun needs to be reliable, which the 870 is. The stock length of pull needs to fit the shooter and if there is a question, a short stock is easier for everyone to shoot than a long one, with youth models and their shorter stocks sometimes being helpful in this area. The shotgun has a limited ammunition capacity so a couple of points spin off of this being the need or requirement to have spare ammunition mounted on the gun.

Magazine extension tubes are OK I guess, but the upfront weight arguably can affect gun-handling characteristics especially inside compressed areas like the home. My personal preference for the solution is the side-mounted TacStar side saddle available just about everywhere. A white light would be very helpful for home defense and extensive research needs to be done to find the correct affordable solution for each shotgun owner.

What To Practice

With the 870, the limited magazine capacity requires the main focus in gun handling beyond safety be the loading or reloading of the gun. This is not a panic button issue, it simply needs to be strongly enforced in your training regimen. While pumping the gun, which is required after each shot fired, be sure to keep the support or pumping elbow under the gun to reduce action bar drag. That helps promote smooth operation while firing.

What's Wrong?

In reality, the 870 does in fact have a limited ammunition capacity. As it comes from the factory in its standard 4-shot magazine configuration, the ammunition point winds up being about the only criticism one could make, which of course is quickly cured by the addition of the mag extension. Barrel length, chokes or sights are all moot points as the Remington quick barrel change capability cures all of those points.

What's Right?

To start with the 870 has been with us 58 years, and it has stood the test of time very well. The 870 shotgun is reliable... period. I understand and have shot some of the new age polymer high-capacity black recoil and gas guns and in fairness, they have their place.

That said, I still have my 870s, the young one 25 years old, the old one 30 years old and I plan on staying with them. They have worked for me for over three decades and I can find no reason to change.

Editor's note: This column originally ran in the November 2008 issue. Clint is recovering from surgery and will resume his column in the January 2013 issue.

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HANDLOADING

STORY: John Barsness

HANDLOADING THE HORNET

Modern bullets and powders
bring out the little .22's full potential.

The early history of the .22 Hornet almost killed the cartridge in the decades after World War II. It was developed in the 1920s from the black powder .22 Winchester Center Fire at the US military's Springfield Armory, using rechambered .22 Long Rifle 1903 Springfield training rifles. The rimfire barrels had a rifling twist of 1:16", and a slightly smaller groove diameter than centerfire .22s.

The Hornet became so popular as a wildcat that in 1930 Winchester started producing ammo two years before any commercial rifle appeared, featuring blunt-nosed 45-grain hollowpoints and 46-grain "solids" at a listed 2,650 fps. Back then the Hornet was seen as filling the gap between the .22 Long Rifle and the .219 Zipper or .220 Swift.

After World War II, however, the .222 Remington (1950) and .22 Winchester Magnum Rimfire (1959) took a big bite out of the .22 Hornet's market from both ends. The .222 shot 50-grain spitzers at 3,200 fps, and handloaders could use the same .224" diameter bullets for other commercial .22 centerfires, instead of special smaller-diameter bullets produced for the .22 Hornet. The .22 Magnum came

very close to Hornet performance, and ammo cost a lot less.

As a result the little cartridge started dying a slow death. According to my *Gun Digest* collection, a total of seven American and European .22 Hornets were offered in North America during the first 25 years after the war, but by 1970 no American company chambered the round, and the only import available was the Walther ZKW-465.

Luckily, over the next 25 years a few American manufacturers saw the light and started making Hornets with .224" grooves and faster rifling twists. Spitzers could now be used, and newer powders raised velocities. The .223 Remington took over the .222's role, creating a larger ballistic gap above the .22 Magnum, and the modernized



Some Hornet handloaders claim pistol primers work best, due to the small size of the case, but in the Ruger they resulted in the largest 10-shot group (top right).

Hornet filled that gap.

I bought my first Hornet in 2000, a carbine barrel for the Thompson/Center Contender. This turned out to have a left-hand 1:12" twist, enough to stabilize spitzers up to 60 grains, though I planned to shoot 40s. A "literature search" of available load data indicated Hodgdon Li'l Gun worked just about perfectly, something Hornet fans already realized, providing the highest velocity listed in every data source. Maximum loads averaged a case-filling 13.0 grains, and full cases generally provide the best accuracy.

For decades .22 Hornets were reputed to be finicky about the ammo they liked, but the T/C's first range session went great. I sighted-in with Hornady 35-grain V-Max factory loads, and 5-shot groups at 100 yards averaged .9". Handloads with Li'l Gun and the 40-grain V-Max shot just as well, and with 13.0 grains the muzzle velocity averaged 2,950 fps from the 21" barrel.

Afterward, I dutifully tried some other powders, including IMR4227, Hodgdon H110 and Ramshot Enforcer. All worked, but none provided the same combination of accuracy and velocity as Li'l Gun. I'd lucked into 1,000 pieces of new, primed Winchester brass, but when reloading used CCI 400 primers, since I'd recently bought 5,000 during a sale. Both primers worked equally well.

Most "authorities" called the Hornet a 200-yard cartridge, but in the



Hornet factory loads have also been modernized with sleeker bullets, thanks to faster rifling twists.

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field a plastic-tipped 40 grain at nearly 3,000 fps proved effective out to 300 yards. Eventually, however, a couple of problems cropped up. First, I grew somewhat weary of breaking open the Contender while shooting prairie dogs all day, and the action flexed during firing. A third of the cases, from both factory and handloads, developed stretch marks on one side after the first firing, ruining them for further loading. This might not happen with the newer G2 action, but it did with that particular older action. So, I sold the Contender barrel and found a Ruger No. 1B. It also shot the Li'l Gun load very well and cases didn't stretch much at all when neck-sized.

Eventually, I tried some other primers and plastic-tipped bullets. CCI BR-4s shrank groups noticeably, and the rifle slightly preferred Nosler Ballistic Tips to Hornady V-Maxes or Sierra BlitzKings, 5-shot groups averaging under .7" even with ammo cranked out as rapidly as possible. The 26" barrel upped velocity to about 3,100 fps

Since then I've owned a couple more Hornets, a Ruger No. 3 and a CZ bolt action rechambered to K-Hornet, the improved version. The No. 3 shot the same load the 1B preferred even more accurately but about 200 fps slower. The CZ shot every load tried into .4" to .6" at 100 yards, again for 5-shot groups, but the magazine was too short for plastic-tipped bullets, normal in Hornet repeaters. The 22" barrel didn't get any more velocity than the 1B, and 40-grain hollowpoints lost their ambition noticeably quicker than any plastic-tip. The CZ went down the road, and the No. 3 soon followed because somebody offered too much money to resist.

Because BR-4s worked so well in all those rifles, I'd never tried small pistol

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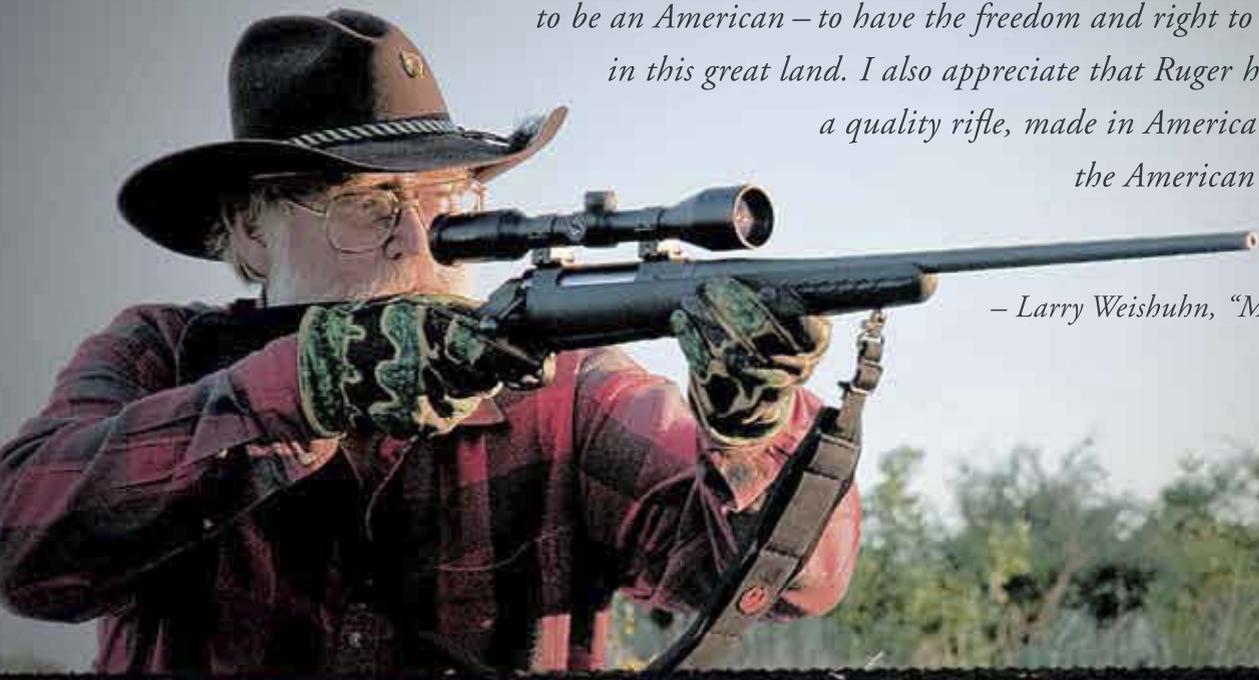
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BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
T/C CONTENDER, 21" BARREL				
HORNADY 40 V-MAX	Li'l Gun	13.0	2,950	.91
HORNADY 40 V-MAX	H110	11.5	2,769	1.01
HORNADY 40 V-MAX	IMR4227	12.0	2,602	.88
RUGER NO. 3, 22" BARREL				
NOSLER 40 BALLISTIC TIP	Li'l Gun	13.0	2,904	.58
SIERRA 45 RN .223	H110	11.0	2,714	1.10
CZ 527 K-HORNET, 22" BARREL				
HORNADY 35 V-MAX	Li'l Gun	14.0	3,323	.41
SIERRA 40 HP	Li'l Gun	13.5	3,093	.44
SIERRA 45 RN .223"	Li'l Gun	12.5	2,945	.62
RUGER NO 1B, 26" BARREL				
BARNES 30 VG	H110	13.0	3330	.80
HORNADY 40 V-MAX	Li'l Gun	13.0	3,110	.82
NOSLER 40 BALLISTIC TIP	Li'l Gun	13.0	3,121	.68
SIERRA 40 BLITZKING	Li'l Gun	13.0	3,102	.76

PRIMER TEST

RUGER NO. 1B			
BULLET NOSLER 40 VARMAGEDDON	POWDER LI'L GUN	CHARGE 13.0	
PRIMER (BRAND)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)	
CCI BR-4	3,125	.81	
CCI 500	3,156	1.03	
F205M	2,924	.87	
CCI 450	3,170	.78	

Notes: Group size is the product of 10 shots at 100 yards.

primers, an often-suggested Hornet reloading trick. Some handloaders claim rifle primers are too violent for the small case, so eventually I tried pistol primers, using CCI 500s. I also tried Federal 205Ms, their small rifle match primer, and some CCI 450 magnum small rifle primers. Theoretically the 450s wouldn't work very well, but life itself is one long experiment.

The easiest way to see how a load shoots in a varmint rifle is to fire a 10-shot group. Any rifle putting 10 in an inch is darn accurate, and anything smaller is great. The loads were assembled with sorted, neck-sized brass and Nosler's new Varmageddon bullet, as it proved slightly more accurate than any other plastic-tip in the No. 1B.

The testing took place on a cool June morning when my Kestrel wind gauge showed a 0 to 2 mph breeze, with occasional "gusts" to 3 mph. The pistol-primed load shot into a little over an inch—very good, though not as accurate as the others. The Federal 205M and CCI 450 loads both surprised me. I use the 205M in a 6mm PPC benchrest rifle which averages less than .2" at 100 yards with 65-grain Bergers, but in the Hornet velocity variation was close to 200 fps, and the group was strung up and down. The

CCI 450 worked very well, providing the highest velocities and the smallest group! Hmm.

Today several 30- to 35-grain bullets are available for the Hornet. These can be driven faster than 40s, but their low ballistic coefficients slow them down quickly at 150 or 200 yards. The most useful are probably the "non-toxic" 30-grain Barnes Varmint Grenade and Speer TNT Green, for shooting where lead-core bullets are banned. Barnes lists a maximum load of 14.4 grains of Li'l Gun for 3,378 fps, but in the Ruger No. 1B H110 shot more accurately at around 3,300 fps.

Apparently the only real trick necessary when loading the Hornet anymore is finding smaller diameter bullets for use in older rifles with 1:16" twists and small-diameter bores. Both Hornady and Sierra offer them, but the only spitzer is Hornady's 45-grain offering. Some older rifles, however, will shoot fine with .224 bullets, especially blunt-nosed bullets like Speer's 33-grain "Hornet" hollowpoint and 46-grain "Bee" flatpoint.

But in four modern .22 Hornet rifles I haven't found much finickiness in handloading. No wonder it's made a big comeback!

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RIMFIRES

STORY: Holt Bodinson

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If there's any handgun more fun, more versatile, more handy and cheaper to shoot than a .22 kit gun or pocket gun, I have yet to see it. Short, light and always with you, it's a gun with a definite and endearing personality. Building on the recent introduction of their popular Lightweight Carry Revolver (LCR) in .38 Special and .357 Magnum, Ruger has released a .22 Long Rifle version of the LCR. The new .22 LCR is destined to carve out a distinct niche for itself in the Ruger revolver line.

A small, light .22 revolver makes a lot of sense. No handgun is more versatile. That rimfire cylinder will digest BB caps, CB caps, CB Longs, Shorts, Longs, Long Rifles and shotshells.

It doesn't matter whether they're blank loads, squib loads, subsonic loads, target loads, high-speed loads, solids, hollowpoints or shot. As long as that universal cylinder keeps turning, that little revolver will keep shooting.

No handgun is handier and more accommodating to different applications and environments. For the

last three decades, Smith & Wesson's stainless Kit Guns in .22 LR and .22 WRM have ridden my hip in the woods and across the fields more often than not. Built on the petite J-frame, the grip is a little small for my hands but with the addition of a Tyler's Grip Adaptor, it fits me like a glove.

Loaded with CCI CB Longs, the Long Rifle Kit Gun has slain thousands of wood chips, cow paddies and other inanimate targets of opportunity from the hip and as well as in aimed fire. The .22 WRM version has accounted for scores of edible cottontails, a few coyotes and one very rabid acting skunk. These little guns are simply handy and provide opportunities for endless hours of relatively quiet and inexpensive practice.

Enter Ruger's new rimfire LCR. Right out of the box, the rimfire LCR is an exact clone of Ruger's popular centerfire version. The dimensions are the same. Barrel length: 1.875"; overall length: 6.5"; height: 4.5"; width: 1.31" in centerfire and 1.28" in rimfire. Weight: 13.5 ounces in centerfire and 14.9 ounces in rimfire. Same U-notch integral sights. Same choice of grips: Hogue Tamers or Crimson Trace Lasergrrips. Same-same-same. It's a perfect matched set! Either revolver becomes the ideal understudy for the other, a factor which adds real value to the overall design.



The little LCR packs a lot of firepower, and its cylinder can digest a variety of loads. The cylinder and crane lock-up of the LCR is conventional and familiar to most shooters. The rakish sculpturing of the LCR cylinder reduces weight and is a distinctive feature of the model.



Speaking of design, it's pretty radical for a revolver. Designed by one of Ruger's in-house engineers, Joseph Zajk, the lower frame is polymer; the upper frame is aluminum; the barrel is simply an inserted steel liner while the highly sculptured, 8-shot cylinder, crane assembly, front latch, cylinder latch and fire control system are steel as well. What you come realize and appreciate is the composite LCR is a successful design for meeting the objectives of economical mass production and light weight.

It's a safe revolver and features an integral lock-and-key system beneath the grip as well as a Ruger supplied padlock. Packed with the LCR are two small combination key-screwdrivers which permit you to remove the grip secured by one screw and then lock the fire control system. As an alternative, you can lock the shackle of the padlock through the cylinder frame and triggerguard.

How does it handle? The LCR is a natural pointer. The angle of the memory-grooved Hogue Tamer grips



Galco's Pocket Protector holster is designed for front pocket carry in pants or jacket of the LCR. It'll keep the gun in the same general position so you can quickly locate the grip for the draw, and conceals the shape of the gun so its outline doesn't "print."

to the frame is excellent. Closing my eyes and raising the revolver into firing position and then opening my eyes, I find the sights are almost in perfect alignment. Along the same lines, the LCR is a great performing fun gun when shot from the hip. With a little practice, you can keep a tin can just a'bobbling along the good earth until that eighth round goes pop. Another option, Ruger offers the LCR with factory-fitted Crimson

Trace Lasergrrips for an additional \$267.

The LCR trigger was a pleasant surprise as well as its oversized triggerguard for gloved hands. As a double-action only revolver, a good trigger counts. The LCR trigger pulls smoothly and breaks cleanly in double-action mode. For more deliberate aimed fire, the trigger can be manipulated to almost a single action level of precision. We call

Loaded with CCI's .22 LR shotshells, the LCR can handle some ugly varmints.



LCR-22

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ACTION TYPE: Double-action-only, **CALIBER:** .22 Long Rifle, **BARREL LENGTH:** 1.875", **OVERALL LENGTH:** 6.50", **HEIGHT:** 4.50", **WIDTH:** 1.28", **WEIGHT:** 14.90 ounces, **FINISH:** Matte black hard coat and Advanced Target Gray, **SIGHTS:** Fixed, **GRIPS:** Hogue Tamer or Crimson Trace Lasergrrips, **PRICE:** \$525 (\$792 with Lasergrips)

it "stacking." By pulling through and stopping at the point where the cylinder has rotated and is locked in place, you can take precise aim before applying just a bit more pressure on the trigger to break the shot.

I find that easiest way to stack a double-action trigger is to insert your trigger finger more fully through the triggerguard so the fleshy pad between the first and second joints is in contact with the trigger. As you pull though to the stop point, the tip of your trigger finger will touch the side of the frame and give you total control of the trigger in the stacked position. At that point, simply squeezing your grip a bit harder will usually break the shot. The LCR can safely be dry fired so

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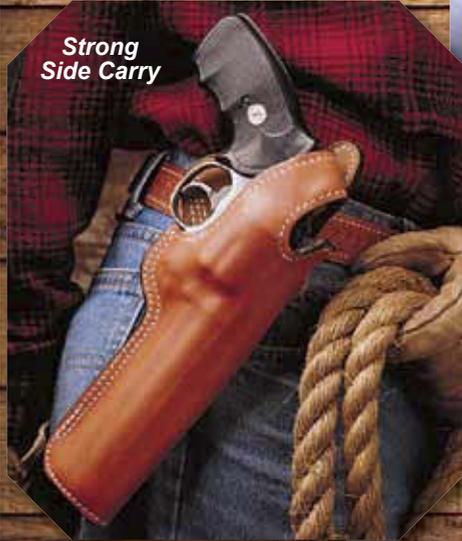
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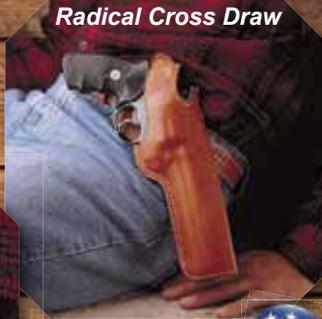
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Supplied with an integral lock plus a conventional padlock, the LCR can be safely stored.

there's no reason not to practice this valuable technique until it's mastered.

How does it shoot? I shot regular and high velocity loads on targets at 15 yards as well as CCI shotshells at 6' and 10'.

The effectiveness of the CCI shotshell loads are reflected in the two Champion brand prairie dog targets. The LCR really throws some impressive killing patterns. If you tramp around in venomous snake country or fish where cottonmouths lurk, an LCR loaded with half a cylinder of shotshells would be very comforting.

On targets at 15 yards, the LCR's short 3-3/4" sight radius called for some hard holding. I learned two things about the gun. First, it favors standard velocity, Long Rifle ammunition for sheer accuracy. In fact, CCI's new "Quiet-22" loading turned in the best, 5-shot groups which averaged 2" while high-velocity loads like Winchester's Power-Point and CCI's Mini-Mag spread from 2-1/2" to 3-3/4".

The second thing I discovered is that some, not all, but high-velocity loads like CCI's Mini-Mag and Winchester's SuperX formed a small bulge on the lower case wall just in front of the rim and opposite the firing pin indentation. The effect of the bulged cases was to make extraction and ejection stiffer than normal. Federal high-velocity ammunition didn't evidence this same problem.

Stored in your tackle box or vehicle, carried on your hip, maybe even stuck in your pocket for short jaunts, Ruger's LCR is a neat concept gun and a welcome addition to the small frame carry plinker clan. **GUNS**

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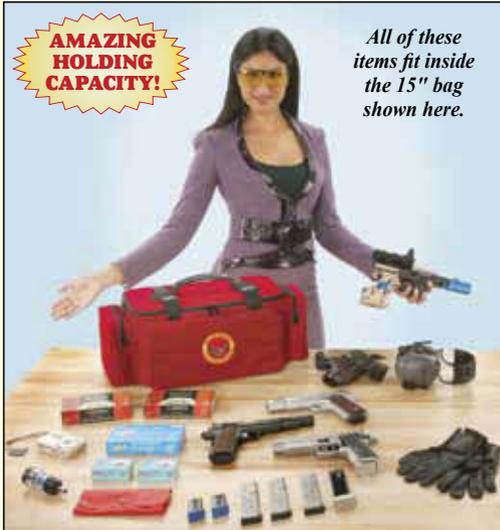


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RIFLEMAN

STORY: Dave Anderson

LOOKING Through a glass.

A hunter's binocular ranks in importance right behind the rifle. I can get along without a scope if I have to (and as a teenager I had to), I can even get along without a knife (OK, that would be tough) but I can hardly imagine being outdoors without a binocular.

Generally, I wear a binocular on a short neck strap. Hunting mostly in northern regions of North America, I always wear at least a light jacket and sometimes an insulated parka. When it comes time to crawl or slither it's easy to tuck the binocular in the jacket where it won't drag on the ground or flash a signal to the game, and is safe from the elements.

I never cared much for binocular harnesses until I hunted in Africa, and found even a light jacket was often too much. We didn't do much slithering (too many thorns) but lots of hands-and-knees crawling. To keep the binocular from flopping around I had to undo a couple of shirt buttons and stuff the binocular inside the shirt. I soon realized why hunters in warm climates, from Texas to Tanzania, like harness systems.

