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Vol. 66, Number 2, 782nd Issue



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ROB JONES/
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Deadly, sexy and practical,
"The Thin Blue Line,"
is a custom GLOCK 21
by TMT Tactical.



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DABBS DOES IT AGAIN

All your writers are great and *GUNS* is and always has been a well written, easy-to-read magazine, but Doc Dabbs is such a hoot to read. You know he writes for the love of it and not because he needs the work. He could review a septic tank and make it a kick to read. I spent most of my adult life writing for television, but when I came across the line about the NAK9X running like "beets through a toddler" in "Century Arms Draco NAK9X" (*GUNS* December 2019), I laughed so hard I almost fouled my own Huggies! Tell Will if I ever steal one of his lines I'll try to give him credit. Absent that, he could sue me but I'm told you can't get "blood from a turnip" to continue the vegetable analogy.

Lee Schell

So far, the "beets and toddler" is my favorite analogy of the year. Someday, when or if I grow up, I hope to turn a phrase as well as Doc. —BW

Accolades for *GUNS/Handgunner* publications are a given. Starting with the total staff, including photography and layout, I

really appreciate your reduced articles. You guys have it all in ACES! Your December issue was very enlightening and entertaining, especially when I got to Will Dabbs' comedy corner. His article blew the fuse on my laugh meter. His reference of Century's NAK9X as the love child of the union of an AK and a GLOCK was icing on the cake. Century Arms must be grinning ear-to-ear. Will Dabbs, M.D. is in the office.

Jim Warner

I know Will saw your email at the clinic and in-between dealing with runny noses and incontinent toddlers, he was appreciative. I, on behalf of our little thundering berd, also appreciate the kind words. —BW

NO MO' BOW

Why did a magazine with the title "GUNS" have an article in the November 2019 issue about a crossbow? The space would have better served us nostalgic shooters who stubbornly continue to prefer wood stocks and blued steel, not Tupperware autoloaders on polymer stock which can't be sawed off to

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GUNS

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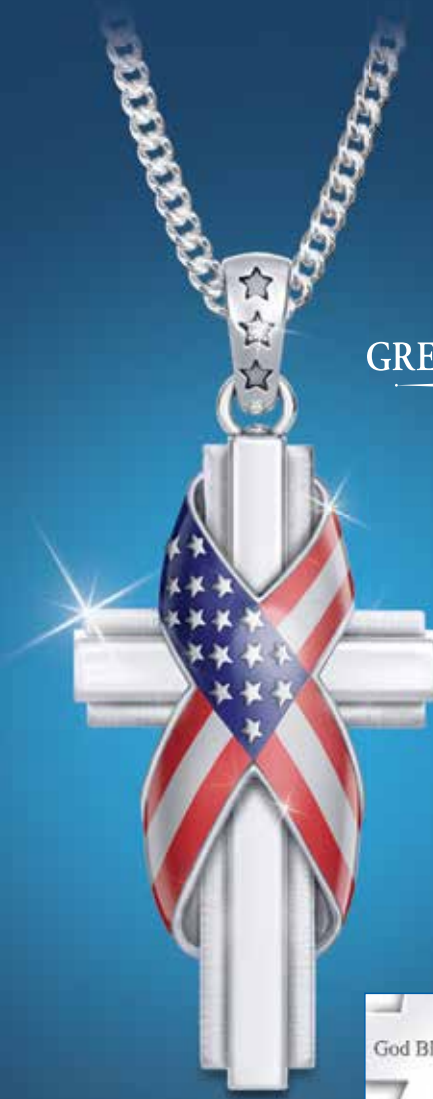
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THE PERFECT PACKIN' RIFLE THE SEARCH FOR THE COMPANION TO THE PPP

Several decades ago, I brought forth the idea of a Perfect Packin' Pistol (PPP). My original definition of a PPP was a sixgun or semi-automatic with the barrel not less than 4" nor more than 5-1/2". It would be easy to pack just as the name implies. Carry it all day and then put it under your pillow or bedroll at night. The chambering could be anything from .22 Long Rifle up to .500 Linebaugh depending upon where one's travels took them.

SECOND PASSION

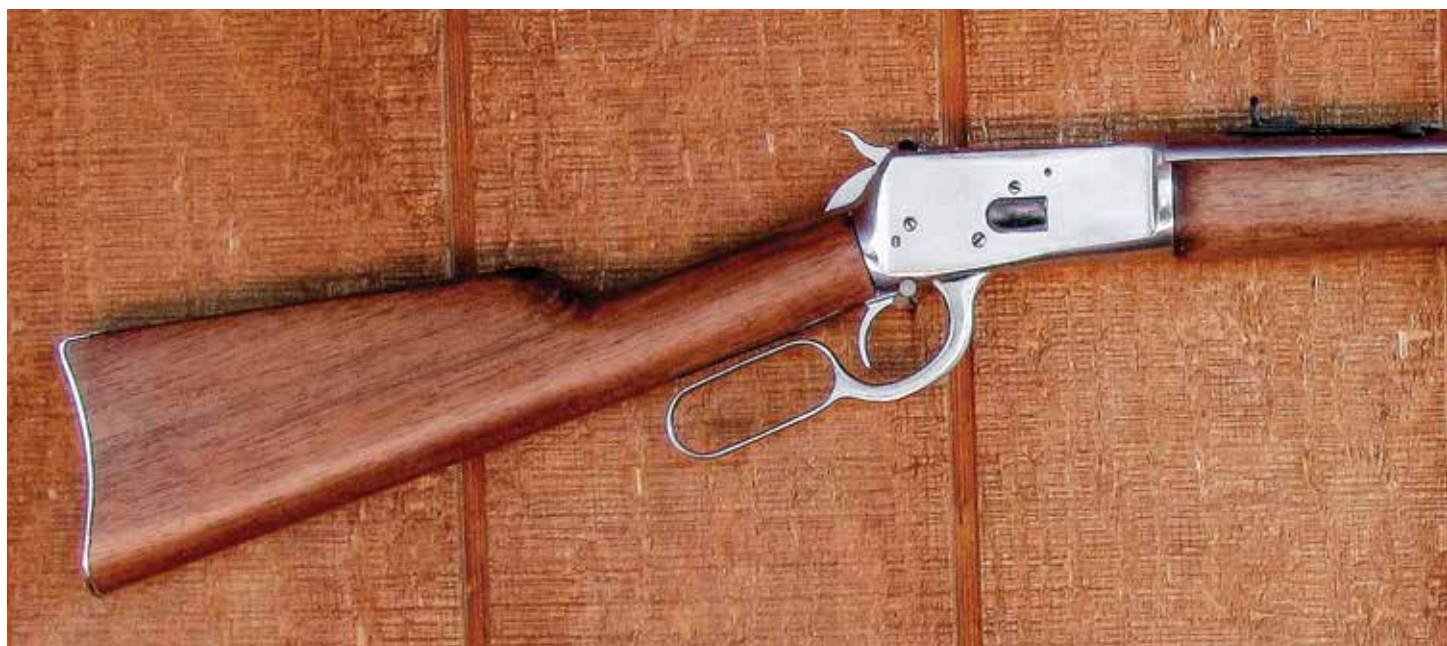
My passion for most of my life has been sixguns but not far behind this is the same feeling for leverguns. Now, at this stage of my life, I am expanding my PPP to a rifle. My goal is to come up with a rifle — preferably a levergun — which is the long gun version of a Perfect Packin' Pistol.

If I decided to go in the direction of a bolt action rifle, there's nothing for me to do as I already have the perfect rifle bolt-style

— the Ruger Model 77 Hawkeye Compact in 7mm-08 Remington with a 16-1/2" barrel. It is extremely lightweight and portable and kills all out of proportion to its paper ballistics. So, since bolt guns are taken care of, I now look at the Perfect Levergun.

Much of my time over the past many decades has been spent shooting the big-bore leverguns — the .45-70, .444 Marlin and even the .450 Marlin (which deserves better treatment than it gets). I've also been behind the buttstock of many a .25-35, .30-30, .38-55, .35 Remington, .356 Winchester, and .375 Winchester. All great cartridges.

When it comes to sixgun length



The PLG after — Barrel cut to 16-1/4"; Lyman Receiver Sight installed, stock refinished, trigger lightened and the internals slicked up.

cartridges in leverguns, .25-20, .32-20, .38-40, .44-40, .44 Magnum and .45 Colt have all been found to be highly useful. But now, the one rifle I would pick to be my everyday companion, to travel anywhere in the desert, sagebrush, foothills, forest and mountains in my area would be a levergun chambered in .357 Magnum.

BACK IN ACTION

We currently have several production examples of .357 leverguns. For more than four decades if one wanted a .357 levergun there was just one choice and that was a Winchester Model 1892 .32-20 converted to .357 Magnum. I believe it was Marlin

who first offered a .357 Magnum levergun, the Model 1894C. Not too long after this beautiful little carbine surfaced, Browning brought out the B92. About the same time Rossi started offering their version of the

1892 in .44-40, .45 Colt, .44 Magnum and thankfully .357 Magnum. Winchester was not to be outdone and they introduced Trapper Models with 16-1/4" barrel lengths in .30-30, .44 Magnum, .45 Colt and .357 Magnum. Today, Winchester offers replicas of both the 1873 and 1892 Winchesters in .357 Magnum; after a long dry spell Marlin is back producing quality leverguns again including the .357 Magnum. Henry also offers their Big Boy in .357 Magnum.

These carbines are all excellent examples of a lever-action .357 Magnum, however my choice for the Perfect Levergun starts with a stainless steel Rossi Model 92. It took a bit of searching for my local gun shop, Buckhorn, to find one but they were successful in finding a stainless steel standard 20" barrel gun.

BUILDING THE BASE

When my Rossi .357 Magnum arrived, I found it certainly was not a Perfect Levergun by any means but it was a good base. The action was gritty and the trigger pull was 8 lbs. I turned it over to my friend, gunsmith Milt Morrison, to smooth up and get the trigger down more in the neighborhood of 3-4 lbs. Since this was a stainless steel rifle, which to me says a weather-beating rifle, I felt the stock needed more than the stain finish it came with. At this stage of my life I doubt if I will ever be out in really bad weather, but someday one of the grandkids or great grandkids will have this as a companion levergun and carry it in all kinds of weather. With this in mind, I had Milt refinish the stock and also work down in the barrel channel and under the parts of the stock that could not be seen to make sure they were also protected from the weather.

My first shooting experience with the standard iron sights was definitely up and down. If I really concentrated, I could put three shots in 1-1/2" at 40 yards, however they could just as easily spread out to 4".

"CARRY IT ALL DAY AND THEN PUT IT UNDER YOUR PILLOW OR BEDROLL AT NIGHT."



The PLG before — a standard 20" Rossi stainless steel M92.



Better sights were definitely in order so I had the boys at Buckhorn drill and tap the left side of the receiver for a Lyman Model 66 receiver sight. While they had it, I asked them to cut the barrel back to 16-1/4".

PPP PARAMETERS

Just as with the PPP, I set up parameters for the Perfect Levergun. The barrel length is no shorter than federal regulations (16") and no longer than 20", with 18-1/2" a better maximum length. Just as with the PPP it has to be in a chambering which could handle anything that might arise in one's personal wanderings. My choice is .357 Magnum for several reasons. It is extremely versatile, able to handle .357 Magnum loads from fast-stepping 125 JHPs up to 200-gr. hard-cast loads for hunting, as well as a long list of .38 Special loads.

In a carbine it is quite accurate with mild felt recoil in most loads and the Model 92 platform is probably the slickest handling of all lever-action rifles. If used for self-defense, the shorter barrel makes it more difficult for an assailant to grab the end of the rifle. For home use, I load the first two cartridges with .38 Specials — less recoil and muzzle blast.



The result — excellent performance from levergun and load. Note Lyman 66A rear sight.

Just as with the Perfect Packing' Pistol, the joy is in the search the Perfect Lever Gun, not the finding. Many Perfect Lever Guns will be found as the search continues. This candidate for the title of Perfect Lever Gun, let us call it PLG for short, is a blending

of an old classic design with modern technology; Browning's Winchester-style action with stainless steel construction. Sometimes, progress is acceptable.

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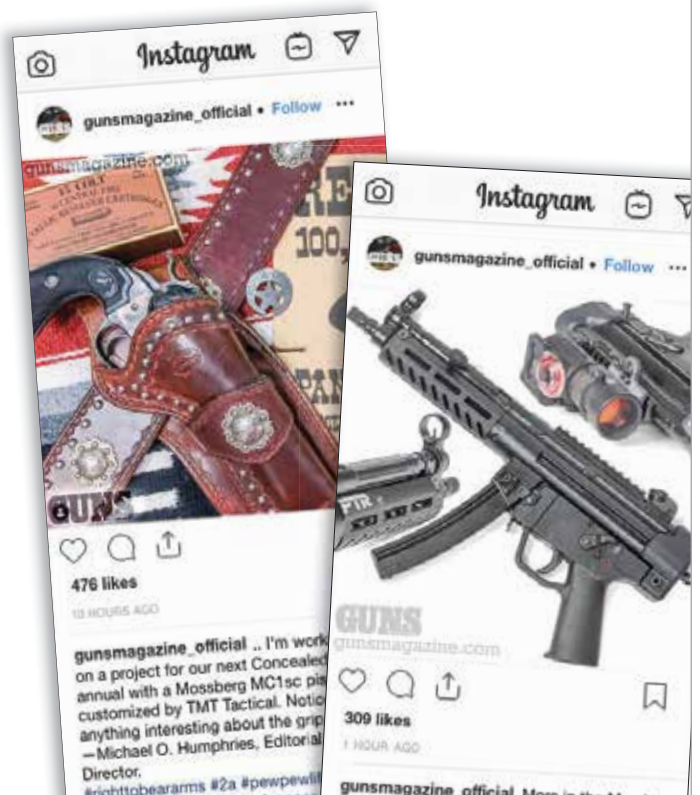
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.40 S&W: DEAD DUCK OR BEST BUY?

ONCE HOT, NOW NOT, STILL WORTH A SHOT

There's a popular meme on the Internet today — "Is the .40 S&W dead?" It comes from the tidal wave of police departments trading in their .40s for 9mm pistols while following the FBI and current wound ballistics mantra of "all service calibers are essentially the same." While this concept remains more debatable than it may seem, there's no question a 9mm duty pistol holds more rounds, kicks less and lasts longer under a constant shooting regimen.

There's also no question the .40 has become "a dog on the market." Some gun shops aren't taking used ones in trade because they can't sell them and aren't ordering new .40s because no one is buying them. This means "new old stock" .40s go

for less than equivalent 9mms and we are seeing good-condition police trade-in .40 pistols selling for as little as \$300 in gun shops.

A versatile compromise, the .40's decline in police popularity may prove a boon to armed citizens.

CHOOSING SIDES

To determine whether or not it's a good deal, we have to look at the prospective buyer. Few experts bought .40s, simply because the cartridge was a compromise between the 9mm and the .45, and generally owning both, we didn't need to compromise. However, police departments did. During the switch from revolvers to autos, one strong faction wanted the 16-shot



The .40 S&W was intended to be a compromise between the 9mm and the .45 ACP. From left to right: G48, G23, and G30S.



The GLOCK 22, holding 16 rounds of .40 S&W, was a super-popular police handgun and the formula was duplicated with the S&W M&P40 and others.

9mms of the period (beginning in the early 1980s) for firepower, while the other faction wanted 8-shot .45s for "stopping power." S&W and Winchester's joint introduction of the 12-shot .40 S&W in 1990 "split the difference" exactly and the .40 rocketed to the top of the heap as a police pistol. GLOCK's swift introduction of their .40 caliber G22 holding 16 rounds made the .40 even more logical a choice.

For people wanting one gun for home and personal defense, they may be well served with the same compromise. The same characteristics that sold the .40 S&W round to the police give it versatility in a couple of different directions for everyone else.

VERSATILITY OF THE .40 S&W CARTRIDGE

The .40 is essentially the auto version of the .38-40 revolver cartridge of 19th century frontier days and may only be exceeded by the .357 Magnum revolver round in availability of different commercial ammunition for different needs. The original (and still most popular) .40 loading is a 180-gr .400" diameter bullet at around 1,000 feet per second, generating some 420 foot-pounds of energy (fpe); the .38-40 bullet was 0.401" in diameter at 975 fps and 380 fpe. The .40, of course, comes with better designed, more effective projectiles.

The .45 Auto? The same 185-gr. .40 load at 1,000 fps and 420 fpe compares quite favorably to the yesteryear-favorite .45 ACP



The .40 GLOCK 22 (center) can be turned into a G31 .357 (left) with just a barrel change and can duplicate a G17 (right) with a 9mm barrel, magazine and recoil spring assembly.



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load of 185-gr. at 1,000 fps and 411 fpe. It comes close to the .357 Magnum, whose contemporary ammo sends a 158-gr. bullet at 1,235 fps and 535 fpe, where the .40 launches a 155-gr. slug at 1,200 fps and roughly 500 fpe, or a 165-gr. projectile at 1,150 fps and 485 fpe. In lighter bullet loads, the .357 Mag 125-gr. hollow point at 1,450 fps and 583 fpe isn't far off from a 135-gr. .40 loaded to 1,325 fps and generating 526 fpe. And let's not disregard the boutique ammo makers who offer heavy, hard-cast .40 bullets at speeds which can ruin a bruin for those who just gotta hike where there are big bears but don't want to spring for a 10mm or a .44 Magnum.

Need something milder? During the early days of the FBI issuing the .40, they had a light 165-gr. load, colloquially called the "minus-P," running at 980 fps with 350 fpe. This is a bit hotter than the .38 Special "FBI Load," a 158-gr. all-lead semi-wadcutter hollow point at 890 fps 270 fpe — I found it fit to kick in a GLOCK 22 about the same as the hottest police load for the 9mm in the same-size GLOCK 17 with the Winchester 127-grain +P+. Handloaders found it could be made even softer for competition: I've seen Scott Warren and Steve Koski use .40s to win overall in major Stock Service Pistol matches against 9mm shooters in IDPA competition, Scott with the S&W M&P and Steve with the GLOCK 35.

CALIBER INTERCHANGEABILITY

A .40 S&W caliber pistol can be readily swapped into .357 SIG chambering (SIG and GLOCK) with barrel change alone, using the same magazines and springs, and your .40 caliber GLOCK can also be made



Top twins: The duty-sized G22 (bottom) and the little G27 for backup/off-duty made a hugely popular .40 caliber team for U.S. law enforcement officers.



The subcompact G27 will happily subsist on a varied diet, feeding from the broad range of 40 S&W loads available and allowing for great versatility.

into a 9mm with new barrel, 9mm magazines and recoil spring assembly. In 9mm, I've seen some conversions that worked and some that didn't: *caveat emptor* and test before you trust. There are also .22 caliber conversion units for some .40 caliber pistols, including the above named brands. It's hard to beat this degree of versatility.

The bottom line? The compromise element which made the .40 S&W law enforcement's most popular choice for nearly a quarter century remains in effect for the person who needs one caliber to cover a broad array of needs. The versatility of the .40 S&W round is never going away. At today's prices, I say more "best buy" than "dead duck."

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POLYMER RIFLES *TACTICAL TUPPERWARE* COMES OF AGE

In 1986 GLOCK introduced their first pistol, the GLOCK 17, to the U.S. market. Reaction to the “plastic” pistol was tepid at first, but was soon at a fever pitch. Three decades later it is used by thousands of private citizens and it’s hard to find a peace officer’s holster that doesn’t house a GLOCK or some other brand of polymer pistol.

LIGHTEN UP

One thing appealing to many is the lower weight of polymers compared to steel. The full-size GLOCK 17 weighs 22 oz. empty. Compare it to two popular handguns used during the time the GLOCK was introduced: the 4" Smith & Wesson Model 19 at 26 oz. empty and a standard 1911 at 40 oz. empty.

