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THE MAGAZINE

FEBRUARY 2024

VOLUME 41 • ISSUE 02

Back in Black

Marlin's Dark
Series 1895



PLUS

**Precision
Metallurgy:**

A New 700-
Footprint Action

**Family
Tradition:**

Dad's Last Gun

CCW Legal:

Going Too Far

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CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS

- 6 First Shot
- 8 Know Your Cartridge

COLUMNS

- 10 Defensive Handgunning RICHARD MANN
- 14 Drawing Conclusions MARTY HAYES, J.D.
- 16 Hardware Talk PATRICK SWEENEY
- 18 Modern Gunnery GDTM EDITORS
- 20 Guns & Gear GDTM EDITORS
- 89 First Look GDTM EDITORS

FEATURES

- 22 The Dark Series 1895: Can a lever gun still be considered "old school" if it looks like something John Wick would own?
RICHARD MANN
- 32 Precise Precision: Faxon's new 700-footprint action is capable of producing incredible downrange precision ... with the right setup.
JOSH WAYNER
- 40 Trailblazer Pivot: If it looks kinda like a gun but shoots just like a gun ... it's still a gun.
PATRICK SWEENEY
- 64 On the Fly: Perfecting the art of bullet technology and ballistic innovation.
RICHARD MANN
- 72 Dad's Last Gun: Father and son shared a lifetime of firearms experiences. But in the end, there was one piece of unfinished business.
ANDREW EWERT
- 80 The Modern Hunting Rifle: A little competition influence, some military sniper inspiration and an infusion of marketing technology.
JOSH WAYNER

THE BEST GUN LIST IN PRINT

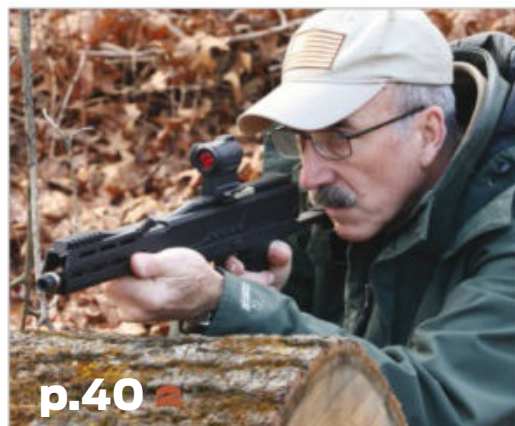
- 47 Show & Auction Listings
- 53 The Gun Digest Marketplace



p.22 ➤



p.32 ➤



p.40 ➤



p.64 ➤



p.72 ➤



p.80 ➤

Gun Digest the Magazine (ISSN 1938-5943) is published monthly by Caribou Media dba Gun Digest Media, LLC. Corporate Headquarters is 5583 W. Waterford Ln., Suite D, Appleton, WI 54913. Periodicals postage paid at Appleton, WI 54913 and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to PO Box 182, Williamsport, PA 17703. Copyright © 2024 Gun Digest Media. GUN DIGEST THE MAGAZINE and its logo are registered trademarks. Other names and logos referred to or displayed in editorial or advertising content may be trademarked or copyrighted. The publisher and advertisers are not liable for typographical errors that may appear in prices or descriptions in advertisements.

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STAYING THE COURSE

Sometimes, it's challenging to sit in my editorial chair and not become completely jaded.

This time of year, largely anchored by SHOT Show, is when the majority of manufacturers dump a host of "new" products into the marketplace because, well, new products are what keep the lights on—and it's what you and I have come to expect as consumers.

The problem is, especially in an economy such as the one we're experiencing now, most of these new drops are less than revolutionary: line extensions, new colors, addition of a threaded muzzle, you name it.

And that's where it's easy to become jaded and difficult to show excitement when a marketing manager calls me up to hype their new offerings.

But luckily for you and me, this trend isn't universal: There are some truly amazing guns, optics, ammo and gear that drops every year.

Keep in mind that new products unveiled at SHOT Show will continue to surface in the coming months, and some manufacturers have made it common practice to roll out new skews throughout the calendar year. But at the moment, the new Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph is at the top of my "you gotta see this thing" list.

We've got a full review in the Modern Gunnery column of this issue. This stunning little tech box is about the size of a smartphone and allows "the average shooter" to get their hands on a chronograph: It's inexpensive as compared to all others before it, extremely intuitive ... and really damn cool.

And as you've also likely deduced from the cover of this issue, the lever-gun movement continues to rage ... and evolve. These days, those Western actions are associated with John Wick and personal defense as much as they are cowboys and horse saddles. That journey has been a fun one to watch, and I suspect it won't slow down any time soon.

So, do me a favor and keep your eyes glued to the upcoming pages of *Gun Digest the Magazine* and those of GunDigest.com. I promise you that I haven't gone into full "grumpy pants" mode quiet yet: I still get excited now and again, and we'll tear through those products in depth in the coming months.

Oh, I almost forgot: Turn to page 72 and read "Dad's Last Gun." But read it in private, just in case it hits you as hard as it hit me. **GDTM**

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6.5 PRECISION RIFLE CARTRIDGE (PRC)

High velocity, way past 1,000 yards.



HISTORICAL NOTES

Introduced in late 2017, Hornady's 6.5 Precision Rifle Cartridge (PRC) was designed to be accurate, shoot flat and shoot long from a compact case utilizing moderate powder charges. The 6.5 PRC produces high velocities for target shooting with performance well beyond 1,000 yards.

The round enters a suddenly crowded field of similarly dimensioned cartridges, including the 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.5x55 Swede, .260 Remington, 6.5x57mm, 6.5-284 Norma, 6.5-06, 6.5 Remington Magnum and .264 Winchester Magnum, to name a few. Obviously, 6.5 designates the bore diameter, which, technically is 0.2559 inch in diameter, but this new round fires 0.264-inch-diameter bullets, as do the other 6.5mm cartridges.

It was created by necking down the .300 Ruger Compact Magnum case, which, if naming conventions for similar neck-downs were followed, it could have been called the 6.5 RCM. To our eyes, it competes most directly with the 6.5-284 Norma. The 6.5 PRC fits in short or medium actions with a standard magnum bolt face

LOADING DATA AND FACTORY BALLISTICS

BULLET	POWDER	GRAINS	VELOCITY	ENERGY	SOURCE
143 ELD-X	FL	FL	2,960	2,782	Hornady 81621
147 ELD Match	FL	FL	2,910	2,910	Hornady 81620

(0.532 inch). It features a long cartridge case neck and 30-degree shoulder.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 6.5 PRC case is 2.030 inches long. Loaded with Hornady's 143-grain ELD-X bullet, cartridge overall length measures 2.955 inches (according to final SAAMI specs), slightly longer than the 2.825-inch length for the 6.5 Creedmoor. Its case capacity is about 28 percent more than the 6.5 Creedmoor and the 6.5 PRC will push a 143-grain ELD-X bullet to about 2,960 fps. This is 260-fps faster than the Creedmoor, an increase of about 8 percent. The neck length is 0.272 inch, and barrel twist rates seem to favor 1:8 rifling.

At rollout, rifle makers chambering the 6.5 PRC included Christensen Arms, Fierce Firearms, GA Precision, Gunwerks, Hill Country Rifles, Horizon Firearms,

McRee Precision, Montana Rifles, Proof Research, Savage, Sauer, Stuteville Precision, Seekins Precision and Trident Armory.

Initial loads include the Hornady 6.5 PRC 147-grain ELD Match (81620), which delivers 2,910 fps and 2,910 ft-lb of energy at the muzzle. To get a 100-yard zero, the round would start +1.5 inches above the muzzle. Then, at 100 yards, the 6.5 PRC would produce 2,645 fps/2,283 ft-lb. At 200 yards, those readings would be 2,518 fps/2,069 ft-lb and -6.5 inches drop. At 500 yards, it would produce 2,275 fps and 1,689 ft-lb and -36.5 inches of drop. The 6.5 PRC 143-grain ELD-X Precision Hunter (81621) load has muzzle stats of 2,960 fps/2,782 ft-lb and 500-yard stats of 2,248 fps/1,604 ft-lb, with -36.2 inches of drop at the longer distance. **GDTM**



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CALIBER

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WIDTH

8.6"

LENGTH

BAD THINGS CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE

A new world ...
and a new
gun belt.



The quick adjust buckle on Black Beard Belt's Ranger Gun Belt allows fast and easy adjustment, one half-inch at a time.

I have a new gun belt, and I really like it. But first, I want to talk a bit about this new world we're currently living in.

Back in 1993 when I was a young patrol officer, I was recruited to cover the firearms law portion of a concealed carry class that was frequently taught in the city where I worked. The lead instructor had graduated from Massad Ayoob's Lethal Force Institute and was well versed in the application of a handgun for self-defense.

Part of the course dealt with what I categorized as "not doing stupid things that could increase your exposure to situations where your life might be jeopardized," or where you might have to use your handgun. This included not hanging around in dark alleys, parking in dim-lit

areas or frequenting secluded stop-and-rob convenience stores, failing to look for suspicious characters and paying attention to the body language of others.

Back then—30 years ago—if you did those things, the chance that you would need to use your gun to save your life while out in public were slim. That hardly seems like enough anymore.

The times, as they say, have changed. Gun belts and holsters are no longer just made of leather, and bad guys with bad intent are likely to appear anywhere at any time. It seems that all that has to happen now is for someone to get off their meds or wake up with their panties in a wad, and they're ready to load their guns and head out to some gun-free zone and start shooting folks.

This complicates self-defense because what we once thought were relatively safe spaces no longer exist. The world—this new world—has become a dangerous place, and it doesn't matter if you live in a small town or a big city.

The point of all this is to remind you that bad things can now happen anywhere, and your awareness needs to be properly tuned and functioning anytime you're out in public. Also, no matter where you are, you should have a plan, and, if at all possible, a gun that's handy and that you can shoot well.

Just as important is the training of your family members to respond to a potential bad situation, whether it occurs in a mall, a church or a bowling alley. If you wait until something happens to make that plan, it'll be too late. Be armed, be vigilant and just like it was 30 years ago, don't do stupid stuff.

BLACK BEARD BELTS

Back in the day, gun belts were made of leather. They still are, and I'm kind of an old-school guy and like leather belts and holsters. However, I'm open to anything that makes carrying a gun more comfortable and, for the past three months, I've been wearing a new gun belt from Black Beard Belts. Black Beard Belts offers several styles of gun belts to include those with a conventional buckle and prong, to the more modern ratchet-style belt.

The older I get the more I appreci-



Black Beard Belt's Ranger Gun Belt is good looking and makes carrying a gun comfortable.

If it's not comfortable to carry a gun, you won't. And, in today's world, not carrying is not good.



ate comfort when it comes to, well, everything ... but especially as it relates to concealed carry. Lack of comfort is the number-one reason those with a concealed carry permit don't carry a gun. This appreciation for comfort has led me to also be appreciative of ratchet-style belts because they're not limited to 1-inch adjustments. If you're feeling an extra bit trim, a ratchet belt will allow you to snug-up incrementally. Just the same: If you eat too much, a ratchet belt will allow you to loosen up a bit. Ratchet belts also allow you a bit more flexibility when carrying, particularly with inside the waist-

band holsters. I have Black Beard Belt's ratchet-style Ranger Gun Belt.

This belt is offered in black, coyote brown, OD green or with the M81 camo pattern, and in 2-inch incremental lengths from 32 to 52 inches. Regardless of length, it has 19 reinforced holes spaced in 0.5-inch increments, and there's an option for steel grommet reinforcement. This 1.5-inch belt is made of high-strength polymer-coated nylon with a no-shine, non-slip coating.

The buckle and pin are made of stainless steel, and it has a quick-release feature. When you adjust it, you get an audible click letting you

know everything is locked in place. This is a good-looking belt to wear with jeans ... and even dress pants. Black Beard Belts also offers a 1.75-inch version of this belt with double holes, but it's a bit radical for everyday wear and is probably best suited to range or duty use.

I've worn this belt a lot with inside the waistband and outside the waistband holsters, and it hasn't shown any wear. Also, I'm not as lean and trim as I used to be, and it seems after every meal I need a bit more room, and with this belt, it's a simple adjustment. It's also easy to adjust this belt when sitting for long periods like on a drive or at a desk, and tightening back to normal is almost instantaneous when you stand up. It's not uncommon for me to carry a steel-framed Colt Commander, and this belt has plenty of rigidity to hold the gun in place.

Don't get me wrong, I still like leather. For me, guns—especially steel guns—and leather go together. But I also like to be comfortable and for inside or outside the waistband daily handgun carry, this is one of the most comfortable belts I've tried. Just like our world is evolving, this new millennium has brought with it new threats. But it's also brought better gear that will allow us to be more comfortably armed, more often, and that's a good thing. **GDTM**



Ratchet-style belts allow quick and easy precise adjustment for carry comfort.

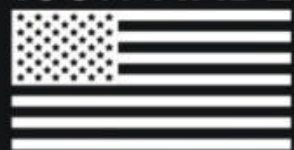


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GOING TOO FAR

The extremely fine line between self-defense and excessive force.

As of this writing, 41-year-old Tyrone Frasier of Stockton, California, is facing several criminal charges in connection with entering a Stockton 7-Eleven and attempting to steal a large amount of merchandise. Frasier commandeered a garbage can and was behind the counter, filling the large garbage can with cigarettes, sweeping them off the rack and into the bin. By the time he was stopped, the garbage can was about half full with hundreds of packs of cigarettes (and at the going rate that would be thousands of dollars' worth of merchandise).

While that's not particularly newsworthy, what happened next to Frasier is.

The incident was caught on cell-

phone video, and the video shows two store employees stopping the theft by beating Frasier with a large piece of wood over and over until Frasier begged for them to stop. (To watch the video, Google 7-Eleven robbery/beating.)

It's clear that a person has a right to stop criminal conduct by using force—but that force must be *reasonable*. By my count, one of the clerks used this wooden stick to hit Frasier 37 times. It reminded me of watching the Rodney King beating, and, in fact, there was some similarities.

In the King incident, four police officers attempted to apprehend King after a high-speed pursuit. While the officers were first acquitted of any wrongdoing, later they were found guilty of federal

charges, and the department lost a large civil lawsuit. This could happen here, too, because the two clerks are not facing any criminal prosecution, at least at this time.

In the 7-Eleven case, I could see that the thief communicated he was giving up after receiving strikes with the stick 10 times. But, instead of stopping the beating, they continued until the guy recording the incident with his phone convinced the clerk that he had given up.

I can understand the frustration the clerks had dealing with runaway theft from their store, and it's my understanding this was not the first time the thief entered the store and blatantly stole items. But, if you are going to use force against someone who is commit-

“I have heard the practical working theory is that, when protecting yourself or property, use equal force, then a little more. Continuing to beat someone once they are disabled is excessive force.”

ting a crime and want to avoid arrest, trial and conviction, then that force must be reasonable.

DEFINING 'REASONABLE'

What is reasonable force? I can't tell you.

What is reasonable will be determined by the jury, and it will be your responsibility (through your attorney asking you questions at trial) to convince the jury you needed to use the amount you used. Your job will be to convince the jury that the force used was no more than necessary to stop the criminal attack.

I'm reminded of a murder case I worked on as an expert, where my job was to do a shooting incident reconstruction. The incident centered around one individual (defendant) shooting the deceased who the defendant said was attempting to disarm him. They were both inside the cab of a truck, and there was some decent evidence to validate this claim. But the problem is that, after the first shots were fired in response to the attempt to grab the gun, the defendant kept shooting—for a total of 10 times, with the last bullet striking the deceased on the top of the head.

That's not a reasonable amount of force, even if one believed the defense of the initial attack was warranted. I've heard well respected firearms instructors say to "shoot 'em to the ground," and if they were lawful to shoot him once, they're lawful to shoot him many times.

Maybe, but then again, maybe not. I've worked on several cases where excessive shots meant excessive force, which meant

"What is reasonable will be determined by the jury, and it will be your responsibility (through your attorney asking you questions at trial) to convince the jury you needed to use the amount you used. Your job will be to convince the jury that the force used was no more than necessary to stop the criminal attack."

conviction and prison time.

PHYSICAL, NON-DEADLY FORCE

Now, let's get back to the use of physical non-deadly force. *Black's Law Dictionary* states reasonable force is "force that is not excessive and that is appropriate for protecting oneself or one's property." In this instance, the thief wasn't presenting a deadly threat, although there's some evidence that he had intimated he had a gun. But, as the camera showed, there was clearly no gun.

I have heard the practical working theory is that, when protecting yourself or property, use equal force, then a little more. Continuing to beat someone once they are disabled is excessive force. Most police officers and deadly force trainers recommend not attempting to apprehend someone

who is committing a property crime, primarily because you do not typically have the physical means to control the guy after he is stopped. It might be logical to carry a heavy-duty zip tie worked inside the belt, just in case.

As far as self-defense, the force would be just a little more than was being used against you. This is why pepper spray and Kubotons are effective intermediary tools one can easily carry. Training, of course, is necessary, so one can explain how their actions were within guidelines when using that intermediate force. A little self-defense training can go a long way. **GDTM**

About the Author

Marty Hayes is president and founder of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network Inc. Possessing a Juris Doctor degree, he has over 30 years of experience teaching the law of self-defense through his own training school, The Firearms Academy of Seattle, and for the world-renown Massad Ayoob Group. He routinely works as an expert witness in self-defense cases.

GET THE LEAD OUT

A simple recipe.

If you ever get a chance to read some of the seminal gunsmithing books—books written more than a half-century ago (in some instances more than three-quarters of a century)—you'll be horrified.

Some of the concoctions they used for bluing and rust and lead removal were simply toxic. Back then, there was no Brownells; if you wanted it, you had to make it yourself. Today, some of the home mixes you might find online aren't any better.



The author's old-style can of Shooter's Choice lead remover and the Tornado brushes he uses to clean the bore when he has "screwed up." Note that the company has updated the current packaging design.



The list of ingredients of the lead remover is simple: nothing caustic, abrasive or reactive ... and nothing to create nasty byproducts.

The new design is a lot more eye-catching than the old, but the results are the same: It gets the lead out.

made with bristles. Instead, the brush is a cylinder of springy stainless-steel loops, ones that scrub on their edges—not their ends. This means you have less abrasion on the bore and the tops of the lands than the bristle-style creates.

Yes, the loops can't reach down into the corners of the grooves as well, but once I've gotten the bulk of the lead out (and rather easily, I might add), I can use a bronze brush for a few strokes. OK, two brushes then, not just one.

SWIPE AND SHINE

The process is simple: run a patch with a bore cleaner, any cleaner, down the bore to mop out the powder residue. Then, a dry patch. A patch wet with the Shooter's Choice is next. Let it sit for 5 to 10 minutes. The hardest part is the waiting. Then, scrub with the Tornado brush, a few passes with a bronze to clean it up and *voila*, done.

I developed this routine at Second Chance, the bowling pin shoot, where it was common to go through ammo by the thousands of rounds in the week-long match. This process also worked miracles on shotguns to get the lead and plastic out from days of shooting buckshot and slugs. Although, for that I had to go with a Chore Boy bronze pot scrubber, as there were no Tornado brushes for 12-gauge back then.

After checking up on Shooter's Choice, they changed the packaging; I still have a few more tins of the old label left, so I'll keep using them.

Oh, and pay attention to what got you into this mess, and don't do it again, OK? **GDTM**

But, you've got a leaded bore ... so what do you do to remove the lead?

I do a lot of testing, and I do a lot of reloading, both for practice (practice ammo) and R&D. That means that sometimes I end up with a grungy bore. The solution is simple: one can and one brush. I use Shooter's Choice lead remover and scrub the bores with Hoppe's Tornado brushes.

Unlike the various caustic, corrosive and borderline lethal mixes you read about, Shooter's Choice is merely "petroleum distillates." I've got a bachelor's degree in chemistry, and "petroleum distillates" covers a lot of ground, but it

isn't like you're using reactive materials that can create lethal compounds.

But they do say not to leave it in the bore overnight, so take at least some care, OK?

One "home remedy" creates lead acetate as a byproduct, and that stuff is nasty. There's an old saying in chemistry and medicine: Dose makes the poison. Well, lead acetate isn't something you can just shrug off. Instead of chemically reacting to the lead, the Shooter's Choice works on the bond between lead and steel, and that's where the brushes come in.

The Hoppes Tornado brushes aren't

PINTSIZED PRECISION

Right sized and loaded with features, the Xero C1 Pro looks to give the chrono market a run for its money.



