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G&A TESTS THE MPR
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REMINGTON MODEL 14

PART VI: EMARY REVIEWS THE PUMP-ACTION RIFLE IN .32 REM.

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Savage
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TARR
The "NY Reload" w/
Smith & Wesson
M940-3 9mm



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WOOD
ATTENTION
SHAREHOLDERS!
Beretta vs. Ruger

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SCAN ME



The subscriber cover illustrates the collaborative effort between Canik and Radian Weapons, resulting in the all-American-made Prime Radian pistol package complete with holster and hardcase. **p. 36**



BY JAMES TARR

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THE CANIK USA PRIME RADIANT WITH AFTERBURNER COMPENSATOR IS ONE FAST SHOOTER.

INITIATE TAKEOFF

COVER PHOTOS AND ABOVE PHOTO: MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

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ALL ROADS, ONE RIFLE
Think of Christensen Arms' Modern Precision Rifle as a general purpose chassis rifle.
BY TOM BECKSTRAND

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OLD & NEW
The Ruger Red Label III stands on its own.
BY ROBERT W. HUNNICUTT

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THE FOURTEEN
"Of Wood & Steel," Part VI: Remington's Model 14, .32 Rem.
BY DAVE EMARY

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MARLIN MYSTERY

Regarding Dave Emary's article on Marlin rifles, I have some questions. I own a Marlin lever rifle with a 25.5-inch barrel, serial number 94XXX, patent dates of Oct. 11, 1887, and April 2, 1889. There are no sling swivels, but there is a lever latch and a flip-up sight. It has been reblued, but I have never fired it. The barrel is pitted, but there is plenty of rifling. It is marked ".38-W." Is this a .38-40 or .38-55 caliber?

Anthony Glogowski
Timberlake, North Carolina

To the best of my knowledge, Marlin marked its .38-40s "38-W" because it didn't want to give Winchester free marketing. I have owned an 1893 in .38-55, which was marked "38-55". Your serial number dates it to 1893 manufacture, which means that it's most likely an 1889 Marlin in .38-40 Winchester. It could be an 1887 Marlin, but that would be rare and unlikely.
— D. Emary

SAVAGE 99 CHAMBERINGS

I enjoyed the article on the Savage Model 1899 in the March 2026 issue. In 1967, I believe, my father was looking for a lighter rifle than his 1917 Enfield in .30-'06. He found that the .284 Winchester was quite a good round. At that time, it was close to .270 in perfor-

mance, and since we hunted from horseback quite a bit he thought the Savage 99 would be a perfect match for the .284 and work well in a saddle scabbard. He took many fine mule deer bucks with that rifle. When he passed in 2005, I inherited it. I noticed that Mr. Emary didn't mention the .284 in his article. I feel this was probably the best deer or elk cartridge for that rifle's long life.
William Frost
Nampa, Idaho

Thanks for sharing. A clarification is in order due to the many letters received concerning Savage 99 chamberings not mentioned in Dave Emary's article, "Ninety-Nine." The series "Of Wood & Steel" considered only the history and specifications of each model up to the year 1925.

The concept was to compare hunting rifles that would have been in common use 100 years ago, so we elected not to describe subsequent variants and other chamberings.
— E. Poole

DEFENDING REVOLVERS

Please tell that sanctimonious James Tarr that I will take a revolver with one round in it over his semiauto with 35 rounds any time. Most self-defense encounters occur within 21 feet of the assailant. If the attacker is up against you, Tarr's semiauto won't fire when it's pressed into his gut because it would be out of battery. If it misfires, how much time will it take him to tap, rack and fire? Not enough. Due to his comment about revolvers for self-defense, I'm cancelling my subscription!

Jeff Frisch
Tigard, Oregon

I assume this is satire but it's getting impossible to tell these days.
— J. Tarr

KEEP 'EM COMING

Regarding the tailpiece "Doozies," please bring on more of these politicians' gaffes. I still laugh when I reread Keith Wood's March 2026 "Spent Cases" column.
J. D. Ray
Texas

BULLET BASE TAPER

I enjoy much deer and elk hunting in Washington, Idaho and Montana, and I reloaded 7mm Rem. Mag. and .300 Savage using flat-

DECEMBER '82

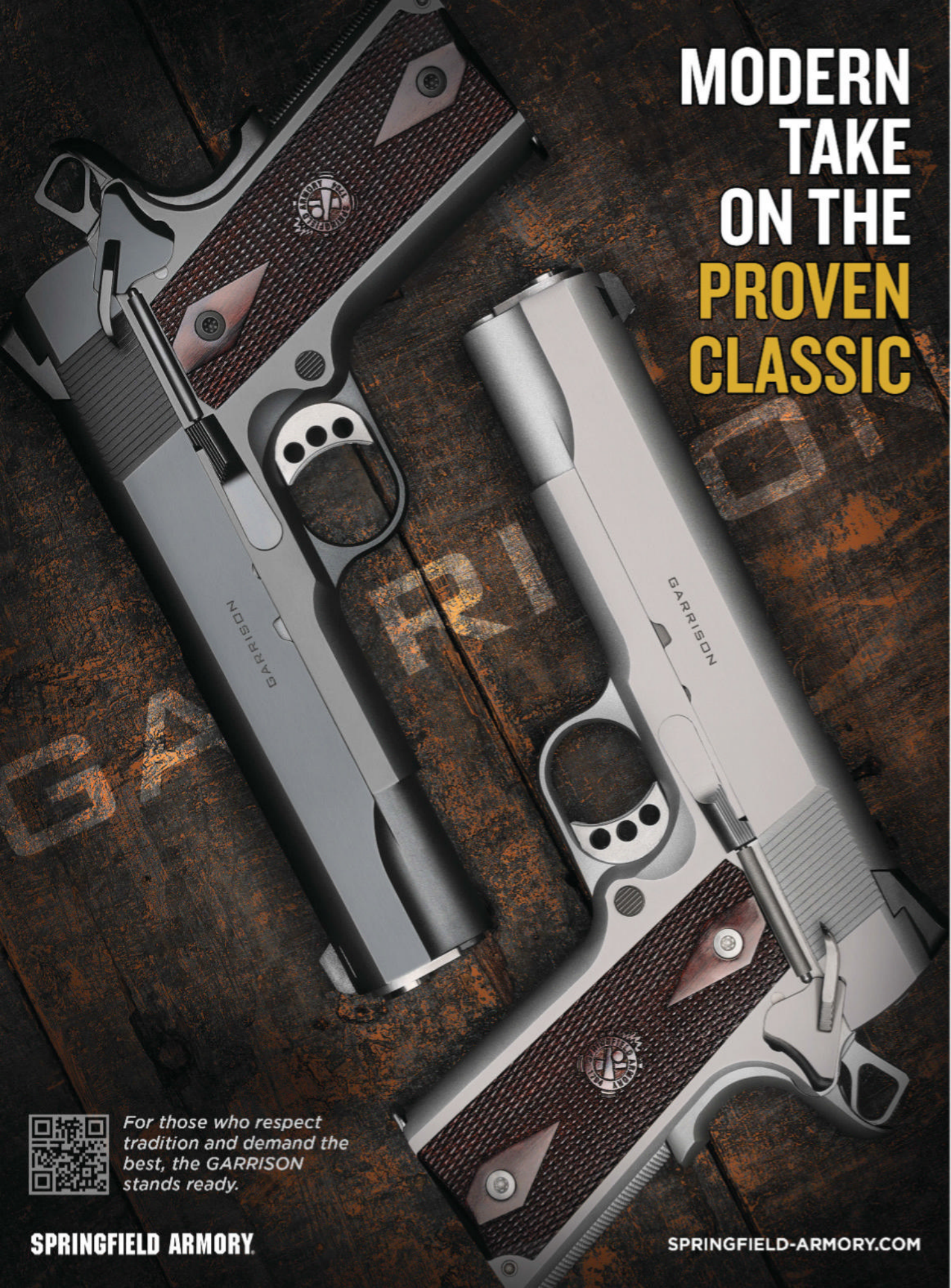
Author Jon Sundra was the first to review the Ruger Red Label over/under shotgun in 12 gauge. It was introduced in 1977 as a 20-gauge stack barrel that frequently drew the question, "Where's the 12?" With a sample in each chambering, Sundra compared and tested them on a dove hunt in Mexico. "It performed flawlessly," Sundra reported, after nearly 1,000 rounds were fired.



base bullets. In the ads and articles for bullets, I notice the bases are tapered a little. Is this to make machine bullet seating accurate and faster? Does base taper reduce bullet velocity due to lower base cross-section?
Gary Bingham
Blue Ridge, Georgia

If I understand you correctly, you are wondering why there is a radius at the edge of the base on flat-base bullets. This is a byproduct of the jacket draw and core-swage process. The core-swage pressure that would have to be applied to get a sharp edge at the rear of the bullet would be excessive and result in overstressed jacket material. This would yield poor accuracy or a jacket that would come apart.
— D. Emary

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DAY 1

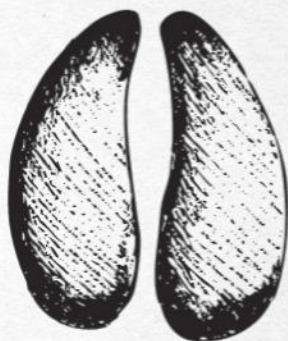
42°46'44.4"N 110°25'55.6"W

Overcast, 28°F, wind from NW

Fresh rub line 200 yds above camp

Hit dirt at 0500. Ridge is steeper than mapped. Saw three cows. Bull sign old. Wind swirled hard around noon. Left knee barking as always. Good day to have a good day.

Roughly
4.75 in





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COLT MODEL 1860 ARMY, .44 CAL., <10%: \$925



1860 COLT REVOLVER

Q: I would appreciate your expert opinion on this family heirloom. The revolver is marked "COLT PATENT" on the left side. There are two matching serial numbers, 12XXX. It is also marked "ADDRESS COL. SAM COLT NEW YORK US. AMERICA". I do not know the caliber, however, it has a smooth trigger pull and cylinder rotation. I would like to increase insurance as appropriate.

J. I.

Florida

A: You have an original 1860 Colt Army revolver manufactured in 1861. Unfortunately, it appears it has been completely refinished. I would value it in the \$850 to \$1,000 range assuming it has a decent bore and works OK. These were superb revolvers. I think the 1860 Army is one of the most beautiful and stylish handguns ever made.

TURNBULL- RESTORED 1911

Q: What do you think the value of my M1911 restored

by the Turnbull Restoration Company in Bloomfield, New York, would be? I purchased this firearm in the late 1980s as an auxiliary piece to my S&W Model 19 revolver when I was a young Chicago police officer. The pistol continued to serve me when I was mobilized in the U.S. Army Reserve in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. My Reserve MP company was still armed with M1911A1s in 1991. They had just been refurbished by

Anniston Army Depot, but consistently jammed. My old M1911 worked. I later paid for a Colt letter, learning that my pistol was delivered to the Army in 1917. In 2011, I took advantage of a sale at Turnbull to restore the gun's finish. (It had been refinished before.) The barrel was also replaced, as was the safety lock. Turnbull did an amazing job, albeit expen-

sive to a retired copper. A good friend of mine — also retired CPD who subscribes to Guns & Ammo — says I diminished the value by restoring it. After whatever service it provided its previous owners and then myself, Turnbull made the CMP Rack Grade condition look good. As my friend said, "A gun is only new once," but it probably looks better

AUCTION BLOCK

GUNWRITER DICK METCALF'S S&W REVOLVERS

A pair of Smith & Wesson Model 460XVR revolvers in .460 Magnum, from the estate of the late gunwriter Dick Metcalf, brought a comfortable \$4,000 at a February 26, 2026, Sportsman's Legacy sale. The consecutively serial-numbered revolvers are from the first production run. Made in 2005, they have 7½-inch barrels, or 8.6 inches including brakes, integral ramps, fiber optic or bead blade front sights, and integral serrated ribs, angled slide-release buttons, and integral locks. Trigger pulls are smooth and the cylinders rotate without stutter. The metal finish on both guns is approximately 85 percent. Richard "Dick" Metcalf (1946–2023) spent the majority of his adult life participating in and profoundly influencing the shooting and hunting industry. For more than 40 years, his features and columns were cornerstones of publications such as *Guns & Ammo*, "Handguns," "Petersen's Hunting" and "Shooting Times." Metcalf also hosted several television shows associated with these publications on the Outdoor Channel and Sportsman Channel. For more information about this and other sales, visit Sportsman's Legacy at sportsmanslegacy.com.



than when it left the Colt factory. So, can you settle the friendly argument for us? Did I waste my money, or did I increase my firearm's value? See pics attached. If you use any of these, please X out the last two digits of the serial number.

J. S.
Email

A: *Turnbull does a superb job of restoring firearms. The attention to detail and workmanship is astounding. While they are not necessarily considered collector's pieces by some die-hard enthusiasts, they at least hold their value well as beautiful examples of craftsmanship and attention to detail. It has been my experience that they will at least be worth their original purchase price, perhaps a bit more depending upon the buyer's interest.*

UNUSUAL GERMAN DRILLING

Q: I think I have a German Drilling in 12 gauge and 8mm. On the front sight, one end can be pushed down, causing the other end to pop up. When a lever on the front right side of the triggerguard is pressed, the rear sight



WILHELM COLLATH DRILLING, 12 GA./8MM, 60%: \$1,250



pops up. Under the shotgun barrel on the right side is the marking "NITRO" along with several symbols, including "AJ" and a "C" with a "w" inside it, followed by "Special STAHL." On the lower right side of the rifle barrel is "C12-8BL AJ". On the right side scrolling under the engraved fox is the marking "FRANKEURTAO". I believe the wing-type lever on top is to select between the shotgun and rifle barrels. On top of the right shotgun barrel is "EXCELST". On top of the

left shotgun barrel is "WIT-TEN", followed by a Roman numeral "II" with a horizontal line, top and bottom, and then a "P" with an "L" over it. On the lower left shotgun barrel is an "O" with a "t" in the top of it, then "S t.M.G." and under this is "N12ZL". On the left side, under the dog engraving, is "PATENT W. COLLATH". I cannot tell what the triggerguard and takedown lever are made of. There is scrollwork on the rib between the barrels and around the screws. There are no cracks and the stock has a cheekpiece. The gun has sling swivels front and rear. The rear swivel is mounted on a scrolled plate that extends another 4½ inches, depicting a man smoking a pipe with a gun hanging over his wrist and a dog by his side. At the back of this plate is a thumb-lift extension used to raise and insert five rifle cartridges. The underside scrollwork extends 8¼ inches from the

front of the trigger to the rear and measures about 1¾-inches wide. Were these three-barrel guns intended for use as "camp" guns in Africa or on other hunting outings? Can you provide an approximate value please? Sorry if this was too much information; I'm just trying to help as much as I can with your research.

T. R.
Kentucky

A: *Thank you for your detailed description and excellent photos. You have a German drilling manufactured by the firm of Wilhelm Collath of Frankfurt an der Oder. The establishment was in its prime from the 1880s to circa 1910. Collath guns were well-made and highly regarded. They were*

HOLLYWOOD HARDWARE

"JUDGE ROY BEAN" WINCHESTER MODEL 1901
This 20-inch-barreled Model 1901 Winchester lever-action shotgun was the trusty sidekick of Actor Paul Newman who portrayed the titular character in the film "The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean" (1972). It was featured prominently in "Bean's" one-room courtroom set scenes and was an inspired prop to be used by the larger-than-life lead character. (Courtesy of the National Firearms Museum, Fairfax, Virginia, and Cinema Weaponry, Glendale, California.)



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U N P A R A L L E L E D



MANHATTAN ARMS SXS SHOTGUN, <10%: \$165

primarily used for European sporting purposes. The style of your gun dates it from around the turn of the 20th century. I'm curious about the 8mm chambering. While it would be convenient if it is 7.92x57 (8mm) Mauser, there is a distinct probability that it is chambered for a more obscure rimmed German 8mm round. I would have a chamber cast made to be sure. The shotgun barrel chambers are almost surely to be for 2½-inch shells. If the gun is 8mm Mauser and the bores are decent, it is worth \$1,250. If it handles a different 8mm, the value would be reduced, possibly by at least 30 to 50 percent. The triggerguard is made of horn, a common German detail.