Using A Binocular

A binocular is useful even at close range in heavy cover. It lets you

The Leupold Yosemite 8x30 is a porro prism design. Well made and with sharp optics it is an exceptional value.

selectively focus at different distances, making it easier to pick out what you want to see—antlers, for example—from surrounding branches.

Using a binocular to locate game in big, open country is a skill. Above all it takes patience. A friend I sometimes hunt with has many fine hunting attributes. He's fit, determined, persevering, a decent shot and "cheerful in all weathers." But does he like to walk! He'll reach the edge of a big valley, take one fast

sweep with his binocular, announce there's nothing there and charge off for the next valley.

I'd rather move slowly and take my time, often an hour or two just using binoculars. My buddy says I'm just lazy. I call it playing to my strengths.

Glassing from an observation point, I like to find a comfortable place to sit, preferably out of the wind and with some kind of cover to break up my outline. A big rock which can

serve as cover and a rest to steady the binocular is convenient though not always available.

Start by taking a careful look around without the binocular.

Once when I was young and innocent

I spent half an hour studying distant antelope with a binocular, when a

nearby movement caught my eye. At the base of the hill on

which I was seated, an antelope was standing in plain view watching me with great interest, about 90 yards away. And yes, I did shoot him.

Have you ever watched a nature show where the camera pans across a scene? It's hard to pick out details with the camera moving, isn't it? So hold the binocular as motionless as you can while carefully studying every detail in the field of view.

When you're sure you haven't missed anything (you probably did, but it's all part of learning) shift the binocular to another piece of real estate and repeat the process. With experience you'll learn where animals are likely to be at different times of the day; when they are up and feeding, when and where they like to lie up while resting.

Buying

Binoculars can be a lifetime investment, and provide a lifetime of enjoyment. They are an item which justify stretching the budget.

If money is no object just buy the most expensive models from names such as Leica, Minox, Nikon, Swarovski and Zeiss. But there are terrific binoculars available at every price level. We're living in a golden



This Minox 8x33 is an outstanding hunting binocular, light and compact, and with excellent optics.



The new Conquest HD from Zeiss is a terrific binocular and an excellent value. I've used the Victory FL extensively, including on an African hunt. The Conquest is very nearly as good, and at half the cost.

age of optics. Never has your dollar bought more performance and value.

Two examples at different price points are the Zeiss Conquest HD and the Leupold Yosemite. I confess to getting a lot of my binocular input from birding forums. In fact I sometimes sit out in the yard with a binocular and watch birds. It's more interesting than it sounds.

The Conquest HD is a fabulous binocular. In terms of resolution it provides at least 95 percent of the performance of the top-line Zeiss Victory model, and at half the price. It is built on an aluminum chassis for strength and durability, values prized by hunters. Currently retailing at around \$1,000 it is not cheap, but for the performance it provides it is an exceptional value.

Birding forums also gave a high rating to the Leupold Yosemite 8x30 porro prism, especially impressive since it retails for around \$100. I haven't tried one other than to look through it at a store. It certainly seems solidly made and amazingly sharp. While I haven't tested it thoroughly yet, it does provide excellent results at a very moderate price.

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UPON ARS

STORY: Glen Zediker

CASE SIZING

If you are a handloader, pay attention. Since it's a semi-auto, full-length spent case resizing for AR-type rifles is mandatory.

There are subtle and often touted differences in most of the better-grade sizing dies, but most standard full-length .223 Remington sizing dies do an entirely adequate job of getting the case to fit back into the chamber, and that's the focus here. I don't think it should be necessary to run a small base-sizing die (smaller diameter near the case head) for most competition rifles with the usual chambers, but it won't ever hurt accuracy.

The main thing is figuring out how to correctly adjust the sizing die body with the press to give the case all the sizing it needs. More is better than less, but too much, as with many things, is excessive.

As a fired case, which is larger diameter and therefore also shorter than it was before firing, gets squeezed to a smaller diameter by a sizing die, it gets longer again. It gets longer until the case shoulder contacts the corresponding portion of the sizing die that is reamed to fit it. Back to the pre-sizing case dimensions: The case body will be bigger and the case will be shorter, but the shoulder area will be located higher than it was prior to firing. The shoulder, therefore, is taller than before. When a case expands fully inside the chamber, its shoulder moves forward as the case head moves back against the bolt, and its body grows in diameter to fit the chamber walls.

Measuring overall case length (base to case mouth) doesn't really matter, not now at least. What matters is knowing the amount of case shoulder expansion, how far it moved forward or "up." Of course (of course) there is a tool or two that will show this.

This new gage from Forster works extremely well. Their Datum Dial accommodates virtually all bottleneck rifle cases, as well as having additional rings that let it be used as a bullet comparator. This gage measures off the case datum line, which I say is the correct means. Slick.

Drop-in-style case gages are popular, but the best kind is one that gives a number that corresponds to chamber dimensions.

This next can't be done without a gage, so get a gage. An option is shown. Use it to measure a new case. Then measure a fired case. Do some math. For best use in a semi-auto, the

difference between fired case shoulder height and resized case shoulder height should be .003". Most cartridge case shoulders are going to be shorter going in when new than they will coming out after being fired. If they're not, that means the rifle is very tightly headspaced and therefore should never be fired with a round that has a headspace dimension longer than the chamber headspace dimension. It also means your barrel man done a bad thing, unless you requested it.

Gage The Distance

As you're adjusting the sizing die body downward (threading it into the press) you're going to use this case headspace gage to check your progress. Again, you'll see the case getting longer, meaning the shoulder is getting higher, but that's because the case shoulder has yet to make contact with the die. When it does the case will stop getting longer. Keep threading the die body lower and checking the case shoulder height. When it reaches fired case dimension proceed very carefully but turn the die down a tad amount more. Stop it when the case shoulder is .003" lower than it was on the fired case. That is called case shoulder "set back." We have set back the shoulder on this case .003". Fix the die in place with its lock-ring, and then check more cases at that setting. Call it good to go when it's showing consistent cartridge headspace gage readings, and (one more time) they are .003".

It's easy. It's also important. I don't think it really matters to accuracy, but it sho' does to function. Everyone who has read much about "precision" loading knows there are those who talk about "fitting" a case to a chamber and how that just has to improve its accuracy. Fitting a case into the chamber is more important and that's why the .003" set back.

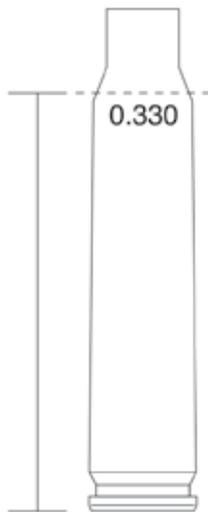
Bolt Actions

A bolt-action rifle can get away with less, but nothing should ever be run that's not at the very least .001" back from fired dimension. I set my



bolt-gun cases back .002" because I want the bolt to close easily. Case-to-case consistency in this dimension might matter to accuracy, but the dimension itself, as long as it's "enough," really can't. If it did then new cases, which can blow shoulders ahead a good deal in some chambers, wouldn't group as well as they do.

There's no harm in setting back a case shoulder more than .003" but the reason for a minimum figure is some improvement in reuse of the future spent cases. There's less material movement on subsequent shots, and the brass that flows forward does so from the case head. I run that little extra in my AR-15s compared to a bolt rifle to provide a space cushion to the shoulder during chambering. Depending on bolt gap, and whether or not it was addressed by a builder, there's



Here is what we're working with, and for. The case datum line on a .223 Remington is .330". From the point of that diameter (dotted line) back to the rifle bolt is headspace in the chamber, so from that line to the base of the cartridge case is our concern in sizing. Get it .003" under the chamber height and we're good to go.

often a little (to more than a little) additional and unintentional case shoulder set back when a round is chambered. Plus, residue buildup in a chamber can reduce net headspace a might (keep the chamber clean).

I've seen sizing dies with problems, and enough times to say, "What's next?" Generally, the problems are from inadequate capacity to set back the case shoulder. If a die is threaded all the way down to the shellholder and still won't push back the case shoulder enough to get the fired/sized difference recommended, then the die either has to have its bottom ground down or be replaced by one that will. Threading the die down farther does absolutely nothing but stress the press. The case will only go in so far. Any and all grinding should be done by a machinist, but it won't cost much and usually is preferable

to trying to get satisfaction from the die manufacturer. There are accessory shellholder sets that have different thicknesses but these also won't solve such a problem. They are handy, though, when loading for different rifles that need different amounts of sizing on their cases.

Information in this article was adapted from The Competitive AR15: The Ultimate Technical Guide, published by Zediker Publishing. For more information, including many downloads, please check www.zedikerpublishing.com or call (662) 473-6107.

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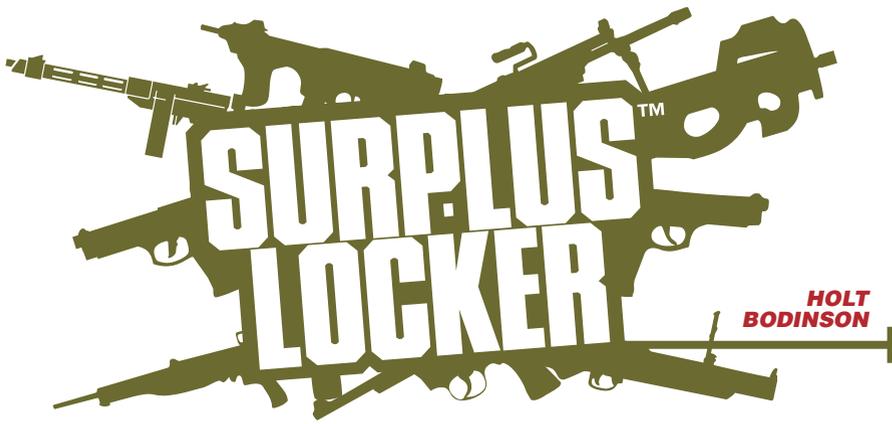
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SIR CHARLES ROSS AND HIS STRAIGHT PULLS

Canada entered WWI with a unique rifle, but it didn't last.

Few military rifles have stirred up as much public controversy as the straight-pull Mark III Ross rifle the Canadian contingents carried into the initial year of WWI. Stories of the Ross jamming in the midst of combat or blowing the bolt back through the shooter's face are legion. There is truth to both charges, but it's a shame the criticism so poisoned popular perception that we forget how well the sporting and target models performed or how sensational the introduction of the .280 Ross cartridge was in the early 1900s. The full story deserves to be told.

Sir Charles Henry Augustus Frederick Lockhart Ross was the Ninth Baronet of Balnagown, Scotland. A Knight of the Realm he inherited an estate of 350,000 acres, 3,000 tenants and Balnagown Castle. Being born a privileged nobleman might be considered, in our egalitarian 21st century, to be a detriment and a preordained pathway to idleness and debauchery, but not so in the case of Sir Charles Ross. Over a lifetime, he proved himself to be savvy executive and businessman, a prolific inventor of everything from ship's propellers to hydro machinery, a soldier, an accomplished sportsman and what was once known as a "bon-vivant." Interestingly, his last years were spent in St. Petersburg Beach, Fla., where he enjoyed deep-sea fishing and venturing forth in "a pith helmet,

pajama bottoms and old slippers."

As a boy, he could be found working away, as often as not, in the well-equipped workshop of the family castle. While attending Eaton College in 1893, he patented his first straight-pull rifle—a design that was considered so complicated that, luckily, it did not see the light of day. If he revealed one fault, it was that he was an impatient soul who had so many varied interests he rarely spent enough time to stick with a design and refine it. Being married three times, he also admitted he didn't understand women.

Moving to Canada in 1897, he set out and built a hydro-electric company in British Columbia, invested in a trolley company in Vancouver, set up a rifle-making company in Hartford, Conn., and a parallel manufacturing relationship with Charles Lancaster



The hooked-lever, magazine cut-off control of the Mark II, inside the triggerguard, is uniquely distinctive.



The safety of the Mark II is a sliding button built into the bolt handle.



The Harris Controlled Platform Magazine is activated by this lever on the right side.



This Mark II bolt release was replaced with a 1903 Springfield-type in the Mark III.

in England. The first straight-pull sporting model to be produced was closely related in design to the 1890 straight-pull Austrian Mannlicher.

For an entrepreneurial rifle builder, Canada was ripe pickings following the Boer War in which Canada was starved for sufficient quantities of Lee rifles and was forced to go up against the Boer's Mausers with its Sniders and Martini-Henrys. Even after the war, Britain steadfastly refused to set



With its solid bolt lugs, the Mark II is probably the best of the Ross military designs. Sir Charles set up a manufacturing facility in Quebec to fulfill his military contracts.

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Unable to acquire Lee rifles during the Boer War, Canada put Sir Charles Ross' straight pull into production (above), many of which was service in the hands of Canadian troops during WWI. The most important difference between the bolts of the Mark II (below, left) and the Mark III (below, right) is the design of their locking lugs.

up a Canadian factory to produce the Lee-Enfield so Canada went looking for a rifle of its own. For Sir Charles, who had a few friends in high places, it was the chance of a lifetime. In 1902, the government signed a contract with Ross for the manufacture of an initial lot of 12,000 rifles.

Building a factory in Quebec, Sir Charles' Mark I Ross was assembled with parts manufactured by the American firms of Billings & Spencer and the Frank Mossberg Co. (not O.F. Mossberg). Delivered in 1905, the Mark I was plagued by faults and was returned to the factory for a new model, the Mark II, also known as the Model 1905.

The two military models of the Ross most commonly seen in milsurp circles are the Mark II, pictured here, and the Mark III (Model 1910). The great distinction between them is the design of the bolt head. In the Mark II, the bolt head features two solid lugs that ride vertically and lock horizontally. The Mark III, built on the Ross 1910 action, features a "triple-threaded, interrupted-screw, double bearing cam bolt head" that opens horizontally and locks vertically. Reportedly, Ross developed the new action to house his potent .280 cartridge which propelled a 146-grain bullet at 3,100 fps and a 180-grain at 2,800 fps.

It is the Mark III model, featuring interrupted screw-type lugs, which the Canadians troops learned to detest during the early months of WWI. The Mark III bolt was intolerant of dirt and soft-cased wartime ammunition. The rear of the interrupted thread was readily deformed by battering against the bolt stop, and the bolt head could be flipped during reassembly so the rifle would fire without being locked.

Captain Herbert W. McBride was

using a big chunk of wood as a persuader."

By September of 1916, all the Mark III rifle's were withdrawn, and the Canadians issued Lee-Enfields. Canada expropriated the Ross factory in March, 1917 paying Ross \$2,000,000. The machinery was sold off and the building demolished.

US Issue

The Mark II seen here is probably the best of the Ross military designs. It is part of 20,000 Mark II rifles the United States purchased from Canada during WWI for training purposes to free-up Springfields for the front lines. The stock is clearly marked with the Ordnance Department's flaming bomb and "US" acceptance stamps.

Weighing 7-3/4 pounds and incorporating a single-stage trigger with a pull of only 5-1/2 pounds, the Mark II is a slick-handling rifle and very fast to operate. The fully adjustable 2,200-yard rear sight is a bit optimistic, but for volley fire during WWI, it served its purpose.

There are several design features in the Mark II that are intriguing. The flush magazine is known as the "Harris Controlled Platform Magazine." To load it, you depress the lever visible on the right side of the stock just aft of the rear sight. This lowers the follower so cartridges can simply be dumped into the magazine well. The Mark III accepts stripper clips, and its magazine box protrudes below the line of the stock.

That odd hook-looking handle inside the front of the triggerguard of the Mark II is actually the magazine cut-off. When pulled down, the rifle can be loaded with single rounds while maintaining 5 rounds in the magazine. The Mark III incorporates a 1903 Springfield-type cut-off and bolt release at the left rear of the receiver.

The safety of the Mark II is a



a Canadian sniper in WWI, equipped with a Mark III Ross fitted with a 6X Warner-Swasey scope. He favored that rifle above all others, experienced no mechanical difficulties with it and praised its superior accuracy. Writing the book, *A Rifleman Went to War*, after WWI, he did capture the frustration of the Canadians with their Mark III rifles, writing, "I heard, during a little lull in the firing, a great voice, supplicating, praying, exhorting and, above all, cursing the whole Clan Ross. Investigation showed it to be "Big Dan" McGann, assiduously trying to open the bolt of his rifle,

MARK II

MAKER: ROSS RIFLE COMPANY
QUEBEC, CANADA

MECHANISM: Straight-pull, **CALIBER:** .303,
CAPACITY: 5+1, **BARREL LENGTH:** 28", **OVERALL
LENGTH:** 47.5", **SIGHTS:** 100 - 2,200-yard rear,
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This Mark II is marked as one of 20,000 purchased by the United States for training purposes. This Mark II carries 3 (below) indicating three series of modifications are reflected in its construction.*



sliding button incorporated into the bolt handle. The Mark III carries a little, flag-looking flip safety on the bolt handle.

During its lifetime, the Mark II underwent 70 modifications. An additional star (*) marked each series of modifications. The Mark II pictured here carries three stars: ***. The final Mark II model sports five.

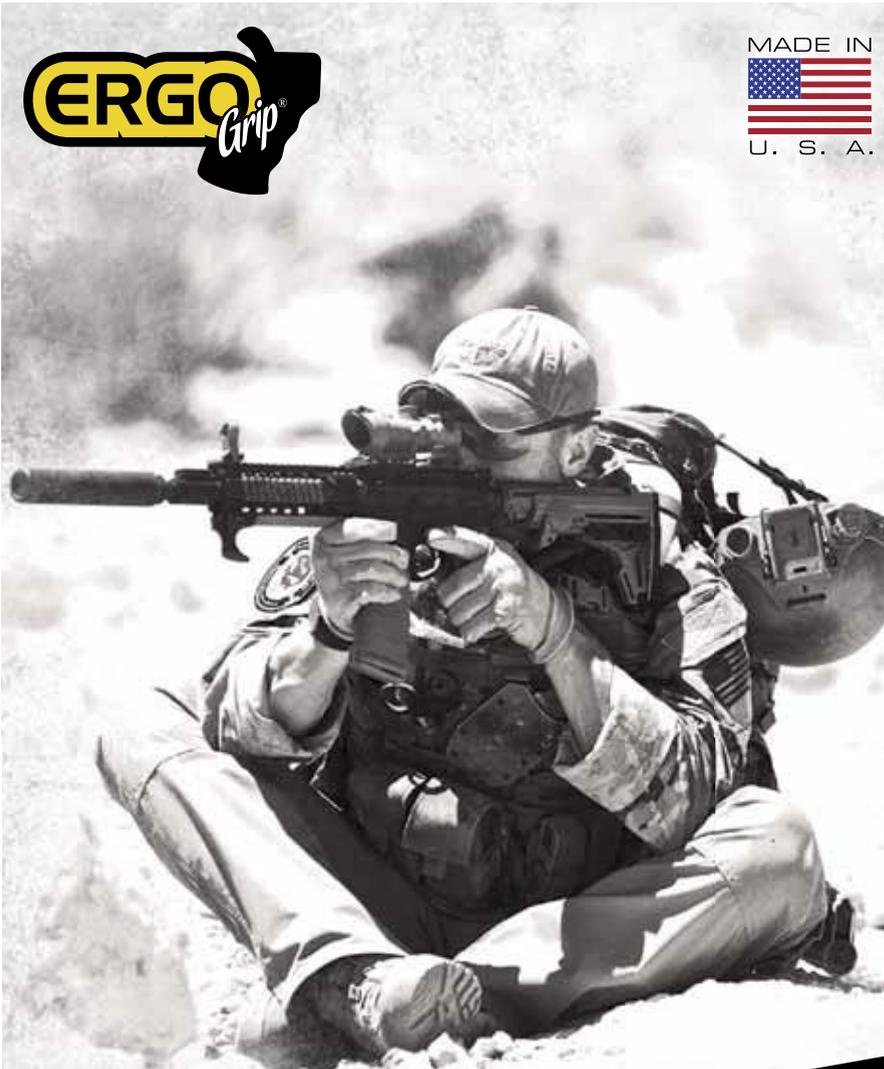
Other Ross models that may be encountered are a variety of sporters, military and civilian target models, sniper rifles and even a straight-pull .22 rimfire, known as the 1912 Cadet. Ross rifles are more common in Canada than in the US, but I just saw one in the rack of the Frontier Gun Shop in Tucson, Ariz., so who knows?

The final chapter to the Ross story may not be Canadian. At the 1954 World Shooting Championships in Caracas, Venezuela, the Russian running boar team showed up with target rifles sporting Ross actions and 7.62 barrels. The Russians won. 

