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Choosing
the Right Self-
Defense Attorney



Gun Digest

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INS THE MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2024
VOLUME 41 • ISSUE 12

MARKET REPORT

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Recent Gun
Sales Trends

PLUS

Reviewed:
The Perfect
CCW Revolver

Gear to Get:
Top Optics
of 2024

**2011 Head-
to-Head:**
A Tale of
Two Turks

**Franchi's
Momentum
All-Terrain Elite**

A Good M.A.T.E.



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LIGHTWEIGHT
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Guns Keep
Getting Lighter.
Why Don't
Scopes?





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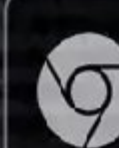
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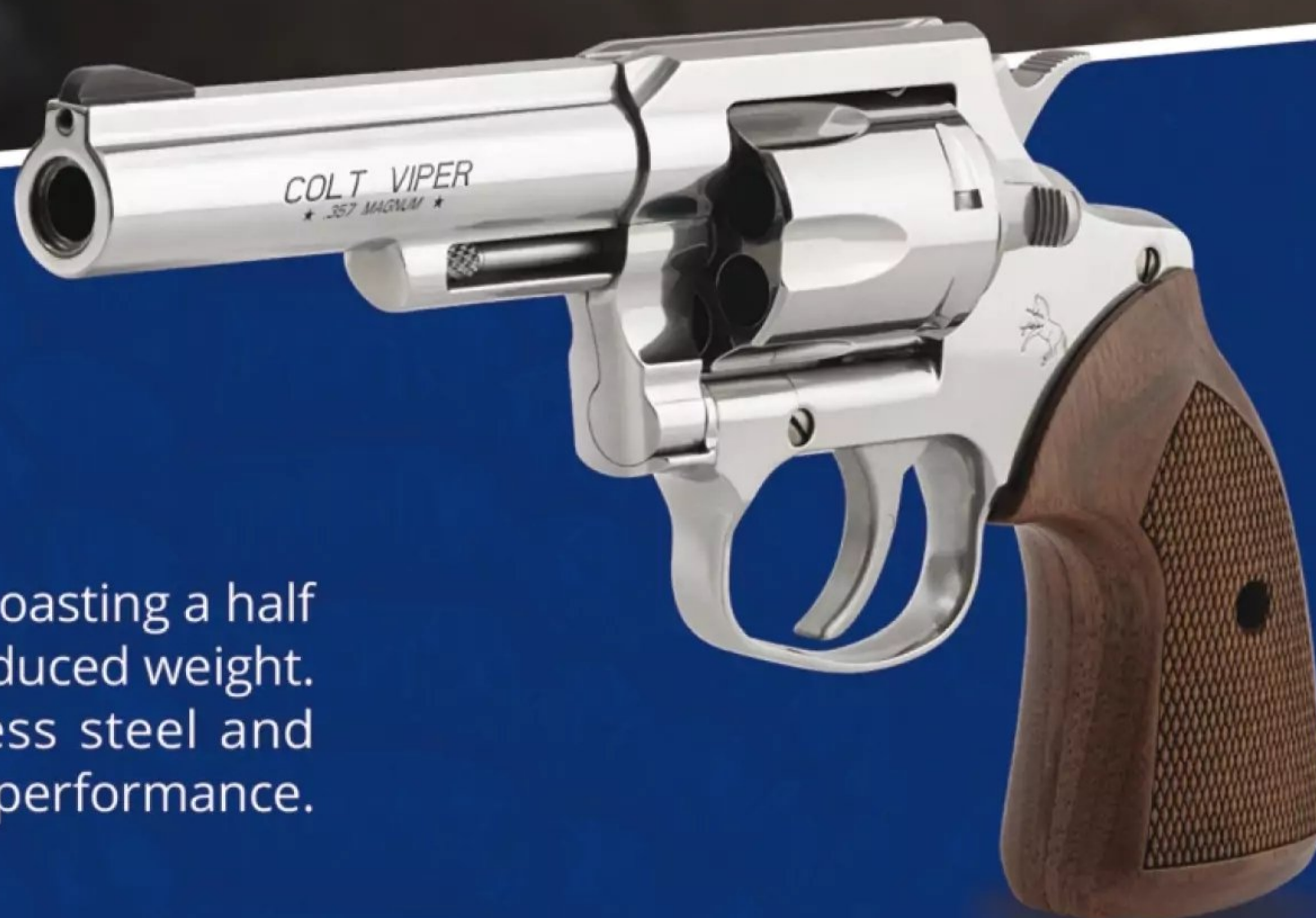


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YOU & GUN DIGEST (YES, YOU!)

Earlier this summer, Richard Mann and I were talking on the phone, verbally hurling article ideas back and forth at one another in an effort to see what would inspire either one of us. Rifles, handguns, ammo ... the usual.

As you could likely predict, the conversation eventually wandered into optics territory: red-dots, holos, specific brands, long range.

"I'd really like to do a piece on light-weight riflescopes," Richard offered. "But there just ain't that many anymore."

"Why?"

"Good question," he said. "Rifles keep getting lighter, but the scopes not so much."

"Find out, and write it up."

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how the majority of the feature assignments get made for *Gun Digest*. (You can read all his findings on that topic in this issue.)

But that's not the only way I source content for this magazine:

There's an email account that doesn't get used much, and I'd like *you* to change that.

As the calendar year comes to an end, I begin to focus on the next year's content. While I always leave open "TBD" slots for ideas and product launches throughout the year, the majority of the assignments get made right about now.

While I'll continue to lean on my stable of regular *Gun Digest* contributing experts, I want more input from my reading experts for 2025. *Pssst: That's where you get involved.*

So, if you've got a gun, ammo or optics question that's been gnawing at ya, email me at info@GunDigest.com. Or, if you've got an idea that you think would make a great article, hit me up and put us to work on it.

And remember to shoot straight ... and shoot often. **GDTM**

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22 PPC USA

Short, stubby
... and
screamin'.



HISTORICAL NOTES

The .22 PPC-USA was developed in 1974 by Dr. Louis Palmisano and Ferris Pindell, primarily for use as a benchrest cartridge. Although originally a wildcat, Sako of Finland introduced commercial rifles and ammunition late in 1987. Norma followed suit in 1993 with loaded ammunition.

Because the .22 PPC-USA is an American development, it's listed here as a current American rifle cartridge, with the "-USA" appended, rather than as a European cartridge. The cartridge is based on the .220 Russian case, which is a necked-down version of the 7.62x39mm Soviet military cartridge.

The Wichita Engineering and Supply Co. made the first rifles for both the .22 and 6mm PPC cartridges. Many custom rifles have been built around this cartridge. In 1993, Ruger announced its No. 1V and M77 varmint rifles in this cartridge as well.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The originators altered the .220 Russian case by giving it a 10-degree body taper and 30-degree shoulder angle, as well as expanding the neck to accept the standard .224-inch diameter bullet used in the United States. The cartridge cases are made in Finland by Sako, or in Sweden by Norma, and use small-rifle primers.

Although the .22 PPC-USA is a short,

rather stubby case only 1.51 inches long, it nevertheless develops ballistics superior to some larger, longer cartridges such as the .222 and .223 Remington. The 52-grain bullet can be pushed out of the muzzle at more than 3,500 fps, and this definitely places the .22 PPC-USA in the varmint and small-game class. A 1:14 twist has become standard for these rifles, although a 1:12 twist can sometimes be found. **GDTM**

.22 PPC-USA LOADING DATA AND FACTORY BALLISTICS

BULLET (GRAINS/TYPE)	POWDER	GRAINS	VELOCITY	ENERGY	SOURCE
40 Nos BT	Varget	29.5	3,560	1,125	Hodgdon
52 HP	BL-C2	28.3	3,400	1,335	Speer
52 HP	W748	28.0	3,300	1,258	Speer, Nosler, Hornady
55 SP	H335	27.0	3,200	1,251	Speer, Nosler
55 SP	W748	28.0	3,200	1,251	Hornady, Nosler, Speer
52 Sierra MK HPBT	FL	9.1	3,340	1,288	HSM 22PPC-1-N

GENERATION

MEETS

INNOVATION



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A PERFECT PACKAGE

A new revolver, and a new load, designed specifically for concealed carry.

If you're a frequent reader of this magazine and column, you know I have an affinity for the .32 H&R Magnum and .327 Federal Magnum revolver cartridges. And, in contrast, I'm often perplexed as to why so many shooters cannot seem to grasp the appeal of either cartridge.

The combination does a fantastic job of bridging the gap between the .22 Long Rifle/.22 Magnum and the .38 Special/.357 Magnum. They're substantially more powerful than the first pair, more comfortable to shoot and offer a higher capacity than the

second. So, anytime there's a new .32 H&R Magnum or .327 revolver, I'm fast to give it a look, which is why as soon as I learned about Lipsey's Exclusive S&W Model 432 in .32 H&R Magnum I requested one for review.

THE CARTRIDGE

The .32 H&R Magnum cartridge is essentially a .32 S&W long cartridge lengthened by 0.155 inch. Additionally, the .32 H&R Magnum is loaded to a maximum average pressure (MAP) of 23,000 psi, as opposed to 15,000 psi. That's a pressure increase of 53 percent. The result is that the .32 H&R

Magnum has an instrumental velocity of 1,020 fps with a 95-grain bullet as opposed to the .32 S&W Long's 750 fps with a 98-grain bullet.

Another neat feature of the .32 H&R Magnum is that the cartridges are only 0.337 inch in diameter as opposed to 0.379 for the .38 Special. This means that, in most compact revolvers, the cylinder will hold six .32 H&R Magnum cartridges ... as opposed to five .38 Specials. Also, a largely unknown fact about .32 H&R Magnum revolvers is that they can chamber and fire .32 Short, .32 Long and even .32 ACP ammunition.

THE REVOLVER

The Smith & Wesson J-frame revolver has been a trusted companion for those wanting a concealable revolver for personal protection for almost 75 years. Recently, S&W announced a partnership with Lipsey's to offer a Model 432 J-frame with an aluminum frame and chambered for the .32 H&R Magnum. This revolver is only 6.32 inches long and weighs a scant 16.3 ounces. This is a concealed hammer design, so it's double-action only, but the revolver has some features not commonly seen on factory new J-frame revolvers.

S&W fitted this revolver with XS Sights' Minimalist Revolver front sight, which features a Tritium vial surrounded with a photoluminescent



The little S&W Model 432 in .32 H&R Magnum from Lipsey's is compact and comfortable to shoot, and the notched rear and XS front sight makes it easier to aim than most snub-nose revolvers.



(Left) One advantage of the Model 432 in .32 H&R Magnum over a snub-nose .38 Special is the six- as opposed to five-round capacity.

(Right) With Galco's Concealable Belt Holster, the little .32 H&R Magnum from Smith & Wesson can easily and comfortably be carried outside the waistband. It's so compact and light you'll hardly know it's there.



green ring. This is a highly visible sight in any light, and S&W smartly paired it with a dovetailed U-notch rear sight that has a Novak-like profile. One of the weaknesses of the J-frame has always been the sights, and this fixes that problem.

Also, S&W worked with Lipsey's and designed a special set of VZ "High Horn" G10 UC "boot" grips that are slim—but also very comfortable. The revolver comes in two finish options: matte black and matte stainless. The barrel is 1.8 inches long, the front edge of the cylinder is beveled, and the charge holes are chamfered. It also has an enhanced trigger and uses titanium pins. The other good news is that this revolver doesn't have what has become to be known as the "Hillary Hole," which is an external keyed lock. It retails for \$759 ... while supplies last.

THE HOLSTER

I'm not a fan of pocket carry—not because I think it's a bad idea, but because it just doesn't fit my wardrobe and carry/training style. I like a handgun on my strong side just behind my hip bone. That's how I train with all the handguns I carry concealed, so that's where I like to wear them, no matter the make or model. When I received the revolver for review, I ordered a Galco Gunleather Concealable Belt Holster (\$169) for OWB carry and one of their Royal Guard 2.0 holsters (\$212) for IWB carry. Both are very

comfortable, easy to draw from and re-holster into, and they make this compact revolver seemingly disappear on my side.

THE LOAD

Though this little revolver will chamber and fire four different cartridges, there's not a lot of .32 H&R Magnum ammo options to choose from; a major online retailer lists only six loads. So, in the interest of providing potential customers with a complete defensive handgun package, Jason Cloessner of Lipsey's worked with gun writer Jeff Hoover and Buffalo Bore Ammunition owner Tim Sundles to develop a load specifically for this mini gun.

The problem with low-power, small-caliber handguns is that they tend to not deliver great terminal performance with hollow-point bullets. This is because they lack the velocity and energy to push an upset hollow-point bullet very deep. The answer to this problem is a hardcast bullet with a flat nose, like a wadcutter or semi-wadcutter. These non-deforming, flat-nose, hardcast bullets cut a caliber-size hole in anything they hit, they penetrate extremely deep, and they don't need to be loaded to extreme pressures or velocities to deliver this kind of performance. There are the same type loads outdoorsmen often choose for bear defense with larger handgun cartridges.

The Load Buffalo Bore (\$38.32, per box of 20) created for this revolver

uses a 100-grain, hardcast, wadcutter bullet that's loaded to a standard pressure, and it's advertised as offering a muzzle velocity of about 900 fps out of the revolver Buffalo Bore designed it for. My testing showed these velocities to be spot-on, and when I fired these loads into blocks of Clear Ballistics, they penetrated more than 2 feet. No, this isn't the same level of performance you can expect out of a .357 Magnum or even a .327 Federal Magnum, but it will for sure deliver enough penetration—no matter how big and fat your attacker might be—and this is from a little gun that's easy to carry and that doesn't have a lot of recoil.

THE PACKAGE

If you like the idea of a compact, lightweight revolver for concealed carry, and if you want a complete setup that includes the gun, and an IWB and OWB holster, and a good self-defense load, the exclusive S&W 432 in .32 H&R, two Galco holsters and the Buffalo Bore load makes for a complete package.

Wouldn't it be cool if Lipsey's would just bundle all those items together in a single box? I doubt that will ever happen, and even though they know my affinity for .32s, and I helped them with their limited edition .327 Single Seven, nobody asked my opinion. So, I'm giving it to you—if you buy the revolver, get at least one of the holsters and the ammo to go with it. **GDTM**



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BEFORE THE TROUBLE STARTS

Choosing the right attorney for self-defense cases.

When faced with the prospect of needing legal defense after a self-defense incident, the importance of selecting the right attorney cannot be overstated. This critical decision can mean the difference between safeguarding your rights and facing serious legal consequences—even when you are completely innocent.

Following are the essential considerations and questions to ask when seeking an attorney for self-defense cases.

IDENTIFYING TRUSTWORTHY LEGAL COUNSEL

It can be a daunting task to find legal counsel who you are comfortable with, and who can provide you with the defense you want ... and need. People often encounter dismissive or unhelpful attorneys when seeking legal advice.

The legal profession, like any other, includes both highly skilled and less competent individuals. The key to finding the right legal counsel is not just identifying a knowledgeable professional, but finding one who can build a relationship of trust and confidence with you. Mounting a successful legal defense after acting in self-defense demands an attorney well-versed in criminal defense and, more particularly, self-defense cases. There are many criminal defense attorneys but very few who are well-versed in the nuances of a self-defense claim.

FINDING A 'SELF-DEFENSE' ATTORNEY

First and foremost, it's crucial to engage an attorney who is engaged in criminal defense and has experience with self-defense cases. This specialization

ensures that the attorney understands the nuances of defending individuals who have used force to protect themselves or others. You don't want someone showing up to a self-defense case who primarily handles divorces or bankruptcies, but you also don't want someone who only represents criminals. There are nuances and important considerations when defending a case of justifiable self-defense versus other sorts of alleged crimes.

Verify the attorney's legitimacy by checking their standing with the state bar association. This simple online check ensures they have no disciplinary history that might compromise their ability to represent you effectively. Understanding the attorney's track record in handling similar cases, including their experience with trials and negotiations, is essential.

"Proactive legal planning is crucial. The time to find an attorney is before you need one. By doing your homework now you can ensure that, if the worst happens, you're prepared with the right legal support. Remember, your choice of attorney can profoundly impact the outcome of your case—and your future."

“It’s a lot like finding the right doctor before a medical emergency: You want someone you trust and who has the expertise to handle your specific needs. You want someone you feel comfortable working with. This is not a choice to make after the emergency arrives.”

ALIGNING PHILOSOPHIES ON SELF-DEFENSE

Equally important is assessing the attorney’s philosophy on self-defense, and their understanding of the Second Amendment. This alignment ensures that they approach your case with a perspective that resonates with your beliefs and values regarding the right to self-defense and firearm ownership. Most people want an attorney who sees self-defense from my perspective—not just as a legal concept or theoretical framework—but as a fundamental, natural right.

INTERVIEWING MULTIPLE ATTORNEYS

Interviewing multiple attorneys is recommended to find the best fit for your case. While this process may involve paying consultation fees, it’s a worthwhile investment in ensuring you have the right advocate by your side. It’s a lot like finding the right doctor before a medical emergency: You want someone you trust and who has the expertise to handle your specific needs. You want someone you feel comfortable working with. This is not a choice to make after the emergency arrives.

For proactive legal preparedness, joining a legal protection program like the Armed Citizen’s Legal Defense Network offers distinct advantages. These programs provide access to a network of attorneys who defend gun owners and provide a good place to start in your search for a self-defense attorney.

PRACTICAL STEPS IN CHOOSING AN ATTORNEY

During your initial consultations, ask prospective attorneys about their experience with self-defense cases, including their trial experience and success in negotiating favorable outcomes. Understand their fee structure and ensure transparency regarding costs. While referrals and testimonials can provide insights, recognize that personal fit and professional compatibility are paramount. Google reviews are great, but they’re not an adequate substitute for personal consultations.

CONCLUSION

Choosing the right attorney for self-defense cases requires careful consideration and thorough research. It’s not merely about legal expertise but also

about shared values and a commitment to protecting your rights. By engaging a competent attorney early and potentially joining a legal protection program, you can enhance your preparedness and mitigate the uncertainties associated with legal challenges after a self-defense incident.

Proactive legal planning is crucial. The time to find an attorney is before you need one. By doing your homework now, you can ensure that, if the worst happens, you’re prepared with the right legal support. Remember, your choice of attorney can profoundly impact the outcome of your case and your future.

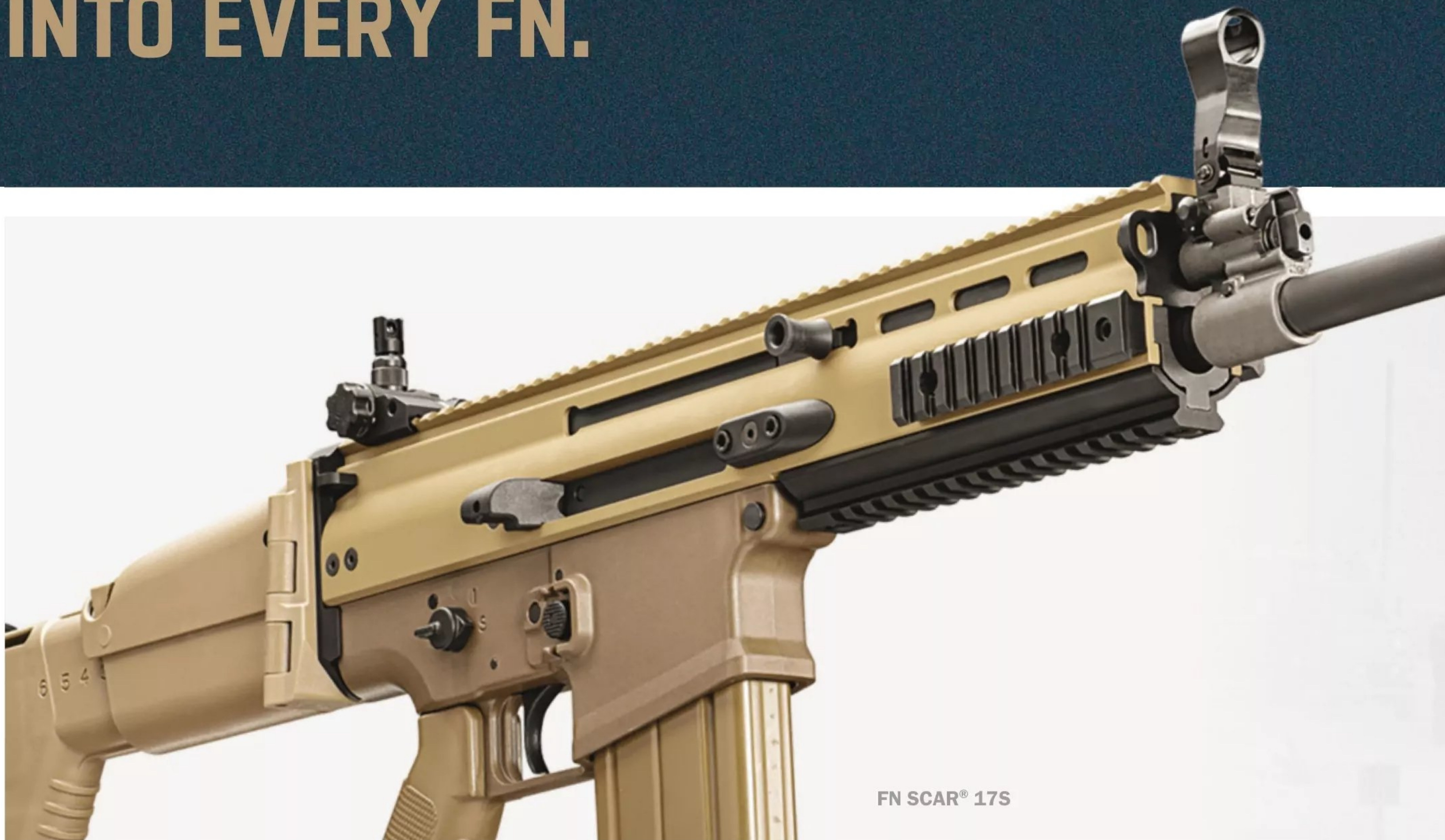
The legal journey after a self-defense incident is daunting and emotionally taxing. It demands that your attorney bring their “A” game from the start and maintain it until the end. The stress of knowing that an innocent person is relying on you is immense. Your attorney must have the ability to stand strong, face the sleepless nights and still be able to competently defend you. Keep searching until you find someone who can. **GDTM**

About the Author

Alex Ooley is an affiliate attorney with the Armed Citizen’s Legal Defense Network. The views and opinions expressed in this article are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Network. This article is for informational purposes only and should not be considered legal advice. For specific legal guidance regarding your situation, please consult with a qualified attorney.

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THE GAS DETOUR

SilencerCo's gas-defeating charging handle.

Got gas? No, not that kind of gas. I'm talking about gas in the face from your suppressor.

Yes, there's gas out of the ejection port, but the real eye-watering gas can be the little jet of gas that spurts out of the rear of the upper, underneath the charging handle. Directed straight back at your face and jetting just above the level of the cheekpiece, it's almost evilly aimed at your eye.

One of our club members had a real problem with that back in the 1980s. Combined with the contact lenses he wore (this was pre-LASIK and pre pretty much anything), there were some ARs he just couldn't shoot.

So, I schemed up several ways to solve the problem for him ... and one of those methods is the same one SilencerCo now offers. (I can't say I was the first to think of it. I didn't make more than a couple for use back then.)

The charging handle they offer is an ambidextrous model with latches on both sides. On the underside of the handle section, they've machined a

groove and installed a section of rubber O-ring. The O-ring seals the gap between the bottom edge of the charging handle and the bottom face of the charging-handle opening in the upper receiver.

And, if/when you wear out the one that's installed, there's a spare O-ring with it. (Is it still an "O" if it has been clipped to be a "U"?)

Installing is easy: Disassemble your AR, take out the old charging handle, install the new SilencerCo one and reassemble. Done.

To do its job, the O-ring has to fill the gap—and that depends on the tolerances of the upper and the charging handle. In the few rifles I checked it in, the O-ring rubs enough that it takes more than just the usual easy thumb push to close and latch the charging handle. I consider that a good thing, as it provides a full seal.

Others, with a bit more wiggle room, might not rub. Even if they don't, the O-ring will be fully (or mostly) filling the gap and cut down or eliminate the gas spurt out of that opening (which

isn't open anymore, right?).

At \$114—compared to a USGI charging handle at \$20—the price might seem high. Look at it this way: You've spent more than \$1,000 (maybe even \$2,000) for your AR-15, and another \$1,000 (maybe even \$1,500) for the suppressor and tax. Every magazine you shoot costs you \$15 in ammunition.

So, is \$114 to keep gas out of your eyes that much to spend? I thought not.

The SilencerCo gas-defeating charging handle is one of those good ideas that might not be needed for every application, but when it is, it's a godsend.

GDTM





PSA DAGGER REVIEW: DOES THE FULL-SIZE SCUT IT IN THE NIGHTSTAND?

We hit the range with a customized, full-size PSA Dagger to see how it fares as a home-defense pistol.





The customized pistol still fits in the case with a total of four magazines (including one in the gun), but the muzzle can't fit in its dedicated pouch with a light installed.

Glock's motto may be "Glock Perfection," but the extensive aftermarket of parts available reveals not everyone agrees. As good as the genuine Austrian-made guns may be in most respects, many shooters clearly have a personal preference for features that differ from the original design.

This is why when the patent expired on the Gen 3 Glock 17, it was a very good day for just about everyone besides Gaston Glock's wallet. Today, the market is teeming with handguns based on this design, and thanks to the excellence of the original, most of the clones are fundamentally good guns too. The only question then is which to choose based on respective features and prices.

When it finally came time to consider this myself (after years of being stuck in the metal-frame DA/SA camp), a genuine Glock was out of the question. Having shot more of them in recent years, the pistol had grown on me, but I just couldn't get over the grip angle or the trigger shoe (a feature that just feels wrong on my finger). When browsing the various clones currently available, most featured a trigger shoe as well. One notable exception was the PSA Dagger.