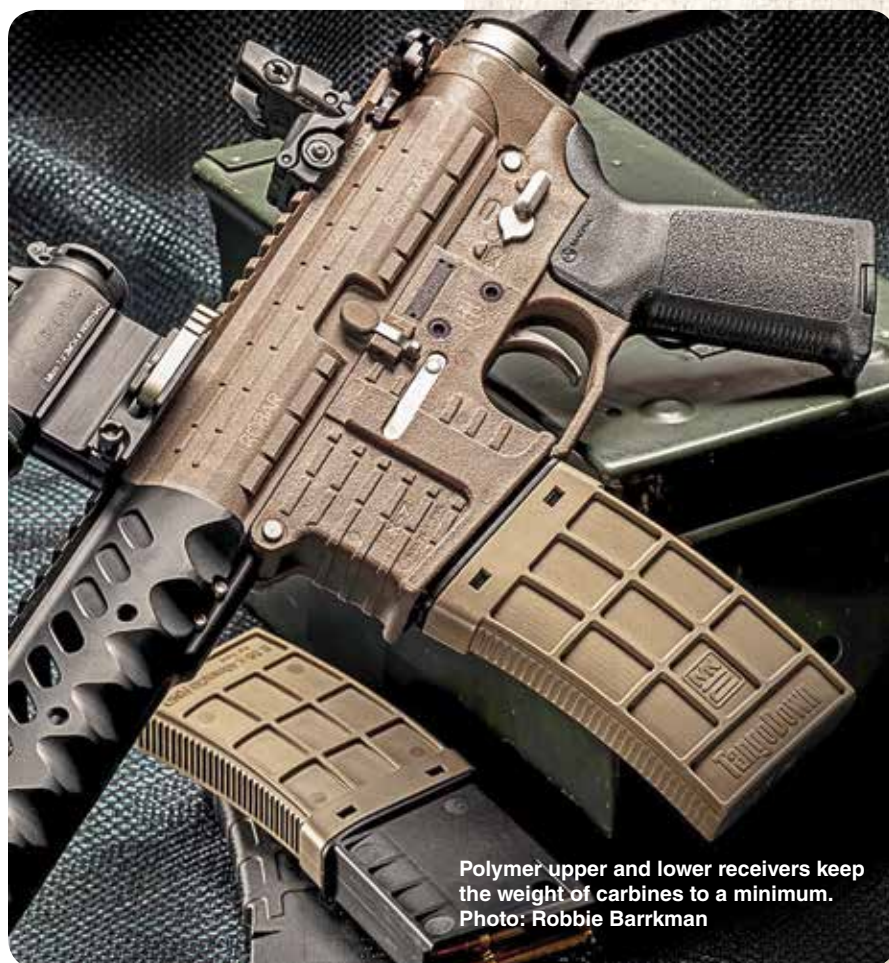
It was only a matter of time before the receivers of long guns — particularly

AR-15-type rifles — were made of polymer.

One of these is the ROBAR PolymAR-15. Although ROBAR has unfortunately just gone out of business, the PolymAR-15 used here as an example is indicative of the genre. Most polymer AR-15s weigh approximately one or two pounds less than a standard version with aluminum receivers. Additionally, because the parts are made in an insert molding process (not the same as injection molding), with

a cycle time of around a minute, they are less expensive than a firearm that requires more time and the expense of machining. The cost reduction is usually passed on to the consumer.

On most of the polymer rifles I have seen there is no useless forward assist (FA) on the upper receiver. I say “useless” because I have never personally seen a problem solved by using the FA, but I have seen problems further exacerbated by using



Polymer upper and lower receivers keep the weight of carbines to a minimum.
Photo: Robbie Barrkman

“IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE RECEIVERS OF LONG GUNS — PARTICULARLY AR-15-TYPE RIFLES — WERE MADE OF POLYMER.”

it. If a round doesn't chamber easily, there's a reason, and beating on the FA is not likely to produce positive results.

BITS AND PIECES

The overall quality of any long gun is the sum of its parts. The ROBAR carbine used

the following parts from Bravo Company Manufacturing (BCM): BCMGUNFIGHTER Stock Mod 0, Gunfighter Grip Mod 3, Charging Handle Mod 5, Small KMR 13 Alpha Forend, KMR QD Forend Sling Mount, Gunfighter QD End Plate and Low Profile Gas Block.

All internal parts of the PolymAR-15L, including the complete bolt group and enhanced mil-spec trigger assembly, were finished in NP3. Externally, the safety, bolt release, magazine release and castle nut are finished in NP3 — the coating is about as close as you can come to self-lubricating. It's



PolymAR-15 internals were treated with NP3 (above), a proprietary composite with Teflon from Coating Technologies Inc. to reduce wear and increase reliability. The ROBAR Lightweight PolymAR-15L is a prime example of a “tactical Tupperware” carbine that runs great while saving weight. Photo: Robbie Barrkman



Upgrades, such as this BCM Charging Handle, are a good investment. Photo: Robbie Barrkman



Magpul MBUS sights and an Aimpoint Micro H-2 offers excellent sighting options. Photo: Robbie Barrkman

been my experience the more it's used, the smoother it becomes. The gas tube is coated with Melonite.

The Faxon 16" barrel is chambered for 5.56 NATO with a 1:8 twist, which handles both the heavier and lighter bullets well. With appropriate ammo, such as Black Hills 77-gr. Match, sub-MOA accuracy is guaranteed. The rifle came with front and rear Magpul MBUS sights while the flash hider is a standard A2 type. For the 14.5" barrel version a KTC Stealth brake was permanently pinned to the barrel.

My carbine is equipped with an Aimpoint Micro H-2 red dot sight with a two MOA dot.

SLING IT UP

I subscribe to the line of thought saying a sling to a rifle is as important as a holster is to a handgun. My go-to sling on my carbines and shotguns is the Vickers Sling from Blue Force Gear. The only other items I have added is a SureFire Scout Light in a 45-degree offset mount, and a BCMGUN-FIGHTER KAG forward grip.

If you want to find out if your firearm is reliable, regardless of type, there is no better proving ground than a high-round count training course. In such courses, I appreciate a light, fast handling rifle and the reduced weight does not leave you exhausted after a long day on the range. I can appreciate adding items if your mission calls for it, but at the end of the day ounces equals pounds.

MALL NINJA REVISIT

I was recently talking to a fellow shooter at the local gun emporium and he told me how he set up his carbine for a "high speed, advanced" class he was going to attend.

He planned on attaching a Burris XTR II 5-25x50mm scope, a red dot sight in an offset mount, a Silencerco suppressor and a Steiner DBAL with green and infrared laser (even though he didn't own a night vision viewing device). At about 5' 6", weighing around 120 lbs., biceps the size of my wrist and carrying a rifle weighing about 15 lbs., I have a feeling he may have left the class early — like after lunch on Day One.

Unlike our gun shop hero, if you're in the market for a lightweight AR-type rifle, you should check out one made with a polymer receiver.

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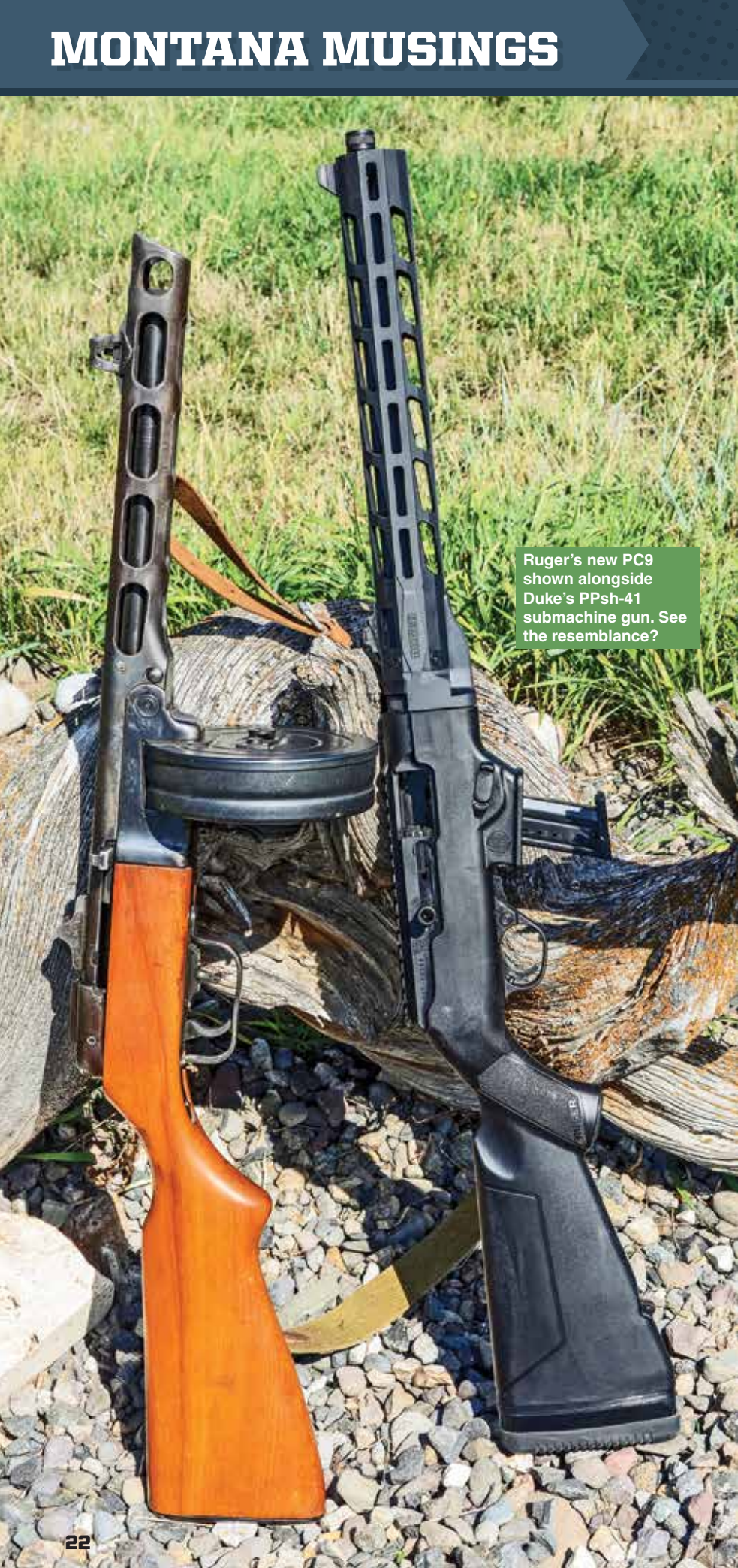
RUGER PC9 FUN, ACCURATE AND JUST A LITTLE 'OLD WORLD'

Because paychecks are important, when an editor asks me to cover a semi-auto black rifle, I agree albeit with little enthusiasm. The same was true with this new Ruger PC9. However, after handling and shooting it I admit to actually liking it. Ruger developed a handy, well thought out, reasonably priced little carbine.

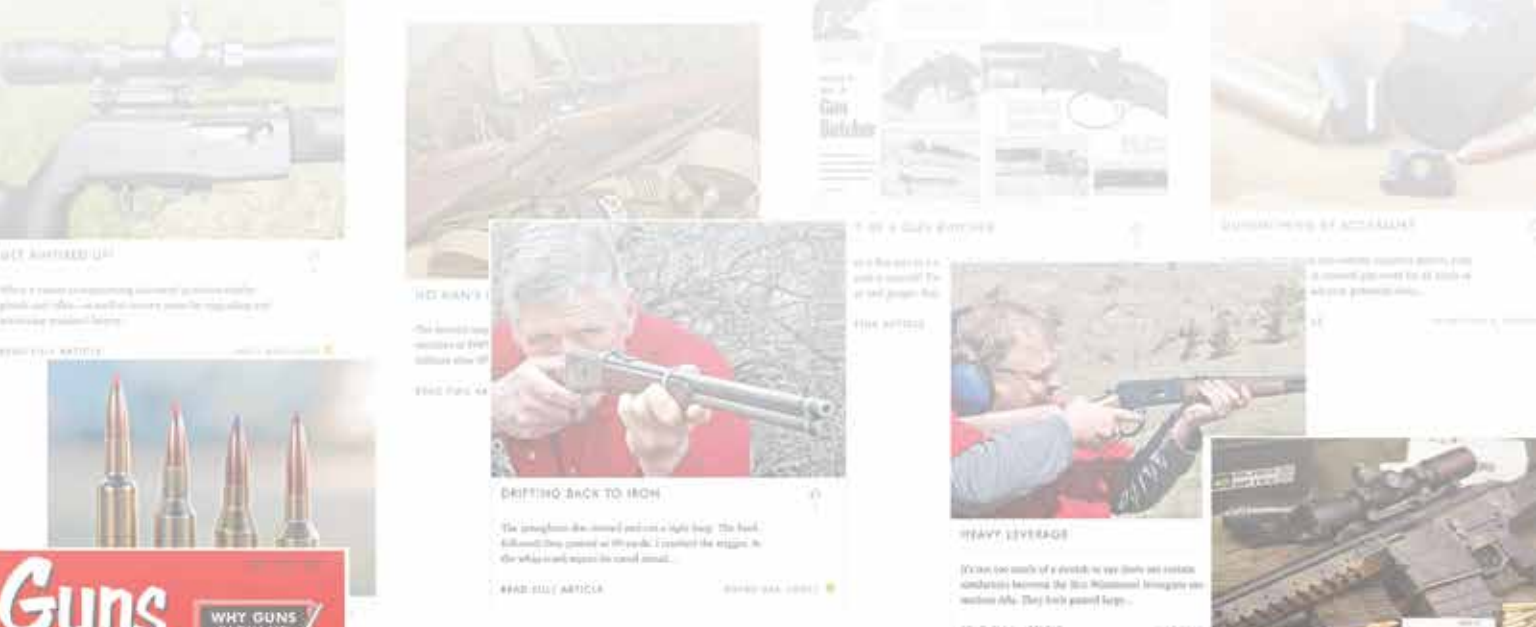
Friends who look it over universally ask what PC stands for. I say, "Definitely NOT politically correct!" Without asking anyone at Ruger, my take is it means "pistol cartridge," and that's what it's chambered for: initially 9mm Luger with .40 S&W coming along too. Ruger has even thought out the magazine capacity factor to give most liberals heart burn.

One version obviously is meant for places where high-capacity magazine has become a modern four-letter word — it ships with a 10-round magazine. Those PC9s going to other locales can have 17-round magazines. Ruger has also made the magazine well so, with a few parts such as were enclosed with my sample, it could be converted to accept GLOCK magazines. It's a great idea, seeing there are multitudes of GLOCK 9mms around. The concept of handguns and long guns taking the same cartridge goes back to the 1870s but semi-autos of both genres taking the same magazines is a recent development. Having no GLOCK 9mm on hand, I left the PC9 set up for Ruger's issue magazines. Mine came with the 10-round version, although living in Montana I could have one taking a bazillion rounds and no one would have cared.

Ruger has many other grand ideas incorporated into the PC9. The charging handle and magazine release are reversible for ambidextrous use. Three 1/2" spacers are enclosed so length of pull can range from 12.62" to 14.12". There is a rail atop the receiver for the vast array of optical sighting equipment now available. Standard factory sights are a blade front with protecting ears and a ghost ring rear adjustable for both elevation and windage. Now get this: right out of the box using Black Hills 115-gr. FMJ factory loads, my PC9 hit precisely to point of aim at 25 yards. I think it may be the first



Ruger's new PC9 shown alongside Duke's PPsh-41 submachine gun. See the resemblance?



Guns

WHY GUNS BLOW UP

CAN WOMEN OUTSHOOT MEN?

For decades in 1955 the answer was yes. And it still was today. Here's a fun look back at R. D. Grant five-page article in the July 1955 issue of GUNS...

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NEW LEVEL OF REVOLVER ACCURACY DEFINED

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“THE BOY SPOTTED THE RUGER PC9 AND ASKED, ‘IS THIS SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE THAT RUSSIAN SUBMACHINE GUN OVER THERE?’”



time such has happened for me with an out-of-the-box rifle.

Even though my eyes are now 70 years old, I don't think I would ever give up the ghost ring rear sight for optical types. In my mind it would negate the purpose of this 7-lb. carbine by adding weight. My attitude

is this: The rifle is a close range personal defense carbine and for me, using the out-of-box length-of-pull, the front sight is dead centered in the rear aperture when the carbine is shouldered.

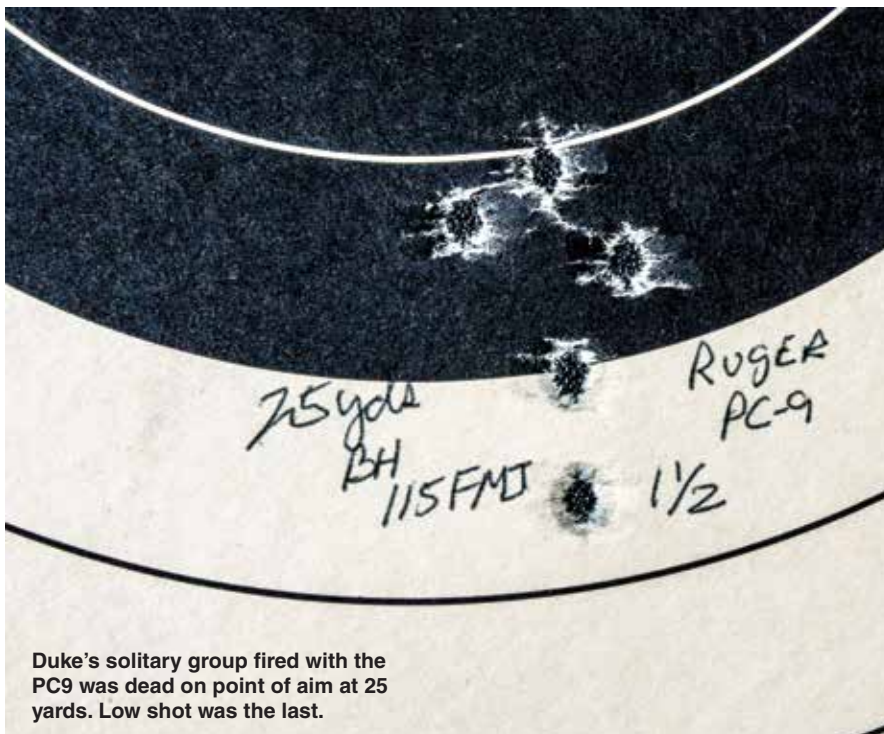
Ruger's PC carbines come with 16.12" barrels and more types and colors of stocks.

Their website has them with tan and even a camo pattern based on the red, white and blue of the American flag. Some versions also have ordinary styled stocks (all synthetic by the way) with forearms. The one sent me has the aluminum shroud type of handguard completely surrounding the barrel. Maybe I'm still a little young at heart because I was immediately taken by its looks!

It shot just fine by my book — the one five-shot group fired at 25 yards was 1 1/2" with the low shot being last. The rest of my shooting with this PC9 has been in rather fast firing at steel plates and I was rather good at it if I do say so myself. There was nary a failure to feed or function at all.

Recently a friend and his 15-year-old son were looking over the rifle racks in my gun vault. The boy spotted the Ruger PC9 and asked, "Is this supposed to look like that Russian submachine gun over there?" I said, "Good point; because whoever designed that PC9's shroud had to have had more than passing familiarity with the Soviet Union's PPsh-41 of World War II fame!

Wouldn't it be something if a magazine manufacturer decided to make a 71-round drum for the Ruger, just like the PPsh-41's?



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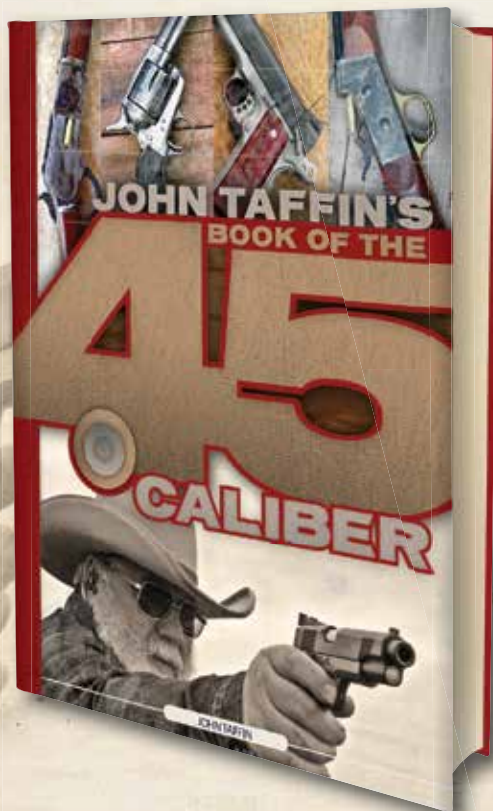


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Staying prickly into serious adulthood is a way of life (above). You don't need to be John or Jenny Rambo to defend yourself capably in your Golden Years. Just make wise life choices.

IN DEFENSE OF THE ELDERLY SURVIVAL FOR THE "SEASONED CITIZEN"

The scientific term is *entropy*. This is a quantifiable measure of the amount of disorder in a system. Everything naturally descends into a greater state of entropy. This simply means we inevitably get old.

Aging is not for sissies. Mundane things like turning my head when I back up the car can now be an ordeal. A foolish youth, spent relentlessly driving my body, has taken its inevitable toll. Now past the half-century mark I have come to appreciate there are some serious considerations when you wish to remain prickly after a Certain Age.

FITNESS AND THE PHYSIOLOGY OF AGING

As we age our bones become brittle and we lose muscle mass. This leaves us more susceptible to younger, stronger predators. However, it doesn't mean we have to just roll over and die. We can still mitigate these effects.

Keep your machine properly maintained. This means eating sensibly and avoiding tobacco and alcohol. Being out of shape is typically a choice. Eat the right stuff and in reasonable quantities.

