

**SI** HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE: **SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

# SHOOTING

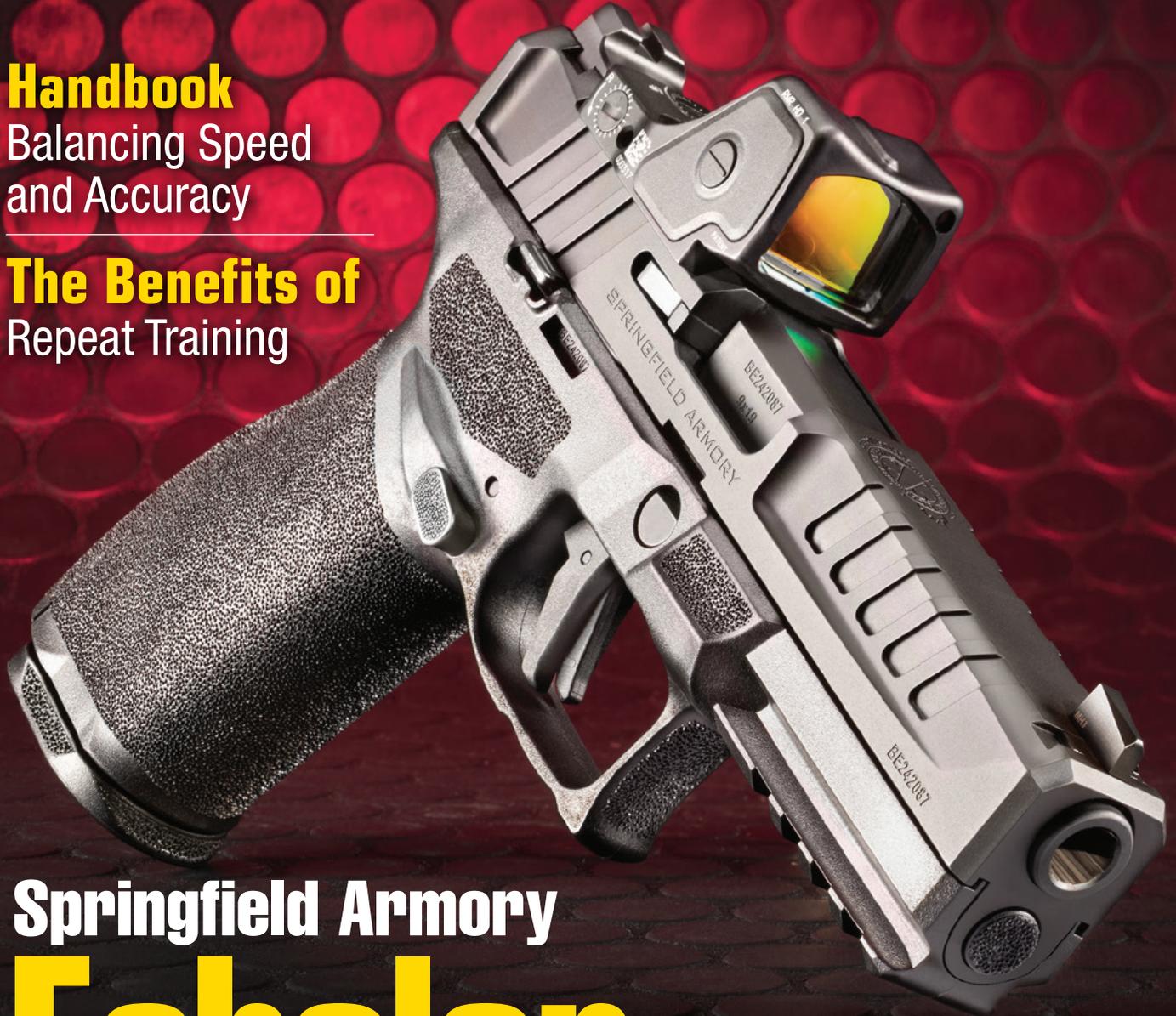
## Illustrated

NOVEMBER | 2023

### Handbook

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and Accuracy

**The Benefits of  
Repeat Training**



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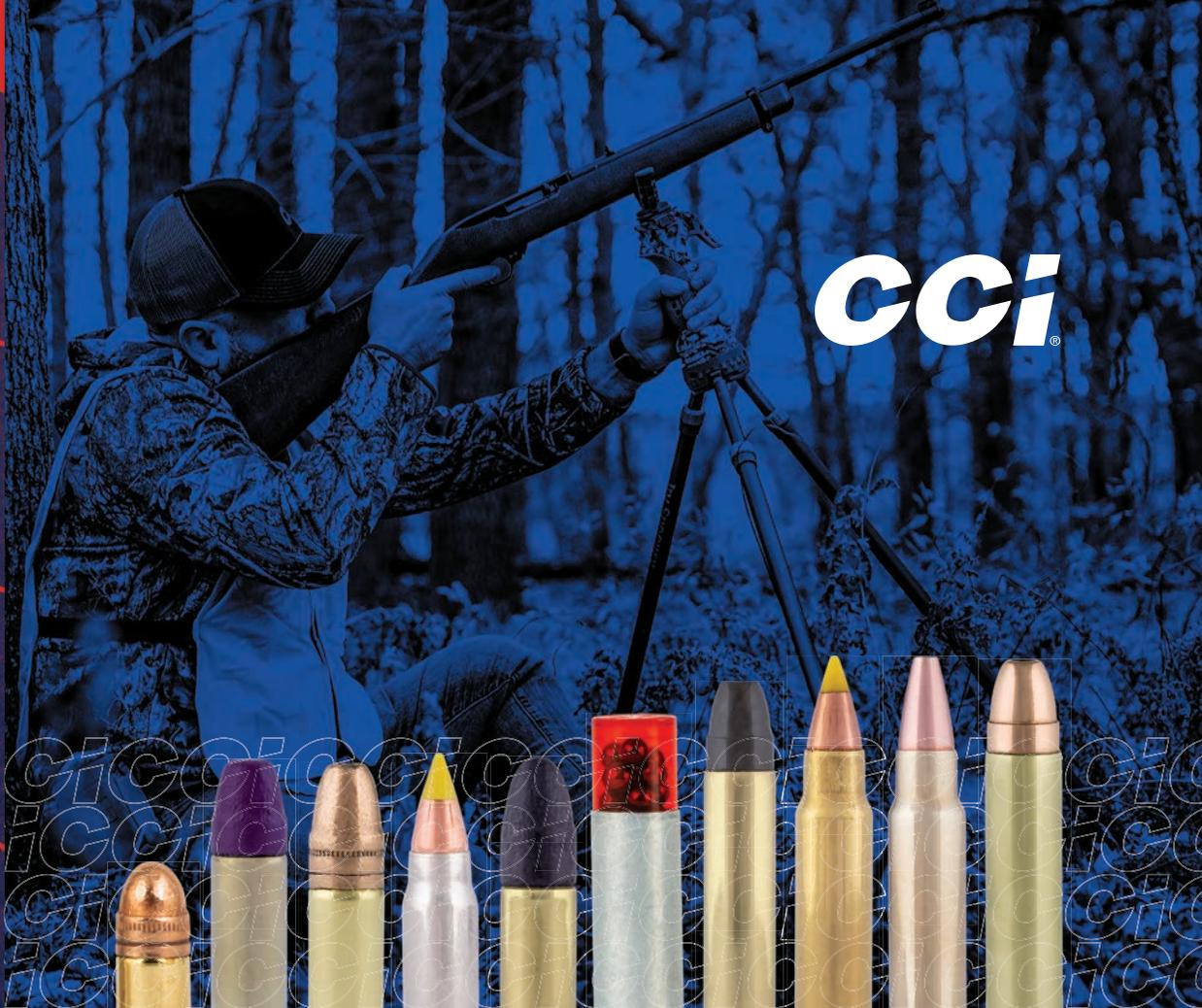
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WHAT ALL GUNS SHOULD BE™

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COVER: ERIC DEAN

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*A Shooting Illustrated Staff Report*

## Handbook

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## **NRA**™ Official Journal of the National Rifle Association of America

The NRA, the foremost guardian of the traditional American right to "keep and bear arms," believes every law-abiding citizen is entitled to the ownership and legal use of firearms, and that every reputable gun owner should be an NRA member.

The items and information offered or detailed in this publication are intended for, and directed and offered to, only those at least **18** years of age or older and who are in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

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## Learning How To Shoot A Revolver

It has a set of grips, a trigger and a pair of sights, just like a semi-automatic pistol, so you'd think that shooting a revolver would be the same as shooting a semi-automatic. And you'd be wrong. Achieving competency with a revolver takes a unique skillset, especially when it comes to reloading your gun in a fast and efficient manner.



## Stocks and Grips: An Evolution

The form and fit may have changed over the centuries, but the purpose of the grips and the stock on your gun remain the same: To provide a way for you to control your firearm so you can achieve accurate, repeatable shots. Our Field Editor, Steve Tarani, shows us how we apply the knowledge gained over the years to the techniques we use today.

KEVIN CREIGHTON



## Skill vs. Gear

It's very tempting to turn to a new gun or a new accessory in order to solve a problem with your marksmanship. But, just how much does the latest and greatest in guns or gear actually improve your skill, versus doing the hard work of improving your technique? We break it down by the numbers, using the classification system established for a popular practical pistol competition.

## News

Kimber Launches Retroactive Limited Lifetime Warranty



72 Percent Own a Gun for Protection

## Guns



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## Gear

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Some of the photographs in this magazine illustrate specific shooting stances or positions in which it was occasionally necessary to position the camera in front of the muzzle for instructional purposes. At no time was a loaded, functioning firearm used in these photographs; special, deactivated guns or solid plastic gun simulators were employed. In some cases the image was taken using a remotely triggered camera.

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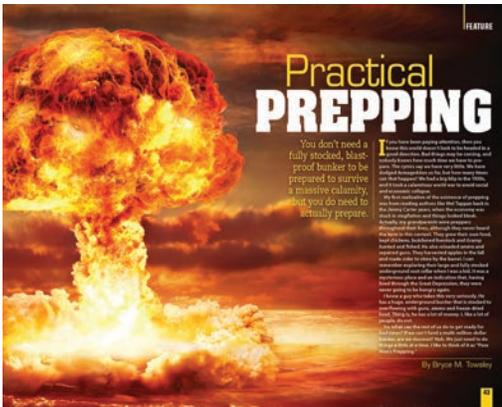
PATENT  
PENDING

# Prepare Yourself

As a former emergency-response trainer and later a sales associate for a major home-improvement retailer, I read Bryce M. Towsley's September-issue article, "Practical Prepping," with great interest. Within an hour or two of a predicted or actual emergency, store shelves can be stripped bare, leaving you empty-handed. His advice is spot on, but I would suggest an additional step in preparing for the worst. About every 5 years, I pick a nice day in the spring or fall and turn off all of the utilities at my house for 24 hours. I do this periodically, because our needs change over time with various life changes. This creates an artificial "emergency" providing real-world conditions to focus my thinking. During that time, I do what I can to "survive," and look for opportunities to improve my situation. From this, I create a list of needs and look for inexpensive ways to meet them without breaking the bank. You may be surprised what you discover about your particular

needs. Over the past 50 years, my family and I have survived quite well through several extended power outages, water losses and severe weather situations. The time to prepare for an emergency is today.

**Ronald P. Andring, Sr.**  
San Antonio, TX



Bryce M. Towsley's article on prepping had lots of great advice, including what to stock up on, building up stock gradually, trying out selections and rotating stock. However, he never mentioned water. Contaminated public water supply is already a common problem, especially during catastrophes—whether natural or man-made. I would like to hear what he thinks we should do for a potable water supply in an extended emergency.

**Joe Rivers**  
Springfield, OH

You raise an excellent point. I didn't cover water owing to space limitations. Water is a complicated subject that could fill up an entire article by itself. Water concerns also vary by region. I live in the Northeast and in a rural area, so water is not a big problem as long as I have a way to purify it. Those living in the city depend on the water supply continuing, in which case it could be purified in most instances. But, the greater danger is that the water stops flowing. Folks living in water-challenged areas like the desert should probably store some drinking water, since it may prove difficult to come by in a crisis.

—Bryce M. Towsley

## We Jammin'

*Shooting Illustrated* is one of the finest publications available, and I thoroughly enjoy it, particularly the "Tech Wisdom" column by George Harris. In the September issue, a reader submitted a problem with cycling issues in the .45 ACP pistol that he recently purchased. I agree wholeheartedly with the advice that Harris provided, but I would add one more thing: I would advise him to check his grip and grip pressure along with his stance and the locking of his wrists. Being a firearm instructor for more than 20 years for law enforcement, I have encountered several individuals who could handle a smaller-caliber handgun just fine. When given a larger-caliber handgun, they would also experience jams and misfeeds. Working with them on proper grip, locking the wrist and a better stance, the pistol would then operate properly as the weapon itself was taking up the recoil and not the person. As we all know, if the firearm itself is not allowed to absorb the recoil in order to make it cycle properly, then jams, misfeeds and poor ejection of spent cartridges can occur.

**Tracy Zuver**  
Archbold, OH

## Stop Rotating

Sheriff Jim Wilson's "Straight Talk" column in the September issue was right-on when he said: "This is the main reason that we discourage armed citizens from continually switching to different kinds of carry guns." On the gun forums, it is very common to hear people talking about their "carry rotation," in many cases switching from day to day between guns that operate very differently. Pick one and stick with it!

**Mike Fontenot**  
via e-mail

## Correspondence is welcomed and encouraged

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Studies indicate that firearms are used more than 2 million times a year for personal protection, and that the presence of a firearm, without a shot being fired, prevents crime in many instances. Shooting usually can be justified only where crime constitutes an immediate, imminent threat to life, limb, or, in some cases, property. Anyone is free to quote or reproduce these accounts.

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**A** man reportedly entered a barbecue restaurant in Leon County, Texas, on Aug. 14 and aggressively harassed several customers. He then went into the restroom and allegedly assaulted an elderly man there, knocking him to the floor and beating him unconscious. An armed citizen intervened and was also attacked and knocked to the ground, whereupon he fired two shots at the assailant, striking him once in the right arm. The suspect fled the restaurant; police later found him sitting in his vehicle on the shoulder of the road, where they arrested him and transported him to the hospital for treatment. The elderly restaurant patron was also treated and no other injuries were noted. (Leon County Sheriff’s Office Facebook post, Leon County, Texas, 8/15/23)

**A** convenience-store owner in Houston, Texas, had just returned from the bank and was about to enter his store on Aug. 16 when he was reportedly hit in the back of the head with a blunt object. He turned and saw multiple masked attackers wearing gloves. The store owner drew his firearm and shot at the assailants. An employee inside the store, hearing the commotion, also fired at the suspects. Two of the attackers died at the scene while a third suspect drove away. The assistant police chief noted “our citizens do have the right to defend themselves, and choices have consequences.” Police also said they believe the incident was an example of “jugging,” wherein robbers identify potential victims while they’re at a bank or ATM and then follow them to their work or home. (khou.com, Houston, Texas, 8/16/23)

**A** young man dressed all in black and wearing a bandana over his face entered a liquor store in Fountain Valley, Calif., on Aug. 16, pulled out what looked like a gun and demanded money. The store’s owner, however, thought the would-be robber looked like a “kid” and that his gun looked “so fake ... like a plastic toy.” He pulled out his own gun, whereupon the suspect immediately fled the store and got away in a waiting vehicle. The armed citizen told reporters he was able to remain calm because he’d been robbed at gunpoint before. (abc7.com, Los Angeles, Calif., 8/18/23)

**A** 35-year-old off-duty prison guard was pumping gas in Philadelphia, Pa., around 10:30 p.m. on Aug. 23 when a suspected would-be carjacker approached her from behind. Security cameras show the 22-year-old man getting her into a “bear hug”; the woman, however, fought back and pulled out her gun. She and the assailant shot at each other, and the man was struck once in the torso and once in the leg. The woman

was unfortunately also hit twice in the leg but was reported to be in stable condition; she is not expected to face charges. (6abc.com, Philadelphia, Pa., 8/23/23)

**A** 43-year-old taxi driver in Metairie, La., was in his cab during the early morning hours of Aug. 21 when a man approached and pointed a gun at him while demanding money. The cab driver, fearing for his life, shot the assailant multiple times, killing him. Sheriff’s office investigators said the suspect was likely the same person who had held up two other taxi drivers in the week preceding this incident. No charges are expected to be filed against the armed citizen. (nola.com, New Orleans, La., 8/24/23)

**O**n Aug. 30 in Butler, Pa., a man and his girlfriend were eating pizza and getting ready to watch a movie when they heard a strange *bang* in the basement. They started to walk down the stairs to investigate when they saw an intruder allegedly pushing his way through the door. The two residents ran back upstairs, and the man retrieved his gun while his girlfriend called 911. The now-armed citizen told the stranger to show his hands, which he did, but then he reportedly stopped complying, repeatedly asking to be hidden in the home. The homeowner said the man moved aggressively toward him, so he fired two shots, striking the intruder once. The homeowner told reporters he still had to kick the intruder back down after shooting him because the man kept attempting to get up. The intruder reportedly told him he’d rather be shot again than kicked, at which point the homeowner told him the next time he had to shoot him, he wouldn’t survive. Police arrested the intruder, who faces charges once released from medical treatment. No charges are expected against the armed citizen. (wtae.com, Pittsburgh, Pa., 8/31/23) 

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By Wayne LaPierre  
Executive Vice President

## America Herself Is At Stake In Next Year's Election

**Y**ou used to not have to worry about crime unless you were associated with the streets, with drug dealing. Now you could just be going down the street, going to the car and you can be killed.

"People don't care. They rob them in Georgetown and Connecticut Avenue. They're going to the Wharf. Now, it could be anywhere."

That's what Ronald Moten, a longtime resident of Washington, D.C., recently told *The Washington Post*. His voice was one of many who've made the same, unmistakable observation. And they aren't wrong. Homicide in our nation's capital is up 29% this year. Robberies are up 67%. Residents who live in traditionally safe areas of the city now fear for their wellbeing just walking outside their apartments and homes.

Of course, it isn't just Washington, D.C. Crime rates are soaring in cities and towns nationwide.

But the rampant crime wave that is ravaging our country is not the disease—it's a symptom of a much deeper sickness that the radical, anti-gun left is intentionally trying to inflict on our nation.

Their sole intent is to tear down our justice system and weaken the institutions that hold America together, so they can then impose their own warped ideology on all of us. In their ideology, we would have an America where crime is to be understood, but not punished. An America where violent criminals have guns, but the innocent are disarmed.

An America where we're not allowed to speak our minds for fear of being censored, canceled and, ultimately, targeted by a weaponized "justice" system. An America where religious institutions are barred from holding views or values that differ from the radical left's agenda. An America where so-called progressive political ideas are not up for debate, but rather, imposed from the top down without any scrutiny or discussion.

What we're witnessing in rising crime rates is the natural byproduct of the destruction and rot that has taken place in America from within. The anti-freedom left doesn't believe in civil discourse. If you own a gun or support the Second Amendment, you're a monster, they say. They don't believe in honest debate. They ignore facts. They are willing to use any tactic to lie, cheat and slander anyone who gets in their way. They'll even pervert our justice system to achieve their political aims.

Just think about how they even define the term "justice." "Justice" to them means letting

violent criminals run free. "Justice" to them means stopping law-abiding citizens like us from owning and carrying firearms. They don't weep for the innocent, disarmed mom in the city who can't defend herself or her family when a thug breaks down the door. They weep for the thug when he's denied bail.

Crime isn't the failure of our criminal-justice system—it's the complete abandonment of any form of criminal justice by the radical, gun-hating left.

The left has spent every hour of every day for years trying to divide America into fragments. They breed hatred, jealousy and contempt among Americans. Our beloved nation will dissolve into history and cease to exist as we know it unless good people stand and fight for the time-honored, sensible and sane values that make America free, safe and prosperous.

Make no mistake: Our fight is now. The battleground is this election campaign. And our opponent is Joe Biden, the radical left's ringleader.

You and I both know that no single organization has a better chance to turn the tide toward freedom and justice than our NRA. Our firearm freedoms are the benchmark for every other freedom in the Constitution. The pro-Second Amendment candidates we've supported over the years have not only stood tall for our gun rights, but also our free speech, our religious freedom, law and order and the constitutional values that built our nation.

Too many people believe that America is so big, so strong, so powerful and so enduring that it will last forever. But you and I know the lessons of history. We know massive civilizations have risen and fallen since the dawn of humankind.

America could last another thousand years or could be gone—at least as we know it—within our lifetimes. And every lesson that history teaches points to an America that's on the brink.

As NRA members, you and I have a role to play like we've never played before. We've won countless elections from the statehouse to the White House, but everything we've accomplished together over the last 40 years has all led up to this critical moment.

It's time to rise up, fight together, save our nation and steer America back on track.

*Wayne LaPierre*



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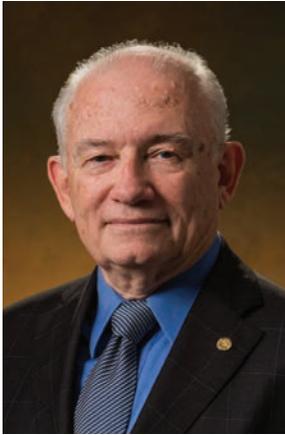
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By Charles L. Cotton  
President

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# Election Day Countdown: Plan To Win

**W**e're now just 12 months out from the critical 2024 elections. While that may seem far in the future, as president of this association, I urge you: If you care about your firearms, your Second Amendment freedom to own them, and your ability to defend yourself and your family, there is no more important task you face right now than to make a plan today to protect them.

President Joe Biden continues attacking your right to arms with every means at his disposal. Scarcely a week goes by without him calling for an outright ban on the most popular semi-automatic firearms in America. When Biden can't get his bans through Congress, his White House unilaterally tries to impose them through executive orders, federal regulations and abusive reinterpretations of existing laws and regulations.

Since Biden took office, hundreds of U.S. gun dealers have had their Federal Firearms Licenses revoked under new "zero-tolerance" policies punishing paperwork errors and other innocent oversights. In July, they blocked funding for archery and hunting education in American schools because it supposedly included "training in the use of a dangerous weapon." In August, they pushed new ATF regulations that would ban many, if not all, private sales of firearms between law-abiding adults. The list goes on.

Meanwhile, in left-leaning states, governors and state legislatures are passing laws that effectively render meaningless the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 landmark *Bruen* decision, which said that states cannot arbitrarily deny the right to carry without a good reason. They're also passing new laws that circumvent the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act—so that they can blame the U.S. firearms industry for violent crimes and sue gunmakers out of business.

Throughout all of it, these anti-gun politicians have 24/7/365 support from their allies in the legacy media and social media. They parrot the lies. They suppress stories that tell the truth about our rights. They "demonetize" pro-gun voices or censor them into silence. Taken together, the propagandists of the press and self-appointed gatekeepers of social media constitute a speech-police steamroller straight out of Stalin's dreams or Orwell's nightmares.

There's not enough room in this column to go into all the schemes and stratagems they're using to crush your Second Amendment freedom, but let me say this: Next November's elections are absolutely crucial to stopping them.

