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November 2023

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Iconic yet sometimes overlooked, the "Trapdoor Springfield" went through numerous iterations throughout its decades of use by the U.S. military.

CONTENTS

AMERICAN  RIFLEMAN

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

137th Year of Publication

NOVEMBER 2023

VOLUME 171,
No. 11

The NRA, the foremost guardian of the traditional American right to "keep and bear arms," believes every law-abiding citizen is entitled to the ownership and legal use of firearms, and that every reputable gun owner should be an NRA Member.

Wayne R.
LaPierre,
Executive Vice
President

features

Double Barrel: Biden Works To Suppress Retail And Private Firearm Sales .. 18

Randy Kozuch

The means many anti-gun politicians use to pursue their ends to the Second Amendment may vary and are dictated by the political and legal framework of the moment.

Marlins With The Ruger Touch: The Model 336 And 1894 Classics ... 36

Jeremiah Knupp

The latest versions of the perennially popular Model 336 and Model 1894 Marlin lever-actions recall their glory days—and take these classics to a new level.

Savage Takes On The M1911 .. 42

B. Gil Horman

Best known for long guns, Savage today encompasses all manner of firearms, and among the latest is no less than one of America's most revered pistols—a rival from long ago.

Guns Can Talk ... And Knight's Armament Co. Understands Them ... 48

George E. Kontis

An experienced firearm designer reports on how the sounds that firearms make can help explain how they work—and how they can be made to work better.

150 Years Of The "Trapdoor Springfield" ... 52

Bruce N. Canfield

This year marks the sesquicentennial of one of America's most iconic military firearms—one not always given the recognition it deserves—the Model 1873 "Trapdoor Springfield."



42



48



60

THE COVER: The new Model 1894 Classic—shown here with both SIG Sauer's 200-grain V-Crown .44 Special load and Hornady's 300-grain Custom XTP .44 Magnums—represents the first Marlin pistol-caliber carbine since Ruger took over ownership of the company.

Design by David Labrozzi; Photo by Forrest MacCormack

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official journal

The Armed Citizen	10
Special Reports	
Standing Guard	12
President's Column	14
Political Report	16
ILA Report	66
Regional Report	68
Featured Program	69
Programs & Services	70

correspondence

The Rifleman Report	8
Readers Write	22
Favorite Firearms	34
The Poker Gun	

reports

News & Notes	24
Products & Projects	28

technical

Questions & Answers	32
Haemmerli & Hausch	
Dope Bag	60
Smith & Wesson M&P9 M2.0 Metal 9 mm Luger Pistol	
Hi-Point 3095 30 Super Carry Carbine	
Revic BR4 Laser Rangefinder	
Handloads	65
A .45 ACP Semi-Wadcutter For Target Work	
I Have This Old Gun	72
Marlin 1894 Trapper	

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Single-Stage vs. Two-Stage Triggers: What's The Difference?

While crispness and pull weight are important traits, the manner in which a trigger functions shouldn't be overlooked, either. What is the difference between single- and two-stage triggers, and which is the best type for you? americanrifleman.org/triggerdifference

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NRA Mid-Range Matches

November 1

NRA Mid-Range Matches; EAA Girsan MC P35 PI Ops In 9 mm Luger; Remington Double Derringer

November 8

On Location: Making EAA's Churchill Shotgun; Taurus TX22 Compact In .22 Long Rifle; H&K P7 Pistol

November 15

American Rifleman Television: The First 20 Years; Taurus Judge Executive Grade In .410 Bore/.45 Colt; German Commission Revolver

November 22

Colt Rifle Basics; Springfield Hellcat Pro OSP In 9 mm Luger; French Resistance No. 4 Enfields



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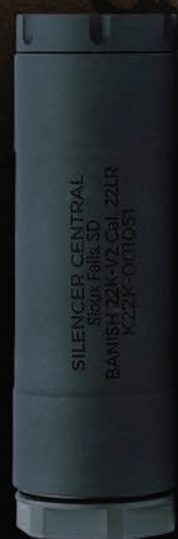
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THE RIFLEMAN REPORT

The term “inside out” can be taken literally or applied as a phrase to describe the thoroughness with which an idea is understood. In this month’s issue, we hope to illustrate that the latter especially is used as a guiding principle to keep the American firearm industry at the top of its game. We also suggest a third application that is appropriate for every shooter.

Our first two stories make it clear that some of the country’s foremost names in gunmaking are not too proud to revisit classic designs from the past as a means of forging their own futures. In “Marlins With The Ruger Touch: The Model 336 And 1894 Classics” (p. 36), Field Editor Jeremiah Knupp explains how “the letters ‘JM’ inside a small oval stamped into the barrel of a Marlin firearm holds a special place in the heart of the brand’s aficionados,” but that the newest Marlins, built in Mayodan, N.C., are marked with an “RM” prefix to indicate they are Ruger-made. It’s a story we first covered last year when Ruger heavily invested in and resurrected the brand with its re-engineered 1895-based models, and it illustrates how truly classic firearm designs simply refuse to die.

In a similar example, “Savage Takes On The M1911” (p. 42), Field Editor B. Gil Horman explains that the company best known for its rifles has opted to enter the marketplace with a “factory-custom” iteration of John Browning’s classic. It appears to have been a choice well-made, as it allows Savage to offer “upgrades and a level of refinement that are usually unavailable in budget-priced pistols while keeping these new guns fiscally obtainable for those M1911 fans who prefer more feature-rich options.”

On the more analytical side of firearms, small-arms engineer George Kontis teaches us that “Guns Can Talk” (p. 48), and that the improvements applied to today’s advanced firearms are informed by “listening” to them function. The author explains that Knight’s Armament has developed the means to analyze



Photo courtesy of Tom Laemlein

sounds emitted from firearm mechanisms during their cycles of operation and that understanding those sounds is one way designers keep American military small arms at the pinnacle of readiness.

In “150 Years Of The ‘Trapdoor Springfield’” (p. 52), Field Editor Bruce N. Canfield recounts the significance of the post-Civil War realization that breechloading arms were the way forward and how Springfield Armory master armorer Erskine S. Allin devised an ingenious solution for adapting earlier designs. “His method was to convert the obsolete muzzleloading muskets into breechloaders by milling away a portion of the top rear of the barrel and attaching a hinged breechblock containing a firing pin and an extractor/ejector mechanism.” That literal “inside-out” design was soon given the descriptive nickname “Trapdoor Springfield.”

And as to that other application of the phrase “inside out” mentioned before, consider this: Arms designers and firearm manufacturers bring to bear tremendous effort in the development of new guns—whether they be models from yesteryear or those newly conceived or improved through modern testing methods. In either case, today’s firearms are safe, reliable, accurate and durable—but they are, ultimately, tools designed to be used.

So, gather your classics or recent acquisitions, and take them from the “inside out” today. Sure, the collectibles can remain at home, but most guns are made to be shot—at least recreationally if not out of necessity for hunting and, of course, for training in self-defense—whether at indoor ranges or in the great outdoors.

In either case, shooting is one of the most rewarding and necessary pastimes in American history.

—BRIAN C. SHEETZ, EDITOR IN CHIEF



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Send clippings via email to armedcitizen@nrahq.org, or by mail to “The Armed Citizen,” 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400. For bonus features, visit “The Armed Citizen Blog” at americanrifleman.org. Share this column online at nrpublications.org.

A man reportedly entered a barbecue restaurant in Leon County, Texas, on Aug. 14 and aggressively harassed several customers. He then went into the restroom and allegedly assaulted an elderly man there, knocking him to the floor and beating him unconscious. An armed citizen intervened and was also attacked and knocked to the ground, whereupon he fired two shots at the assailant, striking him once in the right arm. The suspect fled the restaurant; police later found him sitting in his vehicle on the shoulder of the road, where they arrested him and transported him to the hospital for treatment. The elderly restaurant patron was also treated and no other injuries were noted. (Leon County Sheriff’s Office Facebook post, Leon County, Texas, 8/15/23)

A convenience-store owner in Houston, Texas, had just returned from the bank and was about to enter his store on Aug. 16 when he was reportedly hit in the back of the head with a blunt object. He turned and saw multiple masked attackers wearing gloves. The store owner drew his firearm and shot at the assailants. An employee inside the store, hearing the commotion, also fired at the suspects. Two of the attackers died at the scene while a third suspect drove away. The assistant police chief noted “our citizens do have the right to defend themselves, and choices have consequences.” Police also said they believe the incident was an example of “jugging,” wherein robbers identify potential victims while they’re at a bank or ATM and then follow them to their work or home. (khoul.com, Houston, Texas, 8/16/23)

A young man dressed all in black and wearing a bandana over his face entered a liquor store in Fountain Valley, Calif., on Aug. 16, pulled out what looked like a gun and demanded money. The store’s owner, however, thought the would-be robber looked like a “kid” and that his gun looked “so fake ... like a plastic toy.” He pulled out his own gun, whereupon the suspect immediately fled the store and got away in a waiting vehicle. The armed citizen told reporters he was able to remain calm because he’d been robbed at gunpoint before. (abc7.com, Los Angeles, Calif., 8/18/23)

A 35-year-old off-duty prison guard was pumping gas in Philadelphia, Pa., around 10:30 p.m. on Aug. 23 when a suspected would-be carjacker approached her from behind. Security cameras show the 22-year-old man getting her into a “bear hug”; the woman, however, fought back and pulled out her gun. She and the assailant shot at each other, and the man was struck once in the torso and once in the leg. The woman

was unfortunately also hit twice in the leg but was reported to be in stable condition; she is not expected to face charges. (6abc.com, Philadelphia, Pa., 8/23/23)

A 43-year-old taxi driver in Metairie, La., was in his cab during the early morning hours of Aug. 21 when a man approached and pointed a gun at him while demanding money. The cab driver, fearing for his life, shot the assailant multiple times, killing him. Sheriff’s office investigators said the suspect was likely the same person who had held up two other taxi drivers in the week preceding this incident. No charges are expected to be filed against the armed citizen. (nola.com, New Orleans, La., 8/24/23)

On Aug. 30 in Butler, Pa., a man and his girlfriend were eating pizza and getting ready to watch a movie when they heard a strange *bang* in the basement. They started to walk down the stairs to investigate when they saw an intruder allegedly pushing his way through the door. The two residents ran back upstairs, and the man retrieved his gun while his girlfriend called 911. The now-armed citizen told the stranger to show his hands, which he did, but then he reportedly stopped complying, repeatedly asking to be hidden in the home. The homeowner said the man moved aggressively toward him, so he fired two shots, striking the intruder once. The homeowner told reporters he still had to kick the intruder back down after shooting him because the man kept attempting to get up. The intruder reportedly told him he’d rather be shot again than kicked, at which point the homeowner told him the next time he had to shoot him, he wouldn’t survive. Police arrested the intruder, who faces charges once released from medical treatment. No charges are expected against the armed citizen. (wtae.com, Pittsburgh, Pa., 8/31/23) ★

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By Wayne LaPierre
Executive Vice President

America Herself Is At Stake In Next Year's Election

You used to not have to worry about crime unless you were associated with the streets, with drug dealing. Now you could just be going down the street, going to the car and you can be killed.

"People don't care. They rob them in Georgetown and Connecticut Avenue. They're going to the Wharf. Now, it could be anywhere."

That's what Ronald Moten, a longtime resident of Washington, D.C., recently told *The Washington Post*. His voice was one of many who've made the same, unmistakable observation. And they aren't wrong. Homicide in our nation's capital is up 29% this year. Robberies are up 67%. Residents who live in traditionally safe areas of the city now fear for their wellbeing just walking outside their apartments and homes.

Of course, it isn't just Washington, D.C. Crime rates are soaring in cities and towns nationwide.

But the rampant crime wave that is ravaging our country is not the disease—it's a symptom of a much deeper sickness that the radical, anti-gun left is intentionally trying to inflict on our nation.

Their sole intent is to tear down our justice system and weaken the institutions that hold America together, so they can then impose their own warped ideology on all of us. In their ideology, we would have an America where crime is to be understood, but not punished. An America where violent criminals have guns, but the innocent are disarmed.

An America where we're not allowed to speak our minds for fear of being censored, canceled and, ultimately, targeted by a weaponized "justice" system. An America where religious institutions are barred from holding views or values that differ from the radical left's agenda. An America where so-called progressive political ideas are not up for debate, but rather, imposed from the top down without any scrutiny or discussion.

What we're witnessing in rising crime rates is the natural byproduct of the destruction and rot that has taken place in America from within. The anti-freedom left doesn't believe in civil discourse. If you own a gun or support the Second Amendment, you're a monster, they say. They don't believe in honest debate. They ignore facts. They are willing to use any tactic to lie, cheat and slander anyone who gets in their way. They'll even pervert our justice system to achieve their political aims.

Just think about how they even define the term "justice." "Justice" to them means letting

violent criminals run free. "Justice" to them means stopping law-abiding citizens like us from owning and carrying firearms. They don't weep for the innocent, disarmed mom in the city who can't defend herself or her family when a thug breaks down the door. They weep for the thug when he's denied bail.

Crime isn't the failure of our criminal-justice system—it's the complete abandonment of any form of criminal justice by the radical, gun-hating left.

The left has spent every hour of every day for years trying to divide America into fragments. They breed hatred, jealousy and contempt among Americans. Our beloved nation will dissolve into history and cease to exist as we know it unless good people stand and fight for the time-honored, sensible and sane values that make America free, safe and prosperous.

Make no mistake: Our fight is now. The battleground is this election campaign. And our opponent is Joe Biden, the radical left's ringleader.

You and I both know that no single organization has a better chance to turn the tide toward freedom and justice than our NRA. Our firearm freedoms are the benchmark for every other freedom in the Constitution. The pro-Second Amendment candidates we've supported over the years have not only stood tall for our gun rights, but also our free speech, our religious freedom, law and order and the constitutional values that built our nation.

Too many people believe that America is so big, so strong, so powerful and so enduring that it will last forever. But you and I know the lessons of history. We know massive civilizations have risen and fallen since the dawn of humankind.

America could last another thousand years or could be gone—at least as we know it—within our lifetimes. And every lesson that history teaches points to an America that's on the brink.

As NRA members, you and I have a role to play like we've never played before. We've won countless elections from the statehouse to the White House, but everything we've accomplished together over the last 40 years has all led up to this critical moment.

It's time to rise up, fight together, save our nation and steer America back on track.

Wayne LaPierre



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Election Day Countdown: Plan To Win

We're now just 12 months out from the critical 2024 elections. While that may seem far in the future, as president of this association, I urge you: If you care about your firearms, your Second Amendment freedom to own them, and your ability to defend yourself and your family, there is no more important task you face right now than to make a plan today to protect them.

President Joe Biden continues attacking your right to arms with every means at his disposal. Scarcely a week goes by without him calling for an outright ban on the most popular semi-automatic firearms in America. When Biden can't get his bans through Congress, his White House unilaterally tries to impose them through executive orders, federal regulations and abusive reinterpretations of existing laws and regulations.

Since Biden took office, hundreds of U.S. gun dealers have had their Federal Firearms Licenses revoked under new "zero-tolerance" policies punishing paperwork errors and other innocent oversights. In July, they blocked funding for archery and hunting education in American schools because it supposedly included "training in the use of a dangerous weapon." In August, they pushed new ATF regulations that would ban many, if not all, private sales of firearms between law-abiding adults. The list goes on.

Meanwhile, in left-leaning states, governors and state legislatures are passing laws that effectively render meaningless the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 landmark *Bruen* decision, which said that states cannot arbitrarily deny the right to carry without a good reason. They're also passing new laws that circumvent the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act—so that they can blame the U.S. firearms industry for violent crimes and sue gunmakers out of business.

Throughout all of it, these anti-gun politicians have 24/7/365 support from their allies in the legacy media and social media. They parrot the lies. They suppress stories that tell the truth about our rights. They "demonetize" pro-gun voices or censor them into silence. Taken together, the propagandists of the press and self-appointed gatekeepers of social media constitute a speech-police steamroller straight out of Stalin's dreams or Orwell's nightmares.

There's not enough room in this column to go into all the schemes and stratagems they're using to crush your Second Amendment freedom, but let me say this: Next November's elections are absolutely crucial to stopping them.

NRA members like you instinctively understand that firearm freedom is the canary in the coal mine, and that, in the words of St. George Tucker, "Wherever the right of the people to keep and bear arms is under any color or pretext whatsoever prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction." That's why your role in this fight is crucial.

Now, given Biden's age, the many scandals swirling around the White House, his leftist agenda and the unpopularity of his gun-ban zealotry, you might think that his chances of re-election—assuming he runs—are slim. But the fact is, only five American presidents over the past century have been defeated in their re-election bids.

Next November, voters will elect the next president and vice-president, U.S. Senators in 34 states, the governors of 11 states, state attorneys general in 10 states, statehouse legislators in 44 states and all 435 members of the House of Representatives.

I want to see the NRA and gun owners nationwide play a pivotal role in next year's elections, just as we did in the elections of 1994 and 2000. Here's how you can do your fair share:

- Go to triggerthevote.org/register-to-vote to make sure your vote can be counted.
- Go to nraila.org/sign-up so we can reach you with the most up-to-date information about elections and legislation in your hometown.
- Consider becoming an NRA-ILA FrontLines Activist Leader (FAL) or get in touch with your local FAL by going to nraila.org/grassroots/find-your-frontlines-activist-leader.
- Help fund the crucial communications that can make a decisive difference on Election Day by contributing to the NRA-ILA Political Victory Fund (PVF). Although contributions to PVF aren't tax-deductible, you can rest assured that your donations will directly and exclusively fund powerful election efforts.

If you do nothing else, make it your personal priority to ensure you're registered to vote and to recruit at least one new NRA member. Numbers speak louder than anything else to politicians, and the greater our numbers, the louder our voice. Securing our God-given freedoms is sure to take all the voices and votes that we can muster.



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By Randy Kozuch
Executive Director,
NRA-ILA

YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOT ENOUGH.

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Executive Overreach: Biden Admin Attacks Lawful Firearm Sales

How do you know when the government doesn't believe that their own proposed regulation is lawful? If you guessed "when the government states it won't use its new regulation (which happens to implement a criminal statute) in any criminal cases," then you've likely already read the ATF's new proposed rule: "Definition of 'Engaged in the Business' as a Dealer in Firearms."

I discuss this rule in the context of the Biden Administration's holistic attack on gun owners in more detail in the ILA Story this month, but this most recent unlawful attack on gun rights still deserves a closer look.

You may recall that the definition of "engaged in the business" controls when individuals engage in sufficient commerce in firearms so as to need to be licensed under federal law as a Federal Firearms Licensee ("FFL"). This definition was altered slightly last year by the NRA-opposed "Bipartisan Safer Communities Act." As with the naming of most gun control legislation, there is nothing to make America "safer" in the Orwellian-named BSCA.

The former definition of "engaged in the business" as applied to a dealer was "a person who devotes time, attention, and labor to dealing in firearms as a regular course of trade or business with the principal objective of livelihood and profit through the repetitive purchase and resale of firearms, but such term shall not include a person who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms."

The BSCA exchanged the terms "with the principle objective of livelihood and profit" with "to predominantly earn a profit." Notably, no changes were made to the language protecting those who engage in "occasional sales, exchanges or purchases" or those "who sell all or part of [a] personal collection."

ATF claims to be using this change in the BSCA as the basis for the new regulation, but the proposed rule creates several presumptions about when a person is "engaged in the business," despite the fact that none of the presumptions appear in the BSCA.

The most important aspect of these presumptions is the government's claim that "[t]he rebuttable presumptions shall not apply to any criminal case, although they may be useful to courts in criminal cases, for example, when instructing juries regarding permissible inferences." One might wonder why a new proposed definition of a term that is used in federal criminal statutes cannot be used in

criminal cases. As I mentioned in the opening, the government likely knows this rule is unlawful, and is trying to head off legal challenges by limiting the application of its new rule.

Beyond this tacit admission of the unlawfulness of the rule, the government does get one thing right. They correctly admit that the statute does not give them the authority to set a limit on the number of firearm transactions that a person can engage in before needing to be licensed. However, in true government form, after making this admission, the rule goes on to describe how even a single transaction could trigger the need to be licensed. So much for the statutory requirement that a person engage in "repetitive purchase and resale" before needing a license.

THE GOVERNMENT LIKELY KNOWS THIS RULE IS UNLAWFUL AND IS TRYING TO HEAD OFF LEGAL CHALLENGES.

The rule also contains presumptions that a person is "engaged in the business" for conduct that clearly falls outside of the statutory definition. Since the passage of the Firearms Owners' Protection Act, federal law has made clear that a person "who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms" is not "engaged in the business."

The Biden administration claims that these changes can help move federal law towards "universal background checks," but that is potentially a trap for law-abiding gun owners. Transferring a firearm through a licensed dealer to run a background check does nothing to help a seller if they meet the government's new expanded definition of "engaged in the business." In fact, doing so will provide more evidence for the government to use against a seller that they claim is dealing in firearms without an FFL.

The rule is currently open for comment until Dec. 7, 2023. Please file respectful comments to help push back against this unlawful rule and check back to nra.org for more news on the Biden administration's most recent attack on law-abiding gun owners.



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DOUBLE BARREL:

Biden Works To Suppress Retail And Private Firearm Sales

Many anti-gun politicians share the same goals—including the elimination of the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms and civilian disarmament. However, the means they use to pursue these ends may vary and are dictated by the political and legal framework of the moment.

Case in point is consecutive anti-gun presidential administrations' approach to Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs or gun dealers). Some anti-gun presidents have attempted to crack down on private firearms transactions by demanding a wider swathe of gun owners obtain an FFL. Other presidents

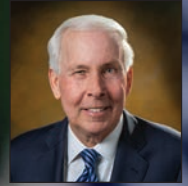
have done the exact opposite, trying to eliminate FFLs, which are often small businesses.

Those were simpler times, when even anti-gun politicians may have felt the need to feign some measure of fidelity to the U.S. Constitution or federal statute to mask their prohibitionist aims. President Joe Biden and Attorney General Merrick Garland observe no such obligation.

Biden's ATF is conducting a war on FFLs, shutting down well-meaning gun dealers for minor paperwork violations. At the same time, Biden's Department of Justice is seeking to curtail lawful private firearm transfers by misinterpreting federal law concerning when a private firearm seller must obtain an FFL.



By Randy Kozuch
Executive Director,
NRA-ILA



The Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) created the modern legal framework around selling firearms in the U.S. Under the law, those “engaged in the business” of selling firearms must obtain an FFL and keep records of the firearms they transfer. Later, the 1993 Brady Bill would require FFLs to conduct a background check using the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) on prospective gun buyers. Private individuals who do not sell firearms as a business, such as ordinary gun owners or collectors, are not required to obtain an FFL and may sell firearms to other private individuals without federal government interference.

