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DECEMBER 2024

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- ***IN HUSHED TONES***
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- ***MUSINGS FROM THE AMMO BUNKER***
  HORNADY'S NEW 338 ARC
- ***THE WAR GUNS***
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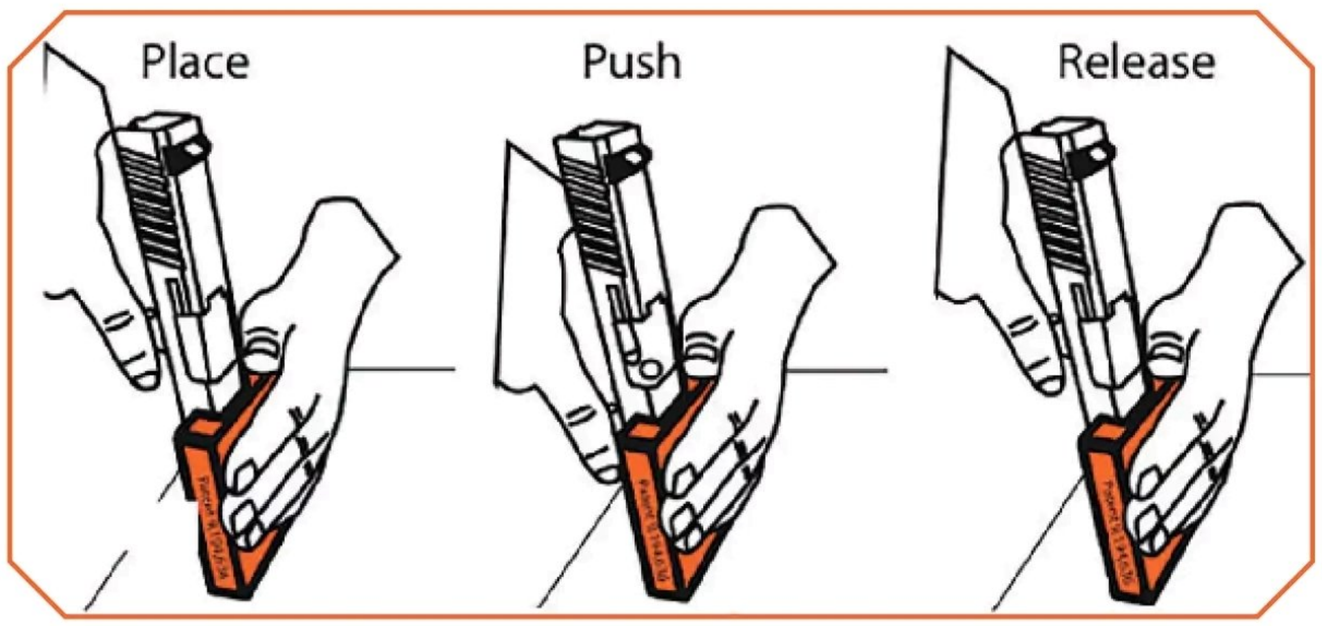

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Firearms News (ISSN #2691-3259). Published 12 times a year, monthly January through December, by Outdoor Sportsman Group, 1040 6th Ave., New York, NY 10018. Periodical postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes (Form 3579) to Firearms News, P.O. Box 37539, Boone, IA 50037-0539. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to 500 Rt. 46, East Clifton, NJ 07011. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement No. 41405030.

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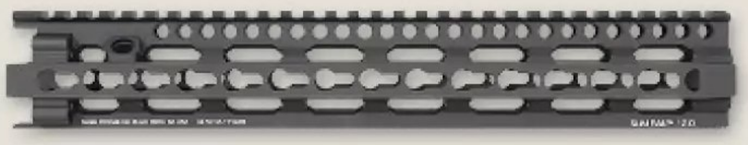

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NEW YORK GUN CONTROL REGIME LOSES YET AGAIN

By Darwin Nercesian

Shutterstock By Allexxandar

Second Amendment supporters, otherwise known as law-abiding citizens, have one more win under their belts as a federal judge has ruled that New York State's expansive gun control regime once again violated the constitutional rights of Americans by enacting a state law that bans licensed firearms owners from carrying concealed weapons on all private property without the owner's consent.

On October 10th, U.S. District Court Judge John Sinatra, Jr., a Trump appointee, not only ruled on the side of the United States Constitution and in concert with the U.S. Supreme Court guidelines set in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*, he also denied a motion from New York for a two-week stay on the decision, reasoning that the state Attorney General's attempt to appeal the ruling is unlikely to succeed on the merits.

"At least as to private property open to the public (the subject of this motion), New York's restriction is unconstitutional… Regulation in this area is permissible only if the government demonstrates that the new enactment is consistent with the Nation's historical tradition of sufficiently analogous regulations… New York fails that test here," wrote Sinatra, Jr., citing recent Supreme Court precedent.

Sinatra points out that, while property owners retain the right to exclude licensed gun owners from carrying firearms on their property, "*the state* may not unilaterally exercise that right and, thereby, interfere with the long-established Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens who seek to carry for self-defense on private property open to the public."

Second Amendment organizations praised Sinatra's decision, knowing, however, that they have a long road ahead as leftist anti-liberty groups in collusion with the government will continue to shift the goalposts as they attack American's right to bear arms using any creatively corrupt measure they can muster.

"This is yet another important victory for Second Amendment rights and another major loss for New York, authoritarian governments, and radical anti-rights organizations like Everytown and Giffords… We will continue to fight forward as we work to restore the full scope of the right to keep and bear arms throughout the United States. Hopefully, Kathy Hochul is ready to write another check for legal fees," said Brandon Combs, the president of Firearms Policy Coalition.

It is important to point out that every such attack on the constitutional rights of Americans followed by the defense of ensuing lawsuits is funded by our own tax dollars, money which is being spent in bad faith when it can be used to prevent real crime, help veterans who have served our Nation, secure borders, fight homelessness or any manner of more responsible and beneficial spending.

Despite this fact, oath breakers like Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul continue to celebrate their gun control policies and even boast publicly about their defiance of the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as their willingness to step up attacks on the freedoms protected by the Constitution.

"And you all know what happened when the Supreme Court overturned the laws against concealed carry weapons, stripping away the power of the governor of this state to make her citizens safe. When the Supreme Court did that, we didn't throw up our hands and surrender. We fought back… We doubled down. We came up with legislation. And we have a prohibition on concealed carry weapons in sensitive places. I personally think every place is sensitive," Hochul said.

While an appellate court has allowed a ban on concealed carry in so-called "sensitive places" to stand in certain instances, including theaters, bars, and public parks, Hochul has shown her hand here as she intends to circumvent the law by banning concealed carry all together using language like "sensitive places" to label all spaces in New York.

"As we've said all along, the 'sensitive place' carry restrictions imposed by New York post-*Bruen* are unconstitutional. Hard stop… We are thrilled that once again, the courts have agreed, and sent this amoral and unlawful ban packing," said Bill Sack, director of Legal Operations for the Second Amendment Foundation. FN

▶▶▶

GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA:
FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT ON THE GROUND IN FLORIDA AFTER HURRICANE

By Luis Valdes

Shutterstock By Guy J. Sagi

This past week, Hurricane Helene left hundreds of thousands of Floridians without power, running water, and in some cases, without a home. But it appears that Hurricane Helene didn't just leave a physical path of destruction, it also caused a political one, too.

The City of Okeechobee, in the heart of rural central Florida, passed a declaration of emergency as a response to the storm, something that just about every municipality does as a precaution when a hurricane is barreling down. However, this declaration of emergency clearly caused its own emergency.

The city cited state statute §870.044 in its declaration and posted in their notice that gun shops are forbidden from selling guns and ammunition, but more importantly, that the residents are forbidden from carrying firearms in public. That is a major violation of the Second Amendment, and a major screw up on the city itself because the law they cited wasn't even related to hurricanes.

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Statute §870.044 is in place for riots and looting, not for hurricane recovery. The enabling statute for such an act is §870.043 and it clearly states that it can only be enacted when there has "been an act of violence or a flagrant and substantial defiance of, or resistance to, a lawful exercise of public authority." Hurricanes don't fall under such, but going further into the city's notice, they cite the entirety of the §870.044 except for the final sentence, which states the following:

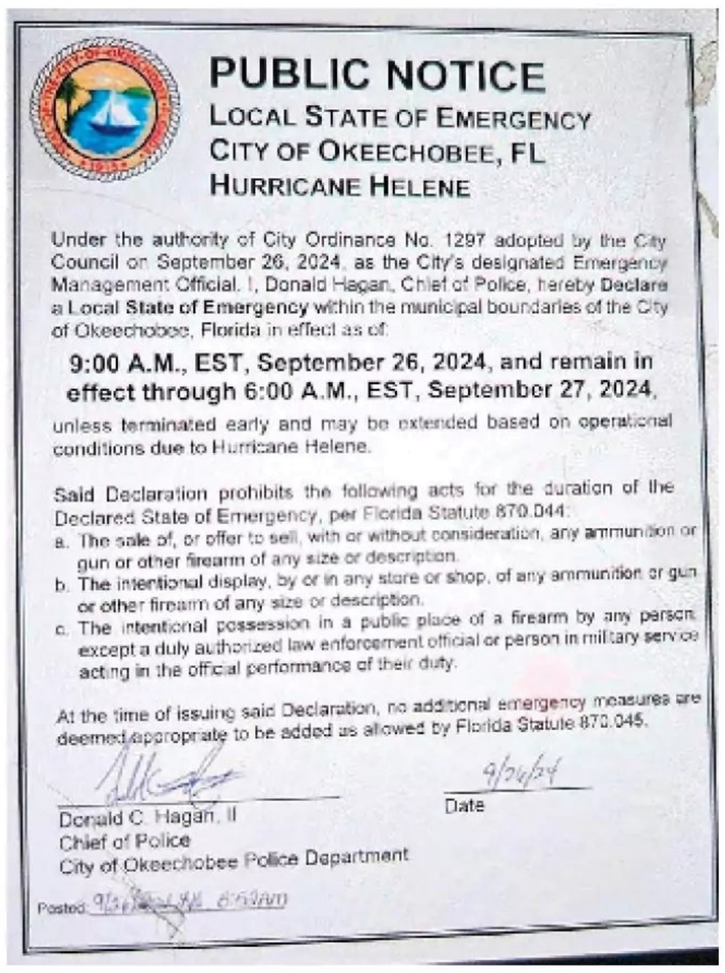
"Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to authorize the seizure, taking, or confiscation of firearms that are lawfully possessed, unless a person is engaged in a criminal act." This was added to the statute after the infamous incident that occurred in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina struck the Big Easy. Plus, you have the federal Disaster Recovery Personal Protection Act of 2006, which prohibits the confiscation of legally possessed firearms during a disaster situation like a hurricane. In fact, the entire chapter where this law exists is titled "AFFRAYS; RIOTS; ROUTS; UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLIES."

Not once in the entire chapter are the words "hurricane," "storm," or "disaster" even mentioned.

Gun Owners of America (GOA) was notified of this declaration by its members and upon being informed, GOA immediately reached out to the city to find out what was happening. But GOA just doesn't send emails, letters, or make phone calls. Oh no, GOA shows up in person to get answers.

That's what exactly I did. On September 30, Okeechobee was scheduled to have their city council meeting and I made sure I was there to address

FDC-9



PUBLIC NOTICE
LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY
CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FL
HURRICANE HELENE

Under the authority of City Ordinance No. 1297 adopted by the City Council on September 26, 2024, as the City's designated Emergency Management Official, I, Donald Hagan, Chief of Police, hereby Declare a Local State of Emergency within the municipal boundaries of the City of Okeechobee, Florida in effect as of:

9:00 A.M., EST, September 26, 2024, and remain in effect through 6:00 A.M., EST, September 27, 2024,

unless terminated early and may be extended based on operational conditions due to Hurricane Helene.

Said Declaration prohibits the following acts for the duration of the Declared State of Emergency, per Florida Statute 870.044:

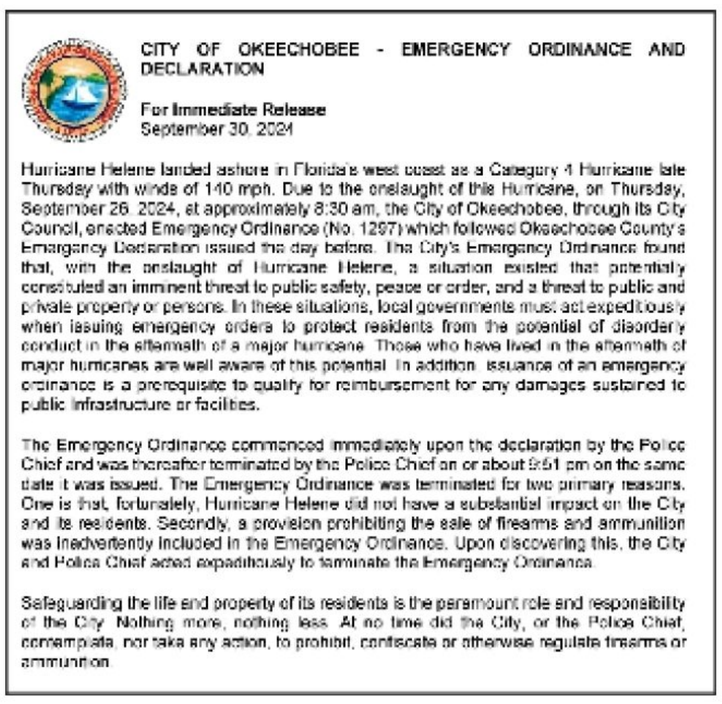
a. The sale of, or offer to sell, with or without consideration, any ammunition or gun or other firearm of any size or description.
b. The intentional display, by or in any store or shop, of any ammunition or gun or other firearm of any size or description.
c. The intentional possession in a public place of a firearm by any person except a duly authorized law enforcement official or person in military service acting in the official performance of their duty.

At the time of issuing said Declaration, no additional emergency measures are deemed appropriate to be added as allowed by Florida Statute 870.045.

Donald C. Hagan, II
Chief of Police
City of Okeechobee Police Department

9/26/24
Date

Posted: 9/26/24 @ 8:53am



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE - EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AND DECLARATION

For Immediate Release
September 30, 2024

Hurricane Helene landed ashore in Florida's west coast as a Category 4 Hurricane late Thursday with winds of 140 mph. Due to the onslaught of this Hurricane, on Thursday, September 26, 2024, at approximately 8:30 am, the City of Okeechobee, through its City Council, enacted Emergency Ordinance (No. 1297) which followed Okeechobee County's Emergency Declaration issued the day before. The City's Emergency Ordinance found that, with the onslaught of Hurricane Helene, a situation existed that potentially constituted an imminent threat to public safety, peace or order, and a threat to public and private property or persons. In these situations, local governments must act expeditiously when issuing emergency orders to protect residents from the potential of disorderly conduct in the aftermath of a major hurricane. Those who have lived in the aftermath of major hurricanes are well aware of this potential. In addition, issuance of an emergency ordinance is a prerequisite to qualify for reimbursement for any damages sustained to public infrastructure or facilities.

The Emergency Ordinance commenced immediately upon the declaration by the Police Chief and was thereafter terminated by the Police Chief on or about 9:51 am on the same date it was issued. The Emergency Ordinance was terminated for two primary reasons. One is that, fortunately, Hurricane Helene did not have a substantial impact on the City and its residents. Secondly, a provision prohibiting the sale of firearms and ammunition was inadvertently included in the Emergency Ordinance. Upon discovering this, the City and Police Chief acted expeditiously to terminate the Emergency Ordinance.

Safeguarding the life and property of its residents is the paramount role and responsibility of the City. Nothing more, nothing less. At no time did the City, or the Police Chief, contemplate, nor take any action, to prohibit, confiscate or otherwise regulate firearms or ammunition.

this issue and get answers for what happened.

I spoke directly with Mayor Dowling Watford and Police Chief Donald Hagan (audio here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Sxotvf-aDs). Both profusely apologized and explained that at no point was it their intention to strip the residents and business owners of their Second Amendment rights.

I made sure to point out to the mayor that while their public statement admitted a mistake and was a good first step, it needed to go further. After all, one of the key issues wasn't just the fact that the declaration barred the sale of firearms and ammunition, it also barred the law-abiding public from being able to carry outside of their homes. All forms of gun control have been an absolute failure since, by definition, criminals are criminals because they break the law.

Mayor Watford was extremely apologetic for what happened and admitted that they did screw up, which is extremely rare for an elected official to do. In all my years of dealing with public officials, hardly ever do you see someone in public office admit they made a mistake. He promised that the City of Okeechobee will never do such a thing again, and he was personally appreciative that GOA came to the meeting to explain the issues in a professional manner. Afterwards, I stepped out of the council chambers and spoke with Chief Hagan.

The Chief told me that he's one of the biggest pro-gun guys in town and even supports open carry being legalized and that he personally rescinded the order when he realized that it violated the Second Amendment. He further clarified that the mistake happened because he was signing a number of documents before the storm, and he didn't proofread the emergency declaration when it crossed his desk. Plus, he said that the declaration template had been on the books going back several years, and no one really paid any attention to it. Hagan said that he would never have personally enforced such an order, which is why he rescinded it when he realized it was wrong.

Regarding Okeechobee itself, the people who make up the place are very pro-gun. The town has a hard-working, salt of the earth, pro-freedom loving mindset. The county it's in literally has more cattle than people. It is the type of place where you'd think freedom would be the number one priority.

However, what happened is not excusable and gun owners deserved an answer for what happened. That's why GOA went to Okeechobee, to get to the bottom of this and make sure it never happens again. All evidence is pointing to this happening due to institutional incompetency within the city's government, but a benign incompetence, even something that was done without malicious malfeasance, can still result in tyranny. As the saying goes, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

We cannot let our guard down, no matter what. Mistakes caused via incompetency are not excusable, because the civil rights at stake are freedoms that American men and women have sacrificed for, bled for, and died for.

As a former police officer, I know that culpable negligence is no excuse under the law. And if I made an honest mistake on the job that still resulted in me harming someone or violating their civil rights, I would still be held accountable.

Mr. Hagan is the Chief of Police and Mr. Watford is the mayor; the buck stops with both of them. It is their responsibility to make sure that the people under their care have their rights respected. Again, a benign incompetence, even something that was done without malicious malfeasance, can still result in unconstitutional loss of rights. Hanlon's razor says it best: "never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity."

Let the City of Okeechobee serve as an example to every other city and town across Florida. No matter what, GOA is watching and will spring into action, go in person, and make sure the Second Amendment is respected and protected.

—

Luis Valdes is a former law enforcement officer and detective, and is currently the Florida State Director, Outreach Director of Puerto Rico & US Virgin Islands, and National Spokesman for Gun Owners of America – (GunOwners.org). You can follow Luis on X via @RealFLGunLobby. FN

[Cont. to page 110]

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Pack of 25 internal operating parts to keep your prized pistol operating. Original New Factory Parts !

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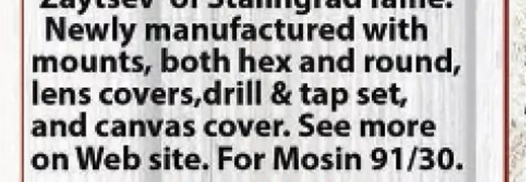

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M11A3 Rifle Grenade, inert,for M7 launcher.	$34.95	#AM125
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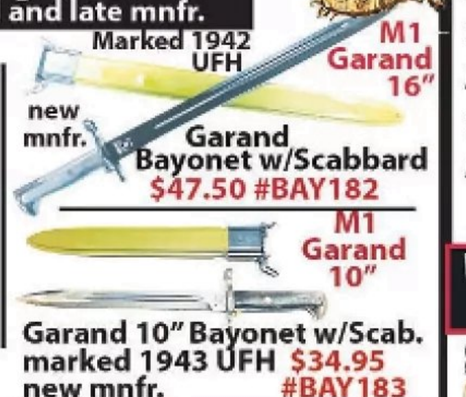

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new mnfr.
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M1 Garand 10"
Garand 10" Bayonet w/Scab. marked 1943 UFH $34.95 #BAY183
new mnfr.

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Bayonet & Scab. Bayo.is orig,. Scab. is new. $32.#BAY084

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BM59E Barrel, .308 Nato,	$149.95	#BM59007
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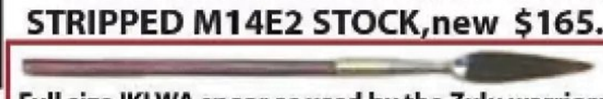

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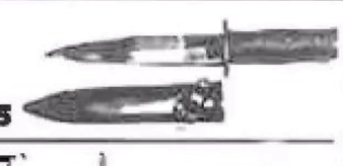

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TYPE 38 & 99 Rifles

SLAVA UKRAINE FLAG 3x5 foot.
Show your Support. Single Panel Flag has vibrant colors and a clear message for 'Despots'. **$25. #FLAG66**

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Cetme 'L' **5.56mm**

CETME L
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Made in the USA By Utica Kutmaster
Solid American made multi tool with Royal Malaysian Police crest, 6 pc socket set, tanto blade,saw,hook blade file, serrated bkade, pliers, and measurement scale in metric & inch on back of the grip. Sockets attach at the bottom of the handle.
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- Holds pistol w/20rd. magazine.
- Comes w/leather holster.
- Walnut, new mnfr.

M14 Bayonet w/Scabbard

M8A1
M6 Model **$79.95 #BAY384**
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#BB031	24",4140 steel, T Titan rifle barrel .30-06	$55.
#BB107	21.75", .270 cal., OD 1.2", 1 in 10 Twist,	$49.95
#BB140	12", AR15 barrel,OTD,SS, .350 Legend,1-12	$40.
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Model 1911 Pistol Barrels

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Thread is .578x28

New

16" Carbine Barrel For Model 1911,.45acp $95. #C45016

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1911,.45acp 5" Commander	$65. #C45325
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1911, 10mm, 5"	$65. #C45399
1911, 38 Super,5" Commander	$65. #C45386
1911,9mm, 5" Commander	$65. #C45385
1911,9mm, 5-3/4"	$66. #C45360

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New 2-3/4" chamber

-Blued with Bead Sight

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3.5x Magnification

-New Mnfr.

-WW2 Dated

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Price buster savings on a 'parts pack' to keep your pistol shooting and assures the resale value in the face of malfunctions when parts are required

(19 internal parts)

All Parts Are Original Mnfr.'d Browning Parts

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A.

B.

C.

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A. 16" barrel with sight/flash hider,ring spring, swivel ,handguard retainer 5.56mm $160. #AR426

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Enfield #32 Mk1 Sniper Scope Ensemble with metal case, wood cheekrest, tools , scope, mount, pads, drill & tap set, tool for adjustments, screws, Leather lens covers. Inscribed with WW2 date and nomenclature. Best way to add real value to your Enfield and fun at the range. See Web Site for more pictures & details.

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7.5mm

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Pack of original spares for maintenance and keeping your rifle firing ! Contains: Extractor & Spring, Firing Pin, Gas Tube, Pouch, Screw Driver, Brush & Grenade Tension Spring.

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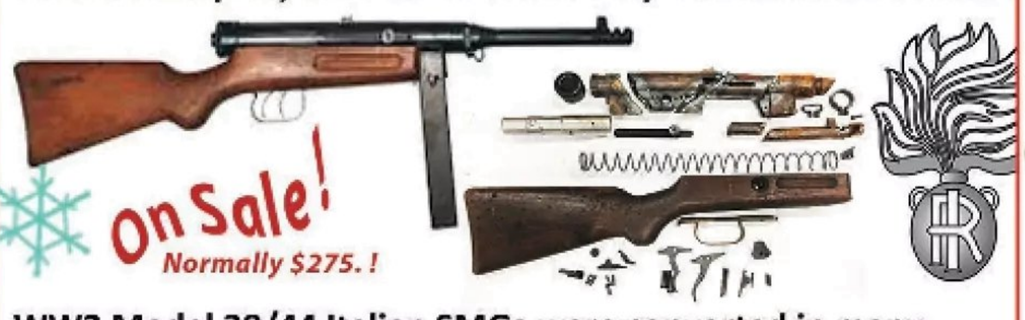
Original Pakistani Ammo manufactured in 1960 for the converted Enfield #1MK3 rebored to .410 shot gun shells. 10 rds to a box, 18 boxes to a case. $14.95 per box. Rare ammunition soon to be gone from the market ! Sold as a collector item and subject to occasional misfires. Complex load in brass case. These 'ball' rounds were used in combat as opposed to shotshells that were loaded for crowd control. Note: if you buy 18 boxes of ammo, you can have the original crate they come in , as long as supplies last.

Beretta 38/49, Model 4 Parts Set / Carabineri Service



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Normally $275. !

WW2 Model 38/44 Italian SMGs were converted in many cases to the Model 38/49 series with improvements such as a cross bolt safety. This is the Model 4 version and the parts set comes with a cut receiver & cut barrel as required, no mag, but with the rest of the internals , sights & stock. A great basis for a 'build' project, We have mags available separately . Parts set as pictured on the right. $199.99# B38020

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STEEL LAUNCHER WITH INERT ROCKET & TRIGGER SIGHT WITH COCKING MECHANISH. REPLICA OF THE FIRST PANZERFAUST USED BY THE 3RD REICH IN NORTH AFRICA AND EUROPE. NEW.

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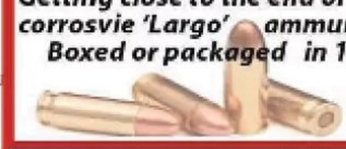
9x23 LARGO (9mm Largo) 100 rd.

Getting close to the end of our supply of surplus corrosvie 'Largo' ammunition mnfrd' in 1951. Boxed or packaged in 100 rd. increments.



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7.62 x 54mm Crimped Blank Rounds

15 rds. to a box, Prvi Partizan mnfr. boxer, brass case.

$19.95 #AM3093

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U.S. Claymore Mine with Pouch Full size, synthetic, inert mine made famoun in Vietnam. Pouch has instruction panel inside. Nice for displays!$69.95 #MISC589 New

GUN POLITICS **By David Codrea** | Political Field Editor

David Codrea is the winner of multiple journalist awards for investigating/defending the RKBA and a long-time gun owner rights advocate who defiantly challenges the folly of citizen disarmament. In addition to being a regular featured contributor for Firearms News, *he blogs at "The War on Guns: Notes from the Resistance," and posts onTwitter: @dcodrea and Facebook.*

'NO CONSTITUTIONAL REASON'
JUSTIFIES NOT RECOGNIZING 2A RIGHTS OF YOUNG ADULTS

"The Supreme Court … sent a challenge to a Pennsylvania law barring people 18- to 20-years-old from carrying guns back to the lower courts for another look in light of last term's decision in *United States v. Rahimi*, in which the justices attempted to provide guidance for courts reviewing Second Amendment challenges to restrictions on gun rights," *SCOTUSBlog* reports. "In *Paris v. Lara*, Pennsylvania had appealed in a challenge to a state law that effectively bars 18- to 20-year-olds from openly carrying a gun when Pennsylvania has declared a state of emergency."

What better time could there be? And what's that got to do with the other case?

"In *Rahimi*, the court upheld a federal law that bans anyone who is the subject of a domestic violence restraining order from possessing a gun," the report elaborates, citing Chief Justice John Roberts, who "explained that even if the modern regulation being challenged 'does not precisely match' laws restricting gun rights in early English or U.S. history, "it may still be analogous enough to pass constitutional muster."

So, Roberts' official position is "close enough for government work"? Really?

Why there should be any split among "conservatives" is left unexplained. How can there be any question that the Third Circuit Court of Appeals was correct in its opinion that "The words 'the people' in the Second Amendment presumptively encompass all adult Americans, including 18-to-20-year-olds, and we are aware of no founding-era law that supports disarming people in that age group."

What's left to send back to the lower courts?

Especially considering duly enacted law, 10 U.S.C. § 311 Sec. 311 defining "Militia: composition and classes (a) The militia of the United States consists of all able-bodied males at least 17 years of age…"

The only legitimate question is how government can countenance an "unorganized militia" when the Second Amendment declares a "well regulated" one "being necessary to the security of a free State." Per attorney and constitutional scholar Dr. Edwin Vieira, the term is "an oxymoron" and an example of "malfeasance… beyond the pale. Under no circumstances may Congress leave the Militia unorganized, unarmed, or undisciplined — let alone knowingly and intentionally impose such conditions."

But they have, haven't they?

Rahimi with its eight-to-one decision against lone dissenter Clarence Thomas shows the "conservative" justices are having second thoughts about the *Bruen* decision, the restrictions it places on infringements, and the danger its text, history, and tradition standard puts other undelegated federal powers in (especially considering the Ninth and Tenth Amendments).

Gun owners have known for some time that John Roberts has a propensity for siding with the "liberals," notably when he sided with Obamacare and when he joined in ruling against the Trump administration including a citizenship question on the 2020 census. "I think it's personal," Sen. Ted Cruz reflected. Roberts "despises" Trump.

And this isn't the first time Justice Alito has raised doubts about his "Machine Gun Sammy" appellation. After voting the right way on bump stocks, he felt compelled to helpfully offer "There is a simple remedy for the disparate treatment of bump stocks and machineguns. Congress can amend the law — and perhaps would have done so already if ATF had stuck with its earlier interpretation. Now that the situation is clear, Congress can act."

Shutterstock By guruXOX

How he squares that with "arms," "shall not be infringed," and the constitutionally delegated powers of Congress, he didn't say.

Ditto for Neil Gorsuch (one of three Donald Trump appointees along with Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett) being such a disappointment when siding with Justices Jackson, Sotomayor, and Kagan in favor of illegal aliens who "missed" their removal hearings. "What does that have to do with guns?" some "single issue" 2A types might ask, unwilling to recognize the plot openly admitted by Chuck Schumer and other top Democrats to put the tens of millions of foreign nationals who violated immigration laws on a "pathway (make that 'superhighway') to citizenship."

As for Brett Kavanaugh, his concessions in the *Bruen* decision opened the door for lower courts to accept all sorts of prior restraints and infringements.

"[S]hall-issue regimes may require a license applicant to undergo fingerprinting, a background check, a mental health records check, and training in firearms handling and in laws regarding

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the use of force, among other possible requirements," Kavanaugh asserted. "[T]he Second Amendment 'is neither a regulatory straightjacket [sic] nor a regulatory blank check.' Properly interpreted, the Second Amendment allows a 'variety' of gun regulations."

Then we come to Barrett.

"Relying exclusively on history and tradition may seem like a way of avoiding judge-made tests," she wrote in a concurring opinion on a copyright case that indicates her sentiments on other areas of law. "But a rule rendering tradition dispositive is itself a judge-made test. And I do not see a good reason to resolve this case using that approach rather than by adopting a generally applicable principle."