NRA members like you instinctively understand that firearm freedom is the canary in the coal mine, and that, in the words of St. George Tucker, "Wherever the right of the people to keep and bear arms is under any color or pretext whatsoever prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction." That's why your role in this fight is crucial.

Now, given Biden's age, the many scandals swirling around the White House, his leftist agenda and the unpopularity of his gun-ban zealotry, you might think that his chances of re-election—assuming he runs—are slim. But the fact is, only five American presidents over the past century have been defeated in their re-election bids.

Next November, voters will elect the next president and vice-president, U.S. Senators in 34 states, the governors of 11 states, state attorneys general in 10 states, statehouse legislators in 44 states and all 435 members of the House of Representatives.

I want to see the NRA and gun owners nationwide play a pivotal role in next year's elections, just as we did in the elections of 1994 and 2000. Here's how you can do your fair share:

- Go to [triggerthevote.org/register-to-vote](http://triggerthevote.org/register-to-vote) to make sure your vote can be counted.
- Go to [nraila.org/sign-up](http://nraila.org/sign-up) so we can reach you with the most up-to-date information about elections and legislation in your hometown.
- Consider becoming an NRA-ILA FrontLines Activist Leader (FAL) or get in touch with your local FAL by going to [nraila.org/grassroots/find-your-frontlines-activist-leader](http://nraila.org/grassroots/find-your-frontlines-activist-leader).
- Help fund the crucial communications that can make a decisive difference on Election Day by contributing to the NRA-ILA Political Victory Fund (PVF). Although contributions to PVF aren't tax-deductible, you can rest assured that your donations will directly and exclusively fund powerful election efforts.

If you do nothing else, make it your personal priority to ensure you're registered to vote and to recruit at least one new NRA member. Numbers speak louder than anything else to politicians, and the greater our numbers, the louder our voice. Securing our God-given freedoms is sure to take all the voices and votes that we can muster.

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IT'S AT ITS BEST.**

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By Randy Kozuch  
Executive Director,  
NRA-ILA

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# Executive Overreach: Biden Admin Attacks Lawful Firearm Sales

**H**ow do you know when the government doesn't believe that their own proposed regulation is lawful? If you guessed "when the government states it won't use its new regulation (which happens to implement a criminal statute) in any criminal cases," then you've likely already read the ATF's new proposed rule: "Definition of 'Engaged in the Business' as a Dealer in Firearms."

I discuss this rule in the context of the Biden Administration's holistic attack on gun owners in more detail in the ILA Story this month, but this most recent unlawful attack on gun rights still deserves a closer look.

You may recall that the definition of "engaged in the business" controls when individuals engage in sufficient commerce in firearms so as to need to be licensed under federal law as a Federal Firearms Licensee ("FFL"). This definition was altered slightly last year by the NRA-opposed "Bipartisan Safer Communities Act." As with the naming of most gun control legislation, there is nothing to make America "safer" in the Orwellian-named BSCA.

The former definition of "engaged in the business" as applied to a dealer was "a person who devotes time, attention, and labor to dealing in firearms as a regular course of trade or business with the principal objective of livelihood and profit through the repetitive purchase and resale of firearms, but such term shall not include a person who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms."

The BSCA exchanged the terms "with the principle objective of livelihood and profit" with "to predominantly earn a profit." Notably, no changes were made to the language protecting those who engage in "occasional sales, exchanges or purchases" or those "who sell all or part of [a] personal collection."

ATF claims to be using this change in the BSCA as the basis for the new regulation, but the proposed rule creates several presumptions about when a person is "engaged in the business," despite the fact that none of the presumptions appear in the BSCA.

The most important aspect of these presumptions is the government's claim that "[t]he rebuttable presumptions shall not apply to any criminal case, although they may be useful to courts in criminal cases, for example, when instructing juries regarding permissible inferences." One might wonder why a new proposed definition of a term that is used in federal criminal statutes cannot be used in

criminal cases. As I mentioned in the opening, the government likely knows this rule is unlawful, and is trying to head off legal challenges by limiting the application of its new rule.

Beyond this tacit admission of the unlawfulness of the rule, the government does get one thing right. They correctly admit that the statute does not give them the authority to set a limit on the number of firearm transactions that a person can engage in before needing to be licensed. However, in true government form, after making this admission, the rule goes on to describe how even a single transaction could trigger the need to be licensed. So much for the statutory requirement that a person engage in "repetitive purchase and resale" before needing a license.

**THE GOVERNMENT LIKELY KNOWS THIS RULE IS UNLAWFUL AND IS TRYING TO HEAD OFF LEGAL CHALLENGES.**

The rule also contains presumptions that a person is "engaged in the business" for conduct that clearly falls outside of the statutory definition. Since the passage of the Firearms Owners' Protection Act, federal law has made clear that a person "who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms" is not "engaged in the business."

The Biden administration claims that these changes can help move federal law towards "universal background checks," but that is potentially a trap for law-abiding gun owners. Transferring a firearm through a licensed dealer to run a background check does nothing to help a seller if they meet the government's new expanded definition of "engaged in the business." In fact, doing so will provide more evidence for the government to use against a seller that they claim is dealing in firearms without an FFL.

The rule is currently open for comment until Dec. 7, 2023. Please file respectful comments to help push back against this unlawful rule and check back to [nraila.org](http://nraila.org) for more news on the Biden administration's most recent attack on law-abiding gun owners.



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# DOUBLE BARREL:

## Biden Works To Suppress Retail And Private Firearm Sales

**M**any anti-gun politicians share the same goals—including the elimination of the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms and civilian disarmament. However, the means they use to pursue these ends may vary and are dictated by the political and legal framework of the moment.

Case in point is consecutive anti-gun presidential administrations' approach to Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs or gun dealers). Some anti-gun presidents have attempted to crack down on private firearms transactions by demanding a wider swathe of gun owners obtain an FFL. Other presidents

have done the exact opposite, trying to eliminate FFLs, which are often small businesses.

Those were simpler times, when even anti-gun politicians may have felt the need to feign some measure of fidelity to the U.S. Constitution or federal statute to mask their prohibitionist aims. President Joe Biden and Attorney General Merrick Garland observe no such obligation.

Biden's ATF is conducting a war on FFLs, shutting down well-meaning gun dealers for minor paperwork violations. At the same time, Biden's Department of Justice is seeking to curtail lawful private firearm transfers by misinterpreting federal law concerning when a private firearm seller must obtain an FFL.



By Randy Kozuch  
Executive Director,  
NRA-ILA



The Gun Control Act of 1968 (GCA) created the modern legal framework around selling firearms in the U.S. Under the law, those “engaged in the business” of selling firearms must obtain an FFL and keep records of the firearms they transfer. Later, the 1993 Brady Bill would require FFLs to conduct a background check using the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) on prospective gun buyers. Private individuals who do not sell firearms as a business, such as ordinary gun owners or collectors, are not required to obtain an FFL and may sell firearms to other private individuals without federal government interference.

In the early years following the GCA’s enactment, ATF set about harassing private individuals whom the agency contended were dealing firearms without a license. Describing ATF’s tactics, an April 1980 *Reason* magazine article explained, “One or two agents approach a collector at a gun show and make a purchase. The same happens at the next gun show, and so on, until the ‘implied dealer’ has made four to six sales. At this point, the collector is booked on felony charges of dealing without a license.”

The problem proved so acute that Congress addressed the matter in the Firearms Owners’ Protection Act of 1986 (FOPA). That legislation further defined “engaged in the business” to provide gun owners with a clearer understanding of conduct that is permissible without an FFL. As attorney and Second Amendment scholar David T. Hardy explained in a history of FOPA for the *Cumberland Law Review*, “The central thrust of the FOPA definition is toward limiting the term ‘engaged in the business’ to those who treat firearm sales as a business, either of the ‘storefront’ or the ‘itinerant peddler’ variety.”

In the 1990s, President Bill Clinton and his anti-gun allies took exception to the number of FFLs helping Americans exercise their Second Amendment rights. So, on Aug. 11, 1993, Clinton directed the Secretary of the Treasury (at the time, ATF was under the Department of the Treasury) to take “whatever steps are necessary” to decrease the number of FFLs. ATF complied, issuing regulations that would put many small gun dealers out of business. From 1994 to 2007, the number of gun dealers fell 80%.

President Barack Obama took the opposite tack. During his time in the White House, gun-controllers were clamoring to criminalize private firearm transfers. So, in 2016, the Obama ATF issued a document titled, “Do I need a license to buy and sell firearms?” The document summarized the Obama administration’s take on the relevant federal law and encouraged those who met their interpretation of “engaged in the business” to obtain an FFL.

The Biden approach is an attempt to impede access to firearms altogether.

The president first targeted FFLs. On June 23, 2021, the Biden-Harris administration announced a “zero-tolerance” policy for what it termed “rogue gun dealers.” The announcement made clear that “[a]bsent extraordinary circumstances that would need to be justified to the Director, ATF will seek to revoke the licenses of dealers the first time that they violate federal law,” even in a handful of trivial instances. In December 2021, ATF updated its “Federal Firearms Licensee Quick Reference and Best Practices Guide” to reiterate the oppressive new regime.

For instance, revokable offenses include “falsifying records, such as a firearms transaction form.” This could cover small and inconsequential clerical errors on a Form 4473 (firearm transaction record). Any small-business owner should be sympathetic to the notion that, over the course of many years and thousands of transactions, they—or an employee—might be capable of an innocent paperwork mistake.

Another zero-tolerance offense is “failing to run a required background check.” It would be one thing if this was used to revoke the license of a dealer flouting federal law by refusing to run NICS checks. In reality, the new standard has been used to target well-meaning FFLs who mistakenly accept what they believe are NICS-exempt right-to-carry permits or conduct a NICS check using forms of identification that are invalid or may have expired.

From the position of a gun banner like Biden, the war on FFLs is working. On Aug. 18, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled, “Hundreds of Gun Dealers Lose Licenses Under Biden Administration Crackdown.” The paper explained that the ATF has “revoked the licenses of 122 gun dealers in the fiscal year that began in October, up from 90 for all last fiscal year and 27 in 2021.” A July 6 item from the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the trade association for the firearm industry, pointed out that in fiscal year 2020 “there were just 40 license revocations.” ATF inspection data shows that there were 36 in just June and July of this year.

Despite the stark increase in revocations, these numbers understate the problem. ATF bullies many FFLs into surrendering their licenses without going through the formal revocation procedure. Moreover, there’s no telling how many good people the Biden administration’s intimidation tactics have prevented from entering the industry.

The 2022 federal gun-control omnibus bill, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA), provided the Biden administration with a new opening to distort the law to attack gun owners.

Recall, private individuals are allowed to sell guns out of their own collections, if they are not “engaged in the business” of selling firearms. The unwise 2022 legislation slightly altered the statutory definition of “engaged in the business.” The bill did so by removing language requiring a person’s behavior be “with the principal objective of livelihood and profit,” changing it to require the conduct be “to predominantly earn a profit.”

The altered “engaged in the business” definition maintains language making clear that a “course” of “repetitive” buying and reselling of firearms is required to meet the definition of “engaged in the business.” Moreover, the definition still makes clear that the “term shall not include a person who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms for the enhancement of a personal collection or for a hobby, or who sells all or part of his personal collection of firearms.”

At the time, some involved in concocting the BSCA assured NRA-ILA that these minor textual changes would not impede law-abiding gun owners’ right to transfer firearms without government interference. Knowing better, NRA-ILA warned these policymakers that altering the settled “engaged in the business” language would provide the Biden administration with the opportunity to put forward new bad-faith interpretations of the law.

Sadly, time has proven NRA-ILA correct.

On March 14, the White House announced “an Executive Order with the goal of increasing the number of background checks conducted before firearm sales.” The document noted that Biden had directed Attorney General Garland to “move the U.S. as close to universal background checks as possible without additional legislation by clarifying, as appropriate, the statutory definition of who is ‘engaged in the business’ of dealing in firearms, as updated by the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.”

Never mind that the U.S. Congress has refused to criminalize private firearm transfers, by expressly rejecting so-called “universal” background-check legislation on numerous occasions. Biden couldn’t resist an occasion to pervert federal law. A *Politico* headline summed up Biden’s scheme, stating in part, “Biden bypasses Congress.”

According to an Aug. 1 article in *The New York Times*, the new regulation would “set a threshold number of transactions that would define a dealer.” The article added, “gun-control groups hope to see it at five sales a year or lower.”

Nothing in the new definition of “engaged in the business” contemplates a threshold number of firearm transactions. Rather, the relevant requirement is for “repetitive purchase and resale of firearms” with a profit-seeking motive. Absent this motive, any number of transactions should be permissible. Under any reasonable reading, those selling

all or part of a personal collection are exempt from the definition regardless of any profit they derive.

On Aug. 31, ATF issued a notice of proposed rulemaking concerning the “engaged in the business” definition. Noticeably absent was a threshold number of transactions that would trigger the dealer-licensing requirement. In fact, DOJ acknowledged there is no justification for such a number, stating, “the Department does not believe there is a sufficient evidentiary basis, without consideration of additional factors, to support a specific minimum number of firearms bought or sold for a person to be considered ‘engaged in the business.’”

However, that’s where the sanity ends. Much of the rest of the proposed rule aims to intimidate gun owners into forgoing lawful private firearm transactions.

The proposal lists what DOJ will consider indicia of having “the intent to predominantly earn a profit” when selling firearms, which the department contends will create a rebuttable presumption against gun owners in civil and administrative proceedings. These include things that gun owners and collectors have long enjoyed that bear little relation to whether they are “engaged in the business” of selling firearms—such as taking out an ad in a gun-club newsletter, posting a gun for sale in an online forum, or renting table space at a gun show. Perhaps understanding the flimsy nature of this type of legislating by executive fiat, DOJ acknowledged that these dubious presumptions “shall not apply to criminal cases.”

Aside from the U.S. Congress explicitly rejecting so-called “universal” background-check legislation, the people’s elected representatives have also refused numerous bills contemplating a narrower set of restrictions on the private sale of firearms pursuant to classified ads and gun shows, with the most notable iteration being the 2013 Manchin-Toomey-Schumer proposal.

In the coming months, NRA-ILA will submit official comments on Biden’s proposed rulemaking. Further, NRA-ILA is already working with our allies in Congress to address this matter and stands ready to challenge this executive power grab in the courts if necessary. Gun owners should respond to Biden’s twin attacks on gun rights by informing their family, friends and neighbors of Biden’s actions and how to put an end to them on Nov. 5, 2024. 

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# Targets in Transition

There's a lot more than just paper targets on which to practice your shooting.



Modern gun owners prefer to be sending rounds downrange rather than sacrificing firing-line time peering through a spotting scope to determine shot placement. Even rimfire and handgun owners are harnessing the advantages of reactive/high-visibility targets, and polymer is quickly gaining traction in the designs.

There's no denying that punching paper is precise and the information it provides is critical. The feedback it provides is mandatory when sighting in, and flaws in shooting technique often print plainly there. Add that it's ideal for selecting the most accurate load for any gun, and versions calibrated with 1-MOA hashmarks will likely never disappear.

The growing popularity of targets that enhance the ability to see points-of-impact quickly and the satisfaction of seeing the target "react" in some way, however, are ushering in a new era. The trend really began 150 years ago, when the NRA range at Creedmoor on Long Island, NY, began using cast-iron plates for long-distance competition in the 1870s. To say that characteristic "clang" with each hit is satisfying is an understatement.

Precise shots at distances up to 1,000 yards was an elite pursuit, however. Most gun owners were more interested in connecting at closer distances, and affording (or hauling) that big hunk of metal was not an option. Targets on paper were the norm by the 1880s, and when the paper arrived shortly after, the target duo became the sport's mainstay. Printed patterns changed for the next century, but it wasn't until the 1990s that a different approach arrived.

That's when Birchwood Casey's Shoot-N-C targets gained traction among enthusiasts. With a traditional-looking exterior target face and a coating of brightly glowing color (chartreuse, for example) underneath, every hole punched glowed brightly along the edges.

They were a big hit. Then, in March, 2004 Champion introduced a VisiShot line based on the same principle. The press release explained,

"Each shot planted on the black target circle produces a bright, Champion-orange impact ring that shines like a beacon on the range." It was so popular the company introduced eight new versions the very next year.

Today, there's no shortage of companies offering similar products, but manufacturers were eyeing something completely different. Siphoning off a portion of the kinetic energy of a bullet upon impact to make the target move—without using steel—reduced backscatter and weight.

Throom, a family-owned and operated business in Middlesex, NJ, was established in 1995. Through the combined engineering, design and manufacturing experience of brothers John and Henry Phillips, the firm introduced something completely different. Erin Mihalik, current CEO and daughter of co-founder John Phillips, admits, "At the time we were the first to introduce the polymer reactive target and the industry wasn't ready for it."

The family of avid shooters was patient, though. "Then all of a sudden in 2013 it started to change a little bit," Mihalik said. Younger shooters who grew up protected by polymer car seats had money to spend and understood the safety the targets provided, she explained, adding older shooters who preferred steel were tired of hauling those heavy plates around.

Champion Targets added its polymer DuraSeal lineup in 2008. Laurie Kokoruda, Champion Target senior product manager, said the self-healing models they offer today remain popular because, "... you can reuse these targets as many times as you like and in a variety of manners, which also really adds something unique to your range day."

Self-healing polymer targets may be capable of surviving centerfire impacts, while providing instant feedback and no splash-back, but they don't quite reign supreme over ranges yet. That fact became apparent during COVID-19 lockdowns, according to one industry expert.

"During and post pandemic, steel targets have been increasingly used by consumers who are building backyard ranges or bringing their personal targets to local ranges," said Matt Rice, senior manager for Media Relations & Consumer Marketing at Vista Outdoor (the parent company of Champion Targets).

Rice continued, "The easy setup, low cost and longevity of the steel targets have all helped fuel their popularity. Our Champion steel can also be used for those shooting airsoft, which also saw an increase in participation following the pandemic."

How long will heavy metal stay atop that reactive-target throne? There's no telling, although there is one thing for certain: Enthusiasts enjoy instant feedback, whether it's spinning polymer plates at 100 yards or chasing the riddle of steel out to 1,000 yards or farther.

## Hunka, Hunka Burning Auction



Elvis Presley's Smith & Wesson Model 53 revolver was appraised earlier this year at between \$60,000 and \$90,000, but when the gavel fell on Aug. 26 during a Rock Island Auction, it went home to a winning bidder who paid \$199,750. The well-documented, Russell Smith exhibition-engraved handgun was originally purchased in 1974, but returned to the factory in 1976 to be transformed into the masterpiece it is today—one once owned by "The King" of rock n' roll himself.

The .22 Mag. was customized for the nation's bicentennial celebration and features a gold-engraved minuteman on one side of the receiver with an American eagle and flag on the other above the words "The Spirit of 76." Other touches include the Liberty Bell on the backstrap, gold plating on the cylinder and much more. A matching .22 LR cylinder is included.

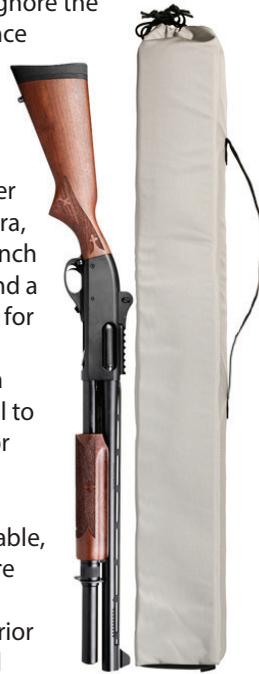
Unfortunately, Elvis didn't have much time behind the trigger. He died in 1977, and despite chronic sightings at UFO landing sights and gas stations nationwide, remains firmly deceased.

## Lifestyle | Chair or Shotgun?

Vang Comp has been building the kind of high-quality gear to optimize shotgun performance and survive abuse for decades, so it comes as no surprise that its latest item is "unapologetically overbuilt." The company's VCS Chair Cover—Discreet Carry Bag is an ideal solution for comfortable outdoor social gatherings.

Thieves will likely ignore the bag and contents, since the exterior looks like a common outdoor chair sleeve. Inside that innocent-looking layer of 1000 denier Cordura, though, is a quarter-inch of closed cell foam and a double-bottom layer for the extra strength required to support a shotgun during travel to and from the range or training session.

A 1.5-inch handle makes carry comfortable, a 550 paracord closure keeps things secure and its 6x8-inch exterior hook-and-loop panel allows attachment of pouches as needed. Interior lengths available include 33, 38 and 42 inches and there are five colors from which to choose.



MSRP is \$75. Visit [vangcomp.com](http://vangcomp.com) to order.

## Shooting Off

*I'd like to thank the dedicated men and women of the Broome County Sheriff's Office Patrol and Detectives divisions for their quick response and thorough investigation ... This case also highlights the right of law-abiding homeowners to legally defend themselves.*

Broome County (NY) Sheriff Fred Akshar told News Channel 34 after a homeowner fired at two home invaders, wounding one, in August.

## Quick Shots

CBC Global Ammunition has acquired SinterFire, known for its lead-free, frangible bullet technology. CBC Global Ammunition is the holding company for a group of companies internationally active in the ammunition sector that include CBC Brazil, Sellier & Bellot, Magtech Ammunition and others.

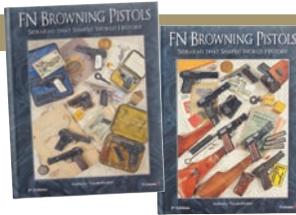
The Support Weapons Sighting System program of the British Armed Forces entered into a contract to procure Romeo8Ts, Juliet3s and Juliet4s from SIG Sauer Electro-Optics. This combination of the Romeo and Juliet products was chosen to increase the effective range and accuracy at greater distances for operators in both day and night operations for the 5.56 and 7.62 NATO lightweight or medium machine gun platforms.

Silicon-based photonics company SiOnyx has acquired American Imaging Engineering (Amigen)—a digital thermal-imaging-system provider—expanding the firm's technological expertise and enhancing its ability to develop innovative night-vision optics.

Shooter's Bookshelf

**FN Browning Pistols: Side Arms that Shaped World History (3rd Edition) Volumes I & II**

By Anthony Vanderlinden  
Wet Dog Publishing; \$149.95 plus S&H



More than two years in the making, the third edition of the expansive tome on FN Browning pistols is now available. Containing an exhaustive array of images, drawings, advertisements and more, if the item about which you inquire is an FN/Browning handgun, there's a wealth of information here about it. Page after page of detailed images of grips, magazines, holsters and more showcase Hi Powers—and High Powers—M1910s, Baby Brownings and everything in between. If you're a fan of semi-automatic pistol development, this two-volume set should provide ample information.

The third edition contains expanded biographies of key individuals, with additional information on John Moses Browning and his relationship with FN, expanded and detailed coverage of grip variants as well as manufacturing and marking details, more info on models, variants, and contracts and in excess of 120 pages dedicated to accessories. Reference guides are included to assist collectors in identifying production details, showcase presentation cases and feature shoulder stocks.