Once in the ShotView app, you have the ability to organize the data and clear the noise from it to get a more precise picture. Some of the functions include (left to right) shot session, historic shooting data from each session, and the ability to edit shots out of a session.

Including a nifty little tripod, the Xero only takes up a corner of your range bag.

Is it time to jettison your bulky chronographs and Doppler radars? If Garmin has anything to say about it, then yes.

Perhaps a game-changing addition to the company's catalog, the Xero C1 Pro Chronograph puts the power of radar into a package small enough to fit into a jacket pocket. Shooters who clock their rounds on the regular understand this is a big deal.

No more dictionary-sized radars requiring a separate case or measuring out how far from the muzzle a traditional chrono is set up to garner an accurate calculation. Instead, it's a unit that takes up minimal space in a range bag, with a setup that involves little more than placing it a few inches from the muzzle.

The twitter about the C1 Pro—even though it was only released in October—already speaks volumes about the potential of the product. Garmin gave a sneak peek of the device at Gap Grind where a handful of shooters got a look at it, and forums have been chewing on the subject since.

So, what exactly do we have our hands on in the petite radar system?

C1 PRO SIZE

As mentioned, the aspect to crow about is the Xero C1 Pro's size, which

for anyone who's used an existing system is comparably convenient. Garmin bills it as "smaller than a deck of cards," which is difficult to argue with since the chronograph measures in at 3 by 2.8 by 1.4 inches and weighs in at a very svelte 3.5 ounces.

Given the device is wireless—it runs off a rechargeable lithium-ion battery, good for 2,000 shots per charge—that's all there really is to the C1 Pro. Well, there's the included tripod, which in the scheme of things doesn't add much to the package.

RADAR'S PERFORMANCE

Interestingly, Garmin has created a fairly versatile system with the Xero C1 Pro, not only suitable for firearms but nearly anything in which you need a velocity reading. At the upper end, the radar's velocity ceiling is 5,000 fps—overkill by the vast majority of shooters' needs, but it's nice to have a few feet per second buffer. In the basement, the unit reads down to 100 fps.

The low end is intriguing, given it opens the door to building ballistic tables for archers—not a bad deal and certain to aid in more hits in the field as bowhunters develop a clearer picture of their bow's potential. Heck, even paintball and airsoft guns are fair game. To this end, the Xero C1 Pro has



A heads-up display gives you a clear and quick reading of how your shots are performing. Very quickly, you can get a complete picture of a string, including standard deviation, average velocity and total shots.

archery, air gun and other functions tuned to these lower-velocity endeavors.

However, there's more to the radar than metering fps. Expanding the potential usefulness and cutting down on pen-and-paper calculations, the Xero has several other useful functions, such as kinetic energy and power factor. To unlock these, bullet weight is entered at your leisure. Furthermore, the wide display screen of the C1 Pro is customizable to bring up the data you need during your shooting session.

AWAY FROM THE RANGE

Aside from size, perhaps the most attractive feature of the C1 Pro is the smartphone app Garmin developed side-by-side with its radar. Dubbed the ShotView App, the program automatically syncs with the radar, importing all your shooting info and giving you an easy system to interpret your data.

Some of the obvious metrics are available, including speed, deviation, extreme spread and kinetic energy. However, a shooter can also mark their data for a number of variables—say a clean or cold bore—as well as exclude outliers from session calculations.

In addition, users can create custom names for each session and add detailed notes for both specific shots and the entire session. And, of course, you can develop profiles specific to their firearms. Overall, this is a system certain to help shooters refine their data and draw a clearer picture of their firearm/ammunition performance and potential.

TESTING THE SYSTEM

As chance would have it, I had a load of .22-250 Remington handloads ready for accuracy testing when I received the Xero C1 Pro—a perfect opportunity to put it through its paces. For good measure, I also included a Bergara B14R and my old deer rifle in .30-06 Springfield to see how it did across the spectrum.

In my time with the unit, there were a couple of features that really impressed me. The size of the unit is unbeatable; it was a second thought to throw it into a range bag. This was further set off by another shooter who showed up with an existing and popular radar the day I went shooting, which required an entire second bag to tote in. Well, the difference there was stark.

The app, however, honestly pushes the Xero above and beyond what's available today. Not having to hardwire to get it into a ballistics program and

the ability to start fiddling with the data at the range, it's a big leap from how things are presently. It's real-time information you can manipulate right then and there in ShotView, then pour over in an accessible format away from the range.

Even for tech late adopters, the app has all the trappings to wow.

PARTING SHOT

For the most part, the Xero C1 Pro has plenty of upside for any shooter—be it a novice who simply wants to get a handle on his hunting rifle's potential or a diehard reloader who pores over ballistic data like it's gospel. Certainly, you can shoot and hit without a chrono, but, oh do devices such as Garmin's unit make it easier—especially the further you reach out.

Perhaps the most heartening aspect of the radar is its price, which isn't bargain basement, but does fall into the obtainable category for most shooters. Presently, the company puts the MSRP at \$600, which is below many existing options in the same class of device.

Given this, there's no reason why shooters shouldn't clock their rounds more often, accurately and, above all, conveniently with the likes of the Xero C1 Pro on the scene. **GDTM**

Right around the size of a cell phone, the Garmin Xero C1 Pro deliver on-target velocity reading every shooter requires.



01 Alpha Titan Suppressor Line

Unless you're still packing a flintlock as your main shooting iron, the rise of suppressors in recent years most likely hasn't escaped your notice. While a difficult niche to truly innovate in, Alpha Silencers has done a pretty solid job. The Titan series combines two of the most demanded features—aside from sound and recoil suppression—shooters have sought: weight savings and reduced back pressure. To the former, the user-serviceable cans are constructed with rugged titanium, considerably cutting down on overall mass. The latter is hastened on by Alpha's flow-through baffle design, pushing the expanding gases forward, thus mitigating undesirable gases in a shooter's face. The line is composed of five suppressors—A22 (rimfire), Titan 223, Titan 30, Titan 9 and Titan 45.

MSRP: Starting at \$500

02 Armasight Sidekick 320 Thermal Monocular

Generally, owning the night involves a hefty investment coupled with relatively bulky gear. Armasight, however, may have hit the sweet spot with its Sidekick 320 Thermal Monocular. The smallest fully multi-functional 12-micron 320 thermal imaging monocular on the market, the optic opens the dark to scouting, shooting and recon—all at a relatively competitive price. Boasting a 60Hz frame rate delivered to a high-definition 1024×768 OLED display, the unit provides a seamless and crisp image. Furthermore, weighing in a tick under 7.5 ounces, the headset/helmet mountable optic doesn't add much to an overall loadout. And, it comes with some nice bells and whistles, such as a simplified three-button control system and one-touch video recording.

MSRP: \$2,300

03 FN 5.7x28mm DFNS Ammunition

After wandering the wilderness for the better part of three decades, the FN 5.7x28mm has received some much-needed support as of late. Chief among its patrons has been the company that developed the red-hot mite. Perhaps one of the more intriguing developments is FN's self-defense line of 5.7 ammunition: FN DFNS. Sporting a unique frangible copper jacketed, copper-tin metal core bullet, the 30-grain projectile offers devastating terminal ballistics, without pass-through concerns common to the cartridge. Additionally, FN has tuned the ammo's load for top performance both out of pistols and carbines—with around 1,900-fps velocity reported out of the former and 2,200 fps out of the latter. This is an intriguing option for the fireball, one certainly upping its self-defense resume.

MSRP: \$40, box of 50

04 Weatherby High Country Rifle

Push a few ridges back during hunting season, and you become cognizant of the importance of weight management. This is where Weatherby's newest mountain rifle proves a valuable asset. Starting at just 5.7 pounds, the Mark V High Country offers an ultra-light hunting rifle that's easy to carry and deadly accurate. Much of the rifle's svelteness is thanks to its Peak 44 Bastion stock, a carbon-fiber stick that tips the scales at an incredible 24 ounces. Additionally, the stock's profile features a more vertical grip, dual front swivel studs and a 3D HEX recoil pad—helping the featherweight not prove too much of a thumper. To the final point, Weatherby also includes an Accubrake on the High Country to tame the gun's kick even more. Available in a host of popular hunting calibers, the rifle should prove a boon to backcountry hunters.

MSRP: Starting at \$2,700



05 Hornady ELD-VT Bullets

Varmint and long-range bullets, for the most part, have resided at opposite ends of the spectrum. Until now, Hornady has combined the best of both worlds in a unique line of projectiles meant to deliver devastating terminal performance at extremely long distances—the ELD-VT. Conceived as a dual-purpose varmint/target bullet, the offering is meant to strike a balance between the disparate disciplines. It does so by employing the long, sleek and ballistically talented Extremely Low Drag bullet profile, to extend the projectile's range. Then, it maintains the explosive terminal ballistics at the target with a unique internal design, where the lead core is moved rearward, leaving a cavity that ensures rapid fragmentation and energy transfer.

MSRP: Starting at \$33

06 Girsan MC14T Lady Pistol

Inspired by the classic Beretta Model 86 Cheetah, the Girsan MC14T Lady offers a self-defense option to women with some unique twists. Like the Cheetah, the Turkish-made .380 ACP offers a tip-up barrel, which allows a round to be loaded without having to manipulate the slide. Not a bad system, especially for those without the hand strength to rack a slide under pressure. Additionally, the hammer-fired pistol comes with an attractive glossy black finish, wooden grip panels and gold-colored accent parts to give it a classy and timeless look. The pistol is also outfitted with a Picatinny-based railed dust cover and ported barrel, the latter mitigating a ton of barrel rise.

MSRP: \$682

07 Smith & Wesson Response Carbine

The issue with many pistol-caliber carbines (PCC) is non-compatibility with guns in their own class. That is to say, many of the designs are proprietary. Not so with the Smith & Wesson Response Carbine, which is based on the nearly ubiquitous AR-15 chassis. This makes the 9mm play nice with a great swath of existing parts and accessories, allowing you to tailor the carbine to your needs and wants. Making it even better, the Response boasts what S&W calls its Flexmag System, which makes it compatible with both M&P and Glock-style magazines. As to the carbine itself, it's outfitted with a 16.5-inch threaded barrel surrounded by a polymer handguard with a Picatinny-style rail on top and M-Lok slots on the sides and bottom. It also comes with a Magpul MOE SL adjustable stock, a flat face trigger and an M&P grip with four interchangeable palm swell adapters.

MSRP: \$800

GEAR TO GET





The Marlin Dark Series 1895 is a fast-handling and good-shooting rifle suitable for big-game hunting anywhere in the world.



THE DARK SERIES 1895

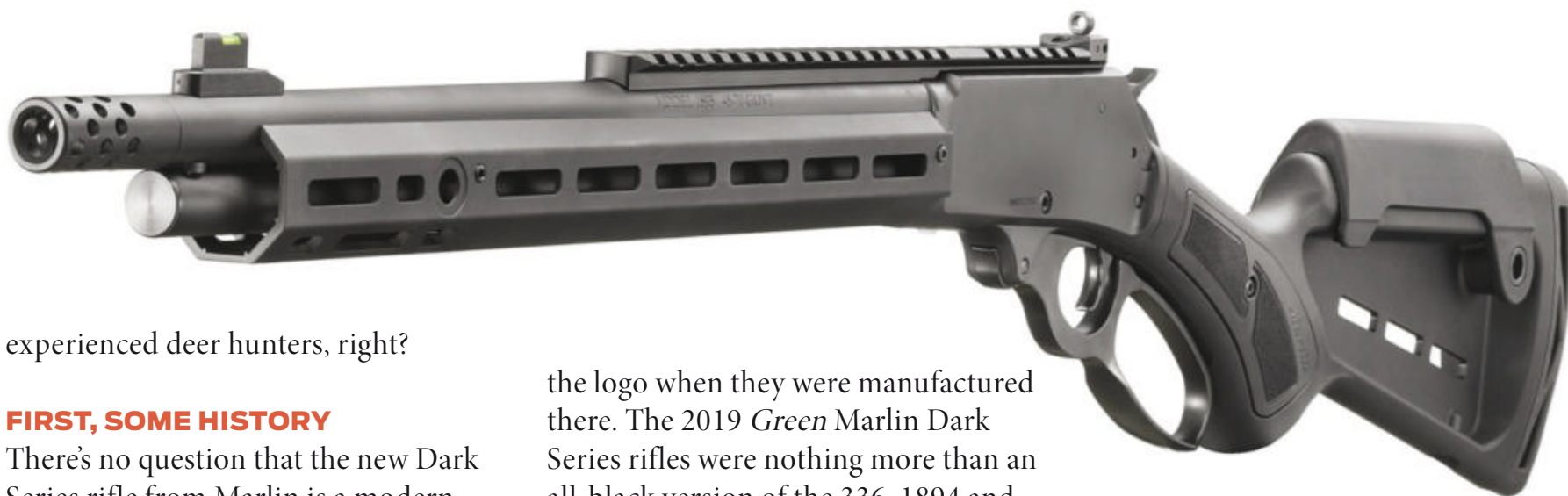
Back in black.

If you want to get opinions on rifles, go to a deer hunting camp. As I'm writing this, I'm sitting in a deer camp at the Lowrance Ranch in Truscott, Texas. This is mostly flat, open country, and you'd expect those who live, work and hunt this ground to be partial to a bolt-action rifle chambered for a flat-shooting cartridge.

Given that, you might be surprised what the ranch hands there said about the Marlin Dark Series 1895 when I showed them a picture of it.

I limited these deer hunting cowboys to a one-word description of the Dark Series 1895. One old timer, who'd just showed me a photo of his pride and joy lever gun—a Winchester

Model 71 chambered in 348 Winchester—described it as the “terminator.” Another ranch hand/hunter in a cowboy hat rambled something about a modern take on the lever gun, but when I pinned him down to one word, he called it “awesome.” Two other fellows agreed that “rugged” was the best description for this rifle. These were



experienced deer hunters, right?

FIRST, SOME HISTORY

There's no question that the new Dark Series rifle from Marlin is a modernization of the traditional lever action rifle, but what exactly does that mean, and whether you call it "modernized" or not, is all this modernization a good thing? To answer that, we have to go back in time a few years to 2019 when "Green" Marlin first introduced the Dark Series of traditional lever-action rifles.

First, and for clarification, "Green" Marlin describes the period when Marlin was owned by Remington. The new Ruger owned Marlins are "Red" Marlins, because when Ruger took over Marlin in 2020, they turned the Marlin logo Ruger red. And finally, the original North Haven, Connecticut, Marlins, are "Blue" Marlins to match the color of

the logo when they were manufactured there. The 2019 *Green* Marlin Dark Series rifles were nothing more than an all-black version of the 336, 1894 and 1895 models, with an XS Sights lever rail installed.

These guns were well received, but they were not enough to save Marlin—or Remington—from bankruptcy.

THE DETAILS

The first rifle in the new *Green* Marlin Dark Series is the Model 1895, but Marlin says a Dark Series Model 336 and 1894 should be out sometime in 2024. The only similarity these new rifles have to the originals are the name, base model numbers, a half-cock hammer, the now common cross-bolt safety and their color. Marlin has substantially changed just about everything else, and these changes have altered the look, but

more importantly the user interface.

Probably the most notable modernization is the absence of a wood forend. In its place, there's a 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch anodized aluminum handguard with M-Lok slots around its circumference. In addition to the multitude of M-Lok slots, on the front end of the handguard, there's two QD sling swivel sockets. The rifle is also fitted with a nicely contoured midsize finger lever, and the lever and bolt are finished in black nitride. The other important metal parts have a graphite black Cerakote finish.

The buttstock has also been modernized and is made of nylon-reinforced polymer, and it reattains the traditional shape. However, at the wrist, there are

(Top) New—post 2020—Marlin lever action rifles are made in Mayodan, North Carolina.



The lever rail, as it's often called, substantially enhances the versatility of the Marlin Dark Series 1895.



THE TAVOR X95



*ATTACHMENTS NOT INCLUDED



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The Tavor X95 is a next-generation bullpup. Upgrades and enhancements include a relocated, non-reciprocating charging handle, a reconfigurable pistol grip, a trigger guard, a lightened trigger pull, and a relocated magazine release.

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textured, removable grip inserts and a thick rubber recoil pad. The buttstock is dished out in the center where you'll find three M-Lok slots. At the top rear of the buttstock, there's a steel QD sling stud on each side, but this stud is also there to allow for the attachment of a polymer comb riser that comes with the rifle.

The rifle's muzzle is threaded at $1\frac{1}{16} \times 24$, and it comes with a radial port break. But if you're like me and despise these noisy abominations, you can unscrew it and replace it with the thread protector that comes with the rifle. Just behind the muzzle break is a high-profile fiber-optic front sight that's encased inside a circle of Tritium for optimum visibility in low light. Further back on the barrel you run into the front of a 23-slot, $11\frac{1}{4}$ -inch rail that extends all the way back to the receiver where you'll find a fully adjustable ghost ring sight.

INTERFACE MAXIMIZED

Because user interface is so important to a rifle, let's delve into it. The buttstocks on traditional lever-action rifles and this new Dark Series are configured to best allow you to maintain a good cheek weld while using open sights. The problem comes when you mount a riflescope. This requires you to raise your cheek from the stock, and this complicates fast action and accurate shooting.

To solve this problem with the Dark Series, Marlin has configured a snap-on polymer cheek piece that's held in place by the two QD sling swivel studs and the detent in the dished-out portion of

the stock. This riser will allow you to get a good cheek weld when shooting a low-mounted optic.

The sight/optics rail also improves user interface. The integral ghost ring that's paired with the high-visibility front sight is ideal for snap shooting at close range. And the rail will al-

low for the mounting of a traditional riflescope, a scout scope or a variety of red-dot sights. I tested the rifle with a Leupold VX-Freedom intermediate eye relief scope mounted just so the ocular bell was forward of the ghost ring sight. With QD rings, this allowed for easy on



This snap-on riser for the comb on the buttstock of the 1895 Dark Series rifle raises the comb to allow for a good cheek weld when shooting with an optical sight.



The rail atop the Marlin Dark Series 1895 will work perfectly with an intermediate eye relief optic or with a scout scope.



The rifle ships with a radial port muzzle break, but it can be easily removed, and a thread protector or suppressor can be attached.

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When was the last time you saw a factory stock traditional lever gun that could be so easily adapted to a tripod?

and off and near immediate access to the open sights.

The handguard also helps with user interface. It helps cut total rifle weight somewhat but more importantly its M-Lok compatibility allows for the attachment of a light or laser, which would be ideal for hunting feral hogs. I mounted a Spartan Precision bipod attachment to the bottom of the rail, which allows for interface with their excellent tripod or their super lightweight bipod.

Up until now, this has been something that was very difficult to do with a traditional lever gun. I also liked the ability to attach a QD sling swivel to the handguard, and the fact that I could sling up tightly with a shooting sling without the point of impact shifting. This shift in point of impact is something that's common with traditional lever guns when you snug up tightly with a shooting sling.

NOTHING'S PERFECT

It's rare that I test a new rifle and like everything about it. This is partly due to my taste in rifles, but also partly because some rifles are just not made all that well. I've tested every new Marlin rifle that's been produced since Ruger took ownership. Personal taste aside,

I'm confident in saying these *Red* Marlins are the best Marlins ever made. Still, I had two complaints with the new Dark Series rifle.

The first was with the trigger. The triggers on all of the other *Red* Marlins have been somewhere between good and excellent, but the trigger on this rifle had just a little hitch right at the beginning of the press. From the bench, it was easy enough to manage but it did interfere a bit with off-hand shooting. It also broke right at 5 pounds. In my experience, this is the exception as opposed to the rule with these new *Red* Marlins. If it was my rifle—and it just might soon be—I'd send it to Jerry Dove at Dove Guns for some trigger work. With just a bit of TLC, this trigger would be just fine.