FURTHER READING

SIR CHARLES ROSS AND HIS RIFLE, BY ROGER PHILLIPS AND JEROME KNAP, SOFT COVER, 32 PAGES, ©1969 MUSEUM RESTORATION SERVICE, \$12.95, FROM: A&J ARMS BOOK SELLERS, 2449 N. ORCHARD AVE., TUCSON, AZ 85712, (520) 512-1065, WWW.AJARMSBOOKSELLERS.COM

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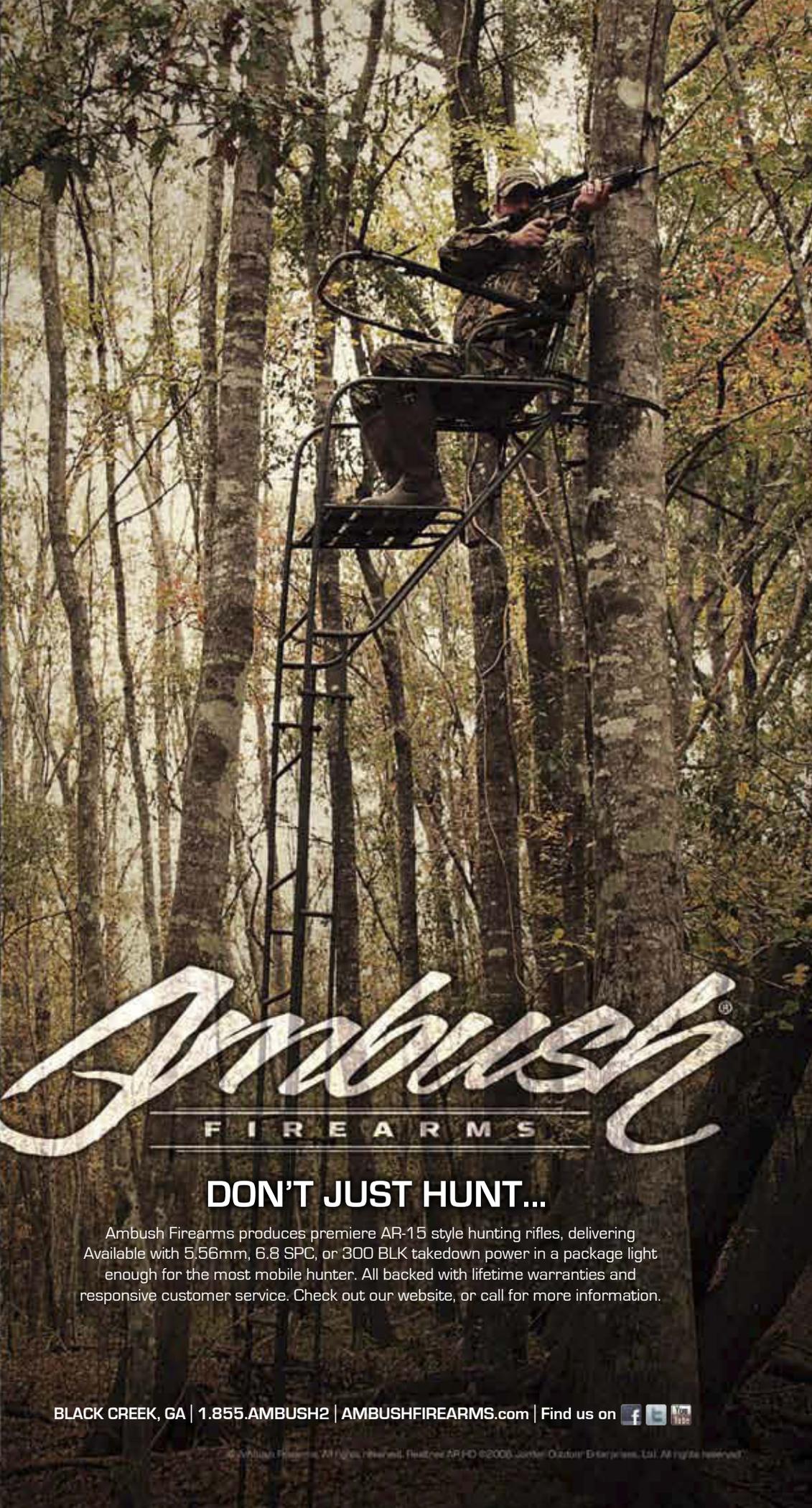
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OUTTM of the BOX

MIKE CUMPSTON

RETURN OF THE BABY EAGLE

The 10-shot compact .45 ACP from Magnum Research.

Following the acquisition of Magnum Research by Kahr Arms and emergence of Israel Weapons Industries as a private entity separate from the government owned Israel Military Industries, the Baby Eagle is again available in the United States. The Baby Eagle is imported in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP with a total of 11 variations on the basic CZ 75-based theme.

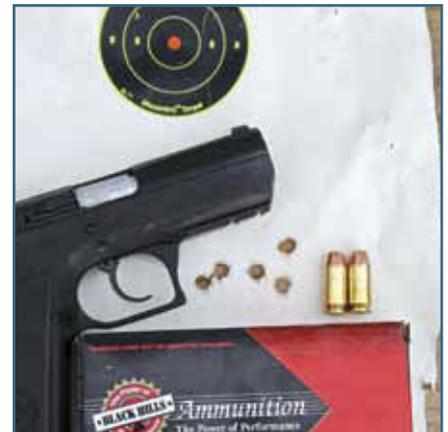
The line includes full-size pistols, semi-compacts and compact models as well as a choice of metal or polymer frames. Baby Eagles are a variant of the IWI Jericho pistol and while some imported versions of the Jericho have frame-mounted safeties, the Eagles have historically featured slide-mounted, hammer-drop safeties and this remains the case with the current imports. Since the .45 ACP is of particular interest

to American shooters, this is the model we chose to review.

The .45 is a semi-compact with the only frame option being steel. Basic function is double action first shot and single action thereafter. Applying the safety drops the hammer whereupon the safety remains engaged until released by upward rotation. With the safety engaged, the slide travels freely allowing maximum safety when



This was Mike's best 25-yard "NRA" slow-fire string though imperfect trigger control produced some wide fliers on earlier targets (above). Black Hills delivered this 25-yard benchrest group (below).



chambering a round. Since the pistol has an internal passive firing-pin block, the half-cock step is superfluous unless the shooter elects to carry the pistol with the hammer in this position to reduce the length of the initial double-action pull. This is a jarring concept to users of traditional Browning-type single actions but, due to the positive, trigger-actuated firing-pin block, it is a viable option.

The sample Eagle came with

BABY DESERT EAGLE II

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ACTION: Locked breech DA/SA semi-auto, **CALIBER:** 45 ACP, **BARREL LENGTH:** 3.93", **CAPACITY:** 10+1, **WEIGHT:** 39.8 ounces, **OVERALL LENGTH:** 7-3/4", **HEIGHT:** 5-3/4", **SIGHTS:** Fixed 3-dot, **FRAME & SLIDE:** Carbon steel, **FINISH:** Black oxide, **RETAIL:** \$630



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The double-recoil spring arrangement (above) seems equal to its purpose but it was noted that ejected cases landed a considerable distance from the pistol. Note that the slide rails (below) are inside the frame a la SIG 210 and the barrel/slide lock-up is accomplished with Browning-type internal locking lugs.

a 12-pound double-action and 5-pound single-action trigger. Closely spaced double-to-single-action pairs were quite controllable and landed center-mass on the B27 target out to 15 yards. Shooting 1-handed, slow-fire at 25 yards, I found the weight of the single action challenging and never quite overcame a tendency to anticipate my trigger release and toss the occasional stray out into the 8-ring of the B27. The all-steel construction and a well-configured grip had the expected positive influence on recoil and recovery with the premium +P ammunition on hand. The pistol functioned 100 percent with the assortment of loads ranging from



With the dots on the slide and frame aligned, the slide stop can be pushed out of the frame for dismounting.

CorBon 160-grain DPX, designed with moderate recoil in mind, to loads from CorBon, Black Hills and Buffalo Bore with a variety of 185-grain bullets. Buffalo Bore supplied a 230-grain +P JHP.

I also had a supply of the very interesting Black Bear Protection load from Buffalo Bore. All of the 185-grain loads produced velocities that were about what would be expected from full-sized pistols chambered for .45 ACP. The Buffalo Bore Bear load features a 255-grain lead flat point intended for the .45 Colt revolver which, before the moderating influence of the Cowboy Action game, was listed at 870 fps. The Buffalo Bore load fired from



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the 3.9" Baby Eagle trumped the old Colt load by 49 fps.

The slide inertia provided by the double recoil spring system seemed unremarkable but spent cases from all the loads took a flat trajectory from the port and landed a surprising 25' to 30' distant. By contrast, the final cases, ejected over an empty magazine follower impacted the port, landed only a few feet away and were mutilated beyond the ability of a sizing die to return them to use. Nevertheless, the pistol delivered perfect reliability and the 25-yard benchrest groups were within expectations, ranging from 1.7" to 2.5". Maintaining the usual Patridge sight picture with the front blade centered and level with the

top of the rear sight, this pistol hit several inches low at 25 yards. When I aligned the white dot array on the sights, point of impact was centered both to windage and elevation.

Dismounting for routine cleaning requires retracting the slide until dots on the slide and frame align and then pushing the slide stop out right to left. Recoil spring/guide rod assembly and then barrel are lifted out in the usual manner and the whole thing goes back together without any surprises.

Holsters makers usually list their models as IWI Jericho/Baby Desert Eagle. The Zahal online store has several models specifically listed for this pistol and Fobus lists an adjustable, kydex paddle holster.

Historically, the Israeli Arms Industry and Magnum research are highly regarded by their customers for the design and execution of their products. Both concerns have a good track record of after-sale customer support as does the new Magnum Research parent company, Kahr Arms.



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.45 ACP FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	ENERGY (FT-LBS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
CORBON 160 DPX	1,062	401	2.4
CORBON 185 DPX	1,124	519	2.3
BLACK HILL 185+P JHP	1,150	543	1.7
BLACK HILLS 230 JHP	782	312	3.1
BUFFALO BORE 185+P JHP	1,135	529	1.7
BUFFALO BORE 230+P FLATPOINT	926	438	2.5
BUFFALO BORE 255 HARD CAST	919	478	2.9

Notes: Group size is the product of five rounds at 25 yards.



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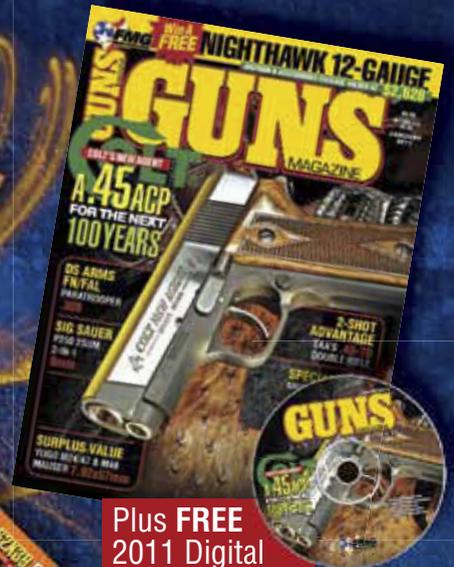
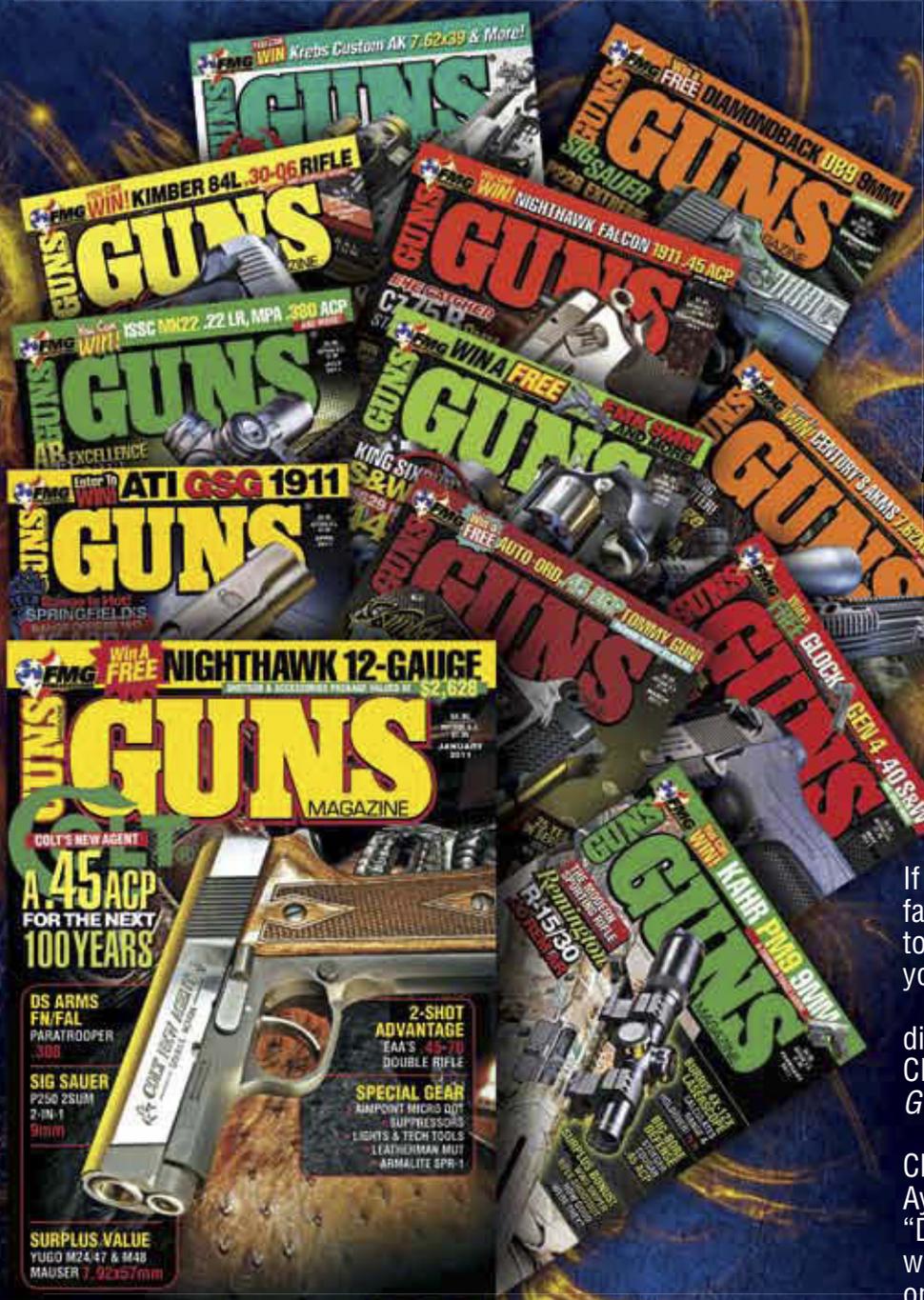


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Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Mosin-Nagant Sporter

Q: I just bought a Mosin-Nagant for \$90, stripped it down sold the parts on eBay for \$150, saving just the barrel, receiver and bolt. I bought an ATI stock, LER scope, muzzlebrake, trigger spring, and now can shoot 2" at 100 yards with surplus ammo.

I was hoping you'd have some additional insight on improving the accuracy we DIY types can use.

*Richard Logue
via e-mail*



A: A new trigger from Huber Concepts will improve a military rifle's trigger pull and is available for a wide range of bolt-action rifles like Jeff's Krag sporter (shown) as well as the Mosin-Nagant. Bedding the action to the stock with Brownells' AcraGlas will improve action-to-stock fit.

Those old M-Ns really can shoot. A 2" 100-yard group is pretty darn good. You might look at installing an aftermarket trigger. The stock trigger pull is usually something only a Russian drill sergeant could love.

One is the Huber Concepts trigger. I installed a Huber Concepts trigger in my Krag sporter. It wasn't hard. Just make sure you don't set it

too light and test it before you trust it. I adjusted mine too light and had to readjust it heavier. It's far better than the old military trigger.

You might also look at Timney Triggers. Their trigger has a safety lever on it, and is adjustable for pull weight. I haven't played with installing a Timney myself for some time, but I have a Les Baer AR with a Timney factory installed and it's nice.

Bedding the action to the stock with Brownells AcraGlass may also help. A next step could also include higher quality match ammo or just start handloading for the cartridge to shrink your groups even further. Before buying bullets, slug the bore. Bore sizes in Mosin-Nagant barrels can be as tight as .308" and as large as .311" or so. Both sizes are available from the major bullet makers. **GUNS**

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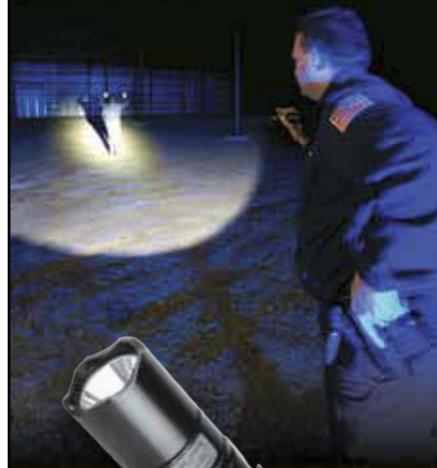
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For The SERVING SOLDIER

The 2012 Military
Christmas Gift Guide.

John Connor

If you've got a family member, friend or loved one deployed overseas in service, we've got some great gift ideas for you again. If you're one of our many—and very much appreciated—GUNS readers who considers *all* of our warriors as “friends and family they just haven't met yet,” we have suggestions for you too.

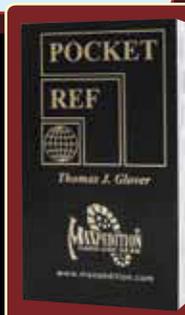
To bring some Christmas cheer to those who won't be home for Christmas, go to www.ansoldier.com, anymarine.com,

anyairman.com, anysailor.com, anycoastguard.com. There you'll find personal notes from troops stationed in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Kuwait, Djibouti and some places you've never heard of, explaining their units' situations and their needs which are not being met by military means. AnySoldier will lead you through the process of what and how to send to whom, and the warmth you get back in a thank you message can keep you toasty through Christmas.

Another very effective charity is TroopsDirect at www.troopsdirect.org. It began with one patriotic entrepreneur sending shoebox-size “care packages” to a Marine friend in Afghanistan, and has grown through his business contacts to an organization, which supplies company to 1,000-man, battalion-size units. When one combat medical unit was waiting 4 weeks for stretchers, bandages, syringes and gauze, TroopsDirect filled their needs *completely* in hours. When several units were getting almost no protein and one meal per day, TroopsDirect sent 5 tons of nutritional supplements, energy bars and protein powder. You send the checks and they take care of the rest, right to the last forgotten grunt on the last scorched rock in the last lonely place. I've been that guy, and so have some of you. 'Nuff said, friends.

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Any service member of any rank or specialty will enjoy and value the Pocket Ref from Maxpedition. A virtual encyclopedia, it contains 3,500 conversions and info on everything from time zones to physics and 50 knots to country codes plus far more than we can list here. The Pocket Ref puts a world of education and even entertainment into a BDU pocket—a great gift!



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The PowerLock multitool from SOG Knives is already a huge favorite with military personnel, and I've used two myself for years. But it was only a year ago I got SOG's Hex Bit Accessory Kit, and began using it almost daily. Five of the 12 PowerLock models feature a 1/4" socket drive like the one you see pokin' outta the end of my PowerLock in the photo. With a dozen flathead, Torx, Phillips and hex bits plus all the on-board PowerLock tools, the combo makes a terrific toolbox for our troops!



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The current administration has banned sending any pork products of any kind to our troops deployed in any country with a significant population of “people who may be offended.” That covers just about everywhere we have boots on the ground. So, no more bags of bacon-bits, no fried pork rinds, none of those juicy 1-pound canned DAK hams, and none of the “golden fleece of grunt-gifts,” Yoder’s canned pre-cooked bacon strips!

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devices, cell phones, most charging devices, MP3 players, handheld games, Bluetooth headsets, portable DVD players and just about anything else that offers our warriors personal communications, recreation and a little diversion. Government spokes-organisms say this “brings USPS into compliance with the regulations of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Universal Postal Union.” Never heard of ’em? They’re tentacles of the United Nations, that collection of highly polished football bats in New York.

PIHP’s—Persons In High Places—assure the troops they can still purchase lithium batteries and lithium-powered devices at their local PX/BX stores. Yeah, right. Ask a grunt on a rock in WhereZitStan how that works for him.

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

GUNS

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Developed by a former Navy SEAL officer, FrogLube is a non-toxic, biodegradable—even “food-grade”—cleaner, lube and protectant for firearms, knives or just about anything mechanical. I’ve been testing it on a Glock pistol and a carbine, and results are impressive. The only complaint from the troops is, they can’t get enough of it. Take care of that, willya? It’s highly resistant to salt water, works well in sandy, gritty environments, and it penetrates steel surfaces for long-lasting lube effect. Don’t worry: It’s food-grade but contains no bacon! A portion of proceeds goes to Troops Direct and the Navy SEAL Foundation.



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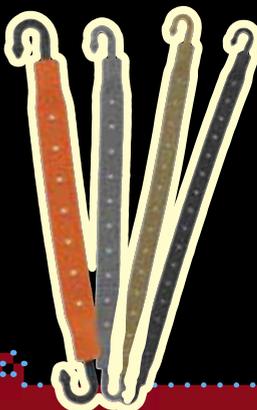
Your fellow *GUNS* reader Jim Toner of Toner Machining Technologies developed his super-rugged, O-ring-sealed polymer TMT Wallet for military personnel, cops, emergency services and outdoorsmen. It's packed with features including a pen, tweezers, toothpick, compass, glass breaker, hidden compartments and more. Light and compact, it's the ideal wallet for harsh conditions. If you order quickly, you can have one laser-engraved with name, rank, and service too!



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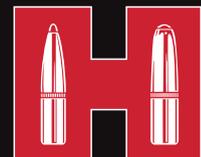
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John Barsness

Photos: Joseph R. Novelozo

Savage bolt-action rifles enjoy a reputation for accuracy far exceeding their price. One of the primary reasons is the floating bolt-head, allowing the locking lugs a little flexibility when seating in the action recesses. In conventional bolt actions the bolt is a solid unit, and uneven locking-lug seating causes the action to flex during firing, reducing potential accuracy. The only way to remedy this fault is to lap the lugs against their recesses. This costs time and money. The Savage system bypasses any need to lap the lugs, only one of several reasons Savage rifles acquired their accuracy reputation.

The original Savage rifle with the floating bolt-head design appeared in the *1959 Gun Digest*. Called the Model 110, it was an "affordable" hunting rifle chambered for the usual suspects including the .243, .270 and .308 Winchesters, plus the .30-06. Over the decades the rifle's reputation for accuracy grew, along with the number of model variations. Eventually demand rose for target versions, especially after the introduction of their superb Accu-Trigger.

Today Savage offers five target models: Bench Rest, F Class, F/TR, Long Range Precision and Palma. The test rifle was a Long Range Precision in the trendy new chambering of 6.5 Creedmoor. Some shooters publicly



The Kruger scope (above) was mounted in a sturdy set of Precision Reflex rings. The Savage bolt release is on the right side of the rifle as expected on the 110 action. The Savage comes with a detachable magazine holding five rounds (below, left). Note the heavy oversized bolt knob. The Savage has a 3-position safety (below, middle) just behind the bolt atop the tang. The Savage stock features a wide, target fore-end (below, right) with an aluminum bedding block, which Savage calls the AccuStock.



RANGE PRECISION

wonder why the 6.5 Creedmoor exists, since several 6.5mm rounds capable of approximately the same ballistics already exist, including the 6.5x55 “Swedish” Mauser and the .260 Remington, essentially a short-action version of the 6.5x55. The 6.5 Creedmoor has almost exactly the same powder capacity as the .260, around 2 grains less than the 6.5x55, so why bother?

Their skepticism of anything new is understandable, especially after being inflicted with 17 dozen new 7mm cartridges over the past few decades, most doing exactly the same things as several other 7mm cartridges. But because of that skepticism many shooters apparently haven't noticed the changes in bullets since the 6.5x55 appeared in 1891. Plus, there aren't 17 dozen 6.5mm cartridges, at least not in North America.

The 6.5 Creedmoor is designed around bullets with much higher ballistic coefficients, a trend started by the affordable availability of accurate laser rangefinders, beginning in the mid-1990s. Really knowing the range, down to the yard or meter, made longer-range shooting not just possible but truly precise. Consequently, shooters started realizing the advantages of high ballistic coefficient in bucking the wind and retaining velocity, whether shooting distant game or targets.