Fans of military arms, handgun history and especially the FN/Browning collaboration will enjoy this rich, lavish coffee-table-style book filled with color and black-and-white images. If there's an FN aficionado on your gift list, this definitive two-volume set should be up for consideration.

**Nosler Celebrates 75 Years**



Nosler is celebrating its 75-year-old legacy of innovation in 2023. "We're humbled to

celebrate a journey that started three quarters of a century ago," said John Nosler, president and chief operating officer of Nosler. "It began with my grandfather's dream to design a better bullet—the Nosler Partition. Today we're carrying on his legacy by innovating and building the most accurate, effective bullets and ammunition in the industry."

Most recently, Nosler blazed new trails with its new Carbon Chassis Hunter Rifle and compact SR-30K Suppressor. Its foundation continues to be engineering premium bullets, components and ammunition for big-game hunters and precision shooters from Alaska to Africa and beyond.

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# The Zen Master Drill

Refine your shooting skills to the point of enlightenment with this exercise.



In a world full of go-fast drills with aggressive par times and demanding courses of fire, it can be refreshing to change the pace—but not the challenge—and slow down. The Zen Master drill creates a magnifying-glass effect wherein the shooter must pay attention to the perfect technique between the *beep* and the *boom*. These progressive-workout practices focus on the sights, tactile discrimination at the trigger and grip consistency, while simultaneously presenting the pistol on target. Everyone wants to get those first gorgeous hits on target faster than the next guy, but to do so, you must explore the functional elements of the gun, clean up your techniques and practice calming the mind, all of which are promoted by this drill.

## Here's the drill:

In addition to your handgun, you will need a B-8 target set at distance of 5 yards and a total of 12 rounds of ammunition.

### Phase 1: Dry Fire

Begin by confirming your firearm is clear, with no magazine in the gun and no round in the chamber. Close the slide and establish a two-handed grip at compressed ready. Present the pistol by raising it high (vertically) into your line of sight and then pressing forward toward the target in an L-shaped path of travel. As the gun travels forward, immediately acquire the sights on the target.

Once sights are acquired, perform one dry-fire trigger press in motion while moving the gun to the target. The trigger press should occur before the firearm is at full extension. Do not stop presenting the gun on target. Keep it moving, focused on sights even after the dry-fire shot. Repeat to simulate two dry-fire shots before the gun is fully extended. Then, repeat for three additional simulated dry-fire shots before the pistol is at full presentation.

### Phase 2: Live Fire

Begin by presenting on target, firing one round before the gun is at full extension. Repeat a second time. Next, present on target, this time firing two rounds before the gun is at full extension. Repeat a second time. Finally, present on target, and fire three rounds before the firearm is at full extension. Repeat to complete the drill. Total rounds fired: 12.

### Zen Tips

#### Pistol Presentation utilizing dynamic tension:

When you tense the muscles and move against them, it creates a form of self-resistance to increase stabilization and improve grip strength.

**Trigger Press:** The L-shaped pistol presentation provides time to marry the sights and the trigger press. As soon as sights are acquired on target, immediately transition the trigger finger to eliminate the mechanical slack, achieve the wall, perfect grip and refine sights, and commit to the final stage of the trigger press to break the shot.

**Breathing:** Utilize gun-meditation breathing, i.e.: Inhale deeply at compressed ready, exhale slowly through the presentation and past follow-through at full extension. 🌀

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Offering gunsmith-level precision without the added expense, the **Wheeler Scope Mounting Combo Kit with FAT Wrench** features all the essential components needed to professionally install optics on your firearms. In addition to containing common flat-, hex- and Torx-head bits, a torque wrench safeguards against over-tightening, while the included thread-locking compound prevents screws from loosening under recoil. Lapping tools and a leveling system are also included.

MSRP: \$164.99; wheelertools.com

Lightweight and versatile, the **Present Arms Small Glock Sentinel Plate Kit** is designed to hold your 9 mm Glock in place during cleaning and maintenance. The included magazine post secures your frame in an upright position, while the integral cutout is large enough to hold gun parts, magazines and/or cleaning supplies. When the work is complete, it can also be used to display your pistol.

MSRP: \$49.95; presentarmsshop.com



Manufactured from rugged polypropylene plastic, the **MTM Case-Gard Tool Box 30** offers a great way to store tools, small parts or other items you wish to keep close at hand. A dual-latching system prevents it from opening inadvertently, while double padlock tabs make it easy to secure whatever you put inside.

MSRP: \$6.99; mtmcase-gard.com

Compatible with either encapsulated or peg-style barrel nuts, the long handle of **Brownells' AR-15 Armorer's Wrench** features a buttstock assembly for adjusting castle nuts. The four teeth on the opposite end aid in easy installation and removal of M4-style receiver-extension nuts. The handle also includes a half-inch drive opening for use with a torque wrench, along with 5/8- and 3/4-inch slots that fit A2 receiver extensions and flash hidere.

MSRP: \$49.99; brownells.com

Compact and multi-faceted, **Fix it Sticks The Works Toolkit** contains numerous accessories and specialty bits for working on handguns and shotguns as well as maintaining optics and AR-style rifles. Components include an assortment of electroless nickel .25-inch bits, a T-handle wrench, an all-in-one torque driver and several specialty tools such as a 1911 bushing wrench, a Glock front-sight tool, a universal choke tube wrench and a castle nut wrench, to name a few. The soft nylon carry case contains an integral bit holder and a built-in pouch for lots of other useful accessories.

MSRP: \$232; fixitsticks.com

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# What Does “Clean” Really Mean?

I don't trust my husband. When I asked him how to clean my pistol, he replied in a matter-of-fact manner, “just wipe it off, it will be clean enough,” which left me no better off than I was before.

I have taken the time to read the owner's manual about how to clean and lubricate my little Mossberg handgun, and I know how to take it apart and put it back together again. I'm used to leaving everything I clean spotless and shiny. Is this necessary considering what they say in the manual to lubricate the moving parts, or is my attention to detail over the top?

*Name and address withheld by request*

**For a moment, after reading the first line, I thought I'd gotten an e-mail I wasn't prepared to address. In reading further, it became apparent that I could be of some help after all.**

Let me start by saying that while your husband may lack tact, he is correct in that guns actually function just fine when they are a little oily and well lubricated, and a little fouling in the barrel is not a capital offense, either. In fact, some firearms

shoot better when the barrel is fouled just a little bit.

Outside of politicians, the biggest enemies of a gun are rust, oxidation and corrosion. Each result from unprotected metal exposed to the environment of water, unfriendly chemicals or perspiration from contact with the user.

Wiping down the exposed parts of the gun with a quality lubricant specifically designed for firearms will provide a molecular barrier from substances that will attack and harm the metal parts of the gun.

Perhaps by citing an example or two I can help you understand how to properly maintain your pistol so it works when you want it to and remains pleasing to the eye.

In the early 1990s, my wife had a SIG Sauer P226 9 mm as her primary training and demonstration gun. As a side test, we only lubricated the gun without disassembly or cleaning for several months. The gun fired in excess of 5,000 documented rounds with all

kinds and brands of ammunition without a failure attributable to the gun. One day, she cleaned the pistol without my knowledge because she said she could no longer stand to use such a filthy gun. That effectively ended the test, but it was proof that lube was the key to preserve the finish and maintain the function of the gun. Once clean, other than some normal wear marks, the gun looked practically new.

I recently had a Mossberg MC2 sent to me for testing and evaluation. I normally am very kind to my guns, at a minimum wiping them down with each use. Since this Mossberg was a test gun, I took it out of the box, performed a safety check and a function check to become familiar with it and took it to the range. The gun was used primarily by guests and students with a wide variety of ammunition. It performed magnificently until round 996, which failed to fully chamber from the magazine. A light tap on the rear of the slide seated the cartridge and the gun continued to fire and cycle successfully, but with increasing sluggishness. That performance was good enough for me in that it showed the gun would operate successfully for the average gun owner with a minimum of attention.

For a more definitive answer, beyond the owner's manual, fieldstrip the pistol and wipe or brush any visible carbon or foreign material from the surfaces of the parts. Consider disassembling and cleaning the magazines as well. A solvent or combination cleaner, lubricant, preservative (CLP)-saturated patch through the barrel several times followed by a clean patch to remove the excess material will take care of the inside of the barrel. For metal surfaces, a lightly lubricated cloth or patch can be used to apply a preservative film to protect from rust, corrosion or oxidation.

Lubrication also reduces friction between the moving parts as well. A little goes a long way. If the lubricant runs under the force of gravity from any part of the gun, you have overdone it. Wipe off the excess so you can see and feel the lubricant on the metal surfaces and your little Mossberg will be clean, lubricated and ready for your next trip to the range.



Moderate use of a quality CLP such as Ballistol can be used to protect the metal parts of your handgun from the hazards posed by corrosion, friction and also fouling.

## Correspondence is welcomed and encouraged

**Write to:** Shooting Illustrated | NRA | 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400  
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# A Lifetime of Service

## Collecting obsolete firearms has untold benefits.



Durable goods like firearms allow us tangible links to our progenitors. The author's rifle ties him to his Second World War-veteran grandfathers, including one who served aboard the *USS Allentown* (shown above).

PHOTO CREDIT:  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES

**A** while back, I got the notion that my backburnered, personal-rifle projects had been producing offspring while I wasn't looking. Sure enough, a much-needed inventory revealed that years of procrastination had allowed my list of things needing work to grow to 16 long guns. This textbook example of poor execution increased by several pending business R&D efforts and a trio of family guns that needed fixing. Obviously, I had a gun-project-hoarder problem that needed dealing with, but where to start?

The right answer was to begin by taking care of my ever-patient family members: Two Enfields—a No. 1 MK III and a No. 4 MK I—and a Marlin Model 81 later, I was still at square one with my personal guns. Oddly enough, a light was cast on the way ahead by two unlikely sources: my deceased grandfathers. A World War II-era, Army Air Corps photo of my paternal grandfather shows him in front of his barracks, holding a World War I-vintage Springfield M1903. I've long wondered why he had such an early model of the rifle, but I never pursued the mystery further. However, it came back to mind when I began studying some of my other Grandpa's personal effects from World War II.

My mother's father kept a notebook, travelogue and field manuals from his USCG basic training, Gunnery School and service in World War II aboard the *USS Allentown*. His handwritten Gunnery School notes detail every shipboard firearm a Gunner's Mate had to master, including M1911 pistols, sub-machine guns, the M1 Carbine, M2 .50 BMG machine guns, depth charges, anti-aircraft systems and deck guns. Missing from those writings are references to the M1 Garand or the M1903 family of rifles. The Garand's absence makes sense, as they were dedicated to front-line troops for much of the war. But, the lack of '03 information perplexed me.

Other notes cover such topics as optical parallax, trajectory, powder compositions, bore-sighting, primer compounds and headspace. While never known as a "gun guy," like so many others of his generation, my Grandpa had to become one to survive the war. When World War II ended, he simply came home, went back to work and raised a family just as his father had done after fighting in France during World War I. While considering my Army Air Corps grandfather's basic-training photo, I realized that my Coast Guard Grandpa must have already been familiar with the M1903 by the time he attended Gunnery School. Sure enough, his "Blue Jacket Manual" from boot camp is packed with detailed, handwritten notes about the '03 family.

Thus, my grandfathers' wartime keepsakes pointed me toward one of my oldest projects-in-waiting: a 1919-manufactured, Springfield Armory M1903 that had been untouched since I purchased it from the Civilian Marksmanship Program 17 years ago. My Mark 1 variant's receiver has the left-side ejection port used by the semi-automatic, .30-caliber, pistol-cartridge-firing Pedersen device. As with most Mark 1s, mine was returned to the standard M1903 configuration once the plan to field Pedersen devices was dropped. At some point, the barreled action wound up in a "Scant" stock, which is a partial-pistol-grip design made from a straight (S) stock blank.

After spending 90 minutes removing all the Cosmoline and deep cleaning it, I gave my rifle its first proper inspection in decades. The rugged stock is in rough shape, but the receiver and bolt are in great condition. The barrel, an original four-groove configuration,



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looks like the dark side of the moon through a borescope. Fortunately, the rifling is evident, pitting is minor and throat erosion fair.

Once looked over and checked for proper headspace, my '03 was ready to shoot. Thanks to my Grandpa's 1944 edition "Basic Field Manual, U.S. Rifle, Caliber .30, M1903," zeroing the ladder sight was easy. My first 150-grain FMJ round was on paper at 100 yards, while shots two through six formed a vertically strung, 2.4-MOA group.

After sight corrections and a confirmation shot, five rounds of Hornady's 168-grain Vintage Match .30-'06 Sprg. load printed a neatly centered, 1.5-MOA group. Considering the 104-year-old rifle's bore condition and thin (for my eyes) front-sight blade, I was very happy with that performance. A clean-breaking, 5-pound trigger pull also helped make the veteran rifle a real pleasure to shoot. This trip down memory lane

has me eyeing another long-ignored project: a pristine, World War II-era Remington '03-A3 receiver that's waiting for me to get caught up.

My maternal Grandpa's records provide fascinating insights into the life of a young Gunner's Mate, Third Class who was trying to come home in one piece. His notes mention action against the Japanese during the occupation of Morotai and the Battle of Leyte Gulf. My Grandpa's Patrol Frigate finished the war with two campaign stars, and we have a contemporary newspaper clipping that describes how an attacking aircraft was shot down by the gun crew with which he was charged.

During one of our final conversations, my Grandpa told me that the Japanese plane had begun strafing the *Allentown* and while everyone was trying to hit it, his crew made the "lucky shot" with a 3-inch/.50 BMG Dual Purpose gun. He also shared

some previously unheard anecdotes from his wartime service that were mixtures of G.I. humor and reminisces that had us both wiping our eyes. All were priceless reminders of the sacrifices made by his generation and the burdens they carried afterward.

In addition to service in the hands of my forefathers during the world wars, it turns out that an M1903 variant was used by my stepfather to qualify during USAF Basic training in the early 1960s. By then, the '03 had largely been relegated to sniper or ceremonial use. When I shouldered my first Army-issued, turnbolt sniper rifle in the mid-1990s, the M1903 family had been fully retired for more than two decades. Still, sighting down the barrel of my MK1 provides a connection to my forefathers and makes me all the more grateful for the millions of U.S. veterans who shouldered the '03—and all other service rifles—in defense of our mortal freedoms. 

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# By Any Other Name

Model names are back, and the gun industry has 'em.



A look at recent gun introductions reveals a plethora of new pistols bearing names instead of less-than-inspiring numbers.

**H**ave you noticed something? That domestic handgun makers are more likely to designate their latest offerings with a name than a salad of digits and letters? Yeah, me too.

I have to admit I first became aware that this had become a trend very recently, to my shame. Well, mostly. Allow me to explain.

When the new micro-compact, double-stack, 9 mm CCW pistol from Fabrique Nationale arrived, I couldn't help but notice that, rather than piggybacking off the alphanumeric designators that previous FN pistols intended for the duty and carry had used, the new blaster had been dubbed with the moniker "Reflex."

So, FN America's new pistol did not fit into the catalog scheme with the 509, 510, 522, etc. Why? There's gotta be a reason, right?

Next thing you know, Springfield Armory is dropping a new blaster that sure seems like the forebear of an entirely new line of duty pistols and, rather than giving a nomenclatural nod to its old XD model designators or even launching some new alphanumeric, it called it the "Echelon." That's what caused me to think back that Springfield Armory had been on this trail for a while, actually, since

its most recent line of micro compact semi-autos had been called the "Hellcat," instead of the X-anything.

When it comes to hanging names on products, the culpability chain is generally a short one that begins and ends in the marketing department. I think it's safe to assume there's a marketing trend that tells us someone influential has decided that alphanumeric designators just don't resonate with consumers the same way names do.

Various anti-gun types have decided to hang their hat on this factoid as though it's some sort of modern trend, wherein a callous firearm industry is abandoning wholesome and innocuous numerical catalog numbers for exotic and enticing names. Supposedly—or so goes this theory—the use of evocative names rather than dull numbers will attract dubious personages to buy handguns, but greedy gunmakers are ignoring this in pursuit of increased sales numbers.

While it's true some companies formerly known for their bland, alphanumeric model designations have abandoned them for cooler-sounding names, this isn't some new trend. I mean, sure, Winchester and Remington have been using model numbers to describe their rifles and shotguns since stagecoaches were still a thing, but the pattern is hardly universal.

If you look back to the earliest days of cartridge-handgun sales in this country by companies like Smith & Wesson and Colt, they may have had products purchased by the military and labeled with various "M####" year number model designators, but for the commercial market things were different.

Colt has nearly always favored names on its handguns designed for civilian sales. If you were in the U.S. Army in the mid-19th century, you might have been issued an M1873 revolver, but if you wandered into a general store in the Arizona Territory, you'd have bought a Single Action Army or a Frontier six shooter (depending on whether you needed a .45 Colt or .44-40 WCF revolver to match your Winchester carbine's chambering.)

Similarly in the early 20th century, the Doughboys and G.I.s might have been issued an M1911 or M1911A1 pistol, but if they didn't smuggle one home in their duffle bag as a souvenir after the war, when they felt the

Continued on page 84

# For the Man Who Gives Everything and Expects Nothing

If you're anything like my dad, you give your family everything. Your name, your time, your values — the people in your life know they can depend on you for practically anything. In exchange for imparting all of this energy and experience, you expect nothing in return.

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# Ye Olde-Time Defense

While that double-barrel shotgun isn't the best defensive option, don't count it out entirely.

**A**t the risk of sounding elitist, I'd venture that most readers of this magazine could buy a Mossberg 500 if they wanted one. It's an inexpensive pump-action shotgun that's perfect for home defense—for most people in most scenarios. But, most people aren't all people.

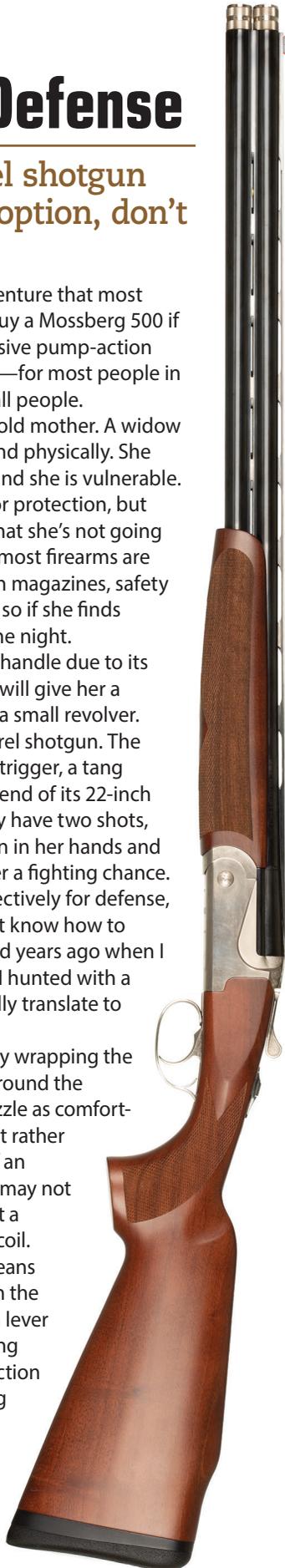
Let's take my precious, petite, 75-year-old mother. A widow now, she's still in good health mentally and physically. She lives by herself in the country, however, and she is vulnerable. She understands the value of a firearm for protection, but both she and I have come to the reality that she's not going to practice with one much—if at all—so most firearms are simply too complicated for her, what with magazines, safety buttons and slide releases. That's doubly so if she finds herself under pressure in the middle of the night.

There is one firearm, however, she can handle due to its light weight and simplicity, and one that will give her a better chance of hitting something than a small revolver. That is my father's 20-gauge, double-barrel shotgun. The 6-pound Ithaca side-by-side has a single trigger, a tang safety and a huge HiViz sight pipe at the end of its 22-inch barrels. The way I figure it, mom may only have two shots, but the mere fact that she's got a shotgun in her hands and twin loads of No. 3 buckshot may give her a fighting chance.

Fact is, double-barrels can be used effectively for defense, but if you choose one, you should at least know how to maximize its effectiveness. As I discovered years ago when I took my first shotgun class, just because I hunted with a double gun for years doesn't automatically translate to ideal defensive manipulations.

For tactical applications, grip the gun by wrapping the fingers and thumb of the support hand around the metal of the barrels as far toward the muzzle as comfortable. You are not swinging with a bird, but rather trying to keep the barrels down to get off an accurate second shot quickly. In fact, you may not touch the fore-end at all; the goal is to get a powerful grip on the barrels to control recoil.

Tactical reloading of a double barrel means keeping the gun in the shoulder pocket in the shooting position while sliding the action lever with your trigger-hand thumb, then finding two shells from your carrier, closing the action using leverage from both hands and firing again. Practice builds smoothness and speed. Some guns that feature automatic ejectors may require leverage to open the gun rather than just gravity, and if



that's the case, you'll need to figure out a quick way to do so while moving the gun from the shooting position as little as possible. Hopefully your double has a manual safety, but many are automatic. If yours is automatic, be aware that after each reload, you'll have to push the safety forward. The only way to ingrain this into muscle memory is by practice.

If the gun has extractors only, you'll have to pluck spent cases out with your trigger hand. See if you can remove both shells at once. If it has automatic ejectors, the shooter should know if those empty hulls will fly overhead as it's mounted on the shoulder, or if they'll strike the defender in the eye or forehead. If the latter, care should be used to roll the gun to the side as the action is opened.

Aftermarket accessories like a simple butt sleeve to hold extra shells will make reloading quicker by holding them in the same place and orientation every time. A dab of white or glow-in-the-dark nail polish on the brass bead (if it doesn't have a fiber-optic sight) can also help aiming when the chips are down.

Other questions you should answer before depending on a double-barrel shotgun for defense include: Are the most-open chokes installed in the gun, if it has removable choke tubes? Will the gun stand up to a full charge of modern 00 buckshot? Does it print its pattern where it's aimed and deliver a decent pattern at defensive distances? Is it oiled and lubed?

These are all things that the average "I'll just grab the double barrel and open fire" person should know prior to actually using such a gun to defend the home. For this person, after the two shots are fired, the shotgun in their hands becomes a rather poor club if they don't have the means or skills to reload it in a hurry.

That said, the old double barrel does have a couple of advantages. First, it's simple. Even those who cannot invest the time to learn how to run a semi-automatic can quickly understand the double's operating procedure, which is: push the safety, pull the trigger (twice if needed), push the lever and stuff the barrels with two fresh loads.

The second advantage is that a double gun, with very few moving parts, is about as reliable as a firearm can get.

While it may not be my first choice, plenty of people have and still do rely on double-barrels to defend their homes. It will always be a formidable defensive arm—especially in trained, practiced hands. 



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Browning's Long Range Pro can help you get more from your long gun.



RICHARD MANN

I've been reviewing/testing rifles and reporting the results in gun magazines for nearly a quarter of a century. One thing I've learned is that no matter how bad a rifle might seem to shoot—precision wise—I can almost always find at least one load it likes. I might have to go through a lot of factory ammunition to find it, or I might have to try several handloads, but if I work at it hard enough, there'll be one load that delivers respectable precision on target. Rarely is that load the same; most rifles are like humans and food, they're very finicky when it comes to what they like to digest. However, recently I stumbled upon a load for the .308 Win. that shoots quite well regardless of the rifle from which it is fired, and that's a rarity.

