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Guns & Ammo (ISSN# 0017-5684) January 2026, Volume 70, Number 1. Published monthly by Outdoor Sportsman Group, 2 News Plaza, 3rd Floor, Peoria, IL 61614-8001. Periodical postage paid at Peoria, IL, and at additional mailing offices. Frequency is subject to change without notice.

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



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PHOTO: MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

CARTRIDGE LINEUP

I am reading the November 2025 article, “Paired Up.” The picture of the cartridges must have missed scrutiny. The first cartridge at the top of page 60 to the left appears to be a .270 Winchester. The second cartridge is a .30-’06. The fourth looks to be a short magnum, especially since the fifth cartridge was listed as “6.5 Creedmoor.” Neck sizes are different. Guns & Ammo is always excellent, but I think this picture slipped through the cracks. Please keep up the great work you always do!

Mark Lesniewski

Email

Mr. Lesniewski — and to the many readers who identified the error and communicated it to us — thank you! You are correct. That cartridge lineup in “Paired Up” needs correction. From left to right, the Barnes Harvest cartridges included 140-grain .270 Winchester; 180-grain .30-’06 Springfield; 150-grain 7mm Remington Magnum; 145-grain 6.5 PRC; 165-grain .308 Winchester; 140-grain 6.5 Creedmoor; 90-grain .243 Winchester; and 69-grain .223 Remington. Mea culpa!
— E. Poole

MY RABBIT HOLE

I couldn’t resist. I enjoy Guns & Ammo. I like Keith Wood’s articles, and his are among the first I read. An exception,

though, was Eric Poole’s editorial “The Rabbit Hole” in the November 2025 issue. I looked at the Model 10 and said, “Hey, I have one!” I bought it back in the mid-1990s and paid \$175 for it, serial number C9309XX, made between 1967 and ’68. It’s in great shape. The grips are original, and it’s a good shooter, too. I didn’t have an appreciation for sidearms since I didn’t grow up in a family around firearms. I flew AH-1G Cobras in the Cav for D Troop, 1/1 Cav out of Chu Lai, attached to the 23rd Infantry Division. I was issued one in South Vietnam from September 1970 to ’71, and others like it during my U.S. Army aviation career. In 1976, I lost one during a field

exercise at Fort Campbell. I jumped a ditch and met the company commander. He noticed the empty holster and said, “Where’s your firearm?” Thankfully, it fell out when I jumped and was in the grass. Oh, and thanks for the SARCO tip! CW4 Dan Brunger U.S. Army (Ret.)

SHOTGUN CANS

I read the “Quiet Time” column on the Banish 12 suppressor in the November 2025 issue. I guess Mark Fingar withstood the temptation to reference “No Country for Old Men” (2007). Congratulations. I couldn’t have resisted.

Mark Ray

Fairdale, Kentucky

The suppressor on “Anton Chigurh’s” — portrayed by actor Javier Bardem — Remington 11-87 cut-barrel shotgun didn’t exist, so the Coen brothers, who wrote, directed, produced and edited the film had the device created. The SilencerCo Salvo 12 was the first commercially successful shotgun suppressor, which was introduced in 2014.

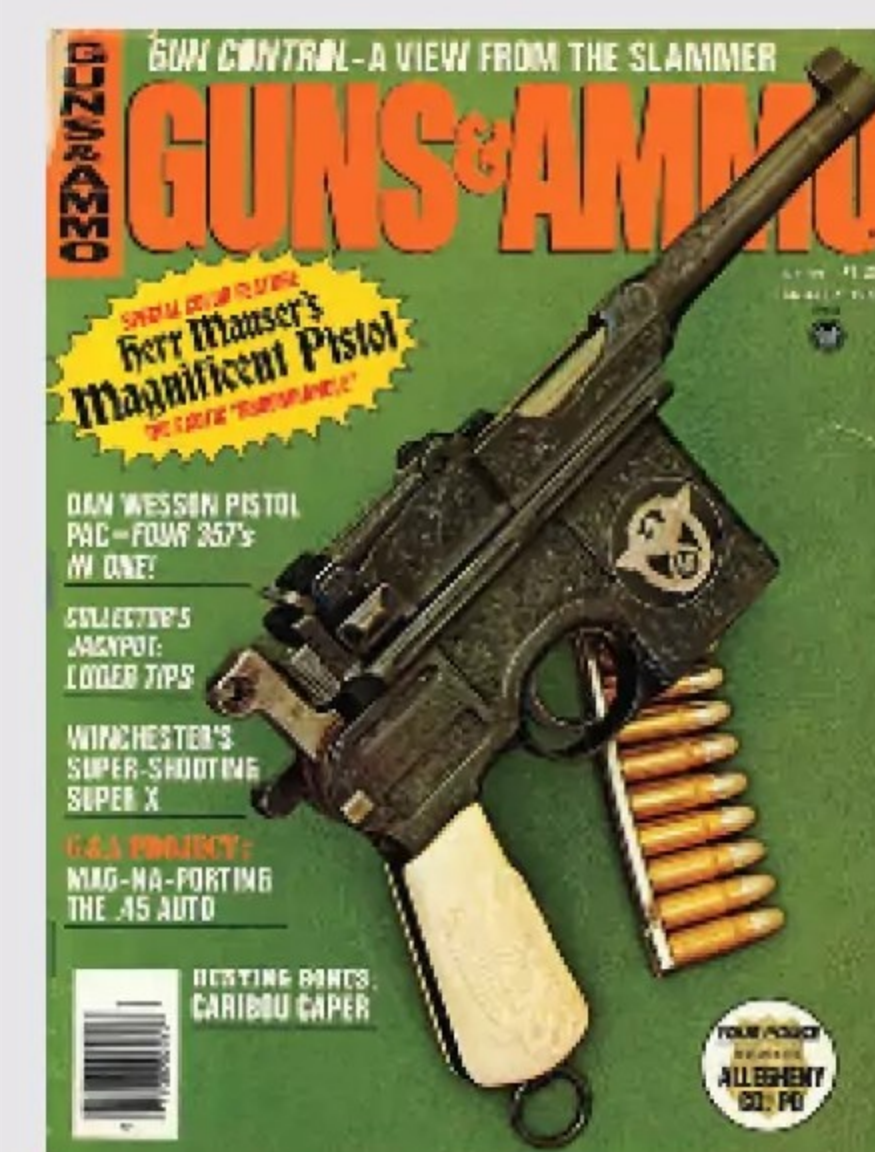
— E. Poole

UK RABBIT HUNTING

I am fairly a rare beast, an Englishman who subscribes to Guns & Ammo but doesn’t shoot “serious” firearms. After reading Craig Boddington’s interesting article on thermal devices, I was inspired to share that I exclusively use air rifles, mainly due to the extensive regulations regarding firearms. I

50 YEARS AGO JANUARY '76

“The Broomhandle Mauser” by Joe Buffer profiled nine variations of Paul Mauser’s design, including a description of changes for serial number ranges and dates. The ornately engraved, silver inlaid and ivory-stocked Bolo Mauser on the cover was a presentation piece for a high-ranking Third Reich police official.



have two Air Arms S510 TRs, sub-12 foot-pounds in .177. These are currently unregulated for adult use in the UK. One of the rifles is fitted with a Zeiss scope and the other a Hikmicro SH50 thermal scope. I also use a Hikmicro LH19 thermal spotter. My quarry is somewhat less impressive, being mostly rabbits and rats with the occasional squirrel. Close to the village where I live is a large estate plagued by rabbits. Informally, I have been asked to help control the rabbits as they make a mess and the burrows are a danger to the horses. There are several well-equipped gamekeepers on the estate, but even a .177 air rifle is quiet and less than lethal on a horse. Almost all my shooting is after dark, and the combination of the spotter for scanning and the scope for dispatching means

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that I've harvested just over 1,000 rabbits so far this year — most of which go back into the food chain. I've been reading G&A most of my life. I especially enjoy Garry James and Patrick Sweeney. Paul Harrowing
Norfolk, UK

BE HONEST, CRAIG

Mr. Boddington needs to be honest and withhold his bias for his .270. He compared the 130-grain Hornady Superformance load for the .270 going 3,060 feet per second (fps) but failed to compare the same brand for the 7mm Magnum, which is a 139-grain bullet going 3,240 fps. Since he only showed the 175-grain Remington Core-Lokt for the 7 Mag., he should have shown both in Core-Lokt and with the 150-grainer. The 7mm Magnum is superior to the .270 in bullet weight, bullet diameter, ballistic coefficient, sectional density, trajectory and energy, if he'd compare the best of each. Ronnie Kay
Louisiana

You are undoubtedly correct. As I've often written, "Figures lie, but liars figure." We can cherry-pick loads and make charts look one way or another. However, my intent was not to deceive. Rather, while keeping the chart short and simple to demonstrate that the old .270 shows up reasonably well against cartridges most consider a mix of faster, more powerful and flatter-shooting. I agree that older .277-caliber cartridges in rifles with a 1-in-10-inch twist cannot compare to the newer .277 cartridges with faster twists and heavier bullets, or to any of the faster

7mms. If I didn't get that point across in the article, it still comes down to the performance you need or want. You might be pleased to know that this year I shot a nice elk with a 7mm PRC and 175-grain ELD-X. I love the .270, but I don't use it for everything.

— C. Boddington

WHY 6.5?

I headed to college in northern Vermont in 1965 — more to hunt than study. My father bought me a used Winchester Model 88 in .308 as a high school graduation gift. It had open sights and was my first large-caliber rifle for deer and black bear. In the 60 years since, I've added to my rifle collection thoughtfully, basing it on the game I hunted. Available calibers, bullet ballistics and terminal performance were important to each decision. Gun purchases were made to fill a niche or gap in what I already had and needed, which is why I have questioned the purpose of the 6.5 Creedmoor. Why was it introduced? Why would a hunter rush to buy a rifle chambered in this caliber? At 150 yards, it is ballistically inferior to my Winchester .308. Out to 400 yards, it offers nothing over the 100-year-old .270, especially with new bullets. Out to 800 yards, the 6.5 CM is a ballistic cripple compared to at least a dozen other cartridges, including the .30-'06, .300 Winchester Magnum or .280 Ackley Improved (AI), my favorite. Beyond 1,000 yards, David with a sling and a good stone has a better chance of getting the job done. Every rifle manufacturer seems compelled to include the

6.5 CM in the chamberings offered. All the hunting and gun periodicals — including G&A — have featured articles on this caliber as if it were something revolutionary or a "must have." I suspect many hunters have succumbed to this marketing. Why not have ballistic experts whom we've come to trust expose the 6.5 CM for what it really is? It's a caliber that fills no useful niche. It's a marketing success, but also a cartridge that no hunter needs when compared to superior options. Glen Z. Brooks, MD
Sands Point, New York

FINGER PLACEMENT

I have what my girlfriend calls "sausage fingers." My hands are rather large, and when I grip my pistols, my hand tends to engulf them. Consequently, my index finger likes to naturally grip onto the triggerguard. I was told that this is an outdated way of gripping a gun. My Springfield Armory Echelon has texture everywhere, including the triggerguard as if it's intended to be gripped. To me, it feels natural. My accuracy is spot-on. Why is this grip style considered "old-fashioned?" Louis Chasseur
Email

Putting the index finger of your support hand around the front of the triggerguard is out of fashion, but there is absolutely nothing wrong with it provided you hit what you aim at. World Champion IPSC shooters Jerry Barnhart and Eric Grauffel shoot that way, as well as CZ Custom's Angus Hobdell and several other accomplished professional shooters — as

do I. Triggerguard grippers unite!

— J. Tarr

RANGE ESSENTIALS

I don't know if I missed it in Jack Oller's "The Essentials" ("Range Bag," October 2025), but you certainly need a cleaning rod. Also, if you're a reloader as I am, I always include broken shell extractors, especially for my semiauto Garand, M1A and M1 Carbine. You never know when the case you've reloaded "x" number of times is going to lose its head. Great column.

John Herrera

New Hope, Pennsylvania

SHOTGUN COVERAGE

Please consider this an observation and not a complaint. Are shotguns not worth the mention? I have no data to support this, but I contend that shotgunners spend more money and fire more shots than handgun and rifle shooters. I don't know the criteria for newsworthiness and coverage in Guns & Ammo, but I'm tired of reading reviews of the latest 9mm semiauto handgun with a capacity of 110 rounds versus the previous model that held 98. Please consider some more shotgun coverage in Guns & Ammo. Have you ever been to the Grand American trap shoot? There are guns there — a lot of them! At my skeet field, there are Berettas, Brownings, Caesar Guerinis, Kriegoffs, Perazzis, and once in a while a Remington or Winchester Model 12 or 42. Life is too short to shoot an ugly gun.

John Mills

Howell, Michigan 

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ERIC R. POOLE

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PUBLIC OUTREACH

FOR AS LONG AS I can remember, I've been a fan of stock car racing. My son, Connor, has taken fandom to another level, though. We go to as many races as we can reasonably afford, often paying extra for pit passes. Connor's mission before and after a race is to secure as many autographs as possible — and he's good at it! Popular drivers are easy to identify, despite many having to minimize interactions with fans apart from special events. He recognizes and pursues drivers, crew chiefs, owners, broadcasters and NASCAR leadership, and even spots those attempting to navigate the crowds incognito. Lesser-known drivers are proud to meet with kids like mine, especially those who recognize them and call out their name. Once Connor attracts the attention of a few drivers, autograph seekers rally around him.

Connor has every driver's autograph on cards, hats, and even on pictures of them together at a previous race. He hopes they'll remember him at the next race. In 2024, he started buying two hats for each track, one to keep and another to auction for a children's charity such as St. Jude (st.jude.org). He dreams that teams will eventually seek out a partnership for the effort to do good.

An encounter with owner Richard Childress at the 2024 NASCAR Chicago Street Race made him a VIP. Childress invited us to walk with him between haulers, introducing us to his teams and discussing his favorite shotguns, passion for shooting and his support of the Second Amendment. Though 11 years old, Connor speaks of racing and shooting like an adult, which made it easy for Childress to relate stories of shooting with his

grandsons Austin and Ty Dillon, both Cup Series drivers.

Winchester Ammunition, along with Bass Pro Shops, sponsored the Richard Childress Racing (RCR) No. 3 Chevrolet and driver Austin Dillon for 17 races in 2025. Connor and I received a VIP invite for the 2025 Sonoma race, a legendary road course in California. Dillon didn't win, but he won my support. Prior to the race, RCR staff took us inside the team's hauler for a tour and interview with Austin.



PHOTO: HAROLD HINSON PHOTOGRAPHY



"Anytime I got to go outdoors, I had fun with my grandfather and Dad," said Dillon. "I still love it today. I'm taking my son Ace. He went on a turkey hunt with me this past year. I got him a .22 Winchester, so we're going to start shooting guns a bit. He's excited. He's only five. If I can get him on something this year, that'll be cool, too."

I asked, "Austin, do you have any goals for hunting?"

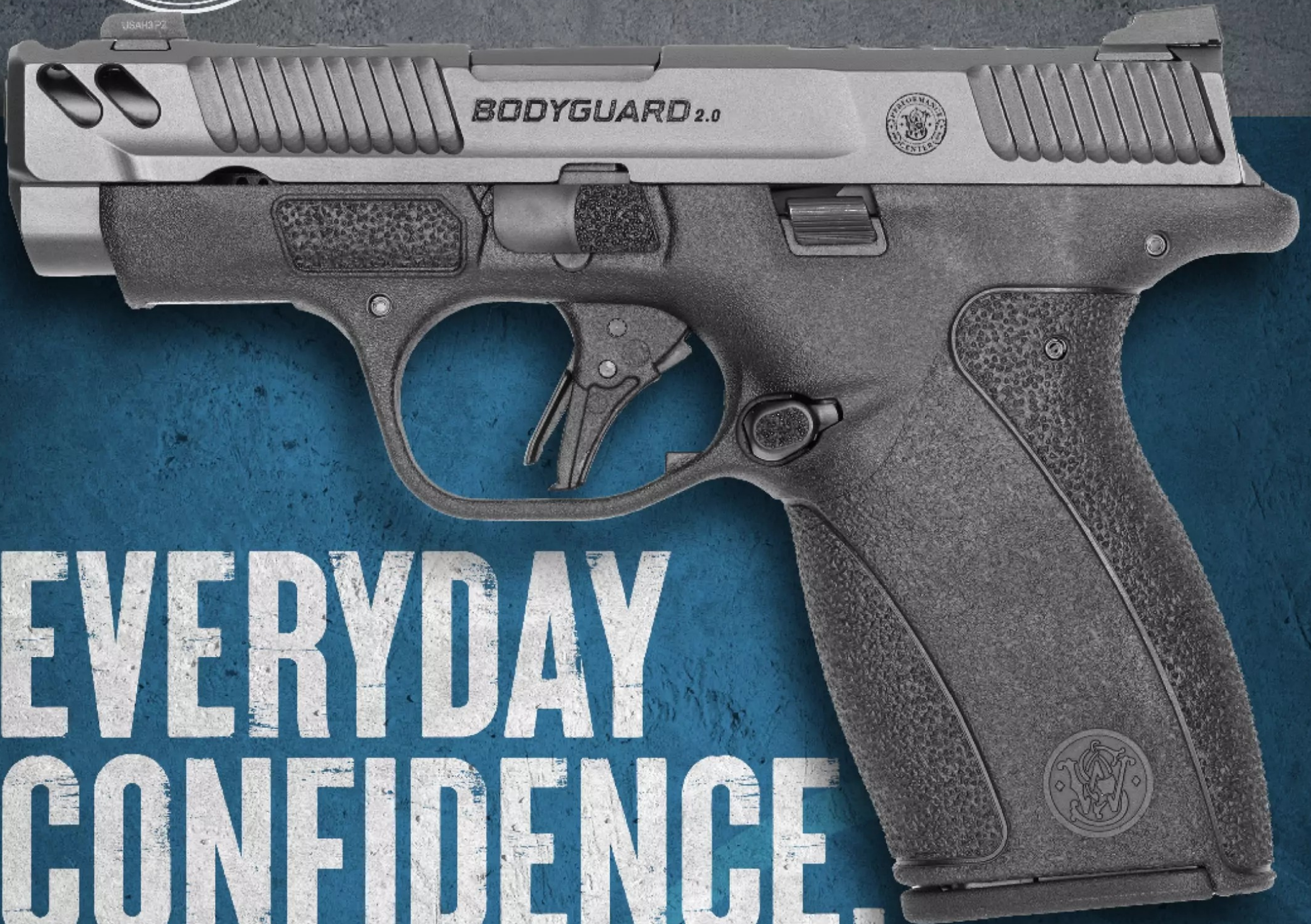
"A turkey slam would be amazing," he said. "As far as deer hunting goes, I'd like to be able to shoot a 190-inch-plus deer. That's one of the top goals, to do it with Dad on my property."

Watching the industry normalized in public arenas gives me pride. Winchester is the only firearm or ammo brand leading an effort to reach and attract new participants from NASCAR's main-

stream audience. After an aggressive driving penalty cost him winning the 2024 Richmond race, Austin Dillon was redeemed on August 16, 2025 — at Richmond. The Winchester brand was displayed prominently on the car. After leading 107 laps, Dillon's win secured the team a spot in the NASCAR playoffs, casting a positive light on RCR, Bass Pro Shops and Winchester that couldn't be ignored.



