



PIG HUNTING ON FOUR CONTINENTS

gunsmagazine.com

GUNS[®]

9 **SHADOW**
SYSTEMS
MR920L
MM

UPSCALE
STRIKER NINE

TIGERS WITH A .22
HARRY CALDWELL
IN ACTION

FAIR AND SQUARE
SCOPE MOUNTING INNOVATION

Enter
To Win!

HI-POINT
MODEL 995
CARBINE PACKAGE

VERY, VERY BRITISH
UBERTI COURTENAY
STALKING RIFLE

BEAR BEWARE
SPRINGFIELD RONIN 10MM

MADE IN "SPRANGFELD"?
SPANISH S&W CLONES

PEACEMAKER SPECIALIST
REMEMBERING EDDIE JANIS

DECEMBER 2021



ALPHA

PROFESSIONAL GRADE WEAPONRY®

BRAVOCOMPANYMFG.COM

4 Smart Ways to Carry in 1 Simple Kit.



IWB



APPENDIX



BELT SLIDE



PADDLE



PLUS
BONUS
HOLSTER
MOUNT

SHAPESHIFT® CORE CARRY PACK

\$99⁸⁸

MADE PROUDLY



LEARN MORE

ALIENGEARHOLSTERS.COM



QR-GM-1221

36

SHADOW SYSTEMS

Upscale Striker 9mm

WILL DABBS, MD

10

CAMPFIRE TALES

Remembering Eddie Janis
JOHN TAFFIN

14

AYOOB ON HANDGUNS

Lessons from the Pin Shoot
MASSAD AYOOB

34

SPRINGFIELD ARMOY RONIN 10MM

Bear and Baddies Beware
MASSAD AYOOB

44

EARNING A NICKEL FINISH

The Joy of Honest Wear
JEREMY CLOUGH

46

SPANISH S&W CLONES

Why *Marcas Registradas*?
CLAYTON WALKER

50

UBERTI COURTENAY STALKING RIFLE

Transcontinental & Traditional
JEFF "TANK" HOOVER

54

HOGS I HAVE KNOWN

Globetrotting for Pigs
MARK HAMPTON

61

GIFT GUIDE

The Editors Ask Santa
GUNS STAFF

FEATURES



GUNS Magazine (ISSN 1044-6257) is published monthly by Publishers' Development Corporation, 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Diego, CA and at additional mailing offices. SUBSCRIPTIONS: One year (12) issues \$24.95. Single monthly copies, \$5.95. CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Eight weeks notice required on all changes. Send old address as well as new. SUBSCRIPTION PROBLEMS: For immediate action email subs@gunsmagazine.com, write Subscription Dept., 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064 or call (866) 820-4045. CONTRIBUTORS submitting manuscripts, photographs or drawings do so at their own risk. Material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. PAYMENT will be made at rates current at time of publication and will cover reproduction in any or all GUNS Magazine editions. ADVERTISING RATES furnished on request. Reproduction or use of any portion of this magazine in any manner, without written permission is prohibited. All rights reserved. Title to this publication passes to subscriber only on delivery to his/her address. The opinions and recommendations expressed by individual authors within this magazine are not necessarily those of Publishers' Development Corporation. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to GUNS Magazine®, ATTN: Circulation Dept., 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, California 92064. Copyright © 2021 by Publishers' Development Corporation.



EST. 1978

KIMBER AMERICA

► **9MM MICRO-COMPACT**

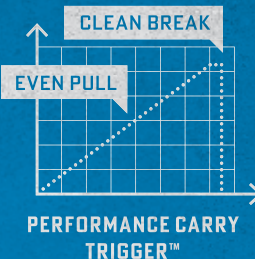
12

ROUND CAPACITY

14RDS WITH EXTENDED MAG

SLIM 1-INCH PROFILE

AMBI-CONTROLS



FEEED » YOUR « APPETITE

FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT

R7/MAKO™

**BREAKING NEW GROUND.
SHATTERING OLD PERCEPTIONS.**

To dismantle the competition, we did exactly that. We picked other polymer pistols apart to create something better, starting with the smooth, consistent pull and clean break of the Performance Carry Trigger™. You told us what you wanted — like 11+1 and 13+1 total capacity, standard — and we delivered. The R7 Mako™ will shatter preconceptions and exceed every expectation.

UPGRADE YOUR STANDARDS AT

R7MAKO.COM



AVAILABLE WITH:

► OPTICS INSTALLED
OPTICS READY

Kimber®

WHAT ALL GUNS SHOULD BE™

COVER PHOTO BY: ROB JONES/THE IMAGESMITH, LLC
THE SHADOW SYSTEMS MR920L IS A STEP-UP FOR STRIKER NINES.

COLUMNS

8

CROSSFIRE

Booming bass and LeMat love
GUNS Staff

18

HANDLOADING

Medium- and Large-Frame .38s
JOHN TAFFIN

22

MONTANA MUSINGS

WWII Handguns
MIKE "DUKE" VENTURINO

24

DEFENSIVE RIFLES

Henry Big Boy .45-70
DENNY HANSEN

26

SHOOTER'S RX

Grenades for Jehovah's Witness
WILL DABBS, MD

28

RIFLES

Harry Caldwell's Tigers
DAVE ANDERSON

30

OPTICS

Is your scope square?
WAYNE VAN ZWOLL

60

KNIVES

Sniper Bladework LPC
PAT COVERT

70

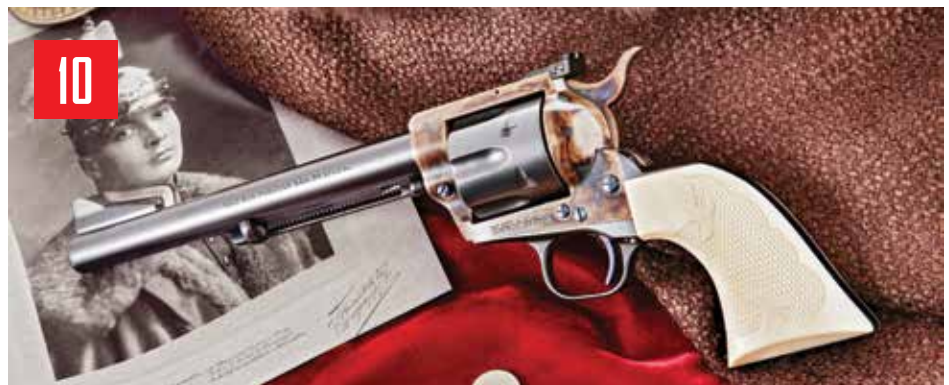
THINK TANK

Trading Trouble
Jeff "Tank" Hoover

74

GUNS INSIDER

Snow Hunt
Yes, Virginia ...
BRENT T. WHEAT



DEPARTMENTS

32

SURPLUS & CLASSIC

The Krag M98
PAYTON MILLER

62

2A DEFENSE

The Gift of Giving
DAVE WORKMAN

64

QUARTERMASTER

- A.P.I. Firearm Storage Bags
 - Clamtainer See-in Containers
 - Real Avid Bore-Max Cleaning Rods
- BRENT T. WHEAT**

66

NEW PRODUCTS

68

GUN OF THE MONTH

71

GUNS CUSTOM CORNER

72

ADVERTISER INDEX



WARNING: FIREARMS ARE DANGEROUS AND IF USED IMPROPERLY MAY CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. DUE TO THE INHERENT VARIABLES IN THE RELOADING OF AMMUNITION, BE SURE TO VERIFY ANY PUBLISHED LOADS WITH MANUFACTURER'S DATA. PRODUCTS MENTIONED OR ADVERTISED MAY NOT BE LEGAL IN ALL STATES OR JURISDICTIONS. OBEY ALL FIREARMS LAWS. ALWAYS CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GUNSMITH WHEN MODIFYING ANY FIREARM. BE A SAFE SHOOTER!

CHARGE MASTER®
LINK™



CHARGE MASTER®
SUPREME™



THE SMART PRECISION BY WHICH ALL OTHERS ARE MEASURED.



*App and updates are
free and available to
all reloaders, including
non-RCBS owners.*

THE NEW BLUETOOTH-ENABLED CHARGE MASTER® LINK™ AND SUPREME™

Introducing two Bluetooth-enabled powder dispensers from the #1 brand in reloading precision—RCBS. The new compact ChargeMaster® Link™ gives you lightning-fast charges you can adjust with our upgraded Bluetooth app, while ChargeMaster® Supreme™ fine-tunes your powder type to your load with our proprietary Powder-Learn Process. So you can choose from two smart ways to get +/- 0.1 grain accuracy with unmatched speed and consistency.

RCBS
PRECISIONEERED RELOADING™



CROSSFIRE

Letters To The Editor

GUNS Magazine® welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit all published letters for clarity and length. Due to the volume of mail, we are unable to individually answer your letters or e-mail. In sending a letter to *GUNS Magazine*, you agree to provide Publishers' Development Corp. such copyright as is required for publishing and redistributing the contents of your letter in any format. Send your letters to *Crossfire*, *GUNS Magazine*, 13741 Danielson Street, Ste. A, Poway, CA 92064, GUNSMagazine.com; e-mail: ed@gunsmagazine.com



BASS GO BOOM!

As my father used to say, "Many a true word is said in jest." Regarding your tongue-in-cheek "Fishin' Guns" article in the October issue, I thought the readers of *GUNS Magazine* would like to see a "real" fishing gun. This is a C.C. Brand exploding bomb lance whaling gun made in Norwich, Conn. in the 1850s. It has a 7/8 bore and fires a black powder-filled metal bomb lance made to explode after penetrating. The guns are all-steel and were made in several sizes. This is a smaller one that measures about 3 feet long and weighs 19 lbs. It is probably too big for bass!

Bill Goodman

I've gotta get me one, even though I agree it might be a little too much for the schoolie largemouths in our local retention pond! —BW

The biggest fish I ever caught was an 8-lb. bass. It was on the south fork of the Cumberland River in southeast Kentucky. Wild country! The bass was in an eddy about two feet down in crystal clear water. My rig was a Ruger single-action in .45 Colt loaded with FF black power. The rule in this area is it is legal as long as you do not get caught. I think fishing articles in a gun mag might be incestuous. It might morph into *Field and Stream*!

Kentuckian

As a "gishing" guy myself, I really got a good laugh from Brent's article! What astounded me was his knowledge of matching particular guns to the different species of fish! That is a gift! When ammo is once again made I'll invite him on a Tennessee Largemouth bass hunt. I'll even furnish the 500 Mag!

Whit Whitten

You got yourself a deal! —BW

In the Spring of 1972, I went bowfishing on Irishman's Bayou as part of an archery class for college P.E. credit. We were all hoping to get gator gar (I didn't). The guide brought a handgun and a machete to finish off any gar we caught. Seems the things die from tail to head, breathing air that slows down their dying and they will bite if they get a shot at you. Others told me afterward it is normal to shoot gator gar after you catch them. If I remember right, .22 long Rifle was the caliber of choice. Since I live in the Desert Southwest I have not kept up with fishing on the Gulf Coast in Texas and Louisiana, gator gar country. I understand the region has been invaded by Asian walking catfish that can also be dealt with using .22 Long Rifle.

Albert Perez

continued on page 65

Check out gunsmagazine.com for our digital edition, news, our exclusive Product Index, web blasts, online features, to enter the Giveaway Package and more! And if you have any news about hot new products you've found, or anything you think we need to know about, drop me a line at ed@gunsmagazine.com!

GUNS

MAGAZINE
THE FINEST IN THE FIREARMS FIELD SINCE 1955

CORPORATE OFFICERS

Thomas Hollander
Randy Moldé • Marjorie Young

EDITOR Brent T. Wheat

ASSOCIATE EDITOR Jazz Jimenez

ART DIRECTOR/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Joseph R. Novelozo

ADVERTISING & MARKETING MANAGER Paula Iwanski

PRODUCTION MANAGER Jennifer Phillips

DIGITAL CONTENT EDITOR Serena Juchnowski

WEBSITE MANAGER Lorinda Massey

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER Denny Hansen

SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR Roy Huntington

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

John Taffin • Holt Bodinson • Dave Anderson
Massad Ayoob • Mike "Duke" Venturino • Will Dabbs, MD
Shari LeGate • Dave Workman • Jeff "Tank" Hoover

FIELD EDITORS

Payton Miller • Sam Fadala • Mark Hampton
John Sheehan • Mike Cumpston • Aimee Grant
David Freeman • Dave Douglas • J.B. Wood



FMG PUBLICATIONS

GUNS
MAGAZINE

GUNSMAGAZINE.COM

EDITOR: Brent T. Wheat

HANDGUNNER

AMERICANHANDGUNNER.COM

EDITOR: Tom McHale

COP

AMERICANCOP.COM

EDITOR: Denny Hansen

SHOOTING INDUSTRY

SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM

EDITOR: Jade Moldae



SPECIAL EDITIONS

FMGPUBLICATIONS.COM

EDITOR: Tom McHale

CUSTOMER SERVICE

gunsmagazine.com

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

866.820.4045

EXPRESS SERVICE gunsmagazine.com (click "contact")
EDITORIAL 858.842.3943 • EMAIL: ed@gunsmagazine.com

PRODUCTION

858.842.3941

EMAIL: jennifer.phillips@pubdev.com

NATIONAL AD SALES 800.537.3006

NORTH EAST Tom Vorel • tom.vorel@fmghq.com

SOUTH EAST Paula Iwanski • paula.iwanski@fmghq.com

WEST Delano Amaguin • delano.amaguin@fmghq.com

INTERNATIONAL Amy Tanguay • amy.tanguay@pubdev.com

ONLINE TRAFFIC MANAGER

Leah Johnson • 858.842.3941 • FAX 858.842.3916
leah.johnson@fmghq.com

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Amy Tanguay • 888.651.7567 • FAX 858.842.3916
classads@fmgpublishings.com



PRODUCED IN THE U.S.A.

DECEMBER 2021

THINK FAST.

9MM +P

1,800 FPS

468 FT-LBS

65 GRAIN

NovX 9mm +P Engagement: Extreme delivers unprecedented terminal performance by combining a fluted polymer/copper projectile with a NovX stainless steel case and aluminum primer base—delivering up to **30% higher velocity, 30% less recoil and 50% weight reduction** versus standard lead and brass ammo.



LEARN MORE AT:
NOVXAMMO.COM



FASTER



LIGHTER



ACCURATE



ENGAGEMENT: EXTREME

FASTER. MORE POWERFUL. ULTRA LETHAL.

9mm
Luger

40
S&W

45
ACP

380
Auto

100%
AMERICAN
MADE

Patented and Patent-Pending

Also available

CROSS TRAINER/COMPETITION

9mm Luger | 40 S&W | 45 ACP | 380 Auto



NEW REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGY

REMEMBERING EDDIE JANIS THE WIZARD BEHIND PEACEMAKER SPECIALISTS

"Hi, John. It's Eddie!"

The best thing about my many years as a gun writer is not all the guns I get to shoot, but all the really fine people I meet. Whenever I answered the phone and heard this greeting I knew it was one of the really nicest men I have ever met and a friend for many decades.

Eddie Janis of Peacemaker Specialists was long well known for producing exquisitely tuned in-time Colt Single Actions as well as beautiful restorations. Eddie

specialized in Colt Peacemakers to the extent he would not work on any other revolvers — no Rugers, no Great Westerns, no USFAs, no replicas of any make, shape or form. He was a purist in the strictest sense of the word.

His sixgun mission in life was to take over where the manufacturer of Colt Single Actions leaves off and proceed to perfection.

Pre-War Colts in their original form are beautiful sixguns, however, many were used hard over the course of their shooting life or even abused. This is where

Peacemaker Specialists came on stage. The early 2nd Generation Colts were also fine sixguns but lacked perfection, often being found with oversize chambers and as machinery began to wear, the later sixguns slipped in quality. Many 3rd Generation revolvers also need help, the kind of help Eddie Janis could supply.

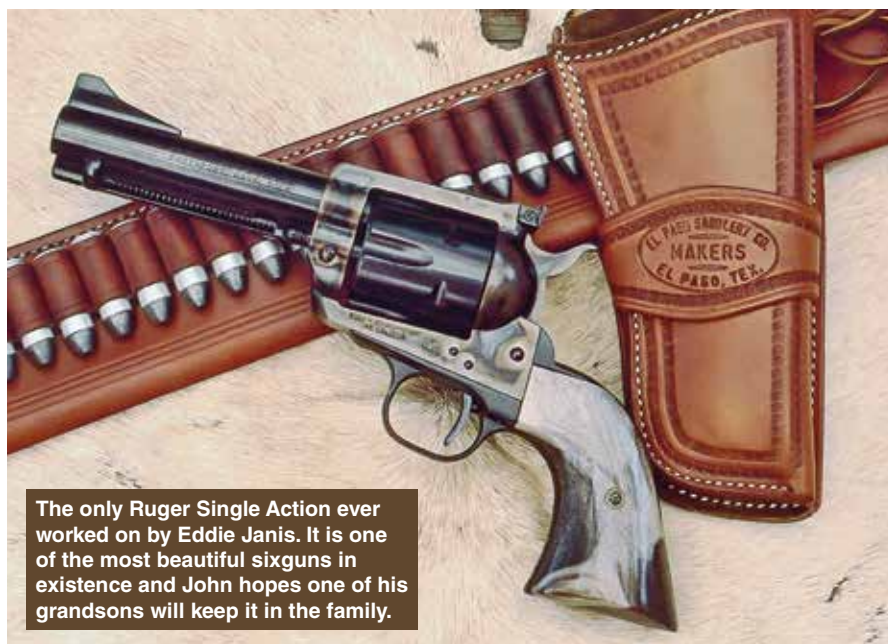
Janis describe what he was known for thusly — "Our priority in doing an action job is *not* to make the gun feel smooth and light. Our priority is to build a gun that is totally reliable by eliminating wear and parts breakage. By accomplishing this goal, the byproduct is a pistol that feels like it's running on ball bearings but locks up like a bank vault." Janis has worked on several of my Colt Single Actions and I can testify to the fact everything he has said is absolutely true. The sixguns are virtually unbreakable, which is quite a bit to say about a sixgun operating with flat springs and yet feels so smooth.

STAY THE COURSE

Janis had such respect for the history associated with the old guns he would not refinish a 1st Generation Colt Single Action or Bisley Model that had not been previously refinished. When it came to the debate of whether or not to re-finish an original Colt, he and I were of like mind — don't destroy the history of a fine single-action.

Eddie offered two superb action jobs. His basic action was the Saddle Tramp, which offered a lightened hammer spring, 4–6 lb. trigger pull, all internals de-burred and special gunfighter springs installed. His deluxe action job was known as the Gunslinger, which added to all of the above with extra polishing of all internal parts for the glossy, smooth, buttery feel. The trigger pull was set as the owner desired and the custom Gunslinger mainspring, bolt and sear spring as well as the hand-honed action made the Gunslinger Colt almost operate itself. I always liked to hand one of my Colt Single Actions with the Gunslinger action package to a shooter with a standard Colt and watch the expression on his face as he cocked a Janis Colt. One had to experience it to believe it.

In addition to providing custom work and parts service, Eddie also came up with a Spare Parts Kit to keep the Single Action sixgun in fine working order. This Cowboy Survival Kit consisted of a mainspring, sear and bolt spring, Handspring, and most



The only Ruger Single Action ever worked on by Eddie Janis. It is one of the most beautiful sixguns in existence and John hopes one of his grandsons will keep it in the family.



Eddie Janis worked on this New Frontier in .44 Spl to bring it to perfection.

Designed in
collaboration with
World Champion
Jerry Miculek

MOSSBERG | 940® JM PRO

TOP GUN
FOR
3-GUN.

#85111

940® JM Pro
12GA, 10-Shot

Briley® Extended
Chokes

SAFETY TIP 
Store firearms securely,
inaccessible to children
and unauthorized users.

GO WITH A WINNER, STRAIGHT OUT-OF-THE-BOX.

Inside, there's a new durable gas system that allows for up to 1500 rounds between cleanings, nickel boron-coated internal parts for smooth operation, and a competition-level loading port (built for Quad-loading), elevator and follower. Outside, an LOP adjustable stock and streamlined forend, plus a host of stylized, functional components combine to optimize speed, accuracy and durability.

Mossberg – Makers of dependable, hardworking firearms for more than a century.

LEARN MORE AT
MOSSBERG.COM

MOSSBERG®
SINCE 1919

importantly, a screwdriver specially ground to fit the screws on the Colt Single Action perfectly so they could be turned without marring or burring the heads. The screwdriver in its little leather holster resides in the top drawer of my desk, which also serves as a workbench.

A PRIME EXAMPLE

Many years ago I had Eddie perform his action job on a Third Generation Colt Single Action chambered in .44-40. He not only smoothed out the 4-3/4" Colt considerably, he also tweaked the barrel to line up the sights to allow the Colt to shoot point of aim. When I came into possession of a poorly re-blued First Generation .32-20 that had indeed "been ridden hard and put up wet" as the saying goes, I immediately thought of Peacemaker Specialists. This Colt had originally departed from the factory in 1907 and was in need of a major overhaul. It was sent to Eddie to bring it back into first-class shooting shape. Several new parts were required, including a new cylinder pin and bushing, a new mainspring, new screws and an ejector rod and spring. I sent along a new Second Generation .44 Special Barrel from my parts box and Eddie had a .44 Special cylinder on hand.

The new cylinder and barrel were installed with minimum barrel/cylinder gap and the forcing cone was cut to 11 degrees. An oversized locking bolt removed all play in the cylinder. Over nearly a century of use, both the trigger and hammer notches had been worn considerably and these were

"EDDIE — KEEP THE CAMPFIRE BURNING, THE BEANS BUBBLING AND THE BACON SIZZLING. SEE YOU WHEN I CROSS OVER THE RIVER."

both welded up and re-cut. The action was tuned, the trigger pull set at 3 lbs. and all internal parts totally smoothed and deburred. Pre-war rear sight notches, being of the very narrow "V" shape do not meet up well with the thicker front sights on Second Generation barrels so Eddie corrected this by opening up the rear sight to give a clear, square sight picture.