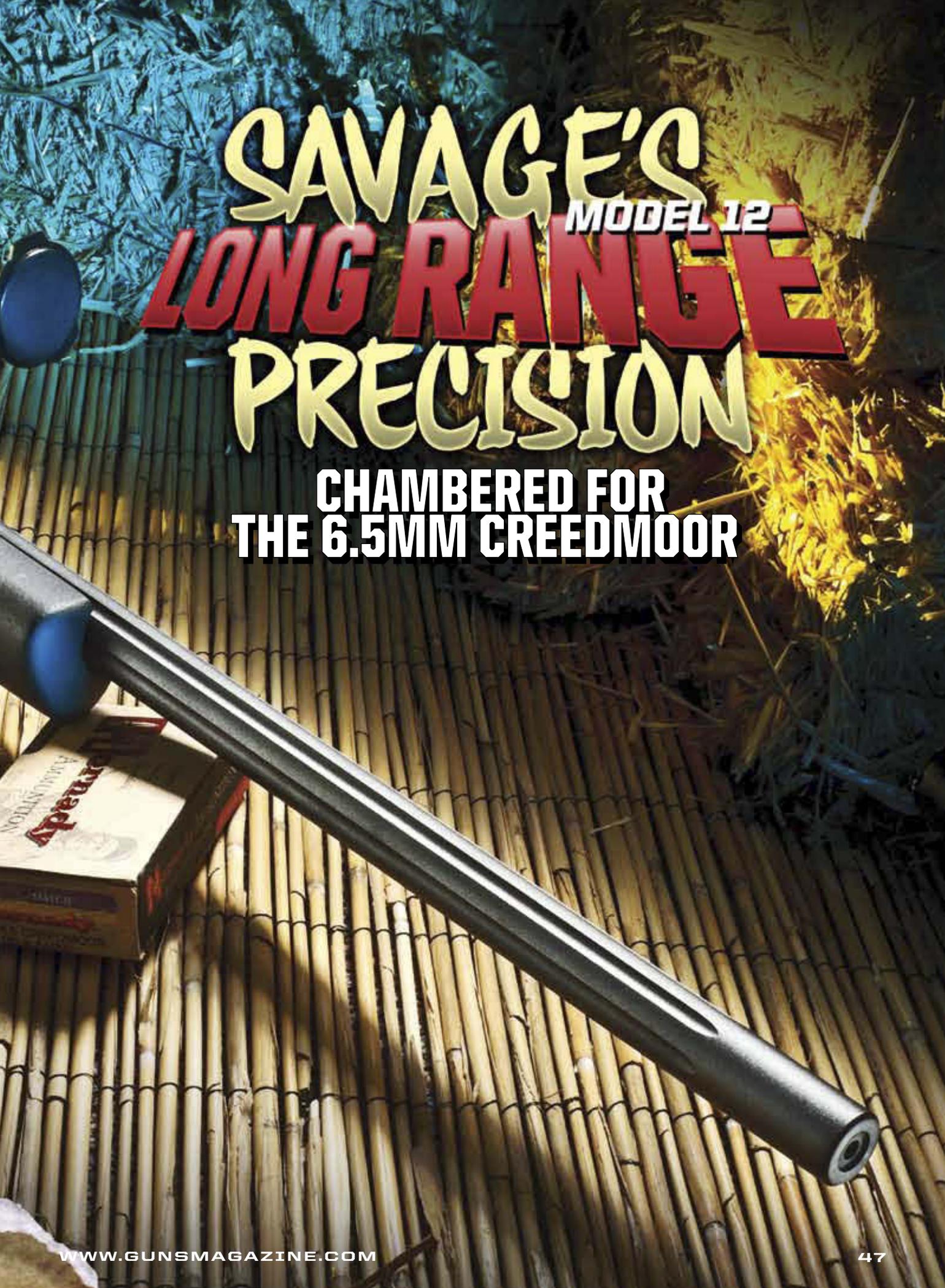
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A Savage Model 12 rifle barrel is shown lying diagonally across a bamboo mat. To the left of the barrel is a box of Speer ammunition. The background is a mix of blue and yellow foliage. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

SAVAGE'S
MODEL 12
LONG RANGE
PRECISION

**CHAMBERED FOR
THE 6.5MM CREEDMOOR**

FOR THIS TEST I BOUGHT A NEW 50-ROUND BOX OF HORNADY BRASS, AND OBTAINED SEVERAL 12-BULLET PACKETS OF VARIOUS 6.5MM BULLETS FROM BULLET PROOF SAMPLES. RIGHT NOW THEY'RE OFFERED FOR BARNES, BERGER AND NOSLER PRODUCTS, AND COST BETWEEN \$9 TO \$15 PER PACKET, A MUCH CHEAPER WAY TO FIND OUT WHAT YOUR RIFLE LIKES THAN BUYING 50 OR 100 BULLETS.

ogive of bullets like the Berger VLD (Very Low Drag), Hornady A-Max, Lapua Scenar and others caused minor problems.

Ever since the Remington 722 appeared in 1948, the magazines of "short-action" bolt rifles have been more or less standardized at 2.8". For decades this magazine length worked fine with cartridges based on the .308 and .284 Winchester cases, but as bullets grew longer they didn't fit so neatly in short magazines, especially 6.5mm bullets in the .260 Remington.

After being semi-ignored by most American shooters ever since the development of smokeless powder, 6.5mm turned out to be the hottest caliber trend of the early 21st century, due to military 6.5mm rifles designed back in the 1890s. Most early smokeless military cartridges used heavy roundnosed bullets, because the black powder cartridges they replaced used heavy roundnosed bullets. Long bullets had some ballistic advantages, in particular penetration, but 155- to 160-grain 6.5mm bullets required a relatively fast rifling twist of 1:8" or 1:9", in part due to the moderate muzzle velocity of early smokeless rounds such as the 6.5x55 Mauser and 6.5x54 Mannlicher-Schoenauer.

In 1905, Germany switched from a heavy 227-grain roundnose at 2,100 fps to a 154-grain spitzer (pointed)

The Kruger scope has an illuminated reticle with a brightness control (below) right at the top of the eyepiece.



The Kruger 2.5-10x50mm scope has target knobs with repeatable clicks, clear optics and budget-friendly price.

bullet at 2,880 fps in their 8x57 military round, after finding the lighter, faster bullet flew a lot farther. Other nations followed Germany's lead, those using 6.5mm cartridges finding their fast-twist barrels would stabilize a spitzer of about 140 grains. These turned out to have very high ballistic coefficients.

This accident of history is the reason 6.5mm cartridges became the new darlings of the recent long-range trend, not any "inherent" accuracy in the 6.5mm bore, as some shooters believe. However, as modern 140-grain 6.5mm bullets grew longer there sometimes wasn't enough room in front of the .260 Remington's case for the super-long ogives. Part of the ogive ended up inside the short neck, reducing neck tension. The overall length of the cartridge could have been lengthened,

as Norma did when commercializing the 6.5/.284 loaded to the same overall length as the .30-06, but one of the supposed advantages of shorter rounds is their ability to function in shorter, stiffer actions.

The solution was to shorten and widen the case body, retaining as much powder room as possible, lengthen the neck slightly—and the 6.5 Creedmoor was born. If you only use "traditional" 140-grain spitzers, there's no reason to get rid of your .260, but if you plan to use long-ogive bullets, whether for hunting or targets, the Creedmoor is a fine solution.

The Savage rifle is definitely built for target shooting, with a 26" barrel measuring a full inch at the muzzle, and a 1:8" twist to handle the longest 140-grain bullets. There are six flutes

in the barrel, too shallow to reduce weight or cool the barrel significantly, but apparently many shooters think flutes look cool. The action uses the target version of the AccuTrigger, a detachable magazine, and today's requisite over-sized "tactical" bolt handle. The stock is an H-S Precision, with a wide fore-end and aluminum bedding block, that Savage calls the AccuStock. Their website states the color of the stock is "natural," but to most humans it appears black. In fact the entire rifle is black, these days also cool.

The obvious question about any target rifle is accuracy. For the test I mounted a 2.5-10x50 TacDriver from the decade-old firm Kruger Optical in steel 30mm rings from Precision Reflex, an Ohio manufacturer of quality tactical shooting products. Kruger's scopes are manufactured or assembled from parts made in Asia to Kruger's engineering specifications at their factory in Sisters, Oregon. This strategy is becoming more common in modern optical manufacturing, and I was interested to see how this example worked.

The TacDriver 2.5-10x50 is a heavy-duty scope weighing a very solid 24 ounces, with a first focal-plane illuminated Mil-Dot reticle, exposed tactical adjustment knobs, and side parallax adjustment. The adjustments worked perfectly, moving shots around a 100-yard target exactly where they should, and didn't leak when dunk-tested in 100-degree water. In my night-time optical test the scope rated a 7, matching a number of more expensive scopes, including brand-new Leupold VX-3s, the couple of Nightforces I've tested, and Zeiss Conquests. Together the rifle, scope and mounts weighed 13-1/2 pounds.

The scope worked fine during the shooting, but a heavy 6.5 Creedmoor doesn't generate enough recoil to bother most scopes. Sometime soon I intend to put the TacDriver on a hard-kicking rifle and see if it holds up. If it does, it's a heck of a buy.

I already had some experience with handloading the 6.5 Creedmoor, thanks to buying one of the earliest Ruger Hawkeye sporters with a 26" barrel. I kept it for a year, testing factory and handloads and taking one pronghorn. For this test I bought a new 50-round box of Hornady brass, and obtained several 12-bullet packets of various 6.5mm bullets from Bullet Proof Samples. Right now they're offered for Barnes, Berger and Nosler products, and cost between \$9 to \$15 per packet, a much cheaper way to find out what your rifle likes than buying 50 or 100 bullets.



Most of the bullets tried came from 12-bullet test packages sold by Bullet Proof Samples.



The weight of the Savage made aiming easy during the test-shooting.



The most accurate load was the 140-grain Berger VLD and 41.5 grains of H4350. After two fouling shots from a clean barrel, the next six bullets landed in a group .36" in diameter.

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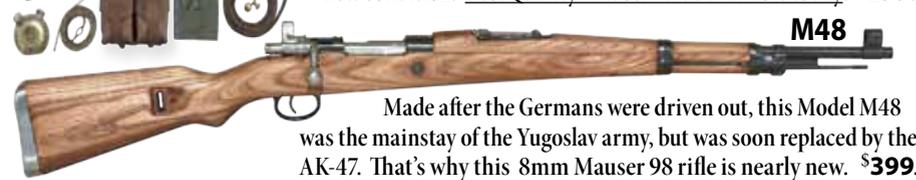
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ACTION TYPE: Bolt action, **CALIBER:** 6.5 Creedmoor, **CAPACITY:** 4+1, **BARREL LENGTH:** 26", **OVERALL LENGTH:** 46.25", **WEIGHT:** 11 pounds, **CAPACITY:** 4 rounds, **FINISH:** Matte black, **STOCK:** High Precision fiberglass, **PRICE:** \$1,124

2.5-10X50MM TACDRIVER

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MAGNIFICATION: 2.5X-10X, **OBJECTIVE DIAMETER:** 50mm, **EYE RELIEF:** 3.25", **INTERNAL ADJ. RANGE:** 60-MOA elevation & windage at 100 yards, **CLICK VALUE:** 1/4 MOA, **TUBE DIAMETER:** 30mm, **WEIGHT:** 24 ounces, **OVERALL LENGTH:** 13", **RETICLES:** Illuminated Mil-Dot, **PRICE:** \$399

Before doing any shooting I looked through the rifle's barrel with my Hawkeye bore scope, finding it pretty much caked with copper, whether from factory testing or another gun writer I don't know. It takes a lot of time to scrub out a barrel repeatedly while test-shooting, so between assembling batches of test handloads I cleaned the bore down to bare steel with several applications of Montana X-Treme Copper Killer, then installed some Dyna Bore Coat, a ceramic/glue



A recessed target crown is employed (above). Note the shallow flutes present around the barrel. The Savage AccuTrigger (below) redefined trigger technology. The target version is present on this rifle and breaks at a safe, consistent 12 ounces.



6.5MM CREEDMOOR HANDLOADED AMMO PERFORMANCE

BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
BARNES 100 TIPPED TSX	Big Game	46.5	3,456	.78
BARNES 100 TIPPED TSX	IMR 4007	43.0	3,255	1.39
NOSLER 120 BALLISTIC TIP	Hunter	47.0	3,241	1.19
BARNES 120 TIPPED TSX	Varget	39.0	3,098	1.27
BERGER 130 VLD	Hunter	46.0	3,156	.72
BERGER 140 HYBRID	Hunter	45.0	2,993	1.15
BERGER 140 HUNTING VLD	H4350	41.5	2,856	.36

mixture designed to fill imperfections in rifle bores. It had worked wonders on several other heavy-fouling barrels, and I didn't have to clean the Savage again throughout the test firing. (The coating, by the way, lasts for the life of the barrel.)

The new Hornady brass strongly resembled Lapua and Norma brass in several ways, including consistent neck thickness, very obvious coloring where the neck and shoulder were annealed, and a lack of a burr inside the flash-holes, indicating the hole had been drilled rather than punched like most American brass. Also, the sharp edges of the primer pockets required a little chamfering before Federal 210Ms would seat easily. I wouldn't be surprised if the Hornady cases were made in Scandinavia, not a bad thing for a round designed for accuracy.

First I loaded 20 rounds of sight-in ammo combining the 140-grain Berger Hunting VLD over 41.5 grains of H4350, the load suggested for 140s on Hornady factory ammo, since I have a pile of 140 VLD's on hand. This combo had shot very well in the Ruger, and would also serve to cure the Dyna Bore Coat.

The other test loads were loaded in 4-round batches, my usual practice in load development these days. Three shots are too chancy, whether the nut behind the bolt pulls a shot or all three bullets accidentally go in one hole, and five really aren't needed for initial testing. The ammo was assembled with Redding Competition dies, using the correct bushing for a .263" inside diameter of the necks. All the rounds showed less than .003" bullet runout, and most were under .002".

The shooting took place in early May on a day when my Kestrel wind-gauge registered 0 to 2 mph, so I didn't bother to put out any wind flags. The reliable clicks of the Kruger scope had the rifle punching the center of a 100-yard target within a few rounds. The AccuTrigger had averaged a consistent 12 ounces on a Timney trigger gauge, making precise shooting easy.

The powder/bullet combinations were chosen from my previous

experience with the 6.5 Creedmoor, plus data from various sources. The largest group with any load measured 1.37", but the most accurate combination turned out to be the sight-in load! After firing two fouling shots, the next six bullets landed about 1/2" lower in a group spanning .36". After all the 100-yard shooting, I clicked the elevation dial up to where the rifle should hit dead-center at 220 yards, and fired four rounds at a target placed at the 200-meter berm of the Broadwater County Rod & Gun Club range, the longest distance open that morning. The group measured less than 3/4", about .3 MOA, and landed very close to the center of the target. That'll do, especially with ammo assembled in brand-new cases with no tweaking of the powder charge or seating depth.

The only "modification" to the rifle was installing the Dyna Bore Coat in the barrel and mounting the scope. Otherwise it was right out of the box. Savage's suggested retail price for the Long Range Precision is less than half of what a typical accuracy gunsmith might charge to put together such a rifle, so it's yet another typically accurate Savage bargain. **GUNS**

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1605 Commerce Way
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Accurate

Roy Huntington

Editor, American Handgunner

Today's rifle market is bulging with rifles with synthetic stocks—and for a good reason. Synthetic stocks are stable and offer all sorts of easy ways to make them rugged, lightweight and consistent in design from one to the next. All of which translates into a more reliable stock design than can usually be had with wood. Synthetic stocks are able to hold accuracy through weather changes, offer repeatable bedding when barreled actions are removed and reinstalled and are pretty much immune to most things causing owners of wood-stocked guns to pull their hair out. So, what's not to like about plastic?

At least for me, the answer is easy. While I confess to owning some rifles with synthetic stocks, you'll likely not hear me swooning over how that bit of plastic "really catches the sunlight" or "looks deep enough to get lost in." Real wood—especially really good wood—can be something to behold. There's a reason cars like Mercedes, Jaguar and Rolls Royce use high-end, real wood veneers for inside trim work. You just can't get that warm look with

plastic. "Hey Jack, that's really some nice plastic you've got there on your dashboard!"

I don't think so.

But the downside to wood is the very thing making it so appealing, the fact its natural beauty is made up of, well... wood. And wood being wood, it tends to get all bendy and twisty, shrinky and expandy as the humidity changes. That wreaks havoc with accuracy as the pressure points on the action change as fast as a 15-year-old bounces from one cable channel to another. Set the torque on the bolts "just-so" and by that evening, things could already have changed. Now bounce from South Dakota to Zimbabwe and you're bound to have a problem holding your carefully-worked zero.

Those pesky problem with wooden stocks are historically dealt with by bedding with fiberglass-like compounds, inletting metal widgets into the wooden stock, pillar bedding, and other fixes. Some worked (and still do), some don't, and some are just plain wastes of time. But bedding takes talent and a skilled gunsmith—and even then it can be iffy.

One of the ways some synthetic stocks manage such reliable accuracy is by including a full-length metal chassis of some sort in the stock. It's secured to the stock with fancy glue and never moves. When you slide the barreled action home, it mates with the metal bedding rail and presto—you get repeatable, stable bedding each time you mate the action and stock. Sounds simple, and it is, once the technology is worked out and the design engineers do their magic.

The gents at Accurate Innovations, Inc. had a brain-storm



Innovations

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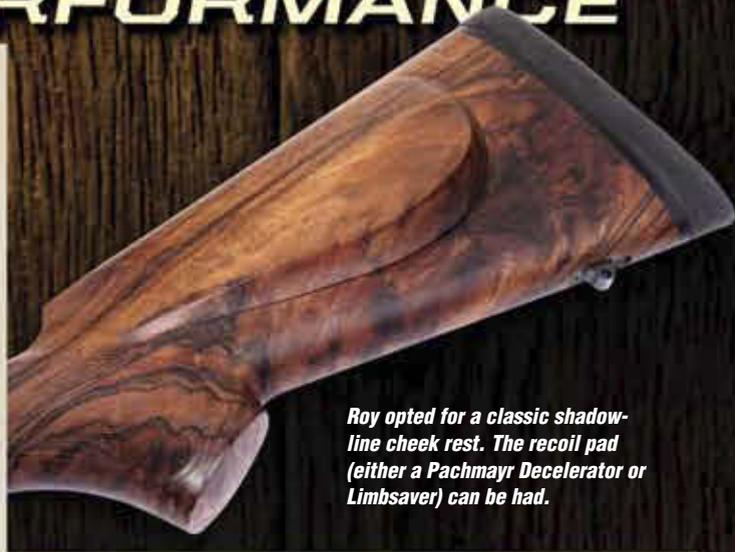
and, being lovers of fine wood, and accurate rifles, pondered how to manage both things. The answer now seems obvious, but what they've done is revolutionary (dare I say innovative?). They designed a proprietary full-length 6061 aluminum bedding chassis fitted into a wood stock blank of your choice. Also, the front sling swivel mount is actually secured to the aluminum chassis for extra security. Bingo... the beauty of wood and the stability of a metal-bedded action.

Wes Chapman, VP at Accurate Innovations, explains further: "We've not only developed a patent-pending aluminum chassis, but also include a steel rod to reinforce the wrist area of your stock. The result is a stable, stress-free mounting platform, a free-floating barrel and superior stability for repeatable, accurate shots, year after year, regardless of the climate."

The forward part of the aluminum chassis incorporates massive lugs that bed into the fore-end, helping to absorb recoil and further strengthening the bond. Aluminum pillars are also pressed into the bottom of the chassis, helping to form this complete metal-to-metal system. Yet, the exterior beauty of the wood still shows, hiding the remarkable system inside.

Accurate Innovations, Inc. offers stocks for a wide range of rifle designs, such as the Remington 700 series, Ruger M77, select models of Savage, Weatherby, Winchester and others.

Looks can fool. While Accurate Innovations, Inc. craft some of the finest wood stocks you can find, they come with a hidden secret—a patent-pending full aluminum chassis bedded inside, assuring consistent accuracy. Roy used two Federal .375 H&H loads to test the accuracy of his restocked Remington 798. No pressed-in checkering here (right), all of Accurate Innovations checkering is done by hand! Custom work is the norm for Accurate Innovations. Here, Roy had asked them to incorporate the logo for his family home into the checkering design. The result is this elegant rendering of the leaping gazelle logo for SUMARO House. Simply marvelous! Wood is a wonderful piece of English Walnut.



Roy opted for a classic shadow-line cheek rest. The recoil pad (either a Pachmayr Decelerator or Limbsaver) can be had.

Offering claro walnut, English walnut, Turkish walnut, maple, myrtle and certain laminates, the magic starts when their in-house stockmakers custom fit the style of stock and wood you've chosen to your barreled action. So you get the reliability of a synthetic stock in beautiful, traditional wood.

Our test rifle began life as a basic Remington Model 798 in .375 H&H Magnum, as manufactured by Zastava in Serbia. Basically, a classic Mauser 98 action, the barreled actions were imported and then stocked with domestic laminated hardwood by Remington. The original stock shows a nice attempt at bedding, using an epoxy bedding material and a built-in metal lug inlet into the stock. Accuracy ran around the 1.75" to 2" area, depending on loads. The stock was a simple design, offering decent performance and helped to keep the price point of the rifle low.

But I bought this rifle for an upcoming African trip, and to go with the classic cartridge, I wanted a classic look. Yet, I didn't want to give up the repeatable accuracy of the laminated stock that came on the rifle. What do to? Enter Accurate Innovations.

Wes Chapman assured me the final result would be accurate, serviceable, able to withstand the rigors of field





A rugged rear sight from NECG (above) was installed, upgrading the basic irons supplied with the rifle. The retro flip-up, ivory bead/brass front sight turned the 798 into a "real" safari rifle, also courtesy of NECG, their Express sight (below).



Here it is for all to see, Accurate Innovations' secret to their consistent accuracy, the patent-pending, full-length aluminum chassis, well-bedded into the stock. It assures a metal-to-metal fit of the barreled action to the stock, while allowing the barrel to free-float.

use and be virtually unaffected by any changes in climate, regardless of what Africa and travel might toss in my direction.

I chose an English walnut stock, leaving the final choice of figure and color up to the experts at Accurate Innovations. As you can see from the photos, they selected an exquisite blank, with some genuinely eye-catching figure. I also asked if they could work the logo of our family's house into the stock somewhere. It's a sort of leaping gazelle we use on shirts and things. Wes said of course. Which is something I learned about Accurate Innovations—they tend to be can-do people, and when asked if they can do something special, tend to say "yes" all the time.