In the early years following the GCA’s enactment, ATF set about harassing private individuals whom the agency contended were dealing firearms without a license. Describing ATF’s tactics, an April 1980 *Reason* magazine article explained, “One or two agents approach a collector at a gun show and make a purchase. The same happens at the next gun show, and so on, until the ‘implied dealer’ has made four to six sales. At this point, the collector is booked on felony charges of dealing without a license.”

The problem proved so acute that Congress addressed the matter in the Firearms Owners’ Protection Act of 1986 (FOPA). That legislation further defined “engaged in the business” to provide gun owners with a clearer understanding of conduct that is permissible without an FFL. As attorney and Second Amendment scholar David T. Hardy explained in a history of FOPA for the *Cumberland Law Review*, “The central thrust of the FOPA definition is toward limiting the term ‘engaged in the business’ to those who treat firearm sales as a business, either of the ‘storefront’ or the ‘itinerant peddler’ variety.”

In the 1990s, President Bill Clinton and his anti-gun allies took exception to the number of FFLs helping Americans exercise their Second Amendment rights. So, on Aug. 11, 1993, Clinton directed the Secretary of the Treasury (at the time, ATF was under the Department of the Treasury) to take “whatever steps are necessary” to decrease the number of FFLs. ATF complied, issuing regulations that would put many small gun dealers out of business. From 1994 to 2007, the number of gun dealers fell 80%.

President Barack Obama took the opposite tack. During his time in the White House, gun-controllers were clamoring to criminalize private firearm transfers. So, in 2016, the Obama ATF issued a document titled, “Do I need a license to buy and sell firearms?” The document summarized the Obama administration’s take on the relevant federal law and encouraged those who met their interpretation of “engaged in the business” to obtain an FFL.

The Biden approach is an attempt to impede access to firearms altogether.

The president first targeted FFLs. On June 23, 2021, the Biden-Harris administration announced a “zero-tolerance” policy for what it termed “rogue gun dealers.” The announcement made clear that “[a]bsent extraordinary circumstances that would need to be justified to the Director, ATF will seek to revoke the licenses of dealers the first time that they violate federal law,” even in a handful of trivial instances. In December 2021, ATF updated its “Federal Firearms Licensee Quick Reference and Best Practices Guide” to reiterate the oppressive new regime.

AP photo by Oliver Contreras/Sipa USA

For instance, revokable offenses include “falsifying records, such as a firearms transaction form.” This could cover small and inconsequential clerical errors on a Form 4473 (firearm transaction record). Any small-business owner should be sympathetic to the notion that, over the course of many years and thousands of transactions, they—or an employee—might be capable of an innocent paperwork mistake.

Another zero-tolerance offense is “failing to run a required background check.” It would be one thing if this was used to revoke the license of a dealer flouting federal law by refusing to run NICS checks. In reality, the new standard has been used to target well-meaning FFLs who mistakenly accept what they believe are NICS-exempt right-to-carry permits or conduct a NICS check using forms of identification that are invalid or may have expired.

From the position of a gun banner like Biden, the war on FFLs is working. On Aug. 18, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled, “Hundreds of Gun Dealers Lose Licenses Under Biden Administration Crackdown.” The paper explained that the ATF has “revoked the licenses of 122 gun dealers in the fiscal year that began in October, up from 90 for all last fiscal year and 27 in 2021.” A July 6 item from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearm industry, pointed out that in fiscal year 2020 “there were just 40 license revocations.” ATF inspection data shows that there were 36 in just June and July of this year.

Despite the stark increase in revocations, these numbers understate the problem. ATF bullies many FFLs into surrendering their licenses without going through the formal revocation procedure. Moreover, there’s no telling how many good people the Biden administration’s intimidation tactics have prevented from entering the industry.

The 2022 federal gun-control omnibus bill, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA), provided the Biden administration with a new opening to distort the law to attack gun owners.

Recall, private individuals are allowed to sell guns out of their own collections, if they are not “engaged in the business” of selling firearms. The unwise 2022 legislation slightly altered the statutory definition of “engaged in the business.” The bill did so by removing language requiring a person’s behavior be “with the principal objective of livelihood and profit,” changing it to require the conduct be “to predominantly earn a profit.”

The altered “engaged in the business” definition maintains language making clear that a “course” of “repetitive” buying and reselling of firearms is required to meet the definition of “engaged in the business.” Moreover, the definition still makes clear that the “term shall not include a person who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms.”

At the time, some involved in concocting the BSCA assured NRA-ILA that these minor textual changes would not impede law-abiding gun owners’ right to transfer firearms without government interference. Knowing better, NRA-ILA warned these policymakers that altering the settled “engaged in the business” language would provide the Biden administration with the opportunity to put forward new bad-faith interpretations of the law.

Sadly, time has proven NRA-ILA correct.

On March 14, the White House announced “an Executive Order with the goal of increasing the number of background checks conducted before firearm sales.” The document noted that Biden had directed Attorney General Garland to “move the U.S. as close to universal background checks as possible without additional legislation by clarifying, as appropriate, the statutory definition of who is ‘engaged in the business’ of dealing in firearms, as updated by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.”

Never mind that the U.S. Congress has refused to criminalize private firearm transfers, by expressly rejecting so-called “universal” background-check legislation on numerous occasions. Biden couldn’t resist an occasion to pervert federal law. A *Politico* headline summed up Biden’s scheme, stating in part, “Biden bypasses Congress.”

According to an Aug. 1 article in *The New York Times*, the new regulation would “set a threshold number of transactions that would define a dealer.” The article added, “gun-control groups hope to see it at five sales a year or lower.”

Nothing in the new definition of “engaged in the business” contemplates a threshold number of firearm transactions. Rather, the relevant requirement is for “repetitive purchase and resale of firearms” with a profit-seeking motive. Absent this motive, any number of transactions should be permissible. Under any reasonable reading, those selling

all or part of a personal collection are exempt from the definition regardless of any profit they derive.

On Aug. 31, ATF issued a notice of proposed rulemaking concerning the “engaged in the business” definition. Noticeably absent was a threshold number of transactions that would trigger the dealer-licensing requirement. In fact, DOJ acknowledged there is no justification for such a number, stating, “the Department does not believe there is a sufficient evidentiary basis, without consideration of additional factors, to support a specific minimum number of firearms bought or sold for a person to be considered ‘engaged in the business.’”

However, that’s where the sanity ends. Much of the rest of the proposed rule aims to intimidate gun owners into forgoing lawful private firearm transactions.

The proposal lists what DOJ will consider indicia of having “the intent to predominantly earn a profit” when selling firearms, which the department contends will create a rebuttable presumption against gun owners in civil and administrative proceedings. These include things that gun owners and collectors have long enjoyed that bear little relation to whether they are “engaged in the business” of selling firearms—such as taking out an ad in a gun-club newsletter, posting a gun for sale in an online forum, or renting table space at a gun show. Perhaps understanding the flimsy nature of this type of legislating by executive fiat, DOJ acknowledged that these dubious presumptions “shall not apply to criminal cases.”

Aside from the U.S. Congress explicitly rejecting so-called “universal” background-check legislation, the people’s elected representatives have also refused numerous bills contemplating a narrower set of restrictions on the private sale of firearms pursuant to classified ads and gun shows, with the most notable iteration being the 2013 Manchin-Toomey-Schumer proposal.

In the coming months, NRA-ILA will submit official comments on Biden’s proposed rulemaking. Further, NRA-ILA is already working with our allies in Congress to address this matter and stands ready to challenge this executive power grab in the courts if necessary. Gun owners should respond to Biden’s twin attacks on gun rights by informing their family, friends and neighbors of Biden’s actions and how to put an end to them on Nov. 5, 2024. 🦋

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READERS WRITE

More Praise For The Stevens 87A

I really enjoyed the Favorite Firearm “The Lost Rifle That Finally Came Home” by Michael Leach on the Stevens Model 87A .22 rifle (September 2023, p. 35). That same model of rifle was the first gun that I ever owned—it was a Christmas gift when I was a teenager, and it provided many fond memories. When I was an adult with kids living in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, one of the large shooting ranges had a turkey shoot at Thanksgiving. I decided to enter it, and my neighbor and his teenage son accompanied me. I won a turkey and put the gun up. My neighbor’s son, who had never shot a gun before, asked if he could use my gun to enter. I showed him how to hold the gun, etc.—mine had open sights—and he entered and also won a turkey! This was going up against shooters who had German scoped rifles and the works, all adults, except for this kid.

The Model 87A was an incredibly accurate field rifle due to the barrel being heavy on the front, which allowed you to hold it steady. As a kid, I could always outshoot my uncles who had high-dollar .22s. Other people I have talked to who owned 87As as kids always said the same thing, “It was the most accurate .22 I ever owned.” These guns were well-made, although very plain—and, again, very accurate.

—JIM MARTIN



I enjoyed reading about Mr. Leach’s “Lost Rifle” in the September issue. I’m pretty sure we owned the same rifle under the Montgomery Ward name at about the same time. It was a fine rifle that dispatched many rats at the city dump after high school.

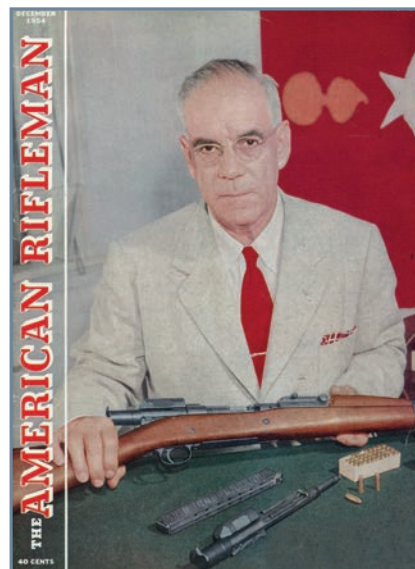
—JERRY RICHARDS

NRA member photo

Pedersen Devices

Bruce Canfield’s wonderful article “The En Bloc Clip: Don’t Blame John Garand” (July 2023, p. 70) about the competition between John Garand and John Pedersen for the design of the first U.S. semi-automatic rifle contains the thought (p. 72) that “... what Ordnance really wanted was a semi-automatic Model 1903” Ordnance already had that in the replacement bolt for the 1903 designed by John Pedersen and manufactured by Remington, which was called a “Pedersen Pistol” or “Pedersen Device.” And now the coincidence: In the same issue (p. 47), there is a picture of Gen. Julian Hatcher holding a 1903 Springfield that is fitted with a Pedersen Device, and there is a second one with the detachable magazine and some ammunition on the table in front of him. I always enjoy Bruce Canfield’s articles in the *Rifleman*!

—ALBERT PROCTOR



American Rifleman archives

“Readers Write” affords members an opportunity to comment on material published in *American Rifleman*. Single-topic letters are preferred and may be edited for brevity. Send letters to: Readers Write, NRA Publications, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400 or email us at publications@nrahq.org.

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In the blockbuster film, when a strapping Australian crocodile hunter and a lovely American journalist were getting robbed at knife point by a couple of young thugs in New York, the tough Aussie pulls out his dagger and says "That's not a knife, THIS is a knife!" Of course, the thugs scattered and he continued on to win the reporter's heart.

Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

Secured in a tooled leather sheath, this is one impressive knife, with an equally impressive price.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

But we don't stop there. While supplies last, we'll include a pair of \$99, 8x21 power compact binoculars, *and* a genuine leather sheath **FREE** when you purchase the *Down Under Bowie Knife*.

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Nighthawk Custom Cosmi

Nighthawk Custom is mainly known for its collection of made-to-order semi-automatic pistols, and the company is even known for its importation of beautifully built Korth revolvers produced in Germany. But few are aware of Nighthawk's relationship with Cosmi SRL, which is based in Ancona, Italy. Some of the world's most elegant semi-automatic shotguns are built at the small Cosmi facility on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, and Nighthawk is the company's exclusive importer in the United States. The Cosmi operation is not a large one because the guns are specially commissioned, one-off examples built to a customer's requirements. Entry-level models cost more than \$23,000. Each gun contains more than 100 components that are machined from bar stock and hand-fit, and more than 400 hours of handwork goes into the building of a single Cosmi shotgun. The unique design of the magazine tube, which runs back into the stock, ensures that the balance and weight remain at the rear, improving handling.

Loading the shotgun requires hinging the action open, revealing a dazzling array of highly polished internal components that contribute to its status as one of the most unique and visually interesting firearms made today. nighthawkcustom.com





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True Velocity Buys Suppressor Company, Adds 5.56 NATO

T rue Velocity Ammo (TV Ammo), one of the contenders in the U.S. Army's Next Generation Squad Weapons trial, continues to expand both its ammunition offerings and its own portfolio of companies.

In 2022, True Velocity purchased LoneStar Future Weapons, also an NGSW trials entrant, and now the company has purchased Delta P, a suppressor manufacturer with a design that is said to function with "full

reliability" on machine guns.

"True Velocity owns world-class ammunition technology, world-class machine gun technology and, now with the acquisition of Delta P, world-class suppressor technology," said True Velocity President and LoneStar Future Weapons Chairman Craig Etchegoyen. "The only rule we have, when it comes to providing the very best technology to our warfighters, is that it must be

American-made. With the acquisition of Delta P, we now have the ability to provide our warriors with superior ammunition, superior weapons and superior suppressors, all made here in America."

TV Ammo is now also offering 5.56 NATO composite-cased cartridges, available with 55-, 69- or 77-grain weight projectiles. Pricing starts at \$25 per 20-round box.

tvammo.com



ALPS Celebrates 30th Anniversary

W orking inside a one-car garage, ALPS founder Dennis Brune and his wife, LaRayne, began a business with the aim to create quality outdoor gear that would be available at a reasonable price. Now the company is celebrating 30 years in business, and its

product lines encompass a wide range of outdoor supplies.

"Enjoying the outdoors is a blessing in so many ways," Brune said. "Whether we are camping by a beautiful lakeside with our family, taking a path less traveled deep in the backcountry

or even tag-teaming spring gobblers with a good friend, outdoor adventures edify the soul and instill memories that last forever. For our family and our employees, the outdoor lifestyle and our loyal customers have blessed us greatly." alpsbrands.com

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Stay Ahead of the Game With the Renegade: The Watch That Defies Convention...

The quest to find the ultimate men's watch has traditionally been a difficult one in the world of fashion. A timepiece with the perfect look and functionality has long been the goal of both watch designers and enthusiasts alike.

The Renegade Blue Chronograph Men's Watch is the perfect combination of style and function. With a sleek design that features a bold blue dial, rose gold hands and hour markers, and a durable sports silicone band, this timepiece will instantly elevate any outfit.

The three sub-dials provide a precise timekeeping function. The sports silicone band is durable yet comfortable, providing a secure fit that won't slide around on your wrist. The band is also easy to clean and maintain, making it perfect for every-day wear. The watch's 30 Metre Water Resistance rating ensures that it has you covered whatever the occasion.

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Editor's Choice

Umarex Legends M3 Grease Gun

The original M3 "grease gun" was developed in the early 1940s and adopted by the U.S. Army in 1943 as a cost-saving alternative to the much more complex and difficult-to-produce Thompson submachine gun. In much the same vein, Umarex has now developed its own CO₂-powered airgun version of the M3 that costs a fraction of a fraction of the genuine article—which today will run you between \$20,000 and \$40,000—and fires .177" steel BBs rather than .45 ACP cartridges.

A member of the Umarex Legends series of historical replicas, the airgun is a facsimile of the late-war M3A1 variant that is capable of both semi- and full-automatic fire, thanks to a three-position selector/safety located under the receiver in front of the trigger guard. As with the real M3A1, which did away with the right-side charging handle of the original M3, the Legends Grease Gun fires from an open bolt and is charged via a simple slot cut into the bolt itself. Up to 60 BBs are loaded into the front of the detachable box magazine, while two 12-gram CO₂ capsules

installed into the bottom of the box power the airgun. The Umarex M3 has the original's same appearance of being manufactured from stamped-and-welded sheet metal, and weighs just shy of 8 lbs. fully loaded.

Umarex's Legends M3 Grease Gun launches its BBs up to 450 f.p.s. at a firing rate of 1,050 BBs per minute. Holding down the trigger in full-auto mode causes the M3 to blurt through its entire payload in less than four seconds—and the airgun's sub-rimfire level of felt recoil makes it easy to keep the fixed aperture rear and post front sights on target, even during fully automatic fire. In short, it's about as much fun as can be had on the range without lighting off a single primer—particularly when used with targets like Birchwood Casey's Shoot-N-C line of products that really highlight all the rapid-fire impacts. Price: \$249.

Contact: Umarex USA; (479) 646-4210; umarexusa.com.

—KELLY YOUNG, SENIOR EXECUTIVE EDITOR



Rossi Brawler

Affordable, single-shot pistols used to be popular in the past, but in the 21st century few options exist for the handgun hunter. Rossi's now offering its Brawler as a rare new option, and this single-shot, break-action design is even more versatile than past single-shots thanks to its dual chambering in both .45 Colt and 3" .410-bore shotshells. The Rossi Brawler uses a single-action, hammer-fired operating system with an automatic ejector to clear spent cases from the chamber. Outfitted with an 8" rifled barrel, the Brawler includes a post front sight, as well as a notched rear sight built into a short section of Picatinny rail for mounting optics. The overall length of



the gun is 14", and the pistol weighs 36.8 ozs., unloaded. A release lever located behind the external hammer opens the action, and there's a transfer-bar safety and a crossbolt safety built into the design. Price: \$239. Contact: Rossi USA; (229) 515-8707; rossiusa.com.

Pop & Lock Manual Tailgate Lock With BOLT Technology

Many pickup trucks come from the factory with tailgate latches that are not lockable, making unauthorized ingress possible even when a locked cap or tonneau cover is in place. Pop & Lock has addressed the issue with a series of powered or manual tailgate lock assemblies that replace the factory units on a wide variety of domestic and foreign pickups. Most ingenious in the manual category is a line of full-handle replacement models featuring BOLT technology, which allows the user to instantly "code" the new tailgate lock to his ignition key. After installing the replacement latch, simply insert the key into the lock and rotate once and the mechanism's internal components "memorize" the key's profile, retaining it for subsequent use. No drilling is required to install the handle assembly, which features UV-resistant polymer construction and is designed to accommodate the factory backup camera. Price: \$108 for 2005-2015 Toyota Tacoma; prices vary for other makes and models. Contact: Vehicle Security Innovators; (844) 996-5625; vehiclesecurityinnovators.com.



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Sneaky Pete Perfect Series

Sneaky Pete is known for its hiding-in-plain-sight brand of concealed carry, and its Perfect Series takes the company's trademark preparedness up to an entirely new level. Not only does the holster resemble a cellphone case, with room inside the enclosed main compartment for the discreet carry of a firearm, but the addition of elasticized pockets to its front and side faces allow the Perfect Series to also carry the rest of your EDC loadout as well. The external pockets are ideal for flashlights, knives or a small notebook, while an internal sleeve is there for card-size items. Each holster is sized to the customer's specific carry gun—from the smallest micro- and sub-compacts to full-size duty guns—and versions with attachment via either belt loops or metal J-clips are available. Price: \$69.

Contact: Sneaky Pete Holsters; sneakypeteholsters.com.



Springfield Armory Hellcat Pro 17-Round Magazine

Springfield Armory's Hellcat Pro is a slightly larger, yet still easily carried, version of its micro-compact Hellcat for personal defense, and the gun's flush-fit magazine capacity was also increased to 15 rounds. Unlike the Hellcat, though, there was no extended magazine at launch, but Springfield has now expanded the capability of its Pro model with a 17-round extended magazine. Like the extended magazines of the original Hellcat, those of the Pro feature a lengthened stainless-steel body along with a sleeve to bridge the gap between the bottom of the magazine well and the floorplate. All future Hellcat Pro pistols will ship with a single 17-round extended magazine, in addition to the included 15-round, flush-fit magazine. Price: \$43. Contact: Springfield Armory; (800) 680-6866; springfield-armory.com.

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Creedmoor Sports Multi-Caliber Bullet Comparator



When loading rounds tailored for a precision rifle, ensuring the bullet is loaded until it sits just off the lands is a crucial component of accuracy. Measuring this distance involves the use of a bullet comparator tool that measures cartridge overall length from the bottom of the case to the bullet's ogive. Creedmoor Sports is making the job easy with its Multi-Caliber Bullet Comparator, which allows handloaders to measure six different calibers by simply rotating the tool. The comparator includes two brass thumbscrews that allow handloaders to lock the comparator tool into the caliper jaws. Once the tool is installed, simply place a loaded cartridge on the lower caliper jaw and insert the projectile end into the proper cartridge hole. The inner diameter of the comparator will contact the bullet ogive, ensuring an accurate measurement. Price: \$39. Contact: Creedmoor Sports; (800) 273-3366; creedmoorsports.com.

Kitanica Envoy Attaché

Far more attractive and functional than the hard briefcases of yesteryear, the Envoy Attaché from Kitanica provides the traveling outdoorsman excellent functionality while still maintaining a low-key, professional appearance. Whether carried over the shoulder as a backpack—using the stowable shoulder and sternum straps—as a sling bag or by its side or top web handles, the 18.5"x12.5"x4.5" Envoy offers a lot of capacity and organizational options. Fabrics are 500 and 210 denier Cordura nylon coated for weather resistance, and YKK zippers secure the various closures. Details include: a padded electronics compartment for a laptop and/or tablet; two mesh pockets for cables and accessories; a light-colored interior for optimal visibility of contents; pen sleeves and admin pockets; an RFID pocket; and an interior hook-and-loop attachment panel. Price: \$99.

Contact: Kitanica LLC; (510) 893-3014; kitanica.com.



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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Haemmerli & Hausch

Q I have an interesting .22-cal. that appears to be a target rifle of sorts, but I can't find information on it. The Blue Book Of Gun Values does not even contain information. Can you help?

A Thank you for your photographs. It appears you have a Haemmerli & Hausch (H&H) target rifle. Founded in 1876, H&H was a highly respected maker of fine rifles in Switzerland. In 1883, Friedrich von Martini sold the rights to the use of his falling-block action to H&H. Around 1921, the name was changed to just Haemmerli, sometimes spelled Hammerli in the U.S.

Jules Bury in Liege, Belgium, was the retailer of the rifle. The firm also made guns, but, in this instance, I would guess it had H&H make the rifle for it with the company's name

stamped in the large oval on the side of the receiver. I estimate that your gun was made somewhere between 1880 and 1921.