Per *ABA Journal*, Barrett joined the court majority (with Thomas dissenting) in "turn[ing] down an emergency request to reinstate a Missouri law that barred state officials from helping enforce federal gun laws." And during oral arguments in the *VanDerStok* challenge to ATF's "ghost gun" ruling currently under consideration, she undermined Justice Alito's analogy of individual ingredients not making an omelet and sided with the government's attorney.

How that case is decided will be a bellwether of the shape of things to come for "assault weapon" bans and for other ATF rules, including a potential one if the Democrats believe they have the political capital and a court amenable to considering semiautomatic firearms just a modification step away from being classified as NFA weapons. What the Supreme Court will agree to hear, and how it will rule, whether Democrats ultimately succeed in "reforming" it or not, will continue to be uncertain due to systemic roadblocks to vetting nominees in the confirmation process.

Per the Congressional Research Service, "at issue has been whether, or to what extent, questions by committee members should seek out a nominee's personal views on current legal or constitutional issues or on past Supreme Court decisions that have involved those issues."

Think of one job you've applied for where you'd have gotten it if you decided to play coy with the hiring managers. While it may be "inappropriate" for a judge to weigh in on a specific case before confirmation — for legitimate reasons, including not having studied and evaluated all the particulars, evidence and precedents against the "supreme Law of the Land," — there's no reason why general principles of understanding should be off-limits. Such hearings are supposed to be, among other things, high-level employment interviews, not pre-coronation ceremonies.

So, back to *Paris v. Lara*, some Supreme Court legal apologists are arguing for procedure *über alles*, that it was proper to remand for reconsideration in light of *Rahimi*, and that *stare decisis* (deference to precedent) must rule. Uncultured non-lawyers (like me) wonder what's so damn hard about "shall not be infringed," about the Declaration's assertion that "we hold these truths to be self-evident," and about "a right delayed is a right denied."

"The powers of the sword are in the hands of the yeomanry of America from sixteen to sixty," Continental Congress delegate Tench Coxe wrote in The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Feb. 20, 1788. "The unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state governments, but where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people. Their swords, and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birth-right of an American."

Anyone who tells you 18-to-20-year-olds are not fully enfranchised citizens entitled to exercise their rights under the Second Amendment is a liar and an enabler of tyranny. If they wear a robe while doing it, they've told you what you need to know.

After it's all said and done, what will the court's "conservatives" tell us?

Additional Considerations

Banning young adults from keeping and bearing arms brings up another issue, their serving as law enforcement officers. An Ohio bill to help alleviate the police shortage has been passed by the State Senate, noting "If enacted, Ohio would join at least 14 other states that permit local police departments to hire individuals between ages 18-20, including our neighbors in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and West Virginia. Certain municipalities in Ohio have already elected to appoint 18-year-olds as police officers, under the home rule authority within the Ohio Constitution."

Allowing young adults to serve invites another discussion on police exemptions, along with challenges to the presumption that they are more trustworthy to keep and bear arms than the general citizenry. That contention opens the door to citing comparative crime and suicide rates between law enforcement personnel and the general public, with a U.S. Department of Justice report highlighting "five key types of police crime: Sex-related… Alcohol-related… Drug-related… Violence-related [and] Profit-motivated," and other studies claiming "Police At Highest Risk For Suicide Of Any Profession… 13 out of every 100,000 people die by suicide in the general population – that number increases to 17 out of 100,000 for police officers."

While not addressing young adult LEOs directly, Pennsylvania's Petition for a Writ of Certiorari that SCOTUS considered argues that "18th-century militia laws actually demonstrate the Founding generation's view that under-21-year-olds should have access to deadly weapons only under appropriate adult supervision. When state militia laws called on under-21year-olds to serve, parental consent was usually a prerequisite, and parents were often required to furnish their children with arms."

Police powers extend to acting as individuals. However, it is instructive of them to admit that adults were recognized as entitled to own arms suitable for militia service, that is, "weapons of war," and were empowered to provide them for their children.

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By James Tarr | Field Editor

GOLDILOCKS GUN(S):
Sub- and Micro-Compact Pistols

Glock 19 (Glock.com)

For a few decades, the 9mm Glock 19 was considered the carry gun against which all others were judged. It was big enough to shoot well, small enough to conceal with a decent holster and covering garment, and offered sufficient power and capacity to solve most any problem a pistol was capable of solving. Not too big, not too small, just right—hence the Goldilocks name. That remained the case, from the time the G19 was introduced until SIG came out with the P365. In truth, the G19 was a bigger/heavier gun than a lot of people wanted to carry. Many people want a carry gun they can just stick in a pocket, or which is so small/light they barely notice it's there.

The SIG P365 redefined the standard for carry guns, and the hottest segment in the market it now sub- and micro-compact CCW guns meant to compete with it.

SIG P365 (SigSauer.com)

The SIG P365 became the new standard. Thanks to modern design and materials, it was significantly smaller and lighter than the Glock 19 while still being shootable, because it had decent sights and a big enough grip and a great trigger. Capacity was also great—flush magazines held ten rounds. That SIG 365-sized envelope has now become the standard for concealed carry pieces, and seemingly every new pistol introduction seems designed to compete with the 365, either offering more or better features, or the same features, in a smaller size or at a cheaper price. The firearms market is at war, fighting for your business, and you are the winner in this competitive arena.

I want to give you a quick and dirty rundown of a few good 9mm pistols on the market that are competitors to the SIG P365 (roughly the same size/weight/capacity) that I have either tested and/or shot enough to have an opinion on and recommend. Be aware it's filled with objective facts as well as subjective opinions. In completely random order…

FN Reflex (FNAmerica.com) and Mossberg MC2sc (Mossberg.com)

The Reflex is a perfect example of this truism: if any of the pistols listed here had been introduced fifteen years earlier, they would have been dubbed "Pistol of the Year" and ballads would have been written about them. In today's market, crowded with awesome guns, it's just a solid choice that is average in just about every way—which means I recommend it and would carry it. Put the Mossberg MC2sc in that same "boringly dependable" category.

The market is awash in great options if you want a small 9mm, including this Mossberg MC2sc. Here Tarr is running it hard at Gunsite.

While perhaps late to the market, FN's Reflex is a solid choice. Interestingly, it is not a striker-fired gun but rather has an internal hammer.

10

Love
at first
group.

ROST MARTIN

Springfield Armory Hellcat (Springfield-Armory.com)

This pistol came out right after the SIG P365 and is maybe the 365's biggest competitor. The Hellcat has a superior grip angle, perhaps best-in-class sights, and a higher capacity than the 365. It has been a huge success for Springfield. Where the Hellcat falls short is with one of the heaviest trigger pulls on the market, singlehandedly keeping Apex Tactical in business replacing the stock seven- to eight-pound pull with something that doesn't suck. And if you've never noticed the Hellcat has a crappy trigger, then you're exactly the kind of shooter it was made for.

Taurus GX4 (TaurusUSA.com)

Yes, I know, Taurus has a bad reputation in the past, as they struggled with quality control (QC) for about twenty years starting in the nineties, but between improved QC and modern manufacturing techniques which drastically reduce the opportunity for human error the guns they're putting out now are solid. The GX4 is a perfect example of this. I actually prefer it to the SIG P365 because of the more ergonomic grip, and while the sights and trigger aren't quite as good as the SIG, it is substantially less expensive. I torture-tested my sample, and could never get it to jam.

If it wasn't for S&W's original Shield (left), the SIG P365 probably wouldn't exist in its current form, but it lacked capacity. Enter the Shield Plus (right) which ups mag capacity by nearly 50%.

Smith & Wesson Shield Plus (Smith-Wesson.com)

If it wasn't for S&W's Shield, the SIG P365 probably wouldn't exist in its current form. The Shield is a great gun, and the only thing that was (arguably) holding it back was magazine capacity. That was fixed with the double-stack Shield Plus, and I consider it as good or better than any other pistol on this abbreviated list. If I didn't already own a Shield, I would have bought the Shield Plus I got in for testing. And I regret I didn't….

Stoeger STR-9 (StoegerIndustries.com)

The STR-9 Micro-Compact—inexpensive, reliable, durable. There's nothing that special about the pistol, but it is a solid, reliable gun at a very low price due to being made in Turkey. Stoeger's STR-9s are probably the best pistols you've never heard of.

Shadow Systems Corp. CR920 (ShadowSystemsCorp.com)

Shadow Systems makes Glock-pattern pistols that are better looking and have more features than Glocks, at the same price. The CR920 is a Glock 43-sized pistol that offers double-digit capacity, good looks, great ergonomics, a decent trigger, and better-than-average sights, while being made in America.

This is far from a complete list of what's out there, but it should give you a good starting point if you're in the market. But before I go…

Honorable Mention: S&W Bodyguard 2.0 (Smith-Wesson.com)

Yes, I know it's "only" a .380 ACP, but it's combination of amazing ergonomics, excellent sights, capacity, and superior trigger pull make this the .380 against which I believe all others will soon be judged. I would carry it over many of the micro- and sub-compact 9mms on the market simply because of how shootable it is. The Smith & Wesson Bodyguard 2.0 is so good that I wonder if in fact it might signal a new era of micro-compact .380s, just like the Ruger LCP did. I guess only time will tell. FN

Tarr ran the Stoeger STR-9 MicroCompact hard at a two-day class at Gunsite. He feels the STR-9s are the best pistols you've likely never heard of.

Just like SIG reinvented the possible with the P365 (top), Tarr wonders if Smith & Wesson has done the same with their new Bodyguard 2.0 (bottom).

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By David M. Fortier | Executive Editor

HORNADY'S NEW 338 ARC!

Is the Latest Addition to Hornady's Advanced Rifle Cartridge Line Something You Should Consider?

Hornady's latest cartridge, the 338 Advanced Rifle Cartridge, is an interesting "AC/DC" addition to their growing ARC cartridge family. Both supersonic and subsonic loads were developed and introduced, making it an obvious competitor to both the popular 300 AAC Blackout and Q, LLC's more recent 8.6mm Blackout. So, the immediate question is, should you consider Hornady's new 338 ARC for your needs?

I suppose the most obvious question is, what purpose does the 338 ARC serve? Basically, it is a step-up in bore size over the 300 AAC Blackout allowing it to put a larger diameter and heavier payload on target. Unlike the 6.5mm Creedmoor-based 8.6mm Blackout (which shares the same .338-inch bore-size), Hornady's 338 ARC fits into an AR-15. The 8.6mm Blackout, with its longer 43mm case length, requires a larger, heavier and more expensive AR-10 platform. So, in a nutshell, the 338 ARC is intended to out-perform the 300 AAC Blackout while doing it in a smaller, lighter and more compact package than the 8.6mm Blackout.

As it was intended to fit into a standard AR-15, or a micro-action bolt-gun, the 338 ARC's parent case is the 6.5mm Grendel, the same as the 6mm ARC. So, while it doesn't use a 5.56x45mm AR-15 bolt, Type 2 6.5mm Grendel/6mm ARC bolts are readily available. A number of companies will be offering barrels and it should feed from 6.5mm Grendel/6mm ARC magazines. This means that other than a 338 ARC barrel, bolts and magazines are not caliber specific and readily available on the commercial market. You do need a muzzle device with a large enough hole though for the .338-inch projectile. So, the 338 ARC does not require expensive proprietary parts and pieces.

New from Hornady is the dual purpose 338 Advanced Rifle Cartridge available in both subsonic and supersonic loads. (Photo by David Fortier)

Hornady is launching their new cartridge with two loads, a 307-grain SUB-X subsonic and a 175-grain hollow point supersonic in their Black line. The 307-grain SUB-X bullet is an expanding design which features a lead core, long grooves in its gilding metal jacket, and a hollow point cavity with a wide Flex Tip insert to aid expansion at low impact velocities. Advertised muzzle velocity from a 16-inch barrel is 1,050 fps. This projectile has a Sectional Density of 0.384 and a G1 Ballistic Coefficient of 0.375. The ballistic coefficient (BC) is rather low due to the relatively blunt nose. The 175-grain HP supersonic load is a bit sedate with an advertised muzzle velocity of just 2,075 fps from a 16-inch barrel. This light for caliber projectile has a sectional density (SD) of 0.219 and a G1 BC of 0.385.

The 338 ARC is intended to surpass the performance of the popular 300 AAC Blackout, L to R: 9mm Luger, 5.56x45mm, 7.62x39mm, 300 BLK Supersonic, 300 BLK Subsonic and 9x39mm. (Photo by David Fortier)

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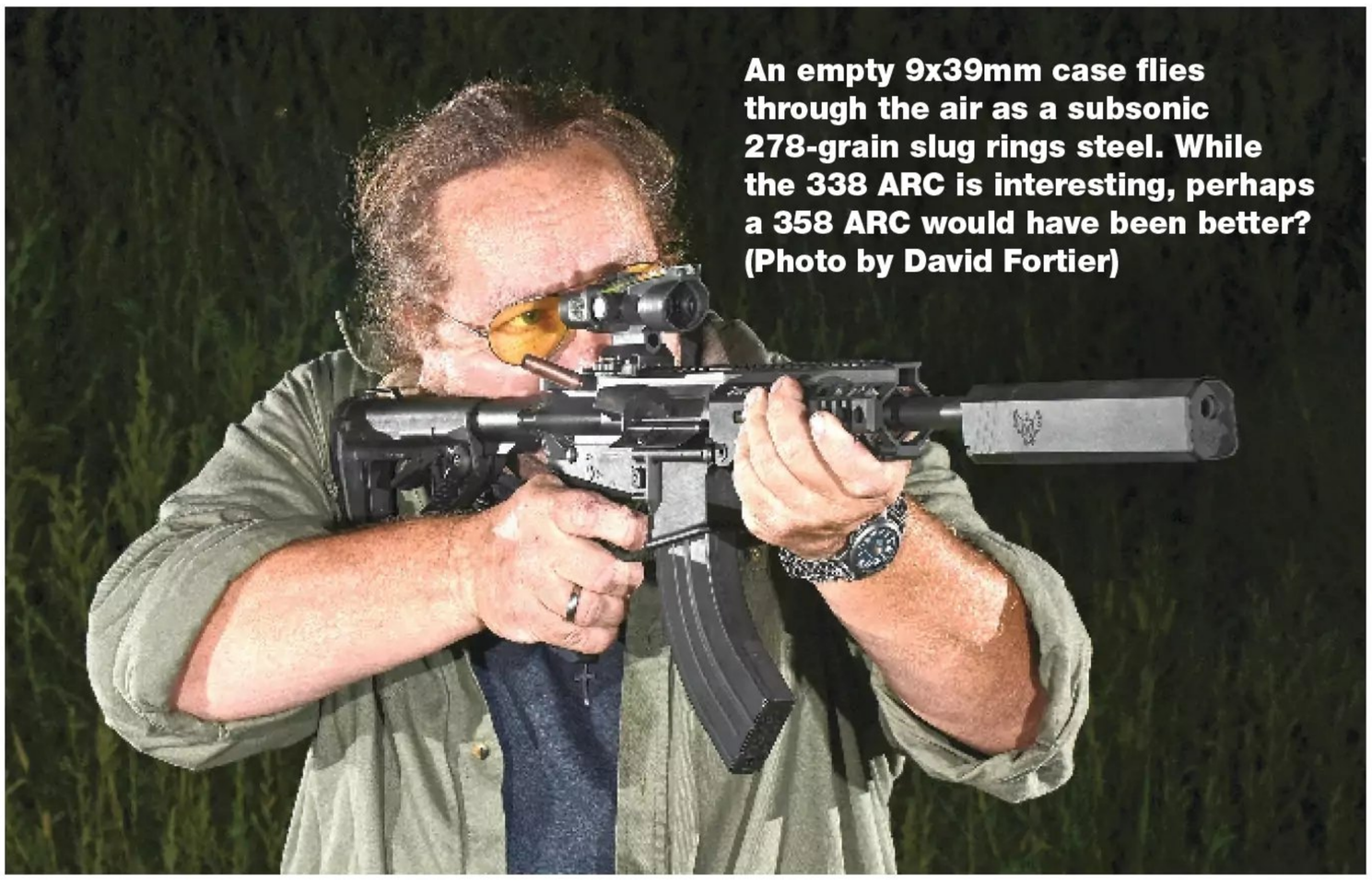

An empty 9x39mm case flies through the air as a subsonic 278-grain slug rings steel. While the 338 ARC is interesting, perhaps a 358 ARC would have been better? (Photo by David Fortier)

When I first had a chance to examine and fire the 338 ARC in July of 2024, I immediately noticed the odd look of the loaded ammunition. The projectiles are unusually long, and extend noticeably from the case mouth. I tried to show that in the photo I snapped of the ammunition while at the range. Basically, it has a short case with a long nose. The reduced case capacity is a virtue for a subsonic cartridge, aiding both efficiency and consistency. The reduced case capacity though is, of course, a negative when it comes to supersonic loads. One interesting selling point to the 338 ARC is its advertised ability to use the same gas port setting for both supersonic and subsonic loads in an AR-15. This makes switching back and forth between ammunition types seamless.

As its main rival is the 300 AAC Blackout, let's consider how the 338 ARC stacks up against this popular .30-caliber cartridge. In the simplest terms, the 300 AAC BLK was an attempt to put reliable subsonic and supersonic 7.62x39mm performance into an AR-15. This it succeeded in, and the cartridge became hugely popular in the US among hunters and recreational shooters. However, direct combat experience with specialized subsonic 7.62x39mm loads led the Soviet Spetsnaz to develop the 9x39mm subsonic cartridge. Basically, the accuracy and terminal performance of the 7.62x39mm subsonic ammunition was lacking. The 9x39mm with its 248- to 278-grain .364-inch projectiles put a much larger diameter and heavier payload on target, improving performance.

I mention Soviet experience with subsonic 7.62x39mm ammunition because many feel similarly about subsonic 300 AAC BLK. While it's very quiet, the long .30-caliber projectiles at pistol velocities are difficult to get to reliably expand a significant amount. While the 338 ARC is running a similar subsonic velocity to the 300 AAC BLK, it starts out slightly larger (.33 versus .30 caliber) in diameter and heavier. The larger diameter projectile makes it easier for the Hornady engineers to design a projectile which will reliably expand at these sloth-like velocities.

What about the negatives? What are some reasons to avoid Hornady's new 338 ARC? Some may feel Hornady didn't bump up the volume enough with the bore size, stopping at .338-inch instead of going bigger, like the 350 Legend did. Factory ammunition will likely be expensive and if you reload, you know .338-inch projectiles are not cheap. The weight of 307-grain subsonic ammunition will be hefty as well. A 20-round magazine loaded with 307-grain 338 ARC will weigh about the same as a 40-round magazine of 150-grain 7.62x51mm NATO. Just stop and think about that.

When it comes to suppressors, you can't simply reuse your .30-caliber can. You will need a larger .338 caliber unit, a suitable 9mm suppressor, or an even larger .45 caliber. So, that is something to consider as well. What about the supersonic load? In my opinion, the exterior ballistics of the 175-grain 338 ARC supersonic load are…unimpressive. Keep in mind the 350 Legend pushes a 180-grain bullet at a slightly faster 2,100 fps. Dropping from a 16-inch barrel to a shorter and handier barrel length, such as 12.5 inches, will further reduce that advertised 2,075 fps muzzle velocity.

On the plus side, the 338 ARC should function reliably, exhibit good accuracy, and its subsonic load should be very quiet. It will be easy to handload. Also, it doesn't require any weird superfast barrel twists, using a one turn in eight inch twist. Terminal performance on game animals should be a noticeable step up with subsonic loads compared to 300 AAC BLK. Building a reliable AR-15 using common parts, other than the barrel, should be simple.

Hornady now has a 22 ARC, 6mm ARC and 338 ARC. Will the 338 ARC be successful? I cannot say, but it's interesting to remember back to the 2003 SHOT Show. It was then that an engineer from Lapua, Janne Pohjoispaa, walked into Alexander Arms' booth, unfolded a piece of paper and handed it to Bill Alexander. Drawn on it was a .220 Russian based 8.6x39mm cartridge Pohjoispaa had dubbed the .338 Lapua Tactical. Alexander replied he could build a rifle for it, but it wouldn't be a big seller. He suggested necking the .220 Russian up to 6.5mm instead of .338, and thus the foundation for the 6.5mm Grendel was laid. All these years later, we now have a similar .338 cartridge to play with. I just wonder if a 358 ARC would have made more sense.

Visit Hornady.com for additional information. FN

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By Patrick Sweeney | Suppressors

SILENCER CENTRAL BANISH SPEED K Ti

Let's Get Lightweight!

The Speed K and the Speed K Ti are both ultra-compact. The Ti model (the tested one, here) is super-light, at a nudge over half a pound.

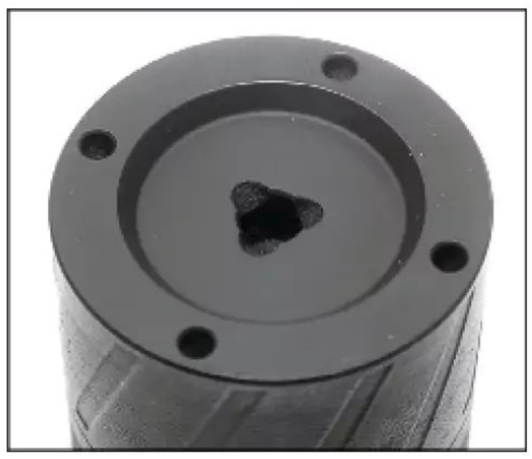
Silencer Central teamed up with Federal to create an ultra-short 5.56 suppressor for use in an LE setting. What the LE side wanted was something quiet-enough, but with reduced back pressure, short length, and extreme durability as well as needing to be full-auto rated. If you've ever seen police officers using equipment, you can understand the need for durability, and as a result, the Banish Speed K tipped the scales at a smidge over fourteen ounces. Why? Inconel, the Speed K is 100% Inconel. If you want your silencer to stand up to full-auto use, there will have to be at least a big dollop of Inconel in there. That's heavy. So, for the rest of us, who will use a suppressor hard but not subject it to full auto use, Silencer Central turned away from Inconel, and embraced titanium. Thus, the Speed K Ti was born.

Made entirely of titanium, the Speed K Ti is light, at just over eight-and-a-half ounces, and it is short, coming in at four inches in length. Now, the length does depend in part on what kind of mounting system you use, and there, Silencer Central has you covered. The Speed K Ti uses the now industry standard HUB system, with the rear of the silencer threaded to 1.375"x24, so you can install any HUB-standard rear cap you want. You have the full set of options from direct thread to any quick-detached (QD) mounting system that makes a hub rear cap to fit their QD muzzle device. Mine came with a direct-thread rear cap, which is just fine. If the point of the exercise is to keep things as light as possible, then a direct thread mounting system is the lightest to be had. Anything QD adds weight, as the muzzle device and the rear cap add ounces.

The Speed K Ti is additive machined, as you can readily see if you unscrew whatever mounting system is installed in the HUB threads. Silencer Central has gone to great lengths to design the baffle system so it performs two tasks: one, it reduces noise, and two, it improves flow-through to reduce back pressure. With the rear cap off, you'll notice the blast baffle, that's the first one the muzzle blast encounters. It has six fins on it. When I saw that, I had to face Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and tip my hat to the designers and engineering staff. The blast baffle takes a big hit on each shot. If we assume the uncorking pressure of your AR-15 is 17,000 PSI (it is the ballpark figure, given various loadings and barrel lengths) then the blast baffle has to take a 17KPSI hit. Adding stiffening ribs to the blast baffle is a clever idea, and one that can only be done by additive manufacturing.

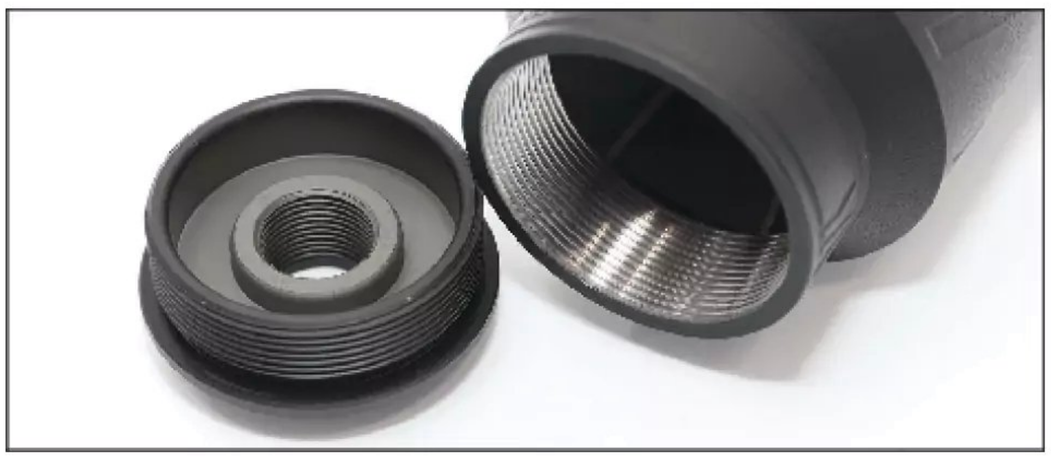
Someone is probably thinking, *"It is only four inches long; how good can it be?"* Well, add in the width, at two inches in diameter, and the volume jumps back up. If we compare it to a standard-diameter suppressor, at 1.5 inches, the Speed K Ti has as much volume as that standard at seven inches in length (I did the arithmetic three different ways; it came out the same every time). So, you can get three inches off the total length of your AR-15 carbine or SBR and get the same internal volume.

"There's got to be a catch, right?" Again, I know what you're thinking. But a two-inch diameter suppressor is not so much larger that it extends out past the diameter of your free-float



The front cap, non-removable, is vented to improve gas flow-through.

The rear cap that came is the direct-thread version, the lightest and most compact setup you can have.



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The blast baffle is supported by ribs to add strength.

handguard. So, it isn't like you've got a quart-sized tin can on your muzzle, and the light weight means that despite its diameter, the Speed K Ti is not going to significantly change the balance or swing of your rifle.

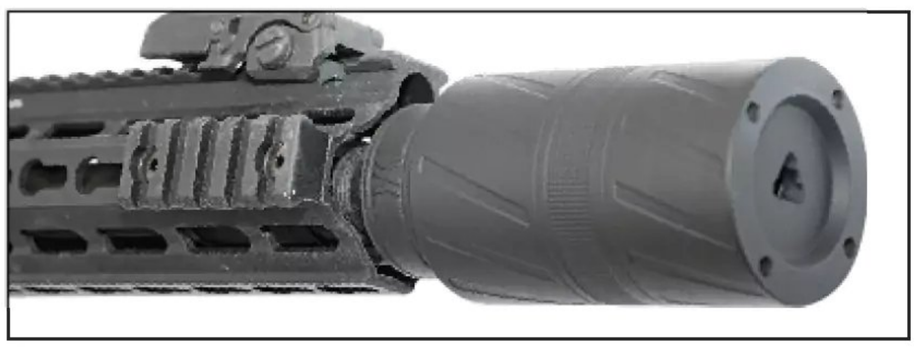
There is one drawback, with one caveat. The Speed K is not rated for full-auto fire. Not that many of us have that option, but some shooters seem to place a lot of value on having that extra durability. Okay, then you go with the Speed K, in Inconel, and its extra six ounces of weight. The caveat? Despite not being full auto rated, the Speed K Ti does not have a barrel length restriction. In talking with the folks at Silencer Central I heard one remark, *"Oh, we've run it on a five-and-a-half-inch barrel."* I had to blink at that as the shortest I've been able to bring myself to shoot is an AR-15 with a 7.5-inch barrel, and that was just plain not fun unsuppressed, bordering on obnoxious. I don't own one shorter than that, but I bet in my circle of shooters at least one of them does. (No, I'm not going to search him out and try the Speed K Ti on his blaster.) However, if you have one that short then Silencer Central has tested the Speed K Ti on one similar, and you are good to go. The Speed K Ti makes even the 7.50-inch barrel SBR less work and almost fun. Gas blowback? Greatly diminished, and with some loads not even there.

Using the Speed K Ti on an SBR can make it a lot more fun to go to the range. It doesn't add much to the overall length, either.

As far as calibers are concerned, the Speed K Ti is good for 5.56 and everything smaller, with two things to keep in mind: whatever you use has to have a jacketed bullet, and the HUB system means you can get yourself in trouble. You have to stick with jacketed bullets, since the Speed K Ti is not disassemblable. You can't take it apart and scrub out the gunk, you can only burn it out. So do not use .22LR through your Speed K Ti. If you do, you have no one to blame but yourself, but, .22WMR, the various 17s (as long as the case is not larger than that of the 223/5.56), and such are all yours to use. The second part is the rear cap. The HUB system means you can swap rear caps and install a QD system. It also means you can inadvertently install a rear cap that would then fit the Speed K Ti onto a rifle or handgun not suited to it. So, if you are going to go to the range and bring some friends so they can shoot a suppressed firearm, do not take extra rear caps. Take the 1/2x28 cap for your AR-15, and if you are going to shoot something bigger, have a different suppressor for that rifle. Save yourself the heartache of blowing up your Speed K Ti. I have to remind you that this is not just a Silencer Central situation, it applies to all silencers using the HUB system.

As far as dampening the noise, Silencer Central reports that the Speed K Ti knocks just over 20 dB off of the muzzle blast. Using a rifle-length barrel and mild .223 ammunition, this can get you down into the generally accepted "hearing safe" zone, that is, under 140 dB. But, on an SBR, and fed 5.56, a 20 dB decrease isn't going to get you below 140 dB. It is, however, plenty good enough to make shooting with foam earplugs just fine. Despite the general acceptance of 140 as the threshold, I find that my hearing is good enough that 140 isn't my threshold, but we aren't looking to the Speed K Ti to get the maximum reduction.

The Speed K Ti is for competition, hunting, work around the farm or ranch, and law enforcement where the light weight and compact size are of greater value than the extra dBs a much larger and heavier suppressor could shave off. Silencer Central can even make the paperwork end of things easy as well. FN



At two inches in diameter, the Speed K Ti does not hang out past your free-float handguard. At least, not enough to matter.