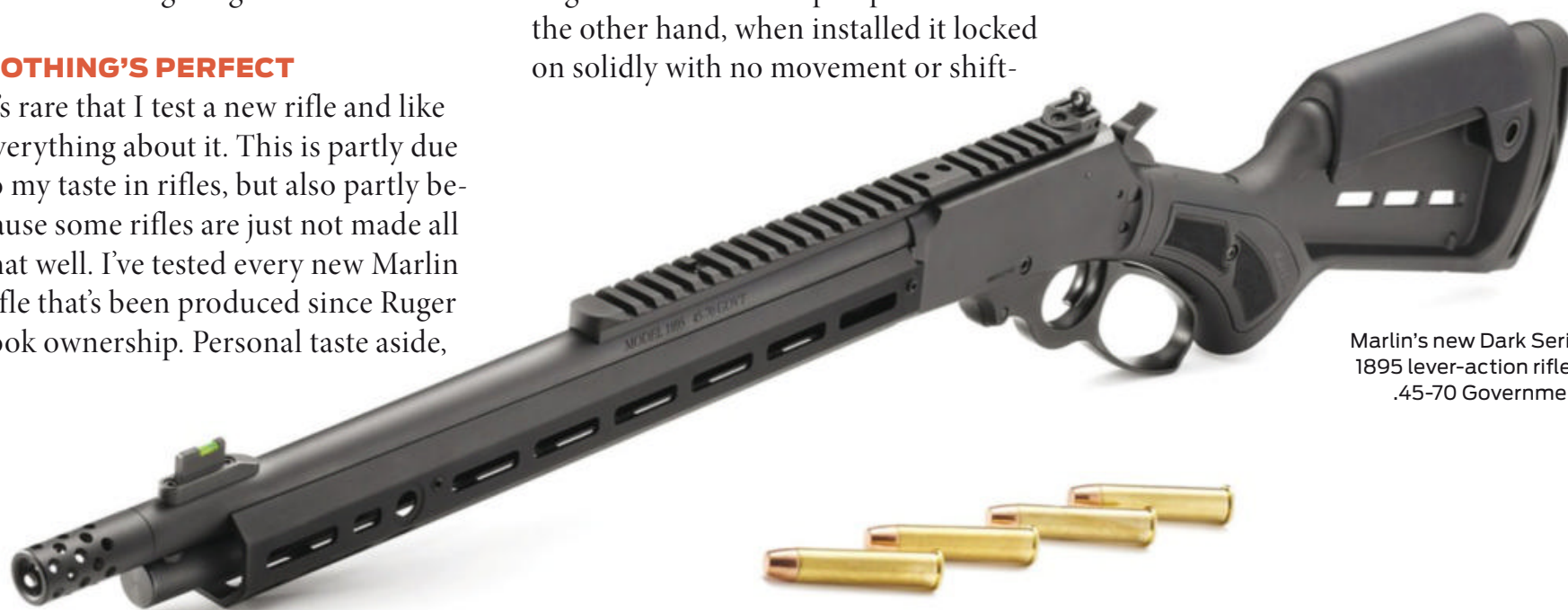
The other issue was with the snap-on polymer comb. First, it was a bit tedious to get the comb to snap in place. On the other hand, when installed it locked on solidly with no movement or shift-

ing at all. However, while messing with it—possibly a bit rougher than I should have been—I broke off one of the flanges that holds the comb in place. Surprisingly, this didn't interfere with a solid fit, and Marlin had me another comb in the mail the next day.

TRADITIONAL VERSUS MODERN

Through the years, Marlin and even Winchester have tried to modernize the lever gun, usually with the introduction of new, flatter-shooting and harder-hitting cartridges, like the .307 Winchester or .308 Marlin Express. Though initially these cartridges created some buzz, they were by most measures, commercial failures.

Admittedly, I'm a lover of the traditional lever-action rifle and traditional lever-action cartridges. Also, admittedly, I don't think this rifle looks very



Marlin's new Dark Series 1895 lever-action rifle in .45-70 Government.

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MARLIN
1895 DARK
#70901



CHAMBERING: .45-70 Government

BARREL: 16.17 inches, 1:20 RH twist
(11/16 x 24 threaded muzzle)

ACTION: Lever action

TRIGGER: 5.0 pounds (as tested)

CAPACITY: 5+1

FINISH: Graphite black Cerakote/nitride

STOCK: Nylon reinforced polymer butt
stock with anodized aluminum handguard

SIGHTS: Adjustable ghost ring (rear), fiber
optic with Tritium ring (front)

LENGTH: 35.5 inches

WEIGHT: 6 pounds, 13 ounces (actual)

PRICE: \$1,379

SHOOTING RESULTS

LOAD	VEL (FPS)	SD (FPS)	ENG (FT-LB)	AVERAGE ACCURACY (INCHES)
Federal 300-grain HammerDown	1,788	19	2,129	1.41
Remington 300-grain JHP	1,446	17	1,393	1.88
Federal 300-grain Fusion	1,509	26	1,517	1.79
Buffalo Bore 300-grain JHP	1,824	11	2,216	2.01
Buffalo Bore 430-grain Hardcast	1,797	14	3,083	1.32
Hornady 410-grain Subsonic	1,021	15	1,313	0.69*
AVERAGE				1.68

Notes: Reported muzzle velocity (VEL), standard velocity deviation (SD) and muzzle energy (ENG) were established by firing 10 shots over a chronograph with the screens 10 feet from the muzzle, and the average accuracy was established by firing three, five-shot groups with each load from a solid rest at 100 yards. *Tested at 50 yards and excluded from average

traditional. However, I do think it’s very well configured to appeal to the modern shooter or to any serious big-game hunter.

The way Marlin has designed the new Dark Series rifle, it’s ideally adapted to do anything a hunter could think about doing with a lever-action rifle in .45-70. In fact, it will allow a hunter to do things with a traditional lever action rifle that were nearly impossible before. I think the Texas cowboys I’ve been sharing camp with are mostly right.

This is an *awesome* looking and *ruggedly* built lever-action rifle, that in .45-70 is suitable for hunting and *terminating* anything on Earth. Now let us patiently wait for the Model 336 and 1894 Dark Series rifles. With apologies to AC/DC, you could say these new rifles are “back in black.” **GDTM**



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PRECISELY



The SilencerCo Omega 36M is a great can, but it is on the heavy side if you're using all the bells and whistles. It's possible to convert this can to be lighter, but the QD function is really nice for transport to help reduce overall length. The Armageddon Gear cover helps reduce mirage and also keeps you from burning your hands.

SEELY!

Faxon's new 700-footprint action.



There seems to be no limit to the number of variants that can be extrapolated upon using the classic Remington 700 screw spacing. In the past decade, countless actions by dozens of companies, big and small, have introduced their own spin on making a turnbolt action that feeds from AICS mags. The short-action bolt gun is dominant in America and, as a result, there's a race to make what could be the best one at the best price.

Indeed, in our era, we have seen the actions—not completed rifles—run up

a bill in excess of \$1,500 ... and sometimes even more.

Factoring in barrels, stocks, optics and accessories, you can rack up a build easily exceeding \$10,000 for a *slight* edge in performance against other high rollers (you can at least spend that money on a Barrett M107 if you want to truly dunk on your range buddies, but that's up to you).

Faxon Firearms sought to change this paradigm and launched what is perhaps the most adaptable, feature-rich action on the market for the price ... and the future will only hold more options for their new action at a fraction of the cost of the competition.

Oh, and they have the ability to swap calibers with pre-fit barrels.

THE BOLT GUN OF TOMORROW
Bolt-action rifles today are unilaterally

descended from the Mauser 1896. Why not the Mauser 98, arguably the most famous Mauser, the Backbone of Hitler's Wehrmacht? Simply because 1898 actions have a third lug on the bolt—not even the 1903 Springfield, itself a Mauser, can claim true fatherhood of today's most common actions. The main difference in the operation mode is 1896 actions are cock-on-closing, where today's guns, and the Mauser 1898, are cock-on-opening. The latter cocking feature has become the predominate mode of fire control, where the lug-free tubular bolt akin to the 1896 action has assumed the role of dominant action style.

Truth told, the 1896 action, as well as the 1903 Springfield, were "overly safe" in terms of construction; the cartridges and

associated pressures present in the earlier Mauser designs were all within standard range, and the 1896 locking lugs were plenty even for modern cartridges. Needless to say, there has been a never-ending attempt to increase the strength of the common bolt gun, largely in a move to increase the number of cartridges that can be fired from one action. The short action needed to exceed what Mauser started, and what we see with the new Faxon FX7 action is one of the strongest to date for its size.

Faxon has dabbled in bolt actions for a little while. Years ago, the company made Ruger Precision rifle barrels as an aftermarket option. They also did OEM work for some companies. The turn came when Faxon partnered with Stiller for the launch of the 8.6 Blackout as a limited first run.

Faxon did an incredible job on the barrel, the cartridge itself I found a bit wanting across the board, notably due to some mathematical snake oil found in the advertising from Q, the company from which the 8.6 Blackout “originated” (JD Jones had the .338 Whisper decades ago, just like he also had .300 Whisper. Re-branding is a hell of a thing, I suppose).

I appreciate Faxon’s enthusiasm for what amounted to a wildcat cartridge at the time, though the overall status and acceptance of the 8.6 Blackout is still in flux. I don’t personally see a glittering future for the conspicuous cartridge beyond boutique end use, though I have been wrong before. Eating crow is a staple diet for gun writers.

The 8.6 RemAge (a name for barrels that used a Remington 700 standard thread but utilized a Savage-style barrel nut for headspacing) style barrels came after, and these products did very well with consumers. The question then came up, “What if we did this our way? A high-quality product without breaking the bank?”

It was decided that Faxon would make their own actions in 2022. It was kept relatively quiet and was released with excitement at SHOT Show 2023. The product line was launched to include rifles, barreled actions and pre-fit barrels. Every

The US Optic featured here is a custom build that the author specified. It’s a solidly built, if not overbuilt, optic that provides a host of features and is very rugged. There are more features packed in than can be taken advantage of by a midrange backpack .308 Win., but they are there if you need them.

The Faxon build and accessories ready for an adventure. Knife and hatchet by Winkler Knives.



core component is made in-house, from the bolt to the action body.

The products consist of a strong 416 body and 4340 bolt, easily able to withstand modern ammunition. The design was meant to keep price manageable but offer a feature-rich end-product to include an integral recoil lug and optics rail, 70-degree six-lug bolt (wow!) and Remington 700 compatible trigger options.

In short, it would be the strongest, most variable action on the market at a savings compared to other options.

But Faxon didn’t just settle here: They also wanted the smoothest action and went to great length to provide the user a satisfactory experience in overall operation. The smoothness, they felt, has to be there, and they achieved it. They focused in on the handling experi-



ence and not just high-performance function. I, personally, enjoy this approach.

Actions will include trigger pins, though they're laid out very differently than in typical 700-footprint actions. The trigger cassette, in this case a Timney Hunter model, is held in by a separate part entirely as opposed to being pinned to the receiver directly, as is done with most 700 clone actions. You will use a Phillips

(in the age of Hex bits?) driver to remove two tiny screws on a plate. This plate has contained pins that enable you to attach it to the trigger of your choice. This plate is then screwed back down to the action.

In the name of full disclosure, I experienced a bit of wiggle when the firing pin was down/action open, and it made me nervous initially. The wiggle isn't a worry,

and I put several hundred rounds of .308 Win. through the complete rifle prior to taking it hunting ... with zero issues. Of note is that the stock itself will keep this separate plate section flush to the action. I was worried it would be an issue, but I tested it with shims to be sure that there was no chance for this novel trigger installation setup to create an issue.

Two finishes, polished DLC and ArmorLube matte finish, are currently being offered. I'm unsure what time will bring on the finishes of the future, but I hope that they are as diverse as the options currently available on Faxon's other products. I'm not a "tactical" guy or mall ninja, and I like bold, interesting finishes on my guns: I'd love to see a Faxon barreled action in rainbow DLC or gold in the future.

Faxon plans to offer barrels for their actions and others: Pre-fit, RemAge and profiled blanks coming in 6.5mm, 8.6mm and 7.62mm as main launch calibers. Short mag and .223 bolt-face actions may yet be forthcoming. Short action will be the primary offering, options in long action and rimfire are being considered.

Also of note, not all the short-action offerings will be caliber compatible: Expect .308-bolt face options to be barrel compatible ... but not able to cross over to options using the .223 bolt face. Stand-alone actions will be shipping quarter four of 2023 (at press time barreled actions will likely be shipping already). I eagerly await what may come from Faxon simply as a hobby builder. I take pride in assembling my own guns, and I love that I can now add bolt action complete builds and barrel swaps to my list.

THE BUILD

The rifle I elected to build was to be one that fit in a backpack, namely an Eberlestock Gunslinger 2. This is an excellent pack that, while heavy for a three-day



Note the two small screws holding the trigger hanger plate to the receiver. You won't need to pound your pins out with a punch like other 700 actions: The heavy lifting is done for you. In fact, this was the easiest trigger install the author ever accomplished.



The Faxon FX7 action in .308 Win., as it arrived from the factory.

pack, is ideal for transporting a rifle hands-free. I used the progenitor of this pack over a decade ago for coyote and deer hunting, and I am pleased to be using the modern variant for the same animals, plus a ram I put down.

I chose a stock I've used from time to time on these pages, the Magpul 700 Pro, to give me a reliable base and folding stock capability. The overall length of the finished rifle, with suppressor removed, was just over 28-inch folded, truly backpack concealable. I wanted to make a gun that was not only packable but functional for the role of hunting at medium range, while not sacrificing compatibility with modern ARCA and optical systems.

In short, I wanted a gun that was able to

take game at all reasonable ranges using advanced support gear while at the same time being reasonable in weight and accuracy. I did accomplish this, but I do feel that I still could have saved a few pounds. Call it a prototype if you want, but I think that the 18-inch, medium contour .308 Win. with a 10X optic can accommodate 95 percent of all hunting in America.

SUPPRESSING A MEDIUM WEIGHT BARREL

There has to be some discussion on the weight ratio to barrel length when talking suppressors. Ideal barrel length for a .308 Win. rifle is 18 to 20 inches in all platforms; you don't give up much going to 16 inches, and I've gone as short as 13.5 inches, but as far as reason is concerned, the 18- to 20-inch range is categorically ideal for weight to velocity. For field use,



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The finished build readily fits into the rifle sleeve of the Eberlestock Gun-slinger two-pack.

the objective should be hearing-safe suppression for 300-yard shots on a kill-zone-sized 10-inch plate. This doesn't seem unreasonable, but so few hunters or shooters ever shoot this distance enough to know how a rifle and cartridge perform.

Accuracy with all .308 Win. loads tested was excellent, all shooting ½ MOA at 100 yards. There was really no difference between all Remington, Federal and Hornady factory loads ranging from 150 to 180 grains. My own handloads consisted of Lapua brass and Hornady 168-grain BTHP match bullets over Hodgdon Varget powder. In total, I fired seven factory loads and three handloads, and I'm exceedingly pleased with the accuracy this barreled action delivered.

This article features a SilencerCo Omega 36M with .30-cal. endcap and Armageddon Gear suppressor cover. This is a heavy can that can handle up to .338 Lapua Mag and everything in between, and while super quiet in .308, it does show

some vertical stringing when warmed up. If you plan to hunt with the Gunner profile barrel, be aware of the weight of your suppressor and what it does to your point of

impact. In my case, the gun shoots 2 MOA high unsuppressed, which is over a half MIL of elevation difference between suppressed and unsuppressed. I do have the option to swap barrels later on as Faxon pre-fits become available, but I sort of like my results using the light barrel as featured here. If, by chance, they come out

with a fluted 16-inch M24 profile barrel in .308 Winchester ... well, I'd be interested.

US OPTICS AND A REASONABLE SCOPE LAYOUT

I originally began using US Optics a half-decade ago, and I've always been impressed with their custom quality. After using their Foundation 5-25X in MOA for years, I contacted the company to send a more compact optic in the same line, but in a max 10X in MIL/MIL. I wanted it in OD green with an integral bubble level and illumination ... and they delivered.

I used this optic on various projects for the past year before it found a final home on the new Faxon action. For .308 Win., there's no better partner than a high-end optic ending in 10X. It can accomplish everything the cartridge has to offer to its effective distance. I like the US Optics I have here for its raw function on a functional rifle, no other notes required. It gets the job done.

CLOSING THE BOLT

I find that what Faxon delivered here is emblematic of what is to come of 700-footprint actions. I love that the company offers an incredibly strong, smooth action, and I love that there's the ability to field future cartridge designs, thanks to the versatility of the action's six-lug bolt.

In my time with their new bolt action, I've seen it perform very well ... and I think you will be as well should you order one. **GDTM**

The action has a generous ejection port. Brass is kicked out so far that you'll probably have to go looking for it.



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TRAILBLAZER PIVOT

Swing to the left,
swing to the right.



When folded (or rotated), the Pivot is just under 21 inches long, which is compact enough to completely disappear into a messenger bag or other non-firearms case.

The Trailblazer Pivot, a blowback PCC chambered in 9mm, is not your usual carbine. Some ideas are so clever you've just got to nod and go, "I'm on board with that." The Pivot is a solution to compact storage that does not use any other usual methods.

Usually, to make a long-gun more compact, several things must be done: shorten the barrel, shorten the stock, fold it, make it a takedown or, my least-favorite, make it a bullpup. Shortening

the barrel makes it an NFA item, shortening the stock makes it usable only by short people, folding and takedown bring mechanical problems with them, and, as for bullpups, the less we discuss them, the better.

The Pivot uses none of those. Instead, the upper receiver rotates on the lower receiver, and since the pivot point is not in the center of the assembly, it increases in length from its closed size. That's how you get a 21-inch closed package to unfold into a carbine with a

16-inch barrel.

NICE AND TIDY

The folding and unfolding is easy enough. On the front of the lower is a flush button. Press the button to unlock the receivers, and you can then rotate the upper to the unfolded position. (Can it "unfold" if it never folded in the first place? The English language has some very strange quirks and shortcomings.) The rotating is easy; you can use your fingers to give it a flip/rotate

in either direction, and you can do it pretty briskly. When the upper gets around to its 180 position, it will automatically lock in place.

Now, the folded position is going to raise some eyebrows, at least until you understand the setup. When folded, the muzzle is going to be pointed back at you. Do not be alarmed. The designers took care of that, in part for safety and also for good mechanical reasons.

To fold or unfold (rotate? pivot?

the upper receiver to swipe across the top deck of the lower.

If you look closely at the Pivot, you'll see there is a notched segment in the upper. That's there to clear the top of the hammer, as the upper swings around across the lower. The hammer has to be high enough to be depressed by the bolt when it cycles, so it sits high in the lower. And the magazine lips have to do the same in order to feed. So, bolt back and magazine out, to provide clearance.

of travel, and while it's still a tad short for long-armed gents like me, I find it entirely usable. If you don't have a 7-foot wingspan, then the stock will be just fine for you. The ambidextrous safety lets you use the Pivot right- or left-handed, and from there it is safety off, aim and fire.

Oh, sights? The Pivot doesn't come with any. There was a time when every carbine, PCC or other *had to* come with sights. There weren't many choic-



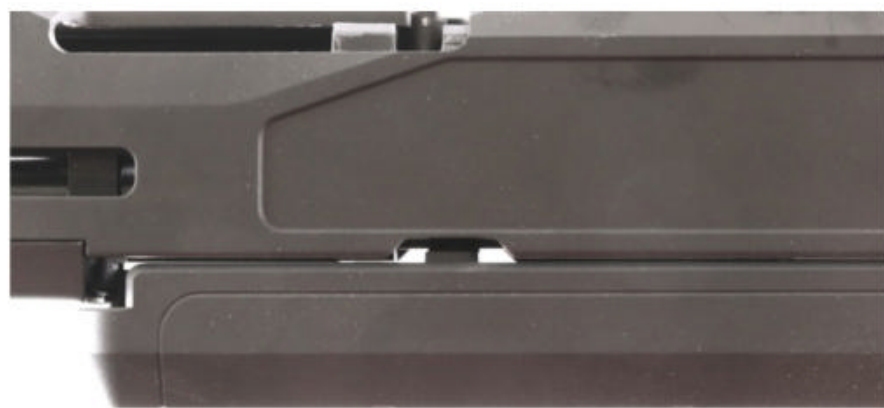
swing about?), the Pivot has to be unloaded, that is, with no magazine in place and with the bolt locked to the rear. The non-reciprocating charging handle has a locking notch, very much like that of the MP5. (And yes, you can do the "HK swipe" to chamber a round.) These are both necessary for

To use the Pivot form in its stored condition, you pull it out of the case, from behind the seat or wherever and hold the pistol grip in your firing hand. Press the unlock button and swing, slap or rotate the upper to lock, grab a magazine, insert in the pistol grip and slap the charging handle down. You carry loaded and have a chambered round. If the stock, as folded, is too short, you simply press the stock latch and slide the stock out as needed. It has 3 inches

es; optics were still fragile and untrusted, and shooters expected sights. Now, there are so many to choose from, and optics are normal; anything Trailblazer put on the Pivot, 80 percent of the buyers would swap out for something else. So, why bother?