RUSSIAN SKS

Q: I read with great interest about the value of the Chinese SKS in the March 2026 issue of Guns & Ammo. I was surprised at the value placed on the rifle featured. I have a similar rifle that was manufactured at the Tula Arsenal outside Moscow.

I've carefully and fully researched all the markings for authentication. It also has the Russian star burned into the beautiful mahogany-colored stock. I'm convinced after running a borescope through the bore that it had either not been fired or fired very little. I have about 20 rounds through it. The rifle is in prime condition. How would the value of this rifle compare with the one in the "Gun Room" piece?

**J. D.
Texas**

A: SKS rifles are a lot of fun to shoot, and because there are many varieties they make interesting collector pieces. I have a 1951-dated Tula-made SKS, myself. For years, SKSs could be purchased for less than \$100. Now they can command some decent prices. The SKS was designed by Sergei Gavrilovitch Simonov. Soviet-made rifles were built from 1949 to 1958, though many countries such as China, Yugoslavia, North Korea, and Albania continued to produce them for

a longer period, and they have been issued and used worldwide. Models can be encountered with plain barrels or attached folding knife or spike bayonets. There are a number of Tula variants. I've seen common guns going for \$450, or thereabouts, and more exotic examples running in the \$3,000 range. The current value on an average, good-condition Tula SKS with matching serial numbers is \$600 to \$850.

MANHATTAN ARMS SHOTGUN

Q: The attached photos were from a shotgun that I just inherited from my father. I remember him hunting pheasants with it in the late 1960s. He probably bought this used in Iowa back in the late 1940s or early '50s. We all thought he had sold it years ago when he bought a different shotgun. He was always very skilled with a shotgun, preferring to use them for deer, as well. As you can see in the photos, the gun has a lot of wear and a few issues. The barrels are

labeled "Fine Damascus Barrels." If you zoom in on the pictures, you can see the Damascus pattern through the patina. I remember a guy telling my dad not to shoot modern smokeless powder ammo through it because of the barrels, and he stopped using the gun after that. The family would love to know anything you can tell us about the gun and if it has any value as a collector's piece.

**T. B.
Email**

A: Your photos indicate you likely have a Belgian-made "hardware store" double shotgun from around the turn of the 20th century. Yours is interesting in that it appears to have side-locks; boxlocks were more common in this genre of arm. These shotguns were of decent quality, but were inexpensive enough to be easily afforded by the Average Joe. Manhattan Arms — not to be confused with the Civil War-era Manhattan Firearms Co. — was a prolific purveyor of imported single- and double-barrel shotguns. Yours is a decent example, but the damage to the barrel decreases its value considerably. It certainly does not appear to be shootable. I'd value the piece around \$150 to \$175. 📷

HAVE AN HEIRLOOM? Curious about a vintage firearm? Email Garry at garry.james@outdoor.sg.com, or send a description with detailed photos to Gun Room, Guns & Ammo, 2 News Plaza, 3rd Floor, Peoria, IL 61614. Please include your name and state of residence.

Due to the volume of requests each month, personal replies are not possible. The most interesting or unusual queries are answered in Guns & Ammo magazine.

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Remington.com

The New York Reload with Smith & Wesson's 940-3.



JAMES TARR

NOW I KNOW

YOU DON'T KNOW what you don't know. It came to my attention recently that many young gun owners have never even heard of a "New York Reload." This cannot stand! The New York Reload is as much a piece of American gun culture as anything. It's only changing tastes and technology that have moved it out of our lexicon. New York City is the biggest city in the U.S., and since Theodore Roosevelt was president of commissioners for the New York Police Department (NYPD, 1895-1897), the agency has influenced law enforcement (LE) gear and tactics. It was — and still is — the largest police department in the U.S. Unlike the FBI, NYPD officers are regularly involved in shootings.

From 1970 to 1990, the NYPD averaged 450 so-called "firearms discharge incidents" per year. There were 994 in 1972 alone. During that era, NYPD officers carried revolvers. Uniformed officers generally carried six-shot revolvers with fixed sights and 4-inch barrels, and detectives often relied on snubnose five-shot revolvers. Duty revolvers included the Smith & Wesson Model 10 and 64, the Ruger Police Service Six, and the Dan Wesson Model 11. Snubnoses were the S&W J-frame and the Colt Cobra. At this time, speed loaders for revolvers either didn't exist, weren't reliable, or officers simply didn't carry them due to their bulk.

Most officers in the '70s and '80s didn't use or weren't aware of Speed Strips either, which hold six cartridges in a row and made reloading a bit quicker. For reloading, a uniformed officer likely had a dump pouch or a leather pouch on the belt with a snap. Undo the snap and the pouch dumped six cartridges into an officer's waiting palm. Plainclothes officers — if they had extra ammo on them at all — tended to carry loose rounds in a pocket. Reloading a revolver with loose ammo out of a pocket or a dump pouch was slow and involved, and more so if they had to do it during a gunfight.



STAKEOUT SQUAD

Enter the NYPD Stakeout Squad. The NYPD Stakeout Squad was famous, infamous, or notorious — pick an adjective. Its most well-known member was Jim Cirillo. The Stakeout Squad would go to where the worst violent crime was, usually

involving armed robbers, and wait for the bad guys to come to them. I've heard it described as "hunting over bait." They were armed with shotguns, M1 Carbines and revolvers, and they got into a lot — a lot — of shootings. Cirillo himself was involved in more than a dozen gunfights. They soon realized the weaknesses of carrying revolvers: They were low capacity and slow to

reload. So, they began practicing and advocating for what became the "New York Reload" — meaning a second gun.

If you get involved in a gunfight, and the problem isn't solved before your wheelgun is empty, the New York Reload simply meant that you dropped your empty gun and drew a backup without even attempting to reload the first. The thinking was that this was simpler and a faster way to get a loaded gun in your hand than reloading.

The NYPD Stakeout Squad usually had their primary service revolver, a 4-inch six-shot .38 Special, and if or when that went dry, they drew a second holdout gun, which was often a smaller five-shot snubnose located in a front pocket or, occasionally, an ankle holster. Many serious uniformed officers of the day already carried a backup snubbie, just in case, but the New York Reload philosophy meant ditching your primary the second it went dry instead of trying to reload it under stress. One advantage to having a second gun on your person meant that you have a viable option if your primary doesn't just go empty, but instead malfunctions or becomes disabled.

SMITH & WESSON MODEL 940-3 9MM

Having personally fumbled through revolver reloads using loose cartridges, I already knew that grabbing a second gun



Reloading a revolver one round at a time was an arduous process. In a stressful situation, it'll likely be even slower than when practicing on a range. The author managed a 14.9 second reload.



The moon clips included with the Smith & Wesson 940-3 were quicker to reload, as they hold six fresh rounds in essentially the load position of the cylinder. Reload time decreased to 6.9 seconds.



The New York Reload was undoubtedly the fastest method to get additional rounds on target when carrying a revolver. Consider a hammerless, compact five-shot snubbie for a backup gun.



Are revolvers a legitimate means of carry in the age of high-capacity polymer pistols? The New York Reload suggests they are.

off my person would be quicker, but S&W's 2026 introduction of the Model 940-3 arrested my attention. The 940-3 is a stainless-steel, hammerless J-frame with a 2.17-inch barrel. It has great night sights and no unnecessary internal frame lock. The interesting thing about these guns is that they are chambered in 9mm. Since the 9mm has a rimless case, it requires full moon clips. Pre-load five cartridges into a piece of spring steel and it holds them at the ready, just waiting to be dropped into the cylinder. The 940-3 includes three full moon clips. Using full moon clips to reload is as fast or faster than using a speedloader, in my experience.


I wanted to test exactly how much faster (or not) the New York Reload was compared to other reloading techniques, so I ordered a new 940-3 for the purpose. The 940-3 would be my primary, and my personal S&W Model 638-2 — an Airweight 5-shot .38 Special with a shrouded hammer — would be my backup. Testing was simple: I'd use a shot timer to see how long it took me to reload the 940-3 using a full moon clip versus loading the 638-2 with loose rounds, versus simply grabbing a second gun. Five clean repetitions of each provided an average. To make the test as consistent

as possible, the full moon clip, loose rounds or second gun was always located in my right front pocket.

What I was measuring was the time between the last shot before the reload and the first shot after it. I started with the Airweight, firing and then dumping the spare cases out and reloading five fresh cartridges into the cylinder from my right front pocket. I figure digging five cartridges out of my pocket and loading them into the gun takes roughly the same amount of time as using a belt-mounted dump pouch for six cartridges. I did not have five clean reps, though. Twice, I fumbled and dropped a cartridge on the ground. The average reload time with loose cartridges was 14.9 seconds, which was slower than I expected. There's no real way to do this without taking your eye off the threat either.

Running the 940-3 with full moon clips, I found the short overall length of the 9mm cartridges mostly helped. It made the loaded clip easier to grab and maneuver. The case mouths wanted to hang up going into the chamber, but the average reload time for five runs was 6.9 seconds — quicker than loading the rounds one at a time.

For the New York Reload, I started with the 940-3. When it was empty, I simply dropped it (onto a pad, as I was only borrowing it). Then, I dug the Airweight out of my pocket. The shrouded hammer on this Airweight definitely helped smooth the pocket draw, which is why a lot of S&W's snubbies don't have exposed hammer spurs. The average reload time for me doing a New York Reload was just 3.2 seconds. Unlike the other two techniques, I didn't have a single bad run. Plus, I could do this while keeping my eyes on the threatening target.

I've reloaded revolvers every way possible through the years. I knew the New York Reload would be the fastest technique, but I didn't realize just how much faster it would be versus a full moon clip! I know a lot of serious guys who still, to this day, carry a snubbie as a backup. I find it hard to argue against using a second gun as your reload. 

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015338

Crossbreed Holsters Lightguard

The Crossbreed Lightguard is a versatile, light-bearing, optic-ready holster built with a hybrid Kydex and injection-molded polymer design. Models are available for more than 50 brands of handgun and 21 light options. It attaches with a spring-steel belt clip that hooks over a 1½-inch belt. The holster is adjustable for cant and height. \$45

ON THE HALFSHELL

THE CROSSBREED LIGHTGUARD is an evolution of the N8 Tactical MultiFlex (\$50, crossbreed.com). It's an outside- (OWB) or inside-the-waistband (IWB) holster, which was reviewed in the March 2024 issue of *Guns & Ammo*. The Lightguard's main draw is the library of compatible pistol lights and semiautomatic handguns for which there are options.

The Lightguard holster incorporates three distinct pieces. The lower portion is constructed from two pieces of Kydex. It clamps around the pistol light and triggerguard. Rubber bushings separate the two sections, which can be tightened or loosened to increase or decrease draw resistance. To enclose the handgun, a third piece of injection molded polymer is used to secure the top portion of the holster and handgun. It is attached with four screws, two on each side over the slide, and offers approximately .7 inch of adjustment range. The top section also has a channel to accommodate suppressor-height sights.

The hybrid Kydex and polymer design presents an element of universal fitment and cost savings. Since the polymer top portion doesn't need to change, the lower Kydex is advertised by Crossbreed to be easily exchanged to try different handgun or light combinations. However, additional shells are as yet unlisted on the website for sale at the time of this writing; only complete holsters are listed. A call to Crossbreed Holsters customer service may be necessary for additional shells.

**ON THE HIP**

For carry, the Lightguard ships with a spring-steel metal clip for belts measuring in width up to 1½ inches. The clip has three-quarters of an inch of vertical adjustment range, and it also allows for adjustment in cant with the two attachment screws. The clip can be moved for a left- or right-hand draw. Crossbreed lists additional attachment methods for sale on the Lightguard landing page including IWB loops, Monoblocks clip, Ultituck clip and a paddle attachment option. A ModWing attachment to minimize printing is also available.

Since the polymer top of the Lightguard clamps around the two lower Kydex pieces, it adds width that you wouldn't find on a one-piece holster. The Lightguard measured exactly 2-inches wide with a Smith & Wesson Performance Center M&P 10mm Carry Comp inserted. Despite the extra thickness, the Lightguard did not print excessively through the Vertx Expedition Short Sleeve used for draw-to-fire testing. An S&W M&P 10mm is large for an IWB carry gun, so it can be assumed that a smaller 9mm would print even less.

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COMPACT

SUBCOMPACT

TAURUS MODULAR SYSTEM

Allows modular grip swaps, easy upgrades, and single-point legal compliance.

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Features a T.O.R.O. slide with shared optics cut geometry ensuring compatibility with existing mounting plates.

STRIKER-FIRED TRIGGER

Engineered for shooters, the falling block sear design offers a clean and crisp trigger pull.

MODULAR GRIP

Available in full, compact and subcompact sizes, each firearm ships with 4 backstraps for the perfect fit.



TaurusUSA.com




CROSSBREED HOLSTERS LIGHTGUARD	
MATERIALS	Kydex (lower shell), polymer (top shell), steel (hardware)
CARRY TYPE	Inside the Waistband (IWB); reversible, right hand/left hand
RETENTION TYPE	Level 1 (friction fit)
ADJUSTABILITY	Yes, cant, height and retention
MSRP	\$45 (tested)
HANDGUN FIT	Semiautomatics; Smith & Wesson M&P 10mm M2.0 Carry Comp (tested)
ACCESSORY RAIL ACCOMMODATIONS	Streamlight TLR-7, SureFire XC3 (tested)
POSITIONS TO CARRY	IWB, appendix IWB (AIWB), crossdraw IWB
AVERAGE TIME TO ATTACH	20 seconds
COMFORT RATING	4/5
CONCEALMENT CLOTHING	Untucked T-shirt (minimum)
AVERAGE DRAW-TO-FIRE TIME	1.63 seconds
MANUFACTURER	Crossbreed Holsters, 888-732-5011, crossbreedholsters.com

Draw-to-fire time is the average of five clean draws producing an A-zone hit on a stationary target positioned at 21 feet.

SIMPLE & SECURE

G&A's test rig was set up for a Smith & Wesson Performance Center M&P 10mm M2.0 Carry Comp and Streamlight TLR-7. The Lightguard is a simple holster, but it proved secure at the range. I did some jogging and sprints before evaluating draw-to-fire times. I was impressed with how little movement I observed while running, which is no small feat when carrying a heavy 10mm pistol.

The Lightguard rides a little high, but that allows for a fast draw because the grip is more accessible. You don't have to

dig below the beltline to draw. The Lightguard doesn't have a backer, so you'll inevitably have some discomfort into your side with your pistol. I love carrying 10mm pistols, but it can be hard to find a good light-bearing option. I rank the Lightguard as a great one. 
— J. Oller



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Streamlight TLR-3X



RICHARD NANCE

CARRYING A TORCH

AS A POLICE OFFICER, I had a Streamlight on my duty pistol for years. There's a reason pistol-mounted lights are a staple of modern law enforcement and military operations. Adding a bright, intuitively operated light to a pistol enables you to confirm whether a shadowy figure is friend or foe. Of course, a handheld light works, too, but holding a light interferes with your grip on your pistol. It makes it harder to control recoil, especially when firing multiple rounds in rapid succession, as may be required during an armed encounter.

Skeptics are quick to point out that when searching with a pistol-mounted light, the muzzle may cover someone who doesn't pose a deadly threat. A simple fix is to orient the light (and therefore the muzzle) below the feet of a potential adversary. With a powerful gun light, the spill should be sufficient to confirm or deny a threat. If you are indeed facing a deadly threat, raise the gun and engage the target.

What constitutes a so-called "powerful" light is open to debate. Most would agree 500 lumens and 6,500 candela qualifies. That's what you'll get with Streamlight's new-for-2026 TLR-3X.

The TLR-3X can be powered by a CR123A battery or a rechargeable Streamlight SL-B9 battery, which is why this model is called "multi-fuel." It has a runtime of 1 hour or 1½ hours, depending on the fuel source. The SL-B9 battery recharges in 2½ hours with the optional USB powercord or charging bank. The TLR-3X is lightweight, tipping the scale at 2.15 ounces with the CR123A battery and 2.25 ounces

with the SL-B9 battery.

The batteries are changed through the face cap, so there's no need to remove the TLR-3X from the host firearm. The unit snaps onto the rail and can be tightened with the supplied tool or a coin. Mounting is secure and simple while

keeping hands away from the muzzle.