Featuring a gradual, more traditional

grip angle and a curved trigger, Palmetto State Armory's take on the concept was appealing to me. With the goal in mind of upgrading my nightstand gun to something made in the 21st century, I asked them to send one over.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I should start by specifying the exact model of PSA Dagger I opted to review, as the company offers many different variations. As mentioned, the pistol's intended role was for home defense. In turn, I selected the PSA Dagger Full Size-S with an RMR optics-ready slide, Ameriglo lower-third co-witness iron sights and a threaded barrel. When concealability doesn't matter, why not go bigger?

The standard PSA Dagger is actually considered a compact model as it's based on the Glock 19. The Dagger Full Size-S is closer to a G19X or G45 given it retains its Glock 19-sized barrel and slide but has a Glock 17-sized frame.

In the Dagger catalog, the Full Size-S is somewhere in the middle of the road of available options. Some fancier models feature window cuts on the slide, repositioned rear sights and different colors of barrels, slides and frames. Additionally, there are also plain models that don't even have an optics cut.

PSA ships the Dagger in a soft carrying case, an addition I always appreciate. It has room to fit the gun, two spare 17-round mags and a pouch for a suppressor, an extended mag or anything else you can fit inside. My only minor complaint with the case is the pistol can't be strapped in as intended after mounting a flashlight or optic, but it still works for transporting the gun.

FIRST STAB AT THE PSA DAGGER

I decided to leave the Dagger completely stock for my first range session, and I didn't clean or lube it out of the box, just to see how it would perform. The pistol ate through its first 100 rounds without any real issues, and I was already impressed with how it shot. The slide release was a bit stiff and the slide didn't lock back a couple of times, but besides that, it performed flawlessly. This gave me the confidence to keep going to see just how dry the PSA Dagger could really be run, but I decided to install some accessories before taking it back to the range.

CUSTOMIZING THE DAGGER

Part of the appeal of Glock-like pistols and modern plastic fantasies, given the breadth of the aftermarket parts, is the ability to customize the guns. As someone



The scallop cut was perfectly positioned for where the author places his thumb.



It's hard to see because the front sight is covered by the dot, but the raised AmeriGlo iron sights cowitness with the Holosun EPS.

who previously only owned handguns manufactured when accessory rails were not yet standard, this alone was an exciting prospect.

I used PSA's included Allen wrench to remove the slide's optic cover plate and replaced it with a Holosun EPS. The EPS

comes with an RMR adapter plate, making it possible to use it on PSA Daggers with an RMR cut slide. Next, I mounted a Holosun P.I.D. light on the Dagger's rail. All went on without a hitch.

The final modification before heading back to the range pertained to my first real

complaint with the PSA Dagger —albeit a subjective one. While I enjoy the Dagger's grip angle much more than that of the Glock, the profile of the back of the grip was too sharp for my taste. Thankfully, all it took to remedy this was a few wraps of grip tape to pad it up. After this, I found the pistol's handle much more comfortable.

THE SECOND STAB

After tricking the Dagger out, I headed back to the range to keep shooting. Keep in mind that I still hadn't lubricated the pistol at this point, and I managed to put another 200 rounds through it at a pretty rapid pace before problems started to arise. My best guess is that the gun heated up enough to finally cook off whatever grease or lube was on it from the factory, so cycling began to grow sluggish and unreliable.

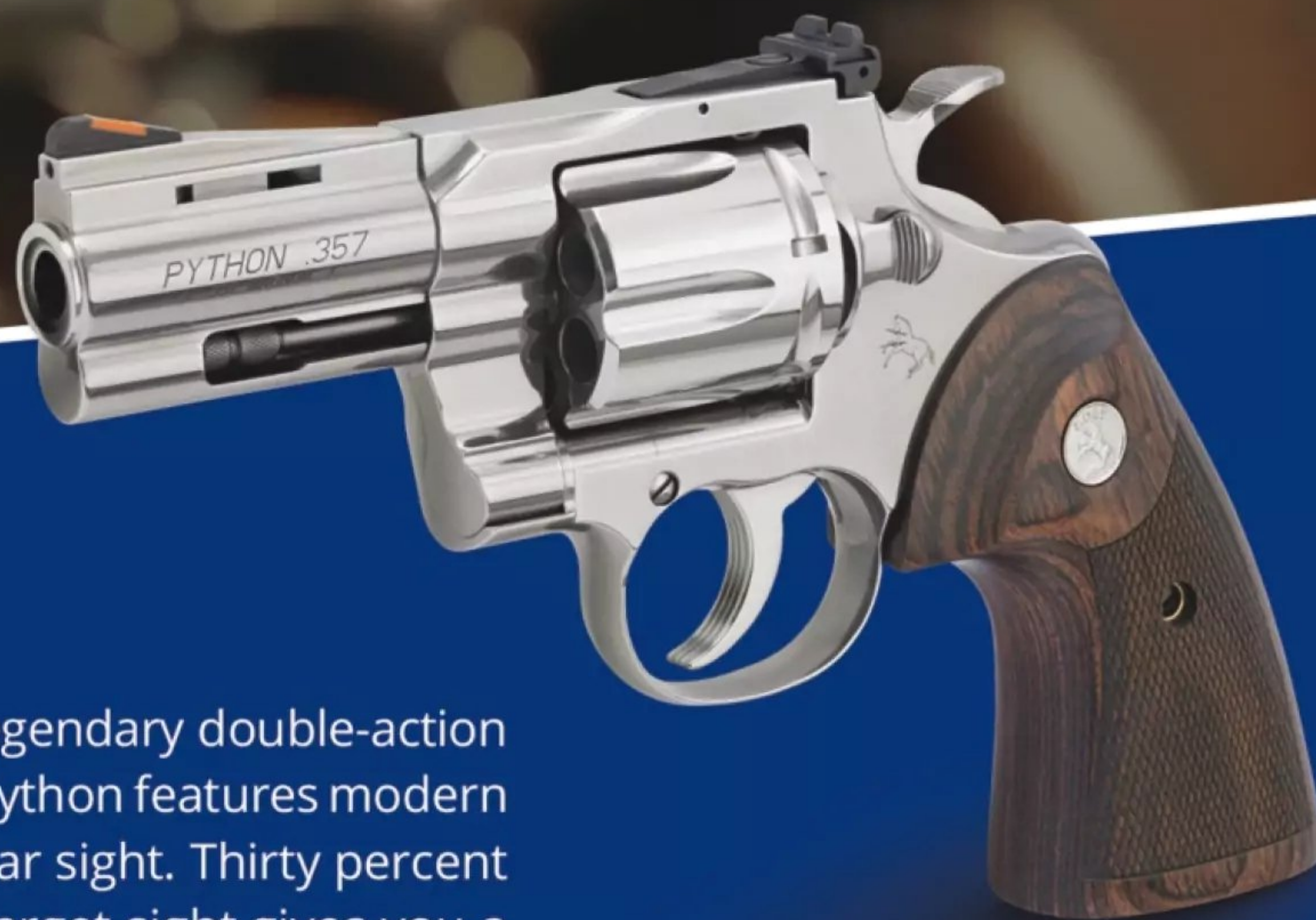
After a quick cleaning and lubing, the Dagger was back on the range and did another 200 rounds essentially flawlessly. Besides one double-feed with a hollow point, it was completely reliable. I kept an eye on the trigger pin over the course of testing (something that early Daggers had a problem with), but it stayed put throughout 600 or so rounds. That all said, the PSA Dagger has proven itself reliable. Like any gun, it just obviously appreciates a bit of lube now and then.

Ammo types used included CCI Blazer 115-grain FMJ, Federal Train and Protect 115-grain hollow points, Federal 115-grain Syntech, Federal 124-grain American Eagle FMJ, Federal 135-grain Hydra Shok and Remington UMC 115-grain FMJ. Shout out to Federal for providing most of the pistol's fodder. Magazines used included two Magpul 17-round mags (one came with the pistol), a Magpul 21-round mag and a Glock 17-round mag.

When it comes to actual shootability, the PSA Dagger left me very impressed. To my chagrin, I shot it better and faster than the metal-framed DA/SA guns I usually train with. Combined with the good reliability and the ability to mount a light and optic, it's a no-brainer the Dagger will



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PYTHON

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PYTHON (PYTHON-SP3WTS)

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PSA DARTER SPECS

MODEL: PSA Dagger Full Size-S;
RMR slide, threaded barrel, black

CALIBER: 9mm

ACTION: Striker fired

WEIGHT: 22.5 ounces (unloaded)

OVERALL LENGTH: 7.15 inches

OVERALL WIDTH: 1.28 inches

OVERALL HEIGHT: 5.38 inches (without mag)

BARREL LENGTH: 4.5 inches

BARREL MATERIAL: Stainless steel

BARREL FINISH: DLC coating

TWIST RATE: SAAMI-spec 1:10

SLIDE MATERIAL: Stainless steel

SLIDE FINISH: DLC coating

FRAME: Polymer

FRONT SIGHT: AmeriGlo Lower 1/3 co-witness

REAR SIGHT: AmeriGlo Lower 1/3 co-witness

SAFETY: Striker block safety and trigger safety

MAGAZINE: Comes with one 17-round Magpul

OPTICS MOUNT: RMR Pattern

MSRP: \$369.99

Grip tape is often an easy solution when a gun's ergonomics don't quite mix with your own physiology.

well to a modern, two-handed shooting grip. The large grip offers plenty of real estate for your fingers, the grip angle facilitates a very natural presentation and the scallop cut forward of the takedown lever is the perfect spot for your thumb for increased control. Hitting steel with the pistol was fast, easy and accurate.

As for the trigger, I'm generally not too picky besides the shape. The curved and hinged design of the Dagger's trigger is already a massive upgrade in my book over anything with a trigger shoe, even one that provides a lighter break. Other than that, the trigger felt adequate and typical of a striker-fired gun. It has a bit of travel before the wall, a relatively crisp break and a short reset. That's all I need in a defensive pistol.

Combined, these features make for a very good shooter, and the MSRP of \$370 makes that all the more impressive. Some other good features worth mentioning are the gun's aggressive forward and rear slide serrations that made racking a breeze, the cutout at the bottom of the frame that made stripping magazines easier and the included AmeriGlo iron sights that cowitnessed perfectly with my optic.

The Dagger's takedown lever and slide-release lever felt about on par with a real Glock, but the magazine release felt worse. This is the only feature on the Dagger I

like better on the Glock. The Dagger's mag release isn't horrible, but it was a bit too stiff for its small size. I think it would've been easier to manipulate with just a little more surface area.

PARTING SHOT

Given the PSA Dagger's reliability, performance, features and price point, it's hard to find anything to complain about that doesn't boil down to subjective nitpicking. The reality is if you're budget-minded but want a good, modern pistol, you can't go wrong with the PSA Dagger.

There are similar Glock clones that would likely perform just as well, not to mention real Glocks, but you'll almost certainly pay more if you want features like an optics-ready slide. With so many minor model variations to choose from, with choices of frame size, optics cut pattern, color and more, chances are high PSA has a Dagger that will appeal to you. **GDTM**

become my new nightstand gun. I plan on offering to purchase it from PSA after this is published.

The ergonomics lend themselves very

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01 Steiner TOR-X Pistol-Mounted Laser/Trainer

Steiner is giving you a one-two punch with the introduction of the TOR-X. At its heart, it's a pistol-mounted laser, but it also doubles as a training tool through integration with the Mantis system. Designed to fit any pistol with a Picatinny or Weaver rail, the TOR-X features a <5 mW green laser in durable, water-resistant aluminum housing. It offers windage and elevation adjustments for precise aim and is ambidextrous for left- or right-hand use. The Mantis training functionality, accessed via Bluetooth, provides detailed feedback on shooting performance, enhancing both live- and dry-fire practice. The TOR-X simplifies training by combining a laser sight with advanced training capabilities in one EDC-compatible device.

MSRP: \$360**02 Sig Sauer Competition-Ready Romeo3Max-Pro**

Developed in collaboration with champion shooter Max Michel, the Sig Sauer Romeo3Max-Pro is a competition-ready open reflex that goes the extra mile. Designed to fit all Sig P320 pistols with a DeltaPoint Pro mounting footprint, the optic features a 31mm distortion-free aspheric glass lens, a choice of 3-MOA or 8-MOA red-dot reticles, and 15 brightness settings. Its low-profile CNC aluminum housing allows for co-witness with suppressor-height sights. The Romeo3Max-Pro also includes a side-mounted battery tray, 20,000 hours of runtime, IPX-7 waterproofing, and MOTAC and MagneTac activation technologies, making it a versatile choice for competitors and enthusiasts alike.

MSRP: \$700**03 PARD Optics Ocelot and Pantera Thermal Scopes**

Night vision isn't everyone's cup of tea, which is why PARD's release of its new thermal scopes should grab your attention. The Ocelot and Pantera scopes not only offer the company's most technically advanced optics to date, they also offer unparalleled resolution. Both models feature a 480x360/20mK resolution, a specification that's currently unique in the industry. Furthermore, both scopes include models with 35mm and 50mm lenses for a wide and clear view of your target.

MSRP: Ocelot & Pantera // \$2,500

SEE IT, SHOOT IT

**01** **02** **03** 

04 Primary Arms Optics SLx 1-10x28 SFP Riflescope

Quick and consistent, the SLx 1-10x28mm Second Focal Plane (SFP) riflescope offers a load of features at a relatively affordable price. First off, Primary Arms serves up the LPVO with its ACSS NOVA reticle that delivers red-dot illumination—no matter the conditions. The versatile scope also offers 1-10x magnification, making it suitable for various shooting scenarios from close-quarters to long-range. Alongside the scope, Primary Arms introduced new SLx mounts designed for enhanced rigidity and maintaining zero under demanding conditions. These mounts, like the scope, are both high-performing and affordable, catering to shooters seeking quality and value.

MSRP: \$550

05 Sightmark Wraith 4k 4X

Looking to take the next step with your night vision capabilities and add a dedicated NV aiming solution? You might want to give Sightmark a look. The company's Wraith 4K 4-32x40 digital day/night vision riflescope offers shooters and hunters a complete package to hit their target, no matter the lighting conditions. With its high-resolution 4K (3840x2160) CMOS sensor, the scope delivers clear and crisp images, both day and night. Furthermore, it features a high-resolution 1280x720 display, 4-32x digital magnification, and a built-in LED IR illuminator for enhanced night vision performance. In addition to its impressive optical performance, the Wraith 4K is also packed with features including 10 reticle styles with 9 colors, and a built-in recorder that allows users to capture video footage.

MSRP: \$500

06 X-Vision Optics Shadow 100 Digital Night Vision Mini-Viewer

Owning the night usually involves dropping significant coin. X-Vision Optics takes some of the sting out of this with the introduction of its Shadow 100 Digital Night Vision Mini-Viewer. Designed to enhance low- to no-light conditions while offering unmatched portability and durability, the view comes about as competitively priced as you could want. And, X-Vision doesn't skimp on the optic's performance: Weighing just under 8 ounces and measuring 5 inches in length, the viewer offers a host of features including 2-8x magnification, a range of 325 yards in the night and 600 yards during the day, photo capabilities, and 32 GB of storage. That's quite a pack for the size of the device and its price.

MSRP: \$150

07 Meprolight MPO PRO-F

Hot as a \$2 pistol, closed emitter red-dots have taken the shooting world by storm. And why not? They offer all the advantages of their traditional open counterparts ... with the added advantage of a guaranteed clear site picture. Meprolight has whole-heartedly embraced this design with the release of the MPO PRO-F, part of the company's new MPO family of optics. In addition to an MR footprint, its shielded design and overall 1.8-ounce light weight, the big selling point on the red-dot is its three user-selectable reticles, including plain dot (3 MOA), circle and dot, and circle. This gives a shooter plenty of aiming options to get on target.

MSRP: \$360



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Lightweight rifle-
scopes seem to be
a thing of the past,
but there are still a
few great options
out there.



THE DEATH OF LIGHTWEIGHT RIFLESCOPES

Rifles keep getting lighter. So, why haven't riflescopes kept up?

Not all that long ago, there were a lot of lightweight riflescopes to choose from. This was back before hunters and most shooters thought 18x magnification was necessary to hit anything, and it was also before target turrets and parallax adjustments on riflescopes became standard features. When I first started writing for gun magazines about 25 years ago, the fixed power Leupold 4x33 riflescope was very popular. Leupold has since discontinued that riflescope, and lightweight riflescopes in general are now on the endangered species list.

Arguably, this transition from light to heavy riflescopes began in 2014 with the release of the movie *American Sniper*. The martial and marksmanship abilities of the rifleman have always impressed us, and that combined with

Chris Kyle's patriotism, devotion to duty and untimely and terrible death, made for a fabulous story. The movie was also an anthem to every American who has worn the uniform. Most importantly, then as now, Americans needed a hero.

Much like Clint Eastwood's *Dirty Harry* film of 1971 launched the .44 Magnum revolver to stardom, *American Sniper* was the inspiration shooters needed to spark an indulgence in long-range rifle craft. Not only did this create a demand for heavy long-range riflescopes, but it also elevated the 6.5 Creedmoor—which had been languishing with only so-so interest since 2008—to one of the most popular rifle cartridges of all time.

As happens with all shooting disciplines, a bubble of interest developed, like with cowboy action shooting and

three-gun competitions. Today, we're at the height of long-range shooting popularity, and the rifles and riflescopes being manufactured reflect the demands of the consumer.

Interestingly, our hunting rifles are getting lighter. Just look at the six-pound Redline from Springfield Armory, the lighter than 6- and even 5-pound NULA rifles from Wilson Combat, as well as a host of lightweight hunting rifles from other manufacturers. Oddly enough, some hunters are using these lightweight rifles as an excuse to go with a heavy riflescope.

An acquaintance recently purchased one of the Wilson Combat NULAs that weighed less than 6 pounds and then paired it with a Nightforce riflescope that weighted nearly 2 pounds. While his overall field-ready weight is less than it would have been with a heavy ri-

Burris 2.75x20mm Scout scope



Leupold VX-3HD 1.5-5x20mm riflescope



fle, the heavy scope destroyed the lithe and nimble handling qualities of the expensive featherweight rifle he chose.

The beauty of the lightweight rifle-scope is that it pairs perfectly with a lightweight rifle. And, as the great gun writer Townsend Whelen once so astutely observed, “A man will travel farther, hunt over more country, have a better chance of coming on game, and be in better condition when he does if his weapon is light.”

For hunters looking to keep weight down in the field, or even for shooters who do not want to overburden themselves or maybe youngsters with an overly heavy rifle, there’s still a valid and practical —though seemingly much overlooked—need for lightweight riflescopes.

MODERN LIGHTWEIGHT RIFLESCOPES

I spent a full day crawling the internet looking for lightweight riflescopes that are still in production. I found six options that weigh 12 ounces or less and that I thought practical for general-purpose use and common hunting applications. Here’s a rundown of the best of the current less than 12-ounce lightweight riflescopes available. The good news is I’ve used them all and can recommend them.

Burris

Burris makes great riflescopes that are dependable. Over the years I used several of them and their now discontinued 2-7x35mm Fullfield II was one of my favorites. Currently, Burris doesn’t catalog a traditional riflescope weighing 12 ounces or less. However, what Burris does have is what’s arguably the best and most traditional scout scope offered by any manufacturer. Their fixed power 2.75x20mm Scout scope weighs only 7 ounces and features a heavy plex reticle and Burris’ Forever

warranty. A variable power scope might be more appealing and more versatile, but you won’t find one this light. It retails for \$348.

Leupold

Leupold has been and continues to be the leader when it comes to lightweight riflescopes. Even if you’re comparing heavy riflescopes, it’s more than likely the Leupold will weigh the least. Even though Leupold has discontinued some of their best lightweight riflescopes like their fixed power 4x33mm and





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Swarovski Z3 3-9x36mm riflescope



2.5x20mm, they still catalog five excellent lightweights that should serve most any practical need.

An excellent choice for lever-action rifles, muzzleloaders and other short to moderate range rifles is Leupold's VX-3HD 1.5-5x20mm riflescope. I've used several of these over the years and now it even comes with Leupold's excellent CDS trajectory compensating dial system. This riflescope weighs only 10.1 ounces, but it also costs \$500. In today's economy, some of us don't have \$500 to spend on anything but groceries and gasoline.

Leupold's VX Freedom line replaced their VX-I and VX-II riflescope line; they're American made and recoil rated to withstand the energy of a .458 Lott. They have click adjustments, Leupold's proprietary Twilight Light Management System, and they all have 1-inch scope tubes. If you'd really like the VX-3HD 1.5-5x20mm but just cannot afford it, Leupold's VX Freedom 1.5-4x20mm is a great option, and it's available with the unique MOA Ring or the Pig Plex reticle. It weighs 9.6 ounces and retails for only \$299.99.

If you want a lightweight scope but need a bit more magnification, I think the Leupold VX-3HD 2.5-8X36mm is one of the best riflescopes money can buy. I've had one on my dedicated whitetail rifle, which is a 5-pound New Ultra Light Arms Model 20S chambered for the 30 Remington AR for almost a decade now. This riflescope is less than a foot long and weighs 11.9 ounces. Like the VX-3HD 1.5-5X20mm Leupold, it also comes with the CDS dial system and has a suggested retail price of \$499.99.

A lesser expensive but similar option is the Leupold VX Freedom 2-7x33mm.

The first riflescope I ever purchased for a centerfire rifle was a 2-7X, and I used it to take a lot of groundhogs, a lot of deer and to even win my first off-hand silhouette match. This less expensive lightweight Leupold weighs 11.1 ounces and has a suggested price of only \$299.99.

There is another lightweight Leupold that comes in at only 9.6 ounces, and it's the Leupold VX Freedom 1.5-4x28mm IER Scout scope. This riflescope is a great companion to any scout rifle but must be mounted a bit further back due

to its 6.0- to 6.9-inch eye relief. However, this amount of eye relief is almost perfect for some of the modern lever guns outfitted with a rail and an aperture sight like Marlin's new SBL and Dark series rifles.

Swarovski

Swarovski makes some of the finest optical instruments hunters and shooters can look through. Their \$5,100 dS riflescope will range the target and instantly provide you with an aiming point that reflects the shooting

The author's wife used the Swarovski Z3 3-9x36mm riflescope with great success in Africa and West Virginia.





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SWFA 2.5-10x32mm SS Ultralight riflescope



solution. Their less expensive Z8i line (\$3,299 to \$4,049) contains some of the most optically brilliant riflescopes money can buy, but they're also heavy. The dS riflescope weighs 39 ounces and Swarovski's lightest Z8i weighs 21 ounces. Because of the steep prices, weight and size of Swarovski's best riflescopes, shooters often overlook them when it comes to a compact and lightweight option. However, Swarovski's excellent Z3 3-9x36mm is one of the best general-purpose riflescopes made. My wife used it on her 243 during her first African safari, and I've used the same scope on several hunts and to frequently evaluate lightweight rifles. The Z3 3-9x36mm retails for \$799 and weighs in at 12 ounces on the nose.

SWFA

SWFA Outdoors is a family owned and operated business located in Waxahachie, Texas. SWFA used to retail a wide range of riflescopes but today they only offer their own line, which has a long story behind it. In 1993, Tasco provided a 10X sniper scope to the U.S. Navy. Now a lot of shooters don't have a high opinion of Tasco riflescopes, but Tasco outsources their manufacturing, and the Navy's scope was built very well and to government contract specs.

Ultimately, Bushnell acquired Tasco and SWFA worked with the factory

Tasco was using to build the Navy's excellent riflescope to develop their own comprehensive line, which is now known as SS riflescopes. The SWFA 2.5-10x32mm SS Ultralight riflescope is one of three similar lightweight riflescopes offered by SWFA. One has a BDC-style reticle, another has a 50-yard parallax for rimfire application, and the third has the conventional Plex-style reticle. At 9.5 ounces, these just might be the lightest 2.5-10X riflescopes in the world. The lenses are fully



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The Leupold VX Freedom 1.5-4x28mm IER scope will work on scout rifles but must be mounted further back than a traditional scout scope.

multi-coated, and the scope is waterproof, fogproof and shockproof. It retails for \$349.95.

THE FUTURE

The interests in various shooting disciplines have a half-life. They rise in popularity and then slowly fade away. Oddly enough, in 2024, at the height of the popularity of long-range marksmanship we saw the introduction of a wide assortment of lever-action rifles. Some were traditional and others were radically modified lever guns that some refer to as “tactical” renditions of what is truly an iconic American firearm. The lever gun is the antithesis of the long-range sniper rifle and as its popularity ignites, I expect we’ll see more compact and lightweight riflescopes better suited to this weapon system.

Hopefully, with the influx of modern lightweight rifles, manufacturers will also begin to offer re-engineered and even lighter lightweight riflescopes suited to more general-purpose applications. Fortunately, I’ve still got several and until the times change, I’d suggest that you pick up one or two when the opportunity presents itself. Who knows what shooting trend will drive the market next or when we will see a return to more practical and lighter wight riflescopes? **GDTM**

The Leupold VX-3HD 2.5-8x36mm riflescope is one of the author’s favorite hunting scopes, especially on lightweight rifles.

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A BEACON IN THE NIGHT

How to see, and shoot, in the dark.
(Some optics can handle daylight, too!)

The ability to see in the dark is an advantage that men have sought for centuries. The veil of darkness has always been a powerful reminder of the limits we have, and the loss of our sight in the dying of the light amounted to the end of the hunt ... and gave way to the fears we still have of monsters and the unknown.

Seeing in the dark is something we can do today thanks to technology, but there are some very large misconceptions and lots of myths about just what these optics can do—and where they are useful.

What follows may surprise you.

HISTORY OF THERMAL AND NIGHT VISION OPTICS

Night vision has been around for quite a while—in a broad sense going back to World War II—but it has only been miniaturized enough to be truly useful somewhat recently. Some of the first attempts at this technology were large and required a great deal of battery power to use, such as the case with the USMC M3 carbine (a type of M1 carbine that was specialized for use with optics) variant, which used an early infrared scope and illuminator ... but also required a backpack loaded with batteries.

Today, many of the best night-vision

optics are powered with simple CR123 batteries, and sometimes are even rechargeable with a USB cable. For a long time, civilian night vision technology was a ways off, and it wasn't until the past 20 years that the technology became available—and reliable enough—on a larger scale that hunters took notice. The War on Terror era generated more interest in this tech on the civilian side, and during the 20 years that war was fought, night vision became widely available for civilian use.