DIVERSITY IS THE KEY

Now, the Pivot doesn't just have the rotational aspect to it—it isn't a one-trick pony. The stock, as mentioned, is adjustable to length, and it also has a storage space for a magazine. And did I



The clearance slot for the hammer is in two locations on the upper, as expected. But the front slot location is also the place of the locking system to hold the Pivot locked in place, open or closed.



The bolt locks open with a notch in its travel slot, just like the MP5. And you get to do the "MP5 swipe" on loading, as well.



forget to mention the Pivot uses Glock magazines, and the pistol grip is made deliberately a tad short, so you can use G19 magazine, holding 15 rounds? You can use higher-capacity magazines if you wish (and most of us would), but since the G19 is common, one might even say a baseline EDC pistol, making it compatible with G19 magazines makes sense.

If they made the grip a bit longer, for more comfort, to work only with G17 magazines, none of the bazillion G19 magazines in existence would work. That would be stupid, and the folks at Trailblazer are not. And since it works with Glock magazines starting with the G19, every Glock mag bigger than that, in 9mm, will work as well. I'm not saying that having a 33-round magazine handy would be too much, but it certainly isn't going to ride well on your belt. So, if belt-loading the Pivot is your plan, have a belt-appropriate magazine

With the Pivot hinged open, you can reach and clean everything. You do not need to separate the upper from the lower.

The upper hinges across the lower, and that means there has to be a clearance slot for the hammer. Also, the Pivot has to be unloaded and have the bolt locked back to pivot open or closed; you can't have a magazine in place like this.

The ambidextrous safety makes it easy to shoot from off the shoulder, should the need present itself.



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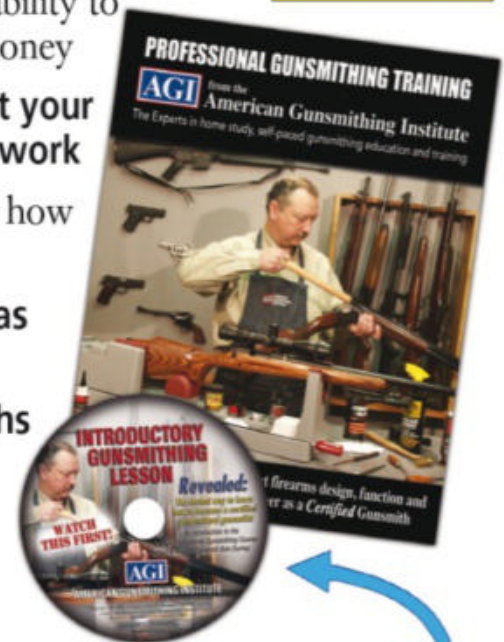
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The Trailblazer Pivot is a compact-storing 9mm carbine that opens up to be a useful tool in an emergency, or just a fun plinking firearm.



The Pivot hinge has to be open to disassemble it, and that could entail needing three hands.



or
maga-
zines there
and the 33-round
one someplace handy.

The upper is an aluminum shell with the steel barrel and bolt inside, while the lower is aluminum and polymer. The upper has a Pic rail on top, but it doesn't extend the full length of the receiver. It starts at the rear, but a hand's-width back of the charging handle stop position, the rail is cut away. This does two things: It keeps your hand from the sharp edges of the rail, while you're working the charging handle.

And it precludes mounting gear there that would do the same thing. The rail picks up again forward of the charging handle travel, so there's room

to mount a front sight if you want a BUIS set. My suggestion, if you do: Be sure and select something that folds. It'd be a shame to take the very compact Pivot and make it a bulky thing with fixed sights.

A compact red-dot sight would be just the ticket here, and I used an Aimpoint Micro T2, 2 MOA for the fun. The Pivot isn't a long-range carbine (although the Pivot and Aimpoint and I did heroic work on the 100-yard gongs at the club), so even a low-power variable scope would be more than needed and, by the time you had mounted it, add considerably to the bulk of the Pivot.

That said, if you want to add accessories, the Pivot is handy. The upper receiver has two rows of M-Lok slots for accessories on each side. The lower receiver has M-Lok slots at the 6 o'clock position, so you could, if you were just not paying attention, hang a whole lot of gear on the Pivot. The whole point of the Pivot is that it's compact, so resist the temptation to bling it up.

In testing, I found that the blowback design is effective, but it has some unavoidable consequences. Since the Pivot is compact and this limits bolt travel, the bolt is heavy and stoutly sprung. Not so much so that it is difficult to hand-cycle,

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TRAILBLAZER PIVOT

- TYPE: Hammer-fired semi-automatic
- CALIBER: 9mm Parabellum
- CAPACITY: 15-plus rounds
- BARREL: 16 inches
- OVERALL LENGTH: 20.9 inches folded, min. extended: 26.7 inches
- WEIGHT: 5 pounds, 1 ounce
- FINISH: Blued steel, anodized aluminum, polymer
- GRIPS: n/a
- SIGHTS: none
- TRIGGER: 5 pounds, 7 ounces
- MSRP: \$1,795
- CONTACT: trailblazerfirearms.com

CHRONOGRAPH AND ACCURACY DATA

AMMUNITION	BULLET WEIGHT (GRAINS)	VELOCITY (FPS)		ES	SD (INCHES)	ACCURACY AVG., BEST (INCHES)
American Eagle Syntech	115	1,369	42	16.3	2.2	2
Sig 365 FMJ	115	1,421	41	15.9	1.9	1.7
Hornady XTP	115	1,371	31	12.4	1.8	1.3
Sig V-Crown	147	1,235	61	22.1	2	1.8
Winchester PDX1	147	1,111	78	32.9	1.9	1.4

Note: Accuracy results were to be averages of three, five-shot groups at 50 yards off a Champion shooting rest. Velocities are averages of 10 shots measured on a Labradar chronograph set to read 15 feet from the muzzle.



The stock, which is adjustable, also holds a magazine. It comes with a 15-round G19 magazine.

but more so than my various competition PCCs, which isn't a fair comparison. Those have been tuned to be smooth and soft, and the shortest one of them is a full foot longer than the Pivot, and the lightest one tips the scales 2 pounds heavier than the Pivot. Unfair, as I said, because the Pivot is meant to be compact, and my competition PCCs are made to win matches.

But the recoil is no big deal in the Pivot—we are, after all, talking about a 9mm carbine. The barrel is threaded 1/2x28, the standard 9mm muzzle thread, so you have your choice of muzzle brakes, suppressors or just use the included thread protector instead.

I tested the Pivot with a cross-section of 9mm ammo, not really expecting to find anything wrong, or amiss, and guess what, I didn't. Boringly, the Pivot fed all, fired all and ejected all with no problems. The Pivot does not lock open after the last round has been fired, but I don't see that as an operational problem, and I can see it as a mechanical and safety problem.

Disassembly is not obvious. It involves a punch or small-diameter

Philips-head screwdriver, and a hole in the rear plate of the upper receiver. The owner's manual lays it all out, and once you have extracted the bolt assembly, your job is done. There's no need to separate the upper and lower, as you can gain access to everything with it hinged open, and the large socket-nut bolt on the bottom does not appear to be user-serviceable. Once the bolt is out, clean the gunk, scrub the bore, aerosol hose out the firing assembly, lubricate and reassemble. There's really no need to make it more complicated than that.

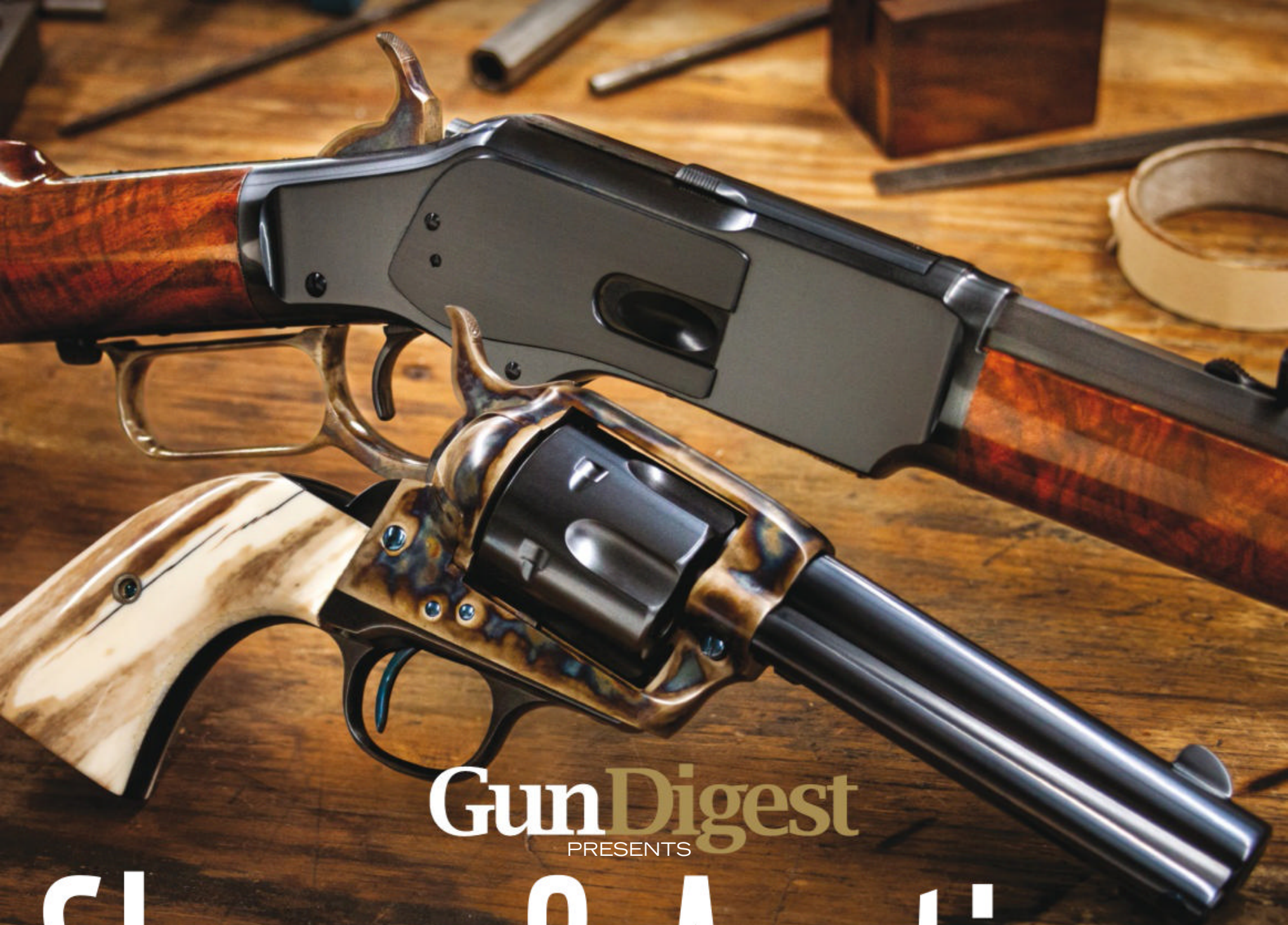
BUT ... WHY?

So, what's the usefulness of the Pivot, very clever engineering aside? Well, if you want to be packing a PCC, but don't want to be using something as obvious as a gun case, this is your ticket. At just under 21 inches long, folded, the Pivot will disappear into bags and cases that don't shout "firearm." Instead of a skateboard pack, a messenger bag will do—and even a not-large messenger bag, provided the zipper arrangement allows.

That said, know the laws in your jurisdiction. Your CPL may cover the Pivot, and it may not. Is it a concealed *pistol* license or a concealed firearms license? Some states don't allow the concealed carry of rifles and shotguns. And in some other (even more irrational) states, the law or case law has determined that a firearm that has a loaded magazine in the case with it, or touching it, is loaded. So your unloaded Pivot, with a loaded magazine in the stock, is "loaded" based on some ignorant judge decades past. Know the law.

As to the cost, the list price seems a bit much at first. Well, it did to me, but then I remembered "it isn't the 1980s anymore." If you're comparing the Pivot to a 9mm-chambered AR, then the price is normal. In fact, you can flip open the latest *Gun Digest* to the AR/PCC section and be hard pressed to randomly drop a fingertip onto one AR or another and not exceed the cost of the Pivot. Oh, you can find 9mm carbines for less, but they don't fold or rotate.

Nope, there's only one Pivot. **GDTM**



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SHOW LISTING BY STATE

INDIANA

Feb 17-18 IN, Valparaiso . Gun & Knife
Show . Porter County Exp-Center,
215 East Division Road.

Oct 5-6 IN, Valparaiso . Gun & Knife
Show . Porter County Exp-Center,
215 East Division Road.

NEVADA

Apr 12-14 NV, Sparks. Big Reno Show .
Nugget Resort Casino, 1100 Nugget
Ave.

NORTH DAKOTA

Sep 6-7 ND, West Fargo. Red River
Range Gun Show. Red River Re-
gional Marksmanship Center, 640
16th St NE.

TENNESSEE

Apr 6-7 TN, Crossville. Cumberland
County Gun and Knife Show.
Cumberland County Community
Complex, 1398 Livingston Road.

Aug 3-4 TN, Crossville. Cumberland
County Gun and Knife Show.
Cumberland County Community
Complex, 1398 Livingston Road.

UTAH

Mar 8-9 UT, Vernal. Vernal Gun and
Knife Show. Uintah Conference
Center, 313 East 200 South.

WISCONSIN

Feb 9-10 WI, Richland Center. Pine
River Sports Gun Show. Richland
Center Community Center, 1050 N.
Orange St.

SHOW LISTING BY DATE

FEBRUARY

Feb 9-10 WI, Richland Center. Pine River Sports Gun Show. Richland Center Community Center, 1050 N. Orange St. SH: Fri. 3pm-8pm, Sat. 8am-3pm. A: \$5 admission, 12 & Under Free With Adult. T: 70. F: 30. Pine River Sports Association. 29798 County Hwy TB, Lone Rock, WI 53556. PH: 608-604-9595. www.myprsa.org.

Feb 17-18 IN, Valparaiso. Gun & Knife Show. Porter County Exp-Center, 215 East Division Road. SH: Sat. 8am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm. A: \$6.00 children 12 & under free with Adult. T: 350. F: \$60.00 8ft. @ run of show. Dunes Rifle & Pistol Club L.L.C.. P.O. Box 345, 812 West Old Ridge Road, Hobart, IN 46342. PH: 219-942-4514. <https://valpogunshow.com>.

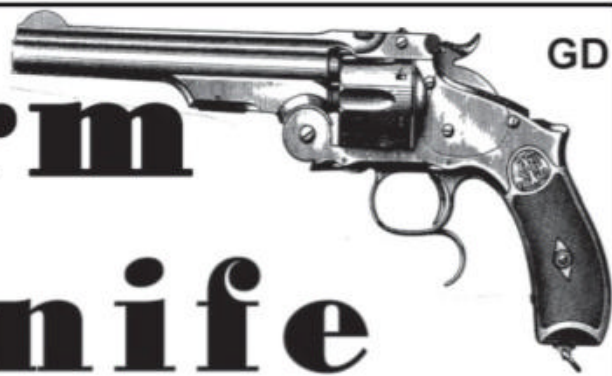
MARCH

Mar 8-9 UT, Vernal. Vernal Gun and Knife Show. Uintah Conference Center, 313 East 200 South. SH: Fri. 12pm-7pm, Sat. 9am-6pm. A: \$5.00 daily. T: 175. F: \$50.00. Friend of Buckskin Hills Shooting Complex. P.O. Box 790028, Vernal, UT 84079. PH: 438-247-2254. vknifeshow@gmail.com.

APRIL

Apr 6-7 TN, Crossville. Cumberland County Gun and Knife Show. Cumberland County Community Complex, 1398 Livingston Road. SH: Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm. A: Saturday Admission is just \$5.00, youth under 16 Free. Sunday Admission is Free to all attendees.. T: 200. F: \$40 for 6' table with multi table discounts. Cumberland County. 1398 Livingdston Road, Crossville, TN 38571. PH: 931-484-5028. www.gkshow.org.

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Apr 12-14 NV, Sparks. Big Reno Show. Nugget Resort Casino, 1100 Nugget Ave. SH: Fri. 9am-5pm, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm. A: \$15 one day. \$24 all three days. \$90 early in with exhibitor set up. T: 700. F: \$165 booths \$435. 1344 Disc Dr suite 800, Sparks, NV 89436. PH: 775-828-2350. Bigrenoshow.com.

AUGUST

Aug 3-4 TN, Crossville. Cumberland County Gun and Knife Show. Cumberland County Community Complex, 1398 Livingston Road. SH: Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm. A: Saturday Admission is just \$5.00, youth under 16 Free. Sunday Admission is Free to all attendees.. T: 200. F: \$40 for 6' table with multi table discounts. Cumberland County. 1398 Livingdston Road, Crossville, TN 38571. PH: 931-484-5028. www.gkshow.org.

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SEPTEMBER

Sep 6-7 ND, West Fargo. Red River Range Gun Show. Red River Regional Marksmanship Center, 640 16th St NE. SH: Fri. 4pm-8pm, Sat. 8am-4pm. A: \$5.00 per day; 12 years and older. 11 and under free with adult. T: 98. F: \$38. Red River Regional Marksmanship Center. 640 16th St NE, West Fargo, ND 58078. PH: 701-356-0677. rrrmc.com.

OCTOBER

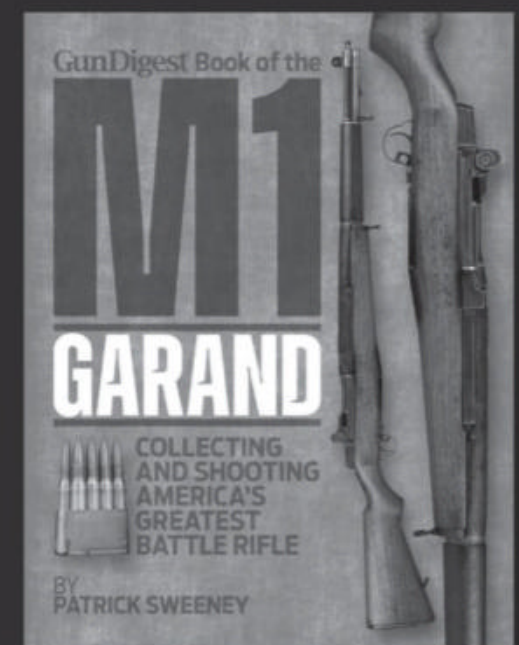
Oct 5-6 IN, Valparaiso. Gun & Knife Show. Porter County Exp-Center, 215 East Division Road. SH: Sat. 8am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm. A: \$6.00 children 12 & under free with Adult. T: 350. F: \$60.00 8ft.@ run of show. Dunes Rifle & Pistol Club L.L.C.. P.O. Box 345, 812 West Old Ridge Road, Hobart, IN 46342. PH: 219-942-4514. <https://valpogunshow.com>.