The electronics are optimized to regulate beam intensity. The reflector produces a beam that's far reaching with just the right amount of peripheral illumination. Borofloat glass not only withstands heat, but it's also shock-, impact-, and scratch resistant.

Designed to fit most compact and sub-compact handguns, the TLR-3X has reversible spring-loaded jaws. Several polymer inserts designed to mount to specific or uncommon accessory rails are also included. A TLR fit guide is on Streamlight's website. The TLR-3X is as intuitive to operate as it is versatile. Multiple activation paddle switch widths

and heights to allow custom ambidextrous activation.

In addition to Constant and Momentary modes, the TLR-3X has a user-activated Strobe mode. To activate, tap either activation switch 10 times, holding the switch down on the tenth tap. The light will strobe then turn off. Once activated, double click the activation switch for Strobe mode.

The TLR-3X is IPX7-rated, meaning it's waterproof to 1 meter for 30 minutes. It's built in the USA with U.S. and foreign parts. The TLR-3X was extensively live-fire tested and is backed by Streamlight's limited lifetime warranty. Visit streamlight.com for more information. 📷



The TLR-3X is a compact gun light. It comes in three models supporting rail mounts for handguns, one for slim-line rails, and another for the SIG Sauer P365, excluding the P365 XMacro. Each can be powered by a CR123A battery or a Streamlight SL-B9 rechargeable lithium-ion battery. Constructed of impact resistant, heat stabilized, engineered polymer, the TLR-3X is lightweight. Despite its small size, the TLR-3X delivers 500 lumens and 6,500 candela, with a beam distance of 161 meters. Run time is 1 hour with a SL-B9 battery and 1½ hours with a CR123A battery. Ambidextrous, customizable activation switches provide momentary, constant-on, and user-activated strobe-modes. \$170

SUREFIRE.

SOCOM4

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SOCOM556-RC4



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EVOLUTION AT THE SPEED OF SOUND

The new SOCOM-RC4 and SOCOM-MINI4 suppressors feature our exclusive low-back-pressure design and take our legendary durability, accuracy, and performance to a whole new level. **Go with the proven performer. Go SureFire.**



Savage AccuFit V2

TOM BECKSTRAND

A STOCK UPGRADE

THIS IS THE MOST EXCITED I've been for a reasonably priced gun accessory in a long time! Rifle stocks have seen a surprising level of increased capabilities without raising costs since 2020. Stocks have become a competitive market for manufacturers, though. The most performance that I've seen at the non-custom rifle stock level arrived in 2026 from Savage with its AccuFit V2. I am impressed with all that it offers without significant price increases to the Model 110 rifles that wear it. With all the doom and gloom about inflation, it is a bright ray of sunshine for us rifle nerds.

Injection-molded stocks are the hardest for me to love because they're clunky with how they can be made to fit the shooter — if that's even an option — and I'm frequently suspicious about how well they can immobilize a barreled action. Firing a rifle creates a lot of torque that must be consistently managed if there's any hope for accuracy. Rubber overmold stocks are the worst. They're rubber, and rubber bends. Moving from bad idea to maybe OK is the move from rubber to injection-molded stocks. Plastic can be done poorly, but I've seen some really good ones, too, some that mix in carbon fiber with a polymer formula to great effect.

AN ALUMINUM SKELETON

The AccuFit V2 from Savage is injection-molded, but it's done around an aluminum bedding block that runs from the rear action screw almost all the way to the forend. If ever there was an injection-molded stock that could immobilize a barreled action, this is it. It's brilliant. Savage also has about twice the action screw engagement of a Model 700, locking the receiver to this aluminum block. Foundationally, the V2 is off to an exceptional start.

As excited as I was to see the huge aluminum bedding block, it's the long list of user-friendly features

added that I found most appealing. I never expected to see so much done to make a stock so shootable at this price. Savage included a quick-adjust length of pull (LOP) and quick-adjust comb height, and it didn't hang a bunch of levers around the stock doing it. LOP adjusts from 12¾ inches to 13¾ inches, and the comb can raise three-quarters of an inch. There is a circular button recessed into the toe that allows for this adjustment. Push it in and the LOP pushes out under spring tension. Spin the button to adjust comb height or use a 5/64 hex wrench for speed adjustments.

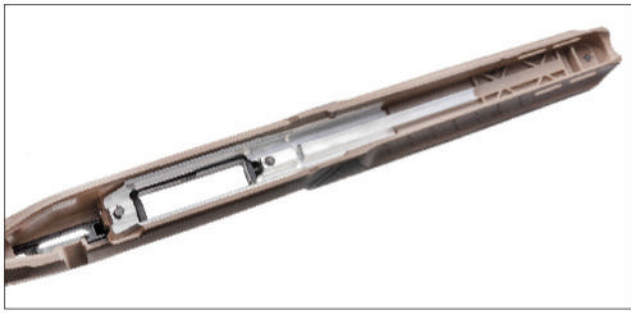
This ability to easily adjust the length of pull and comb height makes the AccuFit V2 an ideal choice

for younger or female shooters as well as large male shooters. The single biggest mistake I see new shooters make is anticipating recoil. Rifles can be loud, which is often uncomfortable to new shooters. What many don't realize is rifle shooting gets a lot more pleasant if the rifle fits the shooter. The AccuFit V2 is the least expensive stock that I've seen that can be made to quickly and easily fit almost anyone. We should all celebrate the victory the V2 represents for our community. It's no longer necessary to spend \$1,000 for a stock that adjusts quickly and is rigid enough for great accuracy.

The stock is not only configurable to various-sized shooters for LOP and comb height, it also has removable grip inserts that adjust palm swell location. This might sound innocuous, but moving the palm swell relocates the firing hand, and that radically changes where the trigger finger



SAVAGE ACCUFIT V2	
LENGTH	43 in. (collapsed) 44.5 in. (extended)
WEIGHT	2 lbs., 14 ounces
GRIP	Modular, polymer
MANUFACTURER	Savage Arms, 800-370-0708, savagearms.com



What makes the Accufit V2 so successful is the aluminum bedding block running from the rear action screw to the forend. It provides strength to the injection-molded polymer stock.



The forend integrates a full-length Arca rail for bipod and tripod attachments. Four M-Lok slots are also on the bottom for Picatinny-rail attachments to accept many popular bipods.



The palm swell requires a tool to remove the set screw, but it's a painless process to change the grip angle. Three palm swell models are available from Savage with more to come.



Not only is the LOP and comb height adjustable, they're spring-loaded. It is easier to adjust without the frequent tuning. Position your head, then fit the stock perfectly.




One control knob adjusts both LOP and comb height. Push the knob to extend the spring-loaded recoil pad outward, releasing to set it. For the comb, use the knurled dial to twist and adjust its height.

touches the trigger. I have proctologist fingers — meaning they're long — yet the large palm swell puts my finger in just the right spot to ensure the pad of my finger is perpendicular to the trigger. It's an easy, effective way to fit most hand sizes.

ARCA READY

The last feature that I absolutely love is the integration of an Arca rail on the 110 Core Tactical stock. Savage made the forend just a hair wider than the Arca rail, so it sits comfortably in the support hand like any other stock when used traditionally. However, the Arca rail is popular because it is so easy to install bipods and tripods and shift them quickly along the entire length of the forend. Savage also put an

aluminum M-Lok panel recessed into the forend's underside for those who want to install Picatinny-style rail sections. It's rare to see so many options so well integrated into any stock, let alone a factory rifle that'll sell in the gun shop for less than \$1,000.

Affordable rifles and stocks that generate this kind of excitement in me don't come along often. Savage worked long and hard to make the Accufit V2 available, and it represents a tour de force of just how much they know about quality rifle manufacturing. The ability to create a stock that is so valuable and performs at such a high level on a rifle that'll be available in most any big-box sporting goods store is mind-blowing. 

MODEL: STORM CAT4

CALIBER: 5.56x45mm NATO

WEATHER ANY STORM

US PALM STORM SERIES CAT4

US Palm Ruggedized Upper Receiver

US Palm "Hurricane" Hybrid Flash Hider

Ambi Bolt Catch

Mono-Loc Handguard System

Ambi 45 Degree Safety

US Palm Fully Ambidextrous Lower Receiver

Flared Magwell

Cold Hammer Forged 4150 Chrome-Moly Barrel

US Palm Reduced Angle Grip

Hiperfire EDT Designated Marksman Trigger



CAT4 BLACK



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Banish 556

HEAVY DUTY SILENCE

ENGINEERED to address the demands of professional-level duty, the Banish 556 is a departure from the brand's traditional consumer-focused lineup. For many, the Banish name is synonymous with lightweight, user-serviceable suppressors, designed primarily for hunters and precision shooters. By pivoting from traditional machining to cutting-edge additive manufacturing (i.e., 3D metal printing), Banish has created a robust unibody 5.56mm suppressor designed to survive the punishing environments that would literally melt lesser cans.

WHY ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING?

Traditional CNC machining is limited, forcing engineers to stick to relatively simple internal designs such as baffle stacks. By leveraging 3D printing, Banish engineers created complex, non-linear internal paths that aggressively disrupt high-pressure gases. The relatively seamless construction eliminated the structural weak points found in multi-part, threaded or welded suppressors, resulting in a monolithic framework built for maximum durability. To achieve the perfect balance of weight and ruggedness, the Banish 556

utilizes a blended architecture. The 6.3-inch frame is divided into two areas. The rear consists of a 2.3-inch, machined, 17-4 stainless-steel blast chamber, while the front section is 3D-printed from Inconel.

Why Inconel? Titanium is lightweight, but it is susceptible to so-called "sparking" and erosion under continuous full-auto fire, particularly from short barrels. Inconel is a superalloy that maintains its structural integrity even when glowing hot. In high-intensity scenarios, titanium can degrade completely, somewhat like sandblasting. Inconel, by contrast, stands defiant against thermal torture. By limiting the heavy Inconel to the high-wear zones and using 17-4 stainless steel for the rest, Banish achieved a full-auto rating without the less-wieldy weight of an all-Inconel suppressor.

One of the greatest drawbacks of a traditional suppressor is backpressure. When gases are trapped and redirected back through the barrel, they typically exit the ejection port and receiver gaps, enveloping the shooter with a face full of toxic gases and smoke. It also increases the cyclic rate of the rifle, putting undue stress on the cam pin, bolt, bolt lugs and gas rings. The Banish 556 tackles this with an internal

CHISEL FOLDING STOCK MOUNT

CHISEL™ THE CUTTING EDGE OF TACTICAL.



SCAN CODE FOR MORE INFO

NEW 590R™/590RM™ CHISEL SHOTGUNS— LOADED WITH CUTTING EDGE TACTICAL FEATURES.

From its rotary safety selector to its Chisel Folding Stock Mount and adjustable stock, compact ergonomic forend options, flat profile trigger, top rail and multiple QD/M-LOK® accessory ports – these new models set a new standard on tactical functionality, customization and comfort. And they represent the newest additions to Mossberg's legacy of rock-solid, dependable pump-actions.

The Chisel Mount/buffer tube allows for 8-positions of LOP adjustment, and the stock can be folded completely along the reverse side of the receiver – great for use in confined spaces or for convenient storage. The easy-to-use Chisel folding fixture keeps the extended position locked firmly in place, while the durable buffer tube will accept a variety of MIL-Spec adjustable stocks.

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

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SINCE 1919

#50233 - 590R Chisel - FDE Cerakote®
12GA, 6+1 Capacity - Magazine Tube Fed
18.5" Barrel with Integrated Heat Shield

#50229 - 590RM Chisel - NFA/Class 3 - FDE Cerakote®
12GA, 10+1 Capacity - 10-Round Detachable Magazine
11.5" Barrel with M-LOK® Forend

Chisel is a trademark of Chisel Machining, LLC. Cerakote is a registered trademark of NTC Industries, Inc. M-LOK is a registered trademark of Magpul Industries, Corp. NFA/Class 3: Requires compliance with any additional requirements under applicable law including but not limited to the National Firearms Act regarding applicable forms for transfers.

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

Consult and comply with any and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, requirements, and/or restrictions, including but not limited to those regarding the purchase, ownership, use, transport, and carrying of a firearm. Not all products are available in all states or jurisdictions.



The Banish 556 contains eight vents starting at the blast chamber and exiting the holes in the endcap. The vents redirect gas and reduce blowback through the action and to the user's face.

venting system. A borescope revealed nine traditional-looking baffles. The real magic is with the eight specialized vents. Four vents in the blast chamber travel straight to the endcap, while four additional vents spiral through the main baffle stack. Seen along the outer rim of the blast baffle, these apertures may appear insignificant, but they have a critical role in the suppressor's performance. The vents force the high-pressure gas to dwell and bleed off forward, rather than pushing back into the action.

This reduction in backpressure ensures the rifle cycles with a timing closer to its unsuppressed state. For the enduser, this means there is no need for an adjustable gas



block or matched buffer springs. The Banish 556 is essentially plug-and-play for standard duty or patrol firearms.

Beyond backpressure, the Banish 556 reduced flash. The internal vents slow down hot combustion gases, cooling them before they exit. The endcap features 15-degree inward exit paths, designed to break up gas flow and prevent secondary flash when unburnt powder meets fresh oxygen. Finished in a high-temperature Cerakote — available in black or FDE — the exterior is IR-neutral, ensuring it

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doesn't glow like a beacon of light under night vision.

The rear of the suppressor features the industry-standard 1.375x24 HUB threading, too. With a generous 1.9-inch-deep blast chamber, the Banish 556 is compatible with almost every popular quick-detach (QD) mounting system. Whether you prefer Dead Air Silencers' KeyMo, SilencerCo's ASR or a direct-thread muzzle, the Banish 556 should easily integrate with your rack of rifles.

RANGE TIME

At approximately 15.6 ounces, the Banish 556 felt substantial and durable. While some might prefer something lighter, there is a distinct advantage to its mass. During gun drills, the extra weight on the muzzle acts as a natural stabilizer. It keeps the rifle flat, reducing muzzle flip and allowing for faster follow-up shots. On the range, the performance was undeniable. While mounted on firearms spanning a 7½-inch short-barreled rifle (SBR) to a 16-inch carbine, the Banish 556 proved its effectiveness.



Banish indicated that on a 16-inch rifle, users can expect a comfortable 132 decibels (dB), and 137 dB on a 10-inch platform. Even when we tested under a steel-roofed shooting bay, the Banish 556 maintained a deep, pleasant tone that allowed us to ditch our hearing protection for the test session.

To confirm the "duty" claim, we pushed the suppressor to its limit with an M16A2 and a 12½-inch-barreled MCR belt-fed upper. Running through multiple 100-round belts, the suppressor became blistering hot but showed zero signs of structural fatigue or baffle erosion. I suspect that the barrel or muzzle device would likely fail long before the suppressor.

The Banish 556 provides military and law-enforcement users with a tool designed to survive the worst conditions imaginable. It's engineered to go through hell and back but still be a great choice for recreational range time. If you need a suppressor that balances advanced "flow-through" gas management with the indestructible nature of Inconel, the Banish 556 is an excellent option. — M. Fingar

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INITIATE TAKEOFF

THE **CANIK USA PRIME RADIAN** WITH AFTERBURNER COMPENSATOR IS ONE FAST SHOOTER.

BY JAMES TARR | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

MOST SO-CALLED “new” pistols introduced every year are variants of existing designs. There is as much innovation occurring through evolutionary changes as from revolutionary ones, though. Canik’s TP9, introduced to the U.S. around 2013, is an example of a model that evolved and was improved on through the years. Featured in *Guns & Ammo*’s July 2025 issue, the Canik Mete MC9 was arguably the greatest iteration of the platform, maximized for carry. Now we have the Prime Radian. It’s basically the same Mete MC9 Prime — but maximized for speed.

The Prime Radian was a joint project between Canik USA and Radian Weapons (radianweapons.com). Before I describe the specifications of this maxed-out everyday carry (EDC) pistol, I need to reiterate a point I made after the original Prime was launched because many still haven’t received the news. While previous Canik model pistols were made in Turkey, the Mete MC9 Prime and the Prime Radian are both 100 percent made in the U.S. Canik USA is located in Florida, and it has a large manufacturing facility there. Radian Weapons is in Oregon.