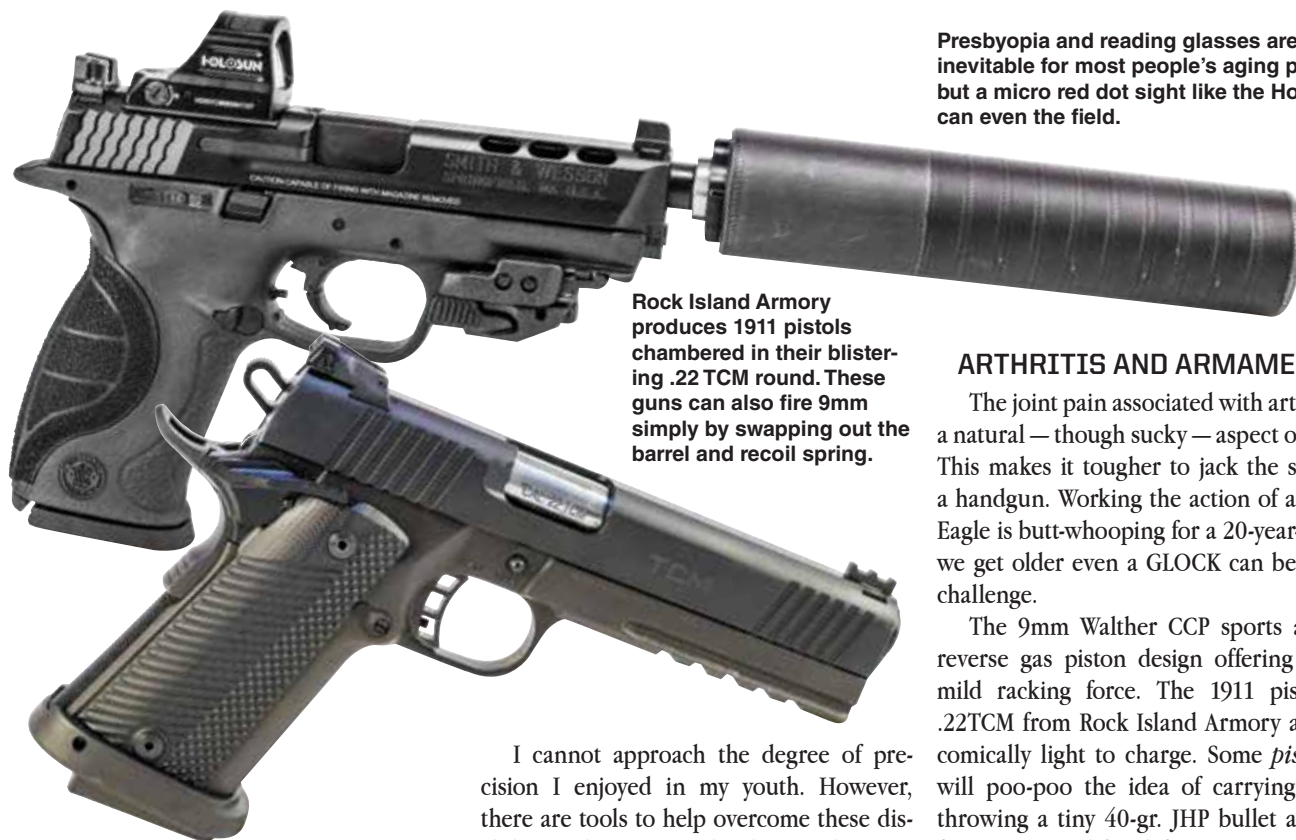
With each passing year it gets tougher to

stay lean and hard. My long-suffering knees won't let me run, but my wife and I walk vigorously for an hour four days a week. It's great fellowship.

An old back injury keeps me from doing pushups. I therefore did a perfect pushup on a bathroom scale and put the same weight on a bar. Now I can knock out my daily regimen via bench presses without stressing my back.

Most people eat a light breakfast, a modest lunch, and a massive supper but we have it all wrong. We are designed to eat a generous breakfast, a modest lunch, and minimal supper.

Staying strong and hard is still attainable in your later years but you have to want it. Keeping fit is a lifestyle. There



Presbyopia and reading glasses are inevitable for most people's aging process but a micro red dot sight like the Holosun can even the field.

Rock Island Armory produces 1911 pistols chambered in their blistering .22 TCM round. These guns can also fire 9mm simply by swapping out the barrel and recoil spring.

ARTHRITIS AND ARMAMENTS

The joint pain associated with arthritis is a natural — though sucky — aspect of aging. This makes it tougher to jack the slide on a handgun. Working the action of a Desert Eagle is butt-whooping for a 20-year-old. As we get older even a GLOCK can become a challenge.

The 9mm Walther CCP sports a novel reverse gas piston design offering a very mild racking force. The 1911 pistols in .22TCM from Rock Island Armory are also comically light to charge. Some *pistoleros* will poo-poo the idea of carrying a gun throwing a tiny 40-gr. JHP bullet at 2,000 feet per second for defensive purposes. I'd be willing to bet those skeptics have never been shot with one.

are many aspects of aging over which you have no control but this is not necessarily one of them.

EYESIGHT

It's called *presbyopia*, and I hate it. As you age the lens in your eye stiffens. This means most older people can no longer focus up close. My reading glasses are now an unfortunate part of my wardrobe. The really sucky bit is I can no longer clearly see my sights.

I cannot approach the degree of precision I enjoyed in my youth. However, there are tools to help overcome these disabilities. Electro-optical sights are the great equalizers.

Most everybody makes combat handguns with slide cutouts for a micro red dot sight nowadays. My favorite comes from Holosun. Holosun sights incorporate small solar cells along with conventional battery power. This dual-fuel design offers just stupid-long run times. Holosun sights are the only red dots in the collection I intentionally leave on all the time. It takes a little experience to bring the optic into your line of sight without conscious thought but it's not like practicing with a gun is actually work.

INJURY

As we get older our skin thins. Many seasoned Americans take blood thinners as well, even if it is just aspirin. This means you could be quick to bleed ... a lot.

If you get hurt just put pressure on the wound as soon as the tactical situation allows. A typical healthy adult human has about five liters of blood. Lose one liter in 20 minutes and you get woozy. Two liters can be lethal. However, this amount is a lot of blood. Don't freak out about it.

If you hit your head substantially you need to report to an emergency room, not a clinic. You'll need a CT scan to rule out a bleed, and you usually cannot get one at your local urgent care. Take significant head injuries seriously, particularly in older people.

Be wary, treat your body respectfully, train hard and regularly, and choose your hardware carefully. Everybody gets old, but it doesn't mean you have to do so gracefully. By properly maintaining your machine and packing the right iron you can remain tactically viable well into your golden years. 🦾



The zippy little .22 TCM (left) alongside the 9mm might not be your first choice for a defensive handgun cartridge but it shoots like a laser and veritably explodes on impact.

www.holosun.com

RANGEFINDING RETICLES

WHAT'S GOOD – AND WHAT'S GREAT!

Any reticle that will subtend — or bracket — a known measure at a known yardage can put you on target at any distance, if you know the size of the target. However, for hunting, a reticle should be simple enough to use without thinking.

START WITH SIMPLE

The single dot, popularized by T.K. Lee, is simple. When a 3-minute dot blocks half the 18" chest of a mule deer, the animal is 300 yards off. Best dot size depends on magnification. To me, a 2-minute dot seems right for a 6x scope, a 3-minute for a 4x, a 4-minute for a 2-1/2x.

Tics on the vertical wire give distinct aiming points to hunters using powerful scopes at a distance. Burris intelligently spaced three tics on its Ballistic Plex to roughly match impact for popular loads at 100-yard intervals beyond 200. Clean, simple and practical, the Ballistic Plex helped me collect a beautiful pronghorn when, denied closer approach by his alert harem, I fired my .280 from 390 steps.

Next came windage tics. Alas, these bred with elevation tics and multiplied, infesting once-empty quadrants with tangles of dots and lines. I marveled at one reticle with

more than 1,050 aiming points. A long time counting, I'd have taken longer finding the one to use and then trying to keep track of it against deer hide.

MIL-DOT MADNESS

The mil-dot reticle has remained clean but with enough useful information to bring hits at extreme range. Mil is short for milliradian, an angular measure spanning about 3.6" at 100 yards. On a mil-dot reticle, a mil is the measure of each space between dots on a crosswire. To find range with this reticle, divide target height in mils at 100 yards by the number of spaces subtending it. If a whitetail 3 feet at the shoulder (10 mils at 100 yards) appears in your scope to stand two dots high, divide 2 into 10; you get 5. The deer is 500 yards away. Or divide target size in yards by number of mils subtended, then multiply by 1,000 to get range in yards. In this example, 1 divided by 2 multiplied by 1,000 equals 500. A rear-focal-plane mil-dot reticle in variable scopes works at just one power setting (usually the highest). Front-plane mil-dot reticles accurately read range at any power, as dot spacing remains in constant relationship to the target.

Lately, complex reticles have been displaced by "trajectory-matched" dials

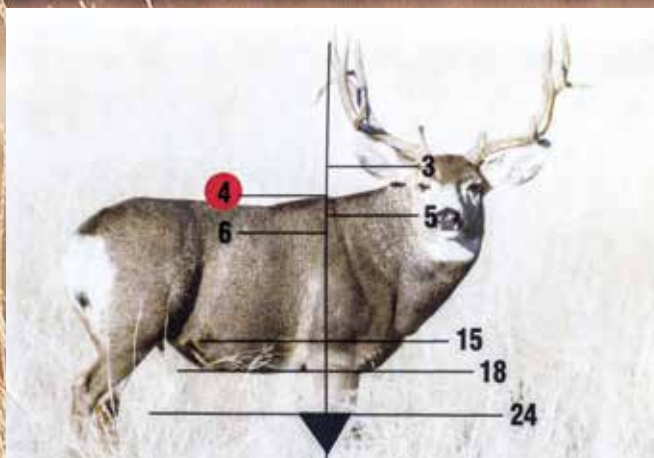


The "30" and "36" index lines allow for ranging targets bigger than elk. All others are ranged at 15x.

pioneered on Leupold scopes by GreyBull Precision. "To cut a dial so you hit with a center hold at any range," says Don Ward, "we must know the bullet's starting speed and 700-yard drop, or actual ballistic coefficient." To increase reach per rotation of the elevation dial, he substitutes 1/3-minute clicks for 1/4-minute — a good idea. Now Leupold offers the Custom Dial System (CDS) dials to match customer loads. Other firms have followed suit.

Burris was early to the stage with a laser-ranging scope. I reported on the first, then in 2014 on a lighter, improved Eliminator III. The current is 3-12x44 and 4-16x50 range game to 750 yards. Program the scope for your load, and each range reading lights a dot on the rear-plane reticle which is your aiming point. An inclinometer helps with vertical angles.

SIG's BDX scopes have injected Blue Tooth into optics. Download an app in your



Use the line of the chest measure (here 18") as the base (above). "Fit" number (here 4) is even with the back.

smartphone with ballistic data, synchronize the phone with a BDX Kilo laser rangefinder and your scope shows a bright dot where the bullet will land.

A BETTER MOUSETRAP

Darrell Holland, an Oregon long-range buff who also runs an excellent shooting school, markets his own ART (Advanced Reticle Technology) reticle. It has mil-dots and ticks marking minutes of angle. Darrell says most other rangefinding reticles "are of limited utility past 500 yards." In a 3-12x50 Schmidt & Bender scope, I've found ART values spot-on at very long distances.

Holland recently fielded another range-finding reticle — "Fit-To-Hit." Using it, like running through gears on a motorcycle, is easier to do than to explain. The standard reticle on Holland's new Game-Getter 2.5-15x50 scope is a modified plex with windage ticks inside the horizontal bars. The vertical wire has a ladder of 15 "Hit" lines below center. Above center is a ladder



Mil-dot Master, a laser RF, a smart phone and other devices work at the range but burn precious seconds.

of three rangefinder lines (24, 18 and 15) then above those are four "Fit" lines.

MAKING IT WORK

Choose the number on the rangefinder ladder best approximating the chest depth of the animal you're hunting. Bring this line

against the animal's brisket and its withers will then match a number on the Fit ladder. Find the same number on the Hit ladder below. Hold this intersection where you want the bullet to land.

This system works for most popular high-velocity game loads. After a few minutes, you'll find it intuitive. Darrell couldn't resist extending Hit lines to help with drift.

The reticle's rear-plane placement compels you to range at top (15x) magnification. But "30" and "36" on the power ring adapt the 24" baseline to range beasts as big as moose and eland. Thoughtful! Ditto yardage figures on the right-hand bar, should you range with a laser and need a Hit number quickly.

A hunter, Holland has made W/E and parallax dials easy to read. Long-range shooters will adore the reach afforded by half-minute elevation clicks (windage are quarter-minute). The resettable dials have zero stops. Multi-coated glass of course. At the range on my Ruger RPR in 6.5 Creedmoor, the Fit-To-Hit reticle proved out. Holland's Game-Getter scope delivered bright, sharp target images. Spot-on at 0.5" each, elevation clicks repeated perfectly. The parallax/focus dial puts targets in crisp relief as near as 10 yards, so can serve on air-rifle ranges as well as for steel plates at a four-figure distance.

At \$495, the Game-Getter is an affordable scope. It takes 30mm rings and uses no batteries. It has no laser unit so is legal for hunting in every state.



Holland's affordable 2.5-15x50 Game-Getter scope on this Ruger RPR features the Fit-To-Hit ranging reticle.



The Burris Eliminator is a laser-ranging scope that works well. Slimmer now, it's still a beefy unit.

www.hollandguns.com

"I'M LONG PAST THE AGE OF ENJOYING BEING POUNDED BY BIG RIFLES AND THIS RIFLE GIVES ME A BIG FEEL WHEN SHOOTING, BUT A VERY SMALL FEEL ON MY SHOULDER."

combinations using .310-.311 bullets and 12 using the smaller .308 bullets. Generally speaking, the latter bullets shot more accurately with the powder combinations chosen, however some of the .310-.311 loads were very close to the smaller bullets in accuracy.

My most accurate loads all came using Hodgdon's H322 powder. The two most accurate loads, each placing four shots in 7/8" at 100 yards, are the Sierra 125 SP (0.308") over 28.5 grains of H322 for 2,188 fps and the Speer 130 JHP (0.308") over 27.5 grains clocking out at 2,154 fps. Either one of these would be excellent for hunting smaller game. Two other loads came in with four-shot groups of 1-1/8". These were also using H322. The Sierra 125 SP (0.311") clocked out at 2,214 fps while the Sierra 110 RN .308 .30 Carbine bullet at just over 2,200 fps also showed the same exceptional

accuracy. These two bullets would also be excellent choices for hunting. The positive performance of the little .30 Carbine bullet really surprised me.

.308 LOADS

I did try three different loads using 150-gr. .308 bullets, all over 26.5 grains of H322. While not quite as accurate as the lighter bullets, with all of them grouping around 1-3/4"—1-7/8", they would certainly do for hunting of smaller deer at reasonable ranges. The bullets used were the Hornady 150 SP and 150 RN, traveling at 2,009 fps and 2,040 fps respectively, and the Sierra 150 FN at 2,045 fps. The latter would be my first choice due to the flat nose configuration.

With the load and bullet combinations used with H4198 and IMR4227, accuracy



John likes the new Lyman Stadium Block for reloading chores and the NexPander to straighten case mouths as well as rendering a slight belling when necessary.

was not quite as good as with H322, however more than adequate for 100-yard hunting situations. The best loads with these powders were in the 1-1/4"—1-1/2" range, which again is certainly adequate for short-range hunting. Using 24.5 grains of H4198 saw Hornady's 123 SP clock out at 2,168 fps while the Speer 130 JHP was just right below it at 2,146 fps with both loads grouping in 1-1/2". With IMR4227 I used 21.0 grains with two Sierra 125 SP bullets, one with the diameter of 0.311" and the other 0.308". The former grouped in 1-1/2" at a muzzle velocity of 2,188 fps while the latter was right there with it at 2,180 fps and 1-1/4" for four shots at 100 yards.

PURE ENJOYMENT

I have to say this — the Ruger American Ranch Rifle is one of the most pleasant shooting rifles I have ever experienced. It is definitely noisy with the muzzle brake in place but recoil is virtually nil. With the 4X scope I never lost sight of the targets when the gun was fired. I'm long past the age of enjoying being pounded by big rifles and this rifle gives me a big feel when shooting, but a very small feel on my shoulder. In accuracy it does as well, often better than some of the more sophisticated rifles shooting cartridges with a reputation for accuracy. I hope before I'm finished to be able to use it to hunt smaller deer-sized critters.

www.ruger.com

These 100-yard targets were fired with the 7.62 x 39 chambered Ruger American Ranch Rifle.



Bullets for the 7.62 x 39 included Sierra 110 RN, Hornady 123 SP, Sierra 125 Spitzer, Speer 130 HP, Hornady 130 SP, Sierra 150 FN, Hornady 150 RN and Hornady 150 SP.

BLACK HILLS AMMO

QUALITY AND ACCURACY BUILT FROM SCRATCH

Over the span of about three decades, Black Hills Ammunition has grown from a small part-time operation to one of the most respected manufacturers of handgun and rifle ammunition. I've used Black Hills ammo in national and international level competition, in varmint shoots and big game hunts from Wyoming to Namibia, in my home and personal defense firearms along with testing rifles and handguns. Never has a Black Hills round failed, or disappointed me in any way.

FROM HANDLOAD TO FACTORY

It's one thing to earn a reputation for excellence if the competition is weak but it's much more impressive when the competition is tough. We don't always appreciate just how good modern factory ammunition is. Back when I started shooting handloads as a teenager in the '60s it was simply a fact handloads — sometimes even

those assembled by novices like me — were superior to factory ammunition.

Almost always we could achieve better accuracy, and we could use premium bullets such as the Nosler Partition, which were unavailable in factory loads. Today virtually any bullet available to handloaders is also available in factory loads. Few handloaders can equal, much less surpass, the accuracy of factory match ammunition.

BUILT FROM SCRATCH

Black Hills ammunition was built up by two remarkable people, Jeff and Kristi Hoffman. Jeff was a peace officer and enthusiastic PPC competitor. He and another officer originally started reloading just so they could afford ammo for training. Jeff eventually earned a Grand Master rating in PPC. Having shot rifles with him on the range I know he is an extraordinary rifle shooter as well. Kristi could probably teach

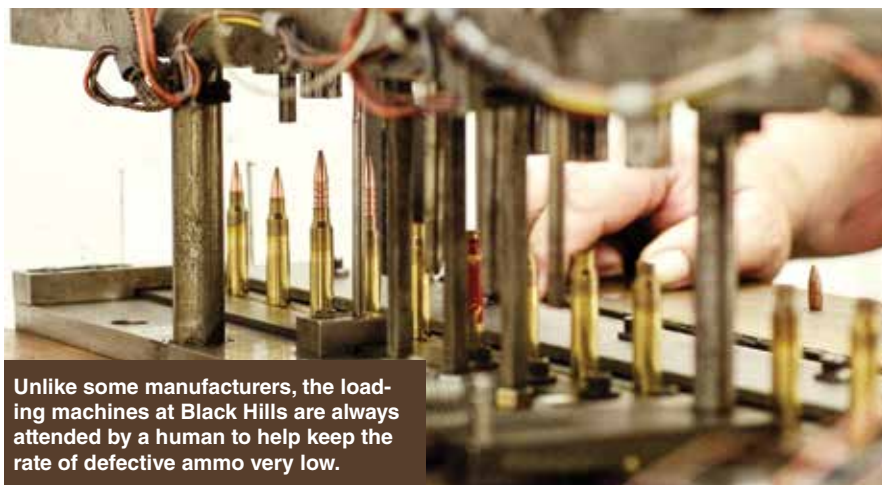


Jeff and Kristi Hoffman

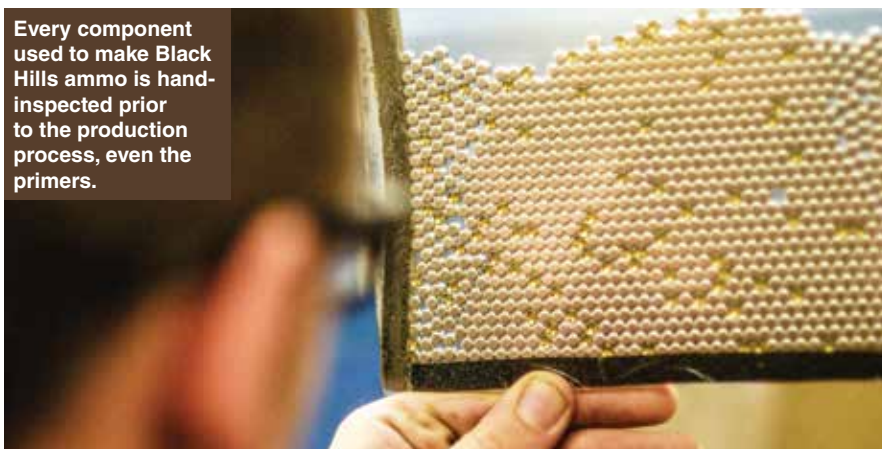
lessons in business management to MBA students, lessons learned not from abstract theory but from hard, unforgiving reality.

