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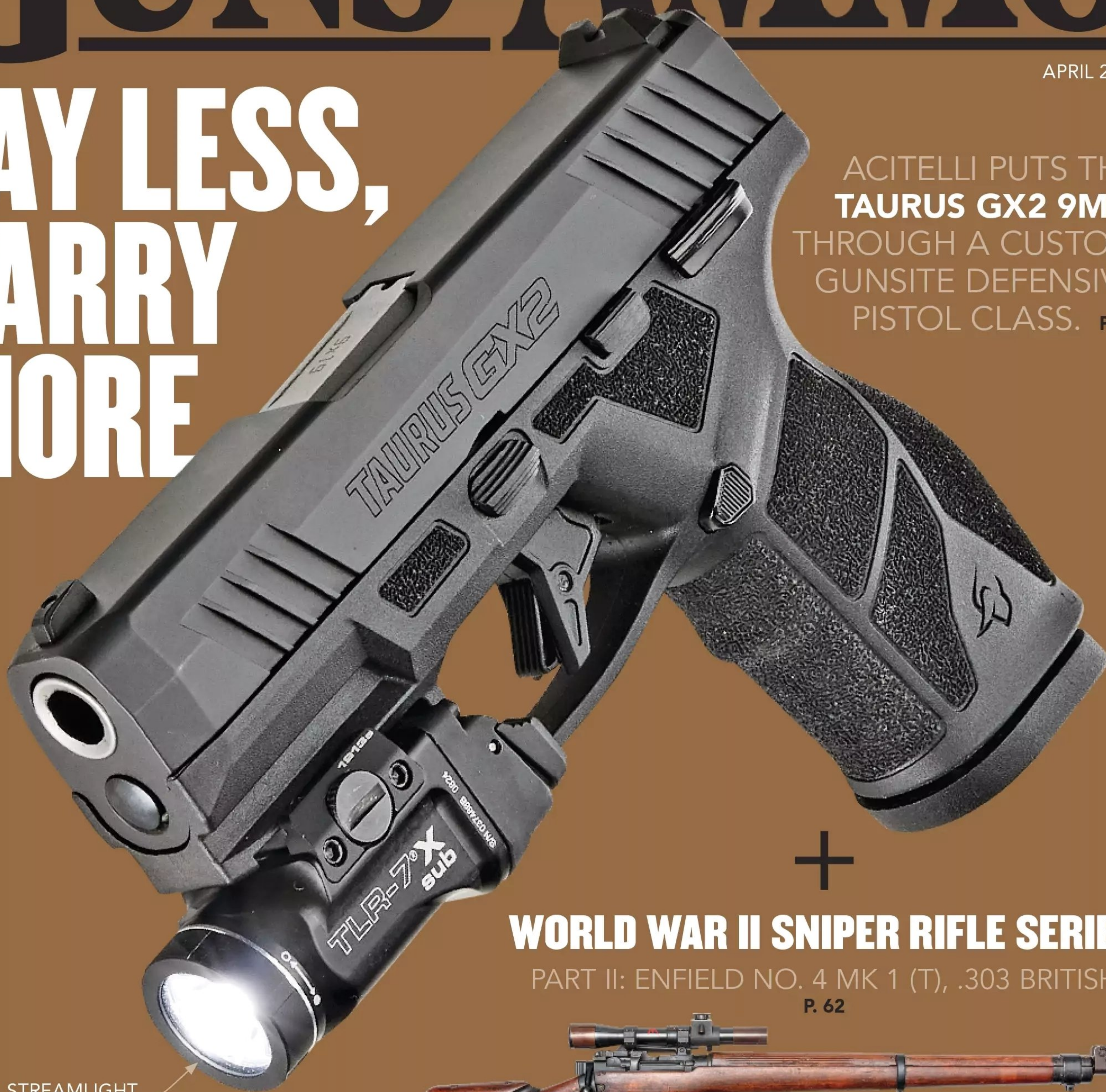
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PART II: ENFIELD NO. 4 MK 1 (T), .303 BRITISH

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Testing the .338 ARC.



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It was a perfect late autumn day in the northern Rockies. Not a cloud in the sky, and just enough cool in the air to stir up nostalgic memories of my trip into the backwoods. This year, though, was different. I was going it solo. My two buddies, pleading work responsibilities, backed out at the last minute. So, armed with my trusty knife, I set out for adventure.

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Well, what I found was a whole lot of trouble. As in 8 feet and 800-pounds of trouble in the form of a grizzly bear. Seems this grumpy fella was out looking for some adventure too. Mr. Grizzly saw me, stood up to his entire 8 feet of ferocity and let out a roar that made my blood turn to ice and my hair stand up. Unsnapping my leather sheath, I felt for my hefty, trusty knife and felt emboldened. I then showed the massive grizzly over 6 inches of 420 surgical grade stainless steel, raised my hands and yelled, "Whoa bear! Whoa bear!" I must have made my point, as he turned tail and headed back into the woods.

Our Grizzly Hunting Knife features stick-tang construction, you can feel confident in the strength and durability of this knife. And the hand carved, natural bone handle ensures you won't lose your grip even in the most dire of circumstances. I also made

certain to give it a great price. After all, you should be able to get your point across without getting stuck with a high price.

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FORGOTTEN COMP'D PISTOLS?

I am a reader and shooter, and happy with Guns & Ammo. I want to react, though, to James Tarr's "Handgunning" column in the January 2025 issue. He wrote, "Fifteen years ago ... no company offered factory-comp'd guns" I have two that are factory comp'd, an old Taurus .357 Magnum revolver and a Glock 22C. There were others, too, possibly limited editions.

Mason Johnson
Email

I am aware of the factory ported Glock pistols and revolvers of that time. As I mentioned in the column, however, "porting" is not the same as a "compensator." Despite the definitions, many manufacturers mislabel products to appeal to the masses and use whatever words they believe will sell more. "Ports" are holes in a gun barrel and/or slide. They do compensate for the direction of energy caused during recoil, but they are not technically "compensators," as I understand the term. "Compensators" are devices that attach to a barrel, designed to similarly function by redirecting gas to reduce the effects of recoil energy.

— J. Tarr

STAY ON TARGET

It's customary to start letters of this ilk with an apology

to avoid insulting folks who might not know of what they speak. So here it is: "Sorry." A reader wrote in the January 2025 letters that he had no interest in guns with porting or comps, and that he would never buy one. Good! More for me! At 82, I'm sure I've read about the shortfalls of comp'd and ported guns, but I've forgotten them. What I do know is that shooting a comp'd .45 ACP in a match for almost 40 years — easily 100,000 rounds — there was nothing quite like a comp for reducing muzzle jump, enabling rapid recovery and earning trophies. As for other uses, I own two 9mm Smith & Wesson Shields. One has factory porting from the Performance Center. There is no doubt, in my mind, which version I shoot better.

Sgt. Jeff Weiss (Ret.)
Email

.45-70 VS. .450 BUSHMASTER

I greatly enjoy Guns & Ammo. I read them front to back every month. I would like to see more about the .45-70. I found Victor J. Smith's comments in the September issue about the 400- to 500-grain bullets very interesting. I shoot Hornady 325-grain FTX in my Marlin Model 1894 and that load is very accurate; I have shot 1-inch groups at 100 yards, though I don't have experience shooting big game with this rifle. I'm pretty sure I could stop a dump truck with my 405-grain jacketed soft-point loads. I would like to know more about the accuracy and ballistics surrounding the .45-70 versus the .450 Bushmaster to win some arguments.

James Yoder
Rome, Ohio

DON'T SHOOT!

Here is an editorial for you: The old and antique guns should not be shot if they are all original — and with no import markings! They are getting rare and expensive. If you break and damage an old gun, you will hurt its value. Even old and antique guns in poor shape are getting expensive, and we should want to save the rare guns. Shoot a reproduction if that is an option.

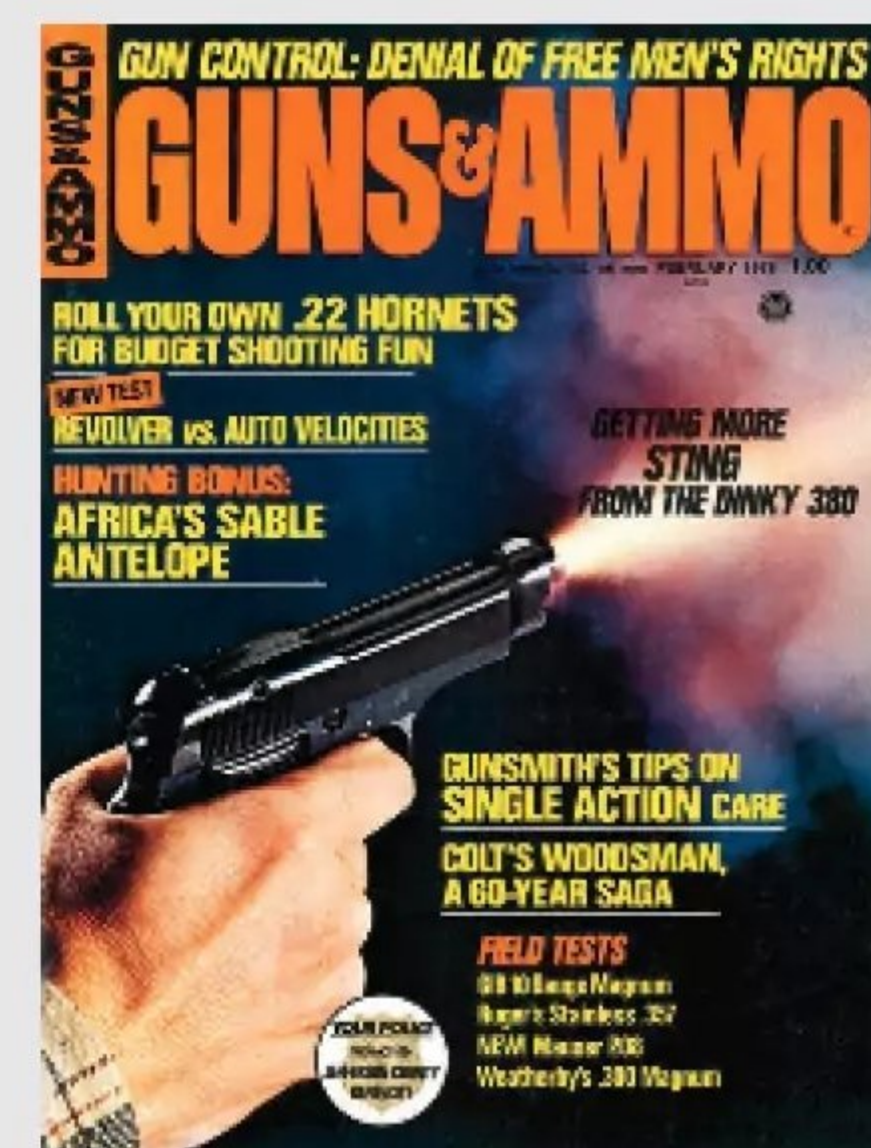
Michael Edwards
Hamburg, Pennsylvania

YOUTUBERS

In reply to Antonio Acitelli's December 2024 column, "Terms & Conditions," inquiring about recom-

FEBRUARY '75

Author Konrad Schreier informed readers that James P. Lee's bolt-action was the oldest military rifle design still in service. Featuring the "Lee Speed" action, Remington submitted it to the U.S. Army's 1882 magazine rifle trials in .45-70. The British army also adopted it in 1889, nicknaming it the "Lee-Metford" in .303. It was subject to a rifling change at the Royal Small Arms Factory in Enfield in 1895 and became the "Lee-Enfield." Soldiers could fire 20-plus aimed rounds during a 60-second exercise known as the "Mad Minute."



mendations of channels and creators that provide firearm content, I think the @PaulHarrell YouTube channel is worth looking at. He was a U.S. Marine, soldier and firearms instructor. I have never seen anyone with as much knowledge as him. Harrell passed away in September 2024, but there is still more than 12 years of content to view. That guy was amazing. The channel is now being operated by his brother, Roy, who is a police officer and doing a good job following the legend. I would also suggest Michael Jones of @Garand Thumb, who is also a U.S. Air Force veteran.

Maurice Clemons
Email

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THE MARCH 2025 ISSUE of Guns & Ammo featured "Superlative," an article that revealed our first look at the innovative Aimpoint COA red-dot sight and A-CUT mounting interface. The COA and A-CUT were developed in partnership between Aimpoint and Glock, resulting in a one-year exclusivity agreement. On page 53, the last sentence in the first paragraph reads, "Aimpoint and Glock have also indicated that by mid-year 2025, Glock will offer replacement slide assemblies with A-CUT to enable existing owners of specific Glock models to benefit from this revolutionary, collaborative effort." A similar statement appeared in the top caption on page 55, second sentence. It reads, "By mid-2025, slide assemblies will be offered for Glock owners interested in retrofitting their pistols." Following publication of the March 2025 issue, the editorial staff learned that these statements were incorrect. Glock will not offer A-CUT slide assemblies separately.

Despite the misunderstanding and miscommunication, Guns & Ammo staff stands behind the review of the COA and A-CUT — and our recommendation. Glock pistols with A-CUT and the Aimpoint COA remain an excellent opportunity for those interested in an optic-ready pistol.

The COA is an evolution of the Aimpoint ACRO enclosed emitter red-dot sight, which first appeared in the November 2018 issue. The A-CUT is a reimagining of the mounting interface designed to ensure that the optic is secure and doesn't move due to recoil energy or external influences. Unlike other optic configurations, the two mounting screws behind the COA do not absorb the shear force of recoil. It's more dependable. Despite its slide-width dimensions and concealable profile, the field of view is generous. Intuitive controls, ease of adjustment and access to the battery tray make the Aimpoint COA the perfect pairing for a Glock with A-CUT. **GA** — E. Poole

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BUDGET GUNS

AFFORDABLE. For many, guns have become less so. Built into the price is the cost of manufacturing, overhead, materials, labor and, of course, profit. Other influences include consumer demand and the effects of increased inflation, just as they always have.

Fifty years ago, the average U.S. household income was \$13,720. In 2024, the U.S. Census Bureau indicated that it was \$75,580 for a two-income household, an increase of 81.85 percent. According to the 1975 Guns & Ammo Annual, the average price of a double-action revolver was \$109.77, and \$207.52 for a semiautomatic pistol. In 2025, the retail price of a new revolver averages \$918.54, and semiautomatic pistols average \$839 including tactical firearms, competition pistols, carry pieces and rimfires. Since 1975, the price of revolvers has increased 88.05 percent, and 75.26 percent for pistols. These numbers are in line with the rate of inflation. A point of consideration, though, is that there were 138 new double-action revolvers and 80 semiautomatic pistols introduced in 1975. If a person had \$31,750.23, he could have purchased a sample of each new handgun that year. In contrast, there are hundreds of new models and line extensions for '25.

The term "budget gun" is often used to describe a low-cost firearm, usually minimalistic in its features or from a particular brand with a storied legacy of producing the most affordable options underneath the counter. However, with so many choices and opinions available, prospective buyers are more willing to spend more to avoid disappointment. Hence the cliché, "Buy once, cry once." The next

question is, "How low are you willing to go?"

Following a survey of new handguns offered in 2025, I noticed that the lowest-priced handguns from many popular brands were not among the list of sub-\$400 budget

guns. The most attainable pistols from Springfield Armory, for example, are 3- and 4-inch XD models, and an XD-S with a 3.3-inch barrel for \$440. The most affordable Mossberg is the MC1sc at \$435. The basic Rossi RP63 revolver starts at \$469.99, and the Kahr CW380 and CT380 retail for \$457.

I managed to identify 59 primary models from the hundreds of new handguns that cost between \$400 and \$500, not including taxes or fees. There are less than 30 handguns between \$300 and \$400. Pistols retailing for less than \$300 are few. The list does not factor used guns, of course, or

those that have been discounted or sold with a rebate.

What led me to go down this multi-day research rabbit hole? In 2024, Guns & Ammo published 664 editorial pages of reviews featuring new firearms, optics, ammu-

nition and accessories. A subscriber bemoaned, "Where are the articles on sub-\$300 guns?" To address his question, I needed to revisit the articles that were published and survey the market. G&A reviewed most of what was offered, but everything is more expensive. The days of plentiful sub-\$300 guns, simply put, are gone.

To err is human — and I am human. Let us know if I've overlooked a make or model of budget gun! G&A will continue to include affordable firearms as part of the editorial lineup in 2025, but don't hesitate to recommend a review. Email gaeditor@outdoorsg.com. Until then, let's turn the page.



HI-POINT YC9, 9MM, MSRP: \$229

HERITAGE ROSCOE, .38 SPL +P, MSRP: \$364

HANDGUNS UNDER \$300

- Altor Arms 9mm/.380 (\$129)
- Bond Arms Roughneck .38 to .45 (\$277)
- Bond Arms Rowdy .45 Colt/.410 (\$299)
- Cobra Firearms Freedom FS .380 (\$145)
- Heritage Barkeep .22 (\$165.99)
- Heritage Rough Rider .22 (\$207.99)
- Hi-Point C9 9mm (\$209)
- Hi-Point CF 380 .380 (\$196)
- Hi-Point JXP10 10mm (\$225)
- Hi-Point YC9 9mm (\$229)
- KelTec P17 Compact (\$220)
- North American Arms .22 (\$250)
- Rock Island Armory LI380 .380 (\$299)
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**SPRINGFIELD
ARMORY.** 

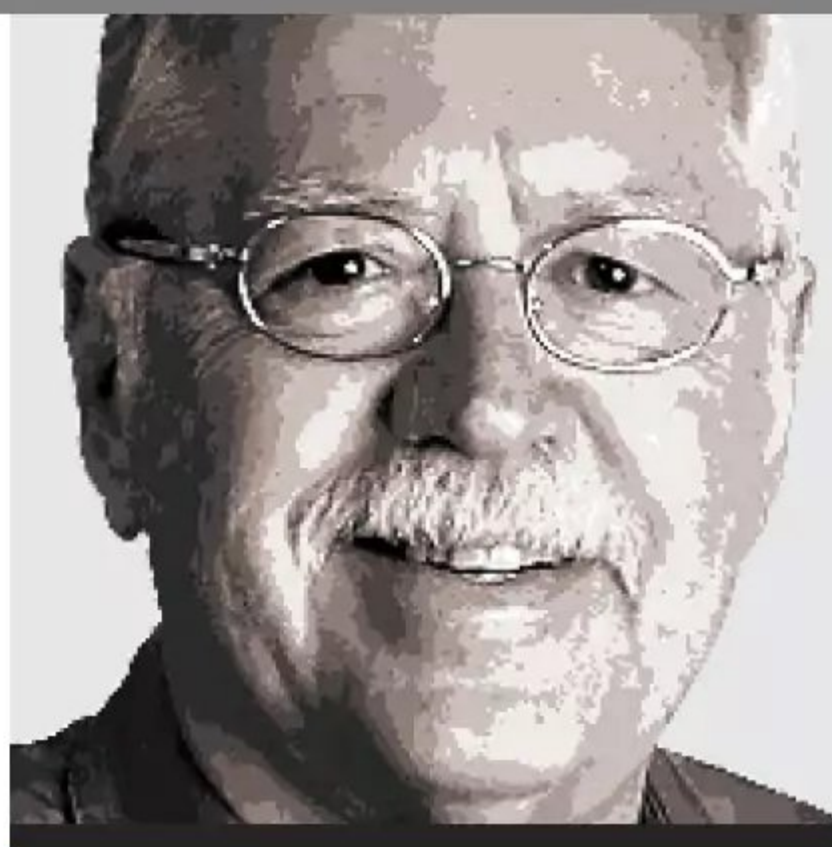


ECHELON™ 4.0C

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

“Lately, the market on Civil War carbines has declined somewhat.”