After getting the rifle, Wes called and said, "So, are you really set on this

stock barrel length? At 24" it's a bit long, don't you think?" I had thought so, and had planned on shortening it. Wes said, "Great, just what we were thinking too. Oh, you'll need a new front sight and rear sight too. We'll handle it." My barreled action was then sent to SSK Ind. for installation of the sights. Can-do... see what I mean?

I've often written you should sell off your clunker guns and then take the amassed money and buy one, really "good" gun. Pull the stops out and get what you want. It beats having a safe with lots of just OK guns in it, guns "almost" what you wanted, but not quite there. The returned Remington 798, stocked by Accurate Innovations, was, indeed, just right.

I'll let the photos speak for themselves. Workmanship was top-

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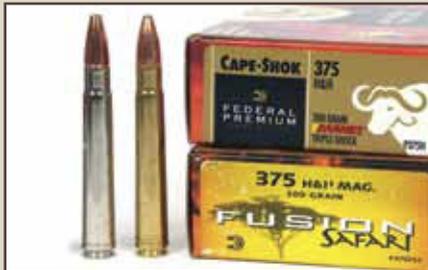
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quality, the wood and figure stylish, classic and compelling, and the way they worked our logo into the checkering under the forearm was, simply put, inspired design. The shortened barrel and rugged safari-type sights showed the rifle could work hard, but be classy at the same time. Who says you can't have good looks—and performance?

And perform it does. Using two Federal loads (the Cape-Shok 300-grain Barnes Triple Shock round and their new Fusion, 300-grain load), the “new” rifle delivered groups hovering around the 1.25" mark, with one 3-shot .95" group a standout. But, the real test was I fired the first groups in the fall. Then, in early summer, I shot the same loads again. Guess what? Performance was exactly the same, with predictable groups around that same 1.25" mark.

Not only is this kind of performance amazing in a wooden-stocked rifle, but it really gives a bump to the self-confidence level. Other than your scope being knocked out of zero, if this rifle is sighted in, it stays sighted in. Period.

I find myself getting this rifle out a lot and simply leaning it against my desk as I work. It's fun to simply look at it. The .375 H&H caliber may be the most versatile around, and the advantages of



Two Federal loads for the .375 H&H were used (above). The Cape-Shok 300-grain Barnes Triple Shock round and their new Fusion, 300-grain load both shot well, delivering groups in the 1.25" range, besting groups fired with the same loads using the original stock. A typical group (here, below using the Federal 300-grain Barnes Triple Shock .375 H&H load). Roy felt with some careful handloading he could really take advantage of the accurate combination of the Remington 798 and Accurate Innovations' stock.



the patent-pending chassis are obvious. Combine the two, and you have what might be—at least for me—an ultimate hunting rifle. Oh, and Wes was exactly right on that barrel length. The new 20" one is handy, compact and tends to make the rifle look ready for fast, close-in work. The NECG Express Sights are, well... just right.

If I had to make a decision to keep only one rifle—just one—it would be this one.

GUNS

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The Cimarron Model 1886 Rifle has a 26" octagon barrel with a full-length magazine under the barrel and a straight-grip stock ending in a crescent buttplate.

CIMARRON MODEL 1886 .45-70 GOV'T

JOHN BROWNING'S STRONG 19TH CENTURY DESIGN
RIDES AGAIN WITH TODAY'S MORE POWERFUL 21ST CENTURY AMMO.

John Taffin

One of my favorite movies is *Arizona* with William Holden. The reason I like this film so much is not because of the star or even the storyline but the fact it uses authentic Western firearms. This was filmed long before the arrival of the spaghetti Westerns and their unauthentic "Colts" which assaulted my eyes to the point I simply could not sit and watch them. These guns were normally poorly finished, brass-grip-framed Italian replicas.

However, thanks to such men as Val Forgett and Mike Harvey the replica sixguns and leverguns were continually upgraded until we have excellent reproductions available of virtually every, well almost every, frontier firearm. Most Westerns, probably beginning with *Tombstone*, made in the last 20 years or so, have paid special attention to the firearms using period correct sixguns and rifles which are faithful replicas of the originals.

When I first encountered Mike Harvey of Cimarron he was working in a bank and started out quite small by purchasing a small importer by the

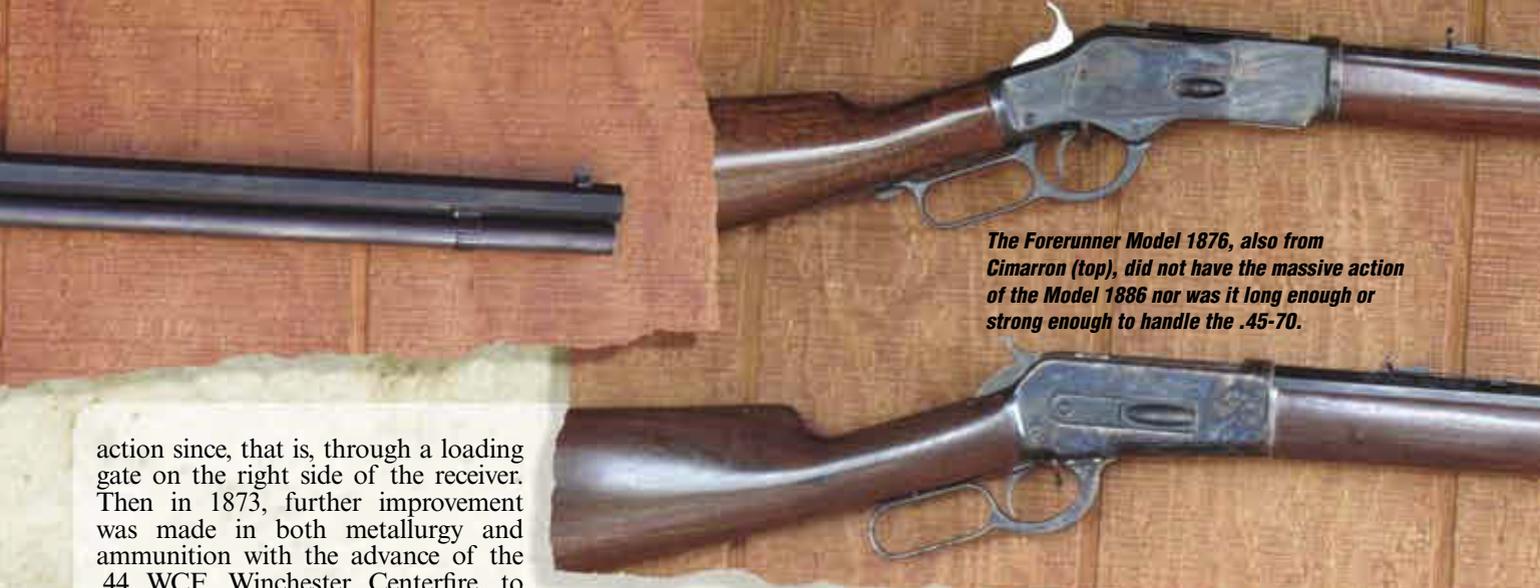
name of Allen Firearms. From that moment on he, along with one of the most beautiful Texas flowers I have ever met, his wife Mary Lou, worked tirelessly with Italian manufacturers to produce authentic replicas. Not only can we now purchase authentic replicas of Colt, Remington, and Smith & Wesson sixguns we also have the full range of Winchester Leverguns available with the latest being the Model 1886 from Cimarron.

It would be good here to look briefly at the history of Winchesters. There were false starts along the road in trying to come up with a workable

and dependable lever-action rifle with the first truly successful design being the Henry, or Model 1860. B. Tyler Henry was Oliver Winchester's shop foreman and his name went on that first Winchester which was chambered in .44 Rimfire. By today's standards it is terribly underpowered, however it was a huge step forward with its 17-round capacity in the day of muzzleloading rifles. The Henry loaded like most of today's .22s with tubular magazines, that is from the front. Six years later using King's Patent, the 1860 was upgraded to the 1866 Winchester which loaded the same as virtually every lever

Modern factory loads from Federal, Hornady and Winchester delivered fine 50-yard accuracy (below, left) through the Cimarron Model 1886. Handloads fired in the Model 1886 were on the pleasant side of the power curve at around 1,200 fps and delivered fine 50-yard accuracy (below, center). The .45-70 has entered the 21st century through a 19th century design in the new Hornady Leverevolution ammo featuring a spire-pointed, 325-grain bullet (below, right).





The Forerunner Model 1876, also from Cimarron (top), did not have the massive action of the Model 1886 nor was it long enough or strong enough to handle the .45-70.

action since, that is, through a loading gate on the right side of the receiver. Then in 1873, further improvement was made in both metallurgy and ammunition with the advance of the .44 WCF, Winchester Centerfire, to replace the .44 Rimfire. This literally became known as "The Gun That Won The West."

Something else happened in 1873, namely the military adopted the Springfield trapdoor single-shot rifle chambered in .45-70. All three of the Winchester lever-action designs were of the toggle-link-action style and people still argue today about the relative merits of the strength of these actions. I prefer to err on the side of caution when it comes to loading for them. Three years after the arrival of the .45-70 in the Springfield, Winchester increased the size of their toggle-link action to become the Model 1876. This is a massive rifle, at least when compared to the other three, however the action was not long enough to accept the .45-70. Instead, among other cartridges, it was chambered in the .45-75. Now it sounds like this should be a more powerful cartridge but actually it did not quite measure up to the .45-70. The .45-75, which by the way was Theodore Roosevelt's favorite 1876 when he was in the Badlands of the Dakotas, used a bottleneck cartridge which was fatter

but shorter than the .45-70 and it also used a lighter, 350-grain bullet.

Winchester did not have a .45-70 levergun. Then first Whitney and, in 1881 Marlin, beat them to the punch with a .45-70 lever-action rifle. Winchester needed help and that help

In addition to the .45-70 it was also chambered in such cartridges as .45-90, and .50-110 before it evolved into the Winchester Model 71 chambered in .348 Winchester and has also been used for several wildcat .50 cartridges.

John Browning did it correctly and he did not stop there. While the Model 1876 was a larger version of the Model 1873 Winchester, Browning's Model 1892 was basically the Model 1886 downsized to handle the .44-40 cartridge of the Model 1873. Now shooters had two strong actions to choose from. If grizzly bears and elk were in the offing, the Model 1886 was certainly

"WINCHESTER DID NOT HAVE A .45-70 LEVERGUN. THEN FIRST WHITNEY AND, IN 1881 MARLIN, BEAT THEM TO THE PUNCH WITH A .45-70 LEVER-ACTION RIFLE."

to be chosen, while the Model 1892 was the perfect saddle gun and everyday working lever action. Thank you John Browning!

Today's Cimarron Model 1886 is a faithful recreation of John Browning's original design. In fact, except for the markings on the barrel one could easily take this excellent reproduction for an original Winchester 1886. On the right side of the barrel below the rear sight we find: "CIMARRON FIREARMS CO.

came from John Browning. Browning abandoned the standard toggle-link action Winchester had been using and went to a pair of massively strong locking lugs.

Marlin was first-ish, however Winchester was most-est. Today's Marlin 1895 is a much stronger rifle than either their Model 1881 or the original 1895 which followed it, however Winchester's 1886 action has never needed to be upgraded as to strength.



FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS" and below this "Imported by CHIAPPA FIREARMS. DAYTON OHIO" and on the left side: "ARMI SPORT ITALY CAL. 45-70 U.S. GOV." The heavy octagon barrel is 26" in length and the full-length magazine tube holds 8 rounds. Both the barrel and tube have a deep blue/black finish while the receiver, hammer, lever, trigger, fore-end cap and crescent buttplate are all case colored. Sights consist of a post front sight set in a dovetail matched up with a semi-buckhorn rear also set in a dovetail and adjustable for elevation with an elevator bar. Cartridges are loaded through a hinged loading gate on the right side of the receiver. Opening the action by working the lever and pushing it all the way forward reveals two massive locking bolts as well as a heavy-duty bolt. John Browning did not try to make his 1886 anywhere close to a lightweight rifle and this modern version weighs in at 9 pounds which may feel very heavy when carried, however that mass is appreciated in long firing sessions.

Both the forearm and buttstock are nicely figured walnut well finished and fitted. Just as with most of the original Model 1886 Winchesters, this replica carries a crescent steel buttplate. I've never understood why

MODEL 1886

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ACTION TYPE: Lever, **CALIBER:** .45-70, **CAPACITY:** 8+1, **BARREL LENGTH:** 26", **OVERALL LENGTH:** 44.5", **WEIGHT:** 9 pounds, **FINISH:** Blue, color case-hardened, **SIGHTS:** Semi-buckhorn rear, post front, **STOCK:** Walnut, **PRICE:** \$1,398.60

heavy recoiling rifles were ever fitted with such punishing crescent steel buttplates. It is my understanding these were originally designed to fit the shooter's arm rather than be snugged into the shoulder. Maybe so, however today's rifle shooter wants the butt snug against the shoulder not wrapped around the arm.

Having said that, shooting this .45-70, even with its 9-pound weight, punishes this shooter very quickly as the two points of the buttplate dig into the shoulder. My original Winchester 1886 from the WWI era was purchased used and long before I got it someone fitted it with custom wood including a shotgun-style buttplate complete with a heavily cushioned recoil pad.

My other 1886 is one of the modern reproductions from Winchester-Browning of a couple of decades ago and thanks to a reader I came up with a shotgun-style buttplate for it and it too wears a heavily cushioned recoil pad.

The standard crescent buttplate would not be a problem in a hunting situation as most of us do not feel the recoil when we have a critter in front of us, and also my ears do not ring if I shoot a rifle in a hunting situation without earplugs although I definitely do not recommend we do so. Shooters in the 19th century rarely ever shot just to be shooting but rather for taking game or a more serious situation. Here in the 21st century it is not unusual for us to sit at a bench for a long period of time running through an extensive string of ammunition. This just does not match up with a crescent steel buttplate and for my use I slipped a highly padded rubber recoil pad over the butt.

Even with the help of the rubber cushion I needed extra help in testing some of the heavier loads. After my surgery of two years ago I simply do not want to take a chance shooting heavy recoiling rifle loads off my shoulder. This is totally personal to me and others may not be affected at all. I have been blessed to make the

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acquaintance of a young fellow who was eager to help me.

Our local Cabela's is in the same complex as the local US Army recruiting station and Staff Sgt. John Romine recognized me at Cabela's, introduced himself, and said he would be glad to help out with shooting any time. I was more than happy to accommodate him accommodating me and we had a joyous time shooting together. I shot the handloads while he shot the factory loads. At my age I was also happy to see I could still shoot as our groups were pretty close together.

There was a time when everything I loaded including the .45-70 were pretty much loaded to the hilt. Those days are long gone and never to return. My powders of choice now are Trail Boss and AA 5744. With the latter I use a standard load of 27.0 grains with all Oregon Trail's bullet weights of 350, 405, 430 and 500 grains. Muzzle velocities are right at 1,300 fps with each bullet weight with a high of approximately 1,330 fps for the lightest bullet and 1,285 fps for the heaviest. All of these are relatively pleasant shooting while at the same time definitely being powerful enough for hunting.

Hodgdon's Trail Boss is a relatively new powder originally designed to provide pleasant shooting Cowboy



Yep, John (below) looks a little bedraggled after a session shooting the .45-70! Fortunately, Taffin was aided in test-firing the Cimarron 1886 .45-70 by one of our nation's finest, Staff Sgt. John Romine (above).

Action loads. It also works great for such cartridges as the .45-70 and is loaded to the base of the bullet without compression. In the .45-70 using cast bullets consisting of the 330-grain Gould hollowpoint and the RCBS 45-300FNGC this turns out to be 16.0 grains resulting in a muzzle velocity of approximately 1,275 fps. Although these are very pleasant shooting loads they should certainly be more than adequate for hogs, black bear, and deer.

As mentioned, I turned the shooting of the factory loads over to the other John and the 26" barrel length of the Model 1886 resulted in quite impressive muzzle velocities. The CorBon 350-grain Bonded Core and the Winchester 300-grain JHP loads both registered over 1,900 fps, the Federal 300-grain Sierra Pro Hunter load was just under 1,700 fps and Garrett's 415 Hardcast bullet load was right at 1,850 fps. This load is designed for deepest



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LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
CORBON 350 BONDED CORE	1,948	1-3/4
FEDERAL 300 SIERRA PRO HUNTER	1,667	1-1/2
GARRETT 415 HARD CAST	1,844	1-3/4
HORNADY 325 LEVEREVOLUTION	2,164	1-3/4
WINCHESTER 300 JHP	1,905	1-3/4

Notes: Chronograph set at 10' from muzzle.

.45-70 HANDLOADED AMMO PERFORMANCE

BULLET (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	POWDER (BRAND)	CHARGE (GRAINS WEIGHT)	VELOCITY (FPS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
LYMAN 330 GOULD HP	Trail Boss	16.0	1,280	2-1/4
RCBS 45-300 FNGC	Trail Boss	16.0	1,265	1-3/4
OREGON TRAIL 350 FN	Accurate 5744	27.0	1,335	1-3/4
OREGON TRAIL 405 FN	Accurate 5744	27.0	1,318	2-1/2
OREGON TRAIL 430 FN	Accurate 5744	27.0	1,294	1-1/2
OREGON TRAIL 500 FN	Accurate 5744	27.0	1,284	1-1/2

Notes: Groups the product of best three of four shots at 50 yards. Chronograph screens set at 10' from muzzle. CCI 200 Large Rifle primers used in Starline brass.

penetration on big tough critters.

Recently, Hornady modernized the .45-70 with its 325-grain Leverevolution load. One of the problems with lever action rifles having a magazine tube was not being able to safely use spire-pointed bullets due to the fact that a pointed bullet in the tube resting against the primer of the load in front of it could easily be a disaster waiting to happen. Hornady solved this by using plastic-tipped bullets. The .45-70 version clocks out at 2,165 fps from this long-barreled Model 1886 turning the 19th century lever gun into a 21st-century hunting rifle.

With the factory iron sights both Johns turned in 50-yard groups in the 1-1/2" to 2" neighborhood, so basically for us this is a 100-yard hunting rifle. There were no malfunctions of any kind except those which were shooter caused. The lever must be operated all the way to the front with some semblance of authority or the next

round will not be picked up and fed into the chamber. Show it who's boss and it works fine.

It's a strange world we live in! This is definitely the age of black plastic rifles and semi-automatic pistols. However, next to these big sellers we now have the choice of replicas of all the lever actions from the frontier period. This Winchester 1886 from Cimarron joins the other Winchesters, Models 1860, 1866, 1873, and 1876. Who could've ever predicted we would have these choices in the 21st century? Thank you Mike Harvey and Cimarron. **GUNS**

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Before the .45-70-chambered Model 1886 (left), Winchester's big-bore levergun round was the bottlenecked .45-75 in the Model 1876.



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THE CONTEMPTIBLES

SOME CONSIDER CERTAIN RIFLES TO BE "LOSERS" IN QUALITY AND DESIGN, BUT THEY ALSO SERVED CAPABLY.



Mike "Duke" Venturino

Photos: Yvonne Venturino

My primary shooting focus for several years now has been with military rifles of World War II. My rifle racks hold many samples of US M1 Garands and Springfield '03s. German K98k Mausers are also plentiful. All the above rifles are held in near reverence by most Americans with an interest in such things.

That is logical. The M1 is America's most famous battle rifle and the '03 Springfield has a reputation as being awesomely accurate and finely made to boot. Which brings us to the German K98k; it is a version of Peter Paul Mauser's Model 1898, which American ordnance officers copied to get their US Model 1903. (Early in the 20th century the US Government had to pay Mr. Mauser a hefty sum for infringing on

his patents.)

Conversely it is safe to say among Americans that several battle rifles of WWII can be lumped together as *The Contemptibles*. Shooters of Springfields and Mausers cannot help but curl their lips in sneers when *The Contemptibles'* names are mentioned. Just last weekend I heard a shooter at a match refer to one of them as "horrible junk." And I must admit—just as with all those thousands

of American shooters who despise the rifles to be described shortly—for many decades I did too.

I was wrong. *The Contemptibles* may not be paragons of fit and finish like American '03s and German 98s. Instead they are simply battle rifles, intended primarily to function well, and secondly to deliver at least enough precision in regards bullet placement to hit human beings out to a few hundred yards.

My opinion is that among the unenlightened *The Contemptibles* of WWII battle rifles are: Italian Carcanos, Japanese Arisakas, French MAS 1936s and Soviet (and Finnish) Mosin-Nagants. Disregarding "last ditch" types made under wartime duress, not one single model of the above battle rifles deserves contempt or disgust.