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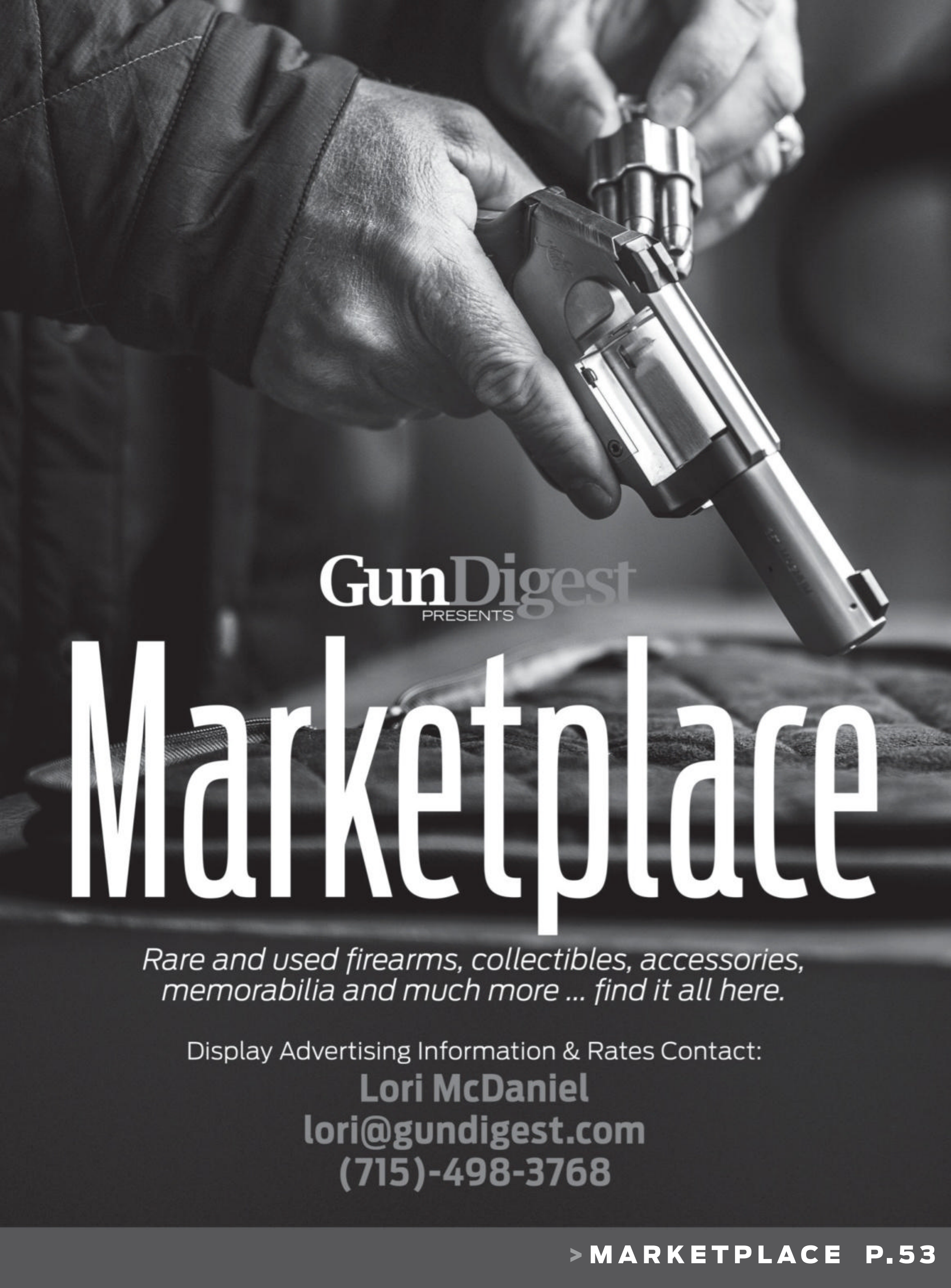


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PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS

- 1-B AMT .22 LR "Backup" Auto Pistol** 2 1/2" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, matte stainless steel finish, black plastic grips, one factory magazine, excellent function, manufactured 1978-2000 \$245
- 2-B AMT .22 LR / High Velocity "Backup" Clip Feed Auto Pistol** 2 3/4" barrel with excellent bore, 98% stainless steel gray matte finish, fixed sights, black plastic grips, missing magazine \$265
- 3-B AMT .380 ACP "Backup" Auto Pistol** 2 5/8" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, matte stainless steel finish that shows high edge and holster wear, black plastic grips, safety latch works properly, excellent function, comes with one 5 round magazine finger rest, manufactured 1978-2001 \$285
- 4-B Astra 9mm Para "Model 600/43" Second Contract (West Germany) Auto Pistol** 5" barrel with bright excellent bore, fixed sights, 98% arsenal blue finish shows some fire blue on safety latch, checkered Walnut grips with left side of frame show proof mark, manufacture date "P" and ordnance proof mark that also is on slide, comes with one magazine not serialized but shows Astra manufacture marked logo, manufactured 1945, excellent function (C&R) \$650
- 5-B Astra/Spanish 9mm Para "Model 600/43" Clip Feed Auto Pistol** 5 1/4" barrel with bright excellent fore, fixed sights, 95% original blue, thinning to gray with some high edge wear along slide, barrel, slide, frame all show crisp Spanish proof marks, "matching" serialized numbers, checkered walnut grips, one original magazine, excellent function (C&R) \$685
- 6-B Browning .25 ACP "Baby" Clip Feed Auto Pistol** 2" barrel with bright excellent bore, 98% original blue with light high edge wear slide lock safety lever, fixed sights, black plastic checkered grips, one F.N. marked 5 round magazine, slide marked "Browning Arms Co.", excellent function, manufactured 1954-1968 (C&R) \$705
- 7-B Browning .22 LR "Medalist" Auto Pistol** 6 3/4" vent rib barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, factory target sights, mint right hand thumbrest Walnut checkered grips, no shell deflector pin, Walnut forend, comes in original black compartmentalized case with red velvet lining, 3 counter weights, screwdriver combo tool, ammo block, booklet and key, collector quality, manufactured in Belgium in 1966 (C&R) \$1295
- 8-B Charter Arms .38 Special "Undercover" Double Action Revolver** 1 7/8" barrel with bright excellent bore, fixed sights, 90% blue showing high edge wear, alloy triggerguard/back, front strap shows chipping enamel point, smooth Walnut grips with gold color medallions, excellent function, manufactured 1975-1991 \$250
- 9-B Cobray .380 ACP "Model M-12" Auto Pistol** 5" barrel with very good bore, 95% parkerized finish with some speckling, fixed sights, rubber padded trigger, 7 1/2" handgun/barrel shroud, comes with one 30 Round factory stick magazine, non factory case and original papers \$700
- 10-B Colt .22 LR "Challenger Model" Auto Pistol** 6" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98% original bright blue, light high edge wear on slide and muzzle, brown "Coltwood" synthetic grips, one original magazine with metal follower, excellent function, manufactured 1952 (C&R) \$625
- 11-B Colt .22 LR "Challenger Model" Auto Pistol** 4 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue with a couple small spots of pinprick pitting at rear of slide, mint checkered brown plastic logo grips, fixed sights, excellent function, manufactured 1952, collector quality (C&R) \$765
- 12-B Colt .22 LR "Official Police" Post War Double Action Revolver** 6" tapered barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98% original blue with light thinning towards muzzle, service hammer, checkered trigger, black pebble grain Hogue monogrips, excellent function, manufactured 1948 (C&R) \$685
- 13-B Colt .22 LR "Police Positive Target" Pre War 2nd Issue Model C Revolver** 6" barrel with mint bore, adjustable front and rear sights, service style hammer, checkered trigger, 98% original blue, light thinning at muzzle and in crane, light drag line on cylinder, checkered Walnut grips with silver medallions, left side of frame shows light scratch, excellent function, manufactured 1933 (C&R) \$865
- 14-B Colt .22 LR Special "Officers Model Target" Revolver** 6" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, very light muzzle thinning, light drag line on cylinder, thinning on triggerguard base, adjustable factory sights, light gray tone loss on right side of frame, forward trigger, mint checkered Walnut grips with silver medallions, not serialized to revolver, excellent function, manufactured 1936 (C&R) \$950
- 15-B Colt .38 Special "Officers Model Target" Revolver** 6" barrel with bright excellent bore, 95% original blue showing some light scratches, fading on front strap, light high edge wear, front adjustable sight with red bead, adjustable U-notch rear sight, checkered Walnut grips with some chipping around the bottom edges, both grip are serialized to revolver, 97% fire blue show on checkered hammer, light oxidation on hammer, excellent function, manufactured 1911 (C&R) \$800
- 16-B Colt .38 Special "Officers Model Target" Revolver** 6" barrel with bright excellent bore, original factory adjustable sights, checkered trigger, polished hammer are mint showing normal edge wear, 95% original blue with fluted cylinder showing spots of flaked areas toned to brown, barrel shows thinning to gray towards muzzle, light freckling on frame, checkered backstrap and smooth front strap shows thinning to brown, checkered Walnut grips with diamond around escutcheon screw and gold color Colt medallions, all matching, excellent function, manufactured 1914 (C&R) \$875

- 17-B Colt 44 Special "Old Model New Service" Double Action Revolver** 5 1/2" barrel marked "44 Russian" with mint bore, fixed sights, cylinder chambers have been lengthened to .44 SPL, 90%+ original blue with thinning at muzzle and on cylinder, front and back strap show gray to brown, frame has high edge wear, service trigger and hammer, front sight has been "regulated", lanyard loop, black hard rubber Colt factory grips, left grip shows 1" crack at rear, excellent timing and lockup, manufactured 1908 (C&R) \$1200
- 18-B Colt 44/40 New Service "Canadian Police" Revolver** 4 1/2" barrel with mint bore, very nice re-blue finish, due to re-blue the rampant colt on left side has been removed, barrel still shows "New Service 44-40" on left side and top of barrel shows "Colt P.T.F.A. MFG. CO. Hartford, CT. U.S.A./pat'd Aug 5, 1884 June 5, 1900. July 4, 1905." left side of frame at barrel has cross flags proof mark, right side of frame marked "2416" and backstrap was marked but now illegible, fixed sights, smooth Walnut grips, lanyard loop missing, tight lockup, excellent function, manufactured 1917 (C&R) \$695
- 19-B CZ 9mm Luger "Model P-09" Auto Pistol** 4 1/2" barrel with mint bore, front white dot sight, rear sight removed and Burris fast fire III dot sight added, Burris has a 3 MoA dot clean clear optics, 99% black matte finish on slide, black polymer frame with front equipment rail on frame and stippled grip sides, ambidextrous de-cocker and slide serrations, comes with one high cap 19 round magazine, excellent function, manufactured 2014 \$450
- 20-B Firearms Import Export (F.I.E.) .22 LR / .22 Magnum "Model Tex-22" Convertible Single Action Revolver** 4 3/4" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 97%+ original blue showing light pinprick pitting, two piece walnut grips, comes with original silver two piece box and paperwork, excellent condition and function, mfg 1986-1990 \$200
- 21-B Harrington & Richardson .22 LR Model 199 "Sportsman" Single Action Target 4th Variation Pre War Top Break Revolver** 6" oval barrel with mint bore, adjustable front and rear sights, 97% original blue with light scattered pin prick pitting, light staining on trigger, large one piece Walnut checkered grips, excellent function, manufactured 1937-1941 (C&R) \$755
- 22-B Harrington & Richardson .32 S&W "Bicycle 2nd Model" Top Break Revolver** 2" barrel with good light pitted bore, nickel finish shows light scratches, fixed sights, triggerguard, trigger, hammer shows 95% original blue, original correct bakelite grips with target logo not serialized to revolver, excellent function, manufactured 1905-1920 (C&R) \$125
- 23-B Harrington & Richardson .32 S&W "Top Break" Auto Ejecting Double Action Revolver** 4" solid rib barrel with fair bore, 97% nickel finish with peppery pin prick pitting, fixed sights, black plastic checkered extended grips, excellent function (C&R) \$225
- 24-B Herbert Schmidt .22 LR "Frontier Model" Single Action Western Style Revolver** 4 3/4" barrel with mint bore, 90% thinning blue on barrel taking on a brown tinge, frame, extractor, triggerguard are all anodized black alloy that show gray with its finish chipping on triggerguard, two piece mother of pearl original Colt grips have been added, grips are marked "J.S." on inside, 6 shot cylinder, 90% original blue showing high edge wear and scattered pinprick pitting \$295
- 25-B High Standard .22 LR "Model GB" Clip Feed Auto Pistol** 4 1/2" barrel with bright excellent bore, fixed sights, 97% original blue with light muzzle wear and light slide high edge wear, brown checkered plastic with "HS" monogrammed in circle, comes with one two tone magazine, excellent function, manufactured 1950 (C&R) \$625
- 26-B High Standard .22 LR "Model G-D" Clip Feed Auto Pistol** 4 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 95% original blue with thinning on barrel sides and some light high edge wear on frame, front blade and rear adjustable "Davis" sight, lever takedown, checkered Walnut grips that show some wear and one minty two tone original magazine, excellent function, manufactured 1949, collector quality, approximately 3,300 made (C&R) \$795
- 27-B High Standard .22 LR 107 Series "The Victor" Target Auto Pistol** 5 1/2" slab side barrel with mint bore, adjustable sights integrated into the ventilated, grooved aluminum top rib, 97%+ original blue on barrel and slide matte finish on frame with stippled front and back strap, checkered grips with left side thumbrest, gold plated adjustable trigger, safety, slide release, magazine release, comes with one 10 round magazine with green polymer follower and red polymer base, push button barrel release, barrel drilled and tapped to accept barrel weights, no weights, manufactured 1993-present \$695
- 28-B High Standard .22 Short "First Model Olympic" Auto Pistol** 6 3/4" lever takedown barrel with excellent bright bore, 97% original blue with rear slide showing light blue to gray from handling, high edge wear along frame, fixed front sight and "Davis" adjustable rear sight, this is a 1950's early pistol with trigger stop, grooved front and rear strap surrounded by very nice period correct factory special ordered original Walnut checkered grips with thumb rest for right hand shooting, curved magazine for .22 short is original and excellent, manufactured 1950, collector quality (C&R) \$1000
- 29-B Irwindale Arms .380 ACP "Backup" Auto Pistol** 2 1/2" barrel with mint bore, satin finish stainless steel, fixed sights, black Lexan checkered grips, comes with one 5 round magazine, this is pre AMT manufacturer of Backup, manufactured 1988-1991 \$300
- 30-B Iver Johnson .22 LR "Model 55A" Double Action Target Revolver** 6" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, shows light pin prick pitting on front strap and light pin prick pitting on left side of frame above triggerguard, front fixed blade top strap groove rear sights, 95% case on serrated target hammer, serrated trigger with light case color, two piece synthetic "Tenite" thumbrest Iver Johnson grips with owl logo on right grip, excellent function, manufactured 1955-1958 and looks un-used (C&R) \$345

CONTINUED ➡

50-B Sig Sauer 9mm "Model P320" Auto Pistol 3.9" barrel with mint bore, Nitron black finish, Sig night sights, compact medium grip module, comes with (3) 15 round magazine, manufactured 2015, as new in box with papers \$465

51-B Smith & Wesson 9mm "Model 659" 2nd Generation Double Action Auto Pistol 4" barrel with mint bore, stainless steel frame and slide with satin finish, fixed factory sights, serrated hammer, smooth trigger, black nylon checkered grips, ambidextrous safety, serrated front 8 back straps, lanyard loop on butt, excellent function, comes with one 14 round high capacity magazine, manufactured 1983 \$700

52-B Smith & Wesson .40 S&W "Model SD40VE" Auto Pistol 4" barrel with excellent bore, two tone: silver slide, black frame, 98% overall, 3 dot dovetail sights, comes with one 10 round magazine \$325

53-B Smith & Wesson .45 ACP "Model 4506" Double Action Auto Pistol 5" barrel with mint bore, stainless steel finish, white dot front sight, white dot Novak lo-mount rear sight, serrated hammer, smooth trigger, ambidextrous safety, straight backstrap with wraparound one piece black plastic grip, comes with one 8 round factory magazine, manufactured 1996 \$745

54-B Smith & Wesson .22 LR "K-22 Masterpiece" 5 Screw Target Revolver 6" pinned barrel with mint bore, 90% original blue with thinning at muzzle, high edge wear, trace case color still shows on target hammer, serrated trigger, patridge front sight, adjustable rear sight, checkered Magna Walnut grips not serialized to revolver and cylinder shows firing pin strikes at the side of the recessed chambers, 22 dummy rounds loaded and works correctly, tight lock up and timing is correct, manufactured 1947 (C&R) \$800

55-B Smith & Wesson .22 LR "Model 17 Target Masterpiece" (4) Screw Revolver 6" pinned barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original bright blue and slightly faded case color, factory target sights, cylinder is recessed and shows firing pin strikes when cylinder was not fully closed, very nice checkered Walnut diamond center grips with silver S&W medallions but serial number is off by 100 digits, excellent function, made in 1960 and sharp looking with a small chipout on bottom of right side grip \$775

56-B Smith & Wesson .32 S&W "5th Model" Top Break Revolver 3" ribbed barrel with bright excellent bore, fixed sights, nickel finish with light loss on left side of barrel and on cylinder, triggerguard and barrel latch show 99% original blue, hammer and trigger show faded case color, hard rubber S&W grips, bottom of left grip shows a light scratch engraved "BZ", all matching numbers, excellent function, manufactured 1909-1911 (C&R) \$345

57-B Smith & Wesson .32 S&W Long 32 Hand Ejector Post War "Pre Model 30 "1" Frame" Revolver 3 1/4" pinned barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98%+ original blue and case color, all matching numbers including mint diamond checkered, round but, Walnut grips with silver S&W medallions, excellent function, collector quality, manufactured 1946 (C&R) \$800

58-B Smith & Wesson .38 Special "Model 1905 4th Change M&P" Revolver 5" pinned barrel with excellent bright bore, fixed sights, 98%+ original blue and case color, all matching numbers except those on excellent checkered Walnut diamond center grips of the non magna style with silver S&W medallions, excellent function, collector quality, made around 1919 (C&R) \$685

59-B Smith & Wesson .41 Magnum "Model 57 Target" Revolver 4" pinned, serrated top rib barrel with mint bore, 99%+ original nickel finish, light scratches on frame and light drag line on 6 shot fluted cylinder, front raised ramp with a red insert, adjustable rear sight with a white lined square notch, target hammer, target trigger show muted case colors, book matched Goncalo Alves checkered target grips with speed loader relief cut and silver S&W medallions, manufactured 1964-1969 (C&R) \$1395

60-B Spanish Astra 9mm Largo "Model 1921" (400) Auto Pistol 6" barrel with good/light pitted bore, 90% thinning original blue showing blue to brown on front and back straps, sides of barrel show blue to gray, light fire blue shows on safety lever and extractor, top of barrel shows Spanish crown and Astra logo, right side of frame shows "Spain" import mark, checkered black horn grips with Astra logo, small repair to right grip panel, magazine latch pin is missing, all matching numbers, manufactured 1921-1950 (C&R) \$525

61-B Stevens Diamond .22 LR "No. 43 2nd Issue" Single Shot Pistol 10" part octagon barrel with mint bore, fixed original sights, 99% original blue barrel, 99% nickel receiver showing light scratches, smooth Walnut grips, two line barrel address without patent date, excellent function, manufactured 1896-1916 (C&R) \$575

62-B Stoeger .22 LR "Luger Style" Auto Pistol 4 1/2" tapered barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98% original blue, light scratches, mint checkered Walnut grips, left side safety lever, comes with one magazine that is missing follower button, over all excellent function, manufactured 1985 \$450

63-B Walther / Interarms .22 LR "Model TPH" Auto Pistol 2 1/4" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, stainless steel finish, black checkered plastic grips with Walther logo, one magazine with black plastic finger rest, excellent function, manufactured 1987-2000 \$700

64-B Walther .22 LR "Model KKJ" Sporter Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, hooded ramp bead front sight and rear ladder sight, grooved receiver, checkered Walnut Monte Carlo stock with cheekpiece pistol grip sporter stock shows small scratches, factory buttplate and pistol grip cap, sling swivels and one factory magazine, excellent function \$1295

65-B Walther / Interarms .380 ACP "Model PPK/S" Auto Pistol 3 1/4" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, all stainless steel construction showing little or no wear, black polymer checkered grips, factory magazine with finger rest, comes with it's original gray vinyl covered cardboard box with foam insert, inside is original manual, safety card, test fire target sheet, cleaning rod and spare magazine with plain base \$800

66-B Webley & Scott .38 S&W "Mark IV" Top Break Revolver 5" barrel with excellent bore, 95% original "war finish", fixed sights, lanyard loop, original black grips chipped at base pin, backstrap stamped "SPF" over "4332" below hammer, all matching numbers, excellent function (C&R) \$725

CONTINUED ➡

67-B Brazilian / DWM 7mm "Model 1908" Bolt Rifle 29" barrel with mint bore, 95% original blue with thinning blue to gray on barrel, barrel bands and on triggerguard, floorplate shows silvering spots in center along with scratches from takedown and cleaning, bolt and receiver in the white, inverted "V" front sight with tangent rear sight graduated to 2000 meters, receiver ring has a clean clear Brazilian crest, bolt not serialized to rifle, all other parts are matching, unmarked brass muzzle cover, cleaning rod are present, hardwood stock and forend wood, stock has crisp Brazilian acceptance mark on right side, buttplate shows wear and pin prick pitting, excellent function, barrel shows Springfield Armory Inc import mark (C&R) \$1100