When the work was all finished, the original plan called for Peacemaker Specialists to return the .44 for test-firing before refinishing. The frame and hammer would be case-colored with the rest of the sixgun blued. However, when the 7-1/2" .44 Special arrived back home, I was more than pleasantly surprised with its look. The new barrel and cylinder match very well with the old re-blued frame, giving it a certain amount of character. Someday I planned to return it to Eddie, however I have enjoyed it all these years as just a good lookin', good shootin' .44 Special Colt.

THE SECRET IS SHARED

I mentioned earlier the fact Eddie was a purist who would only work on Colts, however, he made one single exception and I have it. Starting with a Ruger Old Model .45



Eddie Janis, owner of Peacemaker Specialists, not only knew the Colt Single Action perhaps better than anyone, he also knew how to dress the part!

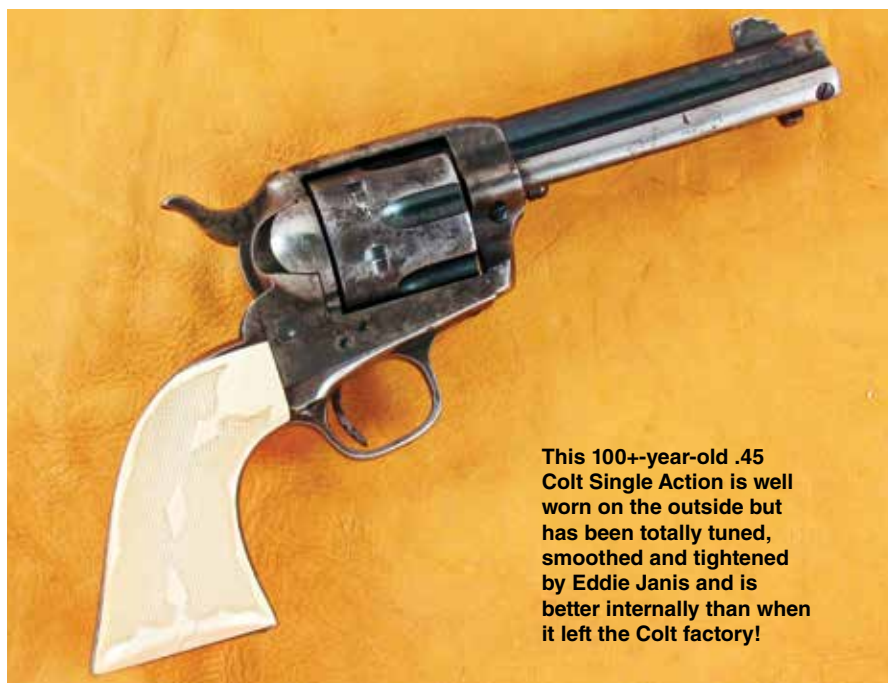
Blackhawk about 30 years ago, Eddie set out to make it a Ruger New Frontier. Perhaps, he just wanted to see what he could do with a Ruger. The result is absolutely stunning to say the least. Barrel length is 4-3/4" and set up with a front sight as normally found on a Colt New Frontier. The hammer and frame are case-colored, the balance is beautifully blued and grips are from the thigh bone of a bison. It is altogether one of the most beautiful sixguns in existence. I was sworn to secrecy to not tell anyone who had done the work on this exceptional sixgun, however, with his passing I feel released from the promise and would like everyone to see what a talented custom sixgunsmith Eddie Janis was.

Eddie is genuinely missed, however he was a man of faith, which he strongly expressed to me as we talked just shortly before his passing. He was teaching his wife the parts business so if anyone needs genuine Colt Single Action Army parts, Peacemaker Specialists is still the place to go.

"Eddie — keep the campfire burning, the beans bubbling and the bacon sizzling. See you when I cross over the River."



PeacemakerSpecialists.com



This 100+-year-old .45 Colt Single Action is well worn on the outside but has been totally tuned, smoothed and tightened by Eddie Janis and is better internally than when it left the Colt factory!



**EVERYDAY
COMFORT,
FOR ALL
DAY CARRY.**



COMFORT FLEX DELUXE

**Ultra-Plush Padded Back
Polymer Re-Enforced Leather
Available for Most Handguns**

Order now at:

www.versacarry.com/comfort-guns



MADE IN THE USA

PISTOL VERSUS PISTOL-CALIBER CARBINE LESSONS FROM THE PIN SHOOT

Just as auto racing teaches us about emergency driving, competition can give us lessons related to defensive shooting.

The PCC (Pistol Caliber Carbine) is all the rage today. Its relatively mild sound signature is less damaging to the ears than pistol, rifle, or shotgun if fired indoors in an emergency. It's light, very soft in recoil and looks intimidating to a malefactor at gunpoint. The longer barrel increases velocity with most loads: A 9mm carbine can achieve hot .38 Super pistol ballistics, a .40 S&W carbine can hit like a full power 10mm pistol and a .45 ACP carbine can equal a .45 Super pistol. The PCC also promises better hit potential: It has a longer sight radius with iron sights, is more likely than a pistol to be used with an optical sight and has that critical locking point on the shoulder. But just how much of a hit factor improvement can we expect at across the room home defense distances?

The Pin Shoot (PinShoot.com), formerly known as the Second Chance match, is my favorite shooting tournament hands down and offers a cornucopia of rifle, handgun and shotgun shooting games. It also offers an interesting comparison of pistol to PCC. Two events at the Pin Shoot use exactly the same target array: a dozen ordinary white bowling pins on three steel tiers, interspersed with blue "hostage pins" that will cost you a heavy time penalty if one is knocked over. With the carbine, it's the "PCC" event and with the pistol, it's called the "9X12."

You could also try a comparison at some other action shooting event which lets the shooter shoot the same stage with both handgun and PCC, but in USPSA or IDPA the scoring is primarily on cardboard targets whose scoring lines have progressively greater value toward the center chest of the silhouette. It would be a daunting

task to break down accuracy vis-a-vis speed for each shooter. At the Pin Shoot, each of the dozen targets is scored the same: If it tips over, you're good and if it doesn't, your miss doesn't count and if the last of the dozen targets isn't down after 15 seconds, you lose.

The reason is a bowling pin is a remarkably representative target in terms of tactical anatomy. Pick up a regulation tenpin and hold it in front of your sternum, with the bottom level with your solar plexus. The pin widens at about the area of your heart, to about the same width. It tapers upward and truncates most of the way up your cervical spinal column. A hit anywhere on the pin would, on a homicidal human antagonist, go far toward solving your anti-personnel problems. Once the antagonist was down and had dropped his weapon, your defensive job would be done. At these Pin Shoot events, your time stops when your last pin is "down and done," and it comes pretty close to Real World.

TIMES, SCORES & COMPARISONS

At Pin Shoot 2021, 44 of the



The same 9mm ammo and magazines work in a Tresna carbine and a GLOCK 17 RTF2. You can carry both and have a common feed system.

THE ADVANTAGE OF METAL FOR THE PRICE OF POLYMER: MEET THE STK100 – THE STRIKER-FIRED PISTOL BUILT TO TURN HEADS



Well, looky here. A striker-fired pistol with enough weight to reduce felt recoil yet comfortable enough to carry all day. The 9MM STK100 also has 17-round capacity and features an optic-ready slide. Not to mention a textured grip that's angled more like a 1911 for greater control and accuracy. Put one in your hand and see for yourself.

\\ [ARMSCOR.COM/STK100](http://armscor.com/stk100)





Phil Farr shot great with both carbine (shown) and pistol on the same target array.



Bonnie Young starts a fast sweep with an AR15 9mm carbine.



Fire blooms at the muzzle of Greg Blough's STI 9mm; he won both the PCC and 9X12 with identical 4.5-second scores.

approximately 140 registered shooters vied in PCC and 51 took the option of trying their pistols in 9X12. Several shot both. Let's look at comparisons. First, let's set aside the ones who didn't get all their pins down and maxed out at the 15 seconds allowed time per run. Some of those I observed and can tell you their guns were jamming. I didn't think it was fair to count those scores.

Significantly, only one of the 44 PCC shooters — less than 1% — went overtime and nine shooters out of 51 — roughly 17% — had the same problem with the pistol. This by itself tells us the carbine is more forgiving, but let's examine some other figures.

Greg Blough won both of those events, with identical 4.5 second times to get a dozen pins down. Among the top-five finishers with the carbine, average time was 4.94 seconds to accomplish the task. Among the top 10 in pistol, the average was 5.17 if my math is correct. With the pistol — winner Blough used an STI 9mm with iron sights — the top five average was 5.34 seconds and for the top 10 shooters, the figure was 5.91 seconds. Those differences are not really huge. Of the seven in the top 10 who shot both, winner Blough was identical gun-to-gun and one shooter did better with the pistol, while the other five were better with the PCC by an average 88/100ths. Pretty consistent.

Going through all the scores of shooters who didn't time out at 15 seconds, I found an average time of 10.85 seconds to whack the 12 pins with the carbine, and 11.70 with the pistol, a difference of 85/100ths of one second — not a lot.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Without camera footage of every run to count hits, misses and malfs, this is not precisely perfect data and we'd want a whole lot more shooters too. It also measures shooters who were confident enough to shoot in a major match, not newbies or even average gun owners. Optics aren't allowed on pistols in "9X12" but were more the norm than the exception in "PCC," and this is another factor to consider.

My early take-away is this — if all I have is my double-stack 9mm pistol, I won't worry too much if I can't access a 9mm carbine ... and I'll be back at the Pin Shoot in June of 2022 for more fun and more learning.

**ABSOLUTE ACCURACY. EVEN WHEN YOUR HEART'S
BEATING OUT OF YOUR CHEST.**

Every riflescope in our whitetail hunting line follows in the footsteps of our most proven, battle-tested products. Otherwise, it wouldn't be a Trijicon® riflescope. Expect absolute precision, brilliant clarity from sunup to sundown, and extreme durability so you can hunt with confidence.



»THE NEW
Trijicon Huron®



»THE NEW
Trijicon Credo® HX



Trijicon AccuPoint®

See what it takes to make a brilliant aiming solution at [Trijicon.com](https://www.trijicon.com).



HANDLOADING FOR MEDIUM AND LARGE FRAME .38 SPECIALS HOT AS YOU DARE

It happened way too many years ago to even try to count now. A middle-aged man made himself comfortable in his modest Midwestern home preparing to watch an evening of television. He had just settled down when an invader kicked down the door and entered brandishing a weapon. He made the wrong choice of homes to attack. The homeowner happened to have his .38 Special at hand and fired on the intruder with finality. The police were called and they assured the homeowner he was not at fault and was not expected to be charged with anything.

A few days later he received a call from the Chief of Police reiterating the fact there would be no charges filed. The homeowner still felt very bad about taking a life, however he was convinced he had no choice and at least the threat of him being charged with anything had been removed. About four days later there was a knock on the door and two detectives showed up

brandishing their identification. The homeowner became immediately worried and blurted out the fact he thought there were to be no charges filed. "Oh no, that is not what we're here for."

What had spurred their visit was how impressed they were the way his .38 Special had performed and performed very quickly. "We just like to know what ammunition you were using, as our duty ammo is nowhere near as effective and has actually failed several times." That was a terrific relief for the homeowner and he was happy to share what he was using. He did have handloads in his .38 Special consisting of a 158-grain lead semi-wadcutter over 5.0 grains of Unique.

LOADING THE .38

I have been loading for the .38 Special since 1956/57. In those early years my sixguns were a Ruger .357 Blackhawk 4-5/8" Flat-Top and a Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum



John's most-used powders for reloading the .38 Special are #2400, #4227 and Unique.

Highway Patrolman 4", both of which saw mostly .38 Specials as .357 Magnum brass was so hard to find.

My load of choice was Elmer Keith's .38 Special Heavy load, consisting of Keith's Lyman #358429 semi-wadcutter bullet weighing 168–173 grains depending upon the alloy over 13.5 grains of #2400. This is an exceptionally *heavy* loading, actually hotter than some .357 Magnum loads today. My bullets were cast one at a time using a single cavity mold and a cast-iron pot on my mother's kitchen stove, then loaded one round at a time using the Lyman #310 Tool.

Looking back I'm thankful I had the pair of .357 Magnum sixguns to shoot this load and do not believe a medium-framed .38 Special such as the M&P or K-38 would have held up very long with such a load. Keith came up with this load long before the .357 Magnum became available. Even though it was introduced in 1935 it was years, in some parts of the country not till after WWII, before it was readily available.

Keith recommended his .38 load only for use in heavy frame sixguns, which at the time were the Single Action Army and New Service from Colt and the .38/44 Heavy Duty and Outdoorsman from Smith & Wesson. Today, we can add a few more to this list including the Great Western .38 Special Single Actions and also the USFA Single Actions. All of these guns are found only on the used gun market and I know of no production heavy-framed .38 Specials being offered today. Medium-framed .38 Specials include the above-mentioned M&P and K-38 as well as the Colt Official Police and Officers Model.

I have used the Keith Heavy .38 Special load in the .38/44 Smith & Wesson sixguns with no problems, however, it seems to be too heavy for the Great Western and USFA

The standard barrel .38 Special M&P and targets fired with 5.0 grains of Unique and three different Lyman bullets.



AR-T02 Hunter Shotgun

This Semi-Auto shotgun is built and finished for the field, but priced for the everyday hunter. Feature packed to make your next hunt a memorable one.

- 12 Gauge 3" Chamber
- 26" Vent Rib Barrel
- Fiber Optic Front Bead
- Incl. +1 Extension for 3" Loads
- Incl. Full, Mod. and Cyl. Bore Chokes
- 3 Camo Patterns Avail.

www.SDSImports.com
Quality that's Affordable.



SDS IMPORTS

Single Actions. Actually it is now a moot point as it is a heavier load than I care to use and I have dropped back to 12.0 grains sporadically while using 11.0 grains for most of my #2400 loads with the Keith cast bullet. I still use the 13.5 grains of #2400 load, however, I have changed my bullet of choice.

Now I mostly use the Lyman Ray Thompson-designed gas-check bullet. This weighs around 158 grains, however, it has two crimping grooves. Thompson originally designed it so the top groove would be used when loading in .357 Magnum brass while the bottom groove was for use in .38 Specials, allowing more powder space. What it does with this particular load is tone it down a bit, reducing the muzzle velocity, blast and recoil. Most sixgunners know the .38 Special Keith Load uses a bullet over 13.5 grains of #2400 and the Skeeter Load uses the same charge with the Thompson bullet crimped in the bottom crimping groove.

POWDER IT UP

My other powders of choice are Unique in the above-mentioned 5.0 grain charge and also 12.0-12.5 grains of #4227. All of my heavy-frame sixguns have no problem with any of these loads, however, I reserve the #2400 loads for use in heavy framed guns while concentrating mostly on 5.0 grains of Unique for the medium-frames Smith & Wesson K-Frames and the Colt Official Police/Officers Model. The Colts with the Official Police frame are slightly



The S&W Outdoorman (above) preceded the .357 Magnum by five years and is a fine sixgun in its own right. The USFA Single Action (below), payment for a debt, is beautiful and shoots extremely well; grips are by Roy Fishpaw.



The .38 Special M&P in standard barrel or heavy barrel form is still a viable sixgun for self-defense.

larger than the Smith & Wesson K-Frames so I do use them from time to time with the 11.0 grains of #2400 load.

My bullets of choice for all of these powders and sixguns are home-cast bullets dropped from Lyman and RCBS molds. I'm very thankful to be well past single cavity molds. My Lyman bullets of choice are, of course, Keith's #358429, 168-grain bullet; #358477, 158-grain bullet, which is very close in design to the original .357 Magnum bullet; and the standard #358311, which is a 158-grain round-nosed design. From RCBS comes the #38-150KT bullet, which weighs right at 158 grains with a large grease groove and crimping groove.

With any of these bullets and 5.0 grains of Unique, muzzle velocities run from around 925 fps to 1,000+ fps depending

upon the gun being used. This velocity is duplicated using 12.0 grains of #4227. Upping the charge to 12.5 grains of #4227 gets us over 1,000 fps. My personal heavy load of 11.0 grains of #2400 gets us up into the 1,100+ fps range. In the Colt New Service .38 Special, the heaviest-framed .38 Special I have ever encountered, this load clocks out at 1,200+ fps with five shots in 1-3/8" at 20 yards.

With a 5-1/2" USFA .38 Special this latter load does 1,165 fps and puts five shots in 1-1/8" at 20 yards. This is a relatively rare sixgun and came to me in quite an unusual way — it came into the office of the now long gone *SHOOT! Magazine* in payment for advertising. No one there had any use for a .38 Special Single Action and you can bet it's now one of my prized possessions!

GUNS

MAGAZINE

**1-YEAR PRINT
SUBSCRIPTION
ONLY \$24.95!**

FREE

2020 Digital Download
with your paid order

Call (866) 820-4045
www.fmgpubs.com

M-F 8am-3pm PST (\$64.95 outside U.S.)
P.O. Box 509094, San Diego, CA 92150

WWII HANDGUNS WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE?

In my lifelong study of World War II history, much of the focus has been on handguns used in the immense fracas. Handguns carried by all sides were relatively unimportant compared to the vast array of other weapons utilized. Because of this, often their details are not mentioned in print or in oral history. Most WWII handguns were officially issued but at least in American forces, many were privately owned.

However, once in a while tidbits pop up that get my attention. Recently, in a memoir of a U.S. Marine on Iwo Jima, the writer tells of a patrol consisting of himself and four others searching caves. In one he lifted a mat under which he found six pristine S&W Model #3 top break .44 Russian revolvers. As finder he kept two and gave one each to the other patrol members. Decades earlier S&W did sell the Japanese Imperial Navy a quantity of .44 Russian revolvers so evidently

this is how six of them ended up on the tiny island.

DETAILS, PLEASE?

Another handgun incident on Iwo Jima took a different turn. Some Marine officers were observing the battlefield when a Japanese soldier emerged screaming from a hidden cave with a bayoneted rifle. One of the officer's runners calmly drew his "nickel-plated .38 revolver" and downed the soldier with two shots. This is an example of lack of detail. Avid handgunners would love to know what sort of nickel-plated .38 he used. We will

never know but in my imagination I favor a Colt SAA .38-40 with 4-3/4" barrel.

As far as officially-issued handguns go, they ranged from .30 caliber semi-autos shooting 85-grain bullets at an amazing 1,500 fps to .455 caliber revolvers firing 265-grain bullets at the incredibly low speed of 650 fps. The first example was the Soviet Union's TT33 chambering 7.62x25 cartridges. The latter was Great Britain's Mk VI .455 Webley revolver.

WWII official-issue handguns ranged greatly as to time of development. The top-break British Mk VI .455 Webley was the same basic design as their Webley Mk I that appeared circa 1890. Its ammunition was loaded with black powder then. The most modern designed World War II handgun was Walther's double-action P38 9mm Parabellum, which came about just a year before the war's advent in 1939.

Germany probably issued more different handguns than any other nation because arms factories in conquered nations were ordered to continue production with the weapons going to the German war effort. Their three



Cartridges of World War II handguns. From left — the Soviet 7.62x25mm, French 7.65 Long, Japanese 8mm Nambu, British 38-200, 9mm Parabellum, U.S. .45 Auto and British .455 Webley.



Duke's array of WWII handguns, encompassing everything from the Soviet TT33 7.62x25mm to the U.S. Colt Model 1911A1.

most basic versions were P08 "Luger," the aforementioned P38 and FN "Hi-Powers," which the Wehrmacht designated P640 (b). All were 9mm. Added to those were such guns as Poland's Radom vz35 and French MAS Model 1935A. The latter was chambered for France's odd little 7.65 Long but Radoms were 9mm. It should be mentioned Germany issued a passel of small semi-autos in .380 Auto, .32 Auto and .25 Auto calibers. Mostly those went to officers and air crew who were not expected to actually fight with their handguns. Germany even issued some Model 1911 .45 Autos captured when they occupied Norway.

U.S.A.

America's ground troops were predominately issued .45 Auto handguns — mostly Models 1911/1911A1 although thousands of .45 Smith & Wesson and Colt revolvers also saw combat. U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviators usually were issued .38 Special Smith & Wesson revolvers. An acquaintance once told me he was a rear turret gunner in a Navy TBF bomber and carried a .38



The United States' military primarily relied on the .45 Auto cartridge but chambered it in both semi-autos and revolvers. From left — the U.S. Colt Model 1911, S&W Model 1917 and Colt Model 1917.

Special S&W in a shoulder holster. I asked if he managed to bring it home but he said, "No, it's at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. I lost it when our plane had to ditch in the sea from battle damage."

I have handloaded for and shot all the WWII handguns shown in the accompanying photo. As an American I'm supposed to say my pick of the litter would be our Model 1911/1911A1 .45 Auto. With no

combat experience and being only a recreational shooter, I'm fond of my .45 Autos. However, I see why the FN (Browning) Hi-Power 9mm with 14-round capacity was popular. A copy made in Canada by the John Inglis Company was issued to some British troops, especially paratroopers. Likely any handgun accompanying WWII soldiers in foxholes, were a great comfort on dark nights.

THESE ARE NOT TURKISH SHOTGUNS*

** They just happen to be made there.*

These new Aselkon Shotguns bring the world famous quality to field and tactical use. Both of these are top of the line shotguns from one of the world's best manufacturers. Aselkon has applied their genius to making shotguns that are good anywhere you need them to be. Every Aselkon sold by ADCO is destined to be the only shotgun you will need. Aselkon excellence is the answer for when good is just not good enough.



The Interceptor - Semi-Auto; Model MX3; 18.5" bbl; 5+1

The Responder - Pump Action; Model XP3; 20" bbl; 5+1

1-781-935-1799

800-775-3687

34A Holton St. Woburn, MA 01801

www.adcosales.com

adcoarmsco@aol.com

Dealer inquiries invited



Optional A30 Dot Sight
Available for all Models



Optional Tactical Sight
Available for all Models



HENRY BIG BOY CLASSIC OLD-SCHOOL DEFENSIVE RIFLE STILL VIABLE

I have a soft spot for lever-action rifles. I carried one on my saddle before I ever heard of the AR-15.

I never thought I was handicapped with seven rounds of .30-30 WCF. I think even today, a lever gun would make a good patrol rifle: It's more than capable of taking out a threat at the distances encountered in police work and then some, and it's light, thin and handy. It may not be "tacticool" but it's still viable.

