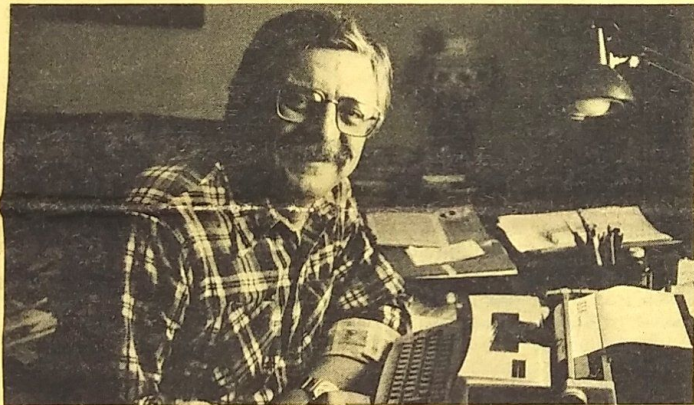




THE SIXGUNNER



MY CORNER

By J. D. Jones

Seems like in today's society, we work and move at such a fast pace, we lose sight of many of the important things in life and don't spend enough time in the right places. Personally, I'm going to be swamped with work until at least September. That's what I get for traveling a month. After a tour of Spain and England, I'm damn happy to be an American and able to freely possess and use guns. Spain isn't nearly as restrictive as England. However, in England, they seem to spend a lot of time on gun security. At Bisley, I saw a "gun security" notice posted in every room I was in except pubs . . . and they were posted in some of them, also. Nowhere did I see any "safety" posters, and at one time, felt a little uncomfortable on the 100 yard line with rifles 200 yards behind on the left and 400 or 500 yards behind on the right. Rifle targets were about 100 yards to the left and right of the pistol targets. I'm glad the guys with the rifles seemed to know what they were doing, because there sure wasn't anything to prevent a bullet from getting into the pistol shooters. Interesting to look back at a row of perhaps 50 riflemen when they open up in your direction, though.

Pennsylvania is quite progressive in their fish and game department. Earl Nothstein, No. 46, sent copy from his

local paper on the 1980 deer season, with 677 resident and 31 non-resident hunters reported taking deer with a handgun. Rifles of course led with 113,270 resident and 6,620 non-residents scoring. 3,234 residents and 49 non-residents successfully used shotguns. That's a lot of successful hunters. (26,772 deer were recorded killed by vehicle accidents.) **The Pennsylvania Game News** is well worth subscribing to. (12 issues, \$4.00 per year: Game News, P. O. Box 1567, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Do Not Send Cash.) They reported a digest of information of 1980 hunting accidents in the May issue.

There were seven fatalities in 1980, and a total of 201 accidents in total. There were 10 self-inflicted handgun accidents, none fatal, and no handgun hunter shot anyone while hunting. There were two fatal and 13 non-fatal shotgun self-inflicted wounds. Two fatal and 132 non-fatal wounds were inflicted on others with shotguns. There were 40 self-inflicted fatalities with rifles and 18 non-fatal woundings. Three fatalities and 21 non-fatal woundings occurred by others. There were no reported bow and arrow injuries in 1980. The entire breakdown is interesting. Send a buck to the Game News address and request a May issue,

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LION . . . THE REAL THING

By Albert L. Pfitzmayer, No. 607

Many years ago during what seemed at the time, a very important national police pistol match, I could not think of anything more exciting than a competitive type shooting match. However, as the years melted away, the silhouette and bull's-eye targets took on a placid look, and my interest in the combat and bull's-eye matches declined slowly but surely. The for real situation was missing, so I decided to try an African big game hunt, with the revolver as the primary battery gun. And not to mention maybe dispatch

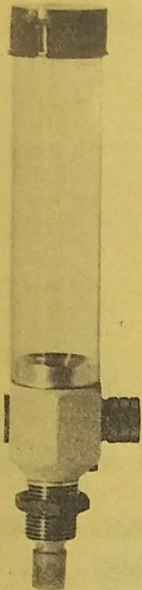
one of the big five in the bargain. For the record, at that time, the order of the big five consisted of: elephant, rhino, leopard, Cape buffalo, and lastly, the lion. Taking big game with a handgun has always fascinated me. . . the close in situation of confrontation is a challenge to all of us. I have used a rifle on a countless number of formidable game trophies. But the range and geographical situation of getting close in on the trophy dictated the rifle. My personal choice of using a

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My Corner . . . (Continued from Page 1)

if you're interested. Maybe they'll send it. The seven deaths were the lowest ever recorded in Pennsylvania.

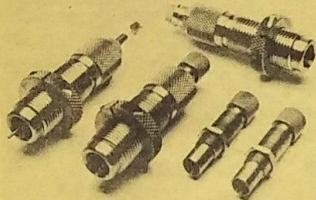
Sherman Harns, No. 833 of 3746 Gondar Avenue, Long Beach, CA 80808, devised and markets a "Precision Loader's Log" that is a good buy at \$3.00 prepaid.



The R.C.B.S. "Little Dandy" powder measure is an often overlooked accessory that is handy to have around. It's fairly inexpensive and 26 different interchangeable rotors are available.

Smith & Wesson recently sent a news release to magazines and gun writers, extolling the virtues of ordnance gelatin as a media for bullet testing. I wouldn't disagree with a single thing they said in the release. Duxseal is what I worked with after I gave up on water soaked paper 20 years ago. Duxseal, for example, must be used at consistent temperature and has a habit of making a poor bullet look good. For a copy of the release, drop a line to HHI. Please include a SASE.

P.M.C. is hitting the U. S. market with its new line of sporting ammunition including pistol ammunition. Write Robbie Robinson (P.M.C., 405 Park Avenue, Suite 904, New York, NY 10022) for their brochure.



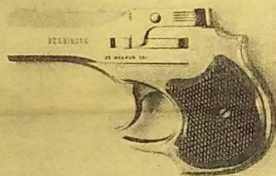
Lyman's new die set featuring seating stems that will fit practically any bullet.

Lyman has been introducing many new products in the past couple of years. Of interest to handgunners is the new Multi Standard Pistol Die Set. It consists of an AA 3 die set with the two step expander plug and three seating screws to handle all bullet designs. Retail is \$42.95. Also new is a 7mm T/C U Benchrest die set. The sizing die is a neck sizer. The seater is a micrometer adjustable die with .001 clicks. It will seat with or without crimping. Other calibers are also available. Retail price is \$49.95. For a Lyman Catalog, write to Paul Beck, %Lyman, Route 147, Middlefield, CT 06455.



Lyman's new bench rest die set with micrometer adjustable seating stem for 7mm T/C U, .308, and others.

High Standard is catching up. Production of the Commemorative revolvers is slow. The auto pistols are meeting the demand, and new models are now being introduced. The Survival Pack is an electroless nickel finished Sharpshooter with canvas carrying case and extra magazine. The .22 Magnum Double Derringer is also now available in the electroless nickel finish. This little gun gets a lot of attention from hunters and fishermen. With shot loads, it'll kill close up snakes and with solid bullets, its penetration is great enough to penetrate the skulls or vertebrae of most big game for finishing shots. It's not a bad choice for a hide out gun, either. It's good to see H.S. rolling again after accomplishing a lot in the past few years.



High standards Double derringer in electroless nickel.

S & W is billing the M586 distinguished Combat Magnum as the "Magnum of the 80s". I suspect it will turn on a lot of civilian buyers. It should start hitting the retail outlets in September. The M-547 9mm revolver apparently solves the "setback" and rimless case problems very nicely, but I can't see much civilian use for it. It was originally designed with French military-police sales in mind. It strikes me as quaint and interesting, but a step backwards. I am interested in the 9mm 559 auto to see what can be done in the accurizing department with this steel frame version. Start looking for it in October.

Soap Box Time: It's often said that reasonable people can solve their differences in a gentlemanly manner without resorting to violence, intimidation, or pressure. After having spent 20-plus years in labor relations, I'd have to say that the statement sounds good, but in real life, is close to being pure horseshit.

The Kennedys, Rodinos, and Shields would now like you to take a reasonable approach, Mr. Gun Owner. Why, how can you defend keeping guns in the hands of criminals and mental incompetents or psychopaths? Just be reasonable . . . help us take handguns away from just these people. How? By helping us pass a law to keep from having them. "Don't we already have laws to prevent them owning guns now?" Yes, but they aren't the right kind of laws. We need something



The high standard sharpshooter in electroless nickel is practically weatherproof and an excellent hunting gun.

different to take guns away from criminals. And so on and on and on.

The line sounds good, no doubt about it. And it's the biggest con going. When "reasonable people" settle their differences, someone gets screwed. Mr. Gun Owner, you have the constitutional right to keep and bear arms. Anything less than that dilutes your constitutional rights. No "gun law" ever did anything constructive that I can see. If you give in to this line, you are screwing yourself. Sure . . . "something needs to be done". How about public executions for four time felony convictions, murderers, attempted murders, and kidnappings for a start? Shorten the legal system and dispense "justice" swiftly.

I don't expect the "reasonable" men on the anti-gun side of the issue to go along with my partial solution any more than I'll go along with theirs. They are not willing to settle for anything less than the total disarmament of everyone. Every little chip out

Lion . . . (Continued from Page 1) revolver over an automatic pistol for big game hunting is two-fold . . . reliability, and positive mechanical performance, not to mention accuracy or caliber limitation surely cannot be overlooked.

The warm tropical rain was just sprinkling the air field as our 707 kissed the slick runway, to be interrupted by a pleasant feminine voice informing us that we had just landed in Masai Land, East Africa. My professional hunter was at the arrival gate with a big smile, and a "jambo" hello. The customs officials were quite efficient in the performance of their duties. Both of my big bore revolvers captured their attention, until a Senior Police Inspector assured them that I was in full possession of the necessary documentation, to use the .44s in their beloved country.

A day later, I was requested by the local police and military establishment to conduct a handgun shooting exhibition at the State Police range. Subsequently, my name became notable with the Masai officials, along with Annie Oakley, Harry Calahan of Dirty Harry fame, and a number of staunch Americans, of which I am surely unworthy of. In the years that followed, I was destined to perform at least a hundred handgun shooting exhibitions. On a few occasions, the fees collected at the ranges were used to send the East African Pistol Teams to the Olympics. However, this was only my second Safari to East Africa, and my credibility had not been truly established with a handgun. Being a veteran handgunner and a collector of

of a stone wears it down. Are you wearing down like the Morton Grove, IL people who are now disarmed? Yep, handgun confiscation has hit Morton

Grove. The new law calls for citizens to voluntarily deliver their handguns to the police prior to the law going into effect in less than 60 days from now. If found in possession of a handgun after the law takes effect, the citizen will have the gun confiscated and be subject to fines and/or a jail sentence.

If you know any crooks, tell them about Morton Grove. The fight hasn't abated one bit. Be reasonable. Spend some time in the right place doing something you really should be doing . . . defending what is being taken away from you. Support the I.L.A. Get the "Report From Washington" and be informed. NRA members, \$6.00 annually. Non-NRA members, \$8.00. Send to: Legislative Action, 1600 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

dangerous game are truly two different stories.

I had a number of 300 grain solids and softs that I had put together for use in the .44 Mag. In short order, they were about to justify their existence. We had gone for almost three weeks without a trace of lions or communication with local tribesmen. It's a terrible taste, eating a lion license, and the initial cost of the bloody piece of paper adds to the let-down. About midday of the third week of hunting, news spread through the camp that a group of Masai women on the way to a distant water hole had seen a good number of lions feeding on a Wildebeest that had fallen to the pride, during the night. I gathered up a handful of .44 rounds, struggled into my shoulder holster and off we went.

The Landcruiser quickly picked up speed and my thoughts were focused on some of the deep wart hog holes we had gone into on yesterday's trip. If we hit a wart hog or bush baby hole at 50 MPH, the lions would have the last laugh . . . that is if they beat the vultures to us! We were lucky — only one of the trackers got dislodged when we soared off the bank of a Luggar (dry river bank).

A lot of things went through my mind as we belted through the heavy grass and bush, carefully planning the attack. Bullet placement was the key to every hunt . . . this was no different. The range had to be less than 30 yards. Expansion of the Barnes Custom Bullet was imperative. I knew the margin for error was zilch. If the shot was anything less than a brain or spine

(Continued on Page 3)

Lion . . . (Continued from Page 2)

shot, we would be wearing the big male in seconds. Somehow, we misjudged the spot where we had glassed the pride feeding, crept right past the feasting group of ladies and blundered into one hell of a magnificent male Masai lion.

I recall the old boy looking up, fixing his emerald eyes on my two hand point shoulder stance. The range had closed to a miserable 20 yards. "Shoot Bwana, Shoot!" whispered the tracker. The big monarch sagged and rolled over as the .44 arched and the round collided with his spine at the base of his skull. Every thought Simba had on his mind is now recorded in the snarl of a full mount. Any way you look at it, 11 feet 9 inches from tip to tip is a trophy of a lifetime!

HARD WORK PAYS OFF

By John Musacchio

Having told all of you (in the June issue of *The Sixgunner*) about the great mounting system that SSK Industries had done on my T/C .35 Remington. I wanted to do a little follow-up story and it goes something like this.

I don't consider myself to be a great shot in any sense of the word, but I must pass along what I have found to be a great load for the TC 14 .35 Remington.