Today, seeing night vision in the wild is somewhat common, and it can be bought at most sporting goods retailers. Later generations of night vision still operate on



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Short-throw actions like the Aero Solus have no problem clearing the thermal optics.

Thermal optics can be used in all conditions, but care should be taken to ensure that the lenses remain covered in transit. The sensor should always be clean.



The setting up for coyote at night is this special build. The barreled action is a Faxon FX7 in 6.5 Creedmoor with a Q Jumbo Shrimp suppressor. It has a Timney trigger and resides in a dyed Magpul Pro chassis. The optics are a Leupold MK4 2.5-20 and AGM Rattler thermal clip-on. The other accessories are by SAP, tripod by Two Vets.



much of the same technology as early versions, but the quality of the image intensifier tubes keeps getting better as opposed to older models.

Thermal imaging technology, or at least a very abstract derivative of it, goes as far back as 1800—but don't get the idea that we were slapping FLIRs on our flintlocks. Sir William Herschel was the first to suggest that certain wavelengths of light registered at different temperatures when he made the discovery using a special prism to separate light waves and then record the temperatures. This discovery is largely the basis for thermal imaging technology, and Herschel was right in that invisible radiation could be detected as heat.

Fast-forward to the post-WWI era, and there were a few thermal detecting devices, but they saw very limited use in WWII. Even during the Vietnam War, the technology was still very large ... and costly. Thermal imaging wasn't widespread outside of military uses until it began to become somewhat cheaper

and smaller. It saw its first civilian uses in construction and medical applications, but the miniaturization of the devices was still quite far away. In the early 2000s this changed, and with the explosion of the digital age, thermal imaging became quite common. In fact, it's maturing rapidly, and more companies are adding this technology to their product lineups. I suspect that in a few short years many of the high-end "day" scopes will also have thermal imaging capabilities in one package.

Legality is something that many people have issues with when it comes to buying this type of technology. In use, it's incredible, but the applications are limited. Thermal imaging optics are really for hunting and identifying game; you can't really target shoot with them unless you're able to somehow create heated targets. I use Hot Hands hand warmers stapled to a target board to zero my thermal optics.

There are lots of liability issues with shooting in the dark, but certain ranges do allow it under special circumstances.

Regulations for hunting typically allow the use of thermal or night vision for hunting wild pigs or varmints such as coyotes, but not for large game like deer and elk. There are, of course, legal shooting hours for these animals, and hunters are discouraged by both the law and light limits against using thermal or night vision.

In some areas, possessing this type of gear is also prohibited when hunting, but at the rate technology is being developed, it's hard to control. Today, you can have thermal imaging on your cell phone.

HOLLYWOOD: MISSING THE TARGET

Most people have received their introduction to the wide world of thermal and night vision tech thanks to Hollywood. However, the same place that made it cool also got a large deal of it wrong, and those myths have carried over to reality in some not-so-great ways.

The main "myth" portrayed is that thermal and night vision technology is clumsy. In reality, these systems are quite easy to use and far more effective than you might imagine. For instance, it's not uncommon



A specially built rifle dedicated to thermal, using the author's time in the field as inspiration. An incredible Armasight Contractor 640 sits on the scope rail. The KRG stock has a rear weight and Wiebad cheek rest. Comfort and balance are important when spending long periods of time staring at a small screen. The stock has a full-length Alpha handguard with integrated Arca rail to facilitate, making it able to be used easily with tripods or inside a blind. The action is an Aero Solus, notable for its smooth operation and ruggedness. The trigger is obviously a Timney, a brand the author trusts on all bolt guns. The barrel was specially made by Preferred Barrel Blanks in .308 Winchester and cut to 16 inches. The Rearden brake allows Q-style suppressor adapters to be used, in this case a JK 155 with Armageddon Gear thermal cover. Ammunition favored by the author for wild pigs is Remington 150-grain Tipped Core-Lokt. Note the two-round SAP cartridge holder, a little add-on that really helps in a pinch.



to be able to see individual hairs with thermal optics; the technology has progressed to the point where it's very, very high definition.

Contrast this with the thermal vision we all know from the classic Arnold Schwarzenegger film *Predator*, which is so ingrained in the night-vision world that most thermal optics have a filter to replicate this relatively outdated visual representation of heat. In the movie, an alien big-game hunter comes to Earth to hunt soldiers and other armed men using high-contrast colored thermal vision, a key plot element. Most people typically shoot with "white hot" filters for high contrast on game. Sadly, the "predator" color filter isn't very effective for hunting, but I do enjoy that it's available.

The Predator's thermal vision was stunning for the time, and most people had never seen something like it when the film came out. Interestingly enough, the definition of the thermal vision used by the alien hunter wasn't so much better than what was around Earth at the time. In fact, we've advanced so far now that even our midrange thermals can achieve high definition and provide clarity to hundreds of yards. Not only that, but detection ranges

are getting better, meaning that you can easily detect thermal signatures past 1,000 yards with many of today's commercial options.

While Schwarzenegger managed to defeat the alien by covering himself in mud to conceal his body heat, we can only assume that this was due to some unforeseen circumstances with the Predator's own technology. In real life, you'd have no problem seeing a person with mud on them. Perhaps the Predator was afraid the interstellar DNR would fine him and revoke his license if he used better optics.

I can only wonder if there is the alien equivalent to straight-wall case restrictions and capacity limits.

Night vision is a bit different in that it has some far more stratified generations as opposed to thermal optics, which are decidedly getting smaller and becoming less expensive. Night vision again is largely misrepresented in film as much, if not more, than thermal imaging. Common night vision is quite good and is a major advantage, but it has some handicaps that thermal does not.

Chief among these is that night vision optics are relatively delicate and can be damaged, or even destroyed, by bright



You will need to pay attention to the mounting height of your optics if you want them to function together, even if they appear to be mounted a bit high.

BRANDS
TO WATCH

ARMASIGHT

In terms of game taken, I've shot more with the Armasight Contractor than the rest. This company makes some very rugged and heavy-duty optics with easy-to-use controls and large buttons. While this might not be something you'd think matters that much, in the dark it's very nice to know where your controls are. In Georgia, I killed a pile of wild pigs using the Contractor on a stock FN SCAR 20S, and it performed very well at ranges out to about 300 yards. I was able to detect objects a half-mile out, and recognize the difference between pigs and deer at around 1,000 yards.

PULSAR

Pulsar is one of the most popular brands of thermal optics among my pig hunting groups. Most of my friends who have become invested in this type of hunting like Pulsar because they're simple to set up and can use standard mounts just like you'd put your day scope in. In the years that I have seen this brand in use, I've developed great respect for the direction in which the company is heading.

AGM GLOBAL VISION

AGM Global Vision is becoming a larger player in the thermal world, and I've started to use their clip-on for my day optics. I needed a quality, compact clip-on that would be able to swap on several rifles that have day optics I really like, so I went with the AGM model. If you have a scope height set at about 1.5 inches, you can clip this optic directly to the rail in front of the riflescope. Lower-end magnification optics work very well with this, I like the Leupold MK4 2.5-10X because the clarity and the reticle is "thick" enough to not get lost in the sauce. Very fine FFP reticles can become hard to see. I prefer a bolder, mil-based crosshair-type reticle using this optic.



light. Non-digital night vision must not be used in the daylight, except in some very limited circumstances. While the movies have tried to do night vision justice, it's typically not a feature for the hero because the action needs to happen in enough light for the audience to enjoy it.

Arguably, the most famous night-vision scene in history takes place in *Silence of the Lambs*, where the villain uses a night vision headset to toy with the protagonist. Night vision, otherwise, is such an advantage that pop culture has largely not been able to grapple with it due to how lopsided it could make the story ... to the point that it simply isn't included to increase tension. Real night vision goggles aren't the grainy, dim-green color pallet we see and, no, the goggles themselves don't glow.

UNDERSTANDING THERMALS AND NVDS

Thermal imaging and NVDs (night-vision devices) are used in a similar way

by shooters, but they are quite different in terms of how they work ... and what they're capable of. Night vision, contrary to what you see in the movies, does require some light to work. Thermal imaging doesn't require ambient light to function, nor will it be damaged by daytime use.

Night vision, in most generations, works by what's called image intensification. The scopes collect light from exterior sources, including the moon and stars, and the optic turns them into an image we can perceive. If you were in a totally pitch-black basement with absolutely no light, your night vision wouldn't do anything. As a result of this, infrared beams are often used with night vision devices—but be aware that these are essentially flashlights we can't see, and other users of night vision systems can actually see your beam emanating from your optic. That's not good if you want to remain as hidden as possible, but not really an issue if you're a



The author's SCAR 20S custom build. There are about too many small parts to list, but the optical package is a Leupold MK5 HD 5-25 and Armasight NVD clip on. This rifle is hard on optics, so only the strongest are used on it.



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The author hunting very hard in rural Georgia with the Armasight Contractor, FN SCAR 20S and SilencerCo Hybrid 36M.

hunter ... assuming you're hunting legally.

Thermal imaging devices work by detecting radiation. There's a bit more to it, but for the sake of keeping this concise, thermal optics are sensors that can display minor differences in radiation with hotter objects generating more radiation. The images we see in the optic are a type of thermogram, and thanks to the advances in both computing technology and cameras, we can make devices that not only record video, but also broadcast with Wi-Fi or Bluetooth.

Thermal optics today are what could be described as radiation-detecting smart cameras. The display on the optic is a feat of engineering, as you're not seeing through it at all, even with clip-on thermals. You're looking at a little screen that, in many cases, isn't different from that on your camera or cell phone. The fact that we can mount these on guns and also zero them as you would a traditional scope is downright impressive.

Of note is that with thermal clip-on optics, your day scope is literally not looking at anything; the image you see through the glass is a tiny screen that's meant to be looked at with magnification. You're not "seeing" the target in a straightforward sense.

PROS AND CONS

While I don't usually play favorites when it comes to these topics, from a hunting point of view, thermal optics are vastly superior to night vision due to their ability to detect prey and positively identify it at distance.

Night vision is very good today, but in my opinion, it doesn't give you an advantage over a day scope. You can see at night with them, but the effectiveness is limited by ambient lighting conditions. It's the same as a day scope in this sense: You can be looking right at an animal and not see it because it's partially concealed behind a tree or bush. With thermal, you'd easily be able to detect the same animal.



Thermal has the ability to detect through atmospheric conditions and even can see little bits through cover. So, even during the day, that bush you can't see through with the naked eye might be only a minor issue to thermal.

Night vision for hunting is very functional, and it's pretty straightforward to use. Night vision clip-ons are much more desirable than straight-up night vision scopes because they can be used to extend the use of the gun rather than limit it to just night. I like the clip-on NVD I've been using for some time from Armasight. It's extremely clear and jives well with any day scope I've used. There's no fuss to using it, and on a moonlit night, it's so bright and clear that it's truly like a cloudy day: You can see everything just as if it was noon.

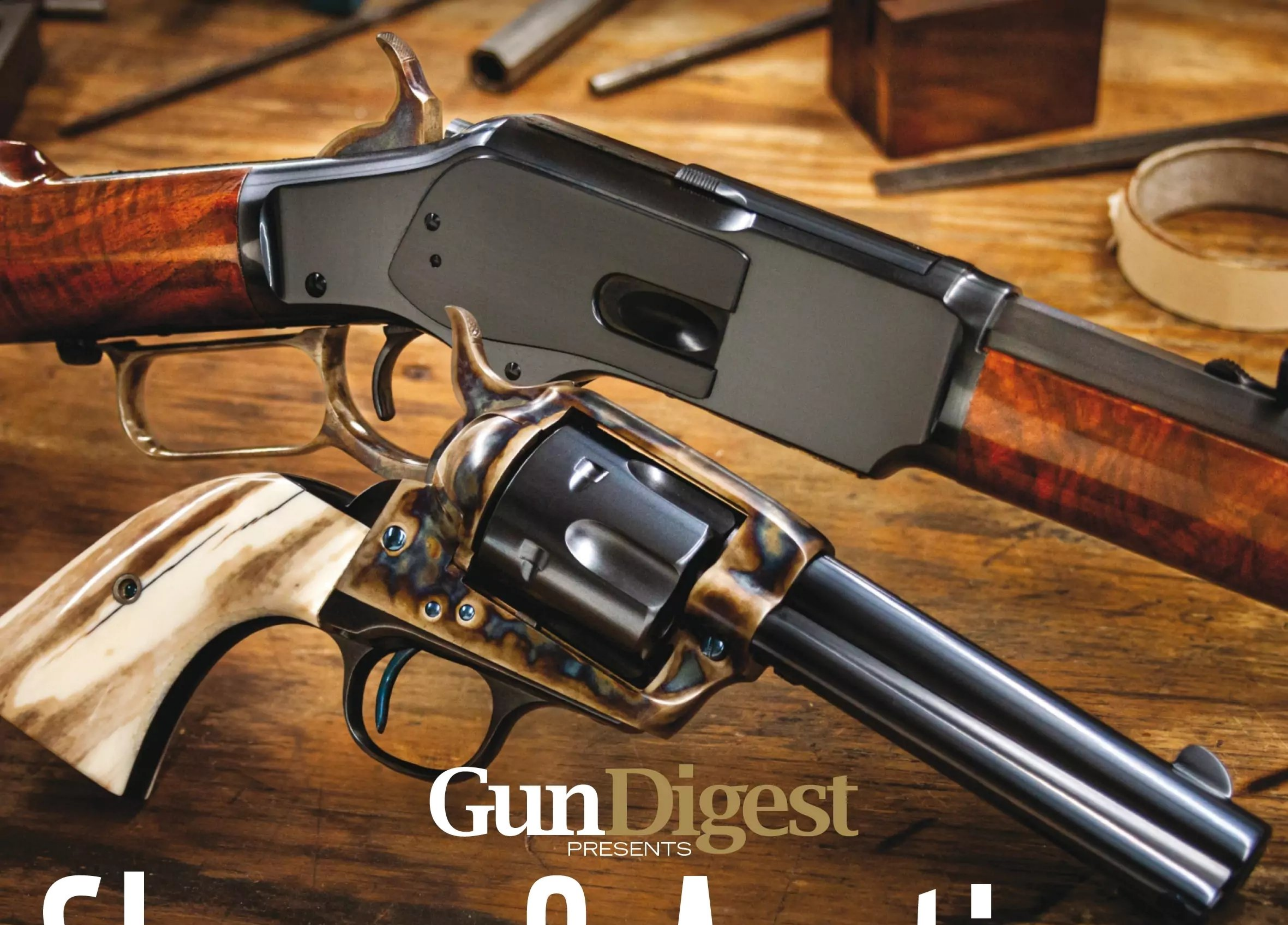
The damage that can occur to night vision devices in the daylight has to do with how they collect light. Again, there's a much longer scientific explanation of how these work, but basically think of it as being able to gather so much light that it can be ruined. The intensifier tubes that these optics are designed around are so good at utilizing light that they can fry with too much. You need to keep light away from it to keep it safe, but it still needs some light to work, just not too much. Each generation of night vision

improves, and the situation is getting better with intensifier tubes being able to be used in a wider range of light conditions. But, overall, their utility lies in the dark, whereas thermal can be used in all light conditions equally.

Thermal optics for hunting have few downsides. In fact, they are such an advantage that you really do need to see it to believe it. The major issue with all thermal and night vision is the cost. The good versions of these devices are very costly, typically around \$2,000 and up, with flagship thermals going for around \$4,000 to \$8,000 depending on where you're looking.

Of note is that night vision is relatively stagnant in terms of development, and pricing on high-quality night vision has remained relatively high, even with more makers. Thermals on the other hand keep getting better, and the cost has dropped significantly over time. The sensors have become quite compact, to the point that thermal units can be small while not sacrificing utility.

Thermals have passed generational upgrades down, and what was once a high-end unit is today's budget option. In 10 years, who knows how much function you'll be able to get from a middle-cost model if the technology keeps becoming more common and affordable. **GDTM**



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Dec 7-8 SD, Rapid City. Rapid City Rifle Club Association. The Monument Event Center, 444 N W Blvd., Rapid City, SD 57701. SH: Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-2pm. A: \$5.00 daily. T: 205. F: \$50. Rapid City Rifle Club. PO Box 1945, Rapid City, SD 57709. PH: 605-209-1166. www.rapidcityrifleclub.com.

JANUARY

Jan 11-12 SD, RAPID CITY. 33rd Annual Tom Wenn Memorial Winter Gun Show. Fine Arts Bldg., 800 San Francisco St, South LaCrosse Street. SH: Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-2pm. A: \$5 Daily. children under 12 free. T: 110. F: \$45.00 prepaid \$50 at show. Rapid City Rifle Club. PO Box 1945, Rapid City, SD 57709. PH: 605-209-1166. www.rapidcityrifleclub.com.

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Jan 18 PA, Greencastle. Franklin Co. Pa-Izaak Walton League- Cabin Fever Gun Show. Greencastle Sportsmans Association, 3260 Sportsman's Road. SH: Sat. 8am-3pm. A: \$6.00 adults. T: 70. F: \$25.00. Franklin Co. PA Chapter Izaak Walton League of America. 106 Greenleaf Rd, Chambersburg, PA 17202-3134. PH: 717-977-9240. None.

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Jan 19 TN, Knoxville. Knoxville TN : Smoky Mountain Gun Collectors Association Gun Show. Kerbela Shrine Temple, 315 Mimosa Ave. SH: Sun. 9am-3pm. A: \$10.00 each day. T: 120. F: \$50.00. Smoky Mountain Gun Collectors Association, Inc. . P.O.Box 9251, Knoxville, TN 37940. PH: 865-333-4970. www.smokymountainguncollectorsassociation.org.

MARCH

Mar 7-8 UT, Vernal. Vernal Gun and Knife Show. Uintah Conference Center, 313 East 200 South. SH: Fri. 12pm-7pm, Sat. 9am-5pm. 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.

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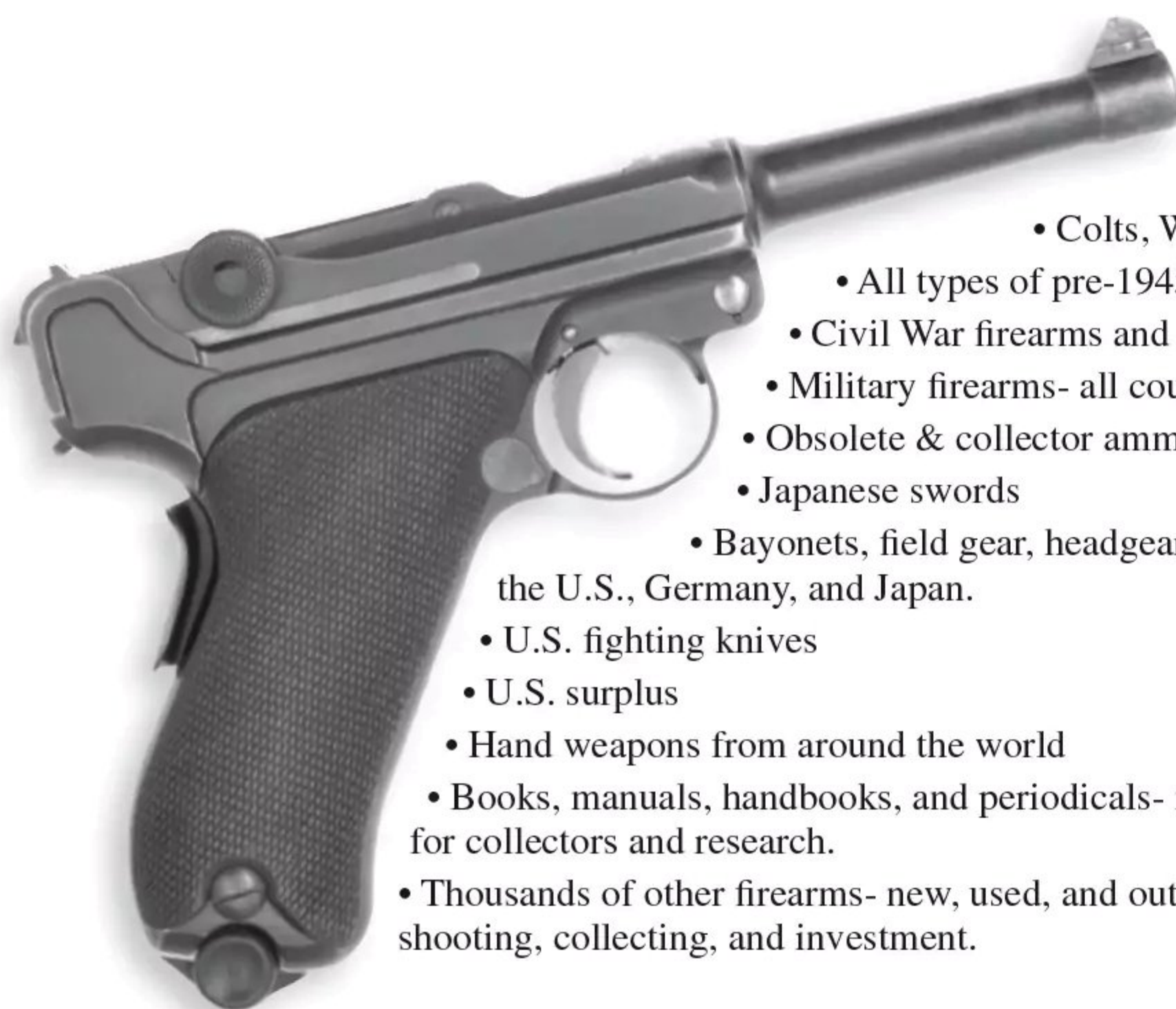
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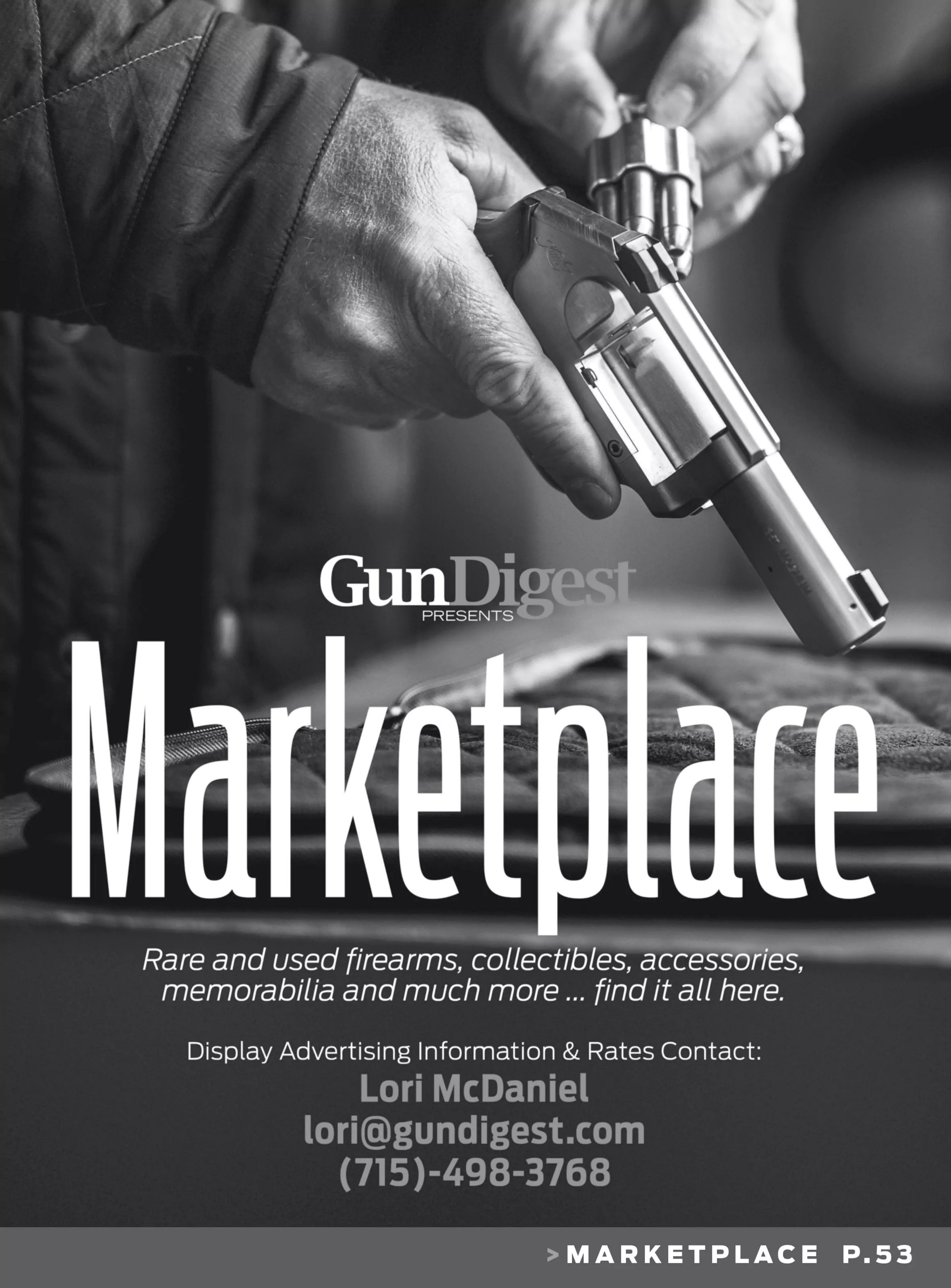
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| 195. S & W Registered Magnum, #46477, Reg #265,
6" bbl, 90% to 95% blue, S & W Medallions w/
non-orig grips w/ tiny thin piece of wd, Factory
Letter says 7 ½" bbl cut to 6" from Factory
8-43 w/ star shipped to A. Novak Cicero, Ill.....\$6500 | 208. Browning M1922 #620XXX, 9mm, 98% w/
pouch\$1050 |
| 197. Colt Police Positive Target #18XXX,22 cal, 6"
bbl, 90%.....\$595 | 209. Browning M1922 #A-91XXX, 7.65, 97%.....\$1095 |
| 198. Colt M1902 #41XXX, 38 Rimless, 6" bbl, 95%
except grip area, traces of blue \$3750 | 210. Browning M1922 24XXX, Dutch Military
marked, 85% overall \$850 |
| 199. Tisas M1911A1, 45ACP#T*0620, new in hard case\$395 | 211. Browning M1922 #91XXX-A, 7.65, WAA-140,
Nazi marked, 75% \$1495 |
| 200. Colt S.A.A. #356XXX, 45 Colt, 7½", looks
almost new, 98% overall, couple spots of lite
pits on cyl & bbl, non-matching grips..... \$5995 | 212. Browning M1922 #186XXX, 32 Auto, Nazi
marked, 90% to 95%..... \$1195 |
| 201. S & W M34-1 #M-172XXX, 4" nickel w/ fake
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| 202. S & W M34-1 #M-192XXX, 4" blued, fake round
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Portugal NIB, matte blue, 2 clips, box shows
wear \$1295 |
| 204. S & W 22/32 #S50XXX, 4" bbl, square butt
grips, post war,99% overall, box unmatched
numbers.....\$3500 | 216. Browning Hi-Power #245NZXXXXXX, 9mm,
adj sights, assem in Portugal, NIB, box shows
wear, 2 clips \$1295 |
| 205. S & W 22/32 #208XXX, 6" Target w/ orig
box, no numbers on box, I think this gun was
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looks NIB, assem in Portugal \$1395 |
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223. Browning Hi-Power #245RRXXXXX, Renaissance, new unfired in wood case, 2 sets of grips\$4795