IDENTIFICATION & VALUES

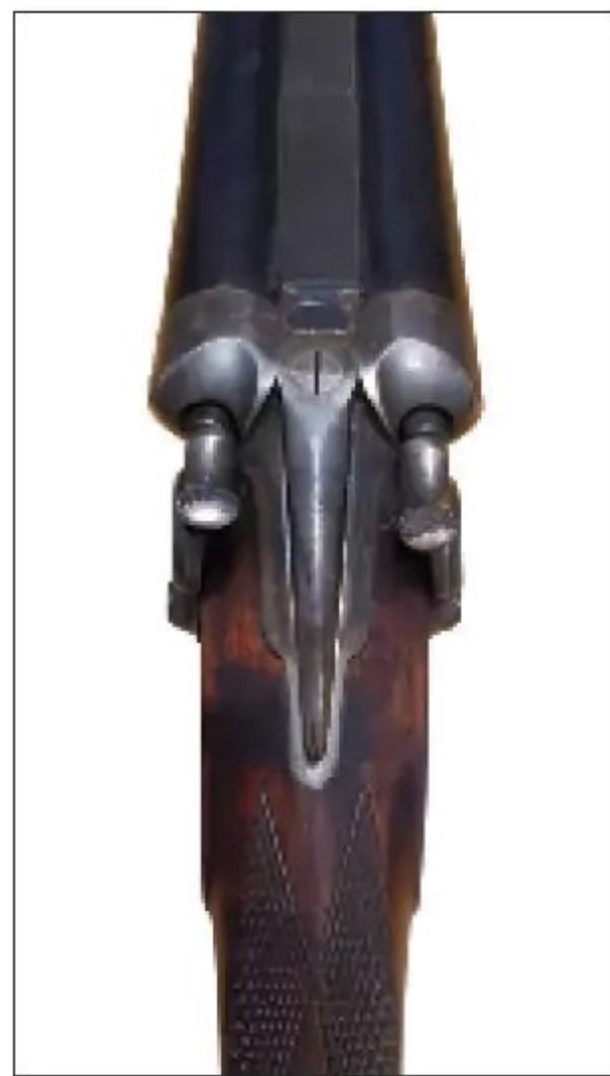


GARRY JAMES

GARRY.JAMES@OUTDOORSG.COM



REMINGTON MODEL 1889 SXS HAMMER, GRADE I, 90%: \$1,800



REMINGTON S/S SHOTGUN

Q: Here are some of pictures of my double shotgun. All I know is that it was my grandpa’s when he was younger. I’ve been told it’s from 1908 and that it’s a Remington. I’ve been enjoying this magazine and your column since the late 1980s or early ‘90s.

S. L.
Email

A: Thanks for being a loyal reader! Glad you’ve found the column of some value. Your photos indicate you have a Grade 1 Model 1889 Remington double-hammer gun. The elaborate hammer shape on the 1889 differentiates it from the Model 1885 and 1887, which were basically the same arm with a few stylistic differences. The series was manufac-

tured from 1885 to 1909. They were available in 10, 12 and 16 gauges, with varying degrees of embellishment. The condition of your piece seems to be quite good, I’d say 80 to 90 percent. As such, it’s valued at \$1,600 to \$2,000.

MODEL 63 WINCHESTER

Q: My husband has a U.S.-

made Model 63 Winchester. The only serial number I can find is on the trigger-guard. The number I see is 11XX. (That same number is on the receiver in front of the triggerguard.) There is also an engraving on the barrel that says, “MADE IN U.S.A. WINCHESTER REPEATING ARMS NEW HAVEN CONN. - PATENT PENDING”. On the other side of the barrel, it says, “WINCHESTER - MODEL 63 - WINCHESTER - .22 LONG R. - SUPER SPEED & SUPER-X PROOF STEEL - TRADE MARK”.

J. L.
Email

A: The Winchester Model 63 Takedown autoloading rifle was manufactured from 1933 to 1958. Caliber was .22 Long Rifle (LR). Some 174,692 were built. It was a popular little arm based somewhat on the Winchester Model 1903. The serial number on your husband’s rifle indicates that it was manufactured in 1933, which adds a premium to the gun’s value. Unfortunately, you do not give me a hint as to the rifle’s condition, so it is difficult to assign a value. I’ll take a stab and assume it’s in 50- to 70-percent condition. As such, it would be worth \$600 to \$800.

K98K MAUSER CLARIFICATION

Q: I was reading the G&A “Gun Room” last month, and you answered a gentleman about a Luger with “byf” markings. On my Mauser K98k rifle with a “42” (year built), it has the same “byf” marking. I was told by the old-timer I got it from that it meant “Berlin Mfg.” Any help clarifying would be greatly appreciated.

A. B.
Email

A: The “byf” on your 1942 K98k rifle is the ordnance code for “Mauser-Werke, Oberndorf am Neckar,” which is commonly seen on World War II-vintage Mauser rifles and handguns. It first appeared circa 1941 and remained in use until the end of the war. I hope this clears things up for you.

MORE ON THE WINCHESTER ’73

Q: I am just reading the August 2024 issue of Guns & Ammo, and I see someone was confused by the letter at the end of the serial number on the 1873 described on page 17. They guessed it was a “P” or an “H”. If you are a student of Winchesters, you know that Winchester would put an “A” or “B”



POULTNEY & TRIMBLE SMITH'S PATENT CARBINE, .50, 60%: \$2,000

at the end of the serial numbers to indicate an internal modification for that model. This was true for the Model 1873. At 382XXX, I think it should actually be a "B", but with a little wear a bit of the letter was lost, especially if it was stamped at an angle. "The Winchester Book" (1961) by George Madis discusses this subject. You might have guessed by now that your "Identifications & Values" is one of my favorite parts of the magazine. I love to learn about all the strange things readers come up with.
R. W.
Email

AUCTION BLOCK

An elegant Mountain Riflery John Bolliger Signature Series in .470 Nitro Express, "The First Mountain Riflery Double Rifle," achieved an impressive \$25,000 at a December 11, 2024, Sportsman's Legacy sale. The bespoke piece, made circa 2007, required 410 man-hours to create. It was the first of only four doubles made in the firm's history. Based on a refined Merkel action, the 23½-inch barrels have a matted rib; stepped, brass-beaded blade front sight; a sling-swivel stud; a fixed express rear sight with two folding leaves marked 50/100/150; is adorned with gold sighting triangles and extractor. The action has side clips, custom sideplates, a mechanical tang safety, cocking indicators, mechanical triggers, bushed strikers, and an extended and tapered lower tang. The stock, fashioned from an outstanding English blank, the properly tapered splinter wears a full wrap of fine checkering with contoured borders and fleur accents complete the formalities. The action, plates, lever and barrel transitions are dressed in bold gold wire with delicate supporting scroll, the pattern extending over the forend iron, cap and pedestal. "470 Nitro Express" rides the rib in a field of gold, and the initials "PWM" are shown on the guard. The legend, "The First Mountain Riflery Double Rifle", also appears on the left barrel. Metal finish is more than 95 percent, and the wood is at least 98 percent. An outstanding leather display case with fitted leather interior, bone-handled tools, brass oiler, key and maker's label formalizes the presentation. For more information about this and future sales contact, visit Sportsman's Legacy at sportsmanslegacy.com.



A: Many thanks for the added information. It definitely gives added perspective to the reader's Model 1873. Thank you, also, for your nice words about the column.

**CIVIL WAR
SMITH'S CARBINE**

Q: I have a Civil War-period Smith Carbine, and just love it. The markings on the gun are "POULTNEY & TRIMBLE/BALTIMORE.U.S.A.", patented June 23, 1857. I have enclosed some photos, which are not really good. Is there anything you can tell me about the gun?
H. C.
Dushore, Pennsylvania

A: Smith's breech-loading carbine was invented by Gilbert Smith and patented in 1857. It was manufactured by, in succession, the American Machine Works of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Arms Company of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, and the American Arms Co., also of Chicopee Falls. The arm, which had a barrel that pivoted down when released by a brass catch, chambered a unique, externally primed India rubber cartridge, and later a style made of thin brass sandwiched between nitrated paper. Production of the Smith began in 1861 and continued by the three con-

tractors until 1865. About 30,000 were ultimately manufactured. Poultney & Trimble were agents for the gun. Generally speaking, it was a serviceable arm, though there were some complaints from the field concerning the ammunition and general robustness of the piece. Lately, the market on Civil War carbines has declined somewhat. Your photos, as you note, are a bit on the fuzzy side, but the gun appears to be sound and in reasonably good shape. From what I can see, I'd value it in the \$1,750 to \$2,250 range.

**COLT NEW 1903
ARMY-NAVY**

Q: I inherited a Colt double-action .38 1903 revolver. I shoot it regularly and would like to know if it has any value as an antique pistol. The barrel length is 6 inches.
S. W. P.
Centerville, Pennsylvania

A: The Colt .38 double-action New Army and Navy revolver was introduced in 1892. It was the U.S. military's first double-action service revolver with a swing-out cylinder. The caliber was .38 Colt. It was not a particularly robust arm and was beset with some problems, and the .38 Colt cartridge, when compared

HOLLYWOOD HARDWARE

Winchester Model 70, "Dirty Harry" (1971)

This .458 Magnum Winchester Model 70 big-game rifle, manufactured in 1965, was employed by Clint Eastwood as the iconic San Francisco detective "Harry Callahan" in the immensely popular film "Dirty Harry" (1971). "Callahan" used the gun in an attempt to take out the nefarious "Scorpio Killer," chillingly portrayed by Andrew Robinson. (Courtesy Mike Papac, Cinema Weaponry, Glendale, California /The National Firearms Museum, Fairfax, Virginia.)



to the earlier, powerful .45 Colt, was looked on with some disfavor. During its life span, the Army and Navy underwent a number of minor changes resulting in six incarnations: Models 1892, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1901 and 1903. Some 291,000 were eventually produced. Civilian versions were also offered. As you surmise, your gun is a Model 1903 and is so marked on the butt. The serial number, 205XXX, indicates it was made in 1903. Condition appears to be a bit rough, so I would value it in the \$300 to \$350 range. Generally, early models bring a bit more than the later ones, especially if they pre-date the Spanish-American War. Theodore Roosevelt famously carried a Model 1895 New Army and Navy at San Juan Hill.

"RED-9" MAUSER BROOMHANDLE

Q: I have a "Red-9" Mauser pistol in 9mm Parabellum, serial number 315XXX. The gun has its shoulder stock holster, and the serial numbers match. I believe it was assembled in 1920 as the number is stamped on

the lower-left side of the barrel. All outside numbers where stamped match. The bore is excellent. The barrel is marked, "WAFFEN-FABRIK MAUSER OBERNDORF." I believe the gun was imported to the U.S. as there is a customs mark, "GERMANY" on the barrel. I am interested in its value. What can you tell me?

M. G. P.
Mesa, Arizona

A: "Red-9" "Broomhandle" Mauser pistols are so named because they were chambered in 9mm Parabellum rather than the usual 7.63 Mauser. These have a large "9" filled in with red paint on the grips. The guns were manufactured between 1916 and 1918 for the military. There were some 1920 reworks, but they normally have fixed sights (as opposed to the more common military adjustable sight), and they may even be dated "1920," but this is not necessarily a hard and fast rule. From what I can see of your pistol, it appears to be a standard military model. The matching shoulder stock is a real plus value-wise. Some 150,000 were eventually manufac-

tured. Condition on the gun appears to be reasonably good; I'd say in the 80- to 90-percent range. As such, its worth is \$2,500 to \$3,000 with another \$1,000 to \$1,500 for the matching stock.

REMINGTON MODEL 12 WORTH?

Q: I have an old pump rifle. It is a Remington Model 12 in .22 Remington Special. It has a 23½-inch octagon barrel and open rear sights. The bore is excellent and "REMINGTON UMC" is in a circle on the crescent buttplate. On the barrel it reads, "Remington Arms-Union Metallic Cartridge Co." Patent dates range from January 1909 to April 16, 1912. Lots of finish (95 percent) remains with some light freckling on the edge of the barrel. Information of the gun and value is appreciated.

R. M.
Ojo Feliz, New Mexico

A: The popular Remington Model 12 hammerless pump-action rifle was manufactured in several variants and grades between 1909 and 1936. Some 840,000 were eventually made. Chamberings were .22 Short (S), Long (L) and LR as well as .22 Remington Special, the Model 12CS. In 95-percent condition, your

rifle is worth in the \$1,300 to \$1,500 range.

COLT MODEL 1902 SPORTING AUTO

Q: I am sending photos of a gun hoping you can help us out with information, as well as a valuation. On the left side of the slide, it is marked "Browning Patent Colts Patent Firearms MFG Co./PAT'D April 20, 1897, Hartford Conn. USA." The number above the triggerguard is 46XX. In front of the hammer there is a Colt horse in a circle. On the right side of the slide is "Automatic Colt Calibre .38 Rimless Smokeless."

J. P.
Rio Linda, California

A: You have a Colt Model 1902 Sporting Automatic. Some 7,500 of these pistols were manufactured between 1903 and 1908. The serial number on this one indicates it was made in 1903. A similar pistol, the Model 1902 Military Automatic, was made between 1902 and 1929. Originally, serrations were on the front of the slide (like yours), but they were moved to the rear at around serial number 9500. Your pistol appears sound, though there is little finish remaining. I'd value it at \$2,250 to \$2,500. **GA**



COLT MODEL 1902 SPORTING, .38 ACP, 70%: \$2,250



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Many “new” firearms are actually just line extensions.



JAMES TARR

LINE 'EM UP

AS THIS COLUMN GOES TO PRESS, the 2025 SHOT Show has just come to an end. The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) reported that it was attended by 54,000 industry professionals and 2,850 exhibitors. There were 14.1 miles of aisles. It is not open to the public, so I hear the same question from those who were unable to attend: “Did you see anything good, cool, new or amazing?” If I’m being honest — and I always am, even if you see me sometimes write with flowery words to cushion my editorial blows — 95-plus percent of the new guns at SHOT Show are simply variations of existing models, otherwise known as “line extensions.” That’s not necessarily a criticism, just an observation.

Some might interpret line extensions to mean that a brand is stagnant, or taking the safe route to increase profits. That might be true for some situations, but some line extensions are like magic. When a new product is successful, variations will follow possessing bigger, smaller, lighter, or more powerful features. Sometimes a line extension is like capturing lightning in a bottle, proving to be better than the original. This statement could apply to almost every variant of the SIG Sauer P320 in 2025; the original P320 was introduced at the 2014 SHOT Show.

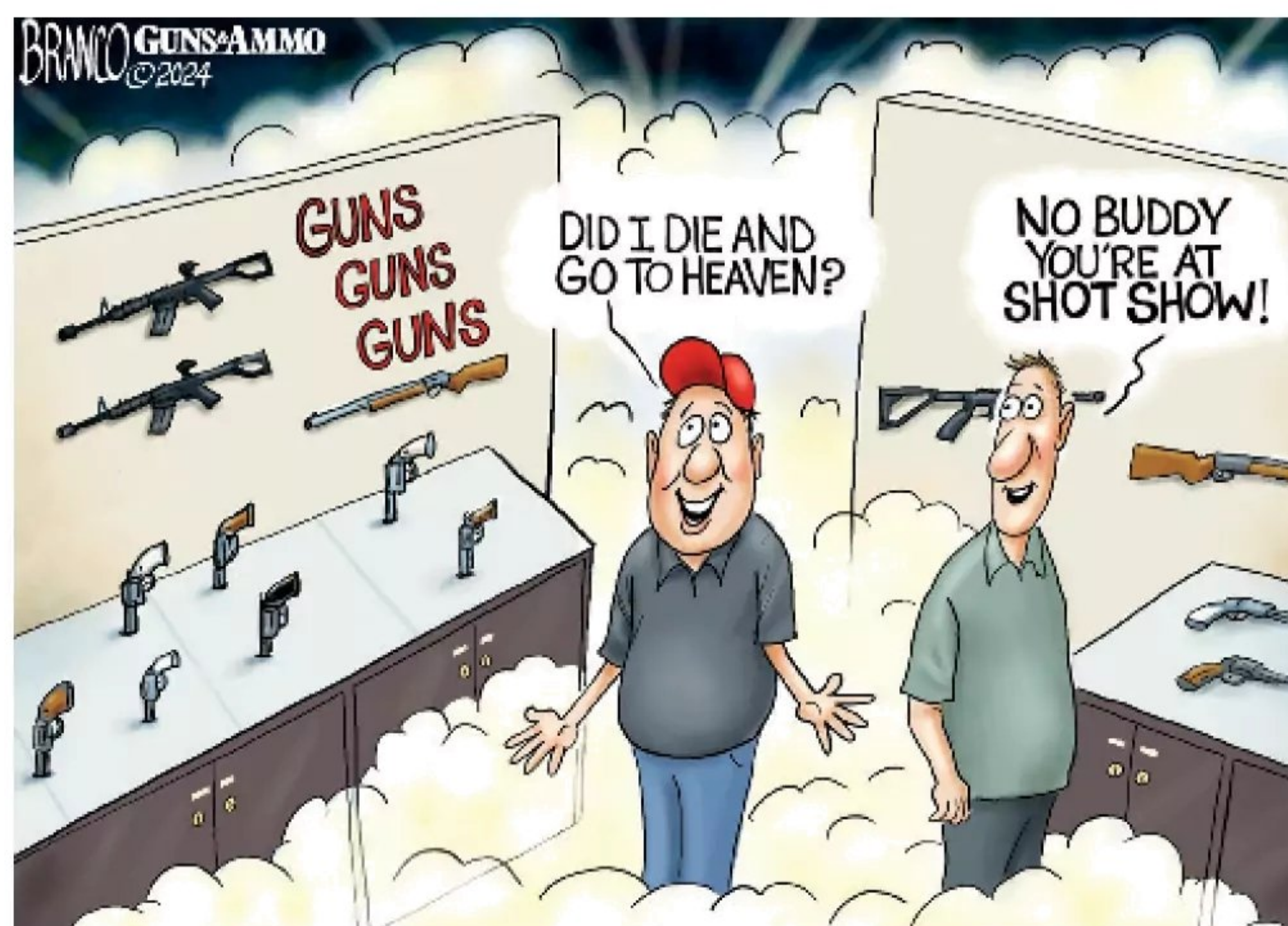
THE GLOCK STANDARD

Truly, no firearm company personifies the term “line extensions” better than Glock. Gaston Glock introduced his G17 in 1982. Fundamentally, Glock has done nothing since but offer line extensions of that principal design. Glock pistols are offered in different sizes, different calibers and colors, but every Glock is based on the same design; only the proportions and certain parts have changed.

The G19 is the perfect example of a line extension that wouldn’t exist without the original, but it far surpassed the G17. The G19 was “lightning in a bottle,” and it remains the carry gun against which others are judged — since

1988. We don’t have access to current production numbers, but it used to be the best-selling Glock model.

Why hasn’t Glock offered the public more than another line extension? It hasn’t needed to. Even today, more than 40 years later, Glock hasn’t met demand. It is the most popular pistol brand in the world. Glock did develop a pistol-caliber carbine (PCC), but it never introduced it to the commercial market because it didn’t need to. Patents were discovered for a carbine in 2019. Glock built an AR-15 variant to compete for a UK government contract, which it didn’t win. The carbine might be a great rifle, but will it ever be released commercially? I’d say no, not unless the sales of pistols tank; I don’t see that happening.



BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Line extensions are a safe bet for business, and a way to maintain a steady, predictable income stream. However, a healthy amount of cash in the bank allows a company to direct engineers to take time and dream up the next big thing. New products are a gamble, and they take time to develop. Research and Development departments can be money pits.

In 2020, when there were riots throughout the U.S., we saw demand for guns and ammo spike. Almost every company that made a gun shelved whatever new products were in the development pipeline. Generally, for the next three years we witnessed companies promoting sales of copies of existing models. It was all they could do to keep up with demand. New-gun introductions were often just line extensions because they required little effort and investment to produce them.

The Model 1911 is America’s pistol. Early in its storied history, there were some caliber variations. The .38 Super was introduced in 1929, for example. Following World War II, Colt began offering its Commander. The Commander was a line extension of the M1911 introduced in 1949. It featured



SIG Sauer introduced the P365 in 2018. Recent line extensions include the P365-FUSE (above, top) and the P365-AXG Legion with compensated slide (above, bottom).

Smith & Wesson's M&P Shield line continues to expand, now including Performance Center models such as the Shield EZ (above, top) and Shield Plus (above, bottom).

Since 2019, the Springfield Armory Hellcat has evolved from its micro-compact form to include the Hellcat Pro (above, top) and compliant versions (above, bottom).

a shortened slide of 4¼ inches. It was the first large-frame pistol with an aluminum frame to be mass produced. An evolution of the National Match series, the competition-oriented Gold Cup followed in 1957. Also in 1970, the aluminum-frame Commander became the Lightweight Commander while an all-steel version was introduced as the Combat Commander. An aluminum-framed pistol simply wasn't possible when John Browning was developing the 1911 because the metallurgy wasn't there, and that's another point. Sometimes line extensions don't just follow trends and fads, but advancements in technology. SIG Sauer's collaboration with Avient (formerly PolyOne) to produce its X-Series tungsten-infused polymer grip modules (TXG) for the P320 is one such example.

SIG Sauer, I believe, wears the crown as the "King of Line Extensions." How many variations are there of the P320 and P365 platforms? In part, these options are due to the modular nature of these pistols. The internal chassis system is the serialized part, so a pistol design can be exploited to create numerous variants and accept personalizations. Within two years of the 2019 introduction of the TXG grip module, aluminum and steel grip modules were released. Now P320 and P365 slides sport integral compensators and are either optic ready or optic equipped. There are even state-compliant models of these.