THE HENRY RIFLE

Designed by Benjamin Tyler Henry in 1860, the original rifle was a 16-shot .44 rimfire. It was produced by the New Haven Arms Company and evolved into the Winchester 1866. The New Haven Arms Company was eventually renamed the Winchester Repeating Arms Company.

Today Henry USA makes modern lever-action rifles though they still make an original true to Henry's 1860 patterns and patents. It is virtually identical aside from allowances necessary to adapt to the .44-40 and .45 Colt centerfire rounds which replaced the long-obsolete rimfires. Due to the longer cartridges, the Original Henrys hold fewer rounds.

A BIG BOY

The rifle shown here is the Henry Big Boy chambered for the venerable .45 Colt

cartridge.

The Big Boy has a traditional 20" blued, octagonal barrel and mounts a classic, fully-adjustable semi-buckhorn rear sight with a reversible white diamond insert. The front sight is a brass bead.

Both the straight-grip stock and forearm are made from select American walnut accented with a brass barrel band and Henry's recognizable brass receiver. The top of the receiver is drilled and tapped to allow a scope to be mounted. Just my opinion, but I think mounting a scope on a lever-action borders on the blasphemous.

The side loading gate we are now familiar did not exist on the original Henry and the Big Boy does not have one. Instead, rounds were loaded much like a .22 rifle.

To load the magazine, the shooter pulls out the spring/follower and removes the top from a slot in the top the magazine-tube. Cartridges are inserted into the shell-shaped cutout on the side of the tube, the spring and follower are pushed home and the top pivoted back into the slot. The tubular magazine holds 10 rounds.

The crisp, smooth action sets an authentic American-made Henry apart from other lever-action rifles. Every Henry I've handled — from the Big Boy to their .410 shotguns to the Classic Lever Action .22 and Golden Boy .22 — has been as slick as a broken egg on polished glass. In fact, the first time I worked the action on my Classic .22 I performed a chamber check to ensure I hadn't short-stroked the action.

WORK IT

The correct technique for firing a lever-action is to work the action from the



The brass frame immediately identifies the gun as a Henry. Wood to metal fit is superb.



A Henry Big Boy with an Uberti 1873 Cattleman (Old Model), both chambered for .45 Colt. A great pairing for outdoor carry.



If you're unafraid of not going to heaven, the Henry Big Boy is tapped for scope mounting.



Henry Big Boy does not have the familiar side gate for loading, but loads directly into the magazine tube.



The Big Boy rear sight is a classic, fully adjustable semi-buckhorn rear sight with a reversible white diamond insert.

shoulder and not lower it for each shot as seen in Western movies and TV shows. The smooth action of the Henry makes this a simple task. The Henry is the preferred choice of many competitors in cowboy action shooting matches for this very reason.

As long as the shooter does his part, accuracy matches the smoothness of the action. Two inches at 50 yards is well within the accuracy cone of the Big Boy.

The Big Boy is also available in .44 Magnum, .357 Magnum, .41 Magnum and .327 Federal Magnum. The .44 Magnum rifle can shoot .44 special rounds, the .357 Magnum rifle can shoot .38 special rounds and the .327 Federal Magnum rifle can also shoot .32 H&R.

A person going afield with a Big Boy and a revolver in the same chambering would be well armed indeed.

And, just like the original, all Henry rifles are 100% made in the United States with American components. You can be proud to own one. I know I am. 

HenryUSA.com

DIY Home Defense Shotgun Upgrade Remington 870 +2 Mag Extension Kit



xssights.com

X-SIGHTS
FASTEST SIGHTS IN ANY LIGHT™



**SPARTAN- HARSEY
DAGGER**

ELITE GRADE



WWW.SPARTANBLADESUSA.COM

910-757-0035

625 SE Service Road, Southern Pines, NC 28387





An M16 replete with an M203 grenade launcher can seem fairly intimidating under the wrong circumstances — such as during door-to-door proselytizing.

KNOCK, KNOCK ... GRENADE LAUNCHERS CAN BE AWKWARD

There's got to be a locus for it on the human genome someplace. We simply haven't found it yet. Some folks clearly just have the gun nerd gene.

It really is tough to quantify. I have been into guns from my very earliest recollections. I'm not a violent guy and honestly don't much care for hunting. However, the act of stroking a trigger and seeing something happen downrange will reliably get my juices flowing. This particularly curious genetic anomaly has taken me to some fascinating places.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY INDEED!

I bought my first two machineguns on my 21st birthday. They joined an already not-insubstantial collection of scary black guns. These pieces were the fruits of uncounted hours spent behind a lawn mower alongside an unsettling lot of janitorial service rendered at a local drug store. Once I came to appreciate I could turn my time and toil into guns, the world was my oyster.

I lived with a couple of like-minded guys as I trudged my way through engineering school. They were cheap, like me, so our modest duplex was hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Money wasted on personal comfort

could otherwise be better spent on finer stuff.

On this cold January Saturday, a few buddies and I had been out turning ammo into noise. The star of the show was my

full auto M16A1 replete with 40mm M203 grenade launcher underneath. We got back to our little duplex and I launched into my recovery routine. I laid out a GI-issue poncho on the living room floor, stripped my weapons and cleaned them nicely in anticipation of our next foray to the range.

As it was chilly I was still wearing my shooting togs. At that time in my life that meant some BDU pants and motorcycle boots, a leather motorcycle jacket, and cutoff fingerless gloves. I got my M16 tidied up and reassembled and then moved to stow it in the gun box back in the bedroom. As I strolled across the living room with my rifle/grenade launcher thrown rakishly over my shoulder there came a knock upon the door. Without giving it a moment's thought I swung open the door to see who might be calling.

All my close friends knew the deal. Most of them were smitten with the gun nerd gene themselves. They all appreciated a trip over to the Dabbs survival enclave would invariably involve a visible firearm or three. In this case, however, it was something else entirely.

HELLO ...

I was unexpectedly greeted by a trio of Jehovah's Witnesses, two young women and an older man. They were arrayed in the standard



The Watchtower is the monthly illustrated religious magazine of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Their outreach teams will typically leave a copy after a visit but Will missed out on his that day.

**"THROUGHOUT OUR BRIEF TIME TOGETHER I UTTERED NOT A WORD.
I JUST STOOD THERE AGAPE, FISH-LIKE AND STUPID.
THE TWO YOUNG LADIES' EYES GREW BIG AS HUBCAPS."**

two-up, one-back Jehovah's Witness assault formation. The man was in the rear. From behind genuinely perky demeanors they launched into their spiel, likely for the hundredth time that day. I swear I'm not making this up. Their opening question was, "Sir, are you burdened by all the rampant violence in the world?"

Truth be known I was and am. People being mean to each other is a lamentable aspect of the fallen nature of man. However, at that place, under those circumstances, carrying that gun, there was simply no way I could have convinced them of the fact.

Throughout our brief time together I uttered not a word. I just stood there agape, fish-like and stupid. The two young ladies' eyes grew big as hubcaps. Their apparent superior officer, the guy in the back, gently put his hands on their shoulders and said, "Sir, you have a nice day." With that they beat a hasty retreat.



Something close to the mental image Will's visitors had when he opened the door in his shooting attire and grenade launcher.

philosophically and theologically upon which they and I disagree. However, they have my sincere respect. Anyone who cares enough about my immortal soul to cold call my front door should be treated with kindness and courtesy, even if I'm not terribly interested in adopting their belief system. I never intended to frighten or unsettle them. It was just really poor timing.

For the rest of my time living there I was never again visited by the Jehovah's Witnesses. I always imagined I likely made it into some special instructional video. I probably earned my own segment titled something to the effect of, "What to do when confronted by a hostile redneck biker with a grenade launcher."

They didn't even offer a copy of *The Watchtower* magazine.

SORRY, FOLKS

I felt genuinely terrible. As regards the Jehovah's Witnesses there is a great deal

To the three unfortunate individuals who called upon me, if you're out there someplace I truly am sorry. The whole exchange just came off epically wrong. Though it did not seem thus back then in 1988, I am actually a pretty nice guy. I'm just smitten with the gun nerd gene. 🔫

QUALITY FIREARMS DESERVE QUALITY CASES

- HIGH-IMPACT OUTERSHELL
- FOUR STRONG SNAP LATCHES
- MULTIPLE PADLOCK TABS
- HIGH-QUALITY EGG CRATE PADDING
- EXTERNAL TIE DOWN POINTS

CHECK US OUT AT MTMCASE-GARD.COM

NOW IN TWO SIZES

mtm CASE-GARD
QUALITY SHOOTING SPORTS ACCESSORIES

AMERICAN DESIGNED • AMERICAN MADE

HARRY CALDWELL COURAGEOUS OR CRAZY?

Harry Caldwell (1876-1970) was born in Ohio and raised in Tennessee. His father was a Methodist minister. Harry and his brothers hunted and trapped from an early age to help feed the family. It was said of Harry he may not have been born with a squirrel rifle in hand but he acquired one not long after. In later years the sons would pay their way through college by trapping and by panning for gold.

All the brothers participated in outdoor sports. Harry Caldwell was gifted with exceptional athletic ability. He particularly loved baseball and was skilled enough to be offered contracts by at least two major league teams. He apparently felt there was no long-term future as a full-time ball player and established himself as a very successful insurance broker.

TIME FOR A MOVE

Despite his success, or maybe because of it, Caldwell felt he was not living up to his Christian faith. He offered his services to the Methodist church as a missionary. He was assigned to China and arrived there

in 1900. His fiancé Mary Cope joined him there the next year and they were married in a stone church in Fukien province. Except for periodic furloughs to visit the U.S. they would live almost 50 years in China, where all their children were born and educated.

At the time there were thousands of tigers in China. Most fed on wild game and occasionally on domestic livestock, but a few became man-eaters. In the relatively unsettled area where Caldwell served, one estimate was tigers killed 500 people annually — which I find hard to believe, but then I wasn't there. One of Harry Caldwell's sons, John, wrote (*China Coast Family*, 1953) of being frightened as a boy by the growls of tigers outside the house at night. Caldwell realized he could do the public a service and establish credibility by shooting the man-eaters.

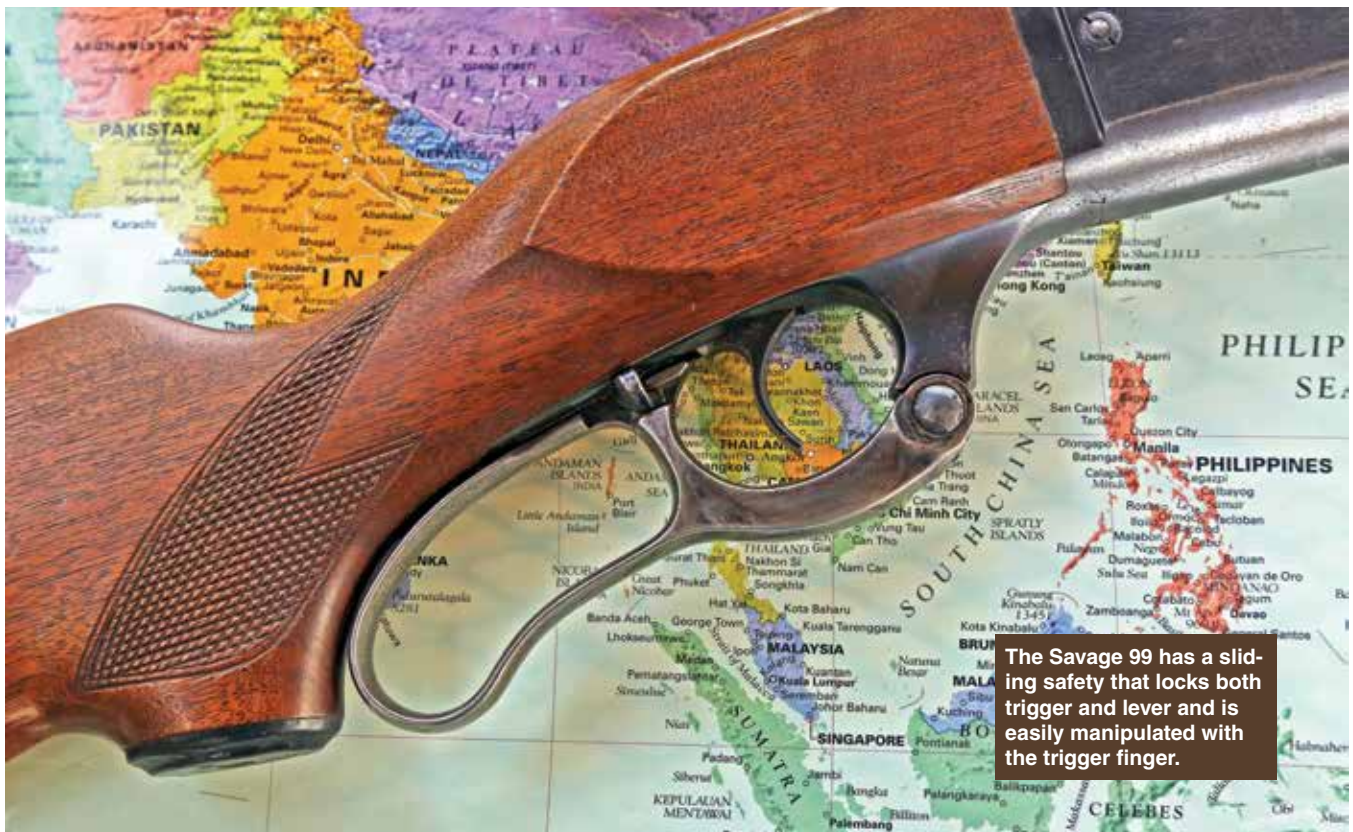
He wrote his brother Will, who lived in New York state, asking him to buy and ship to him the most powerful rifle he could find. Will sent him a Savage 99 in .303 Savage. The Savage .303 is similar in appearance and ballistics to the .30-30



One of Dave's Savage 99s, made in 1954. One of the many fine features of the 99 was the brass rotary magazine. A window in the frame shows the rounds remaining.

Winchester. Where the .30-30 was most commonly loaded with a 170-grain bullet at about 2,050 fps, the most popular load for the .303 Savage was a 190-grain bullet at 1,900 fps. No doubt it seemed plenty powerful for whitetail deer in the North Woods.

A .303 Savage would be far down my list for dangerous game, but Caldwell made it work for two reasons. He was an exceptional shot; Roy Chapman Andrews, an explorer, scientist and hunter of the same



The Savage 99 has a sliding safety that locks both trigger and lever and is easily manipulated with the trigger finger.

era wrote he once saw Caldwell shooting flying birds with a rifle. The other reason was indomitable courage. Almost all the tigers he killed were shot at very close range, sometimes no more than a few feet.

Caldwell's tiger hunting earned him gratitude and respect from the local populace. On a furlough back to the U.S. he found it made him famous. The image of a preacher with a Bible in one hand and a rifle in the other made for good press copy. The publicity brought Caldwell to the attention of Savage Arms, who in future years would send him a rifle and supply of ammunition as new cartridges were introduced.

MAYBE MORE GUN?

The first was a .22 Savage Hi-Power introduced circa 1912, shooting a 70-grain bullet at 2,800 fps. Roy Chapman Andrews hunted tigers with Caldwell, using a Winchester 1895 in .405 Win. In his book *Heart of Asia*, Andrews recounted a debate he had with Caldwell. He started by saying, "... it's plain damned foolishness to use that little bullet, if you don't mind my saying so. It

SAVAGE

Is this a Tiger Rifle?

.22 Savage Hi-Power

YOU know the regulation English tiger rifle—15 pounds of it—.577 caliber—double barrel—530-grain bullet. You know the English way to shoot tigers—from the backs of elephants—with armies of native hunters. Here is an experienced tiger hunter, the Rev. H. E. Caldwell, who tested the .22 Savage Hi-Power—the little 6 1/4 pounder, which shoots through steel boiler plate, and drives its vicious little pointed 70-grain bullet more than half a mile a second—and who decided it was a tiger gun. To prove it, all alone he walked up on a 400-pound muscovy, aimed roughly at the body—up dark to see the sight—and fired one shot. He hit in the intention—“one for back.” The tiger went straight up in the air and fell dead in his tracks. It was a tiger rifle. It has killed Alaskan Brown Bear, Grizzly, Buffalo, Moose, Elk and Caribou, besides the black bear and deer it was originally designed for. It holds both the world's records on moving targets. Write us for particulars about “the biggest little gun in the world.”

SAVAGE ARMS COMPANY, 9210 SAVAGE AVE., UTICA, N. Y.

The .22 SAVAGE Hi-Power

The Savage Arms company gave Caldwell several model 99 rifles and made good use of his experience in advertisements and catalogs. The ad text also notes it had been used to kill “Alaskan Brown Bear, Grizzly, Buffalo, Moose, Elk, and Caribou ...”

hasn't enough weight or shocking power for dangerous game.”

Caldwell smiled. “... the Savage Company sent me out this rifle and the first time I ever fired it was at a tiger. You ought to have seen what that tiny bullet did to him! ... it was too dark to pick any vital spot, so I just fired at the body. The beast lunged into the air, twisted, and came down dead as a herring.”

“Is that the only tiger you've killed with a .22 Hi-Power?” I asked.

“Yes, it's the only one I've ever shot at with this rifle, but it's good enough for me. I'll take on any tiger that ever lived with it.”

Some things never change. Fifty years later Roy Weatherby and Elmer Keith would carry on the light-fast vs. heavy-slow bullet debate. Today, 110 years later, many an intrepid Internet-er praises the .223 Rem. as a big-game cartridge, with nearly identical ballistics as the .22 Savage. A popular load is a 75-grain bullet at 2,800 fps — admittedly with superior bullet construction. As hunters we still draw sweeping conclusions on the basis of limited data. 

NORTH AMERICAN ARMS

North American Arms®, Inc.

Viridian Grip Laser

NAA-22MS-VL .22 Magnum Snub with Viridian Grip Laser For Your “Personal Protection Accuracy”.
(Actual Size Shown)

Convenient, Reliable, Effective!

f **www.northamericanarms.com**

IS YOUR SCOPE SQUARE? NOW THERE'S A WAY

Long ago I shot rimfire matches with a friend whose offhand position put the rifle in a steep cant. The 50-foot distance and his position were the same for each shot, so what did it matter his scope was at 11 o'clock to the bore? The sight-line intersected the bullet's path at 50 feet. He shot good scores.

A scope rotated in the rings so its vertical wire tipped to 11 o'clock is likewise harmless. You could spin it so a crosswire appeared as an X, and center the bullseye every time at the zero distance.

BUT ...

The rub comes when your target is not at the zero distance. If the reticle is plumb but offset from the bore, the bullet will fall parallel to it but meet its image only at the zero range. Think of side-mounted scopes, common on the top-ejecting deer rifles of my youth. Bullet and sight-line converge to zero range, then diverge beyond it. But in the lateral plane there's no gravity-like force pulling them together again.

Shooting far, you want the scope at 12 o'clock on the rifle, the reticle absolutely vertical. Absent wind and setting aside spin drift and Coriolis effect, the bullet should fall directly behind the wire but attaching a scope to ensure it is "squared" is not as easy as you might think.

"It kept me up nights," said D'Arcy Echols, as if building his exquisite hunting rifles left nothing to the imagination. "The solution should have come sooner. Gravity has been around awhile." But his device wasn't intuitive. Or a copy. He's been awarded two patents.

A week later I stepped into his shop, trying to look as if I knew my way around machine tooling. Sensing my discomfort, D'Arcy started at my level, with a length of parachute cord and a catfish sinker. "At long range, a reticle's vertical wire must align with the tug of

gravity. If you use a mil-dot for elevation and the wire is not vertical, you're aiming to the side of the bullet track. If, instead, you use the elevation dial to maintain a center hold, the principle still applies. The reticle must track vertically."

A couple for whom he was building rifles had set him on the path to bring scope



D'Arcy Echols fashioned and now markets this target (above) to help orient scope reticles easily and precisely. A plumb bob in front of this backing board (below) shows "true vertical." The target is aligned with its cord.



reticles quickly vertical to help ensure first-round hits at long range. "My clients were to hunt sheep in one of the 'stans.' The outfitter had advised them shots could come as far as 600 yards." Echols dangled the catfish sinker. "Hence my plumb line. And target." He unfurled a long paper checkered with MOA squares. Two bold vertical stripes in its center intersected twin horizontal stripes near top and bottom of the grid.

Now, you can align any scope's wire on a vertical stripe by rocking the rifle or twisting the scope in its rings. Neither trick ensures the rifle is level or the scope is at 12 o'clock, or consequently, the bullets will descend behind the wire.

"To level a rifle," said my friend, "you need a flat surface, a base-line." Flat surfaces on rifles are scarce. Flat-bottom receivers on early bolt rifles are flat like Kansas — not crenulated or mountainous, but not truly flat. "You can make a receiver flat on top by adding a rail or a scope base, but plenty of scope base holes are off-plumb and off-center. Ditto for guard screw holes."

THE SOLUTION

Echols found the flat surfaces he sought inside the receivers. "Action rails are uniformly broached on a plane perpendicular to features that define the vertical in bolt rifles. They're independent of external contours."

Thus, he milled a steel bar which slid into a Remington 700 action and protruded over its tang. He then installed a tube bubble level crosswise at the rear of the bar, a circular bubble just in front of it. Floating ball bearings in the bar hold it firmly and snapped into place. Removal required depressing the bolt release.

Satisfied, he made a similar bar to fit a Winchester 70.

D'Arcy hung the sinker in front of a 100-yard target board at the local range. He tacked his target so its vertical stripes shadowed the plumb-line. "Over sandbags I leveled the rifle with the bar and rotated the scope in its rings,



In D'Arcy Echols' fixture, above left, this Model 70 is ready to level, using the rest feet to move the bubbles on the bar. Above right, not all flat-bottom receivers are flat, but the recessed flat behind a Model 70s recoil lug serves for the mounting block. The leveling bar indexes off the action rails.