224. Browning Hi-Power #245RRXXXXX, w/ gold trim, looks new w/ pouch \$1395

225. Browning Hi-Power F.N. #245RNXXXXXX, 99% w/ Target sight & pouch..... \$1395

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227. Browning Hi-Power #72C58XXX, as new w/ pouch..... \$1595

228. Browning Hi-Power #T-245XXX, ring hammer, 98% w/ pouch \$1695

229. Browning Hi-Power F.N. #53XXX, very early ring hammer, 98% Matte finish \$2295

230. Colt New Service #53XXX, 38-40, 7½” bb, 90% old reblue, couple initials stamped, great shooter \$995

231. Colt Woodsman Sport #110XXX, 4½” bbl 97% overall \$1095

232. Colt M1903 #24XXX, 38 ACP, 50% overall, exc grips \$1495

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243. Hi-Std Mod H-D Military #170XXX, 6¾” hvy bbl, 98% overall w/ orig box but rough \$895

244. Hi-Std Supermatic Citation #2352XXX, 5½” bull bbl, checke wd grips w/ thumbrest, looks as new \$950

245. Hi-Std Mod G, 380 Centerfire #66XX, 5” bbl, only made 74XX, 97% overal \$695

246. HI-Std Mod G, 380 Centerfire #26XX, 5” bbi, 85% w/ few tiny pits, orig clip repaired\$395

247. Hi-Std Mod Spt King Model 105, #1202XXX, 2 bbl set, 1st - 6¾” and 4½”, 97% overall w/ orig box\$795

248. Hi-Std Derringer, 22 mag, elect nickel + D-2238, looks new w/ orig box, box shows wear \$495

249. Mauser Mod HS.C, #3640, 9mm, 99%\$425

250. Colt S.A.A. #356XXX, Pre-War ,357 Magnum, 5½” bbl, only 500 made, 95% bbl & cyl, backstraps showing some wear, exc grips, 50% to 60% light case, Factory letter shows .357 mag shipping on 10-30-1939, no shipping records, very rare.....\$6500

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262. Colt Walker #041XX, 44, 9” bbl, used 90% w/ little roughness R side\$595

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267. Colt TX Patterson #19XX, .36 cal, 9” bbl, blued, new, blk powder \$995

268. Colt Repro M1860 #539XXX, .44, 5” bbl, Factory Eng, as new, blk powder \$700

269. Colt M1860 Fluted, 8”, NIB, blk powder\$595

270. Rem M1875 #R-391XXX, 44, 8” blk powder, new \$450

271. Colt M1848 Baby Drgn, #970XXX, 4”, 31 cal, NIB, blk powder\$595

272. Rem M1875 #R-410XXX, .44, 5”, as new, blk powder \$495

273. Colt M1862 #P-89XXX, 5½” 36 cal, new, blk powder \$450

274. Colt M1860 #P-99XXX, 8”, .44, new, blk powder \$450

275. Colt M1851 Belly Gun #P-117XXX, .45, 3” bbl, new blk powder \$495

276. S & W M43, #M-63XXX, 90% overall \$695

277. Colt New Service #312XXX, 44-40, 7½”, 90% to 95% overall, exe Cold checkeed non-orig to gun..... \$1395

278. Colt S.A.A. #298XXX, 38-40, 4¾” bbl, 85% bbl and ext cyl, 35% rec, exc grips w/ tiny chip, exc bore & action \$4750
279. Colt S.A.A. #294XXX, 44-40, 4¾”, backstrap scratch engraving, “Clint Kid Texas”m, 70% bbl, E.J. Rodheasing 40%, cyl 70% starting to fade, traces of case, exc grips, near exc bore, exc action, Factory Letter shipped Simmons, St, Louis, MO..... \$5000

280. S & W #240XXX, 38 safety hammerless, nicknamed Lemon Squeezer, Bicycle Model #2 obl, new, unfired, 99% orig blue \$2300

281. Ruger Super Blackhawk, #24XXX, 44 mag, 7½” bbl, 97% overall \$1195

282. S & W M34 #61XXX,.22 L rifle, 4” bbl, flat latch square butt, 98% overall..... \$1195

283. Colt open top #636XXX, 22, 2¾” bbl, factory engraved, 97% nickel, gold cyl, ivory grips..... \$1250

284. Colt open top #49XXXm 22 2¾” bbl, factory engraved, 97% orig nickel, Rosewood grips..... \$1250

285. Colt open top #22XXX, 22 2¾” bbl, factory engraved, nickel bbl 95%, cyl 80% nickel gold guilded pearl grips \$1250

286. Colt open top #97XX, 2¾” bbl, factory engraved, 75% orig nickel, Rosewood grips \$1000

287. Colt Agent #A-61XXX, .38 Special, 2 bbl, L.W. Frame, small grip, 85% overall, made in 1957..... \$695

288. S & W M60, #R-189XXX, 38 Special, overall exc w/ slight holster wear \$850

289. Colt Lightning #122XXX, 38 Colt, 4½” bbl, 95% blue & case colors, exc grips & bore \$2995

290. S & W New Model 3 Target #31XX, 32-44, 6½” bbl, 90% to 95% bright blue, exe grips and bore..... \$3950

291. S & W Model 3 Russian 3 Model #19XXX, 6½” bbl engraved on top of back straps (A. Brenon 1888) R top of rec (April 21st 71-71-71) appears to have Target sights, hard rubber grips unnumbered 90% bright orig nickel, checkered trigger, exc bore, great gun, Factory Letter \$5250

292. S & W Model 3 Russian 3 model #49XXX, 6½” bbl, matching wd grips, 80% orig nickel, rough bore both grips marked 1953?, cyl & latch assembly No.s’ \$2750

RUBEN MENDIOLA

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PISTOLS AND REVOLVERS

1-N Browning .22 LR "Challenger Model" Auto Pistol 6" barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, factory target style sights, mint checkered Walnut thumbrest target grips, looks and functions near new (C&R)\$695

2-N Charter Arms .32 S&W Long "Undercover 32 Model" Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, 97% original blue, fixed sights, very good smooth Walnut round butt grips with silver medallions, excellent function, shows some holster carry wear on front sight\$285

3-N Charter Arms .38 Special "Undercover Model" Double Action Only Compact Frame Stainless Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, stainless finish, black compact boot synthetic grips, looks and functions near new\$325

4-N Charter Arms .44 Special "Bulldog" Double Action Stainless Revolver 3" ported barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, stainless finish, black wraparound checkered synthetic grips, shows little actual use, excellent function\$385

5-N Colt .32 New Police (.32 S&W Long) "Detective Special" 2nd Issue Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, fixed sights, correct Colt logo brown checkered plastic grips, looks and functions as new, collector quality, made in 1952 (C&R)\$1175

6-N Colt .32 Police (.32 S&W) "Pocket Positive" 2nd Issue Double Action Revolver 3 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original bright blue, mint Colt logo checkered black hard rubber grips, looks and functions near new, manufactured 1928, comes in it's original box with paper, box is a but tattered, collector quality (C&R)\$1695

7-N Colt .38 Special "Cobra 1st Issue" Double Action Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, fixed sights, minty checkered Walnut round butt grips with silver Colt medallions, made in 1962, looks and functions as new (C&R)\$1195

8-N Colt .38 Special "Detective Special" Double Action Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, fixed sights, mint checkered Walnut round butt grips with silver Colt medallions (wrap around style), made in 1971, looks and functions as new, collector quality (C&R)\$1195

9-N Colt .38 Special "Detective Special" Double Action Revolver 2" barrel with mint bore, 99 1/2% original bright nickel finish, fixed sights, 3rd issue with shrouded ejector rod, mint checkered Walnut original wrap around grips, excellent function, looks new overall, made in 1973, collector quality (C&R)\$935

10-N EAA .22 LR/.22 Winchester Magnum "Bounty Hunter" Single Action Dual Cylinder Revolver 4 3/4" barrel with mint bore, 99%+ original blue, fixed sights, mint one piece smooth Walnut grip, excellent function, made in Germany with heft and feel of a large caliber about new in box with spare cylinder, manual and cleaning brush, nice quality\$315

11-N Harrington & Richardson .22 LR "Model 922" Solid Frame Double Action 9 Shot Revolver 6" round barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, fixed sights, mint variegated gray H&R logo grips, looks and functions as new, comes in original gold box with manual and cleaning brush, box is a bit tattered but still marked nicely, collector quality (C&R)\$265

12-N Harrington & Richardson .22 LR "Model 929" Swingout Cylinder Double Action 9 Shot Revolver 4" round barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, windage adjustable rear and blade front sights, mint H&R logo checkered black plastic grips, looks and functions as new (C&R)\$235

13-N Harrington & Richardson .22 LR "Model 929" Swingout Cylinder 9 Shot Double Action Revolver 2 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, fixed sights, mint H&R logo checkered black plastic grips, transfer bar safety, near new overall (C&R)\$235

14-N Harrington & Richardson .22 LR "Model 930 Sidekick" Swingout Cylinder 9 Shot Revolver 4" round barrel with mint bore, 98% original bright nickel finish, fixed sights, mint H&R logo checkered brown plastic grips, excellent function showing little actual use (C&R)\$245

15-N Harrington & Richardson .32 S&W Long "Victor" Model Double Action Solid Frame Revolver 2 1/2" round barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue and case color, mint hard rubber grips, looks and functions near new (C&R)\$195

16-N Harrington & Richardson .32 S&W Long "Model 732" Double Action Swingout Cylinder Revolver 2 1/2" barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 95%+ original blue, sides of hammer show light pitting, mint H&R logo checkered black plastic grips, 6 shot cylinder, excellent function (C&R)\$215

17-N Harrington & Richardson .38 S&W "Model The American" Double Action Revolver 2 1/2" octagon barrel with fair pitted bore, 90% nickel finish with flaking and scattered peppery pin prick pitting, triggerguard and trigger are blued, black hard rubber grips, pull pin cylinder release, manufactured 1905-1942 (C&R)\$125

18-N High Standard .22 LR "Model DM 100" Over/Under Cased Derringer 3 1/2" barrels with mint bores, 99%+ original blue, fixed sights, mint smooth white plastic grips, as new in original red flip top case with manual and original outer shipping box serial numbered to gun, collector quality, manufactured 1966 (C&R)\$395

19-N High Standard .22 LR/.22 Winchester Magnum "Double Nine Convertible" Western Style Revolver 5 1/2" barrel with excellent bright bore, 98% original bright blue, fully adjustable target style rear sight and blade front, .22 LR cylinder shows little shooting wear, .22 Mag cylinder shows no wear, excellent smooth Walnut grips with silver H.S. logos, excellent function, made in 1973 and comes in it's black plastic case (no end label) (C&R)\$495

20-N Hopkins & Allen .32 S&W Short "Model XL8" Double Action Solid Frame Revolver 2 3/4" octagon barrel with very good bright bore, 98% original bright nickel, folding hammer, excellent original mother of pearl smooth grips, fixed sights, matching numbers, looks near new but trigger return spring is broken (C&R)\$395

21-N Iver Johnson .22 LR "Sealed 8" Double Action Solid Frame Revolver 2 1/2" round barrel with very good bore, fixed sights, 70% original blue with 8 shot cylinder and barrel having gone gray, very good smooth Walnut round butt grips, works fine (C&R)\$155

22-N Iver Johnson .32 S&W Short "Safety Hammer" Top Break Revolver 3" ribbed barrel with minty bright bore, 98% original nickel, blue and case color, fixed sights, auto ejection, mint "owl" logo checkered hard rubber grips, excellent function, nickel shows a little pin prick pitting otherwise looks new, collector quality (C&R)\$315

23-N Iver Johnson .32 S&W Short "Safety Hammerless" 5 Shot Top Break Revolver 3" ribbed barrel with excellent bright bore, 96% original nickel, blue and case color, excellent "owl" checkered hard rubber grips, excellent function\$265

24-N Iver Johnson .38 S&W "Safety Hammer" 3rd Model 5 Shot Top Break Revolver 3 1/4" ribbed barrel with minty bright bore, 98% original bright nickel, auto ejector, very good "owl" logo hard rubber grips with a chipout at locating pin on right panel, excellent function (C&R)\$315

25-N Ruger .22 LR / .22 Winchester Magnum "New Model Single Six Colorado Centennial" Single Action Revolvers 6 1/2" barrels with mint bores, 99% original blue, mint smooth Rosewood grips with Ruger medallions, have (2) of these near new revolvers with consecutive serial numbers, as new in boxes\$650 for (1) \$1200 for the pair

26-N Ruger .357 Magnum "Old Model Blackhawk" 3 Screw Single Action Revolver 6 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, factory fully adjustable rear and ramp blade front sights, minty smooth Walnut grips with Ruger logo medallions, (3) screw frame without transfer bar conversion, excellent function, made in 1967, collector quality, comes in original "BKH-36" catalog number box with manual and unfilled registration card, box is tattered and in need of repairs (C&R)\$725

27-N Sedgley .22 LR "Model 1920 Baby" Folding Trigger Revolver 1 3/8" barrel with fair bore, fixed sights, flaking nickel finish, folding trigger, black checkered hard rubber grips with "S" monogram, non functioning, firearm is in pieces not assembled, manufactured 1922 (C&R)\$95

28-N Smith & Wesson .22 LR "Model 41" Target Auto Pistol 5" barrel with mint bore, 99 1/2% original blue, factory target sights, mint checkered dark Walnut factory grips, as new in original box with spare magazine, made in 1970, collector quality (C&R)\$1275

29-N Smith & Wesson 9mm Para "Model 59" Nickel Finish Auto Pistol 4" barrel with mint bore, 99 1/2% original bright nickel and blue small parts, as new in original silver reinforced 2 piece box with manual, complete tool kit and owner part of registration card, box shows some tattering and a tear at front edge but is correctly end labeled to pistol, 14 shot magazine marked 9mm/S&W, collector quality, made in 1977\$795

30-N Smith & Wesson 9mm Para "Model 59" Nickel High Capacity Double/Single Action Auto Pistol 4" barrel with mint bore, 99%+ original bright nickel with blued small parts, mint checkered black plastic grips with S&W logo, mint 14 shot blued magazine, looks near new, made in 1981\$725

31-N Smith & Wesson .22 LR "Model 17" (No Dash) 4 Screw Double Action Target Revolver 6" pinned barrel with excellent bright bore, factory target sights, 98% very nice quality factory looking refinish blue, recesses chamber cylinder, 90% original base color with some spotty pitting on trigger, all matching including diamond center, checkered Walnut magna style grips with silver medallions, made in 1960 and very nice looking showing just a few light pits under refinish blue, a nice 3rd model target masterpiece (C&R)\$795

32-N Smith & Wesson .22 LR "Model 34-1" Revolver 4" pinned barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue and slightly faded case colors, factory target sights, minty checkered Walnut square butt magna style grips with silver medallions, looks and functions near new, made in 1981, comes in original reinforced corner box with paper\$725

33-N Smith & Wesson .22 LR "Model 34-1 Nickel Finish" Revolver 4" pinned barrel with mint bore, factory fully adjustable rear target style sight in blue, 1/8" blade front sight in nickel, 98% original bright nickel with some light scratches and turn ring on cylinder, 98% dark case colors, checkered Walnut S&W target style grips on round butt frame have silver medallions and look sharp, excellent function\$875

34-N Smith & Wesson .32 S&W Long "Model 1903" Hand Ejector (2nd Model) Pre 5 Screw 4 Screw Revolver 6" pinned barrel with good bright bore, 99% non original nickel finish, fixed sights, all matching numbers including excellent checkered logo hard rubber grips, excellent function and very nice looking refinish, made in 1904 (C&R)\$795

35-N Smith & Wesson .38 Special M&P (Pre Model 10) 5 Screw Double Action Revolver 2" pinned barrel with excellent bright bore, fixed sights, 95%+ original blue and case color showing some silvering of sharp edges from holster carry, excellent grips with silver medallions, excellent function and very nice looking, made in 1950 (C&R)\$695

CONTINUED ➡

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36-N Smith & Wesson .38 Special "Victory Model" WW-II Double Action Revolver 4" pinned barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98%+ original "black magic" dark parkerized finish, 95% slightly faded case color, top strap marked "U.S. Property G.H.D.", butt is with ordnance "bomb" and "V" prefix serial number, lanyard at butt, all matching numbers including excellent smooth Walnut grips, left side of frame just below cylinder thumb release shows a series of light chatter marks, excellent function, collector quality (C&R)\$895

37-N Smith & Wesson .45 ACP "Model 1917" U.S. Army WW-I Revolver 5 ½" pinned barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue and case color, all matching numbers including minty smooth dark Walnut grips, lanyard at butt, marked "United States Property" on underside of barrel, excellent function, "ordnance bomb" marked frame, all original, collector quality (C&R) \$1950

38-N Uberti / Taylor & Co. .357 Magnum "Model 1870" Single Action Colt Clone Revolver 5 ½" barrel with mint bore, this is a "Cattleman II New Model" style with push button cylinder pin release, 99% original bright blue and vivid case colors, fixed sights, mint one piece Walnut grips, looks and functions as new and comes in original Taylor box with manual and cable lock plus nylon pouch\$565

CENTERFIRE RIFLES

39-N Enfield .303 British "No. 4 MKI* Sporter" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 23 ½" barrel with very good bore, 98% nice quality rebuild blue, military blade front and (2) position peep rear sights, very good original cut down stock in sporter configuration with sling swivels, brass "trap" buttplate and 5 shot magazine, manufactured 1945 by Long Branch, excellent function ... \$315

40-N French 7.5mm French "MAS Model 1949-56" Clip Feed Auto Rifle 20 1/2" barrel with excellent bore, 98% original parkerized finish, factory open sights, flash hider and grenade launcher on barrel, excellent hardwood pistol grip stock, excellent function (C&R)\$1095

41-N Mauser 8mm Mauser "Model G98/40/JHV/42 Hungarian" WW-II Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with good bore, correct military open sights, "JVH/42" marked receiver bridge, numerous Waffen stamps, mismatch on bolt and some other small parts, very good+ original (2) piece stock, excellent function, metal is mostly gun metal gray with a little blue mixed in but no pitting (C&R) \$1475

42-N Plainfield .30 Carbine "model M-1" Auto Carbine 18" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, military style open front and rear sights plus a very nice Weaver 2-10x40mm scope mounted using a Weaver sidemount and Weaver rings, excellent Walnut pistol grip stock with steel buttplate, (5) round blued magazine, flat bolt, bayonet fixture, near new look and function with 1943 date original (2) magazine stock pouch \$765

43-N Savage 30/30 "Model 340" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with bright mint bore, re-blue with areas of thinning to brown patina on receiver, front raised blade sight with Dockendorff adjustable rear sight, smooth Walnut pistol grip stock showing dings and dents, serrated black plastic buttplate, barrel mounted front sling swivel, rear sling swivel in toeline, comes with one 5 round detachable magazine, due to re-blue barrel unable to date, manufactured 1950-1985 \$200

44-N Savage .243 Winchester "Model 99F" Lever Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original bright blue, case color on lever is a bit muted but still 95%, factory open sights plus a Leupold M8-4x scope mounted using factory holes and Weaver rings and bases, cocking indicator, brass cartridge counter, excellent checkered Walnut pistol grip stock with serrated steel buttplate, grip cap, sling swivels and leather sling, excellent function, collector quality, manufactured 1956 (C&R) \$1295

45-N Springfield 30/06 "Model 1903 Sporterized Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with very good bore, 97% nice custom blue with a couple spots of pitting on underside of barrel near muzzle, high number receiver, no open sights but has a "Pro Hunter 3-9x10 WA" mounted on receiver, bolt handle and safety modified for scope use, excellent commercial Walnut pistol grip stock with grip cap, Monte Carlo, cheekpiece, swivel "eyes", Q.D. swivels and nylon sling, excellent function \$495

46-N Springfield / Remington 30/06 "Model 1903A3 Custom" Sporter Bolt Rifle 22 1/2"
barrel with mint bore and marked installed by "Golden State Arms/Santa Fe", 98% custom blue,
ramp bead front, folding open rear sights plus a 4x32mm Bushnell Banner scope in "flipover"
Weaver rings and bases, probably bent bolt handle for scope use, scope safety, excellent dark
Walnut pistol grip stock with 1903 style detachable magazine base, vent rubber recoil pad, sling
swivels and nice leather sling, excellent function \$595

47-N Swiss 7.5mm Swiss "Model 1889 Sporterized Straight Pull" Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with very good bore, 80% original blue, blade front sight and military open rear sight with cut down side of elevator giving a 1000 meter maximum position, matching numbers, military stock cut down to sporter configuration, steel buttplate and sling swivels, missing its 12 shot magazine\$145

48-N Swiss / Schmidt-Rubin 7.5x55 Swiss "Model 1896/11" Clip Feed Straight Pull Sporterized Bolt Rifle 25" barrel with mint bore, 90% original blue thinning to gray, front sight is a 1903 slip on barrel style sight, rear sight is original tangent sight, all matching numbers, Walnut pistol grip stock has a roll over cheekpiece, Rosewood pistol grip cap and forend tip both with a white line spacer, hand carved European style leaf and acorn motif on forend and pistol grip that has a right hand palm swell, comes with one 6 round detachable magazine, brown rubber recoil pad, excellent function\$395

49-N U.S. Government / Saginaw .30 Carbine "Model M-1" Auto Carbine 18" barrel with mint bore and marked "Saginaw Steering Gear Division of General motors", no date on barrel, "Blue Sky" import marked, flat bolt "ID" marked, lever safety, push button release on "U.S.-G" marked 15 round magazine, standard military open sights with adjustable rear marked "IR Co", very good Walnut pistol grip stock with "IO" marked butt sling cutout, excellent function (C&R) \$1295

50-N Universal .30 Carbine "M-1 Carbine" Look-alike Auto Rifle 18" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, military carbine style open sights, minty hardwood pistol grip stock with perforated blued steel upper G.I. style sling and oiler, checkered steel buttplate, round bolt, 10 shot magazine, excellent function\$635

51-N Winchester 30/06 "Model 1917 Enfield" Sporter Bolt Rifle 26" original barrel with excellent bore, 98% nice custom blue, sporting ramp bead front sight and "Redfield" receiver mounted rear sight, original rear sight and protective "ears" have been professionally removed, flattened detachable magazine housing, bent down bolt, minty commercial Walnut pistol grip sporter stock with Monte Carlo, cheekpiece, grip cap, black forend top, vent rubber recoil pad and 1 1/4" swivels, all work very professionally done, excellent function\$565

52-N Winchester 30/30 "Model 94AE" Lever Carbine 16 1/8" barrel with mint bore, 99% original bright blue, hooded ramp front and sporting open rear sights plus factory drilled, tapped and plugged for scope bases, minty Walnut straight grip stock with logo plastic buttplate added swivel "eyes", Q.D. swivels and as new Winchester marked wide leather sling, saddle ring on left of receiver and large loop lever, made in 1991 and looks and functions as new\$925

RIMFIRE RIFLES

53-N Anschutz .22 LR "Model 1710" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 23 1/2" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue, no open sights on tapered lightweight barrel, a very nice Leupold 2-7x32mm scope has been installed, excellent dark figured Walnut pistol grip stock with serrated plastic buttplate, triggerguard marked "73 of 200" in gold, shows some dings \$1700

54-N BRNO .22 LR "Model 1" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 23" barrel with excellent bore, 95% original blue, hooded ramp blade front and 3 leaf open rear sight plus "BSA Contender" 4-16x40mm scope on grooved receiver, excellent Walnut pistol grip stock with sling swivels, black plastic buttplate, leather sling and 5 shot magazine, excellent function, made in 1949 (C&R)\$795

55-N Browning .22 LR "Grade I" Belgian But Tube Feed Auto Rifle 19" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, factory bead front sight, rear sight replaced with correct Redfield Canti lever scope base now mounting a Redfield 4x28mm scope, excellent light colored Walnut pistol grip stock, with steel buttplate, excellent function, made in 1971 (C&R) \$795

56-N Browning .22 S, L, & LR "Model BL I" Lever Carbine 20" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue with some small pin prick pitting spots scattered about, factory open sights and grooved receiver, excellent Walnut straight grip stock with a little finish loss from storage, excellent function \$700

57-N Erma Werke .22 LR "Model E" M-1 Carbine Look-alike Clip Feed Auto Carbine 18" barrel
with mint bore, 98% original blue/black finish, carbine style open sights plus grooved receiver,
minty blonde color pistol grip stock with metal buttplate, sling swivel, slotted rear of butt for oiler
and attached green cloth sling, sharp looking and excellent function, 10 shot magazine\$425