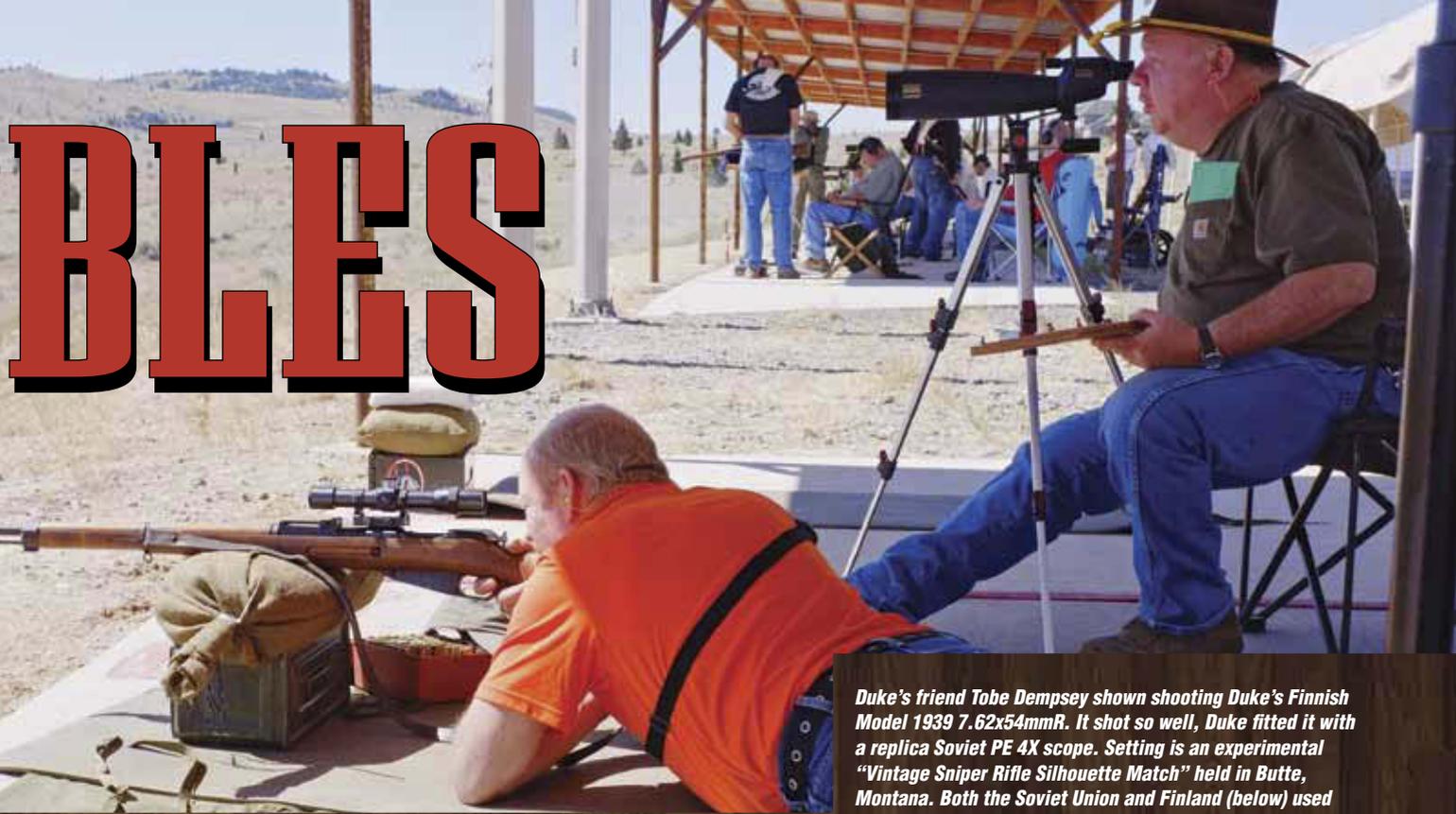
When I bid on an Italian battle rifle on a firearms auction site, it was for a common Model 1891 generically called Carcanos. What I luckily got instead was the rare Model 1941 version with slightly shorter barrel and odd rotating rear sight. Of course caliber is 6.5x52mm. Carcanos including Model 1941s are an adaptation of the basic Mannlicher design. That is cartridges are inserted by means of an en-bloc loader that falls out the bottom of the action when the last round is chambered. Whereas '03 Springfields and Mauser 98s hold only five rounds, Carcanos hold six.

Finish and wood are nice enough for a battle rifle. Bolt operation isn't smooth like Mauser types but it's



Another of Duke's friends Rich Galli shown shooting his original Soviet Model 91/30 sniper rifle with PE scope.

BLES



Duke's friend Tobe Dempsey shown shooting Duke's Finnish Model 1939 7.62x54mmR. It shot so well, Duke fitted it with a replica Soviet PE 4X scope. Setting is an experimental "Vintage Sniper Rifle Silhouette Match" held in Butte, Montana. Both the Soviet Union and Finland (below) used Mosin-Nagants in 7.62x54mmR caliber as sniper rifles. The Soviet Model 91/30 (top) has the later 3.5X PU scope, while the Finn Model 1939 (bottom) has the earlier PE 4X scope (this one is a replica by Accumounts).



Carcanos are loaded with 6-round "en-bloc loaders." The sixth round was considered an advantage in the rifle's heyday. Note Hornady is making new 6.5x52mm Carcano ammunition with the correct .268" bullet diameter. When the last round is chambered in an Italian Carcano the "en-bloc loader" falls out the bottom of the rifle's magazine. Duke's handloads not only duplicate Italian military load ballistics but shoot right to Duke's Model 1941's sights at 300 yards.





Duke feels Japanese Arisakas are tied with Italian Carcanos as number one contemptible in American shooter's minds and include (above, top gun) the Type 99 7.7x58mm and (above, bottom gun) the Type 38 6.5x50mm. Note the dust cover on the Type 38.

positive. Considering the basic open sights, accuracy is just fine—3" or so groups at 100 yards for five shots and at 300 yards bullets can be bounced off a steel PT Torso plate consistently.

Japanese Arisakas rival Carcanos as the most despised of *The Contemptibles*. Yet, I can't see why someone would view them with distain yet laud Mauser 98s. The former is simply an adaptation of the latter. Essentially Arisakas are Japanese Type 38s and Type 99s. The former are 6.5x50mm and the latter 7.7x58mm. There are also Type 38 carbines and a Type 44 which is a Type 38 with folding bayonet.

If made before or early in WWII, Japanese Arisakas have very nice blue finishes. Their stocks are often of an odd sort of blonde wood because the Japanese lack forests of suitable hardwoods. They even had to make spliced buttstocks in order to stretch the wood supply they did have.

Not having a national tradition of rifle shooting or hunting, Japanese ordnance officers considered rifles more as a handle for bayonets than for bullet delivering instruments. Also they tended to hang rather useless things on rifles such as monopods, and action dust covers. A monopod would be fine for level ground but useless in terrain. Dust covers rattle.

Japanese rifles' front sights' protective wings stick straight up alongside the sight blade. Fire quickly or in poor light and it's easy to focus on one of the wings in the rear sight instead of the sight blade. That causes a wide miss to one side or the other.

Then there's the factor of ammunition. Without being able to prove it I think poor ammo was a major small arms problem for the Japanese. Yet if you stick an Arisaka of any model in an experienced rifleman's hands and give him good ammo to boot, he can hit any reasonably-sized target out to that 300-yard mark. Here's an example. A friend visited in 2011 with his Type 44 6.5mm carbine. He talked of selling it due to its poor accuracy. But when firing the handloads I'd developed for my 6.5x50mm Arisakas, he was able to shoot decent groups on my 200-yard PT Torso steel plate. He kept his carbine.

There was a beneficial factor to one version of Arisaka. That was the Type 38 rifle with its 31-1/2" barrel and small 6.5x50mm cartridge. Because the long barrel allows good combustion of the rounds' mild powder charges there was virtually no smoke on firing. Even

though fighting distances were close in the jungle island combat of WWII, American soldiers and Marines had difficulty in spotting where Japanese "hetai" (soldiers) were shooting from. A myth arose the Japanese had "better smokeless gunpowder" than Americans but it wasn't true. It was just they fired a small-capacity round in a rifle with very long barrel.

Perhaps the least known of *The Contemptibles* is the oddest looking. That's the French MAS Model 1936. Because it looks so goofy, it was also the last WWII rifle added to my collection. Although the M1936 has a staggered box magazine as with Mauser type rifles, the action part containing the magazine is all steel. Therefore a 2-piece stock is necessary. Also in order to get the bolt handle near to the shooter's hand they curve it forward and then put a large bolt knob on it.

Another odd-looking part is the tube under the barrel. The unknowing might first think it's a tubular magazine as with Winchester lever guns. Instead it's a storage compartment for a round bayonet. Here's a feature unlike any other of my WWII rifles the French incorporated or better said omitted. There is no safety at all. And finally they stuck the front sight under a huge hood making it nigh on impossible to get at it for adjustment.

Duke says that Italy's Carcano 6.5x52mm rifles are tied for 1st place among the most contemptible of World War II rifles. This sample is the rare Model 1941 version (below, top gun). The French MAS Model 1936 7.5x54mm (below, bottom gun) has no safety and a very odd-looking bolt handle.





A tube under the French MAS Model 1936's barrel (above) stores an inverted bayonet. One of the changes made by the Japanese to Mauser's 98 design was a round, knurled safety at the back of the bolt (below) meant to be rotated by the palm of the shooter's hand.



The good part of the Model 1936 MAS sight arrangement is the rear. It is a peep type with a spring beneath it allowing it to be quickly and positively moved for distance. If only the front sight was as agreeable. The 7.5x54mm French cartridge also isn't so bad. It is easily the equal of our .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO round, although dimensionally its case is different from all others of my knowledge. Also on the plus side, my M36 shoots fine in the accuracy department although a bit to the left because I can't figure out how to get to the front sight in order to move it laterally.

Soviet Mosin-Nagants

Mosin-Nagant Model 1891 and the remodeled Model 91/30s are just plain crude. That is not an accident. They were meant to be that way because in the Soviet (Russian) mind quantity trumps quality. Still they don't deserve contempt, especially those chosen for sniper duty. When WWII started the Soviet Union was the only nation with a fully developed sniper program, to the tune of about 60,000 trained snipers already in the ranks. Although some were issued SVT40 semi-autos, the vast majority carried Mosin-Nagant Model 91/30s fitted with PE, PEM or PU model scopes. Where the rifles are admittedly crude, those scopes were not. Besides fine optics they differed from other European scopes in having both windage and elevation adjustments.

Mosin-Nagants are neither of Mauser or Mannlicher design, but closer to the former in the pre-Model 1898 days. Its magazine is loaded with 5-round clips, but they are the stripper types wherein the clip does not enter the magazine as with Mannlichers. The rounds are held in a straight column instead of staggered.

Mosin-Nagants also came in carbine versions with the ones issued for WWII being Model 1938s and Model 1944s. The former were simply Model 91/30s cut down to have 20" barrels while the latter model's barrel was about 1/2" longer so it would accommodate a folding bayonet.

I've shot a Mosin-Nagant Model 1938 carbine along with my Model 91/30 sniper rifle with PU scope more than an ordinary Model 91/30 rifle. The carbine, which I borrowed from a friend, is nicely accurate and my Mosin sniper rifle is finely accurate. The problem with Soviet Mosin-Nagants is their triggers. I've never seen such a long, albeit not hard trigger pull on any other type of firearm. All of mine are like that so I assume they must be made that way intentionally.

That is different from the Finnish Mosin-Nagants. Finland did not make Mosin-Nagant Model 1891 actions, although all their WWII rifles were based on them. They captured or bought many thousands of Model 1891s and then junked near everything but the actions and built their own rifles using home-grown stocks, barrels, and triggers. Those were named Models 1927, 1928, 28/30, and 1939. My sole Finnish Mosin-Nagant is the latter one and I say this with confidence. If you want an accurate, inexpensive bolt action military rifle then get a Finn Model 1939. Mine turned out to be so accurate I added a replica of the Soviet PE scope to it.

All Mosin-Nagants to the best of my knowledge were chambered for the 7.62x54R cartridge. Don't sneer at it either. It is the equal of our .30-06 in military loadings and predated it.

And so that is my version of *The Contemptibles*. They are odd and somewhat unusual but they are not junk.

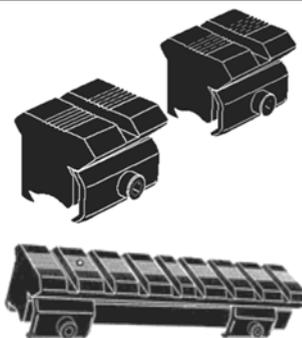
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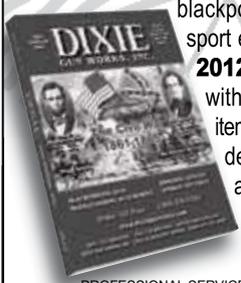
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KNIVES

STORY: Pat Covert

THIS PUNK ROCKS! Buck Knives' Hood Punk is one hardworking fixed blade.

The outdoors industry was shaken by the sudden passing of outdoorsman Ron Hood in June of 2011, just months after the release of Buck Knives' first collaboration with the popular and resourceful survival instructor. Their first effort was the Woods Hoodlum, a wildly successful 15.5" fixed blade that took the cutlery industry by storm. Buck literally could not make the knife fast enough.

Fortunately there were other designs in the works between these two forces. The Hood Punk is the result of their second effort. At 11" in overall length, the Punk may not be as big as its older sibling, but is a handful nonetheless. The 5.7" blade—a hefty .175" thick—is a gently sloping clip point of 5160 alloy or "carbon" steel. This non-stainless steel is easy to sharpen in the wilderness and has a dark gray powder-coated finish for corrosion resistance. The ample Micarta handle, with its attractive washed gray look, features machined grooves in the surface for enhanced purchase. An extended choil adds finger protection



The Hood Punk, with its ample handle and 5.7" clip-point blade, is no slacker when it comes to hard work.

while a thumb ramp on the backside adds even better gripping. The handle features Buck's patented Shock Mitigation System (SMS) to reduce shock and wasted energy when chopping or performing other tough field chores.

All of this punkery comes with a MOLLE-compatible black ballistic nylon sheath and incorporates a pouch for storing a sharpening stone, magnesium firestarter, decent sized folding knife, or whatever other survival good you may want to pack in. Suggested retail for the Hood punk is \$180, and once you get your hands on this well-made fixed blade you won't feel like you got punked!

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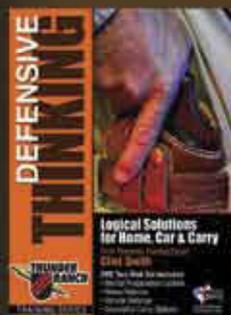
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DAVID CODREA

A Fixed Fight

The case against a New Mexico gun dealer and his family, arrested in August 2011, may not be what the government has led everyone to believe. Charges in a 30-count indictment for gun smuggling, money laundering and false statements looked bad against Rick Reese, his wife Terri, and sons Ryn and Remington, particularly as they resulted from a 7-month investigation by Homeland Security Investigations and ATF. Seized were their inventory, and through asset forfeiture, their home and properties, money, valuables, vehicles....

Bail was denied—it took Terri until March of this year to secure her release, while her husband and sons remain incarcerated. Of note, the court would not allow the family to be represented by one attorney, saying that would make it difficult for one family member to turn on the others. What this guaranteed was driving up legal costs for an impoverished defense, while the government's resources were limitless.

But the Reese family did not break or turn on each other. They steadfastly maintained their innocence. And things that didn't fit began to emerge, such as Rick Reese employing retired and off-duty officers in his store, his large law enforcement clientele, his leasing a shooting range to their agencies, and his plans to run for sheriff as, per a family spokesperson, a “Constitutionalist [who] wanted to restore integrity to the department.”

A hearing was held in June, where attorneys asked for conspiracy charges to be dismissed, and some interesting facts came to light shared by a family friend who took notes. For instance, we learned that the entire investigation began “when Terri Reese contacted the Luna County Sheriff's Office to report suspicious activity—a person who

might be a straw purchaser.”

We learned of incidents where it was a government agent using a phony ID and making false statements on the forms, not the ostensible straw purchaser, and that the FBI approved the sales. We learned the family talking out of earshot—so they could not possibly have been overheard—was used as evidence of “conspiracy.”

We learned that “the government did not produce any evidence of under the table cash sales.” Additionally, “the lead investigator admitted that all [sales tax and income taxes were] paid,” and “the government acknowledged that all guns... were logged in properly, and properly logged out on sale. Except for one, where a couple of numbers were erroneously transposed.”

We learned that “the government's cooperating witness [a cartel drug smuggler who turned informant] spoke very poor English,” and as the Reese family did not speak Spanish, the government provided an undercover agent to coach the purchases. Further, statements made on tape alleged to have been made by the defendants were actually made by an agent, and the transcriber got the attribution wrong.

At this writing, jury selection is still a few weeks away and what they will ultimately decide is unknown. But it sure looks like these people aren't getting a fair fight. And that should make us wonder what sort of fight the rest of us could expect were we to ever find ourselves under suspicion.

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*Visit David Codrea's online journal
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his Examiner column.*

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



At the check presentation done at the 141st NRA Annual Meeting & Exhibits in St. Louis were (left to right) NRA-ILA Director Chris Cox, Larry Potterfield, Brenda Potterfield, Larry & Brenda's Granddaughter, and Sara Potterfield.

NEWS

\$7 Million Milestone

Twenty years ago, MidwayUSA owners Larry and Brenda Potterfield launched a special program to help fund the fight against anti-gun initiatives. To date, this program has accumulated over \$7 million in MidwayUSA Customer donations.

Created back in 1992, the NRA Round-Up program was developed to help raise funds for the National Rifle Association and the Institute for Legislative Action (ILA). When Customers place an order with MidwayUSA by phone, mail or Internet, they are asked if they want to "Round-Up" their order to the next highest dollar amount, with that amount going to the NRA-ILA endowment.

"Each week since the program started, we've sent a check to the NRA and they deposit it into a special fund called The National Endowment for the Protection of the Second Amendment," said Larry Potterfield. "The actual donations have never been spent, but each year, NRA-ILA spends 5 percent of the interest to fight anti-gun legislation. The next time you place an order with MidwayUSA, please round up. With your support, we can change the future."

At the 141st NRA Annual Meeting & Exhibits in St. Louis, Missouri, last April, the Potterfields, along with their daughter Sara and their granddaughter, presented a check to Chris

Cox for \$6,929,025, the total amount of money donated by MidwayUSA Customers since 1992. The check presentation was done at the Celebration of American Values Leadership Forum on Friday, April 13, 2012.

"Every NRA member and every gun owner in America should be thankful for all that Larry and Brenda Potterfield have done for the cause of firearm freedom," said NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre. "Ever since they established the NRA Round-Up, the Potterfields—and all the MidwayUSA Customers who have supported that effort over the past 20 years—have continually raised the bar even higher when it comes to 'putting their money where their mouth is' to defend the Second Amendment. Along the way, they've inspired many others to make their own contributions to the NRA's mission, and we are deeply grateful for their leadership, friendship and trust."

While MidwayUSA founded the Round-Up program, other shooting industry companies have chosen to embrace the NRA Round-Up program as well. To date, these contributions total over \$9 million.—*Courtesy MidwayUSA*

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Marines Overcome Insurgents

For 15 days Marines of 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment engaged the insurgents in and around the town of Zamindawar, located within the Kajaki district of Afghanistan, one of the few remaining insurgent strongholds last May 26-June 9 to disrupt the insurgents' leadership and logistics chain. Marines took small arms fire, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades as the enemy attempted to repel their attack.

The importance of the operation wasn't lost on the Marines. "If this is one of their strongholds, and we came in and cleared the area the way



Lance Cpl. Kyle Prather, a team leader with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, sights into his M240B machine gun, during a firefight, last May 30. The Marines engaged enemies with machine guns, sniper rifles, mortars and tanks. Photo: Cpl. Timothy Lenzo, 1st Marine Division

we did, especially with no [combat-related] casualties, that's a success in our book," said Staff Sgt. John

Wildman, a platoon sergeant with Golf Company, 2nd Bn., 5th Marines. "I believe people will talk about [the

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operation]. We definitely made an impact.”

The Marines targeted Zamindawar because of the strong insurgent

presence, hoping to disrupt the leadership and logistics chain of the enemy. “We definitely eliminated some of their key figures—high value

individuals as we like to call them,” said 1st Lt. Benjamin Royal, a platoon commander with Golf Co.

Marines eliminated more than 50 enemy insurgents during the operation, destroyed numerous fighting positions, all without any civilian or Marine combat-related casualties.

“You can definitely tell the (insurgents) are worried and confused,” said Royal, a native of Clinton Township, N.J. “They held numerous meetings trying to figure out what to do with the Americans.”

The Marines kept the insurgents guessing by using their superior night vision to move under the cover of darkness and employing M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tanks.



Marines with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, take a breather as the smoke clears from a firefight last May 28. The Marines encountered small arms fire, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades during their clearing operation through Zamindawar and suffered no combat-related casualties. Photo: Cpl. Timothy Lenzo, 1st Marine Division

A man in a grey jacket and white shirt is shown in profile, holding a handgun. A red laser line extends from the barrel of the handgun towards the right. The background is a plain, light color.

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Three Marines with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment (above), stack up behind each other to view a suspicious compound during a patrol, last May 27. The Marines cleared Zamindawar, disrupting the insurgents leadership and logistics chain. Photo: Cpl. Timothy Lenzo, 1st Marine Division. An M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank (below), with Alpha Company, 1st Tank Battalion, moves into position during a firefight in the town of Zamindawar, last May 27. The tanks support Marines with 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment during Operation Jaws. Photo: Cpl. Timothy Lenzo, 1st Marine Division



Alpha Company, 1st Tank Battalion supported the Marines throughout the operation, eliminating insurgents and destroying fighting positions.

“The tanks came in and completely changed the landscape of the battlefield,” said Lance Cpl. Geoffrey West, a machinegunner with the battalion. West, a native of Los Angeles, Calif., added at times it seemed the enemy didn’t know how to react to the tank’s superior armor and accurate firing.

In one example, a tank took a direct hit from a rocket-propelled grenade. It briefly stunned the crew but otherwise the damage was minimal and they returned fire, eliminating the enemy.

The enemies used bunkers and an intricate karez system to attack the

Marines. A karez system is a complex collection of connecting, underground waterways, allowing the insurgents to move around unseen. Insurgents also used children to relay messages, often walking between them and the Marines in an attempt to gain any advantage.

“We spotted children watching us as well as being used as distractions before attacks,” said Lance Cpl. Jeremy Corea, an assaultman with the battalion and a native of Elk Grove, Calif. “It’s hard because we know they are being used against us, but what are you going to do? You can’t shoot (civilians).”

The Marines also battled the elements, patrolling and maintaining

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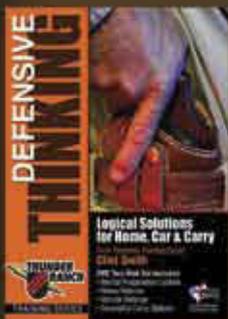
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security in temperatures rising above 120 degrees F. “The heat is something new to us,” said Royal. “The first couple days were like 95 (degrees F) and by the end it (had) reached in excess of 120.” The heat, combined with anywhere from 70 to 100 pounds of gear, meant staying hydrated was a priority. “For most of our guys this was their first combat deployment and none of them knew what to expect, but they came here and did what they had to do,” said Wildman. “I can’t say that enough about our guys. They do what we ask and they do it well.”

The area, which previously saw few coalition forces, will have Afghan forces conducting their own patrols, as the Marines transition from combat operations to advising the Afghan National Security Forces.

After 15 days of firefights and mortar rounds the Marines left the town of Zamindawar ready for hot food and a warm shower. “We accomplished a lot,” said Royal. “This was one of the final, largest operations that was US led. I think anyone who was in Afghanistan during this time period is going to know about Operation Jaws and they’re going to know what happened in Zamindawar.”— *Cpl. Timothy Lenzo, 1st Marine Division*

Airmen Save Drowning Man

“Help!” someone faintly calls out. You look out to the ocean and see a man’s arms flailing about, half a mile into the surf, struggling to stay afloat as waves crash down on him. What would you do, knowing lifeguards are not close enough to save him?

“While we were swimming, LoBasso and I heard a man weep for help. We thought it was a joke at first but we heard him for a second time, so LoBasso swam straight to the man and asked if he was OK. The man immediately replied, ‘No.’”