68-B Bruno 7x57 (7mm Mauser) "Model VZ-24" Bolt Rifle 23" barrel with fair pitted bore, inverted V front post sight with bolt on protected ears, tangent rear sight graduated to 2000 meters, straight bolt has non matching serial number, 95% thinning arsenal blue, receiver ring crest has been ground off, Walnut pistol grip stock with upper handguard shows dings and dents, right side of stock shows brass disk that's unreadable, left side shows tack number in white paint and matching engraved serialized number to rifle, original aluminum buttplate, bottom and side sling swivels, manufactured 1946 (C&R) \$325

69-B Italian / Brescia 6.5 Model 1891 Bolt Rifle 17 1/2" barrel, fair bore showing 95% arsenal blue and scattered pin prick pitting at receiver ring. original factory sights, "non matching serialized numbers, straight grip walnut stock with left side sling swivels, toeline of stock shows a repair mark, left side of stock has an Import cartouche along with a non matching serialized number (C&R) \$365

70-B Italian Government 6.5mm Carcano "Model 1891/28" Bolt Carbine 17 3/4" barrel with good bore, 95% original blue, "Gardone" made, original tangent "turn leaf" open rear and barley corn front sights, marked "1930" on barrel, excellent hardwood stock with blued steel buttplate, side and bottom mount swivels, wiping rod, bayonet lug and nice "Gardone M-91/28" cartouche, all matching (C&R) \$655

71-B Japanese Government 7.7mm Arisaka "Last Ditch" Type 99 Bolt Rifle 26" barrel with mint bore, 95% original blue over rough late war machining, simple non adjustable peep sight, barley corn front sight, matching bolt, Nagoya made, deeply ground "mum" on receiver, very good laminate pistol grip stock with correct wooden buttplate, "blob" welded bolt, all original (C&R) \$495

72-B Japanese Govt. / Nagoya Arsenal 7.7 mm Arisaka "Type 99 6th Series" Bolt Rifle 25 1/2" barrel with excellent bore, 90%+ original blue with areas of thinning to gray, no dust cover, mum has been removed, all serialized numbers are matching, protected front sight, tangent rear sight graduated to 1500 meters, rear tang screw is missing Asian hardwood semi pistol grip stock with full length handguard, cupped edge sheet metal buttplate, excellent function (C&R) \$585

73-B Japanese Govt. / Tokyo Jukikogyo Arsenal 7.7mm Arisaka "Type 99 Last Ditch" 27 Series Bolt Rifle 26" barrel with fair/good bore, 97% arsenal blue with thinning to gray and brown, factory original sights, no mum or dust cover, "blob weld" on safety, bolt serialized to rifle, Asian hardwood semi pistol grip stock and handguard, stock is rough cut at wrist, left side of stock shows an early repair of a chip, wood buttplate, excellent function (C&R) \$565

74-B Mauser 8mm Mauser Yugoslavian Model "24/52-C" Bolt Rifle 23 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 97% original blue, standard military open sight with hood on front sight, all matching numbers including stock, very good pistol grip stock with both side and bottom swivels, steel buttplate and wiping rod, good reproduction leather sling, import marked (C&R) \$520

75-B Mauser 8mm Mauser Model 1935 "Manufacture D'Armes De L'Etat" Belgian Made Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with very good+ bright bore, 80% original blue, all original military style sights, very good+ pistol grip stock with steel buttplate, takedown disk in butt has been plugged with a wooden Walnut insert, original bottom mount sling swivels and original leather military sling, bayonet fixture but no wiping rod, not import marked, mis-matched bolt, excellent function (C&R) \$495

76-B Remington .308 Winchester "Model 742 Woodmaster" Clip Feed Auto Rifle 22" barrel with bright excellent bore, front raised sight with gold color bead, rear sight removed and receiver mounted Redfield scope base, non matching scope rings, attached is a Simons whitetail classic 2-10x44 scope, scope has duplex retical, clean clear optics, left side of scope shows light scratches buffing marks on receiver, weave checkered Walnut pistol grip stock with grip cap and forend with forend tip, checkered Remington black plastic buttplate, comes with one Remington 4 round magazine, manufactured 1973 (C&R) \$375

77-B Remington .308 Winchester "Model 742 Woodmaster" Clip Feed Auto Rifle 22" barrel with bright excellent bore, front raised sight with gold color bead, rear sight removed and receiver mounted Redfield scope base, scope rings and Redfield 2-7 scope with German style crosshairs, clean clear optics, 97% original blue, light scratches on right side of receiver, Fleur-de-Lis pattern checkered pistol grip stock with grip cap and forend with plastic forend cap, aluminum checkered buttplate, comes with one 4 round magazine, manufactured 1965 (C&R) \$375

78-B Ruger 30/06 "Model M77" Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with excellent bore, 98% original blue, nice checkered wood stock with red rubber buttpad, tang safety, sling studs, very few marks on stock, includes 1" scope rings, manufactured 1980 \$680

79-B Savage .222 Remington "Model 340D" Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with excellent bore, 95% original blue, brass bead blade front sight with folding ramp blade rear sight, smooth Walnut stock with black pistol grip cap, white line spacer showing shrinkage, added Weaver side mount base and mount Tasco 4x32 scope, original 4 round magazine, manufactured 1964 (C&R) \$295

80-B Savage .308 Winchester "Model 11" Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, no sights, receiver is mounted with a Leupold scope base and Blazer 3-9x50 duplex reticule scope, scope has clean clear optics, checkered Walnut pistol grip stock with Savage logo grip cap, rubber recoil pad, no floorplate, excellent function \$645

81-B Smith & Wesson .223/5.56 Cal. M&P 15 Auto Rifle 16 1/4" barrel with good bore, 98% original matte black finish, non threaded front gas block sight, carbine handguard, magpul polymer rear sight, fixed carbine stock, factory 10 round magazine \$1100

90-B Armalite .22 LR "Model AR-7 / Explorer" Takenown Auto Rifle 16" aluminum, simulated ported barrel with mint bore, factory sights, 99% matte black finish, multi color polymer pistol grip stock with a 1 ½" crack on right side of grip, comes with one 10 round magazine and original cardboard box with matching serial number to rifle, excellent function, marked "Costa Mesa", early manufactured \$455

91-B Harrington & Richardson .22 LR "Model 195 U.S.R.A. Pre War" 4th Variation Top Break Single Shot Target Pistol 10" ribbed barrel with mint bore, front pinned undercut partridge front sight and adjustable rear sight, 98% original blue showing thinning along muzzle and front strap, "Rice frame" has light peppery pin prick pitting, round plunger style automatic ejector, adjustable grooved serrated trigger and checkered factory hammer that appears to have been "bobbed" just slightly, one piece serrated Walnut grips that has been modified by hand checkering the back top area just under hammer, excellent function, manufactured 1931-1932 (C&R) \$1195

92-B Iver Johnson .22 LR "Model 2X Self Cocking Single Shot" Safety Rifle 24" barrel with bright excellent bore, factory front blade sight, adjustable sporting open rear sight, 97% original blue, receiver/action is blue to gray, chrome plated bolt, checkered Walnut pistol grip stock with original steel buttplate, excellent function, manufactured 1928-1941 (C&R) \$275

93-B J. C. Higgins .22 S, L, & LR "Model 31" Tube Feed Auto Rifle 24" barrel with bright excellent bore, 98% original blue, open sights, grooved receiver, mounted J.C. Higgins 4x scope with plain crosshairs and foggy optics, barrel has light peppery pin prick pitting, two piece Walnut pistol grip stock with Higgins logo grip cap and buttplate, excellent function (C&R) \$275

94-B Marlin .22 LR "Model 60" Auto Rifle 19" barrel with excellent bore, 98% original blue finish, adjustable sights, grooved receiver, very nice smooth figured laminated wood stock, comes with original manual \$275

CONTINUED ➔

110-B Winchester .22 LR "Model 74" Butt Tube Feed "Pre War" Auto Rifle 24" barrel with bright excellent bore, 98% original blue thinning along receiver to gray and along barrel with some muzzle wear, factory open sights, excellent smooth Walnut pistol grip stock, steel buttplate, excellent function, 1st year production manufactured 1939, collector quality (C&R) \$450

127-B Winchester 16 Gauge "Model 12" Takedown Pump Shotgun 26" barrel with bright excellent bore, 2 3/4" chamber, attached polychoke, 87%+ original blue thinning to gray with high edge wear and scratches, single white bead, smooth Walnut pistol grip stock and corn cob style forend, black checkered hard rubber Winchester logo buttplate, excellent function, manufactured 1947 (C&R) \$350

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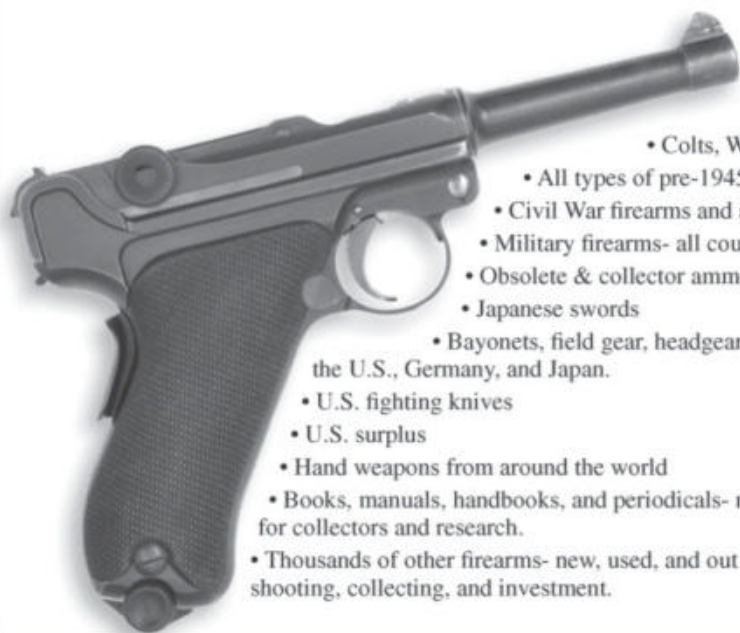
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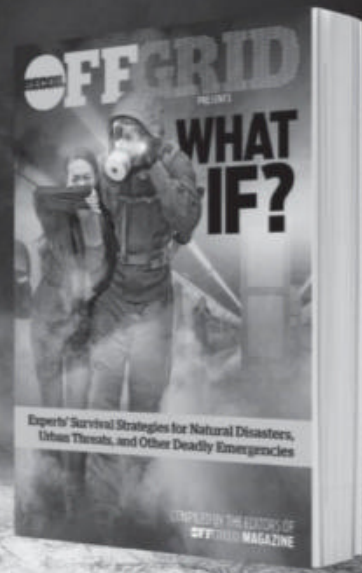
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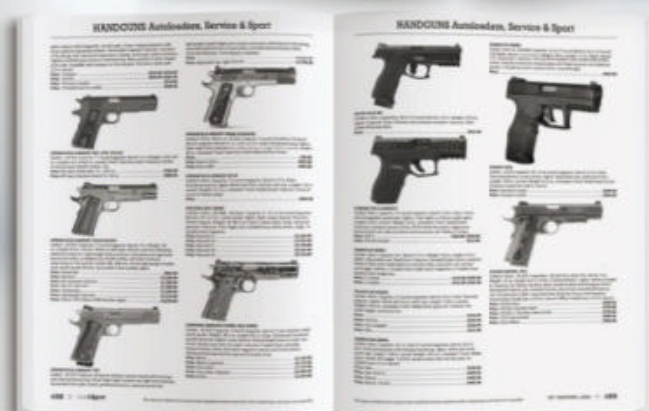
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ON THE FLY

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This 270-grain Controlled Fracturing bullet was used to take this massive black bear on Vancouver Island with a .375 Ruger.



This African buffalo was taken at 100 yards with a .375 Ruger using a 270-grain Controlled Fracturing bullet from Lehigh Defense.

Sometimes, it's necessary to have the backstory to appreciate a product. I think that's especially true with Lehigh Defense ... where bullet evolution seems to be happening faster than anywhere else. Under the watchful eye of Bill Wilson—yes, the Bill Wilson of Wilson Combat—Lehigh Defense is taking the mono-metal bullet to places it's never been.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. For me, this story starts in West Virginia, with two hillbillies trying to create a bullet for a .50-caliber short-action rifle cartridge.

FRANCE TO WEST VIRGINIA

In 2006, I was approached by fellow West Virginian, Mike Cyrus. Cyrus had designed a short-action .50-caliber rifle cartridge capable of launching a 345-grain bullet at 2,700 fps. His problem was that there were no .50-caliber

bullets capable of withstanding impact velocities that high. I showed Cyrus the French designed GPA bullet and detailed my experiences with it. I felt that if Cyrus could create a similar bullet, it would be ideal for his cartridge.

The GPA bullet is a mono-metal bullet with a broached hollow point. When it impacts animals, fluids are forced into the hollow point. This causes the bullet to fracture, and the result is the separation of four petals. Sometimes the petals will break from a Barnes Triple Shock mono-metal bullet, but when this happens, much like they did with the old Winchester Fail Safe bullet, the petals just fall away and are left in the bullet's path. Because the fracturing on the GPA bullet occurs almost immediately, the petals retain velocity and drive forward and outward from the path of the bullet shank. This creates massive tissue destruction and hemorrhaging.

Cyrus liked the idea, and, working with Lehigh Defense, they created a bullet. It wasn't long until Cyrus was back at my range to test it ... and the results were amazing. The bullet delivered a controlled dispersion of shrapnel that left a wound cavity of immense proportions. The break-away petals created their own wound tracks and the base of the bullet drove incredibly deep. Cyrus worked with Lehigh to tweak the design and I took Cyrus' .50-caliber cartridge and those bullets to Africa, where they impressed the hell out of a professional hunter.

Cyrus soon went to work for Lehigh Defense to develop other bullets, conduct testing and to produce load data. He became an integral part of company and moved to South Dakota in 2017 when the company relocated. That year Cyrus also came to Africa with me, and we tested multiple Lehigh bullets on a



Black Hills Ammunition uses Lehigh Defense bullets in their Honey Badger line of defensive handgun ammo.

variety of critters. My son even used a 270-grain .375-caliber version of the Controlled Fracturing bullet that had evolved from Cyrus' early work to take an African buffalo.

ENTER WILSON COMBAT

Lehigh Defense makes a lot of unique mono-metal bullets, and we'll get to them shortly. But it was Lehigh Defense's Controlled Chaos bullet that caught Bill Wilson's attention.

In late 2021, Wilson Combat purchased Lehigh Defense. Wilson felt solid copper bullets would be the future and that Lehigh Defense was on the forefront of that technology. An avid hunter, he has probably killed more feral hogs than anyone I know, and he was impressed with the Controlled Chaos' radical terminal performance. He also felt that the Lehigh's Xtreme Defense bullet was changing how many people think about self-defense handgun projectiles. Wilson relocated Lehigh Defense to Clarksville, Texas, not too far from his home.

And this is where the circle completes. Cyrus was lost in this shuffle,



Cyrus' short action .50-caliber rifle cartridge that he and Lehigh Defense developed a bullet for. (Shown next to a .22 LR cartridge.)



This is a 118-grain 9mm version of the Lehigh Defenses Maximum Expansion bullet.

Here you can see the 2,685 fps (left) and 2,400 fps terminal performance results with a 155-grain, .30-caliber, Lehigh Defense Tipped Maximum Expansion bullet designed for high-velocity rifle cartridges.

A 270-grain Lehigh Defense Controlled Fracturing bullet out of a .375 Ruger was used to take this massive black bear on Vancouver Island.



but it wasn't long until he and Wilson connected, and Wilson learned the value that Cyrus had brought to Lehigh Defense before the sale. Wilson brought Cyrus back to Lehigh Defense to assist with bullet testing, load development and, just as importantly, to handle customer questions and technical support. But what's also interesting is how bullet development at Lehigh Defense works.

RESPONSIVE ENGINEERING

Because of how Lehigh Defense bullets are machined, they can do very small runs and test them; a bullet can be tweaked and tested multiple times in a day. Wilson can take a new design and shoot some feral hogs in the morning, report his findings and the bullet can be modified before the day is over. The final product is not just a result of just

testing in various mediums, it's thoroughly vetted on wild game.

Cyrus is embedded in this process. He shadows Wilson's work and is in constant contact with the factory to make suggestions based on what he sees on paper, on the chronograph and during terminal performance testing. Cyrus was recently on my range showing me the subsonic and supersonic bullets they've been developing for the new 8.6 Blackout cartridge. Before he left, he was on the phone with Clarksville, tweaking things.

During that visit, Cyrus also showed me their new Tipped Controlled Chaos bullet. With its better ballistic coefficient, it retains energy better and delivers flatter trajectories. Like the 8.6 Blackout bullets, it's still under development but should be available in 2024.

SMART BULLETS GETTING SMARTER

This story is slanted a bit to highlight the work and contributions of a fellow hillbilly and friend, but Cyrus and his work with Lehigh Defense has been my main window into the company. Today, Wilson is adding to the Lehigh Defense story and, according to Cyrus, since acquisition, Wilson has substantially enhanced the performance of several of the bullets Lehigh Defense offers.

Of course, I cannot just end it here. You need to have an idea of the totality of Lehigh Defense's smart-bullet product line. So, here's a rundown of some of their best bullets, available as components or in loaded ammunition from Lehigh Defense, Wilson Combat and several other ammunition manufacturers. I'd suggest you give some of them a try.



Tipped Controlled Chaos bullet. Notice the shrapnel that breaks away to form additional wound tracks, leaving the base/shank of the bullet to penetrate.

This version of the Controlled Fracturing bullet is designed for subsonic application and will upset at extremely slow velocities.

A 125-grain, .30-caliber Maximum Expansion bullet fired from the .300 HAMR cartridge.

The Controlled Chaos bullet and the wound-enhancing shrapnel it creates almost instantly after impact.

CONTROLLED & XTREME CONTROLLED CHAOS BULLET

This is an all-copper mono-metal bullet designed to fracture during penetration. The fractured copper shrapnel is then propelled outward and forward from the bullet path. The base or shank of the bullet remains at bullet diameter and penetrates extremely deep, most often exiting. A version of this bullet built with softer copper is called the Xtreme Chaos and it works the same, but the nose of the bullet shank slightly deforms to create a larger diameter penetrating hole.

TIPPED CHAOS BULLET

This is nothing more than an all-copper mono-metal bullet designed to fracture during penetration, just like the Controlled Chaos. The difference, however, is the polymer tip that's inserted into the bullet's hollow point cavity. This tip increases the bullet's BC, helps with retained energy down range and flattens trajectory.

CONTROLLED FRACTURING BULLET

This is a more controlled version of the Controlled Chaos bullet. The difference is that the shrapnel is reduced to large petals that do not bend or break part. The petals separate soon after penetration and radiate outward from the main bullet path, creating havoc and destruction in their wake. Where this bullet is most applicable is with subsonic loads. No other bullet from any manufacture can match it in terms of subsonic terminal performance. It's ideal for cartridges like the .300 and 8.6 Blackout.

MAXIMUM EXPANSION BULLET

This is a deviation of the Controlled Fracturing bullet, and similar to the Xtreme Chaos bullet it's built from slightly softer copper. This allows the petals on the bullet to remain attached similar to the Barnes Triple Shock. This bullet creates massive tissue destruc-

tion but with less penetration than the Controlled Fracturing bullet. It's suitable for handgun and subsonic applications, and Wilson is working to develop tipped versions for high velocity rifle cartridges.

XTREME DEFENSE BULLET

This is an all-copper, non-deforming approach to a self-defense bullet designed to deliver penetration between the FBI's optimum 12- and 18-inch range. A non-deforming/expanding bullet might seem counter to conventional wisdom, but the concept is valid. This is partly because the lack of bullet upset prevents the potential for penetration interference from intermediate barriers and partly because, due to the large flutes near the bullet's nose, wounding is enhanced through high-velocity fluid transfer.



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Underwood loads Xtreme Defense bullets for many handgun cartridges. Those deep flutes use hydraulic fluid transfer to damage tissue.



Underwood ammo offers ammunition loaded with Lehigh Defense Xtreme Penetrator bullets for many cartridges. Notice the wide X flat point in the bullet's nose.



“Ideas about how a bullet should disrupt tissue and cause damage have come a long way.”