The biggest difference between the Prime and the Prime Radian is the barrel. The Prime sported a 3.64-inch barrel with three small oval ports. The Prime Radian features Radian Weapons’ Ramjet barrel and Afterburner compensator. The barrel was stretched from 3.64 inches to 3.8 inches, increasing overall length from 6.73 inches to 6.9 inches. Canik is betting you’ll think the increased performance of the compensator is more than worth it. The barrel and comp are not the only differences with the Prime Radian, though.

FIRST, THE FUNDAMENTALS

The Prime Radian is a polymer-frame, striker-fire pistol chambered in 9mm. It will initially be offered in black or gray, with or without one of the Canik Onyx C red-dot optics. With the gray model, the slide release, magazine release and magazine well all wear the same midnight bronze-ish anodizing as the trigger for accents. (G&A secured a black model for testing.)

The Prime Radian is fed by 17-round magazines, and two are supplied with the pistol. The pistol is 6.9-inches long, 5.46-inches tall (with magazine in place) and 1.4-inches wide, although that’s at the mag-well. The slide and frame are less than 1.1 inches thick. With an empty magazine in place, this pistol weighs 24.8-ounces according to my scale. That’s up from 23.5 for the original Prime tested in 2025.

From the front sight on back, the slide of the Prime Radian is identical to that of the Prime. There are aggressive serrations at the front and rear on the slide that wrap up to the top. “PRIME RADIAN” is marked on the left side of the slide. When the striker is cocked, the rear of the stainless-steel striker — highlighted by a red dot — is visible at the rear of the slide.

The Prime is equipped with steel Night Fision day/night sights. The dovetailed front sight has a tritium insert around which you’ll see a bright orange circle. Between the two, the sight is visible in any light. The rear sight is serrated and has tritium inserts to either side of a standard notch. The slide is cut for direct mounting of optics and accepts the Shield RMSc footprint. If you decide to run irons, the slide plate is steel and cut to match the style and profile of the slide.



Canik USA collaborated with Radian Weapons to upgrade its original Prime model to the Prime Radian. The Prime Radian incorporates several Radian-manufactured components, including the barrel, compensator, backstrap and magwell. Every part is made in the USA.



The barrel of the original Prime had four flats machined into it and atop the slide, behind the front sight, was a rectangular cut that revealed the top flat of the barrel, which displayed “PRIME”. On the Prime Radian, five flats are machined onto the Ramjet barrel.

AFTERBURNER ENGAGED

Radian Weapons sells a Ramjet and Afterburner combo for several pistol designs, but this pairing was specifically developed for Canik’s Prime. The lines match the front of the slide. The barrel is constructed of 416 stainless steel, and the compensator is stainless steel as well. Both are treated with Radian’s proprietary corrosion-resistant Radianite coating. You’ll note Radian’s triangular logo engraved to the side of the barrel chamber and on the front of the compensator.

The Ramjet barrel does not have threads. The Afterburner is secured in place by a tapered locking screw. It interfaces with an angled groove on the underside of the barrel, making sure the comp is properly oriented and timed. The lack of threads means this pistol is legal in states that have prohibitions against threaded barrels. Canik provides a small tool kit with the pistol, which

CANIK PRIME RADIANT	
TYPE	Recoil operated, striker fire, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	17+1 rds.
BARREL	Radian Ramjet, 3.8 in., 416S
LENGTH	6.9 in.
HEIGHT	5.46 in.
WIDTH	1.4 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb., 8.8 oz.
SLIDE	Steel
FINISH	Nitride/Radianite (steel), anodized (aluminum)
MUZZLE DEVICE	Radian Afterburner, SS
GRIP	Polymer, textured
SIGHTS	Night Fision orange tritium (front), two-dot tritium (rear)
TRIGGER	5 lbs. (tested)
SAFETY	Trigger lever, striker drop safety
MSRP	\$900 (black or gray), \$1,080 (w/Onyx C optic)
MANUFACTURER	CANIK USA, 561-908-7993, canikusa.com

includes a Torx bit needed to remove the comp. Depending on the model, Radian advertises that its Afterburner comp reduces muzzle rise roughly 25 percent. The barrel and comp package for other pistols starts at \$389, so it is added value on the Prime.

The polymer frame of the Prime Radian is the same as the Prime, and that’s a good thing. It has a double undercut triggerguard that helps get your hands up as high as possible on the grip. The texture on the sides and frontstrap of the pistol doesn’t look like much, but it’s nicely aggressive. The harder you grip it, the harder it grabs back. The texture is also on the front of the triggerguard and both sides of the frame above the front of the triggerguard. These are areas where the thumb of the support hand may rest while shooting.

At the front of the frame is a three-slot Picatinny-style rail for mounting a compact light. The slide



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strap is the large size. The small and medium are polymer. Taylor Freelance (taylorfreelance-store.com) offers brass backstraps for this pistol, which can add even more weight. Interestingly, I barely noticed the weight. The balance of the pistol is what changed for me.

The pistol has an aluminum magwell, also made by Radian. It's a little larger than the one

release is bilateral with long, extended steel levers. Both levers function to release the slide. The magazine release is a steel rectangular button, vertically serrated. It is reversible, but it takes a bit of work and a pair of needle-nose pliers to pop the spring in and out. It doesn't protrude even as far as the slide release, so there is no need to worry about accidentally ejecting a magazine.

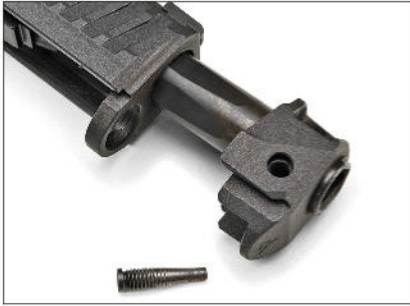


The Radian Afterburner compensator and ported Ramjet barrel extend the length of the slide over the dustcover. The slide is notched, serrated, angled and dovetailed for the front sight.

on the original Prime. It doesn't add any length, but it does add some width. There is also a noticeable shelf at the front for your pinkie. It is removable if you're worried it might print under a concealing garment. Radian offers an aluminum backstrap and magwell combo for other pistols retailing for \$160. Here, it is another strong value-add.

Both the Prime and the Prime Radian are supplied with three backstraps. With the Prime, all three are polymer with the same texture on the grip frame. With the Prime Radian, the backstrap installed at the factory is an aluminum type made by Radian, deeply grooved for texturing. Canik went with aluminum because of weight. It adds nearly an ounce at the rear of the gun, helping it balance nicely. The installed aluminum back-

The trigger on the Prime Radian is the same as on the Prime, and it's interesting. First, the trigger has a black aluminum body, and the flat face is wide. The pivoting safety lever is so wide it basically serves as the trigger. An aggressive diamond texture helps to keep your fingertip in place. The lever is anodized somewhere between a dark gold and bronze color. Press it and the trigger releases the striker at 90 degrees. There was a long take-up and a decently crisp



The Radian Afterburner compensator is not threaded, but interlocks with the Ramjet barrel. It is secured by a tapered fastener.



The grip texture appears on several touch-points, including a pad above the trigger and at the front of the triggerguard.



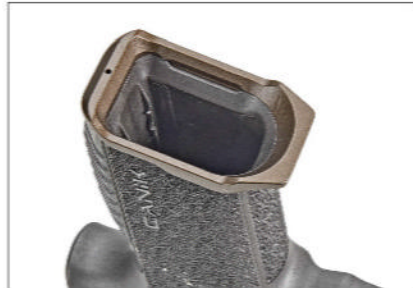
The magazine release is reversible, but requires tools and finesse. The bilateral slide-lock lever is also a functional release.

let-off with minimal overtravel. Total pull weight on our sample was 5 pounds. The trigger reset is being advertised as only 1.3mm. While G&A's wasn't that short, it was close enough.

MODERN COMP CARRY

A word about the relatively new phenomenon of compensators on carry guns: I've read a lot of bad takes about them on social media lately. Compensators on pistols aren't popular because Americans generally lack the upper-body strength to manage the recoil of a 9mm. They are popular because of the interest in mounting red-dot optics on carry guns. For many, shooting a pistol with an optic can result in losing the dot within the window due to recoil. It's a common problem. Ports and comps counteract muzzle rise and can help reduce the chance of losing sight of the dot during recoil.

Even if you're not running an optic, reduced muzzle rise is nice. As for increased flash and noise, yes, a comp'd gun will be louder. When it comes to flash, you'll find there is more of a difference in flash between affordable bulk ammo and premium defensive hollowpoints than you'll see between a standard and comp'd or ported barrel. On the photoshoot for the Prime Radian, I used the highest flash ammo I had on hand. While the camera caught a lot of smoke and flame, I didn't see anything other than a bit of smoke with my naked eye while shooting.



The magwell facilitates faster reloads, meaning the process of inserting a magazine into the grip can be less precise. It can be removed to minimize printing for concealed carry.



Standard night sights were low enough to co-witness through an optic's window. Vortex's Defender-CCW red-dot sight was installed to the RMS3-pattern optic-cut slide to test this feature. \$350

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A machined aluminum backstrap with angular serrations is installed as standard. Two additional polymer arched backstraps wearing Canik's grip texture support small to large handsizes.



As with many of its other cased models, Canik provides a useful holster with the Prime Radian package. It can be worn appendix or over the right hip, and it facilitates mounted optics.

Generally, the louder a comp is the more effective it is. The Radian Afterburner compensator is the loudest carry comp I think I've ever tested. It has two big ports that vent straight up, and this pistol is significantly louder to the shooter than the original Prime.

Worth noting, the Radianite coating on the comp must be a coating, rather than a metal treatment. After one magazine through the gun, I detected the silver color of the stainless steel substrate inside the expansion chamber of the comp. After three magazines, most of the coating inside the comp was gone.

How well a compensator works is dependent on the ammo used. Comps work off gas velocity. You get more of that with lighter bullets being pushed fast than you do heavy bullets moving slow. You'll barely notice the comp working with 147-grain bullets, but you'll see the most difference when shooting 115-grain +P ammunition. The pistol was reliable with every type of ammo tested, though. It was accurate and fun to shoot.

Canik is calling the Prime Radian a "micro-compact EDC" pistol. This pistol is a lot of things, but "micro-compact" isn't one of them. A grip big enough for your entire hand with a nearly 4-inch barrel puts it firmly at the top end of the compact category as far as I'm concerned, but that's fine. That's the Goldilocks zone of carry — guns big enough to shoot fast and accurately, while still being small enough for most to conceal.



PHOTO: ANDY GROSSMAN


PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Subsonic 147-gr. XTP	888	29	13	2.7	3
Black Hills +P 124-gr. JHP	1,209	24	16	2.8	3.2
Nosler ASP 115-gr. JHP	1,141	44	19	3.1	3.6
Winchester 115-gr. FMJ	1,083	39	26	3.1	4

Notes: Accuracy is the average of four five-shot groups at 25 yards from a sandbag rest. Velocity is the average of 10 shots measured with a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph placed adjacent to the barrel.

MORE GOODIES

When you buy a Prime or a Prime Radian, you don't just get a pistol, you get a whole package inside a lockable case. The Prime Radian comes with a polymer (IWB) holster, two magazines, and a magazine

loader in foam cutouts in the top layer. In the bottom layer you'll find a punch, a bore brush and a cleaning rod. The two spare backstraps fit into foam cutouts in the lid, along with small tools hidden inside a micro-sized replica of this pistol. The original Prime was and is an amazing value. For \$250 more, you get \$500 worth of Radian parts on this pistol. The Prime Radian shoots flatter and looks better than the original Prime, all while being American made. 

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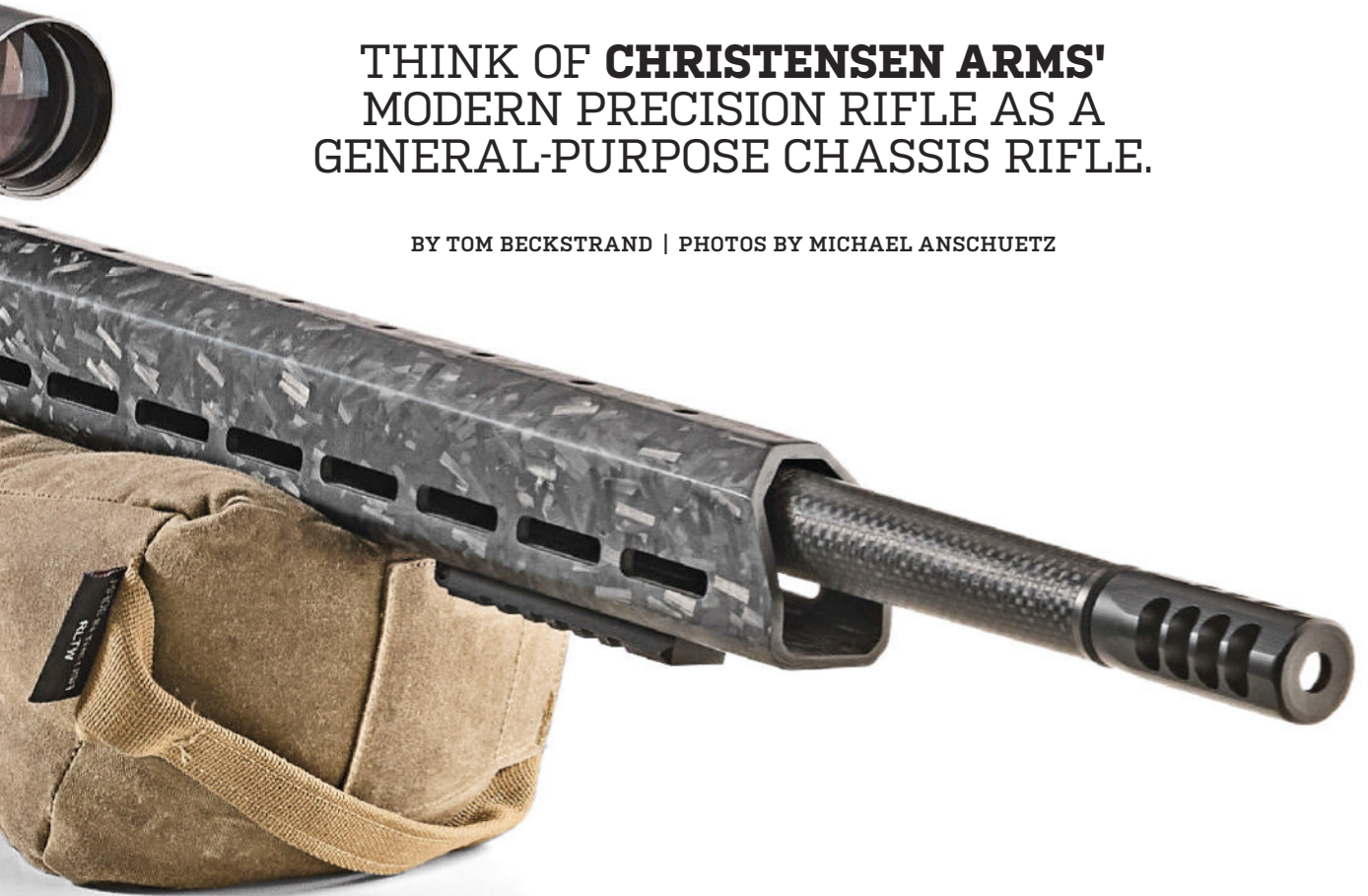
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ALL ROADS, ONE RIFLE

THINK OF **CHRISTENSEN ARMS'**
MODERN PRECISION RIFLE AS A
GENERAL-PURPOSE CHASSIS RIFLE.

BY TOM BECKSTRAND | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ



Christensen Arms' MPR blends precision and utility, featuring a host of lightweight, carbon-fiber components in a competitively priced package.



THE CHRISTENSEN ARMS Modern Precision Rifle (MPR) in an unusual rifle because it has a folding chassis and could serve more than one role. It'd be at home as a highly portable hunting rifle and serve just as effectively as a competition rifle in the National Rifle League (NRL) Hunter matches (nrlhunter.org). It's able to pull off this difficult combination through smart choices in design and materials. Christensen Arms put carbon fiber in all the right places and steel and aluminum in the rest.