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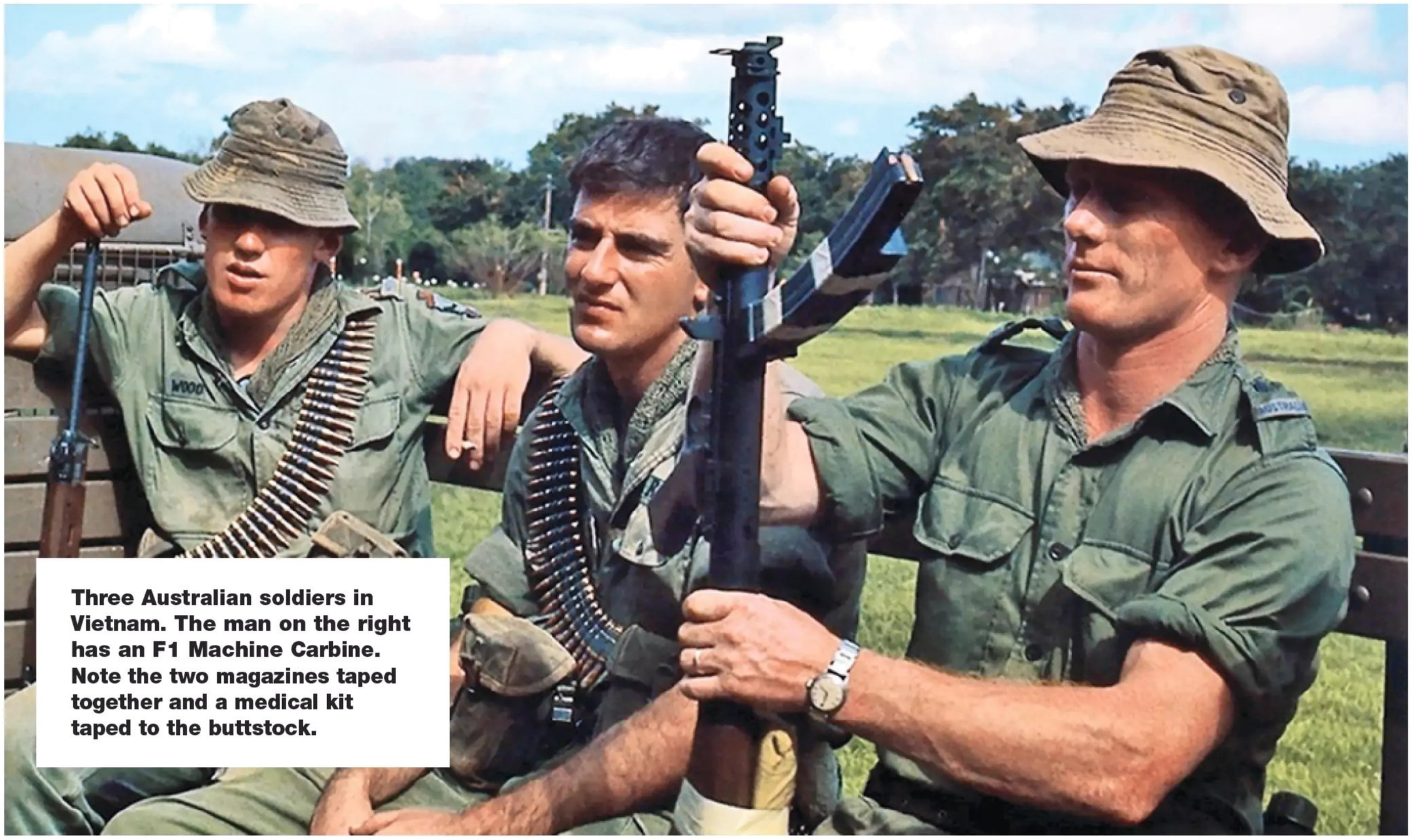

Three Australian soldiers in Vietnam. The man on the right has an F1 Machine Carbine. Note the two magazines taped together and a medical kit taped to the buttstock.

THE AUSTRALIAN F1 SUBMACHINE GUN

Thunder Down Under

Australia was originally settled by people from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and they have maintained strong relations with the British as regards to their society, laws, customs… and military. The Australian armed forces adhered to British pattern small arms during the 19th and most of the 20th centuries except for one area where their reputation for uniqueness became obvious—submachine guns.

With the outbreak of WWII, "Aussies" served alongside Commonwealth forces in North Africa and the Mediterranean theatres where they earned an enviable reputation for toughness and aggressiveness. They were armed with standard British small arms—the No. Mk. III* Lee-Enfield rifle, Bren and Vickers machine guns. During the fighting, they became aware of the usefulness of the submachine gun and managed to obtain some M1928A1 Thompsons. Unfortunately, British army needs took precedence, and they did not receive many.

A "Digger" in Papua New Guinea armed with a M1928A1 Thompson.

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The Austen Machine Carbine combined features of the Sten gun and German MP40. (Rock Island Auction Co.)

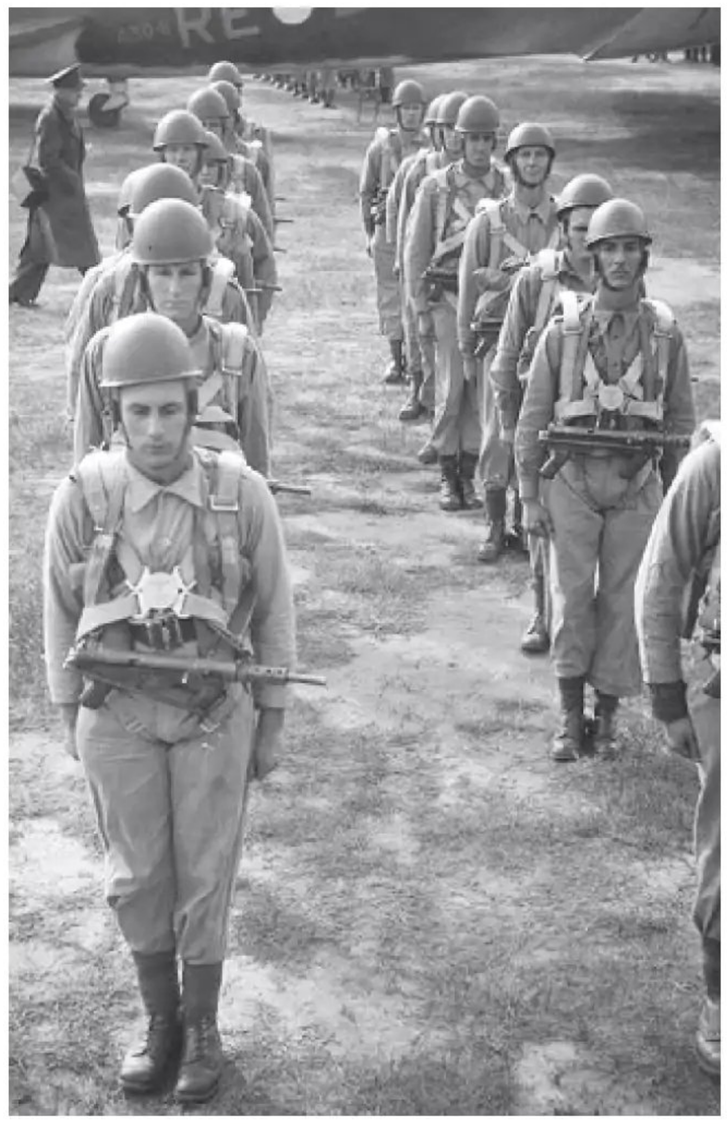
When Japan entered the war most Australian units were withdrawn to provide protection for Australia and from 1942 to 1944 made up the bulk of Allied infantry fighting in the Southwest Pacific theatre.

Much of the combat in this region consisted of jungle fighting and it became obvious that the submachine gun was the perfect weapon. They obtained numbers of Thompsons, and it was the primary submachine gun used by the Australian Army in the infamous Kokoda Track campaign in 1942. It was used in jungle patrols and ambushes, where it was valued for its close-range firepower. But, as in North Africa, there were not enough of them.[1]

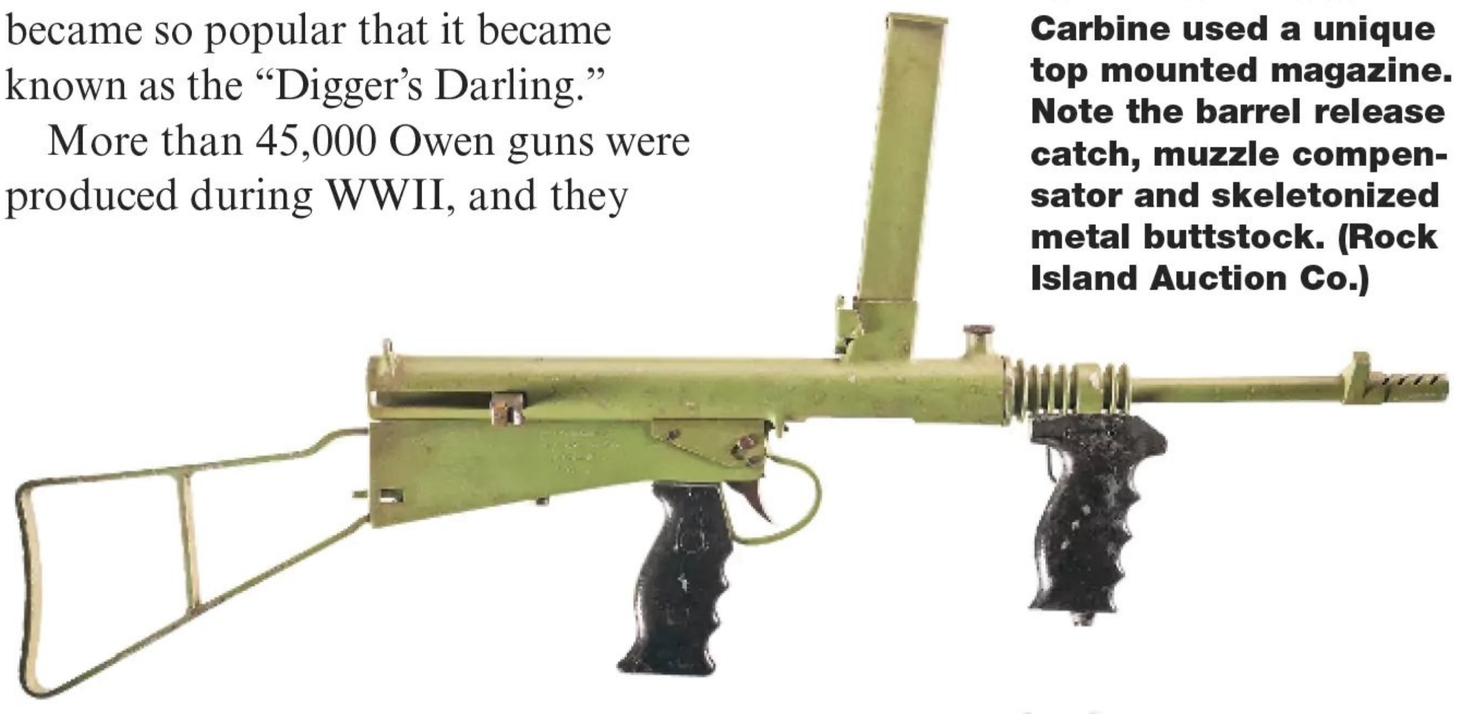
In 1942, the Aussies adopted the Machine Carbine 9MM Austen Mark I (from "Australian Sten") a submachine gun that combined features of the British Sten gun and German MP40 and made use of a number of die cast parts. 19,914 Austens were produced during the war by Diecasters Ltd. of Melbourne and W. T. Carmichael Ltd of Sydney. It was not overly popular and, in 1942, it was replaced by the Machine Carbine 9MM Owen.

The Owen was produced at Lysaght's Works in Newcastle. It was a blowback operated gun that made wide use of stamped steel parts and used a unique top-mounted 34-round magazine. With the top mounted magazine, if mud entered the weapon, it would either fall out of the ejection port on its own or be pushed out by the magazine spring. Trials showed it superior to the Sten Gun and Thompson and it became known for its reliability under the worst conditions of jungle warfare. It first saw service in 1942 and became so popular that it became known as the "Digger's Darling."

More than 45,000 Owen guns were produced during WWII, and they



Australian paratroopers armed with Austen Machine Carbines.



The Owen Machine Carbine used a unique top mounted magazine. Note the barrel release catch, muzzle compensator and skeletonized metal buttstock. (Rock Island Auction Co.)

New Guinea, 1943. An Aussie soldier armed with an Owen Machine Carbine.

Vietnam, 1965. An Australian soldier holding an Owen Machine Carbine.

A soldier of the Papuan Infantry Battalion armed with an Owen Machine Carbine.

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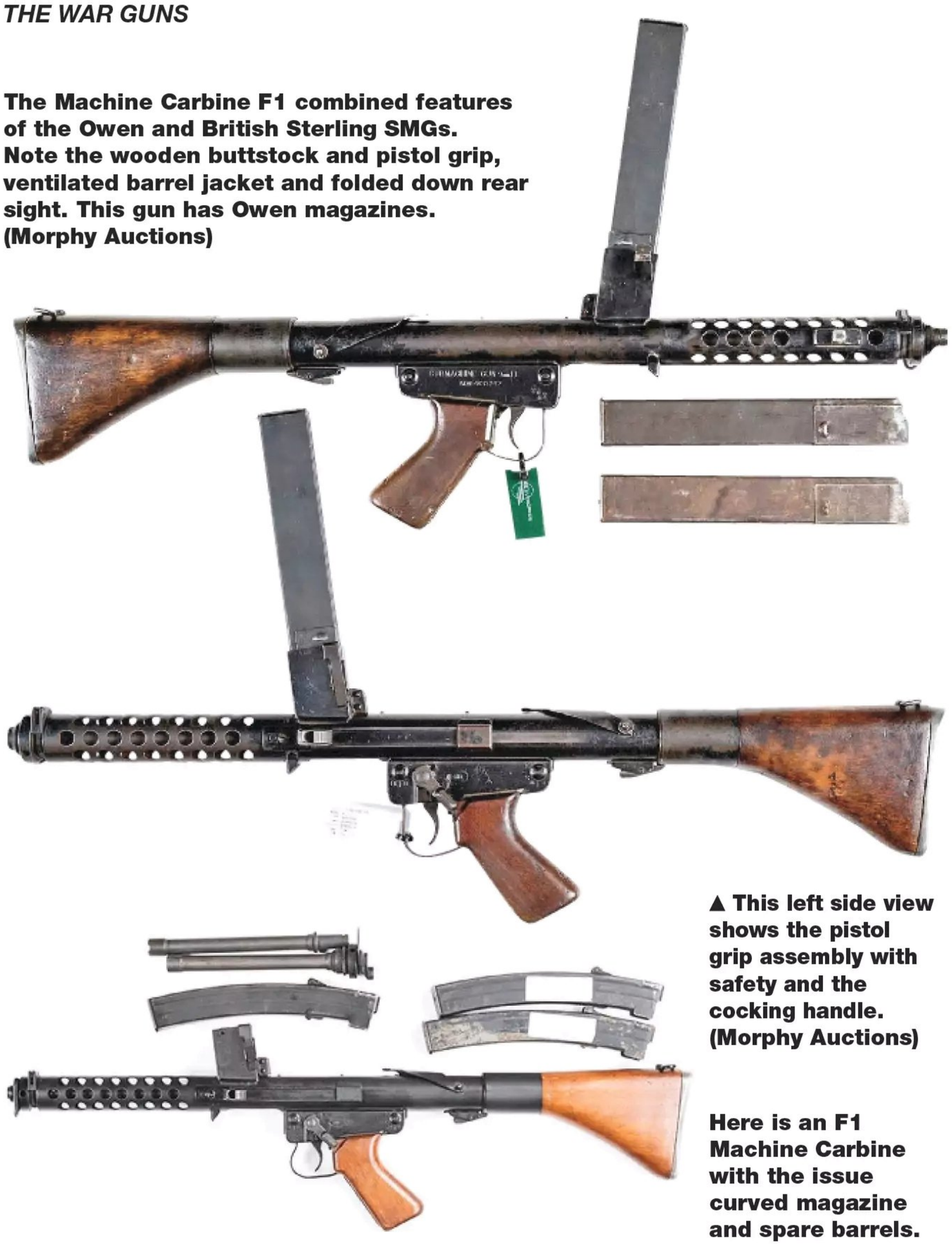
The Machine Carbine F1 combined features of the Owen and British Sterling SMGs. Note the wooden buttstock and pistol grip, ventilated barrel jacket and folded down rear sight. This gun has Owen magazines. (Morphy Auctions)



▲ This left side view shows the pistol grip assembly with safety and the cocking handle. (Morphy Auctions)

Here is an F1 Machine Carbine with the issue curved magazine and spare barrels.

were provided to New Zealand units and native troops fighting the Japanese in Papua New Guinea. It continued in service during the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency and in the early years of the Vietnam War.

Beginning in 1963, the long serving Owens were replaced by the Machine Carbine 9MM F1, which shared many features of the Owen and the UK's Sterling submachine gun. Designed and produced at Lightgow Small Arms Factory, the F1 was a blowback operated weapon which fired from an open bolt and used a fixed firing pin, a one-piece tubular receiver with a quick-change barrel, removable wooden butt and pistol grip. It used a curved, detachable 34-round box magazine that was inserted in a magazine housing on top of the barrel where it is more convenient for carrying and when lying prone.[2]

The ejection port is under the magazine and the pistol grip housing at its rear and a stud at its front prevents the shooter from placing their hand under it. The trigger has a two-stage pull, half back for semi-auto fire and fully back for full auto, the safety catch was easily operated by the thumb. A non-reciprocating cocking handle is located on the left side of the receiver and can be latched into the bolt allowing it to be worked forwards and backwards to clear fouling.

A wooden butt plate and pistol grip are identical to those on the Lithgow made L1A1 SLR (FN-FAL). A lug on the right side of the ventilated barrel jacket allows mounting a bayonet while the forward sling swivel prevents the shooter's hand from moving over the muzzle. Due to the vertical magazine, the sights of the F1 were offset to the right of the weapon requiring a slight tilt of the head to the right when aiming. The rear sight is a folding metal flap with an aperture while the front sight is a blade mounted on the right side of the magazine housing.

An Australian soldier firing an F1. Note the rear sight folded up.

An Australian sailor firing an F1. Note the spent cases being ejected downward.

An Australian naval boarding party armed with F1 Machine Carbines.

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An Australian soldier armed with an F1 Machine Carbine.

An F1 disassembled. (Courtesy of Ian McCollum)

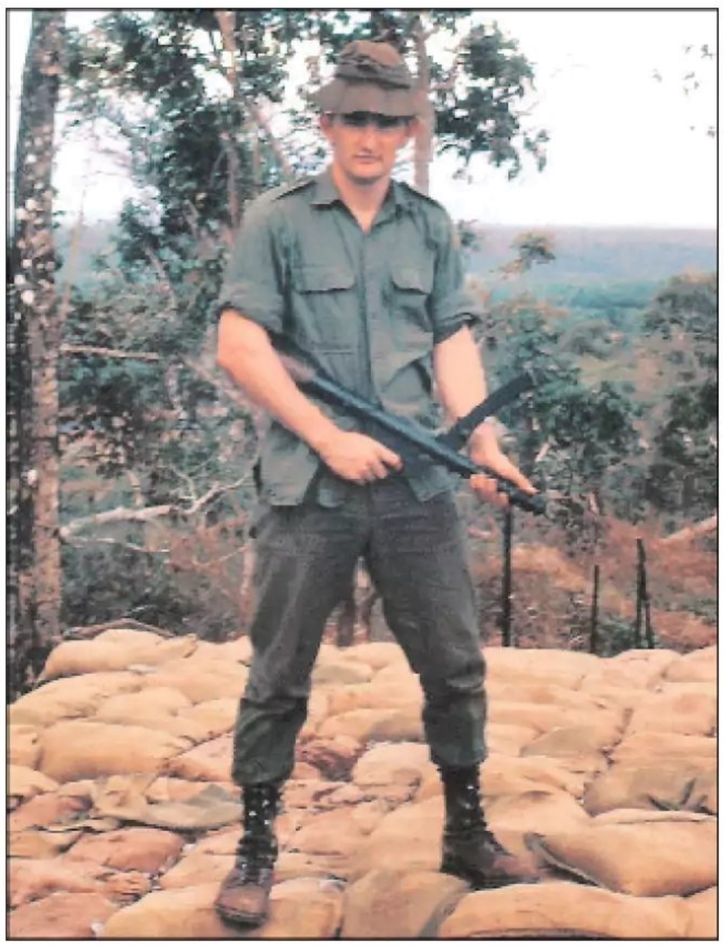
The F1 was chambered for the 9mm Parabellum which was known in Australian service as the S.A., Ball, 9mm, Mark 1. It used a 19mm, tapered, rimless case whose 116-grain FMJ bullet is propelled to 1,250 fps. Trial guns were known as the X3, which was redesignated the F1 upon adoption.

The F1 first saw service in Vietnam and later with Australian peacekeeping troops through to the 1990s. While the F1 was appreciated for its reliability, to those troops who had experience with the venerable Owen Gun, the F1 lacked a certain "something." Colonel Warren Feakes noted that "every time I picked up an F1 I had the feeling that something was missing." Another Australian veteran, Warrant Officer Kevin Konemann, who served in Vietnam in 1966–67, recalled: "It was awkward to fire from the shoulder and more awkward to fire from the hip" and that "the F1 wasn't popular. Soldiers found it more difficult to point and bring on target than the Owen Gun and firing from the shoulder… was decidedly more difficult without the front hand grip."[3]

While Australian troops in Vietnam replaced most of their F1s with M16A1s, many F1s remained in service in Australia with rear echelon troops, aircraft crews, transport units, armored vehicle crews, military police and the Royal Australian Navy until they were replaced with the Austeyr 5.56mm F88C carbine (Steyr AUG).

Others were provided to the Royal Malaysian Police and Papua New Guinea Constabulary while a small number showed up in Rhodesia during the bush war against black nationalist guerillas.

By the time production ended in 1991, in excess of 25,000 had been produced. FN



Vietnam, 1968. An Australian soldier armed with an F1 Machine Carbine.

Australian soldiers in training in Malaya. Their officer is armed with an F1 Machine Carbine.

1 file:///C:/Users/pscar/AppData/Local/Temp/MicrosoftEdgeDownloads/766c0e77-3322-4509-a18a-8aefdf2ae174/[22134603%20-%20Vulcan]%20The%20Tommy%20Gun%20in%20Jungle%20Warfare.pdf

2 The F1 could also use the Sten and Owen straight magazines.

3 https://armourersbench.com/2018/01/27/f1-submachine-gun/

SPECIFICATIONS
MACHINE CARBINE 9MM F1

Caliber:	S.A., Ball, 9mm, Mark 1z
Overall Length:	28 in.
Barrel Length:	7.8 in.
Weight (empty):	8.2 lbs.
Magazine:	34 rds.
Sights:	Front: Blade Rear: Folding aperture
Bayonet:	Knife style with 7.75 in. blade
ROF:	600 rpm

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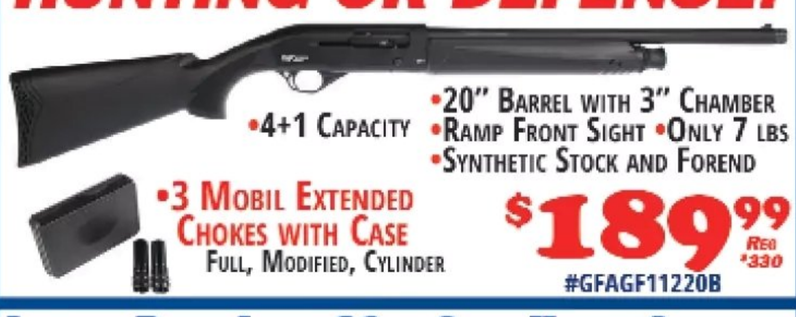

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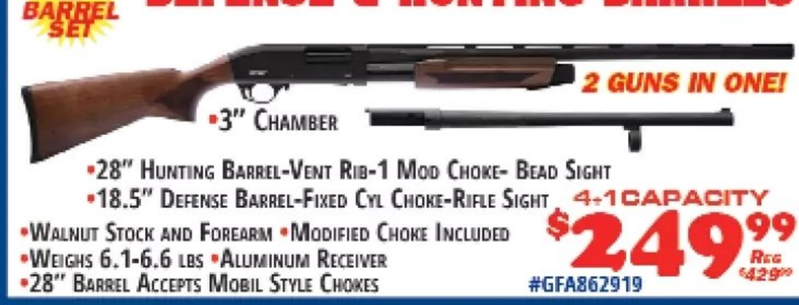

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The GSG-9 adapted for SIG 320 magazines. The Aimpoint Micro H-2 and J-Mac Customs AB-8R arm brace make it ready for almost anything under 100 yards.

GERMAN SPORT GUNS GSG-9 FROM AMERICAN TACTICAL

For Home Defense and Fun at the Range!

By Vincent L. DeNiro, Editor-in-Chief
Cover and lead photo by Sean Utley

I became very familiar with American Tactical, Inc. (ATI) back in 2007, when I met its founder and CEO Tony Dichario while I worked for Beretta. Prior to that, I was a customer of American Tactical's sister company AMCHAR Wholesale, which provides firearms and other related equipment to retailers across the USA. American Tactical is a firearms brand that manufactures and imports firearms including over and under shotguns, AR-15-type rifles and pistols in the Omni line, semi-auto, pump, and single-shot shotguns, and a wide selection of handguns in .22LR and .45 ACP, some in 1911 configuration. I have written up a number of these reasonably priced and reliable firearms from ATI over the years (just type "American Tactical" in the search bar at FirearmsNews.com to read some of the articles).

The GSG-9 is from another line of firearms, German Sport Guns, and yes, I have reviewed and purchased some of these great guns, which includes the .22 LR-chambered GSG-16 (enter "GSG-16" in the search bar at Firearms News.com to read my review). The GSG-16 and GSG-9 have about the same number of similarities and differences when compared to the MP5-type firearms, such as the HK 94 carbine, the GSG-5 22.LR (MP5-type rifle), and MP5-type pistols such as the MAC-5, which I reviewed for the November 2024 issue. I first saw the GSG-9 at the 2023 SHOT Show in the ATI booth and became interested in the design (you can watch the video of my interview with ATI at FirearmsNews.com). So, let's take a closer look.

Features

The GSG-9 is a blowback-operated semi-auto pistol in 9mm. This is one of the differences from MP5-type firearms,

The "little brother" to the GSG-9 is the GSG-16 rifle in .22 LR. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

which use a locking roller system (instead of traditional lugs) for delayed-blowback operation. Blowback operation typically results in having to utilize a much heavier bolt mass as well as a harder-to-actuate charging handle due to the heavier recoil spring needed. However, the GSG-9 bolt (with recoil spring) weighed in at 16 ounces, which is in stark contrast to say an UZI carbine closed-bolt assembly, which weighs almost 30 ounces. Compared to an MP5 bolt assembly, which is delayed blowback, the GSG-9 bolt assembly only weighs about three ounces more — light for a straight-blowback 9mm of this type. Interesting.

The bar-shaped steel charging handle, with hourglass-shape for grasping with a finger, comes out at 90 degrees and is located at the front left, just above the handguard, but it can be reversed to the right side if one prefers or is left-handed. It is non-reciprocating and independently spring-loaded. The handle can also be locked back in a channel by pulling up after it is in the rearward position (like an MP5). One can easily perform the "MP5 slap" to chamber a round if they choose to load the GSG-9 in this way. The polymer forend is 6.5 inches and has two M-LOK slots at 3, 6, and 9 o'clock. It is also part of the charging handle assembly cover and guide.

The receiver is aluminum, and the finish matches the polymer forend and grip assembly so well that it almost appears that the entire firearm is polymer. Across the top is 13 inches of "rail estate" (as Patrick Sweeney likes to say) with a protected polymer front sight and an adjustable rear sight. GSG includes nine extra front sights of different heights (for elevation), and styles (four square posts, three white-dot posts, three black-dot posts) to choose from, and an additional rear sight. I guess the idea also is: if it breaks, you have a pile for replacements (reminiscent of the spare parts philosophy of the "very plastic" Weaver Arms Nighthawk 9mm carbine from the 1980s, but that's a story for another day — look for my article in 2025). Holding the bolt assembly in is a polymer end cap, which incorporates a couple of inches of P-rail — yes brace fans, it's ready when you are.

The precision hammer-forged barrel is 7.5 inches long and topped off with an M13x1 thread pitch. The thread pitch is an issue because, well, this is 'Merica! Most suppressors and muzzle attachments manufactured here are not in metric. Metric thread pitches require an adapter, and although these adapters can be found, adding adapters could slightly throw off the alignment on a suppressor, which may result in a bullet strike damaging the suppressor end cap or internals. Also, when the flash hider is removed, almost the entire threaded portion of the barrel is covered by a bracket that is part of the polymer handguard, which also houses the charging-handle assembly.

Editor-in-Chief Vincent DeNiro with Kevin Stasik of ATI during the 2023 SHOT Show, when the GSG-9 was announced. (Vincent D. DeNiro)

Just under 20 inches, the GSG-9 is a compact package for this type of firearm. It only weighs about four pounds. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

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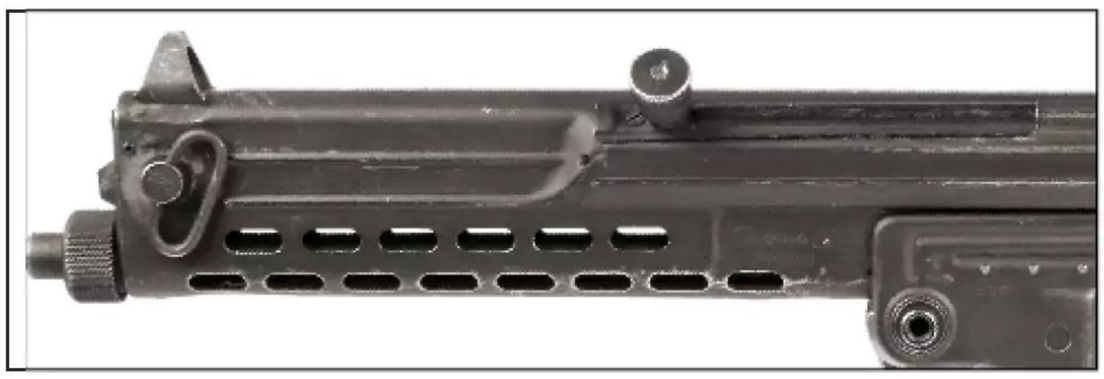


The charging handle location, as well as M-LOK and cooling slots in the handguard, remind DeNiro of the Walther MPL submachine gun more than the MP5 in the left-side front area of the pistol. (Vincent L. DeNiro, MPL photo by Will Dabbs, MD)

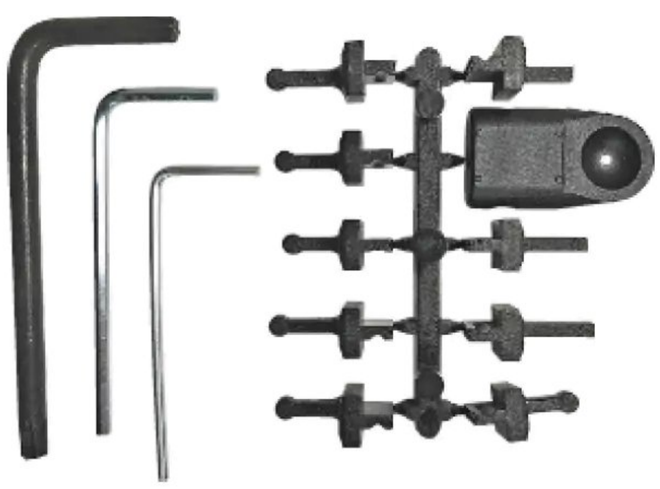
The hourglass-shaped charging handle is easy and comfortable to use. It is non-reciprocating and can lock the bolt open via a channel, similar to an MP5. (Sean Utley)

A 13-inch P-rail with a protected polymer front sight and an adjustable rear sight line the top of the pistol. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The narrow base of the flash hider will screw in, but anything of a larger diameter, like a suppressor, will not. There are M13x1 to 1/2x28 adapters for 9mm available, which would extend the standard thread for an American can, but I do not have any to verify if they will work.