After having secured a good base and scope from SSK, I started to test various loads for accuracy. Shooting off sand bags at 50 yards, I was looking for 1½" to 2" groups. I was shooting many groups of 3" to 4" with various powders such as IMR-4198 and IMR-4320, but I still could not get a load that I was satisfied with. I continued to use the "New" 35 caliber 220 grain spire point copper-clad bullet (from O.S.S., 7532 Tyler Boulevard, Mentor, Ohio 44060), and loaded a few with 22.0 grains of IMR-4198. I shot six rounds into the target, but could not see any holes anywhere. As I walked closer to the target, I realized that all six bullets had struck the blackened bull's-eye in about a 2½" group. I was now satisfied that this was the powder and load that I was going to use.

Wanting to see what this scoped T/C would do on the silhouette range, (I.H.M.S.A. Rules do not allow any scopes on any guns), I set up five chickens at 50 meters and began to shoot them down, one right after another until I had hit 14 or 15 straight. Now I don't want to sound like I'm bragging, but I thought it was great shooting. . . . for me, that is!

Sometimes it takes a lot of time and experimenting to develop a load that will shoot like you want it to, but in the long run, I have always found that it pays off. For those of you who shoot a T/C .35 Remington, here's my load . . . it may shoot well for you, too: W-W Cases trimmed to 1.910. CCI Regular Large Rifle Primers, O.S.S. 220 Grain Spire Point Copper-Clad Bullet with 22.0 Grains of IMR-4198 Powder.

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BARE PRAGMATISM

By Danny G. Herman, No. 1185

Handgun hunting seems to be rapidly becoming a way of life among the dedicated nimrods of this country. The most frequently stated reason for departing from use of the traditional "long-gun" is the challenge that the handgun presents. Personally, I have found no form of hunting or weaponry that could be considered unchallenging. In fact, I would have to say that some of the "easiest" hunts, utilizing the most sophisticated equipment, have turned out to be the most challenging, the most frustrating, the least successful and the most enjoyable. I did put my rifle in the rack, but for reasons that were purely pragmatic.

In the Spring of 1970, Carl T. Johnson, then Game Commissioner for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, invited me to participate in his annual Fall Bear Hunt at L'Anser. Carl T., as he is affectionately known among his compatriots, has hunted bear and cats in Michigan for over 40 years. He and his dog handler, Danny Porter, of Boon, Michigan, maintained the best pack of cat and bear dogs ever put to field in this state and with them have racked up an incredible stack of success stories. As for me, I had never seen a bear in the wild, let alone agreed to pursue one of the bruins on his own turf. The Michigan black bear, while a difficult quarry (to say the least), in front of dogs is not considered to be overly dangerous (at least not normally). However, I was not aware of this fact . . . after all, bears are bears . . . they are big, mean, and generally to be avoided. Therefore, it was with some trepidation that I accepted the invitation, but accept I did.

The next several months were consumed in preparation for the hunt: running every night, learning as much as possible about the habits of black bears, selecting clothing and camping equipment, and trying to select a proper firearm for the task at hand. Probably because of my military experience, I chose the 7.62mm Nato round in a Winchester Model 70 featherweight. The fast handling characteristics of the rifle and the relatively potent round seemed a perfect combination for the close in shooting and rugged country work I was going to be expected to do.

If you have ever hunted bear behind plotts, walkers, blueticks or redbones, you know that there is a very rigid cast system existing among the participants. Most honored in the cast are the dogs, followed by the owners and handlers. Third are, for lack of a better term, the interceptors. These are the hunters, who by various means (usually vehicles), attempt to get in front of the hounds and wait for the bear at predetermined locations surrounding the "start area". The fourth and lowest echelon within the cast is the "runner". They are assigned the task of staying with the dogs; beating through the same brush, climbing the same mountains, swimming the same beaver ponds, etc. In essence, the runner becomes a two-legged canine with very poor cold trailin' capabilities and nowhere near the social status (the cold trailing shortcoming is probably why the "runner" is looked upon with

such disdain by the other members of the Cast). I assume that it was my relative youth that got me assigned to this insignificant category — it couldn't have been because of my nose, which is substantial. At any rate, it was this assignment with its demand for extreme physical exertion which was the final factor influencing my decision to carry the 6-pound Model 70.

My first glimpse of the territory we were to hunt let me know that I was really in for it! What wasn't hilly verging on mountainous, was either river or swamp. What wasn't forest strewn with rocks and dead falls, was dogwood and tag alders, just plain gruesome country if you're a runner.

The first two days of that hunt almost killed me. They were filled with false starts (one-half mile sprints that ended in dogs milling around aimlessly at the end of a meager, petered-out scent trail; 25 mile jaunts to catch up to the rest of the hunters (dogs, interceptors, and others) who with the speed of light had moved-out chasing reports of "Fresh tracks out on the Baraga plains" leaving two or three of us low-life "runners" to our own devices; and pure harassment to the tune of . . . "Where the hell have you guys been?" . . . "Thirsty? You should be able to go two, maybe three, days without water. We could at your age!" . . . "If you can't keep up with a ten year old hound, well . . ."

By the third morning, I was seriously reevaluating a number of my recent decisions, i.e. the wisdom of bear hunting in general, allowing myself to be dubbed "runner", keeping company with a bunch of auto-flagellates who enjoy beating themselves half silly attempting to keep up with a \$1200 flea-bag that is in reality half race horse, and my stupid choice of guns. When I made my well thought out decision to carry a dainty little 6-pound rifle, I might just as well have chosen to carry a 40-pound boat anchor. When that gun wasn't elongating my left arm, it was tangling me in brush; when it wasn't tangling me in brush, it was trying to drown me in beaver ponds! I had, in fact, reached the point where I was willing to tell any one of my upper Cast "companions" to take that rifle and insert it in a spot that would cause them as much aggravation as it and they were causing me. Just at the point that I was seriously considering this alternative, one of the hounds let out a long rolling bawl that could only mean bear. I was off again. Forcing my weary mud clad water soaked legs to carry me and wood and steel tormentor in pursuit of that now dwindling howl. On and on. Not wanting to continue, but fearing the ridicule of the others if I didn't; I was thoroughly exhausted. Three miles and several barked shins later, the sound of the hounds suddenly increased tremendously. I could even see them working through the trees. All my agony, frustration, self doubt and exhaustion vaporized as a huge black hulk appeared in the bracken ferns not six feet in front of the lead dog. The next few minutes were sheer pandemonium, the bear squared off and the dogs took the challenge. Fur flew. Hell, dogs flew, for what seemed an eternity before an opening presented itself and the .308 settled the confrontation (see *Outdoor Life*, March, 1971). I had my bear and what a bear it was! At eight feet and 650

pounds, it set a Michigan record (which by the way was broken a year later by an Upper Peninsula bow hunter — how ephermeral our fame), and converted me to life long bear hunting affectionado. All that pain and suffering, all the harassment and ridicule dimmed to the elation of seeing the bear and the dogs working it. The price paid was little and would be willingly endured again and again on hunts to come.

While at the moment of sighting that bear I resigned myself to (no, relished) the role of "runner" (I honestly don't think I would want any other role unless it was that of one of those dogs) with all its intrinsic torments, I refused to carry that rifle one more step. The rest of that season, I ran unarmed, setting as my top priority upon returning home the acquisition of a more suitable bear gun.

By the time I did return home, I was an "expert" in all the vagaries of bear hunting, and, of course, knew exactly what the proper equipment should consist of (it's amazing how quickly one blundering into the right place at the right time and placing a more likely than not lucky shot becomes an expert). I proceeded through the normal selection process, looking at such characteristics as firearm weight, possible bullet weights in an adequate caliber, velocities, energies, penetration capabilities, inherent accuracy, dependability, and price. All these factors lead me to the rugged Ruger .41 magnum (I was a little shy of the reported punishing recoil of the .44 Mag, a fear I have since overcome).

I burned up hundreds of rounds through that six inch barrel using 210 gr. cast bullets backed by 19 gr. of 2400 that Spring and Summer, hoping to gain a modicum of proficiency prior to the commencement of the next bear season.

When the season did roll around, the combination satisfied most of my needs. It freed both hands, reduced the extra weight by more than half and bagged a nice 250 pounder. When I confronted that bruin, standing on his hind legs, advancing toward me from about 10 paces, completely oblivious to the dogs at his feet, I was considerably less fatigued than I had ever been humping that rifle.

This in spite of the fact that I had covered nearly 15 miles cross-country before making the encounter. I was also more confident in my ability to bag that critter than I had been with the rifle the year before. Obviously the continuous practice had done that. The one major drawback to the rig was the method of carrying. The hip holster I used could not be secured sufficiently to prevent flopping without severely restricting leg circulation and movement. Also hanging the weight on the right hip threw me off balance slightly causing my left leg and back to fatigue more rapidly than my right. While I never hunted with one, I did try running with the Ruger in a shoulder holster but that three pounds of iron banging on my ribs was simply intolerable. I lived through two more seasons and two more bear, then retired the entire system.

Retirement of the Ruger was precipitated when the T/C .30 Herrett caught my attention. Its ballistics were impressive and I felt certain that with the proper loading, it would make an excellent piece of bear equipment. Since all the holsters made for this arm

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Bare . . . (Continued from Page 3)

are rather bulky (more than adequate for a casual stroll through game country or around the range), they are not at all suited to the full tilt races with the dogs. Lack of an acceptable commercial holster provided the drive sufficient to get me to the design table and come up with a holster that would more securely retain the T/C and eliminate the flopping, and the off-balance condition which was so tiring. The end result was a light-weight form fitted leather holster that attached horizontally to a fairly heavy leather belt (the heavy belt prevents rotation about the long axis of the gun). This arrangement located the pistol tightly in the small of my back slightly above my hip line completely out of the way. I can run flat-out with this combination and experience no holster flop at all. The weight is distributed on the mid-line of the body, therefore causes no undue fatigue to any part of the body.

This outfit has only accounted for one bear (and one coyote) but it has reduced the suffering experienced on that first hunt ten-fold. Only one subsequent change in the system has been made. In anticipation of an Alaskan Brown hunt, I've holstered a 12.5" SSK 45-70. The design is identical to that used on the Herrett. I field tested the combination during last Fall's hunt and found it every bit as comfortable and easy to carry as the 10" Herrett in spite of the additional length and weight of the SSK system. Unfortunately, I did not cross paths with any bear, so the 45-70 has yet to earn its keep. I should have a couple good years remaining as a lowly "runner" and the Alaska trip is on the horizon, so I'm confident that the SSK will count coup.

With all the modern pistol bullets and powders, and the excellent selection of big bore single and wheel guns, a good eye developed by constant practice, I'm not sure that handgunning for game is any more challenging than long-gunning. However, if you're going to hunt rugged country where all the strength you can muster is needed, or where speed is the difference between success and failure, the handgun is just plain practical.

LEUPOLD/SEIBERT 24X 12X CONVERSION

By Gary Geraud

When it comes to long range precision shooting its quite obvious that a person can't shoot any better than he can see. With the abundance of rifle cartridges that are being chambered in the many single shot pistols available today, 300 yard shots on antelope are entirely within the capability of many of these pistol/cartridge combinations. The limiting factor in making truly consistently accurate shots is the scope. At the present time most handgun scopes are only 3 or 4 power. Burris has just released a 6x. These magnifications are O.K. for 100 or 200 yard shooting, but leave a lot to be desired when the ranges extend beyond that or for accuracy testing.

It was with this in mind that I began to wonder about having a scope converted with higher magnification, but with ample eye relief for a fairly stout kicking pistol. J.D. tipped me off that Wally Seibert did a lot of scope conversions and that I might get in touch with

him and see what he could do for me. I wrote Mr. Seibert (22720 S.E. 56th Street Issaquah, Washington 98027) and expressed my desires. He informed me that he could convert a 24x Leupold to about 12x with good eye relief. I was quite excited about the possibilities, but really didn't have the cash immediately on hand to buy a 24x and have it converted. I mentioned all of this to a shooting and hunting buddy; Joe Stuempke. He and I both decided that one of us had to get one of these to test out. Well, Joe having just received his allowance from his wife decided that he would go first.

The scope came back from Mr. Seibert's shop in about three weeks and I believe the cost of conversion was around \$55.00 including a cross wire change. We could not detect any alteration of the outward appearance of the scope. All of the modification was within the tube. I would judge the magnification to be very close to 12x by comparison with rifle scopes of like magnification. Optical clarity is very good. Eye relief for me is adjustable and more than ample. The scope has been mounted on a T/C .375 J.D.J. and has held up beautifully. Needless to say, an antelope at 300 yards really looks great with this scope. Accuracy with this combination at 100 yards is consistently around 1". Some groups (.375-three shot) have gone 3/4" on a good day.

If anyone has similar thinking about scopes for hunting it might be worth writing to Mr. Seibert and ask for a current pricing for such a conversion. Joe and I really like it.

Ed: They have also been doing some fantastic shooting, getting under 1/2"-five shot groups at 100 yards with many calibers and have recorded several between .200-300 inch in .22 caliber. These are not "accuracy job" T/Cs but over the counter with T/C, rechambered T/C and SSK barrels. The eye piece on the 24x Leupold Siebert conversion adjusts and gives an eye relief from about 10-22 inches. Just got mine for testing a few days ago.



LOADING THE .44 MAG.

By Charles Able

I started loading for the .44 Mag. over 20 years ago and have tried most everything I read about or thought up.

Twenty years ago I started shooting 20.0 grains of 2400 with Magnum primers and the Lyman 429421 cast bullet. That's the Keith bullet and I cast it to weigh about 245 grains.

This load is cheap to shoot, accurate, kills deer well, is easy on guns and your hand. I've shot an awful lot of them over 20 years and haven't found any reason to change.

At first I used a Lyman two cavity mold, but went to a SAECO four cavity because Lyman wasn't making a four cavity then. I found out real quick I needed a bigger lead pot and got the SAECO Model 24. With it and the big pot you can cast a lot of bullets fast.