A few years ago, I toured the Black Hills factory. Two impressions stood out. One was the skill level, high morale and commitment to excellence of the Black Hills workers. The second was an almost fanatical commitment to quality and reliability. Just to give a couple of examples, every primer is visually inspected before going to the loading machines. Not random samples, but every single one. As I recall, they reject on the order of one primer per 125,000.

The loading machines were set to run considerably slower than maximum, even though it meant having less products to sell. By constant testing they found a slower rate gave slightly improved accuracy. Every loaded round is inspected before being packaged, and the standards are rigorous. Cartridges with flaws (usually minor blemishes which would have no effect on reliability or accuracy) are rejected.



Unlike some manufacturers, the loading machines at Black Hills are always attended by a human to help keep the rate of defective ammo very low.



Every component used to make Black Hills ammo is hand-inspected prior to the production process, even the primers.



Jeff Hoffman is serious about his ammo — he often personally inspects the finished product before it goes out the door.



"Women inspect and men do the packing," Jeff Hoffman said, "because women are better at it (inspecting). Men don't have the patience. I tried it and only lasted about an hour!"

THOSE WITH VISION

What impresses me most about entrepreneurs such as Jeff and Kristi is their sheer audacity. What on earth made Bill Ruger think he could design a .22 pistol at his workbench and then take on established names like Colt and High Standard? How did Roy Weatherby have the nerve to quit a successful and lucrative career to market his theories of higher velocities?

The Hoffmans knew they would be competing with established ammunition manufacturers, with modern production facilities, excellent products, name recognition and a loyal customer base. It takes exceptional qualities: the courage to take risks and accept the possibility of failure, along with a work ethic most people can only imagine.

The Hoffmans epitomize something I see often in the firearm industry. Economist and author George Gilder calls it "The Spirit of Enterprise" and published a book by the same name. In it he pays tribute to the truly indispensable people of a prosperous economy, the ones who make things work. Gilder says:

While the entitled children speak of an absence of worthwhile work, the entrepreneurs hold three jobs at one time. While the entitled children ache at the burden of working nine to five, the entrepreneur works happily from five to nine. While the entitled children complain that success comes from "contacts" with the high and mighty ... the entrepreneurs ignore politics and make contacts with workers and customers.

While the entitled children think riches

come to the gambler ... to the ones blessed with genius or connections ... or are gifted with talent or inherited wealth, entrepreneurs know that genius is sweat and toil and sacrifice ...

EASY TO COMPLAIN, HARD TO EXECUTE

These days it seems many politicians, intellectuals and professors look on entrepreneurs at best with a kind of amused tolerance, at worst with disdain. They think the work of the entrepreneur is easy and they could do it anytime they wanted. They couldn't. They wouldn't know where to start. They don't have the courage to risk it all on a dream, or the work ethic and discipline to see it through. It is the entrepreneur who creates real wealth, who gives more than he takes.

It is the entrepreneur who chiefly create the wealth over which politicians posture and struggle. When the capitalists are thwarted, deflected, or dispossessed, the generals and politicians and socialist intellectuals are always amazed at how quickly the great physical means of production ... dissolve into so much scrap, ruined concrete, snarled wire and wilderness. —Gilder

Jeff And Kristi Hoffman, along with the entire team at Black Hills ammo exemplify the best of the hard-working, family-owned firearms business, the kind of people who keep America running — and shooting straight!

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BROWNING AUTO-5

THE WORLD'S GREATEST GUN DESIGNER'S GREATEST GUN

Will Dabbs, MD

John Moses Browning was one of 22 children born to a trigamist Mormon pioneer father who fled west to avoid religious persecution. Young John began working in his dad's gun shop at age seven. He designed his first firearm, a single-shot falling-block rifle, at age 13.

When John Browning keeled over from heart failure in 1926 at the FN factory in Liege, Belgium at age 71, he held 128 patents. Browning invented the telescoping bolt, the pistol slide, the gas-operated machinegun and a variety of common cartridges to include the .25ACP, 32ACP, .380ACP, 45ACP and the .50BMG.

In addition to the 1911 pistol, Browning designed every major machinegun used by the U.S. armed forces during World War II. Browning's belt-fed .30-caliber M1917 and M1919 as well as .50-caliber M2 and M3 guns armed Allied forces alongside his eponymous Browning Automatic Rifle. Japanese aircraft also employed copies of Browning weapons.

John Browning's son Val was the first Allied soldier to fire the BAR in anger during WWI. JMB's 37mm M4 autocannon armed the Bell P39 Airacobra as well as U.S. Navy PT boats. If we had any real sense as a nation (we don't), we would celebrate John Moses Browning Day as a federal holiday. We should commemorate the great man with postage stamps and



Bonnie Parker's Remington Model 11 Whippet shotgun was chambered for 20 gauge.



federally organized machinegun shoots from coast to coast.

Despite all those guns and all those patents, the one weapon of which John Browning was said to have been most proud was his Auto-5 shotgun. A long-recoil design, the 12-gauge Auto-5 was the world's first successful autoloading shotgun and it remains relevant today.

THE DESIGN

The Browning Auto-5 was so named because it carried a total of five rounds onboard. The gun's mechanism creates its distinctive humped back. A nearly identical design was marketed by Remington as the Model 11 and by Savage as the Model 720. The latter two guns lack the Auto-5's magazine cutoff.

Browning designed the gun in 1898 and the last Auto-5 left the factory a century later. American forces used militarized versions of the Model 11 in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. The British Special Air Service used the gun during the Malayan Conflict. Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain killed himself with one in 1994.

There is a series of bronze bushings which must be properly oriented within the forearm for safe operation. Failure to tune the gun for its loads puts undue strain on the forearm and it is notorious for splitting the furniture. I cannot for the life of me remember how the bushings go — thank goodness for Google.

The barrel and bolt cycle is a single unit, allowing this massive component to absorb much of the recoil. The same basic design drives the semiautomatic Barrett M82 .50-caliber anti-materiel rifle. This inspired mechanism keeps these powerful weapons comfortable.

DAD'S BROWNING AUTO-5

My dad bought his Belgian-made copy new in the 1950s. In my father's capable hands this remarkable scattergun has killed more wild turkeys than Noah's flood. The workmanship is simply gorgeous.

Like many Auto-5s, the forearm on dad's gun split. He repaired the component with a drywall screw, wrecking the resale value. I don't care. I'd lose my home before I let this gun leave the family. It conjures countless warm memories of traipsing about the Mississippi Delta wilderness at his side.

Dad repaired the cracked forend of his Auto-5 with a drywall screw. This improvised fix gives the gun character.



Will's snake gun (above) is a 1920s-era Remington Model 11 with the addition of a Paradigm SRP Gator Spreader, shortened buttstock and flashlight. The Gator Spreader (left) turns the shot string into a horizontal scythe and even resembles an alligator. The gun runs fine so long as nothing obstructs the reciprocating barrel.

THE REMINGTON MODEL 11

I picked up a high-mileage Model 11 for a bit north of \$200 via an online gun auction. The Model 11 was a favorite of Depression-era gangsters and lawmen, and I wanted a facsimile for my personal collection. I pruned the tube back to 18" and mounted up a new front bead to create a spitting image of John Dillinger's handheld howitzer. His original Model 11 is the centerpiece of the Dillinger weapons display at the FBI headquarters in Washington, DC.

The steel on my gun sports a beautiful brown patina, and the forearm was naturally split. I carefully glued and clamped the cracks back together before drilling tiny holes crosswise against the grain. I glued toothpicks into these holes and then gently sanded the edges flat so the repairs are legitimately invisible. The toothpicks now rigidly secured in shear make the forearm stronger than when it left the factory. There is an engineering solution to every problem.

BONNIE PARKER'S WHIPPET

Most gangsters' whippet shotguns began life as Model 11s. These motorized bandits would trim the barrels back and saw down the buttstocks to make the guns more maneuverable and faster in action. Bonnie's personal gun was a

20-gauge. She even sewed a fake zipper pocket into some of Clyde's trousers to conceal the muzzle of his whippet when he entered a bank.

My whippet is 16-gauge. The 20s were available, but they were expensive. By contrast my sweet 16 set me back maybe \$250. I trimmed the barrel and buttstock paying meticulous attention to the sundry length limits so as not to run afoul of the National Firearms Act.

A MODEL 11 FOR THE INFORMATION AGE

My current primary snake gun is a thoroughly modernized Model 11 which left the factory in the 1920s. The upgrade gear came from Brownells and Paradigm SRP. An extended Remington 870 magazine tube is a drop-in addition. I refinished the rusted steel with inexpensive bake-on engine block paint from my local auto parts store. A generous recoil pad from Brownells keeps things comfortable.

The Gator Shotgun Spreader is a modern iteration of the duckbill choke used by U.S. Navy SEALs in Vietnam. This inspired device threads into place and very effectively compresses the shot cloud into a horizontal line of concentrated chaos. The Gator Spreader will not crack like the duckbill originals and it even looks like an alligator. In a weird way nearly a century after his death my old friend John Moses Browning helps keep my rural farm free from venomous serpents even today.



www.brownells.com
www.paradigmsrp.com



NO MO' BOW

accommodate us short length-of-pull guys and certainly not archery gear?

Joseph Schramm

Joseph — So far, you're the only correspondent who wrote to say he didn't like the crossbow article. We decided, after some discussion, many of our readers are interested in crossbows as an adjunct to "regular" guns. Moreover, as some "archery guys" will loudly note, the crossbow is almost more gun than bow. I share your love for blued steel and wood stocks but it's a big world out there and I'd say most of our readers revel in seeing a little bit

of everything the "shooting" world has to offer even if a particular story isn't their personal cup of tea. —BW

KUDOS

I must sing the praises of two companies. I had shipped a Kimber rifle barreled action out to Mag-na-port in Michigan to be ported. Unfortunately, the company with brown trucks said it was "lost"/stolen in Detroit. Donna at Mag-na-port helped me file the proper form with the ATF as well as chasing down the brown truck to make sure it was missing. Alex at Kimber and Kimber also did me a huge favor. Since I had the

stock, trigger assembly, bolt, and magazine well, Kimber allowed me to send in the parts and built a new rifle for me at substantial savings. A+++ customer service!

Lessons learned — 1) Always pay the extra fee for Second Day Air; 2) expect the brown truck company to be painful getting your insurance paid.

Jens Jensen

CRAFTSMANSHIP IN LEATHER

In the December 2019 issue on page 22 ("Reloading the .357 Magnum Levergun" by John Taffin), the buttstock wrap with the shell holder on the Marlin 1894 is beautiful. Who made that? Please respond by email — I start chemo next week and may not be able to wait for an answer.

Dave Schmidt

Yes it is very nicely done and I also got a left-handed one for my grandson. Unfortunately these came from a local business, The Leather Arsenal, and I believe the owner is now retired. May God be with you through your chemo. —JT

ALL IS WELL!

As I was walking away from my post office box after having received my December issue of *GUNS Magazine*, I opened to the back page looking for *Campfire Tales*, usually my first read. Oh My Gosh! Not to be found! I think I started hyperventilating! At first I feared the worst — John Taffin had retired! I hastily looked through the index and was relieved to find the desired read. Please don't do that again without large-print warning! (Smile emoji included in the email.) Love your mag!

Richard Wilkinson

We were worried there might be a few unintended heart palpitations. Fortunately, John is fine and *Campfire Tales* isn't going anyplace — aside from moving to a different page in the magazine. Without getting into the publishing strategies and decision-making processes, we decided putting John "first" makes sense. —BW

MOVING TARGET?

Just read "Backyard Battlefields" (*GUNS* March 2019) and it reminded me of "back when." I received a lever-action toy gun that had metal cases and spring-backed plastic bullets. I loved that gun ... my sister, not so much.

Don Abrahamson



CRAFTSMANSHIP IN LEATHER



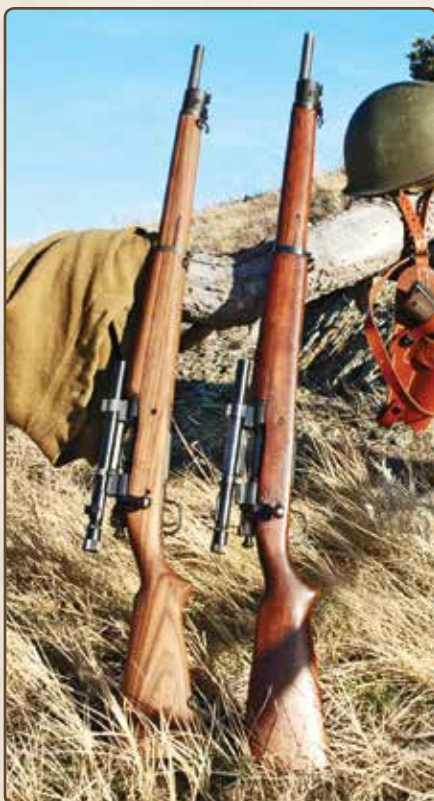
MOVING TARGET?

We're afraid to ask for more information from Don, even though we were probably guilty of similar atrocities as a child. —BW

SERVICE UPDATE

Editor's note: this letter appeared in December Crossfire but we have updated information other readers might find useful.

I found Mike "Duke" Venturino's article in the September issue very interesting ("WWII Snipers — Myths, realities, tools



SERVICE UPDATE



MODEL 31

of the trade"). I lost a brother to a sniper according to my father. I don't know how it may have been verified, but the inscription on his tombstone reads "Killed by German sniper while manning machine gun in Northern Italy, Oct 20, 1944."

Robert Reef

Our writer Barrett Tillman added the following — You might let Mr. Reef know that perhaps he could obtain some details of his brother's death via the National Military Records Center in St. Louis. That's the good news. The bad news: The archive had a catastrophic fire in the '70s that destroyed a huge percentage of WWII and later personnel files. It depended on where the individual files rested in the alphabet. But some files have been partially reconstructed so perhaps it's worth a try.

Noting that the brother was killed in Italy in 1944, I'm reminded of a longtime flying friend whose father was sniped in Italy as a regimental commander. The

German sniper saw enough of "Colonel Puresome" to put an 8mm through his boot, prompting the colonel to exclaim, "That sumbitch could shoot!"

MODEL 31

I enjoyed Mr. Marable's article on the on the Remington Model 31 (*GUNS* September 2019). I have a few M10s (predecessor to the Model 31) and must be a masochist to work on them! As with most Pedersen designs, lots of camming and timing parts wear and get out of whack. His Model 12 being one of the worst offenders as it was designed for standard velocity ammo and high-velocity just tears them up. Besides the M870, the Model 17 was on of the best pump shotguns Remington ever made — but of course it's a Browning design! What killed it was the gun writers of the day called it another one of them Remington bottom-feeders." Sad!

Chris Jarvis





DESERT EAGLE

429 DE

NEW .44 SPEED DEMON FROM MAGNUM RESEARCH

JEREMIAH MCCARTHY

Armed with killer good looks, the Desert Eagle's sex appeal has only increased over the years. The legendary gun continues to make appearances in some shooters' favorite action movies. From *Boondock Saints* to *Last Action Hero*, whether the massive auto-loader was wielded by bad guys in *The Matrix* or gold-plated editions were double-fisted by a fit Demi Moore in the *Charlie's Angels* remake, Hollywood has helped cement the Desert Eagle as a pop-culture icon. While I'm admittedly less attractive than Elizabeth Hurley's Eagle-carrying character in *Austin Powers*, all eyes were on me at the local gun shop while I filled out the ATF Form 4473 to take possession of the highly recognizable hand cannon.

This one is chambered in an exciting new cartridge, the 429 DE. The round is said to be 25 percent faster and offer 45 percent more energy when compared to the tried-and-true 240-gr. .44 Magnum load. Such stats have the new speed demon primed to be a real blockbuster both literally and figuratively.

THE GUN

The 429 DE Desert Eagle is — no surprises here — heavy, weighing in at 4 lbs., 4.3 oz. with an empty magazine. Like other

Mark XIX models, our 429 DE features an ambidextrous safety selector, Picatinny bottom rail and integral muzzle brake. Our test piece rocks a 6" stainless steel barrel with a 1:18" twist and wears a brushed stainless steel finish — currently the only finish option, but there's sure to be more in the future.

Since the new bottle-necked cartridge is based off the .50 AE, it should come as no surprise the 429 DE Desert Eagle also utilizes the same bolt and magazine as .50 AE configurations. Currently, the 429 DE is pending SAAMI approval. Owners of the .50 AE MK19 USA and/or Israeli Desert Eagle pistol with a wide 0.830" top rail will be happy to hear 429 DE drop-in conversion barrels are currently available in a variety of finishes.

It's clear the design team at MRI had hunters in mind when developing the 429 DE, so we outfitted our test piece with a 2x20 Nikon Force XR — an extended eye-relief handgun scope



The Desert Eagle firing the 429 DE cartridge combines Hollywood good looks and blockbusting power into one massive package.

providing enough magnification to make 100-yard hits very doable, but not so much you lose the scope reticle during dynamic hunting scenarios.

Additionally, we took advantage of the lower accessory rail by attaching a GG&G XDS-2 Quick-detach bipod — perfect for shooting from the bench or blind. Topping it off, we added a Slide Spider from Arachnigrip. This laser-cut, high-friction accessory fit perfectly between the slide serrations on our 429 DE Desert Eagle and uses a marine-grade adhesive to ensure it always remains in place.

RANGE TIME

Because shooting is as much a social event as it is an educational endeavor, I enlisted the help of a good friend when it came time to test the new gun. After bore-sighting the scope, getting zeroed at 25 yards was a pleasant and uneventful affair. The fast, powerful .44-caliber cartridge has considerable bark but the mass of the platform, fixed barrel and muzzle brake go a long way toward taming the beast and mitigating felt recoil.

Surprisingly, while Magnum Research advertises trigger pull at approximately 4 lbs., the test gun averaged 6 lbs. 13 oz. on our Wheeler digital trigger pull scale. If we take a moment to entertain the idea our measurements might be off, shooters will still find considerably more travel in the Desert Eagle single-action trigger pull than they would in the single-action pull of their favorite revolver. I do not believe this to be an unfair comparison for a pistol vying to be the next big hunting handgun.

THE DOPE

Using Caldwell's Ballistic Precision Chronograph, average muzzle velocity of the 210-gr. jacketed hollow points (JHPs) came blazing out of the 6" barrel at 1,647 fps, while 240-gr. soft points came out at 1,523 fps. Our results were a little slower than the published data from MRI but we're confident the cold temps played a major factor. Additionally, while MRI continues to finalize the recipe for 429 DE leading up to SAAMI approval, Tertin noted shooters can expect even faster velocities in the future along with premium bullet offerings.

At these velocities, the 210-gr. JHP is generating 639 foot-pounds of energy on target at 100 yards while the 240-gr. soft points are delivering a massive 798 foot-pounds! At this distance, the 429 DE has more energy than a typical .44 Magnum load can generate at the muzzle. Simply put, 429 DE doesn't just ring steel — it knocks it over! My shooting partner and I observed this quite literally toward the end of our shooting session, where we'd saved a single round for an off-hand shot on steel 25 yards out. We laughed out loud when, upon impact, the whole target assembly slowly fell over backwards.

ACCURACY — WITH PUNCH

In the accuracy department, 429 DE proved to be perfectly capable. While shooting from a sandbag rest, five-shot groups at 50 yards for both loads came in around 5". After eliminating a

A) The gun's weight, fixed barrel and aggressive barrel ports gives the Desert Eagle's freaky-fast .429 DE some serious bark — without the bite. **B)** The Desert Eagle's gas port, located at the 6 o'clock position near the breech, syphons gas forward to actuate the piston driven slide. **C)** The rotating bolt design is a critical component for such a powerful cartridge — four locking lugs are present in the Desert Eagle's bolt.



single flyer, the best group of the day was a hair over 2.5" using the 210-gr. JHP. Keep in mind we were battling the frigid temps and the ammo supply was limited. Tertin reports many of MRI's barrels are printing 5" to 6" groups at 100 yards.

If we can smuggle the gun out of Hollywood — and ignore all the filmmaking special-effects flimflam — there isn't a better place to take the 429 DE than to our favorite box blind. With help from the fast, powerful new .44-caliber cartridge, it appears the Desert Eagle has just been cast for its next role — a powerfully accurate deer gun.

www.magnumresearch.com

TMT TACTICAL

LOCK

MAKEOVER

TMT Tactical turned a run-of-the-mill, well-used GLOCK 22 into an eye-catching and tactically savvy shooting iron.



MAKING A FACTORY GUN YOUR OWN

BRENT T. WHEAT

ROB JONES/THE IMAGESMITH, LLC

It's been said — and even sung — “Everything old is new again.” In this issue we're taking the sentiment to a new level with an old gun given a great new lease on life.

On the cover this month is “The Thin Blue Line,” a .40 S&W custom GLOCK 22 imagined and remodeled by the metal-working wizards at TMT Tactical of Morgantown, North Carolina. The gun has a host of practical, tactical and beautiful features added by the artisans at TMT even though it started out as an ugly duckling with a long, and fortunately not too-unpleasant, history.