You won't find these guns in the "Blue Book" because there are so few in the United States. I checked the online gun auctions and found a few that have been sold. But they are all so different in details and chambering that it would be difficult to come to a value. I didn't see any listed that were .22 caliber, but I would think that would be a very desirable chambering.

—MICHAEL F. CARRICK, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

"Questions & Answers" is compiled by staff, Field and Contributing Editors from the inquiries about guns, ammunition and their use received by *American Rifleman*. Direct answers to technical and historical questions are provided only to NRA members. Submit letters to: Dope Bag, NRA Publications, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400 or to: americanrifleman@nrahq.org. Include your membership number or current copy of an NRA magazine mailing label or membership card and a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope. Please limit each letter to one specific question. Technical or historical questions cannot be answered by telephone, and even approximate values on guns or other equipment cannot be provided. Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for replies.

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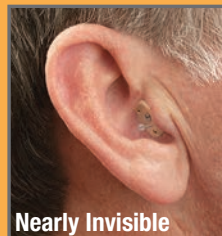
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FAVORITE FIREARMS

The Poker Gun

A Smith & Wesson Model 10 M&P that I saw growing up came to be known as “the poker gun.” My grandfather, Hix Green, kept it in a box on the top shelf of his closet. Born in 1900, he worked as a ranch hand in Texas in 1924. The ranch owner kept this pistol in his truck, but it was stolen. The ranch hands felt so bad that they all chipped in and bought him a brand-new, identical pistol. While the ranch owner was thrilled, the gun thief was arrested a few weeks later, and his original gun was returned. He gave the new gun back to the cowboys to decide what to do with it.

They played five-card draw, and my grandfather claimed he won with a royal straight flush. The likelihood of this always seemed to be astronomical, and I wonder if the older cowboys ceded him the winning hand. He couldn't afford a

new holster, so he altered the existing one, chopping off the bottom for his barrel—to suit his needs on horseback.

In 1941, he worked for a branch of General Motors. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, he went out and purchased a new box of .38 wadcutters, dating it as such: Dec. 9, 1941. He shot six rounds in the backyard in Atlanta and decided he was still an expert cowboy and placed the six rounds you see here back in the gun. He was too old to join the military, so he joined the auxiliary police for Fulton County, helping to replace the men who had gone overseas. They issued him this badge and baton to do his duty.



● NRA member photo

Strangely, my father claimed he never heard the poker story from his own father. Well, grandpa could weave a pretty good tale. True or not, the entire family knows the story, and I was fortunate to end up with the small collection. It's too good of a tale to forget, and the Model 10 M&P has become my favorite gun.

—R. BARRY GREEN

Nearly every shooter has a favorite firearm. If you would like to share the experience of owning yours with other *American Rifleman* readers, or on americanrifleman.org, send a sharp color photograph of the gun, accompanied by its story in fewer than 400 words, with your name, address and daytime telephone number to: Favorite Firearms, *American Rifleman*, National Rifle Association, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400, or email it to americanrifleman@nrahq.org. Photos and submissions cannot be returned and may be edited for clarity and brevity.



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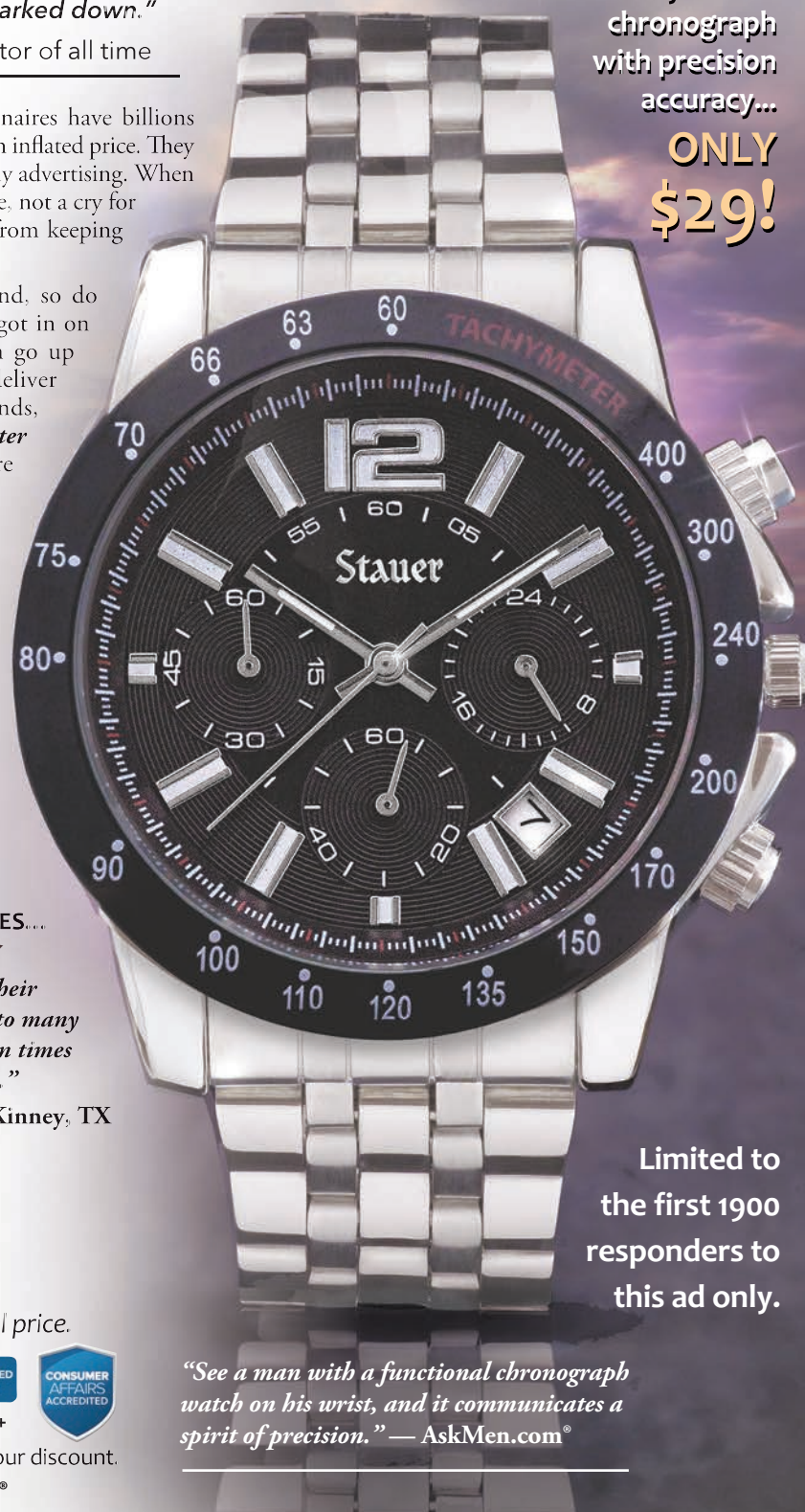
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Marlins With 3 THE MODEL 336 AND



This year, Ruger brought back two iconic Marlin lever-actions with its Model 336 Classic (top) and 1894 Classic (bottom).

The latest versions of the perennially popular Model 336 and Model 1894 Marlin lever-actions recall their glory days—and take these classics to a new level.

BY JEREMIAH KNUPP, Field Editor

The proofmark consisting of the letters “JM” inside a small oval stamped into the barrel of a Marlin firearm holds a special place in the heart of the brand’s aficionados. It symbolizes more than a century of history for Marlin as an independent company, before the years where both its quality and identity were on uncertain ground.

If you pick up a new Marlin Model 336 or Model 1894, the indications that Marlin rifles are now made under the Sturm, Ruger & Co. umbrella are subtle. The barrel marking notes a manufacturing location of “Mayodan, NC” instead of Marlin’s traditional home address of New Haven, Conn. Each rifle’s serial number uses an “RM” prefix to indicate the rifles are “Ruger made.” And the famous Marlin black-and-white bullseye stock inlay is now red and white. Beyond that, the rifle in your hands is unmistakably a Marlin, and under Ruger’s guidance, the brand is achieving success that hearkens back to its “JM” glory days.

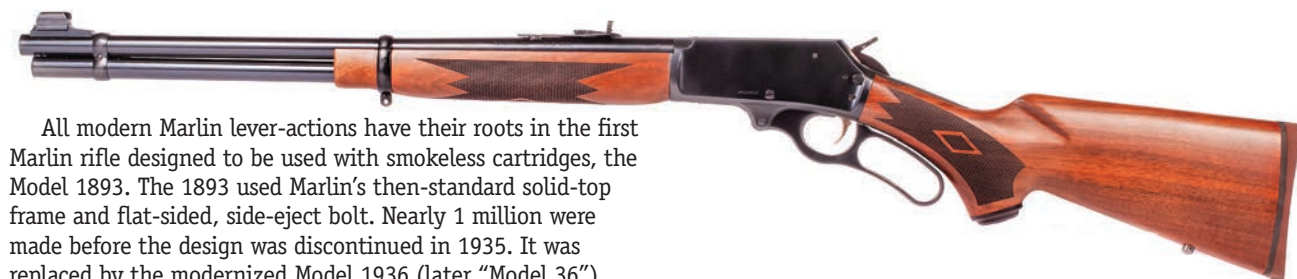
THE HISTORY

While the Marlin company has produced nearly every type of firearm over its century-and-a-half of existence, from machine guns for the U.S. military to small pocket revolvers, the company name has become synonymous with lever-action rifles. John Mahlon Marlin got his start in the firearm industry making small derringers during the Civil War, and, by the 1870s, he was producing Ballard single-shot rifles. By the 1880s, the single-shot rifle was going the way of the buffalo—whose demise it had a heavy hand in—and Marlin looked to repeating designs. The company’s first lever-action, the Model 1881, was chambered for the full-size rifle cartridges of its day, such as the .38-55 Win. and .45-70 Gov’t. The 1881 would lead to a whole line of lever-actions chambered for both rifle and pistol cartridges. Marlin’s early top-eject rifles would be superseded in 1889 by what would become the company’s signature design features—a solid-top receiver with side ejection.

The Ruger Touch

1894 CLASSICS

MARLIN 336 & 1894 CLASSICS



All modern Marlin lever-actions have their roots in the first Marlin rifle designed to be used with smokeless cartridges, the Model 1893. The 1893 used Marlin's then-standard solid-top frame and flat-sided, side-eject bolt. Nearly 1 million were made before the design was discontinued in 1935. It was replaced by the modernized Model 1936 (later "Model 36"), which was produced through 1947.

While Marlin lever-actions had always played second fiddle to the ubiquitous Winchester in the waning days of the Old West, in the post-World War II era, Marlin rifles went head-to-head with Winchester when competing for a place among a new generation of hunters. Marlin upped the ante in 1948 when it introduced its Model 336. The 336 was a modern rifle in every respect of the word. Gone was the slab-sided bolt and in its place was an easier-to-manufacture round bolt that was chrome-plated and that Marlin claimed allowed for a stronger and smoother-operating action. Ejection was through an oval port machined into the side of the receiver. Chambered in classic Eastern whitetail cartridges, such as .30-30 Winchester, .32 Winchester Special and .35 Remington, more than 6 million Model 336s have been produced to date, nearly catching up with its longer-manufactured competitor, the Winchester Model 1894.

Marlin had its own Model 1894. The flat-top frame, side-eject lever-action rifle was chambered in popular pistol cartridges of the day, from .25-20 Win. to .44-40 Win. Production ended in 1934. After experimenting with chambering the Model 336 in pistol cartridges, Marlin modernized and re-introduced the scaled-to-smaller-cartridges 1894 in 1969. Chambered in modern revolver cartridges, such as the .357 and .44 magnums, it became popular for everything from close-range hunting to cowboy action shooting.

The recent struggles, demise and re-birth of the Marlin company were well-documented in the story "Marlin Reborn" by Editor Emeritus John Zent (March 2022, p. 40). After being



Among the visual nods to the original Marlin rifles, the pistol grip cap on the Model 336 Classic features the Marlin horse-and-rider motif (l.). Disassembling the Marlin Model 336 Classic requires the removal of one screw, which allows the lever, bolt assembly and ejector to be removed from the receiver (r.).

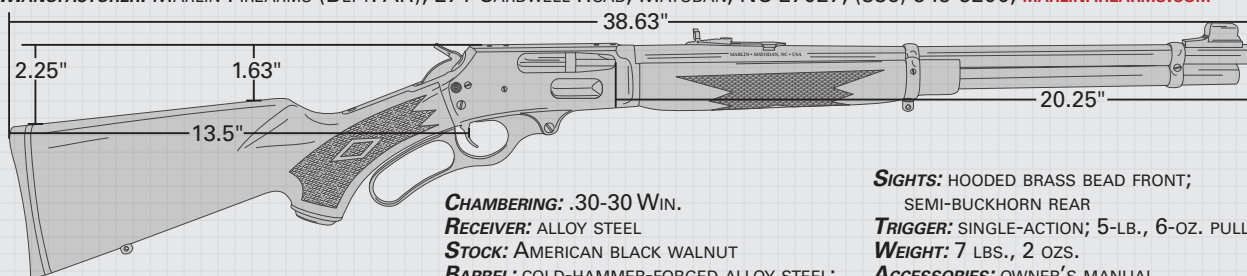
SHOOTING RESULTS (100 YARDS)

.30-30 WIN. CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
FEDERAL PREMIUM HD 150-GRAIN JSP	2,329 Avg. 12 Sd	1,806	2.18	2.27	2.23
HORNADY LE 160-GRAIN FTX	2,356 Avg. 19 Sd	1,972	1.99	2.48	2.25
WINCHESTER POWER-POINT 170-GRAIN JSP	2,087 Avg. 27 Sd	1,644	1.25	2.31	1.85
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					2.11

NOTES: MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 SHOTS OVER A COMPETITION ELECTRONICS PROCHRONO DIGITAL CHRONOGRAPH AT 15 FEET. ACCURACY RESULTS FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 100 YARDS FROM A CALDWELL MATRIX REST. TEMPERATURE: 61° F. HUMIDITY: 80%. ABBREVIATIONS: FTX (FLEX TIP eXTREME), HD (HAMMERDOWN), JSP (JACKETED SOFT POINT), LE (LEVERevolution), SD (STANDARD DEVIATION).

MARLIN MODEL 336 CLASSIC

MANUFACTURER: MARLIN FIREARMS (DEPT. AR), 271 CARDWELL ROAD, MAYODAN, NC 27027; (336) 949-5200; MARLINFIREARMS.COM



ACTION TYPE: LEVER-ACTION, CENTERFIRE, REPEATING RIFLE

CHAMBERING: .30-30 WIN.

RECEIVER: ALLOY STEEL

STOCK: AMERICAN BLACK WALNUT

BARREL: COLD-HAMMER-FORGED ALLOY STEEL;
SIX-GROOVE, 1:12" RH TWIST

MAGAZINE: TUBULAR; SIX-ROUND CAPACITY

SIGHTS: HOODED BRASS BEAD FRONT;

SEMI-BUCKHORN REAR

TRIGGER: SINGLE-ACTION; 5-LB., 6-OZ. PULL

WEIGHT: 7 LBS., 2 OZS.

ACCESSORIES: OWNER'S MANUAL,
HAMMER SPUR, LOCK

MSRP: \$1,239



purchased by the Remington Outdoor Co. in 2007, Marlin's reputation for quality began to suffer in parallel to its parent company's struggles. The Marlin brand was then purchased by Ruger in a bankruptcy sale in September 2020. The production line was packed up and moved to Ruger's Mayodan, N.C., facility. Marlin rifles were examined in detail to determine how they could be manufactured in "the Ruger way." The company re-introduced the Model 1895 in late 2021. This re-birth culminated in the Marlin 1895 SBL receiving the *American Rifleman* Golden Bullseye Award as the 2023 Rifle Of The Year. In announcing the award, we stated "... Ruger was betting on the belief that it could right the ship and return the Marlin name to a place of standing within the industry. If the first Ruger-made Marlin rifle is any indication, that bet has paid off big."

THE MODEL 336 AND 1894 CLASSICS

In 2023, Marlin decided to build on the success of its 1895 and re-introduce the 336 and 1894. Designating the initial versions as "Classic" models would lead one to believe that both rifles will eventually be offered in multiple formats, as is the 1895. The Marlin 336 Classic and 1894 Classic share many of the same characteristics. They both use a 20.25" cold-hammer-forged barrel and a full-length under-barrel magazine tube that is loaded through a side gate in the receiver. The buttstock and fore-end are made of American black walnut that is checkered on the gripping areas. A rubber recoil pad is fitted to the buttstock. Studs for quick-detachable sling swivels are mounted on the buttstock and on the band that secures the fore-end. The receiver, lever and trigger plate are made of forged steel that is CNC-machined into shape.



The shortened, scaled-to-a-pistol-cartridge action of the Model 1894 Classic allows for rapid cycling of its lever action.

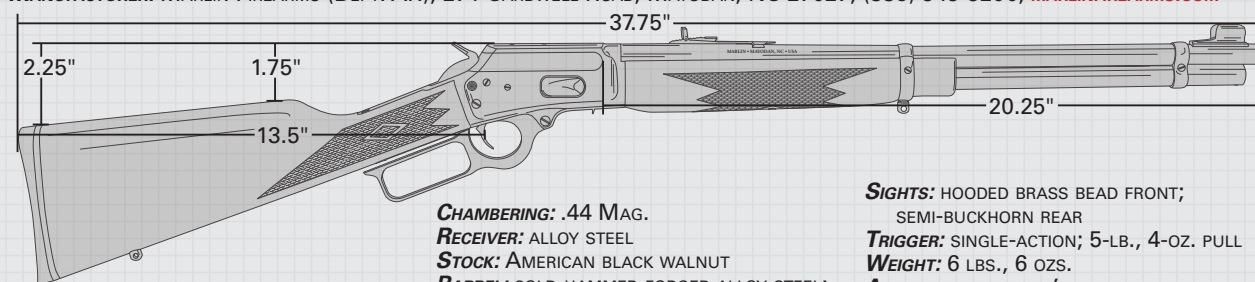
SHOOTING RESULTS (50 YARDS)

CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
.44 SPECIAL					
SIG SAUER EP 200-GRAIN JHP	907 Avg. 35 Sd	365	1.90	2.97	2.52
.44 MAGNUM					
HORNADY CUSTOM 300-GRAIN XTP	1,349 Avg. 17 Sd	1,212	1.92	2.75	2.38
REMINGTON HTP 240-GRAIN JSP	1,793 Avg. 8 Sd	1,713	1.75	3.00	2.52
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					2.47

NOTES: MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 SHOTS OVER A COMPETITION ELECTRONICS PROCHRONO DIGITAL CHRONOGRAPH AT 15 FEET. ACCURACY RESULTS FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 50 YARDS FROM A CALDWELL MATRIX REST. TEMPERATURE: 69° F. HUMIDITY: 81%. ABBREVIATIONS: EP (ELITE PERFORMANCE), HTP (HIGH TERMINAL PERFORMANCE), JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW POINT), JSP (JACKETED SOFT POINT), Sd (STANDARD DEVIATION), XTP (eXtreme Terminal Performance).

MARLIN MODEL 1894 CLASSIC

MANUFACTURER: MARLIN FIREARMS (DEPT. AR), 271 CARDWELL ROAD, MAYODAN, NC 27027; (336) 949-5200; MARLINFIREARMS.COM



ACTION TYPE: LEVER-ACTION, CENTERFIRE, REPEATING RIFLE

CHAMBERING: .44 MAG.
RECEIVER: ALLOY STEEL
STOCK: AMERICAN BLACK WALNUT
BARREL: COLD-HAMMER-FORGED ALLOY STEEL;
SIX-GROOVE, 1:20" RH TWIST
MAGAZINE: TUBULAR; 10-ROUND CAPACITY

SIGHTS: HOODED BRASS BEAD FRONT;
SEMI-BUCKHORN REAR
TRIGGER: SINGLE-ACTION; 5-LB., 4-OZ. PULL
WEIGHT: 6 LBS., 6 OZS.
ACCESSORIES: OWNER'S MANUAL,
HAMMER SPUR, LOCK
MSRP: \$1,239

MARLIN 336 & 1894 CLASSICS



The Marlin Model 336 and Model 1894 rifles are both engineered to reliably load and feed all types of ammunition, including cartridges with polymer-tipped bullets, such as Hornady's LEVERevolution line.

Both the 336 and 1894 use the hammer-block safety that Marlin introduced in 1984. It's one of the most unobtrusive and visually complementary safety designs ever added to a traditional lever-action rifle. It consists of a small crossbolt, with a button head situated between the trigger and hammer on the side of the receiver. When activated, it blocks the hammer from reaching the firing pin. With the hammer at the half-cock position, the safety can be engaged, revealing tiny lettering on the button indicating "Safe." It can be disengaged with the trigger finger of a right-handed shooter, and it prominently displays a red band of warning in this position. It is a necessary safety feature when running live cartridges through the action to unload them, as is required by a traditional side-loading tube-magazine design.

The first impression of the new Classic model rifles is that they're Marlin's with a Ruger finish. Gone is the shiny blue and varnished stocks of Marlin's from the '80s and '90s. It is replaced by a workman-like, matte blue and satin wood that imparts a visual sense of quality. Ruger



All Marlin's made under the umbrella of Ruger feature an "RM" prefix on their serial number. Marlin lever-action designs use a simple, yet effective, crossbolt safety system.

emphasizes the "multi-layered quality control procedures" that go into producing Marlin rifles, and this was evident, both visually and mechanically, in these two rifles.

"Our focus continues to be on quality," Ruger President and CEO Chris Killoy said upon the introduction of the 336 and 1894. "We remain committed to making firearms worthy of John Marlin's legacy. The fit and finish of this rifle is reminiscent of what was produced by Marlin craftsmen in New Haven, Conn., many decades ago."

The 336 Classic has the undeniable look of a postwar Marlin lever gun, down to the semi-beavertail "perch belly" fore-end. Other visual nods to the original Marlin's include a gold-tone trigger, the Marlin "Horse and Rider" motif on the pistol grip cap and the "bullseye" inlaid into the buttstock (beginning in 1922, Marlin started applying this "birthmark" to all its firearms, allowing a customer to quickly pick out the Marlin's from a full rack of firearms in a retail store). The 336 uses a full pistol grip stock with an appropriately curved lever that has a standard-size loop. The rifle tipped the scales at just more than 7 lbs. with an overall length just shy of 39".

"The legendary Model 336 helped to build Marlin Firearms into the iconic American brand that it is today," Killoy said in a press release that accompanied the rifle's introduction. "We have worked for many months on every detail to ensure that Ruger's reintroduction of this iconic rifle lives up to its stellar reputation."