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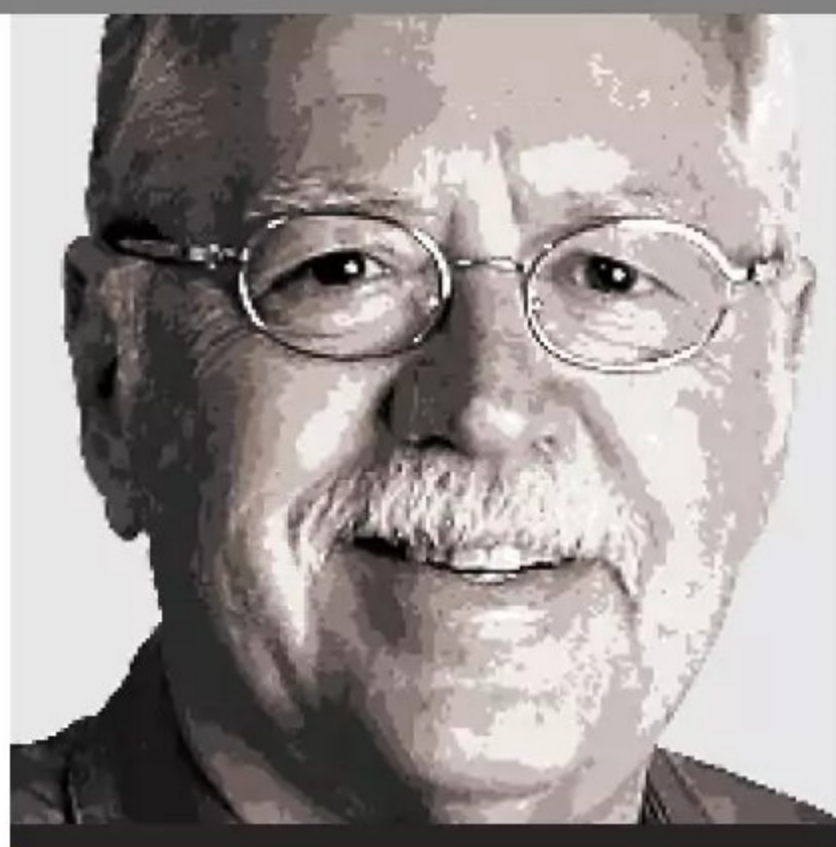
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“The gun’s excellent trigger made it popular with target shooters. The famous marksman and Olympian Walter Winans thought highly of the Fosbery.”



GARRY JAMES

GARRY.JAMES@OUTDOORS.G.COM

IDENTIFICATION & VALUES



SMITH & WESSON MODEL 59 DEVEL COMBAT CONV., 9MM, 98%: \$8,000

DEVEL IS IN THE DETAILS

Q: I would like to know the value of my Full House conversion of the Devel Combat pistol on a Smith & Wesson Model 59. It’s complete with a custom DeSantis holster, tools, two magazines and paperwork. The gun was made in the late 1970s or early 1980s and never fired, except at the factory. Ironically, in 1990, when I purchased the Dornaus & Dixon Bren Ten pistol, I hated everything about it and couldn’t wait to sell or trade it. So, I traded it for this Devel pistol. I know I got beat on this trade after seeing what the Bren Ten commands today, but I never bought guns for investment, only for enjoyment.

A. P.
Email

A: The limited production (234) Full House Devel S&W Model 59 compact-carry auto, built by Charles Kelsey in the 1970s and ’80s — he also downsized Model 39s — is a highly regarded piece that brings very decent money. They don’t often come to market. I’ve seen

one like yours, in excellent condition, selling for north of \$8,000. Even though Bren Tens regularly go for more than that, all in all, it appears you still did just fine. I agree with you, money aside I’d also rather have a Devel conversion of the S&W Model 59 than a Bren Ten.



MORE ON 1911A1 ITHACA MARKINGS

Q: Really enjoy your “ID & Values” column. It’s the first thing I read when I receive a new issue. Thank you for sharing your extensive knowledge and experience. Regarding the email from “D. H.” about a “D44” slide marking on his 1911 Ithaca:

There is much discussion on the CMP Forums, 1911Forum.com and the Colt Forum about the D44 and similar markings. Not sure how one would prove the theory, but there appears to be a direct correlation of the observed markings being the same as the pennant numbers of Allied World War II ships. These were probably

AUCTION BLOCK

A rare Danish Schouboe semiautomatic pistol realized a substantial \$18,800, including premiums, at a May 4, 2025, Rock Island Auction sale. Designed by Jens Theodor Suhr Schouboe, the handgun has the distinction of being one of the most ballistically ambivalent auto pistols ever produced! Its proprietary 11.35mm round employed a 63-grain aluminum-jacket wooden bullet. Developed in 1902, the Schouboe auto was manufactured in limited numbers with various modifications until circa 1917. Originally chambered in 7.65mm caliber, the later 11.35mm version was tested by the United States military who determined it reliable and well-built but considerably underpowered, especially when compared to the 230-grain .45 ACP round. This large-bore example — in fine condition and retaining 90 percent original finish and excellent mechanics — is a prize for any serious collector of transitional semiautos. For information about this and future auctions, visit the Rock Island Auction Company at rockislandauction.com.



Lend-Lease ships built and fully stocked with onboard necessities in the United States for Allies, based on the nations to which the pennants are connected. A sample of the correlations include:

- J347 HMS Persian (Royal Navy Minesweeper)
- J318 HMSC Westmount (Canada Minesweeper)
- J348 HMAS Stawell (Australian Minesweeper)
- J353 HMAS Kiama (Australian)
- D24 HMS Tracker (Royal Navy Escort Carrier)
- D44 HMS Danae (Royal Navy Light Cruiser)

As previously stated, I don't know how that linkage might be proved today, but in my opinion there are too many observed slide marking and pennant number associations to be mere chance.

K. L.
Email

A: Many thanks for your very thoughtful observations. You could very well be on to something here! If other readers have evidence or any other theories, I'd be glad to hear them.

WEBLEY-FOSBERY FIND

Q: I had never heard of an "automatic revolver" until I came across this one. What was the back story, and why didn't American gunmakers try it while early auto reliability was questionable? How much would this long-barreled example be worth? Serial No. 32XX was probably an early entry.

K. G.
Thousand Oaks, California

A: Designed by Maj. George Vincent Fosbery, the Webley Automatic Revolver first appeared in 1901 and was manufactured until 1924. Calibers included .455 Webley and .38 Colt (rare). The .455 chambering held six rounds, and the .38 held eight rounds. Offered in military and target styles, the clever contrivance was manufactured until the mid-1920s. It looked much like a standard Webley revolver and featured that arm's popular stirrup latch and break-open ejection system. It was tested by the British and American militaries. Though found robust, there were problems with debris



affecting performance. The cylinder was not rotated by cocking the hammer but by a sliding two-part frame that possessed a stud working through an angular groove on the cylinder when the top portion moved rearward under recoil. These guns were never officially accepted for military service, but many were privately purchased by officers. They were found to be particularly well suited to air service, as the fouling problem was considerably decreased and spent cases wouldn't rattle around in a plane's cockpit. The gun's excellent trigger pull made it popular with target shooters. The famous marksman and Olympian Walter Winans thought highly of the Fosbery.

Your Model 1903 Target was manufactured in 1906. From what I can see, the condition appears to be decent, though I'd hit it with some oil and carefully remove the light rust visible on portions of the piece. These pistols are popular with collectors, and prices have soared of late. Assuming your gun has a good bore and is mechanically sound, I would value it at \$10,000 to \$12,000. There was an American automatic revolver — the "Union" in .32 S&W — manufactured in



small numbers between 1910 and 1912.

DE LISLE CARBINE UPDATE

Q: I enjoyed your story on the silenced World War II British De Lisle Carbine in the Guns & Ammo January 2025 issue. The replica made by U.S. Armament Mfg. appears to be a nice piece, however, I was a bit concerned about the Enfield rear sight. Was this common on these guns?

V. B.
Email

A: As I mentioned in the article, a very few were likely set up with Enfield Mark III rear sights. The majority used a modified version of the Lanchester machine gun sight. Following the article, the people at U.S. Armament Mfg. (usarmamentmfg.com, 717-721-4570) decided to make changes to its

HOLLYWOOD HARDWARE

This short-barreled 12mm Gyrojet rocket pistol was carried by actor Dean Martin as spy "Matt Helm" in the 1966 send-up of early James Bond films, "The Silencers." Helm made use of an array of fantastical arms and devices as a secret agent of his employer, "ICE," or "Intelligence and Counter Espionage." At the time of filming, the Gyrojet was relatively new. It employed a novel design and fired projectiles propelled by miniature rocket engines. Less than 2,000 were manufactured between 1962 and '75. (Courtesy of the National Firearms Museum, Fairfax, Virginia, and Cinema Weaponry, Glendale, California.)





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DWM P.08 LUGER (CUSTOM), 9MM, <60%: \$900 EA.



product. These include a Lanchester-style sight, ejector and new stockwork. The gun is now an even closer

reproduction of the original than before! I've seen an upgraded version and was very impressed. The guns

shoot well and the suppressor works beautifully.

HEIRLOOM LUGERS

Q: Love your column and never thought I would need your help, but here goes: I inherited two low serial number "DWM" P.08 Lugers from my dad. One is a 1916, serial No. 30XX, and the other a 1917, serial no. 76XX (no letter suffixes). Both are in excellent shape. I remember going to gun shows in the early 1960s with my father when Lugers were \$25. He picked out two nice ones and had Mike Schrank's Smoke 'N Gun in Waukegan, Illinois, (smokengun.org) add the stag horn grips, paint the ends of the wood magazines, plate the triggers gold, do some

engraving and silver painting on the bodies. Total cost was roughly \$200 for both. The bores are immaculate, and the springs are like new. With the work done to these, what would you say is the value? I plan to keep them as a set and pass on to my son or one of my many grandsons.

D. G.
Email

A: Your 1916 and 1917 DWM (Deutsche Waffen und Munitionsfabriken) World War I-vintage P.08 Lugers are among the most common versions of the ilk. In good, unaltered 80 to 90 percent condition, the value per pistol is in the \$2,500 to \$2,750 range. Unfortunately, while quite attractive, the extensive rework on your



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FOR ALL THAT YOU HOLD CLOSE



SPENCER TAP-ACTION PISTOL, <60%: \$1,350

examples has destroyed any collector value they might have had. If they possess decent bores and are mechanically sound, I would price them at around \$850 to \$1,000 each, strictly as shooters.

TAP ACTION PISTOL

Q: I have enclosed some pictures of a pistol my great-grandfather brought

back from Europe in the early-to-mid 1800s. Much is apparent, an over-and-under flintlock, folding trigger, sliding safety, and side lever to switch barrels. The name on the left side of the frame is "Spencer", and on the right, "Birming", though barely discernable. The barrels posed a question for us: Are they loaded with a ramrod, or are the barrels removed, powder poured in after an oversized

ball, and then the barrel returned to increase velocity, possibly? We question the design of the front of the barrels; Are the grooves for the use of a wrench for removal? Your expertise and experience is needed to give us an "A" or "D" — hopefully not an "F" — for our endeavors. We don't plan to sell it but would invite your idea of its value. Most of the finish remains and it works like a clock.

C. L. Pray, Montana

A: Your suppositions are close to the mark. You have what is known as a "tap-action" pistol. The small lever on the side allows the shooter to fire two shots, one at a time, by rotating a flash chamber and then manually cocking the hammer and

lowering the steel. The barrels are removed by the use of a special key — hence the muzzle grooves — loaded from the rear with ball and powder, and then replaced. Priming was introduced into the pan separately. Your little pistol, made by John Spencer of Birmingham, England, dates from around 1800. These guns were produced by a variety of makers toward the latter part of the 18th century and into the first couple of decades of the 19th. Boxlock actions were employed, and frames could be either steel or brass. In addition to Britain, tap-action pistols were made in Belgium and France. The pistol in the photos appears to be complete and in decent condition. I'd value it at \$1,200 to \$1,500. **CA**

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JAMES TARR

STRESS TEST

IF YOU MUST use a firearm in self-defense, your heart rate will undoubtedly spike before it's over. Hopefully, you have enough situational awareness to see trouble coming before it arrives, but you could be lying in bed when the sound of breaking glass wakes you. (Cue the pounding heart, increased blood pressure and sweaty hands.)

No matter what happens, you will experience physical stress in a defensive fight, even if it's mentally induced. How many of us practice for stress, though? One reason I promote action pistol competition is because it's great stress inoculation training. Not only are we physically exerting ourselves while competing, but there is usually a mental stress component as well. Competitors shoot alone in front of a range officer, in front of spectators, and maybe some friends. You know they'll be recording your result on their phones, too.

Physical stress — mainly in the form of an elevated heart rate — affects the speed and accuracy of a person's shooting capability. I'm not splitting the atom here; It is common sense. While I know law enforcement and the military often deliberately add stress and physical exertion into the shooting curriculum, citizens — i.e., the real "first responders" — usually do not. So, allow me to describe a few experiments that you can perform on yourself.

For background, I'm in good — maybe very good — shape for my age of 57 years. I lift weights at least four times a week, generally light weight and high reps. I do half-an-hour of cardio — jogging or the equivalent — three times a week. The number one goal of every workout is not to injure myself. I have to work around a shoulder issue, plantar fasciitis, and perhaps the first twinges of arthritis in one knee. (Yippee!)



You can feel exhausted and out of breath, and still pull a trigger quickly. The question is, "How does physical exertion affect accuracy?" To measure exertion, I decided heart rate was the best metric. I came up with a simple test: Set up a target at 10 yards and fire 10 shots offhand, then measure the group. Do this five times to get an average group size,

using your current carry gun, and preferably the load of ammo you carry for defense.

HEARTS RACIN'

I did three sets of this drill. The first five groups were fired with a resting heart rate of 80 beats per minute (BPM) to start. The second group was fired with a heart rate of at least 130 BPM, i.e., moderate exertion. The third group was with a 170 BPM heart rate for maximum exertion. I used a Fitbit to measure heart rate on my left wrist. When I do cardio, I keep my heart rate above 150 BPM for half an hour and usually max out the last 3 to 5 minutes at 170-plus

BPM. I knew this was something I could handle without a trip to the emergency room. Know your limits, too.

If I shot slowly to get better groups, my heart rate would have time to slow down, which would be counterproductive for the drill. So, I settled on a 20-second time limit to fire each of the 10-shot groups. It's not "fast," but not so long that my heart rate would have time to return to normal.

At a baseline resting heart rate, my group size was affected by my focus, sight alignment and trigger control. I was deliberate and used all the available time to get the tightest group possible. There was the occasional flyer, but my five 10-shot groups averaged 3.7 inches. I observed that at the end of the 20 seconds of shooting, my heart rate increased 5 to 10 BPM. I was just standing there, so that increased heart rate was as much a result of mental focus



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The author recommends cardiovascular exercise immediately prior to shooting to improve performance for shooting under stress. This can include jogging in place, leg lifts, or pushups. Too many pushups may skew results by overworking chest muscles.

as it was physical stress.

To get my heart rate above 130 BPM, I performed cardio by jogging in place. I did leg lifts and a few pushups, but only a few; Working chest muscles can affect shooting results. My accuracy decreased, but not by much. At 130-plus BPM, I was breathing heavily and sweating a little, but that's about it. By the end of the 20 seconds of shooting, my heart rate usually dropped 8 to 10 BPM.

For the final stage, I ran sprints to get my heart rate at 170-plus BPM. Per the American Heart Association, the "maximum" heart rate is 220 minus your age, which is 163 for me. When exercising we are only supposed to aim for 85 percent of that, which is 139 BPM for me. The "gunfight," "running-for-your-life," and "Oh-my-God-am-I-going-to-die" exertion level is 170 BPM.

When you get to 170 BPM and then try to shoot, you'll find it's hard to hold a gun steady. You're probably breathing too hard, and your heart is pounding. If your hands are sweaty, that's another complication. You can't hold your breath for 20 seconds to steady your aim because your body needs too much oxygen. So, either hold it as long as you can and then start gasping and heaving, or breathe through it and try to time your shooting with your breathing, much as a rifleman would when trying to make a precise long-distance

ACCURACY TEST

10-SHOT GROUPS OFFHAND AT A 10-YARD TARGET (AVG. OF FIVE GROUPS)		
STARTING HEART RATE	AVG. GROUP SIZE (IN.)	ENDING HEART RATE (BPM)
80	3.7	88
130	4.2	122
170	5.6	153
USPSA-STYLE FIELD COURSE SPEED X ACCURACY		
STARTING HEART RATE	TIME/POINTS/HF*	ENDING HEART RATE
80	13.2/93/7.04	88
130	13.6/90/6.61	123
170	14.5/88/6.07	155
*HF = Hit Factor, or points per second		

shot. Accuracy will likely suffer, as well as our ability to focus. You'll use every bit of the time available, too. When I was done shooting each stage — after those 20 seconds — my heart rate dropped about 15 BPM. My groups were 50 percent larger than when I was shooting without exertion. (Don't be surprised.)


THE FIELD COURSE

Curious to see how shooting a simple United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA)-style field course affected heart rate and vice versa, I set up a sample stage with 10 targets. Each target was to receive two rounds — 20 rounds for 100 points total. I'd need to reload at some point, too. After the draw, I'd need to take about 10 steps while shooting and moving. I

ran the stage five times each starting at 80 BPM, 130 BPM, and 170 BPM, and kept track of the time and points, scoring it USPSA style — points per second equals “Hit Factor.”

At 80 BPM, it took me just more than 13 seconds each run. I learned 13 seconds is an anaerobic time frame; It's just too quick to raise my heart rate much. At 130 BPM, I didn't really have any problems, but I was having to slow down a bit, and my hits weren't quite as good. At 170 BPM, the wheels didn't come off, but they were definitely a bit wobbly! I badly fumbled a reload on one run, costing me about a second and a half. I was fighting my body to get effective hits on target.

Shooting isn't physical enough to raise our heart rate enough to matter, but the mental focus required does take a physical toll, especially when doing it repeatedly. I learned that an elevated heart rate due to exercise, stress, etc., does negatively affect my shooting — but not as much as I expected. Just how much it affects you will depend on your shooting skill and physical conditioning.

U.S. Army Gen. George Patton is credited for saying, “Train like you fight and fight like you train.” It's good advice for anyone carrying a gun for self-defense. Even if your experience is just standing, drawing and firing two shots in a dark retail parking lot, at some point your heart rate is going to go up. Shouldn't you know what happens to your performance when your body is stressed? Practice shooting while you're panting and sweating. If you ever face armed violence, shooting while stressed won't be new. 



Be mindful of where you exercise, especially at a range where debris, cartridge cases and lead are present.

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SIG Sauer KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II



RICHARD NANCE



Announced in 2024, the SIG Sauer KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II was re-engineered. Though it shares many features with its predecessor, upgrades optimized its performance including an optical system to improve color accuracy and low-light acquisition by 95 percent.

Intuitively positioned buttons atop the housing enable the user to factor wind direction and speed. The unit also incorporates a digital compass and is compatible with the onX Hunt app (onxmaps.com). **\$2,700**



CLEARLY BETTER

THESE DAYS, thinking of binoculars solely as a source of magnification is like thinking your smartphone is only for making and receiving calls. There are so many technological advancements with modern ballistic rangefinding binoculars that using them feels like cheating. For instance, let's consider the SIG Sauer KILO10-ABS HD GEN II.

Developed with customer feedback received on the original KILO10K-ABS HD in 2021, SIG Sauer improved the system with HDX glass with SpectraCoat anti-reflective coatings for truer color and better low-light performance. As good as the original binos were, some reported a "bluish" tint. SIG Sauer reported that the tint was reduced by 95 percent, making the Gen II optics extremely clear. Colors downrange are vibrant, and image quality is razor-sharp.

The GEN II is still compatible with the SIG Sauer Ballistic Date Xchange (BDX) 2.0 and the Elite version of Applied Ballistics Quantum Ballistics app. Either app enables users to upload ballistic profiles to the binoculars through Bluetooth. Ballistic profiles are stored in the binoculars, so there's no need to keep the app running to get a ballistic solution.

When you range a target, the distance appears in the Heads-Up Display (HUD) visible in the right eyepiece. It's shown as Line of Sight (LOS) or Angle Modified Range (AMR).

The elevation and windage corrections are seen directly below the displayed distance. Arrows indicating the direction of the correction (up, left, right) appear next to each correction. Underneath is the bullet's velocity and energy for the distance ranged. Such information is useful in determining whether there is sufficient velocity for a bullet to expand properly. The KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II can store up to 30 profiles. The active profile is displayed on the start screen.

Environmental data is fixed with most ballistic range-finding binoculars, meaning the information you input into the ballistics app is what you're dealing with. If the weather or elevation changes dramatically, you must update the app and send the ballistics table to the binoculars to ensure accurate calculations. The KILO10K-ABS HD (GEN I and GEN II) have a built-in weather station that provides real-time environmental information for adjusting the ballistic data.

The KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II features a GEN II Lightwave DSP ranging engine with extended range (XR) mode. It uses the industry's first Active-Matrix Organic Light Emitting Diode (AMOLED) display for range and information presentation. The AMOLED display provides relevant ballistic data in a crisp red circle, duplex or square reticle.

An onboard compass allows users to create waypoints using Basemaps or onX Hunt apps. This can be handy on a

hunt where you must take a shot on an animal from an elevated position. When you set out to locate the animal, things can look different from the ground, especially when terrain prevents you from approaching the animal directly from your shooting position. A waypoint guides the user precisely to where the animal was when you took the shot. Hopefully, it's still there. If not, at least you have a good starting point to track from.