I've always used scrap lead and mixed it myself so the weight comes out to about 245 grains. If a bullet weighs heavier, I add tin by using bars of 50/50 solder or other hard lead to get what I wanted.

I've never found a powder I liked better than 2400. Now that all components have gone up so high in price I'm glad I started buying as much as I

could afford whenever I saw a good buy on primers, powder or bullets. It's saved me a lot of money over the years. It's still a good idea to buy a lot and put it in storage when you run into a good deal, because shooting, like everything else, isn't going to get any cheaper.

I don't know how long brass will last with that 20-2400-245 cast bullet load, but it's a long time. I've killed a lot of game with that load from rabbits to deer and always found when they were hit right they died quick.

I bought a thousand of the Ohio Bullet Company cast 250 grain bullets. I didn't like the looks of them much as the ones I had, had a lot of wrinkles. They do shoot fairly good. On my last test I shot six of them through a 14 inch T/C with open sights off sandbags at 30 yards. Five of them made one hole about 1 1/4" long and 3/4" high. One was out of the group about two inches. I don't know if it was me or the bullet. I think a T/C or good revolver will keep them in two inches at 30 yards. That's good enough for most shooting.

I have a 6.5 inch barrel for a M-29 I'd like to trade for a stock for the 14" T/C or something. (P.O. Box 1494, Carlsbad, NM 88220)

"ME & MY T/C"

By Tom Welsh, No. 31

This is the time of the year when winter has just about taken all her best licks and is gradually loosening her icy grip from land, man and beast. Now, I can ease up a bit from cutting firewood every weekend and devote more time to "gun fever" which seems to afflict me worse when snow drifts are turning into mud-puddles. Handgun, shotgun and rifle are taken down and inspected and cleaned again and again. Thoughts usually run on about what I'd like to accomplish with each of the firearms during the coming year, and perfect shots and exciting experiences are recalled while handling a particular piece. Also, acquaintances are renewed at the gun shop and the new stuff and the trade-ins are given the once-over, looking for the "something I'll know I need when I see it." Of course, this is all done under the watchful eye of my housemate, who is usually present to be sure that two new guns don't take the place of one old one. Also, she can tell if it is actually the same firearm brought home that had gone out for "repairs." It is amazing what an expert she has become on firearms identification in such a short period of time!

While cleaning my Marlin 39A, .22 cal. lever rifle, thoughts went to its main purpose, besides plinking, that of holding the local starling and grackle population to a tolerable level. Each spring these pests come in by the dozens and try to take over the nesting sites of the song birds which like to nest in the pines and bird houses scattered throughout the nearby woodlot. Also, these gregarious pests help themselves to new gardens and reseeded lawns like revolutionaries to an American Embassy. That's when I got struck with a new thought! Why not put a scope on my T/C Contender .22 cal. bull barrel? I would like to have purchased a new .22 Hornet barrel, but the budget would only allow the asking price of a Leupold M8-2X scope, rings and base.

It wasn't long before the equipment was bought and brought home for installation. Mounting the scope was easy. A flat bladed screw driver and a

small punch or drill bit is all that's needed to put you in business. I removed the rear sight elevation screw, pushed the little retaining pin out with the drill bit, and removed the remaining mounting screws. I put all these items in a plastic bag, labeled it, and put the sight away for use in the future. The Leupold base mates exactly with the existing holes the rear sight was attached to. I used a drop of Loc-tite on each screw and screwed the one piece base to the barrel. The rings were then placed loosely on the scope and adjusted to align properly with the slots in the base; the front ring was then snugged up and placed in the base and carefully twisted into place. The rear ring was tightened up, centered, and secured to the base with the windage adjustments screws. You can adjust a lot of windage into your scope with these screws without touching the internal adjustments on the scope itself. The scope had come from the factory focused perfectly for my vision, so there wasn't any need to loosen the locking and turn the eyepiece for proper clarity and crosshair sharpness.

While the barrel was off, I touched up the trigger pull and trigger overtravel. This was done with the allen wrench supplied from the Thompson Center along with the instruction booklet that accompanies purchase of a T/C frame or complete pistol. You should read the booklet before you start shooting a Contender as they are quite different from any other handgun. You turn the trigger adjustment screw that's located inside the frame, on the bottom and pressing against the front top of the trigger. You adjust this screw until you reach the trigger let-off that you desire. Put the barrel back on, pull the hammer back, and snap the action shut sharply a few times. If the hammer falls, you have a dangerous trigger; back the screw off a little and try again. When the pull is satisfactory, you can now work with the trigger overtravel. Turn the allen screw located in the rear of the trigger guard until the trigger won't release. Then slowly turn the screw back out a little at a time until the trigger will function correctly. I worked with my gun for a little while, and ended up with a trigger that's safe, works consistently, and doesn't disturb the sight picture unnecessarily.

I also purchased a hammer extension as it was almost impossible to get under the scope and safely pull the hammer back. I had to open the slot on the forward part of the extension with a small file so it would slide down on the hammer far enough so as not to strike the scope when the hammer was cycled.

I collected a half dozen brands of ammo, which included three of the "hyper-velocity" types, as I had read that different ammo may effect accuracy in individual firearms. I was hoping that one of the hot .22's would work the best as I was looking for dynamic effects when a feathered target was zeroed in on. Not having much experience with scoped handguns, I made arrangements for getting together at the range with my shooting partner for the initial sighting in and test firing for best groups. We try to get together whenever we can to try out new loads or new guns. This serves a dual purpose, because, besides each of us having a good time, neither one of us will hold back when trying to come up with the tightest group, fastest time, best shot, or generally just outdo the other. When the spirit of competition

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Me & My . . . (Continued from Page 4)

enters the picture, concentration gets sharper and you don't end up with as many flyers as you do when shooting alone.

We tacked up some NRA 50 foot small bore rifle targets at the 25 yard mark and shot over sandbag rests from the bench. The only way to go was with ten shot groups from each brand of ammo and groups were measured by drawing a circle with a compass around the outside of each group and measuring the diameter. We ended up with the following:

Ammo	Me	Him
Expiditer	4-1/2"	4"
Yellow Jacket	2-1/8"	1-3/8"
Stingers	1-1/2"	1-3/16"
CCI Long Rifle Hollow Point	1"	3/4"
Browning L.R. "Nail Drivers"	1-1/4"	1"

We couldn't explain the performance of the Expiditers and came up with about the same results when tried again. Also, a few days later, I duplicated the group testing, in reverse order, to see if it would effect group size, but it didn't. The CCI L.R. hollow points still came out on top, with the Browning and Stingers taking 2nd and 3rd place respectively. The testing, however, did prove to me that different brands and types of ammo can act differently in an individual firearm.

The tests also proved to me that I needed a lot of practice shooting a scoped handgun. While trying to shoot offhand at some random targets, I felt like I was holding a wriggling bowl of jello with crosshairs in the center. Shooting any kind of decent score at all depends entirely on finding a steady rest. To make practice more interesting, I picked up an old tire that had been discarded by a litterbug and with the assistance of a sharp pocketknife, I turned the black sidewalls into facsimiles of starlings and a couple crows. These rubber birds proved to be more durable than blocks of wood and are very realistic when hung from a limb with a piece of wire at various distances from 25 to 50 yards. You are shooting as if under actual field conditions and it is a real challenge to score consistently if the wind starts them bouncing about.

There's one good thing about starlings that should be mentioned — they're biodegradable! And, as for the grackles, for those who won't shoot anything they can't eat, here's a recipe that is reported to be pretty good:

- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 12 (or so) grackle breasts
- 4 slices of bacon, cut in 1 inch pieces
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 12 small (1 inch) onions, halved
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon leaf thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon marjoram
- 1 small bay leaf
- 1/4 cup brandy or cognac
- 1 cup red wine (burgundy is good)

Mix the first four ingredients and roll the breasts in the mixture. Fry bacon pieces until crisp in heavy fry pan over high flame. Remove bacon from the pan and save. Add butter to the pan and evenly brown the breasts in the fat. Sprinkle the remaining flour mix over top of the meat. Add mushrooms, onions, garlic, and herbs; cook over moderate flame until

mushrooms are tender. Pour the brandy or cognac over the meat and ignite. When flames dies, mix and gently pour in the wine. Cover and cook over low flame until the breasts are fork tender, about an hour. Serve it.

If you can't talk anyone into cooking this for you, take the bacon bits you saved, put it into some potato chip dip and drink the beverages — it might be just as well if you did.

RUGER 10 1/2" SUPER BLACKHAWK

By John Taffin, No. 76

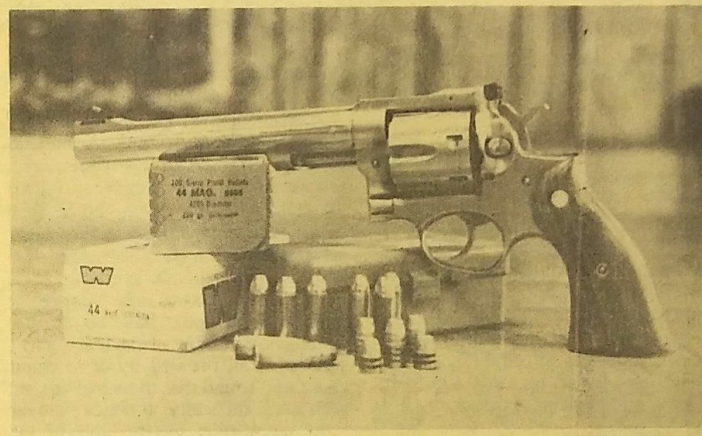
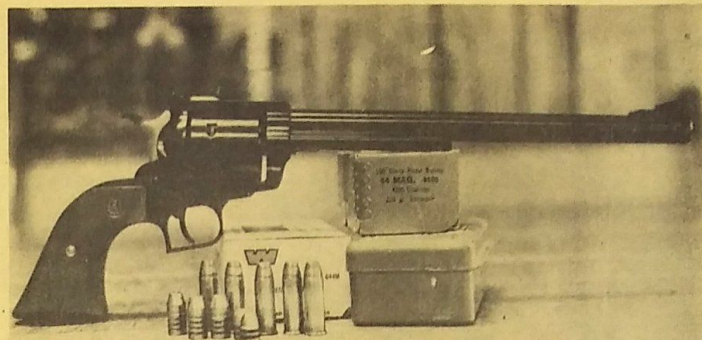
It was 1956 and I had just graduated from high school. My first real job, at a magnificent 90¢ an hour, allowed enough money to make the dreams of my high school years come true. For years I had read Elmer Keith, Charlie Askins and the like, and looked forward to the day when I could have my own sixguns. Ruger had introduced his single-six in 1963 and this was to be my first purchase.

The single-six was and is a fine .22 but big bores beckoned, and I soon purchased a Colt single action .38-40 and right behind this came the first modern powerful single action available — the then relatively new Ruger Blackhawk .357. That original 4-5/8" Blackhawk was a beautifully balanced, accurate shooting single action.

Shortly after the .357 became available, Remington introduced the magnificent .44 magnum cartridge for Smith's Model 29. This was the cartridge that opened up the doors for the handgun hunting and silhouette shooting we enjoy so much today. Ruger wasn't caught napping and chambered their .357 Blackhawk for the new .44 magnum. Three of these were displayed at the 1956 NRA Convention, and Elmer Keith reported that he was promised one of these and told Ruger they were too small but he would like to have one as a .44 Special. Apparently the factory did more testing and one of them let go with a proof load.

This was fortunate as the Ruger single action subsequently was beefed up with a larger frame and cylinder and became what is now known as the Ruger .44 Flat-Top. With a little "horse tradin'", I had the first Flat-Top .44 in my area. Even though it has gone through first being cut from its original 6-1/2" to 4-5/8" and then later being returned to the factory to be re-barreled to 7-1/2", this old Flat-Top is a fine sixgun with its Colt-shaped S.A. grip, steel ejector rod housing and steel micro rear sight. Both of these steel parts were later replaced with alloy parts by Ruger and I've had to purchase numerous steel ejector rod housings to apply to later purchased Ruger single actions. The 7-1/2" .44 Flat-Top comes closer, at least in my estimation, to being more nearly perfect sixgun than any other ever produced.

There are only two changes I would make on the Flat-Top, possibly three. The first is an all steel grip frame, and the second is an unfluted cylinder. Both of these add needed weight when shooting full house forty-fours. The third would be a wide hammer and trigger. In 1959, Ruger brought out their improved model of the Flat-Top



The 10.5 inch Super versus the 7.5 inch Redhawk. Two very different designs from the same manufacturer. A wide variety of useful bullets are shown.

.44, the Super Blackhawk. A number of changes were made: The barrel length was standardized at 7-1/2" (of 30,000 plus Flat-Tops, around 1500 were made in 7-1/2" and 10" instead of the traditional 6-1/2"), an all new steel grip frame was used, patterned after the old Colt Dragon frame being longer than the S.A. frame and having a square backed trigger guard. Most shooters welcomed this new grip frame to better handle recoil. A wide hammer and trigger were added (I later put the same type trigger and hammer on my Flat-Top). The steel micro rear was replaced by an alloy sight with protective ears and the ejector rod housing was changed from steel to alloy.

The Super Blackhawk when compared to the Flat-Top is stronger, heavier, easier to shoot accurately for most shooters. With total production approaching 200,000, the Super has been a tremendous success and it has been the basis for several custom editions. What is even more amazing is the price. The original price in 1959 was \$120 with a wooden case. When the cases were no longer available, the price dropped to \$116; at the same time, Colt SA's were selling for \$125 even though they were nowhere near the sixgun the Ruger is. Today, the Ruger .44 sells for \$228 and the Colt retails for \$480 in the SA Model and \$575 for the adjustable sighted New Frontier Model. Is there any question as to why Ruger sells all they produce and Colt is dropping the S.A. from production?