The Model 1894 Classic has the most traditional lines of the three lever-action models Marlin offers, with its slab-sided bolt, straight-grip stock and square back lever. It weighs 6 lbs., 6 ozs., and its shorter action makes its overall length nearly an inch shorter than the 336 with the same 20.25" barrel.

The initial chamberings the rifles are offered in is .30-30 Win. for the 336 (the magazine holds six rounds) and .44 Mag./ .44 Spl. for the 1894 (magazine capacity is 10 rounds for the magnum cartridge and 11 rounds for the Specials). If the 336 and 1894 prove to be successful, as their rapid disappearance from dealers' shelves indicate they will, expect Marlin to offer additional chamberings in both models. Both rifles have been designed to work reliably with a wide variety of bullet types, and their magazine followers have the modern "dimple" that allows non-traditional polymer-tip ammunition, such as Hornady's LEVERevolution, to be loaded reliably. The 336 fed all the 150- to 170-grain ammunition I tested it with, including polymer-tip and soft-point bullets. Both .44 Mag. and .44 Spl. cartridges, using soft-point and jacketed-hollow-point bullets of 200 to 300 grains, cycled through the 1894 without a hitch. Both rifles have conventional rifling using six grooves with a right-hand twist. The 336's twist rate is 1:12" and the 1894's is 1:20".

While Marlin originally touted its solid-top receivers for their strength, the side-eject design is supremely superior in the lever-action world for scope mounting. The new 336 and 1894 come with their receivers drilled and tapped to accommodate the classic Marlin base screw pattern that

has been used on many lever-action, semi-automatic and bolt-action Marlin designs over the years. Both rifles come supplied with an offset hammer extension that allows the hammer to be manipulated with a scope in place. Their iron sights are an open-notch, semi-buckhorn rear that has a ramp for elevation adjustment and can be drift-adjusted for windage, and a ramped front post with a brass bead inside a "wide scan" hood.

Both rifles were accuracy tested from a bench with their fore-ends placed on a rest, with each string of five shots starting with a round in the chamber and four more cartridges loaded in the magazine. The 336 was mounted with a Leupold Patrol 6HD 1-6X scope. The scope's compact size and the ability to use its illuminated reticle with no magnification would make it an ideal optic for hunting the eastern woodlands. The 336 showed a preference for the budget Winchester Power-Point 170-grain soft points, allowing that ammunition to shoot a 1.25" five-shot group at 100 yards. The average accuracy for the three types of ammunition we tested from the bench was 2.11".

In recognition of its saddlegun nature, the 1894 was tested with open sights at 50 yards. As it came from the factory, its rear sight had to be drifted slightly to get its groups centered on the bullseye. Accuracy between the .44 Mag. and .44 Spl. cartridges we tested was nearly identical, with an overall average of just under 2.5" for a five-shot group. Following formal accuracy testing, we mounted a SIG Romeo5 red-dot sight on a Picatinny rail base to the 1894. While maintaining the rifle's compact size and quick handling, the addition of an electronic optic sped up target acquisition at close ranges. Firing .44 Mag. rounds in the lightweight 1894 produced heavier recoil than the 336. Using .44 Spl. cartridges, however, reduced recoil to a level that made the 1894 a pleasant plinker, even in the hands of young shooters.

The trigger pull weight for each rifle was nearly identical at just more than 5 lbs. Both triggers exhibited the same characteristics—after a short initial gritty take-up "stage," the trigger breaks crisply with no overtravel. With a little practice, it was possible to "set" the trigger past this initial stage for a cleaner pull.

The 336 and 1894 designs are some of the easiest to clean and maintain traditional lever-actions on the market. Removing the lever mounting screw allows the lever to be dropped out of the action. This allows the bolt assembly to be removed from the rear of the receiver. Once the bolt assembly is out, the ejector that it captures can be removed as well.

Both the Marlin Model 336 and Model 1894 use a brass-bead front post sight on a ramp that is protected by a hood (l.). The Marlin's flat-top receivers and side-eject actions lend themselves to the mounting of optics. Both the Model 336 and Model 1894 are drilled and tapped for optic bases and supplied with an offset hammer extension (r.) for use in manipulating the hammer with a scope mounted.



The initial chambering for the pistol-cartridge-scaled Model 1894 is the .44 Mag. The Marlin Model 336 and Model 1894 feature a semi-buckhorn rear sight that employs a simple ramp to adjust for elevation and is drift-adjustable for windage.

All other parts stay in place, and the rifles can now have their barrels cleaned from the breech end. Removing the buttstock gives access to the remainder of the action's parts for cleaning and lubrication.

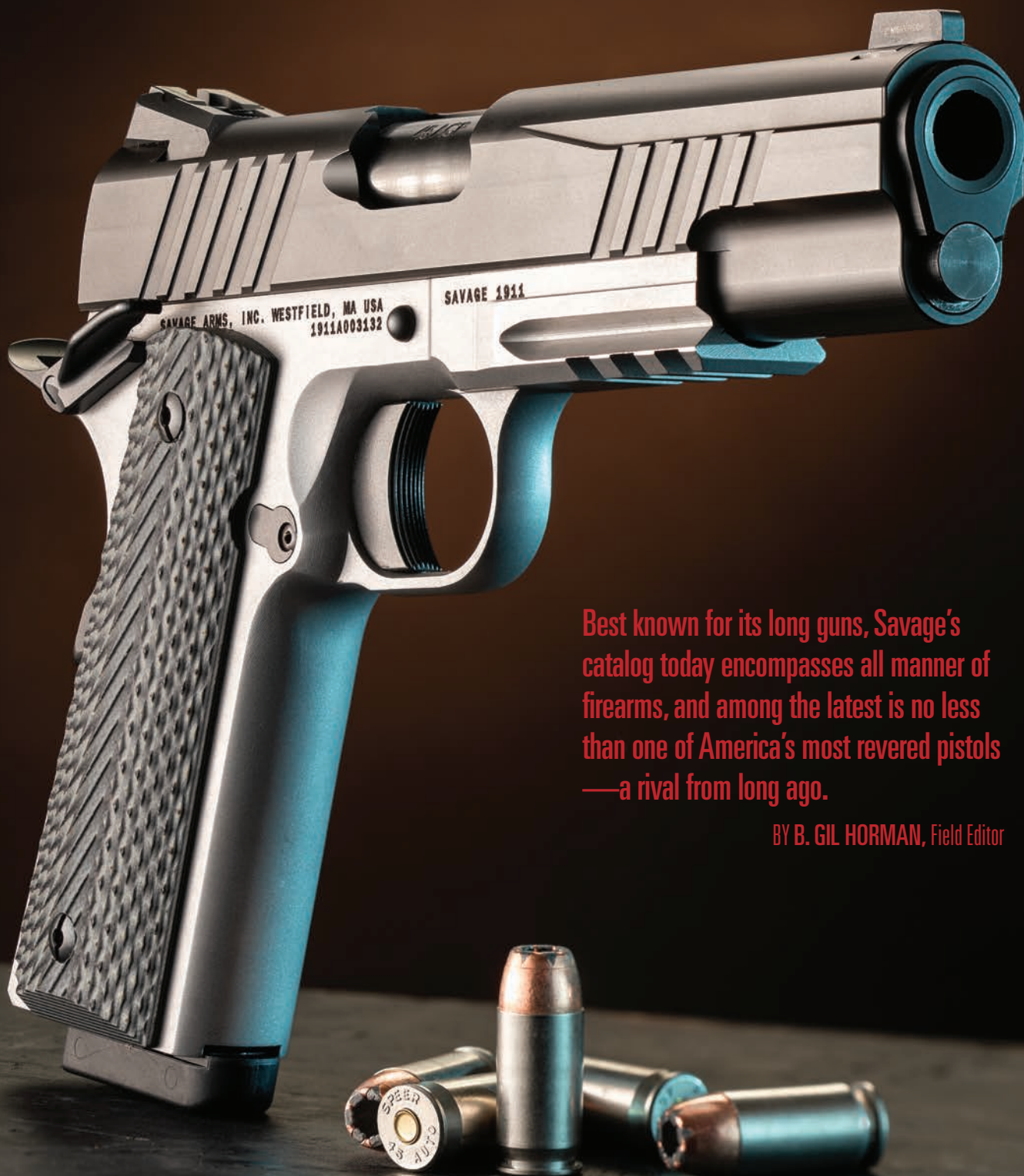
Both the Marlin 336 and 1894 have an MSRP of \$1,239. That number is quite a jump from where those models were priced at in previous decades, reflecting a new reality in the firearm world. While the Marlin 336 was once the most produced centerfire rifle in the country and considered an "entry-level" hunting rifle, that position has now been overtaken by modern sporting rifles and budget bolt-actions. In the modern manufacturing economy, wood and blued steel come at a cost. The tube-fed lever-action will never regain its position as America's go-to hunting rifle. The quantities in which it is produced will reflect this fact, and economies of scale dictate that its price will be higher relative to what it was for previous generations.

That said, just like a single-action revolver, there will always be a place in the market for the traditional lever-action rifle. There's no other rifle that slips into a saddle scabbard as nicely, comes to the shoulder as quickly and manually cycles its cartridges as fast as the tube-fed lever gun. And few other rifles connect with history and heritage, from the days of the Old West to a hunter's first deer camp, like a lever gun.

On the practical side, the 1894 would make an excellent short-range hunting rifle or home-defense gun. Its 10-round magazine and fast-operating manual action are ideal for areas where laws limit your personal-protection options. The 336 has the accuracy to utilize the .30-30 Win. cartridge to its ballistic limits and is a fine hunting rig for mid-size game at ranges under 200 yards.

Ruger's marketing slogan for its line of Marlin rifles is "Long live the lever gun," and the company's first three products are seeing to it that American-made lever-action rifles have staying power. Marlin owners may soon find that they value an "RM" stamped on their rifle just as much as they do a "JM." 





Best known for its long guns, Savage's catalog today encompasses all manner of firearms, and among the latest is no less than one of America's most revered pistols—a rival from long ago.

BY B. GIL HORMAN, Field Editor

SAVAGE TAKES ON THE M1911

The long, rich history of Savage Arms can be traced back to 1891 when Arthur William Savage received a patent for a repeating lever-action-rifle design. By 1894, he had formed the Savage Repeating Arms Co. in Utica, N.Y., to sell his Model 1895 lever-action rifle after several failed bids for military contracts. The Model 1895 would evolve into the iconic Model 99 lever-action.

In 1904, the U.S. Army sponsored the Thompson-LaGarde military sidearm tests, which concluded with a report stating, "... a bullet which will have the shock effect and stopping power at short ranges necessary for a military pistol or revolver should have a caliber not less than 0.45 inches." In 1906, the Army invited armsmakers from around the world to participate in a head-to-head practical competition to find a semi-automatic pistol that would replace the Colt New Service revolver. Despite the allure of a potentially lucrative military contract, only a few manufacturers submitted entries for this test, including the American gunmakers Colt's Mfg. Co. and Savage Repeating Arms Co.

When the pistol trials began, Colt's semi-automatic pistols were already enjoying commercial success. Savage, on the other hand, had yet to produce any pistols at all, let alone handguns for the military. Savage decided to enter the market using a pistol designed and patented by inventor Elbert Searle. Because the Army rescheduled the tests to begin in January 1907, Searle was able to complete the first gun, dubbed the 1907 Savage, just ahead of the deadline.

After various models underwent rigorous testing, the Army outlined the modifications and upgrades it was looking for and offered Colt, Luger and Savage contracts to submit improved pistols for field trials. Luger would decline this offer, leaving the Colt and Savage designs in a head-to-head competition during the next few years. During this time, Savage also developed a .32 ACP version of its pistol for civilian sales.

In the spring of 1911, the .45-cal. Colt Model 1911 and the improved 1907 Savage, now called the Savage Model 1911, faced off for the last time in a 6,000-round marathon endurance test. In the end, the Colt pistol prevailed and went on to become the

now-iconic M1911. As some historians have noted, the stiff competition with Savage contributed to the refinement of the M1911 platform, which led to its adoption and place in military and shooting sports history. Although the 1907 Savage would not play a role in U.S. military combat, the more svelte .32 ACP version was adopted for use by French and Portuguese troops during World War I. Additional variations and chambering options served as civilian defensive pistols until the line was discontinued in 1928.

In the near century that followed, Savage kept its manufacturing endeavors focused primarily on long guns. Today, the company boasts an impressively diverse selection of rifles and shotguns enjoyed by many American shooting enthusiasts. Although handguns have not been a high priority, the company has offered a few interesting and unusual options along the way. The Model 101, styled to look like a revolver, was a single-action, single-shot rim-fire offered from 1960 to 1968. There was also the Savage Striker, which was manufactured from 1999 to 2005; this composite-stock, bolt-action pistol was assembled around the Savage Model 110 action for handgun hunting and metallic silhouette competition.

In 2022, Savage stepped firmly back into the handgun market with two new models. One was the Savage 110 PCS, essentially a revival of the Striker bolt-action pistol but with a few modern updates including a one-piece aluminum chassis system. The other was the company's first defensive



SAVAGE 1911 PISTOL



Although traditional in operation, the Savage 1911s feature several modern advancements—like forward-swept slide serrations, a titanium firing pin and adjustable tritium sights.

semi-automatic in nearly a century: the Stance. This polymer-frame, single-stack 9 mm Luger fits neatly into the everyday-carry niche of the sub-compact pistol market. When I had an opportunity to work with the Stance, I was impressed with how well it moderated the snappy levels of felt recoil commonly produced by pistols in this class.

As 2023 rolled around, it seemed likely that Savage would continue to diversify its handgun offerings. It would have been reasonable to expect additional polymer-frame 9 mm options, since that continues to be a hot category in personal-protection circles. Instead, I was surprised to learn that the company would be adding its own interpretation of its old rival, the M1911 semi-automatic pistol. I was intrigued by this choice and eager to see what the company had in mind. The answer was reassuring. The Savage 1911 lifts its design cues directly from John Moses Browning's classic recoil-operated, single-action, semi-automatic pistol. Although this series treads familiar ground, offering no surprises for those familiar with the M1911 platform, it's obvious that these guns were carefully thought-out so as to provide a desirable feature set in an already crowded marketplace.

For the most part, factory-assembled M1911 pistols fall into roughly three price-point categories. Budget-friendly models, a good number of which are imported from the Philippines, Turkey and Brazil, sport suggested retail prices in the neighborhood of \$400 to \$900. The next step up the ladder leads to the "factory-custom" guns, which can run anywhere between \$1,200 and \$1,800. After this group, there are the fully customized pistols, for which the sky is the limit; pistols in this class can easily cost \$3,000 or more. Savage opted to enter the M1911 marketplace with factory-custom pistols in the \$1,349 to \$1,499 price range, depending on the features selected. It was a good choice, as it allows the company to offer upgrades and a level of refinement that is usually unavailable in budget-priced

pistols, while keeping these new guns fiscally obtainable for those M1911 fans who prefer more feature-rich options.

The Government-size Savage 1911 pistol is initially being offered in .45 ACP and 9 mm Luger. This series features forged 416 stainless-steel slides and frames. It's not uncommon to find cast components in less expensive guns because they are more affordable to produce. But forged steel extends the working lifespan and reliability of those components subjected to the heat and stress produced by firing large quantities of ammunition through semi-automatic pistols.

Finish options include a total matte-black nitride treatment, a natural matte stainless-steel silver or a two-tone option with a black-nitride slide and appointments fitted to a silver frame. Customers can choose a frame with either a traditional rounded dustcover or an integral dustcover accessory rail. The two-tone model chambered in .45 ACP, with an accessory rail (Model 67207), was used for this evaluation.

While the Savage 1911 slide is fundamentally of the classic, round-top variety, its top features a central 0.30"-wide section of milled-in texturing to reduce glare. The front sight of the pistol tested is the dovetailed metallic Night Fision Glow Dome night sight with a large, bright yellow dot outlining a tritium lamp. At the rear is a drift-adjustable Novak Lo-Mount sight secured by a tension screw. The bottom edge of the square notch is augmented by a thin, horizontal tritium bar. In daylight, this sight set is quick-to-acquire and easy-to-use. The configuration of the front and rear tritium lamps is exceptionally useful in low- to nearly no-light conditions.

The slide is cut with a set of canted cocking serrations at the front and the rear. The front serrations have a subtle

Savage 1911s feature machined G10 stock panels from VZ Grips and subtle enhancements including a beveled magazine well.





The pistols employ standard left-side controls for use by right-handed shooters and a curved and grooved aluminum trigger.

swooping bevel that nicely highlights the shape of the slide without calling undue attention to it. The ejection port has been lowered and flared for more reliable operation. Looking through the top of the ejection port, one can see a minute witness hole in the top of the barrel's chamber that serves as a simple visual loaded-chamber indicator.

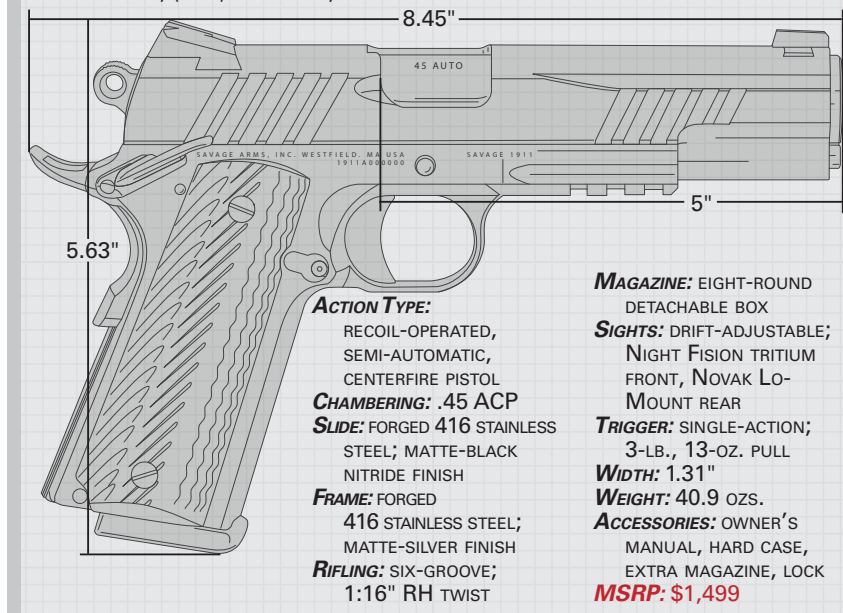
The 5" linked barrel is made from stainless steel and features an 11-degree target crown. For this particular model, it is treated with a matte-black nitride finish to match that of the slide, barrel bushing and recoil spring plug. The bushing exhibited tight and precise fitting to both the slide and the barrel's muzzle.

One of the longstanding debates with modern M1911 pistol design is whether to install a full-length guide rod or to use the original stubby guide to support the recoil spring. I've worked with both configurations and can see the advantage that each has to offer. In this case, Savage installed the short spring guide, which supports two nested, round-wire recoil springs. Based on the range results, the use of the short guide did not impede either the gun's operational reliability or its accuracy, so it still seems to be the same viable option today that it was when Browning configured it more than a century ago.

Savage chose to invest in internal upgrades for this pistol, including a durable, wear-resistant, nitride-coated, titanium firing pin. The sear is fully machined from tool-grade steel, as is the disconnecter. The slide rail and ejector configurations are typical for the M1911 design. The dustcover of this gun's silver frame has a milled-in 1.75" long, three-slot, Picatinny-compatible accessory rail suitably sized for a variety of light and laser sight modules. I found no markings on the left side of the frame. On the right side, from the top of the grip to the accessory rail, the words "SAVAGE ARMS, INC. WESTFIELD, MA USA SAVAGE 1911" are laser-engraved, with the serial number appearing below them.

SAVAGE 1911

MANUFACTURER: SAVAGE ARMS (DEPT. AR), 100 SPRINGDALE ROAD, WESTFIELD, MA 01085; (800) 370-0708; SAVAGEARMS.COM



SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YARDS)

.45 ACP CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
FEDERAL SD 205-GRAIN SJHP	894 Avg. 25 Sd	364	3.02	3.49	3.27
SIG SAUER EP 185-GRAIN JHP	1,002 Avg. 11 Sd	412	2.73	3.18	2.96
WINCHESTER PDX1 230-GRAIN JHP	918 Avg. 10 Sd	430	3.36	3.57	3.47
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					3.23

NOTES: MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 ROUNDS FIRED NEXT TO A LABRADAR CHRONOGRAPH AT THE MUZZLE. ACCURACY MEASURED FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS FIRED AT 25 YARDS FROM A BENCH REST. TEMPERATURE: 77° F. HUMIDITY: 44%. ABBREVIATIONS: EP (ELITE PERFORMANCE), JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW POINT), Sd (STANDARD DEVIATION), SD (SYNTECH DEFENSE), SJHP (SYNTHETIC JACKET HOLLOW POINT).

The traditional rounded trigger guard has been lightly beveled where it meets the grip frame for improved shooting-hand comfort. The grip frame, behind the trigger guard, is also beveled for easier trigger reach. It houses a blackened aluminum trigger with a curved and grooved face. This trigger does not have the weight-reduction holes or overtravel-stop screw often favored for competition pistols. The feel of the single-action trigger pull is often what makes or breaks an M1911, and the Savage did not disappoint. The trigger was smooth with just a hint of take-up before breaking cleanly at 3 lbs., 13 ozs.

The left-side slide stop and round-button magazine release are M1911-style, with the top of the release button cut with fine-line checkering for improved purchase. The bilateral thumb safeties have narrow grooved extensions suitable for general shooting and concealed carry.



Texturing milled into the top of the Savage 1911's slide not only cuts down on glare but also gives the pistol a distinct look.

SAVAGE 1911 PISTOL

The commander-style, skeletonized hammer is machined from stainless steel. The grip safety features an extended beaver-tail, to prevent hammer bite, along with a memory bump.

The full-size grip frame's frontstrap is smooth and untextured, while the straight mainspring housing is milled with the same style of texturing found along the top of the slide. All Savage 1911s ship with VZ Grip's top-notch textured G10 stock panels. This laminated material is strong and lightweight, and it can be grooved or textured for improved purchase without being overly abrasive to bare hands. The pistol's grip has a black-and-gray color scheme, with other models sporting black-and-blue or black-and-tan layers. The left-side panel has a thumb-notch bevel to allow better access to the magazine release.

It is a common practice for manufacturers of M1911 pistols in this class to ship the guns with just one basic seven-round magazine. Their logic is that customers willing to buy guns at this price point usually trade out the factory magazines for those they prefer. Nevertheless, this practice is irksome considering that other types of semi-automatic pistols, which cost significantly less, often arrive ready to use with two or even three magazines in the box. For this reason, I appreciate the fact that the Savage 1911 ships with two eight-round magazines fitted with extended polymer bumper-style baseplates. This gives customers a useful starting point while they sort out their magazine preferences.