The grip assembly, which houses the fire-control group, is removeable in a similar way an MP5 grip assembly is removed, except that there is a double-headed bolt, which acts as a retaining pin to hold it on instead of a spring-loaded pin. The grip has finger grooves, and these are comfortable for my large hands. It is also hollow, so one can remove the bottom plate with a small Philips-head screwdriver and stuff it with whatever small emergency items and parts you may need in the field. The ambidextrous safety selector is comfortable to use and locks positively in the fire and safety positions; similar location to an MP5-type firearm. You get the choice of using a right-sided button to release the magazine, or an ambidextrous paddle-type magazine release located at the top front of the trigger guard. Using the button mag release with the trigger finger is a bit of a stretch, even with large hands — the same issue as any MP5-type firearm.

Now for the unique feature, the way the GSG-9 can use both Glock-type magazines and SIG 320 magazines. But first, a bit of history. Most rifle-caliber to pistol-caliber conversions use adapters within the magazine well in order to accept standard pistol magazines. When Colt came out with its 9mm submachine gun version of the M16, it used a magazine block (adapter) inside the magazine well, which would allow a proper fit of a slightly-modified UZI magazine. Olympic Arms (OA), a once-powerhouse company in the area of non-Colt AR-type rifles, was really the pioneer in pistol-caliber conversions of AR-type rifles back in the 1980s, but its method was different than Colt's. Instead of installing an adapter inside the magazine well in order to use a standard (or slightly modified) existing magazine, OA's idea was to weld a block to the top portion of a submachine gun magazine (different types, depending on caliber), which was the same shape as a standard AR-15 magazine with slot, to use the existing magazine catch. OA used M3 Grease Gun magazines for its .45 ACP carbine conversions, later replacing those with modified and scarce



Front and rear sights can be easily replaced, and the GSG-9 comes with extras. Also included are two Allen wrenches and one star/Torx wrench for disassembly. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The GSG-9 is ready to accept arm braces, with the end cap incorporating a P-rail. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

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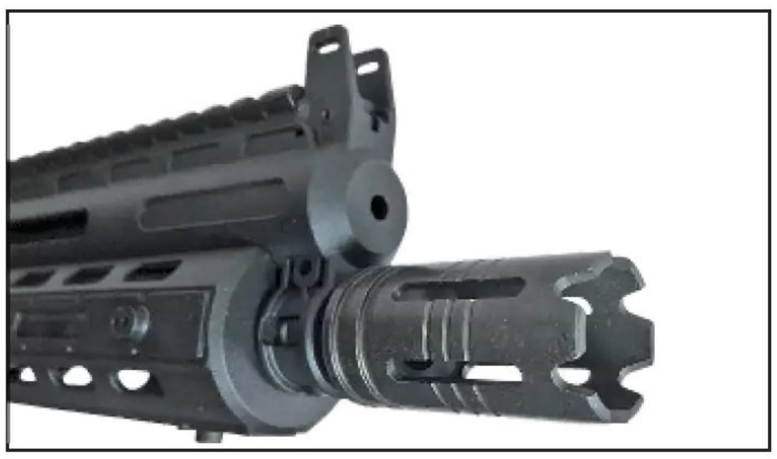

A unique, and premium-looking, flash hider is the cherry on top of the 7.5-inch precision hammer-forged barrel. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The barrel's thread pitch is M13x1. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The hollow finger-grooved grip can be used for storage of emergency ammo, wrenches, batteries, spare sights, or whatever useful will fit. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

Two ways to release the magazine: a right-sided button, or an ambidextrous paddle-type lever. The safety selector is also ambidextrous. The receiver is manufactured from aluminum. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

UZI .45 magazines (these are extremely rare, and I recently saw one offered on GunBroker.com for $670).

Today, mag wells have been angled and shrunken for AR-platform carbines so that standard pistol magazines can be inserted. The designers of the GSG-9 went the way of Olympic Arms, instead of Colt, by producing a polymer magazine adapter which snaps/locks on to the upper portion of a pistol magazine. The adapter locks on to the recessed portions on both sides of the magazine body that the pistol magazine catch locks on to, but also has a cutout in which the GSG-9 magazine catch locks into — this is on the back left portion of the magazine. I was skeptical at first that the adapter would hold in place, but after inserting and removing the adapted Glock 17 magazine a few times, I saw that it was locked in place with little play. The adapter is really locked on to the magazine, so well that it was very difficult to remove it and required two flathead screwdrivers at once — that's a good thing. This GSG-9 came set up for Glock 17 magazines, and I will describe how to switch to SIG 320 magazines later in the article. Note that no magazines are included with the GSG-9.

A magazine adapter must be installed in order for the GSG-9 to function. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

Test Firing

I didn't know what to expect, since I just reviewed a MAC-5, which is of the HK-designed MP5-type (I have almost 40 years of experience with MP5-type firearms). The GSG-9 feels light, and it weighed in at about four pounds with no magazine or flash hider. Compared to a MAC-5 (MP5-type pistol) at five pounds (with wide forend and no magazine or flash hider), I could feel the one-pound difference, and while that is great, I was now expecting a bit more recoil. I had adapted three Glock-pattern magazines for my initial test: a Magpul 17-rounder, a South Korean 33-round magazine, and the new Omega series steel-reinforced 15-round magazine by Elite Tactical Systems (ETS).

I loaded up the ETS magazine (ETSGroup.us) with 15 rounds of Black Hills 115-grain FMJ (Black-Hills.com)

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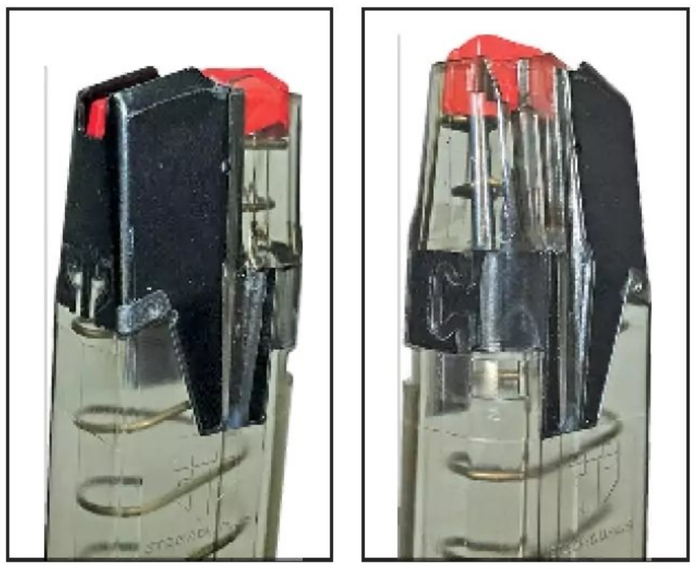
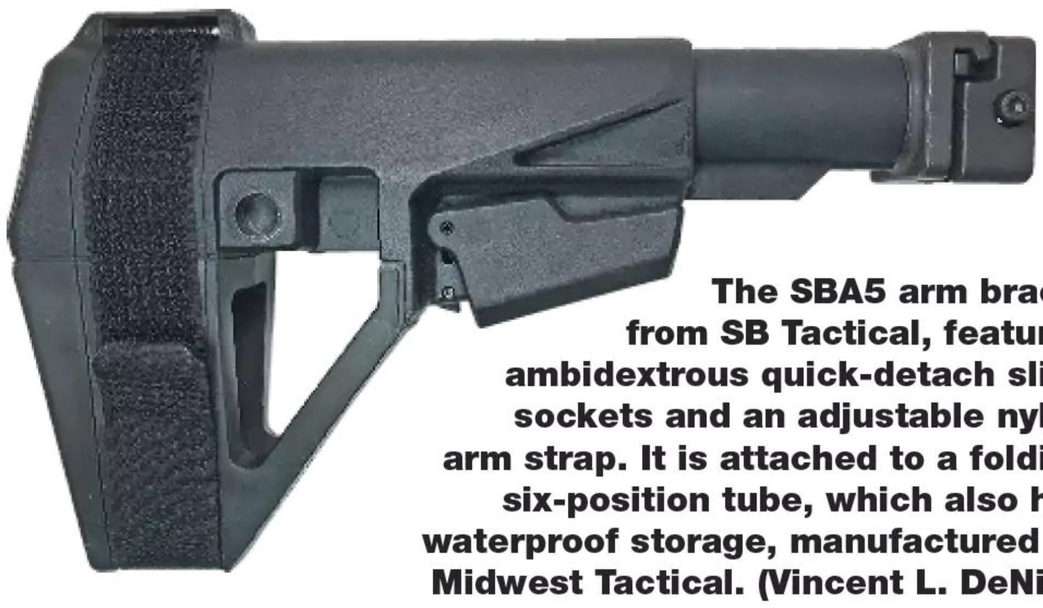
After firing a one- and two-handed test of the GSG-9 as it arrived, DeNiro later added an SB Tactical arm brace, Aimpoint Micro H-2 red dot and the new 30-round ETS Omega magazine. (LAD)



The new steel-reinforced Omega series magazines by ETS are a great choice for GSG-9 owners. (Vincent L. DeNiro)



The SBA5 arm brace, from SB Tactical, features ambidextrous quick-detach sling sockets and an adjustable nylon arm strap. It is attached to a folding six-position tube, which also has waterproof storage, manufactured by Midwest Tactical. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The SBA5 arm brace works well for one-handed shooting. (LAD)

and wow, did this gun shoot well! Light weight, nice trigger, and accurate. Now, I was just plinking on a 14-inch steel target at 50 yards, as well as a full steel silhouette at about 30 yards, along with some five-inch poppers at the same distance. The charging handle was comfortable to "rack" back, and the recoil was pretty mild, although I was using the SBA5 brace from SB Tactical (SB-Tactical.com), which adds one pound seven ounces of weight when attached to Midwest Tactical's folding six-position tube with P-rail clamp, which also offers waterproof storage (MidwestIndustriesInc.com). I would say that the felt recoil was light, straight-back and snappy when compared to an MP5-type pistol, which I would say is a bit more of a push with bouncy recoil in rapid fire. Double taps were easy. I also fired it one-handed and two-handed without the brace. It was no problem hitting the smaller steel plate at 50 yards, the full-size silhouette at 30 yards was child's play. Not bad for an SMG-sized pistol of this type. All of my initial shooting was with the "iron" sights.

I also tried one of my favorite dot optics, the Aimpoint Micro H-2 (Aimpoint.us). Weighing in at only 3.3 ounces (without mount), it has a 2 MOA red dot, which is very clear for me — I have an astigmatism which makes some red dots unusable for me. It has a battery life of five years, but I got mine over six years ago, and it's still running on the original battery. Mine has the AR lever release mount, which is a high mount, so I asked Aimpoint to send me a low mount. However, the high mount worked so well for me that I left it as is. It's just a great optic.

The bolt will lock back after the magazine is empty — something that MP5-type firearms do not offer, but there is no separate bolt release lever. There is also a magazine disconnect so the GSG-9 will not fire if the magazine is removed.

When I tried the Magpul magazine, as well as the Korean 33 rounder, I did have a few FMJ rounds fail to feed as they hit the top of the chamber. I also tried 147-grain Federal Syntech Training Match, which have a polymer-coated flat tip (FederalPremium.com). These had issues feeding from the Magpul and Korean magazines — the flat tip made things worse. However, the ETS Omega magazine fed every one of the Syntech rounds without a hitch. In addition to a proprietary heat-, cold-, and chemical-resistant translucent polymer, the Omega has steel inserts which make up the entirety of the feed lips. The design of the top portion of the magazine is also much narrower at the feed-lip area than ones of a traditional Glock design. Also, the magazine follower and feed lips on the ETS Omega don't appear to guide the round at as high of an angle as the Korean-produced magazine. This angle will also slightly change as the magazine is emptied and as the magazine spring tension on the follower changes. The slight play when a magazine is locked in seems to also be a factor. There seems to be less margin of error in relation to the angle a round is held in a magazine and the GSG-9's chamber. There is nothing wrong with the Magpul or Korean-made magazines I used, the GSG-9 is just "finicky" due to the design of the magazine-sleeve system.

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For the accuracy test, DeNiro chose Hornady American Gunner 115-grain XTP HP, Winchester USA Ready 115-grain FMJ FN, and First Breach 124-grain Precision Match FMJ. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The best group of three, at 50 yards, was 4.5 inches with an average of 4.8 inches for the First Breach 124-grain Precision Match FMJ. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

GSG-9 PISTOL ACCURACY CHART

Manufacturer	Weight (grains)	Type	Average / Best (in.)
25 YARDS - THREE FIVE-SHOT GROUPS			
Hornady Extreme Terminal Performance	115	XTP HP	1.51 / 0.75
Winchester USA Ready	115	FMJ FN	1.61 / 1.41
First Breach Precision Match	124	FMJ	1.32 / 0.84
ABOVE 25-YARD GROUPS WITHOUT FLIER			
Hornady Extreme Terminal Performance	115	XTP HP	0.85 / 0.63
Winchester USA Ready	115	FMJ FN	1.22 / 0.87
First Breach Precision Match	124	FMJ	0.97 / 0.84
50 YARDS - THREE FIVE-SHOT GROUPS			
First Breach Precision Match	124	FMJ	4.8 / 4.54
ABOVE 50-YARD GROUPS WITHOUT FLIER			
First Breach Precision Match	124	FMJ	4.23 / 4.00

Burris Fullfield 30 scope set to 14x for all shots. Fired from bench with Caldwell rest. Conditions: 5 MPH wind, 58 degrees.

Target Time

For the accuracy test, I chose Hornady's American Gunner 115-grain XTP (Extreme Terminal Performance) HP (Hornady.com), Winchester USA Ready 115-grain FMJ FN (Winchester.com), and First Breach 124-grain Precision Match FMJ (FirstBreach.com). Targets were set at 25 yards, and I would be shooting three five-shot groups of each ammunition type with the winner (best average of the three) taken out to 50 yards. I used a Caldwell Stinger rest (CaldwellShooting.com) on a Knothole Designs bench. My test scope was a Burris Fullfield 30 (BurrisOptics.com) set at 14 power and secured by a Geissele Super Precision (Geissele.com) scope mount. The temperature was 58 degrees with a five-mile-an-hour wind.

First up was Hornady's XTP with a .75 of an inch group! Wow, I was stunned even though Hornady will produce some of the tightest groups no matter what cartridge of theirs I shoot. Without the flier, it came in a very small .63 of an inch. The next group opened up, and the last group was 1.48 inches for an average of 1.51. Next was the flat-nosed round from Winchester. The best group was 1.41 with a .87 measurement without the flier. The rest of the groups were pretty consistent with average of 1.61 inches. I had no feeding issues with the flat-nosed bullets (or any others during the test) fired from the ETS Omega magazine. My only gripe is that the 15-round magazine only practically held 14 rounds. It would hold 15, but the last round was difficult to insert (unlike the rest). Loaded fully, there was no give which is needed when the first round is pressed against a closed bolt while locking the magazine in. So, the only way to get it work with 15 rounds was to have the bolt locked back, insert the full magazine, and then drop the bolt.

Taking my time and shooting on the bench gave me a great feel for the GSG-9 trigger, which I already liked. There is about a ¼ inch of take-up followed up by 2/16th of pull without really any creep before it breaks. It measured in at 2¾ pounds. I was happy with it, so I didn't make any adjustments, although I could have very easily with an Allen wench. Last up was the rookie of the bunch, First Breach, which is a new ammunition company based in Maryland. The first group of these 124-grain match rounds came in at 1.30 inches, the second at 1.44, and the last group at 1.21 and .84 of an inch without the flier — very consistent. The average was 1.32 inches, and First Breach had the best average of all three, so it goes out to 50 yards.

First Breach's 124-grain Precision Match FMJ came in at 4.54 for the first group at 50 yards, which was the best one. The second was at 4.70 inches, and the last came in at 5.16, four inches without the flier. The First Breach groups, with and without the fliers, were very consistent (as were the groups fired at 25 yards) with the exception of the last five-shot group. Definitely no problem hitting center mass at 50 yards.

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▲ The mag adapters contain the spring-loaded bolt hold-open mechanism. This one is for SIG 320 magazines. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

▲ Removing the Glock magazine adapter to replace with the SIG 320 adapter. DeNiro found that using a T-8-sized star/Torx tip worked better than the T-7 size he originally used. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

Converting to SIG 320 Magazines

This procedure is the same for either magazine — mine came set up for Glock magazines. With the GSG-9 pointed away from you, from the bottom of the magazine well, you will see a small star/Torx bolt head at around the 1 o'clock position. You simply remove it and install the assembly for the magazine you want to use. This assembly also houses the spring-loaded bolt hold open mechanism. I ended up using a T-7 size to remove the bolt but later found that a T-8 fits better. I later checked the manual, which recommends a T-10 size; I tried it and it's too large.

After converting the GSG-9 for SIG 320 magazine, I ran a box of Remington Range 124-grain FMJ (Remington.com) through a factory SIG 30-round 320 magazine. Flawless. I then tried an ETS Omega 17-round magazine with the Range load as well as the flat tipped Federal Syntech rounds used previously — the GSG-9 fed and fired all ammo perfectly, but the bolt did not lock back after the SIG or ETS 320 mags were empty. Since the GSG-9 does not have a bolt catch release lever, that isn't an issue for me. SIG 320 compatible magazines would be the ones I would run all the time as these seem to work best with the two brands I tested. I would caution that if using a steel magazine, slamming the magazine in may cause the metal mag catch slot to cut the plastic magazine adapter, which would cause the adapter to disengage and slip down the mag body. A polymer magazine may be a better choice.

Disassembly

First, with no fingers touching the trigger, point the GSG-9 in a safe direction and rotate the safety lever to the

DeNiro used a T-20-sized star/Torx tip screwdriver to assist the provided star/Torx wrench in removing the double-ended bolt. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

A non-captive pin retains a "block" which holds the recoil assembly and bolt in place. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The bolt can be removed with the grip assembly still attached. However, the grip assembly will have to be removed to reinstall it due to the hammer being in the way. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

Replacing the extractor on the bolt assembly would be straightforward. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The GSG-9 taken apart for cleaning, although this level of disassembly is not needed often for general maintenance. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

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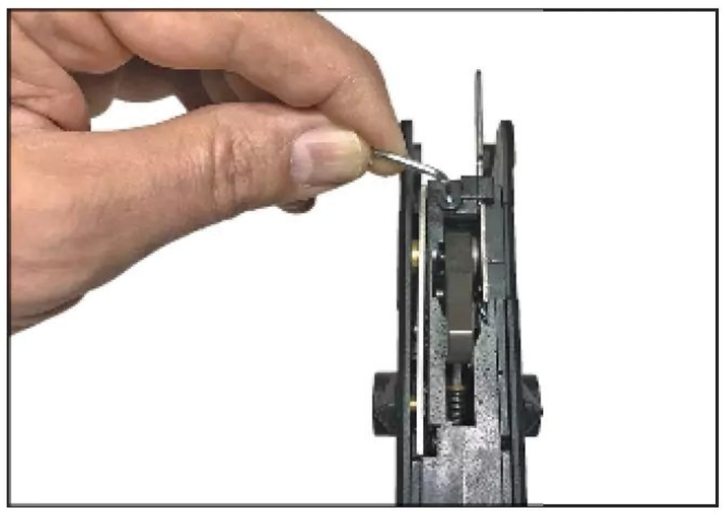

The trigger travel and pull weight can be adjusted using the provided Allen wrench. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

The GSG-9 equipped with an Aimpoint Micro H-2 red dot, SB Tactical's SBA5 arm brace, white light, and ETS Omega 30-round magazine, makes for a great home defense firearm. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

Midwest Industries' folding tube makes the GSG-9 a compact package. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

safe position. Remove the magazine and retract the charging handle and lock it back so you can inspect the chamber for a live round. After you have cleared the pistol, return the bolt forward. Using the provided star/Torx wrench, remove the bolt that retains the receiver end cap. This is a double-ended bolt, so I needed to use an additional star/Torx tip, which was inserted into a Brownells screwdriver — the tip size I used was T-20. After the two-piece bolt is removed, there is a bolt with no head located at the top of the end cap — remove it as well. You can now pull the butt/end cap off.

Now remove the grip assembly by removing another double-ended bolt located right below the push button magazine release. It is the same as the one you just removed. You need to slide the grip assembly back ¾ of an inch, as it rides on a bit of track, then it can be pulled downward to separate. When I did this, the lever-magazine release fell out and I thought, "*Oh crap, what else fell out?*" I then tried to put the mag release back in to see if there was a spring missing. So, I reattached the grip assembly with lever mag release and there was no spring tension at all — until I reinserted the double-ended retaining bolt. "*Whew!*" The spring that works that magazine release is captive and remains inside as part of the button-magazine release assembly — the lever magazine release "piggybacks" on it. I didn't see anything in the manual after doing this, so that's why I'm mentioning it. (I've been taking guns apart for like 50 years, and I vowed not to read directions back when I turned 45, so I didn't use the manual.) The hammer is now out of the way so that the bolt assembly can be easily removed.

Next, there is a retaining pin which holds a silver-colored block (the manual calls this the "adapter for the rubber buffer") which holds the buffer and recoil spring in place. Push this block in toward the receiver (to relieve some recoil spring tension) and push the pin all the way out. You can now remove the block and recoil spring with buffer. To get the bolt assembly out, just slowly pull the charging handle rearward and you can grab and pull it out.

When the grip assembly is removed, you can adjust the trigger travel and the pull using the provided Allen wrench. I was happy with the pull and travel of the trigger, so I didn't bother with any adjustments.

If you want to move the charging handle to the other side, it is straightforward. Use a T-10 star/Torx head screwdriver or wrench and remove the two bolts securing the front P-rail. Then simply remove the one screw directly above the cocking lever. You can now pull it out and swap it to the other side. Just reverse to reassemble. I didn't try it because I liked mine on the left side.

For reassembly, I can think of a few tips. When inserting the bolt assembly, be sure to push the

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Also included are a sticker and patch. (Vincent L. DeNiro)

spring-loaded bar down, which is located on top, and be sure that the extractor is on the same side as the ejection port. You will have to use a thin screwdriver (or something similar unless you have skinny fingers) to hold the bar down so it will fully enter the receiver. Also, reinserting the bolt can only be done with the grip assembly removed.

Practical Use Beyond Gun Collecting and Plinking

For home defense (or car or RV defense, for that matter), it does give one the intimidation factor, which can help diffuse a bad situation — more so than a traditional handgun. The magazine adapters essentially turn Glock 17 and SIG 320 magazines into proprietary GSG-9-only magazines. I would prefer that the GSG-9 had magazine well adapters which could accept unmodified Glock or SIG 320 magazines (heck, throw in S&W M&P, Beretta 90 series, and Springfield XD magazine adapter blocks in there too). The ability to use a standard pistol magazine in a carbine or in a submachine gun-esque semi-auto pistol like the GSG-9 is definitely a plus, especially for police use. However, this is not a deal killer. If one decides to use an UZI carbine or an MP5-type carbine as his or her "house gun," neither of those magazines are going to fit in a traditional handgun worn on the hip.

The magazine disconnect feature is something that most gun owners do not want. Sure, it is an extra safety feature on the range, but many will argue that they may want that one shot if a close altercation somehow ejects the magazine out of the gun. I used to be a deputy sheriff and I can see that side of it. I can also see the other side with it being an asset in some situations like if someone is wrestling you for your gun, and the only thing you can do is eject the magazine because you feel you are going to lose the gun to the bad guy. A minor modification gets rid of this feature. Your choice.

I would like to see a bolt-release lever on this firearm, but this is not a deal breaker either. MP5-type firearms don't have them, and the GSG-9 has a last-round bolt hold open feature, which the MP5-type guns do not have.

A sound suppressor would be a great addition if one ever thinks he/she may have to fire indoors without hearing protection. So, maybe one of those thread adapters will do the trick. If one is not going to use a suppressor, it would be a good idea to really torque down the flash hider (or use a type of thread-locking compound) as it tends to unscrew with firing.

As for ammo reliability, I would stick to FMJ or TC (truncated cone) projectiles for plinking and target practice. For home defense, any small (or filled-in cavity) hollow point, like Hornady's American Gunner XTP round tested in this article, would work well.

The GSG-9 has some great features going for it. The gun shop price is much lower than the suggested retail price, which makes it about half the cost of some MP5-type pistols on the market. It is lightweight for this type of handgun, very pointable, and has a comfortable recoil impulse for follow-up shots. The switchable charging handle as well as ambidextrous safety and magazine releases are pluses. There's plenty of rail and M-LOK space, plus the ability to effortlessly add an arm brace. Clamp on a white light, a great dot optic like the Aimpoint Micro H-2, and a 30-round ETS Omega magazine (coming in 2025 in both Glock 17 and SIG 320 models), and you have a great home-defense firearm in addition to a Saturday afternoon shooter. FN

GERMAN SPORT GUNS GSG-9

Caliber:	9x19mm
Capacity:	Any Glock 17-type or SIG 320-type magazine (not incl.) w/adapter
Barrel:	7.5 in., precision hammer-forged w/M13X1 muzzle thread
Length:	19 3/16 in.
Height:	8 5/16 in.
Weight:	Approx. 4 lbs.
Fore-end:	Polymer w/ 6 M-LOK slots
Trigger:	Adjustable (2.75 lbs.as tested)
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A gas-operated shotgun is a lot softer to shoot than other designs. That's one good reason to opt for the Thunder Ranch 940 Pro.

THUNDER RANCH SERIES MOSSBERGS

Thunder Ranch 590 and Thunder Ranch 940 Pro Shotguns

By Patrick Sweeney

For those who have not read their history, Clint Smith is a decorated marine who served in, and was wounded in, Vietnam. Post-war and working as a police officer in the Midwest, he attended Gunsite in the early years, and was good enough at teaching that he was offered a position there, quickly ending up as the Operations Manager of Gunsite. When it proved to not be possible to purchase Gunsite at the time Jeff Cooper was looking to retire, Clint opened his own range, in Texas and called it Thunder Ranch.

Later, he moved his operation to Oregon, and has lived and taught there ever since. Clint is not one to teach how to win competitions, unless you consider saving your own life a competitive sport. In the course of his Vietnam and law enforcement experience, and teaching at Gunsite and Thunder Ranch, with a short stint setting up the training

The Mossberg Thunder Ranch Series, on top the 940 Pro, below the 590.

Both of the Thunder Ranch Mossbergs have barrels eighteen and a half inches long and are finished in Cerakote. But there's a lot more different between them.

division of HK, he determined that solid, dependable, rugged gear was the baseline to work from. Competition fripperies were just that.

So, when he puts the Thunder Ranch name and logo on something, you really need to pay attention. When the two boxes from Mossberg arrived, I was eager to see what was up. Let's start with the pump, since that is such an iconic American tool.

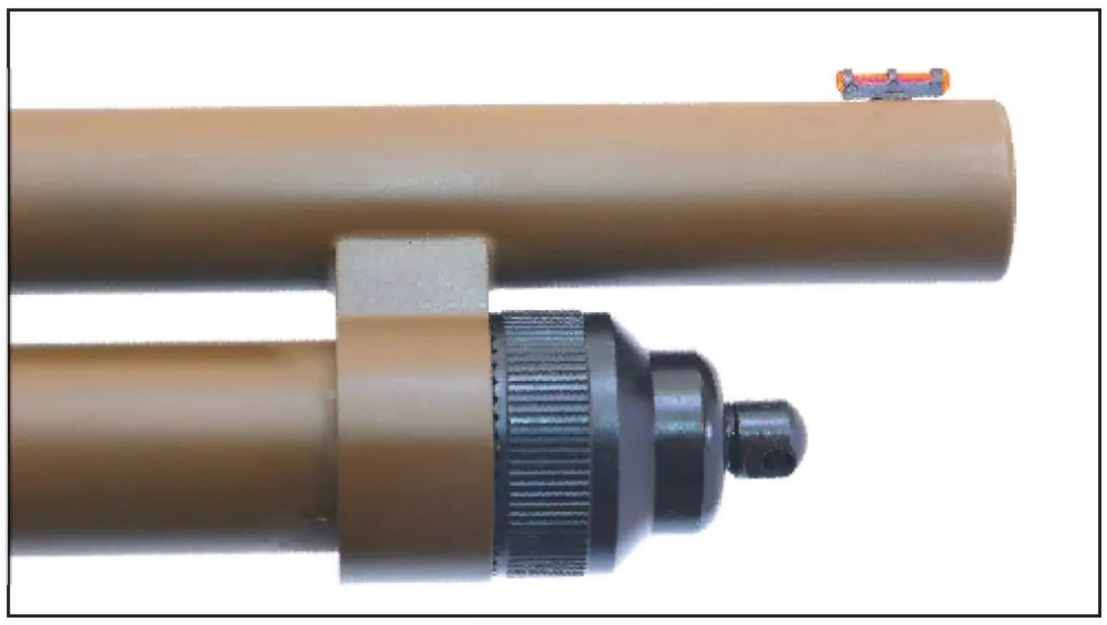
Thunder Ranch 590

I started 3-gun competition in the summer of 1981, with a Mossberg 500. (The rumors that when I first started shooting the Dead Sea was merely sick is just that, a rumor.) I found it handy, lightweight, and with features that were appealing. The 590 is all of that and more. The big change from the 500 to the 590 was the way the barrel attaches. On the 500, the barrel has its own bolt that screws into the end of the magazine tube. If you had a five-shot model (like the Mossberg 500 I had while I worked in Flint, MI back in the late Neolithic) you could not increase capacity. You either had to trade or sell your five-shot for the eight-shot, or you needed to replace the barrel and the magazine tube and its internals.

On the 590, Mossberg changed that. The barrel has a loop on the front that slides over the magazine tube, and

The side of the 590 is full of details. There's the Thunder Ranch logo, of course. You can see the lifter pivot boss behind it, the trigger housing pin below it, and the shell stop pivot boss below the ejection port.

The safety is that big button sculpted to fit your thumb, with the red dot that shows the 590 is ready to go. Ahead of it is the red-dot optic plate, and ahead of that the first set of scope mount holes in the receiver.