During the '50's and early '60's, Ruger offered the Flat-Top in a 10" barrel. When the demand proved less than desirable, the 10" was dropped from production. Anyone fortunate enough to have one (lucky me!) found an extremely accurate and easy to shoot .44. Silhouette shooting was a long way off when the 10" was

dropped and there was no organization like HHI to foster interest in hunting.

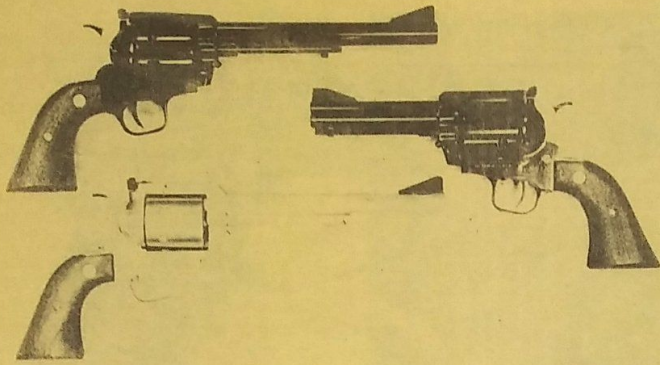
Now Ruger, showing once again that they are willing to cater to shooters' needs and desires, have reintroduced the long-barreled .44 magnum. The Super Blackhawk is now available in a 10-1/2" model designed to give hunters and silhouette shooters maximum benefit. We now have what is possibly the world's strongest revolver available in a barrel length that is highly desirable for hunting and silhouette shooting.

Since I already had two 10" Rugers, a 10" .44 Flat-Top and custom Douglas barreled new model, the new model 10.5" Ruger was no stranger to me. The longer barrels seem to balance better for me even in stand-on-your-hind-leg-and-shoot-with-one-hand type of shooting than any shorter barrels. The increased weight seems to lessen recoil, moves the noise further away from the ears, and the extra length gives greater velocities in most loads.

There are two things I immediately disliked as I picked up the new 10-1/2" Super for the first time. Both of these are personal preferences and certainly do not reflect on the design of the Super Blackhawk. The first problem to me is the grip which is designed for minimum felt recoil by being thin at the top and wide at the bottom. In theory, this allows the grip to slide in the hand on firing, thus providing less shock to the shooting hand. I prefer more of a straight stock that allows me to get a firmer grip in the first place.

The second problem, to me, is the mating of the front and rear sights! The standard width notch of .125 is used on the rear sight and this is too wide for the front sight blade sitting on the barrel more than 12" away. This allows an awful lot of daylight in on both sides of the front sight. I would prefer that the front sight be left as is

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ABILENE .44's

By John Taffin, No. 76

I'm a throwback. I like the old ways. As far as I'm concerned, the last really good looking car to come out of Detroit was made the same year I was born: The 1939 Ford Club Coupe. The most interesting women I know are well past the age of 35. My house is heated with wood, the walls are wood-finished, not flowered wallpaper, and I'll take a plain pair of Levi's over designer jeans.

When it comes to handguns, my tastes are the same. There are only two types of handguns: those that are single actions and those that aren't. I'm a sucker for a good single action. The most beautiful sixgun ever made is without a doubt a blue and case hardened Colt 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Single Action Army with grips of ivory or fancy wood. No other handgun even comes close. Mind you, I said the most beautiful, not necessarily the best!

The Single Action has come a long way since Sam Colt whittled the first model out of wood. The COLT SA has died and been resurrected twice and now looks as if it has died for the third, and final, time.

Romantically speaking, this is a great loss. Practically speaking, the Colt SA has been buried by stronger, better, and less expensive SA's. Ruger is now the number one manufacturer of Single Actions and Interarms has a line of both blue and stainless Dragoon Models.

Now another old line firm is making SA's. Mossberg, long known for inexpensive shotguns, and an excellent line of .22 Rifles, is marketing Big Bore Single Actions. In talking to Ron Fine and Tim Bailey at the N.R.A. Show, I'm convinced that they are dedicated to producing a quality Single Action.

These sixguns are being marketed through A.I.G. Corporation, the design itself having been purchased from U. S. Arms. Models are being manufactured in .357, .44 and .45 Colt.

The first test model I received was a 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Abilene .44 Magnum finished in a beautiful blue which is as good as any and better than most top line blue jobs being offered today.

The Abilene comes in a unique box with a heavy wooden lid and comes with an excellent instruction/parts manual.

Any handgun I received for evaluation is given a thorough cleaning first to find any metal shavings. Disassembly of the Abilene is a bit tricky . . . Here's where the manual comes

in handy. In cleaning, I did find one metal shaving in the action, and all parts were thoroughly cleaned and then everything was re-oiled with tri-flon and re-assembled. The action would benefit from a polish job, but after cleaning and oiling, I had a crisp, smooth 4 lb. trigger pull.

Upon examining the Abilene, I jotted down the things I liked and disliked. First the negative: The front sight is ugly! It is a .120" wide ramp style, but the back is not squared off like Colt or Ruger and just doesn't blend into the barrel right. (Remember the fins on a '56 Chrysler?) The rear sight looks just like those furnished on Colt New Frontiers and Troopers, but the good news is that the Abilene will accept the Colt Elliason Sight. The ejector rod head is large but flat and not shaped like a Colt's. Those are the only things I could find wrong with the Abilene in looking it over, except possibly the grips which are much too thick at the base for my hand.

Now for the good features. I've already mentioned the blue job. It is a deep bright blue and absolutely flawless. In fact, it's better finished than any handgun I own. Only Colt knows how to case harden frames, so A.I.G. is smart enough not to try. The wood to metal metal of the grips is excellent, the hammer spur is wide and the trigger is wide and smooth.

If you've ever had to search for a base pin that took off under recoil because the spring loaded cylinder pin release let go, you'll be happy to know that the Abilene is furnished with a screw in the front of the frame that angles up and locks into a groove on the cylinder pin just like the original Colts. When I cock an SA, I like to hear click-click-click as the trigger travels through the safety notch, half cock, and into the full cock notch. The Abilene is traditional in that it has a half-cock notch which is used for loading and unloading. Another plus is the rounded trigger guard; I frequently get rapped by the square guard of the Ruger.

Here are a few dimensions and specifications of this particular Abilene. The barrel slugs out at .428 which would make it a perfect candidate for an extra cylinder chambered for .44-40 which would also allow bullets to be seated out in the .44-40 case. The barrel is tapered .794" to .714 frame to front and is rifled with 8 lands and 7 grooves with a .005" barrel/cylinder gap. Cylinder length is

1.754", with a diameter of 1.729"-1.724" back to front, and wall thickness of .087".

I would like to be able to tell you that this Abilene is perfect, but it did have some problems. When cocked the first time, the hand did not rotate the cylinder completely around and it did not quite lock up. (Editor's Note: This is very common in single actions). This could result in firing a cartridge not in perfect alignment with the barrel, but I decided to be careful and index the cylinder by hand so I could fire it. A 12" gong was set up at 75 yards for some informal getting-used-to-sixgun type of shooting. Under these conditions, the Abilene performed well, at least initially.

Then the second problem occurred. Upon examining the Abilene originally, I noticed a lack of silver solder at the rear of the right side of the front sight. After about 50 rounds of .44 Magnum loads of 20 grain No. 2400/429421, the front sight simply started to peel off of the barrel.

So this Abilene was packaged up and sent back to the factory to have the front sight re-soldered and the hand replaced. While it was on its way back to A.I.G., I received two more Abilenes.

I thought the 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " blue model was beautiful until I opened the new package. The two new models were prize winners for looks. One was a 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " .44 Magnum finished in a bead blasted nickle finish that looks much better than stainless steel (even though everyone asks: "Where did you get the stainless .44?") and is called a magnaloy finish. The second model received was a bull barrel .44 Magnum with a 4-5/8" barrel finished in bright blue which rivals the aforementioned Colt SA 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " for pure good looks. Everyone I've shown it to says the same thing: "That's the best looking, best balanced .44 I've ever seen!"

Description:	Bull Barrel 4-5/8"	Magnaloy 7-1/2"	Blue 7-1/2"
Trigger Pull	4-3/4 lb.	5-1/2 lb.	4 lb.
Cylinder Length	1.695"	1.754"	1.754"
Cylinder Diameter	1.728"	1.730"	1.729"-1.724"
Wall Thickness	.082"	.087"	.087"
Barrel Diameter Breech	.845"	.761"	.794"
Barrel Diameter Muzzle	.845"	.672"	.714"
Barrel/Cylinder Gap	.004"	Upper .007"	.005"
Groove Diameter	.428"	.428"	.428"
Top Strap Thickness	.345	.330"-.300"	.330"-.300"

Notice a few things. Both 7-1/2" Models have longer cylinders because the case heads are enclosed in these models but not in the bull barrel model. The bull barrel really is a bull with a massive .845" diameter barrel while the 7-1/2" magnaloy model is furnished with a slim barrel. With a .345 top strap thickness, this particular model has a top strap 40% thicker than a Super Blackhawk. Strong! All three models have unfluted cylinders.

Before settling down to serious testing, I invested in a trigger job on the Bull Barrel to bring it down to 2 lb. Prior to doing any concentrated paper punching, I headed for the silhouette range, wired a ram down at 225 yards, and settled down to shoot the Bull Barrel. And shoot it will! After a few preliminary shots to find the sight setting, I made 15 straight hits on the ram with three different loads, using the same sight setting. These loads were 23.5 No. 4227/429421; 22.3 No. 2400/429421; 22.5 No. 2400/240HP.

Although this Abilene shot very

I'd like to tell you these two were mechanically perfect, but alas, such is not the case. When I tried to cock the 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " magnaloy .44, the cylinder bolt would not release. Since I have a pretty good idea about the innards of an SA, I surmised the plunger on the hammer which releases the bolt was not doing its job. Upon dismantling this particular Abilene, this proved to be the case. By working the spring loaded plunger up and down manually a few times, the rough spots were worked off and when reassembled, this sixgun locked up tight and worked smoothly. The cylinder lock-up on this particular Abilene is as tight as any you are ever likely to find.

The Bull Barrel Abilene seemed to be alright . . . until I fired it! After 25 rounds, the stud on the barrel which received the ejector rod housing screw popped out and I was without a means of ejecting empties. The problem, as on the 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " blue model was a poor job of silver soldering. So the Bull Barrel Model was also sent back to the factory to be re-soldered and in a few weeks time, I received both models back and began serious testing of all three Abilenes.

The fact that I ran into some minor problems shows that I did not receive hand-picked models. If you purchase an Abilene, you may run into some problems (as you probably will with 90% of the guns being manufactured today by all companies). Rest assured that if you do, A.I.G. will stand behind their product and make it right. Remember, Mossberg has been making inexpensive rifles and shotguns and it will take a while to get all of the problems ironed out that are encountered in building a top quality sixgun.

No further problems have been encountered in any of these Abilenes. For those interested in such things, here are how I've compared dimensions of these three Abilenes:

accurately, I paid the price as shooting from Creedmore, the muzzle blast of the short barrel ripped the leg of my Levi's to shreds. A small price to pay for 15 straight rams!

The accompanying chart shows the results of some chronographing and paper punching of all three Abilenes. Remember . . . the 4-5/8" had a trigger job, the other two did not. I would expect the groups to shrink accordingly with a little gunsmithing.

The last load for the Bull Barrel is one that J. D. cooked up and is a real blaster with a maximum spread of only 13 FPS for five shots in this Abilene. Recoil is severe and I'm surprised I was able to shoot such a tight group. Surprisingly, I got 1271 FPS out of 4-5/8" barrel and only averaged 31 FPS more out of a 10" barrel. This was with a 350 grain bullet!

First Class is how I would rate the Abilene. They are relatively new, but they are extremely well finished, being available in two finishes, bright blue

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Load	Abilene 4-5/8"		Abilene 7-1/2"		Abilene 7-1/2"				
	Charge (Gr.)	Powder	Bullet	Group Size	M.V.	Group Size	M.V.	Group Size	M.V.
180 Gr.	25	2400	Sierra JHC	5/8"	1352	1-1/4"	1412	1"	1406
Lyman	26	H110	429215GC	3/4"	1251	3/4"	1464	1"	1460
200	26	WW296	JHP	1"	1230	3/4"	1398	5/8"	1409
Lyman	22	2400	429421	1-3/4"	1340	1-3/4"	1431	(3 in 1") 2"	1487
Hornady	23	WW296	265FP	2"	1154	1-1/2"	1347	1-3/4"	1360
350	22.5	WW680	GC	1-1/4"	1271	—	—	—	—

and magnum. The .44 Magnum is available in 4-5/8", 6", 7-1/2", and a 10" silhouette model. (I've been promised one of these soon, and will report on it in a future issue of **The Sixgunner**). While the .357 can be had in 4-5/8", 6", 7-1/2" and .45 Colt in 6" only, I'm hoping A.I.G. will bring out the .357 in a 10" model. This would be a superb silhouette sixgun.

All models retail in the \$275 class except the Silhouette Model which will be higher. From the literature, the Silhouette Model comes with an alliason rear sight and an undercut patridge front blade which should be a vast improvement over the sloping ramp of the 10-1/2" Ruger for shooting silhouettes.