The GEN II incorporates buttons on the left side of the housing that enables users to update wind direction and speed on the fly to increase your odds of making the shot.

While technology still can't make wind calls, being able to immediately change wind direction and speed to reflect what you're seeing through the binoculars is an advantage. The "Hunt" mode simplifies the process further by enabling you to account for changes in wind direction and speed with a single press of a button.

The KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II ballistic rangefinding binoculars are as user-friendly as they are technologically advanced. Any hunter or long-range shooter is bound to benefit from the image quality and information they provide.

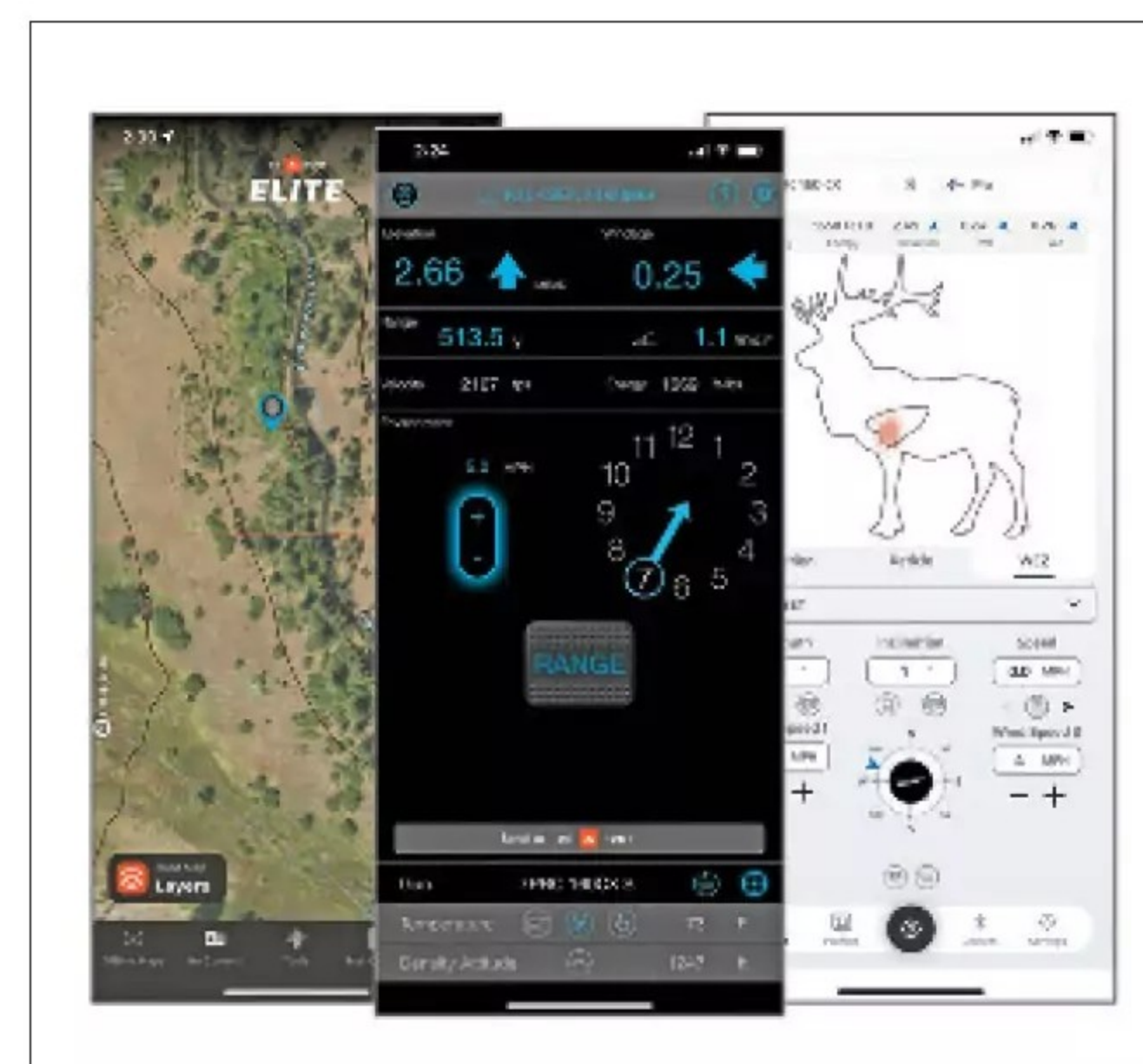
The KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II comes with a storage case, neck strap, lens pen and two batteries.

There's even a card with a QR code for 50 percent off a SIG Sauer bino harness. The eyepieces include diopter adjustment and multi-positional eye cups, which help make the KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II comfortable to use.

The KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II are backed by SIG Sauer's Infinite Guarantee, so no warranty card is required and its fully transferable — forever. That peace of mind only adds to the performance the KILO10K-ABS HD GEN II already provides. Visit sigsauer.com for more information. 



The KILO10K-ABS buttons are intuitively arranged for quick program navigation. These few buttons afford access to "Wind," "Range," and "Menu" functions.



The KILO10K-ABS can support the onX map app on smart devices. Designate a location with the binos and the app can use the information to later navigate to the marked position.

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Should manufacturers offer sub-3-pound triggers?



TOM BECKSTRAND

TRIGGERED

JUST ABOUT EVERY FIREARM REVIEW includes comments about the trigger. It is a critical interface between the shooter and the firearm, so it sees application every time a round fires. We talk about “creep,” “pull weight” and “crispiness” of the let-off. Let’s not forget overtravel, too!

Bloviating about the finer characteristics of a great trigger is something no firearms enthusiast should avoid. It comes at a cost, though. Falling in love with the finer things in life can lead to some hurt feelings when we have to do without. This unfortunate phenomenon is running rampant in the trigger world with many publicly shaming rifle manufacturers for failure to put anything other than a trigger that will adjust to 1 pound or lighter on any rifle! The mentality of more and better performance is fine, as long as it comes with an understanding of the limitations and risks involved.

BUILDING BLOCKS

The basic components of a trigger are the housing, trigger, sear, and several pins and springs. The two parts we’re interested in are the trigger and the sear. The amount of engagement between the trigger and the sear — combined with the amount of spring force pressing the two components together — is what creates the resistance we feel when pressing the trigger. There are two ways to reduce the resistance we feel. The first is to reduce the amount of engagement, i.e., “contact,” between the trigger and sear. The second is to reduce the spring force that pushes the two together.

The world of aftermarket triggers is pretty awesome. Brands such as Geissele, Huber, Jard, Jewel, Timney, TriggerTech, and others, make life for riflemen delightful. They use rigid housings and premium manufacturing techniques to ensure surfaces are true and square so engagement and spring weight can be run right down to almost nothing while still being safe — most of the time. I’ve personally had a factory rifle with one of these premium triggers fail to engage the sear when cycling the bolt aggressively. I was shooting a rifle match

and had adjusted the trigger weight to 1 pound. I was on the clock and ran the bolt like I had many times before only to find that the trigger had failed to engage the sear. The trigger was dead. I quickly lifted the bolt handle and closed it again before firing the shot. This happened three or four times during the match. Even though I had a premium trigger in my rifle, I’d adjusted the pull weight too low. The spring force pressing the trigger and sear together wasn’t strong enough to keep the two from slipping past each other when I quickly cycled the bolt. Everything was fine when I started the match, but a little grit deposited in the trigger housing from a blowing wind was enough to give the trigger fits.

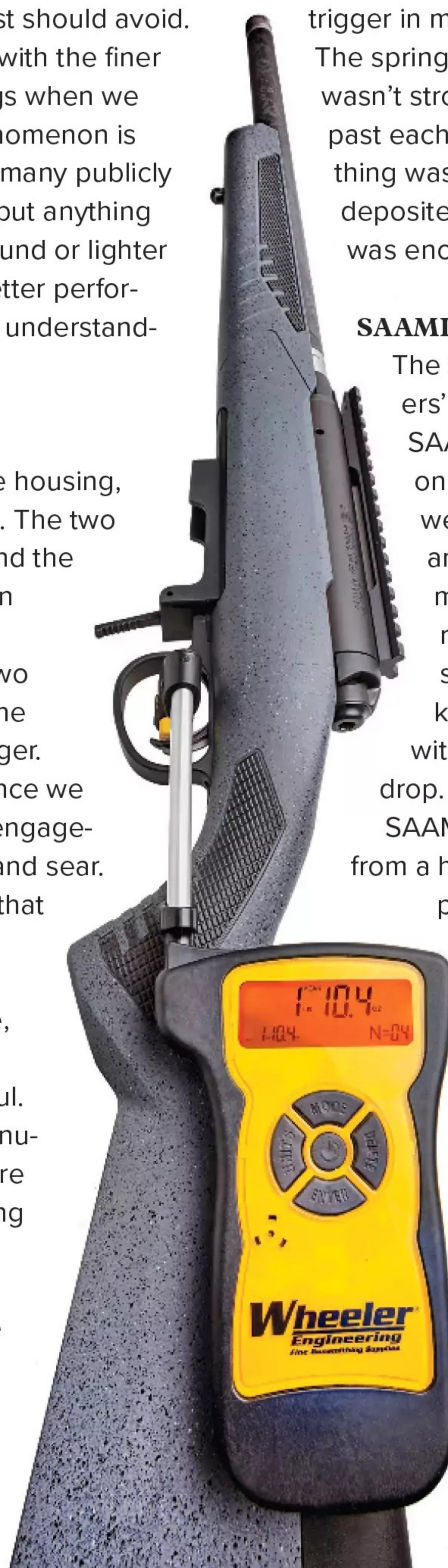
SAAMI SAYS ...

The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers’ Institute (SAAMI) is familiar with this concern. SAAMI gives guidance to rifle manufacturers on what it feels is a safe standard for trigger weights. Its guidance ensures adequate sear and trigger engagement to keep rifles safe, no matter the environmental conditions or how roughly the rifle might be handled. The drop standards are published for those interested in knowing how SAAMI makes sure a trigger can withstand rough use, and perhaps an accidental drop.

SAAMI’s test procedure is to drop the firearm from a height of 4 feet onto a 1-inch thick rubber pad placed over concrete. The chamber should

have a primed case, with the remaining magazine filled with functioning dummy cartridges. The trigger is set at its minimum pull weight. There are six different drops to survive: Vertical with muzzle up, vertical with muzzle down, horizontal with the triggerguard up, horizontal with the triggerguard down, horizontal with left side up, and horizontal with left side down. At no point can the primed case fire.

When the trigger is set to minimum pull weight, there will be little spring tension pushing the trigger and sear together. While some triggers allow for adjusting the sear





The Savage AccuTrigger introduced an innovative safety blade that must be pressed before the trigger can be pulled.



The single-stage pull of TriggerTech Remington 700 Diamond can be measured in ounces, between 4 and 32. **\$345**

engagement, most just allow adjustment of spring weight. Either way, it's not usually too difficult to get the sear to slip off the trigger at the minimum pull weight. Many triggers will pass these tests when clean, but as I found out at my rifle match, once they get a little dirty, they cannot be counted on to function reliably. This is why SAAMI encourages rifle manufacturers to install triggers that cannot be adjusted below 3 pounds. Not every manufacturer listens, though, which is their prerogative. However, it's important as endusers for us to understand our triggers and why they are the way they are.

There are a lot of rifles on the market with triggers that adjust to less than 3 pounds, and they get used every day to great effect. I have several rifles such as these. We get away with it because rifles are rarely dropped when loaded. Also, I don't know anyone with a 1-inch rubber pad over concrete attempting to re-create SAAMI protocols and test the triggers in their personal rifles. A good field expedient test that I use — but that the rifle that failed me in my match passed — is to ensure the rifle is empty, grab the barrel near the muzzle and smash the butt pad onto the ground as hard as you dare. I like to do this a few times. If doing this in the house, ensure that your wife is not around because it makes a ruckus that she will likely find alarming. The next part of the field test is to run the bolt forward and close it as hard and fast as possible. My competition rifle passed this test, only to develop problems at the match when conditions degraded.



Gunwerks' Nexus rifles feature a single-stage TriggerTech trigger with an adjustment range of 2 to 4 pounds.

Cassette triggers are popular for ARs. TriggerTech's 1½- to 4-pound Diamond is offered with a curved or flat face. **\$315**

Just because a rifle passes the field test when clean is not a guarantee that it will always do so. Since most rifle triggers get as much maintenance as the lawnmower sitting in my garage, light pull weights are something a rifleman needs to check from time to time. (Also, I suggest that you make cleaning the trigger an annual task.)

Triggers are more complicated than most realize, and they have the most crucial task on the firearm: Ensure the cartridge fires only when directed. A few ten-thousandths of an inch in engagement and a little spring pressure are all that's allowed to make this happen. Trigger designs have changed little in the last few decades because there's only so many ways to address this issue. However, we're seeing incremental improvements due to advances in manufacturing and engineering individual trigger components to ensure the inertia of each trigger component is balanced around its point of rotation. Properly balanced components have a reduced risk of slipping when jarred.

I support whatever is best for your wants and needs. We are all adults, so we get to make adult decisions. However, my hope is that we'll quit giving rifle manufacturers a hard time for adhering to SAAMI's guidance of giving factory rifles a trigger that measures no less than 3 pounds. Manufacturers can't predict who will purchase its rifles, how they'll maintain it, or if customers will even read the owner's manual. As a result, they have to build rifles that'll withstand just about any type of mishandling under any condition. It's safe, and 3 pounds is still a very nice trigger. **G&A**

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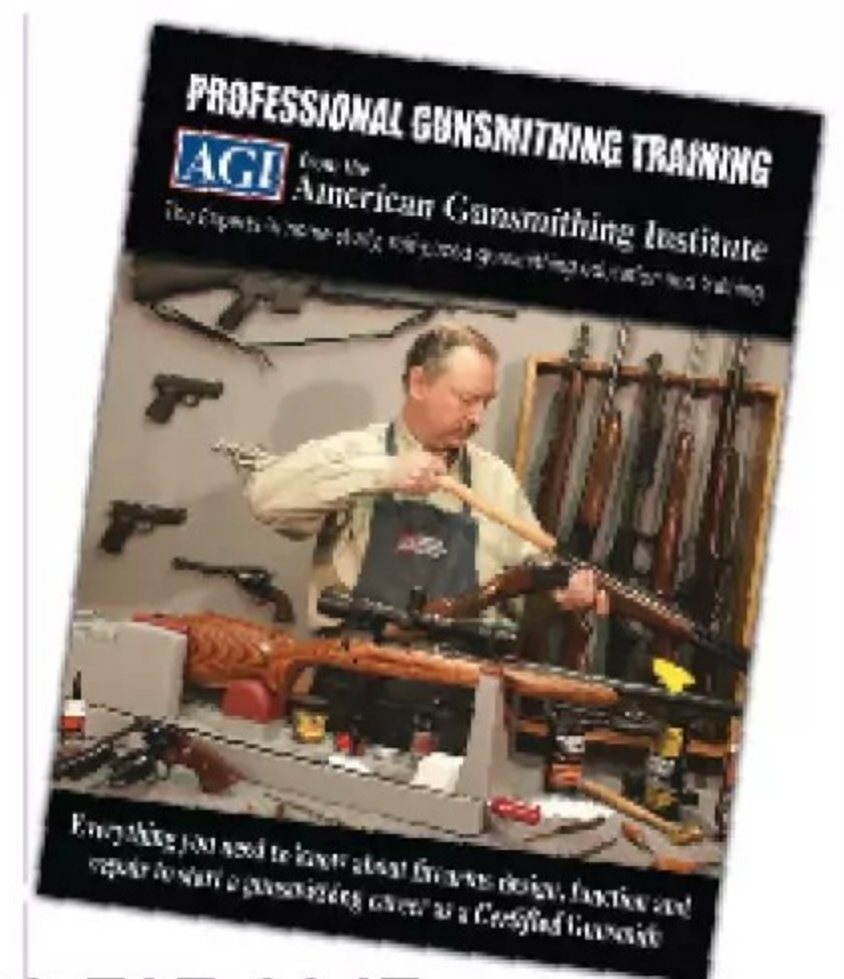
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Q *Speakeasy*



The Q Speakeasy is an all-stainless, .30-caliber suppressor optimized for use with subsonic .300 Blackout cartridges.

Q SPEAKEASY	
CALIBER	.30
LENGTH	8.5 in. (8.25 in., net added)
DIAMETER	1.75 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb. (tested)
MATERIAL	Stainless steel
FINISH	Melonite
ACCESSORIES	Rearend (muzzle device)
FULL-AUTO RATED	Yes
MSRP	\$850
MANUFACTURER	Q, 603-294-0047, liveqordie.com

NOT A NIGHTCLUB

IF YOU'RE A CAR GUY, you've heard the maxim, "There's no replacement for displacement." You can turbocharge an engine and upgrade various bits and pieces, but the bigger engine brings more muscle to the street. Displacement requires volume, though.

With cans, sound suppression happens when you slow the speed of gases escaping the muzzle. This is accomplished two ways: Baffle design and internal volume. The Q Speakeasy is a new silencer with established and proven features, including massive volume, something many contemporary designs have been shrinking away from.

Q is an interesting company founded by Kevin Brittingham. Brittingham was with Advanced Armament Corp. (AAC) when the U.S. Navy SEALs looked to replace the aging HK MP5SD. The SEALs were interested in ARs chambered in the wildcat .300 Whisper cartridge, which evolved into the .300 AAC Blackout and the Honey Badger carbine. The Honey Badger was significantly lighter than the MP5SD while being just as quiet when fed subsonic ammunition

tipped with a good suppressor. Q makes the Honey Badger (\$3,150, liveqordie.com), as well as several other notable niche firearms and suppressors. The company introduced two steel .30-caliber suppressors in 2025, the Blind Tiger (\$800) and the Speakeasy (\$850). G&A secured a sample of the Speakeasy for testing. Both the Blind Tiger and Speakeasy are rated for all .30-caliber cartridges and are full-auto rated, but they have been specifically designed and optimized for the .300 Blackout. These two suppressors are identical except for length. The Blind Tiger is shorter (7 inches). The Speakeasy is longer (8.5 inches). Q claims the Speakeasy is the quietest on the market to suppress subsonic .300 Blackout loads.