THE BUILDER

Before diving into the gun itself, let's take a quick figurative visit to TMT Tactical. A division of Toner Machining Technologies, the precision machining company works in the defense and aerospace industries along with their success in the custom gun world. Their work has graced the cover of many shooting

magazines and their public list of customers is impressive — they've built guns for Sarah Palin, Ted Nugent, Kid Rock, Aaron Lewis, Hank Williams Jr., Big & Rich, Cowboy Troy, Craig Morgan and retired Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell. Along with some retired-cop-turned-word-mangler from Indiana.

The company is also heavily involved in charity work. One of their GLOCK customs sold for \$40,000 for the Lone Survivor Foundation, at record at the time. Overall, the company has raised over \$200,000 for military and law enforcement charities.

TMT President Jim Toner says the company will do “almost anything” to a gun but there are limits. “In our opinion,” Toner said, “function is the most important thing. We are asked to do a lot of crazy things but if we felt it's going to affect the overall function of the handgun, we will encourage the customer not to do it.”

GLOCKS are “by far” the most common gun they see in the shop and most go with a “Full Mod Pack” at \$995, the same



GLOCK GUNS[®] MAGAZINE

TMT TACTICAL

LOCK

MAKEOVER



“THE FINAL RESULT WAS LIKE SEEING
YOUR WIFE WHEN SHE’S
REALLY GUSSIED UP FOR A SPECIAL EVENT —
YOU CAN’T BELIEVE SOMETHING SO TRIED-AND-TRUE,
SO ‘ROUTINE,’ CAN STILL INSPIRE SUCH AWE.”



The 2.5 MOA dot
Trijicon Specialized
Reflex Optic (SRO)
fits perfectly into
an RSR-pattern
mounting cutout and
offers anvil-tough
construction with a
large optic window.

Among special-
ized touches, TMT
opened up the
magazine well to
facilitate loading.
They also plugged
and smoothed the
opening behind
the magwell.

process my gun went through. TMT Tactical also allows you to roll your own gun by picking only the features you want, or alternatively, they'll build whatever you want within reason and within your budget.

THE GUN

The gun started life fresh from the box as my issued on-duty weapon for nearly a decade while I was a full-time city police officer in Nowheresville, USA. Back in the '90s our department, like countless others, fell under the spell of the "Magical 40" and bought G22s. It was my first introduction to the then-new (for U.S. agencies) GLOCK.

I still remember familiarization training. Somewhere around 1992, each shift reported to the range and turned in their heavy stainless Smith and Wesson 4506s to be handed the svelte G22s. The new guns were black and sexy, simplicity personified and while they didn't feel quite as robust as the boat-anchor Smiths, we all *knew* these guns were the future of fighting pistols!

As it turned out, like all fads, a few years later the popular gun press went chasing other dragons and our firearms instructors soon lost interest in the "old" guns. The next Latest, Greatest Thing was the GLOCK 21 in .45 ACP so we all dutifully trooped to the range and turned our '22s in for shiny new G21s.

BRINGING IT HOME

As with most agencies, we were allowed to purchase our old guns and I bought mine. Being .40 caliber, it wasn't my favorite pistol of the many carried during my three decades but it also had accompanied me through the busiest years of my career when I was young, bulletproof and too testosterone-burdened to really understand the possible ramifications of my actions. During this period it also rode my thigh during a fair number of memorable SWAT missions, including a few which appear periodically in my nachos-before-bedtime nightmares.

The pistol resided, almost forgotten and overlooked, for several years in my bedside nightstand. I decided if something bad happened too fast for me to grab the shotgun under the bed, the pistol I know like an 11th digit would be easy to reach and give me confidence — which can actually translate into enhanced competency. I also believed it would give me a healthy dose of luck, something I have certainly depended on for years!

THE PLAN TAKES SHAPE

Earlier in 2019 I talked with TMT Tactical President Jim Toner about a special project for my special gun. He offered his design services to make the gun a true one-of-a-kind piece and after a couple of emails back-and-forth, I reluctantly sent my special gun into Jim's tender care.

Once at TMT, the crew of 49 skilled machinists, designers and gunsmiths gave her both a functional and cosmetic makeover which exceeded my expectations. The final result was like seeing your wife when she's really gussied up for a special event — you can't believe something so tried-and-true, so "routine," can still inspire such awe.

With my gun, the process started with a full grip reduction and epoxy fill of the backstrap. Even though I've got pretty meaty paws, the TMT team did all sorts of magic with the contours to make the gun feel even better in hand than before. I'm already



TMT also mounted Trijicon HD night sights on the gun. The sights offer high visibility in low light and a hooked rear sight platform to assist in one-handed slide manipulation.

pondering what they could do with the beefy frame for my G21!

WEIGHT LOSS DIET

The trigger guard also went on a diet by receiving the popular "undercut" so many folks are doing to their stock GLOCKS. Though I haven't yet taken the gun through a full-on, high-round-count class, it doesn't seem as likely to give me the old "GLOCK knuckle" as it did before. On the forward part of the guard they also removed the ugly raised grip surface, the one that encourages shooters to put a finger up there. Said shooters then wonder why their shots go low, unlike the few competitors/professionals who *do* put a finger up there and shoot just fine.

The remainder of the frame received a superb, grippy stipple job with a pattern reminding me of sunflower florets. (Hey, what can I say? I went to a land-grant university!) The grip certainly got worked over as expected but TMT also stippled underneath

GLOCK

This special TMT GLOCK 22 features a grippy stipple job with new finger indexing pads above the trigger and stippling below the trigger guard to prevent "GLOCK knuckle!"

“IT IS APPARENT TO EVERYONE WHAT THIS GUN STANDS FOR.”



The “Thin Blue Line” GLOCK 22 as remodeled by TMT Tactical. The gun also features a Trijicon SRO Optic and a Coyote Streamlight TLR-VIR II light/laser.

the trigger guard and put a nice tactile patch alongside the frame where your trigger finger can easily index when off-target, even in the dark. They also opened up the magwell just a touch. The stippling was left black while the rest of the frame got a nice, not-too-flashy gray Cerakote coating.

The slide really got worked over. First, the rear cocking serrations were opened up using a ball-end mill, while the front of the slide received “Bone Saw” serrations. Even if you didn’t go for all the “pretties,” I certainly recommend these two operations on any “carry” GLOCK. Having pointed guns at many bad people while wet, sweaty, muddy and once even a tad bloody, I know having such positive engagement for loading or malfunction clearance is an important feature. The slide and frame also received a nice, comfort-enhancing bevel job on the muzzle end.

OPTICS AND LIGHT

TMT Tactical milled a pocket for an RMR-pattern sight and installed a matching cover plate. My first act upon receiving the gun was to remove the plate and install a Trijicon Specialized Reflex Optic (SRO) red-dot optic. The optic went on without a hitch and with a little judicious blue Loctite, it should stay there through hell *and* high water.

I’m old-school and still have trouble convincing my eye and brain a red dot is a better way to go on a pistol, but such a classy, noteworthy custom gun — which might conceivably still fire a shot in anger — deserved a top-shelf, reliable optic. Having put just a few boxes of shells through the gun, I’m impressed with the wide field of view and easy user controls of the SRO. And, if you don’t want to use an optic, TMT Tactical installed a set of Trijicon HD night sights which are robust and fast to use in low light.

To light up the night, I added the robust Streamlight TLR-VIR II in Coyote brown. This combo illuminator offers 300 lumens of white light and an infrared laser. My days of clearing houses with night vision goggles are long gone, but who knows? Maybe my old team will host a low-speed, high-drag “alumni mission”!

TURNING HEADS

The final touches were just for looks! On the top forward part of the slide, the nice flat area where you can land a small aircraft on a GLOCK, TMT used a CNC machine to cut a nice American flag in relief. They also added a blue-outlined badge on the slide cover plate and the TMT Tactical logo the left side. Once the machining was done, the slide was given a great-looking multi-cam Cerakote finish using gray, green and black, nicely complementing the gray slide.

The final touch, and what makes it so special to me among all the other great features, is the very obvious “thin blue line” applied in Cerakote to the top of the slide, running down the axis of the barrel. It is apparent to everyone what this gun stands for.

RANGE TIME

This part of the story is a little funny, really. Each cover gun in our magazine gets a detailed review of how it handled, how it functioned and how it shot. However, when you’re taking a nearly 30-year-old GLOCK with Lord knows how many rounds down the pipe, what can be said?

Here’s the in-depth, technical examination so try to follow me: It shoots like every other GLOCK 22. This is a good or bad thing depending on your personal dogma, but just like *the* golden-arched restaurant everyone claims they hate — GLOCKS are popular for a reason.

FIX ‘ER UP

In the end, I never really thought I’d own a true custom gun. In my imagination, custom guns cost tens of thousands of dollars and took years to design and build. Such apparent difficulty and expense made owning a one-of-a-kind gun something very far down my shooting bucket list.

Yet, the ease and relative low cost of fixing up my old sidekick was eye-opening. While not inexpensive, the price is certainly within reach of most “serious” shooters. To say I’m happy with the outcome would be an understatement, somewhere along the lines of noting President Trump is mildly unpopular with Progressives and the media.

Before you buy yet another pistol to sit quietly gathering dust in the gun cabinet, consider sending one of your old ones to TMT Tactical.



www.tmttactical.com

STEVENS *Model* 555

THIS SWEET SIXTEEN IS PERFECT FOR UPLAND HUNTERS

HOLT BODINSON

The Sixteen gauge is a sleeper but the “forgotten gauge” may be clawing its way back from undeserved exile in a number of shotgun production lines. The latest example is the Savage/Stevens Model 555 O/U.

THE UPLAND GUN

When I began hunting, there were a lot of 16-gauge shotguns being carried in the fields and ponds around the neighborhood. Many a young hunter was started afield with a single-barreled 16-gauge. Winchester Model 12s, Ithaca pumps and Browning Sweet Sixteen A-5's dominated the local adult market alongside a smattering of Fox, Parker and L.C. Smith doubles. My next-door neighbor, who grew up in Oklahoma bobwhite country, agrees as he and all of his family carried a 16-gauge. Just last night I was rereading Robert Ruark's *The Old Man and the Boy*. You guessed

it, when Ruark turned 11, the Old Man gave him a 16-gauge double. “There were engravings of quail and dogs in silver on the sides and my name on the silver butt plate,” Ruark wrote.

Then, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the 20-gauge 3" magnum simply buried the Sixteen, although the 16-gauge continued to be the dominant all-around chambering in Europe.

STILL A WINNER

The sterling quality of the 16-gauge is it can be built on a 20-gauge-sized frame. A classic example is the much-loved 16-gauge Winchester Model 12, constructed on the trim 20-gauge frame. The result in all shotgun styles is a lithe, racy gun with strong ballistics, a joy to carry afield.

Sixteens mount as fast as a 20-gauge, aren't punishing in the recoil department and throw the same weight — or heavier weight — shoot charges faster and often more evenly from a standard 2 3/4" hull. In short, the standard 16-gauge delivers



The slightly smaller 16-gauge shell (bottom) can be adapted to 20-gauge frames but it still delivers 12-gauge, 3-dram performance with 1-1/8 oz. of shot.



The Stevens produced sensational 30-yard patterns with 1-1/8 oz. of 7-1/2 shot. The X'd clays all have at least 2 pellets in them.



classic 12-gauge field performance in a livelier, lighter gun.

So, with the recent reappearance of Browning's "Sweet Sixteen" A5 and now Savage/Stevens's new, Turkish-made Model 555 O/U, there's just the possibility hunters are again appreciating the forgotten qualities of the 16-gauge shell.

SAVAGE QUALITY

The Model 555 pictured is Steven's "enhanced" model displaying full-coverage, laser cut, scroll engraving on its silver receiver and high-quality pieces of nicely figured, oil-finished, Turkish walnut for the buttstock and forearm. It also differs from a standard grade 555 in having auto ejectors rather than manual extractors. The standard blued grade carries an MSRP of \$705 while the enhanced model is listed at \$879. Competitive street prices will be lower for both models, and I think the price differential between the standard and enhanced models is well worth the small extra cost for the full-coverage engraving, figured stocks and auto ejectors.

My first impression of the 555 in 16-gauge was how light and how well-balanced it is. With its 28", chrome-lined, stack barrels featuring ventilated top and side ribs, it tips the scales at only 6.45 lbs. The weight savings are made possible by scaling the receiver to 20-gauge proportions, using trunnions rather than a full hinge-pin and machining the action from aluminum. The trunnions are steel inserts as is the face plate in the standing breech, and there's a solid steel under-locking lug.

It's a smart, modern and durable design, precision machined and well fitted. There's no slop in the action, but neither is it stiff.

The shallow frame of the Model 555 plus the upswept line of the Schnabel fore-end minimizes the distance from the bore axis to the palm of your leading hand. This all-important hand-to-barrel relationship is the mark of all fine game guns. We call this quality "pointability," and the Stevens has it.

SWEET STOCK

The richly grained, Turkish walnut stock is eye-pleasing with good lines and fine checkering patterns. The stocks are oil finished, and if you bring them up your nose, you can still catch just a hint of the wonderful aroma of linseed oil. Length-of-pull is 14.57 and when measured with Brownells' LOP and Drop Gauge, drop-at-the-comb is 1-1/4", 2-3/8" at the heel with zero cast. The butt is capped with a solid pad.

The Stevens features a single-selective, mechanical trigger controlled by an easy-to-thumb tang safety and comes factory



The gun features eye-catching, full-coverage laser-cut floral scroll engraving.



To control weight, the receiver is machined from aluminum with steel trunnions and a steel-reinforced standing breech face.

supplied with five choke tubes (C, IC, M, IM, F), a cable lock and ear plugs.

THE ONLY DRAWBACK

The only aspect lacking in the 16-gauge is the need for a better selection of shells at competitive prices, along with dealers who will stock them. For testing purposes, I chose Federal's "High-Brass", 3-1/4 dram equivalent load featuring 1-1/8 oz. of lead 7-1/2s. It's a great upland load.

For point-of-impact and patterning analysis, I used Hunter-John clay targets consisting of 126 life-size clays, roughly the core body size of a small game bird.

Selecting a modified tube for the lower barrel, I backed off 30 yards, a good upland yardage and let fly. The resulting six patterning sheets were all similar to the one pictured here with well-centered patterns, excellent core densities and no patchy holes. I was impressed.

A REAL REVIVAL?

Will the Sixteen make a comeback? Without a better selection of shells on local dealers' shelves, it will be a tough uphill battle. On the other hand, packing the classic 12-gauge, 3-dram 1 1/8 oz loading in a shotgun crafted on a 20-gauge frame, the Sixteen will certainly live on in the hands of knowledgeable upland hunters.



Stevens Model 555 Enhanced by Savage packs 12-gauge ballistics in a 20-gauge frame and features comprehensive engraving, great walnut and superb "pointability."



The new Cimarron Model 1894 .38-55 (left) is a dead ringer for Duke's Model 1894 .38-55 made in 1897 (right).

CIMARRON

★ MODEL 1894 .38-55 ★

IMITATION IS THE
BEST FLATTERY

MIKE "DUKE" VENTURINO PHOTOS: YVONNE VENTURINO

Never in my wildest imagination did I expect anyone to reproduce Winchester's Model 1894 in .38-55. Cimarron Arms has them, as made by Uberti of Italy, and if the .38-55 sample I have here is typical, they are darn fine rifles.

NOT A FAV

Although I cannot say Winchester's Model 1894 is my favorite lever gun — the award goes to the Model 1873 — it does have a special place in my heart. The reason is one in .38-55 made in 1897 was my very first lever gun. Back in 1984 a fellow I did not know saw a mutual friend and said, "I've got an old Winchester .38-55, you interested?" My friend said "No, but Duke might be," and then gave him my phone number. I visited the fellow, bought the Winchester and then over the years have become close friends with him. Good move

on two counts.

In writing my book *Shooting Lever Guns of the Old West* I bought and shot extensively Model 1894s in all five of the chamberings offered prior to 1940 — the .25-35 WCF, .30 WCF (.30-30), .32 Winchester Special, .32-40 and .38-55. For the uninitiated, here is a brief synopsis of the '94.

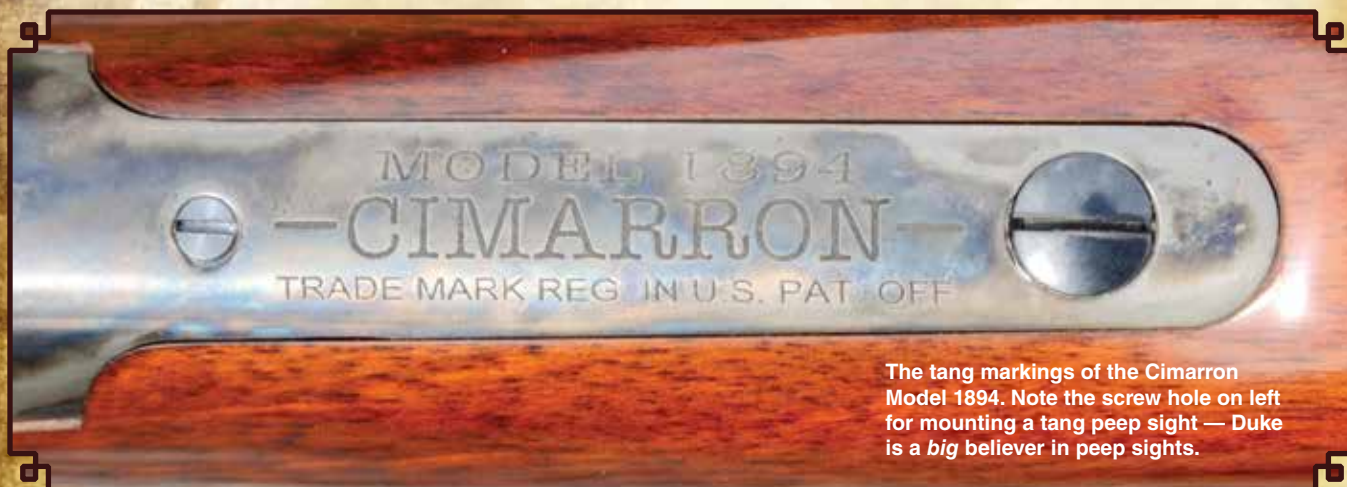
MODEL 1894

Although the Model 1894 is rightly touted as America's first smokeless powder sporting rifle, it was first introduced for two blackpowder lead-bullet cartridges, the .32-40 and .38-55. The reason was Winchester had some difficulty in developing the nickel-steel barrel needed for jacketed bullets. The steel normally used for their barrels would wear quickly from copper-alloy jacket friction. The actual first smokeless/jacketed bullet cartridge offered

in '94 was .25-35 WCF in 1895. The .30 WCF, coming along a few months later, was called .30-30 by Marlin and this name stuck. Then in 1902, Winchester did an odd thing — they simply necked up the .30-30 case to take 0.321" jacketed bullets and called it .32 Winchester Special. Performance between the .30 and .32 rounds was identical for practical purposes.

To say the Winchester Model 1894 was a hot selling item is a vast understatement. With the population of the United States being but a fraction of today's, Winchester sold the first million '94s by 1927. Serial number 1,000,000 was presented to President Calvin Coolidge. Despite interrupted production for several years during World War II, serial number 2,000,000 was presented to President Dwight D. Eisenhower in the 1950s.

Although a huge array of special order



The tang markings of the Cimarron Model 1894. Note the screw hole on left for mounting a tang peep sight — Duke is a big believer in peep sights.



Close up of Duke's original Winchester Model 1894 (top) with Cimarron's new Model 1894 (bottom). Both are .38-55s.



features could be added during the first quarter of the Model 1894's production, two versions were most popular. Standard rifles had 26" round barrels while octagon-shaped ones cost extra. Their two-piece stocks were walnut and standard buttstocks were a straight grip with crescent steel buttplate. Forearms had a steel nose cap. Magazine capacity for all five chamberings was nine rounds and weight was a mere 7 1/2 lbs.

The other top-selling Model 1894 was the saddle ring carbine, primarily intended for horsemen. Those had 20" lightweight round barrels, a unique slightly curved but wider buttplate on the straight grip stock and magazine capacity of seven rounds. Whereas standard rifles had steel nose caps securing wood to barrel, standard saddle ring carbines had two steel bands holding things together. My saddle ring carbine weighs only 6 1/4 lbs. A military musket version of the Model 1894 was also offered but they are extremely rare — I've never seen one. All the above standard '94s had blued metal.

Winchester designed the Model 1894 with the idea of smokeless powder ammunition. It has a completely different bolt locking system than earlier Winchester Model '86s and '92s. Instead of twin locking lugs at the bolt's



The steel buttplates of new (above right) and old Model 1894s are near identical. Duke's only complaint was the wood-to-metal fit could be better. Look at how closely the front sight of Duke's original Model 1894 (below right) matches the new Cimarron Model 1894.

rear, there is a single lug with a hole in the center for striking the firing pin.