58-N Erma Werke .22 Winchester Magnum "Model ESG22" M-1 Carbine Look-alike Auto Carbine 19" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, M-1 carbine look-alike blade front sight, rear grooved receiver mounts a "Beeman" blue ribbon 2.5x16 model SS-1 compact scope, excellent high gloss Walnut carbine buttstock and upper, serrated steel buttplate and G.I. appearing cloth sling and oiler, excellent function and looks near new\$675

59-N French MAS .22 LR "Model 45" Clip Feed Trainer Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original parkerized finish, military style open rear sight and hooded ramp blade front sight, minty blonde color pistol grip stock with steel buttplate, sling swivels and leather sling, excellent function, collector quality (C&R)\$565

60-N Iver Johnson / Erma .22 LR "Model U.S. M-1" Auto Carbine 18" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, G.I. looking open sights, minty dark Walnut buttstock and upper handguard, G.I. type cloth sling and oiler, checkered blued steel buttplate and excellent function, super quality but no magazine\$565

61-N Kimber .22 LR "Classic 22" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 99% original matte blue finish, no open sights but has factory installed 1" rings on receiver, "AA" Walnut pistol grip stock with 20 LPI cut checkering steel grip cap, black solid rubber buttpad, swivel "eyes" and factory 5 round magazine, looks and functions as new \$1260

62-N Kimber .22 LR "Model 82 Government" U.S. Marked Single Shot Bolt Rifle 25" heavy barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, scope base drilled and tapped and plugged barrel with universal base for front sight, excellent marksman style pistol grip Walnut stock with rubber butt pad, excellent function, made in 1990's, has a swift premier 4.5-14x44mm scope mounted using grooved receiver (C&R)\$850

63-N Marlin .22 LR "Model 60" Tube Feed Auto Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 98% original blue, factory open sights, very good hardwood pistol grip stock with factory "squirrel" checkering, excellent function \$215

64-N Marlin .22 LR" Model 88" Butt Tube Feed Auto Rifle 24" barrel with excellent bore, factory open sights, 97% original blue, very good Walnut pistol grip stock with sling swivels and steel buttplate, forend shows some amateur attempt at checkering, excellent function (C&R)\$125

65-N Marlin .22 L & LR "Model 81" Tube Feed Bolt Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue, factory open sights plus grooved receiver, minty Walnut pistol grip stock with logo plastic buttplate, looks and functions as new (C&R) \$195

66-N Marlin .22 Winchester Magnum "Model 980 DL" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue, factory open rear sight, front sight has been removed but grooved receiver has a Bushnell 4x scope chief twenty two scope mounted excellent figured Walnut pistol grip stock with grip cap, Monte Carlo and logo plastic buttplate, excellent function, 5 shot original magazine (C&R)\$400

67-N Marlin / Glenfield .22 LR "Model 60" Tube Feed Auto Rifle 22" barrel with mint bore, 97% original blue, factory open sights plus mint Glenfield 4x15mm scope on grooved receiver, minty impress checkered hardwood pistol grip stock with Monte Carlo and black plastic buttplate, excellent function \$200

68-N Mossberg .22 LR "Model 44 US/US Property Marked" Clip Feed Target Bolt Rifle 26"
barrel with mint bore, 98% original bright blue, marked "U.S. Property with a serial" number
on receiver bridge, barrel marked "U.S. Property", 7 shot original magazine with magazine well
metal having an I.D. number, minty blonde color pistol grip "Marksman" style stock with original
swivels and old leather sling with brass hardware, bead front sight and factory Mossberg S-100
swing away "peep" sight, excellent function, looks unused, collector quality (C&R)\$425

CONTINUED →

86-N Stevens .22 LR "Favorite Model 1915" Single Shot Dropping Block Rifle 24" octagon barrel with very good bright bore, 97% restoration quality refinish blue and dark muted case color, excellent refinished Walnut straight grip stock and forend, Stevens logo is "S" shape minty hard rubber buttplate, excellent function (C&R)\$325

87-N Wards (Mossberg Model 10) .22 S, L, & LR "Model 36D" Single Shot Bolt Rifle 23" barrel with very good bore, very good Walnut pistol grip stock, factory open sights, excellent function (C&R)\$185

88-N Western Field (Mossberg 346) .22 S, L, & LR "Model 842" Tube Feed Bolt Rifle 24" barrel with mint bore, 99% original blue, factory open sights plus a 4x30mm Western Field scope on grooved receiver, minty Walnut pistol grip stock, as new overall, made around 1960 (C&R)\$375

89-N Western Field .22 S, L, & LR No Model Given but Appears to be a Prewar Savage 25 Pump Rifle 24" octagon barrel with very good bore, 95%+ original blue going brown, factory open sights, excellent Walnut pistol grip stock with smooth blued steel buttplate, excellent circular grooved pump handle, excellent function\$315

90-N Winchester .22 LR "Model 290 Deluxe" Tube Feed Auto Rifle 20 3/4" barrel with good bore, 70% original blue, scattered pin prick pitting throughout barrel surface, 80% black grooved receiver, checkered wood stock showing matching dings and dents to rest of rifle, factory buttplate with white line spacer being cracked and expanded, manufactured 1965-1973 (C&R)\$175

91-N Winchester .22 S, L, & LR "Model 69" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 25" barrel with bright excellent bore, 98% original blue, hooded front sight, open field rear sight, scope blocks added to receiver with a Weaver challenger 2.5to7x scope with clean clear duplex retical added, smooth Walnut pistol grip stock with oil finish showing scattered dings and dents, comes with one 5 round magazine and a leather sling, excellent function, manufactured 1934-1963 (C&R)\$265

92-N Winchester .22 S, L, & LR "Model 69A Target" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 25" barrel with excellent bore, 98% blue, no rear dovetail in barrel, rear peep sight has been removed (front sight still intact but with replacement hood) receiver now has a Weaver B-4 scope mounted using a side mount base and rings, nice Walnut pistol grip stock with logo buttplate, 5 shot Winchester marked magazine, excellent function (C&R)\$195

93-N Winchester .22 LR "Model 72" Tube Feed Bolt Rifle 25" barrel with excellent bore, 97% original blue, sporting open sights plus expertly drilled, tapped and plugged receiver for side mount, excellent dark Walnut pistol grip stock with hard rubber logo buttplate (C&R)\$365

94-N Winchester .22 LR "Model 75 Sport" Clip Feed Bolt Rifle 24" tapered barrel with min bore, hooded raised front sight, rear sight is removed and replaced with a dovetail blank, receiver mounted scope blocks, Winchester proof marks are on the side of scope blocks and receiver, receiver mounted Lyman 57E aperture sight, 98% original blue with triggerguard and buttplate showing blue to gray, select checkered Walnut pistol grip stock with grip cap and sling swivels, serrated buttplate, comes with one 10 round detachable magazine, stock shows some dings and dents, manufactured 1947 (C&R)\$1300

95-N Winchester .22 S, L, & LR "Model 62A" Takedown Tube Feed Pump Rifle 23" barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue finish, only very light sharp edge wear, original open field sights, smooth Walnut straight grip stock with grooved forend, black Winchester buttplate, excellent function, collector quality for this 1958 rifle (C&R)\$1150

96-N Winchester .22 S, L & LR "Model 67" Single Shot Bolt Rifle 27" barrel with excellent bore, 90% original blue with light graying and pitting about 10" back from muzzle, "King" adjustable open rear and factory bead front sights, excellent dark Walnut pistol grip stock with finger groove forend and mint hard rubber logo buttplate (C&R)\$235

97-N Felix Sarasketa Y Cia Eibar 12 Gauge Boxlock Double Trigger Over/Under Shotgun 28" barrels with fixed full and modified chokes, 2 3/4" chambers, bright mint bores, raised front blade with chipping red paint, 97% original blue with light scratches and spots of thinning along the engraved boxlock action, hand cut checkered hardwood pistol grip stock and forend wood shows some dings and dents, black checkered buttplate, sling swivels, excellent function, tang safety and a Greener crossbolt, barrel latch is right of center, manufactured 1982 \$325

98-N Ithaca 12 Gauge "Model 37 Supreme" Pump Shotgun 28" vent rib barrel with 2 3/4" chamber, fixed modified choke, "glow bar" front sight and silver mid bead, 98%+ original blue, roll engraved receiver, minty fancy figured Walnut pistol grip stock with cut checkering, logo grip cap and logo vent rubber recoil pad, matching pump handle, looks and functions near new, made in 1969, collector quality (C&R) \$825

99-N L.C. Smith / Hunter Arms 16 Gauge "The Fulton" Boxlock Side by Side Shotgun 26" barrels with raised ribs, 2 3/4" chambers and modified and improved cylinder chokes, 95% lightly fading original blue, frame shows 40% original case color, and marked "Fulton" on sides, extractors, double triggers, very good Walnut pistol grip stock with lightly worn cut checkering, splinter style forend and serrated black hard rubber buttplate, late 1930's manufacture (C&R) \$495

100-N Sears / J.C. Higgins 12 Gauge (High Standard Model 200) "Model 20" Deluxe Pump Shotgun 27" vent rib barrel with mint bore, 2 3/4" chamber and "J.C. Higgins" external adjustable choke device, 99% original bright blue, minty Walnut pistol grip stock with cut checkering, grip cap, vent rubber recoil pad with logo, matching pump handle, looks and functions as new, "Sears Best" pump shotgun from the 1960's, super high quality and very versatile (C&R) \$325

101-N Stevens 12 Gauge "Model 520-30 U.S. Marked" WW-II Pump Shotgun 28" plain barrel with mint bore, 2 3/4" chamber and fixed full choke, 95%+ original blue, receiver marked "U.S." with "P" and "ordnance bomb", barrel has "ordnance bomb" "P" markings with "P" with "Punch dot" repeated on barrel and receiver, excellent plain Walnut pistol grip buttstock with serrated black hard rubber buttplate, matching pump handle, excellent function, collector quality (C&R) \$1295

CONTINUED →

120-N S&W .32 S&W "4th Model" Top Break Revolver 3" ribbed barrel with good pitted bore, 98% original nickel finish, some case hardened coloring on hammer and trigger, 95% blue triggerguard, smooth mother of pearl grips\$565

121-N Smith & Wesson .38 S&W "1st Model" Single Action Top Break Revolver 3 1/4" barrel with fair to good bore, 90% original nickel scattered areas of wear and pin prick pitting, hammer and spur trigger have toned to gray with front case hardened coloring visible, brown checkered hard rubber grips, manufactured, excellent function 1876-1877\$625

122-N S&W 44/40 "Frontier Model" Top Break Double Action Revolver 6" full ribbed barrel with good pitted bore, brass replacement front blade sight, 95% nickel with some areas of pin prick pitting, several small dings on sideplate, fluted cylinder showing some nickel loss on sharp edges of flutes, replacement black checkered plastic grips, manufactured 1898\$975

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tattered jacket\$85

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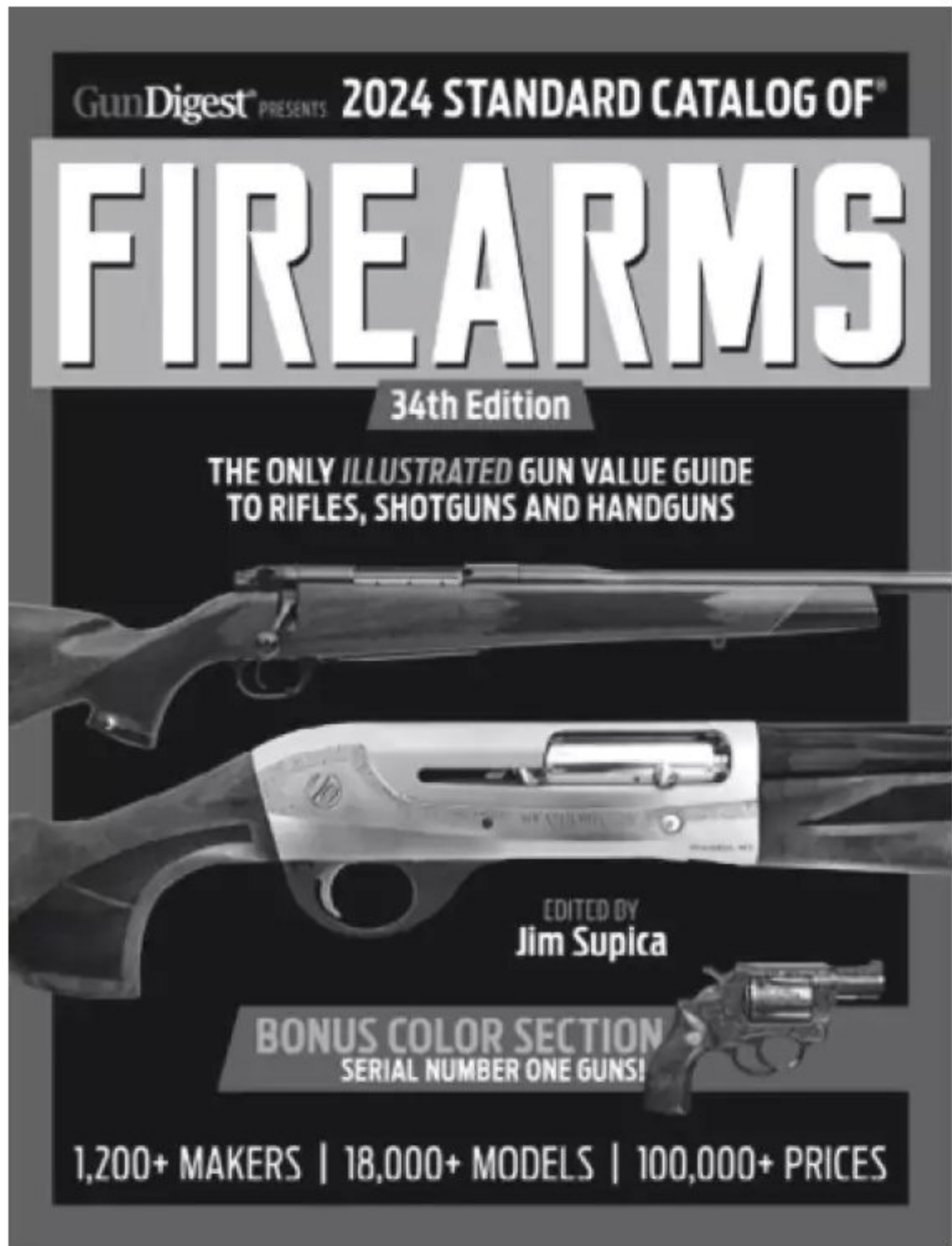
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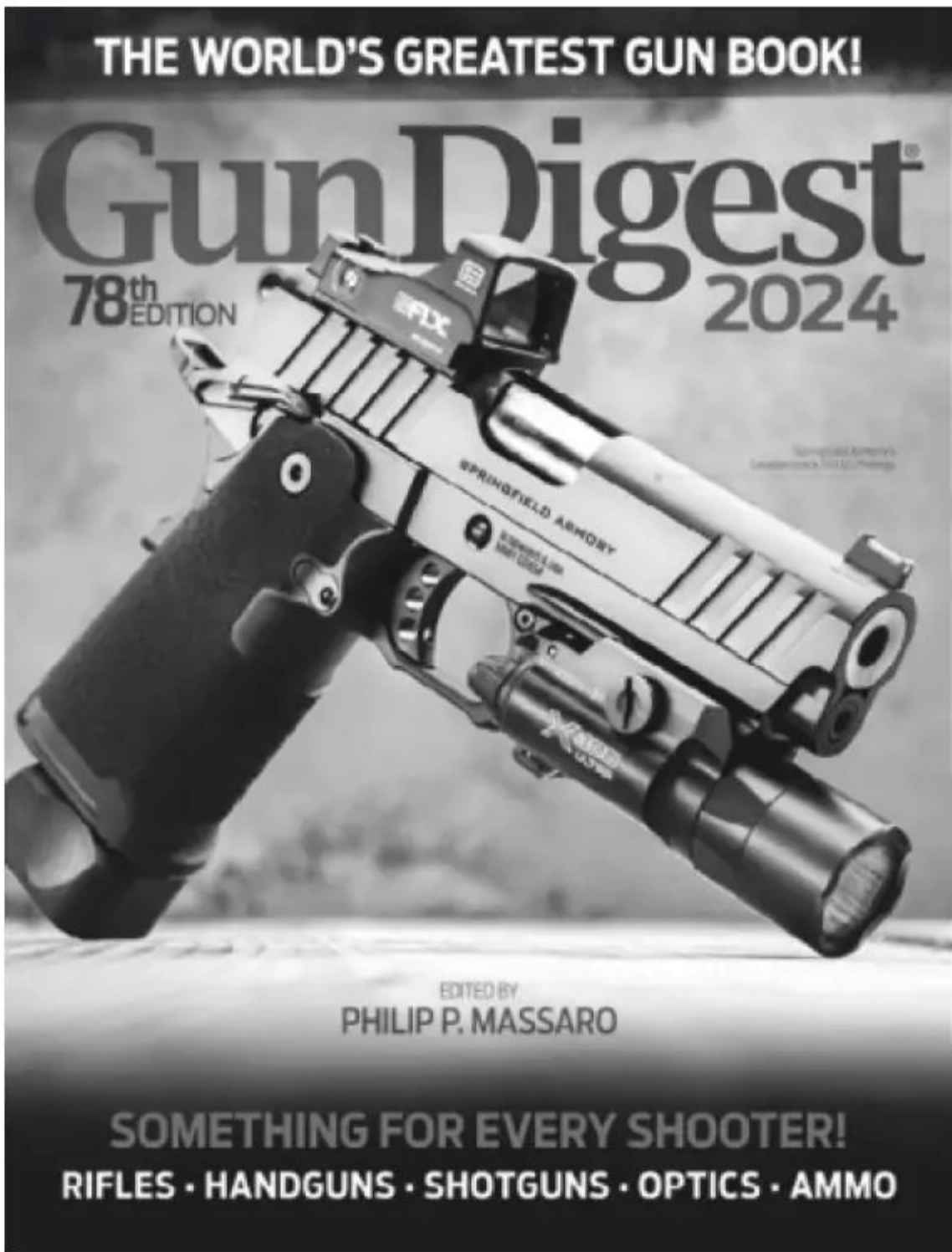
106-N Colt .36 Cal. “Model 1861” Navy Black Powder Series 2nd Generation Single Action Revolver 7” barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98% original blue, 98%+ case color, engraved cylinder, one piece Walnut grips, silver plated backstrap and triggerguard that tarnished to a bronze copper color, comes with original black cardboard box with matching gold side label, inside top lid is unopened instruction manual	\$765
107-N Colt .36 Cal. “Model 1862” Pocket Navy Signature Series 3rd Generation Black Powder Revolver 5 ½” octagon barrel with mint bore, 98%+ original blue and case color frame, silver plated triggerguard and backstrap, rebated engraved cylinder, comes with gray box and paperwork	\$525
108-N Colt .36 Cal. 2nd Generation “Model 1862 Pocket” Navy Percussion Revolver 5 ½” octagon barrel with mint bore, 99% factory blue barrel and cylinder engraved with stage coach scene, frame is 99% case hardened with amazing colors, triggerguard and grip frame are 99% silver plated, smooth one piece Walnut grips, all matching numbers, timing and lockup are excellent, the French fit gold velvet lined display case has a brass medallion with bust of Sam Colt on cover, flush mounted brass lock and case is ebony in color, case includes powder measure, blue finished iron conical/round ball mold combination tool and metal percussion cap tin, no key	\$795
109-N Colt .44 Cal. 2nd Generation “2nd Model Dragoon” Black Powder Revolver 7 ½” barrel with mint bore, fixed sights, 98%+ original blue and case colors on frame, hammer and loading rod, brass square back triggerguard and backstrap, one piece Walnut grips, comes with original black cardboard box with matching side label, inside is unopened papers, like new	\$875
110-N Colt .44 Cal. 2nd Generation “2nd Model Dragoon” Black Powder Revolver 7 ½” barrel with mint bore, 99%+ original blue, 99% case colors on receiver, loading lever, hammer, brass triggerguard with mustard color patina, mint one piece Walnut smooth grips, engraved cylinder (no drag line), still has hanging caution tag, comes in factory black Colt box with sealed paperwork attached to inside of lid, like new condition, appears unfired	\$725
111-N Harrington & Richardson .32 Cal. “Premier First Model 3rd Variation Type Nine Double Action” Top Break Revolver 3” barrel with bright excellent bore, fixed sights, 87%+ original blue toning to gray, muted case colors on trigger and hammer, two piece target logo hard rubber grips, top of barrel marked “Harrington and Richardson Arms Company, Worcester Mass U.S.A. Pat Oct 4. 87, Apr 2.95”, comes with two piece red cardboard box that is missing piece on top lid and shows repair work on inside of box, top lid has original H&R revolver diagram, box has non matching serial number	\$275
112-N Iver Johnson .32 Rimfire “Defender” Single Action Revolver 2 5/8” barrel with excellent bore, 97% nickel finish, fluted cylinder, case hardened color is visible but faded on hammer and spur trigger, smooth Walnut grips, manufactured 1889-1895	\$875
113-N Iver Johnson .32 S&W “1st Model Safety Hammerless” Double Action Top Break Revolver 3” barrel with excellent bore, 98% original nickel finish with a few marks and tiny bubbles on backstrap, 95% blued triggerguard with nice case color, nice case hardened trigger, excellent original “owl’s head” grips, manufactured 1895, super looker	\$625
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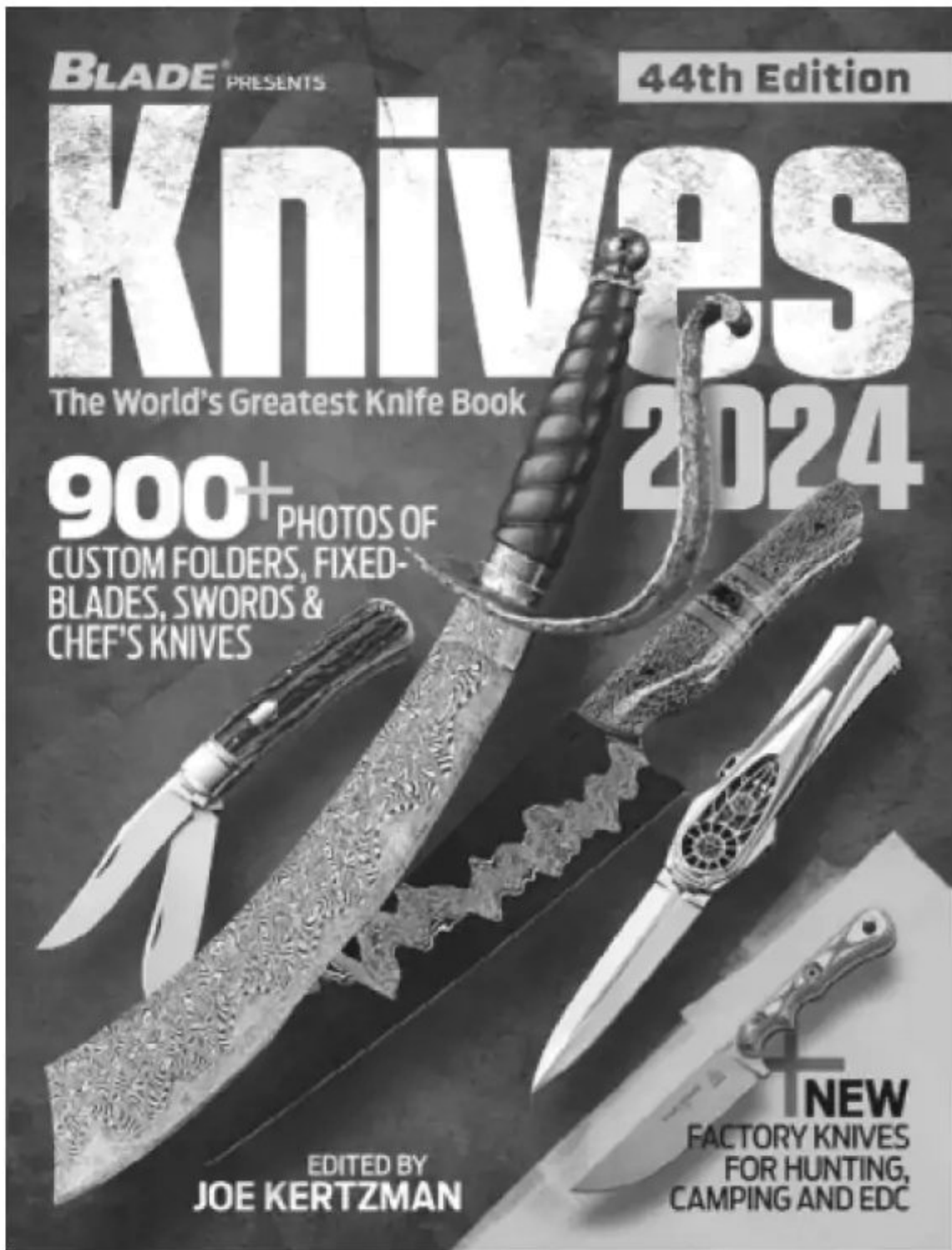
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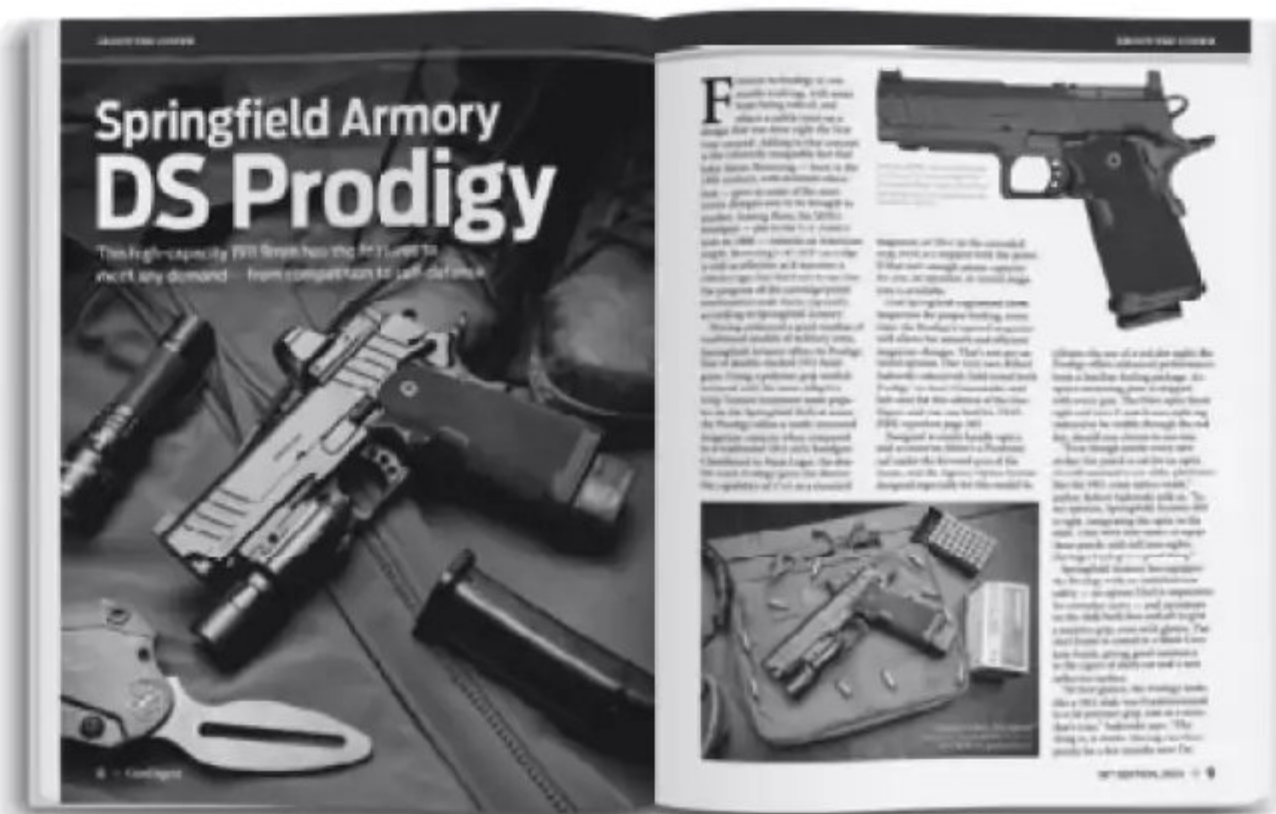
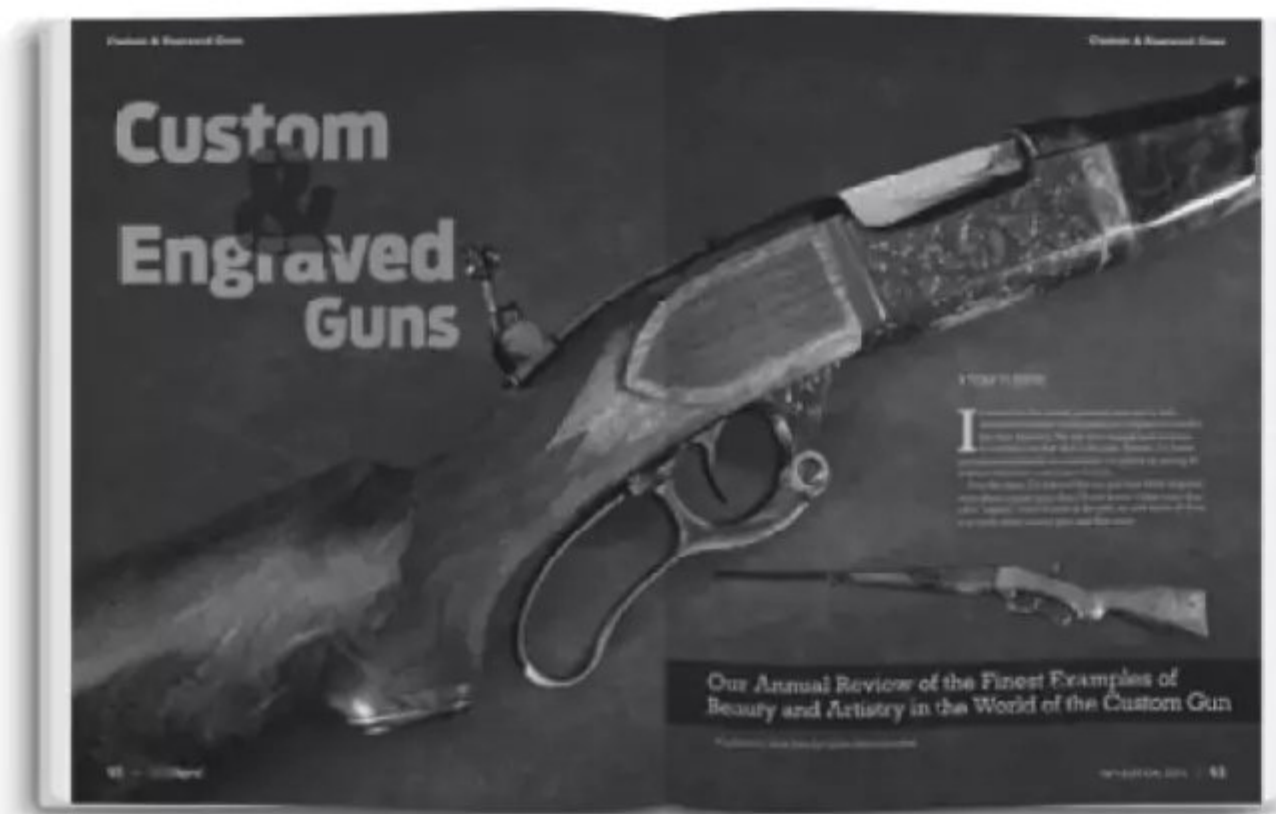
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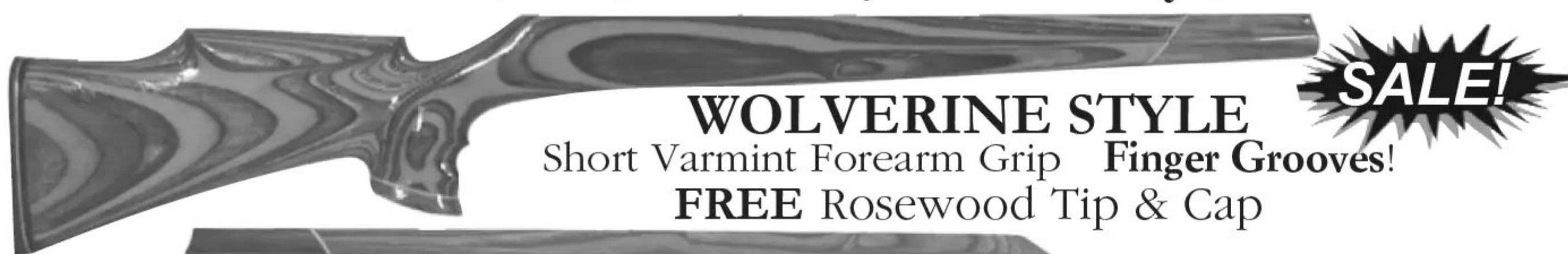
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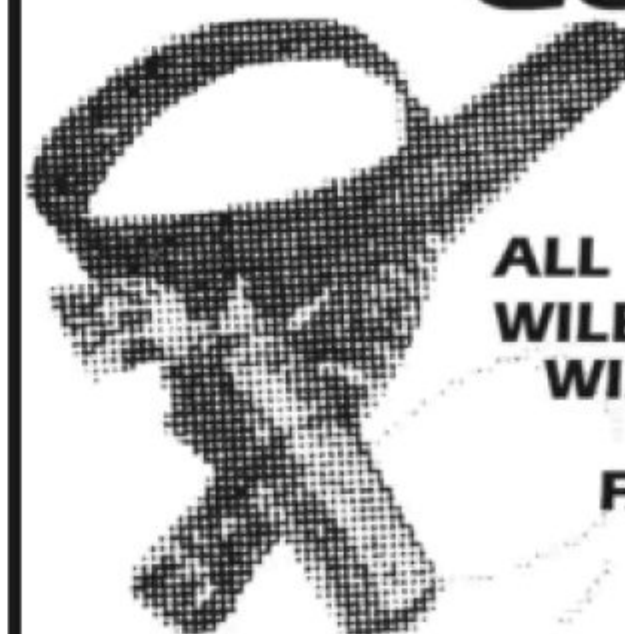
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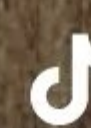
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RUGGED, RELIABLE & READY