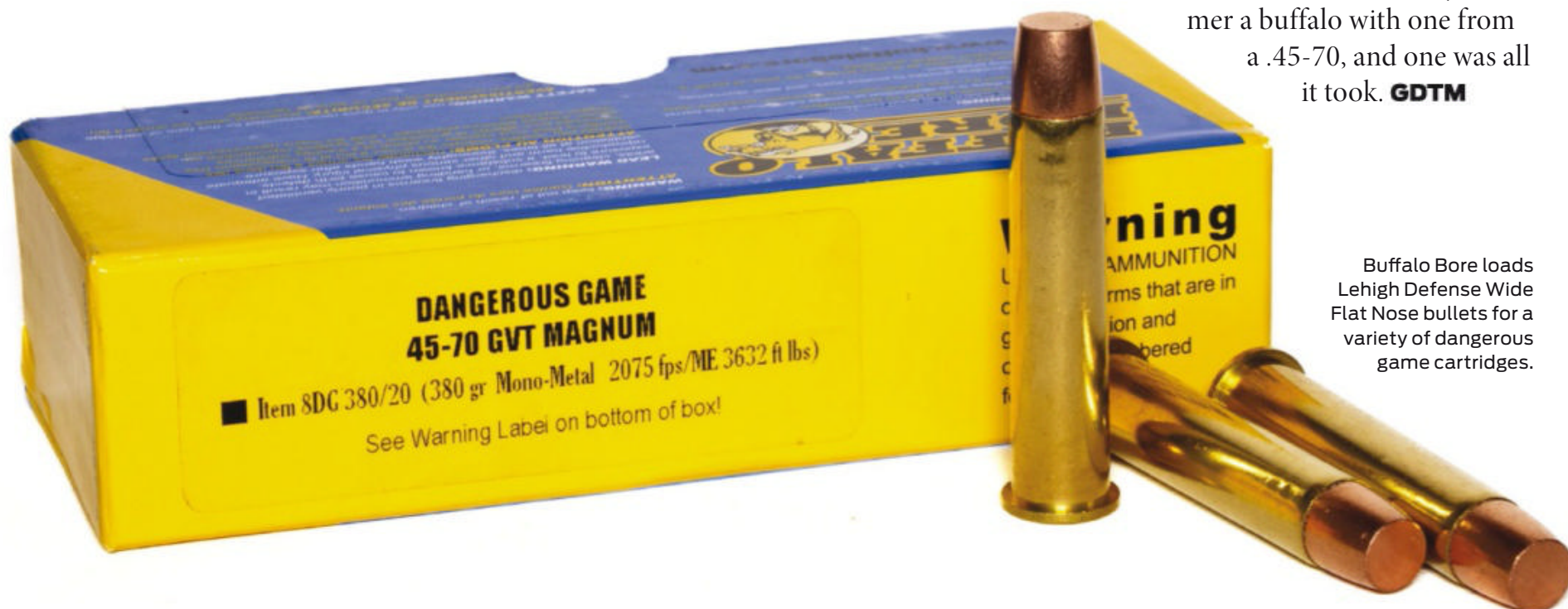
XTREME PENETRATOR BULLET

An alteration of the Xtreme Defense bullet, these bullets are designed to drive deeper. They're suitable for both handgun and rifle cartridges and are heavier than comparable Xtreme Defense bullets in the same caliber. They also have smaller flutes to help maximize penetration, and the X-shaped nose design will punch through as op-

posed to skid on bone. These bullets create much more damage than conventional round nose bullets.

WIDE FLAT NOSE

Very similar to a hard cast bullet, the advantage of a solid copper flat nose solid is that the bullet's nose will not deform, chip or break, and this contributes to the bullet's ability to penetrate very deep and straight. Buffalo Bore loads these Wide Flat Nose bullets in their Dangerous Game line. I watched a hunter in Africa absolutely hammer a buffalo with one from a .45-70, and one was all it took. **GDTM**



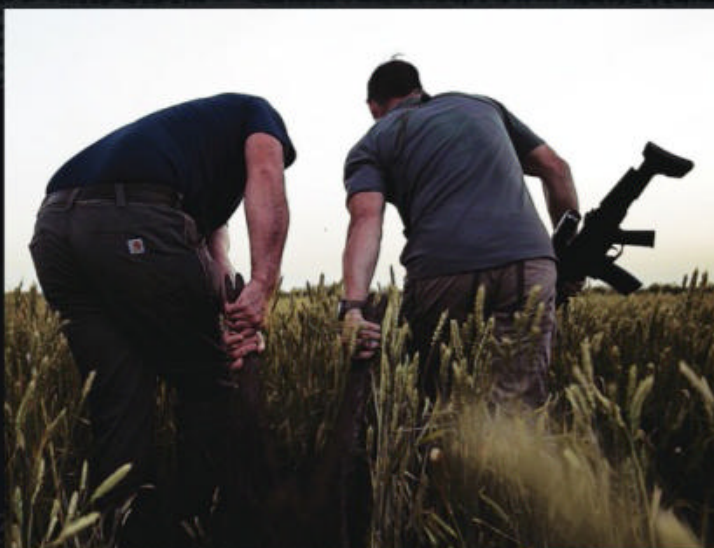
Buffalo Bore loads Lehigh Defense Wide Flat Nose bullets for a variety of dangerous game cartridges.

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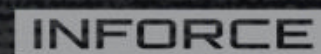
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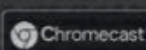
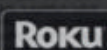
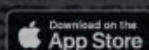
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DAD'S LAST GUN

Father and son shared a lifetime of firearms experiences. But in the end, there was one piece of unfinished business.



Beauty and the Beast? The Glock 19 Gen 5 (below) with the Browning Hi-Power. The Glock is a different pistol from a different era. While it lacks the elegant lines, fine bluing, sculpted all-steel construction and French walnut grips of this 1970s-vintage Hi-Power, it does offer high magazine capacity in a lighter-weight package. Add reliability with modern, high-performance ammunition and easy takedown, and the Glock comes ahead.

Although they didn't share the last handgun, the author and his father, Harry Ewert, enjoyed over a half-century of shooting, reloading, hunting and acquiring firearms together. By adding a Glock 19 to the collection, the author completed their unfinished business.



As father/son relationships go, Dad's and mine lasted 64 years. We shared a lifetime of hunting, shooting, reloading and "accumulating" all kinds of firearms, including rifles, shotguns and handguns. We shot them all, reloaded for most of them and added to the trove periodically when our finances aligned with our desires. And sometimes, when they didn't.

The story of Dad's last gun is a puzzle that, once assembled, was the sum of our knowledge and wisdom, somewhat belated, with a seemingly contradictory outcome if viewed after the fact. It's a story best told from the beginning.

From my early teens, hardly a day went by when my father and I didn't

discuss, fantasize and argue (sometimes heatedly) about the merits of one gun versus another. My poor mother bemoaned the perpetual subject matter in vain.

My late mother, Marilyn, and my late father, Harry, raised me well; Dad worked as an electrician, and Mom was an advertising copywriter. We lived in a modest house in a cozy, middle-class, tree-lined suburb in Wisconsin.

Under my father's tutelage, my introduction to the firearms world was gradual and measured. At age 10, Dad began taking me to gun stores and shows and introduced me to his friends steeped in firearms culture. His voluminous library of gun books (including many fine editions of *Gun*

Digest), magazines, and sales literature in the basement was always open to me, on one condition (not always honored) that I *put all borrowed items back where I found them*.

Being young, curious, and fascinated with firearms, I read his collection enthusiastically and absorbed what I learned like a sponge. In time, my book knowledge would rival his. Looking back, I couldn't have asked for a better upbringing.

When I reached 12, Dad decided it was time to begin my formal firearms education. He taught me pistol craft with his classic Smith & Wesson K38 .38 Special revolver and allowed me to shoot my Marlin 39 .22 lever-action rifle, a birthday gift from his brother, under strict supervision.

During my teens, I purchased my first shotgun, a beautiful Browning Auto 5 in 20-gauge magnum, and my first handgun, a Smith & Wesson 6½-inch barreled Model 28 Highway Patrolman, from the fruits of my summer and after-school jobs. At 16, I hunted ducks, geese, pheasants and furred game with the Browning and perforated coffee cans and paper targets with .38 Special wadcutters shot from that Model 28. A while later, Dad and I took up deer hunting. There was wild game in the freezer during the winter for our family's dining pleasure.

Handguns were our first love. Over the years, we owned and shot over 50 revolvers and semi-autos by Smith & Wesson, Colt and Ruger. The foreign models came later.

We reloaded the most popular American centerfire handgun cartridges. We graduated to casting bullets for our handguns by the thousands, in .35, .44 and .45 calibers, including some

round balls for a brace of Colt second-generation percussion revolvers.

As the cliché goes, it was a great run. Human mortality proved the only limit to our shared passion.

After a long struggle with many health issues, Dad passed away peacefully at age 89. My lifelong hunting and shooting partner is still sorely missed. However, the memories remain clear, and the knowledge and wisdom acquired during our time are firmly in place.

This leads us to the unfinished business of that last handgun.

Dad and I had conservative tastes in firearms. A majority of them are classics in their category. Through our readings, we were heavily influenced by 20th century firearms writing greats Jack O'Connor, Elmer Keith, Charles Askins and, later, Jeff Cooper, Skeeter Skelton and Bill Jordan. Those were our prophets during the 1960s and '70s.

Our revolvers included that classic

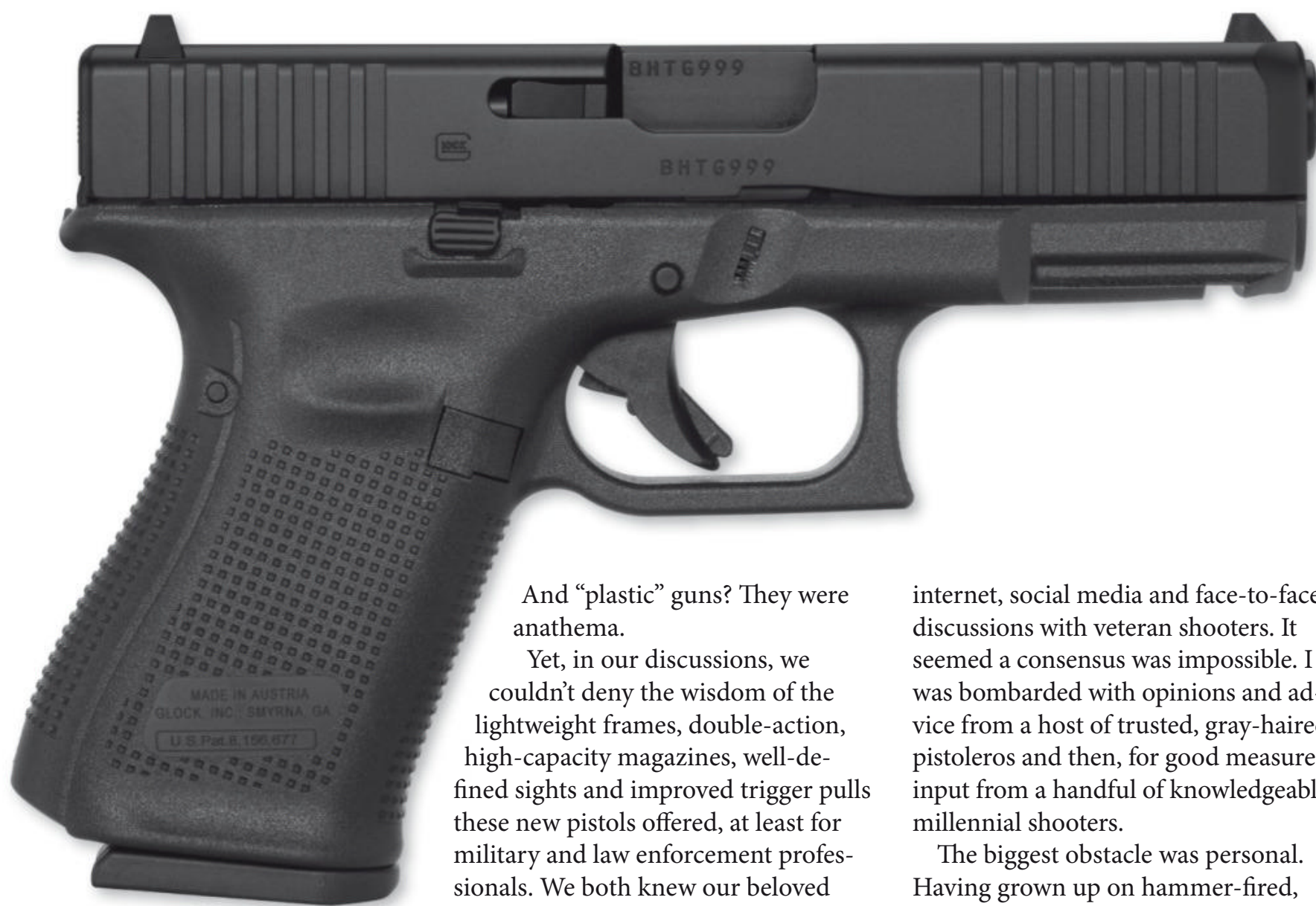
S&W K38, followed by an S&W Model 1950 Target Model in .44 Special, a 1950 Military and Police .45 ACP and many other well-known Smith and Colt revolvers.

Later, we added a host of vintage European 9mm semi-autos, with the Browning Hi-Power and an early World War II Walther P38 at the head of the class. Then, there is a family of Argentine 1911A1 semi-autos, including a Colt contract pistol, a licensed copy, and an unlicensed knock-off, with indigenous design improvements, all in .45 caliber.

For the most part, blued steel and well-figured wood grips were our quality standard in sidearms. However, as the shooting world rushed ahead, we were stuck in the '70s, decades behind firearms technology. By then, the lightweight, high-capacity, double-action 9mm "Wonder Nine" was conquering the military, law enforcement, and civilian handgun markets.



For years, the author and his father doubted the relevancy of lightweight, high-capacity, striker-fired "Wonder Nines." Dad's last gun, this Glock 19 Gen 5, illustrates that even the most entrenched attitudes can change over time with experience.



Dad and I discussed this frequently before his illness. Had we missed the boat? Were we out of touch with the 21st century? We agreed that we were. What to do about it? Our time together was running short. But we were stubborn, inflexible and complacent with what we felt were the best handguns in the world. We owned them for years, shot them regularly and were proficient, sometimes better, with them.

One gun, in particular, stuck in our craw: The revolutionary Glock 17, the pistol that turned the handgun world on its head. At first, it was an abomination to us. Before the Glock, we even disdained semi-autos with aluminum frames, including the original Colt Commander (now lightweight Commander) and the S&W Model 39, America's first double-action 9mm autoloader. Why? As we believed at the time—later proven wrong—aluminum frames were less durable than steel.

And “plastic” guns? They were anathema.

Yet, in our discussions, we couldn't deny the wisdom of the lightweight frames, double-action, high-capacity magazines, well-defined sights and improved trigger pulls these new pistols offered, at least for military and law enforcement professionals. We both knew our beloved Colt Government Models and Browning Hi-Power were beautiful, classic, storied pistols, though heavy and hard to conceal. But we believed they were the standard in semi-auto excellence.

Eventually, we old dogs were keen to learn a new trick. Glock and others of the genre were on our minds. Then, Dad's illnesses worsened, and our plans were put on hold. Though bedbound at the end, we discussed guns, what we'd learned together and what we hadn't. During his last week of life in hospice, we ruminated about the ones that got away, the Glock in particular.

After Dad passed away, I rested all our firearms for a while. As an only child, and per his wish, his guns were now mine and had to be managed as objects of use and investments. I knew he would want me to continue with our passion, enjoy firearms, move forward and continuously learn. For three years, I thought about our unfinished business and what I would do about it. There was substantial research, including from the pages of *Gun Digest*, the

internet, social media and face-to-face discussions with veteran shooters. It seemed a consensus was impossible. I was bombarded with opinions and advice from a host of trusted, gray-haired pistoleros and then, for good measure, input from a handful of knowledgeable millennial shooters.

The biggest obstacle was personal. Having grown up on hammer-fired, single-action semi-autos from the John Browning stable, it was a big adjustment to accept striker-fired, double-action pistols. However, striker-fired technology was proven for many years—U.S. law enforcement and our military made the transition and weren't going back. With some reservations, striker-fired it would be.

Visits to gun shops to examine, hold, and debate the merits of one model versus another were interesting but inconclusive. My selection criteria focused on a proven design, mechanical simplicity, reliability and ergonomics. While this would not be a target gun, a first-rate trigger and sights were prerequisites. For concealed carry, weight and size were a concern.

All the Wonder Nines felt good in my large hands; today's pistols have ergonomics down pat. The lighter weight gives my arthritic shoulders a break. Sights and triggers? Handgun manufacturers offer consumers new levels of off-the-shelf excellence in both. The magazine capacity is there if

you want it.

After a year of searching, I purchased a Glock 19 Gen 5 and haven't looked back. This pistol has it all, and there's no shortage of aftermarket accessories. To me, the jump into the 21st century was exhilarating.

The G19 pistol has been reviewed extensively. It's an excellent compromise in size, weight, firepower and concealability, incorporating all the advancements in semi-automatic handguns over the past 50 years.

Out of the box, fired offhand at 25 yards, the Glock is accurate, reliable with all ammunition, balances right and is very natural and comfortable to shoot. These attributes are reinforced at close range and with higher fire rates. Takedown for cleaning and routine maintenance is shockingly easy. Other pistols would have sufficed, but this is the one we—myself as purchaser and my father, through me as his proxy—chose.

I know Dad would have approved of the choice. I only wish he was around to share the joys of its ownership and use. No, it's not the finely blued, sculpted steel and quality-checkered walnut

grips we valued on handguns. But it is a marvelous shooting tool, built for a purpose. If you judge a handgun by form-follows-function design, the Glock is a work of art.

This newcomer to our collection does not diminish the legacy of the Browning masterpieces we've owned and shot for most of our lives. They're still prized, in the gun safe, ready for use, and will be to the trail's end.

Dad's last gun, a Glock 19 awarded posthumously in his honor, completely contradicts what we thought a handgun should be for almost half a century. That's ironic, but so be it. The unfinished business is now complete.

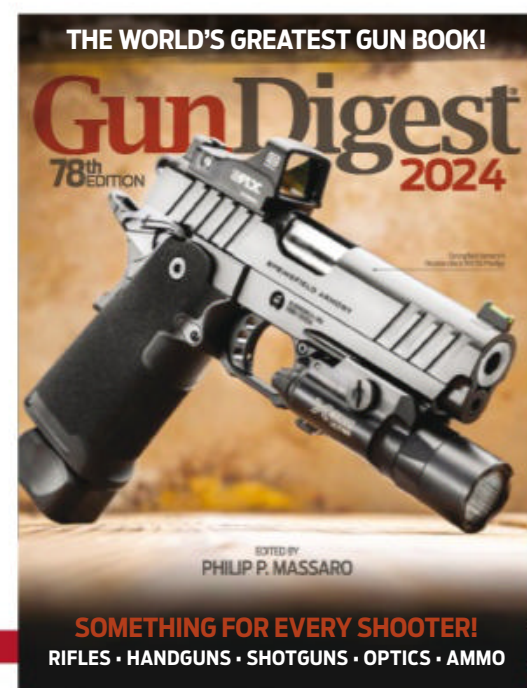
Our hoard of classic firearms is a testament to Dad, my shooting and hunting partner, teacher and best friend. It represents a lifetime of shared firearms experiences, knowledge and shooting memories. Examining each gun, whether to shoot or hold, relive the memories, and admire, still brings tremendous enjoyment.

Dad's last gun is now a valued part of that collection. **GDTM**

This article is but an excerpt from a single chapter in the world's greatest gun book, *Gun Digest 2024*, which is an invaluable guide to understanding rifles, handguns, shotguns, optics and ammunition.

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Two John Browning classics, along with the new standard of excellence in semi-automatic handguns (clockwise, from bottom): Colt Government Model .45 ACP, Browning Hi-Power 9mm and the Glock 19 Gen 5 9mm. After over a half-century's experience with hammer-fired, single-action auto pistols, the author and his father believed the Browning guns set the bar for service excellence. They still do, but the bar has moved, and now the author thinks favorably of lightweight, striker-fired semi-autos.