Technology has changed, but so do tastes. Handgun variants are influenced by external pressures such as improvements in ammunition. In the era of Jeff Cooper's writings, *Guns & Ammo* readers knew the 9mm was useless as a manstopper. "Real men carried a .45," he'd write. To manage the recoil of the .45, you want a big, heavy gun like the M1911. However, improvements to defensive ammunition have elevated the 9mm, especially since the FBI adopted the 9mm in 2015 and inspired the trend of federal and local law enforcement agencies to transition

away from the .40 S&W. The FBI's selection of Hornady's Critical Duty 135-grain +P 9mm load helped to make this possible. Today, the most popular cartridge for 1911 pistols is the 9mm, and compact models sell more units than full-size guns, not to mention the popularity of double-stack 2011-types. Hence, line extensions have allowed the Model 1911 to remain a valid option for competition and carry, and there seems to be no stopping that trend.

Smith & Wesson has also leaned heavily into offering line extensions of its M&P series. The subcompact Shield was a revelation, too, and if it wasn't for that pistol the P365 might not exist in its current form — and I believe the P365 is currently the carry gun that others should be judged against. In 2018, S&W also introduced its Shield EZ, specifically to support gun owners with compromised grip strength or dexterity issues. It is so easy to load, rack and shoot that it remains a tremendous success. When a brand explores the possibilities through line extensions, sometimes the unexpected happens — like magic. Manufacturers knew there was a desire for pistols that are easy to manipulate, but the Shield EZ nailed that design effort. It's been so successful that other firearm companies are making easy-to-rack pistols, including Ruger and Walther. Line extensions appear when engineers are allowed to tinker with an idea or existing product. How can it be made better? What are consumers demanding? Line extensions may only offer incremental improvements to a designs, but the result can produce a significant impact.

A company's desire to maintain a predictable income level through line extensions can be a siren's song, influencing manufacturers to become stagnant and refuse to innovate. Far more frequent than not, subsequent variants can lead to something wonderful. Line extensions are the physical manifestation of the metaphor, "We all stand on the shoulders of giants." **G&A**



1911

OPTICS READY



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THE CARRY RIG

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The Sneaky Pete Xtra Mag Series Brown Leather Holster is a right-hand-only outside-the-waistband (OWB) holster that can be ordered with a belt clip or loop. The cover flap is secured by three magnets when closed, and it features a pocket for identification or payment cards. **\$95**



SNEAKY PETE XTRA MAG SERIES

SNEAKY PETE holsters are a unique option that supports outside-the-waistband (OWB) carry without attracting the scrutiny that an open-carry holster would. For 2025, Sneaky Pete has introduced an OWB holster that carries both a pistol and a spare magazine: The Xtra Mag Series.

Though the Xtra Mag Series can be ordered with a belt clip for quicker use or removal, optioning it with a sewn-on and six-rivet belt loop with an expanding pocket will support carrying another magazine. Due to the single 2.44-inch-wide loop, the Sneaky Pete holster can be threaded on a belt in 20 seconds.

The right-hand-only orientation within the case is due to the molded Kydex-strip structure that outlines the case's interior. The Kydex strip is shaped to form a partition at the bottom, creating compartments for the pistol and a spare magazine. The compartment for the pistol is generous enough to accommodate a pistol with a compact light or laser attached to the accessory rail. The internal dimensions — height, 7 inches; width, 5 inches; depth, 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches — fit the pistol closely so the muzzle doesn't move when a light is absent. With the flap closed over the back of the slide and grip, the pistol doesn't move. The spare magazine on the inside is also secured with a retention magnet between the case wall and Kydex strip.

Testing a Smith & Wesson Shield EZ 9mm, the magazine compartment was only large enough to accept standard-capacity magazines. Though appearances are deceiving, the Xtra Mag Series is a reimagination of Sneaky Pete's holster products. If a user desires, it will accommodate up to three magazines: One in the belt loop's expandable pouch, a second inside the case, and a third in the pistol. The Shield EZ utilizes a single-stack, eight-round magazine, equating to 24 rounds stored plus one in the chamber.



30-DAY CARRY

Despite the 3-pound, 11.3-ounce total weight, the Xtra Mag Series holster wears comfortably when worn with a supportive belt. During my 30-day evaluation, I wore the Xtra Mag Series with single- and two-ply leather belts for comparison. The thicker two-ply belts were preferred due to the increased stiffness that pulled the holster tighter to the body. Though 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - and 2-inch belts were easier to slide through the loop, the holster's loop accommodated up to a 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-wide single-ply belt.

The Sneaky Pete holster is large and stands out visually

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SNEAKY PETE XTRA MAG SERIES	
MATERIALS	Leather, magnets, Kydex
CARRY TYPE	Outside the Waistband (OWB)
RETENTION TYPE	Level 2
ADJUSTABILITY	None
MSRP	\$95 (tested)
HANDGUN FIT	Smith & Wesson M&P9 Shield EZ (tested)
ACCESSORY RAIL ACCOMMODATIONS	Yes (light/laser unit)
POSITIONS TO CARRY	OWB, 1 to 4 o'clock (right hand)
AVERAGE TIME TO ATTACH	45 seconds
COMFORT RATING	4/5
CONCEALMENT CLOTHING	None
AVERAGE DRAW-TO-FIRE TIME	2.08 seconds
MANUFACTURER	Sneaky Pete Holsters, sneakypeteholsters.com

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

to those who know what it is. Most onlookers don't pay attention, though. No one asked what's inside during my evaluation. I preferred wearing the Xtra Mag Series under a loose-fitting button-down shirt. Lifting the flap to access the grip of the pistol neatly lifts the shirt, affording a one-handed draw. I must also appreciate that I could carry a mid-size pistol while seated and buckled in my vehicle, driving, which provided better access than many IWB holsters — and it didn't wear a hole into the lumbar of my seat.



The Xtra Mag Series rates high in comfort and ease to carry, but this is not a holster designed for rapid draws and reloads. Ultimately, it's up to the enduser to determine the tradeoff value between comfort and practicality, as well as draw and reload speeds. **G&A** — E. Poole



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Spartan Precision Equipment MagnaSwitch



RICHARD NANCE

SPARTAN STABLE

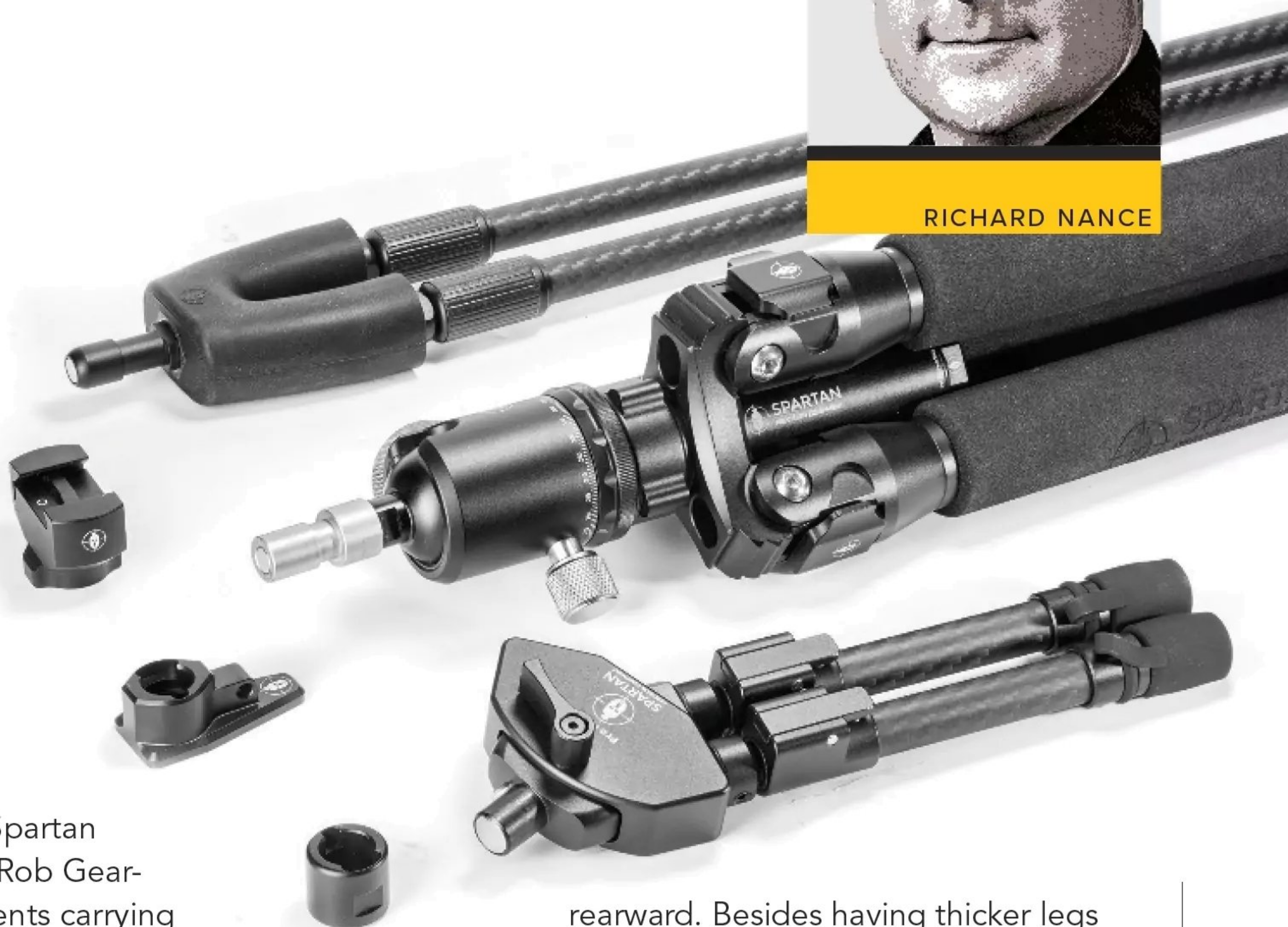
WHEN HUNTING with a rifle, obtaining a stable shooting platform is important. Supporting a rifle on a tree, fencepost or rock may suffice, but a bipod (or tripod) is a better option. With a bipod, you can steady a rifle almost anywhere. However, a bipod affixed to a rifle adds weight and its legs can snag at the most inopportune time.

During his tenure as a hunting guide, Spartan Precision Equipment Managing Director Rob Gearing, aka "Mr. G," became fed up with clients carrying rifles with bipods attached. In search of a solution, Gearing set out to develop a line of lightweight bipods that were easy to carry and quick to attach to the rifle. The MagnaSwitch system is a solution that enables the rifleman to attach, remove or choose between a line of lightweight, compact bipods, tripods and quad sticks. Since glassing and hunting go hand-in-hand, the MagnaSwitch system also supports mounting binoculars or a spotting scope to a compatible bipod or tripod.

The MagnaSwitch system uses powerful rare earth magnets to secure accessories to a low-profile adapter. The adapter's attachment point is a magnetized cup, which encapsulates the magnetized post of compatible accessories. The result is positive, seemingly automatic lockup and easy removal. The Classic Rifle Adapter (\$20, javelinbipod.com) is a user-installed replacement for rifles with a removable front sling-swivel mount. With the adapter installed, you can choose an appropriate accessory.

Two of Spartan Precision Equipment's popular products are the Javelin Lite (\$150) and Javelin Pro Hunt Tac (\$300) bipods. Each comes with the Classic Rifle Adapter kit. Both are constructed of 7075-T7351 aluminum and premium multi-layered carbon fiber, making them lightweight, robust and corrosive resistant. Threaded legs on each model can be changed out for a different style of M14 legs within the product line.

Adjustable 60-degree traverse and 30-degree cant allows shooters to track targets and level the scope on uneven ground. If you don't want the rifle to cant, there's a cant locking lever on the face of the bipod. To prevent the rifle from traversing, install the bipod with the cant lever facing



rearward. Besides having thicker legs that mechanically lock open, the Javelin Pro Hunt Tac is adjustable for height and comes in two sizes, standard and long. The standard version adjusts from 7 to 9 inches in height and weighs just 7.6 ounces. The long version adjusts from 9 to 12 inches and weighs 8.3 ounces. The Pro Hunt Tac's spring-assisted legs allow for one-hand height adjustment. When you need more clearance to make a shot, Spartan Precision Equipment's SpringBok Bipod (\$200) is also a viable option. Like the Javelin Pro Hunt Tac, the SpringBok has adjustable carbon-fiber legs, but its silicone body facilitates rapid position and cant changes without the need for mechanical adjustment. Its modular design is compatible with Spartan M14 leg options. The SpringBok weighs 10.6 ounces and has a leg extension range of 22¾ to 38½ inches.

Although heavier than a bipod, a tripod provides even greater stability. The Ascent Tripod Gen 2 with Davros Pro Head (\$900) is a solid choice. Its removable legs double as trekking poles when secured to Spartan's trekking pole handles (\$20).

In tall vegetation, Spartan's SpringBok Quad Sticks (\$400) are the best option. MagnaSwitch technology allows you to lock the rifle in place for enhanced stability. The wide rear cradle enables you to track an animal without having to reposition the legs.

When paired with the appropriate adapter such as Spartan's Light Duty Optics Adapter (\$25), Heavy Duty Optics Adapter (\$60) or Binocular Adapter (\$50), you can quickly attach your optic or binoculars to a MagnaSwitch bipod or tripod for smoother, steadier glassing. Visit javelinbipod.com for more information on these products.



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Warne Skyline Lite Bipod Warne HyperLite Rings



TOM BECKSTRAND

SIMPLE, BUT BETTER

ONE ITEM OF GEAR I use frequently is a bipod. It's one of the most overlooked shooting accessories for a rifle. If my shooting position isn't solid, the results on target are never going to be optimal. Taking some time to analyze and build a good shooting position is one of the most important aspects of becoming a better shooter.

Tactical needs and competitive shooting has driven recent innovations for bipods. It is no longer a simple shooting accessory. Though many features are useful, the price of a bipod can range between \$300 and \$1,000. However, I've found a quantifiable improvement with Warne's Skyline Lite Bipod series.

WARNE SKYLINE LITE BIPOD

The mounting interface of bipods issued when I started out in the U.S. Army was spot-welded together. Those spot-welds could break when performing any positional shooting that placed an asymmetric load. To fix the situation, I had to replace it with an aftermarket interface machined from billet aluminum.

That ran the cost of those bipods to more than \$200. The Skyline Lite Bipod from Warne features a solid block of billet aluminum as its interface already. Starting at a retail of \$192 (warnescopemounts.com), I discovered that I was already ahead on price with these.

The Warne bipod also allows the shooter to choose how the bipod legs deploy. Many love quick-deploy spring-loaded legs that can be extended just by pulling them into place. Others prefer the option to lock the legs at either 90 or 45 degrees. Warne's Skyline Lite Bipod interface is reversible, so either configuration is possible. Warne also includes a handle to adjust cant tension, a welcome improvement. Finally, Warne's interface design accepts

standard ARMS-17S mounts, so it's easy to change from Picatinny rail mounts to Arca-Swiss or QD M-Lok, should the shooter prefer. The leg adjustments on Warne's bipods are fast and stable. Extending the legs is a simple matter of grabbing the foot and pulling the leg to the desired length.

There are 13 height positions on each leg, and depressing a spring-loaded lever is all that is necessary to collapse it back down. The rubber feet are threaded and screwed into the bottom of the legs. Removing the foot allows for use of Atlas feet and accessories, too. I have a bunch of Atlas feet and leg extensions, so this is a plus for shooters like me. All of the feet and accessories I tried with the Skyline Lite Bipod worked.

HYPERLITE

Warne continues its "simple, but better" theme with its new HyperLite rings. Like the bipod, Warne aimed to offer a superior product for a reasonable price. I might start an argument, but the least expensive set of quality scope rings costs no less than \$100. Warne's rings are at or just above the \$100 threshold, but they are better than most for two reasons: Material selection and the scope ring and rifle interface.

Good scope rings are usually made from billet aluminum because it's a light and strong material. The 6000-series of aluminum is the standard, but Warne went and found a magnesium-aluminum alloy they've labeled "MagnaFusion"; they use this material instead. The advantage of using MagnaFusion is that it cut 35 percent of the weight out of the rings. In a world dominated by lightweight products, a 35-percent reduction in scope ring weight is noteworthy. Also, Warne finishes its rings by giving the edges a radius. Sharp edges aren't a big deal, but they're ugly and don't hold anodizing well.



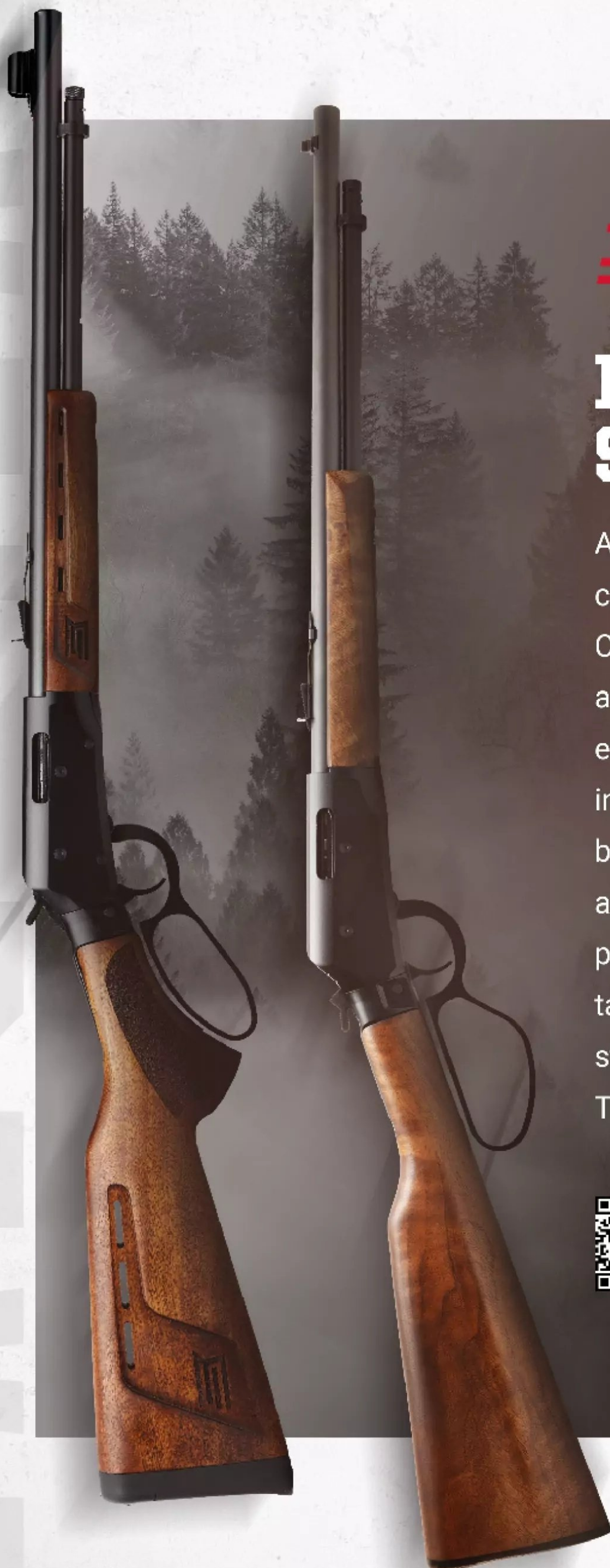


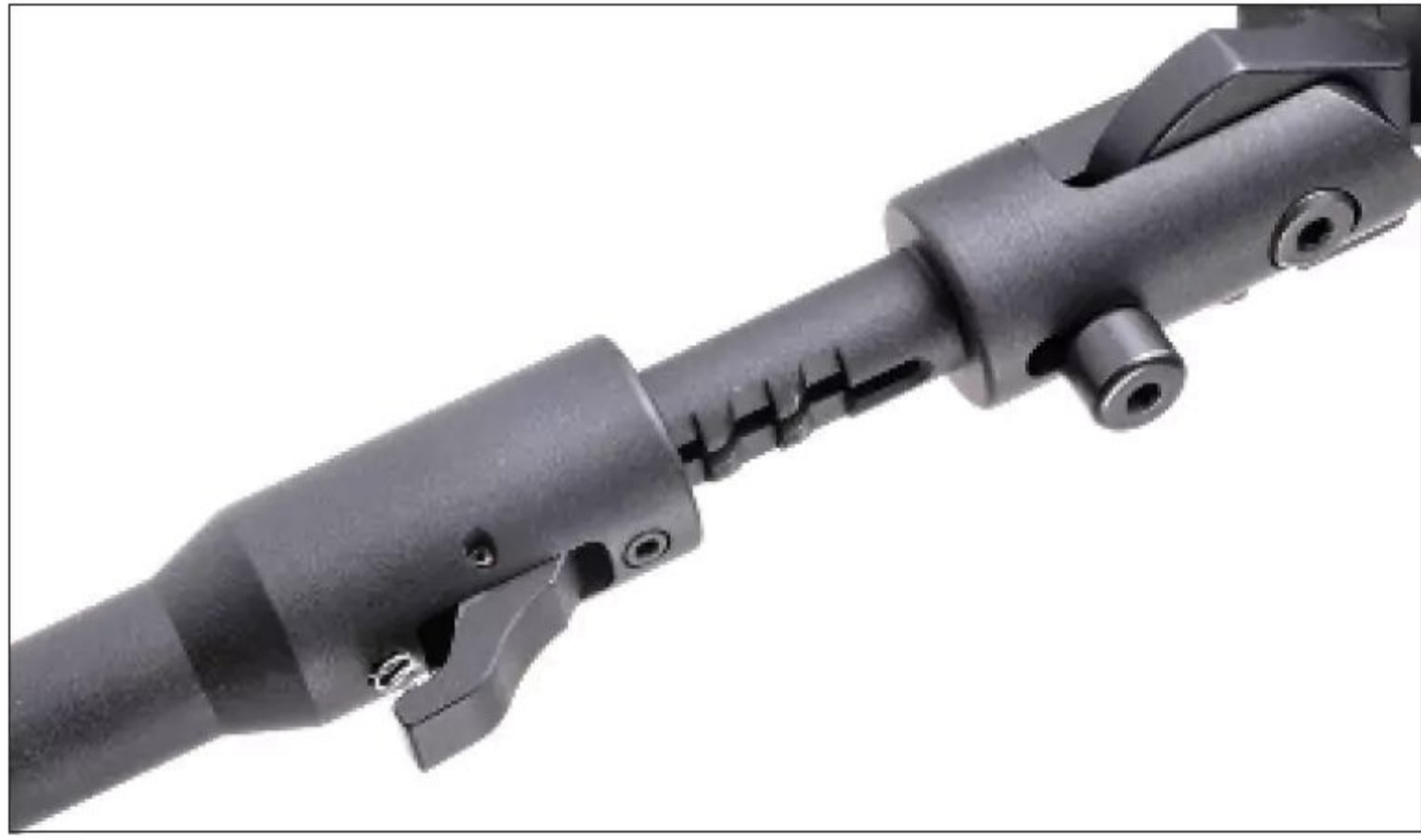
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Warne's Lite Bipod can be adjusted from the shooting position. The legs can be rapidly deployed at the push of a button, and there are 13 adjustable height increments. **\$192** (M-LOK/Pic Rail) to **\$243** (ARCA)