Franchi's versatile Momentum All-Terrain Elite proves all-season ready.



Packed with functional features, the Franchi Momentum All-Terrain Elite (MATE) is a fun utility player for the field, range or vehicle.

Imagine if a new, camo'd-out and fully loaded Ford F-150 arrived in your driveway, and all you had to do was punch start and go right-pedal-down to your next adventure. Maybe Ford isn't your brand, but you get the picture. Such is the feeling of unboxing Franchi's Momentum All Terrain Elite (MATE) rifle.

The MATE is a shorter but feature-rich variant of Franchi's Momentum Elite hunting rifle released in 2022. Designed as a bolt-action, box magazine-fed, everyday-use constant companion rifle, the MATE has a well-chosen set of features on a foundation of quality components at a price that reflects its broad utility.

RED MEAT, NO SALAD

The first impressionist crowd might snap-label the MATE as just another scout rifle or truck gun. You could certainly set it up as either or both, but its rugged and utilitarian design reflects an aspiration for a flexible rifle that can guard the yard or fill the freezer and take some punishment in the process.

For example, the MATE's 18-inch barrel gives it a compact overall length of 40 inches and an empty weight of 7.5 pounds. It doesn't have Euro-inspired lines or sport rainforest hardwoods. Instead, its

rust-proof and impact-friendly molded polymer stock is covered in a True Timber Strata camouflage that dares you to strap it to something knobby tires and sling mud on it.

However, beyond the rugged exterior are design features that make this rifle customizable for a variety of applications and preferences.

The MATE is a rifle made to be stowed and carried. The stock features three quick-detachment (QD) points on both sides and the bottom of the butt, with the same number at the forend. This allows the shooter to quickly configure (or reconfigure) the sling attachments for centerline, one-sided or single-loop-dangle-from-a-treestand options. For African stalks with frequent crouches, I appreciated a one-sided sling orientation that kept the bolt handle facing out and the optic flat, whether I carried the rifle on my shoulder or diagonally across my back.

Forward of each of the forend's three QD points are two metal Magpul M-Lok Modular Locking System attachment slots. This allows the shooter to go AR-crazy with attachments like bipods, lights or vertical grips. The M-Lok system slots sit flush and inside the polymer stock, adding rigidity and eliminating the cheese grater feel of Picatinny rails on handguards—though

you can always attach them.

The forend has stippled sides and a flat bottom that provides a stable surface for field rests, but it's not so wide that it feels unnatural in your support hand. Franchi's final stock touches are grippy, rubberized surfaces on the palm swell, low and high interchangeable modular check pieces, and TSA recoil pads that come in three sizes to customize to the shooter's preferred length-of-pull.

At first touch, Franchi's investment in ergonomics on the MATE pays immediate returns—your hands just know where to go and what to do when they get there.

The function of the MATE follows its design. The 60-degree throw, three-lug bolt is spiral-fluted, chromed, and fitted with an oversized bolt knob. In addition to being cool to remove and look at, I found the narrower throw range quicker and an easy handling adjustment compared to traditional bolts. You won't be finger-cycling the action like an Olympic bi-athlete, but neither will you feel like a short-armed hydraulic press operator.

The MATE's controls are similarly well-designed. The trigger is Franchi's curved and rounded Relia Trigger, adjustable between 2 and 4 pounds. Out of the box, mine broke consistently at 3 pounds. An ambidextrous magazine release extends to and is slightly recessed into the leading edge of the trigger guard and the trailing edge of the polymer M5-style box magazine well. With normal-to-large-sized hands, I could comfortably reach the safety, trigger and magazine release controls by extending my fingers from a natural, fixed position on the curved grip.

The rifle comes with a 10-round polymer Magpul AICS magazine. The close tolerances of the polymer-to-polymer mating surfaces inside the magwell took a few reloads to smooth out, but after a few cycles, even empty magazines fell free with a moderate index finger touch on the release lever.

The MATE's 1:11 twist, 18-inch

The MATE features a flat forend designed to fit flush on horizontal field rests such as packs and fence rails. Like both its sides, the bottom of the forend features an M-Lok slot that can be utilized for a sling mount or, as pictured here, a bipod.



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The MATE comes with a healthy one-piece 10-inch rail mount that includes 8.5 inches of Picatinny rail and a three-dot or pop-up peep sight built into the rear of the rail.

Midnight Bronze Cerakoted barrel shortens the rifle's overall profile, begging you to throw it in the truck like a loyal hound dog. The muzzle is threaded 5/8x24 and comes with a flared radial muzzle brake that adds 1 1/4 inches to its overall length but transitions smoothly from the barrel line without gaping zig-zag cuts or creating a spear-gun profile. Though Franchi includes a matching thread protector, unless you're a length-minimalist, the muzzle brake and rubber TSA buttpad combination softens recoil considerably.

Utilitarian functionality also rides proudly atop the barrel. The MATE features folding front and rear sights that work as three-dot pistol-style sights in the down position and adjustable peep sights in the up position. The rear sight's base is anchored in a cast pocket at the rear of the Pic rail, protecting its hinge. It's a clever design element ... except for the 8.5 inches of Pic rail notches that sing a siren's song to attach optical accessories and block the iron sights.

Whatever your choice, there are two backups to a glass optic instead of one. Again, the MATE is what you make it, and

CARTRIDGE	VELOCITY (FPS)	BEST 3-SHOT GROUP (IN.)	BEST 5-SHOT GROUP (IN.)
Federal 165 Grain Bonded SD	2,550	0.48	1.74
Hornady 150-grain SST	2,949	0.38	0.71
Black Hills 175-grain BTHP	2,509	0.32	1.06
Hornady 178-grain ELD-X	2,547	0.83	2.12
Hornady 165-grain AW InterLock	2,658	0.57	0.84

Tested at 5,100 feet ASL; 52 degrees F; bench rest, bipod and rear bag; 2-12x42mm Steiner optic, SilencerCo Omega suppressor. Results reflect the best of three, 3-shot and 5-shot groups. Velocity data: Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph.

doesn't leave many excuses not to like it.

THE MATE AND THE RIFLE RANGE

Offered in .308 Winchester and .223 Remington, I tested the larger, more plains game-appropriate chambering. Initial range time returned a smooth-functioning action with no failures to feed or extract, using five different loads from 150 to 178 grains. I added a bit of lubricant to the action before I began, but not much. Franchi's choice to chrome the bolt and the tighter cycling radius made for an easy experience.

I also switched out the muzzle brake for a SilencerCo Omega suppressor. This extended the overall length to 44.75 inches, which is still shorter than some of

Franchi's Momentum Elite series rifles.

I ran my practice time and load testing with the same setup I took to Africa. I added a Steiner H6Xi 2-12x42 scope with Vortex rings, a Magpul adjustable sling mounted on the left-side QD attachments and a short, ramped section of Pic rail in the M-Lok slot on the bottom of the forend to attach a bipod. At the range, and especially for re-zeroing in Africa, I like to have an easy and consistent way to stabilize the rifle, so the bipod made both trips. Without the suppressor, the recoil was moderate. With the can, it was minimal. For a medium-length rifle, the MATE manages recoil well.

The best three-shot groups stayed well within Franchi's 1-MOA guarantee

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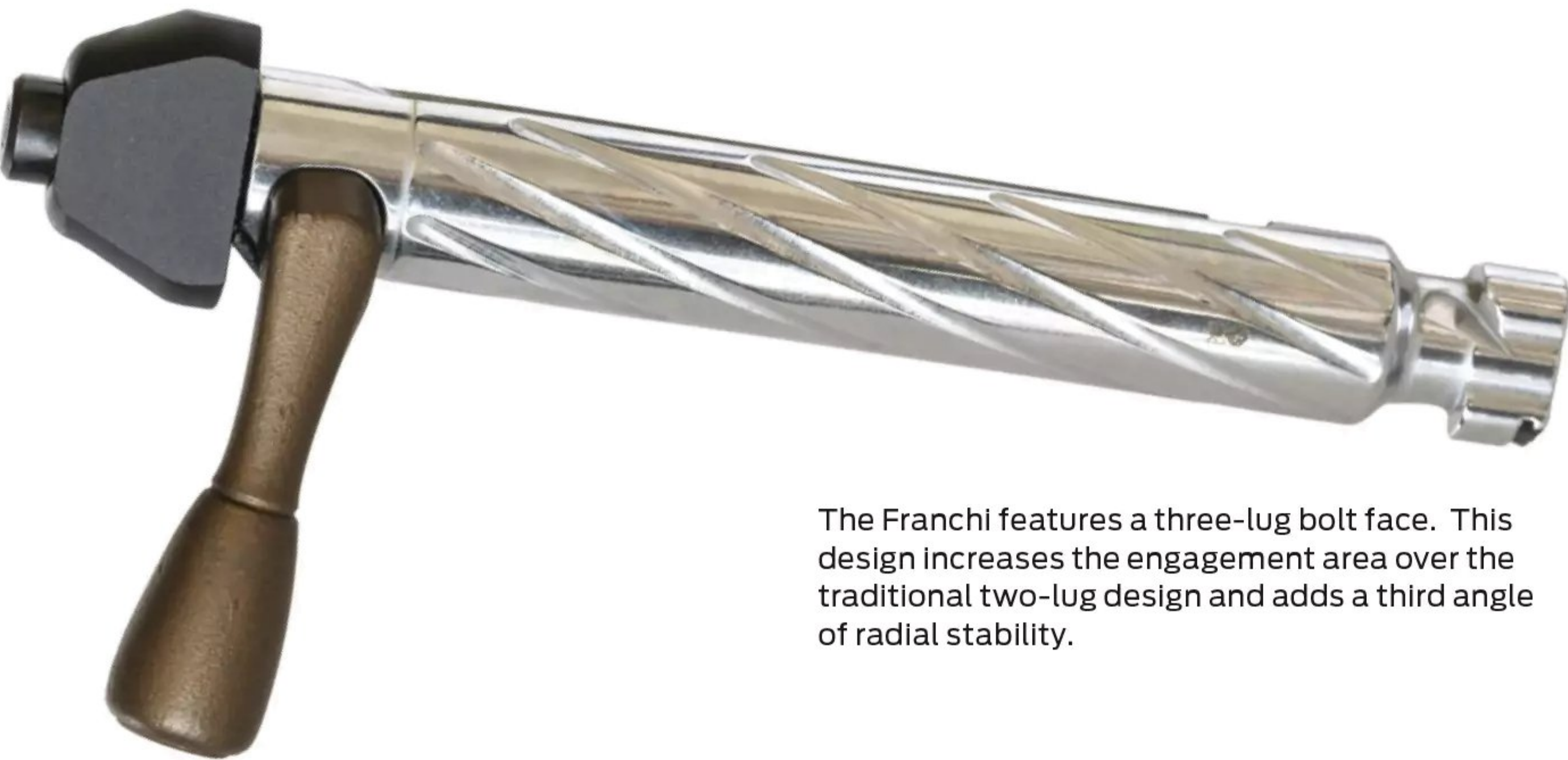
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The Franchi features a three-lug bolt face. This design increases the engagement area over the traditional two-lug design and adds a third angle of radial stability.



The MATE's design is a nice blend between form and function: There are creature comforts worked into the stock in various places ... none of which detract from the overall look of the rifle.



The modular stock comb allows shooters to adjust the rifle to their eyes and head. Franchi supplies two heights with each rifle. Plus, the box mag release lever is accessible yet tucked away to avoid an accidental extraction.



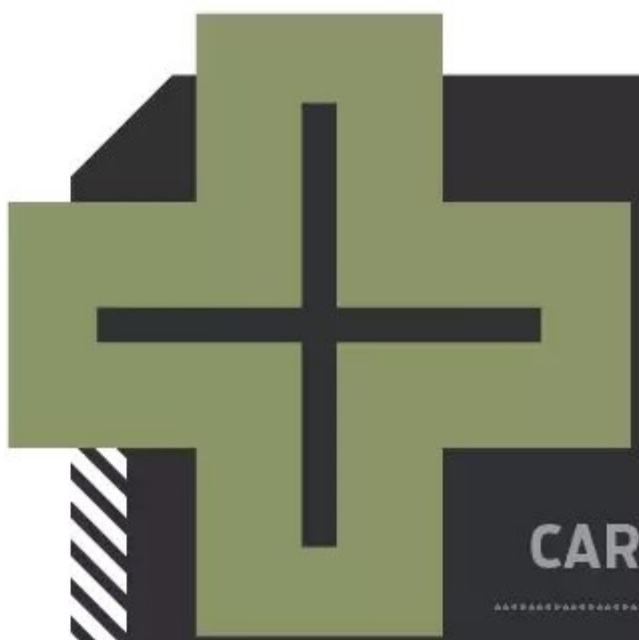
Franchi is hardly the first to utilize the tri-lug bolt design, but this design suits the MATE's functionality very well.

with premium factory ammunition. The smaller and faster Hornady 150-grain SST had the tightest at group 0.38 inch. The laws of physics being as immutable as a dripping sink, the shorter barrel traded off its length and slow twist rate for the ability to control larger bullets. But the rifle handled loads across a 38-grain spectrum with consistent accuracy.

WORLD TRAVELER

The MATE survived the trip from Utah to the Eastern Cape region of South Africa, approximately 100 miles north of the coastal city of Port Elizabeth on the Indian Ocean. Despite a drop off the airline conveyor belt I witnessed helplessly from inside the plane and stops in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth, the rifle required no windage adjustments and only a moderate elevation adjustment. Our African hunting area was 40 degrees warmer and 2,000-foot in elevation lower than my home range, so a 3-MOA adjustment wasn't a surprise.

With a box magazine full of Hornady 178-grain ELD X ammunition, my Professional Hunter (PH) Chris Jonker and Tracker Mike Moukiwa set out in a traditional Land Cruiser "bucky" to glass for blue wildebeest—the poor man's



SPECS

CARTRIDGE: .308 Winchester (tested)

TYPE: Bolt action

CAPACITY: 10+1 rounds

OVERALL LENGTH: 40 inches (with factory brake)

WEIGHT: 7 pounds, 9 ounces

BARREL: 18-inch, 1:11-inch twist Midnight Bronze Cerakote

STOCK: Polymer, injection molded; integrated QD and M-Lok attachments

TRIGGER: Franchi RELIA trigger, 3 pounds (tested), adjustable 2 to 4 pounds

SIGHTS: Folding; 3 dot (folded), or aperture and post (unfolded)

MSRP: \$1,499

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The .308 Franchi MATE and the Hornady 178-grain ELD-X .308 cartridge brought down this old blue wildebeest bull quickly and cleanly in the shade of an acacia tree.



Cape buffalo. A slow crawl through the acacias produced a herd of Cape Buffalo and a family of giraffes before we found a high-sided canyon wall with a herd of wildebeests mixed in with Cape Zebra and springboks. Our stalk didn't meet with success before the sun fell, but we had a spot to restart our search.

We relocated the herd the next as the morning sunlight burned thick white coastal clouds off the hillsides. Chris and Mike communicated with nods and hand signals to guide us quietly over and around a cliff where we hoped

to ambush the herd on the back side.

For my part, I carried the rifle and watched the masters anticipate where the game might move and position me for a shot. After several climbs and descents along a ridgeline, we moved down and across grass and acacia-covered slopes strewn with football-sized rocks. Fortunately, we had the wind in our faces, dampening our steps and keeping our scent out of the herd's noses.

Chris located a very big bull at the edge of the group, moving through

cover just over 200 yards to our front. We crouched and maneuvered slowly closer, slightly to the bull's left. Standing and braced on shooting sticks, I broke the shot. The bullet took him in the high shoulder, and he fell where he stood—in the shade of an acacia tree. From the looks of his “nubby” teeth, ground nearly flat with age, we chose an old bull beyond the end of his prime.

FINAL ROUNDS

Though not from a traditionally snobbish line of African safari rifles, the MATE was a fun and effective partner in the field. Its short length (even with a suppressor) made loading vehicles and crouching stalks under low trees easier. The .308 cartridge and Steiner H6Xi 2-12x42mm optic were more than sufficient for typical plains game ranges.

I experienced no failures or issues of any kind. As a working tool, the MATE became more familiar, faster, than any rifle I have taken to the field. It seemed to want to stay in Africa to keep hunting and managing the environment for the next generation—or maybe that was just me. **GDTM**



Though designed as a quick utility rifle, the Franchi MATE's ergonomic stock features, such as the modular comb inserts and bipod-friendly M-Lok slots, make it quickly adaptable to a bench for zeroing.

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Though there was an issue with a slightly bent slide stop out of the box, once replaced, the BCA Grizzly pistol functioned perfectly. Photo credit: Sebastian "Bat" Mann



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Bear Creek
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I've been assessing and writing about guns for more than a quarter century, and it's rare I receive a gun to test and am genuinely surprised with the results. But a couple months ago Bear Creek Arsenal (BCA) reached out and asked if I would like to review one of their AR-15s. I agreed, but based on the rifle's suggested retail price, I didn't expect much. Boy, was I surprised. I was so impressed I asked BCA if I could review some of their other firearms. They agreed and sent me one of their .22 rifles and a 9mm pistol, and here's a look at all three of the BCA firearms I have experience with. But first, what about the company that makes these affordable guns?

ABOUT BEAR CREEK ARSENAL

In 2013, Eugene Moore, a Navy SeaBee veteran started Bear Creek Arsenal. It's a family owned and operated business, and it has since seen remarkable expansion. Over the past decade, they've continually added new CNC machines, and the manufacturing facility, which is all under one roof, now cov-



The Bear Creek Arsenal BC-15 in 6mm ARC is a great shooting AR-15 pattern rifle and it has the advantage of a right-side charging handle.

The right-side charging handle on the BC-15 sets it apart, and it makes the rifle more user friendly.

ers 340,000 square feet. Bear Creek Arsenal's philosophy is that every American should be able to own premium firearms, while not stressing over being able to afford them. They use the finest machining methods and most modern technology to provide some of the most competitively priced AR rifles in the industry.