BACKBONE OF PRECISION

The chassis is where the MPR gains almost all of its flexibility. The buttstock and center section are machined from aluminum, as is the detachable triggerguard. The cheekpiece and forend are carbon fiber. The forend attaches to the chassis center section with eight small screws, measures 16½-inches long, and is flat on the bottom. There are M-Lok slots cut into the bottom and sides of the forend to allow for mounting Arca or Picatinny rails, or other direct-mount accessories such as a bipod. The buttstock folds to the right and traps the bolt handle, protecting it from rough handling while traveling. This is a sensible and efficient design for any rifle chassis.

The first thing I did when I received this rifle was grab my tools and completely disassemble it. The process involved

CHRISTENSEN ARMS MODERN PRECISION RIFLE	
TYPE	Bolt action
CARTRIDGE	6.5 Creedmoor (tested)
CAPACITY	5 rds. or 10 rds.
BARREL	24 in., 1:8-in. twist
LENGTH	42.75 in.
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 8 oz.
STOCK	Carbon fiber, anodized aluminum chassis
GRIP	Magpul MOE-K
LENGTH OF PULL	12.5 in. to 14.5 in.
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
TRIGGER	2 lbs., 8 oz. to 5 lbs., adj.
SIGHTS	None
MSRP	\$2,299
MANUFACTURER	Christensen Arms, 888-517-8855, christensenarms.com

removing the forend, pistol grip, and triggerguard — in that order — and then pulling the action screws to separate the barreled action from what remains of the chassis. The aspect that stood out most in this process was that it only required two Allen wrenches to turn the MPR into a pile of parts. Simplicity is always a desired feature, and only two wrenches were needed for complete disassembly. This is desirable on a rifle designed to perform in the most difficult conditions. If ever caught in a downpour on a hunt, or having to spend a couple

days shooting in the wind and dust, easy and complete disassembly is important on a rifle that'll see such use.

The length and shape of the handguard allow the MPR to ride front bags and supports well. The bottom is 1½-inches wide and provides great stability on improvised rests. The length is also ideal because it doesn't require the shooter to crowd whatever is being used for support. I've spent far too much time trying to

crawl close to a tree trunk to use a limb to support a rifle.

The center section of the chassis is slender and machined to accept AICS-pattern magazines. One thing I like to check on chassis rifles is how well the receiver fits the chassis. Start with the action screws removed and hold the receiver in place forward of the magazine well with the left hand and the muzzle pointed in the air. Install and slowly tighten the rear-most action screw. If the barrel so much as twitches, the receiver is a



The MPR is fed from detachable AICS-style box magazines. Christensen Arms offers five- and 10-rounders for the 6.5 Creedmoor.



A 4-inch accessory rail is included and attached to the forward M-Lok slots on the forend. A Warne Skyline 7911M Lite bipod with QD lever was used for testing the MPR in the prone position. **\$200**



The folding stock is convenient for storage and travel. Length of pull and comb height are adjustable, and the stock features QD mounting points for slings. The flat toe rides rear bags for stability.



The safety lever is positioned to the right of the bolt. The 90-degree bolt throw is easy to lift and demonstrated ample clearance for the tested Nightforce NX6 2-12x42mm scope. **\$1,800**



The two-lug bolt has a single ejector and claw extractor. A bolt with dual-ejectors supports magnum cartridges.

The majority of the weight in the 3-pound, 3-ounce, chassis is in the folding stock assembly. It is a robust series of aluminum pieces that bolt together to offer all the functionality a shooter could desire. There is a flat toe with a couple of threaded holes, too. The flat rides a rear bag well and the threaded holes allow for an attachment of rail for those desiring to use a monopod.

poor fit to the chassis. Tightening the action screws just puts a bind on the receiver and results in so-called “flyers.” Poor accuracy generally follows flyers. I ran the test on G&A’s sample MPR, which passed beautifully. Once the receiver slipped into the chassis, it didn’t budge.

Loosen two screws to adjust the length of pull and loosen another two screws to adjust the comb height. Tighten everything once its adjusted to the desired position. When looked at in totality, the MPR chassis has every feature a rifleman needs without any excess.



The hand-lapped, button-rifled, carbon-fiber-wrapped barrel is free floating. The MPR includes a stainless-steel muzzlebrake. Removing any combination of hex screws can further tune the device.



The flat-face trigger is sourced from TriggerTech and incorporates a tactile hook at the bottom. It's easily adjustable for pull weight between 2½ to 5 pounds.



The ambidextrous magazine release lever is at the front of the triggerguard, just behind the rear of the magazine's basepad. Push the lever forward to release the AICS-pattern magazine.



As with most Model 700-pattern actions, the bolt-release button lever is located at the left-rear of the action. It is low profile and easy to operate with the bolt to the rear.

It is light-ish, durable and folds for convenience. That's a tough combination for any riflemaker to pull together successfully.

CARBON-WRAPPED CONFIDENCE

Into the chassis Christensen Arms bolts its barreled action. The receiver has a Model 700 footprint, sharing the dual-lug bolt and 90-degree bolt lift associated with it. The receiver is made from 416 stainless steel that has been re-sulphurized for more consistent machining. (Adding sulphur made the cutting process less stressful on the receiver.) The raceway in the receiver is broached prior to the heat-treat process, and then final machining is done after heat treating. There is a high degree of consistency from one Christensen Arms

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
SIG Sauer 140-gr. OTM	2,582	19	7.5	.56	.71
Winchester Match 140-gr.	2,751	34	13.1	.61	.8
Hornady 140-gr. ELD-M	2,733	50	21.2	.69	.97

Notes: Accuracy is the average of three three-shot groups fired from a benchrest at 100 yards. Velocity is the average of five shots measured with a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph placed adjacent to the barrel.

receiver to the next.

The company also puts a lot of destructive testing into the receiver design, including bore obstructions to ensure that any high-pressure events don't harm the shooter. Even many custom action makers don't do this type of testing. The

port in the side of the receiver lines up with a port in the bolt when the action is closed. The port vents pressure out and away from the shooter. The AR-style extractor also allows for venting gas in the event of a catastrophe.

Christensen Arms is a manufacturer that pays attention to details such as firing pin spring weight. Instead of putting a light firing pin spring in the MPR, a heavy 32-pound spring was selected to ensure the primer always receives a hard strike for positive ignition. The



Press the button atop the chassis to unlock and fold the stock. When folded, the stock traps the bolt for additional security.



The firing pin is shrouded by a stylish spiral-fluted cap behind the skeletonized bolt handle.

tip of the firing pin is machined to match the inside diameter of the firing pin channel. This is smart engineering that needs to be recognized. It prevents energy bleed when the firing pin is released and moves towards the primer. Firing pins, if left unchecked, can rattle down the firing pin channel inside the bolt body losing valuable energy as they go. This slows lock time — increasing the likelihood of shooter-induced aiming error — and can result in low energy delivered to the primer. It is entirely possible to hit primers hard enough to get them to ignite, but not hard enough to get consistent burns to see lowest standard deviations (SD) and extreme spreads (ES). The way that Christensen Arms matches firing pin diameter to channel diameter ensures the pin remains concentric as it moves towards the primer, eliminating energy bleed.


The tip of the firing pin diameter measured .078 inch, which is slightly smaller than what many refer to as large firing pins — around .082 inch — and larger than most small firing pins — usually around .065 inch. This matters for those who like to push handloads to the warm end of the spectrum and who favor small rifle primers in .308-sized cases. Combining high pressure with small rifle primers and larger firing pins will yield a higher incidence of pierced primers. Anyone shooting sensible handloads or factory ammunition will almost certainly never

have an issue.

The barrel is made entirely in-house by Christensen Arms, which allows the company to make an accuracy guarantee of sub-minute of angle (MOA). They buy the steel, then cut, drill, ream, button rifle and chamber. Next is turning down the steel blank and then applying a patented (five times over) carbon-fiber wrapping process. The patents exist because Christensen Arms uses several different types of carbon fiber, different directions and methods of wrapping to get a specific combined effect for optimal barrel performance.

VERSATILITY DEFINED

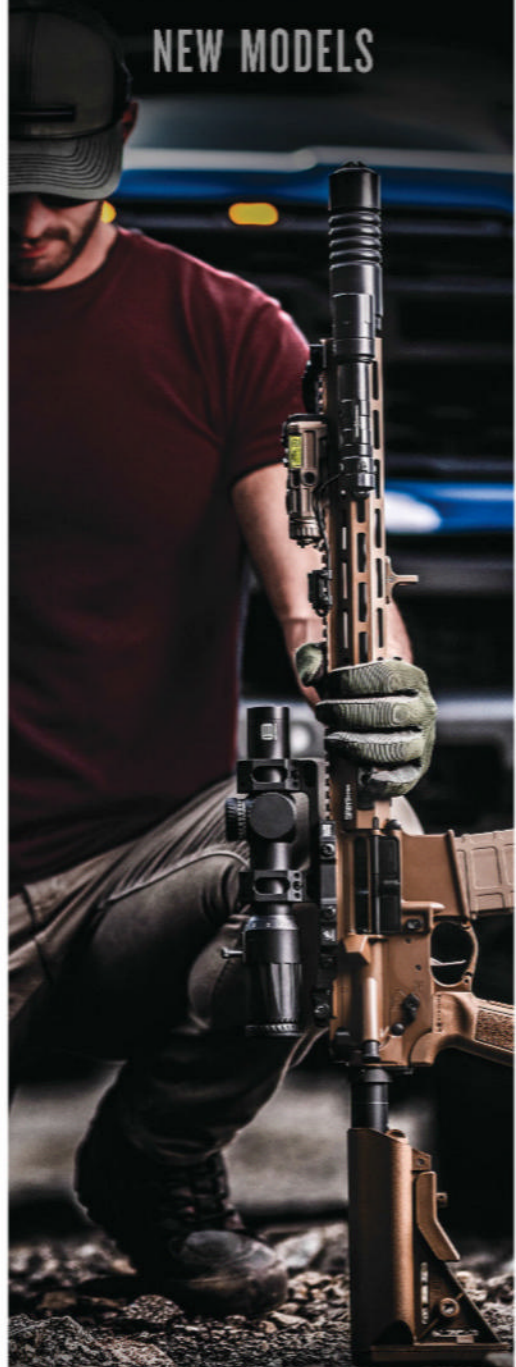
The MPR is easy to spot in a crowd due to its unique looks. It appears to be compact and utilitarian because it is. While some might not care for its looks, the rifle's beauty lies in the long list of relevant features that don't make it a bloated and heavy competition rifle.

I appreciate the number and variety of shooting scenarios that this rifle accommodates. Depending on barrel length, the same rifle could mount easily on a tripod for use in a hunting blind. It could be shot at long-range from a bipod in the prone. It can be carried up the side of a mountain in a backpack, and it would serve well in an NRL Hunter match. If I could only pick one rifle for my hunting and competition needs, it might just be the MPR. 

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

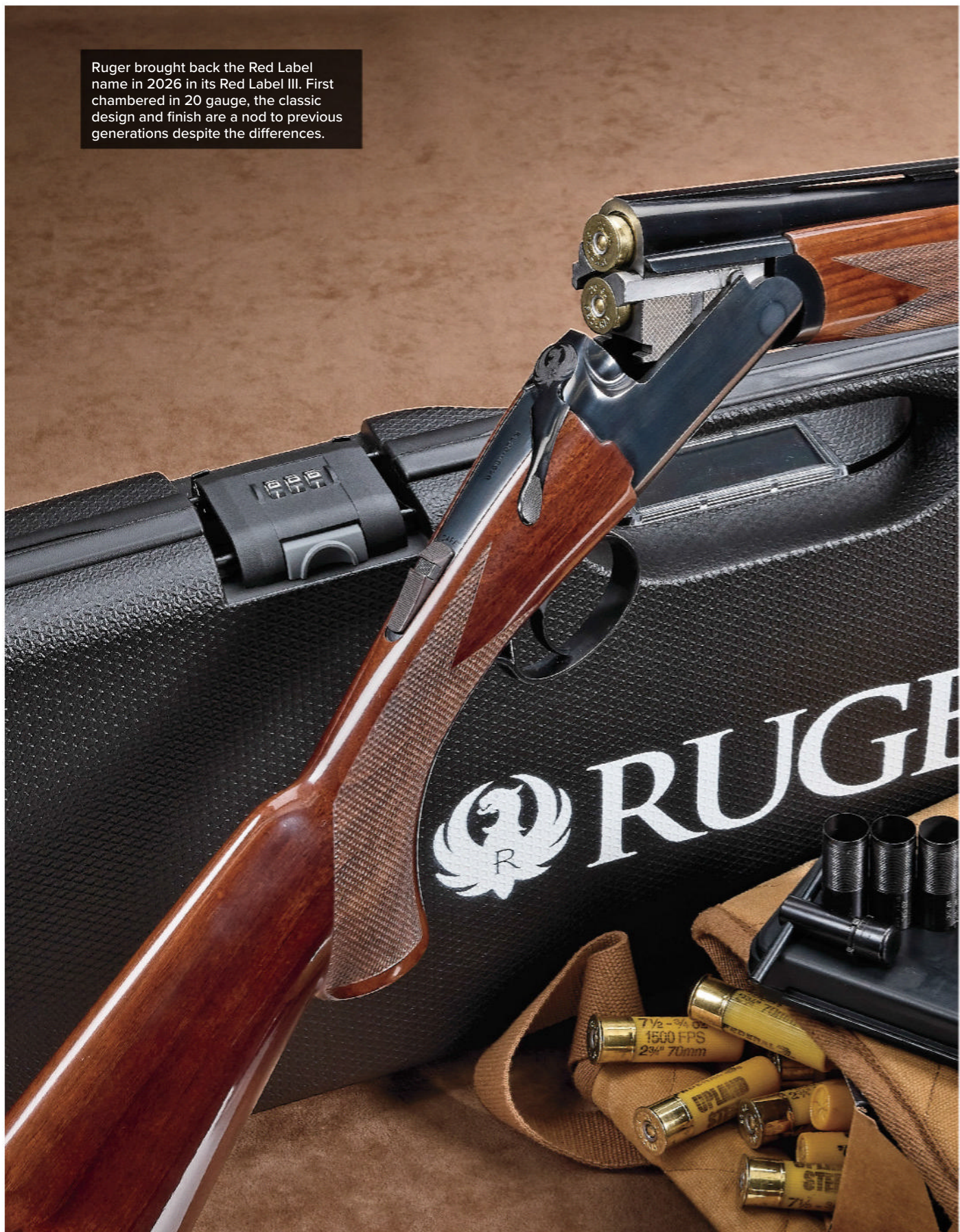
SAINT VICTOR

NEW MODELS



GEAR PAC

Ruger brought back the Red Label name in 2026 in its Red Label III. First chambered in 20 gauge, the classic design and finish are a nod to previous generations despite the differences.





OLD & NEW

THE RUGER RED LABEL III STANDS ON ITS OWN.

BY ROBERT W. HUNNICUTT | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

THE NAME IS THE SAME but not much else. How you like the Red Label III may depend on how you felt about two previous generations. The Ruger Red Label over-under has been with us on and off for almost 50 years. Beloved by many and scorned by others, Ruger has brought back the name, if not the shotgun itself, as the Red Label III.

Development of what was originally called the “Ruger Over and Under” began around 1967. It was finally introduced in 1977. We can only assume that Bill Ruger, Sr., took notice when Ithaca Gun Company brought to market the Japanese-made SKB over-under in '66. He surely knew that the Kodensha-made Nikko Golden Eagle and the Browning Citori — a product of Japanese maker Miroku — would shortly be on dealer shelves. We think of Japan as a maker of high-quality consumer and industrial goods, but in the 1960s, many potential gun buyers regarded it as a peddler of junk, and

a defeated enemy to boot. So, Ruger set his engineers the task of designing an American-made over-under priced at less than \$500, about \$4,000 in today's money. He firmly believed that making an over-under shotgun could be industrialized just as he had revolutionized pistol making with the Mark I.

We now know it wasn't going to be that easy, but younger readers should understand that the Bill Ruger mystique was at its zenith in the 1970s. It's certainly a stretch to compare him with Elon Musk as an industrialist, but not at all as an object of veneration by his public.

The gun industry of the 1970s was a sad, rearward-looking little backwater. Makers with historic names including Colt, Ithaca and Savage were bought and sold by conglomerates whose main goal was to siphon cash flow from making products developed years or decades before. The emphasis was on cost control, not innovation.