A Remington 40x awaits a leveling bar (above, left). Note the windage screw at the platform's rear, for easy side-to-side alignment. A Hart benchrest to hold it all. Clockwise from top right: AR-15 leveling fixture, Model 70 mounting block, V-block for round receivers.

aligning the vertical wire with that pair of stripes. To check scope tracking, I fired at the lower stripe intersection, dialed 40 clicks up and fired again. Given quarter-minute clicks, I looked for the second group 10" up that stripe. Easy peasy."

Then, using his shop skills, he revisited an idea that had once helped him diagnose a faulty scope.

He machined a two-piece, windage-adjustable alloy block for his Hart benchrest, dovetailing its top to accept a V-block drilled and tapped to a round receiver's front guard screw. For Model 70s, he made a flat block to fit behind the recoil lug.

PROOF

Early next day at the rifle range, D'Arcy removed the stock from an Echols Legend rifle in .300 Winchester. "You can do the rest." And I did, attaching the block to the receiver, marrying the pair to the dovetailed base and securing all in the Hart bench-rest.

I traded the bolt for a leveling bar and adjusted the rest to center the bubbles. Eye to the scope, I used the base's windage screw to bring the reticle onto the stripe. They were nearly parallel. I fired a three-shot group. It centered the stripe. "Come up 30 clicks." I did, and fired another trio.

Predictably higher, that knot edged one side of the stripe. "Not close enough," scolded D'Arcy. "You're off half an inch at 100 yards. That's 5" at 1,000."

Easing tension on the ring screws, I tweaked the scope so the wire matched the stripe perfectly — and had to repeat to allow for a slight shift when cinching the screws. Dialing down 30 clicks showed the crosswire holding true laterally. "Not all scopes track true," Echols pointed out. "Dialing up for distance, you must ensure the mechanism will change elevation only."

D'Arcy also showed me a long alloy block he'd just fashioned for AR-15 receivers. "Turns out the base-line on an AR is the belly of the upper. So I designed an external block that hinges to the upper. Use it to level the rifle as you would the bar in a bolt rifle."

The AR block functioned as well as the bars. I marveled at D'Arcy's ingenuity. Plumb is a simple concept. Getting a rifle receiver and its scope reticle plumb begs a clever mind.

D'Arcy Echols plans to market bars and fixture components separately — targets too — so shooters can tailor this system to their needs. Everyone deserves a square scope.

DIXIE

Gun Works, Inc.

Where "Hard-to-Find" becomes easy.

For generations, re-enactors, modern hunters and competitive shooters have looked to the **DIXIE GUN WORKS'** catalog for the hardest to find blackpowder items. Our all new **2021** catalog continues the tradition with the world's largest selection of blackpowder replica arms, accessories, antique parts, muzzleloader hunting and sport shooting equipment.



ORDER TODAY!

**STILL ONLY
\$5.00!**

**PROFESSIONAL
SERVICE
AND EXPERTISE
GUARANTEED**

VIEW ITEMS AND ORDER ONLINE!

www.dixiegunworks.com

Major credit cards accepted

FOR ORDERS ONLY (800) 238-6785

DIXIE GUN WORKS, INC.

1412 W. Reelfoot Avenue

PO Box 130 Dept. 2 Union City, TN 38281

INFO PHONE: (731) 885-0700

FAX: (731) 885-0440

EMAIL: info@dixiegunworks.com



KIRKPATRICK
LEATHER COMPANY



Handtooled
Rifle Scabbard
\$359

kirkpatrickleather.com | 956-723-6893



THE KRAG M98 STILL A SPORTING PROPOSITION

Payton Miller

As the United States service rifle, the Norwegian-designed Krag-Jorgensen was produced at the Springfield Armory from 1894 to 1904. It was used in the Boxer Rebellion, Spanish-American War and in the Philippine-American War before it was replaced by the Model 1903 Springfield.

This may represent a fairly short reign as our standard-issue service rifle, although it's a couple of years longer than the M14 — although the '14 remained in limited service for far longer.

BACK IN THE HUNT

Although the Krag and its rimmed .30-40 cartridge may have been “obsoleted” by various Mausers, not to mention the Mauser-copycat '03, it found favor with many hunters in sporterized trim. Its .30-40 cartridge — while not the equal of the .30-06 — was reasonably close ballistically to the similarly rimmed .303 British, at least in 180-grain configuration as opposed to the original 2,000 fps 220-grain loading.

It was, and is, a perfectly serviceable number for North American big game. In fact, it was used to take the world's record (until recently) Rocky Mountain elk in 1899 according to Barnes' *Cartridges of the World*.

Any commercial loading you may encounter is pretty much restricted to the 180-grain weight. Winchester, Hornady and Remington offer excellent hunting loads (Power Point, SP Custom and Core-Lokt) approaching the 2,500 fps mark — still about right for a general-purpose deer, bear and hog load. Regardless of fad and fashion, 3,000 fps is not the critical yardstick for a viable big-game load used at real-world yardages. Handloaders, of course, can go heavier or lighter.

Surplus Krags were shockingly inexpensive for decades and were often the only available choice for many hunters, particularly when there was a world war going on. The term “buck-fifty” Krag wasn't all that much of an exaggeration.

DIVINE FLAWS?

There were several American Krag variants — Models 1892, 1896, 1898 and 1899 in both rifle (30" barrel) and carbine

(22" barrel) configuration. Many “civilianized” Krag sporters — usually 22" carbine variants — had the side magazine “chopped” and replaced by a flush-fitting hinged cover. It only cut the 5-round cartridge capacity down by a couple of rounds but kinda destroyed the distinctive “Krag Kool” look of the originals.

Unfortunately for the prospects of Krag longevity, the Mauser stripper clip system had gotten all the major powers hot and bothered, so the simple, single-loading virtues of the Krag system were relegated to sportsmen. You could stuff a handful of cartridges in and — as long as the bullets were pointed the right way — once you snapped the cover shut, you were good to go.

Another factor contributing to the '03's adoption was the desire for an action permitting a more powerful cartridge than the 30-40 Krag (or .30 Army) which the .30-03 and .30-06 were. The single-lug bolt of the Krag action as slick-cycling as it was, couldn't handle the pressures the multi-lug setup of the '03 could.

The machining required to produce this wondrous side-magazine today would make any attempt at a current “Krag” prohibitively pricey. Me? I had one once, loved it, and traded it away. The lesson? If you have a nice Krag, hang on to it. Dump it and you'll regret it. Trust me on this one.

One period military holdover is the magazine cut-off, a small



The multi-lug Springfield '03 (top) was stronger than the Krag (bottom). However, the single-lug Krag was plenty strong enough for .30-40 pressures and was as smooth in operation as a bolt action gets!



Quick-handling, light-kicking, accurate and plenty powerful, this Krag Model 1898 sporter is a jewel.



At 65 yards, the large-aperture of the Lyman sight gave good accuracy (above), certainly more than enough for a general-issue rifle. Signature feature: The Krag's side-loading magazine (below) held five rounds and could be single-loaded easily. However, from a military standpoint, the Mauser-style stripper clip was one of the factors in favor of the Krag's successor — the 1903 Springfield.

lever at the left rear of the receiver which allows single loading without tapping into the main 5-round payload sitting in reserve.

Most changes in the M98 variant were minor and included a slight redesign of the bolt handle and a reversing of the operation of the magazine cut-off lever from the previous versions.

Incidentally, a few other notable American rifles have been chambered to .30-40 Krag, notably the lever-action M95 Winchester, the Remington-Lee Model 1899 bolt action and, much, much later, Ruger's nifty little single-shot No. 3 Carbine.

TWEAKS AND TOUCHES

Our shooting buddy Doug Fee's particular M98 specimen — obtained at auction six years ago for the enormously agreeable hammer price of \$275 — had been left alone magazine-wise but had some sporting touches that would have put it in the state-of-the-art class back in the day. Stock-wise, it has a checkered pistol grip and Schnabel fore-end, a suitably vintage and still relatively pliant Red Head recoil pad and an add-on sling swivel band.

But the *pièce de résistance* was a Lyman 1A peep sight set in a milled dovetail on the cocking piece. This little item gave you a choice of two aperture sizes in a remarkably inconspicuous package. I've seen a lot of Krag sporters with larger, more elaborate receiver sights, usually Redfield, Williams or Lyman M48s but this little Lyman is small, efficient and uncomplicated. I've also seen scoped Krag's, but most have featured side-mounts, or rarely, a Scout-type forward mounted setup if your tastes run that way. Mine doesn't.

SUPREMELY SHOOTABLE

Our test ammo menu was restricted to Winchester Super-X 180-grain Power Point that proved to be an excellent load in the Krag. Out of the 22" barrel of our carbine sporter, it averaged 2,308 fps. Since Doug had seen fit to bring along his unaltered full-length (as in 30") 1898 rifle, we were curious to see what kind of velocity boost an extra 8" of barrel would impart. It turned out to be considerable — clocking an impressive 2,639 fps and crowding .308 territory by our reckoning. Pretty interesting, although not quite enough to justify wrestling 49" worth of overall length through the deer woods.

One thing worth mentioning is the very pleasant level of felt recoil of the Krag. Maybe it's just me, but the older I get, the less I like getting kicked. After shooting Doug's little sporter, I began to



see why some troopers bitched about the '03 Springfield.

In terms of accuracy, we were limited to what ammo we could come up with. But those 180-grain Winchester Super-X Power Points pretty much stayed at well under an inch for 3 shots.

For most of my life, I've heard old-timers rhapsodize about how smooth the Krag action is. It won't take you long to realize they were right. One front locking lug was stout enough to handle the .30-40.

The trigger on our sporter was nice and crisp. We actually compared it to a dead-stock '03 Springfield. Both broke at just under 3.5 lbs.

While it's true the rock-bottom price of surplus Krag's made them a tempting object for sporterizing, this is no longer a viable excuse or one making financial sense. A recent 1898 rifle — in what was described by Gunbroker.com as resembling "Unissued Mint" condition — boasted a starting bid of \$3,000.

But fear not, previously sporterized carbines can be found for a lot less.





RONIN 10MM

BEAR OR BAD GUY, THIS 1911 IS READY

Your hand wraps around the familiar grip of the 1911, the checking on the mainspring housing locking into your hand while the checking on the slim wooden grip panels welcome your fingertips. You rack the slide firmly against the necessarily strong recoil spring, jacking a 10mm Auto round into the chamber. You center the red fiber optic front sight on where you want to drill the hole, you roll the trigger through its short, smooth travel, and you feel the exhilarating jolt as you unleash some 700 foot-pounds of energy.

You are shooting the new Springfield Armory Ronin 10mm. You're welcome.

FIRST GLANCE

This 10mm is the latest in Springfield's successful series of well-made \$849 1911 pistols. The fixed sights encompass a ledge-shaped rear to allow one-handed cycling against the belt in an emergency and fiber optic front for fast sight picture

acquisition. The left-side-only thumb safety is correctly sized and adjusted "just right" from the factory, as is the beavertail grip safety. Grasping grooves on the slide are cut properly for solid hold when working against the robust recoil spring — which I love — and are present on the front — which I don't care for — as well as the rear. The classic John Moses Browning bushing and recoil spring guide and especially easier reassembly with no downside. The thin grip panels follow the pattern world champion shooter and master pistolsmith Mike Plaxco pioneered decades ago, with Springfield's own distinctive Ronin checkering format. Trigger

pull on our test sample, serial NM 678033, was smooth and free of creep at 5.6 lbs. average pull weight.

VERSATILITY

The 10mm takes you from mild to wild, "mild" in this case being roughly equivalent to the .40 S&W Jeff Cooper called "the 10mm Short." "Wild" is up to 220-grain hard cast bullets designed to ruin a bruin in self-defense with those 700-plus foot-pounds. Here's what I had on hand to run through the Ronin:

- **175-grain Hornady Critical Duty.** The barrier-blind high-tech projectile runs at 1,160 feet per second (fps) generating 490 foot-pounds of energy (fpe). This is



For street carry, Mas went with Hornady Critical Defense 10mm. Anyone still concerned about "Stopping Power"?

what I filled the Ronin with during the concealed carry part of the test.

- **200-grain Speer Gold Dot.** This bonded hollow point is loaded to a nominal 1,100 fps.

- **180-grain CCI Blazer.** This aluminum-cased jacketed flat-nose is sort of .40 S&W +P at 1050 fps. Affordability made it my main practice load for the test.

- **180-grain Federal Trophy Bonded.** This jacketed soft-nose at 1275 fps and 568 fpe is advertised for "medium game" and should be good for whitetail deer and Florida-size hogs.

- **200-grain Buffalo Bore.** From the company's "Heavy 10mm" series, this is what I'd carry in a 10mm in big bear country. Its flat-nose jacketed bullet at 1,200 fps and 639 fpe duplicates the ballistics of the famously-hot original Norma load.

BB's 220-grain hard cast lead flat nose at the same velocity is gonna hit harder, but I like the feed reliability of jacketed bullets in a 10mm. Given the late Larry Kelley once put one of those Normas from the 6" Bar-Sto barrel of my Colt Delta Elite into the brisket of a truly humongous wild hog — and out its butt, dropping it in its tracks — I'm satisfied with such a round's penetration on the big stuff.

SHOTS FIRED

Recoil is somewhat subjective. Full-power 10mm loads felt about +P .45 in the



The first hand-chambered round consistently shot high but check the rest of the 25-yard Ronin group with 10mm Gold Dot defense loads. Bear beware!

same platform, with the Trophy Bonded a tad snappier and the Buffalo Bore 220-grain noticeably more while the Blazer felt about like shooting GI .45 hardball from a 1911. Our test sample 10mm tended strongly to a "4+1 Syndrome," with the first hand-cycled load generally going higher than subsequent automatically cycled rounds. Accuracy testing was done with a Matrix rest on a concrete bench at 25 yards, measuring five-shot groups to the nearest 0.05" once overall and again for the best three, a proven method for factoring out human error.

The Gold Dot 200-grain did 3.70" for all five counting the errant first shot, and 1.55" for the next four with the best three under an inch: 0.95" center-to-center. Federal Trophy Bonded was 5.25" (all 5), 3.55" (4)

and 1.55" (3). The Blazer turned in 3.65" (5), 2.40" (4) and 1.35" (3). The stout 200-grain Buffalo Bore drilled a 3.15" quintet of holes, the best three in 1.50" and the 175-grain Critical Duty did 5.35" overall with the tightest trio in 2.35". The "best three" clusters averaged 1.54", showing excellent accuracy potential. In some guns, the "4+1 Syndrome" tends to diminish after the parts break in from lots of shooting.

Due to the ammo shortage we didn't get to run "buckets of bullets" through this sample as we usually try to do but the 10mm Ronin did not malfunction at any point.

PERSPECTIVE

For the 1911 fan who's as worried about bears as bad guys, the Ronin 10mm should serve nicely. I would like to see it offered with adjustable sights to take advantage of the broad spectrum of 10mm ammo, the way Springfield offers the option on the Ronin's sister gun, the Range Officer. The build quality and function make the Ronin a solid value in a 10mm 1911. If 8+1 (or 9+1 with Wilson Combat magazines) does not suffice to mitigate a fear of *Ursus horribilis*, you can always turn the pages of the Springfield Armory catalog until you come to their XD-M 10mm, which weighs about half a pound less, retails for \$652, and comes with two 15-round magazines.

Springfield-Armory.com

SHADOW SYSTEMS

WOULD YOU BUY A CUT-RATE PACEMAKER?

There's never been a better time in American history to be a gun nerd. It would have been undeniably cool to stroll out of a hardware store in 1933 with a Thompson submachine gun, cash and carry. However, in 1933 we were four years into the Great Depression, Adolph Hitler was just getting tooled up over on his side of the pond and McDonald's was just some old guy's farm. Dropping by McDonald's for a

hamburger would have therefore been both messy and time-consuming. It's way better today.

Today's daily news feed is liberally populated with urban chaos, and the nation's gun emporia are awash in advanced, affordable defensive guns as a result. Ours is the most refined consumer market in human history and capitalism drives a truly unprecedented selection. Shadow Systems is a cut above this crowd.

Shadow Systems is indeed a compulsive mob. Helmed by an inveterate shooter/combat veteran/West Point graduate with a diagnosable preoccupation with perfection, Shadow Systems makes some of the finest production striker-fired handguns extant. Cool-guy stuff normally costing extra elsewhere comes standard with Shadow Systems iron. You can find cheaper defensive handgun solutions, but is this really where you want to be cutting corners?

BALLISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Imagine if you will, you've been feeling a little weird so you report to your friendly neighborhood sawbones for a look see. Before you know it, you are sporting one of those humiliating open-backed hospital gowns and rolling into some enormous terrifying medical machine. You think to yourself,

WILL DABBS, MD

**PHOTOS: ROB JONES/
THE IMAGESMITH, LLC**



SYSTEMS

if you're lucky, you'll end up sterile. If you're unlucky this thing will steal your soul.

Some doctor who looks like she's about 12 will then engage you in a somber chat. You need an operation. As you're silently wondering when they started letting sixth graders do surgery, you catch something about an implantable medical device.

This procedure won't be cheap. Now you're regretting the cut-rate health insurance plan which includes a deductible equal to the GDP of a small West African nation-state. However, a little judicious Googling turns up Crazy Clyde's Pre-Owned Pacemakers.

Crazy Clyde's offers everything from used implantable defibrillators to low-mileage hip prostheses. Everything they sell has been inside somebody else already, but it is both fairly clean and almost as good as the same thing brand-new. Now you're tempted. Crazy Clyde's could indeed save you a few bucks.

Don't be an idiot. No, you're not tempted. If you need a machine to ultimately keep you alive, you aren't going to shop around for the lowest bidder. You might skimp a bit on generic mayonnaise or opt for Burger King over Olive Garden when money is tight but if this thing is what stands between you and that really bright light, you are going to want it done right. Shouldn't that same axiom apply to our defensive guns?

Why do we lug these things around all the time anyway? I've packed heat for 30 years. The sex appeal was gone after the first 30 minutes. Carrying a gun is both uncomfortable and a hassle. However, if you ever

need the rascal for real, it will be worth more than your house, your car, your dog and your 401k all put together. Just like a pacemaker — if it's the piece of kit spelling the difference between going home to momma and going home in a box, you want it to be the best you can afford. Behold, the Shadow Systems family of combat pistols.

DETAILS

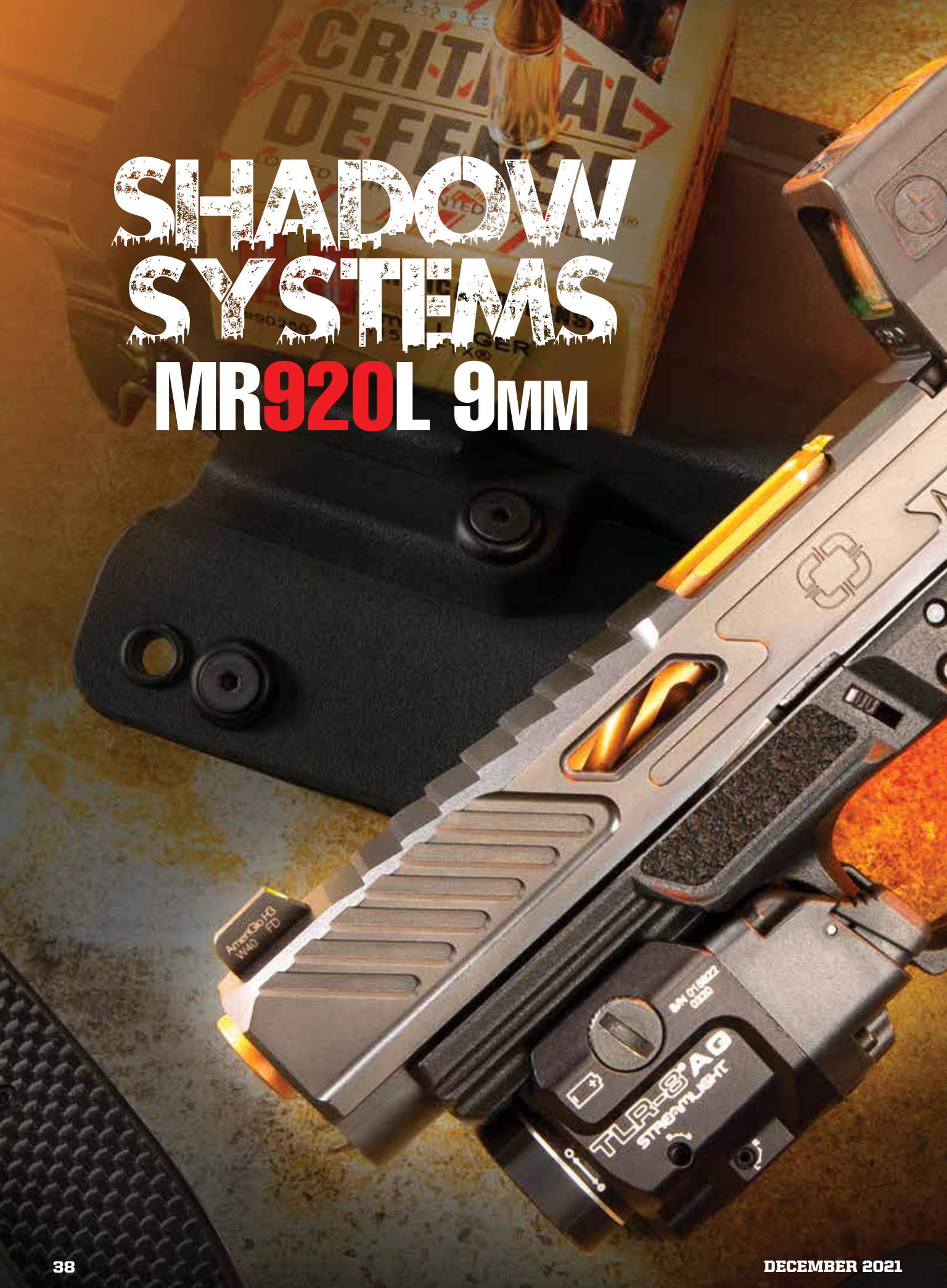
Shadow Systems handguns come in two broad categories, three different models and two different strata. Multi-Role pistols feature a 15-round magazine and mid-sized grip. These guns will ride in GLOCK 19 holsters and are designed for home defense, concealed carry, or duty applications. The Multi-Role guns are available in either standard-length or long-slide configurations.