The 590 uses an open-ended magazine tube (with mag spring retainer inside of it) and a cap that also holds the barrel in place. That button on the end is a sling swivel stud.

there's a magazine cap that screws down (onto the threaded magazine tube) over the loop. If you need more than the standard tube holds, replace the cap with an extended tube and a new spring. That is a lot easier.

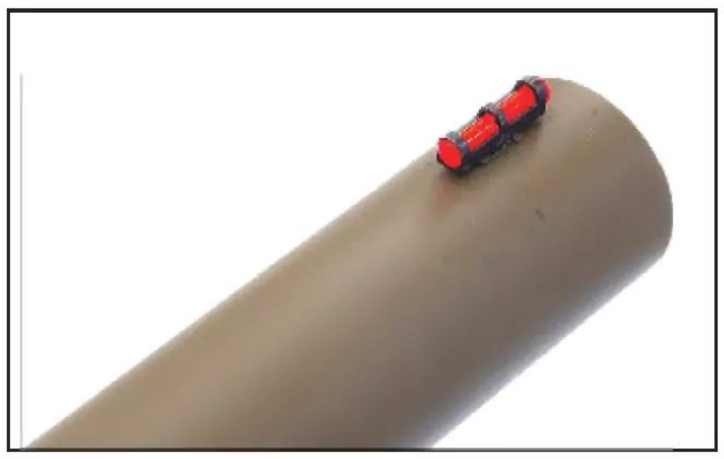
However, the 590 retains the great features of the 500. First up is the lifter design. On other pumps, the lifter blocks the loading port. You have to push the lifter out of the way as you stuff a new shell in. If your finger slips, the shell pops out, and wedges itself between the lifter and the bolt. (This was a problem with the 870, one many of us fixed back then by modifying the lifter. Then Remington offered a modified lifter of its own.) On the Mossberg, if you don't get the shell fully inserted past the shell stop, it pops back out but doesn't wedge. You just shove it again, this time all the way.

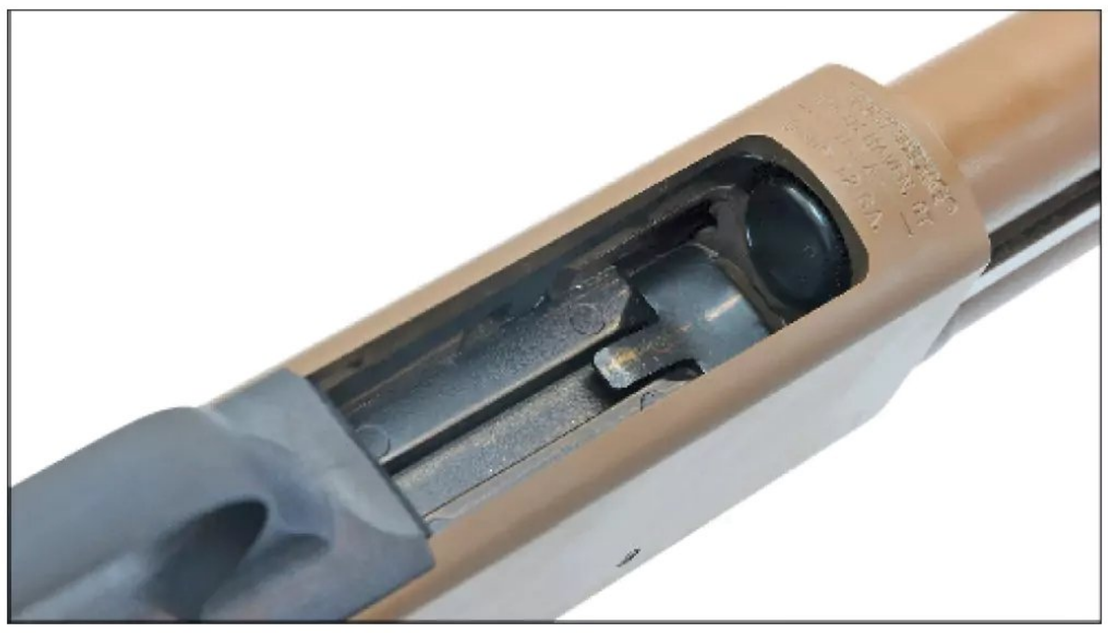
The 500/590 does not have both its shell stops secured to the receiver. You might think this is a shortcoming, as you might lose the free one. Hey, if you easily lose one of the six-inch pieces of spring steel in cleaning your shotgun you might want to reconsider your choices.

The 500/590 uses dual action bars, so you get a low-friction pump action, as the possibility of the action binding is reduced to almost never. The trigger guard is a synthetic part, molded as one piece, with the hammer, trigger and various other parts and spring pinned in place during assembly. You never have to take this apart, so don't. If your Thunder Ranch 590 gets so grubby the trigger assembly needs cleaning, press the cross pin out, and dump the assembly in your ultrasonic cleaner. Lube once it is clean and dry, and you're done.

While we're at it, let's go over disassembly. Make sure your 590 is unloaded. As mentioned, push the cross pin out. It is the rear pin, what looks like a pin forward of it is the pivot boss of the lifter. Leave it alone for now. Then lever (it is hooked in place at the front) the trigger assembly out. The shell stop will fall out when you do this. Unscrew the cap on the end of the magazine tube. Pull the forearm back slightly, to unlock the action. Now you can slide the barrel off of the tube. Press the forearm back far enough that the bolt plate lines up with the clearance cuts and lift the plate

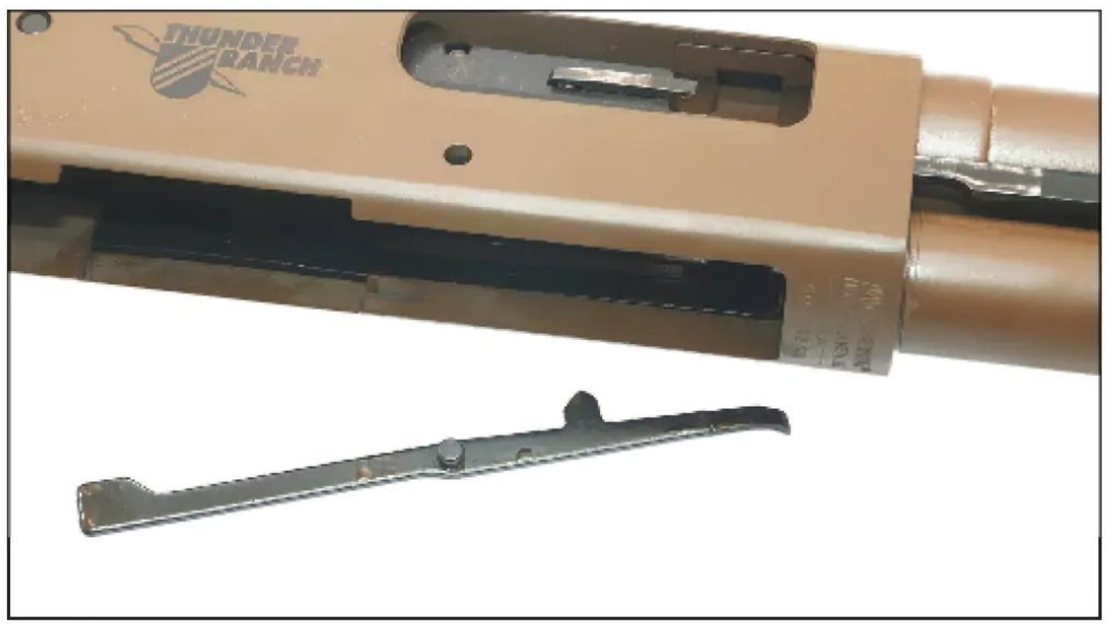
► A red/orange fiber optic front bead makes keeping track of your aim a lot easier.





The loading port of the 590 is not blocked by a lifter. In fact, no Mossberg 500 or derivative, since 1961, has a lifter blocking the loading port.

To remove the trigger assembly you only have to push out the one pin and hinge the assembly down out of the receiver. Those other two details you see are not pins. Don't hammer on them.



The shell stop that is the pivoting one. It and the other shell stop are large-enough pieces of steel that you should not manage to lose them. So, don't.

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This is as apart as the 590 needs to go in order to do any normal cleaning.

out. Slide the forearm forward, and then fish the bolt out of the receiver. To remove the lifter, reach in and pinch the two bars of it towards each other, and once the bosses clear the receiver holes, lift it out. The disassembly sounds more involved than it is, and once you get the hang of it, it will be easy. You are done except for the scrubbing. Which, shotguns being shotguns, will involve a lot of scrubbing.

940 Pro

The Thunder Ranch 940 Pro is built on the 940 Pro action, the competition model that Jerry Miculek had a big hand in testing and developing. Knowing Jerry, the testing was probably breaking one engineering prototype after another by shooting it until it failed, ending when he just couldn't break anything. Then they made it soft to shoot, and able to handle regular or three-inch magnum shells. Trust me, if jerry can't break it, you can't. At least not by using it properly. As with so many things, hammer marks and tire tracks have a way of voiding warranties.

The Thunder Ranch 940 Pro has a large bolt release lever on the right side, along with a large charging handle. Inside, the 940 action has a piston in a cupped loop underneath the barrel. To make cleaning easier the piston has a nickel boron coating. (The 940 Pro is good for 1,500 rounds between cleaning, or so Mossberg says. Me, I'm a bit more OCD on shotgun cleaning than that.) That piston acts against a lightweight spacer, and the spacer slaps the dual-rod connector. That's how Mossberg designed the action to handle light and heavy loads. Instead of the gas flow driving a piston that works the action, the various parts of the piston-spacer-dual rod connector each delivers and moderates the force on the action. The dual rods of the connector means that the bolt plate, the part that locks, unlocks and shuttles the bolt back and forth, has even force applied to its movement. None of this getting shoved from just one side, and potential binding nonsense here.

The 940 Pro, like the 940, has a magazine tube open on the end, and the magazine cap both contains the magazine spring and follower, and locks the barrel in place. Here, Mossberg has added a magazine extension, bringing the capacity up to seven 2-3/4-inch shells in the magazine. And this still with a barrel that is eighteen and a half inches long.

While you are loading the Thunder Ranch 940 Pro, you might notice that you are enjoying the experience. That's because the opening of the loading port has been enlarged and dehorned, and there's an anodized, bright orange/red

The Thunder Ranch 940 Pro, showing the logo, the charging handle, bolt release and the two trigger housing pins.

The charging handle is big so you can easily reach it, past the large bolt release button.

The 940 Pro has the same location as the 590 for the safety button, the red-dot optics mount, and the scope mount screws.

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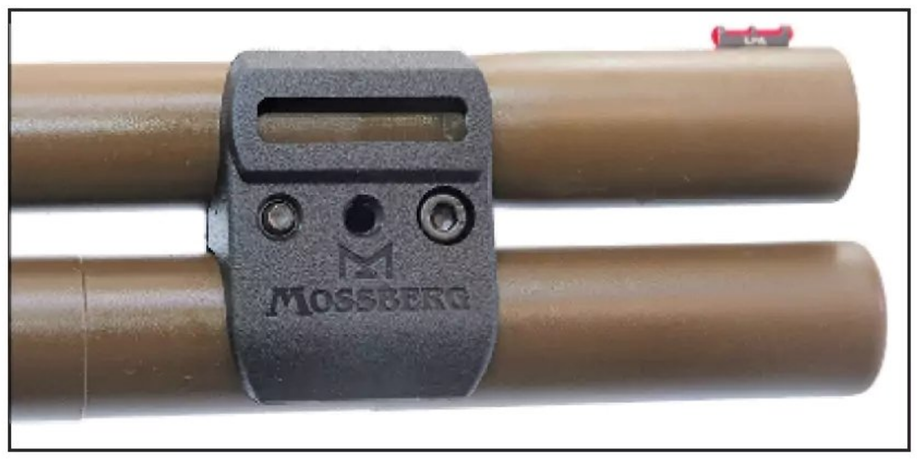
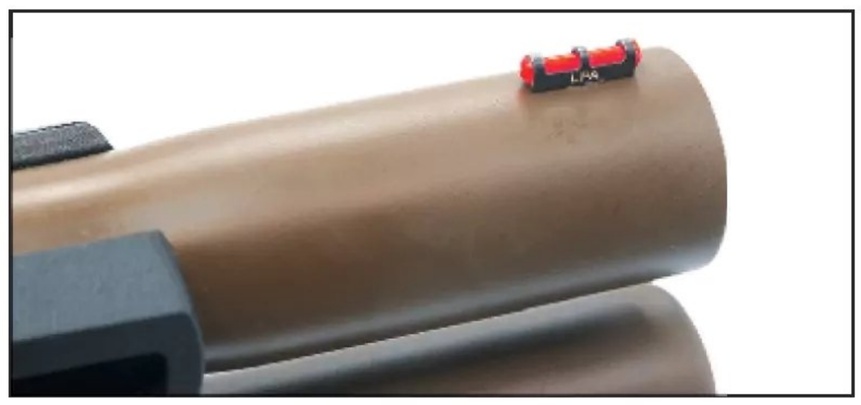
The handguard has QD sling sockets, one on each side, out at the front end.



► The bracket on the front of the 940 Pro supports the magazine tube and provides an extra Mlok mounting slot on each side.



► A red fiber optic bead is your aiming tool.

follower that drives the shells, so you can clearly see if the one you are shoving in is the only one there or not.

The handguard of the Thunder Ranch 940 Pro, and the bracket ahead of it, are noteworthy. First, the handguard is trim and well-shaped to let you both maintain control and to not be a bulky hindrance to use. Plus, it has a pair of quick-detach (QD) sling swivel sockets, one on each side, up at the front. Some people favor slings for shotguns, others don't. Those who do favor them have an easy way to attach a sling. Those who don't will find the QD sockets are not in the way. You might not even notice them at all, after a while. In front of that is a synthetic bracket that clamps to the barrel and magazine tube. This serves a bunch of purposes. First, it gives the magazine tube support during recoil. When you shoot, the recoil causes the magazine tube to flex up and down. The bracket supports it. It also gives the magazine tube extension support and protection in the rough handling that use, training and defense applications might subject it to. If it so happens that you need to be using your Thunder Ranch 940 Pro as an impact tool, the magazine tube has some protection against being bent. The bracket also has M-LOK slots, in case you want to use something other than a sling, or gear that won't work with the QWD sockets.

The stock on the 940 Pro is adjustable for length of pull, pitch, cast and for all I know the phase of the moon. The bag containing the various parts to adjust it was enough gear to work as a doorstop. Me, I typically run firearms just as they come out of the box and didn't try any of the adjustments. But if you are not built like me (think Gary Cooper) the adjustments could make the already good Thunder Ranch 940 Pro even better.

Disassembly and cleaning? It takes more steps than the 590 does, more steps than I have time here, but it is easy if messy (shotguns are like that), and clearly explained in the owner's manual. One detail that I like is that it is easy to unload the magazine tube before cleaning, if that's how you are starting. Again, in the manual, risk the points deduction on your man-card and read it.

Thunder Ranch Series

The additions of the Thunder Ranch Series are details like the QD sling swivels, and the thunder Ranch logo and name engraved on the receiver. The two shotguns also get a Cerakote exterior, in Patriot Brown, and a fiber optic front bead. There are a host of features that they share with the regular Mossberg shotguns but are even more appreciated on the Thunder Ranch Series.

From day one, the Mossberg 500 had the safety lever on the top rear center of the aluminum receiver. This made it ambidextrous in an era when all shotguns used push-button safeties set up for right-handed shooters. On the Thunder Ranch Series, the safety button is not just a ridged bar, but it is a checkered tab with curved sockets built-in to fit the tip of your thumb. You would be hard-pressed to miss this, even in the stressful environment of defense.

The Thunder Ranch Series also has the Mossberg optics-ready cut on the receiver. Unbolt the

Wads leave a mark. Or even more. Here is a typical tight pattern from Hornady 00 buck, at ten yards. The big hole on the right is the wad.

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◄ The 940 Pro stock can be configured (with tools) for a dizzying number of adjustments.

► The 940 Pro loading port has been enlarged, beveled, and here shows the red-anodized follower for easy loading.

► With the included parts and tools you can adjust the 940 Pro to fit almost anyone. And if you can't be fitted, you have our sympathies.

cover plate and you can attach an RMSc-compatible red-dot optic. As an old-school shooter, I'm still getting used to the idea, but a lot of new shooters see it as a must-have, and Mossberg (and Clint Smith) have you covered here. As if that wasn't enough, the receiver is drilled and tapped on top for a scope base. So, if you decide that for hunting season you want to convert either of your Thunder Ranch shotguns to a deer-hunting tool, there you go.

While the 940 Pro has an adjustable stock, the 590 does not. Instead, it has a durable set of synthetic stock and forearm, simple, sturdy and handy. The length of pull on the 590 is listed as "short" but for most shooters, a twelve-inch pull isn't particularly short. In fact, it's just about right. The 940 Pro is a lot harder on your wallet than the 590 might be, not that either are particularly pricey. In this modern era of Bidenbucks (hopefully changed by the time you read this), just over six bills for a fully featured Mossberg 590 is not out of line, and just over twelve for a self-loader isn't bad either.

One detail that neither have are choke tubes. In this modern time of every shotgun has screw-in chokes, you'd think that is a hindrance. Well, no. Back in the old days, buckshot was, well, erratic. You could not count on just any load delivering the performance you wanted. You had to (and we did) test every brand and load until you found

There are more parts involved in taking the 940 Pro apart, but it is all in the owner's manual, so read it.

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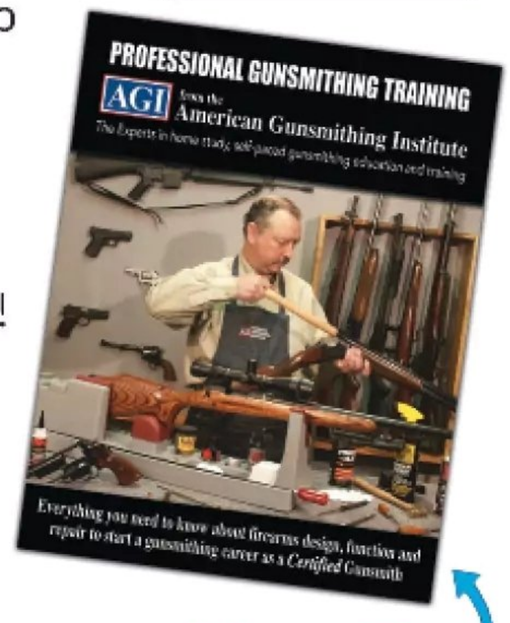

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I love photos like this. The flame you see is simply incandescent gases, hitting the oxygen of the air. Not unburned powder, as some will tell you. Still, it's a blast.

the one (or if you were lucky, two or three) that delivered the pattern you wanted. When you found it, you stocked up. Why? Because there was no guarantee that the next time you needed it, the manufacturer hadn't changed some minor (to them) detail, a detail that changed your pattern and made you start all over again. Today? The pattern-control wads on buckshot (and other pellet sizes as well) means they all deliver good-to-excellent patterns. Patterns that can be too tight for some of us old farts. So, in the interests of keeping things simple, and durable, Clint specified a cylinder choke on the barrels. So, fewer parts to keep track of, nothing to work loose, and less expense than machining for choke tubes.

Testing

Well, the testing was simple. I broke out a case of skeet loads and proceeded to spend a pleasant afternoon hammering falling plates and pepper poppers. At no time did either the 590 or the 940 Pro give me any problems. As I mentioned, I've been using one or another 500/590 since the early years of the Reagan Administration. The pump action holds no surprises, but I still find it a marvelous tool. My crusty old 500 I had in Flint was a single-bar model made for the long-defunct Montgomery Wards store. It came well-used, and I shot it enough that Mossberg was eventually not able to repair it (that's a lot of ammo, by anyone's standard) and you will likely never get to that point. It never had a functional problem, despite only having one action bar, but the dual-bar design of the Thunder Ranch 590 is even smoother. The one drawback you might find is one of the advantages of the basic 500 design: the light weight. With an aluminum receiver and a short barrel, the empty 590 tips the scales at just over six and a half pounds. I can assure you that if you use anything more than low-recoil buckshot loads, you are going to feel it. A lot.

The Thunder Ranch 940 Pro, at mid-seven pounds, is easier to shoot, both because of the extra weight, and the gas system spreading the jolt of felt recoil out over more time. I've shot the 940 JM Pro Competition model up at The Pin Shoot for a day's worth of factory buckshot, and the experience is not abusive. So, practicing with your Thunder Ranch 940 Pro using the buckshot you expect to use (and testing it for patterns) will not be a shoulder-breaking experience. A wallet-breaking one, perhaps, but not your shoulder.

In testing, I found, as expected, that the modern pellet-control wads do their job. All the loads tested delivered tight groups at ten yards, but there is one detail you'll have to be aware of: the wads. Since the wads do their job

Magnum loads and a pump shotgun equals a lot of recoil. So, save your shoulder and search out low-recoil buckshot.

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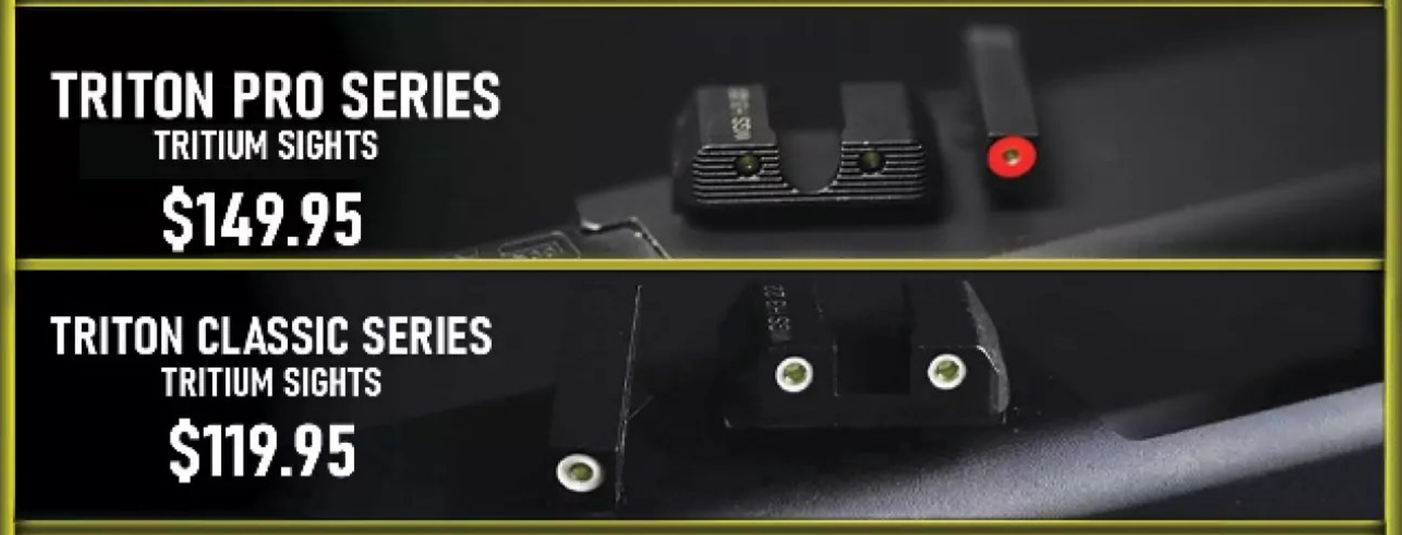

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At ten yards, this Federal load shot a very nice pattern. In the middle of the buckshot hits is the dent left by the wad.

Another tight pattern from Hornady, and a severe dent in the cardboard from the wad.

and keep the pellets together, the wads tend to be close to the pellet trajectory in the close distances you'll use them. It was not unusual to see a heavy dent, and even holes, in the cardboard of targets, caused by the wads. Yes, a wad weighs less than what a buckshot pellet does, but it is still leaving the muzzle at the same velocity. Depending on the load, at 1,200 to 1,600 fps, and it is going to leave a mark.

Now, should you spring for the Thunder Ranch Series? Hmmm. The lowest-cost comparable 590 is a hundred dollars less. You give up the Cerakote finish, the fiber optic bead, the larger safety button, and the Thunder Ranch logo. I think the safety, finish, and bead are worth more than the $100 saved, and the cool factor of the logo, is a bonus. As far as the 940 is concerned, you can jump up to the 940 Pro Tactical if you simply must have a screw-in choke system, but it will cost you a few dollars more. The only other 940 Pro Tactical you can look at is the five-shot, which saves you, again, $100, but you'll have to score your own extended magazine tube to bring it up past five shots. Nope, they are both smoking deals, and can't be duplicated at a lower price point, which pretty much describes the entire Mossberg line: smoking deals, and can't be beat on price. That's why I have a rack of them. FN

THUNDER RANCH 940 PRO SHOTGUN

Type:	Hammer-fired semi-automatic
Caliber:	12 Gauge, 2-3/4 in., 3 in.
Capacity:	7+1 rounds
Barrel:	18.5 in.
Overall Length:	37 in.
Weight:	7 lbs. 8 oz.
Finish:	Patriot Brown Cerakote
Furniture:	Synthetic, Patriot Brown
Sights:	Fiber optic front bead, optics ready
Trigger:	5 lbs. 1 oz.
MSRP:	$1,295
Contact:	Mossberg.com, (203) 230-5300

THUNDER RANCH 590 SHOTGUN

Type:	Hammer-fired pump
Caliber:	12 Gauge, 2-3/4 in., 3 in.
Capacity:	6+1 rounds
Barrel:	18.5 in.
Overall Length:	38.5 in.
Weight:	6 lbs. 12 oz.
Finish:	Patriot Brown Cerakote
Furniture:	Synthetic, Patriot Brown
Sights:	Fiber optic front bead, optics ready
Trigger:	5 lbs. 5 oz.
MSRP:	$662
Contact:	Mossberg.com, (203) 230-5300

THUNDER RANCH 940 PRO SHOTGUN
CHRONOGRAPH AND ACCURACY DATA

Ammunition	Velocity (fps)	Pattern (in.) (Avg.)
Hornady Critical Defense 00 buck	1,579	4.5
Federal Force X2 00 buck	1,241	5
Sellier & Bellot 00 buck	1,221	5.5
Winchester Super X 00 buck	1,309	6

Pattern results were to be averages of four shots at 10 yards off a Champion shooting rest. Velocities are averages of 5 shots measured on a Labradar chronograph set to read 15 feet from the muzzle.

SOURCES

Federal Ammunition | FederalPremium.com, (800) 831-8100

Hornady Ammunition | Hornady.com, (800) 338-3220

Winchester Ammunition | Winchester.com

Sellier & Bellot Ammunition | SellierBellot.us

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It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, we carefully steadied our glasses of bubbly and climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

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New from TISAS USA is the economical PX 5.7 OR pistol chambered for the high velocity 5.7x28mm cartridge. (Photo by Ashley Jaderborg)

TISAS USA'S NEW PX 5.7X28MM OR PISTOL

Optics Ready, 20+1 Capacity, Economical and Fun to Shoot!

By David M. Fortier, Executive Editor

I was as surprised as anyone by the sudden resurrection of FN Herstal's 5.7x28mm cartridge. This small bore PDW cartridge had, for all intents and purposes, appeared dead in the water. Today though, there are a number of handgun options from FN America, Ruger, Smith & Wesson and even Palmetto State Armory. The latest company to embrace this small bottle-neck cartridge is TISAS USA with their new PX 5.7 series.

Perhaps best known for their economical M1911 pattern pistols, TISAS USA is respected for offering a lot of value for the money. So, always interested in a bargain my ears perked up when I first heard about TISAS USA adding the 5.7x28mm cartridge to their handgun line. A quality handgun at an economical price is sure to appeal to both fans

If the high velocity 5.7x28mm cartridge piques your interest, you will want to know about the new polymer framed PX 5.7 OR pistol from TISAS USA.

Developed as a PDW cartridge for NATO, the 5.7x28mm offers both high velocity and reduced recoil. L to R: 5.56mm NATO, American Eagle 40-grain FMJ, FNH SS197SR 40-grain, Elite Ammunition T6B 27-grain and DevastaTOR 28-grain solids, 9mm.

The PX 5.7 OR is a modern polymer frame design with an ergonomic grip and well-placed controls.

The PX 5.7 OR is a nicely made economical alternative to other more expensive 5.7x28mm models.

of this cartridge, as well as shooters who have not yet tried it.

The question I had though was, how well would an economical 5.7x28mm handgun manufactured in Turkey perform? I was interested in checking its design, construction, fit, feel, accuracy and performance on the range. Would it be reliable? Would it have the features readers would be interested in? To find out I received a TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR pistol on short term loan for this review.

A striker fired design, the PX 5.7 OR features ambidextrous slide catch levers and a reversible magazine release.

The pistol arrived packed in a plastic hard case. Inside the foam lined case was the pistol, manual, two cleaning brushes, lock, and spare 20-round magazine. Overall, a nice package and about what you would expect today. Removing the PX 5.7 OR from the case I first noticed it feels good in the hand, despite the long overall length of the cartridge dictating the need for a long magazine and thus a large grip. While a big pistol, it doesn't feel huge, awkward, clumsy or heavy. The controls are well laid out, the sights are very good, it accepts a red dot sight and the trigger is good. Best of all though is perhaps the price; it is within reach of your average blue-collar worker. The standard model has an MSRP of $459.99 while the optics ready model seen here is $499.99. Spare 20-round magazines are $29.95.

What draws shooters to handguns like the TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR is simply its cartridge. The 5.7x28mm is a small bottleneck cartridge capable of driving its 0.224-inch diameter projectiles at relatively high velocity. It was originally developed by FN Herstal for NATO as a modern replacement for the 9x19mm cartridge. While it failed to replace the 9x19mm, it was eventually adopted by NATO in 2021. Its main claim to fame as a military cartridge is its

The PX 5.7 OR features a 1913-style rail mount on the dust cover for mounting accessories such as this Streamlight TLR-1 HL-X white light.

A serrated rear sight is standard, and the OR model is cut for a RMRsc red dot sight.

Feed is from steel 20-round double-column dual-feed magazines.

A look inside the PX 5.7 OR showing its internals.

The TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR would make a nice partner to a 5.7x28mm carbine like this LC carbine from Ruger. (Photo by Ashley Jaderborg)

ability to penetrate soft body armor when loaded with Armor Piercing ammunition. The cartridge has a number of appealing features for the armed citizen. These include very mild recoil allowing very fast follow-up shots, a flat trajectory aiding hits past 50 yards, compact dimensions allowing relatively high magazine capacities, and the light weight of the ammunition allowing more to be carried. It is a very fun caliber to shoot from a handgun.

The downside to the 5.7x28mm has always been, from a shooter's perspective, the lack of economical practice/plinking ammunition. Fans of this cartridge have long asked for a load they can buy in bulk and enjoy shooting without it costing an excessive amount. Basically, shooters desire a 5.7x28mm load similar in price to economical 9mm ball. While the ammo situation continues to improve, especially with Fiocchi's offerings, 5.7x28mm remains noticeably more expensive than 9mm.