Fans of the original Red Label (1977-2011) and Red Label II (2013-2015) will note the Red Label III is different. The Red Label III is based on the Revelation over-under made by Connecticut Shotgun Manufacturing Company.



THE ORIGINAL LINEUP

Ruger planned a three-gun range. The Red Label was to be the field grade, with Blue and Gold Label versions to follow. The public quickly adopted the “Red Label” moniker versus the generic “Over and Under”

Bill Ruger, operating a family owned company, had a free hand to apply his finely honed design aesthetic to firearms made with relatively new processes such as hammer-forging and investment casting. This combination yielded great-looking firearms at consumer-friendly prices.

Ruger’s other talent was marketing and promotion. Gun magazines were the primary sales tool for gunmakers in those dear, dead days, and Ruger made sure a full-page

Ruger ad was opposite the contents page of every title. He cultivated close personal relationships with every notable gunwriter of the time, men including Charles Askins, Jim Carmichel, Jeff Cooper, Bill Jordan, Elmer Keith and Skeeter Skelton.

Steve Vogel, Ruger’s son-in-law, was the only industry marketing man I ever met who had the wit to ensure that guns sent out to the major gun titles had good-looking wood. He’d send a minion to the warehouse to go through hundreds of freshly made firearms to find examples with well-figured stocks for the top magazines.

Shooting America was primed to welcome a Ruger shotgun with endless enthusiasm when it debuted at the 1977 NRA Annual Meetings. The first SHOT Show was a couple of years away, so it was common in those days to introduce new guns to NRA’s membership first. I was there, and it was tough to get hands on the new offering.



The term “Red Label” initially referred to just one model of a gun called the “Ruger Over and Under Shotgun.” Blue and Gold Labels were planned but didn’t materialize.

nameplate, and the other models were shelved.

Bill Ruger was a connoisseur of Boss firearms, so his new shotgun bore styling touches from that golden-age British brand. The blued investment-cast frame had no visible pins or screws, and it was softly rounded for comfortable carry.

The frame was low and streamlined thanks to a locking system that used a bolt with two cylindrical tips that engaged bites in the monobloc. This was in contrast to more conventional over-unders such as

Browning’s Superposed that bolted at the bottom.

The barrels hinged on trunnions in the frame interior as opposed to the usual knuckle at the bottom front, again allowing a low barrel mounting.

The automatic safety moved forward and back for safe and fire, and pivoted left and right for barrel selection. The trigger was mechanical, allowing the second barrel to be fired in case of a misfire. The first edition was offered in 20-gauge 3-inch with 26- and 28-inch barrels. Chokes were fixed. The choice of 20-gauge was widely commented on at the time, but was prescient given that the small gauges have only grown more popular in the years since.

Buttstock and forend were classically shaped of satin-finished dark walnut with the characteristic Ruger grip cap and red recoil pad. Almost no one denied it was a great-looking gun. It was, however, immediately

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Based on the CSMC Revelation, the Ruger Red Label III has a high-polished blued receiver. The action lever is punctuated with the Sturm, Ruger & Co. logo and checkered touchpoints.

controversial. Legions of Ruger fans proclaimed it put Holland & Holland to shame while a big group on the other side insisted just as loudly that it was too fat, too heavy and too unrefined.

Some of the latter was 100 percent merited and some amounted to the griping of hidebound traditionalist snobs who were never going to accept investment casting and hammer forging as ways to make a double gun. The nitpickers were not wrong, however, that internal finishing was not up to the standards of the exterior. There were annoying issues with ejector timing and rattly safeties. Barrel-to-frame fit could be variable, too, with a wide range of tighter or looser operation.

The 12-gauge appeared in 1979, with stainless-steel frames debuting in 1982. A 28-gauge version appeared in 1995, and a special Gold Label edition celebrated Ruger's 50th anniversary in 1999. I've never seen one, but Ruger offered a trap gun in unsingle configuration starting in 2000.

The original Red Label chugged along until 2011. It was clear at that point that competition from imported stackbarrels required a rethink. The second edition, made from 2013 to 2015, had a number of small improvements — and one huge improvement: The retail price was reduced from \$1,899 to \$1,399. This was made possible by casting the frame in a single piece rather than in two pieces that had to be aligned and welded.

For the last decade, Ruger dealers and the rest of the world have had to struggle

along without a Red Label. Demand for over-unders has been largely absorbed by the thousands of guns from Italy, Japan and Turkey.

That's all changed for 2026. The Red Label III is a gun that may well be as controversial as its ancestor. That's not because of how much it shares with the previous generations, but how little. Despite Bill Ruger's confidence that an over-under shotgun could be manufactured much like a Mini-14, the Red Label always required more hand work than Ruger's rifles and pistols, even with the simplifications of the second series.

ENTER CSMC

Ruger management wisely elected to farm out the Red

Label III to an outside company, and it picked a good one. Connecticut Shotgun Manufacturing Co. (CSMC, connecticutshotgun.co) has been around since 1975. In that time, it has continuously upgraded its capabilities. In the early years, it built a name for making modern versions of American classics such as the A.H. Fox, Parker and Winchester Model 21. These are fantastic guns and priced accordingly.

More recently, CSMC has offered its own designs, but prices can range deep into the five figures. Impressively, they are all built in its New Britain, Connecticut, plant. This is by no means a bunch of old guys with files. When I last visited several years ago, CSMC had just taken delivery of a half-dozen new machining centers with big plans for making use of them.

The entry-level CSMC over-under is the Revelation, a name that will make older readers recall the shotshells

made by Federal and distributed by Western Auto. The Revelation shotgun wouldn't have been found at that old-line retailer. It ranges between \$3,000 and \$6,000. It is immediately identifiable by a case-colored frame. The Red Label III is essentially a Revelation with a polished blue frame in place of the case-hardened look.

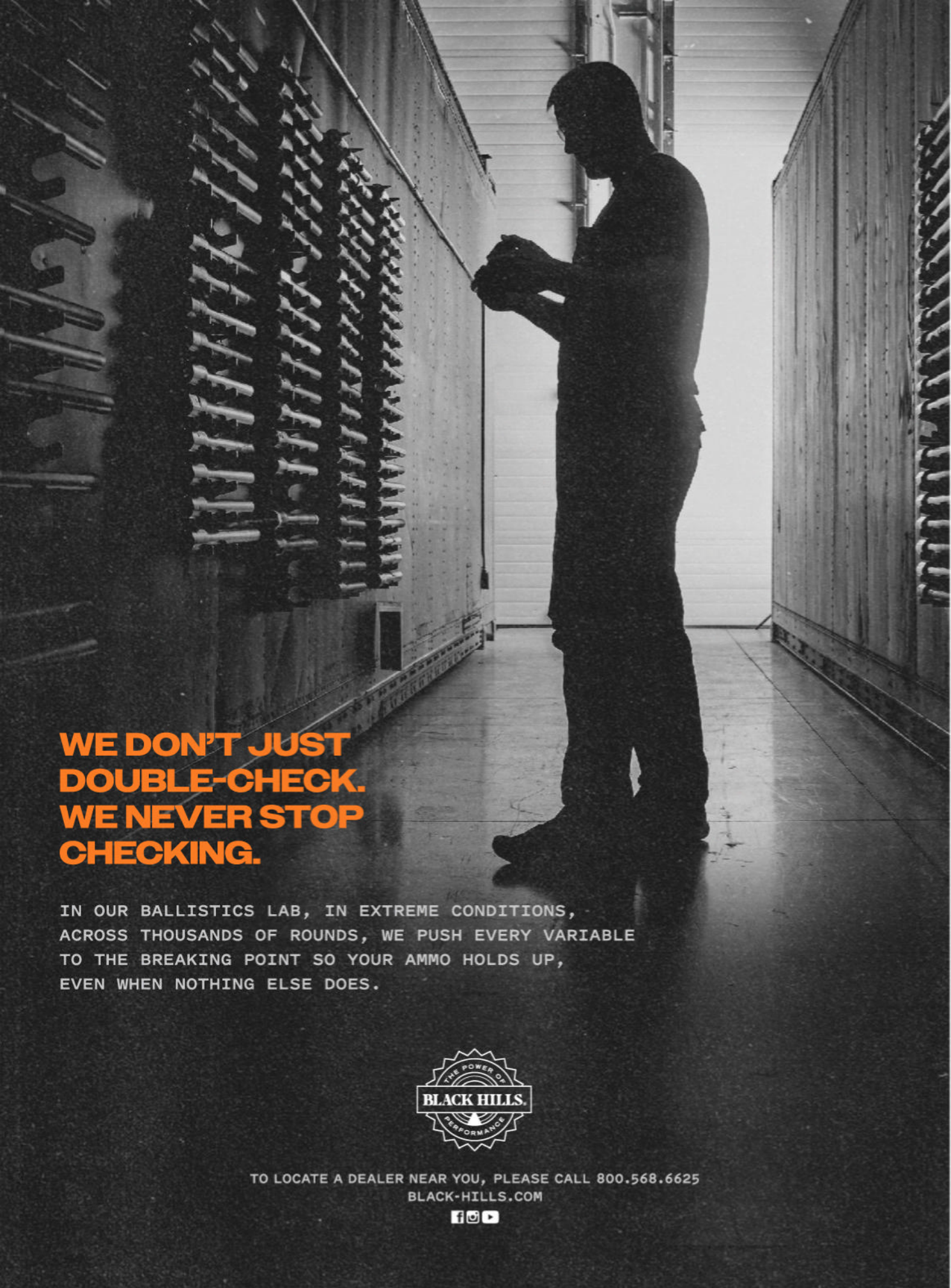
The Red Label III retains the feature buyers most enjoyed about the original: The rounded frame bottom that makes for easy carrying. What it doesn't have is the distinctive bolsters on the top frame surface in front of the standing breech. These looked great but contributed to the porky feel many shotgunners disliked.



Five, flush, screw-in chokes are provided with the Red Label III, as well as a case and wrench. Chokes offer Full (F), Modified (M), Improved Modified (IM), Improved Cylinder (IC) and Skeet (S) constrictions.



The round-bottom frame makes it comfortable to carry afield. The high-polished blued metal wears the Red Label moniker with "III" in Roman numerals.



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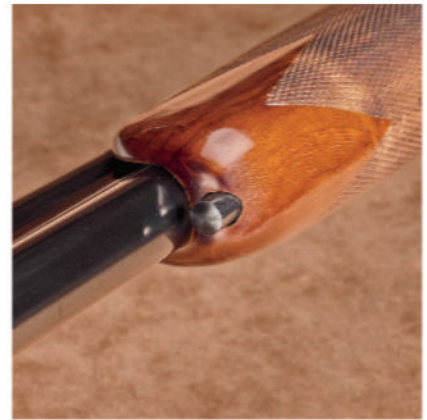




The Red Label III operating system disposes of cocking rods and ancillary parts in place of a simple design that has grown more popular since the 1980s. Moving parts are contained in the monobloc.



The automatic safety has a Beretta-style selector button that moves left or right to select the lower or upper barrel, and up or down for safety. It's well contoured with the button, so it doesn't move inadvertently.



The forend is retained by an Anson-style button at the front. It is touted as eliminating the chance of getting your palm burnt by the Deeley-style pivoting latch. Many shotgunners just like the looks, too.

There are no visible pins or screws, but you can see the outer surfaces of the barrel trunnions at the bottom front of each side. These are incorporated with perfect smoothness, so only the most fastidious should object. The gun is locked by a bolt controlled by the top lever that engages bites at the bottom of the monobloc. In theory, this means the frame has to be a bit taller than the old style, but you'll have trouble noticing that in the 20-gauge at least.

The selective ejectors are operated on a system that has become very common in recent years. It eliminates ejector trip rods and associated parts familiar in older generations of over-unders. The ejectors are controlled by sears that run diagonally in mortises in the monobloc sides. They are activated by bars affixed at right angles to the cocking rods. These run forward and back in a groove in the bottom of the frame. On firing, the cocking rod, connected to the hammer, moves forward. This pushes up on the ejector sear, engaging the ejector and holding it back as the barrels are lowered. As the barrels reach the fully open position, the ejector sear contacts a buttress in the front of the frame, which returns it to its original position. At the same time, a cam on the forend iron pushes back on the cocking rod to return the hammer to cocked position.

The ejector is then free to extend rearward under pressure of a coil spring in the monobloc, ejecting the empty. This system is admirably simple, requires few moving parts and, so far as I've experienced, is very reliable.

The forend iron and

stock are retained by an Anson-style push-button lock, this in contrast to the original Red Label's Deeley-style pivoting lever. This is alleged to be better because it can't get hot and burn your hand. I can only imagine that being a problem during an Argentine dove shoot, and if I'm doing that it will be with an automatic! (No magazine plug, please.)

Since this is a field gun, the safety is automatic with a Beretta-style button. Moving it to the left selects the bottom barrel. Pushing it to the right means the upper tube fires first. The selector is smoothly integrated into the button, so a deliberate motion is needed to move it.

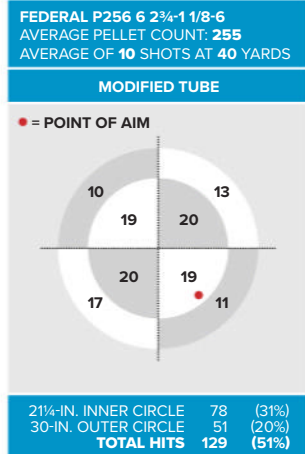
The top lever is sleek and trim, with checkering on either side. The Ruger logo — the new one with an "R" rather than "SR" — is etched at the front. It's latched by a button in the top left face of the standing breech. Depress that to release the lever when casing the gun.

The side rib on the Red Label III is solid the full barrel length. The top rib tapers from 8mm at the breech to 6mm at the muzzle and has a .135-inch red bead and no middle bead. Personally, I'm glad Ruger resisted the temptation to install a loud fiber-optic bead on what is a field gun.

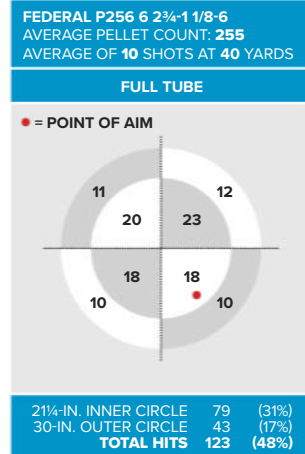
Ruger supplies a set of five Tru-Choke pattern choke tubes: Skeet (.615 inch), Improved Cylinder (.610 inch), Modified (.600 inch), Improved Modified (.595 inch), and Full (.590 inch). These are blued and stamped "RUGER" with the bore measurement. I enjoy that greatly, since I don't have to measure them with the bore gauge.

I did break that tool out

PERFORMANCE



PERFORMANCE





One surprising feature was the buttstock, which doesn't have the red rubber recoil pad and grip cap of the original. It also has a shiny finish, which is a departure from the satin finish of earlier Red Label models.

to measure the barrel, which adhered exactly to the listed .615-inch bore diameter. As you would expect, these days it is proofed for steel shot. The wood is an attractive, if not highly figured, walnut, checkered in a point pattern at 16 lines per inch. It has a shiny finish that wouldn't look out of place on a 1980s Remington 1100. I would have expected a satin finish, along with two signal features of the original Red Label: a grip cap and a solid red recoil pad. The Red Label III has a black plastic recoil plate, which is mercifully devoid of a white-line spacer.

AT THE RANGE

Test-firing the Red Label III yielded exactly the results you'd hope for in an upland field gun. Hits came continuously, with none of the muzzle-heavy feel of the original. For my money, it was as fun to shoot as the second-generation 28-gauge, which was the best of the original Red Labels. Trigger action was excellent, with 4-pound pulls for both barrels. This isn't a trap gun, so there was a bit of trigger takeup for safe field handling.

The only complaint I'll register is about the buttplate, which is a step down from the red rubber recoil pad of the original. When firing field loads in shirtsleeves, it began to bite almost immediately. The Red Label III's 6¼-pound weight means heavy field or 3-inch magnum loads are going to feel zesty.