You'd probably expect this load to be some sort of match-grade fodder. After all, there's a good assortment of match loads available in .308 Win., and some of them do indeed shoot well in some rifles. It's not a match load, it's a load specifically developed for long-range hunting. In 2019, Browning introduced a new line of ammunition called Long Range Pro, loaded with tipped Sierra MatchKing bullets. But, in

2021, Browning added a 165-grain tipped GameKing load for the .308 Win. to that line of ammo. Admittedly, this load slipped under my radar, partly because I'm not a practitioner of long-range hunting, but also partly because Browning ammunition is relatively new and until now, I'd not thought of it as something I'd use for extreme precision. Shame on me!

Browning sent me a case of it for some rifle testing I was conducting; I did not ask for it specifically, it's just what showed up. In fact, for the testing I was doing, I was not at all particular as to what load the company might send. While I was zeroing a rifle, I picked up a box to try, and after a scope adjustment, the next five shots went into a neat little sub-inch cluster. Impressed, I fired two more five-shot groups, and the average for all three groups was .92 inch. I figured this was just one of those situations where a certain rifle liked a certain load, and I didn't think about it anymore. That is until I was zeroing another rifle in .308 Win., which was an AR-10 with a 16-inch barrel.

That rifle's first five-shot group measured 1.31 inches, but the succeeding two groups both came in at less than an inch, for an overall average of 1.00 inch. Now the load had my attention, and I began looking at it a bit closer. Going back to the chronograph data for those two rifle-zeroing range sessions, I found that the average standard deviation for velocity (SD) for this load was only 14.0 fps. That's extremely consistent, especially considering it was for 20 shots—10 shots from a 16-inch barrel and 10 shots from a 20-inch barrel. If two rifles shoot the same load very well, you can call it a coincidence. If three rifles shoot the same load with precision, it's not just a fluke.

I decided to shoot this load in several other .308 Win. rifles. Another 20-inch-barreled rifle averaged .99 inch for three, five-shot groups, an 18-inch-barreled .308 Win. rifle averaged .91 inch and a 22-inch-barreled .308 averaged better than all the others at .81 inch. The worst performance this load displayed was with an inexpensive rifle which has a suggested retail price of only \$489. For three, three-shot groups it averaged 1.54 inches, but it still printed one group that measured less than an inch. The average for all of the five-shot groups out of all six rifles in which this load

Shooting Results Rifle No. (barrel length)	VEL	SD	ENG	Group Size		
				Smallest	Largest	Average
#1 (16)	2,525	11.0	2,336	.84	1.31	1.00
#2 (18)	2,586	14.4	2,450	.89	.92	.91
#3 (20)	2,553	17.0	2,388	.85	.99	.92
#4 (20)	2,716	13.8	2,702	.75	1.32	.99
#5 (20)	2,715	16.0	2,700	.98	2.10	1.54
#6 (22)	2,715	16.0	2,700	.60	1.02	.81
Averages:	2,635	14.7	2,546	.80	1.28	1.02

Barrel length measured in inches. Velocity (VEL) and standard velocity deviation (SD) measured in fps 10 feet from the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a Caldwell G2 chronograph. Temperature: 68 to 82 degrees Fahrenheit. Muzzle energy (ENG) measured in ft.-lbs. Accuracy measured in inches for three consecutive, five-shot groups at 100 yards from a supported rest.

Continued on page 85



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# Two Guns? You Bet.

Sometimes, having a backup gun at the ready makes all the difference.



A few years ago, a respected colleague of mine referred to the carrying of two defensive guns as a “New York Reload.” While I appreciate the clever term, I have to say that the practice goes back long, long ago, maybe even before there was a New York City. In truth, I suspect it dates to when citizens first began to carry pistols for defensive purposes.

Resorting to another loaded handgun just beats standing there trying to reload an empty pistol in the middle of a gunfight. This was especially true before the advent of self-contained cartridges. It is the reason many frontiersmen wore two revolvers on their belt and had two more attached to the pommel of their saddle. Even today, with a bit of practice, a shooter can get that second gun into play in an almighty hurry. Practice being the key, he or she can certainly do it faster than reloading a revolver and might even beat a speedload with a semi-automatic.

But, quickly getting your hands on another loaded gun is only one of the advantages. The primary hand, or arm, may be injured, and it just might be quicker to go for that second gun with the support hand. That is exactly what Frank Hamer did in Sweetwater, TX, in 1917.

Traveling back home from a hotly contested court case, Hamer was warned that he might encounter trouble in Sweetwater. Taking the warning seriously, Hamer buckled on his second gun, a Smith & Wesson .44 Spl. Triple Lock. Initially hit in the shoulder with a .45 ACP slug, he drew the Triple Lock with his support hand and permanently stopped his attacker.

Hamer was a longtime advocate of carrying two guns when necessary. His son, Frank Hamer, Jr., told me that his dad and Maney Gault both carried Colt 1911s in .38 Super as second guns during the Bonnie and Clyde investigation.

Another reason for carrying two guns is your primary gun might malfunction or be struck by incoming rounds. This is exactly what happened to at least one FBI special agent in the Miami shootout with bank robbers in 1986. In this case, the agent’s semi-automatic pistol was hit by a .223 Rem. fired by one of the bank robbers and taken out of commission. Again, an ongoing gunfight is no place to be with an empty gun or one that no longer functions.

Today, probably the most common two-gun technique is that the second gun be smaller in size and more easily concealable. While the primary gun might be located on the waist, the smaller gun is more likely to be in a pants pocket, ankle holster or some other deep-cover location. I am not sure it really matters, so long as the armed citizen practices getting this second gun into play as much as he or she does their primary.

In my case, I don’t and haven’t carried two guns as a usual practice. However, on narcotic raids, felony apprehensions or just foreknowledge that I’d be having to deal with a bad dude, I put the second gun on. My preference was to carry two identical guns. I have nearly always carried the second gun in a shoulder holster. And, if it matters, I have two pairs of guns to choose from: a pair of all-steel Colt Commanders in .45 ACP, and a pair of Smith & Wesson Model 19 revolvers.

Another advantage of carrying two guns is when traveling. I don’t find a shoulder holster to be quite as fast as drawing from the hip. However, while seated in my car, the shoulder holster is faster than trying to dig under the seat belt and get the gun on my hip. Also, should I be involved in an incident while away from home, the gun that I use is more than likely going to be taken as evidence. I might just be able to keep the second gun for my continued protection, depending upon all the circumstances involved, of course.

Some readers might think that wearing two guns is an over-dramatization. Yet, you might live in a city that is experiencing civil unrest and be involved in a bad scene before you are able to get away from it. Another example might be a person working in retail business during a spree of armed robberies. There are any number of conflicts that might force a person into an extended fight he or she can’t avoid. And it behooves us all to remember Murphy’s Law; the primary gun might malfunction or be damaged, and/or your shooting hand or arm might be injured. In short, that second gun might just be a lifesaver.

The key, takeaway here, of course, is to give serious thought to the choice of the second gun and gear; don’t go cheap. Practice with it as often as you do your primary gun. “The New York Reload” has saved the lives of many police officers and lawfully armed citizens, and remains a valid carry choice.🌀



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SPRINGFIELD ARMORY  
9x19

14116

# Upper Echelon

Springfield Armory's new pistol is unlike anything the company has offered in the past, and it may be its best handgun yet.

I actually wear several hats as a gunwriter. When I'm writing editorially—such as in my “Handguns” column here at *Shooting Illustrated* or on my own personal blog—I'm free to opine on things that are purely subjective, offering readers my opinion on topics like “Why cats make better pets for introverts than dogs” or “Why .312-inch-diameter projectiles launched with sufficient energy are ideal rounds for normie-private-citizen-CCW use and all y'all folks who call them ‘mouseguns’ are just wrong.”

But, when I'm reviewing a firearm for the magazine, it's my duty to set all that aside and be completely objective. When it comes to firearm reviews, I need to stick to classic journalism ethics, so sorely forgotten these days, and deliver just the “Five Ws:” the Who, What, When, Where and Why of the firearm in question. Just the facts. Part of that is treating the gun being tested as a unique firearm, in and of itself, without dragging in personal biases.

Photos by Eric Dean

By Tamara Keel



By means of novel sets of movable pins that lock into recesses on the top of the slide, the Echelon can direct-mount 30 different current optics right to the slide without having to worry about fragile intermediate plates ...

It seems that Springfield Armory would like everyone to do this with the pistol at hand. It's an absolutely clean-sheet-of-paper design, and Springfield and its partners at HS Produkt in Croatia are emphasizing this fact, starting with the name of the pistol itself. It's not being branded as the "XD-C" or the "XD-X" or the "XD-Anything;" it's the Echelon. It's an ambitious new design that's looking to conquer new markets and, if it must break with past brand identification a little bit to do so, well, so be it.

The XD line (lines, actually) has been a commercial success for Springfield Armory. They've seen consumer acceptance in the U.S. and a fair amount of success in the field of competitive shooting, but in one corner of the industry they remained kind of the Rodney Dangerfield of striker-fired polymer pistols: They couldn't get "no respect" from the most tacticool corners of the gunternet, mostly because of their lack of adoption by large domestic law enforcement agencies (for a host of complicated reasons, some of which we'll touch on later).

The new Echelon seems determined to burst out of that confining image and grab the

duty-gun bull by the horns. As if to transmit that intent as clearly as possible, the sample pistol arrived with a Trijicon RMR already mounted and a SureFire X300U in the box, as well as a Safariland gun bucket of the type you'd see on the hip of some SWAT or SOCOM dude, rotating SLS optics-protecting hood and all. That's not a setup for casual paper-punching at the neighborhood indoor range.

If all one looks at is its most basic specifications, there's not a lot about the Echelon that's going to grab anyone's attention.

At first glance it's a polymer-frame, striker-fired 9 mm duty-type handgun with a 17-round magazine and a 4.5-inch-barrel. You literally can't swing a cat in a gun shop these days without knocking a dozen or more pistols that fit that description off its shelves (to say nothing of the mess you'd make and how much trouble you'd be in when the cops and the ASPCA got there—if the cat didn't claw the bejeezus out of you first).

"But, Tam," you exclaim, "Doesn't Springfield Armory already have this kind of pistol, in the shape of the XD-whatever suffix it is currently selling?"

Ah, but as the name indicates, this is not that.

For starters, unlike the XD series, the Echelon is a chassis-type pistol, and Springfield Armory has taken the level of modularity this allows to the next level.

The chassis mechanism itself is made of tool steel and all the spring-y bits are

## SPRINGFIELD ARMORY | Echelon



### SHOOTING RESULTS

Load	Velocity	Group Size		
		Smallest	Largest	Average
Remington Range 115-grain FMJ	1,168	2.65	4.15	3.21
Hornady Critical Duty 135-grain FlexLock	1,093	1.80	2.95	2.23
Federal Personal Defense 147-grain HST	998	1.90	3.05	2.50

Velocity measured in fps 9 feet from the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a Shooting Chrony Beta chronograph. Temperature: 71 degrees Fahrenheit. Accuracy measured in inches for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yards from a bag rest.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** HS Produkt; Croatia

**Importer:** Springfield Armory; (800) 680-6866, [springfield-armory.com](http://springfield-armory.com)

**Action Type:** Recoil-operated, semi-automatic

**Caliber:** 9 mm

**Capacity:** 20+1 rounds

**Frame:** Polymer

**Slide:** Melonite-coated steel

**Barrel Length:** 4.5 inches

**Sights:** U-notch rear, tritium-dot-enhanced post front; Variable Interface System for mounting optics

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 5 pounds, 12 ounces

**Length:** 8 inches

**Width:** 1.2 inches

**Height:** 5.5 inches (flush magazine)

**Weight:** 23.9 ounces (flush magazine)

**Accessories:** One 20-round and one 17-round magazine, three backstraps, soft case, lock, manual

**MSRP:** \$679

encircled within the frame. The polymer grip module that holds this chassis not only comes in three diameters (small, medium and large) that govern trigger reach, but also each grip module has interchangeable backstraps and the backstraps also come in three different dimensions.

I'm a writer, OK? I took the minimum amount of arithmetic to get out of high school, ending with a D in Trig and bailing on the math track before I could humiliate myself in Algebra II, but even I know that "Glock times four backstraps" and "SIG times three grip modules" both yield smaller numbers than "Echelon times three grip modules times three backstraps."

Stop laughing, I'll get my points back in the spelling bee.

Oh, and as an added bonus, the backstraps themselves have a metal pin protruding from the top that serves as an armorer's tool. Pretty nifty.

The grip part of the frame has a relatively pleasing ovoid cross section, at least on the medium module that shipped with the test gun, avoiding the blocky frontstrap contours that were endemic to the pioneers of the double-stack, polymer-service-pistol genre. The majority of the grip's diameter is covered in a roughened texture that's more aggressive than early SIG Sauer P320s, if not nearly as grabby as an RTF Glock or FN Edge texture.

Unless your palms are covered in an unusually nasty slime of sweat, CLP and sunscreen, you're probably going to be OK with the factory texture, but if you attend a bunch of matches or classes south of the Ohio River between May and September, you might want to get it stippled.

At the very bottom of the grip module are a pair of scalloped cuts, one on each side of the mag well, to assist in ripping a magazine out of the gun during the clearance of a double-feed malfunction. While this much drama is rarely required in a double-stack gun (or so I was told by the late, great Louis Awerbuck), the presence of those scallops is an indicator that the Echelon is very serious about the tactical market.

One thing the Echelon does share with earlier striker-fired pistols imported by Springfield Armory is an ambidextrous magazine release. There's no need to disassemble the button and flip it around, because it works from both sides. However, the design



Springfield Armory's VIS solution for adding optics is ingenious, allowing optical sights to sit low enough on the slide that suppressor-height sights aren't needed for backup • Sights are the tactical-rack U-Notch rear and tritium front sight common to many new Springfield pistols • Typical of the genre, the Echelon has a bladed-safety

trigger to prevent discharge if dropped. Texture extends outside the trigger guard, should you wish to relive the shooting style of the mid-1980s • Combining the best features of polymer-frame, striker-fired handguns with some unique enhancements, the Echelon is a striking new entry into this crowded marketplace.

of the Echelon's grip module is such that there's an extended shield that continues behind the mag-release button on either side of the frame. It would take an awkward and unusually distorted grip to inadvertently activate the offside release with the shooter's strong-side grip.

The frontstrap of the grip module—all sizes of the module—is blessedly free of finger grooves. We can all hope that this weird trend that started with customized 1911s and Smith & Wesson semi-automatics in the 1980s and then infected the whole pistol world, where everyone was assumed to have the same size fingers and would want to put them in the same places on the grip of a pistol, is dead and gone.

The trigger guard itself is sufficiently oversized to allow a gloved finger in there, provided the glove in question isn't some arctic monstrosity. There's a bit of texture on the front of the trigger guard in case you want to LARP as an '80s action shooter, and above and in front of the trigger guard are scalloped and textured sections that not only let you LARP as a Current Year action shooter by giving you a "gas pedal" for your support-side thumb, but also offer a nice and safe parking space for your trigger finger when you aren't actively shooting.

The bottom of the trigger guard has some ripples and texture in it to accommodate various shooting styles, but most importantly, it has a serious scallop at the rear, where the

trigger guard meets the frontstrap, to ensure the shooter can access a maximally high grip on the handgun. Based on actual shooting, this scallop should also effectively eliminate the malady known as "Glock knuckle" that can occur on the inside of the firer's middle finger during extended range sessions.

The trigger inside the guard isn't the trendy "straight" trigger, not quite, but it breaks when the trigger is very close to perpendicular to the frame. The face of the trigger shoe is nearly as close to "flat" as you can get with a pivoting "tab"-type safety in the middle of the trigger face. The tab is there as it's the easiest way to prevent the trigger from pulling itself under inertia should a dropped pistol hit the ground on the rear top corner of its slide. Trigger pull on the test sample was a consistent 5.75 pounds, with a light, even takeup followed by a rolling break.

Finished with a matte Melonite coating, the slide has five pairs of broad, shallow grasping grooves forward of the ejection port and three more pairs to the rear. Each set of grasping grooves is backstopped by a widened "step" in the slide itself, with the rearmost ones forming a pair of the sort of "ears" you'd find on a Heckler & Koch VP9. The rear grooves are just above the slide releases, which are very low-profile, snag-resistant and ambidextrous. The extractor is of the external, pivoting variety and features a protrusion toward the front that serves as a visual and tactile loaded-chamber indicator.

One thing the Echelon does share with earlier striker-fired pistols imported by Springfield Armory is an ambidextrous magazine release.



At the rear of the slide, just below the tactical-rack U-notch rear sight, are slight "ears" to assist in charging the Echelon • Slightly aggressive texturing adorns the grip, levers and forward portions of the pistol for positive purchase and finger placement • A chassis system is the heart of the Echelon, allowing different-size grip modules to best fit the shooter, and is the serialized component.

# CARRY TOUGH



**STR-9S COMBAT, 9MM**  
**20+1 CAPACITY**  
Overall length - 7.94"  
(optic not included)



## STR-9

Dependable in any condition



**STR-9MC, 9MM**  
**13+1 CAPACITY**  
Overall length - 6.1"



**STR-9C, 9MM**  
**13+1 CAPACITY**  
Overall length - 6.90"



**STR-9F, 9MM**  
**17+1 CAPACITY**  
Overall length - 7.95"

The Stoeger striker-fired, semi-auto 9mm pistol family includes micro-compact, mid-size and full-size models to fit any application. Optic-ready versions available. Standard features include:

- Integrated rail for accessories
- Internal safety
- Front and back slide serrations
- Three-dot sight system
- Enhanced ergonomics
- Smooth-draw rounded edges
- Interchangeable backstraps
- Included cable lock

 **Stoeger**  
Every Day Tough

[StoegerIndustries.com](http://StoegerIndustries.com)



Each Echelon ships with two magazines: a flush-fit 17-round variant and a slightly extended 20-round model • Serrations grace the top of the slide to assist in charging the pistol • Three backstraps are available to best fit the grip to the shooter's hand.



The top of the slide is a broad, flat, sighting plane stretching between the dovetails for the front and rear sights. There's a shelf on the rear-sight assembly to facilitate one-handed slide manipulations by snagging it on a belt or boot heel. The rear sight has a large, U-shaped notch with a white outline. It allows plenty of daylight on either side of the front sight, which features a tritium vial and a lime-green dot surrounding it.

Between the ejection port and the rear sight is the most novel feature of the Echelon. While cuts to accommodate miniature red-dot optics are commonplace in 2023, they normally come in one of two flavors. Either they allow for direct mounting of the optic to the slide for maximum durability, but you're restricted to only one or two choices of optic, or they allow the use of many different optic footprints by means of intermediate adaptor plates. The latter, however, adds an extra point of failure into the system and causes the sight to sit higher, necessitating awkwardly tall suppressor-height backup irons. The Echelon, however, lets you have your cake and eat it, too.

By means of novel sets of movable pins that lock into recesses on the top of the slide, the Echelon can direct-mount 30 different current optics right to the slide without having to worry about fragile intermediate

**"THEY NEVER  
SETTLE FOR  
NORMAL"**

**GUNS AMERICA DIGEST**



## Carrying the Echelon

A duty-size handgun like the Echelon needs a duty-style holster, and the new 6360-RDS from Safariland is a perfect choice. Not only does this holster provide Level III retention, it also protects a mounted MRDS and offers space for an attached weaponlight. Your Echelon—and its accessories—will find a happy home in the Safariland 6360-RDS holster.



Precision-molded to the firearm and light, Safariland 6360-RDS holsters are available for many popular full-size and compact handguns, with a wide array of fits for different weaponlights. Numerous color and pattern options abound, with staples like flat dark earth and basic black mixed in with Multicam and other finishes.

MSRP: \$208.50; [safariland.com](http://safariland.com)

plates, and the optics sit low enough in the slide to use normal-height backup irons. Springfield calls this the “VIS,” for “Variable Interface System,” and it is cleverer than a whole sack full of gunwriter clichés. As previously noted, the test gun arrived with a Trijicon RMR pre-mounted, and it didn’t shift or loosen at all over the course of 750 rounds.

Those rounds were drama-free and devoid of any malfunctions. Between the high-end sighting system and the very usable trigger, the Echelon was easy to shoot accurately. Standing on my hind legs, 8-inch plates at 20 yards were monotonously easy, and off a bagged rest, even I was able to manage the occasional sub-2-inch group, and I’m no Annie Oakley.

Cleaning the pistol at the end of a range session was simple enough. After clearing the pistol, lock the slide to the rear and rotate the takedown lever downward 90 degrees. It can’t be rotated with a magazine in the firearm. Then run the slide forward and off the frame. Easy-peasy, lemon squeezy and no trigger-pulling of any type is required.

I have to hand it to Springfield Armory. In general, the Echelon is a well-executed variation on a common genre of pistol today, but with the added detail of the truly novel VIS optics-mounting system, it may have a real winner on its hands here. 



Hold your own. The new P15™ is more than the first ever KelTec™ striker-fire carry pistol. It’s a new classic. With its patented 15-round double stack magazine, it’s the lightest, thinnest of its kind. The P15 Metal is far from the everyday look of a typical everyday carry handgun. To fit your style, its wood grip panels are interchangeable with other options soon to come. See it in metal or polymer.



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# 2023 *Holiday* Gift Guide

No matter your gifting needs, interests or budget, we've got at least one product for you. Our editors scoured the globe for the most fun, useful and well-made items, and then categorized them in a mostly logical fashion to make your holiday shopping simple. Alternatively, leave this guide out for others to see to drop a not-so-subtle hint about what you want under the tree this year.

*A Shooting Illustrated Staff Report*



# For the Outdoors

## 1 | Garmont

### T8 Falcon Boot

Lightweight, yet supportive, these sporty boots combine the sturdiness of leather with the flexibility of nylon for an extremely comfortable fit. A soft-yet-durable sole provides a responsive feel while moving through terrain, and an inner shank adds ankle and foot support.

\$155; [garmonttactical.com](http://garmonttactical.com)

## 2 | Spy Briefing Gear

### Survival Bucket Cover

Absolutely ingenious, the Survival Bucket Cover fits over a standard 5-gallon bucket to hold all sorts of loose items for a camping trip or any other adventure. It can even fit gun mags in slots on the outside, while tools, lights and other small items have space on the inside. You can use the bucket's handle to carry it all.

\$49; [spybriefinggear.com](http://spybriefinggear.com)

## 3 | Garmin

### Foretrex 901 Ballistic Edition

Wearable GPS guidance that also helps with your long-range shooting? Garmin's new Foretrex 901 Ballistic Edition GPS navigator runs on AAA batteries, passes MIL-STD-810 standard for ruggedness and can pair with your smartphone. It also offers a three-axis compass, altimeter and accelerometer, along with Applied Ballistics software.

\$599.99; [garmin.com](http://garmin.com)

## 4 | SOG

### Power Access Deluxe Multitool

Ideal for the outdoors or any place where you might have to perform any kind of maintenance, the 21 different tools on this portable multitool are the most offered on any SOG product. If you can't fix it with this in your hand, maybe it can't be fixed.