BCA manufactures all key firearm components in-house, and they sell directly to the customer, cutting out the distributor. They use top-of-the-line shipping and warehouse management processes and technologies to achieve excellent turnaround times, and this is all done to pass along the most savings possible to the customer. In keeping with BCA's American work ethic, they back all their products with the "Bear Den Guarantee," which is a limited lifetime warranty. The Moore family also believes in giving back to the community and helping law enforcement, charities and building communities.

Currently, BCA offers firearms available for 26 different cartridges, ranging from .17 HMR, up through the 8.6 Blackout and ending up with the .458 SOCOM. This includes AR-15 and



AR-10 (BC-10 and BC-15) style rifles, and the BC-8 Huntmaster semi-auto AR-patterned rifle, which is available in .30-06 Springfield, .270 Winchester and .300 Winchester Magnum. BCA also manufactures pistol-caliber carbines chambered in 9mm, 10mm and .45 Auto, as well as polymer-framed pistols, a 1911 and semi-automatic .22 LR and .22 Magnum rifles. BCA will soon be adding new

lever-action and bolt-action rifles on the AR platform.

BEAR CREEK ARSENAL BC-15 RSCH

The typical BCA AR-15 is a mil-spec-style AR that comes in various configurations. The main difference with the BCA BC-15 AR that I reviewed is its right-side charging handle (RSCH). With this AR,

the upper receiver and bolt carrier are a bit different. It will still fit a mil-spec AR-15 lower receiver, but the upper is void of the conventional T-handle charging handle and the ejection port is also different to work with the RSCH, which allows you to easily operate the rifle's action while it's on your shoulder.

The test rifle was chambered for the 6mm ARC cartridge, and it has a 24-inch, heavy and fluted, 416R stainless steel barrel, with the muzzle threaded at 5/8x24, and a proprietary BCA flash hider installed from the factory. It also has a rifle-length gas system and a non-adjustable gas block that's concealed inside an aluminum BCA 15-inch M-Lok handguard. The rifle doesn't come with a magazine or a thread protector for the muzzle, and the trigger is mil-spec.

The first round fired from the rifle failed to eject, but after that it ran perfectly without a single hiccup, with and without a Silencer Central Banish Backcountry suppressor installed. The first load I evaluated was the 105-grain BTSP Hornady Black load, and it averaged about 1.25 inches—about what you'd expect from a less than \$600 AR-15 with a not-so-great mil-spec trigger. The next load was the ELD-X load, and it averaged right at an inch, and the Hornady Match load averaged less than three-quarters of an inch. That's near MOA AR-15 performance for less than 600 bucks!

SKU: CR9001N-6MMARHB2418SSF-15M3

CHAMBERING: 6mm ARC

WEIGHT: 9.2 pounds

CAPACITY: AR-15 pattern 6.5 Grendel magazines (magazine not provided)

BARREL: 416R stainless steel, 24 inches with 1:8 twist, threaded at 5/8x24

SIGHTS: None

RECEIVER: 7075-T6 aluminum with integral rail

HANDGUARD: 15-inch M-Lok with rail

STOCK: 6-position adjustable

PRICE: \$596.99

BEAR CREEK ARSENAL BC-201

The BC-201 is really just a copy of the most famous .22 rifle of all time—the Ruger 10/22. It features a 416R stain-



The author tested these three American-made firearms from Bear Creek Arsenal and was impressed with their performance.

less steel (match grade) barrel and an over-molded Hogue stock. The barrel has a .920 diameter and 11-degree target crown and interestingly, the 7075 T6 aluminum receiver has an integrated Picatinny rail for easy scope mounting. The BC-201 feeds from factory Ruger 10/22 magazines and one comes with the rifle. As you might guess, the rifle is compatible with aftermarket Ruger 10/22 components as well.

This rifle ran perfectly with every .22 LR load I tried, but it proved to be a bit

finicky when it came to precision on target. Most of the loads I tested printed five-shot groups at 50 yards from a sandbag rest in the 1.25- to 1.75-inch range. That's not stellar but it's also not uncommon performance for an affordable .22 rimfire rifle. However, the rifle absolutely loved the CCI Green Tag load. I fired 10 groups with this load and the largest measured just shy of an inch, and most were closer to the half-inch mark. CCI's MiniMag load also shot reasonably well, averaging just a tad more than an inch at 50 yards.



SKU: CR8996-SCH22LHB16116SSUT

CHAMBERING: .22 long rifle

WEIGHT: 6.5 pounds

CAPACITY: 10 detachable Ruger 10/22 magazine (ships with one magazine)

BARREL: 416R stainless steel, 16 inches with 1:16 twist, 11-degree crown

SIGHTS: None

RECEIVER: 7075-T6 aluminum with integral rail

STOCK: Hogue Overmold Ghillie Green

PRICE: \$345

**BEAR CREEK
ARSENAL BC-101 GRIZZLY**

This polymer-framed 9mm pistol is essentially a Glock 17 Gen 3 clone. But there are some differences. The slide has window cuts on the sides and top, and the frame has a slightly different shape and feel, and very comfortable and attractive “Bear fur” stippling on the slides, front and rear. The pistol also comes out of the box with photoluminescent night sights and an optics cut for an RMR. BCA offers several versions, but they all cost the same. The base gun is as I described, and then there are models with either a gold titanium or stainless Nitride, threaded or un-threaded barrel. And finally, there’s the pistol I evaluated, which has a black Nitride threaded barrel.

Test-firing started on the bench and the pistol proved to be a tack driver with just about every load I tried. However, I



The BCA BC-201 rifle is a copy of the famous Ruger 10/22.

BCA’s BC-201 rimfire rifle comes with a right side charging handle that’s similar to the one used on their BC-15, AR-15 patterned rifles.

had some issues with the slide locking back before the magazine was empty and then not wanting to release by hand. I had to put my Glock armorer’s hat on, and a full disassembly revealed the slide lock was just slightly bent. I ordered a new slide stop for a Glock 17 for \$9.99, and it solved the issue.

I shot this pistol just as well as I shoot my G17, and the trigger was just as good as any factory Gen 3 Glock I’ve fired. I liked the pistol so much that I installed a Trijicon RMR and a set of suppressor height sights from XS Sights. (Sight removal and installation was very easy using the XS Sights In-Line Sight Pusher Kit, XSsights.com.) With the reflex sight and XS sights installed, I continued to

shoot the hell out of this pistol with and without my Silencer Central Banish 45 suppressor. Those in the hunt for a polymer-framed 9mm should for sure give this gun a serious look.

SKU: CGP101-91917SSBCFTH-TCWC2MPOLY

CHAMBERING: 9mm Luger

WEIGHT: 22.88 ounces

CAPACITY: 17+1 detachable Glock 17 magazines (includes two)

BARREL: 4150 chrome moly vanadium, 5 inches with 1:16 twist, threaded at 1/2x28

SIGHTS: Photoluminescent/three-dot with optics cut for RMR

FRAME: Black polymer

PRICE: \$295

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Though impractical for carry, a suppressor-friendly pistol like the BCA Grizzly is fun to shoot on the range.

THE BEAR CREEK ADVANTAGE

I wouldn't say the guns from BCA are the best American-made guns you can buy. But let me be clear about something, with a Bear Creek Arsenal gun you'll definitely get your money's worth. The BC-15 I evaluated was completely reliable and shot great. The BC 201, while a bit finicky when it came to the ammo it liked, was flawlessly reliable. And, after I replaced the bent slide stop—a part that cost me \$9.99—on the BC-101 Glock clone, that pistol ran to perfection with every load tried, with and without a suppressor.

As a final note, I'll leave you with this. The suggested retail price for all three of these BCA guns—not counting the tax man's cut—is only \$1,236.99, which works out to only about \$413 per gun. To put that in perspective, three similar guns from Ruger, including an AR-556 MPR, a Ruger American Pistol and a Ruger 10/22, would set you back nearly twice as much. Right now, money is tight and if you're looking for a new American-made gun, you might want to start your search at Bear Creek Arsenal. Looking is even less expensive—it's free. **GDTM**

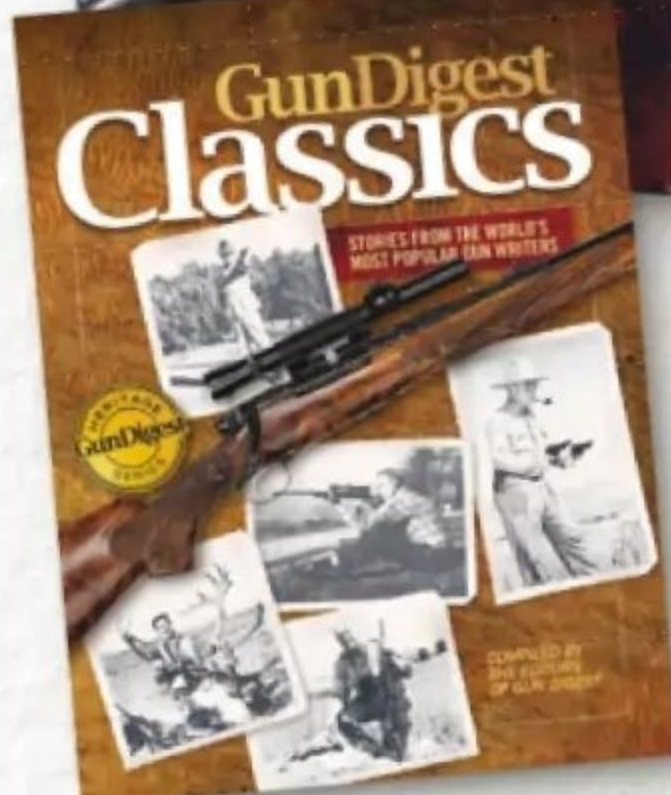
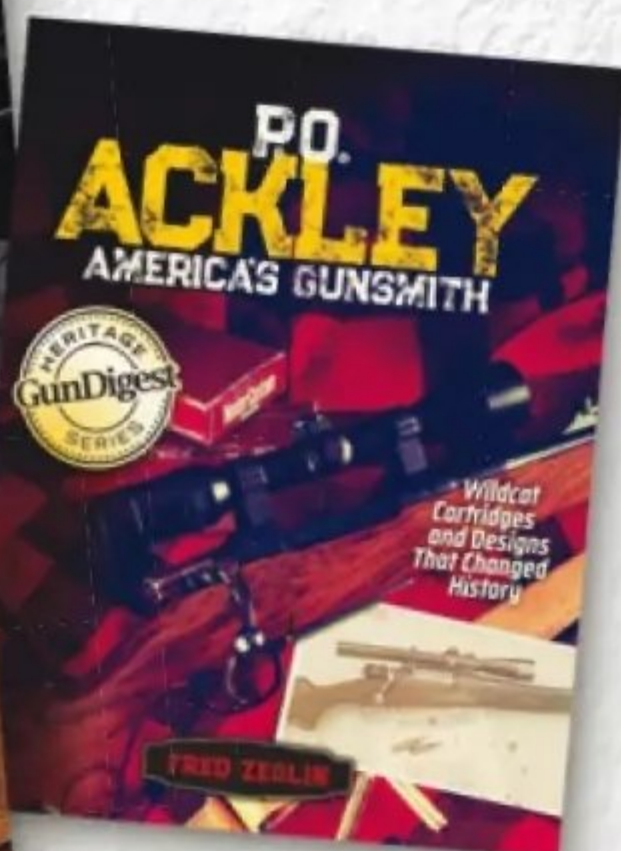
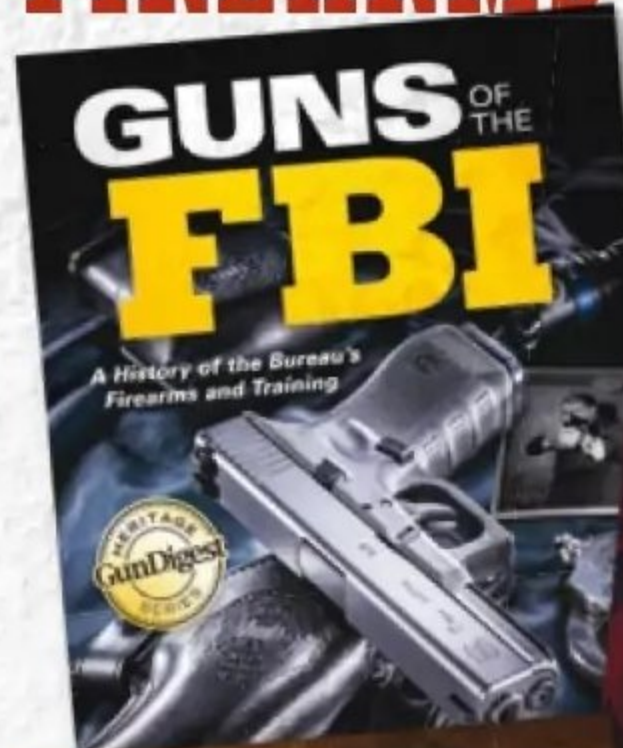
With the rise in suppressor popularity has come a rise in suppressor-ready pistols. The Grizzly is no exception.



The BCA Grizzly pistol comes out of the box with a slide that's cut to accept an RMR.



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A TALE OF 2 TURKS

We pit a pair of Turkish 2011s head-to-head.



Great guns on a budget are few and far between. Often, they only seem like good deals just to disappoint you when they spontaneously self-disassemble after 500 rounds. While an ultra-budget 2011-style pistol didn't seem likely just a few years ago, the market for double-stack 1911s at an entry-level price points is growing exponentially. Turkish gunmaker Tisas is responsible

for two such product lines: the B9R DS, sold under their own banner, and the 1911 DS sold by Military Armament Corp, or MAC.

MAC 1911 DS 9MM

We had high hopes for the MAC 1911 DS and, as such, did our best to treat it

like a rented pack mule at an estate sale. From being beaten up at 2-Gun matches and getting dragged through the dirt, to firing hundreds of rounds in single training sessions, to being fed Russian steel case ammo improperly stored and hoarded since before the pandemic. If this pistol weren't a masochist at heart,



it would report us to the NRA for firearm abuse.

Though it's manufactured by Tisas, MAC's 1911 DS was designed in the United States. Because of this American influence, the specs are a bit more in line with what you might expect a good 2011 to have—4.25-inch bull barrel, 25LPI checkering on the front and back strap, M1913 light rail, RMR pattern optic mount, flared magazine well,

ambi safety, and uses standard STI pattern 2011 magazines. It ships with two Tisas branded 17-round mags made by Check-Mate. For budget-friendly 20-rounders, Springfield Armory sent out a few of their 140mm Prodigy mag-

azines. The LGS also had a 26-round Prodigy mag so that got added into the mix.

FIT AND FINISH

1911/2011 people know that fit and finish is king. A huge piece of the price tag on high-end pistols is due to the time and expertise required to spend 20, 40, or even 100 hours or more hand-



stoning a top-tier gun.

The MAC doesn't have any of that. This is a factory pistol and doesn't pretend to be otherwise. While MAC doesn't use MIM parts, they're not hand-fitted either. Slide-to-frame fit is about on par with other Tisas 1911s, meaning that it's OK. Tighter than a Glock or SIG, but not tight by 2011 standards. That being said, it isn't so loose as to induce malfunctions or allow excess dust or grime into the working bits of the gun.

Mounting a red-dot optic is easy and just requires removing the iron sight-only plate and replacing it with an RMR-cut plate included in the box. Sadly, the irons on the MAC are a little short, and even with the low-ish sitting deck of a Holosun 407c, the irons can't be used effectively with a RDS. Once we changed the Holosun out for a Lead & Steel Pandora PB-3 on a Strike Industries RMR to ACRO plate, the iron sights were totally invisible.

By our count, this gun has seen slightly over 1,000 rounds now, and it's been a champ. Zero malfunctions of any kind. Normally, we wouldn't even clean a gun in the first 1,000 rounds just to see how it held up, but the MAC 1911 DS got dragged through the dirt pretty badly at a 2-Gun match. Because of that, this got a field strip and a wipe-down about halfway through the 1,000

rounds. Even with getting dragged across the range like a cartel informant, the gun still ran.

The most basic requirement of a good gun is that it needs to work, and the MAC 1911 DS clears that bar with room to spare. As for being a good 2011-style gun, let's just say it needs a little end-user love. Out of the box, the trigger is crisp, but damn heavy by 1911 standards at about 5 pounds. The nice thing about a 1911/2011 is that adjusting the trigger is extremely easy and requires just a punch and hammer. After 30 minutes of watching an Atlas Gunworks trigger adjustment video and fiddling with the trigger, we got it down to about 3.5 pounds.

Something else worth noting is that the MAC comes oversprung, meaning the recoil and main springs are just a bit more powerful than they need to be. This doesn't cause any problems and arguably improves reliability across a wider range of ammo, but it doesn't give that greased-pig-slick feeling when you rack the slide like a properly sprung

2011 will give you.

The Tisas mags work outstandingly well, with zero problems of any kind. But the 20-round Prodigy mags were, at first, extremely hard to seat with the slide forward and the mag at capacity. This was just a spring issue, and after leaving them loaded for a week, they seat just fine. Both brands fed and ran perfectly.

The least impressive part of the MAC is oddly not any of the metal parts—it's the grip. Checkering on the front and rear is fantastic and gives your hands a solid lock on the gun. The sides, while they look textured, are effectively





smooth and offer zero grip. It's very strange how they look like they should be giving your hand something to work with, but when you run your finger over it there's just no bite.

The magazine release is also unimpressive and smooth. While checkering on a mag release isn't required, it's a nice touch. But at this price, it's understandable that it was ignored.

TISAS B9R CARRY

The Tisas house gun we got was their B9R DS Carry. It's a mouthful of alphabet soup to say out loud, but the punchline is the, "Carry" part, meaning this one sports a Commander-length 4.25-inch barrel. Fit and finish is, again, on par with the price but on the higher end of what we've seen come out of Turkey in the past. Considering that Tisas builds both guns, we expected them to be identical clones but wound up with some interesting differences.

The optics cut on our Tisas sample

We mounted a Lead & Steel PB-3 on the MAC 1911 DS.

was for the Holosun K/RMSc footprint, rather than the RMR. So we mounted a Holosun EPS—a seemingly simple task that took a little more effort than we’d hoped. The optics cut on our slide was extremely tight. Tight enough, in fact, that it took a sizeable chunk out of the front of the EPS housing before it would actually seat into the cut. The folks at Tisas told us the optic had to be situated completely level to get mounted. Even with that, it still cost us a gnarly gouge but, for better or worse, the EPS came on and off much more easily after receiving an involuntary contour job.

While the full-size MAC pistol was able to accept an X300-A very well, the shorter dustcover rail on the Tisas B9R Carry would not take either an X300 or TLR-1 at all. The locking lug on both lights sits completely in front of the rail. We were able to fit a TLR-7A but left a gap between the back of the light and the front of the trigger guard. Unfortunately, we didn’t have a 2011/TLR-7 light-bearing holster to check if this would affect carry.

One pleasant surprise was the trigger. The Tisas website lists the trigger at 4.75 pounds out of the box, but our test sample tripped the pull gauge at 4.5 pounds exactly, and consistently. While this is still a pound too heavy (at least) by 19/2011 standards, for a sub-\$1K pistol produced offshore, that’s perfectly respectable. This gun got another eyebrow raise out of us when we took it apart for inspection and were relieved to see that the slide release lever rides on the barrel foot, as opposed to the link.

For the uninitiated, here’s why that matters: the 1911 barrel has a rotating link on the bottom, which fits into a lower lug—sometimes referred to as the foot. In original USGI 1911s, the link sat directly on the slide stop pin. Some time later, gunsmiths began fitting their hand-built 1911s so that the slide stop actually rested on the foot, instead of on the link itself. Not only does this enhance accuracy by forcing the up-

per barrel lugs more securely into the locking grooves inside the slide, but it also removes any load-bearing responsibility from the tiny pin that holds the barrel link to the barrel. A slide-stop pin that rests on the foot makes for a better and more long-lived pistol, but it requires extra fitting on the part of the manufacturer, so it’s not always a given. We applaud Tisas for taking this small but mechanically significant extra measure in their production process.

The grip module was very similar to its stablemate, with 25 LPI on the front and back straps and a more conservative sculpted texture on the side panels. The grip is a nice medium size that should fit most hands—a nice change considering that many American-made 2011-style grip modules tend to run on the chunky side. There’s even an integrated mag funnel and a subtle-

Considering both guns came out of the same factory, we were surprised at some of the subtle differences. But these are indeed two different products.



but-definitely-present double undercut along the bottom of the trigger guard.

As with the MAC, we had no issues with feeding or function over several hundred rounds. We were surprised at the amount of snap, even with 115-grain range fodder. But, like the MAC, we’re firmly convinced this is a matter of over-springing.

THE ‘TURKKATOS’ WE NEED

The firearms market is already filled with esoteric niches requiring you to spend insane amounts of money, but it just feels wrong that the 2011-style pistol market is one of them. The 1911 was designed for the military and quickly

became the everyman pistol of Americans for decades. While the 2011 was a redesign built for competition, it seems right that the 9mm double-stack 1911 should supplant the old .45 ACP 1911 as one of the go-to pistols for the average shooter.

With the introduction of budget-friendly guns like the MAC and Tisas, we just might see that start to happen.

GDTM



Bros in Arms

This article was originally published in *Gun Digest's* sister publication, *Recoil*. For a deeper look into what that magazine has to offer (those guys really like their black guns), visit RecoilWeb.com.

FIREARMS MARKET REPORT

A look at what sold and what didn't, with estate tips on liquidating a firearms collection, and a peek into the crystal ball.

The strong firearms market of the early 2020s continues, although not at the frantic pace of the surge inspired by COVID-19 and the summer riots a few years ago. Defensive, sporting and recreational gun purchases continue vigorously online, at gun shows and at local gun shops.

BESTSELLERS

GunBroker.com is the largest online gun auction sales site, and GunGenius.com reports the bestselling new and used gun models on GunBroker each month, along with an annual summary that is well worth checking out. Its most recent reports show the bestselling guns are 9mm semi-auto pistols, predominantly polymer or synthetic-framed. The two top-selling new guns for the most recently reported calendar year are Sig Sauer 9mm pistols—the Model P365 ranked No. 1 and the P320 No. 2.

Other nines making it into the Top 20 new and used gun sales list in the past two years include:

- Sig Sauer P226
- Glock G19, G43 and G17
- S&W M&P9
- CZ 75
- Beretta Model 90
- Springfield Armory Hellcat & XD

Classic sporting long-guns also rank high on the bestsellers list. Many of these models have been produced for decades. Three perennial winners are the Mossberg 500 and Remington 870 pump shotguns and the Marlin Model 60 semi-auto .22 rifle, representing over 10 million guns in

circulation. The two shotguns have broad applications for hunting, competition, personal defense and law enforcement, further accounting for their strong sales.

Some of the classic-pattern long-guns ranked in the GunBroker recent year top sales list, 2023 New Guns and 2022 New & Used Guns, include:

- No. 2 Remington 700 bolt-action rifle (2022 New & Used Guns)
- No. 3 Mossberg 590 pump shotgun (2023 New)
- No. 4 Ruger 10/22 .22 semi-auto rifle (2023 New)
- No. 7 Remington 870 pump shotgun (2022 New & Used)
- No. 9 Ruger American bolt-action rifle (2022 New & Used)
- No. 18 Winchester Model 70 bolt-action rifle (2022 New & Used)

- No. 19 Ruger Mini-14 semi-auto rifle (2022 New & Used)
- No. 20 Mossberg 500 pump shotgun (2022 New & Used)

Lever-actions—Speaking of classics, sales of lever-action rifles are strong, especially those produced by relatively new firearms manufacturer Henry Repeating Arms, founded in 1996. In addition to classic manufacturers Winchester and Marlin (making lever guns since 1866 and 1881, respectively), Smith & Wesson has also recently entered the lever-action market with its heavily promoted 1854 Models. These were first introduced in 2024 and are named for the year when S&W founder Daniel Wesson patented the lever-action design for production by Volcanic Repeating Arms Company.

Notable lever-action rifles reported



as GunBroker bestsellers in the past two years:

- No. 5 Henry Big Boy (2023 New Gun sales)
- No. 9 Henry Side Gate (2023 New)
- No. 11 Marlin 1895 (2023 New)

Revolvers: Somewhat surprising to us old-guy wheelgun aficionados is the relative lack of revolvers in the GunBroker bestseller's ranking. The only six-shooters to appear on the most recent annual lists are:

- No. 12 Colt Python (2023 New Gun sales)
- No. 16 Ruger Blackhawk (2023 New)
- No. 20 Heritage Rough Rider (2023 New)

To see what sort of wheelguns are selling on GunBroker, consider the GunGenius.com list of bestselling new and used revolvers for the most recent month. The top five new revolvers, top to bottom, were S&W Bodyguard, Colt Python, Heritage Rough Rider, Ruger Blackhawk, and Ruger Wrangler. The top five used revolvers were Colt Python, Ruger Blackhawk, Ruger Single Six, S&W Model 10 and Colt Single Action Army.

There are a couple of surprises here. One is the prevalence of single-action models, including the original on which all the others are based, the Colt Peace-maker. The other surprise is the absence of more S&W products.

This may have more to do with Smith & Wesson's practice of having a wide range of revolver model names (model numbers) than with the brand's popularity in the market. This could result in S&W not breaking into GunBroker's top sales figures because of the vast number of models produced. Consider the following.