RUGER RED LABEL III	
TYPE	Over-under shotgun
GAUGE	20 ga., 3-inch (tested)
BARREL	28 in. (tested), 30 in.
WEIGHT	6.25 lbs.
LENGTH	45.5 in.
LENGTH OF PULL	14.5 in.
DROP AT HEEL	2.25 in.
DROP AT COMB	1 3/8 in.
TRIGGER	4 lbs. (each barrel)
ACCESSORIES	Negrini hard case, five screw-in choke tubes (S, IC, M, IM, and F)
MSRP	\$3,299
MANUFACTURER	Sturm, Ruger & Co., 336-949-5200, ruger.com

It should be noted that the buttstock has no cast, which is probably the way to go when selling to both right- and left-handers. For me at least, that meant it shot noticeably to the left at the pattern board. This appeared to have no effect on moving targets, though.

The sample gun came without an instruction manual, being supplied with a quick-start folder that covered all the questions 90 percent of users will have. If you want the usual manual, including the traditional exploded view, download it free from Ruger's website.

PARTING THOUGHT

The Red Label III is a good-looking, good-shooting gun from an established maker of top-quality shotguns. My question is whether true believers will be enthused about a shotgun that doesn't exactly scream "Ruger." The logo on the top latch is the only easily visible marker, and it's not something you see from 10 feet away. Ruger fans will miss out on an excellent shotgun if they let the fairly generic looks of this and the differences from the original deter them.

If you consider the big picture, it's even well-priced. At \$3,299, it's cheaper in constant dollars than the original almost 50 years ago. My advice is to put the original Red Label out of your mind and to consider the Red Label III on its own merits. It can definitely stand on them. **GA**

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IN THE EARLY 1900s, Winchester had the largest percentage of the hunting rifle market with its Model 1894 lever-action. Marlin and Savage offered the Model 1893 and 1899 lever actions, too, which sold reasonably well but were not a serious threat to Winchester's dominance. The shooting public preferred the simplicity of the lever-action mechanism. As I described in the Remington Model 8 article (May 2026), Remington realized it needed a modern rifle to replace its aging lineup and to compete with the Model 94. Launched in 1906, the semiautomatic Model 8 was a John Browning design made beautifully and performed well. Until others were offered, it was chambered in the .25, .30, .32 and .35 Remington cartridges. Despite the advanced features of the Model 8, it wasn't a sales success, and it was expensive when compared

to the lever-actions. It wasn't clear the public was ready for a semiautomatic sporting rifle. So, Remington continued to search for a rifle that would allow them to better compete with the 1894 Winchester. The answer became the Model 14 pump-action rifle.

BORROWING FROM PUMP SHOTGUNS

In 1908, Remington tasked employee John D. Pedersen with designing a new rifle to challenge the 1894 Winchester. Pedersen is better known for designing the semiautomatic Pedersen device for the 1903 Springfield near the end of World War I. Pedersen was born in Grand Island, Nebraska, the home of Hornady Manufacturing. As a former employee of Hornady, that was an interesting piece of historical trivia that I had no idea of until researching for this article.

URTEEN

**"OF WOOD & STEEL," PART VI:
REMINGTON'S MODEL 14, .32 REM.**

BY DAVE EMARY | PHOTOS BY MARK FINAGR





The Remington Model 14 featured a grooved forend that provided a sure grip and resembled the “corn cob” type that was familiar on field guns of the 20th century. The distinctive spiral magazine tube moved with the forend when racking the action.

Pedersen received three patents while designing the pump-action Model 14, the last being in 1912. Production of the Model 14 began in 1912, and the rifle was introduced to the public in 1913. It is rather curious that Remington chose to offer a pump-action, tubular magazine rifle to compete with the lever-action rifles of the era. Thinking about it a little does seem to make some sense, though, as shooters of the time would have been quite familiar with pump-action shotguns. Remington probably determined that the lever-action market was crowded and didn’t want to be a late entry, hence a pump-action rifle.

Sales of the Model 14 began in 1913. It was a slim, lightweight, quick pointing and fast shooting rifle. Build quality was representative of craftsmanship of that time, meaning that specimens exhibit quality and high levels of fit and finish. It was chambered in the same calibers as the Model 8 semiauto: .25, .30, .32 and .35 Remington. These cartridges were all aimed squarely at the Winchester 94’s chamberings. Each duplicated the performance of the similar-caliber cartridge offering in the Model 94.

Another interesting historical note: Prototype Model 14s were cham-

bered in .30-30 Winchester, but no production rifles were offered for that cartridge. The .35 Remington was a stand-alone and powerful cartridge for the time. It was a popular option for the Model 14 line.

In 1914, Remington offered the Model 14½, which was the same gun with different barrel lengths and a longer a magazine tube chambered in .38-40 and .44-40 Winchester. The Model 14 had three types of rear sights, including a ramp-adjustable sight, a screw-adjustable sight and a knurled dial adjustable sight. The Model 14 changed to the Model 141 in 1935. The Model 141 featured a re-contoured stock and only a ramp-adjustable rear sight.

The Model 14 possessed several innovative features, most notably a spiral fluted magazine. The clever inven-

tion prevented the nose of a bullet from contacting the primer of the round in front of it within the tubular magazine. The magazine was attached to the forend and moved with the forend as the action was cycled. The loading gate was located on the bottom of the magazine tube between the receiver and the forend. I will note at this point that loading the Model 14 takes a little finesse. Blunt round nose bullets will not feed into



A Pennsylvania hunter poses with a Model 14 in his left arm while holding a whitetail buck strapped to the fender of a 1937 Chevrolet.



Like a shotgun, the Model 14 loading gate is underneath the magazine tube. The follower is visible through the port on the gate. Feeding the first is tricky, but subsequent rounds are easy to load.



Blunt flat-point bullets did not turn the corner and load into G&A's Model 14 magazine tube. Only the Speer .321-inch, 170-grain flat-point would feed into the tubular magazine of the test rifle.



The knurled and slotted takedown screw is on the left side of the receiver. A safety filler plug is visible on the triggerguard.



A simulated cartridge case head pressed into the side of the receiver served as an attractive, visual aid to identify the chamber.

the loading gate. The only bullet of this type I found that could be loaded was the Speer .321-inch, 170-grain round nose (RN) flat point (FP), number 2259. The Hornady .321-inch, 170-grain, RNFP number 3210 does not work.

The bolt unlocked on firing, or a button fitted into a recess on the right side of the bolt can be pushed to

unlock the bolt and open the action. The Model 14 was a takedown with a knurled screw on the left side of the receiver. Remove it and the trigger group and butt-stock slide down and out of the receiver. An interesting aesthetic touch on the Model 14 is a simulated cartridge case head with the rifle's caliber stamped into it. It was inset into the left, top-front of the receiver. The cartridge



The sliding bolt safety switch on a Model 14 bolt is a less-common feature. A shooter can use their right-hand thumb to push it down to engage the safety, revealing the word “SAFE” (above, right). The switch blocked both the firing pin and trigger.



The steel triggerguard was blued, while the trigger was case hardened. The trigger on G&A's rifle averaged 6 pounds, 10 ounces.



The button behind the safety unlocks the action, allowing the gun to be unloaded. The receiver was scalloped to ease safety access.

case head and spiral magazine are the two most distinctive identifying pieces of flare the Model 14 is remembered for.

The Model 14 had two types of safeties. The first and more common was a push-button safety on the triggerguard that blocked the trigger. The second type was a small lever on the right side of the bolt that was accessed through the ejection port; Push the lever down to engage “safe” and to block the firing pin and trigger. The hole in the triggerguard was filled with a plug.

The weight of the Model 14 was advertised as 6 pounds, 12 ounces. The standard Model 14 included a pistol-grip stock and 22-inch barrel. A Model 14R carbine was offered with an 18-inch barrel. The magazine capacity of each rifle and carbine was five rounds. The Model 14 was available in five grades. A 1914 catalog listed prices as follows: Standard 14A: \$20; Special 14C: \$35; Peerless 14D: \$55; Expert 14E: \$70, Premier 14F: \$105. The 14R carbine was \$18.

In 1914, a year after the introduction of the Model 14, the Model 14½ was introduced. The magazine capacity was 11 rounds. The 14½ rifle was available with a pistol grip and 22½-inch barrel for \$17.25, and the 14½ R carbine was available with a pistol grip and

18½-inch barrel for \$16.75. These prices sound ridiculously low today, but bear in mind the average wage in 1914 was less than \$1,000 per year.

Remington did achieve a more cost competitive rifle with the Model 14. The 1914 costs for a competing rifle in its standard configuration were: Remington Model 8: \$30; Remington Model 14: \$20; Winchester Model 94: \$19.50; Marlin 1893; \$16; Savage 1899: \$21.50. These prices may not appear much different, but with the average pay per day in 1914 of \$1.50 to \$1.75 a day, 50 cents was a significant difference in price for that time. Remington certainly had a more competitive gun than the Model 8. From 1913 to the end of production for the Model 141 in 1950, 201,937 Model 14, 14 ½ and 141 rifles were sold. They remain collectible and desirable today.



G&A's Model 14 was chambered in .32 Remington. With a straighter wall, it was a rimless version of the .32 Winchester Special.

THE TEST RIFLE

Guns & Ammo's sample rifle was a Standard grade Model 14 chambered in .32 Remington. It has a pistol-grip stock and 22-inch barrel, and the wood remains in very good condition. The metal was good, also, but the blue has faded. The barrel's bore was in excellent condition, and the gun retained its standard bead front sight and a ramp-

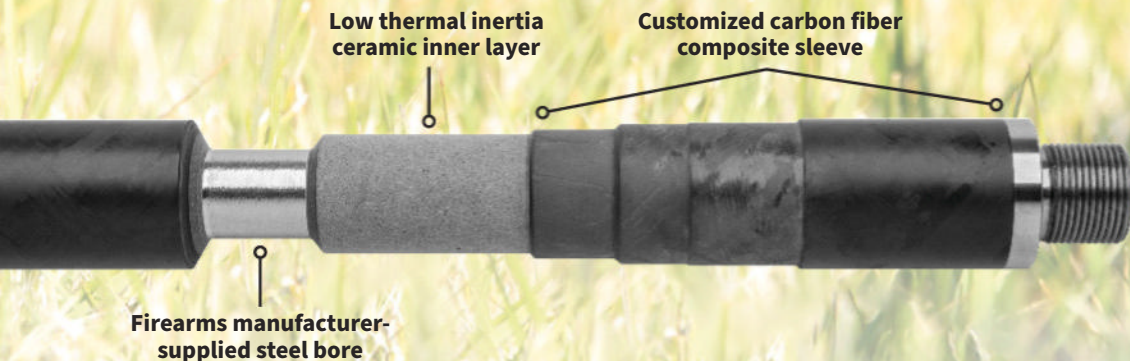
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The front sight is a dovetailed ivory bead on a post. The Model 14 was available with three types of rear sights. G&A's test rifle was equipped with the standard, ramp-adjustable, stepped rear sight.

adjustable rear sight. The safety is the uncommon bolt slider that blocks the firing pin and trigger. The cross-bolt triggerguard safety is filled with a metal plug. The trigger pull was tested at 6 pounds, 10 ounces, and exhibited no creep. The gun weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces, empty on our scale. It still balanced well when carried at the receiver, was quite slim, pointed easily, and the action was smooth and quick. Internally, the gun showed little wear.

To load, the rifle rounds are inserted into the loading port in the bottom of the magazine tube. You must carefully position the angle correctly to get the nose of the first round in the detent of the follower, then push. Rounds load easily after the first round. As I've already noted for the .32 Remington cartridge, only the Speer .321-inch, 170-grain RNFP, number 2259, will feed in the Model 14's magazine loading port.

To reproduce vintage ammunition as close as possible, I consulted the 1923 Remington catalog. It shows the .32 Remington was loaded to a velocity of 2,110 fps for a 170-grain RNFP flat-point bullet, which looks very much like the Speer bullet. Available powder speeds in that era were equivalent to IMR 3031, 4895 and 4064. The .32 Remington would most likely have been loaded with 4895 or 4064 speed propellants. The Speer 170-grain RNFP was loaded in a Graf/Privi case with a CCI 200 primer. After consulting the Hodgdon Reloading Manual for the .32 Winchester Special, I tried both IMR 4895 and IMR 4064. I settled on a load of 31.5 grains IMR 4895. Hornady (hornady.com), Lee Precision (lee-precision.com) and Redding (redding-reloading.com) all make die sets and shell holders for the .32 Remington.

Table 1 shows the test's results at 100 yards. Editor-in-Chief Eric Poole did all the shooting for consistent accuracy potential determinations. For this series, we fired three five-shot groups at 100 yards and one five-shot group at 200 yards. We obtained very limited original factory ammunition for comparison in



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VELOCITY (FPS)	ES	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVERAGE GROUP (IN.)
REMINGTON MODEL 14 .32 REM.				
Speer 170 FP, IMR 4895 @ 31.5-gr.	2,013	113	3.06	3.82
<small>Notes: Accuracy is the average of five, three-shot groups from 100 yards on a sandbag rest. Velocity is the average of five shots chronographed adjacent to the muzzle.</small>				

this rifle, hence the limited number of those groups. Original factory .32 Remington has long been out of production.

We also sought to explore to what ranges these guns with period sights and ammunition would have been effective to. The mid-1920s .32 Remington with a 170-grain bullet had effective ballistics in terms of retained velocity and energy to about 200 to 225 yards. With iron sights, the Model 14 hunting ranges would have been limited by the eyesight of the shooter or the accuracy of the rifle and ammunition. Effectiveness would have been largely dependent on the size of the front sight of these rifles and the shooter's eyesight. The front bead on the Model 14 was a little large and completely covered our 10-inch target at 200 yards. A smaller front sight would have probably helped the Model 14's group sizes. We shot at a steel target at 200 yards with a 10-inch circle to represent the kill zone of a deer. Even with the rather large front bead, we were able to hold the 10-inch circle with the Model 14 at 200 yards.

We really liked the light weight and easy carrying qualities of the Model 14. A pump-action is a little different for most centerfire riflemen, but the Model 14 worked well and was quick handling. When firing repeatedly, it wasn't difficult to stay on the sights while pumping the action. The .32 Remington chambering in the Model 14 was an effective rifle-and-cartridge combination to the ballistic limits of the cartridge. One-hundred-years ago, the Model 14 would have been considered a serious rifle for hunting given its performance and price.

If you enjoy the series, "Of Wood & Steel," be sure to look for Part VII featuring the Winchester Model 54 in the July 2026 issue of Guns & Ammo. 📖



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HEIGHT	5.5 in.
WIDTH	1.2 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb., 11 oz.
FINISH	Black nitride (steel), Melonite (barrel)
SIGHTS	Tritium dot with yellow circle (front), U-notch (rear), variable interface optics
TRIGGER	5 lbs., 8 oz.
SAFETY	Trigger blade, drop safety
MSRP	\$760
MANUFACTURER	Springfield Armory, 800-680-6866, springfield-armory.com



EUREKA!

IT'S BEEN A REFRESHING 3 years since California's microstamping law was suspended in 2023. Californians are no longer limited to pre-2013 semiautomatic handguns, predominantly chambered in .45 ACP and having only iron sights. The market changed considerably, favoring 9mm, optic-ready micro-compact and compact pistols. With its XD and Model 1911 lines, Springfield Armory always had a good representation in the market. Seeing a Hellcat on California shelves in 2024 was like ice cream on a summer day for its law-abiding subjects. In 2025, the Hellcat was followed by the Echelon, a forward-thinking, modular pistol.

COMPLIANCE

One of the main anti-gun tools the California Department of Justice (DOJ) wielded was the Unsafe Handgun Act (UHA). It contains specifics on what features and tests a handgun must go through to be California compliant. No amendment has crushed the rights of Californians harder than the microstamping amendment. Enacted in 2013, semiautomatic pistols were required to have a pistol identification code stamped on the firing pin. In 2023, a federal judge blocked enforcement of the amendment and temporarily removed the major setback. The California DOJ was then tasked with determining whether microstamping was a viable technology. It found it to be viable and began the process of making microstamping a requirement again beginning January 1, 2028. The UHA affects the civilian market. Law enforcement and military personnel were not

subject to the restriction.