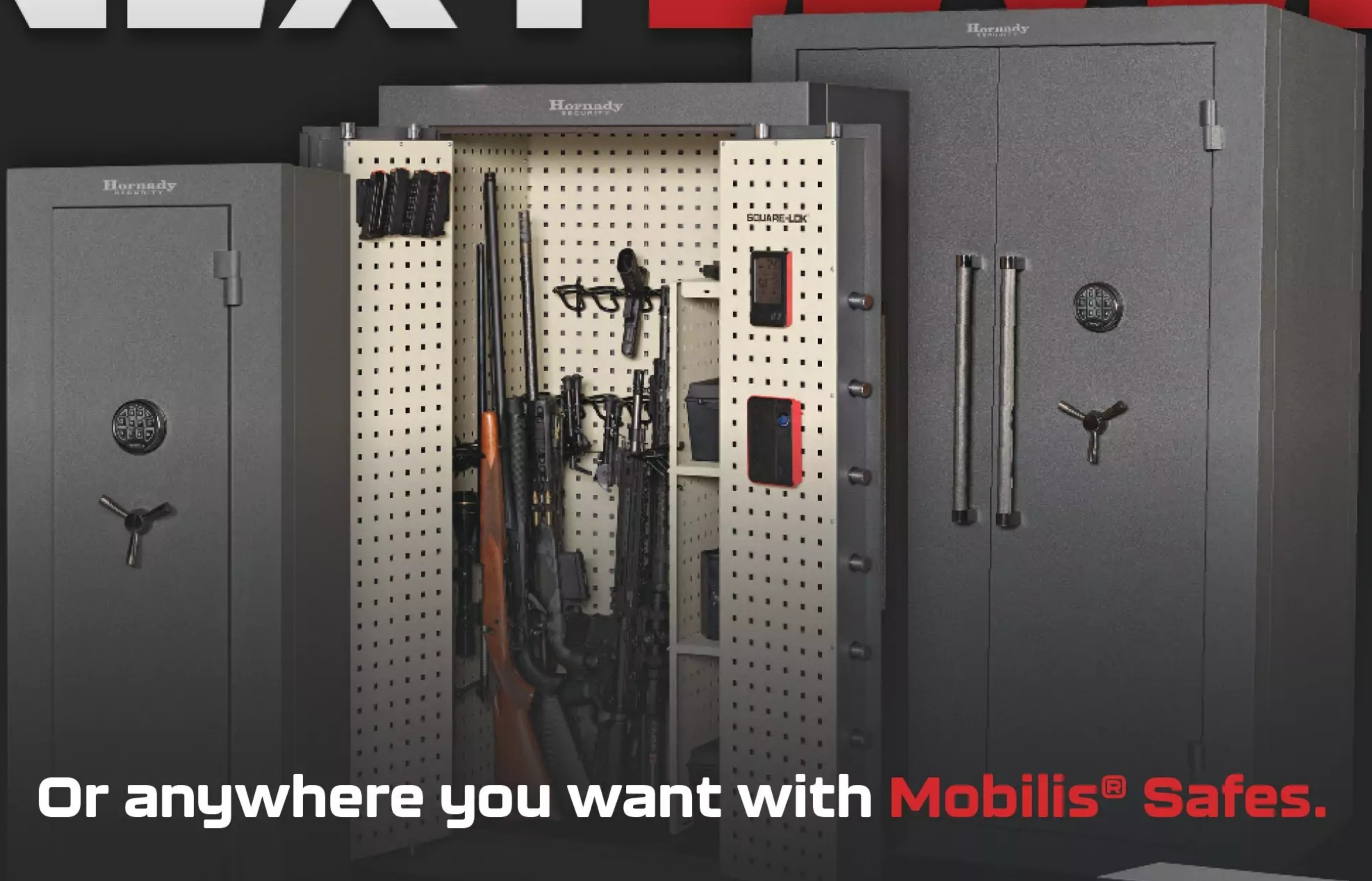
MATERIAL PROCESS

The Speakeasy has all stainless-steel construction with a Melonite finish inside and out, giving it a matte black appearance. It has a 1¾-inch diameter and weighs exactly 1 pound. As suppressors go, it is big though not that heavy

PHOTOS: ANDY GROSSMAN



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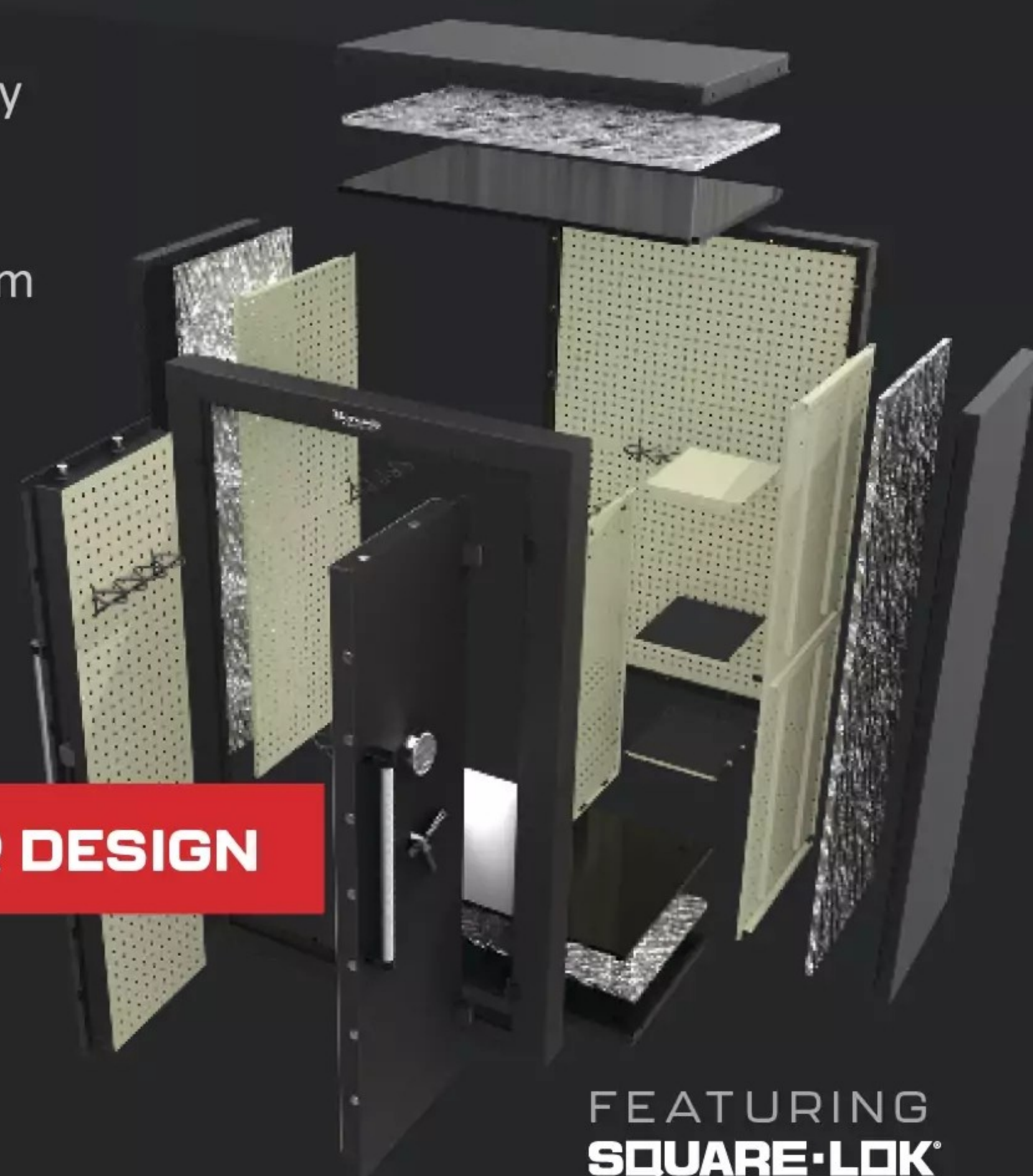
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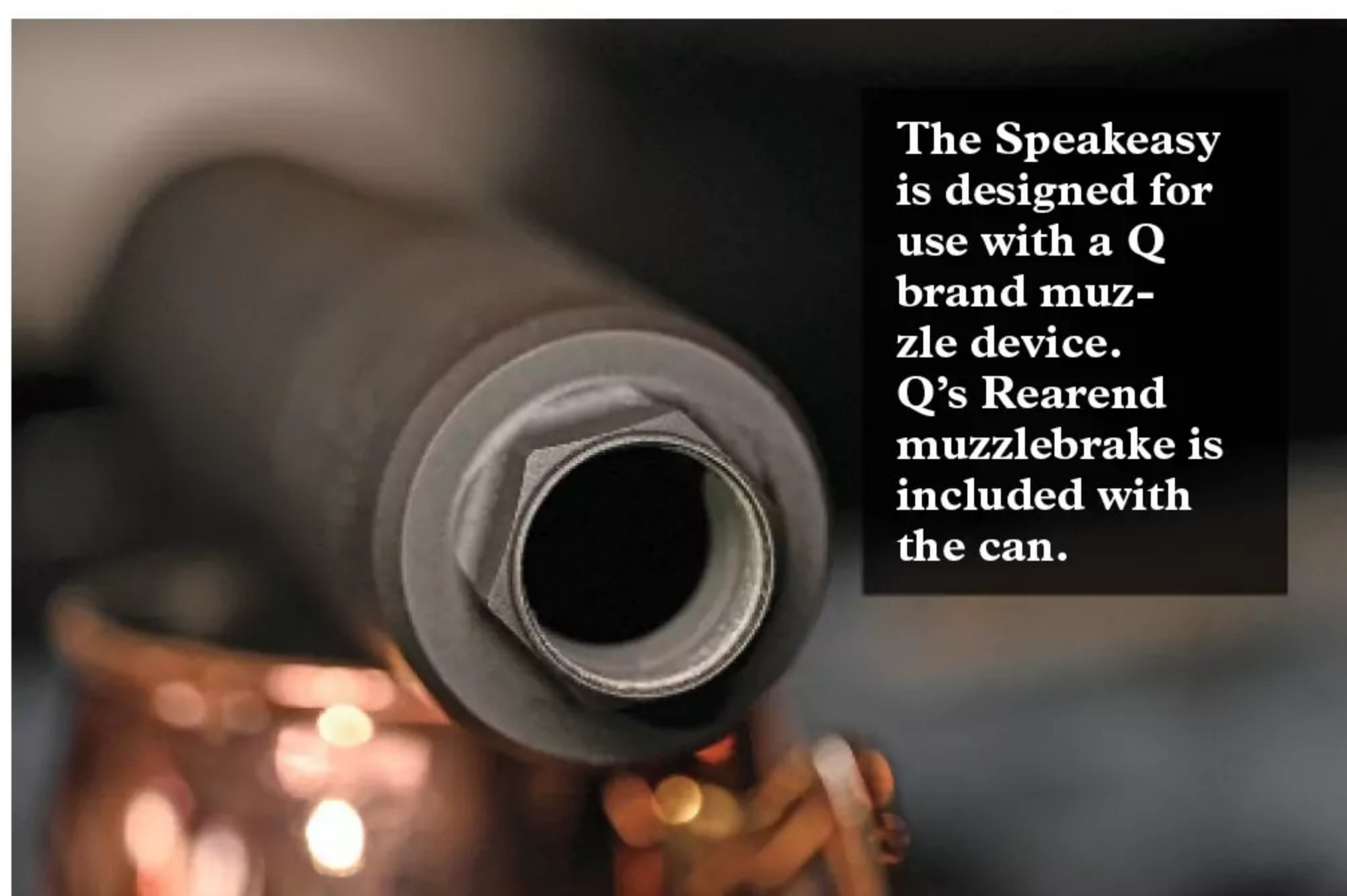
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The Speakeasy is designed for use with a Q brand muzzle device. Q's Rearend muzzlebrake is included with the can.



The Speakeasy's design produces almost no muzzle flash when paired with subsonic .300 Blackout loads, even in low light.

due to its construction, especially for its size.

The Speakeasy suppressor offers tubeless construction with 10 baffles inside, not to include the endcap. It is all one piece and threads onto a Q taper-mount muzzle device — either a Rearend (one is included with the suppressor) or Q's Cherry Bomb muzzlebrake and suppressor mount.

With the Speakeasy, Q went “old school.” Baffles are a deep-draw stamping process. Suppressors with stamped baffles are nothing new, but they do provide advantages. Steel baffles have thinner walls than you'll see with most 3D-printed baffles while being just as strong. Thinner baffles, combined with its tubeless design, result in a lighter-than-expected 1-pound weight while offering huge volume inside. In fact, even though the Speakeasy is all stainless-steel construction, it is just lighter than Q's all-titanium Thunder Chicken (\$1,125), which is a 7.62 silencer that's roughly the same size. The same is true when comparing the all-steel Blind Tiger to the fast-attach and all-titanium Trash Panda (\$1,050).

I noted the baffles in the Speakeasy have the standard cone shape, and the initial blast baffle has six small round vent holes on the periphery. A Q representative said, “The baffles are engineered for maximum internal volume and consistent gas flow, translating to quieter performance at the shooter's ear, downrange and with more consistent dispersion.”

“Q”D

The Rearend is a fast-attach muzzlebrake that's 1.71-inches long, adding just more than an inch to the overall length of your gun. It has tapered threads, and the suppressor locks up tight. The Rearend is a variant of Q's well-known Cherry Bomb muzzle device. It is a muzzlebrake with dozens of small vent holes, and the Rearend is identical except for how it mates with the barrel. The Rearend is meant for barrels with a 90-degree shoulder. It is constructed of 17-4 stainless steel and weighs 2 ounces. It uses a half-inch socket on the front for easy install and removal. Unlike the Cherry Bomb, the rear of the Rearend has 3/4-inch wrench flats in case the muzzle device gets stuck in the can. Q recommends Rocksett to attach the Rearend to a barrel. When mounted, the Speakeasy extends about 8¼ inches beyond the end of the barrel.

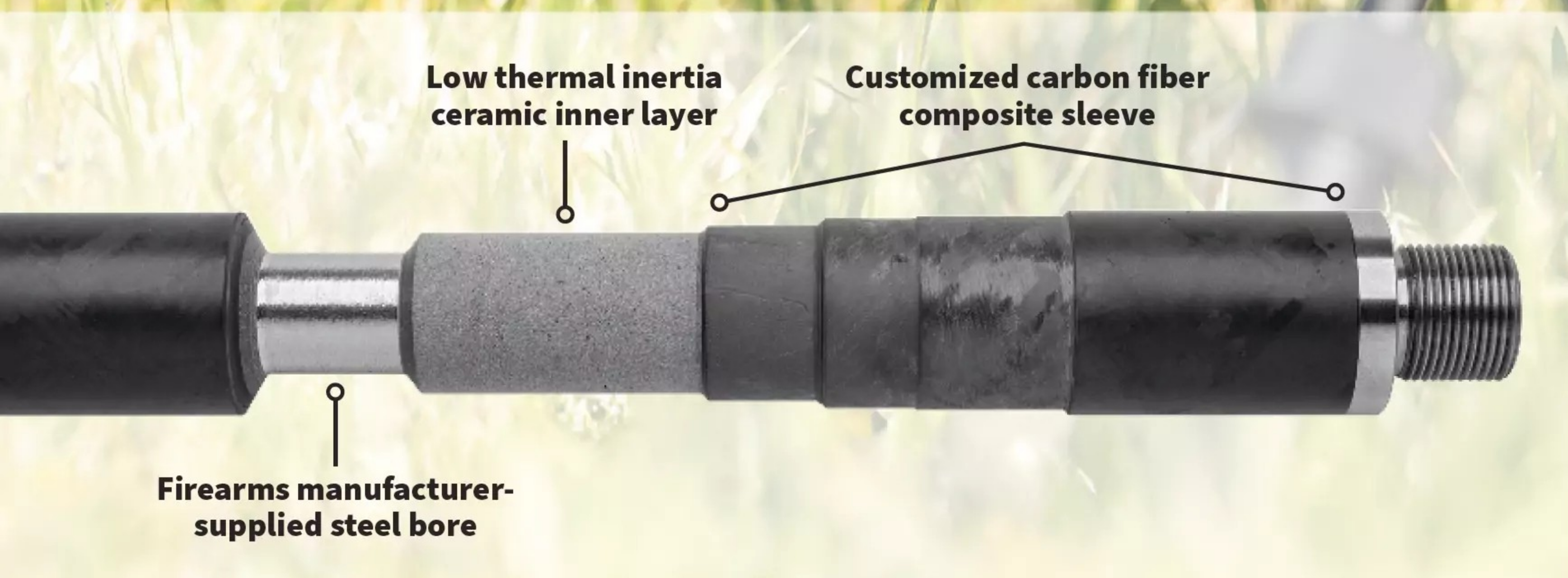
The .300 Blackout is a popular cartridge in part because subsonic Blackout loads can be “Hollywood” quiet — with the right suppressor. I've shot subsonic Blackout loads through several general-purpose .30-caliber cans and was shocked at how loud they were. It was nearly like the sound when shooting supersonic ammunition. The baffles in those general-use suppressors were developed to handle the abuse of magnum cartridges. They don't seem to do much to slow down the comparatively anemic pressures associated with subsonic .300 Blackout loads.

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Despite the longer 8½-inch length, the Speakeasy only weighs 16 ounces. The stamped baffles are very thin, yet full-auto rated. The Speakeasy is internally and externally finished with Melonite, giving it the matte-black color.



The first time I fired subsonic ammo through the Speakeasy was at a media event where it was mounted on a Q Mini Fix (\$3,150). The Mini Fix is a small bolt-action rifle with a folding stock and a short barrel offered in either 5.56 or .300 BLK. The experienced, the veterans, the jaded shooters — all of whom owned suppressors — were shocked at how quiet the Speakeasy was. The impact of the bullet on steel at 100 yards was louder than the gun firing.

The .300 Blackout cartridge in supersonic form was optimized for 9-inch barrels, and you'll only see incremental velocity increases in barrels longer than that and minimal velocity loss in shorter tubes. Subsonic .300 Blackout loads reach nearly full velocity (plus-or-minus 1,050 feet per second (fps) in barrels 7 inches and longer. For testing, I mounted the Speakeasy to a AR-15 pistol with 8.3-inch barrel in .300 Blackout.

When wearing ear protection, all subsonic ammunition fired through a suppressor sounds extremely quiet. You need to take off your ear protection to discern which loads and silencers are truly quiet from ones that aren't. I've tested numerous .30-caliber suppressors. The only one that came close to how quiet the Speakeasy is with subsonic ammunition is the Surefire SOCOM300 SPS (\$1,299, surefire.com), another suppressor purpose-built for the .300 Blackout cartridge. Yet, the Speakeasy is 4 ounces lighter and demonstrated less first-round pop (FRP).

One complaint about suppressors has been noticeable FRP. The air in your unfired suppressor is the same as the

outside air, which means it can be cold and dense. The first shot blasts that air out, making it noticeably louder than subsequent shots. The Speakeasy produced a bit of FRP, but it wasn't bad, likely due to the large volume inside the can. Shooting subsonic ammunition, there was no discernible backpressure or gas in my face, but there was some when I switched to supersonic ammunition. The sound tone with supersonic ammunition was quite pleasing to the ear, also.

Cost and production speed are two reasons Q went with stamped steel construction on the Speakeasy. Steel is less expensive than titanium, and stamping is quicker than 3D printing. Q has always struggled to meet consumer demand. It is hoping the stamped steel construction of its new suppressors will allow them to keep up with orders, likely higher given the relatively lower prices of these suppressors.

Suppressors are more popular than ever, in part due to the reduced wait times. I secured a sample by way of a trust, submitting e-paperwork to the ATF on a Thursday afternoon. It was approved the following Tuesday morning, roughly 20 business hours. Between the short wait times and the \$200 tax stamps going away, the traditional barriers to owning a suppressor are disappearing.

The Q Speakeasy is one of the quietest suppressors — if not the quietest — that G&A has tested with subsonic .300 Blackout-chambered firearms. It more than delivers on sound performance. The only downside for some that I could find might be its size. Otherwise, the Q Speakeasy delivered as advertised. **GA** — J. Tarr

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LET'S VENT

ROST MARTIN GIVES COMPENSATION TO ITS RM1S AND RM1C PISTOLS.

BY JAMES TARR | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ANSCHUETZ

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, Rost Martin jumped into the gun market with the RM1C, first introduced by Editor Eric R. Poole in “Born Ready,” featured in the March 2024 issue of Guns & Ammo.

The RM1C is a compact pistol roughly the size of the G19, but it offered several unique features. What grabbed our attention was the build quality. These pistols have excellent fit, finish and features at an affordable price. Most striking about the price is that these pistols are not built overseas, but rather in Dallas, Texas.

Rost Martin followed up the RM1C (compact) with the RM1S (subcompact) in G&A’s April 2025 issue. The year 2025 quickly produced two additional models: RM1C Comp and RM1S Comp — “Comp” as in “compensated.” The RM1C Comp has been announced previously, but the RM1S is the latest model. Let’s dive into the specs of the basic guns before considering the compensators, which are interesting.