Duty-Role guns are the full-figured sort, sporting a full-sized grip and a 17-round magazine. These guns boast an extended slide and barrel assembly for a longer sight radius, higher velocities and



SHADOW SYSTEMS

MR920L 9MM



THE GEAR

AMMO: Hornady Critical
Defense 115-grain FTX
HOLSTER: Comp-Tac L-Line Modular
BELT: Galco Casual
WEAPONLIGHT: Streamlight TLR 8
Light/Laser
KNIFE: CRKT Avant

The MR920L full-size striker-fired 9mm can fill a variety of roles — duty, home defense, concealed carry — uses common G19 accessories but is anything but ordinary.

GUNS

MAGAZINE

improved accuracy. The Duty-Role weapons will ride in a standard GLOCK 17 holster and are designed for service applications.

Each Shadow Systems pistol is available in either Combat or Elite configurations. Think of this as awesome and extra-awesome. The Combat versions feature directional slide serrations both front and rear. The Elite versions have these same grooves but are also serrated on the top of the slide and include lightening windows in the side.

All this is what sets the various Shadow Systems guns apart from each other. It is actually in the common stuff where the design really shines. That story begins with a mindset.

BALLISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Shadow Systems is a different sort of gun company. From top to bottom they are comprised of compulsive gun folk. Law Enforcement Officers, combat veterans and competitive shooters

design and build these weapons. The quality of execution and superlative design shine through clearly. As a result, the company is growing.

Shadow Systems currently employs about 100 people. They also recently moved into a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility. Their success is driven by their mantra.

These guns are designed first and foremost to be reliable. Some custom striker-fired pistols feature a light, airy, diaphanous, angel's-breath trigger pull. To quote Shadow's CEO Trevor Roe, a 4-lb. "Bang!" beats a 3-lb. light primer strike every single time. Every millimeter of these guns is optimized for pure unfiltered function. The fact they also look cool is simply gravy.

Shadow Systems is driven by several simple principles. They tighten tolerances in the spaces that improve accuracy, but never at the expense of reliability. Everything needing to be made out of metal is made out of metal. Their guns also all include the





At 15 meters off of a simple rest, Will found the Shadow Systems guns shoot plenty straight with a variety of ammo.

expected multi-tier mechanical safety systems.

The Shadow guys are obsessive about their product. They feast on feedback. The end result is a simply magnificent combat tool.

COMMON CORE

Shadow Systems manufactures their own slides, frames, barrels, triggers and entrails in-house at their facility in Plano, Texas. Spiral fluted match barrels are rifled one-in-ten and safe with cast lead bullets. Slides are cut from 17-4 stainless. Aluminum triggers feature a comfortable flat face and a built-in blade safety. They break crisply and monotonously between 4 and 4.5 lbs.

The front sight includes a luminous tritium insert. The rear sight is basic serrated black. Just put the glowing dot on something you dislike and squeeze.

Most all modern high-speed combat pistols are cut to accept a micro red dot sight. However, most tactical handguns also require some kind of adaptor to interface the optic with the slide. In many cases these adaptor plates can cost a c-note or more. Additionally, if

you find yourself with a new optic you then typically have to start over and dump another pile of cash on a fresh adaptor plate. I've been there myself and didn't much care for that.

The good folks at Shadow Systems figured all that out for us. The slide is drilled and threaded to accept a wide variety of popular optics. These include sights from Holosun, Trijicon, Swampfox, SIG, Vortex, TruGlo, Leupold and Shield. The gun comes with screws of three different lengths as well as a series of polymer buffers to create a perfect fit with each of these sights without some expensive extraneous mounting contraption. I do this for a living, and these days, such unvarnished compassion for the consumer can be a rare thing indeed.

The frame is simply inspired. The stippling is perfect, and there are sweet parking pads for your trigger finger for those times you're not actively unleashing chaos. This same pad on the other side lets you really lock your support thumb in place for optimal recoil control. There is a little shelf underneath the slide stop to make sure it never rides up unintentionally. The coolest bit, however, is the backstrap system.



A pistol manufacturer has *finally* realized most shooters own and use several different brands of optics, so Shadow Systems pistols feature a patented multi-footprint optic cut. The Shadow Systems pistols come standard with a green outline self-luminous tritium dot front sight to mate with a beefy serrated rear sight — if you're not using an optic!



The slide features side and top directional serrations for positive grip under stress. It wraps around the conventionally-rifled spiral-fluted barrel for serious control with great looks.



“OF COURSE IT WAS RELIABLE WITH EVERYTHING WE FED IT. IF IT SAYS ‘9MM PARA’ ON THE HEADSTAMP, THE SHADOW SYSTEMS GUNS WILL EAT IT RELIABLY AND WELL.”

Lots of guns include interchangeable backstraps to accommodate various hand sizes. Those on the Shadow Systems guns actually adjust the lay of the pistol. High, neutral and low grip inserts let you tweak the orientation of the gun in your hand to suit your personal proclivities. With lesser pistols you choose a grip-to-frame angle based upon a certain manufacturer or model. With the Shadow Systems pistols you can fit the gun to your own unique hand/eye axis.

TRIGGER TIME

Of course it was reliable with everything we fed it. If it says “9mm Para” on the headstamp, the Shadow Systems guns will eat it reliably and well. These guns also shoot unnaturally straight. Keeping my rounds in a tennis ball at 15 meters wasn't a challenge.

Something about these Shadow Systems pistols just feels good. There is a natural spot for each of my fingers and the grip inserts let me configure the chassis to suit my big monkey mitts. It is obvious when you heft these things some really smart people put a lot of effort into making everything perfect.

I topped my MR920L pistol with a Holosun HE509T-GR enclosed reflex optical sight. The built-in solar cell automatically adjusts the user-selectable reticle for ambient light and ensures truly insane run times. The Shake Awake function cranks the sight up whenever you touch it. The titanium housing is indestructible. No kidding, I love these things.

RUMINATIONS

I have myself never owned a \$250,000 automobile. I have however, sat in a couple. When compared to your more pedestrian Honda, Toyota, Chevy, or Ford, there's just something that feels different about such a rarefied hand-built supercar. So it is with these Shadow Systems pistols.

The niche here, however, is the Shadow Systems mob built this superlative combat implement without letting costs get out of control. Their guns are indeed more expensive than your stock box-store fare but not by a tremendous margin. If you might have to rely on a defensive handgun to save the life of those you love you don't do it halfway. Shadow Systems is top-tier iron that isn't crazy expensive. This is the good stuff. You know it when you feel it.

MSRP: Starting at \$799

ShadowSystemsCorp.com
Holosun.com

The Complete Collection Of

GUNCRANK DIARIES

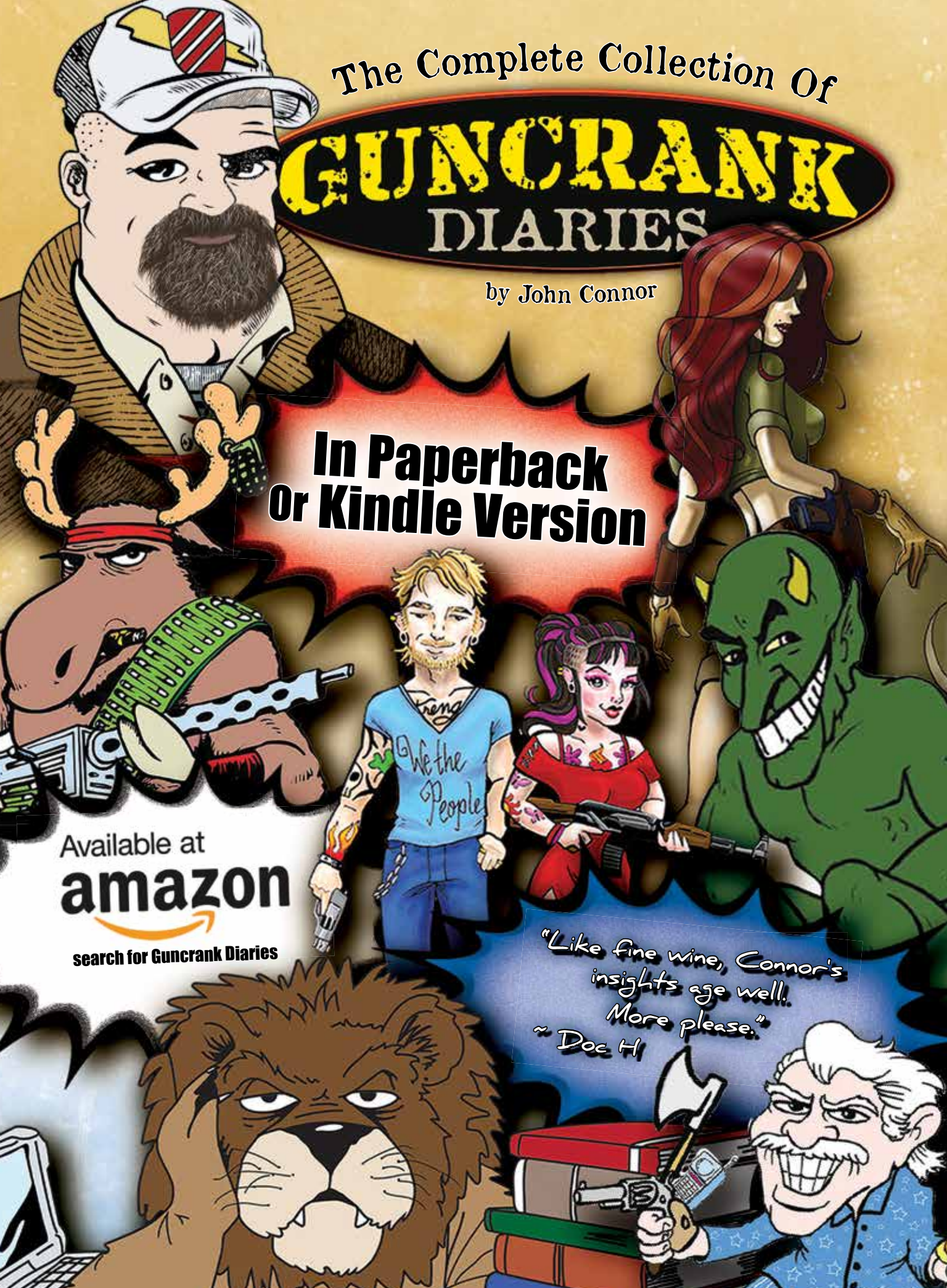
by John Connor

**In Paperback
Or Kindle Version**

Available at
amazon

search for Guncrank Diaries

*"Like fine wine, Connor's
insights age well.
More please."
~ Doc H*



Earning a NICKEL FINISH IN PRAISE OF HONEST WEAR

JEREMY D. CLOUGH

"Desirability does not arise from beauty... Instead, their value is primarily derived from a third criterion: antiquity and personal association."

— Everett F. Bleiler, introduction to *Kakuzo Okakura's The Book of Tea*.

My friend Gary once asked me which I would like to inherit: a mint condition 1911 my grandfather bought new, seldom fired and never carried, or the same one he bought new and carried for the rest of his life, with

most of the blue gone and the checkered grips worn almost smooth, with all the stories that go with it. The question, of course, answers itself. Gary was serious about things being used, having once lent me a very expensive prototype knife with instructions to bring it back scratched.

I thought about this the other day when I bought my Quarantine Gun, a used .45 purchased from a friend. Assembled from an Essex receiver with a Colt slide and parts, it's a very cool pistol but well worn. The slide to frame fit rattles, and unlike the

hard fit barrels I'm used to, the chamber area of the barrel yields cheerfully when pressed down. It also has a "nickel finish" — you know, like it was dropped in a bag of nickels and shaken. I can fix any or all of this. I won't.

THE ZEN OF ATTRITION

In our Instagram-perfect world, we lose sight of the beauty of honest wear and use. You can't expect something to stay perfect if you use it — and that's okay. In fact, it's even better. It becomes part of the story, just like your scars. Hemingway famously said people wounded by life were often stronger at the broken places.

The Japanese technique of *kintsugi* takes this further, making damaged things more beautiful at the broken places. Based in part on the idea of *wabi-sabi*, which values imperfect items, *kintsugi* is a repair method for pottery where the shards are joined with lacquer and the new seams outlined in gold. Rather than discarding the item upon breaking, it is made more beautiful and more valuable.

My favorite watch is a Luminox Field Chronograph given to me about 16 years ago. As a young(er) man with a modest salary and too much debt, the \$800 watch was a very generous gift, one otherwise well beyond my reach. I took care of it, but I used it. I clicked the chronograph to time laps when I ran or swam, I clocked jury verdicts with it when I was a D.A. and



"IT ALSO HAS A 'NICKEL FINISH' — YOU KNOW, LIKE IT WAS DROPPED IN A BAG OF NICKELS AND SHAKEN. I CAN FIX ANY OR ALL OF THIS. I WON'T."

I always carefully screwed the pushers back down before submerging when I took it SCUBA diving.

It wore its way through a couple of bands before alighting on the faded black Zulu strap it lives on now, and it's either on its second or third movement, I forget. One of the subdial hands didn't match the others for a few years, because when I knocked it loose, the model had been discontinued and replacement parts weren't available. Oddly, the last time it was serviced it came back with the hands matching. One wonders.

It's been to the bottom of the ocean and submerged in other bodies of water beyond



count, banged onto rocks while hiking or scrabbling up hillsides, and I'm pretty sure it has a waffle stamp on one side from being slammed into the checkering on my .45.

REFINISH? NOPE.

That stainless full-house Novak .45 hasn't gotten off easy, either. After a dozen years of carry, it's got bright spots from holster wear, plenty of scuffs and scratches and some checkering I've flatspotted, probably with the help of the Luminex. The last time I had it at Novak's for a quick checkup, they asked if I wanted it refinished. The answer — of course — was a

decisive "no." The same went for my worn badge when I used to be a prosecutor, which I was advised not to replace because "it says you're not a rookie."

Sure, it would be easy to bead blast the .45 back to newness, and I could probably have bought another Luminex for the cost of its most recent movement swap. But where would all this history go? I'll leave it for my sons to pick up where I left off, just like I'm going to do with my new "nickel-finished" .45.



AMERICAN HANDGUNNER®

**ONE-YEAR PRINT
SUBSCRIPTION
ONLY \$19.75!**



**Plus FREE 2020 Digital Download
with your paid order.**



Call (888) 732-2299 • www.fmgpubs.com

M-F 8am-3pm PST (\$54.75 outside U.S.) • P.O. Box 509093, San Diego, CA 92150



SEND IN THE CLONES

SPANISH COPIES OF S&W REVOLVERS

CLAYTON WALKER

In an effort to piggyback off another's good fortune, companies will inevitably rush in with similar-looking but inferior products. There's a thriving black market for fake designer handbags and jewelry that seem like identical copies of their fancier counterparts — at least until they fall apart at the seams or stain your skin green. Your child's room may have a mimic hiding in plain sight: perhaps a well-meaning relative bought your son a robot "Transmorpher" instead of an honest-to-God Transformer, or maybe your daughter owns a generic "Ice Princess" masquerading as Princess Elsa from the *Frozen* movies.

We often make the mistake of thinking knockoff goods are a modern problem. In fact, one of the most well-known firearm brands still carries an interesting reminder of a time when its counterfeits saturated the market. On the side of every

modern-era Smith and Wesson revolver, you'll find what collectors call the "four line" rollmark. The first line reads: "Made in U.S.A." The final two read: "Smith & Wesson" followed by "Springfield, Mass." But somewhat oddly, the second line is *Marcas Registradas*. It's a Spanish phrase translating to "Registered Marks."

To understand how the line came to be, I call your attention to the "Spanish clones" of the old .38 Hand Ejectors — the parents of the venerable "Model 10" revolver S&W still sells today. My clone, technically known as an *Armero Especialistas*, "Alfa" model, proves to be an especially fascinating chameleon.

HISTORY LESSON

Around the turn of the 20th century, Smith and Wesson's flagship K-Frame became big news and big business for the Springfield firm. Innumerable Spanish competitors decided they



Is it or isn't it?
This *Armero Especialistas* "Alfa" is
a Spanish-made
clone of the S&W
.38 Hand Ejector



Surprising quality details abound on Clayton's Alfa, like a case-hardened hammer and trigger (above), but ... Non-visible machining is decidedly inferior, evidenced by this ugly, rough ejector star (below).



CLONES

wanted in on the action and began producing a bewildering variety of blatant copies in an effort to meet demand for the awesome guns — and undercut the existing market.

Naturally, S&W found out about this skullduggery and attempted to put a stop to things. While they had some legal success going after American importers on the grounds they were intentionally attempting to defraud consumers, the sovereign nation of Spain essentially told them to pound sand — they didn't recognize their American trademarks. S&W did eventually secure patents abroad but only after the knock-offs existed on the international market for several decades. S&W added the *Marcas Registradas* as a way of saying "Stop copying this design!" in a language its counterfeiters would definitely understand but by then, the damage was done.

So what to make of these guns as a whole? First, let's start with the reality many of the Spanish copies were downright janky. On the low end, there are several design elements that stick out even to the casual observer as being not right at all.

It's common to find design details appearing to be sketched out from memory. Cylinder releases can be of strange teardrop or circular contours, dimensions can look squashed or stretched and often hammers tend to have unusual shapes.

Hilariously, some rollmarks claim the guns are made in "Sprangfeld, Mus." Others attempt to vaguely match the iconic S&W "Trade Mark" logo with a blobby, sloppily rollmarked forgery. Often, the substandard finishes have worn completely away in the last hundred years and metallurgy is so questionable firing the guns is generally regarded as a bad idea. There are many, many unconvincing fakes.

SOME AREN'T BAD

This "Alfa," however, is a pretty damn successful copy. Every signature contour of the Smith-pattern revolver is mostly intact here down to the smallest of details. The front sight blade, ejector rod, hammer, cylinder release, grip shape, frame dimensions, screw orientation, sight groove and frame detailing are all

“WITH ALL THIS IN MIND, IT HELPS TO
REMEMBER SPAIN HAS A RICH HISTORY OF
FIREARMS PRODUCTION STRETCHING BACK
CENTURIES. CONSEQUENTLY, A LOT OF GUNMAKERS
WEREN'T EXACTLY BANGING ROCKS
TOGETHER WHEN THEY MADE THESE GUNS.”

The Alfa below a
K-Frame S&W. A
convincing fake, no?

basically dead ringers for the real thing — it's almost insidious, really. The barrel appears to be pinned and the quality of walnut stocks are top notch. Even the machining on places like the cylinder ratchet, hand and lockwork is pretty good, and the bluing looks great for being about a century old!

With all this in mind, it helps to remember Spain has a rich history of firearms production stretching back centuries. Consequently, a lot of gunmakers weren't exactly banging rocks together when they made these guns. There's clear craftsmanship here — even some “improvements.” For example, many of the Spanish copies used a single beefy V-Spring — not unlike a Colt — in place of three separate springs on the original S&W design. On paper, this made the design slightly less fragile, and in theory, better-suited to military service. The French government went so far as to order many “Spanish Model 92s,” as they were then known, as fighting handguns during World War I.

This robustness, however, has a clear cost. While just about any S&W revolver has a pedigree of being something you can pick up and shoot quite easily, the trigger on this copy flat-out sucks. The double-action mode is easily on par with the worst revolvers I've ever shot: the V-Spring stacks for days at the end of an already-stiff travel. But even more impressive in its awfulness is the single-action trigger, which is just as heavy. Mechanically,



Internally, the Spanish clones are more Colt than Smith, with a massive V-spring powering the lockwork — and making for a horrific trigger pull.



The infamous *Marcas Registradas*, still present in modern-make Smiths.



Brutalized screws can be tell-tale signs of softer steels, as much as “Bubba” gunsmithing.

one spring is both keeping the hammer under tension and pushing the trigger forward, whereas on legitimate S&Ws these are two separate jobs parted out to separate springs.

The effect is a single-action trigger pull in the vicinity of 11 lbs. Yes, 11 lbs. It's definitely over the 10-lb. limit of two separate trigger gauges I have laying around so the additional pound represents a conservative estimate. I'll note I can't attest to mechanical accuracy of the gun: Given my nagging concerns of the metallurgy of any Spanish clone, even one as seemingly well-built as the Alfa, I'll likely never shoot it. However, given the horrendous trigger, I doubt I'd be fruitful in obtaining any trustworthy data related to how it groups. Also — I have actual Smith and Wessons more deserving of range time.

POP QUIZ

Let me end by asking you this: Had I not told you this was a Spanish clone, would you have been fooled? Admittedly, I overpaid to get the best fake I could.

Some eagle-eyed S&W fanatics would have examined the grip logos and the slight, slight difference in the shape of the trigger guard and immediately suspected something was amiss from your standard five-screw M&P. Would-be sleuths also have the

internet now, so it's easier than ever to pull up side-by-side photo references of a legit gun to compare with the copy.

But say you're a *vaquero* in the 1920s who goes into a local gun store looking for one of “those new Smith & Wesson revolvers,” and the guy behind the counter says, “Sure, we have those! And at a cheaper price than you were expecting!” Or, maybe you're an American shooter who wants one of these nifty double-action revolvers with a swing-out cylinder in .38 special. You know, just like the one you shot at your brother-in-law's last summer — doesn't the gun behind the counter look just like what you remember? Long story short, I imagine the tricksters at *Armero Especialistas* were extremely successful at cutting into Smith & Wesson's business.

Today, the Spanish copies are little more than a historical curiosity. While I would certainly have no qualms taking a well-worn example of an actual S&W .38 Hand Ejector to the range or conscripting it for self-defense if it were all I had, the Spanish clones are a poor choice for sport or social work. That being said, I think every serious S&W collector should have one or two clones in their collection. They are fantastic conversation pieces, not particularly expensive and hearken back to a profoundly interesting time in the company's history.

COURTENEY A. Uberti STALKING RIFLE

“AN 1885 HIGHWALL WITH BRITISH FLAIR”

JEFF “TANK” HOOVER

Guns are the perfect mechanism for granting us travel to times past, providing the means to walk amongst our heroes. Or, in this case, a rifle close enough in design to inspire dreams of intriguing scenarios that excite us beyond belief. Picking up this splendid shooter and holding it at arm's length, you'll immediately be transposed into the 19th Century, outfitted in sweat-soaked khakis and pith helmet, aiming at one of Africa's grand mystical animals. Only special guns are capable of casting such spells!