Another quantifiable improvement over a lot of scope rings is Warne's use of the NATO STANAG 4694 interface instead of the older MIL-STD-1913 Picatinny rail system. The STANAG system attaches to both Picatinny and Weaver rail bases, but how it attaches is superior, in my opinion. The Picatinny rail interface uses angled flats on the sides of the rail to secure the device. The STANAG 4694 system uses the entire top of the rail and the angled flats on the bottom edge to lock the ring in place. The STANAG 4694 design does a better job of controlling the ring's mounting height, which is also superior from a return-to-zero perspective. Since the STANAG system uses the entire top portion of the rail, there is a lot more



The Lite Bipod allows 44 degrees of smooth cant range that is easily manipulated or locked out with the rotating tension lever. G&A tested the 7914M featuring a quick-detach M-LOK interface.



Warne HyperLite rings are constructed of lightweight magnesium alloy and features the STANAG interface system. **\$110**

surface area contact between the ring and the base. This helps prevent point-of-impact shifts that can occur from ring movement when the optic takes an accidental blow. Warne's choice to incorporate the STANAG system was a small engineering decision that is invisible to most when looking at the product, but it has significant performance implications.

While the hunt for simple-but-better products continues for most of us, I found that Warne's Skyline Lite Bipods and HyperLite scope rings with MagnaFusion to be a refreshing update to enhance our riflshooting. **RA**

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Griffin Armament Sportsman Ultra Light HD Series



A HUNTER’S EASY BUTTON

OF THE 42 STATES that allow suppressor ownership, 41 permit the use while hunting. Being able to stalk game without the need for ear muffs or plugs provides hunters an advantage. While the majority of sound suppressors may not be “Hollywood quiet,” most suppressors will bring a gunshot down to reasonable hearing-safe levels. This is not only good for hunters, but others around them, including landowners who may not enjoy the sounds associated with shooting sports. Sound suppressors also help minimize recoil, making larger calibers easier to shoot, translating into greater accuracy and clean, ethical shot-placement. Lastly, an effective suppressor will help prevent spooking game and spoiling the area. This gives other hunters a chance at success, too.

Griffin Armament’s Sportsman Ultra Light HD series was developed by hunters to satisfy the need for a compact, lightweight and affordable package built to last a lifetime. Based in Watertown, Wisconsin, Griffin

Armament has been manufacturing suppressors for 20 years. In the last two decades, they’ve amassed more than 40 suppressor models with several mounting options for each. It would be hard to find a company with a greater variety of suppressors, firearms, optics and mounts made under one roof. Griffin Armament’s “Silencers To Your Door” program also allows delivery of suppressors to your residence, assuming it’s legal to own where you live.

Ordering is as simple as visiting the website, where you’re guided through the process with ease.

The Sportsman Ultra Light HD is available in two models, a “.300” and “.36” caliber. These cover all of our practical needs from .223 Reminton to .338 Lapua Magnum, as well as the odd .22 LR and 9mm if needed. The Sportsman Ultra Light HD is fully constructed from 17-4 H900 heat-treated stainless steel, and it is rated for limited full-auto use. Understandably, the “HD” stands for “High Durability.” Also, there’s no barrel-length restric-

GRIFFIN ARMAMENT SPORTSMAN ULTRA LIGHT HD	
CALIBER	.300 (7.62mm)
THREAD PITCHES	1/2x28, 5/8x24, 1 3/8x24 (HUB)
DIMENSIONS	6.09 in. x 1.5 in.
WEIGHT	10 oz.
MATERIALS	17-4 H900 heat-treated stainless steel
FINISH	Cerakote, black or FDE
ACCESSORIES	HUB Mount, Bushwhacker wrench, pouch
MSRP	\$600
MANUFACTURER	Griffin Armament, 262-200-0003, griffinarmament.com

PHOTOS: MARK FINGAR



There are many quick-change mounting options to accommodate various rifle and pistol platforms. These include muzzlebrakes, flash hiders and compensators, as well as thread-on and HUB adapters.



The Griffin Armament Bushwacker Wrench is a simple combination tool that doesn't add much weight to a pack should you need to make adjustments in the field or at the range.

tions on the Sportsman Ultra Light HD, a testament to its ruggedness.

While traditional suppressors consist of a tube containing a stack of baffles, the Sportsman Ultra Light HD is a “tubeless” design, making it as light-weight as possible. The HUB-threaded blast chamber, baffles and end-cap are all assembled into a stack. Then, they are joined into a single unit with a series of circumferential laser welds. The welds are visible on the exterior as a series of rings. The .300 has seven baffles, while the .36 has eight for better sound reduction and durability with cartridges such as .338 Lapua Magnum. Several key baffles feature a series of ports along the perimeter that strategically help pressures and gasses seep towards the endcap and away from the shooter’s face, while also dampening recoil and helping gas-operated rifles cycle smoothly. Griffin Armament calls this “ECO-FLOW” patented technology.

The Ultra Light HD suppressor measures a diminutive 6.09 inches, with a 1½-inch diameter. It’s finished in high-temp Cerakote, available in either black or FDE. These ship with a choice of a ½x28, ⅝x24 direct-thread HUB plate, or a taper-mount HUB adapter. Since the Ultra Light HDs are HUB (1⅜x24) compatible, any number of adapters can be used. Griffin Armament offers dozens of HUB-compatible solutions to accommodate almost any configuration. (I applaud the HUB interface.) These suppressors

GRIFFIN ARMAMENT SPORTSMAN ULTRA LIGHT HD	
CALIBER	.36 (9mm)
THREAD PITCHES	½x28, ⅝x24, 1⅜x24 (HUB)
DIMENSIONS	6.09 in. x 1.5 in.
WEIGHT	10.4 oz. (w/o mounting adapter)
MATERIALS	17-4 H900 heat-treated stainless steel
FINISH	Cerakote, black or FDE Cerakote
ACCESSORIES	HUB Mount, Bushwacker wrench, Griffin pouch
MSRP	\$650
MANUFACTURER	Griffin Armament, 262-200-0003, griffinarmament.com

also ship with a pouch and Griffin Bushwacker Wrench.

A quick trip to the gun club included both suppressors, a Benelli Lupo in .300 PRC, a Terminus 6.5 Creedmoor bolt-action, a LaRue Tactical AR-15 in 5.56 NATO, a Glock 19 in 9mm and, merely for fun, an HK SP5K. Griffin Armament sent Guns & Ammo samples of adapters, brakes and mounts, so I tried them on everything appropriate to each bore size.

The .36-caliber can on the Lupo proved wonderful. It’s so light that I could barely feel it on the end of the barrel. Gone are the days of bobbing through buckbrush with a heavy, 12-inch suppressor! The .300 performed just as beautifully on the 6.5 CM and the 5.56 NATO guns. I removed my hearing protection halfway through and was quite pleased with the sound reduction. Swapping adapters took only a few seconds. I put a HUB pistol-booster on the .36 and attached it to the G19. It



The Sportsman Ultra Light HD series utilizes patented ECO-FLOW baffles. These help to push gas forward and out through the muzzle instead of back and into the shooter’s face.

ran like a champ and was whisper-quiet. Then, I installed a HUB tri-lug on the .36 and attached it the SP5K. It, too, ran flawlessly with subsonic 124-grain handloads at 850 feet per second (fps). This was a great combination. It’s hard to believe that I went from using it on rifle, then a pistol, and finally a sub-gun in a matter of minutes. If you’re looking for one solution for multiple firearms, the Sportsman Ultra Light HD might be the best choice. Excellent job, Griffin Armament!  — M. Fingar



COVERING THE BASES

THE **TAURUS GX2** TARGETS THE AFFORDABLE MARKET SEGMENT, AND WE TEST IT THROUGH TRAINING AT THE GUNSITE ACADEMY.

BY ANTONIO ACITELLI | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

UP-SIZING a successful micro-compact has been a growing trend with new firearm introductions since 2020. The SIG Sauer P365, Springfield Armory Hellcat and Smith & Wesson M&P Shield, for example, all started small and gradually evolved to include near-full-size variants. Taurus' GX4 was no exception. It was a smash-hit when it was first introduced in the August 2021 issue, preceding the 2022 G&A Handgun of the Year award-winning GX4XL, which included optic-ready T.O.R.O. models. While popular, the GX4 lineup didn't quite cover every base. The price was still more than \$400. Up to the plate for the 2025 roster is the GX2.





The Taurus GX2 features many similarities to the GX4 Carry, including front and rear slide serrations and an external extractor. The texture of the grip and magazines, however, are distinctly dissimilar — as is the \$175 difference in price. The GX2 costs less due to new robotic manufacturing processes. **\$309**

TAURUS GX2

TYPE	Recoil operated, striker-fired, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	13+1, 15+1 rds.
BARREL	3.38 in., stainless steel
LENGTH	6.19 in.
HEIGHT	4.89 in.
WIDTH	1.18 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb., 3 oz. (tested)
MATERIALS	Stainless steel (barrel), steel alloy (slide/frame), polymer, textured (grip)
TRIGGER	5 lbs. (tested)
SAFETY	Manual striker block; trigger lever; internal
FINISH	Matte black (slide)
SIGHTS	Steel, white dot (front); notch, serrated, black, drift adjustable (rear)
MSRP	\$309
IMPORTER	Taurus USA, 800-327-3776, taurususa.com
MANUFACTURER	Taurus, Brazil

SPRING TRAINING

I first learned about the Taurus GX2 when Guns & Ammo sent me on assignment to attend a custom handgun carry class at the Gunsite Academy in Paulden, Arizona. Running through Lt. Col. Jeff Cooper’s proving grounds is a fantastic way to size up a pistol. There’s plenty of target practice, draw-to-fire drills and stress-inoculation training. Joining the class were several media representatives and engineers from Taurus. Taurus USA CEO Bret Vorhees even joined us for the drills and range demonstrations.

Appendix inside the waistband (AIWB) holsters by PHLster (phlsterholsters.com) were provided, along with IWB magazine carriers. I usually avoid appendix carry due to comfort and reasons relating to my personal risk tolerance, but this class was appropriate to evaluate my opinions. I took solace in the fact that if men and women who designed the GX2 were okay with it being carried in this manner, it was a good sign to the pistol’s reliability and safety features.

Gunsite instructors are at the top of their field. They ran our group through a custom handgun course designed to emphasize drawing from concealment, accuracy, home defense scenarios, complete with Cooper’s “Urban Scrambler.” The Urban Scrambler involves shooting from various firing positions through different levels of cover, and at varied ranges. It is not only a great exercise to sharpen one’s handgun skills on the move, but



it was one of the stress tests to evaluate the GX2.

Carry drills pushed us to work on situational awareness while safely drawing from concealment and reholstering. Reholstering is one of the most important skills I took away from the course. The vast majority of accidents and self-injuries occur due to improper reholstering. For those who appendix carry, it’s the worst scenario during a bad time.

Training also reminded me why it’s important to practice the fundamentals. I experienced some accuracy issues initially, and they were not due to the gun. I have been overly reliant on red dots and neglected iron sight work for too long. After getting back into the swing of things, effective shots on target were

not a problem with the GX2. Targets were set at 5, 10, 15 and 25 yards, and the entire class rang steel and hit paper consistently. Each attendee fired several hundred rounds. Given the \$300 price-point, it was impressive watching the firing line chew through cases of ammo.

CARRY ON A BUDGET

A review of the GX2 can’t be done without bringing attention to its cost.





The grip texture of the GX2 is more aggressive than other Taurus pistols, including the G2C. It covers more surface area, too. Magazine basepads fit squarely to the bottom of the polymer grip.



The controls of the GX2 are low-profile and familiarly located. Unlike the GX4, the GX2 disassembly crossbolt features a serrated lever to rotate. The GX2 also includes a thumb safety.

At a \$309 suggested retail price for the alloy steel slide version that I shot, the typical buyer should expect to find the GX2 across the gun counter for around \$250 or less, especially if there are rebates. I asked Taurus about the niche they wanted this gun to fill. They replied, “The GX2 was for first-time buyers, as well as more experienced shooters looking for a budget gun to carry or maintain for home defense.” This is same niche also covered by the Taurus G2C (\$304).

Released in 2013, some might say that the G2C is aging. It has fewer features than the GX2. When comparing stats, the GX2 could be described as a G2C, except for several design elements carried over from the GX4. There remains an accessory rail beneath the dustcover for mounting laser sights or lights, which adds some utility for as a nightstand gun. Additionally, the GX2 has a similar grip to the GX4, but it sports a more aggressive texture. The GX2 does lack the GX4’s interchangeable backstraps, but the external takedown lever is a notable improvement versus the GX4’s.

Like the GX4 Carry, the GX2 offers three slots to accept compact pistol lights or laser sights. A 500-lumen Streamlight TLR-7 X sub was used during G&A’s tests. **\$254**



The double-column staggered arrangement tapers to a center-fed cartridge. The base model ships with two 13-round magazine. Fifteen-round magazines are available separately. **\$34**

Users can disassemble the GX2 without tools, coins or the rim of a cartridge case.

The internal stainless-steel chassis provides a good heft to the GX2, while also giving it a solid foundation. It accepts 13-round magazines as standard and extended 15-round mags. While the grip and magazines of the GX2 share some cosmetic similarities with the GX4, they are not interchangeable.

How did Taurus manage to engineer more features into the GX2 while maintaining the \$300 price? The answer was advancements in CNC machining and automated production lines. These pistols can be manufactured in Brazil



The GX2 was designed on the popular and reliable striker-fired system, while removing the slide assembly requires a simple, 90-degree downward rotation of the takedown lever. The barrel is stainless steel, and the guiderod and progressive recoil springs are a captured unit.

while still adhering to quality control standards, meaning that Taurus was able to lower its costs without compromising reliability or shootability. The strategy of utilizing robotics for production to reduce costs is not new to manufacturing, and it has been utilized with great success.

Being built in Brazil means that some features of the GX2, such as the manual safety lever and loaded chamber indicator notch are ever-present. They're mandated on handguns originating outside of the United States. A manual safety may actually improve the chances of first-time buyers being more comfortable carrying



The GX4 sports a trigger safety lever, but one that is wide and serrated unlike most. Averaging 5 pounds, the trigger exhibited a smooth and predictable takeup.

the GX2 — especially for those carrying AIWB — because it gives the pistol an extra layer of reassurance. For the pistol to fire, the safety lever must be manually disengaged.

AT THE RANGE

During the Gunsite training, I never witnessed a jam or misfire of the GX2 on the firing line. The only consistent,



The notch atop the barrel hood at the rear serves as a loaded chamber indicator. Also visible is the cartridge dimensions, 9x19mm. The slide top is flat and smooth.

repeatable error I observed was due to an issue with pre-production magazines. Attendees repeatedly dropped them onto the hard desert floor. When mags with ammo were dropped, they tended to produce a stuck



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PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Fiocchi Range Dynamics 115-gr. FMJ	1,066	43	14	1.35	2.31
Sierra Outdoor Master 115-gr. JHP	1,050	55	16	1.45	2.44
Magtech 115-gr. FMJ	1,034	58	17	1.75	2.52
CCI Blazer Brass 115-gr. FMJ	990	56	14	2.65	3.23

Notes: Accuracy is the average of five five-shot groups from 25 yards using a brace and sandbags. Velocity is the average of 10 shots measured by a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph positioned 9 inches beneath the muzzle.

follower or eject multiple rounds. Taurus was aware of this issue and assured us that they would have it ironed out before production. As a result, Taurus delayed the launch of the GX2 by a few months to make sure this magazine issue was entirely fixed. Here’s a tip-of-the-hat for that one.

When I had the chance to work with the GX2 at my home range, I examined the mags again. They now feature a special coating and better seat into the pistol grip. To simulate the conditions at Gunsite, I loaded five inert rounds into the mags and started dropping them onto dirt. As of late, there were no jams or feeding issues. The magazines exhibited better performance and seating. It was nice to see that Taurus listened to our feedback and made adjustments based on the results of our training.

Taking the GX2 to the range, it struck me again how nice this gun feels in my hands. The 19-ounce weight might be a downside for some who concealed carry, but I’ve never had a problem working with a heavier handgun. I consider my hand size to be average for most Americans, so maintaining a secure grip that fit the textured finger grooves was easy. The trigger pull was smooth, too. It would be familiar to anyone who has experienced the GX4. It averaged close to 5 pounds on my trigger-pull gauge.



The Taurus GX2 features steel front and rear sights in a standard, Glock-pattern front white-dot post and a dovetailed rear notch. The chassis serial number is visible through a cutout in the grip.



The GX2 ran smoothly through training at Gun-site with Magtech ammo, so I tested it with other loads at home. It shot 115-grain rounds the best from Fiocchi, Sierra, and Magtech. Each round went smoothly through the GX2 without issue, producing some decent groups from bench and a few impressive patterns while firing from the draw or one-handed. Often enough, I’d spot a tight group of three rounds in a five-shot group that were about 2 inches, only to be enlarged by a couple of fliers.

Unfortunately, the CCI Blazer Brass brought for testing was incompatible with the gun. Using it resulted in repeated stovepipes within the first 20 rounds. I was unable to get the slide to lock back after the final round left the magazine, too. As a control, I tested the same box of ammo with other handguns that ran through it handily, and then tried shooting a new box of Blazer through the GX2. It resulted in the same problems. Velocity testing showed that the Blazer rounds left the barrel slower than the other ammunition tested. Perhaps, there wasn’t enough energy to overcome the recoil spring weight. As the recoil spring settles in from repeated use, the issue might go away but I’d recommend evaluating several types of ammo before carrying to be sure — as I would with any gun.

Rapid-fire testing resulted in good groups from 5 to 7 yards. When fired in a hurry, all shots landed confidently within the A-zone of a silhouette target. Allow me to emphasize that one-hand shooting with the GX2 was excellent. Regardless of a one- or two-hand grip technique, the beavertail design allows every hand a high purchase.

SAFE AT HOME

Balancing price and quality can be a tight pitch for gun manufacturers, but the GX2 strikes a nice balance for a budget gun that swings above its price point. Accuracy was consistent enough to ring steel on the range, and the GX2 proved more than capable to defend against close-range threats or in a home-defense scenario.