Since the .45 comes with genuine staghorn grips, these should be available for other models, the same being true for the target grip which comes standard on the Silhouette Model.

If there is one thing I don't need, it is

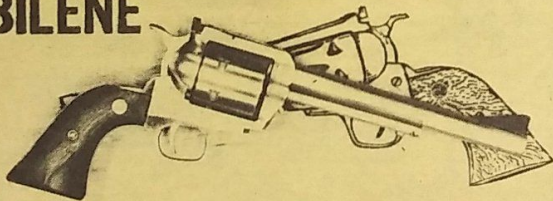
another .44 Magnum sixgun, since I already have 10 of them. But the best recommendation I can give you for these Abilenes is that although they were supplied by the factory for testing purposes, I won't be sending them back. Instead, I'll be shipping a check in the mail so I can keep these. There is no way I would part with the Bull Barrel, and I can't decide which I like better of the 7-1/2" Models, so I'm stuck with all of them. I just hope 13 is not an unlucky number!

Editor's Note: I know for a fact that John experienced a run of bad luck with the Abilenes as certainly not all have something wrong with them. All of the problems he experienced are very common in single actions, particularly the extractor rod housing coming loose. The Abilenes are being produced and should be available in most .44 Models. The Silhouette Model began being shipped from the factory during the first week of July.

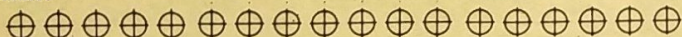


The Llama is sleek in appearance. Very few edges to catch on clothing.

ABILENE



The Stainless Abilene is a massive well-made gun. Shown on its shipping container.



LLAMA-GAMO

By J.D. Jones

I recently had the opportunity to visit the Llama and El Gamo factories.

The Llama Gabilondo Y Cia S.A. factory is located in Victoria, Spain at the edge of mountain country.

Llama has a new model revolver in production and a new auto in the initial stages of production.

Spanish guns made during the period of between WWI and the Spanish Civil War were "export" guns made for the bottom price ranges worldwide. At that time Spains economy was so poor they could and did successfully compete in this low buck market. (World economy was almost at an all time low during this period.) Accordingly, the guns in this country were compared with S & W and Colt who were in their prime as far as quality. This unfair comparison led to the popular opinion that "Spanish" products were inferior. With that behind us we find some of the most progressive innovations since

WWII to have come out of Spain. Workmanship of some of the high grade weapons is simply unsurpassed. At this point inflation in the Spanish economy is also quite high. The country seems well to do. The top of the line guns of Llama must be good enough to compete after shipping and duties are paid in the U.S. retain market. Not an easy task. In the meantime, Colt and S & W no longer make guns the way they did in the 20s and 30s. Essentially the quality of the new Llamas are in my opinion better than many American made guns.

The revolver action is a new style D.A. The gun is about the same size as an 'N' Frame S & W except somewhat heavier. The guts incorporate a hammer that operates on an eccentric that allows it to move up and down as well as back and forth for ease of D.A. and safety. The new Llama .44 Magnum resembles a S & W in appearance. (It's



Llamas new .44 and .357 are available on the same frame.

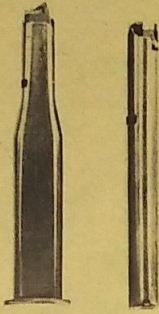
also available on the same size frame in .357.)

From start to finish, production is first class. Thousands of these revolvers were in production. Most impressive was the modern technology and quality control. I'm impressed particularly by the rifling operation on the .44. The barrel is drilled, reamed and then sized and rifled by three broaches. At this point the barrel interior appeared smoother than any I had seen. They were installing a machine to lap or hone (translation problems) barrel

interiors hoping to achieve a surface that would shoot factory WW and Remington lead bullet full charge loads without excessive leading.

The barrels we shot with this ammo (WW) had not been so finished but were still shooting well after hundreds of rounds of this ammo.

The new auto is a D.A. Obviously, it's a military, police or self-defense gun. Just as obviously, if you want to compete in this market your auto must be a D.A. and a damn good one. It will be first available in 9mm about



New magazines for the 10 and 14 shot 9mm.

September and .45 by perhaps November-December at the earliest.

In appearance it looks like its moving at 100 m.p.h. — well, at least 85 m.p.h. — while it's standing still. The D.A. trigger travel is about as long as most of them are, but quite light and smooth. After the first shot or by thumb cocking the hammer the gun reverts to conventional S.A. firing mode.

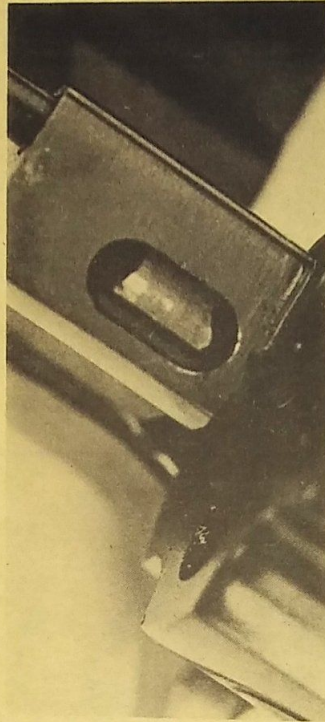
The 9mm will come in two versions, 10 and 14 shot. The grip dimensions are the same on both versions. Sights are fixed, but highly visible and quite good for this type gun. Fit, finish and general appearance was excellent on the guns I examined. I particularly like the overall design but the single row magazine feed is quite good as is the latch that locks the barrel retaining pin in place. The gun is medium in weight and size. Its recoil feels very similar to a M-39 although the "feel" is entirely different. The frame is made of steel and it appeared the gun would be easy to accurize. As it was, it shot fully as well as most autos of this type. I'm not much of a rapid fire shooter, but just looking over the gun I put 14 in about a 9-10" group on a silhouette in about five seconds or less.

The nine is sort of an interesting cartridge. I have quite a few of different flavors and am very anxious to get a few hundred rounds through one of these. It's a damn nice gun.



The 8-7/8 .44 Llama greatly resembles a "Smithton" with improved action.

After leaving Llama we went to the El Gamo Airgun Plant in Barcelona. El Gamo makes an astounding variety of different airguns, including one pistol which I found quite interesting. El Gamo products generally fit in the



The new Llama also locks up at the crane.

superior quality at moderate price brackets. I was surprised to find out their output was 1000 airguns per day and five million pellets per day.

The plant was modern, clean, used very sophisticated machinery where its use was warranted and quality control was very evident in operations.

I was amazed to see every airgun inspected for appearance, "broken in" by shooting, and machine rest tested for function and accuracy. Anything that wasn't up to standard was duly tagged and sent back for adjustment.

Gamo has a recoilless match rifle in the works and we were allowed to shoot it. All I can really say is that its an amazing gun. It shoots very accurately and will be competitively priced. Both Llama and El Gamo are imported and distributed by Stoeger Industries, 55 Ruta Ct., Hackensack, NJ 07606. Phone 201-440-2700.

MY FIRST 430 DEER

By Ken Whitworth, No. 694

If there is one time of the year when people become paranoid, it's that wait just before November 15th, the opening of the firearm season for deer in Michigan. Work production slows down, wives get less help around the house, the local sport shops are so busy they can hardly get their doors closed at night, and local ranges . . . well, it sounds like July 4th! I'm no different from the rest, a few trips to the sport shops, ranges, etc., only help to pass the time, but it still goes by too slowly.

For the past 14 years, I have hunted with my father and a few friends. For the last 12 of those years, we have hunted on our own private 44 acres in North Central Michigan. The past nine years I have hunted with a handgun (SBH 44 mag.), taking seven whitetail bucks. This year, as usual, I hunted the opening two days, using my .430 JDJ for the first time. The .430 has already taken a boar, and we feel very

comfortable together. For the month preceding the deer season, I practiced with 45 grain 4198 behind Sierra's 240 grain HC. This load shows no signs of excess pressure, and the brass just falls out of the chamber. The 240 grain HC Sierra must be moving about 1800 FPS from my 12.5" barrel. The Sierra is a difficult bullet to get to expand consistently on deer. The average whitetail deer found in Michigan weighs between 150 and 190 pounds. This extra velocity should get it to expand well, but hopefully not blow up just on contact. I am not too worried because I usually try for a heart-lung shot, and this will not disrupt a bullet like a shoulder hit. Besides, who wants to lose two shoulder roasts, anyway?

Most of the deer taken with my Ruger 44 have been heart shots. Even with a heart shot they average 25 to 50 yards before they drop dead. Remington SP, Hornady HP and Sierra HC in 240 grain all gave considerable penetration and did a lot of damage, usually blowing the heart apart (never just a hole through it). The Sierra 180 grain also gave complete penetration, blowing the heart apart. The only time that I have had deer drop and stay down is with a direct hit to the nervous system. Of three deer taken, two with spine shots and one with a head shot, with 240 grain Hornady HP, they went straight down and never moved.

It's a half-mile walk from camp to my favorite spot on the edge of a cedar swamp. This is a walk that I really look forward to each year. The time always passes quickly because I reminisce of my past hunts and the many times I have seen deer in these woods. Deer are beautiful animals and such a joy to watch. Just before dawn on opening day, I made my blind comfortable and began the wait. Shortly after sunrise, a doe walked within a few feet of my blind, looked at me, and continued on. In the afternoon, just before dark, two nice sized deer walked out of the swamp, but with the dark background of the swamp, it was impossible to tell if they were bucks. That night, all I had to drag back was myself.

Some hunters that I have talked with who hunted with a handgun, often regret that they did not bring their rifle along. The reason is usually the same . . . lack of confidence. Whatever the excuse, lack of practice, the deer is too far away, too dark, bad eyes, etc., it is still a lack of confidence. No matter what they hunt with, each weapon has certain limitations, and you must accept these when you make your choice. Hunting with a handgun is certainly no exception. Lots of practice, knowing how your gun performs at various distances with your hunting load, and having adequate power for the animal you are hunting will help to build your confidence. Whether a single shot or revolver, or auto, you must be confident that you can place the first shot exactly where you want it to go, or pass up the shot. I once saw a friend empty a Ruger 44 Mag. at a deer in the open, less than 50 yards away, and the deer just walked away after the last shot. Another enemy of the handgunner is excitement, buck fever, whatever. I've seen it so bad that a deer ten yards away would have nothing to worry about. Practice and knowing your limitations cannot be over-emphasized.

On the second day, the temperature was still above freezing and no snow

had fallen. Before daylight, I was back in my blind, warm and comfortable. My blind is on the top of a long narrow hill overlooking a cedar swamp. The shooting lanes are straight forward, to my left and downhill. I usually see the deer before they look up that high and see me. Sometimes they catch my scent, and while they are trying to locate my position, I see them first. This spot has been very productive over the years.

Shortly after 9 a.m., I caught a glimpse of a deer to my far left. His back was visible over a ridge, but his head was down, feeding. No more than 50 yards away, he was a difficult target because so little of him was visible. As his head came up, so did the .430 JDJ, but the only thing I could see on his head were his ears. If only I had time to scope the TC before heading north, seeing the deer would have been easier. Suddenly he turned his head toward me, and I could see two distinct spikes, one 4" and the other one 5". I aimed for the heart area, knowing that if the bullet was to go just a few inches low, it would probably kick up a lot of dirt from the top of the ridge just in front of the deer. Slowly, I squeezed the trigger, the TC fired, sending the 240 Sierra on its way. After recovering from the recoil, I could see no deer. Did I miss, did he go straight down, did he run away? These were my thoughts as I headed down the hill to where I last saw him.

When I got to the spot where he was last standing, there was no deer and no blood. Could I have missed? Possible, but I didn't think so. The shot looked good when I squeezed the trigger. Could the 240 grain Sierra have hit the heart-lungs and not dropped him, or at least have left some blood? The .430 JDJ, with the 240 grain Sierra HC, 1800 FPS should have put one big hole in him, even with a bad hit.

The ground was covered with dead ferns and leaves, making spotting a small amount of blood difficult. I marked the spot where the deer was last standing, and headed in the direction that I thought he would have taken. Fresh blood was spotted just 20 feet away. A few feet further and the blood trail looked like a red carpet going through the woods. There was blood everywhere. Losing blood that fast, he couldn't go very far. After he was hit, he only traveled 40 yards before he piled up. He was a nice 150 pound spike horn.

When I first saw the entrance hole, it did not look very impressive. It wasn't until I opened him up that the effect of the bullet was noticeable. He was hit on his left side. A small portion of the back of his front leg was removed. Three ribs were taken out, leaving a big hole, large enough to put your hand through. The pieces of the heart that I could find looked like hamburger, as did the lungs, with bone splinters everywhere. The bullet exited, taking two ribs and leaving a perfect two inch hole. The 240 grain Sierra HC at 1800 FPS showed more damage than any bullet from a .44 Magnum handgun that I have seen. By using 4227 instead of 4198, velocities of over 1900 fps in a 12.5" barrel may be reached, but I see no advantage when using hollow-points or fast expanding soft-points at close range (as is typical in Michigan). If you are hunting where 100 yards or greater distances are the norm, then the extra velocity would be welcome. I doubt whether any of the available 240

(Continued on Page 10)

FOUL WEATHER HUNTS

By Wayne Randall, No. 320

As I pushed the Blazer further North, it started to snow harder. I had only three days to hunt deer, but with tracking snow, my chances were improving. If I had thought back to my previous trip to this area in September, I wouldn't have been so happy with the snow.