A BIT OF BOTH

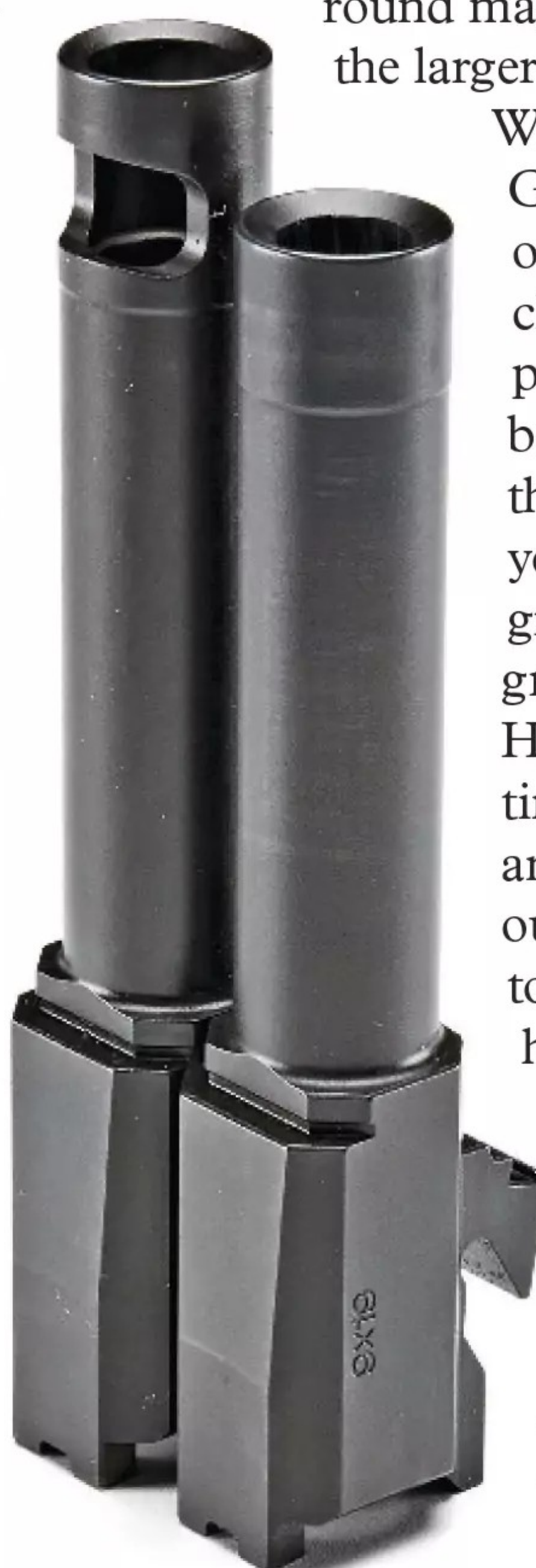
Both guns are polymer-framed striker-fired semi-automatic pistols chambered in 9mm. The RM1C has a 4-inch hammer-forged barrel. Overall, it is 7.1-inches long, 5-inches tall with a flush magazine inserted and 1.2-inches wide at the bilateral magazine release. The grip is 1.1-inches wide, and the slide is just a hair more than an inch

thick. With an empty magazine in place, it weighed 21.1 ounces on my scale. Flush magazines hold 15 rounds.

The RM1S shortens the barrel from 4 inches to 3.6 inches. The grip was shortened to just more than half an inch to accept flush-fit 12-round magazines. Overall, it is 6.7-inches long, 4.6-inches tall with a flush magazine inserted, and with that empty magazine it weighs 19.7 ounces. The RM1C ships with one flush 15- and one extended 17-round magazine. The RM1S is supplied with one flush 12- and one extended 15-round magazine. The RM1S retains all the features of the larger pistol, including an optics-ready slide.

While the folks at Rost Martin used the Glock-style pistol design as their jumping-off point, do not think of this as a “Glock clone.” A few components have similar proportions or appearance, but I don’t believe any parts are interchangeable. Here’s the biggest difference. Technically, what you’re looking at isn’t a frame but rather a grip module, as the trigger system inside the grip module sits inside a removable chassis. However, unlike some pistols, the Rost Martin chassis — held in place by a roll pin front and back — isn’t meant to be easily swapped out by the user. That’s a job recommended to be performed by a gunsmith. Rost Martin has yet to offer replacement grip modules for sale, though.

On the “C” and “S” models, the last half inch or so of the barrel sports a slightly wider diameter to better mate with the slide. The barrel also has an aggressive crown. Both the barrel and slide sport a Tenifer/nitride finish for corrosion



resistance. The barrel has an integral polished ramp to aid reliability.

The sights on these pistols are identical. They are steel and dovetailed into place. The front sight sports a white dot, and the serrated rear sight has a U-shaped notch. These pistols are optic-ready and ship with a polymer cover installed on the slide. A steel adapter plate for mounting optics with the Trijicon RMR footprint is provided. Other plates are available from Rost Martin, too. The top of the slide is wide, flat and serrated. Ostensibly, it’s done to “reduce glare” while shooting. In reality, I think it (mostly) adds a bit of style and class.

The size and number of slide serrations are unchanged between the C and the S models, but in the S the front serrations are moved back a little. They are flat-bottomed and nicely aggressive. I’d like to point out that other than the slide serrations — and the corners of the sights to provide a nice crisp sight picture — there are no corners or sharp edges on the slides of these guns. These are nicely rounded and smoothed for carrying.

The markings on the slide are subdued. The “Comp” on these compensated models isn’t marked on the slide, but that big cutout near the muzzle should be a clue. Both pistols have full-length steel recoil spring guidero



When comparing the RM1S and RM1C, the difference is apparent when gripping each pistol. The RM1S has a shorter grip that is easier to conceal and a shorter accessory rail.



ROST MARTIN RM1C COMP	
TYPE	Recoil operated, striker fire, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	15+1 rds., 17+1 rds.
BARREL	4 in., ported
LENGTH	7.1 in.
HEIGHT	5 in.
WIDTH	1.2 in.
WEIGHT	1 lb., 5.1 oz.
SLIDE	Steel
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
GRIP	Polymer, RGT (textured)
SIGHTS	Steel, white dot (front), U-notch (rear), optic ready
TRIGGER	6 lbs., 4 oz. (tested)
SAFETY	Trigger lever, striker drop safety
MSRP	\$489
ACCESSORIES	Cable lock, three backstraps, RMR mounting plate
MANUFACTURER	Rost Martin, 844-237-2890, rostmartin.com

single spring is somewhat strong. Some striker-fired pistols are true single actions, with the striker fully cocked for each shot. That’s not what you get with these Rost Martins. When the striker is what I’ll call “half-cocked,” you can see the rear of it (painted red) at the rear of the slide. As you manipulate the trigger through the take-up, you can see it move backward. When the trigger breaks on an empty chamber, the striker flies forward and disappears. While Rost Martin calls it a “double-action” (DA) trigger system, it’s not a true DA and doesn’t allow for restrikes without cycling the slide. There is a striker capture in there that prevents the striker from moving forward unless the trigger is pressed, though, as an additional drop safety.

The trigger is polymer, with the expected pivoting safety lever in the center. It has a flat face and breaks close to 90 degrees with a stop at the bottom of the triggerguard that nearly eliminates overtravel.

The spec for these pistols is a 5-pound triggerpull,



There isn’t much difference in length between the RM1C and RM1S slides, but the compensated versions of each are notable at the range.

and other pistols I've shot have measured close to that. However, measured triggerpulls on these samples were heavier, measuring 6½ pounds for the RM1S Comp, and 6¼ pounds for the RM1C Comp. Triggers were crisp, however. Between the wide trigger, the lack of overtravel, and the 90-degree let-off, they were more shootable than just the weight would indicate.

Rost Martin calls the texturing on the pistol its “Responsive Grip Texturing,” or “RGT.” The RGT has a fine pebbled appearance but is more aggressive than it looks. The harder you grip the gun, the better it bites into your hand. Forward, just above the front of the triggerguard on both sides, there is a curved, textured section meant to cradle the thumb of your support hand while shooting.

ERGONOMICS

Honestly, there's not a lot of difference in size between the two models. The length of the barrel and slide will go completely unnoticed inside a holster, and maybe while you're shooting. The small difference in the length of the grip, on the other hand, completely changes the user experience. Being able to get your entire hand on the gun makes a huge difference in control and confidence, and that is exactly why you see all the micro-compact 9mms on the market getting upstaged by upsized versions of themselves. I can get all my fingers on the



ROST MARTIN RM1S COMP	
TYPE	Recoil operated, striker fire, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	12+1 rds., 15+1 rds.
BARREL	3.6 in., ported
LENGTH	6.7 in.
HEIGHT	4.6 in.
WIDTH	1.2 in.
WEIGHT	19.7 oz.
SLIDE	Steel
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
GRIP	Polymer, RGT (textured)
SIGHTS	Steel, white dot (front), U-notch (rear), optic ready
TRIGGER	6 lbs., 8 oz. (tested)
SAFETY	Trigger lever, striker drop safety
MSRP	\$489
ACCESSORIES	Cable lock, 3 backstraps, RMR mounting plate
MANUFACTURER	Rost Martin, 844-237-2890, rostmartin.com

RM1S with the flush magazine in place, but just barely; Half my pinkie is hanging off the bottom of the basepad. If you've got small or thin hands, perhaps this grip is perfect for you. If not, the gun includes a longer magazine sporting a grip extension. I can comfortably get my entire hand, all my fingers, on the grip of the C, and it feels good in the hand. Rost Martin really nailed the ergonomics.

The magazine release is teardrop-shaped and polymer. You'll find one on either side of the pistol. Both sides worked equally well. There is a steel bilateral slide-stop that isn't quite big enough to be used as a slide release. At the bottom of the grip on both pistols, you'll find the magazine well opening was slightly



No matter the model, the RM1S and RM1C are provided with a shorter, flush-fit magazine as well as an extended magazine for increased capacity and improved grip.



Rost Martin pistols include small-, medium- and large-arch backstraps. The difference in size is subtle, but the ability to personalize the grip is welcome.



The RM1S and RM1C feature a familiar disassembly process if you're already familiar with the takedown of polymer-framed striker-fired pistols. However, comparing the inner-workings of the slide and the fire-control assembly in the chassis reveal Rost Martin's unique design approach.

enlarged and beveled to smooth and speed up reloads. If you've got big hands, a very small beavertail protects your hand from slide bite at the top rear of the grip. The magazines are steel, with numbered index holes on the back and oddly colored followers that you will spot easily through your ejection port. Technically, they're "chartreuse." If you're like me, there's a greater-than-80-percent chance you've never even heard that

word before, and a 98 percent chance you don't know it's a color. The magazines are made by Mec-Gar — the king of factory pistol magazines — and pretty much the only part of the gun not made in Texas.

THE NEW FIT
Now for the comps on these comp'd guns. They're fascinating. While technically they're just ports, they



Rost Martin pistols feature robust steel sights, a white dot at the front and U-notch rear. Depending on the optic configuration, they are too short to co-witness with most red-dot options.

The ported barrel vents against the cut slide and functions more like a compensator.

The crowned barrel, guiderod, and dustcover are flush to the length of the slide.



The steel controls are low-profile, optimized for carry. The frame above the triggerguard features a textured index point on both sides to place an idle trigger finger or support-hand thumb.

are ports that work as compensators. What’s the difference? Ports are simply holes in the barrel that vent gases, typically to reduce muzzle rise. Compensators have ports in the top, but they also include a baffle at the front that the expanding gases impinge upon, reducing recoil, felt and otherwise. The simple roll cut on these pistols, sliced down and through both the slide and barrel, created both a port and an ersatz blast baffle at the same time.

At the range, I had a unique opportunity. With an un-comp’d RM1S slide, I was able to switch back and forth on the S model to compare apples-to-apples how much the comp reduced muzzle rise and affected recoil. Some of it was subjective, of course, dependent upon grip, shooting style and ammo. For me, the comp seemed to reduce muzzle rise about 25 percent. It also increased blast and flash — especially with cheap or dirty ammo. As author Robert Heinlein famously reminded us, “TANSTAAFL” — and if you’ve never seen that acronym, look it up. Comps and ports work off gas pressure. Lighter bullets pushed faster — 115- and 124-grainers at standard or +P — provide more pressure than

PERFORMANCE: RM1C COMP

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Winchester 115-gr. FMJ	1,133	34	21	2.4	3
Federal Hydra-Shok 124-gr. JHP	1,104	24	12	2.6	2.8
Hornady Critical Defense 115-gr. FTX	1,117	28	17	2.8	3.3
Fiocchi CovertX 124-gr. JHP	1,085	28	17	2.9	3.6

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

PERFORMANCE: RM1S COMP

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Critical Defense 115-gr. FTX	1,086	31	22	2.4	3
Federal Hydra-Shok 124-gr. JHP	1,074	23	15	2.6	3.2
Winchester 115-gr. FMJ	1,107	37	20	2.7	3.8
Fiocchi CovertX 124-gr. JHP	1,080	28	18	3	3.6

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

slower, heavier bullets (147 grains), thus make the comp work better. On these Comp models, the front sights are moved back almost half-an-inch to make room for the slide cut. The port and comp on the RM1C is bigger, according to my calipers, .275 inch versus .265 inch, but they are the same depth. The cuts take maybe a tenth of an ounce off the weight of the guns, not enough to notice. Unlike comps that hang off the end of a barrel, these have no affect on reliability.

Both models were 100 percent reliable during testing, as all the Rost Martins I’ve tested have been. Interestingly, Rost Martin already has a California-legal version of the RM1S Comp, priced slightly higher. The RM1C Comp might be on the California roster by the time you read this, as well. California seems to be doing everything it can to ban guns entirely and go full Orwell, so

it’s nice to see a gun company, while working within those (unconstitutional) laws, getting new guns into the hands of California’s subjects.

These guns look good, perform as advertised, offer solid features, and are priced competitively, especially when considering they are 100 percent American made.



The accessory rail supports mounting of lights. A Nightstick TCM-10F was tested for fit. **\$142**



The polymer trigger has a wide flat face that fires at 90 degrees, aiding in shootability.



G'DAY HOWA

HOWA'S 1500 MINI-ACTION IS SET IN AN AUSTRALIAN PRECISION CHASSIS TO HOST THE .22 ARC.

BY TOM BECKSTRAND | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR





Note the recoil lug and flat mating surfaces between the action (above, top) and the chassis (above, bottom). The large surface area supports and immobilizes the barreled receiver for accuracy.

ONE OF THE BEST THINGS to happen to the .22 ARC was its availability in bolt-action rifles. Until now, my favorite low-recoil centerfire rifle chambering was the .223 Remington. Both of my kids have a fair amount of range time with a bolt-action chassis rifle I built in .223, for the expressed purpose of allowing them to shoot to several hundred yards without much muzzle blast or recoil. That rifle provided hours of entertainment and helped fan the flames of rifle-shooting desire.

The problem is that the .223 Remington isn't a great cartridge for shooting beyond 600 yards, and it doesn't do well in the wind. The heaviest readily available bullet that a .223 Remington offers in factory ammunition is 77 grains, which is good but not great.

Enter the .22 ARC. Introduced in 2024 by Hornady, inexpensive factory ammunition is available in bullet



The push-feed bolt offers tool-less disassembly with a quick twist of the bolt shroud. The bolt face features a smartly placed ejector and improved extractor, keeping cases safely from optics.

weights to 88 grains, as well as the lightweight but high ballistic coefficient (BC) ELD-VT. Hornady's little 62-grain number clocked 3,228 feet per second (fps) out

of Howa's 22-inch barrel. There's a lot more I can do with this rifle in .22 ARC than I can do with my more expensive custom rifle in .223. Not only is the .22 ARC cartridge a great pairing for a bolt-action chassis rifle, but Howa put a lot of features in its Mini 1500 Australian Precision Chassis (APC) rifle that aren't available elsewhere.

HERITAGE & FEATURES

Howa Model 1500 receivers combine the best features of the Remington Model 700 and the Winchester Model 54. The receiver footprint on the Howa 1500 is flat on the bottom, and the front action screw threads directly into the integral recoil lug. A flat-action bottom and the action screw threading into the recoil lug are the design cues that Howa borrowed from the Model 54, and it's refreshing to see such a sound design that isn't another carbon copy of the Model 700 footprint.

The Howa is push-feed — like the Remington — but the footprint is unique and more like Winchester's 54. The advantages of Howa's pattern are two-fold. The



Removing a single screw allows easy separation of the two-stage trigger from the receiver. Trigger maintenance is convenient. It was tested at 2 pounds, 13 ounces.

The low-profile bolt release is located beneath the bolt shroud, which is accessible on the left side. Press it down as the bolt handle is retracted to remove the bolt assembly from the action.

first is the action is better supported in a chassis since flats marry better than two curved surfaces. Slight changes in arc geometry can eliminate much of the contact between to curved surfaces, whereas flats conform to each other and create massive contact patches. The second advantage of the Howa is the amount of thread engagement between the action screws and receiver. There is easily twice the amount of a Model 700’s engagement with the Howa, so it will be much less inclined to experience those oddball flyers that can plague unbedded Remington bolt-guns when dropped into a chassis.

Howa isn’t one to just rely on great design features from the past, and it was quick to incorporate its own efforts into the Model 1500. One feature I love to see — a feature that is usually only found on custom actions or newly designed rifles that cost much more

HOWA 1500 MINI APC	
TYPE	Bolt action
CARTRIDGE	.22 ARC (tested)
CAPACITY	5+1 rds.
BARREL	22 in., 1:8-in. twist
LENGTH	42 in. to 45.5 in., adj.
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 4 oz.
STOCK	APC chassis, adj.
GRIPS	MDT Vertical Grip Premier
LENGTH OF PULL	12.75 in. to 16.25 in., adj.
FINISH	Matte blue (steel)
TRIGGER	2 lbs., 13 oz. (tested)
SIGHTS	None
MSRP	\$1,399
MANUFACTURER	Howa, 800-553-4229, legacysports.com

— is a toolless bolt disassembly. It wasn’t long ago that removing the firing pin assembly from the bolt body required a special tool and a little bravery. Periodic removal (i.e., “annual”) of the firing pin assembly is a good idea for two reasons. The first is to clean out the detritus that can accumulate inside the bolt body. Little bits of brass shavings, carbon, lint and other various schmegma like to hide inside this channel. Pierced primers are an especially egregious event that pumps large amounts of carbon and pieces of primer into the bolt body. Even one pierced primer can

create enough mayhem to ensure a rifle won’t fire until the firing pin channel is cleaned. Debris that accumulates in this area creates friction that robs the firing pin of critical energy it needs to deliver to the primer. Too much energy-robbing debris can create insufficient speed for the firing pin to ignite the primer, or to ignite



The APC chassis makes use of a standard AR-pattern receiver extension, so it will accommodate most aftermarket AR-15 stocks. It's adjustable for length of pull and has a rubber recoil pad.

it so weakly that accuracy falls off at distances as close as 100 yards. Firing pin channel cleanliness inside the bolt body is one of the most overlooked aspects of bolt-action rifle maintenance.

The second reason easy removal of the firing pin assembly is advantageous is the access it grants to the firing pin spring wrapped around the firing pin. Every 4,000 rounds or so, it's a good idea to replace this spring. When it becomes fatigued, it is possible to see a sub-minute-of-angle (MOA) rifle turn quickly into a 2- to 3-MOA rifle. Shooters might think that means the barrel is shot out, because that is the most likely issue — depending on the cartridge — but the rifle could just need an inexpensive new spring.

Removal of the firing pin assembly is as simple as holding the bolt body in the left hand and then placing the right hand on the bolt shroud and giving it a twist away from the rifleman. Rotate the shroud for about a 120 degrees and spring tension will push the firing pin assembly away from the bolt body. Re-assembly of these two components is just as simple and done by reversing the order.

The final modern feature that Howa incorporated into its 1500-series receivers is a trigger hangar. Most



Two screws firmly attach the tubular forend to the chassis, giving the rifleman generous real estate for positional shooting. Accessories, such as bipod mounts, are attached via M-Lok.

triggers attach to the receiver by way of two pins that require a hammer and punch to drive out in order to separate the receiver and trigger. Most rifleman will never do this, even though it's a good idea to do it from



MDT Vertical Grip Premier adjusts fore and aft for ideal trigger placement on the shoe. The adjustable vertical grip supports trigger reach by those with small or large hands.



time to time to give the trigger a good scrubbing. If I were king for a day, I'd mandate the use of trigger hangars on every bolt-action rifle because it makes trigger maintenance and replacement much easier. Howa's hangar uses a single screw to attach the trigger to the receiver. Should the trigger start acting up or need maintenance, removal of the screw allows the trigger to drop out of the receiver.

AUSTRALIAN?

The chassis has Australian ancestry, and it is a great and unique fit for this rifle. Chassis rifles are usually a little heavier than conventionally stocked rifles, and



The radial muzzlebrake is effective and removeable. The muzzle is threaded 1/2x28 to accept standard muzzle devices and suppressors.



The injection-molded magazine has a five-round capacity. It is unique to Howa's Model 1500 bottom-metal. Additional magazines, as well as optional 10-round magazines, are available. [\\$29](#)



that's the case here. The extra weight and the ability to easily adjust the length of pull to fit different shooters make for a rifle that is enjoyable to shoot and share with others. The length of pull adjusts from a short 12¾ inches to 16¼ inches.

An AR receiver extension protrudes from the receiver's rear, so it can accommodate any stock that will fit onto an AR. The stock that comes on the APC has a couple of flush cups for sling mounting on either side and a loop on the steeply angled toe, should the shooter want to attach the sling directly to the stock. The toe is short and bites deeply into a rear bag, so the shooter will need to frequently adjust the rear bag when shooting groups.