Three 4th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Airmen from Seymour Air Force Base, N.C., found themselves in this situation while spending the day at Atlantic Beach, N.C., and saved the life of a 49-year-old man last June 2.

Airmen 1st Class Dylan Seng, Ashley Irelan and Alexis LoBasso, 4th AMXS crew chiefs, went to the beach to relax, soak up some sun and hit the waves, but were thrown into a life or death situation.

“LoBasso, Irelan and myself decided to go into the ocean,” said Seng, a native of Palmyra, Penn. “While we were swimming, LoBasso



USAF Airmen 1st Class Alexis LoBasso, Ashley Irelan and Dylan Seng pose together in front of an F-15E Strike Eagle on Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., last June 11. These Airmen saved a 49-year-old man’s life while spending the day at Atlantic Beach, N.C., on June 2. USAF photo: Airman 1st Class John Nieves Camacho



At the presentation of the \$100,000 to the Special Operations Warrior Foundation were (left to right) Glock Vice President Josh Dorsey, SOWF Scholarship Recipient Melinda Ruddess Petrignani and SOWF President Col. John T. Carney.

and I heard a man weep for help. We thought it was a joke at first but we heard him for a second time, so LoBasso swam straight to the man and asked if he was OK. The man immediately replied, 'No.'

As LoBasso, reached the man, named Michael, Seng and Irelan followed. After realizing Michael had been struggling for awhile and could no longer keep his head above water, the three Airmen assisted him to shore. Once there, lifeguards took control and checked everyone to make sure no one inhaled any water.

"These three put the life of another above their own," explained Thomas Daly, Atlantic Beach Fire Department Guard Unit 41 captain. "Their quick actions, working together as a team, and sound resolve, should be a reflection of great pride to their supervisor, the Air Force and our country. It was an absolute pleasure working with them."

As Irelan, reflected on the experience, the native of Toccoa, Ga., said that what he will always remember

from the experience was when Michael thanked them and said, "You didn't just save my life, you gave my boy more time with his father." —*Airman 1st Class Mariah Tolbert 4th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

Glock Supports Scholarships

Glock continued its support of special operations forces with a \$100,000 donation to the Special Operations Warrior Foundation (SOWF) at the SOFIC (Special Operations Forces Industry Conference) held in Tampa, Fla., last May.

Accepting the donation on behalf of SOWF was Col. John T. Carney Jr., the founding father of Air Force Special Tactics and current President of SOWF, and Melinda Ruddess Petrignani, former recipient of the SOWF Scholarship. Petrignani's father was an Army Ranger and lost his life when Melinda was 9 months old.—*Kaitlyn Parsons, Leader Ent.*



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Here's what the Gun Tool contains. Swinging out from one end of the handle are the following drivers: a Torx T15, Torx T10, Allen 5/32" and an Allen 3/32". Swinging out from the opposite end of the handle are a Torx T20, a stainless universal choke tube wrench, knife blade and a pin punch. Stored under a spring-loaded hatch on the back of the handle are four bits that fit into a 3/16" bit socket recessed into the end of the tool handle. Those bits include two Phillips—numbers P00 and a P1—and two conventional, flat screwdriver bits, a 1/8" and 3/16".

The Gun Tool consists of 18 firearm associated tools and tool bits packed into a large pocketknife body designed specifically for tightening or loosening gun parts.



How handy is it? Well, for example, I've been working with a Kimber Model 84L Classic chambered for the .280 Ackley Improved and fitted with a Redfield Revolution 4-12x40mm scope mounted in conventional Leupold rings and bases. Fitting the Leupold bases and tightening the rings around the Redfield requires the use of a Torx T15 driver. The Gun Tool has it. Checking the tightness of the stock screws before taking the first shot with the Kimber requires the use of a 5/32" Allen wrench. The Gun Tool has it.

Have you ever had to drop a pinned, shotgun or rifle trigger assembly in the field because of a misfeed and jam? I have, on several occasions, and I wish I had with me the Gun Tool with its integral pin punch to have gotten the job done expeditiously.

The universal choke tube wrench of the Gun Tool pretty much describes what it is. I tried it with Browning 12-gauge tubes, Remington 20-gauge tubes, Briley 28-gauge tubes and Remington .410 tubes with complete success.

None of the tools is locked into battery other than the four bits under the hatch which slip into the

3/16" driving socket; however, when extended, the pin punch, knife blade and universal choke tube wrench are held in place by very stout springs—so stout, in fact, you can break a fingernail just getting them out of the handle for the first time. I ended up lubricating the springs and cams with DuPont's Teflon Multi-Use, Dry, Wax Lubricant and rotating the tools repeatedly in-and-out of battery to domesticate them.

The Gun Tool is a well thought out, well designed, well built, firearm accessory. Not surprisingly, the same company, Real Avid, which makes the general Gun Tool, also makes a Gun Tool specifically designed for Ruger firearms, a big game dressing knife in which the blade is illuminated by two LED lights, a 28-in-1 archery multitool, a turkey hunting multitool. You get the idea. Real Avid makes a variety of interesting and useful multitools for the outdoorsman. With a suggested retail price of \$24.99, the Gun Tool is an excellent value.

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Colt's New Service Revolver

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Few things stir the soul of a devout bibliophile more than a thoroughly authoritative book that is at once handsome, well-written and lavishly illustrated. For gun junkies, such a book is every bit as rewarding as a new gun. Timothy Mullin's *Colt's New Service Revolver* is a delight to read and savor slowly, drawing out the experience as long as possible.

This is more than merely a book. It is first a tribute to the late Bill Powell, perhaps the planet's foremost authority on these great revolvers and second a scholarly but eminently readable study of "A Particularly Strong, Heavy Weapon," replete with exquisite photos of rare and exotic examples of the New Service, vintage ad copy, documents, schematics and patent drawings. Indeed, it is really a museum masquerading as a book.

What must impress most is the scope of the work. Powell's extensive collection included serial number 0, a pre-production example which embodied the final iteration of the gun before real production commenced. Serial number 1, in the hands of a

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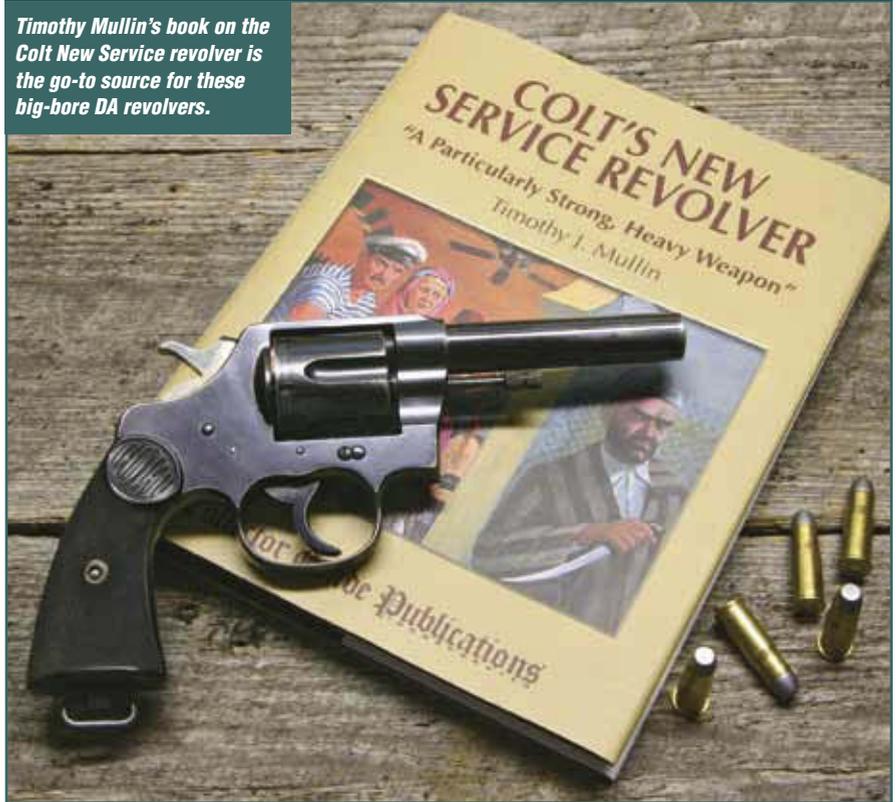


fellow collector, is also featured in detail. Following are chapters on the various commercial, military and target models, prototype and experimental guns and famous users. The section on engraved guns is worth the price of admission.

Author Mullin, lawyer, Army veteran, historian, law enforcement firearms educator and sage, is well qualified to write this book, one of eight he has written. Indeed, no less an authority than Elmer Keith adjudged his *Training the Gunfighter* one of the 10 best books he had ever read. A word of caution, however: if you are not a New Service revolver enthusiast, you will certainly catch the disease upon reading Colt's New Service Revolver. For that reason alone, it merits a place in the library of any gun and book lover.

COLT'S NEW SERVICE REVOLVER, TIMOTHY MULLIN, 296 PAGES, 394 ILLUSTRATIONS (258 IN COLOR), \$69.95, COLLECTOR GRADE PUBLICATIONS INC., P.O. BOX 1046, COBOURG, ONTARIO, CANADA, K9A 4WS, (905) 342-3434, WWW.COLLECTORGRADE.COM.

Timothy Mullin's book on the Colt New Service revolver is the go-to source for these big-bore DA revolvers.



White Shoot-N-C Targets

JEFF JOHN

For years I've generally used traditional round black bull's-eye targets, such as the original Birchwood Casey Shoot-N-C, for iron-sight shooting. In most cases, the 6 o'clock hold works fine if you don't mind the bullets at the bottom of the target (assuming you want the shots to impact right over the front sight). My first impression was the white bull's-eye showing hits as black cir-

cles would do as advertised, which is offer maximum visibility of the hits. To my surprise, the white target pasted on the cardboard made it far easier for me to aim at the center of the bull's-eye while sighting in my P1776 British Infantry Rifle (built from a Rifle Shoppe kit). This rifle has a sight picture similar to a Patridge-sighted handgun.

At 50 yards distance, there possibly wouldn't have been much trouble spotting the big Buffalo Bullet .62

roundballs' smack on any target. I was nonetheless pleased to see the big clean holes as they appeared. Large roundballs often create very jagged conjoined holes in paper when close together, but in the Birchwood Casey targets they appear as separate round holes.

Target repair pasters are included on each sheet to help conserve targets as you sight in. Although it was a calm morning at the Pyramid Shooting Facility, by the time I moved the target to 50 yards the wind was beginning to blow pretty harshly. Rather than wrestle a paper backer in the wind, I pasted the target directly to the cardboard of the range's target frame, figuring I'd shoot a picture at the range. I outsmarted myself handily by forgetting the camera. With nothing to lose, I tried removing the target. To my surprise and delight, it peeled easily off the cardboard backer and I carefully placed it back on its wax paper backing for transport home.

I'll be going out again and try Goex FFFg before doing the final adjustments of the sights for a 100-yard zero. You can bet the white Shoot-N-C targets will be along for the ride.

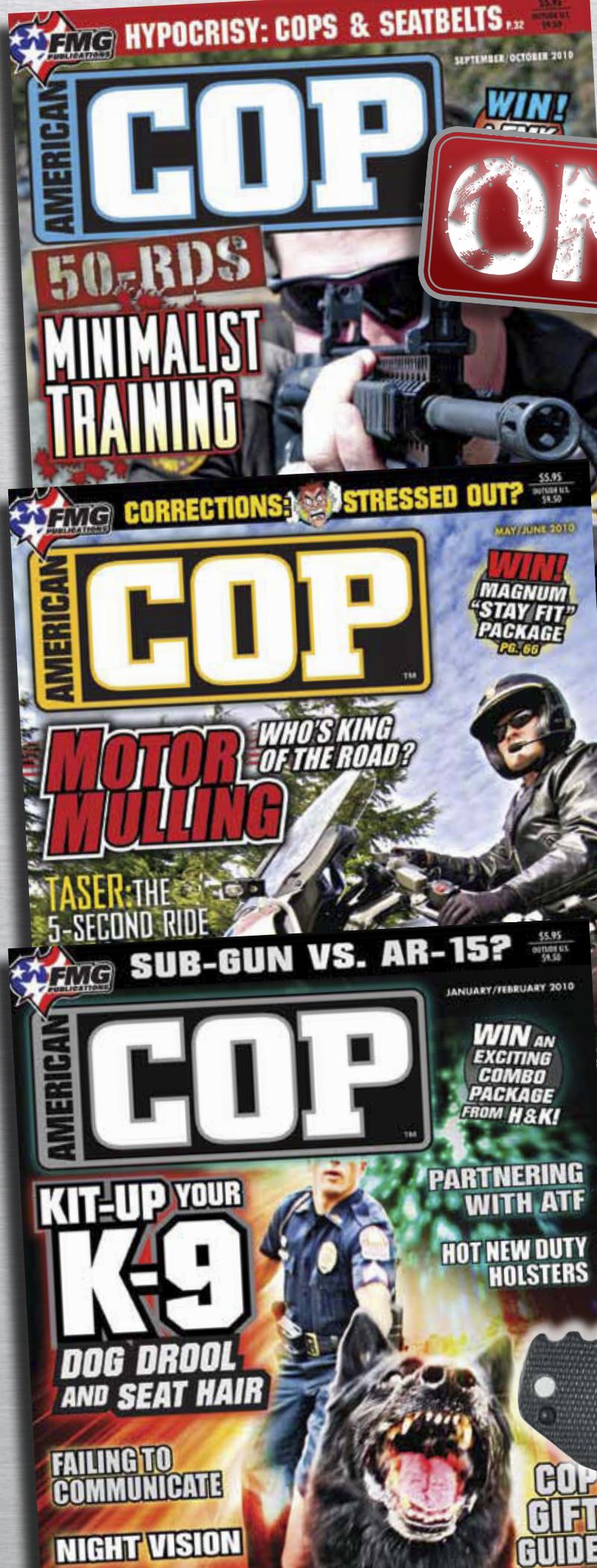
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SAIGA STRIKEFORCE ELITE PACKAGE

ATI

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



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The Contego tactical folder is the ultimate in form and function. It has a reverse tanto blade made of CPM-M4 steel with Cerakote (62-64HRC). The blade has ambidextrous thumb-stud openers and an AXIS locking mechanism. The textured and contoured G10 handle is scaled with a stainless steel backspacer. The Contego comes with a reversible deep-carry, tip-up pocket clip and carbide glass breaker. For more info: (800) 800-7427, www.gunsmagazine.com/benchmade



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Cody Range Bags

Cody Range Bags are designed for women, by women. Their new pistol clutch is available in six stylish fabrics and features thick padding and a lockable zipper to keep your firearms protected. With a durable cotton shell and nylon lining you won't have to sacrifice function for style when you hit the range. Whether you carry a gun for protection or for sport, you shouldn't be stuck carrying it in a boring black bag! For more info: (888) 435-5855, www.gunsmagazine.com/cody



FFSSR

Parallax Tactical

Parallax Tactical of San Diego, Calif. is introducing their new 13", free-float rail dubbed the FFSSR (Free Float Super Slim Rail). It features four limited-rotation QD sling swivel sockets located in the front and rear. The rail is a hybrid design, with a quad rail on the front and rear. The rail features a slim 1.5" OD at the slimmest section and an ID of 1.33". It is available for retail sale and OEM distribution; MSRP \$199. For more info: (619) 630-4869, www.gunsmagazine.com/parallax-tactical

MILITARY-GRADE BORE SOLVENT

G96 Products

This Military-Grade Bore Solvent removes leading, powder residue, and copper fouling from the bore of firearm. The solvent is safe to use on metals and will not cause rust, oxidation, staining, or galvanic corrosion. It could be harmful to some paints, varnishes, and plastics, so do a patch test to make sure there are no bad effects. It is recommended that the firearm be re-treated with G96 Gun Treatment, G96 Gun Oil, or G96 Synthetic CLP Gun Oil after use. For more info: (973) 684-4050, www.gunsmagazine.com/g96



1716 TRITIUM KEY RING

Maxpedition

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



REVENGE

Redfield

The Revenge line has five riflescope magnifications as well as a scope for crossbow hunting. The new Accu-Ranger Ballistics System is unique; it allows hunters to determine the distance to commonly hunted animals and helps enhance shooting accuracy at longer ranges—out to 600 yards—without you taking your eyes off the target. Revenge riflescope magnifications include 2-7x34mm, 3-9x42mm, 3-9x52mm, 4-12x42mm and 6-18x44mm. The 7x34mm ABS Crossbow scope comes with the Accu-Ranger Crossbow reticle. Specific Accu-Ranger reticles include the Hunter, Sabot, Varmint and Crossbow. Other reticle options for Revenge riflescopes include the 4-Plex and Fine Plex, depending on model. For more info: (877) 798-9686, www.gunsmagazine.com/redfield



If you would like your product featured in GUNS Magazine's New Products, Contact: Jason Moreau (866) 903-1199.

For more New Products visit us online at www.gunsmagazine.com

SHRIKE 5.56

ARES Defense

ARES Defense Systems has released the SHRIKE 5.56 Advanced Weapons System. The innovative SHRIKE 5.56 upper receiver is designed to fit any MIL-SPEC quality AR-15/M16/M4-type lower receiver and features a dual-feed system, allowing users to configure the SHRIKE 5.56 from magazine to belt-fed in seconds without modification to the lower receiver. Durable and lightweight, the military-grade SHRIKE 5.56 delivers the firepower of a US M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) at nearly half the weight of the current SAW. For more info: (321) 242-8410, www.gunsmagazine.com/ares-defense



RANGEGOLF PAPER HANDGUN TARGETS

KJGallickDesigns

KJGallickDesigns presents a new development in paper targets for handgun competition and training. The 20"x26" targets simulate aerial views of golf course holes. The shooter's distance to the target changes based on the strike of the round on the target until the hole is struck. RangeGolf tournaments can be organized using any type of golf tournament format with RangeGolf targets. Many different courses of 18 holes are available with targets of varying difficulty and strategy. Targets are sold in sets of nine holes with scorecards and instruction sheets. For more info: (717) 460-1112, www.americanhandgunner.com/rangegolf



RACHIS RECOIL SYSTEM

Brass Stacker

The RACHIS Recoil System for full- and compact-frame Glock GEN 4 pistols is now available. The Carry model features a hollow, lightweight Nitro-Wear, heat-treated ETD 150 alloy steel guide rod. The COMPETITION model is permanently bonded with a Tungsten Carbide core. Both are used in conjunction with a conventional ISMI non-captive, single-stage round wire recoil spring and a 12L14 alloy steel guide rod bushing. With an approximate 400 percent increase over the weight of the factory recoil assembly, these high-density guide rods provide additional non-reciprocating mass, improving recovery times and yielding faster target acquisition of follow-up shots. For more info: (828) 665-4427, www.gunsmagazine.com/brass-stacker



ULTRA-LITE SERIES PISTOL CASES

Americase, Inc.

Americase, Inc. is pleased to announce the pre-release of two pistol cases from the forthcoming Ultra-Lite Series of cases — a 4-pistol case (weighing in at 6 pounds) and an 8-pistol case (at 9 pounds). Each case has two loop latches that can be padlocked. These cases are light but have strength, quality and integrity. The interior is bordered by 1" of high-density cushioning, while the pistol/accessory compartments are carpet-lined; additionally, each case comes with two handles, one on the top and the other on the case front. Included is a weather seal to keep out dust, dirt and moisture. For more info: (800) 972-2737 or www.gunsmagazine.com/america



6.5MM AND 7MM SKIVED GAMEKINGS

Sierra Bullets

The 6.5mm and 7mm versions of the 30-caliber, 165-grain HPBT GameKing are now available for retail sale from Sierra. Just like their 30-caliber cousin, these bullets are ideal for midsized game with standard and magnum calibers. The thicker jacket promotes deep penetration while the skives at the meplat provide reliable expansion. For more info: (800) 223-8799, www.gunsmagazine.com/sierra-bullets



M1911 PISTOL MAGAZINE

Metaform Company

Metaform Company (a division of ATW) is now manufacturing pistol magazines. Metaform's line of high-quality magazines for the popular M1911 single-action, semi-automatic handguns will now be available to more people than ever. Retail customers will now have access to replacement magazines fabricated with Metaform's rigorous 24-step manufacturing process, which ensures magazine precision, reliability and performance. For more info: (800) 618-3318, www.gunsmagazine.com/metaform



CORE

Stealth Cam

Stealth Cam has launched their newest and smallest scouting camera, the CORE. The CORE is equipped with TRIAD technology, which incorporates three technologies — video, still imagery and time lapse — into one complete package. The video setting is capable of 10,



20, 30, 60 or 90 seconds of video recording with audio. The 40 infrared emitters, with a range of 50', provide excellent quality pictures at all times of the day. The time/date/moon phase/temperature stamp on video files gives the hunter access to the wildlife habits to provide key information for future, successful hunts. For more info: (877) 269-8490, www.gunsmagazine.com/stealth-cam

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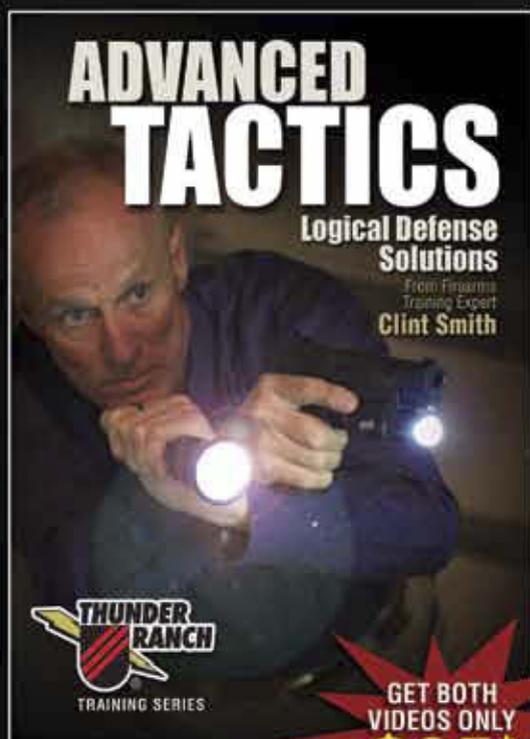
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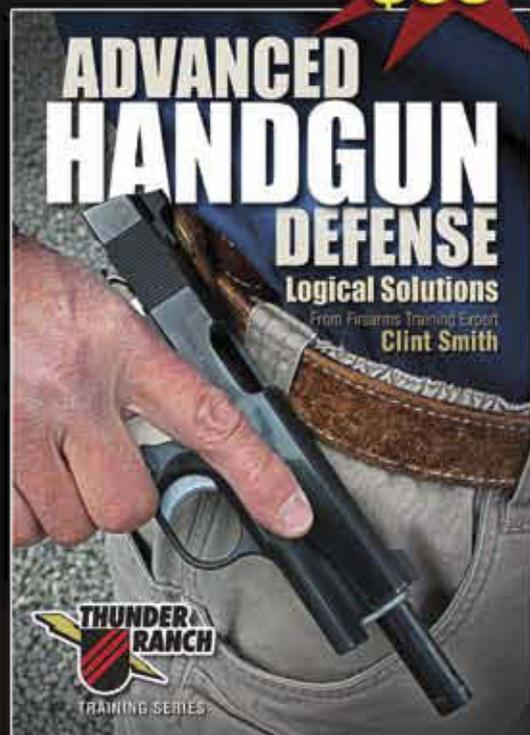
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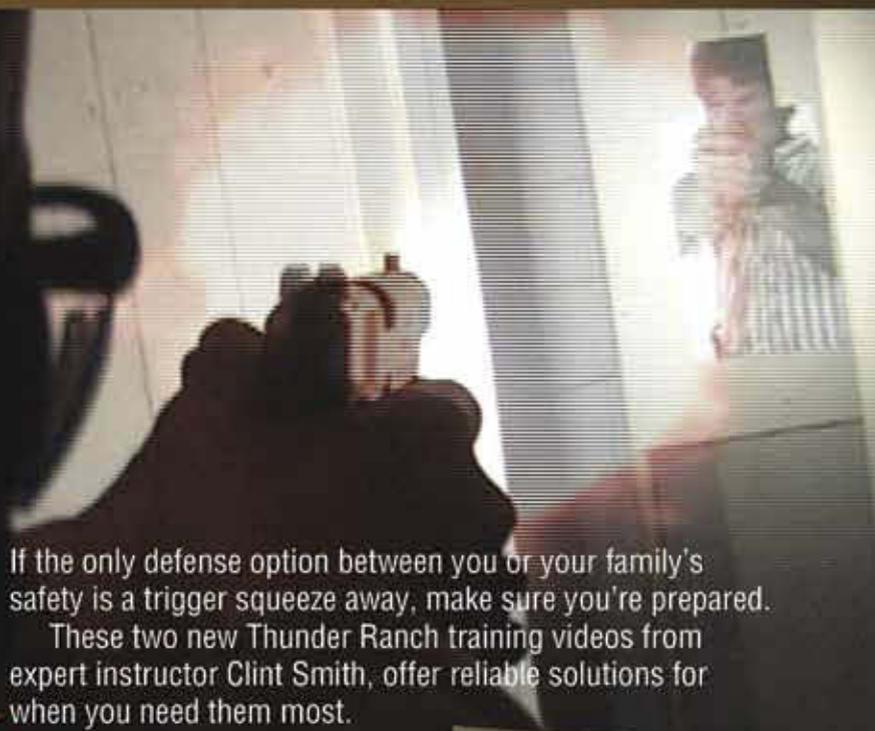
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GUNS MAGAZINE'S GUN OF THE MONTH GIVEAWAY

3-GUN COMPETITION PACKAGE

GUNS Magazine had the competitive shooter in mind with this month's 3-Gun Competition Package — complete with shotgun, pistol and rifle, plus accessories!