\$79.95; [sogknives.com](http://sogknives.com)

## 5 | Full Forge Gear

### Hurricane Backpack

Outdoor enthusiast on your list? The Hurricane Backpack offers a water-resistant exterior along with MOLLE webbing that allows you to configure the pack to meet your needs. A large, internal, hydration pocket, reinforced nylon straps and two interior pockets add to the Hurricane's utility.

\$59.99; [fullforgegear.com](http://fullforgegear.com)

## 6 | Alps Mountaineering

### Felis 2-Person tent

Lightweight, free-standing and easy to assemble, the Felis 2-Person tent from Alps Mountaineering has another appealing facet: it's made from 100-percent recycled polyester fabric. Half-mesh walls allow excellent airflow while a vestibule offers a place to store gear.

\$199.99; [alpsmountaineering.com](http://alpsmountaineering.com)

## 7 | Nighthawk Custom

### Night Hunter

With a 4-inch-long, CPM154-steel blade, G10 scales and a Kydex sheath, this fixed-blade knife offers the same fit and finish you'd expect from a product bearing the Nighthawk Custom name.

\$449.99; [nighthawkcustom.com](http://nighthawkcustom.com)

## 8 | Remington

### 30-Can Cooler Backpack

Keep your drinks and refreshments cool when you're on the go in this soft-sided, leak-proof insulated cooler. It also has pockets on the outside to store your phone or other accessories and straps to make carrying it easy.

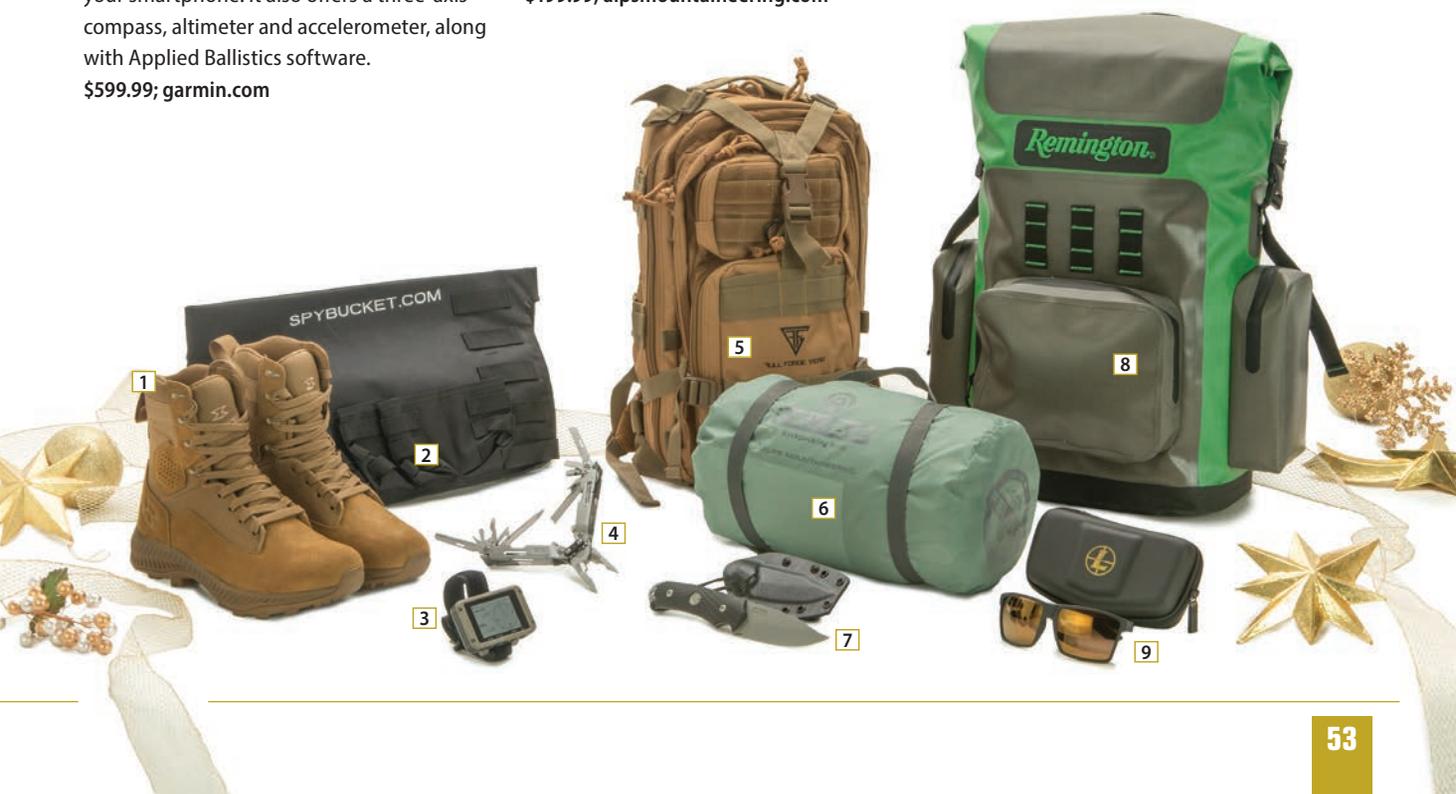
\$224.99; [remingtoncoolers.com](http://remingtoncoolers.com)

## 9 | Leupold

### DeSoto

While it's important to protect your precious eyesight on the range (and elsewhere), you don't have to look like a refugee from a 1970s wood shop. Leupold's DeSoto eye wear offers shatter resistance, polarized lenses and numerous frame and lens color options.

\$189.99; [leupold.com](http://leupold.com)



# For the Home

## 1 | Kitfox Design Group

### GWOT Throw

Available in two sizes, this blanket is festooned with pictures of some of the gear used on today's battlefields. World War II, Vietnam and hunting-oriented versions are also available.

\$125; [kitfoxdesigngroup.com](http://kitfoxdesigngroup.com)

## 2 | Camp Chef

### Redwood

Everyone loves sitting around a campfire, but there are times and locations where traditional fires are inadvisable. The Redwood fire pit by Camp Chef is powered by propane, same as your gas grill, so it can be used in places where uncontrolled burning is a bad idea. And, it adds ambiance.

\$199.99; [campchef.com](http://campchef.com)

## 3 | Giant Mouse

### Bamboo Magnet Knife Bar

Keep your kitchen blades organized and out of the way, yet still have them close at hand with this wall-mounted magnetized blade holder that has a subtle bamboo finish.

\$30; [giantmouse.com](http://giantmouse.com)

## 4 | Federal

### Dog Bowl

Built of steel and with a 64-ounce capacity, the Federal dog bowl is big enough and tough enough to stand up to the appetite of your hungry, four-legged friend. Moreover, it stays in place, is easy to clean and looks pretty sharp, too.

\$29; [federalpremium.com](http://federalpremium.com)

## 5 | MTM Case-Gard

### Tactical Rifle Crate

Store a rifle along with ammunition, cleaning supplies and more with the MTM Case-Gard Tactical Rifle crate. Padded space on top can accommodate a scoped rifle up to 39 inches in length, while four sections below hold everything else you need. It's also lockable and has wheels for moving the crate around your storage area.

\$139.99; [mtmcase-gard.com](http://mtmcase-gard.com)

## 6 | Winchester

### Lighted Logo Sign

Light up a room with the LEDs hidden behind the Winchester logo on this wall-mountable sign. It's great for the gun room, workshop, garage or anywhere else you want to show off one of America's most iconic firearm and ammunition labels.

\$130; [winchestergear.com](http://winchestergear.com)

## 7 | Meat!

### Kitchen Knife Set

This six-piece set has blades ranging in size from an 8-inch chef's knife to a 3.5-inch paring knife, so you'll always have the right knife for the job at hand. It includes an attractive storage stand.

\$174.99; [meatyourmaker.com](http://meatyourmaker.com)

## 8 | Silencer Central

### Suppressor Bottle Opener

After the shooting is done and the guns (and suppressors) are put away, crack open a cold one with this lightweight, sturdy bottle opener in the shape of a Banish suppressor from Silencer Central.

\$12.99; [silencercentral.com](http://silencercentral.com)



9 | Trijicon

10-inch Metal Wall Clock

Measuring 10 inches in diameter, this attractive timepiece is sure to hit the mark and add a touch of firearm-accessory fondness to your gun room or man cave. Battery-operated and easy to both hang and set, it will keep you on schedule while showing off your love of tactical optics. \$24.99; trijicongear.com

10 | PowerTac

Destroyer-X10K-G2-9,500 Lumen Search & Rescue Light

If standard flashlights seem dim, then the 9,500 lumens of the PowerTac Destroyer flashlight will not disappoint. Touted as a search and rescue tool, this flashlight will win any "my light is the brightest" contest you might possibly find yourself in. \$799.95; powertac.com



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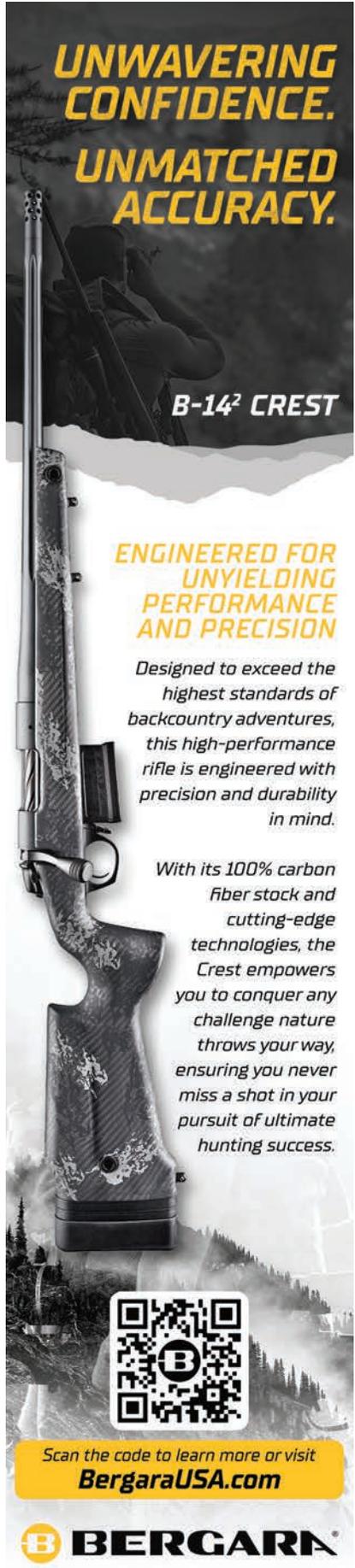
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# For the Range and Shop

## 1 | Hornady

### Bullet Guide Counter Mat

This sizable mat isn't only a padded surface to prevent the marring of guns and tools; it's also a handy, ever-present reference to Hornady's many bullet styles. It's ideal not only for the handloader, but also for any do-it-yourselfer or even a professional shop.

\$24.99; [hornady.com](http://hornady.com)

## 2 | Pyramex

### Venture Gear Tactical Drone 2.0

Eye protection can be inexpensive and stylish, as demonstrated by the Drone 2.0. An adjustable nosepiece aids comfort, while an anti-fog treatment on the lenses helps keep them clear, even on hot days. The glasses pass the MIL-PRF-32432 High Velocity Impact Standards, ensuring your safety on the range.

\$28.99; [pyramex.com](http://pyramex.com)

## 3 | Springfield Armory

### Hellcat Pro 17-Round Magazine

No one ever complained about too much ammo, right? Springfield Armory Hellcat Pro owners can now add two more rounds to their handgun without significant bulk—whether you have the black or FDE version.

\$42.99; [springfield-armory.com](http://springfield-armory.com)

## 4 | MDT

### Oryx Bipod

Crafted from a high-quality polymer blend, this bipod provides rigidity, strength and stability. Users can quickly stow, deploy, adjust cant tension and extend the legs using just one hand. The bipod's rubber feet ensure a slip-free rest across a variety of surfaces, and the unit weighs a mere 11 ounces in the M-Lok version (shown).

\$99.95; [mdttac.com](http://mdttac.com)

## 5 | XS Sights

### DIY Series Bundle

Comprised of XS's R3D Night Sights and Inline Sight Pusher Kit for Glock's, this package has everything the do-it-yourselfer needs to install sights on Glock pistols. It reduces installation force by 50 percent, can install suppressor-height sights and be used with a red-dot sight in place.

\$269.98; [xssights.com](http://xssights.com)

## 6 | Heckler & Koch

### Heckler & Koch Pro Ears Gold II 30

The advanced electronics inside these earmuffs allows you to hear conversations and ambient noise around you, yet still protect your hearing from gunshots and other high volume noise spikes, demonstrating that H&K does not actually hate you.

\$199.99; [hk-usa.com](http://hk-usa.com)

## 7 | Riton

### 30 mm/1-inch Precision Quick Detach (QD) Scope Mount

Crafted from 6061-T6 aluminum for strength without excess weight, the mount makes it easy to quickly deploy your 30 mm or 1-inch main-tube scopes. The sturdy, one-piece unit also fits comfortably within most budgets.

\$139.99; [ritonoptics.com](http://ritonoptics.com)

## 8 | Bravo Concealment

### Double Magazine Pouch 3.0

The latest iteration of Bravo Concealment's Double Magazine Pouch, this one, dubbed 3.0, is offered in right-hand or ambidextrous versions. It has 1.5-inch OWB belt loops and incorporates retention adjustment, making it a great choice for use on the range or for carry with a cover garment.

\$38.99; [bravoconcealment.com](http://bravoconcealment.com)

## 9 | Real Avid

### Master Gun Workstation

Whether you're mounting a scope, cleaning a bolt-action rifle or just making an adjustment, a sturdy workstation makes a big difference. With cleaning-rod storage and space for small parts, Real Avid's offering is a must-have for the DIYer on your holiday list.

\$199.99; [realavid.com](http://realavid.com)



**10 | DuraMag**  
AR Magazine

Lightweight and durable, these AR-15-style aluminum magazines will match perfectly with your next rifle build. They have a 30-round capacity and come anodized in an assortment of colors, or the traditional gray. \$18.20; [dura-mag.com](http://dura-mag.com)

**11 | Beretta**  
Leather Shooting Gloves

When the mercury dips, protect your hands with a set of fine Italian leather gloves. Beretta's leather gloves offer slip-resistance, breathability, flexibility and are even designed to work with the touchscreen on your smartphone. \$99; [beretta.com](http://beretta.com)

**12 | Rise Armament**  
Range Med Kit

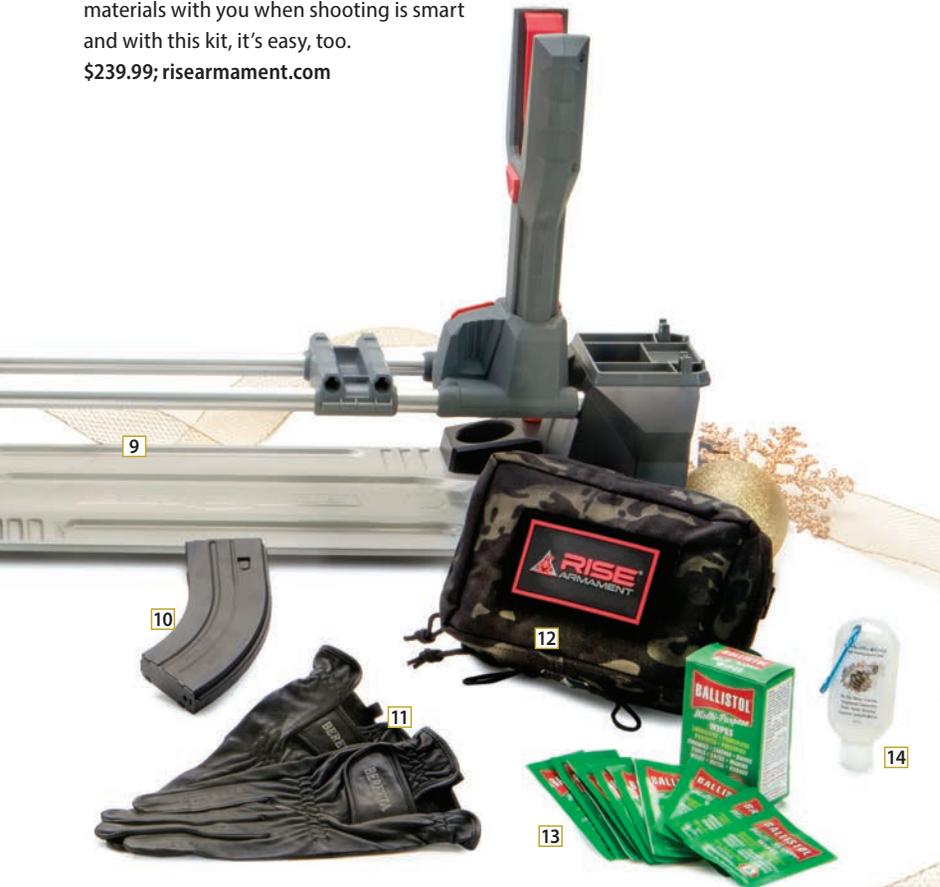
A compilation of all the emergency medical gear you might need in a critical situation on the range, this kit is also equipped to help alleviate minor injuries. Keeping first-aid materials with you when shooting is smart and with this kit, it's easy, too. \$239.99; [risearmament.com](http://risearmament.com)

**13 | Ballistol**  
Wipes

Available in a five-box set that includes 10 wipes per box, Ballistol Wipes are an environmentally friendly, multi-purpose cleaner. When used on firearms, they clean and dissolve copper fouling as well as brass and zinc residue. Since it molecularly bonds to metals, it also keeps your guns completely protected in addition to looking sharp. \$25; [ballistol.com](http://ballistol.com)

**14 | LockedIn Grip**  
Liquid Shooting Sports Chalk

Athletes from gymnasts to weightlifters and beyond use chalk to improve their grip, so why shouldn't shooters take advantage of this proven remedy? Easy to mount on your gear thanks to the included carabiner, this chalk keeps your hands free of moisture during shooting while providing a superior grip on your firearm. \$12; [lockinginrip.com](http://lockinginrip.com)



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# For Travel

## 1 | Pelican

### Air Travel Case

Why not give your travel essentials the same rock-solid protection you give your firearms and delicate electronics? Pelican's Air Travel Case has two removable fabric organizers and storage built into the lid, integral TSA-approved locks and stainless steel bearing wheels for easy maneuvering through airports.

\$509.95; pelican.com

## 2 | Browning

### Buckmark Flag Low Back Seat Cover

Show off your love for all things gun and your patriotism with this two-piece car seat cover. The microfiber fabric is cut to fit the contours of most vehicle seats and sports the iconic Buckmark logo in red, white and blue along with accent stitching to beautify your automobile while protecting its seats.

\$39.99; browning.com

## 3 | DeSantis

### 1.5-inch Reversible CCW Belt

Built from two pieces of premium saddle leather with a polymer liner in-between for enhanced rigidity, this DeSantis belt offers versatility in the form of a black exterior and a brown underside. It can be easily reversed to match your outfit by using a flat-bladed screwdriver.

\$119.99; desantisholster.com

## 4 | Bradford Exchange

### U.S. Army Personalized Canvas Messenger Tote Bag

Proudly identifying the recipient by both name and service branch, the U.S. Army Personalized Canvas Messenger Tote Bag features a padded and adjustable shoulder strap, multiple compartments, burnished-metal hardware and faux-leather trim. Other service branches are also available.

\$129.95; bradfordexchange.com

## 5 | Timepieces International

### Renegade Blue Men's Watch

Whether in the office or on the town, the Renegade Blue Men's Watch adds a touch of class to your ensemble. Boasting a rose gold and blue finish, three precision sub-dials adorn the face—including split second, second and minute displays. A non-slip silicone band and presentation case are included.

\$169; timepiecesusa.com

## 6 | Safariland

### IncogX

Designed in conjunction with Haley Strategic Partners, the IncogX might be the best appendix-carry holster in existence. Its suede-coated polymer body is extremely comfortable to wear, yet remains eminently supportive of your pistol while maintaining outstanding concealment. It is available with (shown) or without (\$90 MSRP) an attached magazine carrier.

\$120; safariland.com



**7 | Recover Tactical**  
20/20 Series Sling Bag

Thick interior padding, reinforced stitching and lockable zippers make this small, yet roomy, bag ideal for everyday carry. It can be worn as a sling bag or a shoulder bag, or carried by a top-handle loop or side handle like a briefcase for added versatility.

\$59.95; [recovertactical.com](http://recovertactical.com)

**8 | Magpul**  
DAKA Grid Organizer for Pelican Vault V730

Keep your long guns secure in the case without having to order and cut foam inserts every time you make the slightest change with Magpul's intuitive DAKA Grid organizer.

\$139.95; [magpul.com](http://magpul.com)

**9 | Nebo**  
Assist Air Jump Starter

Jumpstarting a dead battery is a lot easier when you don't have to rely on a second vehicle. Nebo's Air Assist Jump Starter allows the independence of popping the hood, connecting the cables and reviving a dead battery wherever you are—and it can refill a flat tire and recharge your phone, too.

\$179.99; [nebo.acgbrands.com](http://nebo.acgbrands.com)

**10 | Ontario Knife Company**  
RAT 1 Red

A stylish, red G10 grip combined with a folding, 3.5-inch, S35VN steel blade make the RAT 1 an ideal EDC knife. It weighs a mere 4.8 ounces and sports a reversible clip.

\$135.95; [ontarioknife.com](http://ontarioknife.com)

**11 | Primary Weapons Systems**  
5.56 Bumper Sticker

If you have a 5.56 and PWS fan on your list, here's a way to help them class up their ride and show their fondness for the cartridge and company. The bumper sticker is a simple and affordable way to allow any gun enthusiasts to express themselves and recognize one another. It's also available in 7.62.

\$0.99; [primaryweapons.com](http://primaryweapons.com)

**12 | Fisher Space Pen**  
Elite Navy Cerakote Cap-o-Matic Space Pen

Eye-catching and designed to operate in just about any conditions, the Fisher Space Pen Cap-o-Matic now comes in a variety of Cerakote-finish options, including black, brass, orange and the Navy-blue option shown here.

\$39; [spacepen.com](http://spacepen.com)



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# Just for Fun

## 1 | Umarex

### Legends M3 Grease Gun Full Auto BB Gun

While owning a genuine World War II-era M3 Grease Gun would certainly be cooler, having one you can afford to shoot more than once a decade is almost as good. Umarex's Legend series also has pellet-firing replicas of other iconic firearms like the Broomhandle Mauser and Thompson submachine gun.

\$239.99; [umarexusa.com](http://umarexusa.com)

## 2 | Retro-Rifle

### Rising Palm

Looking for a way to show off your love for all things firearm in a loud, yet strikingly subtle manner? Check out the shirts from Retro-Rifle. Not only are they a great conversation piece, they also all sport fun designs featuring tastefully placed guns and are made from high-quality materials for a perfect fit. New designs drop every Tuesday and Friday, and these shirts sell out fast!