The chassis center section hosts MDT's Vertical Grip Premier. That's a mouthful, but it is a vertical grip that adjusts fore and aft to offer ideal trigger finger placement relative to the trigger. Being able to get the grip in just the right spot makes for a more pleasant range experience, especially when shooting for long

periods of time.

I pulled the barreled action out of the chassis to see how well the two pieces fit and loved what I saw. Smearing a little oil on the flat bottom of the receiver, bolting it back in place, and then removing it again left a wet smear where the two components touched. The entire action bottom exhibited even contact with the chassis. What is especially interesting is how much support the rear-most part of the receiver — the tang — had. The flat tang had complete support and contact with the chassis, something that is extremely rare with other receiver designs. When the chassis fully supports

the receiver, as I found on the APC, there will be few unexplained flyers because the receiver is immobilized and stress-free.

The final piece of the chassis is the tubular 16-inch forend, which has M-Lok slots at the 3-, 6- and 9-o'clock positions. All that M-Lok means users can mount whatever accessory

is desired and still have room leftover. While most of us will never mount anything more than a bipod, the long forend supports slings and positional shooting.

BUT WHY?

All of these features in the Model 1500 APC plus the .22 ARC chambering work together to create a mini-action package that is ideal for leisurely long-range plinking, one of my favorite pursuits.

The .22 ARC has the BC of the 6mm Creedmoor and the muzzle velocity of the 6.5 Creedmoor, all with substantially less recoil and much better barrel life. That is a tough combination to beat, and it's all in a fully featured receiver set in a well-designed and easily configurable chassis.

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG GROUP (IN.)
Hornady 88-gr. ELD-M	2,750	28	10	.65	.93
Hornady 62-gr. ELD-VT	3,228	51	16	.78	1.04
Hornady 80-gr. ELD-X	2,866	32	12	.8	1.01

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



THE BIG GUN

MOSSBERG'S 940 PRO TACTICAL SPX REMINDS US WHY THE SHOTGUN IS STILL A KING OF DEFENSE.

BY RICHARD NANCE | STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK FINGAR





The knurled charging handle and bolt release are large. A small fence protects the bolt release from unintended activation.



The polymer triggerguard features a silver cocking indicator that visually and tactilely shows that the shotgun is ready to fire.

MOSSBERG 940 PRO TACTICAL SPX	
TYPE	Gas operated, semiautomatic
GAUGE	12, 3-in. chamber
CAPACITY	7+1 shells
BARREL	18.5 in., steel
LENGTH	37 in.
LENGTH OF PULL	12.5 to 14.25 in., adj.
STOCK	Synthetic; Adjustable LOP, cast and drop
WEIGHT	7 lbs., 4 oz.
RECEIVER	Aluminum
FINISH	Anodized (aluminum), matte blue (steel)
TRIGGER	5 lbs. (tested)
SIGHTS	Ghost ring (rear), fiber optic (front); optic ready
SAFETY	Tang-mounted switch
ACCESSORIES	Stock spacers, Vang Comp 6-shot hook-and-loop shell carrier, adapter plates
MSRP	\$1,190
MANUFACTURER	Mossberg, 203-230-5300, mossberg.com



The handguard shrouds the barrel's sides, but features vents to release heat. M-Lok slots and QD points are on both sides, too.



The 940 Pro gas-vent system is clean running, and allows the action to adapt and cycle any 2¾- or 3-inch 12-gauge shotshell.

WHETHER FOR DUTY OR DEFENSE, a 12-gauge semiautomatic shotgun is a solid choice, but not all shotguns are created equal. If you're looking for your first tactical shotgun, it may be hard to know where to start. That's where Mossberg comes in. You can't go wrong with a company that's armed America's warfighters and peacekeepers for decades. The brand's latest tactical offering is the 940 Pro Tactical SPX, Guns & Ammo's 2025 Shotgun of the Year. It's a gun that's proven to be versatile and user-friendly.

My introduction to the 940 Pro Tactical SPX came during a media event at the Gunsite Academy in Paulden, Arizona, just before it was launched. A couple weeks later, I ran the 940 Pro Tactical SPX in a Team Tactics course at Gunsite (gunsite.com).

Putting a new firearm through an intense three-day training event — subject to a high desert environment — was a great test. From ergonomics to reliability to accuracy, if there's a flaw, hard use on a dusty range would reveal it. However, a firearm's strengths would also be highlighted.

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX is one of the most well-designed tactical shotguns I've handled. It's an extension of the 940 Pro line, so there are plenty of familiar features. Since the 940 Pro Tactical SPX was designed

specifically for duty and defensive use, it possesses unique characteristics.

According to former Guns & Ammo Handgun Editor Jeremy Stafford — current Mossberg Law Enforcement and Military Sales Manager — the 940 Pro Tactical SPX was born out of the professional program. Although the SPX was designed around the expressed needs of law enforcement and military clients, it was also optimized for defense-minded private citizens.

BIG ON CAPACITY

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX has a 3-inch chamber, meaning that it will also feed 2¾-inch shells. The extended magazine tube even holds seven 3-inchers.

It measured 37 inches long with an 18½-inch barrel and weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces. The optic-ready, anodized aluminum receiver is bookended by a polymer stock and forend. Oversize controls make the 940 Pro Tactical SPX easier to operate under stress.

Mossberg's signature tang safety is dished and knurled for intuitive manipulation; It snaps crisply on and off. The steel cylindrical operating handle is knurled and protrudes nearly an inch from the aluminum receiver. The low-profile, polymer bolt-release button is oblong-shaped with shallow serrations. The



Length of pull is adjustable using included spacers. The buttpad absorbs recoil. Bilateral QD cups and a swivel accepts slings.



The loading port features and elongated elevator, grooved for feeding. The orange follower indicates an empty magazine tube.



The 940 Pro SPX supports the RMSc mounting interface for red dots, but adapter plates support mounting other optics.



Protected by wings, the SPX front sight accepts interchangeable fiber-optic or solid white and orange rods.

snag-free design prevents the bolt release from being pulled rearward, which could activate the cartridge release, leading to a malfunction. A small shroud helps the bolt release from being unintentionally activated.

The triggerguard is large enough for fast action, and a cocking indicator protrudes from inside the triggerguard. It's a visual and tactile reference that the shotgun is cocked and ready to fire.

The curved trigger was tested at 5 pounds according to an NRA universal trigger weight system. The trigger is also adjustable for overtravel.

The model I evaluated was black, but there are versions with Flat Dark Earth or OD Green Cerakote finishes for an extra cost, which include the barrel and magazine tube. There's even a MultiCam version available. Not only does Cerakote enhance the appearance of any gun, but it also provides enhanced abrasion, corrosion and wear resistance. G&A's black base model retails for \$1,190 while Cerakote models are \$1,246, and one with a Holosun dot sight lists for \$1,371.

BALANCED & CUSTOM

When I picked up the 940 Pro Tactical SPX, it felt well-balanced; not heavy, but solid. The forend immediately drew my attention. Its round bottom and flared sides

provide a comfortable gripping surface. Texture and vertical cuts ensure the firing hand won't slip. A flare at the front of the forend serves as a hand stop, too.

The forend wraps around the sides of the barrel, providing a heat shield that protects the support hand. Quick-detach (QD) sling cups are on both sides of the forend and positioned farther back to ensure unimpeded access to M-Lok-mounted accessories.

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX also features a one-piece magazine tube that eliminates a potential failure point inherent with a two-piece tube. "It's a little more robust for the defensive-minded user," Stafford said. The magazine tube is housed in an aluminum shroud. The magazine tube and barrel are coupled with a clamp, with an M-Lok slot on the sides.

While the 940 Pro Tactical SPX fit me well right out of the box, it's easily customized for length of pull from 12½ inches to 14¼ inches using the supplied stock spacers. You can even adjust rise or drop at the heel and cast using the supplied spacers and retention plates. When tailored to fit, the 940 Pro Tactical SPX is more comfortable to mount, easier to shoot and less fatiguing than a "one-size-fits-few" type of shotgun.

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX's receiver is machined from anodized aluminum. Not only is it drilled and



The Vang Comp shotshell carrier supports reloading or single-feeding different loads. Spares are available at vangcomp.com \$30

tapped for an optic rail, but it also sports a coverplate atop a RMSc optic cut. The coverplate has an integral, low-profile ghost ring sight that — when combined with the front fiber-optic sight — makes a formidable system. Each is surrounded by protective wings. The 940 Pro Tactical SPX ships with mounting plates for the Trijicon RMR, the Docter, and the Leupold DeltaPoint Pro footprints.

An oversized, beveled loading port was configured for easy magazine feeding. The bright orange-anodized aluminum follower visually lets you know whether the magazine tube has at least one shell. The elongated elevator won't pinch your thumb when loading, either. The ejection port facilitates efficient emergency loads, which is an important attribute for tactical shotguns.

SHELL CADDY

Speaking of loading, Mossberg collaborated with Vang Comp Systems (vangcomp.com) to provide a hook-and-loop shell carrier on the side of the receiver. It's held securely in place, as evidenced by the fact that none came off during my Gunsite course. However, the carrier comes off with a deliberate pull. If you have a second carrier, you could easily swap an empty one for a spare full of shells. (When you remove the carrier, you'll see the shotgun's serial number.)

Loading from the "side saddle" — as receiver-mounted shell carriers are sometimes called — proved efficient. It also supported access to different types of ammunition, which is one of the benefits of a shotgun. In close quarters, buckshot — particularly 00 buck — is devastatingly effective. At a distance, it can spread to

the point that some pellets are off target though. Avoid such problematic considerations by manually loading a single slug from the carrier into the chamber to address a more distant threat. You're accountable for every projectile that leaves the barrel of your firearm.

Stopping the threat at the cost of injuring an innocent bystander or hostage is not acceptable. That's why most cops carry slugs in addition to buckshot for their shotguns. Unlike buckshot, a slug is a single projectile that can be very accurate. Slugs can penetrate things that would stop most projectiles, but overpenetration is a concern when choosing a slug. Typically, slugs are not the best option for home-defense situations.

Although some recommend birdshot for home defense, it shouldn't be relied upon to immediately incapacitate a determined attacker. Birdshot is great for bird hunting, shooting steel, clays, and even as a component of evaluating a shotgun's overall performance, but you should depend on buckshot or slugs for defense.

AT THE RANGE

The Pro Tactical SPX incorporates Mossberg's Accu-Choke System. It comes with a cylinder bore installed, which is preferred for defensive appli-



The barrel features Mossberg's Accu-Choke System. A Cylinder bore choke is installed, and a choke removal tool is provided.

cations because it doesn't constrict pellets too tightly and require pinpoint accuracy. That said, you need to understand how your shotgun will pattern at various distances with buckshot. Learn your gun's limitations!

Using Federal Premium 00 Buck with FliteControl wad (\$14/5 shells, federalpremium.com), my fist covered all nine pellets at 5 yards. At 15 yards, my open hand covered the nine pellets. At 25 yards, all nine pellets were contained within the torso of the target. Federal Premium's BallistiClean Law Enforcement Frangible Buckshot (\$40/25 shells) performed similarly. I'd feel confident taking an unobstructed shot on a bad guy at 25 yards with either load, but even a quality 00 buck load will spread too far to ensure all pellets are on target at 50 yards.

With a Holosun 407K (\$259, holosun.com) atop the receiver, I benched the 940 Pro Tactical SPX at 50 yards from the target. I fired three, three-shot groups with Power-Shok 1-ounce rifled slugs. These man-stoppers left the barrel at 1,498 feet per second (fps). The average group measured 1.6 inches, with the tightest being just 1.1 inches. That'd get the job done when the threat you're facing is beyond buckshot range.

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX is fast-cycling and soft-

MEET YOUR NEXT CARRY AMMO... XRG DEFENSE

After years of use with European Law Enforcement, XRG Defense ammunition is now available to the American market. This solid copper hollow-point bullet construction results in near 100% weight retention regardless of the barriers encountered. Light-for-caliber bullet weights produce low perceived recoil, high velocity, and reliable expansion from today's compact personal defense handguns. XRG Defense has been tested extensively in modern, compact handguns to ensure reliable feeding and function in the most demanding environments.



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PHOTO: YAMIL SUED



To highlight the potential of M-Lok slots on the forend, a 1,000-lumen SureFire Scout Light Pro was tested. **\$369**

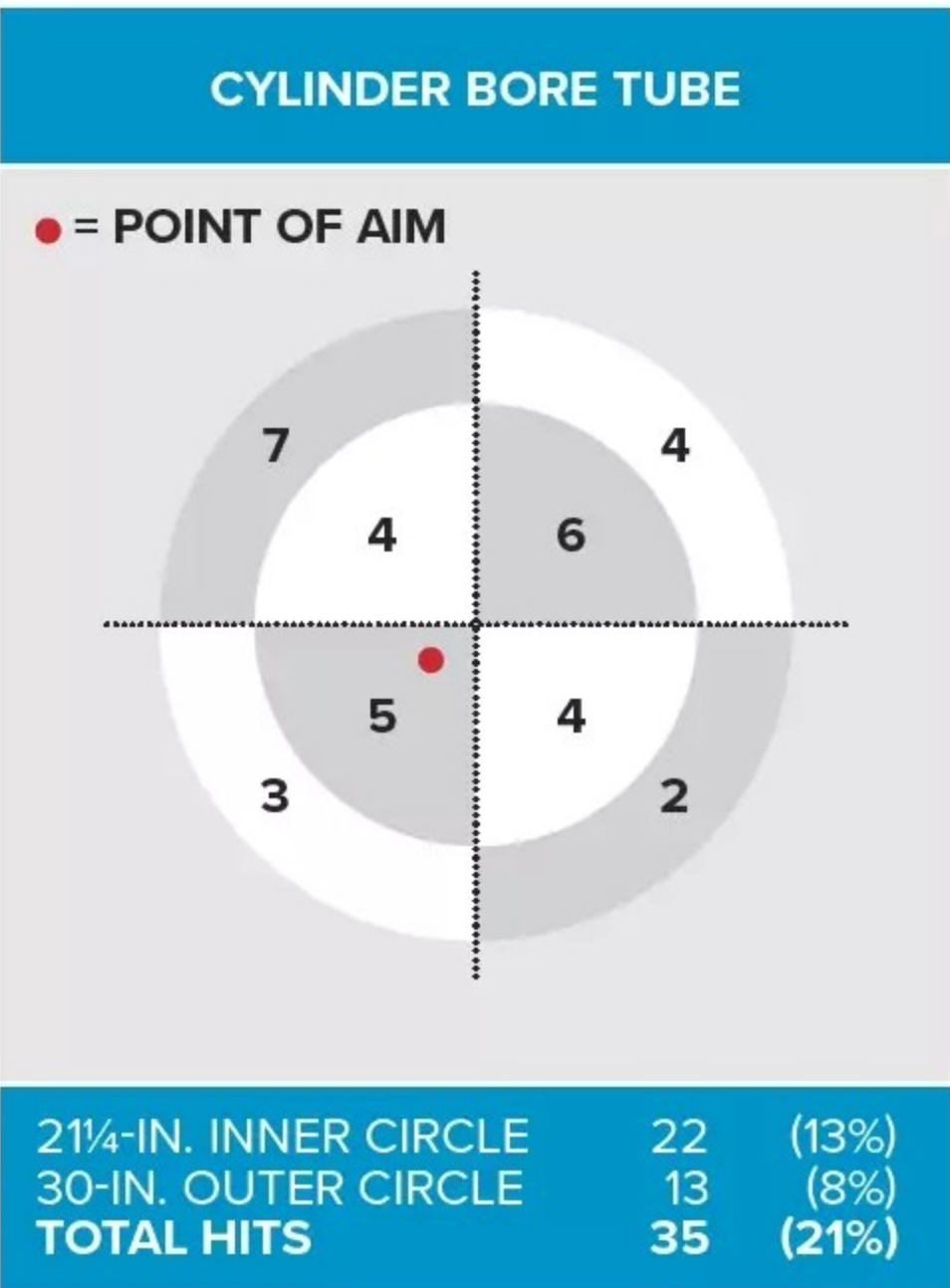
shooting. It also has a surprisingly smooth trigger and runs clean when compared to other shotguns. Thanks is in part to the corrosion-resistant internal components and finishes, including a nickel boron (NiB)-coated gas piston, magazine tube, hammer and sear. Mossberg suggested that the 940 Pro Tactical SPX can run 1,500 rounds between cleanings. That's comforting, but cleaning more frequently is a good idea for shotguns intended for duty or defensive use.

There is nothing wrong with the iron sights that come with the 940 Pro SPX, but I recommend adding an optic. The receiver was cut deeply, so optics sit low. This enables us to find the dot intuitively when the buttstock is mounted to the shoulder.

There are plenty of places to mount a light to the 940 Pro Tactical SPX. For duty and defensive use, a light is a necessity. Since a shotgun is shoulder-fired, it's impractical to use a handheld flashlight, but that doesn't relieve us of our moral and legal responsibility to ensure that we are indeed facing a deadly threat

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AVERAGE PELLET COUNT: 169
AVERAGE OF 10 SHOTS AT 40 YARDS



before pressing the trigger.

For duty, having a sling on a shotgun is also critical. It acts as a holster for the shotgun, freeing both hands to handle people and objects as required. A sling also enables you to easily transition from the shotgun to a holstered handgun. In a home-defense setting, a person is not likely going to have a holstered handgun to transition to; A sling could be just another accessory that snags on something and impedes your ability to rapidly employ the shotgun.

Mossberg's 940 Pro Tactical SPX is a purpose-built defensive shotgun. Developed with input from professionals, and tailored for law enforcement and military use, it would equally serve law-abiding

citizens well as a home defense shotgun. If you're looking for a versatile fighting shotgun that's up to the task, the 940 Pro Tactical SPX is hard to beat.

The 940 Pro Tactical SPX is reasonably priced, especially when considering its many premium features. Based on my experience, I wouldn't hesitate to bet my life on its reliability and performance. **G&A**

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OF WOOD

**Winchester
Model 54**

**Winchester
Model 1907**

**Savage
Model 1899**

& STEEL

PART I: EXAMINING 100-YEAR-OLD HUNTING RIFLES.

BY DAVE EMARY | PHOTOS BY MARK FINGAR

**Remington
Model 14**

**Remington
Model 8**

**Marlin
Model 1893**



To evaluate hunting rifles of the interwar period (1918-1939), Guns & Ammo acquired six used examples that highlight competing designs and evolutionary technologies. Ammunition was handloaded using era-correct components and load data, while several boxes of period ammunition was also tested.

IF YOU ARE LIKE ME, your interest in firearms includes a keen interest in their historical roles. I am fascinated by what life was like “back then,” and have long admired the craftsmanship of vintage firearms. Following the Great War, the 1920s became a period of unprecedented change in America. The year 1925 was when Winchester introduced the Model 54, the first successful commercial bolt-action rifle. It wasn’t the first bolt-action produced, but it was the first sporting rifle to achieve widespread acceptance. It was also the predecessor to the Winchester Model 70. Winchester also introduced the .270 Winchester cartridge in 1925, which became the standard-bearer for a high-performance hunting round.

Many components are taken for granted that were maturing 100 years ago. Smokeless powder was still in its infancy and high-velocity cartridges were new. Lever-action rifles dominated the market in the mid-’20s, but they were being seriously challenged by bolt-actions. Reloading was a novelty and optically sighted rifles were considered rare.

This article, “Of Wood & Steel: Part I,” is a prelude to a series discussing six period rifles made a century ago by major commercial firearm manufacturers of the time. These rifles were tested with ammunition that was made to be as close as possible to the loads available in the 1920s and ’30s. In the final article, the results of the Guns & Ammo’s tests will be compared.

THAT WAS THEN ...

In 1925, America was experiencing a boom in construction, economic development and transatlantic

cultural exchange. The older generations were aghast at the popular “flapper” trend in young women’s clothing, which featured dresses cut just below the knee and tight-fit blouses. The culture embraced makeup, smoking and drinking at speakeasies, rebelling at social constraints. Many suggested that those who wore flappers were nearly “naked.” The love affair with the automobile was well underway, and the aging Ford Model T was replaced by the Model A in 1928 — challenged by other brands. Firearms and ammunition were also subject to major changes and advancements, even in the wake of John Browning’s death in November 1926.