Overall, the GX2 impressed with its reliability and practical features, making it a strong contender for first-time buyers and budget-conscious shooters alike. **G&A**



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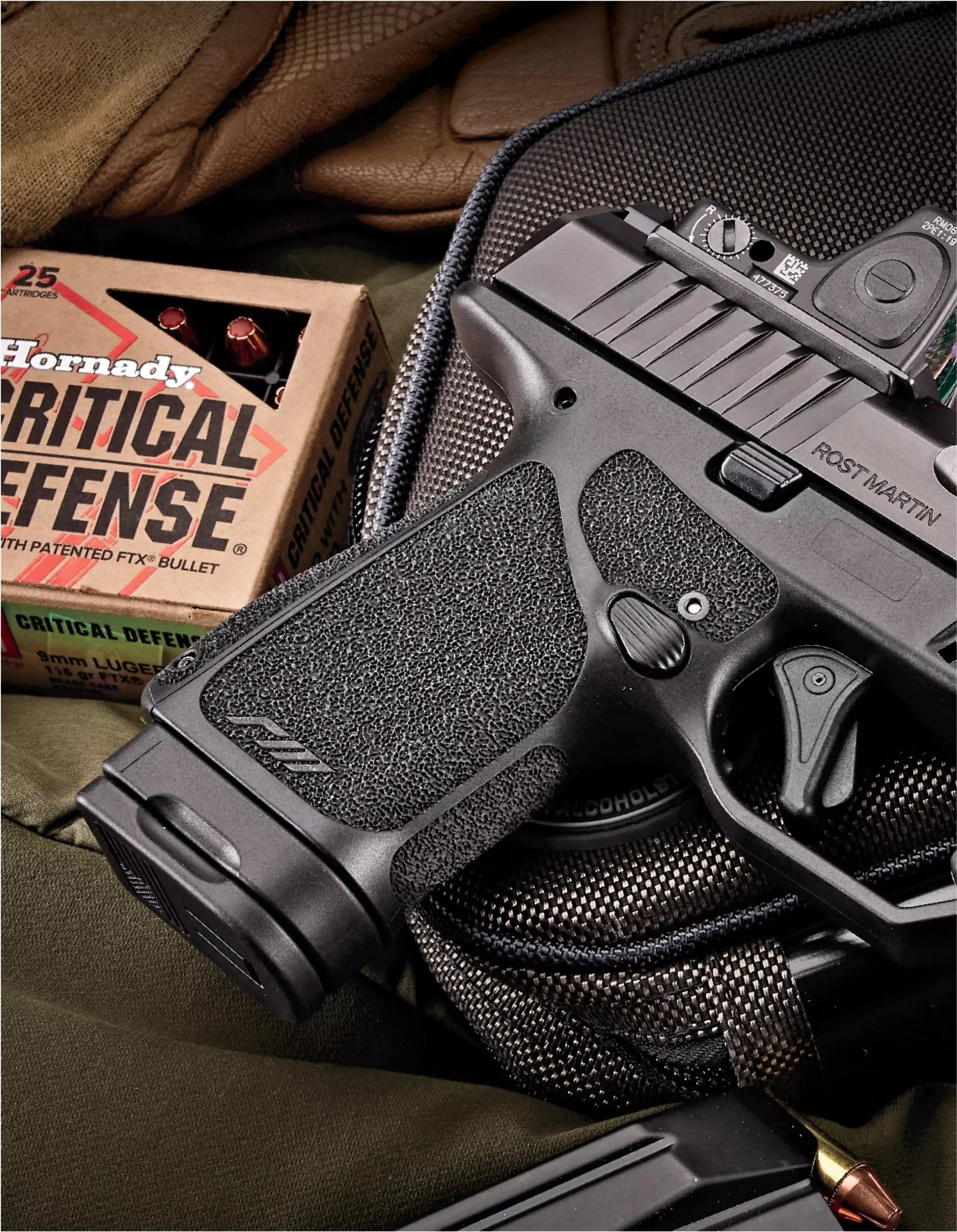
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MAVERICK

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE OF THE RM1C, **ROST MARTIN** FOLLOWS WITH A SUBCOMPACT MODEL. HERE IS THE **RM1S**.

BY JAMES TARR | STUDIO PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ





ROST MARTIN jumped into the gun scene with the March 2024 issue of *Guns & Ammo*. The RM1C is a compact striker-fired, polymer-frame pistol that challenges models such as the Glock 19 Gen 5 (\$539, glock-us.com), Springfield Armory Echelon 4.0C (\$679, springfield-armory.com), and Smith & Wesson M&P 2.0 Compact with 3.6-inch barrel (\$669, smith-wesson.com). However, the RM1S has several desirable features, surprising given its affordable \$469 retail price. That is the same price as the RM1C. What's especially noteworthy about this is that Rost Martins are not built overseas. Rather, they come from Dallas, Texas. The naming convention describes the RM1C with 4-inch barrel as a "compact," and the RM1S with 3.6-inch barrel as a "subcompact."

The barrel shortening is not a lot, but you can see the change. The biggest difference is down below; the grip of the RM1S is more than a half-inch shorter than the RM1C to accept flush-fit 12-round magazines. Though a California-compliant version of the RM1C holds 10, the standard mag holds 15 rounds. The RM1S is supplied with one flush 12- and one extended 15-round magazine. According to my digital scale, weight with a flush magazine inserted dropped the overall weight to 19.7 ounces. Aside from the reduced scale, the RM1S retains all the features of the larger pistol, including an optic-ready slide.

First, a confession: While I'd seen the RM1C at trade shows and talked to peers who had tested the gun, I never fired a Rost Martin product until the RM1S showed up at my FFL. Everything about the pistol was new to me.

The build quality on the RM1S is excellent; that was my initial reaction. When compared to others, it seems

Aesthetics distinguish Rost Martin pistols from other polymer-framed, semiautomatic 9mm pistols. That and the fact that these are built in Dallas, Texas. The RM1S is not a "micro," rather a concealable subcompact.



ROST MARTIN RM1S	
TYPE	Recoil operated, striker fired, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	12+1 rds., 15+1 rds.
BARREL	3.6 in., forged steel
LENGTH	6.7 in.
HEIGHT	4.6 in. (w/ magazine)
WIDTH	1.24 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb., 3.7 oz. (tested)
SLIDE	Steel
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
GRIP	Polymer, textured, black
SIGHTS	Steel, white dot (front), U-notch (rear); optic ready, RMR plate included
TRIGGER PULL	5 lbs., 4 oz. (tested)
SAFETY	Trigger lever, internal striker drop safety
MSRP	\$469
ACCESSORIES	One 12-rd. mag.; one 15-rd. mag.; cable lock; three backstraps; RMR-pattern mounting plate
MANUFACTURER	Rost Martin, 844-237-2890, rostmartin.com

as if Rost Martin underpriced these guns. I understand why, I suppose. They're a new gun company with little name recognition. Generally, the first products from a new company tend to be rough and have issues. In the year-plus since the RM1C was introduced, it has garnered a reputation for performing as well as it looks.

While the folks at Rost Martin used the Glock pistol design as their jumping-off point, in no way are these clones. A few components have similar proportions and appearance, but I don't know that any of the parts are interchangeable. The Rost Martin pistols don't use Glock-pattern magazines,

for example, and a look inside the slide and frame reveals substantially different features.

Technically, the RM1 series do not have a "frame." Rather it is built on a removable chassis that's given a grip module. The trigger system inside the grip module sits within the chassis. However, unlike some pistols such as the SIG Sauer P320 Compact (\$580, sigsauer.com), the Rost Martin chassis, secured by several roll pins, isn't meant to be easily swapped out by the user. It's a job recommended to be performed by a gunsmith.

THE DETAILS

The 3.6-inch barrel is hammer-forged. The last half-inch or so sports a slightly wider diameter to better interface with the slide, and the RM1S has an aggressive crown. Both the



The RM1C features a three-slot rail. Due to the abbreviated slide and 3.6-inch barrel, the RM1S (above) has two rail slots beneath the dust cover to accept aftermarket lights or laser sights.



The steel sights feature a standard front white dot and a rear U-notch with serrations. Though robust, the sights are not tall enough to co-witness with mounted red-dot sights.



The RM1S features a plastic coverplate that blends to the serrated, flat-top slide. When removed, the slide accepts an adapter such as the provided steel plate for RMR-footprint optics.

barrel and slide are finished in a Tenifer/nitride formula for corrosion resistance, and the barrel has an integral polished ramp to support reliable feeding.

The sights on the RM1S are steel and dovetailed into place. The front sight sports a white dot, and the serrated rear sight has a U-shaped notch — no additional dots. The RM1S is optic-ready, and a polymer cover comes on the slide. A steel adapter plate is also provided for mounting optics with the RMR footprint; other plates are also available from Rost Martin.

The top of the slide is flat and serrated. This is ostensibly done to reduce glare, but in reality it (mostly) adds a touch of style. There are slide serrations on the sides at the front and rear. They're flat-bottomed with just the right amount of aggressive texturing. The RM1S uses a full-length, steel guiderod surrounded by a single flat-wire recoil spring. The spring is strong since it needs to absorb the recoil forces of a



The texturing above the triggerguard is a nice touchpoint to both sides. It provides a tactile index point for a trigger finger or support-hand thumb.

relatively small, light gun.

Internally, the pistol has some neat features, too. It features a double-action trigger mechanism; pulling on the trigger draws the striker back a short distance. There is a striker capture in it, too, that prevents the striker from moving forward unless the trigger is pressed; it's an additional drop safety. When the striker is positioned at what I'll call "half-cocked," you can see the rear of it (painted red) at the rear of the slide. As the trigger moves through the take-up, you can see the striker move backward. When the trigger *clicks* on an empty chamber, the striker flies forward so the shooter can't see red anymore.

The grip module was carefully designed for ergonomics, and it offers interchangeable backstraps. The Medium size is installed at the factory; a Small and Large are also provided. If you're one of those people who hate the Glock grip angle, you're in luck: The grip angle of the RM1S is less like a Glock and more like a 1911, even with the large backstrap installed.

Rost Martin calls the texture on its pistol the Responsive Grip Texturing (RGT). RGT has a fine pebbled appearance, but is more aggressive than it looks. The harder you



A red dot appears when the striker is cocked. After the pistol is fired, the indicator disappears, providing the user with a status of the pistol's condition.



Taking apart the RM1S for inspection or maintenance is a standard affair for most striker-fire pistols. The 3.6-inch barrel is hammer forged. The guiderod and recoil spring are a self-contained assembly. The internal chassis is pinned to the polymer grip module. All Rost Martin magazines feature a highly visible follower, also.

grip the gun, the better it bites into your hand. Forward, just above the front of the triggerguard on both sides, is a curved and textured section that cradles the thumb of the support hand while shooting.

I don't have big hands. For reference, I usually wear size Medium gloves and have thin fingers. With the flush magazine in place, part of my pinkie was hanging off the end of the basepad. While it didn't move as I was shooting, anyone with thick fingers will probably find their pinkie slipping off. With the extended 15-round magazine inserted, I could easily get all my fingers around the gun. The extended magazine comes with a grip extension that matches the dimensions of the grip. My only complaint is that it is smooth; I wish it was equipped with RGT to better keep your hand in place.

The trigger is polymer, which has the familiar pivoting safety lever in the center. The trigger has a flat face and fires close to 90 degrees. The trigger pull on Rost Martin guns was specifically engineered to be better than a Glock's; they succeeded. Most guns have trigger pulls at or just less than 5 pounds. Guns & Ammo's sample RM1S was no different. There was a short take-up, then a relatively crisp *click* with almost no overtravel. Reset was somewhat short and very

positive. The total pull weight on our sample pistol was 5¼ pounds, measuring just above the small hook at the bottom.

At the bottom of the grip, there is a magazine well that's slightly enlarged and beveled to smooth or speed up your reloads. At the top rear of the grip, a small beavertail protects your hand from slide bite.

Many holster makers are already offering models made specifically for Rost Martin pistols, but if not don't feel discouraged. These pistols were deliberately designed to fit into holsters made for similarly sized Glock pistols. However, because there are so many options available, you should verify gun-fit before committing to a holster.

FOR EVERYDAY CARRY

Compact pistols the size of the RM1C are the best choice for most everyone when considering a defensive pistols. These are big enough to shoot fast and accurately, and small enough to conceal if you put a little thought into your wardrobe. Real-world experience has shown me that citizens interested in concealed carry prefer their pistols to be as small and light as possible — up to the point they become uncontrollable while shooting. This is why companies like Rost Martin introduce pistols such as the RM1S.



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Though a medium-size backstrap is installed by Rost Martin, the RM1S includes two additional small and large options.

It's the grip of the pistol that affects concealability more than anything else — not barrel length. The slide is usually tucked away inside your pants, and Rost Martin only shortening the barrel of the RM1S a small amount (.4 inch) makes more sense than you might first think.

If you can get your whole hand on the gun with the flush magazine in place, like me, you'll find the gun to be more controllable. It's definitely more concealable. On the other hand, if your pinkies are hanging in the wind, that extended mag might be the way to carry the RM1S if you find the short grip is negatively affecting your shooting performance.

AT THE RANGE

Let me hit you with some observations from my range experience with the Rost Martin RM1S. As a 9mm weighing less than 20 ounces, recoil is a mite snappy, especially with plus-P ammunition. While I could get my entire hand on the gun when it was stuffed with the flush magazine, using the extended magazine seemed to reduce felt recoil and increase my control some small amount.

If you're carrying in such a place or manner where the longer magazine won't compromise concealability, I can see no reason why you wouldn't slam the big stick into place. As I am an inveterate competition shooter who has never met a pistol he couldn't improve on with a little tinkering, if this was my pistol I'd stipple the smooth grip extension on the 15-round magazine.

The magazines are steel and numbered with index holes on the back. Inside is a interesting-color follower. I would describe it as a lime-greenish-yellow. The point of the bright color is that it's easily spotted through the ejection



Made for Rost Martin by Mec-Gar, the RM1S includes a 12-round magazine and an extended 15-round mag with a spacer.



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Crit. Def. 115-gr. FTX	1,088	34	22	2.2	3
Federal Prem. HST 147-gr. JHP	881	22	13	2.4	2.9
Black Hills +P 124-gr. JHP	1,169	24	16	2.5	3.2
Federal Syntech 115-gr. TSJ	1,123	30	20	3	3.7
Magtech Steel 115-gr. FMJ	1,093	34	22	3.1	3.8

Notes: Accuracy is the average of four five-shot groups at 25 yards from a sandbag rest. Velocity is the average of 10 shots measured by an Oehler Model 35P chronograph placed 12 feet in front of the muzzle.

port. This colored follower makes Rost Martin magazines distinctive if you happen to collect spares for several different guns. The magazines are made by Mec-Gar USA (mec-gar.com) for Rost Martin. Mec-Gar could be described as the king of original-equipment manufacturer (OEM)

pistol magazines.

I tested the RM1S with a variety of 9mm loads, including defensive hollowpoints ranging to include Federal's polymer-coated Syntech rounds. Reliability was 100 percent. The RM1S was also quite accurate, especially for its size.

A lot of critics believe that you can't write an "honest" review unless you bash a product. Honestly, I don't have anything overtly negative to say about the RM1S. My single complaint is the slick surface on the magazine extension. The pistol performed perfectly and delivered on its promises. It gives the consumer one more choice in a crowded market. If you are looking for a reliable, affordable, carry-size 9mm pistol — one that's made in America — the RM1S is near the front of the pack.



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THE FIRST ARC

HORNADY'S .338 ARC WAS DEVELOPED FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE THE KING OF SUBSONIC AMMO.

BY TOM BECKSTRAND | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR

THE NEW .338 Advanced Rifle Cartridge (ARC) exists because, like a handful of other Hornady cartridges, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) identified a need. The first public ARC cartridge that we learned about was the 6mm ARC, featured in *Guns & Ammo's* September 2020 issue. The fact is that .338 ARC pre-dates the 6mm. In 2017, the DOD wanted more subsonic accuracy and better terminal performance than what was available, so Hornady started development of its .338. However, the DOD quickly moved on to more pressing matters. Several years later, the folks at Defense got back to their unfinished subsonic business, hence the .338 ARC is now public.

SUBSONIC IS HARD TO DO WELL.

Creating a cartridge that performs well at both subsonic and supersonic velocities requires careful analysis of several factors. There's the bullet to consider, as well as the case volume and powders available to fill it. In a perfect world, a subsonic bullet would have a full case of readily available powder and operate at high pressure. The supersonic version would have a lighter bullet and a differ-

ent powder that takes up the additional case capacity and also operates at high pressure.

It's natural to compare the .338 ARC against the .300 Blackout since both fit in AR-15s and are capable of firing at subsonic and supersonic velocities. The .300 Blackout started out as the .300 Whisper, and both cartridges were built to fire 110- to 120-grain supersonic projectiles in an effort to improve the terminal effects generated by an AR-15. Good subsonic performance with 220-grain bullets was also a goal. While the .300 Blackout is a good super-

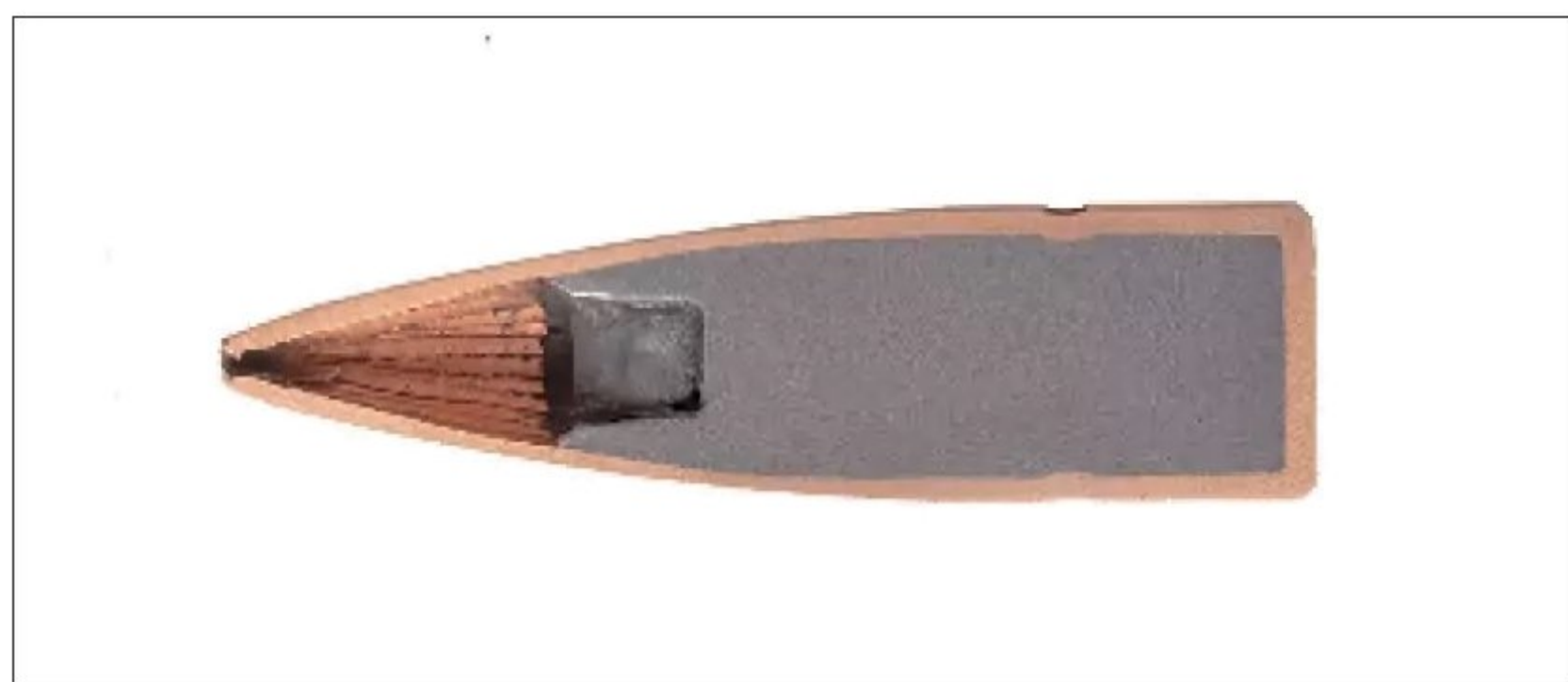
sonic cartridge and a decent subsonic cartridge, it doesn't really excel at either once the target distance gets beyond 100 yards. I'd even go so far as to say that the .300 Blackout and its pedestrian performance is the reason the .338 ARC exists.