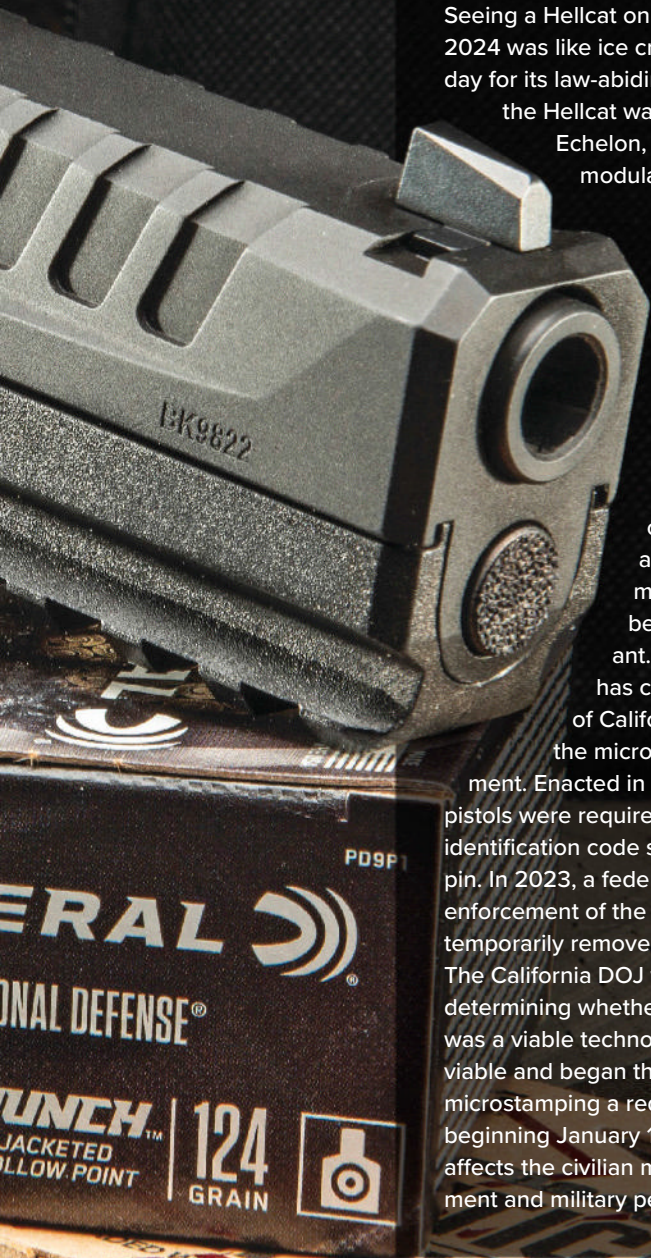
The UHA carries other amendments that require features not commonly found on semiautomatic handguns. One is a magazine disconnect, and the other a loaded chamber indicator (LCI). A magazine disconnect disables the firing mechanism if there is no magazine installed. No magazine, no *pow*. An LCI is a lever that pops out when a round is chambered. The text "Loaded When Out" is required too. The letters must be at least 1/16-inch tall and be legible from 24 inches. One side of the lever is painted red to serve as a graphic clue that a round is chambered. The challenge for manufacturers is how to add these components without compromising the firing pin assembly or optics mount.

Another UHA necessity was that three handguns of each model must be submitted to a DOJ-Certified laboratory for testing. Tests included drop testing and firing 100 rounds to ensure parts don't loosen and have not cracked or broken.

NEXT LEVEL

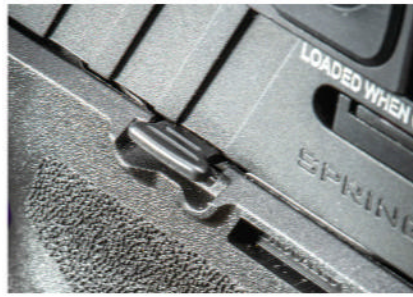
The Echelon was launched in 2023, but it took 2 years to enter the Golden State. It's a striker-fired pistol with a steel-alloy slide and polymer grip module. There are four California-compliant versions: 4.0C (compact) and 4.5F (full-size). Both are available with a compensator. The 4.5F non-compensator model was sent to Guns & Ammo for review.

According to Springfield Armory, the Echelon was inspired by the famous Battle of Leuctra on July 6, 371 B.C. This is where the Thebans used an echelon formation to defeat the more numerous Spartan-led army. The formation helps a small force overcome a larger force and is still used today in modern military tactics. Since California's legal magazine capacity is 10 rounds or fewer, we hope that the Echelon is as cunning and maneuverable with this limitation as the Thebans were.





Deep forward and rear angled serrations and rear wings are easy to grip and rack.



The slide-stop lever is bi-lateral, though low profile.



The trigger safety lever bisects the flat-face polymer trigger.



Stipple-like texture is generously applied to the thumb rest and disassembly lever.



The functional yet not-to-abrasive texture envelops the grip module and extends to the magazine basepad.



The backstraps include a small punch that ensures alignment with the grip.

The Echelon 4.5F is 8-inches long, 5½-inches tall and 1.2-inches wide. That's basically the size of a Glock 17, and it even shares the same grip angle. It utilizes a 4½-inch hammer-forged steel barrel with a Melonite finish. It's chambered in 9mm Luger with a 1-in-10-inch twist barrel. The steel slide is billet machined with an innovative optics cut called the variable interface system. Like the barrel, the slide is finished with a Melonite coating. The grip module is polymer with an accessory rail and interchangeable backstraps. The Echelon arrived with a soft case, three backstraps, two magazines, and optic mounting screws and pins.

THE COG

What makes the Echelon distinct from other Springfield Armory handgun models is its Central Operating Group (COG). The COG is a stainless-steel chassis with an integrated trigger, trigger assembly and slide stop. The self-contained unit has the components needed to release the striker to discharge the firearm. The chassis is also the serialized part. Traditionally, manufacturers have serialized the frame and grip assembly, thus making it the ATF-registered firearm. The COG is easily removed from the grip module and becomes a swappable component.

Providing a drop-and-play system frees Springfield Armory to produce grip modules in a variety of sizes and colors, offering them as accessories. The enduser benefits by being able to tailor the handgun to their different needs without having to buy a new handgun. Currently, Springfield Armory offers a 4.0C and 4.5F grip modules in

small, medium and large sizes. Color choices are black, FDE and OD Green. That's a lot of variety, especially when the grip modules run \$65. The COG allows Springfield Armory to arrive at a market with a few models and a lot of grip options. Other part manufacturers such as Sharps Bros. (sharpsbros.com) have jumped on board. Sharp Bros. offers a billet machined T7075-T6 aluminum grip module in bronze, black and OD Green with Brazilian Cherry or black aluminum grips. For \$326, it makes the Echelon feel like a 1911.

TRIGGER TIME

Pressing the Echelon's trigger, you wouldn't know it was in a chassis. It's a good trigger with a consistent 5-pound resistance. The travel is smooth with a short reset. There are three safeties within the pistol. A striker-block plunger limits the travel of the firing pin. A safety sear serves as an additional safety in case the pistol is dropped. The trigger safety lever prevents the trigger from moving rearward unless the safety is pressed, too.

The Echelon grip module features 360-degree texture around the grip, along with textured surfaces on the magazine release, takedown lever, triggerguard and thumbrest. The texture is uniform and feels soft to the skin, but it is very grippy. The reversible magazine release — combined with ambidextrous trenches and slide stops — makes the Echelon one of the most left-friendly pistols on the market.

Small, medium and large interchangeable backstraps are included with the pistol. Replacing them requires no tools. Each backstrap is outfitted with an integrated pin

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The variable interface system is low, co-witnessing optics and iron sights.



California's loaded chamber indicator requirement is part of the extractor.



Fieldstripping the Echelon doesn't require pressing the trigger.



The COG easily slips into an aftermarket Sharp's Bros. modular grip assembly.



CA-compliant 10-round magazines are available from Springfield Armory. \$45



An advantage of a plateless system is that the Echelon's sights are aligned in the lower third of most popular optics.

for assembly and disassembly of the firearm. Springfield Armory offers small, medium and large grip modules as accessories. The dust cover has a generous accessory rail for lights and laser sights.

SLIDE WORK

The slide was well thought out. The serrations are wide with deep valleys engulfing our finger pads. There are five serrations on the front of the slide and three on the rear. A forward trench precedes the serrations. These serve a stout ledge to keep the fingers well planted on the slide. Together with the captive recoil spring, this makes it one of the easiest 9mm slides to rack, even when using the front serrations only.

Another standout are the iron sights. The rear is a U-notch with a white outline. The front post contains a tritium vial surrounded by a yellow luminescent ring. The sights are useful day or night.

The loaded chamber indicator was cleverly engineered. Generally, manufacturers place a small lever on top of the slide behind the ejection port. Springfield Armory added a small lever to the extractor. When asked about the location, the company responded that putting it on the top was an "ugly" solution.

OPTIC READY

Another versatile feature is the Echelon's optic mounting system. It utilizes six threaded holes and four pin locations to accept many optic footprints. Pin sets are available for models including Trijicon, Leupold DeltaPoint Pro, Shield, Holosun, Vortex, Riton and Swampfox, among others. Springfield Armory offers an Aimpoint Acro plate as a separate accessory, too. You'll find mounting details about pin location and screw types in the operator's manual.

Field stripping is as easy as it gets. Eject the magazine and empty the chamber, lock back the slide, rotate the takedown lever down, and push the slide forward. Removing the COG takes a few more steps and is a little trickier. The manual offers clear instructions for this.

The first accessory feature tested on the Echelon was the mounting system. Guns & Ammo's staff gathered five different

red-dot sights, each requiring a different pin set or screw length. There were three screw sets provided in the box: short, medium and tall. The screws and pins were in an individual baggie and marked with a label that made installation a breeze. Finding the right length was easy thanks to the manual

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady American Gunner 115-gr. XTP	1,160	54	14	1.5	2.5
Federal HST 124-gr. JHP	1,205	34	8	2.1	2.6
Federal Punch 124-gr. JHP	1,182	27	8	2.2	3.
Federal Hydroshok 135-gr. JHP	1,069	32	10	2.5	2.9
Hornady Critical Defense 115-gr. FTX	1,157	23	8	2.7	3.3

Notes: Accuracy is the average of five, five-shot groups fired at 25 yards from a bag benchrest. Velocity is the average of 10 shots recorded by a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph placed adjacent to the muzzle.



Tested with a Blackpoint holster, the Echelon concealed well for its size.

stating that the screws shouldn't protrude more than .11 inch from the base of the red dot. We found the right pin and screw combination for each red dot model on hand using only the screws and pins in the kit.

Warming up with the pistol showed us the trigger was smooth and consistent. The short reset allowed us to get in tune with the recoil for quick follow-up shots.

We appreciated how easy it was to rack the slide, although the tradeoff was snappier recoil.

The magazine release is within thumb's reach without having to rotate the pistol to disengage a magazine. The magazine well's slight flare aided in executing intuitive reloads.

The texture around the pistol ensured firm contact with the grip without requiring our hands to apply a death grip to the module. Another small but useful touchpoint was the ambidextrous forward trench, informally known as a "gas pedal." The small ledge made for a great thumb indexing point to help quickly return the pistol to the target. The texture is just right, too. It's aggressive enough to provide firm resistance, but flat enough to not chafe when carrying the pistol against the belly.

For accuracy testing, a Trijicon RMR Type 2 with a green LED replaced the coverplate and was mounted to the slide's variable interface system. A big plus to the optic system was that it kept the rear deck of the RMR low enough to see the standard metallic




A so-called "trench cut" behind the front serrations supports slide manipulation.

sights through the window of the optic. Although red dots get a lot of attention, the night sights on the Echelon were excellent for both day and night training.

Five, five-shot groups of each load were shot at 25 yards while seated at a bench. Hands rested on a bag for support. Group averages ranged from 3.3 inches to as little as 2½ inches. Though not a match pistol, the Echelon was fun to shoot and would be useful for personal defense.

To see if the full-size Echelon was carry friendly, we sourced a Blackpoint Tactical Mini Wing IWB holster and Leather Wing OWB holster (blackpoint-tactical.com). Both holsters utilized leather wings to help keep the pistol close to the body. Appendix carry was doable, but it showed the least printing with an oversized thick garment. For California's T-shirt weather, the best carry position for the pistol was over the hip or slightly behind it.

PARTING SHOT

Modular systems designed around a chassis system such as the Echelon may be the future for striker-fired pistols. It benefits the manufacturer who can offer a multitude of options, including colors and different-size grips. Accessories ease support and prevent adding to a brand's SKU count. Such modularity benefits shooters because we can personalize our handguns with only a tinkerer's competence. That's huge in a state like California, given its rules and regulations. 



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KEITH WOOD

Why is Beretta Holding interested in Ruger stock?

THE BOARDROOM

A CORPORATE DRAMA is unfolding and gun owners should watch closely. Separated by an ocean and competing philosophies, Beretta Holding, S. A., and Sturm, Ruger & Company are battling for control of Ruger, one of the American firearms industry's most recognizable brands.

On September 22, 2025, Beretta Holding S.A. filed paperwork revealing a 7.7-percent stake in Sturm, Ruger & Co. According to reports, there was no courtesy forewarning, just a Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) filing that landed on Ruger's desk like a warning shot. The filing stated that Beretta had no "present intention" to take control of Ruger.

Ruger reached out, asked for a pause in Beretta's share accumulation but was rebuffed. Beretta kept buying

stock in Ruger, which

has been a publicly traded company since 1969 and listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) as "RGR" since 1990. As of the first quarter of 2026, the European-based Beretta Holding has increased its position to a commanding 9.95 percent, making it Ruger's largest single shareholder.

Representatives of the two sides met face-to-face in Paris in December 2025. At that meeting, Beretta's chair outlined a long-term plan to combine the two companies, but no formal proposal was made. It was also made clear that Beretta Holding had no interest in the status quo and would find a way to increase its position if Ruger remained resistant.

Talks continued in Luxembourg in February, which went nowhere. On February 24, 2026, Beretta Holding formally nominated four candidates for Ruger's board of directors, setting up a proxy fight at this year's annual meeting.

The companies' conflicting press releases haven't done much to calm the waters. "Beretta Holding proposed a strategic minority investment in Ruger on market terms that would benefit all shareholders," Beretta's statement read. "Beretta Holding never sought control of the company." Ruger's release had a very different tone, saying "Beretta repeatedly demanded terms that would transfer value from other Ruger stockholders to Beretta and undermine Ruger's status as an independent public company."

The financial backdrop matters. Beretta cited "Ruger's deteriorating financial performance" in its statements, which isn't wrong. Ruger's profits are projected to swing from a \$30.6 million net income in 2024 to a \$4.4 million loss in 2025. Operating income declined nearly \$65 million during the previous two years. Sales are down and expenses are up. On its face, the numbers gave Beretta's "we just want to help" narrative some credibility.

A privately held company, Beretta Holding's finances are not readily available. We can, however, compare Ruger to

another publicly traded American firearm company: Smith & Wesson (NASDAQ: SWBI). In the last three years, Ruger and Smith & Wesson followed similar post-pandemic demand declines, but Ruger's

were steadier. Ruger maintained roughly flat revenue through the downturn while S&W experienced a sharper contraction and lower profitability as industry sales normalized. Despite converging revenue levels, Ruger maintained stronger balance sheet discipline and profitability trends. Given these facts, it isn't necessarily fair to be critical of Ruger's leadership. These are simply tough times.

In response to Beretta's actions, Ruger enacted a one-year stockholder rights plan that expires on October 25, 2026. It's a classic poison pill that makes a hostile takeover more costly. The company has also refreshed its nine-member board, adding five new directors in the last year. Beretta criticized those appointments and claimed it leaves long-tenured directors in key leadership positions, those who presided over the company's financial decline.

Beretta, a company celebrating its 500th anniversary in 2026 — one of the oldest industrial companies on Earth — wants a piece of Ruger, an American institution that has armed generations of hunters, competitors, law enforcement officers and citizens. Whether that interest constitutes a lifeline or a takeover is the question shareholders decide in spring 2026. This is a developing story that is worth following. The boardroom may be a long way from the range, but the stakes are just as real. 📺

THE FILING STATED THAT BERETTA HAD NO **"PRESENT INTENTION"** TO TAKE CONTROL OF RUGER.

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