Adolphe Uberti's release of a proper stalking rifle, called “The Courteney,” is designed in traditional British guise to honor one of the most famous African hunters, explorers and adventurers of the early 19th Century — Frederick Courteney Selous.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

When I saw the Courteney single-shot, I was mesmerized by its beauty. I wanted it — bad! Based on Winchester's 1885 Highwall model, this single shot rifle is beautifully reproduced by Uberti, albeit in British guise.

Available in two calibers, .45-70 Government and .303 British, both issued military calibers for their respective countries at one time. Since I already owned a slew of .45-70s — my favorite caliber — I ordered one in .303 British for several reasons.

First, I wanted a rifle and caliber Frederick Courteney Selous would possibly carry, or at least look like one he would have used. Secondly, I get giddy at the thought of experimenting, researching, handloading and casting for a new cartridge. Lastly, it's the most-used caliber in the history of the British Empire. In short, it's the proper cartridge for igniting dreams of a 19th century British hunting wannabe in deepest, darkest Africa. All part of the perfect package, eh?

RECOIL RECALL

Frederick Courteney Selous first stepped foot on the dark continent in the 1880s as a young 19 year old, wanting to become a famous hunter. High aspirations, indeed! While hunting with a 4-bore muzzleloader, he developed a flinch. Legend has it





The rifle performed as expected — with excellence — whether handload or factory fodder was used.

after a misfire on an elephant, he traded the rifle back to this gun bearer for his back-up rifle. During the excitement, the gun bearer quickly reloaded the first rifle, giving it a double charge.

While shooting at the elephant, the double-charged rifle knocked Selous off his feet, severely cutting his face in the process. Recoil was so severe it broke the rifle stock. Selous stated he developed a nasty flinch after this episode, one he fought the rest of his life.

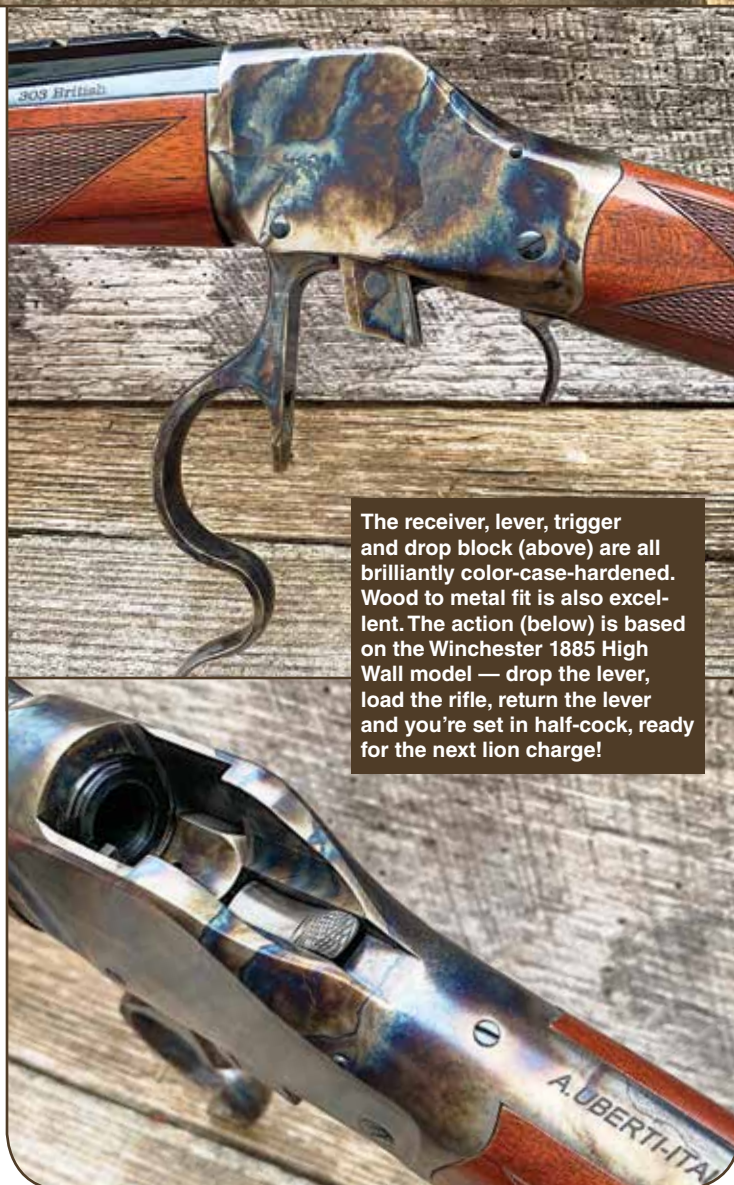
Selous ordered a light-recoiling .256 Holland & Holland single-shot rifle with drop-block action. The .256 H&H shoots a 160-grain bullet at 2,300 FPS. As most of us are out of reach of a custom Holland & Holland single-shot rifle, you can see the attraction of A. Uberti's "Courteney Rifle." Chambered in .303 British, the 180-grain bullet can easily attain over 2,400 FPS in the traditional cartridge widely used by British hunters in Africa.

THE RIFLE

My attention is drawn by the brilliant color-case hardening of the action, the drop-block, under-lever and trigger. The mottled blues nostalgically remind us of days past, when heat-treating was necessary for strengthening steel and the beautiful finish was a secondary benefit.

When dropping the under-lever, the expertly checkered hammer is set to half-cock as its own form of safety. Bringing it to full cock makes it ready for firing, providing the simplest, quaintest and most positive safety mechanism design. Dropping the lever again extracts the cartridge case $\frac{1}{4}$ " where it can be either pulled out or, by tipping the barrel up, will allow it to drop out. While loading, cartridges must be pushed in the final $\frac{1}{4}$ " with your finger.

A Weaver-style base is secured to the barrel with four screws, allowing easy scope mounting, using Weaver or Picatinny-style rings. Uberti recommends the use of "high" rings. The base houses a traditional dovetailed, shallow "V" rear sight.



The receiver, lever, trigger and drop block (above) are all brilliantly color-case-hardened. Wood to metal fit is also excellent. The action (below) is based on the Winchester 1885 High Wall model — drop the lever, load the rifle, return the lever and you're set in half-cock, ready for the next lion charge!



Frederick "Courteney" Selous, one of Africa's most celebrated hunters, explorers, conservationists and adventurers.

"THE 'COURTENEY' WILL NOT LOOK OUT OF PLACE NEXT TO **MORE EXPENSIVE CUSTOM LONG GUNS** AND ONLY YOU NEED TO KNOW THE TRUTH, PRICE-WISE."

An optional base is available without Weaver style slots for those wanting to keep their "Courteney" rifle honest (scope free). The rifle has a traditional hooded and ramped front sight also secured by screws and a rounded bright brass bead sight. Sight picture is traditionally perfect.

The round 24" barrel has six grooves with a 1:10 right-hand twist. Overall rifle length is 37.5" and weight is 7.1 lbs. A traditional sling-swivel band, approximately 3" from the fore-arm tip adds credibility to the British-themed rifle. Bluing is deep, dark and enthralling on barrel and sight base.

The Prince of Wales buttstock has the traditionally sexy, rounded-off curves of an authentic Victorian-era rifle, giving John Browning's 1885 Winchester drop-block action a vintage British look. I'm sure Mr. Browning would approve wholeheartedly of these modifications.

The pistol-grip stock and fore-end are classically checkered, adding warmth and charm to the rifle while providing a positive grip. The slim forearm tapers to a contrasting African heartwood tip for a nice final touch of authenticity. The buttstock itself is large, sporting a classic red rubber buttpad with black

spacer. Wood to metal fit is extremely tight, with no gaps. Finish is A-grade satin walnut and grain is straight.

THE SCAVENGER HUNT

Like everyone, I was suffering from the great pandemic shortage of '21 and really had to search to find ammo, components and mold. Everyone was out of everything. My .303 British components scavenger hunt fittingly included good, old fashioned leg work, combined with internet interloping.

All said and done, I managed to get two boxes of PPU 150-grain soft-point

boat-tail ammo, a box of Hornady 150-grain SP Interlock bullets and 100 rounds of Federal primed brass. I already had a NOE mold for handloads. Missing the good old days of in-stock supply, it was fun being resourceful, making me appreciate what I received even more. Luckily, I was pretty well set with primers and powder.

Doing my best Selous impersonation, and lacking patience before the scope and rings arrive, I took the "Courteney" rifle to the 50-yard range. The PPU ammo easily shoots 3-shot groups into 1" to 1.5". Velocity is clocked at 2,723 FPS, well over the listed velocity of 2,650 FPS. The trigger broke at a measured 4 lbs. 5 oz. and was creep free and crisp.

For optics, I went with a Leupold Freedom 2-7X33 for this rifle as its size blends perfectly with the slim lines of the Courteney rifle. The scope is mounted, using Leupold rings. Groups of just over 1" at 100 yards were the norm with the PPU factory fodder.

Using 38.0 grs of IMR 3031 under the Hornady 150-grain Interlock bullet provided just over 2,650 FPS. Accuracy was right around an inch, give or take, at 100 yards for three shots. Cast loads consisted of a NOE mold of Lyman's #311440 and a 150-grain gas-checked slug nicknamed "The Flying Fist" as it has a clenched fist profile. Loaded over 20.0 grains of Alliant 2400, it clocks just under 2,000 FPS with 3-shot groups running under 2" at 100 yards. It is a fun load to shoot and could easily whack a deer.

THE COURTENY CONCLUSION

Uberti's rendition of Winchester's 1885 high wall is a classically-finished British style hunting arm. A Trans-Continental beauty, this rifle is splendidly correct for American species of deer, elk pigs and other exotic game as well as with heavier bullets.

The "Courteney" will not look out of place next to more expensive custom long guns and only you need to know the truth, price-wise. If you're looking to put a boost in your shooting arsenal, the Uberti "Courteney" rifle will indeed provide it without breaking the bank. Anyone yearning for a fine traditional hunting rifle with a British flair will love Uberti's "Courteney" stalking rifle. You will too!

MSRP: \$1,689

Uberti-USA.com

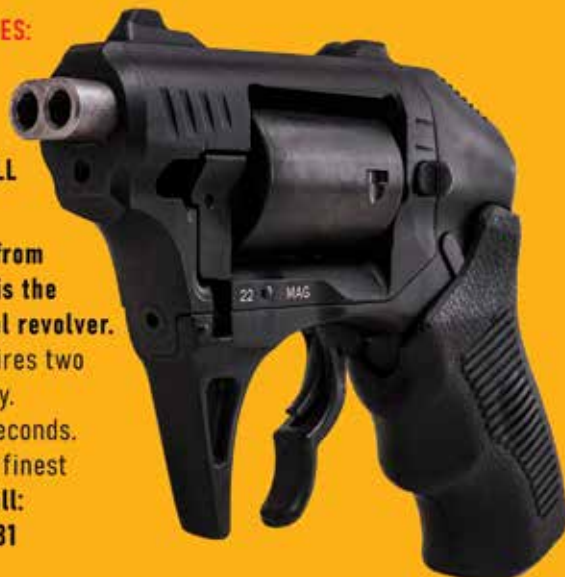
S333

DUAL IMPACT SHOCK

NEW GEN 2 MODEL FEATURES:

- LONGER BARRELS
- HIGHER VELOCITY
- IMPROVED ACCURACY
- SMOOTHER TRIGGER PULL

The S333 Thunderstruck from Standard Manufacturing is the world's only double barrel revolver. Each pull of the trigger fires two .22 rounds simultaneously. Four pulls, 8 rounds, in seconds. Handmade by the world's finest gunmakers. Visit us or call: (860) 225-6581

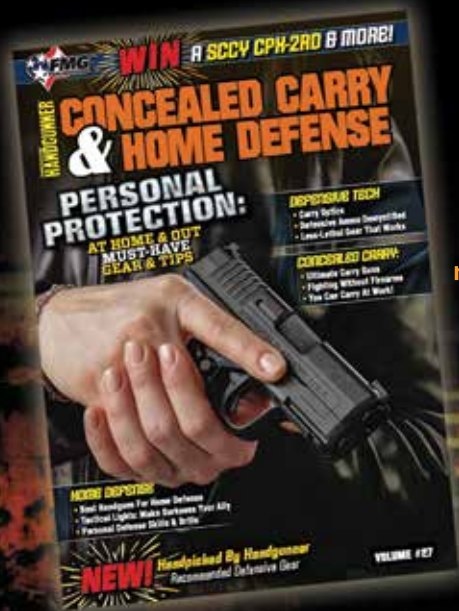


Standard
MANUFACTURING



#STOGUN
STOGUN.COM

ARE YOU PREPARED TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY?



The American Handgunner Concealed Carry Special Edition contains valuable tips from industry experts! Learn about life-saving tactics, including how to choose and conceal the ideal everyday carry knife. Get the latest reviews on defensive handguns, ammunition performance and much, much more!

**AVAILABLE
IN PRINT AND
DIGITAL FORMAT**

fmgpubs.com

ALSO AVAILABLE ON





Hornady's Jayden Quinlan took this warthog in South Africa with a Benelli Lupo in .30-06. Jason was using Hornady's Outfitter ammo with a 165-grain GMX.



The giant forest hog is shy and elusive, making them challenging to hunt. Mark took this big hog in Central African Republic with his Freedom Arms .44 Mag and Buffalo Bore 305-grain L.B.T.-L.F.N. ammo.

GLOBETROTTING FOR HOGS

FINDING A SILK PURSE ACROSS FOUR CONTINENTS

MARK HAMPTON

There's no doubt whitetail deer is the most popular big game animal here in the U.S. Their existence is widespread over much of the country and numbers have proliferated in recent times. However, in the past few years there is another animal creeping up on the popularity of whitetail deer — the wild pig. Their numbers have not only increased exponentially but their range has expanded greatly.

Like many others, I enjoy hunting hogs and have taken them in North America, South America, Australia and Africa. While different species of hogs vary depending on location, the end result is always the same — pure unadulterated exuberance!

NUMBERS DON'T LIE

Pig population numbers flourish largely in part to mathematics. Their gestation period is 114 days so it doesn't take long for a sow to have several litters of pigs over a relatively short period of time. Hogs are now prevalent in places they have never been in the past and are considered an invasive species by many. Opinions on their presence vary but at any rate, wild hogs are probably here to stay and provide hunting opportunities galore.

In many states wild hog can be hunted year-round with no closed season. The opportunity to hunt hogs with a variety of methods and firearms is most welcome. In Texas for example, it's common to hunt them over corn feeders. Some regions find running them with dogs popular, providing pure heart-pounding excitement and close range encounters. Occasionally *sounders* — “herds” of hogs — are often spotted in open fields providing extended-range shooting prospects. Circumstances or personal preference may dictate the ideal firearm but hog hunting is fun regardless where you find them, method employed or particular choice of shooting iron.

Over the years I've encountered hogs in both common and unique places. The various hogs I've taken in the past have been with a variety of rifle and handguns in a multitude of calibers. Painting with somewhat of a broad brush, most any caliber suitable for whitetail deer will generally suffice for wild boar — it doesn't take a super magnum. Proper shot placement is far more important than launching a .50 caliber slug.



A steady rest like this BOG tripod enhances shot placement on big hogs.

There are many efficient rifle cartridges to choose for hunting hogs — far too many to mention. Handgun hunters who prefer revolvers are well equipped with .41, .44 Mag., .45 Colt, 454 Casull, or 460 S&W Mag. Semi-autos in 10mm Auto have also performed satisfactorily. Single-shot aficionados have a plethora of cartridges to choose from including 30-30 Win., 7mm-08, 308 Win. and 45-70 to name just a few very capable rounds. Distance wise, the majority of hogs I've taken have been inside 100 yards so optics choice is subjective and remains a personal preference.

THE FAMILY ALBUM

There are several other species besides wild boar providing unique and challenging hunting opportunities. The javelina or



Mark's wife Karen took this big, mean-looking wild boar with a Remington Model 700 in 7mm-08 shooting Hornady 139-grain GMX ammo.



This red river hog was taken in Cameroon with a borrowed camp rifle — a Blaser in .375 H&H topped with a Zeiss scope.

Mark's luggage was lost in Cameroon and he was forced to use a camp rifle with lots of "character." This Blaser in .375 H&H has seen better days but it's accounted for a lot of game!



collared peccary is the smallest species of peccary. These pig-like animals can be found in southern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico and south Texas. Like all the other hogs, these little guys are fun and challenging to pursue. I've taken a couple of javelina in Texas with custom XP-100s in 6.5 WSM and .308 Win. — certainly more than enough gun for these pigs.

Their range extends down to South America where I took a really nice boar with a T/C Encore in .308 Win. while hunting in Argentina. My luck ran out however on a recent hunt in Arizona. After spotting a group of pigs feeding on an adjacent hillside, I snuck over and got within 75 yards or so. I was shooting an Encore in .41 Mag. The pigs were partially hidden in the tall grass but when I caught one in the open, the hammer fell. Pigs took off everywhere and disappeared quickly — along with my confidence. I totally missed! Plans are being fleshed out for a return trip to redeem myself. This time I'll be packing a Freedom Arms Model 83 in .357 Mag. Hunting these small pigs does not require cannon.

Considerably larger than the javelina, the white-lipped peccary may reach up to 85 lbs. When hunting in Argentina, we pursued them behind dogs that became quite an adrenaline rush. It was more like a rodeo than a hunt as we were on horses. You know what they say — "When in Rome ..."

These pigs have a change in disposition when the dogs get after them. The vegetation was so thick you couldn't make out top-notch from toenails. At the time I yielded a Ruger Redhawk in .44 Mag. and took the vicious porker from close range before he hurt the dog or worse — me.

Back in 1983 during my first African safari in Zimbabwe, several bushpigs were encountered. I would later find this not to be normal as they are mainly nocturnal, resting in dense vegetation during the day. My first animal sent to the salt was an ugly bushpig taken with a T/C in 358 JDJ. Later on that hunt my wife, Karen, also took one with a Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Mag. customized by Mag-na-port. Both shots were inside 50 yards. Several years and 20 safaris later, I hadn't seen a bushpig since! I then realized how lucky we were. Many years following while hunting buffalo in Mozambique, we bumped in to a herd of these hogs feeding in the early morning. After a short sneak job, I rested an Encore in 338 Federal — a most-worthy hog-hammer — on a low hanging limb. The shot was close, 45 yards perhaps,



To each his own — there are countless successful hog handguns. This S&W Model 629 Performance Center makes for an ideal hunting revolver.



For those who prefer big-bores for big boars, this S&W 460 Mag. will cleanly handle any hogs encountered. The revolver is topped with a 2.5-8x Leupold scope.



as the 180-grain AccuBond punched through his shoulders. I appreciated the opportunity to finally see another bushpig.

Africa is a special place with a tremendous variety of game, including hogs. You don't go to the Dark Continent just to hunt warthog but if you hunt long enough, you will eventually run across them. They are an ugly pig to say the least, preferring the savannah and open forest. Oddly enough they are good to eat and also make excellent leopard bait. Those long tusks on old, mature boars are quite impressive. I've taken several with a mixture of handguns. On a recent hunt in South Africa, I was hunting with Hornady's Jayden Quinlan who was packing a new Benelli Lupo in 30-06. One afternoon we bumped in to a lone boar with nice tusks. Jayden is an excellent shot and it didn't take him long to send a Hornady 165-grain GMX through the warthog's shoulder.

RIVER HOG

While hunting a remote region in the Central African Republic (CAR), I blew a prime opportunity on red river hog. It was the end of a long, grueling hunt in wild Africa and to make matters worse, I really wanted a red river hog — the smallest African pig, one that prefers thick cover.

Late in the afternoon we bumped into a group of these hogs. As they were feeding along a thick riverbed, we crept within 40 yards. I rested the Encore in 375 JDJ on a branch. When the largest boar appeared, I thought I'd better hurry up and shoot even though a tree had much of his vitals hidden. Of course, I could place a bullet in his shoulder by just barely missing the tree — well, that's what I get for thinking!

The bullet shattered the tree and the red river hogs

immediately disappeared. It would have been too logical to wait for a moment and get the proper shot! This is what happens when you get in a hurry.

Fortunately I redeemed myself in Cameroon. Unfortunately, my luggage got lost and I had to borrow a camp rifle. This Blaser in 375 H&H looked like it had been beaten severely or dragged behind a truck, but it had character. As one of the trackers and I were walking along a dry creek bed one evening, a group of red river hogs exploded out of the thick bush. Two of them busted out of the thicket, racing in the open where we were standing. The Zeiss scope picked out one of the hogs and the working-class Blaser performed like a champ — as it probably had many times in the past. Naturally the one I missed in CAR was much bigger!

BIG DADDY

The giant forest hog is a most-interesting looking creature and the largest living pig



This bushpig was taken in Mozambique with an Encore chambered in .338 Federal, a great hog-hunting action.



This Ruger Super Blackhawk Bisley Hunter in .44 Mag works well in hog-hunting endeavors.



A Ruger Super Blackhawk customized by Mag-na-port and fitted with a Leupold scope makes for a dandy hog gun.

species — they're huge! They are also one of the most challenging hogs to hunt as they are shy, wary and mainly nocturnal and seldom seen. I was hunting in the middle of nowhere in CAR and giant forest hog was a priority. While quietly strolling along a drainage ditch one afternoon, my wife actually spotted this big male partially hidden in tall grass.

A Freedom Arms Model 83 in .44 Mag. became quickly rested in a BOG tripod rest. The shot was approximately 90 yards when the unique-looking monster turned broadside and offered a shot. The Freedom Arms carried a cylinder full of Buffalo Bore 305-grain hardcast ammo. At the shot, the hog didn't appear to be hit and took off. We quickly followed, trying our best to get in position for another shot. I watched the hog stumble briefly and could tell he was hit. When the opportunity presented itself, I put two more rounds in him as quickly as possible. Boy was I glad to see him down! What an incredible, unique animal. There have been very few taken with a handgun and I was thankful the .44 Mag. finished the job.