The DOD jumped on the .300 Blackout train around 2010. After six or seven years of working with it, it decided they wanted something else because they weren't getting the accuracy and terminal effects they wanted at distances exceeding 100 yards. This is why the first ARC cartridge that was



.338 ARC 175-GR. HP

The Hornady Black line offers a 175-grain hollowpoint (HP) Match load. It has a sectional density of .219 and a G1 ballistic coefficient (BC) of .385. This load is suited for target shooting.



developed was this .338. Hornady started working on it by designing a case with the correct volume for subsonic and supersonic use, but subsonic performance got the priority. One of the goals was to keep the chamber pressure of the subsonic load as high as possible without exceeding a velocity of 1,075 feet per second (fps). Keeping chamber pressure relatively high meant the powder would burn evenly. This kept muzzle velocity consistent with low extreme spreads and prevented fouling the chamber and receiver with unburned powder, a common occurrence when shooting subsonic .300 Blackout. The high (for subsonic) chamber pressure is one of the secrets to its tight velocity standard deviation and is why accuracy at 200 and 300 yards is much better than the .300 Blackout, meeting the DOD's needs.

The bullet weight for the .338 ARC in subsonic form tips the scales at 307 grains. Hornady's Sub-X bullet has a flat meplat featuring a large rubber plug filling the cavity in the bullet's nose. This bullet was designed for great accuracy and excellent terminal effects at subsonic velocity with projectiles typically penetrating 16 to 20 inches

of ballistic gelatin. During testing, Hornady's Sub-X load for .338 ARC exhibited the tight velocity extreme spread and standard deviation, with an extreme spread of 42 fps and a standard deviation of 15.5 fps. This is a little better than average for quality factory supersonic ammunition, but is exceptional for any subsonic ammunition.

The reason velocity is such a performance issue for subsonic cartridges is the effect it has on the bullet's time of flight, especially as the distance to the target increases. As soon as the bullet leaves the muzzle, gravity pulls it toward the ground. The projectile's downward velocity starts at zero and accelerates at 32.2 fps. A velocity extreme spread of 40 fps results in 1.3 inches of drop at 200 yards and 13.2 inches of vertical dispersion at 300 yards. No single variable impacts group size at 200 or 300 yards with a subsonic cartridge like velocity variation.

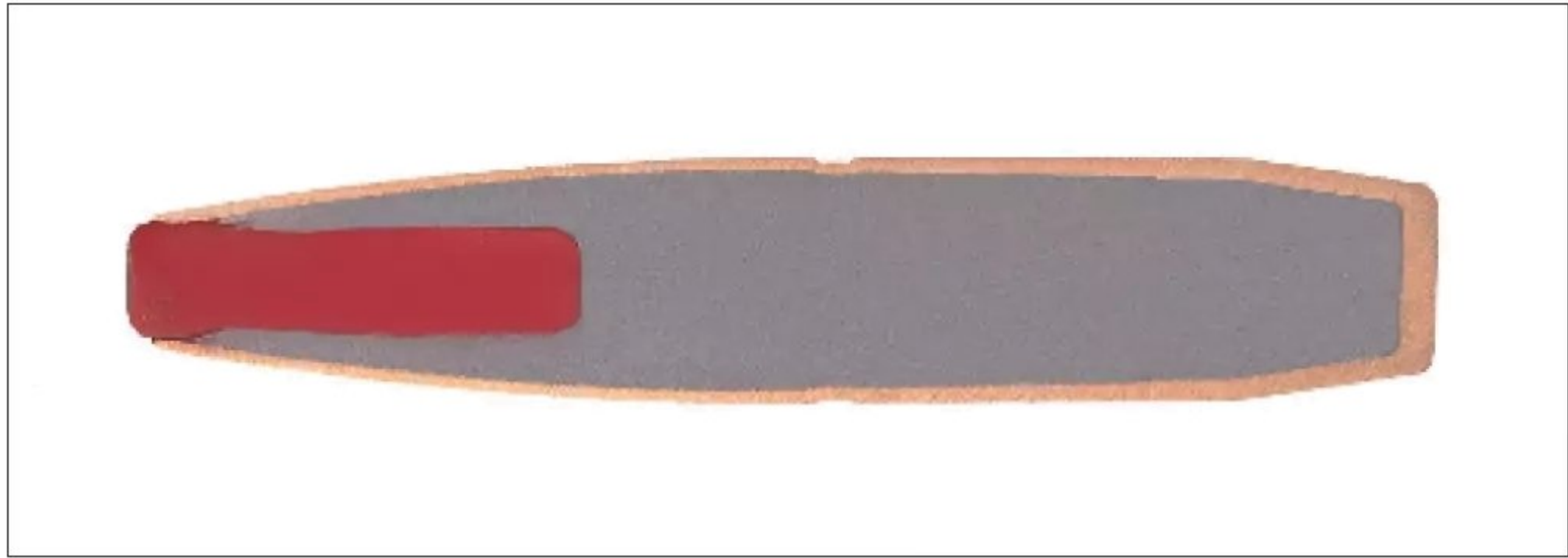
BUT IT'S SUPER, TOO!

The .338 ARC isn't just a subsonic cartridge; Hornady also loads a 175-grain supersonic hollowpoint bullet in its Black line. The Match





The Hornady 307-grain Sub-X bullet measured just more than 1,000 fps from a 16-inch Proof Research barrel. The lead-core bullet features a Flex Tip insert for reliable expansion at subsonic velocities.



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady 175-gr. HP	2,084	30	10.6	.9	1.27
Hornady 307-gr. Sub-X	1,009	42	15.5	1.09	1.9

Notes: Accuracy is the average of three five-shots groups at 100 yards. Velocity is the average of 10 shots measured with a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph placed adjacent to the muzzle.

projectile has a flat bottom, thin copper jacket and massive open cavity inside the nose. Out of a 16-inch barrel, it has a muzzle velocity of 2,084 fps and generates 1,000 foot-pounds (ft.-lbs.) of energy out to 250 yards. However, the impact velocity of this bullet only stays above 1,800 fps out to 150 yards. I wouldn't plan on any expansion or fragmentation beyond that distance.

The 175-grain hollowpoint load is a great choice for ringing steel and would work well for hog hunting inside 150 yards. I don't think I'd hunt deer with it because there's a decent chance it would just pass through the animal with minimal upset. I'm also pretty sure that Hornady will come up with a .338 ARC load ideal for hunting with a bullet designed to expand at ARC velocity.



This is a task well within Hornady's skillset. When developing the supersonic load, Hornady kept an eye on chamber pressure. All of the ARC cartridges are capped at a maximum chamber pressure of 52,000 pounds per square inch (psi) because they are designed to be functional in AR-15-type rifles. Handloaders can safely take the pressure up to 62,000 psi when developing loads for bolt-action rifles, which would add about another 150 fps. The benefit of Hornady's attention to pressure is that the subsonic load generates about 36,000 psi chamber pressure. Keeping the chamber pressure as high as possible for the subsonic load means an AR-15 can reliably cycle supersonic and subsonic loads without having to adjust the



gas block or swap out buffer weights. The .300 Blackout could only pull this off with a pistol-length gas system and a large gas port, which meant it was way over-gassed when shooting supersonic if it cycled subsonic loads reliably. This is because supersonic .300 Blackout loads have a maximum chamber pressure of 55,000 psi and the subsonic loads operate at around 25,000 psi.

WHY I LIKE IT:

I’ve been on the lookout for a good subsonic cartridge that wasn’t useless in supersonic form for years. The .300 Blackout is a good supersonic cartridge, but only OK in subsonic form. It also struggles to headspace properly with factory ammunition in bolt-action rifles. I saw a much higher frequency of rifles going *click* when they should have gone *bang*. This occurs because the .300 Blackout has an unimpressive shoulder that leaves no room for case shape error. I am mostly interested in bolt-action subsonic rifles because I want to be able to shoot as quietly as possible while still generating the best terminal effects. I also want the option for strong supersonic performance on whitetail and hogs.

The 8.6 Blackout came along and I got my hopes up. It has plenty of powder capacity for fantastic supersonic performance. Subsonic accuracy might struggle with the velocity standard deviation because of that same case capacity, but I thought I’d take a look. I even went so far as to take the 8.6 Blackout on a subsonic deer hunt and got a nice little buck in the process. That’s where the good news ended. The twist rate for the 8.6 Blackout is 1-in-3 inches. This means that only monolithic bullets will work at supersonic velocity, and only monolithic bullets will expand reliably for good terminal effects at subsonic veloc-

PROOF RESEARCH CONVICTION	
TYPE	Bolt action
CARTRIDGE	.338 ARC (tested)
CAPACITY	10+1 rds.
BARREL	16 in., 1:8-in. twist
LENGTH	36.25 in.
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 10 oz.
STOCK	Proof Research
GRIP	Vertical
LENGTH OF PULL	13.6 in.
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
TRIGGER	TriggerTech Special, 1lb. to 3.5 lbs., adjustable
SIGHTS	None
MSRP	\$8,500
MANUFACTURER	Proof Research, 406-756-9290, proofresearch.com

ity. I’m not a huge fan of monolithic bullets because they are expensive and they don’t group well at subsonic (and often supersonic) velocity. Monolithic bullets are hard and don’t obturate to engage the bore’s rifling like lead-core bullets. The 1-in-3-inch twist rate of the 8.6 Blackout causes a lot more problems than it solves.

I did all of my testing of the .338 ARC with a Proof Research Conviction, a fine bolt-action rifle. The .338 ARC was designed for the AR-15 (just like the 6mm ARC and .22 ARC), but the ARC family is a great choice for bolt-action rifles, too. They offer low recoil, are easier to shoot accurately, and nothing is quieter than a

bolt-action when shooting subsonic and suppressed. Proof Research uses bolt faces designed just for the ARC cartridges, so extraction and ejection are positive. Accuracy is always top-notch.

The .338 ARC answers the mail on everything I’m looking for in a subsonic cartridge. It offers the most consistent velocity spreads of any subsonic cartridge I’ve tested, and it works well with lead-core bullets. In supersonic form, it lands between the .350 Legend and .400 Legend for the energy it creates. Once a good hunting bullet comes along, it’ll do everything supersonic I want. The final piece is it’s highly likely to see DOD adoption. The 6mm ARC is alive and well and gaining popularity fast inside DOD. That means rifles designed around the ARC family are in use with U.S. Special Operations. All they need for great subsonic performance is a new barrel. The .338 ARC will never be as popular as the 6mm ARC, but it has good reasons to thrive in the next few years. If you want to shoot an accurate and lethal subsonic or supersonic rifle cartridge, try the .338 ARC. It rates top billing.

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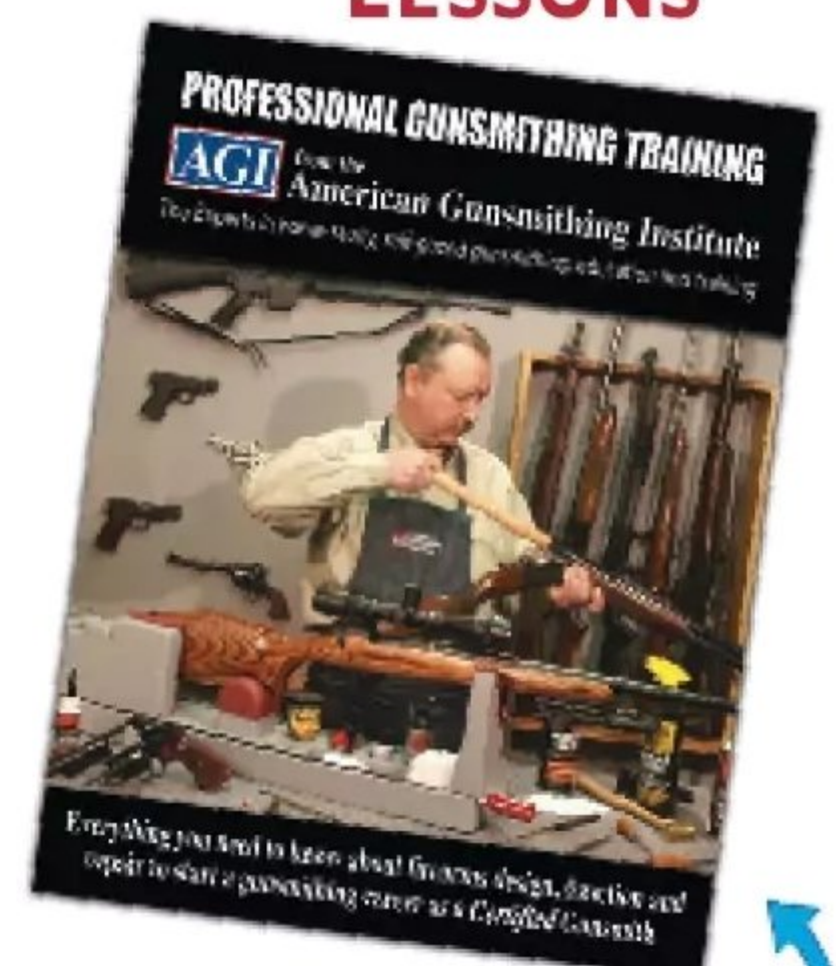
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STRAIGHT-PULL RIFLES rule the roost among many European hunters, though not so much in the United States, yet. It's not for lack of merit, but because of differences in politics and hunting culture. Lacking our amazing Second Amendment, firearms ownership is somewhat restricted across much of Europe. Most European straight-pull bolt-actions are switch-barrel designs, making it easier to own additional barrels rather than multiple firearms.

Equally important and popular throughout continental Europe is the driven hunt. Yes, they stalk and hunt from stands as we do, but large, organized drives for boar, deer and moose are a huge tradition — and a major management tool. Rules are tight as to what might be shot on any given drive, but the shooting is fast, and usually at moving game. Europeans are far better at this than we are because they do it all the time, and because they practice. Most European ranges have moving targets on tracks.

It can take a while to get the hang of the straight-pull, but it is much faster than a turnbolt, with less movement and less disturbance to the aim. Politics again: Many European countries don't allow semi-automatic rifles. So, again, the faster straight-pull

is preferred among European hunters. I understand the speed because I started using a straight-pull 15 years ago. They are strong and accurate, as well as fast.

I don't know if straight-pull rifles will ever approach the popularity of turnbolts here, however, there is history. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Marines adopted the Lee straight-pull rifle in 1894. There were others back then, but the Savage Impulse was the first American straight-pull centerfire in a century when it appeared in *Guns & Ammo's* April 2021 issue, and the German Blaser R8 has been marketed since 2008.

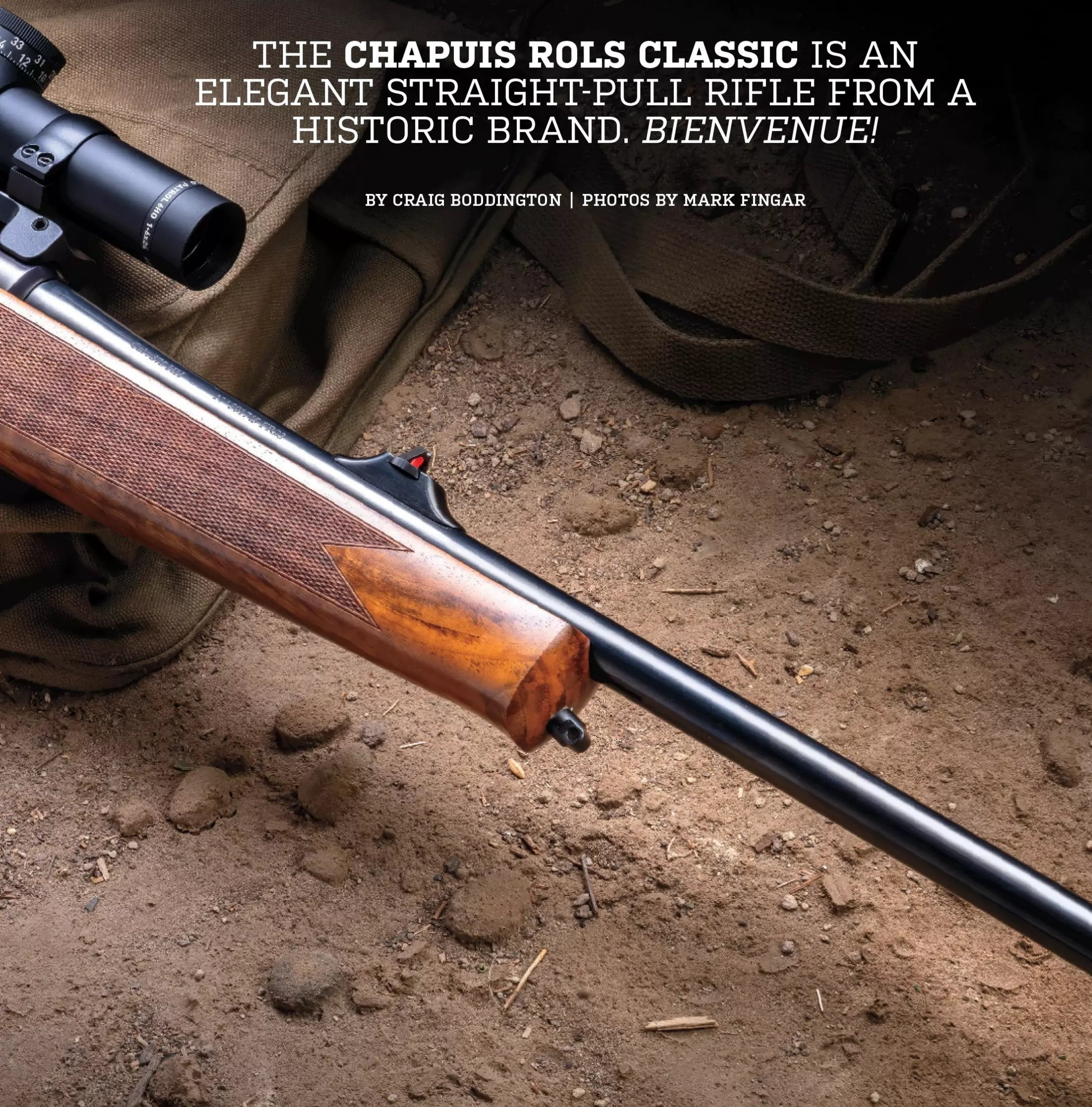
So, meet the ROLS, arriving to the U.S. in 2019 from the prestigious firm of Chapuis in the Loire Valley of France. Since the early 1900s, its arms have been passed from father to son to grandson. Today, Chapuis is under the umbrella of Beretta Holding, imported through Chapuis USA.

France still has a strong and active hunting culture for boar, deer, chamois, birds and small game. Like Americans, most French hunters pursue their passion close to home. The straight-pull ROLS is purely French in design. It is slim, trim, light and elegant, handling like a dream.

A FRENCH CLASSIC

THE **CHAPUIS ROLS CLASSIC** IS AN ELEGANT STRAIGHT-PULL RIFLE FROM A HISTORIC BRAND. *BIENVENUE!*

BY CRAIG BODDINGTON | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR





When in the field, it's arguably easier to top-load the ROLS when on the move. The mass of the bolt can be unnerving to those new to straight-pulls when compared to a standard bolt-action.



To access the magazine, the entire floorplate and trigger group drops down. The rotary magazine accommodates four rounds for the .30-'06 and has a three-round capacity for magnums.



The AAA-grade Circassian walnut stock with Schnabel forend, and satin finish is exquisite. The diamond-pattern checkering on the handguard and grip is precision cut by lasers.



The front sight is pinned to a steel ramp. Included with the ROLS is a white bead that is nested into the mid-barrel rear sight U-notch. The A-frame sight features also a red fiber-optic post.

A TALE OF TWO ROLS

The ROLS is offered in three production versions: Classic, with a one-piece AAA walnut stock; Deluxe, with an engraved receiver and two-piece fine walnut stock; and Carbon, with a one-piece carbon-fiber stock. Chamberings include 6.5 Creedmoor, .308 Winchester, .30-'06 Springfield, .300 Winchester Magnum and .375 H&H. I have no experience with the Carbon or Deluxe, but I have spent time with two ROLS Classics: In 2024, I tested a Classic in .30-'06 for several weeks, including most of a month in Africa, and recently the .375 H&H illustrated here.

They are not identical, though. The .30-'06 has a 24-inch barrel, and the .375 H&H has a 25½-inch barrel; it weighs 9 ounces more. It's 6.6 pounds for the '06, and 7.2 pounds for the .375. The most significant difference between the two rifles I used is that the .30-'06 came as a left-hand bolt option, while the .375 arrived in a right-hand configuration. A great benefit of the ROLS, as well as most other straight-pull rifles, is that it is quite simple to

produce both left- and right-hand bolts, and any model of the Chapuis ROLS Classic can be ordered with the desired bolt option.

That is not to say the .30-'06 is a left-hand model. Both have straight buttstocks with a right-hand cheekpiece. Since I knew I'd be hunting with the .30-'06, I asked my old friend Tom Leoni at the Maryland headquarters for Chapuis to substitute a left-hand bolt. My mission with the .375 H&H was simpler: Spend time at the range, make sure of the photography, and no ".375-suitable" hunt in the offing. Hey, we lefties aren't that picky. The ROLS stock is straight and has no right-hand cast. Even though the cheekpiece was useless for my left-handedness, both rifles felt good and handled well, quick and lively.