Part of the higher cost of 5.7x28mm ammunition is due to the cartridge case featuring a dry lubricant. This is to both aid feeding and more importantly, ease case extraction. Lubricated cartridges are a bit of a dinosaur which largely fell out of use in small arms post-World War II. Unfortunately, the lubricant does add both complexity and cost to the cartridge's manufacture. However, as more manufacturers embrace the 5.7x28mm cartridge hopefully ammunition prices will continue to drop.

Well, enough about the 5.7x28mm cartridge, let's delve into this new model from TISAS USA. As I said, this is a fairly large piece, even though it's not bulky or particularly heavy. Overall length is approximately 8.5 inches and the slide is approximately 1.1 inches wide. It's approximately 5.5 inches tall and weighs in at 24 ounces. The frame is manufactured from textured polymer. While long, the grip is fairly thin and nicely textured. The trigger guard is both squared off and undercut to aid comfort. The dustcover

FNH offers a variety of loads in 5.7x28mm including their SS197SR 40-grain topped with a Hornady V-MAX.

Federal offers a 40-grain FMJ load in their American Eagle line, this worked well.

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features a 1913-style rail for mounting a white light, laser or other accessories.

Riding atop the frame is a black Tennifer finished steel slide. This features grasping serrations at the front and back. The rear of the slide is machined to mount an RMRsc pattern optic. So, out of the box it is red dot compatible. Riding inside the slide is a 4.8-inch forged barrel with button rifling. This has a one turn in nine inches Right Hand rifling twist with eight grooves. Beneath the barrel is a captured steel recoil spring with a full-length guide-rod. There is a loaded chamber indicator which allows the shooter to visually check to verify if there is a cartridge present.

TISAS USA's PX 5.7 is a striker-fired design. Trigger pull on this model is actually pretty nice with a clean break and a pull weight of approximately 4.5 pounds. Reset is distinct but a bit long. It's not a match trigger, but I really had no complaints. The trigger features a blade-in-trigger type safety similar to a Glock.

Ambidextrous slide catch levers are fitted. These are well-placed and I could easily reach them without having to change or modify my hold on the pistol. A conventionally placed push-button magazine release is standard. This is reversible for left-hand shooters. The magazine ejects cleanly from the pistol with a push of the release. The magazine itself features a steel body and polymer base-plate and follower. The magazine is interesting as it's a double-column design with two-position feeding rather than the standard single-feed. Capacity is an impressive 20 rounds and witness holes are provided indicating 5, 10, 15 and 20 rounds. Two magazines are provided with each TISAS USA PX 5.7 pistol.

The front sight features a green fiber optic for rapid acquisition. The serrated rear sight is adjustable for windage. The snag-free rear sight features a square notch. The sight picture is good and the fiber optic front sight stands out nicely, in bright sunlight especially. I had no complaints in regard to the PX 5.7's's high visibility sights. However, if you prefer something different, the PX 5.7 uses

Fiocchi offers a number of 5.7x28mm loads including their 62-grain FMJ Subsonic and 40-grain Tipped Hollow Point.

The PX 5.7 OR proved very smooth shooting with a good trigger and excellent sights. (Photo by Ashley Jaderborg)

Two quick shots to the chest and one to the head shows the PX 5.7 OR is capable of fine practical accuracy.

The pistol comes with two 20-round magazines giving you 40 rounds on tap.

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Five rounds of Fiocchi 40-grain FMJ at 10 yards.

Here are five rounds of Fiocchi 40-grain Tipped HPs at 10 yards.

Five rounds of Fiocchi 62-grain FMJ Subsonic at 10 yards, note the lower point of impact.

TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR PISTOL

25 YARD ACCURACY AND VELOCITY CHART

Load	Bullet Weight (gr)	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	SD	Average Group (in.)
American Eagle FMJ	40	1,679	15.0	3.2
Fiocchi FMJ	40	1,705	23.7	3.5
Fiocchi Tipped HP	40	1,750	18.0	2.8
FNH SS197SR V-MAX	40	1,764	19.2	3.0
Fiocchi Subsonic	40	1,036	22.3	3.0

Notes: Accuracy results are averages of four five-shot groups fired from a rest at 25 yards. Velocity figures are 10-shot averages recorded with a LabRadar Doppler chronograph at an ambient temperature of 68 degrees F at 1,030 feet above Sea Level.

The TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR is a big pistol but it's not overly heavy or unwieldy. (Photo by Ashley Jaderborg)

standard Glock pattern sights. So, you have a wide variety of designs to choose from on the aftermarket.

Unlike your typical center-fire service pistol, the PX 5.7 does not have a Browning based tilting-barrel operating system. Instead, it features a delayed blow-back system. In the PX 5.7, the barrel and slide are held together in battery by the tension of the recoil spring. What is a bit different in this system is the barrel is not fixed in place. Instead, the barrel recoils a short distance, with the slide after a cartridge is fired. The slide and barrel are held together long enough for the projectile to leave the muzzle and for pressures to drop to safe levels for reliable extraction and operation. The slide continues rearward extracting and ejecting the fired cartridge case and then loads a fresh cartridge into the chamber as it returns forward. As the slide is returning forward under the tension of the recoil spring, the barrel rejoins it and returns to battery.

Out of the box, the PX 5.7 OR looked good, there were no issues with its finish, the slide retracted smoothly, and the controls all functioned properly. Stripping it for a look inside, I found a couple tool marks, but internally the pistol looked good. I also found it to be properly lubricated.

Next, I needed a quantity of 5.7x28mm ammunition for testing. Rummaging around my ammo room I located a quantity of FN produced 197SR 40-grain V-MAX ammunition. To this I added American Eagle's relatively economical 40-grain FMJ. I also had two 400-round "combo packs" from Fiocchi. One of these had two 150-round boxes of their 40-grain FMJ load and two 50-round boxes of their 40-grain Tipped Hollow Point. The other had two 150-round boxes of their 40-grain FMJ load and two 50 round boxes of their 62-grain Subsonic

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load. This provided a nice assortment of loads to try on the range.

I began testing with a 50-round function test using Fiocchi's 40-grain Tipped Hollow Point load just to verify the pistol operated correctly. It ran without issue and I liked the mild recoil. Two loaded magazines provide a whopping 40 rounds on tap. That's a lot of fun, and the TISAS PX 5.7 OR is fun to shoot. After ringing steel for a bit with the pistol feeding, firing, extracting and ejecting without issue, it was time to get to work.

To check the PX 5.7 OR's accuracy I began by firing four five-shot groups off a sandbag rest at 25 yards. I noted the metal magazines loaded fairly easily without undue force being required. The magazines inserted easily, and rounds fed smoothly. Recoil with all the various loads is light, and the pistol is quite comfortable to shoot. The sight picture is excellent. The front sight stands out clearly and the rear sight has a wide notch, perhaps a bit too wide, with plenty of daylight.

The PX 5.7 OR strips very easily for routine maintenance.

The first load I tried was the American Eagle 40-grain FMJ. This proved to be the slowest supersonic load of the group. Accuracy averaged 3.2 inches at 1,679 fps. The FN197SR load averaged three inches at 1,764 fps. Fiocchi's 40-grain Tipped HP shot very well and averaged 2.8 inches at 1,750 fps. Fiocchi's 40-grain FMJ averaged 3.5 inches at 1,705 fps. I was very interested to see how the subsonic load from Fiocchi functioned and grouped. This 62-grain FMJ's Point of Impact was noticeably lower than the supersonic 40-grain loads, however it functioned fine. It averaged three inches at 1,036 fps. It fed, extracted and ejected without issue.

Moving from the bench, I ran the PX 5.7 OR through a variety of drills from three to 15 yards firing on paper targets. This was done to check the TISAS' handling, muzzle-rise during rapid fire, and ease of operating the controls. I was also interested to see if any problems cropped up as the round count climbed. Here, the PX 5.7 OR performed well, recoil is easy to control, the sights are quick to acquire and the controls are easy to reach. While on the large side, the pistol swings quickly as it's fairly light. Magazines ejected cleanly with the push of a button.

From here, I moved to shooting offhand at steel at 25 and 50 yards. Making rapid hits on a full-size steel silhouette did not prove difficult at 25 yards. The sights and the trigger on the PX 5.7 OR are quite good and aid accuracy at distance. However, the rear notch is a bit wide and I had to concentrate at 50 yards. Point of Impact does vary though between bullet weights and even loads of the same bullet weight in regard to elevation. So, you need to know your POI for the load you are using. This was especially true of Fiocchi's 62-grain subsonic load.

Overall I rate the PX 5.7 OR a very fun pistol to shoot. It holds 20+1 rounds, has mild recoil and fires a cartridge capable of impressive velocities. Time will tell regarding its overall durability and service life. The MSRP is a reasonable $499.99 making the PX 5.7 OR an economical buy for an optics ready 5.7x28mm pistol. If you prefer iron sights, their PX 5.7 FO without the optics cut is only $459.99. The PX 5.7 OR stacks up very well compared to its more expensive competition. If you are interested in the 5.7x28mm cartridge then TISAS USA's offerings are a very attractive option. FN

TISAS USA PX 5.7 OR PISTOL	
Caliber:	5.7x28mm
Operation:	Delayed Blowback
Barrel Length:	4.8 in.
Trigger:	Striker fired, 4.5 lbs. pull
Feed:	Detachable 20-round box magazine
Overall Length:	8.5 in.
Height:	5.5 in.
Width:	1.1 in.
Weight:	24 oz.
Sights:	Fiber Optic front sight, Serrated rear
Finish:	Tennifer
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Thompson firing the M249 Para model during evaluation of it for counter ambush vehicle drills. (T.J. Mullin photo)

THE FN MINIMI

The World's Most Popular Squad Automatic Weapon

By Leroy Thompson

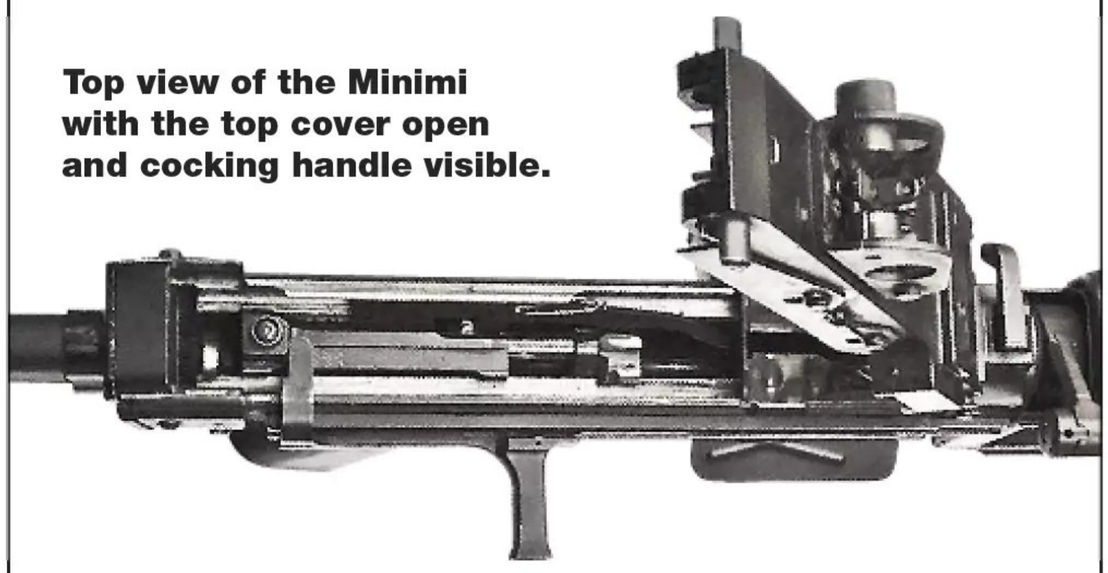
Countries around the world quickly adopted the Minimi when it was introduced, with many manufacturing it. Shown is the Canadian manufactured C9A1 version. (Defense Imagery)

Used by members of NATO as well as many other countries, since it began production in 1977, the FN Minimi has been adopted by more than 75 countries. In the USA, it is known as the M249, in Canada as the C9, in the UK as the L108A1, in Australia as the F89, in Sweden as the Ksp 90, in Switzerland as the Lmg 05, but no matter what the designation, it remains the same excellent LMG (Light Machine Gun) or SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon).

The Minimi fires from an open rotary bolt and uses a gas-operated, long-stroke piston operating system. It is air-cooled and may be fed from a magazine or belt. Standard NATO STANAG M16 magazines may be used in the M249. A clever feature was that when a belt was in place,

◀ The view an enemy might have of a French Minimi gunner. (Defense Imagery)

Current standard production Minimi from FN. (FNH)



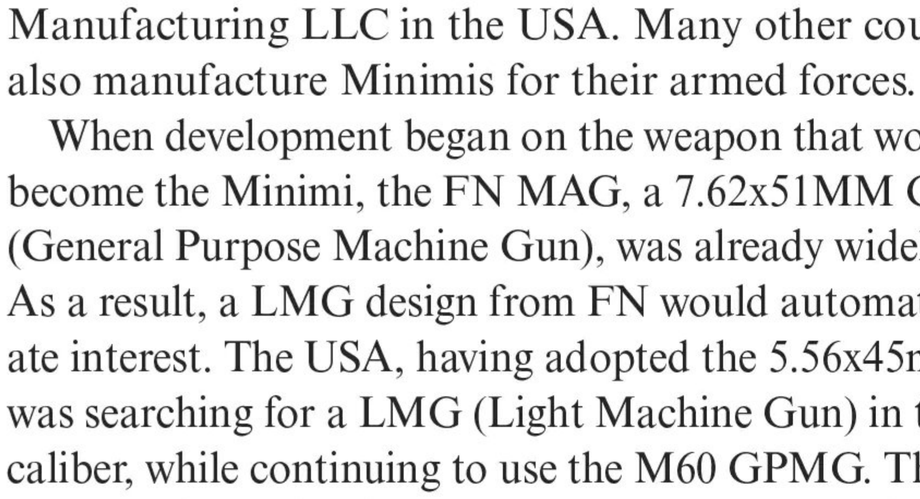
Top view of the Minimi with the top cover open and cocking handle visible.

the magazine port was blocked and when a magazine was in place the beltway was blocked. Belts are 200-round disintegrating type. An adjustable gas valve allows adjustment for adverse conditions and/or fouling. The Minimi's receiver is fabricated of stamped steel. Barrels are chrome lined and have been available with either 1:7 or 1:12 twist, though with wide adoption of the SS109 load, the 1:7 barrels are more widely used. A quick-change lever on the left side of the Minimi unlocks the barrel allowing a well-trained soldier to change it in less than 10 seconds. A folding bipod is affixed to the gas tube. The primary manufacturer is FN Herstal, but M249s are manufactured at FN Manufacturing LLC in the USA. Many other countries also manufacture Minimis for their armed forces.

When development began on the weapon that would become the Minimi, the FN MAG, a 7.62x51MM GPMG (General Purpose Machine Gun), was already widely used. As a result, a LMG design from FN would automatically create interest. The USA, having adopted the 5.56x45mm M16, was searching for a LMG (Light Machine Gun) in the same caliber, while continuing to use the M60 GPMG. The US DOD had issued bid specs for a new SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) in 1972. While developing the Minimi, FN was well aware of the interest of the USA in such a weapon, and the importance of US adoption of the weapon to engender major sales.

During initial development, the Minimi resembled a scaled-down FN MAG. US

Minimi "belts" use disintegrating links as can be seen piled up below the weapon.



Minimi's birdcage style muzzle brake.

To some extent, the Minimi was a scaled down version of FN's very successful MAG GPMG. (FNH)

An Estonian member of the SOTG (Special Operations Training Group) in Afghanistan with a Minimi. (SAF Public Affairs)

Top view of an M249 Para model.

To meet the requirement for a Minimi in 7.62x51MM, this Mk 48 Mod. 0 was developed for US SOF; shown is the M48 in action with the 2/327th, 101st in Afghanistan. (US Army)

M48 7.62x51mm version of the Minimi. (PEO Soldier)

Right side view of the FN M249S Para Model. (FNH)

Right side view of the FN M249S. (FNH)

doctrine that had evolved to specify two SAW gunners to each squad would influence FN's quest for a Minimi that would sell to the US armed forces. Also pushing FN on development of the Minimi was the presence of three competing designs from US manufacturers: Philco (XM233), Ford (XM234), and Rodman Laboratories (XM235).

Throughout the development stages, the Minimi evolved into the weapon that is so ubiquitous today. The Minimi in almost its final form was tested in April 1979, against various other designs. For purposes of the tests, the Minimi was designated the XM249, a designation it would keep, minus the "X," after being adopted. Over almost a year of testing, the potential SAWs were evaluated on 54 criteria, with the Minimi meeting more than any other competitor. The Minimi was adopted as the M249 with an initial order for 68,000 machine guns, the first 2,000 to be produced in Belgium and the remainder in an FN plant in the USA.

One of the great selling points for the Minimi is its versatility that has allowed it to be adopted for various missions. For example, the Minimi Para Model was

As they say, "Light 'em Up," an M249 firing at night. (USMC)

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developed in the 1990s to make the weapon more portable. Features include a shorter barrel and retractable folding stock. Later models incorporate a Picatinny Rail for mounting optical sights. The Minimi Para TR has a triple Picatinny Rail allowing mounting of a vertical fore grip and/or illuminators and pointers. The US M249 Para has a different type of heat shield over the quick-change barrel and a retractable five-position stock similar to that of the M4 Carbine. This stock is also more soldier-friendly for troops wearing body armor. The Minimi Mk 3 Para Model has a shorter plastic forearm with short Picatinny rails. Other upgrades include a more ergonomic cocking handle and an improved feed tray.

Although many of the countries which are using the Minimi also use the FN MAG GPMG, the USA and some other countries expressed interest in a scaled-up Minimi to fire the 7.62x51mm round. For US SOCOM (Special Operations Command), the Mk. 48 Mod 0 was developed as an "M249" firing the 7.62x51mm cartridge at a lower cyclic rate. The US Navy SEALs and US Army Rangers have used this variant.

Military M249 gunners are trained that "sustained rate of fire" intended to suppress enemy fire is 100 RPM, which does not overheat the barrel. "Rapid Fire" is 200 RPM, which is used on the defense to break an assault. As 200 linked rounds is the standard load for a soft or hard ammo container, this rate would be easy to monitor. Gunners are admonished that firing at a faster rate will quickly overheat the barrel. The Marine Corps in training M249 gunners lists its capabilities as follows:

Max. Range: 3,600 meters
Point Target: 800 meters
Area Target: 1,000 meters
Grazing Fire: 600 meters
Tracer Burnout: 900 meters

Tactical missions for the Squad Automatic Rifleman in the US Army

PRONE, SUPPORTED

6-46. The prone, supported position allows for the use of support, such as the bipod or tripod (see figure 6-15). Soldiers must build a stable, consistent position that focuses on the following key areas:

- Firing hand. The firer should have a firm handshake grip on the pistol grip and place their finger on the trigger where it naturally falls.
- Nonfiring hand. The nonfiring hand is placed to maximize control of the weapon and where it is comfortable on the weapon or support.
- Leg position. The firer's legs may be spread with heels as flat as possible on ground or the firing side leg may be bent at the knee to relieve pressure on the stomach.

1 Support:	Supported with sandbag, equipment, or structure.
2 Leg Position:	Spread with heels flat against the ground or the firing side leg bent at the knee to relieve pressure.
3 Stance / Center of Gravity:	Prone position maximizes the Soldier's frame against the ground for maximum stability.
4 Firing Elbow:	Used to provide stability to the weapon.
5 Nonfiring Elbow:	Used to provide stability to the weapon.
6 Firing Hand:	Grasping pistol grip, finger off the trigger until ready to fire.
7 Nonfiring Hand:	As far forward as possible for maximum stability.
8 Butt Plate:	Midpoint of shoulder to absorb recoil impulse.
9 Stock Weld:	Firm stock weld.
10 Shooter, Gun Angle:	Shooter body is nearly in-line with the gun-target line.

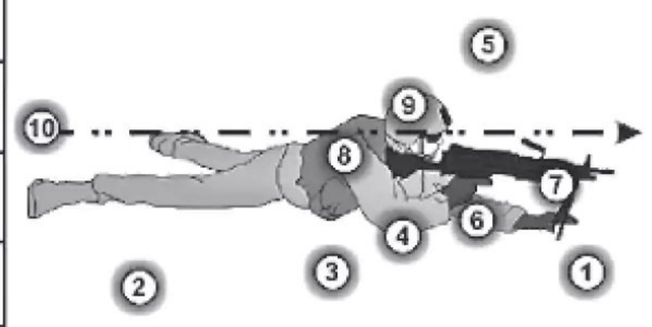

Figure 6-15. Prone, supported, example

Illustration of proper prone firing position from M249 manual TC-3-22-249.

COLLAPSED LOW READY

6-28. Soldiers use the collapsed low ready position when a greater degree of muzzle control and readiness to respond to threats or weapon retention is necessary (such as crowded environments). In the collapsed low ready, the firing hand is secure on the weapon's pistol grip. Soldiers place their nonfiring hand on the hand guards or vertical foregrip (see figure 6-4). The collapse low carry allows a Soldier to navigate crowded or restrictive environments while simultaneously minimizing or eliminating the muzzle covering (flagging) by maintaining positive control of the muzzle orientation.

Carry Position:	Collapsed Low Ready
When Used:	A greater degree of muzzle control and readiness is required. Used in restricted or crowded environments, urban terrain, or when positive control of weapon orientation is required.
Command:	ASSUME COLLAPSED
Advantages:	Provides some Soldier mobility while maintaining positive control of the weapon and weapon orientation. Increased readiness.
Disadvantages:	Use of hands limited.

Figure 6-4. Collapsed low ready, example

Low Ready Position with the M249 as shown in US Army Manual TC-3-22-249.

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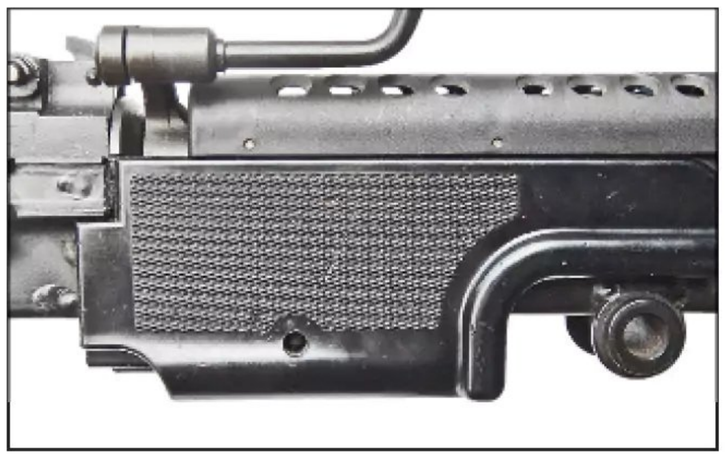
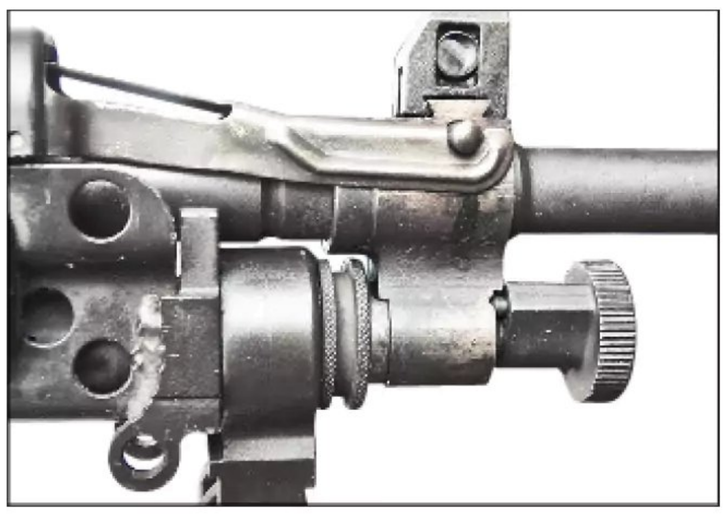
The M249 could also be mounted on vehicles such as this Humvee. (USAR)

View of the Minimi showing the cross-bolt safety as well as the trigger and pistol grip.

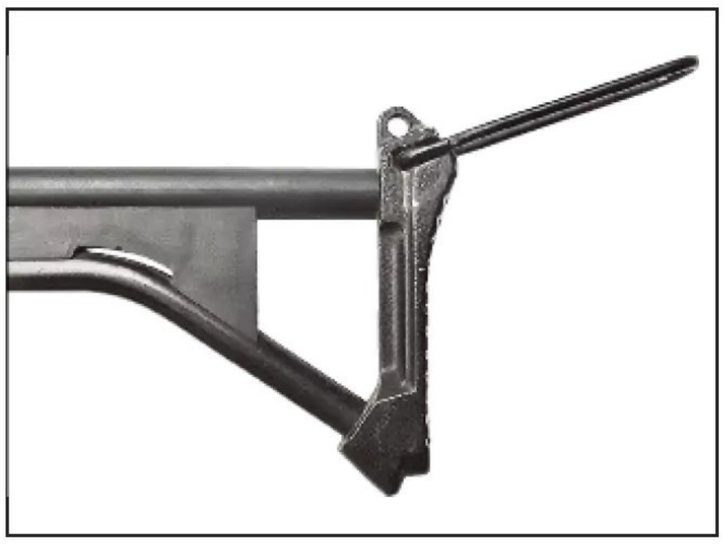
The cross-bolt safety in the "safe" position; also visible is the cocking handle.



Though small, the Minimi's forearm allows it to be fired offhand much more effectively.



◄ Close-up of the collar for the Minimi's gas valve.



Minimi's stock with the shoulder rest up.

illustrate the need for the M249 to be mobile. Among these missions are: target suppression, overwatch, building clearing, cave/tunnel/dugout clearing, backing up security checkpoints, and myriad other scenarios where immediate engagement with a lot of rounds down range is needed.

The Minimi or M249 is often mounted on a variety of vehicles from Humvees to various light armored vehicles. In addition to typical pintle or pedestal mounts, more sophisticated RWS (Remote Weapons System) mounts that allow the soldier to operate the weapon while remaining under armored cover in the vehicle are in use. Equipped with night sights, laser range finders, high-capacity ammo boxes, stabilizer for firing while the vehicle is moving, target tracking systems, and various other high tech devices, an M249 may be fired via a remote cable while its operator remains within the vehicle.

In the past, I've fired both Minimis and M249s, standard and Para models. For this article, I fired a standard FN-manufactured Minimi. Various features affecting operation of the Minimi or M249 may have been mentioned in passing already, but I want to point some of them out again. The Minimi is full-auto only so there is no selector switch. Instead, there is a cross bolt safety above the pistol

An infantryman firing his M249 mounting an M145 optical sight. (US Army)

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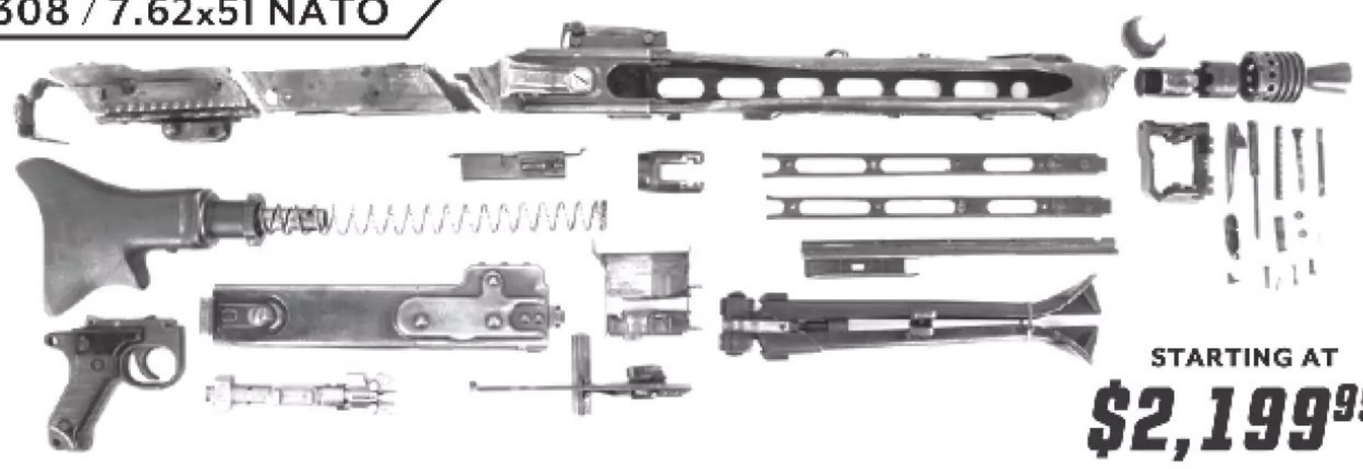

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Thompson firing the Minimi offhand at a hanging plate at 100 yards; the linked 5.56x45mm ammo was left outside the ammo box for illustration purposes.

grip. On the right side just behind the forearm is the cocking handle. Speaking of the forearm, though it does not extend a great distance, it is invaluable when firing the Minimi offhand. Although I had no need of using it, the gas regulator collar is located at the front of the receiver where it is easily reached. The skeleton stock on the weapon I fired was the early skeleton type with the flip-up shoulder rest. Useful if moving quickly with the Minimi, the carry/barrel change handle can be folded down when firing.

I have fired an M249 in the past using an M16 30-round magazine, a practice that would normally only be justified if the weapon had gone through all of the available linked ammo. For this test, I fired 200 rounds of linked 5.56x45mm ammo. Before loading, the cocking handle should be pulled to the rear to lock the bolt back; after which, the cocking handle should be pushed to the front. Then, the cross-bolt safety should be applied by pushing it to the right making sure the red line is visible.

The latches for the top cover are located beside the rear sight atop the receiver in back of the cover. After lifting the top cover, any debris should be cleared from the feed tray, then before threading the linked ammo into the feed tray it should be lifted up to be sure the chamber is empty. Normally, it works best to tilt the SAW to the right while using the left hand to pull the first round in the "belt" against the feed tray, then count five or six rounds onto the tray before closing the feed cover, MAKING SURE YOUR HAND IT OUT OF THE WAY. For purposes of photos to show the ammo being fed into the Minimi and the links dropping to the ground, I used the ammo outside of the ammo box, which would normally be used in combat.

As the ground was quite muddy on the day I shot the Minimi, I did not put up targets at 100 and 200 yards. Instead, I aimed at hanging plates

STANDING, UNSUPPORTED

6-39. Soldiers should use the standing, unsupported position for closer targets or when time is not available to assume a steadier position such as short range employment. The Soldier should lean their upper body slightly forward to aid in recoil management. Figure 6-8 illustrates the key focus areas for the standing supported position.