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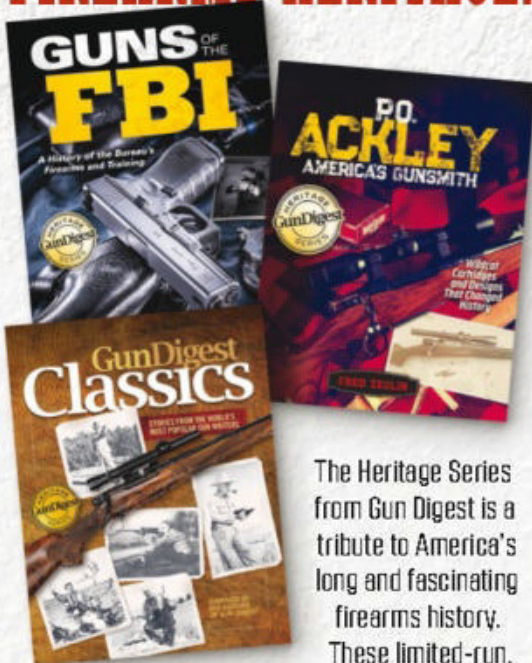
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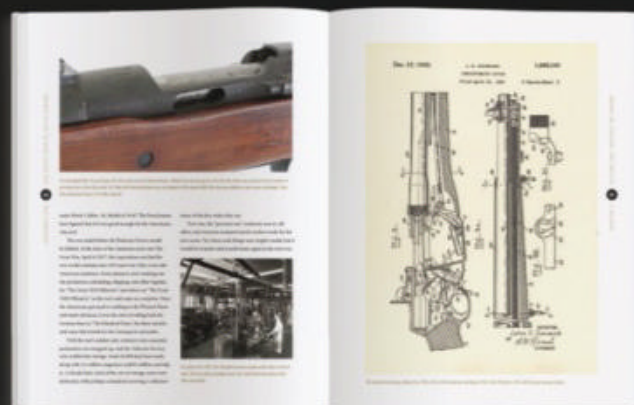
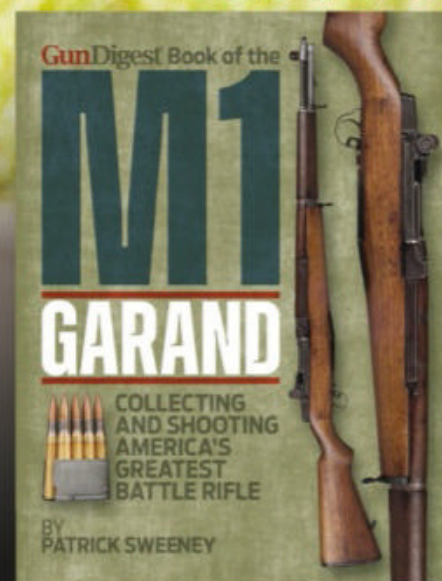
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THE MODERN HUNTING RIFLE

A little competition influence, some military sniper inspiration and an infusion of manufacturing technology.

The author's position dominates this vast field. Thanks to the tripod and concealed position, the author has almost 180 degrees of freedom, and the rifle is always ready to fire. There is no need to keep the gun in your hands with this setup.

In conversation, you'll find that people have a rather rigid idea of just how much "modern" can go into a gun ... or what accessories could or should go on a rifle to make it suitable for a given task. There tends to be an idea of "this is a hunting rifle, this is a target rifle, and this is a sniper rifle" among most riflemen.

Today, all the lines are functionally non-existent. That might hurt to hear, but it's true.

I can't tell you the number of times I've been told that it isn't fair to the deer to use what I have, but as I will soon address, everything I'm using has been done before: We're just now seeing better ways to interface these otherwise disparate species of gear.

Right now, we're in an era of refinement and proliferation regarding support gear, and I think the prophecies I spew here

and in deer camp will all come true in a matter of a decade or less. What you see as custom guns here in my photography are my actual hunting rifles, and I believe they'll all be par for the course soon.

In fact, my gear may get antiquated in a short time. Let's dive in.

WHAT MAKES A HUNTING RIFLE?

There's no official definition of what makes a rifle a "hunting rifle." From a purely cultural angle, a Savage 99 is a classic deer rifle. That much can be said of it. If you choose to use this as your main hunting gun instead of something that takes advantage of modern technology, well, you're not wrong for doing so. However,

understand that, by nature, you are at a technological disadvantage as compared to the efficacy of what I generally carry afield.

Am I a "better" hunter for using all this gear? Most certainly not, but I have learned to leverage new equipment to the timeless game. Again, it's all about the experience you seek.

Now, ask yourself, is the Savage 99 a better gun than a caplock .54 Hawken? Is the Hawken a better gun than a flintlock? Is the flintlock a better gun than a matchlock? Is a matchlock better than a bow ... and so on.

Regression for the sake of nostalgia is





The author's straight-wall-case deer rifle, chambered in .450 Bushmaster. The action is a trued Remington 700 with a 20-inch heavy spiral fluted barrel. It wears a SilencerCo Hybrid 46M in Armageddon gear cover. The stock is the excellent Foundation Revelation with Wiebad cheek pad and SAP sling and two-round holder. The rifle is zeroed with 260-grain Remington loads for 150M with the excellent Leupold MK5 HD 5-25X in a Scope Chaps cover.



The author's lightweight field rifle in 6.5 Creedmoor features a Michigan-made Tuebor Precision titanium action, 24-inch Proof Research barrel, Rearden MFG muzzle brake and Q Jumbo Shrimp suppressor. The stock is the new LRH from Manners. The rifle is zeroed with Black Hills 143-grain loads and wears a Vortex Razor HD Gen 3 6-36X. Accessories are from Wiebad, Scope Chaps and SAP.



This build was made of parts the author had laying around. The action is a 24-inch 6.5CM Christensen factory action taken off an MPR. It has a Rearden muzzle brake and SilencerCo Omega 36M with Rearden Atlas adapter. The Magpul chassis is a folding model and very strong. The optic is from US Optics, and accessories are from SAP and Armageddon gear.



The Curtis build is a CarbonSix 26-inch .308 Winchester with Rearden MFG flash hider and JK Armament 155 suppressor. It has a USO Foundation 5-25X MOA optic. The rifle has a KRG X-Ray chassis for the Remington short action. It is a great chassis that can be easily customized. Other accessories are by Scope Chaps, Wiebad and SAP.

just that: regression. It's no sin to take technology to the field; the first man to throw a rock at an animal started this march and, yes, that thrown rock is technology. You can choose to intentionally handicap yourself, but understand that I won't. I want meat over the fire, same as my ancestors did 10,000 years ago.

And if you really think about it, we're

still throwing said rocks ... just a bit faster and farther.

That Savage 99 was high-tech at the time it was introduced. It created a lasting legacy as a classic and eventually fell out of favor, except with some diehards. It's a great gun, however, a far cry from the muzzleloaders in common use just a few decades prior. There's no definition of a

hunting rifle other than that which you take hunting, be it a Model 70 or Barrett M107.

RIFLE CONSTRUCTION AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

Rifle actions have changed very little since Mauser developed the 1896 action. The Remington 700 did what



The Manners stock is designed to use an Arca rail. This model came with it installed. It's a direct installation and representative of what the author believes will become a standard feature on hunting bolt guns within the next decade.

others couldn't and reached a saturation level in the market to the point that its "footprint" (body diameter, trigger inlet, and screw spacing) is now the de facto industry standard. Most large companies are concerned with the bottom line, and as a result, there hasn't been tremendous innovation in things like "stock" stocks over the years. Thus, aftermarket companies began to step in and experiment.

This level of standardization has created market opportunities that would otherwise not exist for a one-off rifle design, particularly in generating repeatable accuracy. Where this has generated the most excitement has been in material innovation in aftermarket stocks. Each of the stocks in this article is a radical departure from those of yesteryear and essentially guarantee of increased performance.

The interface between action and stock used to be wizardry. Today, the art of bedding and installing pillars is all but vacated except in some high-end custom guns. The reason being that, with an aluminum bedding block or internal chassis, there's no need to bed at all. In 99.9 percent of cases and from direct personal experience, dropping an action in an aluminum stock/modern internal chassis, groups shrink instantly. I don't even worry about my groups when I build a gun because I know they'll shoot: Manufacturing, for the most part, has gotten that good.

Of extreme interest to me is the solid Micarta stock made by Foundation Stocks. You will probably recognize this material as being the same as I use on the various Winkler Knives axes, including other tools and knives I use to supplement the guns in my photos. The material has been used for everything from insulation to electronic components housing and is made from cloth soaked in epoxy that is subjected to heat and pressure.

The machining and quality of the Foundation stock is incredible and it, while being a traditional stock layout, needs no bedding or special attention. I took my well-used custom .450 Bushmaster action and bottom metal and literally just dropped them in, tightened down the action screws and proceeded to take a pile of deer with it. I wish they made a version in green linen—that's my only critique. You can't ask for a better modern stock.

Likewise, one of my main bottleneck-cased hunting rifles, a Tuebor Precision titanium action with Proof Research 6.5 Creedmoor barrel, wears a new Manners carbon-fiber LRH stock with internal mini chassis. Again, all I did was drop the action in and tighten it down. This rifle is under 10 pounds loaded and shoots 140-grain Federal Gold Medal Match factory ammo into a truly jaw-dropping ½-inch, five-shot group at 200M. It's an absolute tack driver, and I did nothing

special to it—well, having a 6-36X Vortex Razor on it certainly helps.

As far as chassis designs go, the Magpul Pro folder has been one of my go-to chassis for years. You've seen this same chassis in many of my articles, and it has probably housed a half-dozen actions over the past several years. It currently has a Christensen action in it with a USO optic. I put it together for a specific property I hunt where I wanted a 10X max optic with a thick-lined reticle for low light. The aluminum base of the chassis is about as rigid as you can get and, while being a used action I took off a buddy, it drops Sig Sauer 130-grain Elite Hunter loads into a ½-inch group at 100M at 10X.

KRG has been making fine stocks for a while, and their design is also incredibly simple and effective. The stock featured here is on my wife's 26-inch suppressed .308 Win. While as long as a musket, it's eerily quiet and can place Hornady 178's into a ragged hole at 200M. The barrel is by CarbonSix and the action by Curtis. She's currently waiting on a prototype extended Arca forend for this build.

I trust KRG because they're affordable and consistent. Twenty years ago, when I was first into precision rifles, I'd have killed for a sub \$400 aluminum-based stock when all that was available was the original generation AICS chassis for double that amount.

But, above all, these stocks have the ability to interface with an Arca-Swiss rail. Some are able to do it with an M-Lok adapter, Anschütz adapter or direct integration. The Arca rail is something I will discuss below when talking tripods, however, now is the point for me to make the bet that in a decade all modern hunting guns and virtually anything geared to hunting and field use will have an Arca rail integrated into the stock. This will be less a big deal on AR-type rifles, but for bolt guns, the Arca interface will allow a proliferation of accessories to further enhance performance.

CAN IT

The first thing people usually notice is that all my hunting guns are suppressed: If you can own one in your state, you absolutely should. Pistol cans are fun, and I hunt with them, too, but rifle suppressors are really where it's at for increasing your effectiveness in the field. So much has been written already, but it's always worth noting that suppressors not only reduce recoil—when combined with the other accessories you'll see how effective the entire system can be.

More importantly, what we are seeing now is that most modern factory guns are coming with threaded muzzles. The popularity of suppressors certainly helps, but just 10 years ago threaded models were not the norm. It may seem trivial,



Tripods are commonly used with spotting scopes, such as this Vortex.

but the standardization of muzzle threads is a huge deal. What you put on the end of your barrel can control recoil, mitigate flash or reduce noise—in some cases, all three.

TRIPOD TERRITORY

The modern tripod is a recent creation that has had a long evolution. Creating a stable base for precision at distance is difficult and has taken many forms. The most common today is the bipod, but even at that the shooter is something of the third contact point. The rifle is a platform for the projectile—our original stone, if you will. Over the millennia, we've become

collectively excellent at directing a projectile, and today's tripods are rugged, stable bases that are vital to a full hunting system.

Shooting tripods are directly evolved from camera tripods and even share their Arca-Swiss mounting interface, but this is a recent development in the gun world. Arca-Swiss camera adapters have been around for decades, and they were developed to address the same thing that they address with guns: stabilizing a heavy object.

Arca-Swiss rails are essentially just a generous dovetail rail with a clamp on the mounting head. During the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and even in the various wars of the 1980s and '90s, snipers were always trying to adapt new gear to their rifles. Tripods at this time were revised from camera tripods, but these were often fragile and didn't provide consistency.

Arca integration is easy on semi-auto rifles. In this case, a short plate is installed flush with the handguard.



Rifles were simply set in a V-wedge, sometimes just made of junk.

In the later War on Terror years, dedicated clamp-style head mounts became popular, but these were difficult to use with the rounded forearms of most sniper rifles and AR-based precision rifles. Various other types of mounts were tried, including QD Picatinny rail mounts, but ultimately the already-established Arca-Swiss

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Bipods can be adapted to Arca, M-Lok, Picatinny and sling studs to suit your needs.

started to take over, largely because the tripod heads were already available. A wide range of products are compatible with rifles because of how prolific photography accessories are.

In the past 10 years, tripods evolved from flimsy aluminum photography models to heavy-duty carbon fiber with rugged controls. I believe tripods are going to be the most in-demand rifle accessory of the next decade. The market is growing rapidly, and we are seeing tons of add-ons such as caddies for gear and note-taking, their use on spotting scopes and lightweight models for field use

SYSTEM INTEGRATION

If you view the rifle not just as a rifle but as a part of a larger system, you see how important the interfaces become. I typically have both Picatinny and Arca mounts on my rifles; I don't like to have my bipod also be attached to an Arca interface because I like to use the lower-profile QD mounts from Atlas Bipods. In general, what you're looking at is a completely stable bullet-launching platform that you simply have to align and pull the trigger.

When you have a modern optic, you can zero at max point-blank range and then use your reticle to account for drop.

I can easily swap between 260-grain Remington loads in .450 Bushmaster to Hornady 395-grain SubX loads without losing zero or guessing. When suppressed, I can keep my awareness on the environment and listen for the impact of my shots on game.

The Two Vets "The Kit" tripod stows in

Tension and tilt/pan adjustments provide you with as much or as little resistance as you want when moving the rifle to fire.



my backpack, and it can adjust to any position I need, including prone. The added bipod weight also reduces recoil, and I can stay on target easily. What's most interesting and useful is that, when the gun is in the tripod, it's in firing position already. I sit back, relax and glass. This layout is so effective that it's the only way I hunt if I can help it.

ON THE HORIZON

I estimate that in just 10 years' time we'll see a complete renovation of the hunting rifle category. Likewise, I believe we will see advanced materials, such as carbon fiber, continue to become more common on factory guns. This used to be a custom option, but today we are seeing complete rifles with this technology for less than the cost of some barrels alone.

I believe that soon there will be factory guns with carbon-fiber stocks and threaded barrels with Arca-Swiss interfaces for well under \$1,000 that shoot as well as custom guns do today. There will be a few more years of teething before things become truly standardized, but we're on our way to the total blending of competition, military sniper and hunting rifles to where the capabilities will be utterly uniform across the board. **GDTM**

The Two Vets ball head. This is a fast and rigid clamp system that prevents the gun from slipping out.



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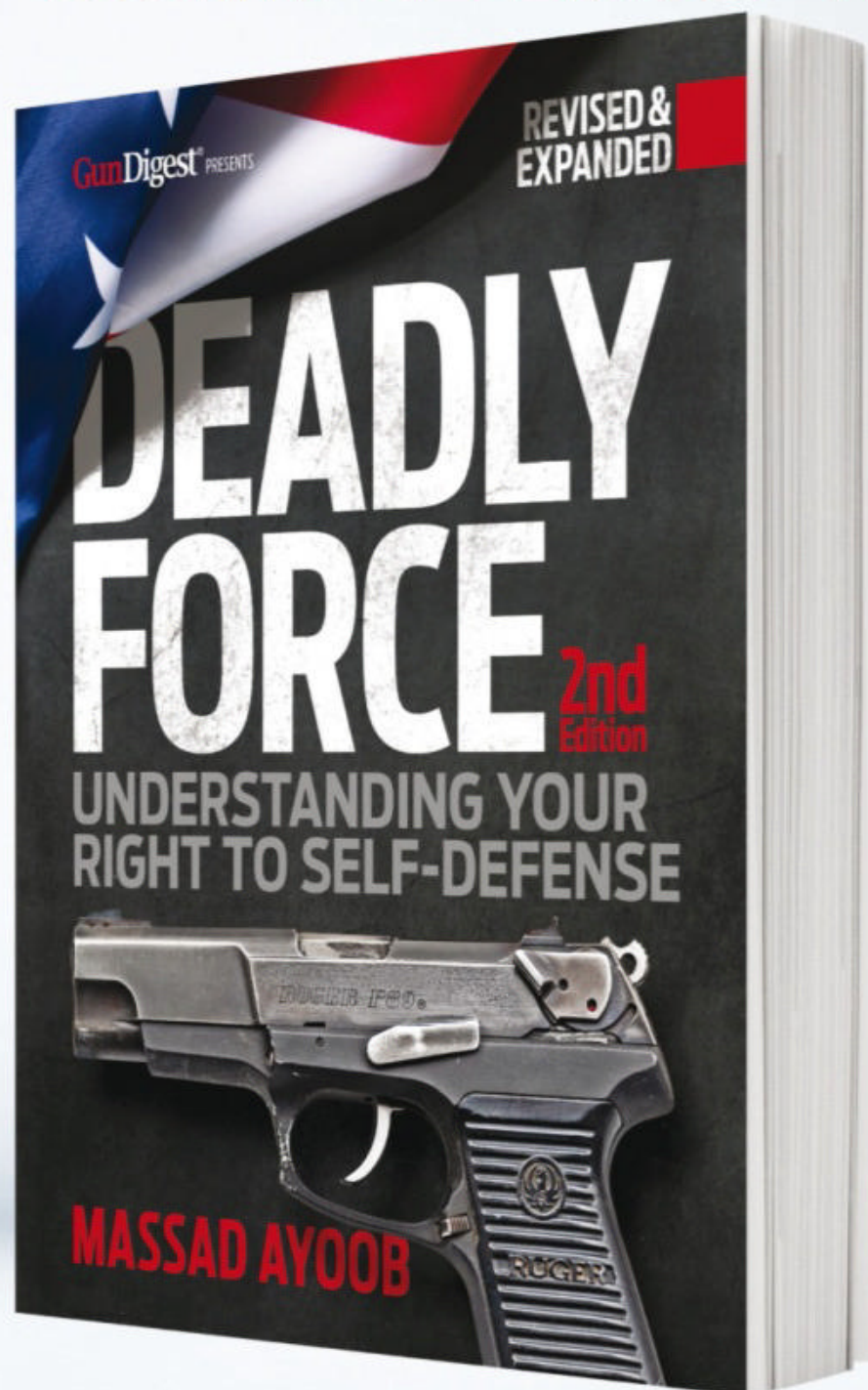
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HEY, JACOB!

Jacob Grey TWC 9 double-stack 9mm 1911.



current popularity of the 9mm double-stack 1911, especially those sporting things like optics-ready slides and accessory rails.

Jacob Grey is the latest company to announce its own spin on this concept in the form of the exceptionally attractive TWC 9.

The frame and grip of the TWC 9 are made of billet 7075 aluminum, and the pistol has a stainless-steel 4.25-inch bull barrel, with a 1:10 twist and a Nowlin ramp. Jacob Grey says that the CNC-machined billet aluminum frame and grip result in a very tight and smooth pistol while also providing good structural integrity and reducing the overall weight.

Other features of the 9mm TWC 9 include its CRT (Controlled Radius Trigger) that offers a consistent and crisp 3.5-pound trigger pull, its stainless-steel optics-ready slide that's cut for RMR/RMSc-pattern red-dots, and its suppressor-height tritium front and rear sights from XS Sights.

The TWC 9 also has an ambidextrous safety, a flared magwell and uses standard 2011-pattern magazines.

"I wanted to utilize our tech and aerospace history, and combine it with the Jacob Grey Custom 1911 successes, to build a production gun that's priced right and second to none in quality," said Todd Neice, President of Sales and Marketing at Jacob Grey. "Once you get your hands on this firearm, you will quickly see that we succeeded."

The TWC 9 is available now, and it has an MSRP of \$2,499. **GDTM**

The 1911 will never go out of style, but the classic single-stack varieties are lacking in capacity and features ... at least by modern standards. Hence the



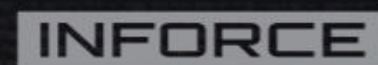
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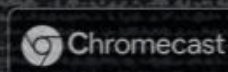
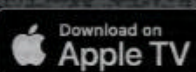
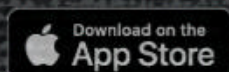
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