SMOKELESS AMMUNITION

Blackpowder fueled fixed ammunition since the early 1860s. Several generations of shooters grew up with the now-familiar pistol and early rifle series of Winchester cartridges available in lever-actions and single-shots. Change began in the late 1880s when smokeless nitrocellulose-based propellants were developed and viable. The .30-30 Winchester was introduced in 1894 as the first commercial smokeless-propellant ammunition, pushing a 165-grain bullet to an unprecedented velocity of 1,900 feet per second (fps). That same year, the U.S. Army adopted the smokeless-powder-charged .30-40 Krag (.30 Army) round. These two cartridges started a scramble by the industry to develop steels and actions that could harness the more powerful and higher-pressure smokeless powders.

Lever-action cartridges such as the .30-30 Winchester, .35 Remington, .33 Winchester and similar rounds fed into Winchester’s Model 1886 and 1894 rifles had

displaced the older black-powder cartridges by the turn of the century. The 1895 Winchester introduced high-performance smokeless cartridges by chambering the 7.62x54R, .30-'06 Springfield and .405 Winchester in a commercial rifle — albeit a lever-action. Just before and after World War I, improvements in smokeless propellants began the push for even higher performance, flat-shooting cartridges to take advantage of new bolt-action rifle designs.

The .30-'06 evolved from the .30-'03, introduced in 1903. The '06 was a powerful cartridge for the time, and first offered in the Winchester 1895 lever-action along with several other smokeless cartridges. In 1921, it was offered in the bolt-action Remington Model 30. Some custom bolt-action rifles chambering the .30-'06 were built on imported commercial Mauser actions.

“Wildcatting,” i.e., the development of higher-performance cartridges, began shortly after smokeless powder and jacketed bullets became publically available in the 1910s, championed by Charles Newton. Powders and jacketed bullets available at that point were limited compared to today. Introduced in 1915, the first commercial cartridge to achieve 3,000 fps was the .250-3000 Savage with an 87-grain bullet.

The .300 Savage was introduced in 1920 and based on the same case as the .250 Savage. It was a very compact round that nearly matched the .30-'06 Springfield's 150-grain load. As mentioned, the .270 Winchester was introduced in 1925, loaded with a 130-grain bullet at an advertised velocity of 3,160 fps. With the powder speeds available, I won't conjecture at what the operating pressure of that round was. Current specs for



A U.S. Army private poses with a Springfield Armory Model 1898 Krag carbine in .30-40 Krag with fixed bayonet. The five-shot “Krag” was standard-issue during the Spanish-American War.

a standard .270 Winchester 130-grain load are 3,060 fps. The .270 Winchester cemented the fast, flat-shooting hunting round in the American shooter's mind. Professor Jack O'Connor became the champion of this movement as a writer for “Outdoor Life” magazine, and later as the executive editor of “Petersen's Hunting.”

The .30-40 Krag became popular in the 1920s, but not due to its performance characteristics. Low-cost rifles such as the Krag-Jørgensen bolt action was prevalent on the surplus market as the U.S. Army sold its Krags at the conclusion of World War I.

PROPELLANTS & RELOADING

In the mid-'20s, reloading was a novelty. Few jacketed bullets were available, and there was a limited range of smokeless propellant speeds. Reloading tools were largely handheld

plier-like devices. Ideal offered a metallic reloading press and powder measures like we have today, while separate tools performed depriming and priming operations. A wide range of bullet molds were available for both plain-base lead bullets and gas-check lead bullets. Jacketed bullets were still largely the domain of the ammunition companies. Primers for reloading were also limited.

The primary suppliers of smokeless propellant in the U.S. during the 1920s were Hercules Powder Company and Du Pont Improved Military Rifle (IMR) Powder.

Hercules was the more dominant supplier of pistol and shotgun powders, while IMR had the larger share of the rifle market. Since 2003, IMR is owned by Hodgdon Powder Company.

Table 1 shows the rifle speeds of propellant that were available in the mid-1920s. It's interesting to note that IMR 4064 was the slowest rifle propellant available. IMR 1147

PROPELLANTS AVAILABLE IN THE MID-1920S

MANUFACTURER	PROPELLANT	DATE INTRODUCED	MODERN EQUIVALENT
Du Pont	IMR 1204	1925	IMR 4227
Du Pont	IMR 16 / 17½*	1916/1923	IMR 3031
Du Pont	IMR 1015	1919	IMR 4064
Du Pont	IMR 1147	1923	IMR 4320
Hercules	Hi Vel #2	1915	RL-7
Hercules	Lightning	1903	IMR 3031
Hercules	#308	1915	IMR 4895
Hercules	WA .30	1908	IMR 4064

*17½ was 16 with tin added to reduce fouling.



— which became IMR 4320 — was new in 1925 and likely developed for the .270 Winchester. Ball powders did not exist yet. Ball powders were developed in the mid-1930s to repurpose surplus World War I propellant; They weren't offered to the public until 1960. Reloading finally became popular after World War II with the availability of good jacketed bullets from Hornady and Speer.

SIGHTING SYSTEMS

The predominant sights in 1925 were buckhorn barrel-mounted sights. Tang peep sights offered by Lyman and Marbles were also popular, and receiver-mounted peep sights enjoyed a following. Optical sights in 1925 were not unheard of, but they were rare. In the early 1900s, Stevens offered a line of scopes, and in 1909 Winchester introduced its line of B-series scopes. Both designs were later sold to Lyman. In the 1920s, J. W. Fecker began offering scopes and employed John Unertl. The highest-quality scopes offered by a U.S. manufacturer were made by Noske, while Zeiss scopes were also imported.

For the most part, these early scopes were a fixed low power, fragile, unreliable and expensive. It wasn't until Weaver introduced its 330 scope in

1930 that scopes for the masses became readily accessible. In 1925, a Zeiss or Noske riflescope could cost two to three weeks' worth of the average American's wage!

ROARING FIREARMS

In 1925, small arms design and performance transformed. Lever-action rifles were still the most popular afield, but the proliferation of stronger and more accurate bolt-action rifles eroded its dominance. Bolt-action rifles weren't new. The Mauser brothers released its first bolt-action military rifle in 1871, which was perfected in the Model 1898. By the mid-1890s, most countries had adopted some type of bolt-action rifle for its military. In contrast, the U.S. sportsman preferred the lever-action until the 1920s.

Savage was the first to embrace the bolt-action trend

with its Model 1920, produced from 1920 to 1928. It was a wonderful, small and light rifle with an action sized specifically for the .250 and .300 Savage cartridges. With a 22-inch barrel in .250 Savage, the rifle weighed just 5 pounds, 14 ounces. It was never very popular, though. Only 12,000 Model 1920s were produced. It was too far ahead of its time.

Remington followed



Circa 1922, five hunters and their dogs were photographed carrying deer through the woods. Firearms included a Winchester Model 12 and side-by-side hammer-fired shotguns. (LoC Photo)

RIFLES TESTED

MANUFACTURER	MODEL	YEAR MADE	CALIBER
Marlin	1893	Pre-1905	.30-30 Win.
Remington	8	1913	.30 Remington
Remington	14	1919	.32 Remington
Savage	1899	1925	.300 Savage
Winchester	1907	1909	.351 WSL
Winchester	54	1929	.270 Win.

with the Model 30 bolt action in 1921. It was nothing more than a refined Model 1917 Enfield of World War I fame. It wasn't especially popular, either. About 27,000 rifles were sold during its 19-year run.

It wasn't until Winchester introduced the Model 54 bolt-action in 1925 that a bolt-action rifle gained serious attention, and it's no coincidence that the .270 Winchester cartridge was also introduced with the Model 54. Based on the Mauser design, the Model 54 was the first successful commercial bolt-action rifle. The Model 54 led directly to the Model 70 we're all familiar with, which was introduced in 1936. During its 11-year production run, more than 50,000 Model 54 rifles were produced.

Several other types of firearms were popular during the Roaring Twenties. It might come as a surprise to some, but semiautomatic magazine-fed rifles were available and popular long before bolt-actions! Remington came out with its John Browning-designed Model 8 semiautomatic in 1906. It featured Remington's line of cartridges meant to compete with Winchester's 1894 chamberings. The .25, .30 and .32 Remington were rimless versions of the .25-35, .30-30 and .32 Winchester. Of note, the .35 Remington was also introduced in the Model 8, and it stood the test of time. An interesting piece of history is that the Model 8, chambered in .35 Remington, was used by Texas Ranger Frank Hamer during the takedown of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow on May 23, 1934.

Winchester had two semiautomatic rifles available during this time. The Model 1907 was chambered in



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Marble's Gun Sights (marblearms.com) continues a tradition of manufacturing front and rear sights, as well as peep tang-mounted sights, shotgun beads and sights for handguns.

.351 Winchester Self-Loading (WSL), and the Model 1910 chambered the powerful .401 WSL cartridge. The Model 8 and Model 1907 were very popular among law enforcement and prison institutions of the era.

Another firearm of note was the Remington Model 14 and 14½ pump-action rifles. Introduced in 1913, they were meant to compete against the Winchester Model 1892 and 1894. The Model 14 chambered the Remington line of rifle cartridges, while the Model 14½ chambered the .38-40 and .44-40 Winchester pistol cartridges. The Model 14 was followed by the virtually identical Model 141 in 1935. Approximately 200,000 Remington pump-action rifles were made between 1913 and 1951.

G&A'S TEST GUNS

Six period rifles were obtained to evaluate the performance and handling hunters could have expected 100 years ago. Ammunition was handloaded to approximate bullet types and performance specifications known of that time period. Table 2 includes a summary of the rifles that were sourced, including when they were produced and the chambering.

Space is limited for an evaluation of this type, and we could not reasonably test every rifle available in 1925. These are a representative sampling of manufacturers, action types, and cartridges for deer hunting. Of note, I chose an 1893 Marlin in .30-30 instead of a Winchester 1894. So much has been written about the 1894 that I'm not sure much new information could be added, so I felt it would be interesting to consider a direct competitor of Winchester's 94. 

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In upcoming issues, each article will focus on one of the six listed firearms. The series will conclude with a test summary comparing features, performance and final observations. If your subscription is nearing renewal, or you are not already subscribed to Guns & Ammo, it's time to sign up. You're not going to want to miss a single entry in this series!



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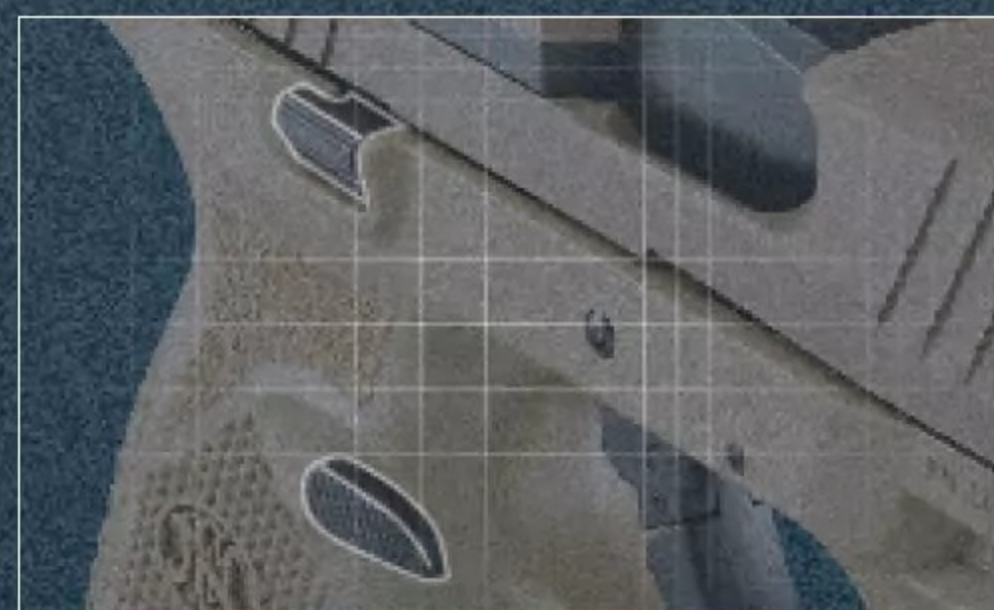
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BY THE HORNS

THE MEDIUM-FRAME double-action (DA) revolver has been considered an eminently suitable defensive tool for a century and a quarter, and for good reason. Taurus has been making such revolvers since 1941, and exporting them to the U.S. since 1968. Starting with the M66, Taurus took the lessons of the past and the tools of the present to create a combination of features in an everyday carry revolver — then went further.

The first step was the cylinder. In the same space as a standard six-shot revolver, Taurus managed to alter geometry and make it a seven-shooter. It did more than simply increase ammunition capacity by 16 percent; it also made the cylinder stronger. The locking slots are now in-between the charge holes, not directly next to them. This approach equals more stainless steel to take the pressure. As classic as blued steel is, stainless steel is better at resisting the corrosion caused by humidity and perspiration from everyday carry.

TWO PERSONALITIES

The cylinder is chambered in .357 Magnum, so you can use .38 Special ammunition — both

regular pressure and +P loads — for practice or carry. Yes, the logical choice is to practice with and carry .357 Mag. ammo for maximum benefit, but doing so is both expensive and hard work. Two boxes of .38s in a range session is good practice and can still be enjoyable. Shooting through a second box of .357 Mags gets to be work, and you risk building bad habits from the added felt recoil. So, carry .38 or .357? This is a choice we must make for ourselves.



Typical revolvers carry a maximum of five or six rounds. The Taurus 66 Combat was designed to accept a seventh shot. The cylinder-release latch is positioned on the left side of the frame, and is the push-forward-to-open type.



In large, bold italic letters, "COMBAT" is spelled out on the right side of the underlug, and the serial number is on the barrel and frame. The green fiber-optic front sight is bright, but it does not co-witness with an optic. Without a dot sight attached, the front sight is aimed using the groove integral to the topstrap of frame.



TAURUS 66 COMBAT

TYPE	Double-action-only (DAO) revolver
CARTRIDGE	.38 Special, .357 Magnum
CAPACITY	7 rds.
BARREL	3 in., stainless steel
LENGTH	8.4 in.
WIDTH	1.52 in.
HEIGHT	5.67 in.
WEIGHT	2 lbs., 5 oz. (tested)
FINISH	Matte (stainless steel)
GRIPS	Hogue
SIGHTS	Fixed fiber optic (front), fixed topstrap groove (rear)
TRIGGER	10 lbs., 1 oz. (tested)
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The barrel is 3-inches long. It's the balance point between "easy-to-carry" and "get-all-the-velocity." Three inches came about when the FBI — back in the days of "revolvers are all" carry guns for law enforcement — settled on it as the best compromise. On the .38 Special and .357 Magnum carry choice, the 3-inch barrel meant you won't get all of the extra velocity the .357 offers because shorter barrels meant less time for the bullet to accelerate. The flash on some loads can be impressive, too.

Taurus carried over the full-length underlug on the bottom of the barrel, adding weight for recoil control. The underlug is contoured back from the muzzle to make re-holstering easier. On top, the 66 Combat has a fiber-optic front sight, so you'll see a glowing dot in any kind of light as your index point for lining up the sights.

A close-up photograph of a Taurus Arms revolver, focusing on the cylinder and the frame. The cylinder is open, revealing the internal chambers. The frame is made of metal and has the text "Taurus Arms" and "Made in Brazil" engraved on it. A person's finger is visible at the bottom, holding the frame. The background is a blurred, textured surface.

Since the Taurus 66 Combat is a DAO revolver, the hammer does not need a hammer spur. The cylinder rotates counter-clockwise, the norm for Taurus revolvers.

the adjustable sights of the M66 and went with fixed sights. While adjustable sights are useful in target shooting, they usually have sharp edges. Sharp edges can abrade both you and your garments. The abrasion also creates lint and dust that accumulate, of course, on your firearm. Fixed sights solve that problem. The rear sight is nothing more than a groove down the center of the top of the frame, a method that has worked since Samuel Colt put a notch in the hammer of his revolvers to use as a sighting method. Taurus went a step further by drilling and tapping the top of the frame to accept an optic adapter plate. One is included in the box of the Taurus 66 Combat. Bolt on the adapter plate, then fasten the electronic sight.

G&A evaluated the optic-ready feature of the 66 Combat by attaching a Burris FastFire C (\$276, burrisoptics.com). The provided optic plate had



The DAO trigger measured 10 pounds, 1 ounce, across an average of 10 pulls. The trigger is more than adequate for defensive use, and capable of producing excellent groups.

an RMSc footprint, so any optic that works with that pattern can be attached to the 66 Combat. Yes, an optic sight is larger than adjustable sights, but the edges typically aren't as sharp — and this is another choice. The better precision red-dot optics permit comes at the cost of a bit more bulk. Another decision you get to make. At least Taurus made it easier by providing the plate.

DOUBLE ACTION ONLY

As is traditional on double-action (DA) revolvers, the cylinder latch is on the left side of the frame behind the cylinder.



Hogue grips are regarded for offering a secure fit and improved control of the revolver throughout its operation. The finger grooves ensure consistent hand placement, too.

Pushing it forward unlocks the cylinder so the cylinder can be hinged out. Forward of that, the ejector rod is what you press to eject the empties. The grip portion of the frame is contoured to what is known as a "round butt" shape, that is the frame does not have square edges. This makes it easier to conceal since the frame doesn't bulge right at the spot where it is most likely to print through garments. Taurus assembles the 66 Combat with a round-butt Hogue rubber grip to soften recoil and not alter the concealability of the frame contour.

To further aid in comfort and to save wear-and-tear on clothing, the hammer of the M66 Combat is machined to match

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The 66 Combat is a double-action-only (DAO) revolver that incorporates current trends for everyday carry, including the Taurus Optic Ready Option (T.O.R.O.). The revolver sports a seven-shot capacity, a green fiber-optic front sight, and Hogue rubber-overmold grips.



PHOTO: TAURUS

the contour of the frame, lacking a hammer spur. This leads us to the last detail, and that is that the 66 Combat is a DA-only (DAO) revolver. There is no single-action (SA) notch in the mechanism, and you cannot thumb-cock the hammer to fire it SA. So, a hammer spur isn't even needed. Taurus knows that DA is not as easy to use as SA when it comes time to fire with as much precision as we'd like. What they did address was the trigger, making the double-action as smooth and as light as possible. Still it fires a cartridge 100 percent of the time. Decades ago, when Police Pistol Combat (PPC) was the predominant law enforcement handgun competition, finding a pistolsmith who could smooth and lighten a duty revolver's action so it was "10 pounds DA" was not always easy. If you couldn't find such an artisan, you stood little chance on the range against other competitive shooters. The 66 Combat measured 10 pounds, 1 ounce, in trigger pull. With practice and dryfiring, it will likely lose a few ounces of that weight.

PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Hornady Critical Defense 110-gr. FTX (.38 Spl.)	912	55.2	20.1	1.8	2
Federal Personal Defense +P 120-gr. JHP (.38 Spl.)	949	87.7	36	1.9	2.1
Black Hills 125-gr. JHP (.357 Mag.)	1,128	88.6	31.9	2.1	2.5
Fiocchi Hyperformance Hunt 140-gr. Barnes XPB JHP (.357 Mag.)	1,099	23.7	10.4	2.2	2.6
Accuracy is the average of four five-shot groups at 25 yards from Champion shooting rest. Velocity is the average of of 10 shots measured with a Garmin Cero X1 Pro chronograph placed adjacent to the muzzle.					

The all-steel construction of the 66 Combat provides enough weight that the recoil of .38 Specials is not a problem. Some .357 Magnum loads might be more work to handle. As you must move up into the hunting loads, recoil can feel abusive. In bear country perhaps, that's a choice you must consider. Otherwise, most personal defense loads will be a good option lacking such oppressive recoil.

AT THE RANGE

Accuracy testing was uneventful. The action of the 66 Combat — in addition to being light and smooth — was properly timed. Each charge hole carried up and indexed before the hammer drop, so shooting good groups was a more manageable task than other DA revolvers might be. The .38 Special

loads were easy, and while the 357 Magnum loads required a bit more concentration, the Burris FastFire C red-dot optic made the task much easier. The velocities delivered were as expected for a revolver with a 3-inch barrel; not the fastest, but faster than snubbies would do.

If you are considering a double-action revolver as your everyday carry firearm, then the 66 Combat could fill that role superbly. As an all-steel revolver, you will have to invest in a solid belt and sturdy holster — which you should be doing anyway — so you can pack the weight and not have it show. As far as longevity is concerned, decades of experience have shown that a well-made revolver such as the 66 Combat will require a serious investment in ammunition and its expenditure to come close to wearing out said revolver. If you stick to using .38 Special and .38 Special +P ammunition, you might go the rest of your life and not wear out one of these. Now that's a solid investment.