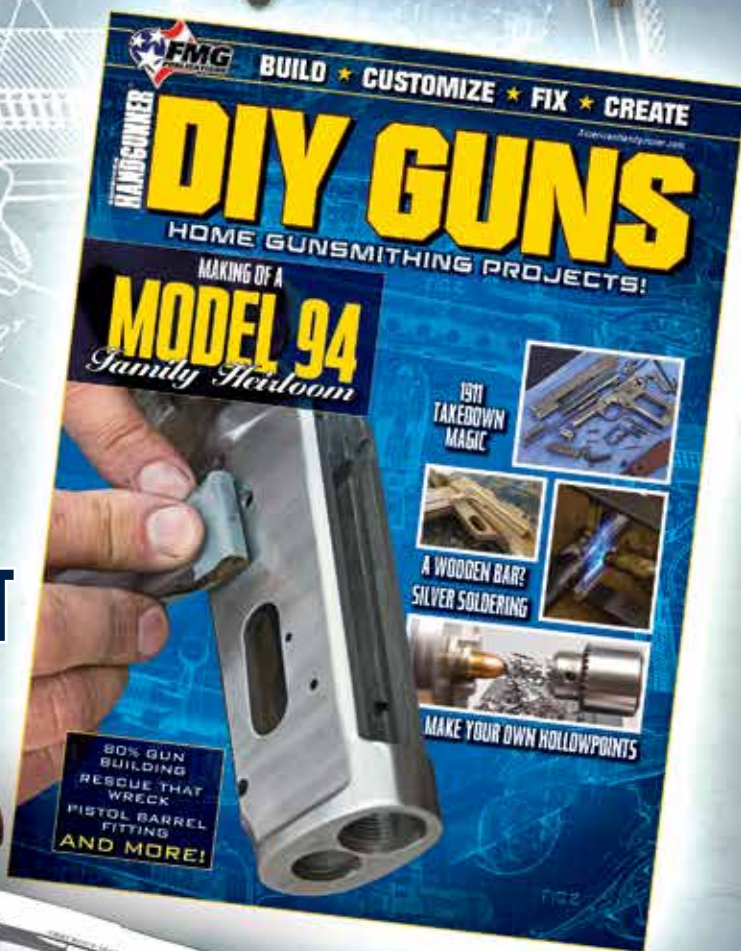
Whether you're hunting hogs in Australia or Arkansas, Africa or Argentina, it's going to be an epic adventure. Hog hunting is just plain exhilarating. Rifles or handguns, take your pick — it's all good! So, what's the best caliber for hog hunting? I'm not sure but if I can hunt them for another 40 years, I might come up with something!

YOUR NEXT DIY PROJECT IS HERE!

Do it yourself
gunsmithing
tips, tricks
and ideas for
every skill level.

AVAILABLE IN
PRINT AND DIGITAL FORMAT

fmgpubs.com/DIY21



ALSO AVAILABLE
FROM AMAZON





SNIPER BLADEWORKS LPC BOMBASTIC BRUTE!

Sniper Bladeworks was founded by knife designer Lance Abernathy, a former SWAT officer and self-professed gun guy, back in 2009. If the handles of his tactical folders resemble pistol grips, well, let's just say the apple didn't fall far from the tree. That said, there's sound logic behind Abernathy's grips designs. They put the blade in an aggressive forward position and — like pistol handles — they're made to fit the hand. Sniper Bladework's knives are also built with tank-like, failure-is-not-an-option construction.

The LPC tactical folder is a half-pound of tough love. Tipping the scales at 8 oz., the LPC is overbuilt in every way. Fully extended, the knife is 8.3" with 3.52" of the total in an ornery clip point blade of premium S30V stainless steel. The rear of the blade has a swedge grind for enhanced penetration and the back section can serve as a thumb ramp for getting down to the nitty-gritty along with a deep finger choil below the blade edge. The LPC's Titanium frame is well over a half-inch thick with the front slab topped in textured black G10 and the rear one housing a beefy frame-lock mechanism. A stout pocket clip rounds out the package.

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT

What can you say? If you like a handful of knife, Sniper Bladework's LPC is glad to oblige. Add its aggressive design and you're looking at a tactical folder built to take on all comers. There's

Sniper Bladework's LPC tactical folder (above) is a half-pound of tough love. S30V stainless steel and Titanium make for an upscale package built to last. The LPC's beefy Titanium rear frame slab (below) houses a frame-lock mechanism and a pocket clip for keeping the beast at the ready.



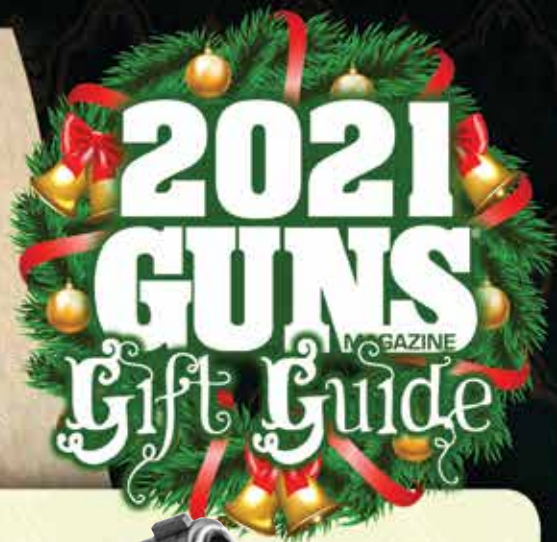
enough handwork in the LPC to call it a custom; the fit and finish is superb and the action is butter on glass. Will it drag your britches down? Heck yeah, but LE officers carry much heavier loads everyday — and this is the world Lance Abernathy comes from. The LPC is priced at \$325 and, given its upscale content and quality of construction, worth every penny.

SniperBladeworks.com

Dear Santa,

It's always tough to sift through the countless new products to compile the annual *GUNS* Christmas Gift Guide. So, rather than spending hour upon hour in the impossible task of deciding which things are most worthy, I asked the experts: the other editors here at FMG. In closing, I'd like to point out the boys and girls here at *GUNS* and *American Handgunner* magazines have been very good (except that one incident involving McHale) and we'd like to see the following things under our tree.

Cordially, Brent T. Wheat, Editor



Santa, you know I love bags and rucksacks so I want my very own *Ghost 30 EDC Pack* from *ALPS OutdoorZ*. It's really neat because it's kinda grayish and doesn't look all "tactical" but makes a great *Everyday Carry* pack with stuff like dual internal padded laptop pockets, a padded sunglasses pocket, five

mesh interior pockets and even an integral rain fly. I also really like the full-length zipper so you can open it up all the way and find the .45 ACP round you lost down in the bottom. By the way, in case you were wondering, the pack is around \$169.99 and you can see it at AlpsOutdoorZ.com.

Brent T. Wheat
GUNS Editor



All I want for Christmas is my very own *Les Baer American Handgunner Special Edition 1911* complete with 8-round magazine, adjustable sight and secret compass built-in, please. I'm asking very nicely, very polite even. Are you listening Santa?

Please? P.S. Just kidding about the compass part though. That new fool Tom McHale who took my place said the MSRP was \$2,995 and you can find info on it at LesBaer.com.

Your favorite heathen,
Roy Huntington
Special Assignments Editor

I want a *Streamlight Pocket Mate* USB light. It's a tiny, and I do mean tiny, keychain light with a big attitude. Its single activation button – handy for a thumb – turns on the low-power mode that beams out 45 lumens of light. The light weighs next to nothing (1/2 oz.) and features a mini-USB charging port. A charge will get you an hour at low power or 20 minutes on high. A spring-loaded hook allows easy keychain attachment, and a subtle clip lets you go hands free. And, I'm sorry about 'the incident' and promise to be more careful around flamingos in the future. That goof ex-*Handgunner* editor Roy Huntington said the MSRP is around \$20 at Streamlight.com.

Please don't sneak down the chimney unless you wanna get shot.

Love,
Tom McHale
American Handgunner Editor



I hate fumbling with resizing dies so I want a set of *Redding's Competition Shellholders* this year. They provide an accurate and repeatable shoulder position which allows you to resize various batches of brass without touching the die, only the shellholder. They vary by two thousandths and are available for a variety of calibers. If you're feeling generous, the MSRP is around \$60. Go check out their website at Redding-Reloading.com.

Serena Juchnowski
Digital Content Editor



P.S. Please sanitize my gifts before dropping them off. No ... I mean it.

THE GIFT OF GIVING

IT'S THE SEASON FOR 2A DONATIONS

Dave Workman

With the holiday season upon us, now is the time to consider giving yourself, and maybe the next generation, a gift by making a contribution to an active gun rights organization. This is one way of defending the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms many people overlook.

It's the principle of paying it forward, because lawsuits filed now, or sometime in the next few months, could take months or even years to reach final settlement. For more than 20 years, I've headquartered at the Second Amendment Foundation (SAF), which has been on the forefront of gun rights litigation, especially following the June 2010 Supreme Court ruling in *McDonald v. City of Chicago*. It has become the premier organization for legal actions, with a pretty good track record. Just ask anybody in Illinois.

TYING IT UP

McDonald was a SAF case and not only nullified Chicago's decades-old handgun ban but also did something even more important — the McDonald ruling, authored by Associate Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr., tied the Second Amendment to the states via the 14th Amendment.

Not every state has a specific right-to-bear-arms provision in their state constitution. Six states don't — California, Maryland and Minnesota, Iowa, New Jersey and New York. There are debatable provisions in the Iowa and New Jersey state constitutions and New York's constitution provides for "organized" and "unorganized" militia. However, thanks to McDonald, all states are now subject to the Second Amendment, which initially had been seen as a restraint on the federal government.

This ruling literally opened the legal floodgates. At last count, SAF was involved in more than 35 lawsuits, typically with partner organizations.

No contribution to a gun rights legal-action fund is too small. Ten thousand small contributions amount to a formidable bank account and lawsuits cost a considerable amount of money. This is important because too many defendants in these cases — typically municipalities — receive *pro bono* (free) legal support from anti-gun law firms.

This is no small disadvantage gun rights organizations must overcome. Good legal representation comes at a premium.

The National Rifle Association, Gun Owners of America, Firearms Policy Coalition, Inc., Illinois State Rifle Association, Massachusetts Gun Owners Action League and too many other groups to mention also get involved in legal actions. Frequently, they partner with one another to share legal costs, which is a sound strategy.

Making a contribution before the end of the year might

also be tax deductible. Check with each organization you're considering as the recipient for details. If you write a check in December, you should be able to deduct it from your income taxes in 2022 if you itemize your deductions.

OTHER OPTIONS

There are many other ways of contributing to the Second Amendment framework and the key is to do it this month.

As I've mentioned before, make a donation to your local gun club's juniors program. If the organization doesn't have such a program, volunteer to start one, and do it this month! You'll get plenty of help from the NRA and maybe club members who are parents or retired grandparents. Plan to work on this project through the coming winter months so in the spring, when it's time to visit the shooting range, your program will be all set.

Also, at the December meeting of your local shooting organization, make a gift to the juniors program of a brick of .22-caliber rimfire ammunition and maybe a pack of regulation paper targets.

You might also build some new target stands for the juniors. I've built target stands out of a 1" PVC pipe with joints. You should be able to purchase the materials for a half-dozen of these for under \$100, and if you pool resources with a couple of others, this is a holiday gift that will keep on giving. Be sure to fill the bases with sand and seal them to prevent them from falling over in the wind.

As an alternative, check with your local Boy Scout Council and see if they might welcome such a contribution.

Another option is to make a gift of ear and eye protection to the club. Range safety glasses and earphones or even a box of foam earplugs are a nice gesture.

Something you may have never considered is to buy a subscription to *GUNS*, *American Handgunner* or some other firearms periodical — or several of them — for your local public library, and do it this month. Make it a Christmas gift. This puts valuable information into the hands of the reading public. If some librarian's nose gets out of joint, be prepared to defend your contribution in the public forum.

If not magazines, buy some books about firearms and donate them to the public library, and send an announcement to your local community newspaper. There are many options, whether technical in nature or historical. Here are some suggestions: Any book authored by Massad Ayoob, John Taffin, Wayne Van Zwoll, Bryce Towsley, Jim Zummo, Stephen Halbrook, David Kopel or the late Bill Jordan, Elmer Keith and Charles Askins make for great reading and superb references.

December is the month of giving, and some gifts have a way of making a big impact for many years to come. You can play Santa in many ways, and wrap up what has been a tumultuous year with a feeling you have accomplished something good.

As I've endeavored to explain, there are many ways to effectively defend the Second Amendment. Make an investment in your future, the futures of your children, their children and in continuing the right to keep and bear arms.





fmgpubs.com/TAFFIN44

JOHN TAFFIN'S
BOOK OF THE

44
CALIBER

JOHN TAFFIN

**THE MOST
COMPREHENSIVE
BOOK ON
THE TOPIC!**

"Whether you're simply a lover of all-things .44, a student of history, a handloader or simply learning so you can make a future purchase, 'John Taffin's Book Of The .44 Caliber' will give you days of great reading and just plain fun."

~Roy Huntington

**Get John Taffin's
book of the**

\$70.99

price includes shipping (U.S. only)

CALIBER

API FIREARMS STORAGE BAGS

If you're like me, you save all the "magic plastic" anticorrosion bags many new firearms arrive in from the factory. They're not really magic but do an otherworldly job in preventing corrosion on firearms or most other metallic objects. Now, you don't have to save a collection of wonky discard bags because — coming soon — are API Firearms Storage Bags.

These are far better than OEM bags because the cor-



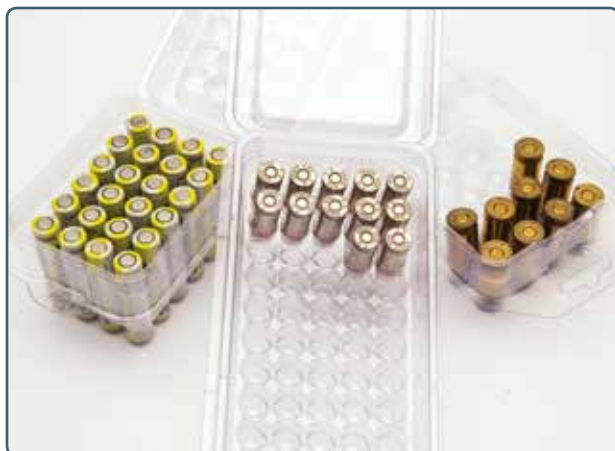
rosion-inhibiting inner layer is encased in a much stronger, puncture-resistant outer layer than the single-use bags. The corrosion-inhibiting properties are guaranteed for five years and I love the integral, stout Velcro closure on their gun bags. However, my favorite product is the ammo can liners, allowing you to safely store things like steel-cased ammo or gun parts without the nagging worry of creeping rust.

MSRP: Starting at \$9.59

APIGunBag.com

CLAMTAINER SEE-IN STORAGE CONTAINERS

Let's be honest — these are a beefier version of the clear plastic "clamshell" containers all sorts of products from bolts to buttons are sold in today. No big shakes there. However, after you start considering the possibilities,



the genius of this line of dedicated, durable, lightweight containers becomes obvious.

My Ammo Buddy containers sit on top of the gun safe to collect and store those errant "pocket rounds" that show up daily, while several Battery Buddy units hold my backup supply of AA and AAA batteries in the gun closet. This just scratches the surface of their extensive lineup and you certainly need to check out the "DoomBox," a mousetrap container to corral all the rotten mouse goo you sometimes find in cabins, RVs and other places where traps are unattended.

MSRP: \$9.95 (coming in late October)

Clamtainer.com

REAL AVID BORE-MAX CLEANING ROD

I've got plenty of cleaning rods, ranging from cheap aluminum (not too bad, actually) to mil-surplus steel (definitely *not!*) models which are fantastic for ruining a bore if you're not careful, plus they can be used in a pinch to skewer an enemy sentry!



However, cleaning rods all have the same profile: They either have no handle or one resembling a screwdriver. This isn't the most ergonomic set-up when you have to put a little muscle behind a patch or coax a recalcitrant brush back out of your barrel.

Real Avid, known for innovative tools, has solved the problem by developing their Bore-Max line — cleaning rods with a vertical "gun handle." The grip is easy on the hands and will certainly impart all the force you want on the carbon-fiber rod. It also turns easily in the bore thanks to an ultra-guide bearing in the handle and even comes with a nifty hanging bracket.

MSRP: \$39.95

RealAvid.com

I think the most remarkable thing about this story is a college actually gave credit for shooting something! Probably wouldn't happen today! —BW

NOT WHAT YOU THINK

Why did what appears to be a pentagram appear twice in Mark Hampton's October 2021 article "Ethiopian hunt"? Seems bizarre. Am I missing something?

Steve Lilley



I had to look it up myself — the pentagram symbol is featured prominently at the center of Ethiopia's flag. It "represents the unity and equality of the different nationalities and the people of Ethiopia." Like many political things — in many countries beside Ethiopia — such a great concept is often completely ignored in real life. —BW

THE GUN CRANKS OLYMPICS

Regarding the "The Creation of the Gun Cranks Olympics" YouTube video of August 19 — Just a note to say I laughed so hard I thought I was gonna have an accident! I thoroughly enjoyed that video and I had no idea that the guys are so bent!

Don

TIME FOR STORE BOUGHT

Mike Venturino: Just a note to let you know how much I have enjoyed your writings over the years. We are about the same age and, to some extent, walked some of the same trails in the gun and reloading world. Enjoyed your most recent article on the .38 Special. I have cast and loaded literally tens of thousands of the Thompson bullet Lyman #358156. When casting I run two sets of Lyman 4-cavity molds. Sure have hated to see the lack of availability of the old metal composition wheel weights. When Diane and I retired from AZ DPS (State

Trooper) in May of 2002 and made a final move to our place here in Lake City, Colo., I brought well over a ton of wheel weights. I've gone through all of those. I've managed to scrounge some here and there but expect to finally run out of those within the next couple of years. After that I'll probably just buy "store bought" cast bullets.

Ron Bruce

SNAKESVILLE — POPULATION: TOO MANY!

I read Doc Dabbs' poignant reminiscence "Touring Snakesville" (*Shooter's Rx*, October 2021 issue) with a pang of nostalgia. As a 16-year-old, over 50 years ago, I had a similar experience. Two high-school buddies and I decided we would take a three-day canoeing adventure down Arizona's Verde River. The Verde wends its way south through the desert mountains of central Arizona to finally debouch into the Salt River. John, Gordon and I launched our 16-foot aluminum canoe well to the north of the Salt. We would drift down to see what we could see and camp evenings along the bank. Suffice it to say we were properly heeled.

Being a *pistolero* even back then, I carried my Ruger Hawkeye single-shot pistol chambered in the .256 Win. If memory serves Gordon had a Ruger Single-Six in .22 magnum. As we drifted, we'd call shots on the bank, plinking at anything interesting. We put in for the evening in a mesquite bosque, built a fire and unrolled our beds. Early next morning, as we loaded the canoe, a diamondback rattler big around as a truck-driver's wrist, crawled out of the shadows buzzing its displeasure. Gordon wanted to shoot it but I stopped him. Better to capture it alive, I said.



I pinned its head with a mesquite stick and we placed it in a tow sack and tied the opening shut. I tossed the sack in the canoe; we got in and shoved off into the current. A bit later, while languorously

drifting, I was startled awake from a doze when John and Gordon suddenly bailed out into the drink on either side of the canoe in front of me. With the weight suddenly gone, the canoe catapulted up and a big writhing rattler, free of the tow sack, seemed suspended in the air a foot or so in front of my face. Completely by reflex I flipped backwards and started to frantically flail the water. Unbelievably, John, Gordon and I escaped without being bitten. Soaked to the skin, we recovered the canoe and resumed our journey. The snake was never seen again. Needless to say, I was unpopular for the rest of the trip. As the Doc implies, fortune favors the bold, and thankfully, 16-year-old boys.

Mike Marsh

LEMAT LOVE

Regarding the engraved Pietta LeMat Grapeshot Revolver appearing on page 59 of the October 2021 issue. It's a most strikingly handsome reproduction. Is it available cased? Where can I get one?

Bob Keagy



The LeMat shown is a file photo from approximately 10 years ago of a Navy Arms model but it is no longer imported. However, Pietta still manufactures several models available from many online and big-box stores. Unfortunately, our notes do not indicate if the engraving on this beautiful piece was factory work or a special one-off job. —BW



MR-30PG PRECISION RIFLE

D&L SPORTS, INC.

The *MR-30PG Rifle* has been the only rifle to win the Triple Crown of tactical shooting and is featured as the Black King rifle of the *Shooter* cinema series. Tier One in function and accuracy, the rifle is offered in multiple calibers and include an aluminum traction butt plate as well as an adjustable length of pull all the way down to 12". MSRP: \$8,500. For more info: (928) 636-1726, DLSports.com

M&P9 M2.0 SPEC SERIES PISTOL KIT

SMITH & WESSON

Smith & Wesson announced the release of the limited edition *M&P Spec Series Pistol Kit*. It includes an M&P9 M2.0 OR pistol, an M&P knife and a challenge coin. The M&P9 M2.0 in 9mm is a full-size spec series pistol with a 4.6" threaded barrel, an optics-ready slide

and suppressor height sights. With a capacity of 17+1, the gun comes with a Crimson Trace optic. The M7P Paracord Fixed Blade Neck Knife has a 2.8" blade with an OAL of 5.9". The M&P Spec Series Challenge coin has a 3D high-relief sculpted design. It's solid nickel metal with antique finish and hard-baked enamel. MSRP: \$969. For more info: (800) 331-0852, Smith-Wesson.com



REMOTE BEACON ILLUMINATOR

MUDDY OUTDOORS

Muddy Outdoors' *Remote Beacon Illuminator* is a remote-activated green LED to safely locate a tree stand or blind in the dark. The compact, multidirectional LED light attaches to your stand or blind and activates with a push of a button. Simple to install with no special tools needed, the Muddy Remote Beacon can double as a safety feature by illuminating climbing steps. MSRP: \$39.99. For more info: (877) 269-8490, GoMuddy.com



AEMS (ADVANCED ENCLOSED MICRO SIGHT)

HOLOSUN

Even lightweight, powerful and tiny optics can fit the needs of discerning firearms enthusiasts. One such



optic is Holosun's *AEMS (Advanced Enclosed Micro Sight)*. The newest addition to the Holosun family of optics, this 3.9-oz. sight (without mount) is lightweight but designed for various types of shooting use. For more info: (909) 594-2888, Holosun.com

TD ACRO MOUNT FOR SIG SAUER P320

TANGODOWN INC.