A NEW ORIGINAL

As said in the beginning, Cimarron/Uberti did an exemplary job of recreating the original Model 1894s. Sights are semi-buckhorn rear with notched slider. Each notch in the slider is supposed to represent an increase of 50 yards in elevation zero. Of course, it depends on ammunition velocity. The front sight is a one-piece blade. Both front and rear sights are dovetailed to the barrel so the rifle can be zeroed for windage. A note here: Both sights have tiny "cramp" screws which must be loosened before trying to drift the sights. Buttplates on both my original and the new Cimarron are sharply curved crescent style, with the new one having a bit sharper edges top and bottom. Take it from me — you don't want those points on either rifle pressing into your shoulder during recoil.

My sample new '94 has the 26" octagon barrel along with a color-case-hardened receiver and lever. A carbine version is also available with a 20" lightweight barrel. However, from photos on Cimarron's website, I think it does not have the saddle ring feature. The new '94 isn't cluttered with external safeties, they are the same as originals. The half-cock notch in the hammer is one safety, albeit a poor one. There is also a small spring loaded protrusion on the bottom tang. The lever must be fully closed when depressing the protrusion for the rifle to fire.

LOADING UP

I fired the Cimarron/Uberti Model 1894 .38-55 with one factory load — Winchester's 255-gr. JSP bullet — and one handload. I



The low 2½" group is Duke's handloads, followed by a group with Winchester's factory loads (after rear sight was raised) of 4½" due to undersize bullets.

pulled a bullet from the factory load and it measured 0.376". Why did I do that? Original Winchester .38s (except for the .38-40) had barrels nominally 0.379" across their grooves. So RCBS's old #38-255FN, which I acquired right after getting the first Winchester in 1984, drops a nominally 0.380" bullet.

Most new .38-55 barrels have 0.375" for groove diameter and Winchester factory ammo is made for such. Unfortunately, in my mind RCBS also changed their .38-55 mold design to drop bullets of about 0.377" and renumbered the mold as #37-255FN. My #38-255FN bullets were the same size as my original because Cimarron had their .38-55 barrels made to the early specs, i.e., 0.379".

My favorite powder for such cartridges is Western Powder's 5744 and a charge

weight of 19 grains was used. Winchester's factory load gave barely over 1,100 fps while my handload hit a bit over 1,300 fps. By the way, rifling twist rate for this .38-55 is 1:18" while for Cimarron/Uberti's .30-30s is one turn in 12".

This must be said — jacketed bullets of 0.376" will likely shoot okay but not great in a 0.379" barrel. The smaller lead bullets will only tumble in my experience. Lead bullets of 0.379" will shoot the best — again by my considerable experience. To get a mold dropping bullets this large I recommend Buffalo Arms as their website lists an array of bullet molds for 0.380" bullets.

DOWNRANGE

Most groups for five shots at 100 yards ran from 2 1/2" to 4 1/2" although I admit to some flyers ruining other groups. I was having trouble holding vertical dispersion with the open sights because of my 70-year-old eyes. A nice touch with the new '94 is the upper tang is drilled for mounting a peep sight. I highly recommend them — with a peep, the rear sight is ignored so focus can completely be on the front one.

Cimarron/Uberti's Model 1894 is a good addition to their lever-gun series. My only critical comment is I think the wood-to-metal fit of its buttstock could have been a bit better. They are priced from \$1,337.70 to \$1353.30 depending on the exact version. 🦋



Duke fired these two loads through the new Cimarron Model 1894 .38-55 — his favorite handload (left) and Winchester 255-gr. factory loads.

www.cimarron-firearms.com
www.buffaloarms.com

RUGER WRANGLER

DAVID FREEMAN

America still loves its cowboys. This is reflected in the number of single-action revolvers offered by current gunmakers. Ruger's single-actions have long been favorites of cowboy action shooters and others who shoot for fun. The cost of ammo and the discomfort of heavy recoil make rimfire versions of these revolvers quite popular.

AFFORDABLE ON THE RANGE

However, the prices on Ruger's rimfire single-action revolvers have been right up there with their centerfire cousins, somewhere north of \$500. There's never been any question the classic Ruger revolvers are worth every penny — they're beautiful, made of stainless or blued steel, rugged and durable.

But the 2016 firearms market slowdown resulted in manufacturers finding ways to offer more affordable guns across the board. Ruger product manager Mark Gurney and his team decided it was time to address a market segment they were missing — an entry-level, affordable, single-action sixgun. Their answer is the new Ruger Wrangler and it is drawing more excitement than almost any new gun offered this year.

The Wrangler has all the look and feel of a classic Ruger single-action revolver but with an aluminum alloy frame. The finish is Cerakote in a choice of three colors — black, silver or burnt bronze, each with a black cylinder and black grips. MSRP is \$249 but you can bet store prices are in the \$210 to \$220 range. If you can't pick a favorite color, you can buy all three and it won't break the bank. Ruger sent me one of each for testing. My personal favorite is the black one, but they're all attractive.

ALUMINUM REVISIT

It's not the first time Ruger has built an aluminum alloy Single Six. In 1956 they introduced a "Lightweight" version of the Single-Six revolver which had an alloy cylinder frame, alloy cylinder, alloy grip frame and steel barrel. Only one barrel length (4 5/8") was offered. The guns weighed about 23 oz. compared to the 35 oz. weight of the standard Single Six.

The first production guns had a silver/gray anodized

The new Ruger Wrangler makes playing Cowboy more affordable. Can't choose a color? Get one of each! The first Ruger aluminum-frame .22 revolver (bottom) is the long-discontinued "Lightweight Single Six." According to Ruger customer service, this particular gun shipped in May 1956.

NGLER

Playing cowboy is
more affordable
than ever!

cylinder frame, black anodized grip frame, flat cartridge loading gate, blued barrel and black checkered hard rubber grips. They also had a brown or dark golden coating on the alloy cylinder.

These first guns became known to collectors as the “Tri-color” Lightweight. Later, Ruger built some of these guns in all-blue and with a steel cylinder instead of aluminum alloy. Production was stopped on the lightweights in 1959 after a run of approximately 12,000. Apparently, the market at the time wasn’t ready for an aluminum revolver from Ruger.

The new Wrangler copies the external style of these early aluminum alloy Single Sixes externally, but internally it has newly designed parts, foremost of which is Ruger’s Transfer Bar Safety, allowing the gun to be carried with all cylinders filled. When the hammer and trigger are fully forward, the transfer bar is lowered out of firing position and the hammer rests directly on the frame, not on the firing pin. The hammer and trigger on the Wrangler resemble those on the New Model Single Six, but they are metal injection molded (MIM) parts. Ruger has its own MIM operation which allows them to manage both costs and quality.

COMPARISONS

It’s only natural to compare the Wrangler with its more expensive cousin. I have a New Model Single Ten .22 to use as a comparison, made from stainless steel with hardwood gun-fighter grips. I’ve always been a fan of the wood grips on Ruger’s single-action revolvers, but I’m finding the Wrangler’s checkered synthetic grips attractive and functional as well. They are reminiscent of early Colt Single Action Army grips and have a great feel to them. It appears to be the same grip as on the previous Lightweight Single Six.

The New Model Single Ten weighs more — 38.8 oz. compared to the Wrangler’s 30 oz. The Single Ten has adjustable fiber optic sights where the Wrangler features a blade front sight and a fixed rear sight factory set to be on target at 15 yards. None of

The Wrangler (bottom) with its Stainless Steel New Model Single Six cousin.

“GO OUT AND LEARN THE FUN OF
SINGLE-ACTION SHOOTING.
THAT’S WHAT THIS GUN IS ALL ABOUT!”





RUGER WRANGLER

David's granddaughter Abby (above) with her favorite, the Burnt Bronze Wrangler. David's grandkids Josh, Abby and Drew enjoying the Wranglers at their backyard plinking range.



The Wrangler loved all .22 rounds from Short to Long Rifle.



the Single Action Ruger's have a half cock. Instead, you open the loading gate to rotate the cylinder for loading or unloading.

The Wrangler has a cold hammer-forged 4.62" barrel with six grooves and a right hand 1:14" twist. Trigger pull on the three Wranglers I tested averaged just over 5 lbs. while the Single Ten pull averaged 4 lbs. 6 oz. The Wrangler shares a feature with other Ruger rimfire revolvers — they have a recessed ring around each cylinder hole allowing the base of the cartridges to sit totally flush in the cylinder. This recessed ring makes it possible to dry-fire the Wranglers without damage to the firing pin, something almost always prohibited on other brands of rimfire revolvers. The Wrangler owner's manual actually recommends dry-fire practice.

When I asked Mark Gurney what he wanted to tell our readers about the Wrangler, he said, "Go out and learn the fun of single-action shooting. That's what this gun is all about!"

GUNFIGHT AT THE BACKYARD CORRAL

In keeping with this thought, I rounded up three grandchildren for a session with the Wranglers at their backyard plinking range. We set out a bunch of aluminum soft drink cans along with some self-healing targets and just went plinking. I had a variety of rounds on hand including Winchester Super X .22 Shorts, Remington .22 Subsonic, CCI Mini Mags and Remington Golden Bullet. The kids had cans and the self-healing targets bouncing all over the place. They have all been well trained in gun and range safety, so I just sat and watched the smiles on their faces. There wasn't even a hint of a problem and they all enjoyed the session. The all-black gun seemed to be the overall color favorite among the boys, while their sister preferred

the burnt bronze one.

The next day it was my turn to shoot. I went to one of my favorite indoor ranges with the three Wranglers and a couple of guns for comparison — the New Model Single Ten and a High Standard Double-Nine reminiscent of my first handgun, bought 56 years ago for \$45. It's an aluminum-framed revolver, too, weighing only 25 oz. with a 5 lb. single-action trigger pull and iron sights like on the Wrangler.

I picked an assortment of ammunition, including everything from match grade Ely to some old .22 Shorts and some .22 Longs I've probably had for 50 years. The nice thing about revolvers is they don't care. I find shooting the Shorts fun because they are so quiet compared to other cartridges. If you want to make some loud bangs use CCI Mini Mags.

I wasn't expecting match-grade accuracy but by focusing on the Wrangler's blade front sight the result was some nicely grouped shots around the point of aim at 15 yards — plenty good for plinking or teaching a kid about sight alignment. What's really cool is an hour of range time with less than \$10 in ammo cost and no sore hands or shoulders due to recoil.

SINGLE-ACTION SOLD

I'm all-in with these Wranglers. I can see them as "first guns" for an entire generation of new shooters attracted by the look, feel, brand name and quality of a new Ruger at an easily justified price when compared to alternatives. I can also see them as affordable collectibles for us old guys who just can't resist adding another Ruger or two to their collection — just because they can!

www.ruger.com



SIG SAUER®

P320

XFIVE Legion

**A SERIOUS COMPETITION
IRON WITH USGI ROOTS**

JOHN TAFFIN

The standard SIG SAUER P320 is the basic platform the company used to enter the U.S. military trials to select a new pistol. As a result, the P320 was adopted by the government in 2017 as the M17, which tells us something about the excellence of the P320. There is no doubt the civilian version of the M17 will become extremely popular for two reasons — first is the fact military designs always spill over into the shooting public. This was true with the Colt Single Action in the last quarter of the 19th century and it's also easy to see the tremendous influence of the .30-06 1903 Springfield and the .45 Government Model 1911 during the 20th century. The other reason is the fact it's chambered in 9mm, the most popular semi-automatic cartridge available today.

M17'S NEW COUSIN

Now SIG SAUER has turned to the P320 platform to come up with another excellent version of the 9mm semi-automatic pistol. The M17 is designed for serious combat while the new XFIVE Legion is designed for serious competition. In fact, this design is held in such high esteem by the company they've made a very well-known competitive shooter, Phil Strader, their Pistol Products Manager. This alone makes it easy to see they are serious about pistol production appealing to, and satisfying,

discriminating shooters. If you've ever watched any of the TV gun shows featuring combat-style competition, you've certainly seen Phil shooting SIGs. Phil shares some things about the new pistol: "The P320 XFIVE LEGION takes advantage of the positive attributes of polymer and steel simultaneously. The TXG grip module flexes (like polymer material) for a softer recoil, but maintains the weight of a steel pistol for less muzzle flip. Combined with the improved trigger that reduces pull by up to 30



The X5 Legion comes in this sturdy case with three magazines and a lighter recoil spring.



The SIG SAUER P320 XFIVE Legion (opposite page) — a serious competitor with military roots. The SIG SAUER M17 is the official sidearm of the U.S. Military since 2017 and the kissin' cousin to the P320 XFIVE Legion.

percent and the new recoil assembly that allows shooters to customize the pistol to their specific loads, the P320 XFIVE LEGION will make a visit to the range something to remember.”

THE WHY

Phil went on to explain the X-Series grip module was redesigned from the original P320 based on input from professionals and competitive shooters, law enforcement personnel, SIG Academy staff and others. By looking at a wide variety of potential users, the improvements included a better magwell opening, an extended beavertail and a straighter grip profile to better resemble the feel of a 1911.

They certainly accomplished this goal as the XFIVE Legion feels like a 1911 in my hand. The addition of heavy material in the TXG grip mod (more on this shortly) came from another engineer at SIG. Phil shared they typically add weight to pistols in order to make them shoot softer and this was a way to evenly distribute the weight throughout the entire grip.

Phil continued: “All of the other attributes were based on what we’ve been doing in competitive shooting for years. The flat trigger surface that breaks at 90 degrees helps the shooter from over-manipulating the pistol left or right during the trigger pull. The slide serrations were improved for a more positive grip on the slide. The thicker 5" barrel was to increase weight in the front, and the recoil assembly was a change that many have

already been making to the original P320 XFIVE LEGION.”

OUT FOR A SPIN

Those are the words from a professional, now I will take a look at it. I’ve never been a big fan of black pistols and I am pleased to see this pistol is not black but rather Legion Gray. SIG was able to increase the weight of this pistol without using an all-steel grip frame, while at the same time reducing the flexing of the frame. They did come up with a 43-oz. pistol by infusing the polymer grip frame with tungsten. The combination of the two materials makes a significant difference in both weight and feel. The 43 oz. is not overly heavy but it certainly dampens the recoil of the 9mm significantly.

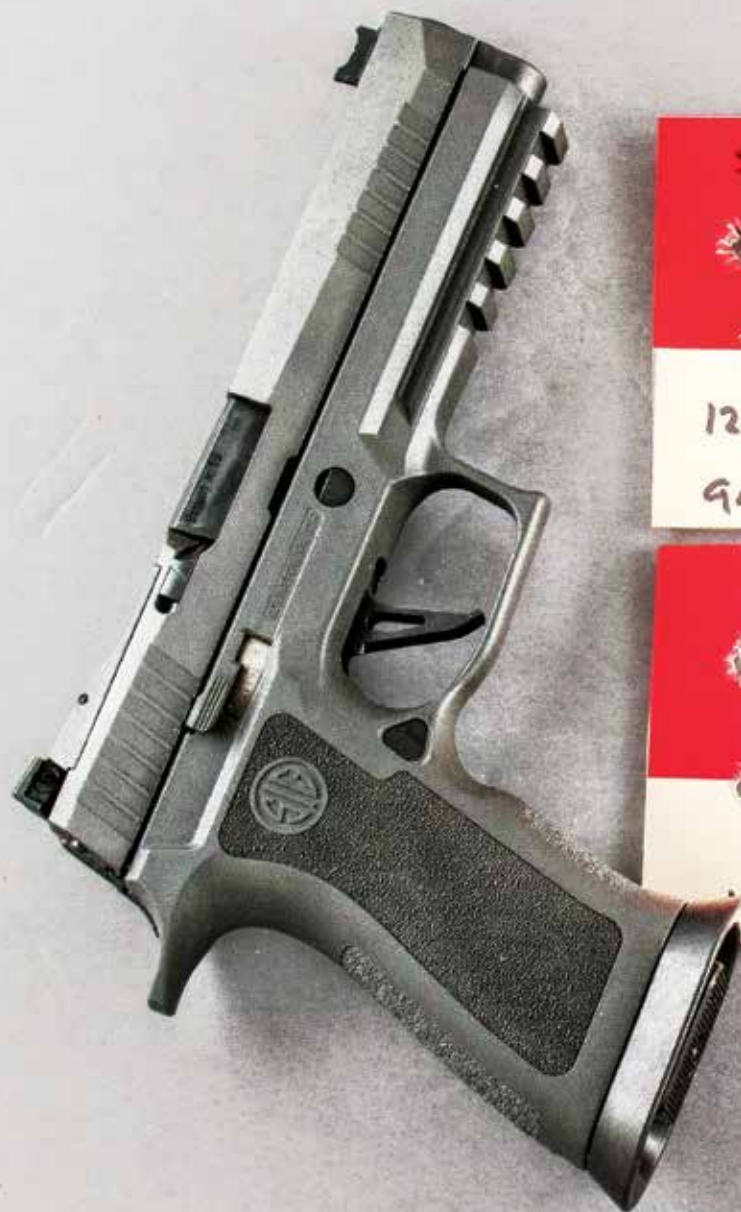
This pistol was designed first and foremost for competition and it almost makes me wish I could compete again. However, those days are several decades back in the past, but perhaps I could compete again if I could just stand still and shoot plates while never having to move. Maybe. I did have a good time shooting paper plates with the XFIVE Legion. I may not use it for competition, however, with a proper holster, I can see no problem packing it while wandering off, on foot, to explore sagebrush, foothills, forests and mountains. Of course, all of this requires the same movement as competition but I can at least dream.

TARGET LOCK

Sights on this pistol are absolutely excellent, consisting of a green fiber-optic front sight which is exceptionally easy to see, mated up with a fully adjustable square notch rear sight. The striker-fired pistol operates much like the double-action revolvers I have been shooting for the past 60+ years. In fact, the trigger pull is better than one finds on many of today’s



The pistol was shot with a variety of 9mm loads including eight factory SIG SAUER versions.



Accurate, but built for speed — John shot these targets at 20 yards with several different 9mm loads.



John demonstrated the SIG SAUER X5 Legion works just as well on paper plates as steel.

double-action revolvers. It's also much like a double-action revolver as there are no external safeties to manipulate. When time comes for shooting, the only decision to be made is to pull the trigger.

XFIVE controls are a takedown lever on the left side, an ambidextrous slide release, and a magazine release on the left side behind the trigger. The magazine release is very positive and there is no hesitation with the magazine sliding out. SIG supplies not just one or two, but three high-capacity, 17-round magazines. This means plenty of ammunition readily available for competition and should one wander afield, the ability to carry more than a full box of ammunition.

If one desires, the rear sight assembly can be easily removed and replaced by a Romeo 1 PRO optic. Shooting can also be aided by adding light

or laser to the Picatinny rail in front of the trigger guard. The trigger is straight and as Phil mentioned, breaks at 90 degrees. It's relatively wide and smooth faced — this means no safety trigger, which always chews on my trigger finger, and breaks cleanly and crisply, making it one of the easiest shooting 9mms I have ever experienced. It can be made even easier-shooting by replacing the normal 14-lb. recoil spring with the provided 12-lb. spring for shooting lighter loads.

“THIS PISTOL IS SO PLEASANT TO SHOOT I’VE SPENT SEVERAL DAYS RUNNING MORE THAN 20 DIFFERENT LOADS THROUGH IT, INCLUDING SEVEN DIFFERENT SIG SAUER LOADS.”

RUNNING THE XFIVE

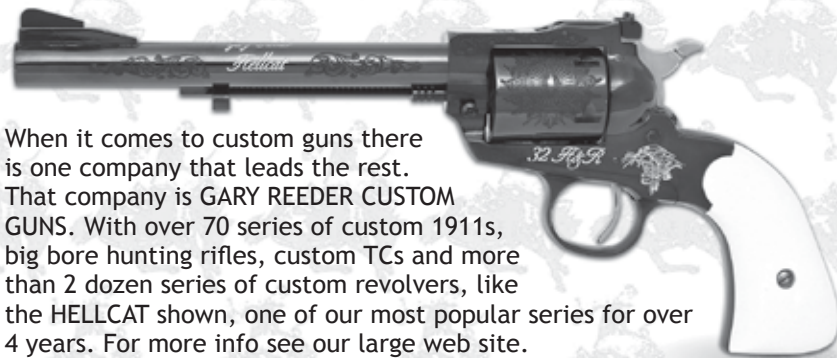
This pistol is so pleasant to shoot I’ve spent several days running more than 20 different loads through it, including seven different SIG SAUER loads. I experienced absolutely no malfunctions of any kind as to feeding, chambering, and ejecting. For practice use or my style of competition on paper plates I find FMJ 9mm loads very reasonably priced and readily available. However, for more serious carrying my choice of loads would come down to the SIG SAUER V-Crown 115-gr. JHP. This load clocks out at over 1,300 fps and would do most of what we would want or expect a 9mm to do.