\$49.95; [retro-rifle.com](http://retro-rifle.com)

## 3 | Best Cigar Prices

### 90+ Rated All-Star 5-Cigar Combo & Cutter

This deal for *Shooting Illustrated* readers is smokin' hot. Five outstanding, premium cigars from makers like Rocky Patel, Oliva, Alec Bradley, Romeo y Julieta and Montecristo, along with a cutter for the price of basically one stick? We'll take it. Hurry, though; the deal expires on Jan. 31, 2024.

\$15.99; [bestcigarprices.com/NP009](http://bestcigarprices.com/NP009)

## 4 | Gamo

### Three Diamond Target

You'll never have to leave the bench with this tough and durable airgun target. Varying target sizes put your precision-shooting skills to the test and move when hit. Thanks to a solid base, it doesn't need to be shoved into the ground.

\$11.70; [gamousa.com](http://gamousa.com)

## 5 | Apex Tactical

### AZ Nunchuks Single Point Nunchuck Set

Who doesn't want the opportunity to injure themselves? Alternately, you can pretend you're a member of the post-adolescent, altered Ninjitsu-practicing aquatic reptiles, or just admire the craftsmanship of this 1980s action-movie staple that you can own.

\$65; [apextactical.com](http://apextactical.com)

## 6 | Wilson Combat

### Shirt, Short Sleeve, Retro, Heather Blue

Combining retro appeal with pride of ownership, this T-shirt from Wilson Combat has the same design as that worn by Bill Wilson during his competitive years.

\$19.11; [wilsoncombat.com](http://wilsoncombat.com)

## 7 | CRKT

### Onion Throwing Knives, Fixed

With axe-throwing venues all the rage these days, it's only a matter of time before throwing knives come back in style. Beat the rush with these precision-balanced, 1050 carbon steel throwing knives that come in a set of three with a nylon sheath.

\$75; [crkt.com](http://crkt.com)



**8 | Primos Hunting/Pursuit Energy drink**

Since hunting usually requires participants to wake up far too early in the morning, a new partnership between Primos Hunting and Pursuit offers a line of energy drinks perfect for helping enthusiasts deal with that 4 a.m. wake-up call. Two sugar-free and two regular options are available.  
\$8.75/4-pack; [pursuitenergy.com](http://pursuitenergy.com)

**9 | National Rifle Association Membership**

Give your friends and family the gift of freedom. Membership comes with copious benefits, including a choice of monthly magazine (we suggest *Shooting Illustrated*, of course) and the knowledge you're helping to protect the rights our cherished Second Amendment protects.  
\$45; [membership.nra.org](http://membership.nra.org)

**10 | Battlebrick MRAP Army APC**

There are the interlocking plastic bricks you played with as a child, and then there is this mighty machine, complete with a miniature plastic soldier in full battle gear and a rotating gun turret. Putting it together is a fun project for the whole family.  
\$84.99; [battlebrickcustoms.com](http://battlebrickcustoms.com)

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**TRANSITIONAL  
TARGET I**

SCORING	TOTAL
5'S	
4'S	
3'S	
2'S	
0'S	
<b>TOTAL</b>	



# Good Enough, Fast Enough

A sight picture doesn't have to be perfect, and precise accuracy usually isn't needed at the cost of speed.

**W**hether you shoot iron sights, carry optics or a combination of the two, or train for combat or competition, the critical balance of speed and accuracy cannot be overstated. Why is striving for a textbook sight picture the worst thing you can do when held accountable to faster speeds with accuracy? What untapped magic lays dormant behind the classic trope of a "bad sight picture" that, when engaged, affords accuracy at faster speeds?

## Build the Shot

Under the duress of on-demand performance, you will be pressured into rapidly building the shot—a process by which you must bring stability to alignment. You don't have all day, because you are being held accountable for time and accuracy, so you need to develop the skills to rapidly build the shot.

Covering the multi-faceted components and sub-components it takes to build a perfect shot exceeds the scope of this study. However, for brevity, suffice it to say that most of the work effort is to precisely align the muzzle as quickly as possible.

The two classical methods for describing the handgun draw stroke are what the late master instructor Ron Avery called "rock on a string" or "touching a doorbell."

Rock on a string (violently throwing the muzzle out there with minimal control) is like tying a rock to a string, then throwing the rock at the target creating tension at the end of the string length. Its counterpart methodology is to imagine reaching to press a doorbell.

During the first part of the doorbell-press movement, you can move as fast as you want, but when

you get closer to that doorbell button, you need to bleed off some of that kinetic energy and gain greater control as you drop speed. Otherwise, you will either miss the target or break your finger in the process.

Given the two mental images, rock on a string versus pressing a doorbell, which best describes a time-and-accuracy-efficient draw stroke?

The quicker you build the shot and move into proper muzzle-target alignment, the better the result. The greater your control and timing, the better your stability and alignment. Using this as a baseline allows you to unleash the potential of a "bad sight picture."

## Tactile vs. Visual

Part and parcel of any sight picture ("good" or "bad"), with dots or irons, is visual processing. However, before delving into the visual reference of a sighting system, when you bring the handgun up to your eyes (as opposed to dropping your head down to the gun), the first thing you pick up peripherally is the shape of the gun. This crude visual reference of a blurred object moving into your field of vision should be the very first item to enter your visual process.

The alignment process begins prior to your eyes referencing the sighting system itself. Often referred to as kinesthetic alignment, using only your proprioceptors affords you the advantage of establishing alignment as early as possible, prior to visual confirmation. The advantage here is that you've begun alignment prior to any specific sight reference. Here you are outside the context of "good" or "bad" sight picture as this has not yet come into play.

What untapped magic lays dormant behind the classic trope of a “bad sight picture” that, when engaged, affords accuracy at faster speeds?

In effect, you have saved a tremendous amount of processing time by establishing a rough-hewn tactile alignment prior to picking up your sights, which are utilized later to fine-tune initial tactile alignment. Picking up a raw visual reference is what buys you optimal time, as opposed to beginning your alignment process only with the use of your sights once they are up.

Whether using irons or carry optics, the key learning point here is to establish alignment as early as possible by using only natural point-of-aim (NPOA), which is accomplished by body feel, kinesthetics, proprioceptors and the like prior to visual confirmation, which is applying your eyes to your sights to confirm the alignment you made by feel.

Immediately following alignment by feel (tactile), is getting your sights connected to the target in some manner (with irons, somewhere good enough for the technicality of that shot, and with a red dot, the dot visible anywhere in the window) at least even just seeing them in some way (visual).

Several grandmaster shooters and master shooting instructors advise development of such alignment by feel by running a simple 3-yard drill.

Set up a paper target at the 3-yard line. Consider round placement anywhere on paper to be a good hit. Point your muzzle directly at the center of the target. Close your eyes. Press the trigger and then open your eyes. Where did the round place?

Next, set up at the same distance and then move the gun to the low-ready position (pointed at the base of the target) and now, with your eyes closed, move the muzzle to the center of the target and press. Where did the round print?

Lastly, set the same drill up again, except this time run it from the holster. Again, with eyes closed, present the handgun to the target and press off a round all by feel. Where did the round print? Running this same drill starting from three different positions helps you to develop that tactile reference by developing and maximizing your proprioception to engage in kinesthetic alignment.

Multiple-time world champion competitive shooter and master instructor Rob Leatham states that muzzle-target alignment is 70 percent body and 30 percent eyes (visual confirmation only). Combining tactile alignment (70 percent) with visual confirmation (30 percent) provides the skilled shooter with optimal balance of speed and accuracy.

Standing on the solid bedrock of a well-controlled presentation (doorbell method), with initial tactile alignment (70 percent) affords you optimal conditions for fast, effective visual processing.

### Focal Plane

Positive target identification is the very first order of business. The initial part of your visual processing is to extend your focal plane to the target. Does this target require shooting?



“Perfect is the enemy of the good.” When it comes to sight pictures, it can also be the enemy of the armed citizen defending him- or herself. An imperfectly centered and still blurry post can produce adequate accuracy at close range. With an MRDS, the shooter may only see a streak of color as he locates and moves the dot before breaking the shot.



Whether in competition or in a combat application, if the answer is “yes” then only one of two things happens.

If you’re shooting irons, depending on the technical difficulty of the shot, you will draw your focal plane back up from the target you’ve just identified as a shoot target, toward your front sight post. If you’re shooting a dot, you must train yourself to leave your focal plane on the target while being aware of your dot position. Much easier said than done—especially at faster speeds.

Retired law enforcement professional and master-level competitive shooter Kyle Schmidt reminds his students that the sights are never immobile—the gun never stops moving. Novice shooters try to make the gun immobile as opposed to setting and monitoring an acceptable arc-of-wobble. Attempting to completely immobilize your sights only leads to massive frustration, as it cannot be done.

The sights move and will always move, your objective is to get them to move or wobble within what you consider to be an acceptable margin of error on the target. Here, a key learning point is that an acceptable margin of error is a higher priority than a “good” versus a “bad” sight picture.

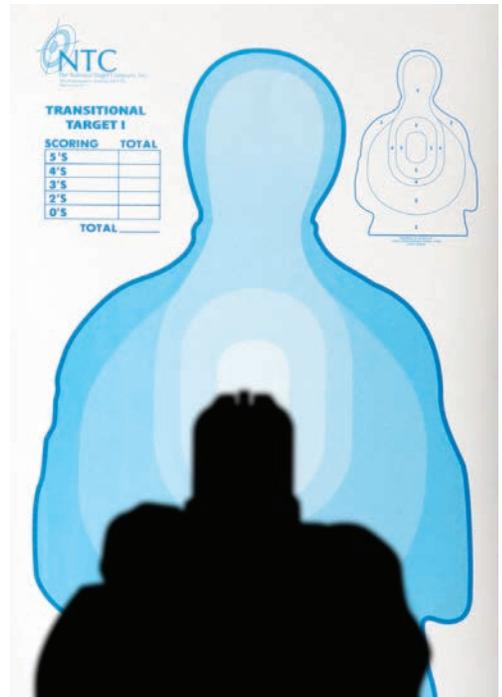
### Visual Confirmation

Crude visual reference is always faster than refined visual reference. If you’re shooting irons, you can reference the back or crude outline of the slide. If you’re shooting a dot, you can reference the carry-optic window housing. Either way, you are using your kinesthetic-alignment process to bring that peripheral blur into a raw alignment. In the process of employing this initial crude reference the sighting system eventually moves into your field of vision. The split second you begin to engage your sighting system is the split second you can start looking for a “bad” (or rather, “good enough”) sight picture.

The key learning point here is to eliminate any delay either mechanical or visual. Switching gears from 70 percent tactile to 30 percent visual should be immediate. Start by feel and end with immediate confirmation.

According to Avery, there are three visual confirmation options when using irons. Each depends on the technicality of the shot. One is to keep your focal plane on the target leaving your front-sight post and rear-sight notch blurry. It’s what Avery calls a “hard target focus.”

Focusing on the rather small front sight isn’t always possible in the speed and stress of a gunfight. In such cases, the entire rear silhouette of the gun can become the aiming device.



The next option is to shift your focal plane from the target toward your front-sight post but not exactly on your front post, somewhere in between a hard-target focus and the front post. It’s what Avery calls a “soft target focus.”

The remaining option is to shift your focal plane from the target toward your front-sight post and set a sharp visual focus on the razor’s edge atop the blade of your front post. It’s what Avery calls a “hard front sight focus.” In some shooting circles, anything other than a hard front sight focus would be considered a “bad sight picture.”

Referencing carry optics and in addition to RDS mechanical offset, champion competitive shooter Max Michel describes three visual processing timesavers that confirm initial alignment. He uses the metaphor “Your eyes are the gas pedal for your trigger.”

The first is what Michel calls “a flash of color,” which is a something like a “tracer light” or “color blur.” It is the highest speed visual confirmation possible with a dot, yet good enough to confirm alignment on less-technical shots. Pressing off a shot the nano-second you see that flash or blur affords you optimum efficiency.

The second is what he calls a “float” which is where the dot is “floating” within your acceptable arc-of-wobble margins. It takes just a bit more time (due to increased difficulty of the

... if round placement is acceptable with “misaligned” sights and you were to take that extra tenth or more of a second to “correct” your sight picture, is it worth the exchange of time?



Imagine throwing a rock on a string hard at the target. The tension arrives suddenly as the string plays out. It's fast, but with little control • The finger reaching toward a doorbell may move fast, but slows for final adjustment.

Picking up a raw visual reference is what buys you optimal time, as opposed to beginning your alignment process with the use of your sights.

shot) than the flash of color, but not much. You're not trying to land a drone here; you just want immediate confirmation.

Lastly, is the "settled dot" which is where the dot "looks like a dot" as opposed to a blur or a float. The dot has "stopped" (slowed movement), has shape and good form. Again, it looks like a dot and represents an RDS textbook sight picture.

### Refined Visual

When running iron sights, the novice shooter is told of the importance of textbook sight alignment. The quintessential mechanically perfect sight picture comprises equal height with equal light and a hard focus on upper blade edge of front-sight post.

However, we've all seen the alternative variations of front-sight-post to rear-sights-notch "misalignment" configurations such as the front-sight post being too far left, right, down, up, front sight blurry, rear sight completely out of visual focus or any combination thereof. We are told of such sight misalignment maladies are the root of all evil when it comes to inaccuracy or poor shot placement. The truth of the matter is that it's too general a statement to be applicable to every shooting scenario, every time.

Alignment precision is directly proportional to the technicality of the shot at hand. The more technical the shot, that is farther distance, smaller target size, target penalty (points in competition or shooting a hostage or innocent bystanders in combat application)

and other target difficulties such as moving targets or a two-way gunfight, the greater your need for that textbook, precision iron sights alignment.

The inverse of this is also true. The closer you are to the target, or the bigger it is, or the lesser the penalty for a miss, etc., a greater margin of error becomes acceptable.

As an example, try running this mental picture exercise (or you can even run it on the range) Set up with iron sights in front of a large paper target about 3 yards away and point into the visual center of the target with your handgun. Consider it a good hit if it prints anywhere on paper.

Align your sights perfectly (textbook front sight post to rear-sight notch) with the center of the target and press off a round. In this example did your sight alignment result in acceptable shot placement?

Next, move your front-sight post to the right where it is pressed up against the right side of the rear-sight notch and take the shot. In this example did your sight alignment result in acceptable shot placement?

Now, move your front-sight post to the left where it is pressed up against the left side of the rear-sight notch and take the shot. In this example, did your sight alignment result in acceptable shot placement?

Then, try too far up, too far down and any combination of the above. In every one of the configurations and permutations at the very close distance, did your sight alignment result in acceptable shot placement?

In some shooting circles, anything other than a mechanically perfect sight picture would be considered a "bad sight picture." However, if round placement is acceptable with "misaligned" sights and you were to take that extra tenth or more of a second to "correct" your sight picture, is it worth the exchange of time?

Backing into building the shot, first and foremost is to save visual processing time by using kinesthetic alignment followed by crude visual reference. Next is to adjust your focal plane according to your sighting system and as per the technical difficulty of the shot. Lastly, when applying refined visual confirmation, your eyes are the gas pedal.

Proficiency in shifting your focal plane (irons), splitting your target focus (dot) and using "bad sight pictures," affords you a measurable increase in speed with accuracy. 🌀



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# Repeat Training

By George Harris



## The Problem

You have had the conversation multiple times with your significant other about your training expenditures. The primary point of contention is why a person would re-attend a shooting lesson or class they have already completed successfully. After all, from their perspective, in any segment of academia, once a passing grade has been attained, the next step in the progression is advancement to a higher level of the same or similar subject matter. You need some help in explaining why it is beneficial to retake a class or lesson, especially where physical skills are taught.

## The Solution

Without a doubt, repetition is the cornerstone to locking in a new skill or developing a deeper understanding of a technique. There are a multitude of reasons related to the benefits of re-taking a class or lesson aside from repetition.

For instance, different instructors and training locations can be beneficial to improved performance by themselves.

Every instructor has their own style of presenting, as well as life experiences that factor into what they are teaching. Many seasoned instructors will “read” their attendees and orient the training to best fit the needs of the students. In many cases, the same material is covered, but in a different manner that might be easier to perform or understand. It is with relative certainty the material from one class to another will come with a different perspective in an effort to provide the best presentation for the recipients. Students having some familiarity with the subject matter tend to develop a deeper understanding and application of the material as opposed to what they may have learned at their initial training event. The truth is, unless the class is pre-recorded, there are differences in every presentation that sometimes offer another perspective over the original presentation.

Venue or location—such as the differences between the smooth concrete floor of an indoor range and the rough and uneven surfaces of an outdoor range—make a big difference when learning and practicing shooting in improvised positions and the movements necessary to enter and exit various positions. Weather conditions can have an impact on the conduct and flow of a class as well, with the addition of temperature, precipitation and elevation as new or different variables. Physical stamina is tested when attending a class at 6,000 feet for one who lives at sea level. Even something as simple as targets, what they consist of and how they are arranged add variation to the equation of the message being conveyed.

There are new things, both academically and practically, to be learned from every class you attend. Although we may tend to forget certain aspects of a previously attended class or a lesson, they can usually be renewed with a short discussion or occasionally even a simple reminder.

The practical/tactical physical skills portion of lessons and classes degrades more rapidly than the academic component, and therefore need to be refreshed more frequently. An excellent way to maintain skill proficiency in the areas desired is to periodically repeat a class or lesson that focuses on the techniques and exercises needed to keep those skills at an acceptable level.

In the professional world of academia, recertification is a means and requirement of maintaining job proficiency—and in fact the job

► **There are new things, both academically and practically, to be learned from every class you attend. Although we may tend to forget aspects of a previously attended class or a lesson, they can usually be renewed with a short discussion or simple reminder.** ◀

itself—in a variety of fields. When it comes to personal defense and firearms proficiency, the parallels are undeniable to meet the need.

From an economic perspective, many firearms schools will allow previous students to repeat a class for a significantly discounted price. Try requesting a discount at your local institution of higher learning for a class previously attended.

Keep in mind when learning new information, the brain can only absorb so much. For classes heavy on critical thinking or technical information, key points may be forgotten. The same goes for refining physical skills and learning new techniques; repetition can be invaluable in keeping actions smooth and fluid.

Hopefully, your future discussions regarding your training expenditure will be more fruitful for you with the reasoning provided, especially where personal safety is concerned. 🌀

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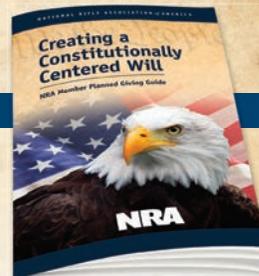
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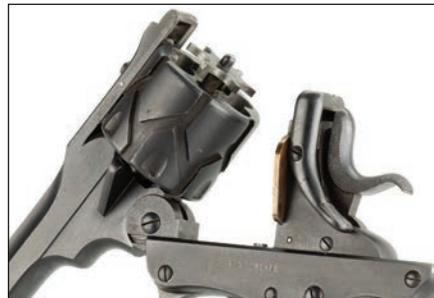


## The Webley-Fosbery

A semi-automatic—revolver? Yes.



Opening the Webley-Fosbery revolver's top-break action was accomplished via a lever pressed by the shooter's thumb (for right-handed shooters) • Cut into the cylinder, the zig-zag channels helped operate the Webley-Fosbery.



**S**am Spade: What happened?

Tom Pohlhaus: Got him right through the pump with this.

*[He takes a revolver from his coat pocket, holds it toward Spade but Spade doesn't take it. After a moment, Pohlhaus flashes his light on it. Mud inlays the depressions in the revolver's surface.]*

Pohlhaus: A Webley. English, ain't it? *[Spade takes his elbow from the fence post, leans down to look at the gun, but does not touch it.]*

Spade: Yes. Webley-Fosbery Automatic Revolver, .45, eight shot. They don't make them anymore.

Such was the screen debut of the Webley-Fosbery semi-automatic revolver in John Houston's classic "The Maltese Falcon," based on Dashiell Hammett's 1930 novel by the same name. Both the source novel and

the movie reference the Fosbery by name, but most readers and moviegoers had likely never seen this curious British revolver. Production had ceased in 1924, with fewer than 5,000 of them made. And yes, you read that right, a semi-automatic revolver. As our dear friend Garry James once said, it was the answer to a question that no one ever asked.

P. Webley & Son of Birmingham, England, had produced revolvers for the British military since 1853, and since 1887 the company produced the standard sidearm of the British Army. Merging with W. & C. Scott in 1897, it became known as Webley & Scott, the name it retains to this day. Of the dozens of handgun models W. & C. Scott has manufactured in the past 170 years, none are as interesting or as revolutionary as the one designed by Brigadier George Vincent Fosbery, VC, in 1895. The Webley-Fosbery was patented and introduced in 1901. What made it unique then, as it is now, is that it is a revolver that is semi-automatic. That is to say, the firing of the revolver rotates the cylinder and cocks the hammer automatically after every shot is fired, rather than pulling the trigger.

Fosbery's design was perhaps trying to solve the age-old debate between American and British revolver makers as to which system was more accurate or practical. Samuel Colt rabidly defended his single-action revolver patents by claiming that only a fully cocked gun would deliver an accurate shot. British makers like Robert Adams and John Deane challenged Colt's market share by introducing double-action revolvers, which they marketed as able to deliver six shots faster than the Colt. It was a contest between accuracy and speed. Fosbery's semi-automatic revolver offered a single-action trigger pull that was theorized to be a combination of the best of both worlds.

Fosbery designed a revolver with a six-shot cylinder that literally cut the frame of the revolver in half horizontally and placed a stationary stud in the lower frame that fit into a grooved zig-zag-like channel cut into the cylinder. The force of the recoil from the first round would cause the top half of the frame to recoil rearward, rotate the cylinder half a

turn and cock the hammer. A large mainspring would force the top part of the frame forward following the initial recoil and rotate the cylinder the other half turn. The gun was now cocked, and a new round was in battery to be fired immediately. The innovation was that all it would take to fire the next round was a few ounces of pressure on the trigger to release the hammer and fire the gun once again. No longer would a shooter have to manually cock the revolver, nor would they have to place undue pressure on the trigger to work the action of cocking the hammer and rotating the cylinder manually.

Webley produced two models of the Webley-Fosbery in the standard British .455 Eley military cartridge, the Model of 1901 and Model of 1903. The gun Hammett referenced was the Model of 1902, an eight-shot cylinder in .38/200 caliber. Only 300 or so of the Model 1902 are known to exist.

The Webley-Fosbery was tested by the U.S. Army Ordnance Department in 1902 and again in 1907 to replace the standard service sidearm then currently in use by the U.S. Cavalry. Although it performed well in loading and accuracy tests as well as stopping power, the high tolerance of the slide and recoil mechanism did not fare well under the dust and dirt phase of the competition, and the Webley-Fosbery lost out to John Browning's semi-automatic that became the fabled Colt Model 1911.