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Canik Mete SF One Series 9mm



CANIK METE SF ONE SERIES	
TYPE	Recoil operated, striker fired, semiautomatic
CARTRIDGE	9mm
CAPACITY	15+1 rds.
BARREL	4.19 in., steel alloy
LENGTH	7.28 in.
HEIGHT	5.21 in.
WIDTH	1.41 in.
SLIDE	Steel
FINISH	Nitride (steel)
GRIP	Polymer
SIGHTS	Post, white dot (front), white dots, notch (rear)
TRIGGER	2 lbs. 8.8 oz. (tested)
SAFETY	Trigger lever, striker plunger
MSRP	\$325
MANUFACTURER	Samsun Yurt Savunma Sanayi, Turkey
IMPORTER	Canik USA, 561-908-7993, canikusa.com

VALUE PROPOSITION

GUNS & AMMO reviews many 9mm, striker-fire, polymer-frame handguns. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF, nssf.org), this style of pistol continues to dominate firearms sales in the U.S. Everyday carry (EDC) pistols are still trending, but the market has indicated that it wants options.

Canik has well established its reputation for reliability and quality. Its pistols have earned a following among American pistol shooters. Canik's latest entry is the Mete SF One Series. What sets it apart from other Mete models? The manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$325. It is the most affordable model of all Canik pistols — and almost anything else in its category.

PACKAGE DEAL

When buying a Canik, it's more accurate to suggest that you're purchasing a package. Models such as the Mete MC9 Prime (\$650) and TTI Combat (\$1,000) include a holster within a multi-layer lockable hard case, and more. Other models are also accessory rich. For Canik to offer a model in the sub-\$350 price point, it had to trim goodies, including spare magazines. The One Series comes with just one 15-round magazine. Still, the package features the usual tools, alternate backstraps for the grip, a gun lock, and a simpler hard case.

Despite its low price, the Mete SF One Series is an equal to its Mete cousins as far as performance, reliability and shootability.

Mechanically, the foundational design is the same. Therefore, the value proposition of the One Series is a breath of fresh air for the frugal. For many, the excitement felt at the dawn of the polymer pistol age has lessened. The

One Series has stimulated that feeling in us once again. It did not disappoint. The Mete SF One Series was subjected to several unique tests beyond Guns & Ammo's typical review procedures, and it performed above its class.

One Series has stimulated that feeling in us once again. It did not disappoint. The Mete SF One Series was subjected to several unique tests beyond Guns & Ammo's typical review procedures, and it performed above its class.



In order to minimize the price, the One Series lacks the extras provided with other Canik pistols. Hence, only one 15-round magazine is included.



The Canik Mete 9 SF One Series features an optic-mount coverplate. Using the provided Allen bit, remove two M4 screws to reveal an optic-ready slide that accepts adapters, as well as optics with Trijicon RMR/RMRcc and Shield RMS/RMSc footprints.



The three-dot iron sights are inserted into standard dovetails. Beneath the rear notch, a red indicator protrudes from the serrated backplate when the striker is ready to fire.



The accessory rail on the dustcover offers three slots for attaching popular lights and laser-aiming devices. Note, the front of the triggerguard and slide are serrated touchpoints.

METE 9

As part of the Mete series, the SF One shares much of the design, aesthetics and features as the rest of the line.

The magazine well is slightly flared underneath for clean reloads. At the range, only having one mag meant that modified reloading drills were performed. Alas, the flared magwell works as intended. Additional magazines are available from Canik's website (\$35, canikusa.com).

The slide is red-dot ready for Shield RMS/RMSc or Trijicon RMR/RMRcc micro optics. Mounting plates for each type are included. Forgoing a red dot, the iron sights are the three-white-dot setup with a slightly enlarged white dot at the front. It's easy to distinguish and get on target quickly, and would be ideal for a defensive situation. Set into a dovetail-style mount, the sights could easily be exchanged for fiber-optic or tritium night sights, too. Lastly on the sights, the rear sights feature an angled edge to rack the slide against a flat surface with one hand.

There is no manual safety, but the slide release is confirmed ambidextrous — not just bilateral. The mag release, though, ships for right-hand dominant shooting, but it can be reversed. Inside the frame, there is a spring that has the



The Mete SF One Series features an ambidextrous slide-release lever behind a pull-down takedown crossbar. The magazine release is set up for right-handed shooters but is reversible.



Canik provides a punch used to remove the pin that secures the backstrap to the grip. An optional backstrap is provided to accommodate smaller hand sizes.

appearance of a modified cotter pin. Using a set of needle nose pliers, the spring can be removed, allowing the mag release to be changed to a left-hand orientation. (It takes only a few minutes.)

Also on the frame is a full three-slot rail positioned on the dustcover to mount lights or laser sights. With three mounting slots, the rail is compatible with almost every model of accessory on the market.

The grip texture has a sandpaper-esque feel in the hand. It offers a secure hold on the gun during operation, but it's not so aggressive as to damage clothing when carrying concealed. Additional texture points are on the left and right side of the frame just forward of the takedown bar. These are tactile reference points that can be used to index your trigger finger against between strings of fire.

The most notable feature of the One Series is its trigger. G&A staff agreed that it was outstanding. With a 10-pull average measured using a Wheeler Professional Digi-



The trigger of the Mete SF One Series averaged 2½ pounds, which is excellent for target shooting. The red safety lever is visually distinctive, and triggerguard contoured for a high grip.



The muzzle and guiderod assembly is flush to the slide. With forward slide serrations, the user can manipulate the slide to charge the action or inspect the chamber's status.

tal Trigger Gauge (\$88, wheelertools.com), the Mete SF One Series produced a 2-pound, 8.8-ounce pull. Plus, it has one of the shortest perceived trigger resets seen on a gun at this price. A sub-3-pound trigger is light for a concealed-carry pistol that might be carried close to precious cargo.

The short take-up was notably smooth and consistent. Paired with the quality barrel, G&A's staff was able to produce decent groups at 25 yards with the iron sights from a bench. Accuracy testing with a red-dot sight tightens those results, however, in keeping with the spirit of the pistol's price the published results reflect the 25-yard accuracy potential of the Meta SF One Series with iron sights only.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

The Canik Mete SF One Series performed above many of our expectations. Twenty-five yards is a poke for an everyday carry gun, especially when realistic defensive engage-



Included with the Mete SF One Series is a miniature pistol that functions as a driver. Remove the grip plate to access bits needed to install optics.



PERFORMANCE

LOAD	VEL. (FPS)	ES	SD	BEST GROUP (IN.)	AVG. GROUP (IN.)
Federal American Eagle 115-gr. FMJ	1,126	61	20	2.3	3.2
Hornady Critical Defense 115-gr. FTX	1,128	28	9	3	3.9
Black Hills 115-gr. JHP	1,205	36	13	3.4	3.75
Fiocchi Range Dynamics 147-gr. FMJ	942	46	18	3.6	4

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

ments are less than 10. At 10 yards, most shooters will easily blow out the X-ring on a paper target. Beyond the standard protocol tests, we had a chance to evaluate the Mete SF One Series on moving targets. It's rare to get such an opportunity on a public range where most

of our tests are done on static targets. The Green Valley Rifle & Pistol Club (gvshoot.com) — home of the famous Bianchi Cup — hosted G&A's evaluation of the Mete SF One Series. Its infamous moving target stages are matchbreakers. Engaging movers designed for competition with an EDC handgun is as much of a test of the shooter as it is the gun.

At 10 and 15 yards, the Mete SF One Series performed exceptionally. Managing Editor Jack Oller fired three-shot groups at a target moving between eight and 10 miles per hour. "It was challenging," he noted, "especially without a red dot." Oller's best group at 10 yards put two shots on the X-ring with a flyer at about 4 inches below. At 15 yards,

the grouping looked similar but had increased spread. Still, all shots taken at the movers were well within center mass. Oller walked away impressed.

Shooting movers was a fascinating way to see what the One Series can do against the clock in a stressful situation. Real-world defensive scenarios are rarely as clean as training on paper targets at the range. A bad guy probably won't stand still while you align your sights and apply the fundamentals of marksmanship. Practicing on a range with moving targets is a unique test of your performance with a particular pistol. The Canik Mete SF One Series rose to the occasion.

With its accuracy potential established, a test of reliability followed. Putting the Mete SF One Series through G&A's Typewriter Test showed it has no problem feeding any kind of ammunition. The "Typewriter Test" involves randomly loading an assortment of full metal jacket (FMJ) and jacketed hollowpoints (JHP) of various grain weights — spanning 50-grain Liberty Ultra-Light 9mm ammunition to 147-grain JHP — in the same magazine. This is a way to establish a pistol's ability to accommodate



The One Series hard case includes a 15-round magazine, tool, gun lock, optic plates, backstrap, punch and manual.

different slide velocities. Not only did the Mete SF One Series produce no malfunctions, rapidly shooting plate racks during the Typewriter Test highlighted its consistent cycling. Across 250 rounds, the Mete SF One Series ran without flaw.

PARTING SHOTS

In case it hasn't hit home, the Canik Mete SF One Series is just \$325, and odds are that it'll be on the shelf at your local gun store for less. At this price, there should be even more room in your budget for ammo and training. Many may feel it's inappropriate to attach an expensive red dot or light to the rail of an inexpensive gun. How-

ever, the Canik Mete SF One Series proved that it performs with the best, so it deserves the best.

The Canik Mete SF One Series is an excellent everyday carry option. It's small enough to conceal, and large enough to comfortably shoot in volume. Whether worn on the belt, carried off body, or stored in a lockbox near the nightstand, the Canik Mete SF One Series is one of the best value propositions you're going to find in a defensive handgun. **GA**

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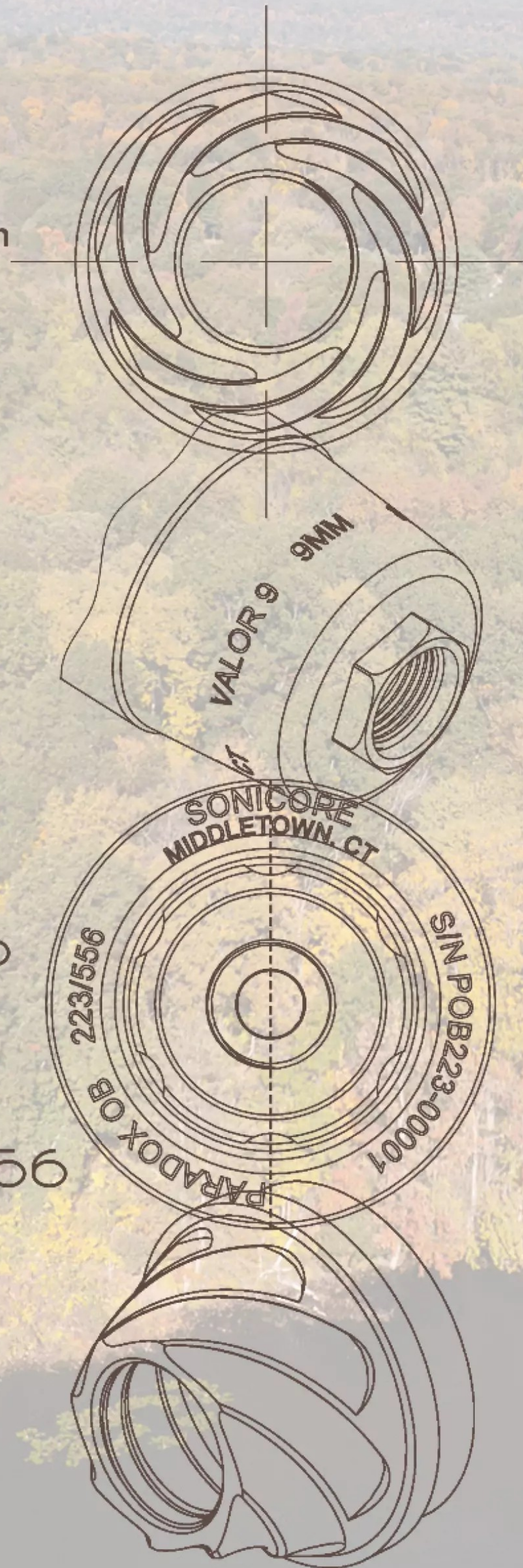
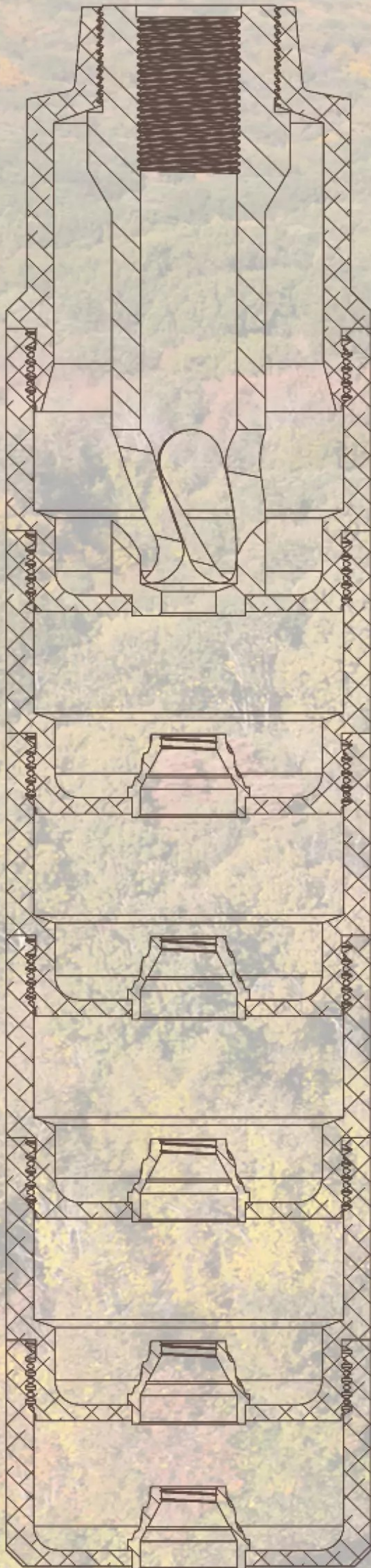
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LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

AT THE TIME OF WRITING, I've recently returned from Gunsite Academy in Arizona (gunsite.com) where I assisted in the production of Guns & Ammo TV. With Managing Editor Jack Oller at the helm, we reviewed dozens of firearms and accessories released in 2025, and then evaluated them with several instructors. Gunsite is a great place to explore firearm techniques, as well as the performance and durability of firearms, optics, ammunition and accessories. I recommend Gunsite to anyone interested in developing their mindset and skills with a particular firearm. Hosted by Gun Tech Editor Richard Nance, "G&A Personal Defense" online video series was also shot at Gunsite, which is a great primer for handgun and rifle use.

Before the trip to Gunsite, I attended the opening of the Smith & Wesson Academy in Maryville, Tennessee (academy.smith-wesson.com). The facility not only supports law enforcement training but is also open to the public, including introductory and defensive rifle and pistol courses. Meeting the S&W team in person gave

PERSONAL DEFENSE 101

Richard Nance demonstrates the basics of personal defense, including situational awareness, target prioritization and firearm drills.



ACTION!

Guns & Ammo Managing Editor Jack Oller supports the production of "Guns & Ammo TV" at Gunsite, showcasing new firearms and training techniques.

me a great perspective on the Academy and time with new firearms.

These back-to-back trips reminded me of how important it is to visit industry members on their home turf. At events and showcases, editors and contributors get first-person test experience and often provide immediate feedback to engineers and product teams. There's always something to learn, and these experiences often create new perspectives while examining the products we've been assigned to review. Keith Wood's visit

CLASS IS IN SESSION

The Smith & Wesson Academy opened to the public on Sept. 12, 2025, offering firearm training adjacent to Smith & Wesson's headquarters.



ANTONIO ACITELLI

to Rob Leatham's and Jason Burton's 1911 Mastery Course (November 2025) is one example, which resulted in an exclusive G&A Buzz Podcast interview with Burton. (Search "Building The Bespoke 1911" on YouTube.) Personally, I've always wanted to tour CMP facilities and participate in an M1 Advanced Maintenance Course.

Are there facilities, events or training you would like to see reviewed? Email us at gaeditor@outdoorsg.com with the subject line "Sound Off," and we'll be on the lookout for suggestions.

TOP COMMENTS

Long-time subscriber. Thanks for the great "Proofhouse" in the July 2025 issue. We, the Red Headed Stepchildren of Kalifornia, need more positive news like this. We've already heard the bad stuff. Nice gun, but I'm still waiting on my future CZ Shadow Compact, S&W Bodyguard 2.0 and RIA 5.0. I want to be the only kid on my block with a square barrel. All must be optic ready, of course.

Every time I drop by the California DOJ-approved handgun roster, I am like a kid on Christmas morning wondering if Santa dropped by. He's been stiffing me on the good guns. I'm sure you guys have contacts at California DOJ and the manufacturers that can clue you in to upcoming Cal Roster approved guns, right? More encouragement please. — Tom, Email

In response to the September 2025 "Connect" column, "Quiet Riot":

In your Sept. column in Guns & Ammo magazine, you talked about suppressors and the removal of the \$200 transfer fee. You briefly talked about the rule changes. Could you perhaps write a complete article about all of the modifications of the rules that have occurred with changes made to the BATF? More than suppressors were affected by the changes. Thanks. — Bill C., Email



SOUND OFF

Respond to articles, find community and join the conversation in the Guns & Ammo forums and by engaging with us on social media:



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KEITH WOOD

Just when we thought the state couldn't get worse.

CALIFORNIA BANS GLOCK

CALIFORNIA has been on a roll in recent years, doing its best to maintain its position at the cutting edge of the anti-gun movement. I wasn't sure if the state could get any worse for gun owners, but Governor Gavin Newsom made that clear when he signed Assembly Bill 1127 in October 2025. The legislation will effectively ban Glock and Glock-platform handguns, which are some of the most popular firearms in the nation.

Effective July 1, 2026, licensed firearms dealers in California "shall not sell, offer for sale, exchange, give, transfer, or deliver any semiautomatic machine gun-convertible pistol." The new law defines a machine gun-convertible pistol as, "Any semiautomatic pistol with a cruciform trigger bar that can be readily converted by hand or with common household tools ... into a machine gun by the installation or attachment of a pistol converter as a replacement for the slide's backplate without any additional engineering, machining, or modification of the pistol's trigger mechanism."

In plain English, this means that Glock and Glock-platform handguns will be banned from sale or transfer under the California Penal Code. These models have been altered in some instances to function automatically with the installation of a so-called "Glock switch," hence the platform is being classified as a "machine gun." The fact that Glock switches are already illegal to possess in California seems irrelevant, and that installing one is already a violation of the National Firearms Act (NFA). California's General Assembly and governor took the extra step and banned the host handgun. It's akin to banning cold medicine because criminals can convert it to meth.

Will this egregious act stand up to a legal challenge? We may not have to wait long to find out. On October 12, 2025, a lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California. The plaintiffs, who include the National Rifle Association (NRA), Firearms Policy Coalition (FPC), and the Second Amendment Foundation (SAF), are challenging the law as a flagrantly unconstitutional violation of the Sec-

ond Amendment.

The plaintiffs' argument is that, according to the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark *Heller* decision, "The Second Amendment protects law-abiding citizens' right to possess — and, as an incident, to acquire — weapons that are in common use, including handguns." As one of the most popular handgun brands sold in the U.S., the Glock is most certainly in common use.

"Gavin Newsom and his gang of progressive politicians in California are continuing their crusade against constitutional rights," NRA-ILA Executive Director John Comerford said. "Once again, they are attempting to violate landmark Supreme Court decisions and disarm law-abiding citizens by banning some of the most commonly owned handguns in America. This flagrant violation of rights cannot, and will not, go unchecked."

In July 2025, Gov. Newsom told podcaster Shawn Ryan that he is "not anti-gun at all." By signing yet another bill that infringes on the Second Amendment rights of his constituents, he has proven that his words do not match his actions. As the legal challenge makes its way through the courts, Newsom will likely be launching a campaign to become the U.S. president. Though he will no doubt run for the ideological center if he wins the Democratic nomination, Newsom's record on the Second Amendment is clear. **GA**





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