Just one last comment on the right-and-left issue: Like most lefties, I've used right-handed turnbolts all my life. We are accustomed to reaching over the receiver to find the bolt. (It's quicker than you might think.) A straight-pull rifle requires different motion and leverage. A straight-



The ROLS Classic included the Recknagel scope mounting system to attach magnified optics. With two quick-release levers, the mount was fast and repeatable.

pull with the bolt on the wrong side is awkward. So, if you take the plunge to straight-pull, do yourself a favor and get a bolt on the proper side for you. If you live in a house divided, with both right- and left-handers, get it with two bolts; one right, another left.

FEATURE RICH

The ROLS has a drop-down floorplate/triggerguard assembly that houses a polymer rotary magazine. It appears the trim must be in-line, but it is not. In rimless cases, it houses four cartridges plus one in the chamber. With belted cartridges, it's three-plus-one. That capacity is normal in magnum bolt-actions. As a personal aside, I'm comfortable with a double rifle's two shots, but I'd just as soon not go after a wounded buffalo with a bolt-action and a two-shot magazine. This bugaboo does not apply to the ROLS.

Both rifles had excellent AAA-grade wood with a satin finish and laser checkering. The Classic comes with simple

CHAPUIS ROLS CLASSIC	
TYPE	Straight pull, bolt action
CARTRIDGE	.375 H&H (tested)
CAPACITY	3+1 rds., rotary magazine
BARREL	25.5 in., 1:12-in. twist, steel
LENGTH	43.3 in.
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 3 oz.
STOCK	AAA Circassian walnut
FINISH	Bronze anodized (receiver, aluminum); gloss blued (barrel, steel)
TRIGGER	Single stage, adjustable; 2 lbs., 10 oz. (tested)
SIGHTS	Bead, white (front); U-notch, red fiber-optic post (rear)
SAFETY	Manual decocker button
MSRP	\$6,399
MANUFACTURER IMPORTER	Chapuis Armes USA, 800-264-4926, chapuis-usa.com

As should be expected of a rifle with its heritage, the ROLS Classic is delivered in a fine, compartmentalized case. However, it doesn't offer much room for an optic.

but excellent iron sights, with highly visible fiber-optic front nestled in a slim rear notch. I didn't use them on either rifle. The barrel has recesses for the Recknagel clamp-on scope mounting system. If you're familiar with the Blaser saddle mount, it is somewhat similar, which means "fast and repeatable." Although the testing was months apart, I put an older Zeiss Victory 2.5-10x50mm on the .30-'06 barrel and a Swarovski Z8i 1-8x24mm on the .375 (\$3,579, swarovskioptik.com).

OPERATION

The ROLS comes in a nicely fitted hard case with the barrel and bolt separate from the stocked receiver assembly. The barrel shank simply slips into the receiver and tightens with a supplied Allen key and a large bolt forward of the magazine. Make sure that bolt is plenty tight. That's it for removing the barrel for cleaning or switching barrels. If barrels with different head diameters — as in .308/.30-'06 family and belted magnums — are desired, the bolt



Multiple, concentric lugs surrounding the bolt rate it for high pressure. The ROLS was tested to an impressive 123,000 psi, almost twice the pressure of typical modern cartridges.

head can be switched out.

Loading, unloading, and removing and inserting the bolt is slightly more complicated. For loading and unloading, press the large flush-mounted round button on the floorplate assembly. It drops the floorplate down, freeing the magazine, which is then easily top-loaded and reinserted. With the magazine empty but locked in place, there's plenty of room to easily single-load into the chamber, and the magazine can also be top-loaded or topped up.

To insert or remove the bolt, it's important to remember that you must press that button and drop the floorplate/magazine assembly. To insert, just guide the rails into opposite sides of the receiver. For removal, the bolt-stop is a small plunger at the rear left of the action, sort of underneath the bolt head when the bolt is open. Forget to drop the floorplate and you'll drive yourself crazy trying to get to the bolt release.

Unlike rotating bolts with lugs that are literally turned into place, straight-pulls lock up with lugs surrounding the bolt head, cammed into matching recesses in the barrel shank when the bolt is fully in battery or retracted as the bolt handle is pulled rearward. Accustomed to Mauser's massive dual-opposing locking lugs, straight-pulls don't

appear as strong. Actually, the opposite is true. The multiple concentric lugs of the straight-pull offer more bearing surface. The ROLS is tested to 123,000 pounds per square inch (psi), almost double the pressure of the hottest modern cartridges, which typically top out at 65,000 psi.

As with all bolt-actions, loading the chamber is accomplished by pushing the bolt handle forward, stripping a cartridge from the magazine and carrying it into the chamber. It is essential to be certain the bolt handle is snapped all the way forward, as it is that last bit of travel that cams the lugs and ensures lockup. Whether the cartridge was fired or not, moving the bolt handle rearward removes the case or cartridge from the chamber. Right-hand bolts eject to the right, and left-hand bolts to the left.

The "safety" central at the rear of the bolt assembly is not a safety per se, but actually a cocking/decocking lever. It is similar to the Blaser R8 system and the decocking lever on Krieghoff double rifles and the slide-action Semprio. It's safe and positive, but if you've never used a "safety" like this, you may flub it a couple of times as you get the hang of it. With the thumb of your shooting hand, press the lever up until it locks. You are now ready to fire. In the top-center of the lever is a smaller square button. To decock (and make safe) put pressure on that button and the lever will slide back down, making the rifle inert, but it does not automatically decock between shots.



The ROLS Classic safety system does not automatically decock between shots, so it's important to practice using the decocker before heading to the range or field.



FIELD & RANGE

The first ROLS I used, in .30-'06, was extremely accurate and a pure joy to shoot. I did not group it for score though; I wish I had because it grouped just under or just over 1 minute of angle (MOA) with everything I fed it.

At the time, my purpose was getting ready for a lengthy African sojourn; first, 10 days in Mozambique and then 3 weeks in South Africa. It was a joy to carry. The Professional Hunters (PHs) I showed liked the look and feel, as did I. Unfortunately, for most of the trip, the main goal was buffalo. There was little time for — or interest in — .30-'06-suitable game. Along the way, I shot a couple animals for the pot, though. No surprise, the ROLS performed perfectly and there are few better choices for plains game than the good old .30-'06.

At the tail end, I spent the last week in the Eastern Cape with Fred Burchell at Frontier Safaris (frontiersafaris.com). There, I was joined by my young friend and intern, Richard Charlton. Medically retired from the U.S. Army, Charlton is completing his Wildlife and Outdoor Enterprise (WOEM) degree at Kansas State University. Although a widely experienced hunter, including guiding in Alaska, this was his first African trip. I was more than happy to



On the bench, the author tested the Chapuis ROLS Classic in .30-'06 first, shortly following its introduction to the U.S. Aside from barrel length and several ounces of weight difference, the .30-'06 and the .375 H&H were near-identical in handling qualities.

share the ROLS with him for field work. After a quick range session, he had no problems. It seemed like everything he pointed the rifle at fell over nicely.

One of the animals he wanted most was a zebra; big, tough, wary and rarely easy. With time growing short, we heard zebras calling and spotted them up on a huge, brushy ridge. We managed to get ahead and had them stopped 300 yards above us, milling back and forth in thick stuff on a near-vertical slope. Trying to pick out a stallion, Burchell had Charlton on sticks. One of many times I've been delighted that it wasn't my shot.

It seemed to take forever, but finally a correct zebra stepped out and the shot went. Hit hard, the animal lurched to the right and vanished into a little cut. Watching through binoculars, I was sure it had gone down there. It had. It was not the easiest recovery, but Charlton made a hell of a shot.

Fast forward six months to the ROLS in .375 H&H; same fantastic fit and finish. The craftsmanship was obvious. It sported a crisp, clean trigger, though I'm not sure why the .375 carries 1½-inches more barrel. It eked out more velocity, with all three loads coming in a bit over specs, but there was no appreciable difference in its handling.

There was one difference, though. As a traditional hunting rifle, the ROLS barrel isn't threaded for

PERFORMANCE

LOAD: .375 H&H	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Dangerous Game 300-gr. DGX-Bonded	2,563	49	18	.70	1.63
Hornady Outfitter 250-gr. CX	2,745	43	12	1.36	1.48
Federal Premium Safari 300-gr. Woodleigh Hydro Shok	2,515	55	23	1.4	1.93

Notes: Accuracy is the average is of five, five-shot groups at 100 yards fired from a benchrest. Velocity is the average of five shots recorded by a LabRadar chronograph placed adjacent to the muzzle.

either a brake or suppressor. At 7.2 pounds, it's light for a .375, so it kicked. Add a scope and mount, and it's slightly less than 8 pounds; it's still gonna kick. I had all manner of odds and ends of .375 loads on hand, but few with enough ammo for zeroing and five five-shot groups.

I did have some Hornady Outfitter with 250-grain CX, Hornady 300-grain DGX Bonded and Federal Premium Safari with 300-grain Woodleigh Hydro Shok solids, an eclectic mix.

I started with the 250-grain Hornady CX. Even though the lighter bullet is faster, 17-percent reduction in bullet weight reduced recoil quite a bit. I shot that series over sandbags with a PAST recoil shield on my shoulder. For me, whether rational or not, I tend to get my best groups

when shooting with sandbags. The results were consistent, averaging just under 1½ MOA. I've seen .375s do better, others worse, but I felt that was solid, certainly minute-of-buffalo

or -lion at any distance. The only problem: At that gun weight, the recoil was sharp. At the end of the first series, I had a splitting headache. It was time to clean the barrel and start over. From that point, I wimped out and used a Caldwell Lead Sled for the remainder of testing. The second load, the 300-grain DGX Bonded, stayed consistent at 1.63 inches for five five-shot groups. Remember, flukes can be good or bad; this series was skewed by the best group of the entire session at less than three-quarters of an inch.

The third series was Woodleigh Hydro Shok solid, as loaded by Federal Premium. Some big-bore rifles shoot

better with solids; for whatever reason, this is rare in my experience. Perhaps, by the end of the session, I was getting jumpy. In any case, the load had the largest average group size at 1.93 inches; still easily minute of elephant, hippo or rhino.

The Schnabel forend gives it a bit of European flair, but the straight comb is American, exactly the way the ROLS Classic handles. Fast and sure, light and lively. I like the look and feel of the ROLS. Like all straight-pulls, with a bit of practice, it's as fast as greased lightning. **G&A**



Boddington used the ROLS Classic .30-'06 to take a disfigured blue wildebeest with one shot. With a drooping right horn, the bull was taken as a cull animal. The skull was fractured from fighting; with serious infection, it couldn't have survived.



SHARP

THE BRITISH DID NOTHING between the wars with development of its sniper rifles or training of snipers, choosing to forget the horrors of trench warfare. Early in World War II, though, the British army reissued the small number of remaining sniper rifles from World War I in storage. These rifles were Pattern 1914 (P14) Enfield rifles fitted with either an offset Pattern 18 or Aldis 3X scope. The rifles had a detachable cheek rest that was not well liked; the Pattern 18 scope had focus and elevation adjustments but no windage adjustment. Lateral adjustment was done mechanically in the scope base. The Aldis scope offered focus, windage and elevation adjustments. These scopes were considered antiquated and not very reliable. However, the Brits must be credited for realizing they needed a first-rate sniper rifle early in World War II.

By September 1940, a scope mount and

rings were designed for the then-new No. 4 Mk 1 rifle to mount the No. 32 scope, which was originally developed for the Bren machine gun. The No. 32 was supposed to be mounted on the left side of the Bren, which is why the windage turret is on the left side of the scope and not the right. The No. 32 scope was a well-designed, rugged scope. In 1941, the conversion of No. 4 Mk 1 rifles to the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) sniper variant began at Royal Small Arms Factory (RSAF) Enfield. Converted rifles were officially available for issue in February 1942, but commando units had them prior to this. In late September 1942, Holland & Holland (H&H) was awarded a contract to produce No. 4 Mk 1 (T) rifles. H&H made more than 23,000 of the approximate 25,000 No. 4 Mk 1 (T) rifles that were produced. Rifles selected for conversion showed particularly good accuracy during production tests.

SHOOTERS

WORLD WAR II SNIPER RIFLE SERIES, PART II:
BRITAIN'S ENFIELD NO. 4 MARK 1 (T)
AND NO. 32 SCOPE.

BY DAVE EMARY | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR





The No. 32 scope and mount could be quickly detached from the No. 4 Mk 1 receiver. It was necessary to remove the scope in order to remove the bolt assembly for maintenance.



The No. 32 Mk I scope featured 2 MOA windage and elevation adjustment turrets for the .303 Mk VII ball round. Also, the objective and ocular housing featured sliding protective shades.

The conversion to a No. 4 Mk 1 (T) was more elaborate than other sniper rifles during World War II. The rifles were carefully re-bedded with 4 to 5 pounds of upward pressure on the barrel from the front of the forend. Only the front several inches of the forend wood, and an inch or so directly in front of the receiver, were allowed to touch the barrel. If the forend wood and metal spacer on the front action screw in the triggerguard couldn't be adjusted to meet this specification, small, grooved metal tabs were placed at the front of the forend channel to provide upward pressure on the barrel. All this was done to stabilize the action in the stock. A wooden cheekpiece was also added to the stock. When compared to other sniper rifles of the time, the cheekpiece of the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) made the rifle more user friendly, as an actual cheekweld could be achieved. Triggers were also smoothed to achieve a crisper trigger pull.

OPTIC IMPROVEMENTS

Two small metal tabs were screwed to the flat left side of the receiver, which were drilled and tapped for the scope-mount bolts. A heavy duty one-piece mount was screwed to the mounting tabs on the side of the receiver with large screws. A 3.5X No. 32 scope with heavy post reticle and thin horizontal-line reticle was used. Original scopes feature a rounded top to the post. Reproductions have a slightly pointed top on the post. The scope has both elevation and windage turrets on a 1-inch diameter maintube. There was no focus adjustment, but the scope did provide



The trigger of the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) was smoothed. Inside the triggerguard is the magazine release lever. The wristband displays serial and "TR" markings, indicating its selection as a sniper rifle.

focus for the reticle. The No. 32 scope was made in three versions as the war progressed, each incorporating steady improvements to the mechanics and function. The Mk I scope, available in 1942, had 2 minute-of-angle (MOA) click values for both windage and elevation, but it was somewhat difficult to adjust and lock the turrets.

The Mk II scope was introduced in April 1943. It had 1-MOA click values and internal improvements to the turret to reduce backlash. The Mk II scope retained the difficult-to-adjust turrets of the Mk I. First issued in October 1944, the final No. 32 Mk III had 1-MOA click



Holland & Holland performed the majority of sniper conversions of the No. 4 Mk. 1. Only rifles with five-groove barrels were selected for sniper-rifle service. The left-side of the receiver was squared true and fitted with mounting pads. Holland & Holland designed the mount, placing the No. 32 scope directly over the bore line. Enhancements to the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) included a comb fit to the stock.



The trapdoor on the buttplate provides access to the stock bolt and offers storage of the oiler and pull-through. Second variation plates were made of a gray-color cast alloy.



The serial number of No. 4 Mk 1 rifles appear at the back of the bolt handle. G&A's 1941-dated test rifle featured a 2nd Variation cocking piece, the most common with three grasping grooves.

values for both elevation and windage, and further internal mechanical improvements to reduce backlash with easier turrets to zero and lock.

The No. 4 Mk 1 (T) was such a successful design that it remained in service into the 1990s. A number were even converted to 7.62 NATO chambering and redesignated as the L42A1.

Snipers were issued a wooden chest and kit that contained the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) rifle and scope, a metal can for



The 10-round, detachable-box magazine for the No. 4 Mk 1 (T) was marked with the rifle's serial number, and a spare was issued. The optic interfered with chargers, so mags were single loaded.



British .303-caliber test ammunition included (L-R): 174-grain 1943 WRA Mk VII, 1942 RG Mk VII, and 1954 RL Mk VII.

the scope, a 20X collapsible spotting scope, binoculars, scope adjusting tool, 1907-style leather sling and a camouflage smock. Web slings were supplied in limited quantity. The British were serious about equipping their snipers.

A few unit-level sniper schools sprang up in England early in the war. After D-Day, sniper schools were set up on the continent. Most of these schools were 2- to 4-weeks long.

Emphasis was put on shooting skills and fieldcraft.

Both the original and reproduction scopes I have used have identical characteristics in terms of the rather mushy clicks and backlash in both turrets. With the No. 32 scope, it is important to always adjust in the same direction and go well past your desired setting and come back to it if

A close-up photograph showing a person's finger pulling the bolt handle of a bolt-action rifle. The rifle has a dark metal receiver and a wooden stock. The bolt is partially open, revealing the internal mechanism. The background is plain white.

I view the windage turret on the No. 32 scope as an aid for easy zeroing, as there is no windage adjustment in the scope mount. In his book "With British Sniper to the Reich" (1948), Captain Clifford Shore wrote, "It was foolish to adjust the windage knob. One should learn to hold off for wind."

Expectations for the British sniper according to “Infantry Platoon Weapons Pamphlet No. 10, Sniping” were, “As a guide, the standard of shooting to be demanded of a sniper is that he should hit a man-sized head target regularly at 200 yards and a man’s trunk up to 400 yards, this standard may well be improved on.” Further, “Accuracy can be obtained to 1,000 yards, but shooting at anything approaching this range should be discouraged in the field unless there is some very special reason for doing so.”

Shore wrote, “The No. 4 (T) was capable of 2½ MOA, day in, day out. Sometimes better than this depending on the ammunition.” Most engagements Shore described were between 200 and 400 yards, but one high-value target at approximately 600 yards involved three snipers who

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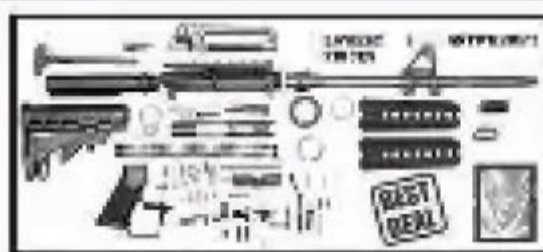
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See Web Site for details



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MODEL
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The safety assembly featured in internal "locking catch" to safely disengage the bolt from the sear. The "locking bolt" is the moveable external lever. It is the Third Variation with an indented top.



were brought in to simultaneously fire at the target. That employment of snipers was successful.

The effectiveness of the Broadhurst Clarkson & Co. three-draw 20X spotting scope that snipers were issued was notably effective. It allowed the snipers to make observations and see details that were not possible with the Kershaw 4X binoculars, giving the British sniper a significant edge.

THE RIFLE

We primarily used my No. 4 Mk I (T) for evaluation, an original rifle dated 1943 and marked "TR" on the left side of the metal wrist and stock socket. "TR" was the marking used to denote a rifle selected as one for conversion

to a Mk I (T) sniper rifle. Incidentally, the “T” stands for “telescope equipped.” When I purchased the rifle, the scope mount bases were included, but there was no mount or scope. I acquired a reproduction set of scope rings and a No. 32 Mk II scope. I have examined and used original scopes, and I cannot tell the difference in the mechanical operation between current reproduction scopes and the originals. Reproductions seem to have better glass than the original, but mechanical function is indistinguishable. Guns & Ammo Editor-in-Chief Eric Poole participated in several days of range evaluation and brought his all-original 1941-dated No. 4 Mk 1 (T), but the turret housing came loose early in testing, so we stopped shooting it. The triggers on these rifles were clean, exhibiting no creep and measuring 5 pounds on a Lyman digital trigger pull gauge. The No. 4 Mk 1 (T) is a heavy gun, weighing 11½ pounds, so felt recoil was not a factor. It is nearly 3 pounds



The front sight assembly is protected by the common Second Variation bracket. The sight blade is marked with its height, “.06” and manufacturer “F” for Fazakerley.

heavier than its American counterpart, the Springfield Armory M1903A4.

AMMUNITION

The primary-issue ammunition in the British army during World War II was the .303-caliber Mk VII ball round. It featured a 174-grain spitzer, flat-base bullet and was loaded with cordite propellant. This round dates back to 1910. The Mk VIIz round was introduced during World War I and featured smokeless stick propellant and the same 175-grain, flat-base projectile. In 1938, the Mk VIIIz round was introduced to improve the range of machine gun fire. The round was loaded with a smokeless stick propellant and a 175-grain boattail bullet. The Mk VIII round was observed to produce excessive throat erosion, though, and was prohibited from use in rifles and light machine guns. An urban legend about a British sniper’s ammunition preferences was that Winchester ammo was preferred for being more accurate.

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We explored this theory at the range.