As mentioned earlier, M1911 pistols in the factory-custom class are more refined than less expensive guns. This is certainly the case with the Savage .45 ACP. The machining and fitting throughout is excellent; the slide is fitted tightly to the frame to wholly eliminate the "G.I. wiggle" found on some M1911s. The slide cycled smoothly from the first time the chamber was checked, without the roughness exhibited by some models when they leave the factory. The various edges are properly rounded, and the controls operate smoothly and properly, including the thumb safety clicking tightly into its Safe and Fire positions. The individualizing touches, including the front slide serrations, the mainspring housing texturing and the G10 stocks, are tastefully executed in such a way as to make this pistol series appealing to more tactically minded enthusiasts without alienating the traditionalists in the crowd.

In this, the golden age of sub-compact, polymer-frame 9 mm carry pistols, time spent at the shooting range with the Savage 1911 proved to be a good reminder of why this platform is still going strong more than a century after its conception. With its all-stainless-steel construction, this full-size pistol tips the scales at 40.9 ozs. with an empty magazine inserted in the grip. This weight, in conjunction with the hand-filling grip, lends to more moderate, manageable levels of recoil when shooting .45 ACP. It's more of a good, solid shove compared to the often-snappy kick of

sub-compact 9 mm pistols that can weigh less than 20 ozs. The useful sight system and the light trigger pull also contributed to the enjoyable shooting experience.

Informal and formal testing included ammunition ranging from practice-grade "hardball" loads to the latest defensive hollow-point bullet designs. Manufacturers of all-steel M1911 semi-automatics usually recommend a break-in period of 200 rounds or so; this allows the machined steel components to settle in and smooth out. However, this pistol fed, fired and ejected all of the ammunition used in it without any jams or malfunctions throughout the entire course of fire. With such a tight slide-to-frame fit, I expected at least a few malfunctions within the first 50 to 100 rounds, but that was not the case. The pistol did not exhibit any mechanical issues either. In short, it was satisfyingly smooth sailing from the first round fired.

When considering the Savage 1911's downrange performance, I can't help but reflect on a magazine article from about two decades ago. As I recall, the author spent a then-exorbitant sum of \$3,500 (more than \$6,000 today) to ship his favorite M1911 off to a gunsmith to be fully customized. He was proud of the gun, and rightly so, because the gunsmith did good work. The finished pistol proved to be capable of 3.5" groups at 25 yards, and he was quite pleased with the results.

I mention this here because some readers flinch at the notion of spending \$1,500 for an M1911 these days. But with today's modern production techniques and Savage paying attention to the details of its version of this pistol, the performance and features are just as good or better than what previously cost much more. Firing from a bench rest at 25 yards using the factory-installed sights, the Savage 1911 demonstrated sub-3" group potential with five-shot groups ranging from 2.73" to 3.57" in size and an average extreme spread of 3.23".

Since I began writing for NRA Publications, I've taken advantage of the opportunities that have come my way to work with Savage firearms. This has included time testing the company's bolt-action hunting rifles, break-action shotguns, semi-automatic rimfires and the polymer-frame Stance concealed-carry pistol. In all cases, the test guns have met or exceeded my expectations. This company succeeds in packing handy feature sets and reliable operation into their guns while maintaining fair prices for their customers. I'm glad to see the company continuing to grow and diversify.

Sometimes stepping into a new-to-the-company facet of the firearm market can be a tricky process. It's not uncommon for early products to require some inline changes or fine-tuning to reach their full potential. I'm happy to report that this is not the case with Savage's 1911 pistol series. These guns are fully mature, ready-for-market products with quality workmanship and features that match their price tags. These pistols can comfortably go toe-to-toe with other factory-custom guns that have been available for years. Now that this company has adopted the once-rival M1911 platform as part of its catalog, I look forward to seeing what it chooses to do next. 



Savage 1911s are available with or without a three-slot Picatinny accessory rail on the dustcover.



STILL MAKING HISTORY.



OUR HISTORY, YOUR LEGACY

Colt's TacHunter offers precision, ergonomics, and reliability in a lightweight field-ready platform. The heart of the TacHunter rifle is Colt's CBX action which features a flat-bottom receiver that reduces flex and improves accuracy. Combined with an extended aluminum bedding block, a carbon steel button-rifled barrel, and a user-adjustable (2.5-5lb) trigger the rifle delivers sub-MOA accuracy guaranteed. The TacHunter provides a truly customizable shooting experience with enhanced ergonomics, stock spacers, and interchangeable cheek risers.



CBX TACHUNTER®

308 WIN CBX TacHunter (CBX-SP20PGA-308)

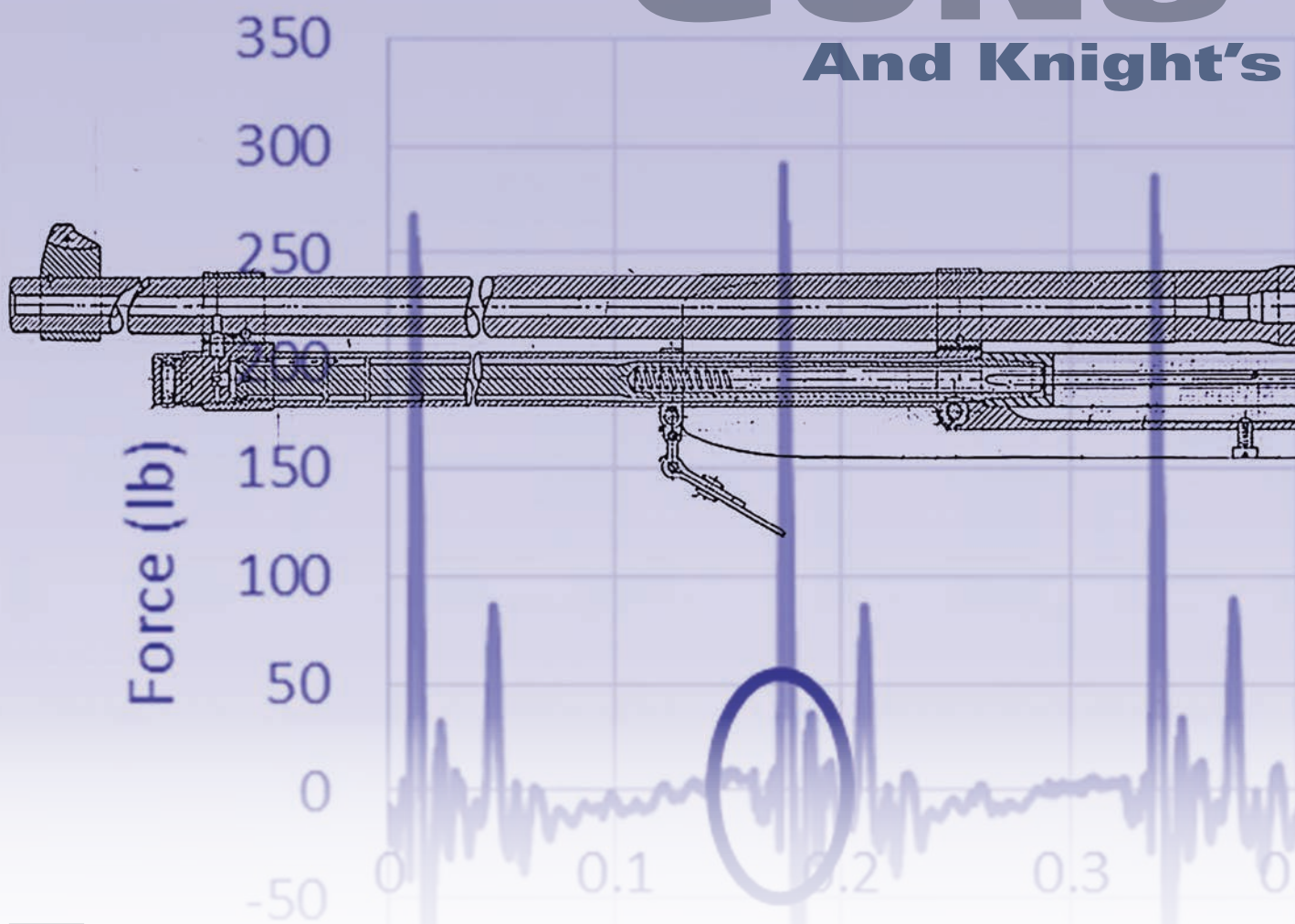
6.5 Creedmoor CBX TacHunter (CBX-SP22PGA-65C)

COLT.COM



GUNS

And Knight's



Think guns can't talk? Think again. Guns talk in much the same way that you and I do. When we speak, sound energy is produced by forces causing vibrations in the air. This vibrational energy is transferred through the air in the form of sound waves in various frequencies. People can hear a wide range of frequencies, and most animals can hear even more.

So, what about guns? Whenever gun components go through a cycle, like a bolt locking or a cartridge being fed, vibrations are created by those actions as well. From what has been learned during an Army-funded study at Knight's Armament Co., it's possible to not only record and examine these vibrations, but also to understand what they're saying.

As an example, when a cartridge feeds normally, it sets up a typical vibration, but if there is an abnormal feed or a jam, the vibrational characteristics are totally different than the norm. The intensity of these vibrations is significant, too. Low-level vibrations can be associated with

smooth functioning, while a crash-bang during bolt lockup, for example, could either be the indication of a unique problem—like the sudden intrusion of dirt—or it could be a gun screaming for help due to a design flaw.

So, how do Knight's engineers listen to guns?

Getting Analytical

Knight's Armament Co. has been listening to guns speak for a decade now, but only recently has it begun to understand what they're saying. It all began with an Army-funded project to study recoil and the controllability of firearms. The topic had been studied extensively in the past, but most prior studies had used humans as "test fixtures." Unfortunately, there is so much variation in how people hold and fire a gun that the results were inconsistent, and little of any value was ever learned.

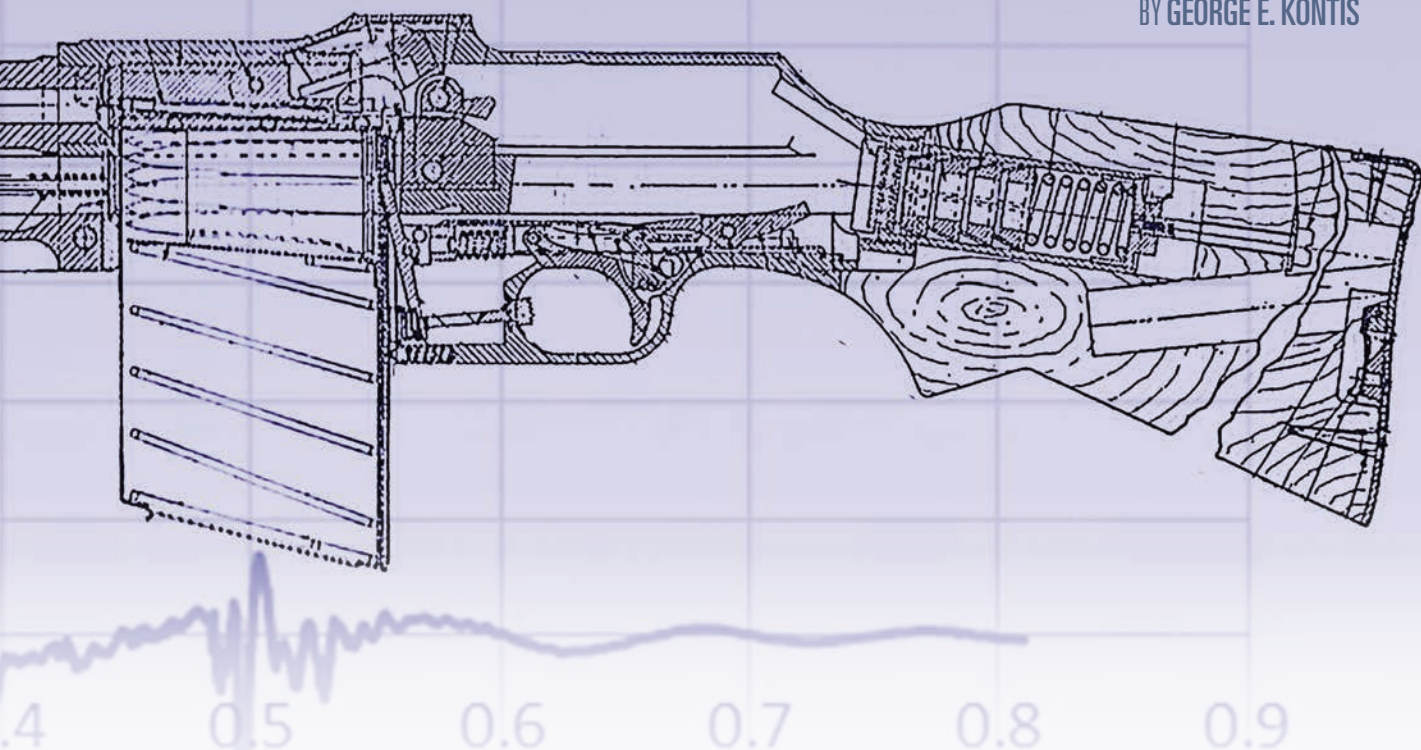
During the course of its most recent study, Knight's developed what is called a Weapon Recoil Simulated

CAN TALK...

Armament Co. Understands Them

An experienced firearm designer reports on how the sounds that firearms make can help explain how they work—and how they can be made to work better.

BY GEORGE E. KONTIS



Shoulder (WRSS)—it's a firing fixture designed to hold shoulder-fired arms of up to .50 caliber. Firing guns from the WRSS allows for consistent measurements of recoil force and locates shot impact locations for multiple rounds. With the human variable removed from the equation, the WRSS gives an accurate comparison between gun models.

In order to design the WRSS to mimic the human body, Knight's took the approach of measuring the vibrational characteristics of a human body shooting a firearm. Using this data, it built a mechanical fixture with the same characteristics. The end result is a shooting fixture that eliminates the inconsistencies introduced by flesh-and-bone soldiers.

During full-automatic fire, the WRSS records where the first, second, third—up to the fifth—shot will impact the target, providing a quantifiable measure of firearm controllability. Additionally, accelerometers can be placed anywhere on the gun to measure the g-load at that location

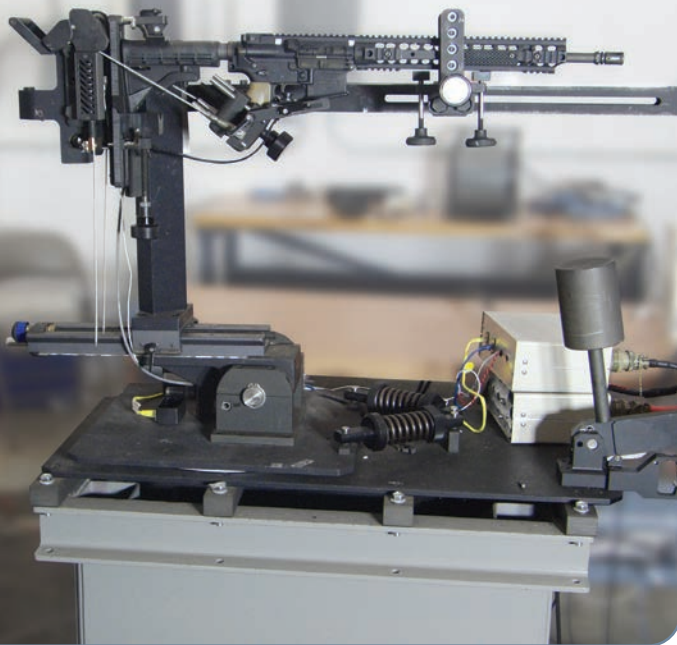
(at a g-load of 1, a 1-lb. rifle scope weighs 1 lb., while at a g-load of 100, the same scope weighs 100 lbs.). These g-force measurements are important in the development and mounting of relatively fragile accessories such as scopes, laser pointers and night-vision devices. It was from the vibrational measurements given by these accelerometers that the engineers realized the guns were talking.

Knight's engineers initially looked only at the peak of these acceleration waves to find the maximum g-level, but during their upgrade to the next-generation WRSS, they noticed the vibration patterns were similar during normal operation but wildly different during an abnormal function. The guns were talking—but what were they saying?

The situation became clearer when they compared a set of parts known to function poorly to a set that worked properly. From the frequency-response measurements in the results, it became obvious as to when and where the malfunction incident occurred. The higher- and



GUNS CAN TALK



lower-than-normal peaks of these measurements were, in effect, the gun crying out in pain from the abnormal operation. In further testing, similar data from the WRSS system was used to identify the cause and effectiveness of the corrective action.

One additional device important to the study was the high-speed video camera. These new cameras not only produce slow-motion videos of gun components moving through their cycle but can also track them and determine their precise position at any given time. Coupling the accelerometers with the high-speed video output gave the Knight's engineers data not only on what these vibrations were saying in the language of "Gun," but where in the cycle they were saying it.

Same Family—Different Language

An interesting comparison in "cycle talk" was noticed between the .30-'06 Sprg.-chambered Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) and the 7.62 NATO-chambered M240—a machine gun known worldwide as the MAG-58. The BAR was invented by John Browning and used during both world wars. The M240/MAG-58 was invented by *Fabrique Nationale* in Belgium and fielded in the early 1960s. The action and operating cycle of the M240 is almost identical to the BAR. The major difference is that the BAR feeds from a magazine inserted into the underside of the rifle, while the M240 uses linked ammunition fed from the top—their two cartridges are not too different. Both arms are known for high reliability, and it was expected that the instrumentation would demonstrate very similar results for the two guns. This was not the case.

The Knight's Armament Weapon Recoil Simulated Shoulder fixture (top) helps engineers locate a firearm's "talking" points, such as those indicated on the M240 machine gun mechanism (r.), and renders its results in the form of informational graphs (opposite).

When Knight's studied these two examples, it recorded the noisy ammunition feed as the bolt stripped a round from the link belt of the M240. Other interactions, such as bolt lockup and rear buffer impact, were noisy as well. In contrast, the BAR whispered throughout its cycle, smoothly drawing a round up out of the magazine followed by a precise chambering and bolt lockup. It seems that the more we analyze Browning's firearms, the more we are amazed by his mastery of gun design.

Using the first generation of the WRSS, the Army has found it to be a beneficial tool in evaluating recoil systems, muzzle devices and even drive springs. To date, it has documented the characteristics of the recoil and control characteristics of more than 50 weapon systems. With the new generation of WRSS, the Army is also looking at the vibrational characteristics during gun cycles and learning "Gun" language just like the Knight's engineers.

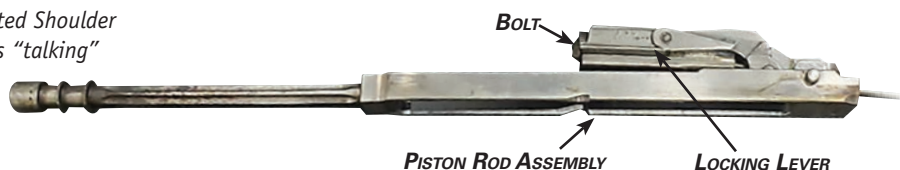
A Diagnostic And Evaluation Tool

Why would any gun company need a WRSS? Imagine you're a test technician developing a new firearm. After firing a few rounds, you notice one of the parts has an unexpected shiny corner or a curious abraded surface. You recognize this as a sign of a potential problem, and you know there isn't supposed to be anything touching this part at any point in the cycle. So what caused the shiny spot? Locating the source might require cutting windows into the receiver or other parts to try to "catch" the event using a high-speed video camera. Thousands of rounds might be fired through several prototypes before the source of the interference is determined.

With the WRSS, it's only necessary to record data from the accelerometers then move them to different locations in order to pinpoint the source of the interference; it doesn't matter if the errant parts are visible or not. In a similar fashion, the WRSS can also be used to find components undergoing excessive vibration. Experience has shown it takes about 20 rounds to locate these anomalies, representing a huge savings in time and expense.

For new, untested components, the remotely fired WRSS is valuable in reducing risk to test operators since it mounts the firearm just the same way a person would hold a gun. Knight's has found this to be particularly useful for evaluating muzzle flash, as tests are safely conducted in complete darkness with no test technician required for shoulder firing.

According to the Army, the WRSS has greatly reduced the time and cost for it to evaluate new and modified firearm components to predictively see how they will perform before they ever reach a soldier's hands. It cites the example where the performance of a dozen muzzle-brake



configurations were compared using the WRSS. It quickly narrowed down the selection to just two or three before actual human-in-the-loop evaluations.

The WRSS was able to test those dozen configurations in a matter of a few hours, whereas it would have taken days or weeks to run a statistically significant number of shooters through a test using those same muzzle brakes. In the past, it might have only machined two or three muzzle brakes because that is all it would have the funding and time to properly test. Now, with the WRSS, and the ability to use additive manufacturing (3D printing) parts, it can significantly increase the number of design iterations on a component in a fraction of the time. The cost and time savings are tremendous and results in the development of a more refined component.