According to the most recent available ATF Annual Firearms Manufacturing and Exportation Report (AFMER), S&W ranked No. 1 in total firearms manufactured over the last three years for which statistics are available. In viewing these stats, it's important to note that only American-manufactured guns are reported and that stats were unavailable for some major brands for some years. Also, the statistics for the most recent years aren't yet available. That said, here's a look at:

LEADING AMERICAN FIREARMS MANUFACTURERS FOR THREE YEARS

RANK	MANUFACTURER	3-YEAR PRODUCTION	2022	2021	2020
1	Smith & Wesson	5,616,453	973,944	2,317,792	2,324,717
2	Ruger	5,306,321	1,565,743	2,078,013	1,662,565
3	Sig Sauer	3,505,269	1,134,718	1,293,532	1,077,019
4	Springfield Armory	1,547,295	562,446	590,750	394,099
5	Glock	1,492,503	465,117	581,944	445,442
6	Mossberg	1,363,053	452,092	492,444	418,517
7	Savage Arms	1,126,508	719,641	406,867	N/A
8	Anderson Manufacturing	1,125,300	157,264	505,635	462,401
9	Heritage Manufacturing	1,119,800	308,040	505,601	306,159
10	Henry Repeating Arms	938,375	365,867	320,603	251,905
11	Palmetto State Armory	931,042	551,448	N/A	379,594
12	Kimber	752,888	230,325	294,750	227,813
13	Taurus	679,108	287,650	290,780	100,678
14	Kel-Tec	597,576	196,118	215,804	185,654
15	Aero Precision	523,311	202,265	177,059	143,987
16	Beretta USA	443,788	180,447	155,352	107,989
17	Diamondback Firearms	417,680	123,025	163,195	131,460
18	FN America	414,528	138,595	169,407	106,526
19	Colt	400,405	158,797	151,771	89,837
20	Remington	244,704	155,999	86,594	2,111

Smith & Wesson's current product line includes 184 different models, 117 of which are revolvers. It seems likely that splitting the sales among that many models tends to diminish S&W's rankings in GunBroker bestsellers lists. While 9mm autopistols lead the current defensive handgun market, it's likely that if all S&W five-shot J-frame .38 Special revolvers with 2-inch barrels were grouped into a single model instead of 29 different model designations, they would easily break into the bestsellers' listings. The recently introduced S&W Lipsey's Ultimate Carry (UC) revolvers are especially enjoying a surge in popularity.

America's Rifle, the AR platform: There is no question that the AR rifle is the most popular long-gun in America. So, why isn't an AR on the best-seller list? This is probably because no single model or manufacturer currently dominates the very active market for these rifles. Most patents expired in 1977, and other firms began producing AR-platform rifles. Note that on the list of America's leading gun

makers above, No. 8 Anderson Manufacturing, No. 11 Palmetto State Armory, No. 15 Aero Precision, and No. 17 Diamondback Firearms are primarily known for their ARs. Also, No. 1 S&W, No. 3 Sig, No. 4 Springfield, No. 18 FN and No. 19 Colt offer AR-type rifles in their product lines, while No. 6 Mossberg produces .22 rim-fires based on the AR platform.

It's estimated that nearly 20 million AR-pattern rifles have been manufactured since 1990, with around 500 different companies manufacturing these popular guns and their parts. The AR is easily customizable, with most makers using mil-spec interchangeable parts. "Build-your-own" ARs have gained wide favor, starting with the basic receiver. The widely repeated trope is that the AR is "Barbie for boys" in customizing and accessorizing.

A BUYER'S MARKET?

Few people watch the firearms market more closely than Blaine Wade, NRA Gun Collectors Committee Chairman, who

says he sees an emerging buyer's market with collectible and utility firearms. "The current interest rate on savings accounts is around 5 percent, according to most financial institutions," says Wade. "There appears to be less liquid funds available from other collectors and firearms enthusiasts, too. Collectors and enthusiasts with funds for investing often opt to earn interest in the financial market instead of commodities."

"This apparent market condition is noticeable with the firearms I seek. For the last several months, a buyer can compete in auctions for somewhat scarce collectible firearms without the usual pressure from other buyers. Bargains can be had with the occasional exception of the rare pieces that always command individual attention."

Wade says he's noticed that this trend extends to gun shows, which usually have a local premium compared to the internet sites. Dealers from shows, he says, are advising that they are not producing their standard volume and that the market is "flat."

"It is definitely time to look for the collectible firearm that can normally be 20 percent or so more expensive than the current market is bringing. I have found more rare or extremely rare firearms in 2024 that have been reasonable on auction than ever before; it reminds me of 2017 prices," he said.

While Wade doubts that the trend will continue, our national economic and political situation drives the firearms market, and buyers should take advantage of the opportunity while it lasts.

COLLECTIBLE FIREARMS

Rick Hacker, NRA Publications Field Editor and *Gun Digest* contributor, is seeing an influx of seldom-seen models. He says that as big-time collectors pass on, their families liquidate lifelong gun collections, flooding the market with rarities to tempt even the most frugal collector.

"We are seeing a phenomenal number of extreme rarities coming on the market—Ulrich-engraved Winchesters, factory-engraved Colts, etc," Hacker said. "In many cases, these guns have been hidden away in private collections for years. However, they

are being bought up piecemeal by monied collectors who, nonetheless, are unable to acquire an entire collection at once. They must be built up, gun by gun, much as the old timers did it."

Hacker also sees fierce "bidding wars" among collectors chasing after the same gun, which he cautions is driving prices beyond realistic values. "This, in turn, creates a false image of worth that, in many cases, cannot be recouped by the buyer should he wish to sell sooner rather than later. I have dropped out of many an online auction when the price got out of hand because I knew I could never get my money back, let alone make a profit before I would be ready to sell," he said.

"I think there's a moral there somewhere—only buy what you feel reasonably comfortable spending and don't overbid. You will live to regret it unless it is something you really want and don't plan on selling that gun in the very near future."

In the near term, Hacker recommends watching EDC-type handguns, quality British revolvers and anything from now-defunct companies.

GUN SHOWS & COLLECTIBLE AMMO

According to Jackie Smith, collectible, military, and Western antique guns have all increased roughly equally across the major auction houses. "Used firearms are increasing by 25 percent and are bringing basically MSRP," said Smith. "New guns are bringing a premium as well. Particularly Glocks and HK pistols."

Smith sees niche collectibles in the ammunition field increasing by around 40 percent. "I have been selling John Bolerjack's collection for the past three years, and I have seen individual rounds bringing up to \$100 per round and .22 boxes bringing \$20 to \$40 per 50-count box to well over \$100 for antique boxes. Modern .22 boxes are bringing \$10 per 50-count box."

"I really don't know if the trends are sustainable, but it sure seems like they are. Guns and ammo seem a better hedge against inflation than stocks or precious metals."

THE GUN SHOW SITUATION

Texas' Kurt House doesn't hide his bias: He forgoes the local and state gun shows that offer black guns and—in his words—"foreign junk, jerky, bottles and rocks and security systems hawked by buxom gals in low-cut T-tops." Instead, you'll find him at the higher-end shows that specialize in antique guns, such as the Las Vegas Antique Arms Show, the Colorado Gun Collector Show, the Texas Gun Collector and Tulsa Wanenmacher bi-annual shows, as well as the Colt Collectors Annual Show and some of the Western collectible shows such as the Old West Events show in Santa Fe.

Trends in gun buying and selling? For House, that's an easy call: Auctions have replaced the shows as the primary source of high-quality antique guns. "When I started gun collecting 61 years ago, the only way we could get collector guns was at a gun show," said House. "Now the auctions have almost taken over, with Internet gun sites close behind. A friend of mine who owns what is probably the largest gun store in the United States once confided to me that when he first started his fledgling website in the 1990s, his sales were about 10 percent internet, with 90 percent walk-in traffic. Through the years, it went from that to 40 percent fairly quickly, and now he reports it ranges from about 50 to 75 percent on used, or collectible guns, not sporting, defense or competition-type new arms."

House admits frustration in trying to analyze historic gun sales. "Judging from record auction prices for Teddy Roosevelt's factory-engraved Colt Single Action, a French Boutet garniture belonging to Napoleon, the automatic Colt 1911 of Bonnie & Clyde, a factory-engraved Colt attributed to the Dalton Gang, or a 16th-century German wheellock of European royalty, sometimes they fetch higher prices than when last sold, but sometimes not quite as much. Why is this? Are buyers less or more interested in history now than in the old days, what I call 'The Golden Age of Gun Collecting'?"

"Just when I think I can state that 'prices of quality arms have always increased,' I find that a particular historic gun sold for \$215,000 in 2007, and when it recently sold in the past few months (2024), it sold

for \$228,000. Well, OK, it did increase, but not significantly compared to other forms of investment. I have always believed quality arms, even historic arms, to be a good investment, but as I stated at the beginning, I am biased. I have collected guns with the most fun imaginable for 61 years now, and I buy them because I enjoy them; they are symbols of the past, and I like history. They tell the story of this country,” House said.

MARKETPLACE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Rex Halfpenny, an aging boomer with a 357 Magnum habit, tackled our marketplace questions. What guns are in demand now? Halfpenny sees super-fast flat-shooting calibers and rifles like the 6.5 PRC driving long-range shooting in the hunting category. “It also appears to me shotguns and shotgun hunting have weakened,” Halfpenny said, “perhaps viewed as old man sports.”

The personal defense arena is always hopping, but one type might lead the pack. “Pistol-caliber carbines are the new pump shotgun—less costly and widely available pistol ammo, high cap, and maneuverability,” Halfpenny says.

Other trends Halfpenny noted include lever-action rifles, high-capacity polymer pistols, and anything black and tactical. He identified a more troubling trend in gun shows turning off enthusiasts with “higher entry fees, poor selections, and greater incidence of non-firearm tables.”

According to Halfpenny, commemoratives still don’t sell as well as the same model without the embellishments.

His advice for gun buyers, sellers and collectors? “The best time to learn about firearms and participate in the legal activities afforded by our Constitution is always now. Enjoy it while you can,” Halfpenny said.

WHEN IT’S TIME TO SELL: ESTATE TIPS TO CONSIDER NOW TO PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT

As much as we enjoy our collections, none of us can take them with us. Even if you don’t choose to liquidate during your lifetime, your estate must deal with it. To date, no gun safe company has offered a coffin

model. It’s worth it to give it some thought ahead of time.

Whether it’s a few personal shooters or an extensive lifetime collection, there are several considerations when selling:

LEGALITIES

Ensure your sales are legal. This is not always simple with federal, state and local laws and regulations to comply with. A thorough discussion is well beyond the scope of this article, and your locality may have additional restrictions. Also, laws change. This ain’t legal advice—check with your lawyer.

That said, if it’s a one-time sale, under federal law, you can currently sell personally owned handguns directly to another individual in the same state or long-guns to an individual in any state in a face-to-face transfer so long as that individual can legally own the firearm (adult, not a convicted felon, etc.). Some states have additional restrictions or will require that you perform a background check. However, if you’re repeatedly buying and reselling firearms, you are considered “in the business” and must have a Federal Firearms License (FFL) to make these transactions, with all the attendant paperwork. (Guns manufactured before 1899 are currently considered “antiques” and are not subject to these restrictions under federal law.)

Legally shipping personal guns that you sell is a whole ’nother box of worms. Most folks selling multiple guns find it easier and less worrisome to sell through an existing FFL dealer and let them handle the compliance issues.

SALES VENUES

You can sell to or through a local gun shop or FFL-licensed pawn shop. Some shops will sell for you on consignment, taking a percentage of the sales price. You may get less going this route than other options, but it is quick, easy, and legal. It can be a good option for selling a few personal guns with minimal hassle. If you have a specialized collection, there are excellent specialty dealers who don’t necessarily have a brick-and-mortar shop but are well-connected with the collecting community and will often take collections on consignment.



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Gun shows can be a good venue for private sales. You can rent a table to sell to the attendees, or you can bring in one or two guns and walk them around, offering them for sale to table holders. If you go this route, research the values ahead of time (have I mentioned that the *Standard Catalog of Firearms* is an excellent resource for this?) and ensure you comply with legal sales requirements. If walking your guns around the show, look for tables offering similar items and get several offers. Haggling is expected at gun shows. The buyer generally wants to buy as cheaply as possible, but you will find motivated and interested buyers.

Online venues are popular and effective. As mentioned, GunBroker.com is the largest of several online auction sites. Guns.com facilitates online gun sales through licensed dealers.

Consignment to an FFL-licensed auction house is often the best option for estates and large collections. If the collection is large and includes high-value collectibles, one of the national outfits that publishes printed and online catalogs with photos, live offers, and online bidding may be the best choice. The largest of these is Rock Island Auction Company, based in Moline, Illinois, and Bedford, Texas, which conducts more than 20 auctions a year, including a few Premier Auctions, any one of which may gross \$20 million or more with 2,000 to 3,000 lots. Other large national-level auction houses include Morphy Auctions in Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Poulin Antiques & Auctions in Fairfield, Maine; Heritage Auctions in Dallas, Texas, and other locations; and Cowan's Auctions in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The national auction houses make their nut off large collections and high-profile individual pieces that may bring record prices. They can get national and international exposure for the finest examples of rare, engraved and historically attributed firearms, reaping premium prices from motivated buyers competing to acquire a special treasure. However, smaller collections and less valuable generic sporting guns can get lost in the crowd. They are sometimes grouped into lots of multiple guns that bring less per gun than if they

were sold individually. A smaller FFL-licensed regional auction house may be a better choice for smaller collections and groups of common sporting arms. Many of the best of these will have national reach through their websites.

Most auction houses charge a percentage commission or premium to both the seller and the buyer—15 to 25 percent is not uncommon for the seller's commission (deducted from the gavel price). The buyer is often charged a 10 to 15 percent or more buyer's premium added to the gavel price. Most auction houses can get your guns sold and paid out within three months to a year.

A CASE STUDY

I've recently had the opportunity to closely follow the liquidation of four collections of nearly a thousand guns through consignment to a prominent national auction house. The two largest collections were specialized collectible firearms—one a group of antique revolvers and the other of early semi-auto pistols, each of a specific brand and type. Since either collection could flood the market for that specific type of gun if sold simultaneously, we spread the sale over a couple of years. A few guns sold for five figures, even a couple that broke into six figures, and some went for under \$100 each. Here are my general observations.

ESTIMATES VS. RESULTS

A consistent factor in auction sales is that some guns will go higher than expected, and some will go lower. If you're selling a significant number of guns, the odds are good that the high and low sales will average out to the actual market value. If you're selling a single gun, there's a risk that it will be one of the guns that sell low. For the most valuable guns, most auction houses will accept a reasonable reserve price set by the seller below which the gun will not sell. (The problem with reserves is that if the gun remains unsold, and if offered again at a future auction, an attentive bidder may ask, "What was wrong with it the first time?")

As with all major auction houses, an estimate was made of each gun's likely

sale value in the catalog description. This is often a fairly wide range. Typical examples might be \$1,500-\$2,500, \$500-\$800, or \$30,000-\$50,000. It's easier to estimate the probable value of a common and widely used sporting gun than a scarce collectible model simply because the comparable sales for the former are much easier to find. It's especially difficult to estimate values for collector guns that may have significant value added due to rare high condition for their age, artistic period engraving or historic attribution to a famous person or event.

Since the guns in these collections were generally scarce to very rare, the estimated values were a bit speculative, as expected. Even so, a sample of the guns cataloged shows that almost half sold within the estimated range, more than a third over the estimates, and less than 20 percent under.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Watching these collections sell, the following trends were observed:

Days of the Old West are over: As with previous collecting generations who first sought flintlocks, then long rifles, and then percussion revolvers, the hot market for post-Civil War six-shooters has passed. As with the earlier generational trends, prices are not necessarily dropping, but interest has dwindled, and the value growth rate has slowed to a crawl.

Milestone guns can surprise you: One-offs such as prototypes, experimental models, or the first gun produced of a model can bring substantial premiums, especially if the manufacturer or model is significant.

Top condition still brings top dollar: This applies only to guns that are old enough that most surviving specimens show significant wear. The very few stashed away and still pristine warrant substantial premiums. Again, the more important the make and model and the older the gun, the higher the premium. Word to the wise: Watch out for refinishing and restorations.

Junk guns bring junk prices: In these collections, there was a significant batch of guns that, although old, are generally ignored by most collectors—small-frame hammerless revolvers such as European

velo-dogs and cheapo pocket guns by I.J., H&R, H&A and the ilk. Most of these were sold in groups of three to five in a single lot, and the price realized per gun could be as low as \$50. Might they have done better in a regional auction where they could be sold as individual lots? Maybe, but probably not by much. It would have taken decades to get them sold individually at gun shows. Notwithstanding, I still think they're sort of cool. I have terrible taste.

Return on investment: I had access to the year the owners bought them and what they paid for over half the guns in these collections. We were able to figure out how they had performed as investments. Most guns were purchased for the collections 20 to 30 years ago, with an average ownership duration of 26 years. The cost of sale—the seller's commission—was deducted from the gavel price to reflect what the owner received.

Considered as a group, the return on investment was 4.2 percent per year. This was skewed by a single piece that sold exceptionally high. With that piece removed from consideration, the return on the total investment was 2.7 percent per year. Not all were money makers; approximately 2 percent of the guns netted less than their original purchase price from two to three decades ago.

Of course, I couldn't stop fiddling with the numbers there. I examined particular factors that impact the value of collectible firearms, specifically rarity, period engraving, and historical attribution.

Rarity: Guns acquired because they were rare variations of a particular model—non-standard caliber or barrel length, special factory features, etc.—may be slower than expected. The owner generally paid a premium for these features when buying. Still, they did not increase in value as rapidly as the standard models, with an average return on investment of only 1 percent per year on the rare variations. It seems likely that a relatively small number of collectors currently chase obscure variations of a particular model, resulting in a limited resale market.

Engraving: Professionally period-engraved guns have always brought substantial premiums, valued for their artistry and

rarity. They continue to do so, sometimes bringing multiples of what a comparable non-engraved specimen would bring. However, these auction results suggest that the market for these may not be increasing in value quite as fast as the general market. Interest may even be slowing. A few in these collections showed a 2 percent annual return on investment.

Historic attribution: The guns with credible historic attribution to a famous or semi-famous individual tended to show a slightly faster increase in value than other collectible guns, with this sample averaging a 4 percent annual return on investment. These also tended to be the guns that brought the highest prices, depending on the significance of the history associated with them. The strength of the provenance and documentation is everything.

The samples were relatively small and certainly not statistically significant, but they did tend to confirm my hunches on trends in firearms collecting.

With an overall average 2.7 percent return on the collection, would the money have done better in the stock market? Probably. The average yearly return on the S&P 500 has been over 10 percent for the last 20 years. In a CD? Nope. The average rate on a five-year CD over that same 26-year period was about 2.1 percent. Would the collectors have had as much fun holding onto a CD or fretting over the fluctuating Dow Jones? You tell me.

It goes back to what I've said too often. As hobbies go, gun collecting is a pretty good investment. As an investment, it makes a nice hobby.

THE CRYSTAL BALL SAYS ...

And what of the firearms market in days to come? You, gentle reader, are living in the future. At the time of this writing, the event that could have the biggest impact on the firearms market, as suggested by several of our experts above, has not yet occurred: the 2024 elections. What could possibly happen?

If a Republican victory incites Antifa and BLM-style riots and burning of cities, look for a rush for personal defense firearms.

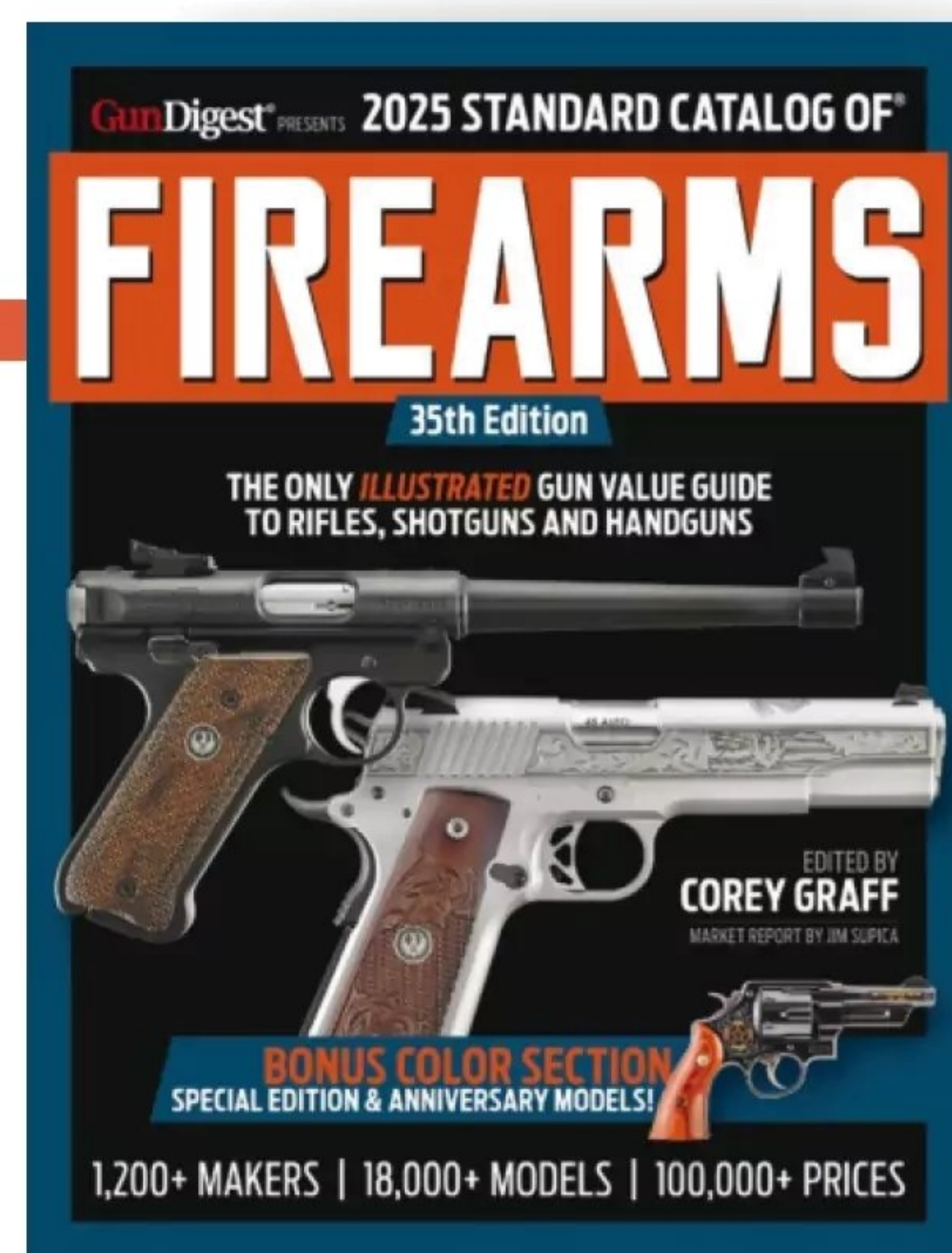
If a Democratic victory introduces the

likelihood of future gun restrictions, expect a surging demand for AR-type rifles, double-stack autopistols, and any other arms that are likely targets for bans or confiscations. The market should be especially strong for those that can be legally bought "off the record" through private party transactions (at least while that option lasts). So long as pre-1899 antique firearms are exempt from restriction, registration, and regulation, there may also be increased interest.

And if a group of concerned citizens questions the legitimacy of the election and peacefully parades and mills in a government building funded by their tax dollars while accompanied by capitol police, while pearl-clutching swamp-dwellers flee, panic, and fume ... I dunno. Maybe expect buying opportunities as they have to dump their guns on the market to try to pay for their legal fees and feed their families while they're in prison. Your guess is as good as mine. I'd rather not think about it.

(Did I mention that we still need the NRA, warts and all? Reform. Rebuild. Support.)

Now go buy some guns. **GDTM**



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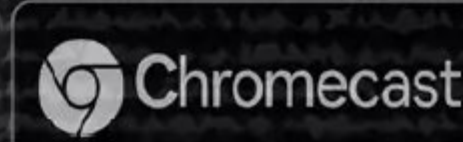
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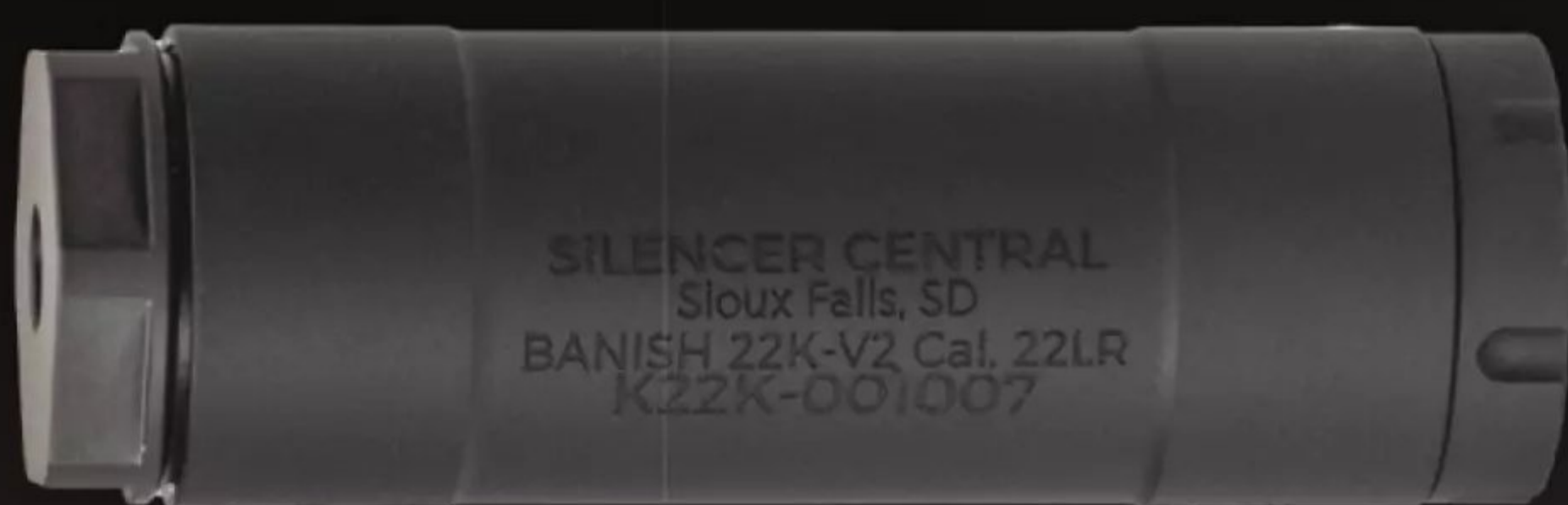
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