1 Support:	Unsupported
2 Leg Position:	Standing, firm, feet shoulder-width apart.
3 Stance / Center of Gravity:	Aggressive lean forward toward the target.
4 Firing Elbow:	Tucked toward the shooter's side.
5 Nonfiring Elbow:	Slightly outward.
6 Firing Hand:	Grasping pistol grip, finger off the trigger until ready to fire.
7 Nonfiring Hand:	Extended as forward as possible, for aid in recoil and transitioning.
8 Butt Plate:	Highest point of shoulder to absorb recoil impulse.
9 Stock Weld:	Firm stock weld.
10 Shooter, Gun Angle:	Shooter body is approximately 45 degrees to the gun-target line.

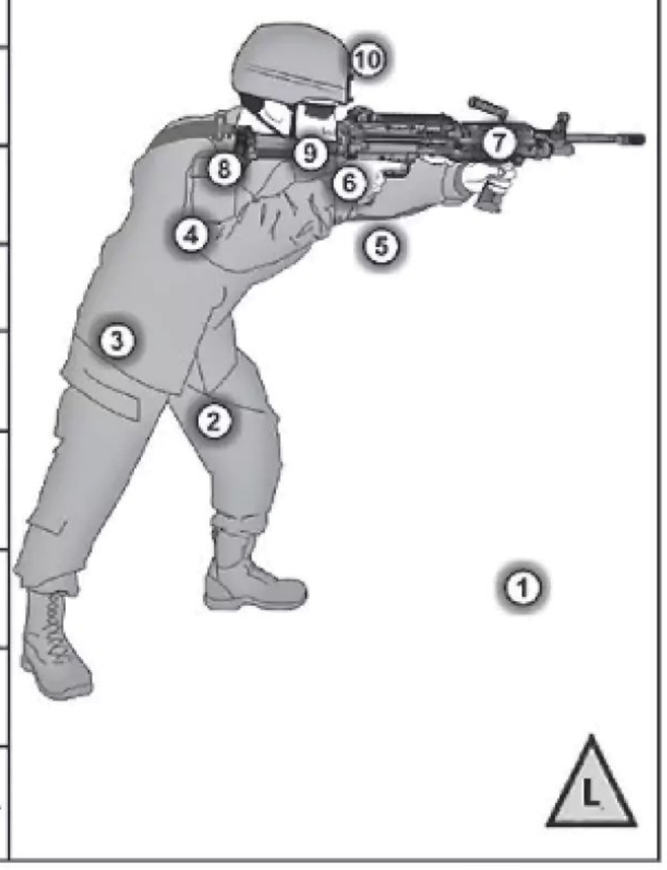

Figure 6-8. Standing, unsupported, example

Correct off hand M249 firing position as shown in TC-3-22-249.

Hard case 200-round M249 ammo box.

Soft 200-round Minimi pouch; US versions are usually camo.

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Thompson beginning to fire a 15- to 20-round burst on the Minimi; notice brace is being thrown up and forward.

Thompson near the end of firing bursts using a 200-round belt in the Minimi; note the spent links building up below the Minimi.

Although most military Minimis are used with optical sights these days, the rear aperture, though not optimum, is still usable to 300 yards.

Front post sight of the Minimi.

and judged accuracy by the sound of hits. I started off firing offhand at 100 yards. The Minimi I was shooting had the standard iron sights, but I found the rear aperture and post usable. I got some hits firing offhand, but I refuse to admit what percentage! Offhand, I was firing five or six round bursts and found the Minimi easily controllable.

To digress a bit, some years ago, I had been asked to evaluate the use of the M249 Para Model to break an ambush of a motorcade. In that case, I found the weapon worked well for putting bursts into "attacker" targets at ranges between 25 and 50 yards. By the way, with the Para's stock collapsed and the 13.7-inch barrel, I found the M249 could be carried in a

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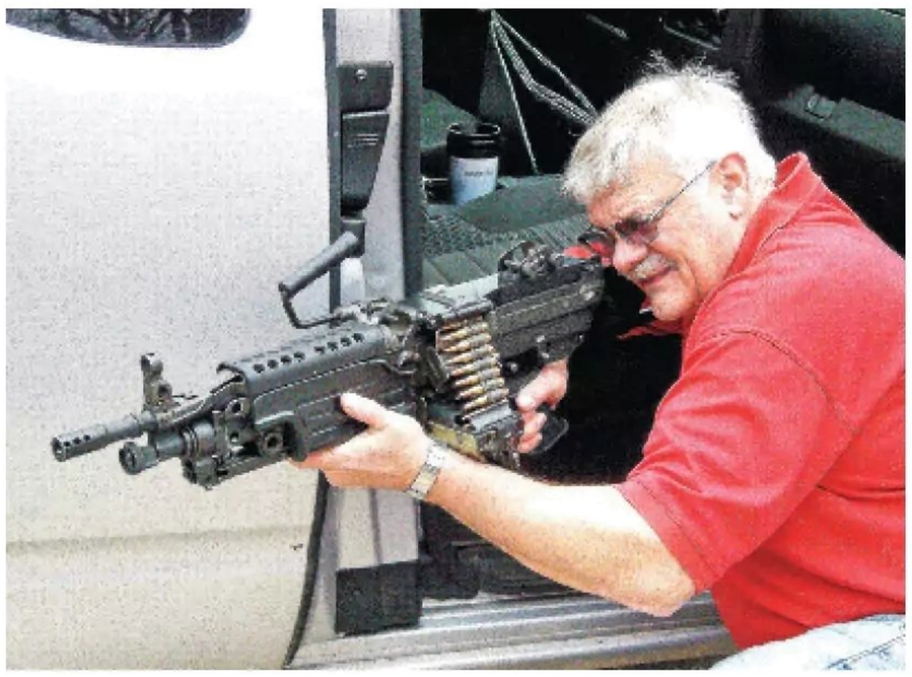

Evaluating how quickly the M249 Para model can be brought into action during a vehicle counter-ambush drill. (T.J. Mullin photo)

The M145 optical sight used on many US M249s.

The Minimi at rest after firing around 500 rounds.

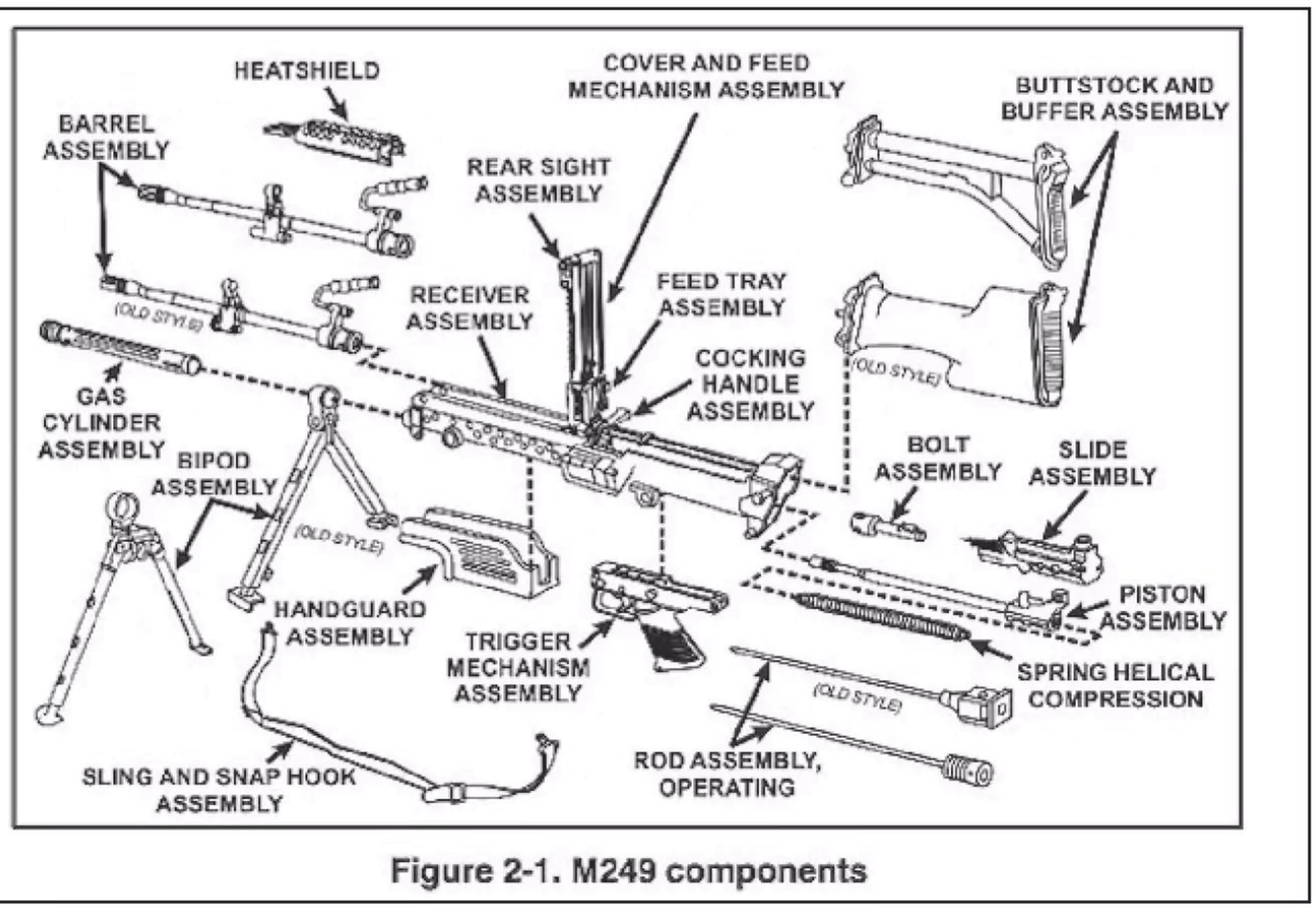

Figure 2-1. M249 components

M249 components diagram from TC-3-22-249.

vehicle, stock resting on the floor between my legs and that the debus drill was fairly quick with some practice.

Back to shooting the Minimi. Firing prone from the bipod in bursts of between five and 10 rounds, hitting the target at 200 yards was fairly easy, though I'll admit my friend Brian, who was along, hit more consistently. In total, I fired 200 rounds and found the Minimi was reliable, had good ergonomics, and was a pleasure to shoot. I wish we had had an Elcan M145 Machine Optic mounted. In the past, I've found I shoot much better with it—Duh!

My conclusion is simple. I understand why so many armies around the world have chosen the Minimi/M249. It's a really, really good LMG/SAW—really, really! FN

A US Army Ranger firing the M249 offhand. (US Army)

SPECIFICATIONS **FN MINIMI**	
Action:	Gas-Actuated, Open Bolt
Overall Length:	40.9 in.
Barrel Length:	18.3 in.
Weight:	15.7 lbs.
Cartridge Capacity:	100- to 200-round linked "belts"
Sights:	Rear—Aperture, Front—Post
Cyclic Rate:	700–1,150 RPM

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The Umarex Komplete is a very different kind of air rifle. Powered by disposable NitroAir nitrogen cartridges, the Komplete is a manually operated repeater available in either .177 or .22 calibers.

THE UMAREX KOMPLETE NCR NITROGEN-POWERED AIR RIFLE

By Will Dabbs, MD

And Now for Something Completely Different…

The Umarex Komplete NCR is a different sort of air rifle. A manually-operated repeater chambered in either .177 or .22, the Komplete NCR is unique in that it is powered by disposable compressed nitrogen cylinders. Lightweight, accurate, powerful, and fun, the Komplete NCR represents a fresh new shooting experience.

Though the Umarex Komplete is a fairly full-figured gun, it is surprisingly lightweight and a delight on the range.

Origin Story

I bought my first gun, a no-frills BB-launching Daisy, at age seven. My Dad split the $7 cost with me 50/50. It was the sexiest physical object I had ever seen.

The world has come a long way since the old putt-putt Daisy BB guns of my youth. Back when I was a kid, CO_2-powered guns were still a novelty. These rifles and pistols most typically fired either plated BBs or .177-caliber lead pellets. Disposable CO_2 cartridges called powerlets drove the things. The appeal was that you could get multiple shots without reloading, and you didn't have to manually pressurize the weapon before firing.

In case you haven't yet had the pleasure, the ultimate iteration of air rifles today is the high-pressure PCP (Pre-Charged Pneumatic) sort. PCP guns carry onboard air tanks that can be pressurized via a dedicated air compressor, a laborious hand pump, or a scuba tank. Where a typical shop air compressor might run 250-300 psi, the specialized sort that drives PCP airguns operate at around ten times that.

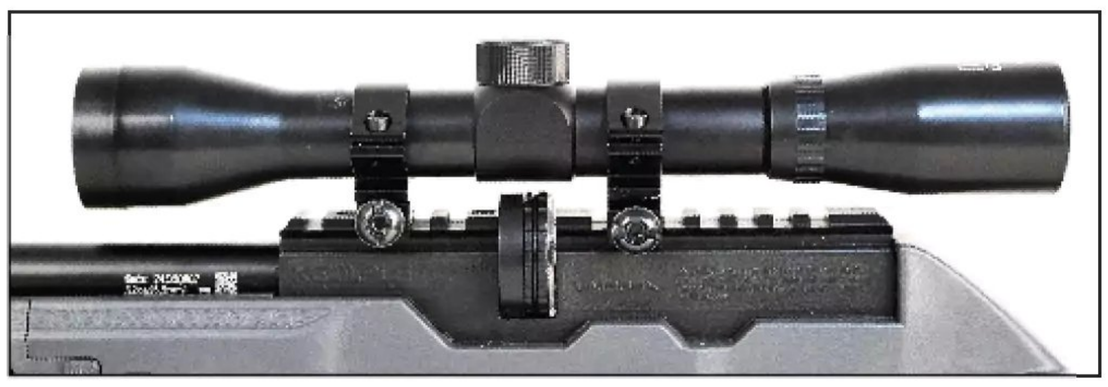
I have logged a little trigger time on these PCP guns, and they are indeed quite nifty. The largest of the lot fires .50-caliber slugs the size of my little finger. Smaller versions shoot .177, .22, and .25-caliber pellets like a laser. However, these rifles are fairly gear intensive. They are also spendy. Keeping them fed demands a little planning and some relatively expensive equipment. The dedicated compressor in particular is potentially prohibitive. Now Umarex offers a fascinating alternative.

I acquired my first gun, this bare bones Daisy lever-action, back in 1973. My half of the cost was $3.50. The addiction has come a long way since then.

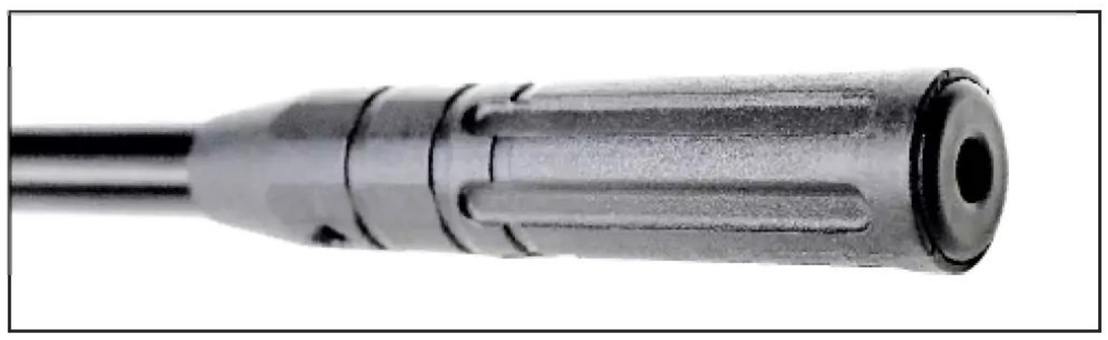
Here we see the Umarex Komplete alongside a high-end Rapid Air Worx HM1000 Micro Hunter PCP air rifle.

The .22-caliber Umarex Komplete feeds from this compact ten-round rotary magazine. The gun comes with two.

The action arm on the right side of the gun manually cycles fresh pellets into the chamber.



The scope that comes with the Komplete rifle is fairly pedestrian, but it gets the job done.



This polymer sound moderator does not require registration and works quite well.

The .22-caliber Umarex Komplete NCR feeds from a rotary 10-round magazine. The .177-caliber sort packs a dozen. There is a manual bolt lever on the right that cycles in fresh pellets. The gun includes a 4x32 scope with rings and two magazines. It also has a surprisingly effective built-in sound moderator. As this is an airgun that does not fire fixed ammunition, there are no registration or regulatory requirements associated with this device.

Between Two Extremes

The Chinese fire lance is generally accepted as having been mankind's first true firearm. It was initially depicted on a silk painting dated to the mid-10th century. The fire lance consisted of a bamboo tube that was packed with gunpowder and charged with pieces of porcelain or iron pellets as projectiles. It was conflagrated by means of a time fuse. This whole shebang was strapped to the end of a spear such that it could then be thrown at an enemy combatant. The gun's maximum effective range was around three meters. Much has changed since then.

Nowadays guns come in all shapes and sizes. The longest confirmed sniper kill in military history currently stands at 3,800 meters. Ukrainian marksman Viacheslav Kovalski used a custom-built anti-materiel rifle called the Volodar Obriyu to set this record. That loosely translates to Horizon's Lord. This beast of a gun fires custom ammunition made by necking down Combloc 14.5x114mm cases to accept .50 BMG match bullets.

In between those two extremes, you'll find PCP airguns. These weapons offer greater power and precision than their manually-powered counterparts. The new Komplete NCR puts PCP awesomeness in the hands of folks of normal means.

A Wee Spot of Science…

The new Komplete rifle is driven by nitrogen instead of the CO_2 gas-driven airguns of my youth. The disposable NitroAir nitrogen cartridges that drive the Komplete NCR look like CO_2 cartridges on steroids. They are typically sold in packs of two for about $25. That's obviously $12.50 per individual cylinder.

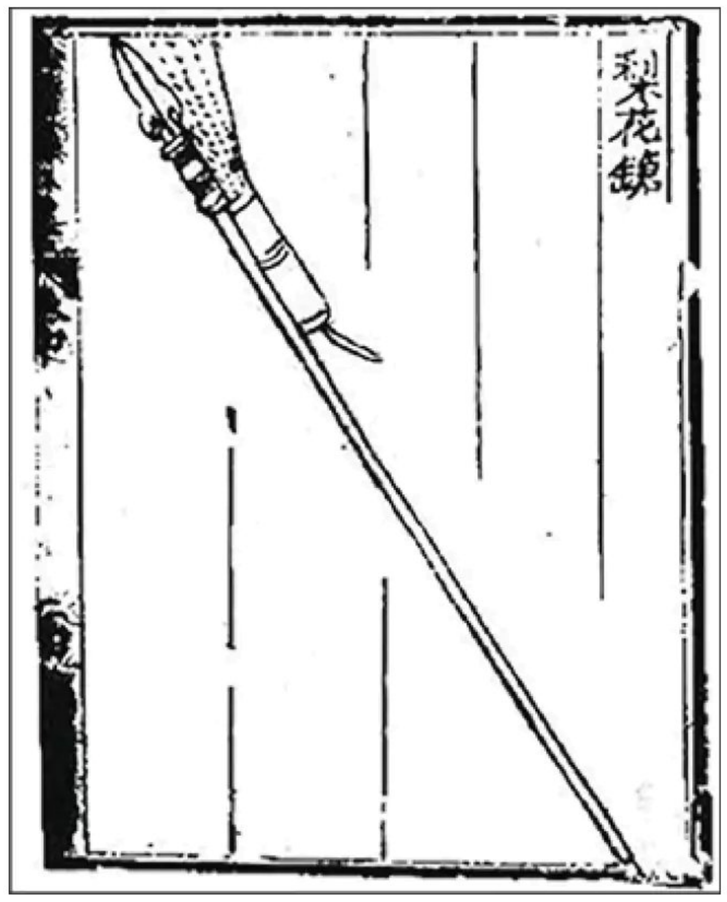
To get the gun ready for firing, one removes the forearm, screws the NitroAir cartridge in place, and goes to town. There's a scant hiss to let you know it is seated. One cartridge is good for about 50 shots before velocities start to fall off—900 fps at 40 shots fell to 575 fps at 70 shots, and

around 370 fps at 80 rounds. Running one of these nifty rifles is a fresh new experience, even for a grizzled gun nerd like me.

Nitrogen at room temperature is a colorless, odorless gas. Its atomic number is 7. Based upon its location on the periodic table, chemists would call it a pnictogen. It is the seventh-most common element in the solar system. Nitrogen comprises 78% of the earth's atmosphere.

Today, nitrogen is used to create oxygen-free environments for food processing. Liquid nitrogen is commonly used for cryogenic applications like freezing off skin lesions at the dermatologist's office. Nitrogen is a critical component of amino acids and proteins. As nitrogen floats about essentially inert in the atmosphere, spilling it is quite literally harmless. Even Greenpeace acknowledges that nitrogen is harmless.

NitroAir nitrogen cartridges are made from steel. The primary component of steel is iron. Most of the earth's core is iron. Both components of the NitroAir cartridge system are utterly harmless. Throw the empty cartridges away when you're done without any tree-hugger-induced guilt. As a card-carrying packrat, I naturally save mine just because they look so cool. Yes, my long-suffering bride could use your prayers….



The Chinese fire lance had a max effective range of around ten feet, but it sparked an arms race that burns brightly even today some 1,000 years later. (Public domain)

Umarex NitroAir disposable nitrogen cartridges look like traditional CO_2 cartridges only bigger.

The Gun

The Komplete NCR rifle weighs a paltry five pounds and sports an ethereal 2.25-pound target trigger. The rifle includes a regulator system that transforms 3,600 psi gas in the cartridge into usable 1,800 psi gas in the gun. Unlike CO_2-powered guns, the Komplete rifle is effective in both hot and cold environments.

Velocities with lightweight .22-caliber pellets hover around 900 feet per second. The side lever requires about seven pounds of pressure to activate, but its innate mechanical advantage makes that painless. The removable forearm has plenty of M-LOK space for accessories should the spirit lead.

The included 4x32 scope is pretty low-end, but it is perfectly scaled for a .22-caliber air rifle. The safety is a simple pushbutton built into the trigger. The integral sound suppressor is surprisingly effective given its modest size.

Installing a fresh NitroAir cartridge is both painless and stupid-proof.

Let Us Retire to the Range

Running the Umarex Komplete NCR will remind you what brought you into this weird quirky sport in the first place. Steel targets offer audible feedback when you connect. Empty aluminum beverage cans burst delightfully. I could easily keep my rounds inside a quarter out to 25 meters or so. Thanks to the NitroAir cartridges, all that is required to run the gun is keeping the magazine topped off and manually cycling the charging handle.

The buttstock and human interface of the Komplete are delightfully executed. The pistol grip and stock geometry fit me like a second skin. The manual of arms is straightforward.

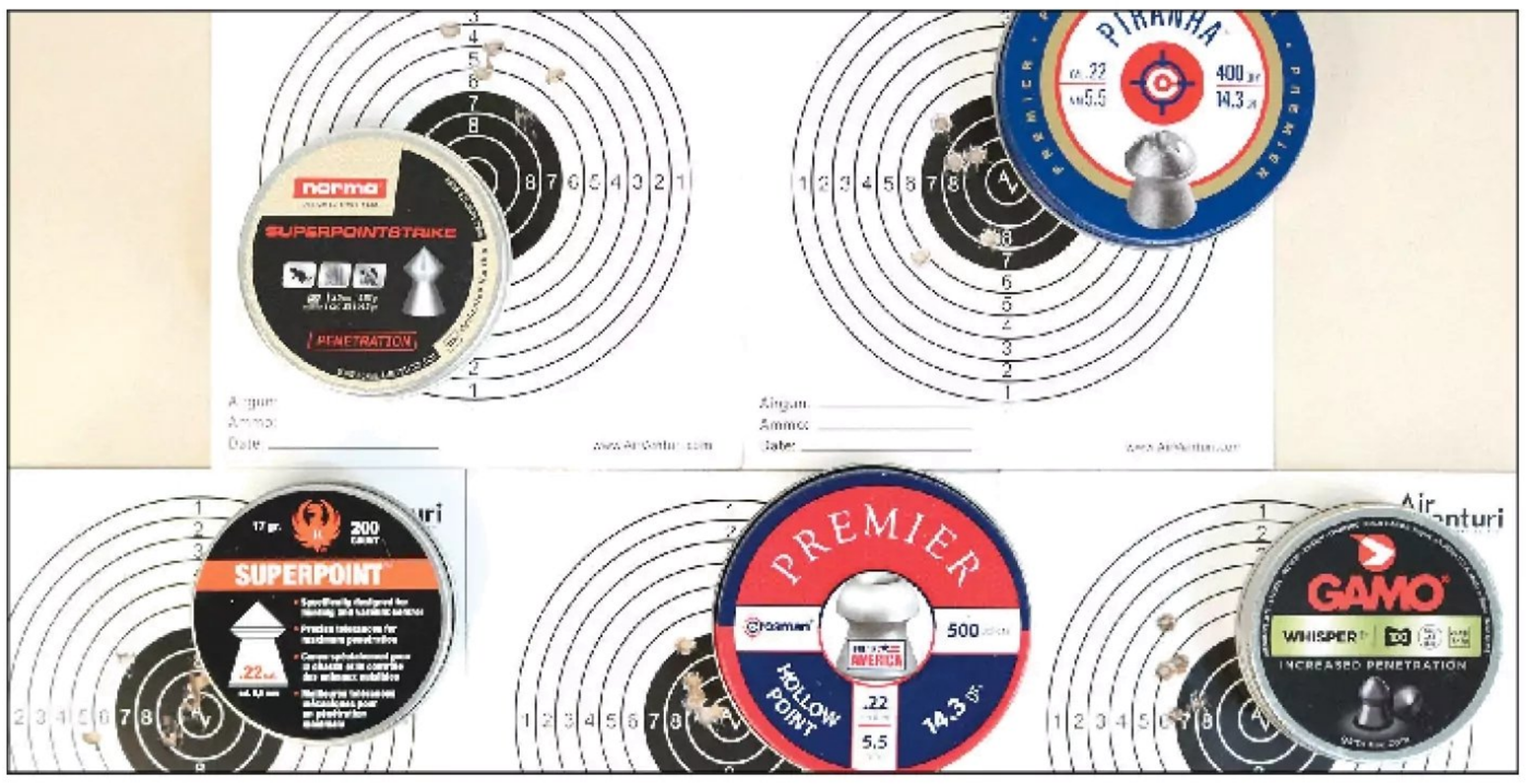
You can throw these things away without guilt. Everything about it is pretty benign.

For a sub-$200 gun, the Umarex Komplete is remarkably well-executed.

The ergonomics of the Umarex Komplete are well-reasoned.

4X is a decent magnification for a rifle of this sort.

The combination of the Komplete's lovely trigger and well-executed human interface made it a proper performer on the range.



PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS
UMAREX KOMPLETE AIR RIFLE

Load	Group Size (in.)	Velocity (fps)	Std Deviation
Crosman 14.3 gr. Piranha	1.3	908	2.7
Crosman 14.3 gr. Premier	0.75	907	3.8
Normal 14.5 gr. Superpoint Strike	1.25	897	2.5
Ruger 17 gr. Superpoint	1.2	872	19.9
Gamo 21.8 gr. Whisper	0.9	755	6.9

Group size is five rounds fired from a sandbag rest at 25 meters and measured center-to-center. Velocity is the average of five rounds measured by a Garmin Xero C1 chronograph.

Despite a wee bit of creep, the target trigger is sublime. There is, of course, no felt recoil, and the gun is diaphanously lightweight. On my first outing I shot up aluminum cans, abused steel targets, centerpunched empty shell casings, and defaced a few old pennies for flavor. The Komplete NCR shoots both straight and hard. It is also hearing safe.

Philosophical Musings

Pellets are cheap in bulk. However, at $12.50 per cartridge that is good for about 50 shots, New Math tells us that this works out to around 25 cents per trigger pull, not counting pellets. That's not chickenfeed. However, appreciate the context.

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Close Focus (m)	5
Exit Pupil	4.25-1.42
Eye Relief	21-18

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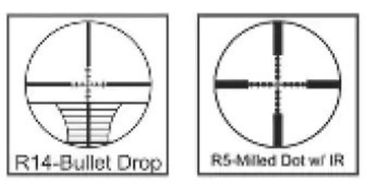
R6-Milled Dot

R14-Bullet Drop

Magnification	6-24x
Field Of View @100	.8-2.8 degrees
Exit Pupil (mm)	1.67-6.67
Objective Diameter	40mm
Tube Diameter (mm)	25.4
Eye Relief (mm)	85-90
Length	400mm

Magnification	4-16x
Field Of View @100	1.1-3.9 degrees
Exit Pupil (mm)	3.12-12.5
Objective Diameter	50mm
Tube Diameter (mm)	25.4
Eye Relief (mm)	75-85
Length	370mm



R14-Bullet Drop

R5-Milled Dot w/ IR

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2003RA02506 4-16X40 AO

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R14-Bullet Drop

Magnification	4×16
Field Of View @100	1.1-3.8
Exit Pupil (mm)	2.5-10
Objective Diameter	40mm
Tube Diameter (mm)	25.4
Eye Relief (mm)	70-85
Length	370mm

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2003RA08001 6-24X50 SF

30MM tube size gives you a clear picture in relatively low light because of the tube size and fron end. Excellent for close shots as the parallax goes down to 10 yards and in between to infinity. Non illuminated comes with sunshade and also rings for mounting to your rifle. Has three position turrents for fast and easy adjustment and the parallax is on the side of the scope for easy use. Also turrents are easily reset to zero and has comfortable eye relief so you are not close to the scope when firing. Enjoy.

R14-Bullet Drop

Magnification	6-24x
Field of View @100	.8-2.9 degrees
Exit Pupil (mm)	2.08-8.33
Objective Diameter	50mm
Tube Diameter	30mm
Eye Relief	85-90mm
Length	400mm

SUPER SPECIAL 5 REGULAR PRICE $188.00

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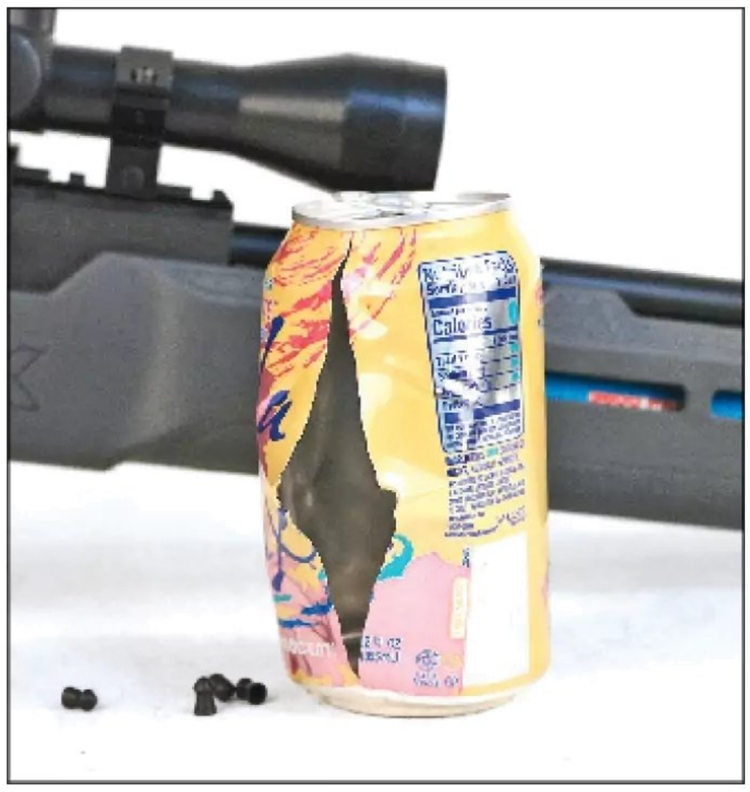
THE UMAREX KOMPLETE



The Umarex Komplete will remind you of the raw unfiltered joy of just shooting stuff.