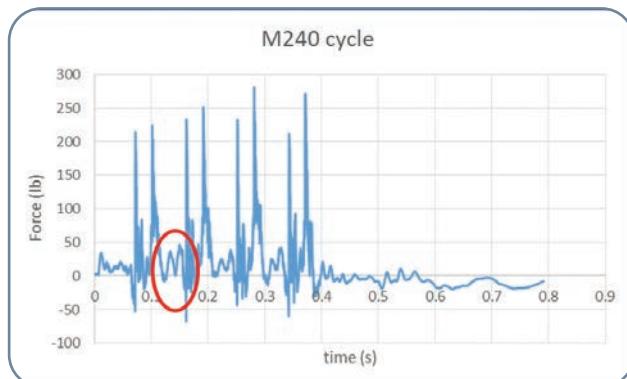
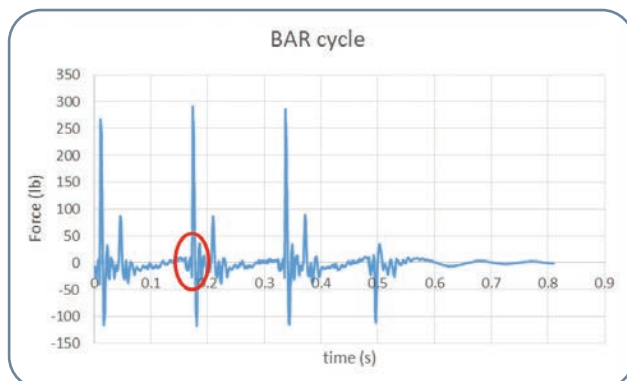
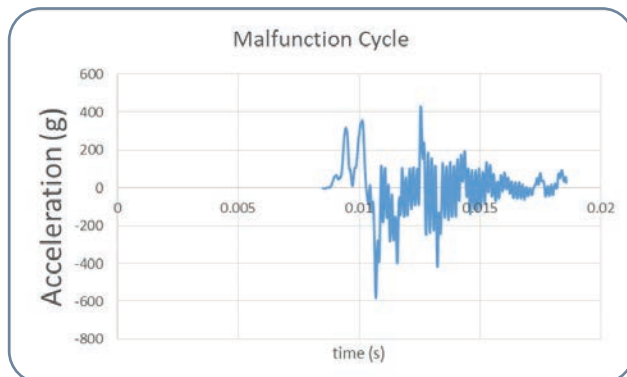
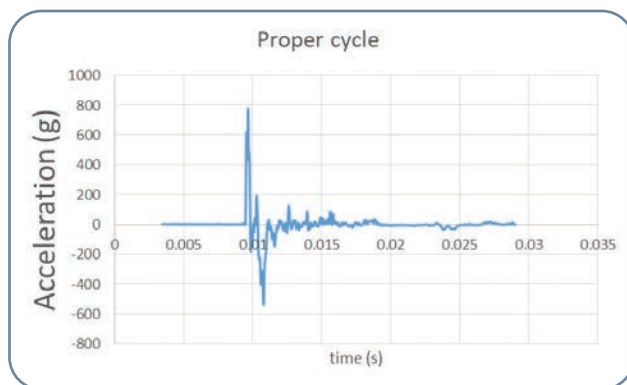
The Army's take is that, in many ways, the WRSS brings to hardware evaluations what additive manufacturing brings to prototype manufacturing—both are fantastic tools in a development engineer's toolbox. At the end of the day, it does use actual soldiers in the final testing of components; it's just that now the components have improved characteristics that are more refined and more thoroughly tested.

As for Knight's Armament, owner C. Reed Knight, Jr., couldn't be happier with what his engineering team has developed. In his own words: "The advantage the WRSS has given us as a research and development team is we have taken the variability of the human subjectiveness out of the loop. The incremental improvement can be attributed to an improvement, and not the operator's subjective experience. And the WRSS can resolve very small variables that the human cannot detect, because the event is so transient."

The first upgrade package was sent out recently to improve usability of the system and to incorporate refinements to the control box and software. All the previous data taken is comparable to the current system. Given the Army's use of the system and the different applications Knight's has found, future uses may be diverse and unexpected, and commercial sales are expected.

Knight's engineers have figured out what guns are saying but haven't yet come up with a way for them to relate their history. As for my own guns, I'll probably never know who carved the image of a retriever on the stock of the M1 carbine my dad brought back after World War II. Neither do I expect to learn what was on the mind of the German officer when a young Alexander "Sandy" Patch liberated his Mauser Broomhandle—another gun I own—during World War I. And yet, I continue to be amazed by how far technology has taken us since I began my career in firearms. Maybe there is hope after all. 🦋

George Kontis has worked as an engineer at the General Electric Armament systems division designing and testing aircraft cannons and small arms. He developed new firearm testing methodology and was co-designer of the GPU-5A 30 mm gun pod. He has held engineering and senior management positions at: GE, FN, Barrett Firearms, Heckler & Koch and Knight's Armament Co. Kontis is listed as a subject-matter expert in firearms by the U.S. Defense Systems Information



Analysis Center. In 1998, he was awarded the Col. George M. Chinn award for his contributions to the field of small arms, and he holds numerous firearm-related patents. In 2015, he founded Gun IQ International LLC, a consultancy firm focusing on advancing firearm technology, failure analysis, patent issues and the use of advanced materials and processes. He has authored more than 50 articles with a primary focus on the technical aspects of firearms.—THE EDS.

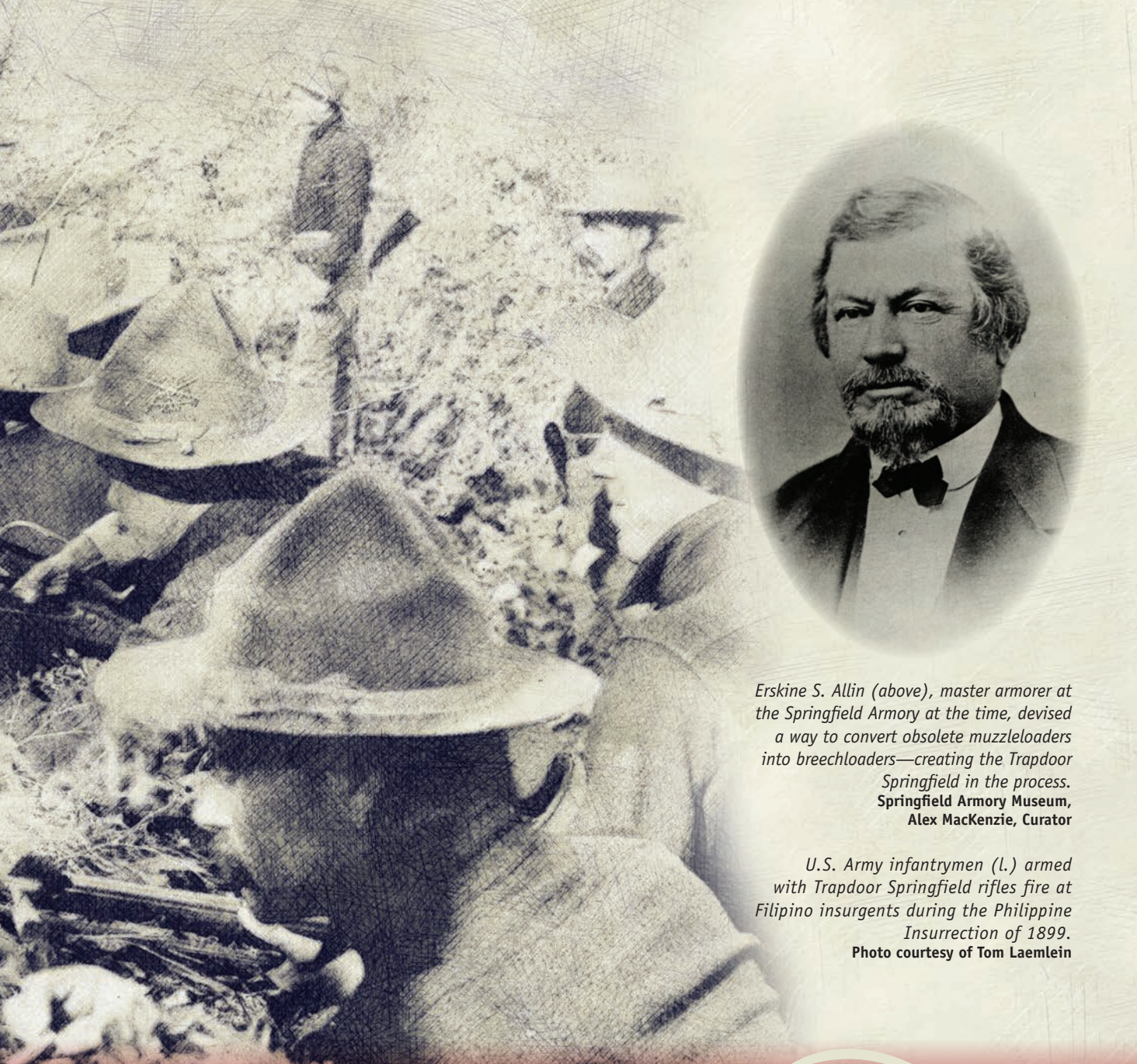
This year marks the sesquicentennial of an iconic American military firearm—one not always given the recognition it deserves—the Model 1873 “Trapdoor Springfield.”

BY BRUCE N. CANFIELD, Field Editor

150 Years Of The “Tr

The genesis of the Trapdoor Springfield occurred just after the conclusion of the Civil War. Following the events at Appomattox, the Army was rapidly demobilized but was soon tasked with providing protection for the ever-growing numbers of westward-bound settlers. The recently concluded war had proven the worth of breechloading arms, but due to

the draconian budgetary cuts that followed, funds were not available to procure new guns for the Army. There were tens of thousands of perfectly serviceable .58-cal. muzzleloading percussion rifle muskets, some never issued, residing in warehouses. Civil War-era breechloading carbines, such as the Spencer and Sharps, were issued to some cavalry units but



Erskine S. Allin (above), master armorer at the Springfield Armory at the time, devised a way to convert obsolete muzzleloaders into breechloaders—creating the Trapdoor Springfield in the process.
Springfield Armory Museum,
Alex MacKenzie, Curator

U.S. Army infantrymen (l.) armed with Trapdoor Springfield rifles fire at Filipino insurgents during the Philippine Insurrection of 1899.
Photo courtesy of Tom Laemlein

apdoor Springfield”

were little more than a stopgap measure and did nothing to equip the infantry with breechloaders.

In 1865, the master armorer of Springfield Armory, Erskine S. Allin, devised an ingenious solution to the problem. His method was to convert the obsolete muzzleloading muskets into breechloaders by milling away a portion of the

top rear of the barrel and attaching a hinged breechblock containing a firing pin and an extractor/ejector mechanism. Similar hinged-breechblock mechanisms had been fabricated by foreign and domestic gunmakers with varying degrees of success. Allin's design was soon given the unofficial, but widely used, descriptive nickname "Trapdoor Springfield."



MODEL 1865 "FIRST ALLIN CONVERSION"



Model 1865

The first pattern, the Model 1865, was dubbed the "First Allin Conversion." Five thousand Model 1861 .58-cal. breechloading rifle muskets were converted using Allin's design. The guns retained their original 40" barrels and were chambered for a .58-cal. rimfire metallic cartridge but were otherwise essentially unchanged from the original Civil War muzzleloaders. The modified rifle was issued with the standard Model 1855 triangular socket bayonet.

The Model 1865 rifle (top) initiated Erskine Allin's innovative hinged-breechblock (inset) concept.
Rock Island Auctions



MODEL 1866 "SECOND ALLIN CONVERSION"



National Firearms Museum

Model 1866

The breechblock mechanism and rimfire cartridge of the Model 1865 proved to be less than satisfactory, and the Model 1866 ("Second Allin Conversion") was developed and adopted. The new variant retained the original 40" barrel, but it was reamed out and a .50-cal. sleeve brazed in place to accommodate a new cartridge. The somewhat complicated "First Allin" breechblock was replaced by a simpler and stronger breechblock assembly. A much-improved .50-cal. centerfire cartridge, the ".50-70 Government," was developed for the new design. Some 25,000 Model 1863 muzzleloading rifle muskets were converted to the Model 1866 configuration, but other than the sleeved barrel and hinged breechblock, it remained in the same configuration as the Model 1863 muskets. There were 424 Model 1866 "Cadet Rifles" produced as well. The Model 1855 socket bayonet continued to be issued with the Model 1866 and subsequent .50-70 Gov't-chambered Trapdoor Springfield rifles.



MODEL 1868 RIFLE



National Firearms Museum

Model 1868

The Model 1866 was followed by the Model 1868, which was chambered for the same .50-70 Gov't cartridge but featured a newly made receiver and was fitted with a barrel sleeved to .50 caliber and shortened to 32½". More than 50,000 (52,145) Model 1868 rifles were produced between 1868 and 1872. There were also 3,401 Cadet models (designated "Model 1869") produced. Civil War-era lockplates (usually dated 1863 or 1864) were used, and the breechblocks were dated "1869" or "1870." Four Model 1868 carbines were fabricated but never issued.



MODEL 1870 CARBINE
Author's collection

Model 1870

The final variant of the .50-70 Gov't Trapdoor Springfield was the Model 1870. It was very similar to the previous .50-70 Model 1868 but had a shorter receiver and newly made .50-cal., 32½" barrel. Civil War-era lockplates and other furniture continued to be used. Breechblocks were marked either "1870" or "Model 1870." A total of 11,531 Model 1870 rifles were manufactured between 1870 and 1873. In addition to the rifle version, 362 Model 1870 carbines were produced between April and December 1871. These had 22" barrels and were fitted with a "swivel bar and ring" assembly for cavalry use. The Model 1870 rifle and carbine are noteworthy, as they were essentially the prototypes for the widely produced and issued "Trapdoor Springfield," the .45-70 Gov't Model 1873 and later variants.

TRAPDOOR SPRINGFIELD



MODEL 1873 RIFLE
Collector Firearms

Note the "thin wrist" section (arrow) on the Model 1873 stock that proved to be prone to breakage.

Model 1873

The Model 1870 rifle and carbine proved to be improvements over the previous "Trapdoor Springfield" models, but the .50-70 Gov't cartridge was found to be less than optimal. A trial was held in 1872 to determine what rifle and carbine would be standardized to equip the U.S. Army infantry and cavalry units. In 1873, slightly modified versions of the Model 1870 rifle and carbine, chambered for the newly developed ".45-70 Government" cartridge, which was ballistically superior to the .50-70 Gov't, was approved for adoption. The .45-70 Gov't cartridge was loaded with 70 grains of black-powder and a 405-grain lead bullet. A cartridge was developed for the carbine that used the same 405-grain bullet but had only 55 grains of powder to reduce recoil.



MODEL 1873 CADET RIFLE

Rock Island Auction
MODEL 1873 CARBINE

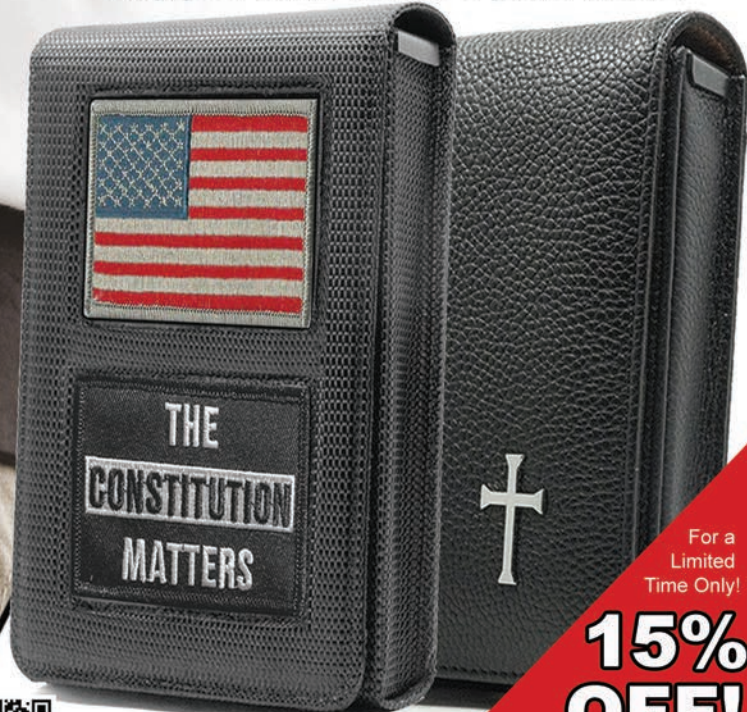
The newly adopted arms had a blued finish rather than the "National Armory Bright" finish of the previous Trapdoor Springfields. The Model 1873 bayonet was adopted concurrent with the Model 1873 rifle. Model 1873 bayonets were fabricated from the sizeable supply of Model 1855 bayonets left over from the Civil War. Their sockets were "bushed down" by means of a "cold-pressing" process developed by Springfield Armory so the bayonets could be used with the smaller-diameter .45-70-chambered barrels, and the formerly bright-finished bayonets were blued.



*The Model 1873 carbine featured a "swivel bar and ring" attachment (inset).
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TRAPDOOR SPRINGFIELD

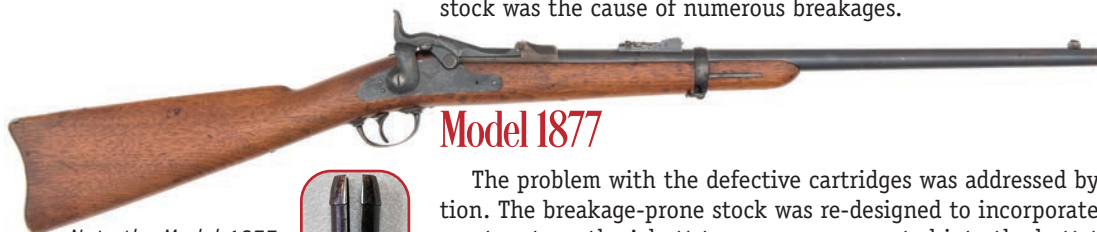


Cartridges for .45-70 Gov't Trapdoor Springfields differed for rifles (l.) and carbines (r.), with the rifle load using 70 grains of blackpowder and the carbine using 55.

The Model 1873 rifles and carbines had breechblocks marked "U.S. Model 1873" with "U.S. Springfield" above "1873" adjacent to a "spread eagle" insignia on the sideplate. The stock had a "short comb/thin wrist" configuration and utilized the same pattern of solid buttplate as the previous Trapdoor Springfield models. Model 1873 stocks were marked with an "ESA" (Erskine S. Allin) inspection stamp.

The rear sight was adjustable for elevation but not windage. The carbine had the same type of "swivel bar and ring" assembly as the Model 1870 carbine. The Model 1873 carbine barrel band had a stacking swivel. A total of 216,230 Model 1873 rifles and 20,028 Model 1873 carbines were produced, along with 8,588 Model 1873 Cadet Rifles (used at West Point and other military schools).

The first Model 1873 carbines were shipped from Springfield between December 1873 and January 1874 for subsequent distribution to several western Army posts. One of the units to receive Model 1873 carbines was the 7th Cavalry commanded by Lt. Col. George A. Custer. There had been some issues previously encountered with the new carbines which were tragically, but vividly, illustrated on June 25, 1876, at the infamous Battle of Little Bighorn. Among the problems was the fact that the ammunition cases were found to be too soft and could sometimes become stuck in the chamber. Unlike the rifle, which was fitted with a full-length cleaning rod under the barrel, the carbine's lack of a cleaning rod and broken shell extractor to clear jammed cartridges proved to be a serious hindrance. Also, the "thin wrist" stock was the cause of numerous breakages.



Model 1877

Note the Model 1877 carbine's change in stock configuration to incorporate a thicker wrist (top) to reduce breakage and a butt trap that held, among other things, a headless shell extractor (inset).



Rock Island Auctions

The problem with the defective cartridges was addressed by improved ammunition. The breakage-prone stock was re-designed to incorporate a thicker wrist for greater strength. A butt trap recess was routed into the buttstock to accommodate a three-piece jointed cleaning rod for the carbine and other tools; it could be accessed via a buttplate with a hinged door. The revised pattern was designated as the "Model 1877," but the breechblocks retained the "1873" marking. The rear sights were stamped "R" or "C" to denote "rifle" or "carbine," a practice that was continued on subsequent models. Interestingly, after 1877, the infantry rifles and Cadet Rifles retained the "Model 1873" nomenclature and only the carbine was officially re-designated as the "Model 1877," with some 19,881 carbines of that pattern being produced from 1877 to 1884. Most of the earlier Model 1873 rifles, carbines and Cadet Rifles were subsequently modified to incorporate the 1877 features.



National Firearms Museum

1879 Changes

Although the basic design remained the same, several relatively minor changes were subsequently made during the intervening years, most notably the introduction of the "Model 1879 Buckhorn" rear sight. The configuration of the breechblock was slightly changed but continued to be marked "1873," however, the "1873" date was deleted from the lockplate. The inspection stamp on the stock was changed from "ESA" to "SWP" to denote master mechanic and inspector, Samuel W. Porter, who succeeded Erskine Allin. Some collectors classify these variants as the "Model 1879," but there was not an official change in the model designation.

In 1879, several minor changes, including the introduction of the "Buckhorn" sight, were made to the Trapdoor Springfield design, although there was no change in the official designation.



National Firearms Museum

Model 1884

A Model 1884 Trapdoor Springfield rifle (top) is shown next to the more compact carbine version. U.S. Army Indian Scouts, here armed with Trapdoor Springfield carbines, served from 1866 to 1914.

National Archives

In 1884, the Model 1884 "Buffington" rear sight was developed for use with the Trapdoor Springfield rifle, carbine and Cadet Rifle. Unlike the earlier rear sights, which were only adjustable for elevation, the new sight was fully adjustable for windage as well. Otherwise, there were no significant changes made, but the new version was designated as the "Model 1884," and the breechblock markings were changed accordingly. Roughly 20,000 (20,003) Model 1884 carbines were made, along with 148,796 rifles and 13,500 Cadet Rifles. Production ceased in 1893.



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TRAPDOOR SPRINGFIELD



Soldiers with the 1st Kentucky Volunteer Regiment shoulder Trapdoor Springfield rifles during the Spanish-American War.
Photo courtesy of Tom Laemlein

1886 Experimental Trapdoor Carbine

In 1886, a carbine version with a 24" barrel was developed that featured an almost-full-length stock. Some 1,000 were produced, and varying numbers were issued to several cavalry troops in the West. However, it offered no real advantage over the standard carbine and was not adopted as standard.

Other variants made in limited numbers included several types of shortened rifles, a special "Marksman" rifle, target rifles and a "long range" rifle (see more variants at americanrifleman.org/trapdoorvariants). Also, a few rifles chambered for an experimental .30-cal. cartridge were fabricated for testing.

Trapdoor Springfields were the standard longarms for U.S. Army infantry and cavalry units engaged in the "Indian Wars" from the early 1870s to the mid-1890s and were also issued to Navy and Marine Corps units.



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Conclusion

The Trapdoor Springfield was in production from 1873 through 1893. It was superseded by the repeating bolt-action Model 1892 Krag-Jørgensen, which went into production at Springfield Armory in 1894 and was chambered for the .30-40 smokeless-powder cartridge known today as the .30-40 Krag.

Even after being supplanted by the Krag, however, the obsolescent-but-still-dependable Trapdoor Springfield was not yet ready to be put out to pasture. With the declaration of war against Spain in 1898, the Krag was the standard United States service rifle but was in critically short supply. Fortunately, there were still significant numbers of .45-70 Gov't Trapdoor Springfields on hand, and most of the U.S. Army volunteer units were armed with Trapdoors. When the United States became embroiled in the Philippines shortly after the conclusion of the Spanish-American War, many American soldiers were also armed with Trapdoor Springfields.

Undoubtedly, most of the soldiers would have preferred to have had the repeating Krag bolt-actions instead of the single-shot .45-70s, but it was better than the alternative, which likely would have been nothing. Most of the Trapdoors were purged from the American military inventory by the first decade of the 20th century, but as late as World War I, some Trapdoors were seen in the hands of volunteers stateside guarding bridges and other vital areas. Some National Guard troops were reportedly armed with Trapdoor rifles during some of the labor unrest of the 1920s.