In reality, at this stage of my life, competition is over and wondering afield is pretty limited. However, I did purchase this P320 and I like it so much I’ve ordered a second P320 version, the civilian version of the M17. I see myself shooting this XFIVE Legion quite often and sharing it with family members, kids and grandkids. This is the perfect pistol for some enjoyable family fun shooting using these 9mm rounds. 🔫

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TPM OUTFIT H&K MP5

WILL DABBS, MD

In 1990 I was a hard-charging young Army Aviator suffering from a toxic overdose of both testosterone and patriotism. There wasn't a great deal to do around Mother Rucker for a young stud with a weekend to kill. However, rumors abounded about a cool new movie called *Navy SEALs*.

SCREEN ENVY

In the first few minutes we realized the Good Guys (a captured American helicopter crew) were very good and the Bad Guys (a mob of bloodthirsty Islamic terrorists) were very bad — then the windows blew out, and holy heck broke loose.

The SEALs sported black *balaclavas* and superfluous black eye shadow. There wasn't much point but it looked undeniably awesome. What was truly compelling, however, were their sound-suppressed German submachine guns.

The guns chattered like typewriters. They sounded like crack-addled beavers in a furniture factory. Enraptured, I leapt to my feet, held aloft a defiant fist, and shouted, "As God is my witness, someday I will make one of those magnificent firearms my own!"

I didn't actually do it, but I did kind of think it. Now, some 29 years later I have finally added an MP5SD to my personal collection — and here is what it is really like.

GENESIS

The Heckler and Koch MP5 was the fourth iteration of the roller-locked HK family. This 9mm stuttergun followed versions running 7.62x51mm, 7.62x39mm and 5.56x45mm. The gun's original designation was the HK54.

Work began on the gun in 1964, and it first



Sexiest machinegun alive — The use of the MP5SD by the British SAS in 1980 during Operation Nimrod sold a lot of submachine guns. The knife is a Gerber Mk II.

TERS SD CLONE

saw service with West German border guards two years later. There have been more than one hundred variants and it remains in production today. Licensed copies have been made in Greece, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkey and the U.K. Numerous small companies in the U.S. currently produce clones.

The MP5 is lyrically complicated. The Sten and Grease Gun showed us you could make a reliable full-auto submachine gun with half a dozen parts and a little judicious mechanical slop. By

contrast, the MP5's entrails look like those of a sewing machine. The design stemmed originally from the German MG42 belt-fed machinegun.

The MG42 changed the way the world made guns. Here we saw a hard-use military weapon crafted via industrial stampings. The guys who built the MG42 had never before built a gun. As a result, they approached the project without a lot of preconceptions.



TRIGGER TIME ON THE ALPHA PREDATOR





The MP5SD sound suppressor is removable and encapsulates a ported barrel dropping standard velocity ammunition to subsonic speeds.

“SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT TRAVELING AT LOW ALTITUDE WILL MAKE BYSTANDERS GET RELIGION. THE SAME EFFECT IN BULLETS IS SIMPLY ANNOYING.”



The HK scope mount (above) is as complicated as the U.S. tax code but it works. The diopter rear sight (below) on the MP5 is as complicated as everything else about the gun.



Despite its meticulous design and rarefied execution, the MP5SD is actually built for mass production. The receiver is a sheet steel pressing.



The semi-auto fire control module on the TPM Outfitters MP5SD is clipped and pinned per BATFE rules. This bit of window dressing makes the gun look factory original.

In 1980, the British SAS took down the Iranian embassy at Prince's Gate in London on live international television packing MP5s. Afterwards everybody with a badge wanted a pair of black fatigues in his closet and an MP5 in the trunk of his squad car. HK could not have purchased better advertising.

TACTICAL PARTICULARS

The basic MP5 is designed around a pressed steel receiver formed from sheet stock. The end result is fairly rugged and can be churned out in quantity. The dichotomous bit is despite these humble industrial origins, the MP5 is actually a remarkable feat of precision engineering.

The action is recoil-operated but roller-delayed. During firing, a pair of industrial roller bearings cam into recesses machined into the breech face to delay the bolt opening just long enough for pressures to drop to safe levels. The end result was a reliable and easy-to-build gun.

A WEE SPOT OF PHYSICS

The speed of sound in dry air at 68 degrees Fahrenheit is 1,125 feet per second or about 767 miles per hour. Sir Isaac Newton first calculated the speed of sound back in the 17th century, missing the actual number by a mere 15 percent. Anything travelling faster than this mystical speed creates a shockwave — this means noise.

Supersonic aircraft traveling at low altitude will make bystanders get religion. The same effect in bullets is simply annoying. The MP5SD uses a ported barrel to drop the velocity of standard 9mm ammo into the subsonic range.

Through my gun, 115-gr. ball ammo averaged 1,013 fps while 124-gr. bullets ran at 892 fps and 147-gr. projectiles registered 793 fps. The heavy bullets were markedly quieter despite their all being subsonic.

TRIGGER TIME

Unfortunately, the inimitable clackety-clack sound I heard back in the movie theater was the product of some clever Foley editor's vivid imagination. Centerfire pistol rounds are invariably





The MP5SD is both accurate and controllable. The gun's smooth operation and utter lack of recoil make it a tactical favorite.

TPM OUTFITTERS HK MP5SD CLONE

noisy. However, my precious bride sat ensconced inside in her favorite chair reading some moldy bit of English literature not 30 meters from where I was hammering away and didn't even notice. While the gun is not quite comfortable to the unprotected ear up close, it does not sound much like a firearm.

The MP5SD weighs 7.8 lbs. loaded and is beautifully controllable. The rate of fire is a spunky 800 rounds per minute but an experienced trigger finger can drop bursts into a standard silhouette out to 50 meters all day long. Like most suppressed firearms, the smoky gas blowing back into your face will all but asphyxiate you.

The manual of arms is, like the gun, unduly complicated. Lock the bolt to the rear using the non-reciprocating charging handle located at the gun's left front and extract the empty magazine. Insert a fresh magazine slightly baseplate forward and rock it back until it catches. Then slap the charging handle to drop the bolt over the fresh magazine. The whole process takes a little longer than the same chore on an M4 but you look like a movie star doing it.

It is tough to mount optics. The original HK claw mount will mar the host receiver, weighs a ton, and is more complicated than the space shuttle. It does, however, function beautifully.

HOW TO GET ONE

An original transferable MP5SD is the financial equivalent of a nice new car. I don't mean some low-end Ford Fungus. A transferable full-auto MP5SD will set you back as much as a decent

airplane. There is, however, an alternative.

The MP5SD falls prey to inane American gun control laws. As the sound suppressor is removable and the barrel is less than 16" the gun requires two separate \$200 tax stamps. Even if you welded the suppressor to the gun it is still too short. If you want a buttstock, you're stuck with two stamps.

My gun came from TPM Outfitters in Texas. They do great work and offer a wide array of MP5 variations. While this semi-auto gun was still stupid expensive, it only cost a fraction of what a transferable machinegun might. Fortunately, I also had access to a registered trigger pack, properly modified to the fit gun, for the full auto work.

DENOUEMENT

Now I can scurry about my rural Mississippi farm thinking I am as cool as Charlie Sheen in his prime. Never mind Charlie Sheen's life is currently the chemical formula for chaos, and I am a 53-year-old gray-haired gun writer with diagnosable maturity issues. In my mind I am a flinty-eyed Navy SEAL saving the world.

The gun is not as quiet as I had imagined, but it is still nonetheless utterly awesome. I could use it to ring steel targets until I died of starvation. If you, like me, found the MP5SD to be a foundational entry on your bucket list, then the good folks at TPM Outfitters can hook you up.



www.tpmoutfitters.com

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ZERO TOLERANCE 0470 SINKEVICH AN EYE-POPPING NEW EDC STUNNER

Zero Tolerance (ZT) Knives have been the flagship of Kai USA — which also manufactures Kershaw folder knives — for over 14 years now. Originally a line of combat knives, ZT has been steadily gravitating toward the EDC market where the bulk of their folders now reside. Collaborations with Belarusian knifemaker Dmitry

Sinkevich have been a huge success in the ZT line and their latest — the Model 0470 — is sure to whet your EDC appetite.

Dmitry is a master of both fine machining and the fluid line, traits you can see here on the Model 0470. At 7.80" overall and 4.4" closed this is a midrange EDC with aggressive tactical roots. The 3.40" CPM-20CV stainless steel blade has an almost imperceptible clip at the tip to improve penetration and the deep blade grind offers up excellent slice. The blade opens via a knurled flipper only and rolls out slick as butterfat on ZT's patented KVT ball bearing system. The flow into the Titanium handle is, as you'd expect from the maestro, flawless, and the handle slabs feature intricate

machining leading up to the icing on the cake: Marbled Carbon Fiber inlays. On the backside you'll find an integral lock that's superb artistry in itself. A Titanium pocket clip for tip-up carry completes the folder.

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT

Zero Tolerance produces knives of extremely high quality at a fraction of the price of a custom. A Sinkevich folding knife will typically run around \$1,600 (at the low end) while suggested retail on the ZT 0470 is \$325. You get a finely manufactured Sinkevich-designed folder with the same extraordinary good looks but without the handmade sticker price. This is champagne on a beer budget and you could buy quite a few bottles of high dollar bubbly for what you'd save!



www.kershawknives.com



NEWS FLASH: YOU ARE THE 'GUN LOBBY'

LARGE BRICK BUILDINGS DON'T VOTE, PEOPLE DO!

The late Neal Knox used to open every speech, every public appearance, with a trademark greeting — “Hello, Gun Lobby!”

He wasn't poking fun at the audience. He was reminding them of the simplest truth: The “gun lobby” is people who should use their votes judiciously.

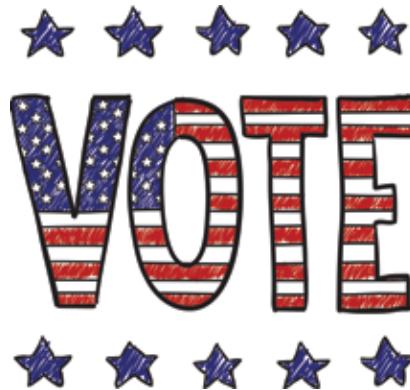
The past several months have seen turmoil surrounding the National Rifle Association, giving the gun prohibition movement endless glee and far too much confidence. They've lost sight of the fact they are not up against a large building in Fairfax, Virginia but are fighting a formidable force of men and women who long ago figured out this struggle is not about guns at all, it's about rights.

You, and a hundred million people just like you — people who own firearms for any number of reasons — have the means and the motive to become their worst nightmare. It's because these gun-haters are not simply trying to take away your guns, they are trying to take away your rights. If history should have taught the world anything, it would be the notion Americans are unique individuals, capable of patience, compassion and diplomacy, but woe unto anybody who tries to trample their rights.

Push the American — and in particular, the American gun owner — too far, and whole political parties (along with their anti-rights allies) risk waking up on the morning after an election, wondering what fell on them. Don't believe it? Ask Hillary Rodham Clinton. Ask the 50-plus Congressional Democrats who found themselves suddenly out of jobs after the 1994 midterms. You did it and you can do it again.

Last month, this column warned about five mistakes gun owners couldn't afford to make as the national election looms. Now we're going to talk about some things you must do if you wish to pass along the tradition — and right — of gun ownership to your children, their children and generations yet to come.

Set an example, be a leader. Step forward to run for your town or city council, planning commission, school board or county commission and be serious about it. If you don't



care to run, find someone you can support, someone whose views closely represent yours — but remember, you may not always agree. However, agreeing with someone 75-80 percent of the time is far better than having someone in office with whom you disagree 100 percent of the time.

Don't ever think this isn't important, because the gun prohibition lobby in Washington already proved it is important. When the anti-rights mindset creeps into local politics, you need to confront it and fight back.

Attend council sessions and pay attention. Become known in this environment as somebody who listens and is keeping an eye on those people sitting at the council dais.

Set aside money to support a candidate. Money is the lifeblood of politics. Anybody who can go to a gun show and spend hundreds of dollars on guns or ammunition can certainly cut a check for \$25 or \$50 to help elect a pro-Second Amendment candidate. Not only can it help put such a person in office, it puts you on their radar screen as a supporter.

You don't need a “middleman” entity to decide where your money goes. You make the decision and get your fellow activists to do likewise — and do it more than once.

If you can't give money, give your time. Volunteer to work on a campaign. Show the world gun owners are just like anybody else who is interested in their community and efficient government. You'll be surprised at the friends and allies you might make.

Study the issues and ask the hardball questions. Candidates for office, and politicians running for re-election want your vote. You can challenge these people — politely of

course — in public forums, at Townhall gatherings, local fundraisers, summer picnics or anywhere they show up to sell their candidacy.

Keep tabs on who contributes to campaigns. If some politician is getting money from a gun control group, it's public information. The other side likes to ask conservatives if they are getting money from the “gun lobby,” but it's a two-way street. You can ask somebody if they're getting donations from, for example, the Everytown for Gun Safety Action Fund.

Your state has a “Public Disclosure Commission” or something similar and the law requires campaigns to make regular reports. Keep your eye on these things.

Be savvy to pretenders. If a candidate for office claims to “support the Second Amendment ... but,” or says “I shot guns as a kid” or “my brother is a hunter,” the needle on your Stink-O-Meter should be off the dial. Such a candidate is virtually guaranteed to throw your interests under the nearest bus.

Thanks to social media, you can expose these people.

Take notes and keep them. Under no circumstances fabricate quotes from someone if you share anything on social media.

Vote, and make sure your family, friends and fellow shooters vote. You've got one shot at this in November. Put it in the bull's eye.

When Neal Knox referred to an audience as the “gun lobby,” he was spot-on. Millions of gun owners are the strength of the Second Amendment movement. It's your work, your money, your activism and ultimately your votes making the difference.

Four years ago, gun owners made the critical difference in Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida and elsewhere. If someone says otherwise, and tries to play down the importance of the “Second Amendment vote,” trying to diminish your importance, they are living in denial.

And don't ever forget: The majority party sets the rules and controls the agenda.

This year's election could be for all the marbles. This election is in your hands. Treat it like your firstborn child. Protect it. Make it grow into something you can be proud of. Do not allow it to be ripped from your arms and do not betray it.

MTM CASE-GARD PATCH CATCHER

The MTM Case-Gard Patch Catcher is one of those, “Why didn’t I think of that?” ideas. When cleaning a rifle, you should always clean from the breech but this results in a filthy, caustic, dripping mess at the muzzle end. More than one of us have ruined the kitchen table when a drop of errant gun solvent somehow found its way under the (insufficient) protection we had laid down.

Years ago I tested a device similar to the Patch Catcher and

it took more time and effort to use than actually cleaning the gun. However, once I got my carbon-stained mitts on a Patch Catcher, I realized Case-Gard had actually solved the problem of capturing the cleaning crud without over-engineering a solution. At just under \$11 dollars on Amazon.com, this is one piece of simple, problem-solving cleaning kit every shooter really should consider.



MYSTERY RANCH COULEE 25 DAYPACK

I must admit I have a pack problem. Whereas some people horde shoes, cash or, God forbid, Hummel figurines, I have entirely too many packs on hand. So, a few months ago, I did the only rational thing to do — I ordered a Mystery Ranch Coulee 25 Daypack.

I was searching for a bag to carry from the airline overhead bin and straight into the field on editorial trips. It needed to be robust enough to withstand both the hell of air travel and bashing in the back of a dusty jeep. So far, the Coulee has been perfect in all regards and shows far less wear than Your Humble Editor.

The pack is essentially one giant pouch and stuff is easy to find via the tri-opening, water-resistant zippers. There is a small compartment in the lid for keys, ammo and such. While I own too many packs, this one just went to the top of the list.



REAL AVID SMART DRIVE 90 TOOL KIT

I recently received a set of Real Avid gun tool products and greeted it with a figurative yawn. Shortly thereafter my lack of enthusiasm became embarrassing when I learned handling the Smart Drive 90 set is comparable to driving a new Bentley Mulsanne after putzing around town for years in a broken-down Ford Fungus (partial-credit on the simile to Will Dabbs, MD).

In fact, I'd be hard-pressed to use enough hyperbole when discussing the Smart Drive 90 tool kit. After owning similar competitive tool chests, the quality difference was clear and striking. Even the plastic case is idiot-proof — the cases are intentionally over-built so whenever a naturally clumsy person such as myself drops it on the floor, it doesn't shatter!

Take it from a real avid shade-tree gun plumber — do yourself a favor and invest in the Smart Drive 90 tool set (along with their punch sets). I'll wager you'll likewise agree your old tools belong in the recycle bin beside the Fungus!



XS SIGHTS DXT NIGHT SIGHTS

The day I realized my aging eyes couldn't clearly see the front sight on a pistol was eye-opening (pun intended). Faced with this common aggravating malady, I grudgingly decided to try out some XS Express Sights — and discovered I had been missing the boat!

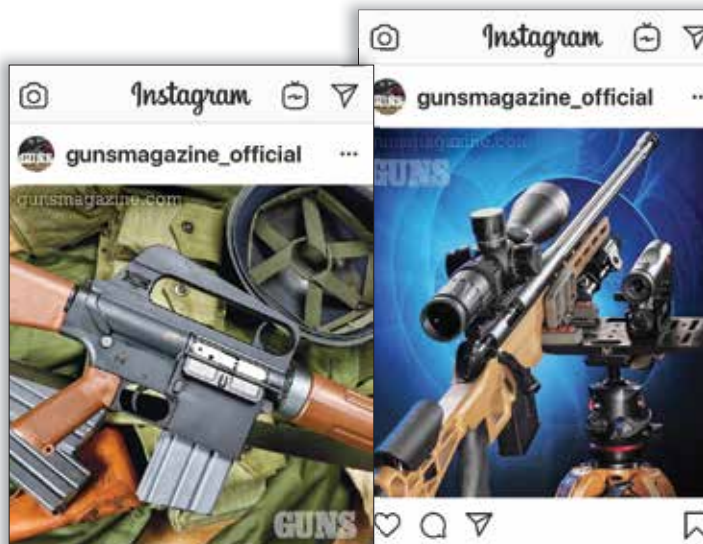


The concept is simple, and actually over a century old, as first seen on dangerous game "Express" rifles — a simple open-V rear sight is mated with a large round front sight, making for fast sight acquisition. In practice, you simply place the "golf ball" front sight onto the target and press the trigger as necessary.

After using the sights on my EDC 9mm S&W Shield for a full year, I'm a believer! They are certainly fast and easy to pick up in any light. They're not for precision shooting but anyone — young or old — should consider these sights on your favorite defensive pistol!