I have an old Army buddy who is a fellow aviator. He tracked into fixed-wing aircraft, while I flew helicopters. By the time he retired as an O-6 Colonel he had about a zillion hours flying Gulfstream jets. He then took a job flying these same remarkable airplanes for a local private jet service.

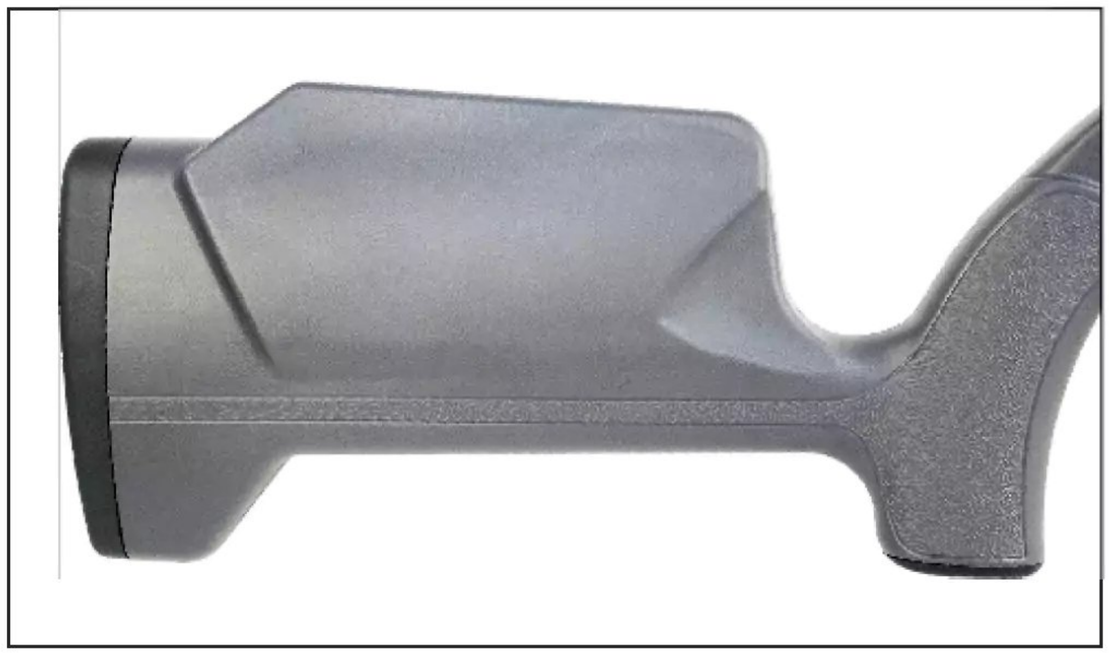
His clientele are folks with money who would sooner avoid the gate hassles at Memphis International Airport. Renting his $28 million machine costs around $25,000 per hour. At that price, it at least comes with gas and a crew. Why would anyone in their right mind shell out that kind of coin to use somebody else's jet airplane? Well, it's all about convenience.

The kind of folks who have that kind of cash to spend on luxury transportation could indeed afford their own jets. They just don't want the hassle. By renting somebody else's plane, they don't have to fret about maintenance chores or ensuring that some ex-military fighter pilot shows up for work both sober and on time. For them, it is worth the basic cash outlay just not to have to fool with the little things. In some ways, the Komplete NCR is similar.

I maintain several conventional high-performance PCP air rifles in my own personal stable. They are fun, powerful, exotic, and cool. However, the high-pressure air compressor is expensive and demands a little maintenance. It is also both bulky and heavy. If you take the gun to the field, the compressor will run off of a car battery. However, that is a bit of a distraction. A scuba tank is heavier than a late-night philosophy discussion in the freshman coed dorm. That manual air pump I mentioned earlier will either transform you into a competitive body builder or just make your heart explode. The Komplete NCR does away with all of that.

These nitrogen cartridges, though expensive, are undeniably convenient. If taking your Komplete rifle out to

The Komplete shoots plenty hard. Most of my pennies zipped off into the woods. The few that remained typically imbedded themselves into my target backstop.



The buttstock fits the human form wonderfully.

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The disposable NitroAir nitrogen cartridges that drive the Umarex Komplete allow you to take this PCP gun to the field without worrying about a bunch of bulky support gear.

The Umarex Komplete is the PCP air gun you can use to hunt small game comfortably.

remote spaces for hunting or fun, it is awfully easy to drop a couple of spare cartridges into your cargo pockets. That is the niche wherein the Komplete NCR can be found.

If the expense seems daunting, Umarex offers a wide selection of break barrel, manually-operated pellet rifles as well. However, if you are looking for convenience along with reliable, consistent performance, shot-after-shot, the Komplete is all that and more. There are lots of ways to throw .22-caliber projectiles downrange. This one is unique.

Practicalities

So, what's the Komplete NCR really good for? It would knock the dog snot out of a tree rat or bunny if DIY wild game is your bag. Against heftier threats it would at least give pause. However, where the Komplete really excels is just plain old-fashioned ballistic fun. Putting the holy smackdown on that Coke can that has been talking bad about your momma or punching Lincoln out of a penny will cure what ails you. That's a reliably enjoyable way to kill a lazy afternoon at the range.

You may be a John Wick-grade, ex-SAS, retired professional assassin whose personal gun collection contains the tricked-out HK G36 assault rifle that George Washington himself carried when he crossed the Delaware on Christmas Day, 1776 in another dimension. However, no matter how many triggers you have squeezed, you likely have not run anything quite like this. For the neophyte just starting out, the seasoned gunman with curious grandchildren, or the competitive shooter with a lifetime total round count in the bazillions, the Umarex Komplete NCR is fresh, new, and different. If you like to shoot and rank convenience as a priority, the Komplete will get you there. FN

The Umarex Komplete represents a fresh new take on air riflery.

UMAREX KOMPLETE AIR RIFLE	
Type:	Nitrogen Cartridge-Fed Pre-Charged Pneumatic Repeater
Caliber:	.22
Action:	Manual Side-Lever
Magazine:	10-Round Rotary (Two Included)
Barrel:	23.6 in.
Overall Length:	41.5 in.
Weight:	5 lbs.
Trigger:	Two-Stage, Adjustable Take-Up
Finish:	Blued
Sights:	None/Picatinny Rail
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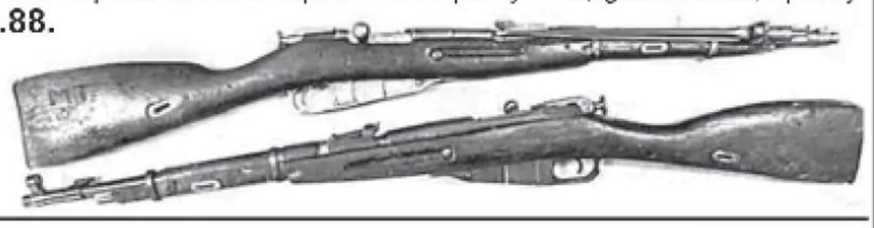

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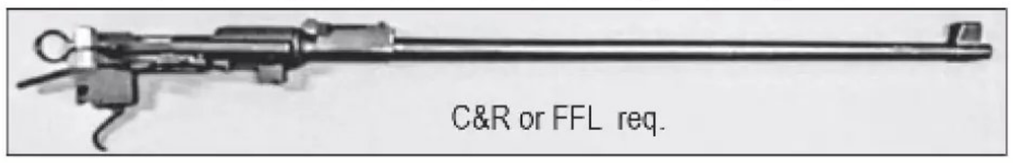

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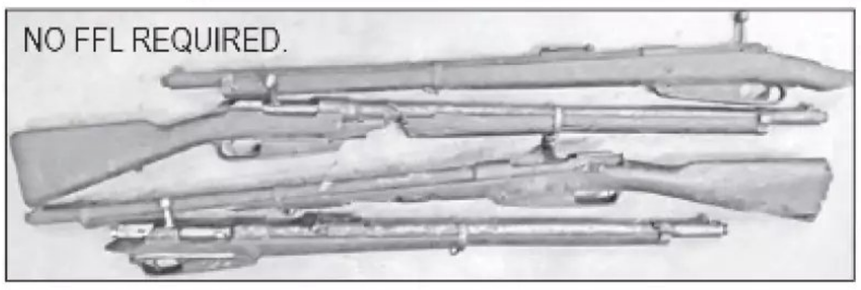

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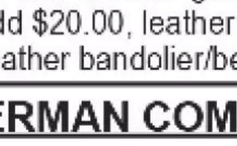

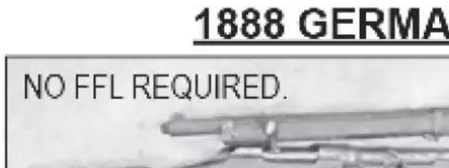

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[Cont. from page 12]

6TH ANNUAL 'ROD OF IRON FREEDOM' FESTIVAL IN PENNSYLVANIA DRAWS THOUSANDS

By Yonathan Stern

From October 11th through the 13th, Kahr Arms hosted their 6th annual Rod of Iron Freedom Festival (ROI) at the Tommy Gun Warehouse in Greeley, PA.

Kahr Arms is a firearms manufacturer which specializes in high-quality, deep-concealment pistols (such as the PM9). They also manufacture the famous semi-automatic versions of the Thompson submachine guns and Desert Eagle. Kahr Arms was founded by Justin Moon, son of the well-known Korean religious leader, Reverand Sun Myung Moon. Reverand Moon's younger son, Pastor Sean Moon, leads the Rod of Iron Ministries, an evangelical Protestant Church which split from Reverand Moon's Unification Church after the elder Moon's death. Rod of Iron Ministries has been in the spotlight in recent years due to their practice of worshipping with AR-15's. While many conservative Americans may find this practice fascinating, antigun liberals see Rod of Iron Ministries as a dangerous cult and regularly portray the church in a negative light. However, that portrayal has certainly had no effect on dimming the appeal of the Rod of Iron Freedom Festival.

Lauded as America's largest open carry event, ROI Freedom Festival boasts conservative speakers, vendors, a 600-yard open shooting range, book signings, martial arts displays, 2A art exhibits, gun raffles, and a music festival. Previous years' ROI festivals saw appearances by Benghazi hero John "Tig" Tiegen, Dana Loesch, Alan Gottlieb, Teddy Daniels, and the Proud Boys.

The goal of the ROI is to promote the Second Amendment, Biblical values, freedom, and most of all, Trump. The theme of the event could best be described as "God, Guns, Guts and Trump."

Located in the Pocono mountains, only minutes from the New York and New Jersey state lines, the ROI Festival draws attendees not only from the surrounding region, but also from across the country, and even around the world. The author met attendees who flew in for the festival from as far away as Brazil, Germany, France, Korea, and Japan.

While the Rod of Iron Fest is an open carry event, festival organizers ensure that long guns carried by revelers are unloaded and zip-tied, while holstered handguns can be open carried loaded and unzipped.

ROI 2024 had a star-studded list of speakers and saw record numbers of attendees. The festival kicked off on Friday with a special movie premier and Q&A with former National Security Advisor, Lt. General Michael Flynn. The event continued on Saturday with speeches by former ICE director Tom Homan and other well-known government and political experts. However, the real action started on Sunday with a speech and book signing by Sebastian Gorka followed by lectures given by best-selling author and anti-communist activist Trevor Loudon, former Navy SEAL and DEVGRU Operator Craig "Sawman" Sawyer, Texas hero Stephen Willeford who neutralized a church mass shooter (ending the killing spree) was in the Gun Owners of America (GOA) booth, a Japanese Choir, a video message by Colonel Alan West, a bluegrass music concert, and a gun raffle featuring a Trump AR-15. The event capped off with a giant bon fire and prayer.

The Author with Kahr Arms CEO Justin Moon at the 2024 Rod of Iron Freedom Festival.

Without a doubt, Rod of Iron 2024 brought "God, Guns, Guts and Trump" to center stage in North-Eastern PA. For more information on next year's event, please visit: RodOfIronFreedomFestival.org.

—

About the Author:

Yonatan Stern, is an IDF veteran and professional firearms instructor. Yonatan is the director of Cherev Gidon Israeli Tactical Training Academy in Honesdale, PA, the next town over from Greeley and Kahr Arms. Yonatan can be reached at: mefaked@cherevgidon.com FN

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE *GARLAND V. VANDERSTOK* "GHOST GUN" CASE

By Darwin Nercesian

The United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments on Tuesday, October 8th in *Garland v. VanDerStok*, a case that centers around whether or not the ATF and the Biden administration have the legal authority to circumvent the legislative process whenever they feel they can appeal to what they present as a greater purpose. Executive vigilantism if you will.

Garland v. VanDerStok resulted from the ATF publishing a "Final Rule" in April of 2022, changing the regulatory definition of "firearm" to include parts that could become functional frames and receivers via additional manufacturing, unilaterally shifting the legislative goalposts yet again. This rule is aimed at manufacturers of 80% receiver kits who have supported the right of private citizens to make firearms for personal use at home, a tradition that does not carry with it the obligation to serialize those guns. By forcing serialization of the kits prior to purchase, law-abiding citizens who choose to maintain their privacy would seek another option, effectively shutting down these manufacturers.

Although attorneys representing the government, in this case, have deployed copious amounts of subterfuge in a sleight-of-hand attempt to deflect attention from the matter at hand to a more emotional ground for their actions, the heart of the suit surrounds 18 U.S.C. 921(a)(3) of the Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA).

> (3) The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The ATF and Biden administration have repeatedly attempted to justify the circumvention of Congress' legislative jurisdiction by making "rules" backed by penalties and imprisonment as administered by the government. We have a term for that. It's called creating law, and neither the ATF nor Biden's Department of Justice have the legal authority to do that.

If this argument feels familiar to you, it should. The ATF, seemingly impervious to learning its lesson, has recently seen "rules" struck down in matters of pistol braces, bump stocks, and forced reset triggers. So why continue beating the drum only to crash against the judicial rocks time and time again? The answer is simple. Although *VanDerStok* is a test of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) and not the Second Amendment, the case is Second Amendment adjacent, adversely affecting gun owners and access to firearms, a goal the administration and the left, in general, will take any opportunity to chip away at.

The government's case essentially rests on the idea that they must get around the law to protect public safety, an argument I don't think they would tolerate from a private citizen. Rule of law for thee, but not for me. I spoke with Bill Sack, Director of Legal Operations with the Second Amendment Foundation, who points out the GCA was passed in 1968, and Congress has had plenty of time to change it, but they haven't.

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"The government attorney, who spoke at length trying to justify their circumvention of the plain language of the statute, was both eloquent and ineffective at the same time. The fact of the matter is that the ATF is seeking to put language in the statute that is not there, a fact that can be seen by anyone who reads the statute itself. Anybody can look it up, you know, 18 U.S.C. 921(a)(3) A and (a)(3) B. You can see it's not there. It's a common-sense argument, and the government is trying to come up with every reason why if you squint really hard and you bend over backward, you can take the language from (a)(3) A and put it into (a)(3) B, but the fact of the matter is that it isn't there. Congress didn't put it there."

It's important not to get stuck on ancillary distractions presented in the government's case. Even the term "ghost guns" is a well-thought-out piece of propaganda coined only in recent years to paint a picture of an untraceable murder weapon rather than the long-standing tradition of homemade firearms that has been around since the founding of the Republic.

At one point in the briefing, the government presented the analogy, likening the kits to a build-at-home Ikea couch, arguing that it is still considered a couch before assembly. While the receiver kits in question do

not even include half the parts necessary to assemble a completed firearm, the analogy also ignores the requirement for actual manufacturing, including milling, drilling, and fine finishing, not just assembly, demonstrating either a lack of knowledge on the subject matter in front of the highest court in the land or a willful intent to deceive the Justices.

Media opinions have certainly hung on comments from misinformed Justices.

"Drilling a hole or two, I would think, doesn't give the same sort of reward that you get from working on your car on the weekends… My understanding is that it's not terribly difficult for someone to do this," said Chief Justice John Roberts.

While it's easy to ridicule the Chief Justice for this misguided statement, it's important to consider his sources for the hyperbole, the ATF and the Biden administration. "Drilling a hole or two" is a demonstrably dishonest take on the process, and I would have particularly enjoyed seeing a kit laid out in front of the Justices for a hands-on show of how "not terribly difficult" it is. This would have been good for a few laughs.

Representing manufacturers and groups opposing the rule, Peter Patterson pointed out that building the kits is far more complicated than the administration has suggested, however, Patterson wisely remained grounded in his argument, staying with the facts and nature of the litigation, which had nothing to do with how easy or difficult a kit is to build, and everything to do with the ATF overstepping its authority.

Since the conclusion of the day's oral arguments, the mainstream media has touted the Supreme Court's disposition during the hearing as signaling a tendency towards the ATF and Biden administration's arguments regarding lack of manufacturing difficulty and the potential for prohibited individuals to purchase kits and build them at home for criminal intent. I will point out, however unnecessarily, that violent crime has been around long before 80% receiver kits, and violent criminals have never had an issue arming themselves, sometimes aided by our own government. Just ask Barack Obama and Eric Holder about Operation Fast and Furious.

I WILL POINT OUT, HOWEVER UNNECESSARILY, THAT VIOLENT CRIME HAS BEEN AROUND LONG BEFORE 80% RECEIVER KITS, AND VIOLENT CRIMINALS HAVE NEVER HAD AN ISSUE ARMING THEMSELVES, SOMETIMES AIDED BY OUR OWN GOVERNMENT. JUST ASK BARACK OBAMA AND ERIC HOLDER ABOUT OPERATION FAST AND FURIOUS.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett added to mainstream media perceptions as she has appeared yet again to break with conservatives on the court, expressing her support for regulations that force buyers to obtain a firearms license to purchase build kits. This is not the first time Justice Barrett has departed from conservative views on the Second Amendment, values she represented herself as a staunch supporter of when she was nominated to the Supreme Court by then President Donald Trump. She previously joined Chief Justice John Roberts and liberal Justices in blocking a lower court's injunction from taking effect against the ATF "ghost gun rule" last year.

VanDerStok, however, is not the only case in which Barrett has supported gun control measures, as she showed strong disapproval of an analysis by conservative Justice Clarence Thomas during oral arguments in *United States v. Rahimi*, a case bringing into question whether people under a domestic violence civil restraining order have the right to own a gun. Barrett signaled disagreement with Thomas's strict constructionist view of the Second Amendment, a school of thought that suggests readers should focus only on the wording of the Constitution, a curious stance for Barrett as someone whose oath is sworn to that very document.

I won't debate interpretations over a crystal ball trying to predict the Court's future ruling. That is utterly useless. I will say, however, that I find the cause of such fortune-telling short-sighted, as the Justices are faced with decisions solely based on administrative procedure, which should be the prevailing legal factor in this case.

A decision in *Garland v. VanDerStok* is expected by next summer.

"The rule of law is not to be ignored when it's inconvenient. It's most important when it's inconvenient," Bill Sack said to me in our conversation.

The abuse of power and the weaponization of rogue agencies and the judicial system have eroded our freedom and liberty for too long. While I don't subscribe to the idea that leftist politicians are something we should strive for on any intellectual level, I also don't think they are as dumb as they would need to be to ignore and oftentimes facilitate criminal elements while focusing legal efforts on criminalizing law-abiding citizens exercising their rights, not without some sort of agenda. My respect for the foresight of the Founding Fathers, however, is without limit, as they saw all of these matters ahead of time. Looking back on history and human nature, they provided us with a framework to succeed, and it is one the Supreme Court of the United States of America must now, more than ever, steadfastly preserve and defend. FN

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VP DEBATE: VANCE LET MODERATORS AND WALZ MISLEAD VOTERS ON GUN RIGHTS

By David Codrea

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"At VP debate a star is born and Trump is vindicated," former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich gushed in a *Fox News* postmortem. "Vance Delivers a Master Class in How to Deal with Biased Moderators," *The Daily Signal* echoed.

I don't see it that way, at least for when the conversation turned to the Second Amendment. JD Vance's acceptance of prohibitionist terms, his failure to correct egregious errors and outright lies, and his avoidance of elaborating to voters on why the right to keep and bear arms is the keystone of freedom, show that when it comes to effective advocacy, Republican politicians all too often come up short.

The first blown opportunity arose when the subject of abortion was raised and Tim Walz complained that under a Trump administration, "the states will decide what's right for Texas might not be right for Washington. That's not how this works. This is basic human right."

The right to arms and to defend life and liberty are basic human rights as well, and for that, former President Barack Obama, addressing handgun bans overturned in the *Heller* decision, said "What works in Chicago may not work in Cheyenne." Disregarding for a moment that the ban hardly "worked" in Chicago, it points to Democrat hypocrisy when they cry "home rule" to impose municipal infringements disallowed by state preemption laws but then turn around and demand nationwide citizen disarmament edicts.

When the subject turned to "America's gun violence, epidemic" rather than calling out CBS News moderators Norah O'Donnell and Margaret Brennan for using a loaded and pejorative term, Vance repeatedly used it himself. The truth of course, as economist John Lott has demonstrated, is ""Murder isn't a nationwide problem. It's a problem in a small set of urban areas, and even in those counties, murders are concentrated in small areas inside them," meaning there is no justification for blanket citizen disarmament "laws."

And he let O'Donnell's assertion that "the leading cause of death for children and teens in America is by firearms" without challenge. Again, per Lott, "What is a child?... These deaths are largely gang-related, and even banning guns is unlikely to stop drug gangs from obtaining guns…"

Vance did not respond to O'Donnell's loaded statement that he opposes "red flag gun laws and legislation to ban certain semi-automatic rifles, including AR-15s," with a persuasive explanation of why due process means you can't punish before you convict, how gun prohibitions don't stop dangerous criminals from obtaining them, and how removing guns but not criminals leaves society at risk from proven threats. He chose not to explain why the Second Amendment mandates "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed," and to educate on what "arms" are and why the Framers thought it important for the citizenry to be capable to respond to trained and equipped military threats. Instead, he tried to sound conciliatory to holding parents responsible for criminal actions of their children, saying "I certainly trust local law enforcement and local authorities to make those decisions."

Really? In deep blue Seatle and San Francisco? From Chicago to Cheyenne?

He also continued with the language of the left decrying "illegal guns," which, rather than meaning "stolen" has been expanded to include types of firearms the government doesn't want to allow you to have, and to fraudulently "legitimize" a non-Constitutional power of government to approve or disapprove transfers.

And when addressing "gun free school zones" (that act as predator empowerment zones), Vance elected to ignore programs like Faculty/Administrator Safety Training & Emergency Response (FASTER), and the proven superior safety record of schools where trained teachers and staffers who choose to be are armed. To Walz and Kamala Harris, choice only applies when there's a defenseless life to be terminated.

Vance also could have pointed out that "before the 1990 Gun-Free School Zones Act (GFSA), only two notable mass shootings had occurred

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on school campuses and targeted school attacks increased by over 384% following the enactment of the GFSA" (Ammo.com). And he could have asked Walz what he meant when he said, "I've become friends with school shooters."

When it was his turn to address the issue, Walz reverted to the litany of lies he and Harris have been parroting on the campaign trail, and Vance let a slew of them go unchallenged.

"I'm a hunter. I own firearms," Walz argued. "The Vice President is. We understand that the Second Amendment is there, but our first responsibility is to our kids to figure this out."

Their first responsibility is to their oath to the Constitution. If they keep that and stop infringing on the rights of citizens in whose care children are entrusted, plenty more will be figured out.

Walz pressed on, lauding due process-denying "enhanced red flag laws," and registration-enabling "enhanced background checks" that the "law-abiding" obey and dangerous criminals ignore. (No less a source than the National Institute of Justice has concluded "Effectiveness depends on the ability to reduce straw purchasing, requiring gun registration…")

He repeated the ubiquitous bald-faced lie that "we've got folks that won't allow research to be even done on gun violence."

That's not true and Vance could have responded with what is. The Centers for Disease Control was acting as a gun prohibitionist advocacy group and Congress didn't defund research, it forbade using tax dollars to promote agenda-driven "junk science" that had the predetermined goal of advancing "gun control."

"I've spent time in Finland and seen some Finnish schools," Walz went on. "They don't have this happen even though they have a high gun ownership rate in the country. There are reasonable things that we can do to make a difference. It's not infringing on your Second Amendment. And the idea to have some of these weapons out there. It just doesn't make any sense."

VANCE ALSO COULD HAVE POINTED OUT THAT "BEFORE THE 1990 GUN-FREE SCHOOL ZONES ACT (GFSA), ONLY TWO NOTABLE MASS SHOOTINGS HAD OCCURRED ON SCHOOL CAMPUSES AND TARGETED SCHOOL ATTACKS INCREASED BY OVER 384% FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE GFSA" (AMMO.COM). AND HE COULD HAVE ASKED WALZ WHAT HE MEANT WHEN HE SAID, "I'VE BECOME FRIENDS WITH SCHOOL SHOOTERS."

Vance could have replied that handguns, shotguns, and rifles, including semiautomatics (AR-15-type rifles and semi-auto military-style rifles) are commonly sold to civilians in Finland with a license. He and Harris are talking about banning them. And it's not the licenses that make Finland more peaceable — the 4 million or so peaceable NRA members, arguable the most heavily armed civilian population on the planet, don't need licenses to keep their behavior in check. See John Lott's conclusions, above.

"No one's trying to scaremonger and say, we're taking your guns," Walz continued. "You can still keep your firearms, and we can make a difference."

But you can't keep your firearms, Vance could have countered. Democrats want to ban semiautomatics. Red flag laws will disarm citizens who haven't even been charged with a crime, let alone convicted. Harris was on record as a San Francisco District Attorney arguing against the Second Amendment being an individual right, calling for a handgun ban, and threatening official home invasions to enforce guns being kept locked up and useless against "unofficial" ones.

Speaking of guns, she claims to have one but won't admit what kind, possibly because if it's a semiauto, it is functionally no different than the rifles she wants to mandatorily "buy back" or just outlaw and seize, and handguns are used in far more homicides than so-called (on purpose) "assault weapons."

"I was the NRA guy for a long time. They used to teach gun safety," Walz continued, not explaining what it was he promised NRA to get its endorsement before betraying the gun owners who believed him. "I'm of an age where my shotgun was in my car so I could pheasant hunt after football practice."

The Second Amendment isn't about pheasant hunting.

But he admitted it's not the guns. He could have one on a school campus and the kids would be perfectly safe. So, naturally, he followed that up with "Sometimes it just is the guns. It's just the guns."

"I think there's a capacity to find solutions on this that work, protect Second Amendment, protect our children," he concluded.

Right. Protect "shall not be infringed" by infringing." And Vance let him get away with it.

Our leaders must do better. We need them to lead, and we need them to teach, because while gun rights advocates can reach niche audiences, our representatives have the potential to educate those outside the echo chambers with something they won't get from regime media: the truth. FN

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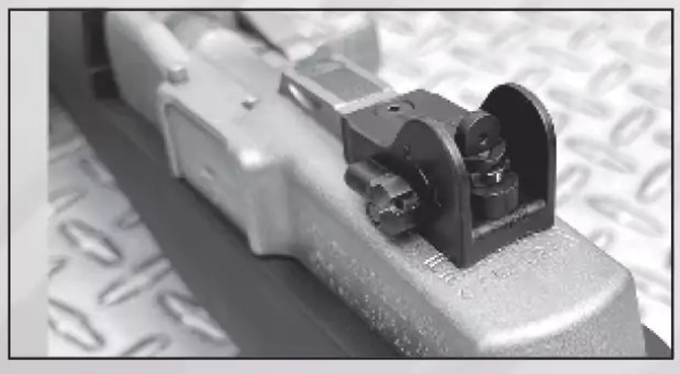

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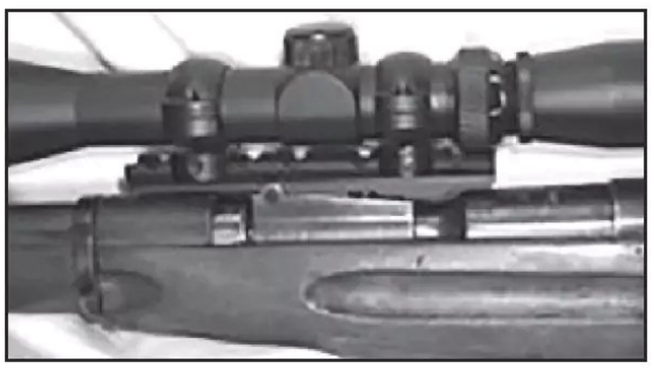

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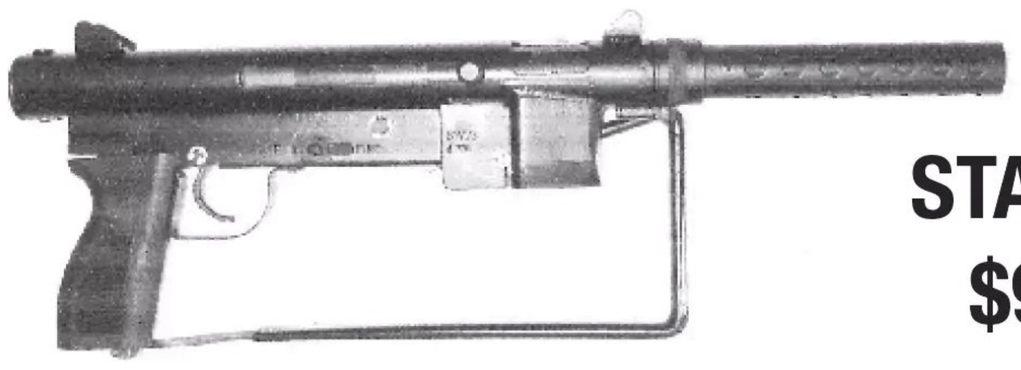

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