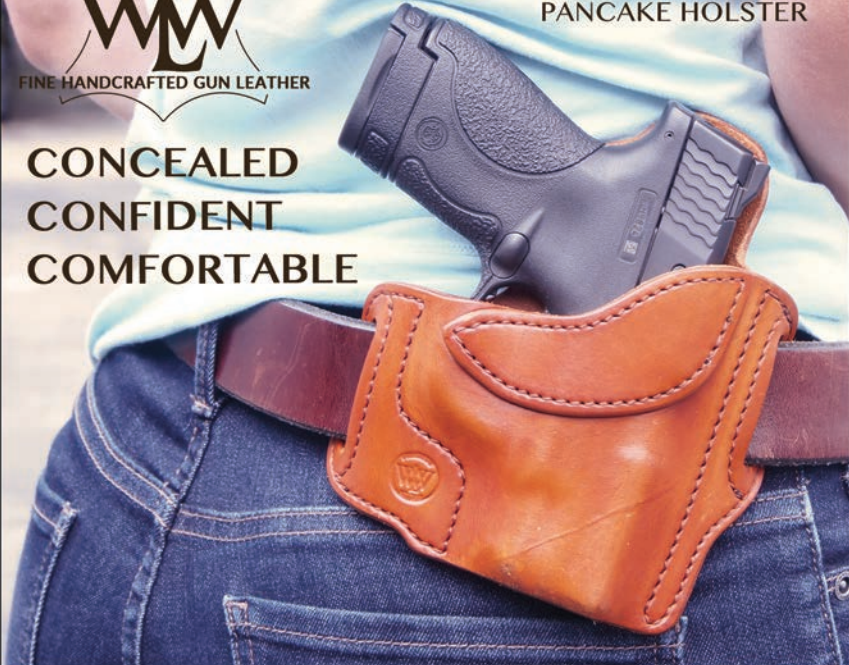
Although it was eventually rendered obsolete by smokeless powder and smaller-caliber, repeating bolt-action rifles, the venerable Trapdoor Springfield served as a standard U.S. military arm for almost three decades. It is a popular martial collectible today and exhibits the flawless craftsmanship found on all the arms manufactured by Springfield Armory. Its legacy as a quintessential part of America's military history is secure even a century and a half later. 



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Smith & Wesson M&P9 M2.0 Metal

Firearm trends appear to be a virtual pendulum at times—it isn't uncommon to see a theme grab hold of the industry only to be reversed entirely some years later. Pistol frame composition is a recent demonstration of this phenomenon. Since the mid-1980s, polymer has been the name of the game as manufacturers have struggled to keep up in the race to deliver the latest fantastic plastic semi-automatics. But that trend has slowed of late, and we are starting to see more and more metal-frame handguns introduced each year. Not to be outdone by the competition, Massachusetts-based manufacturer Smith & Wesson is joining in on this return to metal with an aluminum-frame version of its M&P9 M2.0 polymer pistol line. By using lightweight aluminum, S&W claims to have crafted a handgun that provides the benefits of a metal frame, but that weighs only a few ounces more than its synthetic-frame version.

Like its polymer predecessor, the M2.0 Metal is a striker-fired semi-automatic chambered in 9 mm Luger. As both pistols employ a recoil-operated action, the barrel and slide travel to the rear as a nested pair before they separate to extract and eject the fired case. This allows chamber pressures to drop to a safe level before the breech opens. As the slide returns forward, it strips a

fresh round off of the detachable box magazine and guides it into the chamber as it returns to battery.

With the exception of the Tungsten Cerakote finish on both its slide and frame, the new metal pistol is essentially identical to the polymer M&P of the same size, and holsters for the one will fit the other. Deep cocking serrations are cut into both the front and rear of the slide to ease manipulation, and each M&P9 M2.0 Metal comes optics-ready, with a variety of mounting plates and screws included. Iron-sight lovers will be happy to learn

that the included sights are made from steel, as opposed to plastic, in the popular three-dot arrangement.

Moving on to the frame, a few subtle changes have been made to the aluminum gun. A series of lightening cuts have been added to both sides of the frame, leaving the metal M&P only about 3 ozs. heavier than its synthetic counterpart. This is an interesting move as most manufacturers go the metallic route in an effort to add weight. Adding weight reduces felt recoil, but at the expense of less convenient carry. Smith & Wesson believes that its design is controllable enough, so why make it clunky?

The M&P's superb ergonomics are carried over into the metal variant, including a reversible push-button magazine release, four interchangeable backstraps and bilateral slide stops, making for a smooth transition for those who already have time on previous M&P M2.0 pistols. The only feature that isn't available is the optional bilateral manual thumb safeties, however, a safety blade is built into the trigger shoe, and the gun does have an internal striker block.

Our range day was a gathering of several different testers, all with unique hand sizes and dexterities. Before allowing each to fire the pistol, we spent a few minutes swapping backstraps to allow for the best fit possible. Each shooter was able to find a configuration



Internally, the aluminum-frame M2.0 Metal is no different than its polymer brothers, although the frame of the all-metal gun does have a few lightening cuts to help keep its weight down.



Utilizing the same control scheme as other double-stack M&Ps, the M2.0 Metal is also compatible with their backstrap inserts.

that worked well for him or her, and all found the texturing to be aggressive without being painful. Initial firing was at a pair of steel IPSC silhouettes and was intended to develop a general feel for the firearm and trigger.

Some of our testers had experience with original M&Ps and appreciated the newer flat-style trigger shoe; on average, our trigger broke crisply at 4 lbs., 8 ozs., of pressure. The same testers also recognized a reduction in frame flex during firing, which we attribute to its aluminum composition. Our 400-round test consisted of various bullet weights including Ammo, Inc.'s ultra-heavy-for-caliber 165-grain Stelth ammunition and DoubleTap's 115-grain +P load. We felt these effectively bookended the 9 mm Luger spectrum, yet no malfunctions were exhibited. All of our range participants found the muzzle flip and recovery to be on par or even slightly better than the polymer version, and fast controlled pairs were possible, even for the less-experienced shooters.

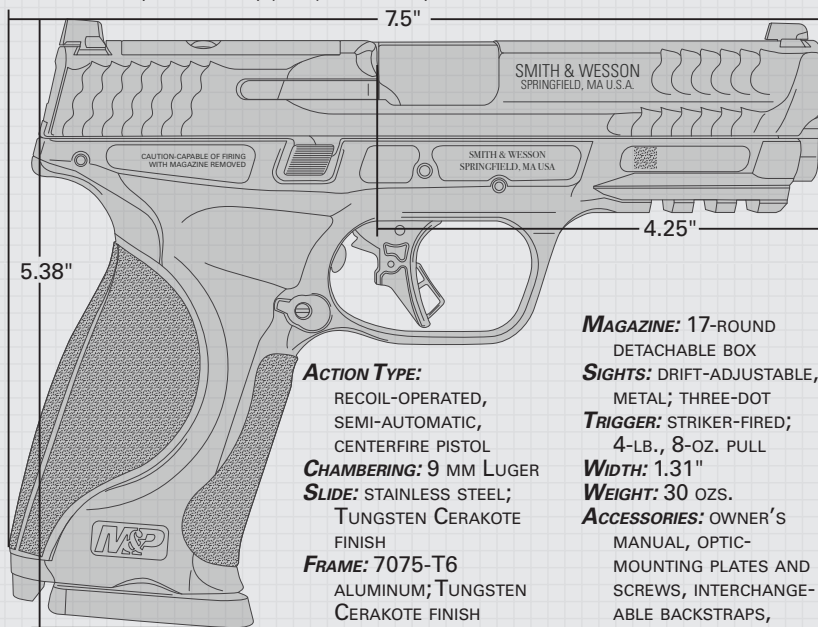
We ended our range day with a formal accuracy test and a simple fieldstripping. After removing the magazine and ensuring the pistol was completely unloaded, the slide can be locked to the rear and the takedown

In addition to a solid set of three-dot irons, the M2.0 Metal also satisfies red-dot fans with an extensive set of mounting plates compatible with all four of the major footprints.



SMITH & WESSON M&P9 M2.0 METAL

MANUFACTURER: SMITH & WESSON CORP. (DEPT. AR), 2100 ROOSEVELT AVE., SPRINGFIELD, MA 01104; (800) 331-0852; SMITH-WESSON.COM



MAGAZINE: 17-ROUND
DETACHABLE BOX

SIGHTS: DRIFT-ADJUSTABLE,
METAL; THREE-DOT

TRIGGER: STRIKER-FIRED;
4-LB., 8-OZ. PULL

WIDTH: 1.31"

WEIGHT: 30 OZS.

ACCESSORIES: OWNER'S
MANUAL, OPTIC-
MOUNTING PLATES AND
SCREWS, INTERCHANGE-
ABLE BACKSTRAPS,
EXTRA MAGAZINE, LOCK

MSRP: \$899

SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YARDS)

9 MM LUGER CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
AMMO, INC. STELTH 165-GRAIN TMC	712 Avg. 12 Sd	186	3.18	4.06	3.49
DOUBLE TAP DT LEAD FREE 115-GRAIN SC-HP +P	1,110 Avg. 13 Sd	315	2.27	3.56	2.91
FEDERAL HST 147-GRAIN JHP	1,015 Avg. 8 Sd	336	1.78	4.81	3.13
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					3.18

NOTES: MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 SHOTS OVER A CALDWELL G2 CHRONOGRAPH AT 10 FEET. ACCURACY RESULTS FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 25 YARDS FROM A SANDBAG REST. TEMPERATURE: 45° F. HUMIDITY 85%. ABBREVIATIONS: JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW POINT), SC-HP (SOLID COPPER-HOLLOW POINT), Sd (STANDARD DEVIATION), TMC (TOTAL METAL COATING).

lever rotated downward. From there, simply unlocking the slide allows it to be slid forward and removed from the frame. With the underside exposed, the guide rod assembly and the barrel can be removed for cleaning and lubrication. Reassembly is as simple as reversing these steps.

If we think back to the genesis of polymer-frame pistols, the ultimate goal was to make them lighter.

However, with that came frame flex and the stigma of carrying a "plastic" gun. Through proper metal selection and well-executed engineering, the S&W M&P9 M2.0 Metal gives users the lightweight package sought back in the '80s—but with sturdiness that even younger generations can appreciate. 

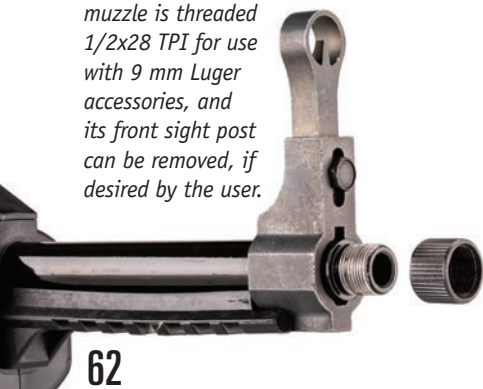




Hi-Point Firearms was founded in 1993 behind the simple, noble precept that no one should be excluded from the right to defend themselves for financial reasons. The company has been producing spartan but functional pistols ever since—with a family of pistol-caliber carbines (PCCs) joining the lineup in 1996—that basically anyone can afford. Over time, the manufacturer has expanded its offerings to include more and more pistol-cartridge chamberings, most recently adding .380 ACP and 10 mm Auto to the mix in 2016 and 2018, respectively. That has resulted in a modern catalog that now covers the majority of today's most popular pistol chamberings.

For 2023, however, Hi-Point broke fresh ground by introducing the industry's first PCC chambered to fire Federal Ammunition's newest pistol cartridge—the 3095 chambered in 30 Super Carry. Eager to see how this high-pressure chambering would behave through a longer, carbine-length barrel, we contacted Hi-Point for a test sample as soon as one was available, and what follows are the results of our testing.

The carbine's muzzle is threaded 1/2x28 TPI for use with 9 mm Luger accessories, and its front sight post can be removed, if desired by the user.



All Hi-Point firearms are semi-automatics that use the straight-blowback method of operation, which has helped contribute to their reputation for reliability. And not only is the 30 Super Carry carbine functionally identical to all of the company's other long guns, but it is literally one of the 9 mm Luger-chambered carbines that has simply been re-barreled for the new, smaller-diameter cartridge.

The 3095's receiver and bolt are cast from Zamak 3 (a zinc-aluminum alloy), and a sheet-steel shroud encases the receiver, while the rifle's one-piece stock (which incorporates its ribbed fore-end, pistol grip and buttstock) is injection-molded from a high-strength polymer. Thanks to its mix of metal and polymer construction, the 31"-long gun weighs only 6 lbs., 10 ozs., empty. Rail space abounds on the Hi-Point carbines, as there is a 9" Picatinny-style rail atop the gun for the installation of an optic, another 10 slots attached to the fore-end's 6-o'clock face and seven more mounted directly under the barrel. From the factory, a large, shielded, fully adjustable peep rear sight unit takes up most of the receiver's rail space, and an elevation-adjustable front sight post is affixed to the barrel, but both elements can be removed by the user, if desired.

A left-side manual safety swings up into the "Safe" position and down to fire, and the gun does not employ a passive magazine-disconnect safety. The reciprocating charging handle screws directly into the bolt assembly and extends through a slot cut into the left side of the receiver and shroud—it cannot be reversed. There is

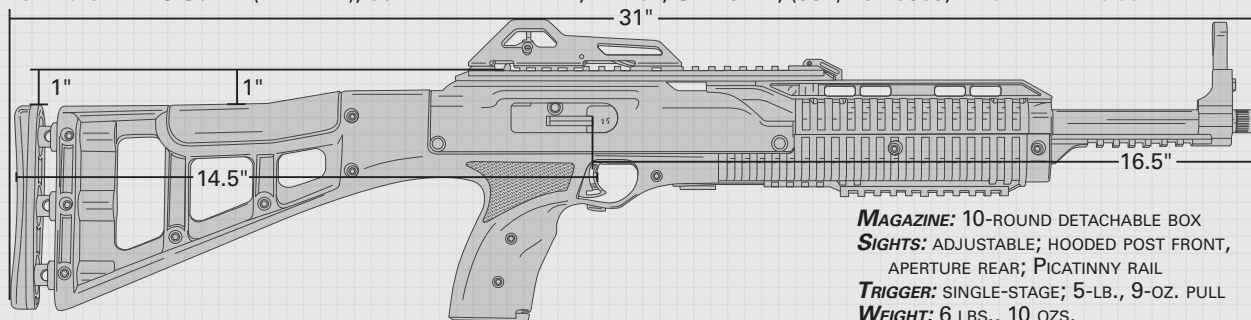
no way to manually lock the bolt rearward, however, it will lock itself back automatically on an empty magazine.

One of the chief selling points of the 30 Super Carry is its increased capacity potential compared to 9 mm Luger in pistols of the same size, a benefit that the Hi-Point unfortunately misses out on due to its use of single-stack 10-round magazines. Two 10-rounders ship with the gun from the factory, but, until they loosened, their springs were initially so tight that neither could be filled beyond seven rounds without help from a Maglula. The magazines are fed into the carbine through a well in the grip, in typical semi-automatic pistol fashion, and a round polymer release button on the stock's left side drops them free of the rifle when depressed.

The 3095 makes use of a 16.5" button-rifled steel barrel with five-groove, 1:10" right-hand rifling. It is threaded 1/2x28 TPI for compatibility with most 9 mm Luger muzzle devices and suppressors, and a thread protector is provided when an accessory is not in use. Of single-stage design, the trigger exhibited a consistent bit of creep prior to breaking on average at 5 lbs., 9 ozs., of pull.

During previous evaluations, we have found the company's carbines to be unfailingly reliable but capable of only marginal accuracy, which made our range session with the 30 Super Carry version an atypical Hi-Point experience—as the gun's accuracy exceeded all expectations, but there were a few break-in gremlins. For the first 100 rounds or so, we experienced an occasional failure to eject the fired case with both magazines, resulting in the empty getting hung up on the

DISTRIBUTOR: MKS SUPPLY (DEPT. AR), 8611-A N. DIXIE DRIVE, DAYTON, OH 45414; (937) 454-0363; HI-POINTFIREARMS.COM



MANUFACTURER: HI-POINT FIREARMS
CHAMBERING: 30 SUPER CARRY
ACTION TYPE: BLOWBACK-OPERATED, SEMI-AUTOMATIC, CENTERFIRE RIFLE

RECEIVER: ZAMAK 3 ALLOY, STEEL SHROUD
STOCK: POLYMER WITH RECOIL BUFFER
BARREL: STEEL; FIVE-GROOVE, 1:10" RH-TWIST RIFLING; 1/2X28TPI MUZZLE

MAGAZINE: 10-ROUND DETACHABLE BOX
SIGHTS: ADJUSTABLE; HOODED POST FRONT, APERTURE REAR; PICATINNY RAIL
TRIGGER: SINGLE-STAGE; 5-LB., 9-OZ. PULL
WEIGHT: 6 LBS., 10 OZS.
ACCESSORIES: OWNER'S MANUAL, EXTRA MAGAZINE, SLING, SLING SWIVELS, SIGHT-ADJUSTMENT TOOL, LOCK
MSRP: \$369



A reciprocating charging handle (top) extends from the left side of the receiver. The hooded, adjustable rear sight (above), can be removed to free up some rail space.

round beneath it as it attempted to chamber. However, these issues had resolved themselves by the end of the second box of ammunition, as either the magazines' follower springs or the gun's recoil spring (or both) broke themselves in. Between the weight of the carbine, the recoil-reducing springs in its buttstock and the demure nature of the chambering itself, recoil was minimal—even less than a comparable 9 mm PCC.

Using an unmagnified Viridian green-dot with a 2-m.o.a. reticle, the 3095 turned in the tightest 50-yard groups that we've ever encountered from a Hi-Point carbine. Across three 30 Super Carry loads—Federal's 100-grain HSTs, Remington's 100-grain FMJs and Speer's 115-grain Gold

SHOOTING RESULTS (50 YARDS)

30 SUPER CARRY CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
FEDERAL HST 100-GRAIN JHP	1,401 Avg. 11 Sd	436	1.44	2.03	1.74
REMINGTON UMC 100-GRAIN FMJ	1,485 Avg. 25 Sd	490	1.68	3.14	2.10
SPEER GOLD DOT 115-GRAIN GDHP	1,216 Avg. 32 Sd	378	1.34	3.92	2.39
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					2.08

NOTES: MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 SHOTS OVER AN OEHLER 36 CHRONOGRAPH AT 15 FEET. ACCURACY RESULTS FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 50 YARDS FROM A BENCH REST. TEMPERATURE: 73° F. HUMIDITY: 12%. ABBREVIATIONS: FMJ (FULL METAL JACKET), GDHP (GOLD DOT HOLLOW POINT), JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW POINT), Sd (STANDARD DEVIATION).

Dots—utilizing this magazine's five-shot, five-group standard, the rifle managed an impressive 2.08" average extreme spread.

Not only did the 3095 seem to have a slight preference, accuracy-wise, for the two 100-grain test loads, but it was also these two lighter-weight ammunitions that made the most of the carbine's 16.5" barrel. Relative to the three loads' listed velocities, which were taken using 4" test barrels, the Federal HSTs gained 151 f.p.s. from the longer barrel and the Remington UMCs picked up an additional 235 f.p.s., while the Speer Gold Dots only increased by 66 f.p.s.

Between its fine accuracy and virtual lack of recoil, the 3095 proved

to us that the premise of the 30 Super Carry-chambered pistol-caliber carbine is a worthy one, and we are curious to see if other manufacturers follow suit with designs of their own. But even if this doesn't come to pass, the Hi-Point is nonetheless an easy-to-shoot carbine that makes for a solid home-defense candidate for the highly recoil-averse. 



The Hi-Point 3095 is the first pistol-caliber carbine on the market chambered for Federal's 30 Super Carry cartridge.

The *American Rifleman* has used the phrase "Dope Bag" since at least 1921, when Col. Townsend Whelen first titled his column with it. Even then, it had been in use for years, referring to a sack used by target shooters to hold ammunition and accessories on the firing line. "Sight dope" also was a traditional marksman's term for sight-adjustment information, while judging wind speed and direction was called "doping the wind."

WARNING: Technical data and information contained herein are intended to provide information based on the limited experience of individuals under specific conditions and circumstances. They do not detail the comprehensive training procedures, techniques and safety precautions absolutely necessary to properly carry on similar activity. Read the notice and disclaimer on the contents page. Always consult comprehensive reference manuals and bulletins for details of proper training requirements, procedures, techniques and safety precautions before attempting any similar activity.



Revic BR4

Known primarily as a maker of premium long-range hunting rifles, Gunwerks of Cody, Wyo., not only also specializes in shooting systems and training, but even spun off its own optics company back in 2013 with the creation of the Revic division. Here we review the Revic BR4, a compact and lightweight laser rangefinder that is packed with a suite of sensors. In addition to the rangefinding function, the handheld package contains a barometer, compass, inclinometer, thermometer and ballistic computer—while standing just 3.25" tall, 4.75" long and 1.65" wide, and weighing 10 ozs.—about the same size as a compact binocular.

The unit features an IP67 weather-resistance rating and a welcome 1/4x20 TPI threaded tripod mount on the bottom of its aluminum body. The four rubberized buttons on the top of the BR4 provide tactile feedback when pressed and are big enough to use while wearing gloves. One button fires the laser itself, while the other three activate and navigate through the rangefinder's menu system.

An attached, flip-down rubber cover protects the optical elements. The Revic BR4 features 10X magnification from a 25 mm objective. It has a 4.5 degree field of view equating to 23 feet at 100 yards. We found the glass quality to be adequate for the task, with no chromatic aberration or distortions through the viewfinder. The beam itself has a divergence of 0.2 milliradians (mils) vertically and 1.6 mils horizontally. In use, a rectangular reticle represents the beam

divergence. Revic claims a single CR2 lithium battery is good for 2,000 uses of the ranging laser with an operating temperature between -4° F and 140° F. The maximum ranging distance against reflective targets is 4,000 yards, and the company claims the BR4's measurements will be accurate to within 1/2 yard on targets closer than 200 yards, within 1 yard on targets between 200 and 2,000 yards, and within 3 yards on targets out beyond 2,000 yards.

The BR4 pairs with an associated phone app via Bluetooth. The app allows for the configuration of multiple rifle and ammunition combinations. It also allows for "truing" the results of a zero session to better tailor the BR4's ballistic solutions. The app supports turrets marked in minutes of angle (m.o.a.), mils (MRAD) and also bullet drop compensating (BDC) turrets. One feature we found to be very helpful was that the BR4 incorporates all of the atmospheric and incline data as part of the ballistic calculation and provides the corrected m.o.a., MRAD or BDC adjustments. In addition to the profiles set up within the app, up to 10 profiles can be stored within the BR4 itself independent of the app. The internal menu system displayed within the optic is minimalist and not particularly intuitive; we had to reference the manual several times to locate certain settings. Once set to our preference, however, we did not have to adjust it again.