For the opening of small game season in September, my wife and I headed to the Superior National Forest of Minnesota to hunt and look over the area in preparation for the deer safari in November. On Saturday morning, the rain started at daybreak and continued until late Sunday morning when we decided to head home. A lot of time was spent driving the roads and learning the area, but we never left the vehicle. One very wet grouse was spotted on Saturday afternoon. He was perched about 25 yards off the road. I couldn't decide if I wanted that grouse bad enough to get soaked! I let two cars go by as I prepared my S & W K22 to pot the grouse. The last car skidded to a stop and turned around. He had spotted the soggy grouse, also. As he pulled up, he realized that I was sitting in my truck. When he stopped, the grouse flew off.

That topped off a perfect weekend. At least I scouted the forest and found a motel to stay in. November would be a different story . . . or would it?

There were several other deer hunters at the motel when my dad, brother and I pulled in. It was still snowing when we went to bed. Opening morning was cloudy but the snow had stopped. As my brother and I loaded our S & W .44's, my dad made some comments about our choice of weapons. His scoped 30-06 was perfect, he said.

After walking about 75 yards, I knew I had made the right choice.

Deer . . . (Continued from Page 9)

grain jacketed bullets would at 1900 fps hold together enough for penetration. For large deer, bear, elk, moose, etc., the Hornady 265 grain jacketed SP bullet or SSK's 315 and 350 grain cast bullets would be a better choice, because they will penetrate and break bones.

My .430 JDJ is still less than a year old, and it will take some time before enough game is taken to clearly determine what bullet vs. velocity loads are best for each kind of game. The loads that work fine for antelope may be OK on deer, but inadequate for elk. I am very pleased with the load used to take my spike horn, but I will probably use something very different next year. I want to try a 340 grain cast hollow point of my own design, possibly at the next HHI hunt.

Some spots were open enough to see almost 50 yards. Most were not! I took a stand and hoped a buck would stroll by. I didn't know where any trails were, but I would scout the area later in the morning. An hour later, it started to rain. During the next half hour, it turned to sleet! Not wanting to catch pneumonia, I headed for the truck. I was the last one to get there. The rest of the day was spent playing poker and watching the snow and sleet fall.

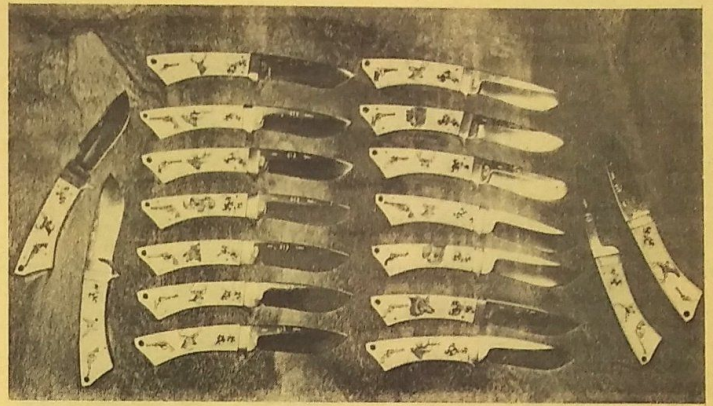
Day two: It was still snowing. Under the snow was a crusty layer of ice and leaves. Still hunting in the thick brush was impossible. The weather conditions dictated taking a stand and waiting for the deer to move. It snowed off and on for the whole day. No deer were sighted. Deer don't move in bad weather. Scratch the second day of the hunt . . . Two down and one to go.

Day three: Good news and bad news . . . Good news was that the clouds were gone and the sun was up. Bad news was that the temperature was only 5°. Great day to freeze your --- off waiting for deer. The gun was probably frozen shut, anyway. The last day ended without any deer sighted.

We stopped for supper on the way back to the motel. My dad had trouble getting his orange coveralls off before entering the cafe. I held onto him while my brother tried to pull them off over his boots. The local police car went by very slowly. It went around the block and cruised by again. They probably thought we were mugging an old bearded deer hunter.

We never saw any live deer . . . Only saw two bucks tied to a bus. Maybe the driver got lucky and ran over them.

Well . . . there is always next year!



Yep, some of the HHI knives have been delivered. This is part of the first batch. Some are still available. Call 614/264-0176 for info.



Black powder on the 100 yard line in typical Pistol 81 conditions.

PISTOL 81

By J. D. Jones

I can think of a lot nicer places to have been rather than England in May, 1981, but since that's where the largest pistol match in the world is held, that's where I was.

Unfortunately, it rained, rained, rained, and when it wasn't doing anything other than rain, it rained! The temperature wasn't very warm, either. I saw the sun at least twice in the dozen or so days I spent in England.

But, that's the conditions 906 competitors shot under to compete in "Pistol 81". Yep, 906 competitors (68 from 11 other countries) in "no handgun" England. On top of that, several hundred entrants were turned away. Last year, each entrant shot an average of 4.6 events each. "81" will average considerably less as rain seemed to slow things down at times.

Pistol 81 was held at Bisley, probably the best known range in England. It isn't far from London and its classic history of military and civilian shooting is prominent worldwide. As far as I'm concerned, it would be a terrific place if the "huts" had any heat in them to dry things out. Ranges of all kinds for pistol and rifle competition abound. In four days, I saw perhaps half of them.

The courses of fire provide something for everyone. Twenty-four separate events (seven disciplines) are held on 24 separate ranges on each of four days. Competitors are encouraged to enter as many events as they care to. Truly, you can go to this shoot and shoot for four solid days without

repeating a course of fire or the type gun used or else compete in several matches with the same gun.

You can start out with air, progress to flintlock, percussion cap, classic pistols manufactured prior to 1914 on up to the latest in practical and long range free pistol. Hell, they even compete at 100 yards with pocket pistols, (bbl. length max. 3.55") black powder pistols and on out to 200 yards with service pistols (High Power Browning) and .45 Auto. Some of the definitions of "classic" revolvers and autos are quite interesting. Their "clay disc team shoot" looked interesting. Fifteen clay discs are placed 15 yards from a table. Three guns — Centerfire, Semi-Autos, Centerfire Revolvers, or .22 L.R. pistols loaded with six rounds are placed on the table. The three team members are situated 50 yards from the table. At a signal, they rush forward and are timed until all clay discs are broken. Sounds interesting for you young fellers.

I saw several games I would have liked to have played. I did shoot two long range events: the long range All Comers and the long range Free Pistol.

Just to let you know that silhouettes aren't the only long range shooters around and that you weren't the first, the British shoot to 300 yards and Roy Jenks of S & W told me he has photos of a long range shoot with scoped handguns taken in the 1890's.

The All Comers rules are quite liberal. I shot a .357 Magnum

(Continued on Page 11)

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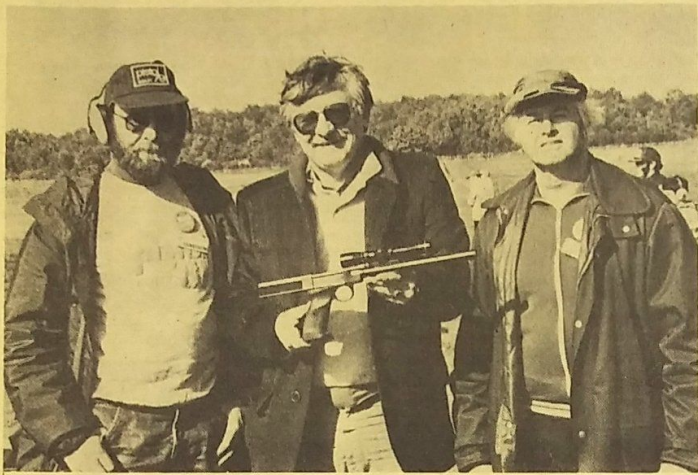
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Chris Lucking, J.D. Jones, Gilley Howe, and the Kengill .30-30 long range free pistol.

borrowed from Chris Lucking that he had rebarreled with a polygon bore H & K barrel. He also had made his own cylinder of 1.750 inches in length. (Maximum allowable cartridge length for this competition.) Targets are bull's-eye. I started out at 200 yards with Chris' target load utilizing a 180 grain Speer bullet, and scored 48 out of a possible 50. At 300 yards, conditions weren't as good and I scored 44. The next morning, with borrowed ammo that I think was loaded with 158 grain bullets, my first group was at 1-2 o'clock. Chris, who had observed with binoculars, pointed down and left. I moved the sights down, left and fired two; then fired three in a circle around those two. After it was all over, Chris said my first two after I corrected were in the 5 ring.

Such is life for a 42 for a total of 134. . . . 138 won the match. The British award medals for performance. In the All Comers, 90 nets a bronze, 100 a silver, and 115 a gold medal.

The long range free pistol is another type beast. When they say free pistol, they mean free! Restrictions are .30-.455, the barrel cannot be over 9.5 inches (I think) longer than the loaded round. Ten shots in ten minutes at 200 and 300 yards. Butt rest only. That's it . . . Have fun!



Typical rig for paper punching. Gun is a Walther GS-P .32 Long.

There were lots of bolt guns. Quite a few T/Cs. Several (Sorry, Phil, they have been using them for years) Navy Arms Rolling Block pistols converted to .30-30. And a few Kengills. The Kengill is an unusual gun. Its bolt is locked by "wings" that lock into the receiver walls. It's very strong, made of very high quality steels and can be chambered for anything you can get inside the receiver. Gilley Howe is the man responsible for Ken Pratleys making it. Gilley loaned me one in .30-30 with enough ammo to shoot. The bullet was a 146 grain full metal jacketed Norma. Don't remember the

powder for sure, but I think it was 34 grains of No. 2.

I found on my 200 yard sighter shot the trigger wasn't anything to brag about. Turned out that was the way Gilly liked it as the gun has three external trigger adjustments for travel, sear engagement and spring tension as well as a stop.

Anyhow, the 1st shot was a 4 at 12 o'clock. Chris cranked and banged on the 4X Leupold and the next was a V Bull. And so were the next 10. Seemed about right to me, and it turned out to be a record. (200 yard target — 10" black 5" V ring — 300 yard about 16" Black — 8" V).

Conditions were not good at 300 yards. Chris suggested waiting until the next day to shoot the 300 yard portion. I wanted to get it over with and get dry! Shooting stopped at 5 p.m. whether you were finished or not. At 20 till 5, I started with both guns. As shots are marked between each shot, four sighters and 20 shots can take awhile if your pit crew is a little slow — and these guys had been pulling targets for three days in the rain.

First sighter at 300 yards was at 12 o'clock, barely in the 'V'. The No. 2 was barely in the bull (5 ring) at 5 o'clock. Afraid to move the sight, No. 1 record shot hit right beside No. 2 sighter. Chris wanted to move the scope adjustment and had much more confidence in the Leupolds adjustment than I did. I figured it "jumped" adjustment on the recoil of the No. 1 sighter and didn't want to chance it again. I went with Kentucky windage and elevation. The wind became progressively stronger and my final hold was in the white off 10 o'clock position of the bull. Ended up with 100 — 15 V at 2 minutes till 5.

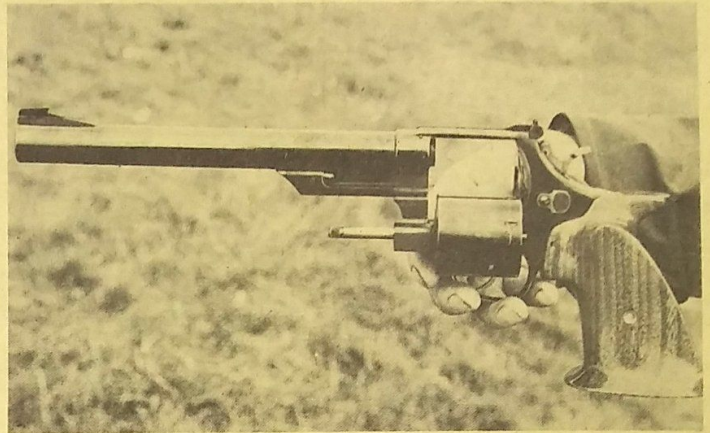
Chris and Gilly think I made a mistake in using guesswork to aim rather than adjust the scope. They are probably right, and I think the record is now 100 — 17 or 18 Vs. Anyway, 15 Vs was good enough to win it.

In this competition, it takes a 94 for a bronze medal, 97 for silver, and 99 for gold.

Several possibles (100s) were shot with the handmade single shot Kengills. I don't know of any being shot with anything else. All of the Kengills used that nasty old no good for a pistol .30-30 cartridge. Hell, everyone knows the .30-30 won't shoot! Strange to me, there were no .303s entered, but plenty of .308s.

In a nutshell, Chris and Gilly furnished me the best in equipment and

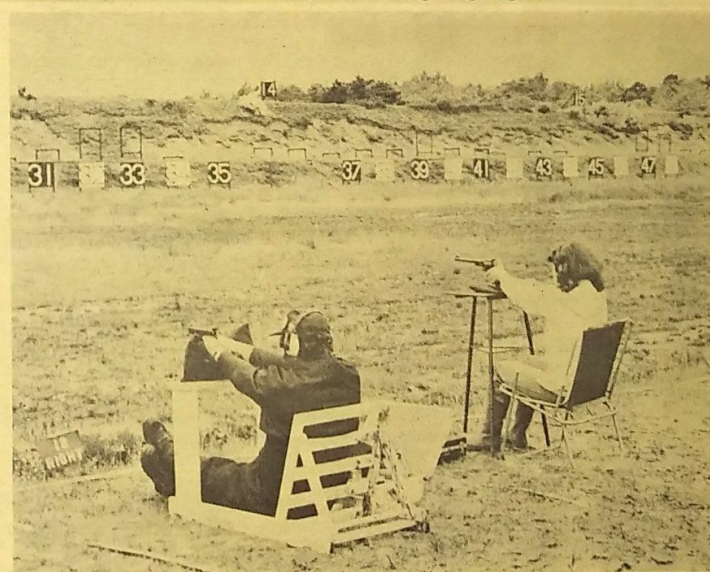
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Chris Lucking's custom S & W with 1.750 inch long cylinder he made himself and H & K polygon bore barrel. Chris did all the work on this gun himself.