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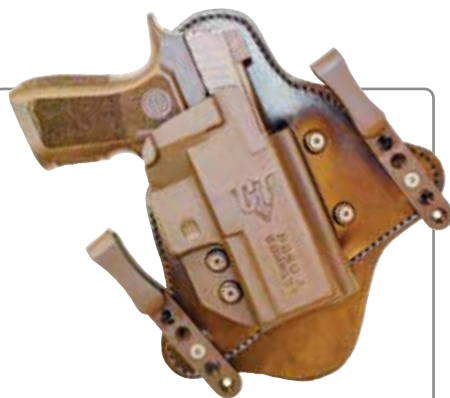
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SPRINGFIELD ARMORY HELLCAT HOLSTERS

CROSSBREED HOLSTERS

Springfield Armory Hellcat Holsters from CrossBreed have been made available to coincide with the launch of the new 9mm pistol. IWB holsters for the Hellcat are the SuperTuck, Reckoning, MiniTuck, Freedom Carry and Appendix Carry; OWB are the SnapSlide, SuperSlide or DropSlide. Other concealed carry options for Hellcat owners include the Modular Belly Band, Cargo Pocket Rocket, Purse Defender, Small Purse Defender, Pac Mat and Mini Pac Mat plus mag carriers. For more info: (888) 732-5011, www.crossbreedholsters.com



HOLSTERS FOR THE SIG P320 XCOMPACT

COMP-TAC
Holsters for the SIG P320 XCompact are now offered by Comp-Tac. They are the 1) MTAC — IWB, hybrid holster with 2-layer backing and a Kydex shell; 2) International — OWB with a modular mounting system (for range use and competitive shooting); 3) Warrior — all-Kydex, OWB holster with a pancake-style design that fits close to the body for easy OWB concealment; and 4) eV2 — appendix AIWB holster designed for casual everyday carry as well as deep concealment. For more info: (281) 209-3040, www.comp-tac.com



TP9 ELITE SUB COMPACT

CENTURY ARMS
The TP9 Elite Sub Compact (SC) is an addition to Century Arms' Canik line of handguns. Chambered in 9mm with a 12-round standard capacity, it's concealable, lightweight and reliable. The double-stacked, striker-fired polymer pistol weighs 24.78 oz. with a width of 1.45" and an OAL of 6.70". It comes standard with a tungsten slide and black frame, a loaded-chamber indicator, ambidextrous-slide and reversible-magazine release, white dot phosphorous front sight and black-out rear sight and more. For more info: (800) 991-4867, www.centuryarms.com

MBA-5 BUTTSTOCK

LUTH-AR
The Luth-AR MBA-5 Buttstock is designed as an affordable, lightweight, adjustable carbine buttstock with a paddle-style adjustment lever for rapid positioning. The wide, flared cheek rest provides a comfortable cheek weld; the integrated Picatinny rail allows a mono-pod or other accessories to be attached. The MBA-5 is designed to fit either Mil-Spec or commercial carbine buffer tubes and includes an anti-rattle clamp. For more info: (763) 263-0166, www.luth-ar.com



PROLIX LUBRICANT

PROCHEMCO PROLIX
The ProLix Lubricant — a citrus-based biodegradable cleaner pioneered in 1995 — now sports new packaging. It's the first successful "all-in-one" gun care product. That it is made of 89 percent (or greater) renewable resources shows the company's "commitment to sustainable practices and caring for the environment." Both the ProLix Cleaner/Lubricant Dry Tech line and the "gun-oil and grease replacer" ProLix Xtra-T Dry Lube (in picture) can remove carbon, copper, lead, shotgun plastic residue and black powder. For more info: (801) 569-2763, www.prolixlubricant.com



LAR-22 SERIES RIFLES

ROCK RIVER ARMS
Rock River Arms recently launched its LAR-22 Series Rifles with three variants: the Tactical Carbine, Mid A4 and the NM A4 CMP Trainer. The Tactical Carbine is ideal for tactical training or target plinking. The Mid A4 is a more traditional A4-style firearm. The Tactical Carbine and the Mid A4 are offered either with forged aluminum upper and lower receivers or with RRA's polymer upper and lower receivers. The NM A4 CMP Trainer is built as a stand-in practice rifle for a CMP National Match competition. It combines a precision 20" stainless steel heavy barrel with RRA's NM CMP TRO free-float rifle-length handguard. For more info: (309) 792-5780, www.rockriverarms.com



WALTHER PPQ M2 COYOTE TAN WALTHER ARMS

The Walther PPQ is comfortable, elegant, efficient and effective. It is now offered in Coyote Tan finish and called the *PPQ M2 Coyote Tan*. Both slide and frame are Cerakote Coyote Tan while the trigger, mag release, slide release barrel and backstrap remain black. Available in limited quantities, the PPQ M2 Coyote Tan has interchangeable backstraps, an ambidextrous slide stop and reversible button-style magazine release. For more info: (479) 242-8500 ext. 507, www.waltherarms.com



G3 POLYMER 9MM PISTOL TAURUS

The *G3 Polymer 9mm Pistol* is the first full-size pistol in Taurus' G-series. For the past years, its precursor, the Taurus G2c pistol has been one of the most popular everyday carry 9mm handguns because it is reliable, ergonomically designed, easy to operate and has a good cost-to-performance ratio. The Taurus G3 is the answer to requests for a 4"-barrel version of the G2c. Highlights of the G3 include stippling across the grip, an ergonomic palm swell, side-frame memory pads, a Picatinny rail and a 6-lb. trigger. The G3 comes with two 14-round mags and one 17-round mag. OAL is 7.5". For more info: (800) 327-3776, www.taurususa.com



GLOCK 19 GEN 5 TACTICAL CUSTOM MODEL ALTAMONT

The *GLOCK 19 Gen 5 Tactical Custom Model* from ALTAMONT is the only G10 GLOCK upgrade on the market. And it's the only Gen 5 with an upgraded Finger Groove Frontstrap. ALTAMONT's GLOCK 19 features a permanent G10 reinforced polymer frame as well as a G10 grip and finger-groove front-strap inserts. The custom G19 slide has front serrations and deep star stipples in a gray/black finish. For more info: (800) 626-5774, www.altamontco.com



RAM NIGHT SIGHTS XS SIGHTS

The *RAM Night Sights* from XS Sights are the brightest sight options for fast and accurate shooting in bright and low light. The RAM (radioactive material) night sights have a traditional 3-dot tritium, notch and post sight picture. The rear sight is blacked out to increase contrast against the bright orange or green front sight. The front sight features XS's Ember Glow Dot technology that absorbs ambient light and glows in low light. The sights fit standard holster options for various models of GLOCK, Smith & Wesson, SIG SAUER and more. For more info: (888) 744-4880, www.xssights.com



PRECISION 37" DOUBLE-RIFLE CASE HIGHLAND TACTICAL

Highland Tactical's *Precision 37" Double-Rifle Case* allows shooters to safely and easily transport equipment to and from the range. Measuring 37"x13"x6", it comfortably stores up to two firearms as well as other range gear. The *Precision 37" Double-Rifle Case* includes a detachable case for a pistol and five magazines. There is MOLLE-compatible webbing on the front panel of the case for attaching extra gear. For more info: www.hltactical.com



DOUBLE-PISTOL BAG AND 10/22 TAKEDOWN BAG HOGUE INC.

The *Medium Double-Pistol Bag and 10/22 Takedown Bag*, the latest additions to the Hogue Gear line, are designed to securely transport firearms and accessories. The former is created for shooters who transport more than one sidearm and to prevent damage to them during transport. The latter, designed as a multi-purpose gear bag, can house a rifle with a Hogue tactical stock and scope plus an extra barrel and forend. For more info: (800) 438-4747, www.hogueinc.com

QUELL WILSON COMBAT

The *QUELL* rifle suppressor from Wilson Combat offers exceptional sound attenuation. The hard-use suppressor solution from Wilson Combat weighs 15.9-oz. (19 oz. with the suppressor mount) and has a Magnum caliber rating ideal for any carbine or rifle. The 6.9" long, 1.5" diameter QUELL is built of 100 percent hardened 17-4 PH stainless steel and completely sealed with circumferential welds. The QUELL's construction allows it to be used in full-auto, supersonic rifles and more. For more info: (800) 955-4856, www.wilsoncombat.com





DANIEL DEFENSE DD5V4 RIFLE PACKAGE

Shine the spotlight on the DD5V4 in 6.5 Creedmoor because it's at the center of our giveaway bonanza for this issue. Part of the Daniel Defense DD5 rifle line, the DD5V4 provides users of the semi-auto platform greater long-range precision shooting capability. Featuring an adjustable gas block for a consistent feel during suppressed or unsuppressed shooting, the rifle also has a bolt carrier group that reduces overall recoil impulse. Other features include a Daniel Defense Mil-Spec trigger and Glass Filled Polymer buttstock and pistol grip. The DD5V4's lower and upper receivers are CNC Machined 7075-T6 Aluminum, Type III Hard Coat Anodized; the 18" barrel is DD Proprietary Steel, Cold Hammer Forged.

Four Birchwood Casey products can be yours too if you win this giveaway. The *Dirty Bird 12" 24-Yard Pistol Reactive Target* is ideal for pistol training. Made of heavy tagboard, it comes in a 12-piece pack. The *Long Gun Service Mat* measures 13"x54". The mat's soft leather protects firearms and an integrated parts tray prevents screws and other small parts from getting lost. The *Convert Three-Lens Kit* comes with interchangeable lenses and a polycarbonate frame to protect your eyes in any shooting situation. The *1-2-3 Aerosol Value Pack* consists of three cleaning products to keep your firearm in tip-top shape: the Bore Scrubber, Gun Scrubber and Barricade.

For a chance to win these awesome prizes from Daniel Defense and Birchwood Casey, just go to www.gunsmagazine.com/giveaways. You can also mail a postcard. —Jazz Jimenez

DD5V4

MAKER: Daniel Defense
(866) 554-4867

CALIBER: 6.5 Creedmoor

CAPACITY: 20 (with Magpul PMAG), **BARREL LENGTH:** 18"

OAL: 35 3/8" or 39"

WEIGHT: 8.6 lbs.

www.danieldefense.com

VALUE: \$2,499

BIRCHWOOD CASEY PRODUCTS

MAKER: Birchwood Casey
(877) 269-8490

www.birchwoodcasey.com



LONG GUN SERVICE MAT

VALUE: \$80

1-2-3 AEROSOL VALUE PACK

VALUE: \$33.99



WINNERS CHOSEN BY RANDOM DRAWING. Limit one entry per household. To protect the privacy and security of winners, their names will NOT be made public. Contest void where prohibited by law. Winners must undergo a background check and comply with all other federal, state and local laws. Taxes and fees will be the responsibility of the winner. Contest open to U.S. residents only. Employees and agents of Publishers' Development Corp. are not eligible. No purchase necessary. Winners will be notified by certified mail on official letterhead. Attention deployed military: Use stateside address! Giveaway guns and accessories may have evidence of being test fired or exhibit minor handling marks. Factory warranties may apply in some cases. The Gun of the Month package is awarded only to the entrant drawn and will not be awarded if the firearm presented is illegal in the jurisdiction of the winner. An alternate, authorized winner will be selected. No substitutions or transfers to a third party are allowed.



ENTER TO **WIN!**



If you are unable to enter online, mail a postcard with your name and address (no envelopes please). Entries must be received before February 29, 2020. Limit one entry per household.

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**TOTAL
VALUE:
\$2,649.98**



**DIRTY BIRD
12" 24-YARD
PISTOL
REACTIVE
TARGET**

VALUE: \$12.99



**CONVERT
THREE-LENS KIT**

VALUE: \$24

.45 COLT DOUBLE-ACTION CONVERSION

TWICE THE FUN IN ONE GUN

While loving the simplicity of the strong and reliable single-action thumb-cocker, I’m savvy enough to also appreciate its swinging sidekick, the double-action revolver. Both revolver styles keep cartridge brass confined in the cylinder after firing, making it unnecessary to chase, a big plus for those with an aversion to bending over. More importantly, shelling out freshly fired brass into your hand is soothing and convenient, especially when you guard your fired brass like gold coins.

VERSATILE VIXEN

The swing-out cylinder has the added benefits of allowing you to dump empties, as well as loading them, all at once. I’m going to show you how to enjoy your .45 Colt double-action even more, by making it a bi-caliber contender, providing you with twice the fun.

As you know, the .45 Colt is my favorite cartridge — but I still enjoy many others,

especially when I can shoot them in the same gun such as the popular and abundant .45 ACP. Besides shooting .45 ACPs, I’ll show you different techniques for loading your .45 Colt cartridges, and it doesn’t matter if it’s of Ruger, or S&W lineage, either. If you enjoy tinkering with gun “stuff” while watching TV, you’ll love what I’m about to share with you.

TK CUSTOM COOL

Tom Kilhoffer, owner of TK Custom, is the moon-clip guru of the revolver world. He skillfully machines the face of your .45 Colt cylinder, allowing it to accept moon-clipped .45 ACP cartridges. Besides allowing you to shoot cheaper and more abundant .45 ACPs, you now have a faster reload with the moon-clipped bound cartridges. All it takes is the skillful milling of the face of your cylinder the thickness of a moon-clip.

All you need to do is send your cylinder to TK Custom. Heck, they even have



Those full moon clips sure are handy!

videos on their website showing you how to do it, saving you the hassle of shipping your firearm. Turn around was less than a week and it’s a whole lot cheaper than buying another revolver to shoot .45 ACP. TK Custom is a full custom shop and offers many options for slicking up your sixgun. Check them out.

The best part of the conversion allows you to continue shooting .45 Colt cartridges, making your revolver a double-duty gun now! Call me crazy, but loading moon-clips with factory — or handloaded — cartridges is fun, and a very fast way of reloading your sixgun.

TK Custom makes a dandy nutcracker-style tool, which saves fingers from cuts and sore thumb syndrome by pushing in the last cartridge. They also make a handy tool for removing your empties, which is actually tougher on dainty digits.

.45 COLT THREE-WAY LOAD

With double-action revolvers, there’s three ways of feeding those cylinders. The standard way involves plunking each cartridge by hand, one at a time. There’s nothing wrong with this method, it’s even kind of satisfying as you “throw” your target a steely eyed glare. You can even load two cartridges at a time, as you develop more dexterity.

You can also use speed strips, which are handy for several reasons. They keep cartridges bound in a neat package, prevent them from “jangling” in your pocket and allow you to load two cartridges simultaneously without the risk of dropping any.

Then there are speed-loaders. Ask any old copper and he’ll tell you the speed-loader was the greatest invention since reclining bucket-seats on the midnight shift. Far faster and easier than old “dump pouches” this handy contraption made timed qualifications a whole lot easier, not



Choices, choices: Whether moon-clipped, speed-stripped or speed-loaded, the TK Custom-converted revolver gives you versatility.



Feel the need for speed? Use a speed loader! Note the proper way of holding the revolver — two middle fingers through the cylinder window for a secure grip.

to mention the need for hot reloads during a gunfight. Speed loaders provided confidence and reduced the fear of dropping loose cartridges under stress.

FULL-MOON FAVORITE

You'll be howling in delight after your full moon-clip conversion is installed, allowing you to utilize .45 ACP ammo. The full moon-clip wasn't released until the mid-'80s for competitive shooters while prior to this, half-moon-clips were devised to take advantage of the abundance of .45 ACP ammo available during WWI. An S&W employee came up with the brilliant idea of using half-moon-clips for the model 1917 revolvers made by S&W and Colt.



TK's cylinder millwork provides the ability to shoot both moon-clipped .45 ACP and .45 Colt ammo.

CONVERSION CONTEMPLATION

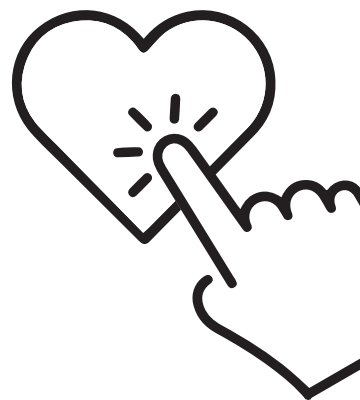
So, if you're in the market for making your double-action revolver a double-duty shooter in .45 Colt/.45 ACP, go ahead and get the TK Custom conversion done. You'll never regret it, as you'll now be able to shoot it twice as much with two different calibers.

The .45 ACP is generally cheaper to reload, or buy, than .45 Colt ammo. Why not shoot for cheap when all you're doing is punching paper at the range, or simply plinking at rocks? Save your heavy loads for the field. Either way, the choice is yours with this option.



www.tkcustom.com

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GUNS[®] MAGAZINE

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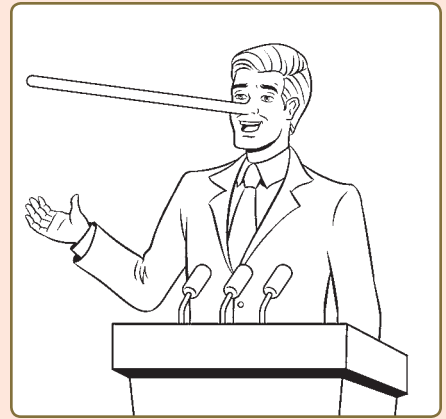
GUN CONTROL DOUBLESPEAK

You have to hand it to the anti-gunners — they've done a masterful job of weaponizing language to make it harder to argue against their illegal and illogical stances without sounding like a radical yourself.

I'm referring to "camo-speak," a new phrase coined to describe the hijacking of gun control language to make it more palatable to the uninformed masses. Sadly, much of our big media and journalists commonly use such words and phrases in their reporting, sometimes even inadvertently. Even more unfortunately, some gun owners fall for it too.

Camo-speak is why "gun control" is now known as "Gun law reform." "Gun control" groups such as Moms Demand Action are now referred to as "Gun Safety Organizations." "Common-sense laws" gun control laws are frequently touted as one panacea — who dares argue against anything so basic as "common-sense"? Of course, "Red-flag laws" are never known as "extra-judicial gun seizures." The list goes on and frankly, I have to grudgingly admit it's a brilliant strategy by our opponents.

I bring this up because I think gun owners are slowly losing the battle for hearts and minds with younger people, and Camo-speak is one big reason. I suggest you check out the upcoming March issue of *GUNS* as our 2A Defense columnist



Dave Workman explains how you can intelligently fight back against such word piracy in the media. It's a compelling read for trying times!

THE INDUSTRY FIGHTS BACK

In another case of technology moving faster than laws, Franklin Armory has filed suit against the New Jersey State Police for prohibiting the sale of their Reformation series of firearms. It seems the gun-grabbling pols in New Jersey don't know what to do with the gun so they just banned it. Now, Franklin Armory is fighting back.

If you aren't familiar, the Reformation guns appear to be an AR-clone but with a



unique distinction: it has lands and grooves in the barrel, but they're totally straight. This means the gun isn't technically "rifled" (which imparts spin) but the gun also isn't a smoothbore shotgun.

Franklin Armory tried to get the gun approved for sale in New Jersey but ultimately the state police decided it was an "assault weapon" under the state's Assault Weapons Ban (NJSA 2C:39-1W(3)). Such designation

seems a nice catch-all category for the state which does its best to prevent law-abiding citizens from owning guns. In response, the lawsuit alleging violation of 2nd and 14th Amendment rights was filed on October 24.

The case will undoubtedly take years to decide and appeal. Sadly, the state of New Jersey, with unlimited taxpayer funds to bankroll their legal team, will probably win by simple attrition. However, before such an ignominious end, we have to give a shout out to our friends at Franklin Armory for putting their money where their (figurative) mouth is to fight gun-banning politicians.

SPEAKING OF DOUBLESPEAK

Did you know knives kill more people than rifles? To listen to "the media," especially after the latest criminal mass-homicide, you'd think rifles were felling more people each year than the battles of both First and Second Bull Run. However, even I didn't realize the disparity until it was pointed out.

Using data from the "Murder Circumstances by Weapon, 2018" from the *Crime in the United States* report from the FBI, you'll find knives and cutting instruments are far more deadly in the U.S. than rifles.

In 2018, rifles were considered the primary weapon in 297 cases in the U.S. out of 14,123 homicides. However, a knife was the murder weapon in just over 1,500 cases, a four-fold difference. Shotguns were slightly less used than rifles in 235 homicides. Meanwhile, blunt objects accounted for 443 murders and personal weapons (i.e. hands and feet) accounted for 668 homicides. Year-to-year, the numbers for all these categories have remained in a relatively stable ratio.

Even one murder is too much but as



responsible gun owners, we need to know the real numbers when educating others about the dangers posed by certain weapons. Very clearly those dreaded "black rifles" are actually 50 percent less dangerous, statistically speaking, than hands and feet!

MEA CULPA AND CONNOR UPDATE

Even though *GUNS Magazine* is 65 years young, we are constantly tinkering with things to better serve the reader and keep abreast of trends and technology. In fact, this is the most difficult part of being editor — figuring out the changes which keep us up-to-date but, more importantly, making readers happy. Most of the time, using the collective knowledge of our matchless staff, we get it right. Sometimes a shot goes just off the paper into the backstop, just like on the shooting range.

In this regard, we have been paring down the articles a bit to include less redundant info, including the MSRP of firearms. The logic was, “Anybody can find it within 15 seconds on the internet” (along with “It’s essentially a relative guideline rather than a real number”) so why expend valuable and costly real estate on the printed page? However, we’ve heard from readers and they’re not fans. One letter really struck



home; in essence, the reader said, “I pick up the magazine to get away from the internet!” Duly noted and acted upon. Occasionally we might forget to add the MSRP but we’ll try to include it whenever possible.

One other bit of housekeeping. We commonly get inquiries from readers regarding

long-time writer John Connor. According to His Editorship, *GUNS* Publisher Roy Huntington, “Connor says, ‘I’ve been blown-up too many times and it’s just time to retire and putter around these days and rest-up some.’”



RED RYDER STILL RIDES

At a recent media event, one section of the firing line was entirely devoted to the venerable Daisy Red Ryder. Even though we periodically mention the gun, I hadn’t shot a “Gen-U-Wine” Red Ryder in years — talk about getting swept back into the mists of time!

Upon picking up the adult-sized version, the memories came flooding back. First was the familiar buzzing sound of hundreds of BBs swishing around in the magazine/barrel as you handle the gun. Then there was the familiar drill of turning the Red Ryder to cock it via the action lever. Back in my neighborhood there were kids who claimed they knew

someone strong enough to cock the gun like a “real” lever-action. They were lying, of course — only someone with both strength *and* an incredible pain tolerance could actually do so. Everyone else turned the gun over and grasped it like a pump handle. Not exactly the stuff of Saturday Westerns!

Once on the firing line, I had forgotten about the complex geometry and calculus required to shoot a real BB gun. Due to the rainbow arc of the steel spheres, glinting in the sun as they completed their slow downrange saunter, a shooter had to employ some fairly complex mental calculation to have any chance of BB and target

intersecting beyond 10 yards’ distance. For a kid who had serious difficulties in math class, it required all my mental energy to make it happen. Such complexities probably saved the lives of countless songbirds but I do think it gave me a better understanding of “Kentucky windage” today.

If you’re interested, the Red Ryder is celebrating its 80th birthday this year with a special commemorative version featuring “elegant engraving on the firearm and commemorative medallion in the stock.”

Gene, Roy, Hoppy, Dale, Black Bart and the rest of the gang would be proud!

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