As if the appearance of the Webley-Fosbery in "The Maltese Falcon" wasn't obscure enough, the revolver also received rave reviews in the writings of Walter Winans, who won Olympic gold at the 1908 London games and silver at the 1912 Stockholm games (where George S. Patton, Jr. narrowly lost gold in the Pentathlon). Winans was a devoted advocate of the revolver that didn't take significant

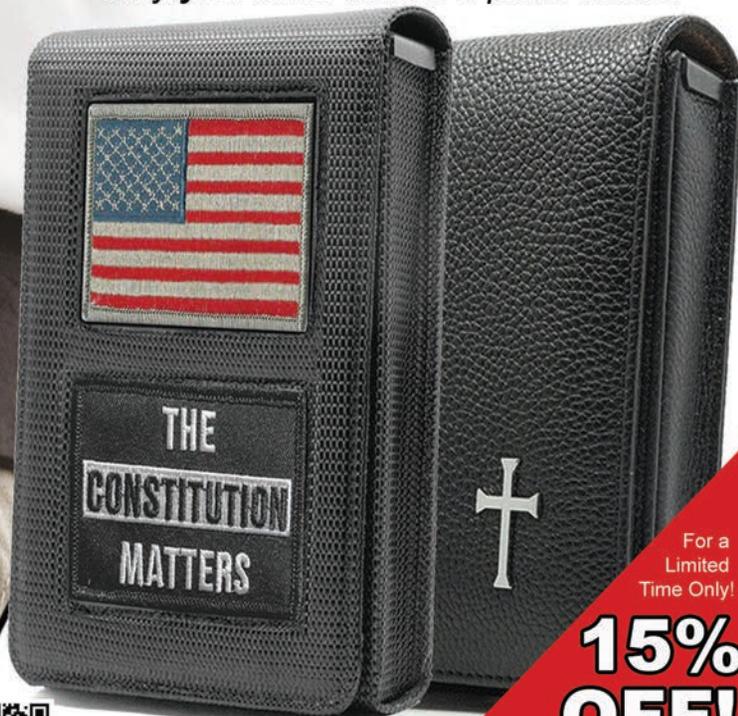
pressure to fire and reload. He once demonstrated his prowess with the revolver by shooting 12 shots, using a Prideaux speedloader, into a 3-inch bullseye at 12 yards at speed.

The British Army never formally adopted the revolver, but hundreds were privately purchased by British officers and used during the last stages of the Boer War and World War I. Pilots of the Royal Flying Corps appreciated the fact that the firearm did not eject spent shells when fired, allaying a fear that some had that a hot shell casing from a semi-automatic might land on and ignite the heavily doped fabric of their flying machines.

And, as for Bogart's line in the first film noir, he had it kinda-sorta right: the gun Ward Bond—as Tom Pohlhaus—held out for Bogey to inspect was actually a .455 Eley six-shot, today considered the jewel in the crown of any British-pistol collector's inventory.🌀

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# Extar EP9

The world of polymer pistols now has a new star.

The Extar EP9 is an ultra-lightweight, 9 mm, large-format pistol perfect for home defense. Weighing in at slightly more than 4 pounds and being less than 24 inches in length, it's an extremely agile firearm with familiar MSR-style controls.

Extar is a family-owned and operated American company founded by a long-time engineer and polymer-injection-molding expert. Extar sources all the raw materials required for manufacturing and creates each firearm from the ground up at its Arizona facility. It controls the



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Manufacturer:** Extar; (928) 583-9265, extarusa.com

**Action Type:** Direct-blowback operated, semi-automatic

**Caliber:** 9 mm

**Capacity:** 18+1 rounds

**Frame:** Polymer

**Barrel Length:** 6.5 inches

**Sights:** Picatinny rail for mounting optics

**Trigger Pull Weight:** 6 pounds, 12 ounces

**Length:** 23.8 inches

**Width:** 2 inches

**Height:** 7.9 inches

**Weight:** 66 ounces

**Accessories:** One Extar 18-round magazine, manual

**MSRP:** \$449

## SHOOTING RESULTS

Load	Velocity	Group Size		
		Smallest	Largest	Average
Ammo Inc. 115-grain FMJ	1,178	2.0	2.0	2.0
Norma 115-grain FMJ	1,185	2.0	2.8	2.3
Norma 124-grain JHP	1,174	2.0	2.0	2.0

Velocity measured in fps at the muzzle for 10 consecutive shots with a ProChrono Pal chronograph. Temperature: 88 degrees Fahrenheit. Accuracy measured in inches for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yards from a rest.

## ON TARGET

Lightweight and durable

## OFF TARGET

Heavy trigger pull

manufacturing of parts, assembly, quality control and marketing, and sells directly to consumers. This all-encompassing operation allows Extar to provide customers with superior, well-designed and rigorously tested weapons systems at an affordable price. For as well built and reliable the EP9 is, the \$449 MSRP is one of the best values on the market.

Because of the most recent attack on our Second Amendment rights involving pistol braces, the Extar EP9 no longer ships with a brace. It instead ships with a standard pistol-buffer tube surrounded by a foam pad. It's not ideal and I'm sure Extar doesn't like it either, but companies are being forced to adapt while the ATF's grotesque administrative overreach remains in place. With that out of the way, let's start at the muzzle.

The EP9 comes installed with the Extar "blast director." The device does a great job at directing all blast and gases forward of the shooter. Significant flash is still visible even in daylight, but it does serve its intended purpose. The black-nitrided steel barrel is 6.5 inches in length with a 1:10-inch twist rate. It is threaded 1/2x28, which is compatible with a slew of muzzle devices and suppressors. Surrounding the barrel is a textured polymer



The blast director looks odd—like a suppressor from the side or a big, smoothbore from the front. It does the job, though, and makes shooting the EP9 more pleasant • Reloads are accelerated by the beveled mag well • Capacious and reliable, the magazine that comes with the EP9 will have you investing in more • An AR-type pistol grip is both familiar and comfortable •

handguard with a total of nine M-Lok slots located at the 3-, 6- and 9-o'clock positions.

Spanning the top of the rifle is a full-length Picatinny-style rail that allows the user to mount any type of optic system they prefer. I mounted my Holosun 508-T for this review. It was a bit of a struggle to seat the optic's lugs into the grooves of the rail, but with a little extra force and maneuvering, it locked firmly into place and held zero throughout testing.

The magazine well is slightly beveled toward the back, which made magazine changes very smooth and easy. The ergonomic magazine release is one of the best I've used on a large-format pistol—it ejects the magazine quickly and efficiently. The left-side charging handle is made of sturdy polymer and serves its purpose well.

Moving down to the trigger assembly we have an all-steel fire-control group with a heavy trigger pull, measuring an average of 6.75 pounds. The trigger can be switched out with most standard MSR triggers. Although it didn't impress me with its somewhat gritty/spongy pull, it has an audible and tactile short reset, which was its redeeming quality while shooting. I was able to get some good double and triple taps to remain on target. The safety selector is also steel and non-ambidextrous with a 90-degree throw. Extar installs its own proprietary pistol grip, which has some grippy texturing on both sides. The gun can accept standard-AR aftermarket grips, too. A smartly placed QD attachment point is located on the

bottom of the non-removable receiver extension, which is perfect for attaching a single-point sling.

As I mentioned before, the EP9 would make a very effective home-defense or vehicle firearm, but it is also a fun and inexpensive range plinker. The cost of 9 mm ammo has dropped significantly since the last ammo crisis, so taking this out frequently for training or just fun won't break the bank. The recoil impulse for a straight-blowback handgun this light is extremely manageable and is very similar to heavier-framed large-format pistols I've used. The EP9 can easily be held and shot one-handed.

Unfortunately, I was not able to put thousands of rounds downrange to prove its reliability, but others have done so with great results. I shot the EP9 both from a rest and from unsupported positions and achieved excellent accuracy from both. I used five different types of ammunition across three different magazine options. Glock factory magazines, Magpul PMags and Extar-branded mags all fed perfectly and dropped free when released without any hang-ups. I also tested hollow-point ammunition using 124-grain Hornady Critical Duty and Speer Gold Dot, which both fed flawlessly.

While the shooting experience overall would have been much more enjoyable with a brace or stock, I just used the single-point sling method. The only other drawback to the EP9 is the trigger, but for a sub \$450 gun, it's hard to complain about. The heavy pull-weight arguably makes it safer in a self-defense capacity, but at times I felt I was able to outrun it. Maybe some slight polishing of the sear or a few hundred rounds to break it in would help with the grittiness. I should also mention that Extar offers a slew of upgrade parts on its website, one of which is a nickel-coated trigger group.

Going into this review, I was a little bit skeptical. With my "buy once cry once" mentality, the idea of a budget large-format pistol made almost completely of polymer didn't really excite me. However, the moment I picked up the EP9 and felt how light it was, cycled the action a few times and did some dry magazine changes, my mind began to change. It's an "affordable" gun, but feels extremely well built and robust. I got the feeling that I could throw this off a roof or drag it behind a car and it would remain perfectly intact.

Accuracy and reliability were also very impressive. Across several ammunition and magazine types, the firearm didn't skip a beat. It's small and light enough that it doesn't feel like a burden to carry around the capacity and reliability afforded by the EP9 accepting standard Glock magazines, you'll never feel inadequately armed. Perhaps best of all, the gun is both practical and affordable. It would make a fine addition to a home-defense battery. The Extar EP9 made a believer out of me, and will likely do the same for you.

Of course, if 9 mm isn't your thing, Extar also offers the EP45 ...



Thanks to a buffer tube that covers parts vital to the gun's operation, this large-format pistol is regulated as a handgun. Padding on the tube's exterior adds some comfort when shooting • A generous ejection port allowed spent cases to clear with ease • The light-weight, metal BCG reduces felt recoil • A full-length top rail offers multiple mounted-optic configurations.

# Trijicon RCR

Enclosed-emitter red-dot sights are all the rage, and Trijicon's new RCR just jumped to the front of the pack.



## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Manufacturer:</b> Trijicon; (800) 338-0563, trijicon.com	<b>Length:</b> 1.8 inches
<b>Magnification:</b> 1X	<b>Width:</b> 1.2 inches
<b>Display Window Dimensions:</b> 22x16 mm	<b>Height:</b> 1.3 inches
<b>Reticle:</b> 3.25-MOA dot	<b>Weight:</b> 1.95 ounces
<b>Adjustability:</b> 150 MOA total travel in 1-MOA clicks	<b>Accessories:</b> Hard case, capstan screws, CR2032 battery, manual
<b>Eye Relief:</b> Unlimited	<b>MSRP:</b> \$849

## ON TARGET

Practically indestructible

## OFF TARGET

Mounting requires dexterity

Windage and elevation adjustments are made via dials with clear markings • Capstan screws secure the RCR to any pistol slide with an RMR-footprint cut • Brightness is easily increased or decreased with large, tactile buttons located on either side of the RCR • Trijicon listened to customer feedback and placed the battery compartment on top of the RCR rather than underneath, allowing easy access for replacement.



While Trijicon wasn't the first (nor second) to offer an enclosed-emitter sight, the company used its time wisely. Paying close attention to the market—and also to the market reaction—it carefully engineered the new RCR to address issues brought up by other enclosed-emitter sights. Footprint? It uses, obviously, the RMR footprint, one of the most common footprints for pistol-slide-mounted red-dot optics. Battery life? How does six years on setting five sound? Oh, and that's with a top-mounted, easy-to-find CR2032 battery, mind you.

Lastly, Trijicon's neatest party trick yet for an enclosed-emitter sight: the attachment method. Standard RMR-footprint cuts can accept the RCR with literally nothing more than a 3/16-inch-diameter tool (we used a drill bit at the product launch). The capstan screws fit into the standard RMR footprint and capture the RCR using precision-engineered inlays that allow the screws to be tightened down with nothing more than the aforementioned 3/16-inch tool. It's positively ingenious. Screws will come with a dab of blue Loctite, although if you're going to make this a permanent optic, using the harder stuff might not be a bad idea.

In operation, the RCR itself is, like the RMR, a study in simplicity. Two large buttons on either side increase (+) or decrease (-) the brightness, while two small dials allow for windage and elevation adjustment. Once installed on your pistol's slide, zero the optic based on your protocol of choice and then change the batteries as needed. That's it. Obviously, where this is a brand-new optic, we haven't tested the claimed battery life owing to the lack of a time-machine to help us jump forward six years, but even if you decide to change the battery once a year, you're not out a ton of money—and it's super easy to do.

On the range, though, is where the RCR really shines. At the product launch, Trijicon brought red-dot guru Scott Jedlinski from Modern Samurai Project to help us put the RCR through its paces. We started off with a 10-yard zero, firing two to three rounds into a 1-inch square to determine point-of-impact (POI). Should the POI be significantly off, Jedlinski would verify for anything significantly out of the square to ensure it wasn't just poor gunwriter aim. Once the dot was verified at 10 yards, we moved back to 25 yards and fired a three-round group into a

5-inch circle. Should further adjustment be needed based on the 25-yard POI, we could fine-tune the dot then.

Once sufficiently zeroed, we ran through a series of drills with the express purpose of dispelling myths about red-dot sights. Think the dots are slower than iron sights? Successful Bill Drills would seem to indicate otherwise (six rounds at 7 yards into the A-zone in 3 seconds or less). We all passed with tenths of a second to spare, and the better shooters in the group were even faster. Yes, some of it has to do with technique—Jedlinski ran us through a number of different training scenarios designed to help us get on target faster.

Really, though, isn't that something we should all be doing if we're going to complain that [new technology X] is [insert pejorative here] than [existing technology Y]? If you're making the claim that iron sights are faster than red-dot sights, and you're

basing that on how you feel you got on target one time with no formal instruction, are you really giving red dots a fair shake?

Another myth that was busted at this event was that of durability. Now, speaking as someone who has had numerous rear sights walk their way out of the dovetail in addition to seeing more than a few screw-mounted front sights take flight into the wild blue yonder under recoil, I dispute the assumption/assertion that iron sights are infallible. What about fixed sights, you rebut? Well, I had the barrel of a revolver torque itself slightly clockwise, and since the front sight is pinned to the barrel, that was problematic. I don't cotton to the idea that irons are inherently better.

However, for the RCR, we did test its durability. Guns were dropped. Thrown. Smashed lens-first into tables. Pounded on workbenches. Dropped into the dirt and then had

more dirt kicked on them. Trijicon encouraged us to run the RCRs hard and abuse them, and we obliged. Not a single optic stopped working. In fact, on the "pound the optic on the workbench" test, I lamented that my fellow gunwriters were being a little too gentle. I think my exact words were "Haven't you guys ever gotten mad at something?" I don't want to brag, but I managed to chip a little of the finish off the workbench with my test—and the optic not only worked, but still dropped two rounds into that 1-inch square.

Simple, rugged and easy to mount; there is a lot to like about Trijicon's new RCR enclosed-emitter sight. While the jury's still out on battery life, the top-mounted battery compartment renders that all but moot. You'll still have a world-class, dependable optic that'll hold zero despite an impressive amount of abuse. And, that's pretty much priceless.🌀

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ACTION

## NRA-ILA Files Lawsuit Against New Mexico Governor

NRA led a coalition of parties in a legal challenge against New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and Dept. of Health Secretary Patrick Allen's unconstitutional orders banning the carrying of firearms in Bernalillo County and on all state property under the guise of a public health emergency.

Lujan Grisham announced she would attempt to institute and enforce her unconstitutional 30-day ban on the lawful carrying of firearms for self-defense in the affected areas on Sept. 7, but was quickly met with opposition from local law enforcement when both the Sheriff of Bernalillo County and the Albuquerque Police Department indicated neither would enforce the order.

Several lawsuits were filed in federal court challenging the order's constitutionality, with one—as we go to press—having had a

temporary restraining order issued against its enforcement.

Going directly to the state's top court, the New Mexico Supreme Court, the NRA suit was filed on Sept. 14 and was joined by the Republican party of New Mexico, Libertarian Party of New Mexico, members of the legislature, law-abiding gun owners, law-enforcement professionals and an FFL, who are all affected by the orders.

Not only has the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that the Second Amendment protects a right to carry a firearm outside the home, but also the New Mexico Constitution guarantees the right to keep and bear arms, and the state's courts have held that the right to keep and bear arms "stands shoulder to shoulder with the most basic guarantees of individual liberty against the power of the state."

## NRA-ILA Amicus Brief In 8th Circuit

On Aug. 23, NRA-ILA filed an *amicus curiae* (or friend of the court) brief in support of a challenge to Minnesota's permitting law that bans young adults ages 18–20 from exercising their right to carry a firearm for self-defense.

"Young adults are the people," the brief argues. "It is unquestionable that members of the founding-era militia and citizens who hold political rights" are the people, as the founders understood that term. And because they are people with Second Amendment rights, they cannot be completely deprived of exercising their rights. Minnesota, however, claims that young adults can be deprived of their rights

because their "rational thinking is overridden by more 'impulsive, emotional, or irrational behavior.'" But if it truly believed that young adults couldn't make rational decisions, then neither it—nor the Constitution—would allow young adults to serve on juries, as the brief counters.

"A free society prefers to punish the few who abuse their rights after they break the law than to throttle them and all others beforehand." [Minnesota has not complied] with that edict," the brief concludes.

The case is captioned as *Worth v. Jacobson*. It is before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit.

## NRA-ILA

ILA Grassroots:  
(800) 392-8683

NRA-ILA: (703) 267-1170

NRA-ILA website: [nraila.org](http://nraila.org)

# 9th Circuit Hands NRA And Hunters Victory Over Traditional Ammunition

On Sept. 2, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a 25-page ruling that rejected an effort by an environmental group to force the U.S. Forest Service to ban the use of traditional ammunition in the Kaibab National Forest, located in Arizona. The group sought to prohibit the use of lead ammunition within the Forest, where big-game hunting is popular.

The case, which has been working its way through the legal system for more than a decade, was perceived by some as part of a strategy to lay the groundwork for anti-hunting groups to attack access to hunting on federal land by eliminating the use on such land of the type of ammunition the majority of hunters use.

Michael Jean, the director of the Office of Litigation Counsel for NRA-ILA, commented on the ruling to the *Washington Examiner*, stating, "This NRA victory is a significant setback for gun-control and anti-hunting advocates who see ammo bans as a pivotal leap in their agenda."

When hunting is permitted on federal land, the federal government generally allows the states in which the land is located to set hunting regulations. While the Arizona Game & Fish Department does promote using non-lead ammunition, it does not prohibit its use, so traditional lead-based ammunition is perfectly legal in the Kaibab National Forest.

By not prohibiting the use of lead-based ammunition, the environmental group attempted to assert that the federal government was contributing to the deaths of scavenging birds that might ingest fragments of lead bullets that may be left behind after hunting. The 9th Circuit rejected this argument.

"This case affirmed that the states have primary responsibility over wildlife management, including all aspects related to hunting," Jean told the *Examiner*. "Courts will not entertain 'failure-to-regulate' lawsuits against the federal government for merely honoring state hunting laws. It's also a rejection of an attempt to apply a federal law that was designed to regulate large-scale commercial-waste disposal to ordinary American hunters." 🔄

## IN MEMORY NRA-ILA CONTRIBUTIONS

August 1-31, 2023

**Scott Leonard Taylor** (from: Charles Jenkins); **Myles DiGennaro**, Oakton, VA (from: Lorna Gladstone); **Harry L. Johnston**, Mt Pleasant, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club); **Michael J. Messina**, Kansas City, MO (from: James P. McMahon); **Bill Kerns** (from: St. Joseph Rifle & Pistol Club); **Barbara Wade** (from: Hamburg Rod & Gun Club); **Milton Munger**, Cheektowaga, NY (from: Hamburg Rod & Gun Club); **Arthur C. Toland**, Charleston, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club).

## Richard Casper is NRA COUNTRY

Photo by Jason Myers



**R**ichard Casper was a junior in high school when the 9/11 terrorist attacks happened. "I had this urge inside of me," he said. "I joined the Marine Corps infantry. ... I wanted to be the first person fighting." During basic training, he was selected for a special duty of guarding then-President George W. Bush at Camp David. Once he completed that assignment, he deployed, leading to experiences like his Humvee being hit by explosives and a good friend being shot by a sniper and dying beside him. "It was so hard to comprehend because we go to work the next day like nothing happened," Richard said. After Iraq, he struggled with the transition home, failing college business courses and developed crippling anxiety. He went to his local Veterans Administration (VA) hospital and learned he had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), among other medical issues. Little was known about PTSD in 2007 and Richard was told he would be unable to learn. He decided to change his major to art, thinking it would be easier, and discovered an outlet for his pain. In 2013, he founded CreatiVets, a nonprofit that offers arts programs to wounded combat veterans. (If you or a veteran you know is interested in a unique healing opportunity, visit [creativets.org](http://creativets.org).) Since the month of November is for honoring our beloved veterans, NRA Country chose Richard Casper—Marine Corps veteran, CEO and artist—as the NRA Country Artist of the Month. NRA Country's Lisa Supernaugh asked him a few questions in between his classes and events.

**LS:** First, we would like to thank you from the bottom of our heart for all you do. Tell us a little about what called you to serve?

**RC:** My dad was one of 11 kids and all his brothers served in the military. I had a calling from a very young age to join as well, but it wasn't until 9/11 that I decided I wanted to be a Marine.

**LS:** Please tell us how you had this amazing idea to help veterans heal through art.

**RC:** Through art, I learned how to tell my story without telling my story and that took a huge weight off. More of my anxiety and depression went away. I ended up coming to Nashville to write with a hit writer; he took what I was working on for a year and turned it into a song in less than two hours. I decided I needed to give every wounded veteran the opportunity.

**LS:** Can you tell us about the songwriting program?

**RC:** It's a four-day trip for veterans to write backstage at the Grand Ole Opry. CreatiVets covers all costs for the veterans to get to Nashville and pairs them with a mentor. It's fun, but it's also a lifesaving program. They have to write about something they are struggling with and that's when the healing starts.

**LS:** Does CreatiVets receive any proceeds for song downloads to further the mission of healing through the arts?

**RC:** We can be found on any streaming platform—search CreatiVets. You can also go to [creativets.org](http://creativets.org). We do receive money from the streams and downloads, so we appreciate everyone who wants to give back by listening.

**LS:** What's next for your mission?

**RC:** We have a lot of work to do in the next few years, including launching our music platform, launching chapters around the country and trying to reach as many veterans as possible. We work with some VA hospitals and nonprofit partners to provide our life-changing programs to their already amazing programs in over 20 states now.

*NRA Country is a lifestyle and a bond between the country music community and hard-working Americans everywhere. It's powered by pride, freedom, love of country, respect for the military and the responsibilities of protecting the great American life.*

*For more information, visit [nracountry.com](http://nracountry.com), follow on Twitter @NRACountry, and NRA\_Country on Instagram.*

# NRA Online Regional Report

To search for events in your area, go to

[nrapublications.org/regional-report](http://nrapublications.org/regional-report)

Visit the links below to find gun shows, programs, clubs, events and training in your area.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT

[le.nra.org](http://le.nra.org)

Public and private officers interested in becoming law enforcement firearm instructors should attend one of NRA's Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor Development Schools. NRA Police Pistol Combat competition is intended to be used as an extension of an officer's training.



## FRIENDS OF NRA

[friendsofnra.org](http://friendsofnra.org)

Friends of NRA events celebrate American values with fun, fellowship and fundraising for The NRA Foundation. To learn more about events in your area, visit [friendsofnra.org](http://friendsofnra.org), contact your local field representative or send an email to [friends@nrahq.org](mailto:friends@nrahq.org).