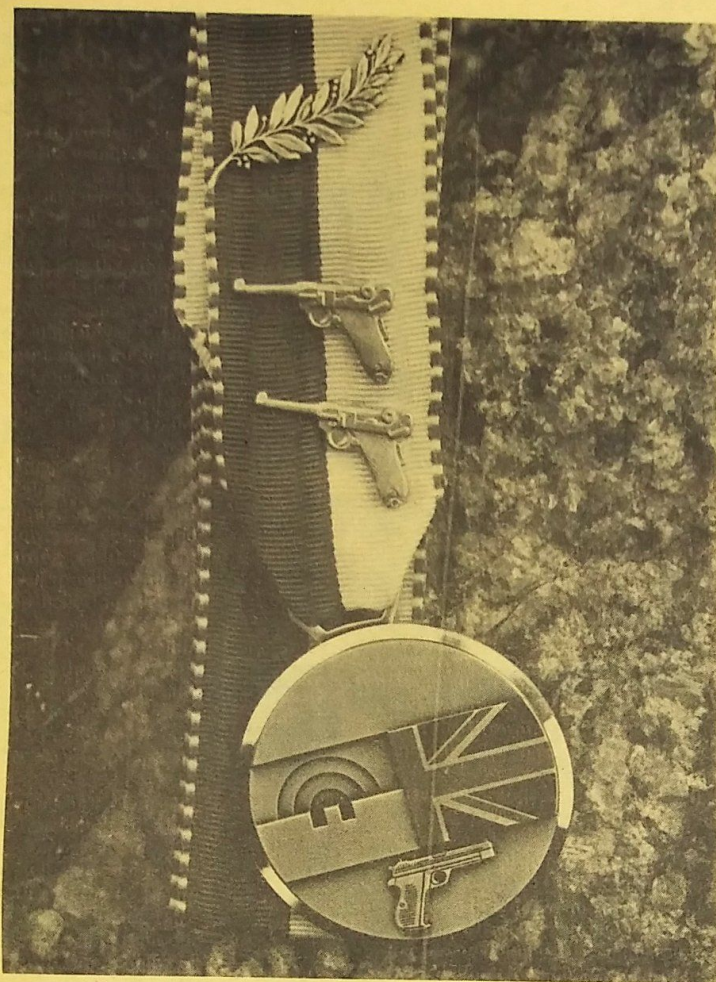
S & W with Gilly Howes long range sights!



Two different styles of rig to take advantage of the rule allowing the butt of the gun to be rested.



Action of the Kengill. It's a single shot. Simply drop the round in the top and close it to shoot.



The Grand Master medal. Two "golds", signified by the two gold lugers on the ribbon are required to win the G.M.

Chris, who walked me through the matches, was the best coaching and sight adjusting advisor that anyone could ask for. I just did what he said and besides having a good day, had a lot of luck. As in most matches, there were probably 8 to 10 entrants realistically capable of winning on any given day.

I found two gold medals equalled on Grand Master medal with two little gold Lugers to pin on the ribbon. Very nice.

I particularly like the British method of awarding these medals at major shoots. The medals make all I've seen in the states look pretty poor. They are fairly easily attainable by many shooters and are dandy souvenirs.

I also particularly like the pubs at Bilsley which are actually part of the

clubhouses of many famous military units such as the "London and Scottish", and the custom of drying out from the inside that takes place in them each evening.

I was the guest of Tony Humpage and after picking me up at the London airport and making sure I was properly situated in a hotel, Tony proudly had me try out the English beer. It's non-carbonated (flat), 2-3 percent, served warm and in half pints or pints. Never saw anyone with a half pint, though. After my first pint without comment, Tony just had to ask: "Well, what do you think of English beer?" I said, "Tony, the beer is fine, but I think the horse they strained it through was sick." That was the real start of a helluva good friendship. He feels the same about American beer.

ROCK 'N ROLL & .44s

By Ted Nugent, No. 1230

I first hit the woods around 1954 at six years of age on our family's annual fall jaunts into the woods of Northern Michigan. Each October, Dad would load us all up to camp and wander around the forest with a bow and arrow, chasing whitetail deer. We never bagged much venison, but it was those initial experiences in the out-of-doors that led me to my life in the woods and game fields of the world.

I'm 33 now, a success at my profession and am an avid hunter, trapper and fisherman.

I am a life member of the National Rifle Association, National Trappers

Association, Michigan United Conservation Clubs, Citizens Committee For The Right To Keep and Bear Arms, a life sponsor of Ducks Unlimited and a member of the National Wildlife Federation, to name just a few . . . and not just on paper. I'm active, involved and a real supporter of each organization because I believe in their causes.

I got lucky with Rock 'N Roll and now can afford to spend six to seven months each year hunting, trapping and fishing and just taking my Bronco into the out-back.

I've always bow hunted, and spend a

lot of time with the smooth bore after all the small game. I can appreciate an accurate 7mm Remington Mag. on those long shots and have worked on my handgun marksmanship over the years.

I got my first Smith & Wesson Model 29 in 1970 when they were still under \$200 and have managed to accumulate a fine collection of assorted revolvers and automatics over the years. I still use that original Model 29, even though I have collected a few more since then. It is a 6-1/2" Blue with Pachmayr grips and a "trigger and action job" done by my friend, Larry Kelly, when I had him Mag-Na-Port it.

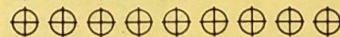
I have collected a number of Michigan whitetails with it; a dozen wild boar; a good Alaskan black bear; a 7 x 7 Roosevelt elk; a fine Boone & Crocket barren ground caribou, at 150 yards (witnessed); a few Corsican and Barbados rams; and a number of small game.

I plan on scoping one of my 8-3/8" models for some pronghorn hunting soon and look forward to introducing my shooting friends to handgun hunting.

A lot of the local law enforcement boys come out to my farm in Michigan to shoot on my range and we are planning a little handgun deer hunt in the future.

Anyone who dares contest my right to bear arms or tells me "hand guns are only made to kill people" had better be ready to sit down and listen to the facts of the matter. The enjoyment I get from the hours of target shooting and hunting with my family and friends, not to mention all that fresh meat I supply us with, surely has had a lot to do with my ability to cope with the riggers of travel and pressures in my career. In fact, some day I wouldn't be surprised if my kids and I head off into the Alaskan wilderness somewhere to live right.

Editor's Note: Ted is a highly competent and successful Rock 'N Roll performer and is well known worldwide. There is as much difference between the act and the man as night and day. He is able to work about half the year and hunt, trap and fish the rest of the time. An extremely competent handgun hunter, Ted is extremely busy at this time, but will be writing about some of his exploits as time permits. The preceding was Ted's way of introducing himself and letting us know where he stands.



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.44 MAGNUM POWER: FACT OR FANTASY

By Lynn O. Cozart, No. 1080

The most powerful handgun in the world. That's what the manufacturer's literature with my new Ruger Super Blackhawk said. I had no reason to doubt the claim. After all, every gun magazine I could lay my hands on said the same thing. This was the gun that everyone that was dissatisfied with the .357 Magnum, or feared an encounter with a large angry animal was buying. In short, this was the giant killer.

Unfortunately, Americans have invented something called advertising. We are not content with just a good product and its merits, we want superlatives like biggest, best, most and so on. The gunmakers have no choice but to comply, or else not sell their product. However, you cannot tell lies in advertising, or the people you are trying to sell to will eventually realize it, and stop believing even the true parts of your advertising. So, most advertising tells only the good selling points of a product, without going into any of the negative aspects. While this isn't dishonest, it does allow a lot of false impressions to be thought facts.

For instance, the .44 Magnum is the most powerful handgun in the world. This is true, and you can't blame the manufacturer for using it in their advertising. Aha, where is the false impression in that? Well, the problem is that while telling the truth, there are one or two little goodies that aren't mentioned. Not deliberate falsehood, just neglect of most companies or people buying their products to qualify the statement comparatively.

Undoubtedly, most people remember that great deer hunting combination, the Winchester model 94 carbine and the .30-30 cartridge. You know, the one most gun writers now say is adequate or marginal for deer and black bear under one hundred yards. Well, the fact is, that combination has more foot pounds energy and muzzle velocity than any .44 Magnum pistol and cartridge commercially available.

But, what does this really mean? It means that while the .44 Magnum is the most powerful handgun in the world, it has all the limitations of a handgun. You just can't get something for nothing in bullet performance. To make a more powerful handgun, either you have to make the bullet go faster, or make it heavier, or make it bigger. To improve on the .357 Magnum, they took a .44 Special and made it go almost as fast as the .357 Magnum, with a heavier bullet. The result was a more powerful handgun, only with a lot more recoil. The bullets underwent some modifications for more penetration, which they achieved, but also lost some expansion. Clearly, you can only go so far toward developing a more powerful handgun before you run into the problems of recoil, noise, penetration, and expansion. You can only make a given bullet go so fast in a given gun, before running into excessive pressure, noise, and recoil.

But I gave this aspect no thought at all as I hurried out to the range to sight in my new Super Blackhawk. Since I live in Pennsylvania, where the main big game is deer, I wanted to be ready for deer season. After sighting in, I was ready for anything, sure that any deer I shot would go down like he had been hit with a sledgehammer. All I had to

(Continued on Page 13)

44 Mag . . . (Continued from Page 12)
worry about was finding the deer.

Now, four years later, and five deer shot with the .44 Magnum, I am a lot more skeptical. The first deer I saw had been shot by my brother-in-law with a scoped Super Blackhawk at twenty yards through the left shoulder with a Remington 240 grain hollow point. The bullet broke the shoulder, and then separated core from jacket. The jacket ended up imbedded in the spine, and the core in the stomach. Bone fragments destroyed the left leg, heart and liver. This first deer went down immediately, and stayed down. I wasn't sure, but I thought maybe the bullet should have stayed together.

The next four deer shot in two years including the one fantastic year when both my brother-in-laws and I got a doe a piece with Super Blackhaws, had neat holes completely through them. One doe was shot twice in the neck, one bullet hitting the spine (the bullet went clear through) one in the paunch, and one shot by my brother-in-law through the paunch, and again in the back of the neck when it got up six foot away as he walked up to it. Not one of these bullets expanded to amount to much. Something was wrong somewhere.

When warm weather came again, I wasn't satisfied with bullet performance, so I decided to find out what went wrong. First, I put a target on a wooden box at twenty-five yards. With my reloads, accuracy was good, and an impressive array of splinters flew from the back of the box at each shot. So far, so good, but just to see how good, I thought I would do the same thing with a .357 Magnum, and see what happened. Accuracy was just as good (which I knew to start with) and there was an equally impressive array of splinters at each shot (surprise). While such a test is not truly scientific, it did give a lot of food for thought.

But, the next test would separate the men from the boys, I was going to check the penetration. First I would shoot each gun into a seasoned oak fencepost on my father's property (he was not real impressed with the idea, but I did it anyway) and see how many fenceposts I would need to recover the bullet. Surprise number two was coming. Neither gun would shoot through even one oak fencepost, six inches in diameter. The .44 penetrated to about three and one half inches, and the three inches the .357 penetrated was really puzzling. Now I had two powerful handguns, and neither bullet would expand (as I found from the bullets recovered from the fencepost) more than a little bit. In addition, the cores of both bullets were separating from the jackets. Just to be sure it was the bullet, I took a .44 Magnum carbine and shot it into the fencepost so that I could obtain the most power and velocity from the .44 Magnum load. No, it didn't do very much better. Now, I had more problems than I started with.

The more I thought about it, the more problems I had. I was using Speer 240 grain Jacketed Hollow Cavity bullets in the .44 Magnum and Speer 158 grain Hollow point bullets in the .357 Magnum (please don't sue me fellows, I'm not saying your product isn't good, it's the best I've used to date, and if ever I hunt bear, moose, or mule deer, I'm going to buy only your Lawman ammo for my .44 Magnum cause it penetrates the best). According to Lyman's 45th edition, my charge of 24.3 grains of H4227 was close to max-

imum (25.0 grains) and the .357 Magnum at 12.0 grains of H4227 wasn't close to maximum (15.0). Even in a 20" carbine the .44 Magnum performance didn't increase much, and the only way I could increase the velocity would be to switch powders and use magnum primers. There just wasn't any way to make the bullet go fast enough to expand, short of having the gun come apart from excessive pressures.

By now, disgusted with my tests (I felt better about the whole thing when I was blissfully ignorant) I decided to do some target shooting for relaxation. As the box was still set up, I put up a target and started shooting .357 Magnum target loads (actually .38 Special in power and speed) with 150 grain hollow points cast of pure lead in a Lee mold, resized to .356 and lubricated in an RCBS lubricator and resizer, lubed with Lyman's Ideal Bullet Lubricant. Again, the accuracy was good, but then it always had been. I started casting these bullets for target practice and groundhogs, because it was so much cheaper than jacketed bullets. Surprise number three came as a real shock. I got an even more impressive array of splinters with this light load in .357 Magnum, than I had gotten with full power .44 Magnum loads with jacketed hollow cavity bullets. Having nothing to lose, I decided to try the fencepost penetration test. Speer will be happy to hear that I got nowhere near the penetration distance of their bullets, only about an inch and a half. Instead, I got dramatic expansion. These bullets nearly doubled in size.