First up is the Benelli USA M2 Tactical Shotgun. This no-nonsense 12 gauge is the go-to shotgun for police and military around the world. The M2 Tactical is Inertia Driven, using recoil energy to cycle the action, and features a fully adjustable ghost-ring aperture rear sight and

military-style, fixed-blade front sight or adjustable rifle sights.

The Colt "Pro" CRP-18 Competition Rifle in .223 Rem features an 18" match-grade stainless steel custom fluted barrel with a SureFire Muzzlebrake/Suppressor Adapter, Geissele 3-1/2-pound Super 3 Gun Trigger and assorted Magpul components. Accompanying the Colt Competition Rifle is a Leupold VX-R Patrol Rifle scope in 1.25-4x20mm with a Colt scope mount.

Rounding out the 3-gun package is the Springer Precision

Springfield XD 5.25 Competition Custom Pistol, featuring premium aftermarket parts for the XD, the premier platform for combat, carry and competition.

No package is complete without accessories, and *GUNS* has readers covered with the 300-lumen INFORCE 9vx LED Flashlight. The multifunction, multi-intensity light balances penetrating brightness with super usability under varying field conditions. Also included is the Pemburu from Grayman Knives, which features

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ACTION TYPE: Semi-auto, **GAUGE:** 12,
CHOKE: Crio, **CAPACITY:** 5, **BARREL LENGTH:**
18.5", **OVERALL LENGTH:** 39.75", **LENGTH-OF-
PULL:** 14-3/8", **DROP-AT-COMB:** 1-3/8", **DROP-
AT-HEEL:** 2", **WEIGHT:** 6.7 pounds, **SIGHTS:**
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ACTION TYPE: Semi-auto, **CALIBER:** 9x19mm,
CAPACITY: 19, **BARREL LENGTH:** 5.25", **OVERALL
LENGTH:** 7.25", **WEIGHT:** 29 ounces w/ empty mag,
FINISH: Black and Burn Bronze CeraKote, **SIGHTS:**
Dawson Precision .100-wide fiber optic front (\$40),
GRIPS: Laser cut grip tape, **HOLSTER:** Blade-Tech
DOH holster, XD(M) mag pouches, AR-15 mag thigh
holder (\$225), **PRICE:** \$1,671.50



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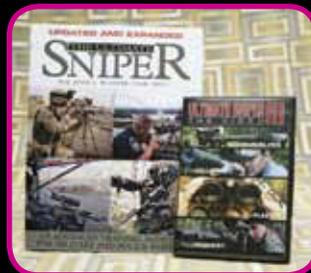
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ACTION TYPE: Direct impingement gas operated, **CALIBER:** .223 Rem, **CAPACITY:** 30, **BARREL LENGTH:** 18", **OVERALL LENGTH:** 35" collapsed, 38.25" extended, **WEIGHT:** 7 pounds w/o magazine, **STOCK:** 6-position adjustable, **PRICE:** \$1,999



BLADE-TECH

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Follow sample card below. Mail postcard to: GUNS Magazine, **GOM NOVEMBER** P.O. BOX 502795, San Diego, CA 92150-2795. Entries must be received before **DECEMBER 1, 2012**. Limit one entry per household.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: Would you participate in amateur 3-gun competitions if more were available in your area?

- (A) Yes
- (B) No, I'm not interested.

Name _____
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ODD ANGRY SHOT

STORY: John Connor

A VETERANS DAY REMEMBRANCE Honoring unlikely heroes.

One was called “The man who won the war for us,” by Supreme Allied Commander Dwight Eisenhower, though he never served in uniform during that war. The other was an enlisted soldier, the quintessential “private from Palookaville.” His face was almost unknown to the troops, but he created the two best-known faces in the European Theater of Operations. Both men are all but forgotten now. Let’s change that on Veterans Day 2012.

On Veterans Day, November 10th, it is only fitting that we honor the bravery of our most valiant warriors, living and dead, and the sacrifices of our own loved ones who served—and those still serving—in uniform. But along with them I offer the memories of these two men.

A few years before America entered World War II, the net assets of a certain barrel-chested Louisiana boat builder amounted to \$13,639, and he didn’t have a single contract with the US Navy. In late 1943 the Navy listed over 14,000 vessels in its inventory. Ninety-two percent of them, some 12,964 units, were designed by that fierce, stout bayou boatman, and most were built at his own assembly yard. Officially labeled “LCVPs” and “LCMs” for *Landing Craft, Vehicle (and) Personnel*, and *Landing Craft, Mechanized*, those designations were seldom spoken. In all their variants they were simply known as “Higgins boats,” and they were the single development of the war which profoundly shaped the winning Allied strategy.

Andrew Jackson Higgins was born in Nebraska in 1886. One of 10 siblings, he grew up fast, tough and enterprising. As a kid he organized newspaper delivery and gardening services,

hiring older boys for labor, and then selling the businesses to adults. As a teenager, Higgins worked summers in Wyoming logging camps. In winter he designed and built iceboats, racing them on frozen lakes, and as a volunteer militiaman, he observed amphibious operations on the Platte River. He developed lifelong interests in military strategy, boat design, forestry and the lumber industry.

He moved to Louisiana, where he designed shallow-draft spoon-bill-prowed boats to run lumber and equipment on waterways denied to less agile designs. To avoid damage from floating or submerged obsta-

cles he placed his boats’ propellers in U-shaped tunnels in their hulls.

The Boat

The storm clouds of World War II brought all four of his passions together. The final element of his design was a hinged landing ramp

in the bow. Now his boats—and no others—could be run full-throttle up onto beaches, drop their ramps to disgorge men, tanks and tons of equipment, then simply reverse off the beach, turn in their own length, and scoot back to mother ships offshore.

Previously, military forces could not land significant men and supplies except by seizing an existing port to offload onto solid quays. In 1942, British forces tried that at Dieppe, France. They were slaughtered, and a successful invasion of Fortress Europe looked impossible. But with Higgins boats, every beach in the world became open to Allied invasion.

There’s far more to the Higgins story and I urge you to find and read it. His personal energy, his brilliant manufacturing practices, his selfless release of his patents, royalty-free, to help win the war, though it later impoverished him, are nothing less than inspiring. I’ll end with this: Hitler personally and bitterly cursed Andrew Higgins, but grudgingly admitted to his staff, “Truly, this man is the new Noah.”

**“Mauldin
draws
what
Mauldin
wants.”**

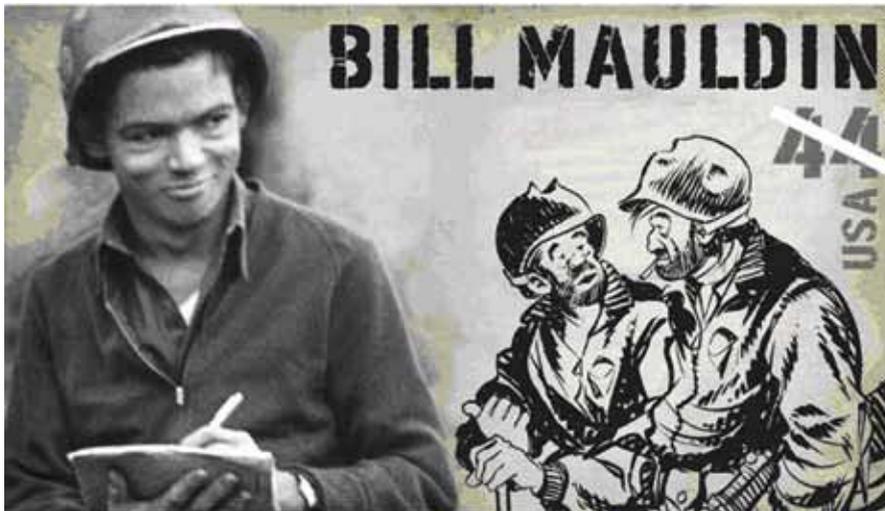
**– General Dwight
Eisenhower**

William Henry “Bill” Mauldin was born in Mountain Park, N.M. in 1921. His dad had served as an artilleryman in World War I and his grandfather was a cavalry scout during the Apache Wars. A shy, skinny kid, he loved doodling cartoons and continued doing that as a 19-year-old private in the National Guard. He was federalized into the Army in 1940 and volunteered to draw cartoons for the *45th Division News*. Bill had just turned 20



A Higgins boat at Normandy on D-day in 1944.

**"If you're a leader,
you don't push wet
spaghetti, you pull it."**



years old when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor.

Three years later, at 23, he had won the first of two Pulitzer Prizes, one of his cartoons made the cover of *Time Magazine*, and the first book of his work, *Up Front*, was a best-seller. Every combat infantryman in Europe knew who he was. But he was still a shy, skinny kid with some pencils and a paper tablet—and still an enlisted dogface soldier.

Mauldin's division made the invasion of Sicily and then of the boot of Italy, fighting their way up the Apennine Mountains to the Alps, a grueling, deadly campaign. His doodles rapidly became the most popular feature of the paper, and began appearing in the military-wide *Stars and Stripes*.

Always at the front, as the war shaped the American infantryman, the infantryman shaped Bill's cartoons. He was one of them; one of the anonymous, long-suffering ex-blue collar workers called to duty and cast into the murderous maelstrom of modern warfare, occupying the lowest, most dangerous rung of the military ladder. He ran the same risks, and when he was wounded near Monte Cassino, their bond with Bill was sealed. With an open heart and a compassionate eye, he saw them and their war as they saw it. In return, the troops embraced Bill and the two iconic infantrymen he invented to represent them: Willie and Joe, American soldiers, unlettered, unsophisticated, undaunted

Seven years after his death, the USPS honored Bill Mauldin on a stamp, accompanied by his pals Willie and Joe.

and undefeated.

It would be difficult, perhaps even impossible, to express in words how Bill's cartoons touched those infantrymen. They weren't cute or funny in any conventional sense. As Bill explained it, "Humor is really laughing off a hurt, grinning at misery." The trigger-pullers knew he cartooned for them, not for the folks back home or to please his superior officers, whom he often treated with the infantryman's irreverence; not cruelly or unjustly, but poking them when they needed pokin'. He said, "If you're a leader, you don't push wet spaghetti, you pull it," and the troops knew exactly what he was talking about.

I need a 1,000 more words and don't have 'em. Mauldin stayed up front through Normandy and on to the end of the war, right along with Willie and Joe. When generals demanded Bill's cartoons cease, their boss, General Eisenhower declared, "Mauldin draws what Mauldin wants," and closed the matter. In 2003 as Bill lay dying, first dozens, then hundreds of old infantrymen made pilgrimages to his bedside. They remembered, and so should we.

His book *Up Front* is still out there. I recently found two original 1945 copies for under 10 bucks each. You can go cover-to-cover in one day—perhaps on the 10th of November? Connor *OUT*

GUNS

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GUNS

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2012

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the trench warfare of the time. The precise fitting of that extra third locking feature as well as the enclosed ejector rod was an object of concern when matched up with the muddy trenches. If either the lock or ejector rod housing became caked with mud the revolver would be out of commission until thoroughly cleaned. Removing both features resulted in what they thought was a firearm better suited to the conditions.

Was the third lock even necessary? In their book *S&W 1857-1945*, authors Robert Neal and Roy Jinks say, "Most authorities believe that the third lock provided on this model was put there by S&W more as an example of the ultimate in precision machine work than as a necessary item for extra strength. Even with S&W's normal two locks they provided twice the locking strength of any Colt Hand Ejector arm then produced, along with the extra accuracy of the forward lock in keeping the cylinder in line with the barrel." Why was the third lock there? Because it could be.

The Triple Lock was very popular with peace officers especially those in the Southwest and along our southern border. The pre-WWII S&Ws are usually referred to as having long actions, which were particularly good for shooting double-action style. As new peace officers came along a demand arose for a return to the Triple Lock or at least an enclosed ejector rod housing. S&W did not feel the demand warranted such a return until Wolf & Klar of Fort Worth, Texas, placed an order for 3,500 .44 Specials in 1926. The shrouded ejector rod was back but the Triple Lock was never to be seen again, or at least I thought so. The Triple Lock did come back but not through S&W.

In the August 1979 issue of the *American Rifleman* there is a picture of what was then a new Triple Lock. Built with a 4" barrel with a ventilated rib and smooth Roper-style grips, this Triple Lock was produced by Rossi and chambered in .44 Magnum. No one seems to know whatever happened to it; however, there may have been two of them made.

Spanish Connection

For all these years as far as I knew there were no other Triple Locks ever produced. Then I got a phone call from my good friend J.D. Jones telling me he had found a Modelo Silo Nuevo, a Spanish copy of the Triple Lock or, if you please, a Candida Triple. J.D. was going to buy it himself but figured I would appreciate it much more since



Will the real Smith & Wesson Triple Lock please stand up? It's the bottom one (above). Only the front sight placement is a giveaway. The third lock (below) can be seen at the front of the yoke and at the back of the ejector rod shroud.

I am so enamored and captivated by the .44 Special. He gave me the name of the Ohio gunshop which I immediately called and for \$300 plus shipping I had a Spanish Triple Lock. Where in the world did it come from?

The answer comes from the late Dan Shideler. We all know, if we've been around handguns very long, that Spain had been copying both S&W and Colt revolvers since the frontier days. This particular revolver came from Trocaola, Aranzabal y Cia (or TAC) of Eibar, Spain. This company began in 1905 and by the time of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 was out of business. Unlike many other Spanish revolvers there is no way these could be classified as junk and in fact Great Britain not only purchased .455 Triple Locks from S&W for use in WWI they also bought Webley copies from TAC.

The original S&W Triple Lock was never adopted as US military issue, however the Spanish version is officially known as the Modelo Militar. The Spanish considered revolvers with adjustable sights as target guns while fixed-sighted versions were considered military-style revolvers. TAC was obviously proud of their "Candado Triple" as they made no attempt to pass it off as a S&W. Many of those other S&W-style revolvers had such a misleading mark on the barrel as "For the SMITH & WESSON cartridge." Many years ago, I answered an ad in the local paper and went to look at a pair of "Smith & Wessons" for sale. When I told the seller they were not S&Ws but actually Spanish copies, she became very indignant and practically threw me out of the house. However, the following week they were advertised in the paper once again for a lot less money.



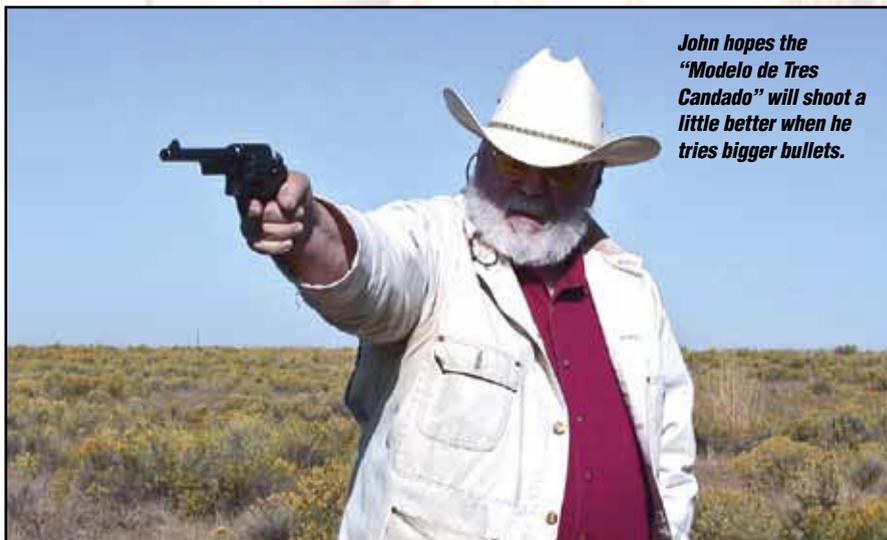
My new Triple Lock seems to be very well-made, looks exactly like a 6-1/2" fixed-sight S&W Triple Lock and is finished in bright blue with excellent checkered walnut stocks. Case colors on hammer and trigger are both still quite brilliant. The only down side is the fact the chamber mouths are well over size at .437". The only loads I had made up for test-firing with bullets even close were .432"; next spring I will try some larger bullets and hope I can do better than the 2" groups I am now getting.

While there is no attempt to pass this off as a genuine S&W it is somewhat humorous to read what it says on the barrel. On the left side we find: "FOR 44 SPECIAL AND U.S. SERVICE CTG" (I don't know of any US service cartridge which will fit in a .44 Special). Then on the top we find: "BEST AMERICAN CARTRIDGES ARE THOSE THAT FIT BEST THE TAC REVOLVER." At least they're not warning labels! At my age discovering something new is pretty rare. This Candado Triple from Spain is worth much more than the price of admission to me. Thanks J.D.

GUNS

CAMPFIRE TALES

BY JOHN TAFFIN



John hopes the "Modelo de Tres Candado" will shoot a little better when he tries bigger bullets.

MODELO DE TRES CANDADO

Spanish Three Lock model.

For more than 100 years Colt and Smith & Wesson competed with each other to see who could come up with the most modern model first. Of course, Colt had started in 1836 with the first truly workable revolver, the percussion Paterson. In 1857, S&W introduced the Model 1, a 7-shot, tip-up .22 which was the first successful cartridge-firing revolver.

Then 1869 saw the first big-bore centerfire sixgun with the S&W .44 American and then Colt countered in 1873 with the first solid frame—the .45 Single Action Army. While Colt was on a roll they went double action with the 1877 Lightning followed by the 1878 Double Action. S&W came right back in 1881 with the double action version of their single-action New Model 3.

Before the close of the 19th century both companies were ready to look to the future and Colt introduced the Army, Navy and New Service Models,

all double actions with swing-out cylinders. By 1899 S&W had the .38 revolver which would become known as the Military & Police. All of these double actions locked only at the rear of the cylinder, however S&W soon added a second lock under the barrel in front of the ejector rod. At this point only Colt had a big-bore double action revolver with a swing-out cylinder. That was about to change.

The Triple Lock

In late 1907, S&W brought out their first big-bore modern double action

with the New Century. The competition was the Colt New Service which only locked at the rear of the cylinder and had an exposed ejector rod. The New Century was the first of what would become the N-Frames and was chambered in a somewhat modernized version of the excellent .44 Russian cartridge. It was lengthened slightly, about 2/10" to become the .44 Special, however the ballistics stayed basically the same. S&W countered the single lock/exposed ejector rod of the Colt by not only using a lock at the end of the ejector rod but also completely enclosing said rod. However S&W engineers did not stop there.

The New Century, also known as the .44 Hand Ejector First Model, would soon be known to all those who really appreciated it as the Triple Lock. Not only was this new sixgun chambered in a new cartridge using an enlarged Military & Police frame, improved with the use of the shroud to enclose the ejector rod which protected the rod, and also improved the looks of the S&W revolver. And S&W did not stop there, either.

The Triple Lock got its name because of a third lock brilliantly machined in the front of the frame at the yoke and barrel junction to solidly lock the cylinder in place. Even to this day many sixgun lovers will tell you the S&W Triple Lock is the finest revolver ever produced. Alas, it didn't last very long. By 1915 the third lock as well as the enclosed ejector rod were gone. Why did S&W drop the .44 Special Triple Lock? Could it have been too expensive to produce? It can't be for that reason as the Second Model of 1915 only sold for \$2 less; for a measly \$2 what may have been the finest sixgun ever produced disappeared.

Actually the blame probably rests upon the British. They were at war in Europe and ordered 5,000 Triple Locks chambered in .455 for use in

continued on page 89

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