## GUN SHOWS

[gunshows.nra.org](http://gunshows.nra.org)

Dates and locations of gun shows are subject to change. Please contact the show before traveling. Discounted NRA memberships are sold through NRA recruiters. Some shows may offer free admission to people who sign up for new memberships or renewals.

To become an NRA Recruiter, contact NRA Recruiting Programs at [recruiter@nrahq.org](mailto:recruiter@nrahq.org).



## TRAINING

[refuse.nra.org](http://refuse.nra.org) | [nrainstructors.org](http://nrainstructors.org)

The NRA's Refuse To Be A Victim® program provides information on crime prevention and personal safety. To learn more about the program, visit [refuse.nra.org](http://refuse.nra.org). The most up-to-date seminar and instructor training schedule is available on the Internet by visiting [nrainstructors.org](http://nrainstructors.org), or online training is available at [nraonlinetraining.org](http://nraonlinetraining.org).

Questions? Email to [refuse@nrahq.org](mailto:refuse@nrahq.org) or by calling (800) 861-1166.



## AREA SHOOTS

[ssusa.org/coming-events](http://ssusa.org/coming-events)

For more information, please contact the NRA Competitive Shooting Division at [comphelp@nrahq.org](mailto:comphelp@nrahq.org).



## STATE ASSOCIATIONS

[stateassociations.nra.org](http://stateassociations.nra.org)

Joining NRA-affiliated state associations supports NRA's mission in your state. See [clubs.nra.org](http://clubs.nra.org) for more information.

## Member Information & Benefits

### NRA.ORG

**MEMBERSHIP ACCOUNT INFORMATION:** (877) 672-2000  
**NRA Headquarters:** (703) 267-1000

**MEMBER SERVICE** (800) 672-3888  
**NRASTORE.COM** (888) 607-6007

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NRA Wine Club (800) 331-9754  
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**REFUSE TO BE A VICTIM** (800) 861-1166

**RECREATIONAL SHOOTING** (800) 672-7435

**NRA AFFILIATED CLUBS** (800) 672-2582

**RANGE SERVICES** (877) 672-7264

**COMPETITIVE SHOOTING** (877) 672-6282

**LAW ENFORCEMENT** (703) 267-1640

**FRIENDS OF NRA** (703) 267-1342

**NRA MUSEUMS/ GUN COLLECTOR PROGRAMS** (703) 267-1600

**SHOWS & EXHIBITS** (877) 672-7632

**MEDIA RELATIONS** (703) 267-1595

**HUNTER SERVICES** (844) 672-6883

The "NRA Regional Report," a service for NRA members, is an up-to-date listing of NRA conducted and/or sponsored events scheduled in your region for the current month. Call to verify event dates and locations before traveling.

## NRA DALLAS '24 ANNUAL MEETINGS & EXHIBITS

**MAY 16-19, 2024**

For hotel accommodations at the NRA Annual Meetings, visit [nraam.org](http://nraam.org).





By Joseph P. DeBergalis, Jr.  
Executive Director,  
General Operations

## NRA's Wild Game Meat Donation Month

*The National Rifle Association is encouraging hunters to donate excess game meat in November to help provide meals for those in need of food.*

The American tradition of hunting has been shared from one generation to the next, building a rich history that dates back to pre-Columbian Native American culture and the first settlements in the New World. This month, I want to give praise to the hunters who came before us and subsequently passed along this great tradition to future generations of Americans, as well as to highlight a new initiative NRA is spearheading for November—Wild Game Meat Donation Month.

The importance of the hunting culture in America cannot be overstated, both for sport and for food. Millions of Americans take to the field and forest each year to partake in this grand tradition. Hunting with friends and family brings fun and fellowship, but more importantly, for many, it is downright necessary for survival.

Besides our shared love of hunting and spending time in the great outdoors, there is nothing more American than giving and sharing. If you find that your own supply of meat is plentiful, please consider sharing your bountiful harvest with the needy. There is no

better time than the present to do your part by donating to organizations that distribute excess game meat to the less fortunate in your area. I also want to express my praise to those who have previously donated via the Hunters for the Hungry network, for which the NRA has been a longtime proud advocate and supporter.

NRA needs your assistance to share the news about Wild Game Meat Donation Month, and to promote this worthy endeavor with hunters in the United States. In addition to contributing your excess harvest with those in need of nourishment, other ways that you can help as an individual supporter are by sharing your story with friends and by promoting donations on your personal social media pages. In addition, interested organizations can assist by publishing articles in newsletters, magazines and blogs and on social media to promote wild game meat donations.

Learn more about Wild Game Meat Donation Month at [NWGMDM.nra.org](http://NWGMDM.nra.org).



[nwgmdm.nra.org](http://nwgmdm.nra.org)



[hfth.nra.org](http://hfth.nra.org)



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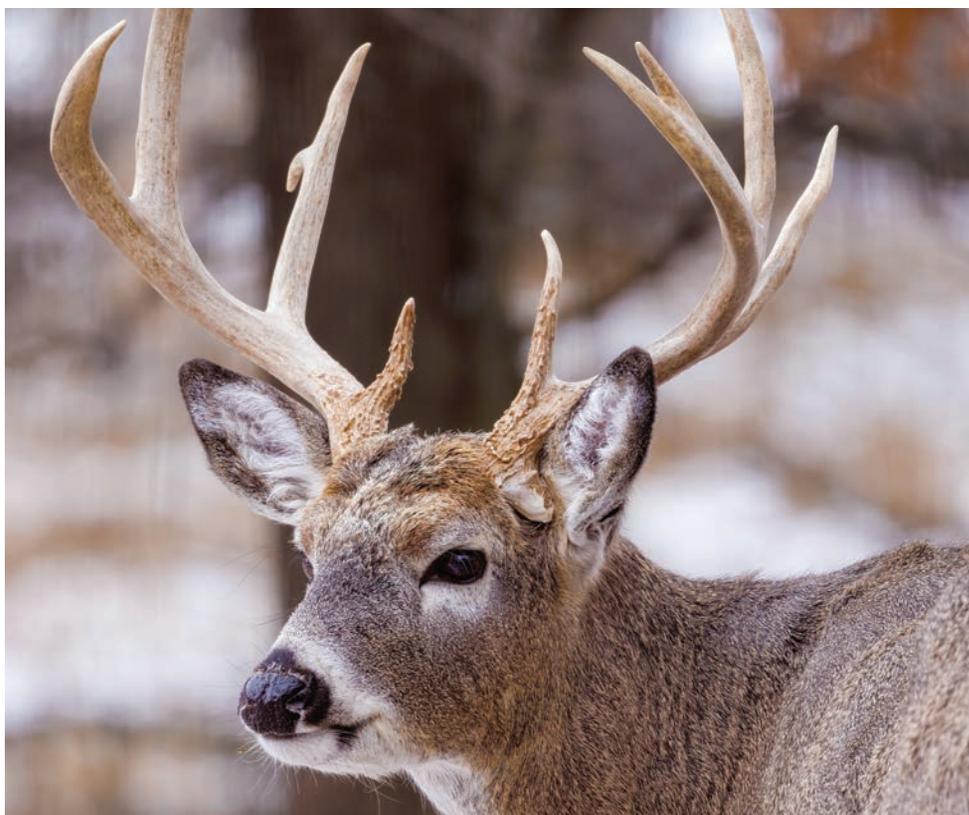


Joining NRA-affiliated state associations supports NRA's mission in your state.

**GET INVOLVED TODAY!**

GO VISIT

[stateassociations.nra.org](http://stateassociations.nra.org)



Pexels photo by Aaron J. Hill

# Women Top Championship Leaderboards At Camp Atterbury

This year at Camp Atterbury, Ind., during the NRA National Matches, three women captured the top titles at their respective championships. Amanda Elsenboss won the NRA National High Power Rifle Championship, Kimberly Rowe topped the High Power Mid-Range Championship leaderboard and Kristin Yeaton won the Smallbore Rifle 3-Position Championship.

All three of these National Championships form part of the NRA National Matches, which are held at Camp Atterbury and were concluded on Aug. 8, after the close of the NRA National Smallbore Prone Championships (and the awarding of the NRA Smallbore Lones Wigger Iron Man Trophy). Ruger was the presenting sponsor.

With a score of 2387-113X, Amanda Elsenboss of Woodbury, Conn., won the 2023 NRA National High Power Rifle Championship held July 8-14.

After the competition at the awards ceremony, Elsenboss was awarded a

Mumma Trophy plaque, along with a gold-tone NRA National Championship medallion. Classified as a High Master, Elsenboss was competing in the Service-Service Rifle category. In addition, her score netted her the National Service Rifle Championship (also setting a national record), as well as the High Woman award. And, with a score of 796-40X, Elsenboss secured the Vandenberg Cup this year by a three-point margin over the runner-up, Hugo B. Adelson.

The 2023 NRA National High Power Rifle Mid-Range Championship was held July 16-21 and won by Kim Rowe of Wadsworth, Ohio, with a score of 2396-171X.

For her victory, Rowe received a Patriot Minuteman Championship plaque, a gold-tone National Championship Medallion and a \$200 check from the NRA. Additionally, she was a member of the winning Mid-Range Prone Match team USNRT-Rowe with teammates Oliver Milanovic, Larry

Sollars and Joseph Bakies, along with team captain and coach Charles Rowe. USNRT-Rowe fired a winning score of 2394-163X.

Kristin Yeaton of Augusta, Maine, is this year's NRA National Smallbore Rifle 3-Position Champion. She walked away from the match at Camp Atterbury on July 29, with a score of 4418-139X. The five-day competition was held from July 25-29.

Not only did Yeaton capture the overall 3-Position title during the Smallbore Nationals at Camp Atterbury last week, but she also topped the Metric 3-Position Grand Aggregate leaderboard with a score of 2095-39X, as well as the National Smallbore Conventional 3-Position grand aggregate with 2323-100X. For the latter, Yeaton received a Frank Parson Bowl Trophy plaque and a \$100 check from the NRA.

See the full results of the 2023 NRA National Matches at Camp Atterbury at [competitions.nra.org](https://competitions.nra.org).



NRA Smallbore 3-Position Champion Kristin Yeaton, High Power Rifle Champion Amanda Elsenboss and High Power Mid-Range Champion Kimberly Rowe pose with their awards.

Photos by John Parker, Cole McCulloch

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(Name of Board member), NRA Office of the Secretary, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030; or [nrabod@nrahq.org](mailto:nrabod@nrahq.org); or (703) 267-1021. Please include your name, contact information and NRA membership I.D. number, as only communications from NRA members will be forwarded.

# The Miracle of Hemp in a Pill?

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A next generation hemp technology is now available across the nation and can be purchased without a prescription.

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**Canna LS** contains pure "full spectrum hemp," which works to relieve joint discomfort, restore sharp memory, and support a healthy normal inflammatory response, to name a few. And since it has no THC, it heals without the "high."

Exciting new scientific research shows that hemp contains special molecules called cannabinoids which bind to receptor sites in the brain and body. When taken orally, hemp activates these receptors.

## Why This New Technology Is Better Than Hemp

Unfortunately, most hemp found on the market can't deliver a fraction of these results. "The problem is, most hemp formulas come in oil form," according to Chief Technologist Mi Hwa Kim of The Green Gardener. "Oil doesn't breach the cell membrane, which is where the real healing happens. Our body is 80% water, our cells 90%. And you know what they say about oil and water — they don't mix."

This is why **Canna LS** contains a unique "water soluble" system. The technology is shown to improve absorption

in the cells by 450%, quickly boosting the body's cannabinoid levels.

"The other problem is that most of these formulas only contain a single compound extract," says Ms. Kim. "Hemp's full spectrum of cannabinoids are shown to work synergistically. In short, they work better together. It's called the "entourage effect." Most miss out on the full effects because they are missing some of the best rejuvenating compounds within the hemp plant. This is why we've made **Canna LS** with "full spectrum" hemp." "Finally, most hemp formulas are made on foreign farms with pesticides, or grown using non-organic seeds and processes. We've grown the hemp in **Canna LS** at a 100% organic American farm, under strict agricultural guidelines. It's grown without pesticides or GMOs. And it's grown to contain no THC."

## How It Works

The key to hemp's health benefits is the Endocannabinoid System, a network of receptors in the cells. The system is there to maintain homeostasis (balance). In response to toxins in our body, it releases cannabinoids to set things back to their natural state.

"It's really an amazing God-given system that's been completely over-looked," says Ms. Kim. "Our bodies are practically designed to work with the compounds in hemp, which is why we needed a technology like **Canna LS** that unleashes its full potential."

Over time, with aging, the endocannabinoid system

eventually burns out. Fewer cannabinoids are released, so the body's levels deplete. The result is, all sorts of symptoms of aging like age-related memory loss, blurry vision, joint discomfort, and much more.

"This is why there's almost nothing hemp can't do and no health concern it can't address," says Mi Hwa. "The trouble is, most hemp formulas are just not absorbable enough for the cell, so they fail to activate the endocannabinoid system. This is why they don't deliver anything close to the full range of potential results."

Fortunately, **Canna LS** is clinically shown to enter the cell membrane 450% more powerfully. This is how it boosts cannabinoid levels fast, helping to relieve joint discomfort... re-store foggy memory... and support healthy blood sugar. And what most people really love is that the "pearl" gel is easier to take than taking a pill or oil.

## Not Yet Sold In Stores

Full-spectrum hemp, like **Canna LS**, is available nationwide. However, several major pharmaceutical companies are currently testing hemp in clinical settings, which means it may require a prescription in the future. It's advised to get **Canna LS** while you can.

## Taking All The Risk Off Consumers

A large percentage of men and women using **Canna LS** experience truly amazing results. That's why it's now being sold with a guarantee that goes way beyond the industry standard. "We can only make this guarantee because



we are 100% certain our customers will be satisfied," says Ms. Kim. We want to take full risk off consumers. So in addition to offering substantial discounts for first-time customers, we also make them a huge promise that ensures they don't have to risk a cent."

Here's how it works: Take **Canna LS** exactly as directed, and you must be thrilled with the results! Otherwise, simply return the bottles and any unused portion within 90 days of purchase.

## Where To Find Canna LS

To secure the hot, new **Canna LS** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-866-256-2857** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Canna LS**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-866-256-2857** to secure your supply of **Canna LS**. Use Promo Code **SICA1023** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!

twangs of nostalgia for their wartime sidearm, they'd go into the local gun store and find that there were no handguns of that name from Colt.

See, "M1911" was a purely military designation. However, the Colt's Patent Firearms Manufacturing Company sold all manner of variants on the commercial market in the 1900s under names like "Government Model," "Gold Cup," and "Combat Commander" without anybody fearing it would send people's plates spinning off their sticks.

Speaking of the M1911 and/or Government Model, one of its most notable cloners is Kimber. While the old Kimber company that made hunting and target rifles back in the day had used numbers to designate different models, once it branched out into the M1911 pistol clone business in the 1990s, it embraced model names with a vengeance. It wasn't long before a savvy Kimber pistol fan could

decode the various combinations of "Custom," "Carry," "Pro," "Compact," et al to decipher whether the Kimber pistol in question was a full-size, compact, alloy-frame or whatever.

In their attempts to label this as some new and horrible trend, the anti-gun types will often point to Smith & Wesson dubbing a series of firearms as the "Military & Police," as though this is some new and nefarious marketing trend, and that's the most risible accusation of all.

It was during the last decade of the 19th century when Smith & Wesson tried to amp up interest in its then-new medium-frame .38 Spl. Hand Ejector revolver by dubbing it the "Military & Police," even though the U.S. military at the time was still all about the offerings from Colt.

While Smith had used fairly sterile model numbers to designate its various offerings in the late 1800s, the early 1900s saw a flowering of

evocative names from the company. In addition to the Military & Police revolver, you could buy a Regulation Police, a Terrier, an Outdoorsman, a Registered Magnum, a Combat Masterpiece or a half-dozen other named revolvers.

It wasn't until 1957 that the company shifted its handgun catalog to cold, uninspiring model numbers (although the names remained as secondary designations).

In the early 2000s, though, Smith decided to mine its heritage for model nomenclature, resurrecting old names like "Military & Police" and "Bodyguard." It was facing a sales slump in the face of an Austrian company that was selling pistols hand-over-fist using vicious names like "Model G17" and "Model G21."

Maybe the moral panic over the re-emergence of model names is misplaced? Just throwing that out there for everyone's consideration. 



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was tested was 1.02 inches, with an average for the best five-shot group with each rifle at .80 inch. I've never seen a single load for any cartridge from any manufacturer deliver velocity or on-target precision this consistently through so many different rifles.

GameKing bullets have always been regarded as accurate and lethal. They're what's called a cup-and-core bullet. They have a lead-alloy core that's encapsulated up to near the tip in a gilding-metal jacket that gets progressively thicker toward the base to assist with weight retention. Untipped GameKing bullets have an exposed lead point, but the newer tipped GameKing bullet, which Sierra calls the "GameChanger," has a polymer tip. The addition of this polymer tip increases the ballistic coefficient of the bullet from .404 for the standard GameKing, to .530 for the tipped GameKing. This is a

substantial increase. Factoring a muzzle velocity of 2,700 fps, it equates to a difference of 6 inches in trajectory at 500 yards, and with a 10 mph, 90-degree crosswind, the tipped GameKing drifts 7 inches less.

I also fired this load into blocks of Clear ballistics at a distance of 50 yards out of the 16-inch-barreled AR-10. On average, it penetrated 24 inches and the bullet upset with a frontal diameter of .58 inch, retaining between 70 and 75 percent of its weight. The 31-percent increase in BC also means that this bullet should deform on impact 200 yards past the distance an untipped GameKing will upset. This sets its maximum terminally effective range out of a .308 Win. to about 725 yards.

This ammunition is also loaded in nickel-plated cartridge cases. While this does nothing to enhance ballistics, the slicker nickel finish does allow the cartridges to feed from the

magazine more easily and smoothly. This is never a bad thing, and with the nickel plating, you won't get the corrosion you see on brass cases exposed to the elements.

With its proclivity for precision and consistent velocities, whether you're ringing steel, punching paper at distance, hammering feral hogs or a bull elk or need an accurate load for personal protection, chances are high this load will shoot well in your rifle. It's an excellent general-purpose load for the .308 Win. and has become the first one I reach for when I'm testing a .308 Win. rifle.

Ammo is expensive, there's lots of it from which to choose, and none of it comes with an accuracy guarantee. You might as well stack the odds in your favor before the trigger-pulling ever starts. A box of 20 rounds retails for about \$37, and I'm betting your favorite .308 Win. rifle will like it. If it does, I'd suggest buying a case. 

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So, what will it do? After a proper setup and a dozen or so settling shots, you are ready to find out some things you never knew about your gun. If you are getting ready to go to Camp Perry and have three different lots of ammunition, shoot about 20 rounds of each at 25 yards. Also, shoot the same at 50 yards. In half an hour, your question will be resolved, and you will know the best lot. If it is match-grade ammo, the group size may be inconsequentially small. You can get similar results with handloads. When you hit on a real fine load combination, shooting slight changes can sometimes improve it. You will find out some curious things about your semi-automatic pistol when you use the Rest. Approximately 70 to 80 percent of all new semi-autos will shoot the first round somewhere other than the rest of the magazine.

Revolvers are equally interesting. Remember that a sixgun is essentially six guns, in that there are six chamber-and-barrel combinations. It makes a difference. An hour or so with a revolver in the rest can provide interesting information. Shoot a group of five or so with each chamber and find out which one shoots the smallest—and the largest. More to the point, you can use the accuracy of shooting from the rest to identify the most accurate team of five chambers.

Shooters who tune their handloads with Ransom Rest shooting will appreciate my delight at the smallest handloaded group I ever fired with a handgun—.29 inch. Twenty years later, I had reason to assemble the same load and it almost did it again.

If there is anything to be learned from all of this, it is simply that your handguns are far more accurate than you ever imagined. Sure, it is possible to get a high-priced, name-brand gun that shoots unacceptably large groups, as well as an aging import that drives nails. Wouldn't you really like to know? I believe that any shooter who uses a gun of known mechanical accuracy does it with much greater confidence—even fightin' iron. 🌀

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# Ransom Rest

To reveal a handgun's mechanical accuracy potential, the human factor must be eliminated.



The Ransom Rest eliminates any shooter-induced movement during the firing process, revealing a handgun's mechanical accuracy. Inserts (blue) match the specific model of pistol to ensure a proper fit.

PHOTO: RANSOM INTERNATIONAL

In 1985, I ended my law enforcement career with regular service retirement. At this point in my life, several things changed forever, but a lifelong preoccupation with all things that burn gunpowder was not one of them. Since my teenage years, I have had a strong interest in firearms in general, but handguns in particular. I began to play with the idea of possibly becoming one of the guys who wrote monthly articles for the several gun magazines that drew my attention. I read a great deal of firearm-oriented literature. The basic type of magazine article was a plain gun review, where the writer described a particular arm, talked about how it was like similar guns and differed from others—but always discussed how the gun performed. That would seem to be an accurate assessment of the situation, because I have been doing it for 38 years.

Just plain good luck put me in the right place at the right time. I got a gunwriter's job at a small magazine, moved to a bigger one at a better salary and find myself still hard at it in 2023. Mostly focused on handguns, I've had a great time shooting most of the new model introductions. I had always been intrigued by gun articles that had accurate information on a gun's performance. My concerns with a handgun's consistent average velocity with

either store-bought or hand-loaded ammo was pretty well resolved with an early version of Dr. Ken Oehler's chronographs. But, although I had some competitive-shooting experience,

I needed some means of minimizing the human error in shooting off the bench.

Before I compiled my first article, I purchased and used a device that enabled me to accurately identify the precision of the handgun. A so-called "machine rest," this equipment is known as the

Ransom Rest.

The basic idea came from the fertile imagination of former-USMC armorer Chuck Ransom. Ransom built ultra-accurate 1911s in .45 ACP for competition, and wanted to measure the accuracy of his creations. After several years of development, he came up with a device that measures the accuracy of a handgun and/or ammunition. It is widely used in

the firearm industry, but is priced to appeal to individual shooters or clubs.

The Rest is made of two heavy-steel castings, the first of which is a flat-bottomed base that the shooter securely bolts to a sturdy bench at the range. The second is a short arm with a means to fasten a handgun. At the juncture of these two components, there is a pivoting joint held in place with a powerful coil spring. The basic idea is to fasten a handgun to the arm and fire it from a mobile bench and base. If the gun fires in exactly the same place from shot to shot, the bullets will hit the same point on the target. The various elements of handgun marksmanship are just not part of the equation. To make the use of the Rest effective, the shooter must have a proper set of so-called "inserts" for the gun he or she is using. Inserts are rubber-faced aluminum plates (right and left) with molded-in recesses that match the butt of whatever gun you are shooting. There are more than 700 different handguns listed in the Ransom International catalog. There is an immense amount of experience-developed lore on working with the Rest, but the basics are herein. Properly maintained and manipulated, it is a superb piece of test equipment.

Continued on page 87

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