For field testing, we loaded two profiles and took a pair of rifles of

REVIC BR4

MANUFACTURER: REVIC (DEPT. AR), 201 BLACKBURN ST., CODY, WY 82414; (307) 296-7300; REVICOPTICS.COM

WIDTH: 1.65"

WEIGHT: 10 OZS.

MAGNIFICATION: 10X 25 MM

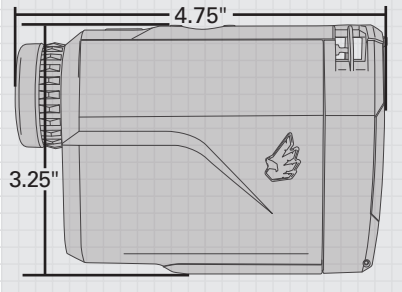
BATTERY: CR2 (x1)

RANGE: 4,000 YARDS

ACCESSORIES: OWNER'S MANUAL, SOFT CASE, WRIST STRAP, CLEANING CLOTH

DATA: RANGE TO TARGET, WINDAGE/ELEVATION ADJUSTMENTS, TEMPERATURE, COMPASS HEADING

MSRP: \$1,285



different chamberings to a 1,000-yard range with targets at unknown distances. For both rifles, the BR4 provided near-instant and accurate ballistic solutions for every target. We were also able to test the target modes with the BR4, which include Near, Far, LR Near and LR Far. Near or Far determines which is the desired range to use when there are multiple layers of possible targets—Near will use the closest measurement, while Far uses the farthest. The LR modes, which should be used with a tripod, increase data collection and help provide accurate readings when there is interference from brush or other obstacles.

In all, we found the Revic BR4 to be an excellent tool for mid- to long-range shooting and beyond. It serves both hunters and long-range target shooters alike well, thanks to its combination of a powerful and accurate ballistic engine, excellent ranging capabilities, and lightweight and compact form factor. 

HANDLOADS

A .45 ACP Semi-Wadcutter For Target Work

Shooting a large-diameter bullet has a lot of benefits—chief among them in target work is that the larger hole they produce has a better chance of breaking the line of the next highest scoring ring. To capitalize on this trait, wadcutter and semi-wadcutter (SWC) bullets were created to cut the cleanest, largest hole possible for formal competitions. This load is one of my favorites for the M1911 platform and features an accurate and clean-cutting 200-grain SWC from X-Treme bullets. The recipe starts with once-fired Winchester brass that has been cleaned and re-sized before being re-primed with Federal No. 150 primers. I then bell the case just enough to seat the bullet and prevent it from being gouged against the case mouth, as copper-plated bullets, like hard-cast lead projectiles, can be damaged in this way.

Winchester 231 has always been a phenomenal powder for M1911 ammunition. A charge of 5.3 grains produces excellent accuracy, and the recoil is manageable. The final steps involve seating the bullet so that a bit of the bearing surface is visible to help with reliable feeding. Typically ending with an overall length of 1.230" accomplishes this task and is short enough to feed through standard M1911 magazines. When building this load, I like to use Hornady's Series II Custom Grade dies, as their built-in taper crimp eliminates the need to perform that action separately.

Many new shooters are apprehensive about shooting .45 ACP, but the low recoil of this load makes it a fantastic candidate for introducing someone to the M1911 platform or the cartridge in general. Best of all, this load is one of the least expensive for the .45 ACP in my recipe book, but you wouldn't know that from its accuracy.

—FRANK MELLONI



RECIPE

BULLET: 0.451", 200-GRAIN
X-TREME COPPER-PLATED
SEMI-WADCUTTER

PROPELLANT: WINCHESTER 231

CHARGE: 5.3 GRAINS

PRIMER: FEDERAL No. 150 LARGE PISTOL

CASE: WINCHESTER

CASE TRIM-TO LENGTH: 0.893"

CARTRIDGE OVERALL LENGTH: 1.230"

VELOCITY @ 10' (F.P.S.): 866*

MUZZLE ENERGY (FT.-LBS.): 333

ACCURACY: 2.91"***

USES: FORMAL TARGET SHOOTING,
TRAINING

NOTES: LOADS FIRED FROM A
5"-BARRELED SPRINGFIELD M1911

* AVERAGE OF 10 SHOTS.

** AVERAGE OF FIVE, FIVE-SHOT
GROUPS AT 25 YARDS.

TEMPERATURE: 31° F

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LATEST
LEGISLATIVE
NEWS FROM
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INSTITUTE FOR
LEGISLATIVE
ACTION

NRA-ILA Files Lawsuit Against New Mexico Governor

NRA led a coalition of parties in a legal challenge against New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and Dept. of Health Secretary Patrick Allen's unconstitutional orders banning the carrying of firearms in Bernalillo County and on all state property under the guise of a public health emergency.

Lujan Grisham announced she would attempt to institute and enforce her unconstitutional 30-day ban on the lawful carrying of firearms for self-defense in the affected areas on Sept. 7, but was quickly met with opposition from local law enforcement when both the Sheriff of Bernalillo County and the Albuquerque Police Department indicated neither would enforce the order.

Several lawsuits were filed in federal court challenging the order's constitutionality, with one—as we go to press—having had a

temporary restraining order issued against its enforcement.

Going directly to the state's top court, the New Mexico Supreme Court, the NRA suit was filed on Sept. 14 and was joined by the Republican party of New Mexico, Libertarian Party of New Mexico, members of the legislature, law-abiding gun owners, law-enforcement professionals and an FFL, who are all affected by the orders.

Not only has the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that the Second Amendment protects a right to carry a firearm outside the home, but also the New Mexico Constitution guarantees the right to keep and bear arms, and the state's courts have held that the right to keep and bear arms "stands shoulder to shoulder with the most basic guarantees of individual liberty against the power of the state."

NRA-ILA Amicus Brief In 8th Circuit

On Aug. 23, NRA-ILA filed an *amicus curiae* (or friend of the court) brief in support of a challenge to Minnesota's permitting law that bans young adults ages 18–20 from exercising their right to carry a firearm for self-defense.

"Young adults are the people," the brief argues. "It is unquestionable that members of the founding-era militia and citizens who hold political rights" are the people, as the founders understood that term. And because they are people with Second Amendment rights, they cannot be completely deprived of exercising their rights. Minnesota, however, claims that young adults can be deprived of their rights

because their "rational thinking is overridden by more 'impulsive, emotional, or irrational behavior.'" But if it truly believed that young adults couldn't make rational decisions, then neither it—nor the Constitution—would allow young adults to serve on juries, as the brief counters.

"A free society prefers to punish the few who abuse their rights after they break the law than to throttle them and all others beforehand." [Minnesota has not complied] with that edict," the brief concludes.

The case is captioned as *Worth v. Jacobson*. It is before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit.

NRA-ILA

ILA Grassroots:

(800) 392-8683

NRA-ILA: (703) 267-1170

NRA-ILA website: nraila.org

9th Circuit Hands NRA And Hunters Victory Over Traditional Ammunition

On Sept. 2, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a 25-page ruling that rejected an effort by an environmental group to force the U.S. Forest Service to ban the use of traditional ammunition in the Kaibab National Forest, located in Arizona. The group sought to prohibit the use of lead ammunition within the Forest, where big-game hunting is popular.

The case, which has been working its way through the legal system for more than a decade, was perceived by some as part of a strategy to lay the groundwork for anti-hunting groups to attack access to hunting on federal land by eliminating the use on such land of the type of ammunition the majority of hunters use.

Michael Jean, the director of the Office of Litigation Counsel for NRA-ILA, commented on the ruling to the *Washington Examiner*, stating, "This NRA victory is a significant setback for gun-control and anti-hunting advocates who see ammo bans as a pivotal leap in their agenda."

When hunting is permitted on federal land, the federal government generally allows the states in which the land is located to set hunting regulations. While the Arizona Game & Fish Department does promote using non-lead ammunition, it does not prohibit its use, so traditional lead-based ammunition is perfectly legal in the Kaibab National Forest.

By not prohibiting the use of lead-based ammunition, the environmental group attempted to assert that the federal government was contributing to the deaths of scavenging birds that might ingest fragments of lead bullets that may be left behind after hunting. The 9th Circuit rejected this argument.

"This case affirmed that the states have primary responsibility over wildlife management, including all aspects related to hunting," Jean told the *Examiner*. "Courts will not entertain 'failure-to-regulate' lawsuits against the federal government for merely honoring state hunting laws. It's also a rejection of an attempt to apply a federal law that was designed to regulate large-scale commercial-waste disposal to ordinary American hunters." 🦋

IN MEMORY NRA-ILA CONTRIBUTIONS

August 1-31, 2023

Scott Leonard Taylor (from: Charles Jenkins); **Myles DiGennaro**, Oakton, VA (from: Lorna Gladstone); **Harry L. Johnston**, Mt Pleasant, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club); **Michael J. Messina**, Kansas City, MO (from: James P. McMahon); **Bill Kerns** (from: St. Joseph Rifle & Pistol Club); **Barbara Wade** (from: Hamburg Rod & Gun Club); **Milton Munger**, Cheektowaga, NY (from: Hamburg Rod & Gun Club); **Arthur C. Toland**, Charleston, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club).

Richard Casper is NRA COUNTRY

Photo by Jason Myers



Richard Casper was a junior in high school when the 9/11 terrorist attacks happened. "I had this urge inside of me," he said. "I joined the Marine Corps infantry. ... I wanted to be the first person fighting." During basic training, he was selected for a special duty of guarding then-President George W. Bush at Camp David. Once he completed that assignment, he deployed, leading to experiences like his Humvee being hit by explosives and a good friend being shot by a sniper and dying beside him. "It was so hard to comprehend because we go to work the next day like nothing happened," Richard said. After Iraq, he struggled with the transition home, failing college business courses and developed crippling anxiety. He went to his local Veterans Administration (VA) hospital and learned he had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), among other medical issues. Little was known about PTSD in 2007 and Richard was told he would be unable to learn. He decided to change his major to art, thinking it would be easier, and discovered an outlet for his pain. In 2013, he founded CreatiVets, a nonprofit that offers arts programs to wounded combat veterans. (If you or a veteran you know is interested in a unique healing opportunity, visit creativets.org.) Since the month of November is for honoring our beloved veterans, NRA Country chose Richard Casper—Marine Corps veteran, CEO and artist—as the NRA Country Artist of the Month. NRA Country's Lisa Supernaugh asked him a few questions in between his classes and events.

LS: First, we would like to thank you from the bottom of our heart for all you do. Tell us a little about what called you to serve?

RC: My dad was one of 11 kids and all his brothers served in the military. I had a calling from a very young age to join as well, but it wasn't until 9/11 that I decided I wanted to be a Marine.

LS: Please tell us how you had this amazing idea to help veterans heal through art.

RC: Through art, I learned how to tell my story without telling my story and that took a huge weight off. More of my anxiety and depression went away. I ended up coming to Nashville to write with a hit writer; he took what I was working on for a year and turned it into a song in less than two hours. I decided I needed to give every wounded veteran the opportunity.

LS: Can you tell us about the songwriting program?

RC: It's a four-day trip for veterans to write backstage at the Grand Ole Opry. CreatiVets covers all costs for the veterans to get to Nashville and pairs them with a mentor. It's fun, but it's also a lifesaving program. They have to write about something they are struggling with and that's when the healing starts.

LS: Does CreatiVets receive any proceeds for song downloads to further the mission of healing through the arts?

RC: We can be found on any streaming platform—search CreatiVets. You can also go to creativets.org. We do receive money from the streams and downloads, so we appreciate everyone who wants to give back by listening.

LS: What's next for your mission?

RC: We have a lot of work to do in the next few years, including launching our music platform, launching chapters around the country and trying to reach as many veterans as possible. We work with some VA hospitals and nonprofit partners to provide our life-changing programs to their already amazing programs in over 20 states now.

NRA Country is a lifestyle and a bond between the country music community and hard-working Americans everywhere. It's powered by pride, freedom, love of country, respect for the military and the responsibilities of protecting the great American life.

For more information, visit nracountry.com, follow on Twitter @NRACountry, and NRA_Country on Instagram.

NRA® Online Regional Report

To search for events in your area, go to

nrapublications.org/regional-report

Visit the links below to find gun shows, programs, clubs, events and training in your area.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

le.nra.org

Public and private officers interested in becoming law enforcement firearm instructors should attend one of NRA's Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor Development Schools. NRA Police Pistol Combat competition is intended to be used as an extension of an officer's training.



GUN SHOWS

gunshows.nra.org

Dates and locations of gun shows are subject to change. Please contact the show before traveling. Discounted NRA memberships are sold through NRA recruiters. Some shows may offer free admission to people who sign up for new memberships or renewals.

To become an NRA Recruiter, contact NRA Recruiting Programs at recruiter@nrahq.org.



AREA SHOOTS

ssusa.org/coming-events

For more information, please contact the NRA Competitive Shooting Division at comphelp@nrahq.org.



FRIENDS OF NRA

friendsofnra.org

Friends of NRA events celebrate American values with fun, fellowship and fundraising for The NRA Foundation. To learn more about events in your area, visit friendsofnra.org, contact your local field representative or send an email to friends@nrahq.org.



TRAINING

refuse.nra.org | nrainstructors.org

The NRA's Refuse To Be A Victim® program provides information on crime prevention and personal safety. To learn more about the program, visit refuse.nra.org. The most up-to-date seminar and instructor training schedule is available on the Internet by visiting nrainstructors.org, or online training is available at nraonlinetraining.org.

Questions? Email to refuse@nrahq.org or by calling (800) 861-1166.



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By Joseph P.
DeBergalis, Jr.
Executive Director,
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NRA's Wild Game Meat Donation Month

The National Rifle Association is encouraging hunters to donate excess game meat in November to help provide meals for those in need of food.

The American tradition of hunting has been shared from one generation to the next, building a rich history that dates back to pre-Columbian Native American culture and the first settlements in the New World. This month, I want to give praise to the hunters who came before us and subsequently passed along this great tradition to future generations of Americans, as well as to highlight a new initiative NRA is spearheading for November—Wild Game Meat Donation Month.

The importance of the hunting culture in America cannot be overstated, both for sport and for food. Millions of Americans take to the field and forest each year to partake in this grand tradition. Hunting with friends and family brings fun and fellowship, but more importantly, for many, it is downright necessary for survival.

Besides our shared love of hunting and spending time in the great outdoors, there is nothing more American than giving and sharing. If you find that your own supply of meat is plentiful, please consider sharing your bountiful harvest with the needy. There is no

better time than the present to do your part by donating to organizations that distribute excess game meat to the less fortunate in your area. I also want to express my praise to those who have previously donated via the Hunters for the Hungry network, for which the NRA has been a longtime proud advocate and supporter.

NRA needs your assistance to share the news about Wild Game Meat Donation Month, and to promote this worthy endeavor with hunters in the United States. In addition to contributing your excess harvest with those in need of nourishment, other ways that you can help as an individual supporter are by sharing your story with friends and by promoting donations on your personal social media pages. In addition, interested organizations can assist by publishing articles in newsletters, magazines and blogs and on social media to promote wild game meat donations.

Learn more about Wild Game Meat Donation Month at NWGMDM.nra.org.



Photo by Aaron J. Hill

Women Top Championship Leaderboards At Camp Atterbury

This year at Camp Atterbury, Ind., during the NRA National Matches, three women captured the top titles at their respective championships. Amanda Elsenboss won the NRA National High Power Rifle Championship, Kimberly Rowe topped the High Power Mid-Range Championship leaderboard and Kristin Yeaton won the Smallbore Rifle 3-Position Championship.

All three of these National Championships form part of the NRA National Matches, which are held at Camp Atterbury and were concluded on Aug. 8, after the close of the NRA National Smallbore Prone Championships (and the awarding of the NRA Smallbore Lones Wigger Iron Man Trophy). Ruger was the presenting sponsor.

With a score of 2387-113X, Amanda Elsenboss of Woodbury, Conn., won the 2023 NRA National High Power Rifle Championship held July 8-14.

After the competition at the awards ceremony, Elsenboss was awarded a

Mumma Trophy plaque, along with a gold-tone NRA National Championship medallion. Classified as a High Master, Elsenboss was competing in the Service-Service Rifle category. In addition, her score netted her the National Service Rifle Championship (also setting a national record), as well as the High Woman award. And, with a score of 796-40X, Elsenboss secured the Vandenberg Cup this year by a three-point margin over the runner-up, Hugo B. Adelson.

The 2023 NRA National High Power Rifle Mid-Range Championship was held July 16-21 and won by Kim Rowe of Wadsworth, Ohio, with a score of 2396-171X.

For her victory, Rowe received a Patriot Minuteman Championship plaque, a gold-tone National Championship Medallion and a \$200 check from the NRA. Additionally, she was a member of the winning Mid-Range Prone Match team USNRT-Rowe with teammates Oliver Milanovic, Larry

Sollars and Joseph Bakies, along with team captain and coach Charles Rowe. USNRT-Rowe fired a winning score of 2394-163X.

Kristin Yeaton of Augusta, Maine, is this year's NRA National Smallbore Rifle 3-Position Champion. She walked away from the match at Camp Atterbury on July 29, with a score of 4418-139X. The five-day competition was held from July 25-29.

Not only did Yeaton capture the overall 3-Position title during the Smallbore Nationals at Camp Atterbury last week, but she also topped the Metric 3-Position Grand Aggregate leaderboard with a score of 2095-39X, as well as the National Smallbore Conventional 3-Position grand aggregate with 2323-100X. For the latter, Yeaton received a Frank Parson Bowl Trophy plaque and a \$100 check from the NRA.

See the full results of the 2023 NRA National Matches at Camp Atterbury at competitions.nra.org.



NRA Smallbore 3-Position Champion Kristin Yeaton, High Power Rifle Champion Amanda Elsenboss and High Power Mid-Range Champion Kimberly Rowe pose with their awards.

Photos by John Parker, Cole McCulloch

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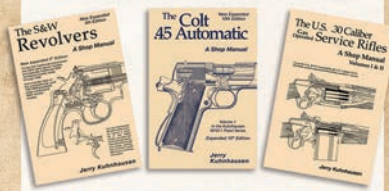
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MARLIN 1894 TRAPPER

GUN: MARLIN MODEL 1894 TRAPPER

CHAMBERING: .44-40 WIN.

SERIAL No.: 142373

CONDITION: NRA VERY GOOD (ANTIQUE FIREARM STANDARDS)

MANUFACTURED: APRIL 21, 1897

VALUE: \$1,750 TO \$2,250



When John Mahlon Marlin decided to compete with Winchester by entering the lever-action market, his first effort, introduced in 1881 as the top-ejecting Marlin Repeating Rifle (it was not catalogued as the Model 1881 until the appearance of Marlin's second lever-action in 1888), was a muscular-looking firearm. But then it had to be, as it was the first lever-action with a receiver long and strong enough to chamber what had become one of the most popular cartridges in the country, the .45-70 Gov't, thus beating Winchester's Model 1886 by a full five years. Tipping the scales at almost 10 lbs., the 28"-barreled Marlin Model 1881 was a very hefty gun. Even producing a shorter 24"-barreled rifle and, in 1885, a slightly scaled-down "lightweight" version couldn't bring the rifle's weight below 8 lbs.

The Model 1888 (which was produced for only two years) and then the side-ejecting Model 1889 were both smaller, lighter and chambered in the same .32-20, .38-40, and .44-40 Winchester cartridges as the Winchester Model 1873, with the Model 1889 also being offered as a handy 6-lb., 20"-barreled carbine. This made it Marlin's first practical saddle gun, thereby competing with Winchester's '73 carbine. It was a configuration that Marlin continued with its subsequent Model 1893 and Model 1894 carbines. Additionally, many firearm companies were offering non-catalogued features, and shorter 20" carbine-length barrels for lever-action rifles, albeit a rarity, was one such option. Consequently, in 1892, Marlin began producing shorter-barreled carbines, starting with a 15"-barreled Model 1889.

Collectors refer to these shortened carbines as "trappers," but that term was never officially used by either Winchester or Marlin. Winchester referred to them as "Baby Carbines" or "Special Short Carbines" on the rare occasions when they were cataloged. Marlin, on the other hand, simply called them "special lightweight

carbines," although in his book *Marlin—A History Of The Guns And The Company That Made Them*, William S. Brophy, who was also Marlin's senior technical manager and a founder of The Marlin Collector's Ass'n (marlin-collectors.com), referred to these guns as "baby carbines"—a term the company never used. Although some Marlin trappers had full-length magazines that held nine rounds (compared to 12 rounds in a standard-length carbine), many shortened carbines sported half magazines to save weight, although it reduced ammunition capacity. Firepower aside, those adventurous souls who special-ordered Marlin trappers were in favor of having a light, quick-pointing, fast-shooting lever-action that was easier to carry over long distances.

Although many of Marlin's early firearm records are incomplete, thanks to Brophy's efforts, there is an authenticated list of Marlin "special lightweight carbines." In a letter to the director of the ATF dated April 1, 1980, Brophy states that he has gone through all the Marlin factory records from 1883 to 1906 to locate carbines with barrels shorter than 16". The previous Model 1889 notwithstanding, he only found Model 1893 and Model 1894 examples, and all had 15" barrels.

Interestingly, a few years ago, a small number of authentic Marlin Model 1893 and Model 1894 saddle-ring Trappers—all with 15" barrels and allegedly discovered in Mexico—turned up at a gun show. This is one of those guns. Chambered in .44-40 Win., Serial No. 142373 is authenticated by factory records as a factory original, and as a pre-Jan. 1, 1899 gun, is classified as an antique. Model 1894 Trappers made after 1898, though, are classified as modern firearms and subject to NFA regulation, but specific guns have been exempted by the ATF as being factory-original short-barrel rifles that are Curios and Relics. With no remaining finish, it has a moderate bore, is all-original and fully functional, and thus is worth \$1,750 to \$2,250.

—RICK HACKER, FIELD EDITOR

American Rifleman does NOT accept submissions for the I Have This Old Gun column. Topics are assigned to Field Editors in advance. Due to the volume of mail received, our writers are not able to answer individual questions. Please consider instead sending your correspondence and questions through our Dope Bag/Q&A service, which is available to all NRA members in good standing. Details appear in the Q&A section.

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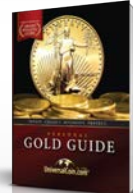
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