The *TD ACRO Mount for SIG SAUER P320* (SSM-02) from TangoDown Inc. is made from ordnance-grade steel with a rust-resistant Melonite finish. Mounting fasteners are included with a pre-applied Vibra-Tite VC-3 thread-locking compound. It has a dovetail for backup iron sights (offered separately). The Aimpoint ACRO combined with the SSM-02 will work well together whether the P320 is for competition, EDC, or duty use. MSRP: \$78. For more info: (909) 392-4757, TangoDown.com



DXT2 BIG DOT SIGHTS

XS SIGHTS

Smith & Wesson M&P Shield pistols' factory sights can quickly and easily be replaced with XS night sights. The *DXT2 Big Dot Tritium Night Sights* offer front sight visibility in all lighting conditions. With a patent-pending glow dot that absorbs light, the sights drive focus to the front sight using a high-contrast front and a V-notch rear for an unobstructed view of the front sight. MSRP: \$132. For more info: (888) 744-4880, XSSights.com



TAURUS GX4 — NEW COLOR OPTIONS

TAURUS

Taurus follows up its recent launch of the all-new *Taurus GX4* with the addition of two slide color options. The Taurus GX4 is a full-feature micro-compact polymer frame handgun chambered for the 9mm Luger. The lightweight, low-print defensive pistol is comfortable to carry even with summer clothing. Originally with a black gas nitride finish, the Taurus GX4 is now available with Tungsten Cerakote slide and Troy Coyote Tan Cerakote finishes that contrast with the black polymer frame. Both models come with two 11-round magazines. MSRP: \$410.61. For more info: (800) 327-3776, TaurusUSA.com



For more New Products visit us
online at gunsmagazine.com



PRY CUTTER KEYCHAIN TOOL

CRKT

The *Pry Cutter Keychain Tool* is small enough to take anywhere. The tool is a jack-of-all-trades, featuring several components from a cord cutter to a bit driver tool. Constructed of stainless steel in a bead-blast finish, this compact multitool features a pry bar section for everyday, utility tasks. With a replaceable cord cutter and bottle opener, the *Pry Cutter Keychain Tool* includes a multi-position O-ring PH1 hex bit and 1/4", 5/16", 3/8" hex wrenches. MSRP: \$19.99. For more info: (800) 891-3100, CRKT.com



MASTER-FIT AR15 CROWFOOT WRENCH SET

REAL AVID

Real Avid's *Master-Fit AR15 Crowfoot Wrench Set* is a single-purpose crowfoot wrench kit made for building and modifying AR15 rifles. It's specialized for precise fit of MIL-SPEC and free-float barrel nuts, muzzle devices and castle nuts. Titanium-coated stainless steel provides tight tolerances. MSRP: \$299.99. For more info: (800) 286-0567, RealAvid.co

BROWNING ENVY HUNTING BLIND

ALPS OUTDOORZ

ALPS OutdoorZ introduces the *Browning Envy Hunting Blind*. Weighing 23 lbs. with an 82" center height and 74" shooting width, the *Envy's* wall and window curtain construction are of 600D polyester fabric. Offered in Realtree EXCAPE and Mossy Oak Country DNA. MSRP: \$399.99. For more info: (800) 344-2577, ALPSOutdoorZ.com



ANN114 BUTTERFLY BEAR & SON CUTLERY

Bear & Son Cutlery celebrates 30 years of butterfly knife manufacturing with the release of limited-edition *balisongs*. Each knife features a laser engraved 30th anniversary logo on the blade. One such *balisong*, the *ANN114 Butterfly*, features a 3-5/8" carbon steel blade with a satin finish. The handles are made of zinc with a silver vein finish. Premium tang pin construction on the knives ensures smooth deployment. MSRP: \$61.49. For more info: (256) 435-2227, BearAndSonCutlery.com



.500 PREMIUM BULLETS NORTHERN PRECISION

Northern Precision now makes *.500 Premium Bullets* for the .500 Smith & Wesson magnum and .500 cal. guns. These are made from drawn-down 50 cal. B.M.G. jackets and trimmed to specs. The .500 are offered in custom weights and in bonded core for hunters who need max penetration and weight control. MSRP: \$32 for a box of 25 non-bonded bullets; \$49 for a box of 25 premium bonded core bullets. For more info: (315) 955-8679, NPCustomBullets.com

L19 LONG-RANGE FLASHLIGHT THE ACEBEAM

The AceBeam *L19 Long-Range Flashlight* has an optical lens for high-output power and strong light-gathering ability. It can find prey or targets within a distance of 1,300 meters white or 1,520 meters green, providing sufficient response time in emergencies. Specially designed for tactical and hunting, this high-power, long-range flashlight has easy-access tail switches, crenelated strike bezels and weapon-mounting capabilities. Ideal for tactical, hunting, outdoor, professional, security and law enforcement use. MSRP: \$149. For more info: AceBeam.com



HOLSTER CARE KIT GALCO

Like all products made from natural materials, leather holsters, belts and ammo carriers require periodic care and maintenance. GALCO has assembled the *Holster Care Kit* to make this easy. It includes an application dauber, a synthetic wool buffing pad and a foam scrub pad to make applying GALCO's Leather Lotion and Draw-EZ simple and mess-free. MSRP: \$34. For more info: (623) 434-7070, GalcoGunLeather.com

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY ONLINE:

HI-POINT FIREARMS CARBINE **MODEL 995** GIVEAWAY

December is the month of special giving and we're pleased to have the Hi-Point Firearms' *Model 995* as our giveaway prize. The Model 995 is a 17" blow back pistol-caliber carbine with an industry leading lifetime warranty. Features include a 9mm threaded barrel, fully adjustable sights (rear peep and post front), all-weather skeletonized stock with internal recoil buffer, Picatinny rails and a thumb magazine safety. The 995 Carbine comes with a 10-round detachable box magazine, trigger lock, sling and swivels. All Hi-Point Firearms carbines are +P rated to accept all factory ammunition.

Use the *Torrent Double Rifle Case* from Full Forge Gear to get your Hi-Point Model 995 on and off the range with ease. The case helps keep your rifles secure while you're on the go. With plenty of storage space, it's large enough for two full-sized rifles. Internal straps will secure an SBR or braced

rifle. Exterior MOLLE webbing allows you to attach accessories. Three external pockets will hold as much as 500 rounds of ammo, which is just what you need!

Yes, you'll need it to store the 500 rounds of Barnaul 9mm Luger 115-grain FMJ ammo you'll also get if you win this giveaway! Barnaul Ammunition is premium Russian steel case ammo that delivers performance that will not break the bank.

The Hi-Point Firearms' Model 995, Full Forge Gear's *Torrent Double Rifle Case* and 500 rounds of Barnaul ammo will certainly make for a merry December. So enter the giveaway now at GUNSMagazine.com/giveaways. You can also send a post card!

—Jazz Jimenez



HI-POINT FIREARMS CARBINE MODEL 995

MAKER: Hi-Point Firearms
(419) 747-9444

Hi-PointFirearms.com

CALIBER: 9mm, **CAPACITY:** 10, **OAL:** 31"
BARREL LENGTH: 16", **WEIGHT:** 6.25 lbs.
VALUE: \$339

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 by December 31, 2021. Limit one entry per household.

GUNS Magazine
GOM December 2021
P.O. Box 502795
San Diego, CA 92150-2795



About post cards, some of our subscribers say you can buy them with or without a stamp value from your local post office.

TOTAL VALUE: \$587.95



TORRENT DOUBLE RIFLE CASE BLACK

MAKER: Full Forge Gear
(877) 425-4867
FullForgeGear.com
VALUE: \$114.95



BARNAUL 9MM (9X19 FMJ)

MAKER: Barnaul Ammunition
(877) 425-4867
Barnaulammo.com
VALUE: \$134



TRADING TRIALS & TRIBULATIONS ... HOW I DISCOVERED THE .17 HMR RIMFIRE

So "Buckshot" wanted "The Neck's" old Charter Arms Bulldog .44 Special, along with my WWII-era Randall Made #1, with pinned stag handle. Knowing the value of both, he plays it cool. The Neck wants Buckshot's battered CZ 7.62X39 model 527 and my original Brill holster.

We were at a standstill. This was typical, as we've been trading since elementary school. We were in the cafeteria swapping lunches. I wasn't much of a trader, even back then. I usually ended up with a stomachache trading into spoiled liverwurst or a bad egg salad sandwich, while my friends devoured my Little Debbie Swiss rolls and Fritos. Some things never change ...

The question now is who will make the game-breaking offer, opening the

floodgates of smaller, more intricate trades, leaving everyone happy? Well, almost everyone ...

THE NAMES

Buckshot, his nickname since enduring a severe bout of acne in junior high, and The Neck, named for the crooked way he held his head from shooting his first big-bore rifle, and myself, have known each other since 2nd grade.

They came up with "Tank" after I shot a paper clip by rubber band, narrowly missing Buckshot by mere inches and cracking the aquarium in home room. The ensuing flood dumped 50-gallons of water and several flopping fish on the floor.

I don't feel sorry for them! These guys would trade you out of your last pair of jeans, all while laughing at the indecency of it all. Buckshot ends up with the .44 Bulldog, along with my Randall, while The Neck somehow walks away with Buckshot's CZ, my Brill holster and my 4" Ruger Service Six. I never saw it coming!

Me? I'm left with a cap pistol and some boxes of .17 HMR ammo. I don't even own a gun in .17 HMR, let alone a roll of caps! I'd been hoodwinked again, which is par for the course when trading with thieves. My *compadres* leave, laughing, while I feel somewhat dazed.

Now to try and find a .17 HMR gun so I don't feel totally snookered.

THE BOX

I head upstairs after hearing the door close when they leave. I notice a long, narrow white box, with a red bow, sitting on the kitchen table. What the hell? Below the bow is a scribbled note I can barely



The Ruger American in .17 HMR is a dandy varmint gun for urban settings. That's "Dexter" peeking over the gun, shot by Tank's daughter several years ago.

GUNS[®]

Custom

CORNER



The gun's tang safety is a nice feature and the Picatinny base makes for easy scope mounting.



The raised stock comb provides nice cheek purchase for high mounted scopes. The American is extremely accurate.

read. "Tank, here's something to shoot those 17 HMRs with." Those darned guys! I'd been set up. Maybe the guilt finally got to them?

RUGER AMERICAN RIMFIRE

Inside is a Ruger American stainless steel, black synthetic bolt-rifle, with target knob. The barrel is 18" and threaded, should I want to suppress it, and it has a Picatinny base for easy scope mounting. The Ruger Marksman adjustable trigger is nice, with a crisp, creep-free 3.5-lb. pull.

It comes with a 10-shot rotary magazine with easy release. The 60-degree bolt throw easily clears the Bushnell Banner 4-12X44 scope those clowns mounted on it. They even added a Harris bipod for me. I was starting to get kind of choked up, feeling guilty with all the expletives going through my head earlier.

I did what any shooter would do and went to the range. It only took a few shots

zeroing the rifle in, the Bushnell Banner scope tracking perfectly. At 50 yards, the gun shoots 0.4" 5-shot groups. At 100 yards, 0.9" is the average. Plenty accurate, while not being too loud, for such a flat shooting rimfire. Velocity is listed at over 2,550 FPS with a 17-grain bullet, perfect for ventilating suburban vermin.

KEEPIN' SECRETS

I really like this rifle! It's short, handy and one of the most accurate rimfires I've ever had the pleasure of shooting. So, if you ever run across some guys at a gun show, pawn shop, or gun store and one holds his head kinda' funny, and the other has a ruddy complexion, don't tell them how great my Ruger American 17 HMR shoots!

It's probably The Neck and Buckshot, and those *desperados* would surely trade me out of it in a nanosecond! I need a few good guns for myself ... and some rolls of caps.

Ruger MK Pistols

Reassemble Correct & Quick Every Time



One-Time Fix

- * Stays in Pistol
- * No Experience Needed
- * Not for 22/45 or MK IV models

HammerStrutSupport.com

256-527-3527

\$16

CLICK BAIT:

Catch more handguns daily!

New website loaded and made ready for you.

Visit americanhandgunner.com

GUNS[®] MAGAZINE

ADVERTISER INDEX

THE COMPANIES LISTED HAVE FEATURED ADVERTISEMENTS IN THIS ISSUE.
LOOK TO THEM FIRST WHEN YOU ARE READY TO MAKE A PURCHASE.

DECEMBER 2021

ADVERTISER	PAGE	ADVERTISER	PAGE
ADCO Arms.....	23	Mossberg.....	11
Alien Gear.....	3	North American Arms.....	29
<i>American Handgunner</i>		NovX.....	9
Subscription.....	45	RCBS.....	7
Arm Scor.....	15	Ruger.....	75
Bravo Company USA.....	2	SDS Imports.....	19
Dixie Gun Works.....	31	Spartan Blades USA.....	25
HSS Corp.....	71	Springfield Armory.....	76
<i>GUNS Magazine</i> Subscription.....	21	Standard Manufacturing Co. LLC.....	53
Kimber America.....	5	Trijicon.....	17
Kirkpatrick Leather Co.....	31	Versacarry.....	13
MTM Case-Gard.....	27	XS Sights.....	25

WANT MORE?

Click Here:
gunsmagazine.com

RUGER 10/22 CUSTOM COMPETITION

THE ESSENTIAL OPTIC

TAURUS .357 MAGNUM RAGING HUNTER

learned the success of a hunt cannot be measured in poundage or inches. Those help, but they're not the sole reason you spend an inconsiderable amount of coin and sweat. Perhaps you've finally grown up, at least as much as an otherwise feral human male is capable.

A CHANCE MEETING

The cosmic balance sheet suddenly changes as you crest a small rise and look into a small opening along the road. There, three deer are searching intently for a few remaining wisps of green grass beneath the snow. You have been stalking so quietly the deer are unaware of your presence. For a second, your ego momentarily escapes its cage as you revel in a smattering of smugness at your matchless woodcraft, even though a

behind her shoulder. The blade is nestled properly in the buckhorn rear sight, you've got a good offhand shooting position, the distance isn't far and you couldn't ask for a more near-perfect setup. If the percussion cap does its job — not always a guarantee — and the powder does its job and the ersatz modern mountain man makes a proper trigger pull and follow-through, the result is almost guaranteed.

The deer are still mincing about when they suddenly freeze, now aware something is very wrong as their strange supernatural senses kick in. You don't believe in such stuff but you've seen animals do this enough to know there might be something to ESP, remote reception or other such twaddle. In fact, you actually plan on this moment happening whenever stalking close to big-game animals.

The petrified tableau is like one of those faded old deer-hunting prints adorning the

**"PERHAPS YOU'VE FINALLY GROWN UP,
AT LEAST AS MUCH AS AN OTHERWISE
FERAL HUMAN MALE IS CAPABLE."**

football team wearing tap shoes could have walked through the woods today without making a sound.

Frozen like a camouflaged statue, you watch as the deer feed along for a few moments. The group is an older doe accompanied by two yearlings, probably her offspring, ambling aimlessly about 60 yards away and slowly quartering toward the left. The wind is in your face and the deer should feed even closer if they do not spook.

The deer continue moving, pausing, head up and looking, head down and feeding, repeating *ad infinitum*. Amazingly, they're still unaware and unconcerned about your presence. As they disappear behind a small clump of scrubby trees, the muzzleloader comes to your shoulder in practiced but painfully slow motion. So far, so good. You wince involuntarily at the rude click of the hammer locking back to the full-cock notch but the deer don't hear it in the snow-muffled landscape. Finality is certain, regardless of outcome, within seconds.

The biggest deer appears from behind the tree and, after a slight imperceptible adjustment, the front blade sight steadies just

walls of all hunting shacks but it's very real, populated by intelligent warm-blooded creatures engaged in a true matter of life and death. This is the crux of the pursuit, the moment non-hunters don't understand and devoted hunters can't explain.

THINGS CAN CHANGE

Suddenly, something strange happens — "*Merry Christmas!*" is heard as a voice rudely breaks the silence, sounding like a cannon shot in the calm. After a split-second pause, the deer jump, reverse directions in mid-air and bound away, vaporizing into three white flags flashing through the trees until finally disappearing over the hill.

Slowly lowering the gun, you wonder why you spoke up and consider the possibility cold has frozen more than a few brain cells. It confounds you, but only a little.

Trudging back the final half-mile to the truck, a tiny smile hangs on your lips. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus and he is currently wearing a hunter's orange cap. Besides, you can always tell the guys you didn't see anything worth shooting today — and you'd be telling the truth. 



Get our latest



**SPECIAL
EDITIONS**

**for \$12.95
each! Order
online today!**

fmgpubs.com

**Toll Free:
1-888-732-2299**

or by mail,

P.O. Box 502610

San Diego, CA 92150-2610

SNOW HUNT A FAMOUS LAST WORD

There is a special magic when hunting in the snow, especially for deer, especially in late December. You move unhurried and thoughtful through inaudible flakes sifting down onto the silent landscape, alone except for your thoughts. Occasionally, an overloaded branch silently spills its burden with a silent powdery explosion, the last bits of sparkling shrapnel slowly sifting down toward the forest floor. There is no sound on the gray windless day other than your own breathing and the quiet hiss of a few inches of powder sliding over freshly oiled boots. Walking through the ermine-coated woods with a muzzleloader, your thoughts are more inward than toward the hunt itself.

As the season fades into finality a few days before Christmas, you are hunting solo because your regular partner has already tagged a nice buck a few weeks before during the general gun season. You were happy for him, at least in the intellectual side of your brain, while your green-hued ego positively simmered with jealousy. Fortunately, you've got enough miles under your boots to keep the little bastard in check — mostly. Instead, you told your partner "Congratulations!" a couple of times and slapped him heartily on the back with 99% sincerity.

WINDING DOWN

Alone now in the final innings of the season, you find yourself pondering the waning year, replaying all the crucial events and wishing you could have another shot at a few things. You worry about the here-and-now, along with the things we are leaving for future generations. You're worried about politics, your next oil change, your retirement portfolio and a million other things both huge and unimportant as they randomly turn through your head like the wheels on a slot machine. However, those thoughts are

dismissed after a moment because right now is not the time to worry. Right now is time to carefully stalk over the next ridgeline.

Standing on the crest, you pause for a few moments and survey your domain. The tiny creek below is barely audible from your vantage point as it curves around to caress the sandstone cliffs of the small valley as it slides over a bed of clear gravel and bedrock. This isn't really wilderness, it's simply second-growth forest covering land too steep to farm in the otherwise corn-infested Midwest. What it lacks in true boondocks charm is made up by a great bedding habitat for the resident deer while they sleep off their corn and soybean feeding binges. It might not be prime elk territory in Colorado, but some of the local

Everything about these charcoal burners is experiential — the greasy feel of the loading patches, the noisy confrontation of the hammer tormenting the lockwork, the sulfurous smell of exploding double-F blackpowder — for tradition's sake, only the *real* stuff is allowed in this gun, thank you very much — and the palpable history behind all of it. Using your thumb, you lovingly rub off a bead of melted snow from the oiled brown octagon barrel and start slipping down toward the creek thinking of Barber's *Adagio*.

It's the only music appropriate for such a serious-minded moment, despite the Rolling Stones tune that keeps inexplicably peering over the lip of your consciousness, almost demanding you let anyone within earshot know you can't get any satisfaction.

The next hilltop holds no game and after realizing it's probably time to start heading home, you turn onto the logging road to begin the slow uphill climb back toward the truck. A minute later the sun cuts a window through the low gray overcast and the momentary burst of solar energy makes the icy treetops explode with the light of a trillion diamonds. While fumbling for the small camera in your backpack, you pause with the realization no picture could reproduce the scene, or more importantly, the mood of the moment. As quickly as it opened, the window shuts, leaving you



whitetail bucks wouldn't be a pushover for their bigger-country cousins.

After taking a swig from an icy canteen and slowly masticating a piece of salty venison jerky you made from last year's deer, it's easy to imagine being a pioneer 150 years ago and finding this land for the first time. You often have similar thoughts when carrying the front-loader. Feeling the solid heft of the hand-built .54 caliber Hawken cradled in your arms, it seems at once an anachronistic throwback yet capable enough to win wars and expand national boundaries.

in the suffused light of a winter morning the same color as clam juice.

You are a mixture of feelings as you head back toward "civilization." The season is in the final innings and no venison yet resides in the freezer, but you've had many adventures with good friends and seen extraordinary things. On the ledger, you are on the red side of the profit margin, but just barely.

After all those previously mentioned miles of life experience, you've finally

continued on page 73



COLION NOIR,
Firearms Enthusiast

The acquisition, ownership and use of firearms is heavily regulated.
Some models may not be legally available in your state or locale. Know the law and shoot safely.

**9MM
LUGER**

Caliber

**10+1
12+1**

Capacity

3.20"

Barrel Length

**18.4
OZ.**

Weight

RUGER[®] MAX-9[™]

The MAX-9[™] is Your Next Handgun[™].

Whether you're new to firearms ownership, or you've been an enthusiast for years, the versatile MAX-9[™] is sure to meet your personal protection needs.

Comfortable enough to conceal in an inside the waistband holster or pocket holster, this micro-sized pistol has it all - without compromising on capacity or features. Rugged, reliable, affordable - the Ruger[®] MAX-9[™].



RUGER.COM/MAX-9

Emissary 1911



All New EMISSARY

The all new Emissary 1911 from Springfield Armory® blends form and function seamlessly in a firearm built for defense and loaded with custom-grade features. The Emissary's forged slide and frame is outfitted with a tritium luminescent front sight and an accessory rail for adaptability. A Tri-Top cut to the slide with 40 LPI serrations diffuses glare and a heavy-profile bull barrel ensures the Emissary stands ready to deliver.



SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY
SPRINGFIELD-ARMORY.COM