For testing the No. 4 Mk 1 (T), I was able to find Radway Green (RG) 1942 Mk VII ammunition loaded with cordite. I also found a small quantity (14 rounds) of 1943 Winchester (WRA) Mk VII ammunition loaded with a Ball powder. Poole also sourced post-war 1954 Royal Laboratories Mk VII ammunition for comparison. Nearly every round of the British-made ammunition produced a hangfire, and there were several duds. It was a testimony to Poole's trigger discipline and follow-through that he was able to shoot this ammunition as well as he did.

AT THE RANGE

Testing was done on a known-distance (KD) range with targets at 100, 200, 300, 400 and 500 yards. We fired at the B-27 silhouette paper target to closely match the sight picture that would have existed for a sniper. The No. 4 Mk 1 (T) was zeroed with a handload of 37.5 grains of Accurate



2495 and Sierra 174-grain Match Kings with several five-shot groups averaging 2,188 feet per second (fps) and a standard deviation (SD) of 19. We only fired three-shot groups at each distance for accuracy results due to the limited supply of period ammunition, and touched up the zero along the way using the issued adjusting tool and tightening the lock ring. As long as scope adjustments

were made in the same direction, the scope tracked well. If adjustments were made in the opposite direction, we had to go two or three clicks past where we wanted to be and come back to the setting due to backlash. We did not adjust the windage turret after zeroing at 100 yards. All loads combined averaged .96 MOA at this range.

We then fired at the increasingly distant targets by dialing the elevation turret for the range come-up given from calculated trajectory performance for each load. We found the elevation turret range calibration was not as accurate as a sniper would like. We held off for windage, which

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became an influencing factor. Winds gusted 10 to 20 mph from a consistent three-o'clock direction during testing. We tried not to shoot in gusts, with Poole the primary trigger man as I spotted and gave wind calls.

The Radway Green Mk VII ammunition was very accurate. Radway Green produced sub-MOA groups at 100 yards, averaging .88 inch; at 200 yards, averaging 1.63 inches. It was hard to tell how well the Royal Laboratories ammunition shot due to the number of hangfires. Still, groups measured 1.13 inches at 100 yards, but increased to 4.63 inches at 200 yards and much larger out to 400 yards. The sample of Winchester (WRA) ammunition dispelled the myth that it was more accurate than British-issue ammunition. It did not have hangfires but grouped an average of 4.53 inches at 100 yards. This lot was miserably inaccurate in our test rifles after recorded 16½-inch groups at 200 yards. We gave up shooting the WRA load after a frustrating 200 yards. For comparison, the Radway Green load averaged 13½ inches at 500 yards.

Our standard practice was to try and shoot in the same wind condition experienced while testing sniper rifles from other countries. I based wind corrections on flags I had staked at each yardage and observing surrounding vegetation. It was way too windy to read mirage, which wasn't a concern until about 500 yards. The matchup succeeded most of the time, but several of the groups showed an obvious miss of a wind condition. With the low-power scope and thick post reticle, wind corrections were generally "Hold right-half" or "Hold right-edge of the silhouette." Greater target resolution was not possible beyond 300 yards with the No. 32 scope. Nearly every group revealed the vertical elevation of the group measured less than the windage group size.

PARTING SHOT

The Enfield No. 4 Mk (T) proved to be an effective rifle to 500 yards, averaging 1.89 MOA across the entire 500-yard test. The integral cheekpiece was a significant improvement to



sniper rifle designs, making it more comfortable to precisely shoot than the Mauser K98k Zf.39 tested in Part I and the Mosin-Nagant 91/30 PU that will be examined in Part III of "Guns & Ammo's World War II Sniper Rifle Series." The No. 32 scope was easy to use, but the sniper had to be conscious of backlash and dial accordingly. These rifles were accurate, more

so than standard-issue Lee-Enfields, as evidenced by the performance data collected while testing the Radway Green load and reproduction handloads.

Depending on ammunition, 600 yards was probably the limit for reliable torso hits on the battlefield. The low-power optic and its heavy post reticle were significant limitations for greater range and effectiveness. The test results matched closely to the comments recorded by Capt. Shore.

Next, we will examine the Soviet Mosin-Nagant 91/30 PU in Part III of "Guns & Ammo's World War II Sniper Rifle Series." 

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Rock River Arms Production 1911 .45 ACP

POWERHOUSE

THE ROCK RIVER ARMS (RRA) Production 1911 is a cost-conscious rendition of the company's limited-production custom Model 1911s. The RRA Production 1911 is an out-of-the-box .45 ACP positioned as an alternative to bespoke 1911s, but priced at \$1,500 (rockriverarms.com). With it, RRA has challenged the segment with its 42-ounce pistol that puts the entire 1911 market on notice.

The feature set of the RRA Production 1911 places it into a sweet spot. It is comparable to the Emissary and the TRP, which are made by fellow Illinois-based Springfield Armory. The 1911 Emissary starts at \$1,378 (springfield-armory.com). The recently updated semi-custom TRP retails between \$1,732

and \$1,999. Though brands including Springfield Armory, Ed Brown, Kimber, Nighthawk Custom, Staccato, and Wilson Combat have rejuvenated the platform, the RRA Production 1911 should give makers of John Browning's legacy pause. The RRA Production 1911 looks and shoots like a custom pistol, and it will challenge the performance of every single one.

A caveat to this conclusion, though, is that Guns & Ammo's test sample was a prototype. However, it should represent the guns that are dealer-bound, but one never knows for certain ahead of a launch. If RRA is able to maintain the quality demonstrated by our evaluation sample, it could potentially redefine the value structure of the Model 1911 market.



A bright, green fiber-optic front sight is quick to acquire and settle within the rear U-notch. The ramped rear sight sits in a Novak-pattern dovetail, making it a well-established combination.



The aesthetic treatments to the RRA Production 1911 features smooth edges and purposeful shapes. These pistols are entirely dehorned. The beveled angles of the barrel, slide and grip complement each other.

ROCK RIVER ARMS PRODUCTION 1911

TYPE	Recoil operated, hammer fired, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	.45 ACP
CAPACITY	8+1 rds.
BARREL	5 in., stainless steel
LENGTH	8.5 in.
WIDTH	1.4 in.
HEIGHT	5.6 in.
WEIGHT	2 lbs., 10 oz.
MATERIAL	Steel (slide, barrel, frame); G10 (stocks)
FINISH	Black nitride (steel)
SIGHTS	Fiber optic, green (front), U-notch, black serrated (rear)
TRIGGER	4 lbs., 6 oz. (tested)
SAFETY	Thumb safety, ambi.; grip safety
MSRP	\$1,500
MANUFACTURER	Rock River Arms, 309-792-5780, rockriverarms.com



The muzzle end of the Production 1911 narrows slightly and tapers to ease re-holstering. Like many contemporary 1911 designs, this model does not use a barrel bushing but offers front serrations.

SPEC'D FOR SUCCESS

The RRA Production 1911 includes all the bells and whistles of a high-end gun. The construction features machined billet and bar-stock steel. Following a detailed disassembly, no cast parts were found; the only piece formed through metal injection molding (MIM) was the grip safety lever. This amount of precision machining ensures that parts come together tight and correct; in a 1911 that translates to repeatable accuracy. Evidence of this was found in the wobble-free relationship between the slide and frame. While not glass-smooth, the reciprocation allows for use in adverse conditions while providing a superb and easy-to-cycle fitment.

In 1911 parlance, G&A's test sample was configured as a "Government" model, meaning that it is a full-size pistol with a 5-inch barrel chambered in .45 ACP. Though obvious from the accompanying illustrations, it's likely that Rock River Arms intends to create a series of Production 1911s, ostensibly in different sizes, chamberings and finishes. Looking at the slide, it's clear to see the company is leaning on its metal machining acumen. The result is a modest and modern appearance. Rounded, polygonal grasping grooves are relieved into the slide, front and rear. The combination of shallow grooves and deeper grip channels offered excellent purchase for slide manipulations. The effect in the front is similar to a Hi-Power cut, where the muzzle end of the slide narrows to facilitate easier holstering. Machined flats at the 12-, 10- and 2-o'clock positions also create a tasteful hybrid profile that merges the round-top and tri-cut slide styles.

For sights, the RRA Production 1911 comes with fixed irons mounted in Novak-type dovetails. The front is a green fiber-optic set in a steel sight fixture. The rear is a



Slide-to-barrel fit is excellent, and the bull barrel locks up without movement at the muzzle. To disassemble the Production 1911, the guiderod must first be unscrewed with an appropriate Allen wrench.



The grip safety and beavertail support a high grip, while the repetitiously grooved pattern ensures control. The rear texture extends to the speed bump of the grip safety lever.

ramped sight that displays a serrated face and U-notch to the shooter. The combination is excellent for target or defensive use. At the range, the sights were quick and easy to align.

The heart of the pistol is the 5-inch bull barrel. Bull barrels don't need the traditional bushing. Instead, lockup is achieved between the front of the slide and the flared barrel. Underneath, the recoil assembly features a reverse plug, a single coil spring and a two-piece, full-length guiderod. Field stripping the gun requires an Allen wrench to unscrew the guiderod and free the recoil-spring assembly.

Moving to the frame, the combination of slim G10 stocks and the unique texturing reliefs give the impression of a trim, easy-to-grasp grip. This feeling of having a firm handle on the gun is reinforced by the high, extended beavertail and the undercut triggerguard. These features encourage a full-firing grip as close to the bore axis as possible. The stocks' somewhat rounded polygonal texture is carried around the full circumference of the pistol, including the frontstrap and mainspring housing. The magazine release and the memory pad of the grip



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black handgun. The person has extensive tattoos on both forearms and is wearing a grey, textured sweater and a smartwatch on their left wrist. The background is dark and out of focus.

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The G10 grips are slim yet provide a solid grip on the Production 1911. The grips did not abuse the hands, even after an 800-round test session.



The flat magwell is extended and funneled to support quick, intuitive reloads. The RRA Production 1911 ships with two eight-rounders. Additional 1911 magazines are available from Rock River. [\\$44.50](#)

safety are also machined for improved purchase.

The hammer is a skeletonized component in an extended-delta configuration. Machined horizontal ridges provide a touchpoint for hammer manipulations, too. The trigger is somewhat skeletonized with two narrow and tall slots cut behind the flat face. According to a Lyman digital gauge, the trigger-pull weight averaged less than 4½ pounds, not too light for a duty- or carry-ready 1911 in .45. Beyond the tested weight, the trigger offered short, clean rearward travel, and compared well to other 1911 single-action triggers.

Other controls include a bilateral thumb-safety lever and an extended slide-lock/release lever. All the metal parts wear a black nitride finish. Not surprising, the mainspring housing includes an integral magazine well. It's not flared as on a competition gun, but it is slightly extended and contoured to guide the magazine into the grip.



The trigger is partially skeletonized, and its pull tested at 4 pounds. The flat-face design is contemporary, while still providing access to an overtravel adjustment screw.



The rear slide serrations feature a rounded polygonal design. The thumb safety and slide-lock levers are similar in profile and sport serrated touchpoints. The frame is relieved for easy trigger reach.

AT THE RANGE

The first order of business, of course, was to test the RRA Production 1911 on the bench for its accuracy potential. With four different .45 ACP loads from four different makers, bullet weights ranged from 185 to 230 grains. Ammunition represented both target and defense types. Guns & Ammo's protocol involves firing five, five-shot groups with each load from 25 yards. To aid efforts, a Ransom Rest Multi Cal. Steady Rest was used.

Rock River Arms claimed the Production 1911 is capable of 2½-inch groups from 50 yards. Our testing showed the pistol was good for it in a fixed rest, but shooters may not be mechanical enough to achieve such precision. Still, it was very accurate. It's tough to shoot such groups when projectiles are nearly a half-inch wide, so 2- and 3-inch

groups are good, regardless of ammo. The Production 1911 wasn't picky.

Overall, the best performance came using the 200-grain D&L Sport General Service Pistol (GSP) load. It has been a consistently good load during recent tests. What impressed G&A's staff the most was the five nearly uniform groups fired with American Eagle 230-grain Total Synthetic Jacket (TSJ). The best and worst groups shot with that range load were separated by only a couple tenths of an inch; that equals consistency.

As impressive as the RRA Production 1911 was at the bench, it was its performance during defensive drills that demonstrated its versatility. The gun felt just right, like shaking the hand of a familiar friend. With a bit of pressure, the texture locked it into our grip. The sensation was different than shooting other pistols, though, because the Production 1911 doesn't rely on ergonomic modeling or multi-layer molded texturing, and it doesn't use aggressive checkering or sandpaper-like adhesives. Instead, the

connection comes from the wide, smooth reliefs of the checkboard-like pattern. The way a hand fills the reliefs, paired with the weight of the gun, provides the user with confidence that the pistol grip is anchored. As a result, the pistol absolutely shreds A-zones and X-rings.

Running through a battery of shooting drills, the gun felt fast and handy. The sights were fast to acquire and track, and the trigger offered that “barely there” resistance that is so beloved with single-actions. The weight of the Production 1911 ably soaked up the .45’s recoil, and a sure grip ensured a clear draw from leather, and helped the sights stay as level as possible and on target through multi-shot rapid-fire strings. Throughout our tests, the gun never failed. There were no stoppages or malfunctions with any of the ammunition tested.

After two extended range sessions with the Production 1911, some 800 rounds had been fired. Though our hands were sore, they were unscathed. It was a credit to the fact that the pistol was dehorned and G10 grip pattern well designed. The texture is deceptively smooth.

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
SIG Sauer 230-gr. FMJ	860	58.7	14.7	1.32	2.58
D&L Sports 200-gr. GSP	870	26.4	6.4	1.52	2.27
Hornady Critical Defense 185-gr. FTX	1,022	34.4	8.4	2.17	2.95
American Eagle 230-gr. TSJ	780	47.4	15.1	2.6	2.67

Notes: Accuracy is the average of five, five-shot groups fired in a Ransom Rest from 25 yards. Velocity is the average of 10 shots measured by a Garmin Xero C1 Pro chronograph offset 6 inches from the muzzle.

Tests were also done from concealment using a Milt Sparks Summer Special leather holster (\$165, miltsparks.com). Whether in the hand or against the skin, the gun was never abrasive to carry. Not only could you shoot Rock River’s Production 1911 all day, but it can be carried

for personal defense without regret.

PARTING SHOT

Gun enthusiasts who grew up shooting striker-fire polymer-frame pistols have seemingly discovered the broader world of handgunning. While the 9mm remains most popular, interest in the .45 ACP has resurged. The Rock River Arms Production 1911 comes with two eight-round magazines, but it’s .45-caliber slug hits like a hammer.

The Rock River Arms Production 1911 is a specimen. For 1911 enthusiasts, handling this gun would likely bring about a purchase. Maybe that’s a good thing. In today’s single-action semiauto market, you can spend a lot more and come away with a lot less. With the RRA Production 1911, you always walk away with a whole lot more. **G&A**

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WEB EXCLUSIVES

IN PAST ISSUES of Guns & Ammo, I've posed the question about what content would be a good fit for web assignments. After some time working with gunwriters and their contributions, gunsandammo.com has assembled a catalog of features and guides that are uniquely digital, yet they maintain the tone and quality of the magazine. These articles are on firearm news, techniques and releases that don't compete with the printed word, rather they help elevate the subjects. To highlight just how much has been expanded, I've selected a few of my favorite web articles.

Alfredo Rico's love for airguns has shown itself before. Since his review of the Umarex Komplete NCR in Guns & Ammo's December 2024 issue, he and I have talked a few times about how all shooters can get enjoyment and training from shooting airguns. To help prospective airgunners enter the hobby, we now offer a complete starter guide to airguns online, which



AIRGUN STARTER GUIDE

Alfredo Rico leverages his experience to describe every type of airgun. Did you know SIG Sauer offered a CO₂-powered pellet pistol of the service issue M17? **\$160**

covers every type, discusses the pros and cons of each and illustrates several worthwhile examples. Everything from airsoft to .50-caliber PCP pellet guns capable of taking down large game is on display.

For more traditional firearm content, Contributor Brad Fitzpatrick has had a great time with a Ruger M77 Safari Magnum. It helped inspire an entire article on the family of rifles, in fact. While not as big of a seller as the Ruger American rifle, the M77 was the brand's first centerfire bolt-action, which is still going strong as the Hawkeye since 2006.

RUGER'S ICONIC RIFLE

Designed in 1968 by Jim Sullivan, Ruger's first bolt-action centerfire rifle was the M77. Though replaced by the Hawkeye in 2006, it's still relied on by many.



SLUGS FOR SELF-DEFENSE?

In terms of personal protection, shotgun slugs can fill important but oft-overlooked roles. What are they? Read on.



Finally, an interesting question posed to Contributor Aaron Carter. "Do shotgun slugs have a place in personal defense?" While the case for simply using buckshot seems "cut and dry," it can't hurt to be prepared. While training at Thunder Ranch, Carter observed some interesting data. Some may be convinced to keep a slug or two in their shell carrier for use during one of the few cases when buckshot may not cut it.

With these articles as a primer, what would you be interested in reading about? The firearms world is fair game. If it has a trigger, we'd like to write about it. Email your ideas to gaeditor@outdoorsg.com. **GA**

TOP COMMENTS

In response to the "Connect" column, December 2024, "Tools of the Trade":

A couple months ago I purchased the Tipton Best Gun Vise 360. I was looking for a vise that would hold my handgun barrels without crushing them so I could clean them. What a score getting the Tipton 360 with the plastic covers that snap on the metal part of the vise. I didn't even realize it came with the attachments! The real plus is that it is well manufactured. This is one of those tools you will hand down to your grandkids. I'm glad you featured it in "Connect."

I also picked up on the Hickok45 videos mentioned in another column. Great videos and information from that gentleman! Plus, you can tell he has a lot of fun blowing up stuff like we all do! He represents the kid in us. I truly enjoy the magazine. Keep up the good work. Thank you.

P.S. Reading about all the hoops our poor brothers and sisters have to go through in California to enjoy our sport, I am so glad I live in Texas! I would hate to have to deal with all the restrictions.

— Fred M., Email



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KEITH WOOD

Why *California is the worst state for gun owners.*

NOT SO GOLDEN

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, Guns & Ammo has published its annual “Best States for Gun Owners” rankings. Due to space limitations, I’ve never been able to thoroughly describe each state’s respective laws. Here, I want to examine one of the most anti-gun states in our republic: California.

According to the Giffords Law Center, California has the “strongest gun safety laws in the nation.” California gun owners must obtain a Firearm Safety Certificate (FSC), which requires passing a written test. An FSC is valid for five years. The state imposes a 10-day waiting period on firearm transfers, but that can be extended to 30 days to gather additional information.

The state imposes new requirements nearly every year. For example, a law took effect in January that eliminated the private-party transaction exemption from the prohibition on more than one firearm purchase within a 30-day period. Private-party transfers must pass through a licensed dealer. All firearms must be obtained through a licensed dealer. Beginning in 2026, all gun owners will be required to disable or store firearms in a safe or a certified lockbox when a firearm is not in control of its owner or lawful authorized user.

California keeps a list of “compliant” handguns available for purchase, known as the “Roster of Not Unsafe Handguns.” New handguns not on that list cannot be obtained.

California began restricting so-called “assault weapons” in 1989. The state’s definition of such a firearm is extremely restrictive. For example, a pistol with a threaded barrel is classified as an “assault weapon” under the statute. The registration periods for the various categories of assault weapons passed decades ago, so there is almost no legal means of obtaining one. These firearms cannot be

transferred to family members or inherited, and .50 BMG firearms are treated similarly. Magazines are restricted to no more than 10 rounds.

Suppressors are banned. NFA firearms, such as machine guns, short-barreled rifles (SBR), and others, can tech-

nically be owned but require an annual permit issued by the California Department of Justice, which rarely issues them. [There is a narrow loophole for Curio & Relic (C&R)-eligible NFA firearms.]

California was a may-issue state in terms of concealed carry. Issuance varied from county to county. After the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Bruen*, a shall-issue permit system was adopted. The spe-

cifics of obtaining a permit and the places where carry is legal still vary by county. An 8-hour (or longer) course that includes live fire must be part of any permit application process, and no other state’s permits are recognized in the Golden State.

In terms of lawful self-defense, there is no duty to retreat inside one’s residence. California does not have a de facto “Stand Your Ground” law, but the state’s standard jury instructions allow for a similar defense at trial.

California has recently established a private cause of action for failure to comply with the state’s firearm laws, opening dealers and other industry elements up to significant civil liability.

Despite the regulations, Californians still represent a large segment of U.S. firearm sales. According to NICS data, more than 1 million guns were sold or transferred in the state during 2023. Only Texas and Florida reported more transactions. When compared to most U.S. states, California’s gun laws are extremely restrictive and are only getting worse. 



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13+1 CAPACITY
15+1 CAPACITY



1.1 INCHES

MICRO 9

7+1 CAPACITY



1.06 INCHES

EVERYDAY
CONCEALED
CARRY

CDS9

CONCEALED CARRY,
REFINED.



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