There could only be one answer, and I wanted to find it, and I think I did. By sifting through all the results, I determined that the only possibilities were 1) I was crazy; 2) I needed stronger glasses; 3) the pure lead hit the target, and the box, whereupon, the bullets expanded dramatically and blew unbelievable holes in the box when they went out the other side. There was only one solution, try the same .44 Magnum load, only using lead bullets.

After three weeks, I got the chance to use Taurus (Alberts) bullets I had ordered for my test. There was a definite improvement on expansion, with a corresponding loss of penetration. Just to show the manufacturer knows what he is talking about, Taurus recommends their bullets be used in mid-range target loads of under 1000 feet per second. I experienced no leading with these bullets, but due to the heaviness of the load, some bullets would back out of the casings, and lock up the cylinder and the gun. If Taurus would put a crimping groove in them, they would definitely due well in heavy loads as well. In fact, for this reason, I started casting my own bullets in a Lee mold.

With Lee Bullet number C429-240 SWC, resized in my RCBS lubricator, to .429 and lubricated with Lyman's Ideal Bullet Lubricant, and Hornady .44 caliber gas check installed, I got impressive results. Accuracy was equal to the Speer bullets (I can think of no higher praise) and expansion was dramatically better than with any factory bullet. Now I had the ultimate bullet for deer. The only problem is, I didn't get a deer this year, and although I think I know what this bullet will do, I have to shoot a deer with it to be sure.

No matter which way you go, the bullet for expansion, or a bullet for

penetration, with the .44 Magnum you still have two problems, which you must compensate for. First, there is a lot of recoil and muzzle blast, which means a lot of practice is necessary. Most shooters will be able to control a .44 Magnum, but not by shooting a box of ammunition a year. Second, and even harder, is that each shooter must realize the limitations of his gun and ammunition, and his own ability. No one likes to admit he isn't as good as someone else, that is what makes shooting so tough, and the .44 Magnum so popular in the confusion of facts and fantasies.

It is a fact that the .44 Magnum is the most powerful handgun in the world. It is a fact that it is powerful enough for any game animal on the North American continent. It is a fact that it is better ballistically than the .357 Magnum. But it's a dreamworld fantasy that a .44 Magnum will make up for sloppy shooting. It's a fantasy that you only have to hit an animal with the .44 Magnum for it to expire on the spot. And it's a fantasy to believe that using any heavy caliber handgun is going to enable to shoot as well as a rifleman. Generally, the only way to be sure that the .44 Magnum is enough gun, is as the African hunter put it, "Get as close as you can, sonny, then get ten feet closer."

Ed: Technically, the .44 Magnum is not the worlds most powerful handgun and sometimes wood impact prohibits expansion and sometimes expands bullets very well. The point is well made — The .44 Magnum isn't magic — it still must be shot well to perform well.

BOAR HUNT M-29 STYLE

By Bruce Smith, No. 249

The time was finally at hand, three months had passed since I had decided to try my first boar hunt. My hunt was scheduled to take place at Telico Junction Hunting Preserve near Englewood, Tennessee. After talking with several friends who had hunted at Telico Junction and hearing many favorable comments, I was ready to give one of those boars my best shot!

After spending the last three summers shooting steel silhouettes which just stand there and fall over when hit, I was ready to shoot something which might not give up so easily, and offer a different type of challenge.

Arriving at Telico Junction early in the afternoon gave me and my hunting partner, Dick Deardurff plenty of time to settle in.

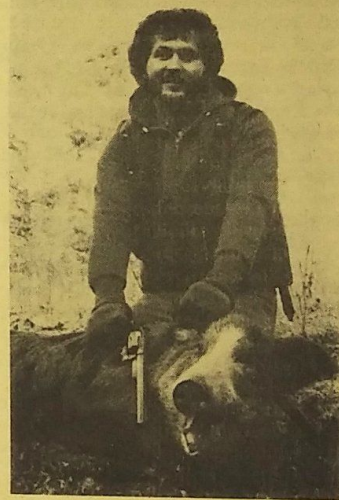
A trip over to the taxidermy shop to check out some of the fine mounts (boar, ram, goat, etc.) really got the blood to stirring. Back to the cabin to dig out the hardware and out to the sight in range. Breaking open the model 29 (8-3/8 in. barrel) and slipping six rounds of Hornady 240 Hollow Points backed by 24 grains of W-W 296 in the cylinder, I was about to see if point of aim in Tennessee was the same as in Ohio. After three cylinders full or so, I was satisfied with a 6 o'clock hold at 40 yards on a three inch bull.

Slipping on the borrowed shoulder holster, after a good nights rest and an early morning breakfast, I was now ready to meet up with the rest of the hunting party and catch a few last

minute instructions from our guide.

Out of the truck (after a short, but cold ride to the hunting area) and into the woods, we started working our way up the frost covered hill. Didn't take long to get warmed up walking those hills, as I am use to flat land hunting back in Ohio. After stalking the hills for 40 minutes or so we came across another hunting party which had just spotted three boars, none to anyone liking we continued on. Getting more anxious by the minute, it was now time to circle the next hill. Lark and Dick took the right and I took the left fork. Several minutes passed and there it was, a good size boar coming into a clearing from over the hill. I froze, the boar quickly moved forward into the clearing and hadn't spotted me, yet. (About 40 yards down wind.) A quick check and I could make out the tusks protruding from the lower jaw. Not Bad! This was the one I wanted. Bringing the front blade of the .44 Magnum down behind the front shoulder I started my squeeze. Just as the hammer fell the boar turned slightly and the 240 grain slug entered behind the left ear and exited out the top of the head. Yes, one shot and it was over, at least for the boar, as he dropped like a ton of lead. Had I really connected on the first shot? Yep! after a closer inspection there was no doubt this boar was going nowhere, except back to Ohio and into my freezer. (.44 cal. entrance hole behind left ear running at a 30 degree angle exiting front top of skull.)

After taking a few pictures on site and dragging the boar out to the truck, the ride back to camp was a very satisfying one. Yes, my handgun hunting trip had become a reality and a very rewarding experience, and you can bet there will be more handgun hunting experiences in my future.



Bruce Smith and his No. 1 boar taken with a 8-3/8 inch 29.

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RUGER, 4-5/8" .44

By Charles Able, No. 556

Well, Larry Kelly, HHI No. 2, is the man that did it to me. It all started some years ago when I was living in Alaska. I ran out of 2400 powder and went down to the gun shop to buy some and shoot the bull with the gunsmith. He showed me a Ruger .44 that he cut back to 4-5/8" and reblued. I liked the look and feel of the short barreled gun. It balanced and pointed well. I asked what it would cost to get one of my .44's done like that. He said he could do the job for about \$30.00 . . . \$14.00 for cutting the barrel, \$1.50 to put the sight back on, and \$12.50 for rebluing the whole gun. I told him that I wanted to think about it for a few days and would let him know what I decided. By the next day, I had made up my mind to get the job done. At that time, I had three .44's. I took one down to him to get the work done, and in about a week, I had my 4-5/8" .44. Over the next four years, I used the gun a lot. I did not use it as much for hunting as some of my longer barrel guns, but this gun was the most used of all of my guns. Every time I went out of town, I had that gun with me. It was a little harder to hit with it than the 7-1/2", but if you did your part, it would shoot just about as well as the long barrel guns.

After about four years, I was back down in the lower 48 and times were hard, and I sold the short .44 for eating money. Two years later, things were looking better for me. I missed the short .44 a lot and decided to get another one made up the first chance I got. I found an old model Ruger .44 at a gun show that was just like new. The owner wanted too much money for it, but I did some horse trading with him and I got the gun.

The first thing I did when I got back home was to take the gun all apart and give it a very good cleaning. The Super Blackhawk was just like new inside and showed very little outside blue wear.

The next day, I shot the gun off sand bags and got 1-1/2" groups at 25 yards. I thought to myself, I was on my way to having my short barrel .44 again as I had a good shooter.

I didn't know it at the time, but this is where things started going downhill.

I took the gun over to a gunsmith here in town. He is not the best, but he is the only one in town.

I had thought about sending the gun to Mag-Na-Port to get the work done and wrote them. After I got their

information, I decided their prices were too high, and decided to go with the home town gunsmith. I told him that I wanted to have the barrel cut to 4-5/8", put the sight back on, and have the gun Armoloyed as I had been reading about putting Armoloy on guns for a rust-free finish.

Well, in two weeks, he called me and said that my gun was back from the Armoloy Company and I could come and get it. It cost me \$40.00 for the Armoloy, and the gunsmith charged \$26.00. I hurried over and got my gun. At the shop, I did not look at the gun all that close. When I got home, I got to looking it over better, and the front sight was raised up on one side about 1/16th of an inch.

I called the gunsmith and asked what happened with the gun. He said the sight was on good and would not come off. I told him I did not like the sight that way, but I would try it and see how it would do. I took it out and shot it and it shot a foot off to one side with my windage adjusted all the way to one side to try to correct it. I took the gun back over to his house and said to fix it. In two days, he called me and said it was fixed. When I got it, the sight was the same. He had just turned the barrel in the frame. It still would not shoot. Back to his house I went with the gun. He said that he did the best that he could with the gun.

I talked with him some and he said I should put on a scope and to hell with the sight being up on one side.

I thought about it some and decided that might be the best. Sometimes I wonder about myself . . . just how stupid can one get, because I told him to do the job.

Well, in 19 days, he called and said that the gun was done. I took it out to the range and tried to sight it in. At first, it shot about two feet low at 25 yards. By moving the elevation adjustment all the way up, it was only six inches low. Then I noticed that the scope had moved back in recoil and had wrecked the adjustments inside the scope and they could not be moved. I took it home and was looking at it when two of the screws fell out of the scope mount. They had been sheared off flush with the gun's frame.

At this point, I did not know what to do. Every time I took the gun over to the gunsmith, he wrecked it some more. I could not shoot it with the scope on, and I could not shoot it with it off! The gun was a lost cause.

I decided the worst thing I could do would be to go back over to see the gunsmith for any reason. I was sick about the gun. I had \$220.00 in the

gun, \$25.00 for shortening the barrel, \$40.00 for Armoloy, \$114.00 for the scope, \$22.00 for rings, \$21.00 for scope base, and \$15.00 for putting it on the gun. \$457.00 in all . . . and all I had was just junk!

I got rid of the gun. It made me sick every time I looked at it. If anyone around here wants to know where he can get his gun work done, I tell them about this one.

I lost the first battle, but the war isn't over yet. I still did not have the .44 I wanted, and this is where Larry Kelly, No. 2, and his boys at the Mag-Na-Port shop did it to me, but in a different way.

I went down and bought a new Ruger .44 7-1/2" and sent it to Kelly. I told him what I wanted done to the gun: I wanted the barrel cut to 4-5/8", front sight relocated, M-N-P, hammer jeweled, trigger jeweled, and a new blue job.

In about two weeks, I got my gun back. I could not believe the job they did for me. That was the best job that I have ever seen done on a gun, bar none.

It was perfect in every way. I got the gun back almost 18 months ago and I have not shot it yet. It is so nice I hate to think about shooting it. I have taken it with me on a lot of trips out of town and not shot it, but one of these days, I am going to shoot it. I put ivory grips on it and I have the best looking .44 in town. If you were wondering what kind of work Larry and his boys do, you will not be disappointed . . . they do the best work that I have ever seen.

The biggest mistake I made was not sending him the first Ruger. I was going to save some money and it ended up costing me a lot. The other day, I got another new .44 Ruger and as soon as I can save up the money, off to Kelly it goes!

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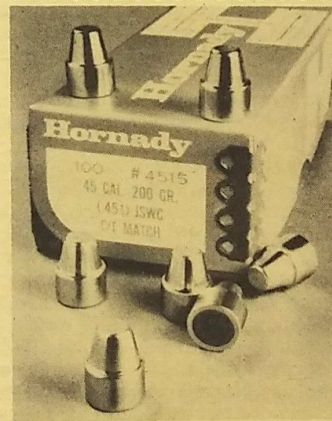
Your fellow HHI members want to read your stories. Writing is not hard. Just write the story the same way you would tell it. It doesn't matter if it's a short or long story. It's fine if you have good photos, but they are not essential.

Stories can be submitted in longhand or typed. Please use only every other line either way. This is important.

Don't worry about spelling or punctuation. Just tell us those shootin' and huntin' stories and experiences. Other people want to know what you are shooting and doing!

HHI HUNT

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DON'T FEED THE BEARS

By Robert Koch, No. 680

The other year I went deer hunting with an archer, my friend, Fred. I used to be an archer, but advancing years have stiffened up my joints so pulling a bow is painful.

For years I had hunted deer with various rifles in Montana, Idaho, Colorado and New Mexico. I also hunted antelope in Wyoming. With accurate, long-range rifles such as the 06 Improved and 8mm06 improved, the hunting gradually lost its zest. I was able to make one-shot kills at far ranges.

Occasionally I'd use a revolver and found it more challenging, closer to the problems an archer faces. I also now and then used black powder rifles to make the rewards more meaningful. Lately all my hunts have been with handguns.

On the hunt I am reporting, we had driven to the area near Cuba, New Mexico. I was carrying a Smith & Wesson 44 Magnum with 6½" barrel. My loads were WW cases, 250 grain cast bullets of wheel weights with a little solder, Federal 150 primers, and 25 grains of 4227. This load would shoot a 5" group off the bench at a 100 yards, but I had previously decided not to take a standing offhand shot over 75 yards to insure not wounding a deer. I would attempt 100 yard shots only if I had a rest.

Fred and I separated, he working slowly through the aspens lower down, and I walking the ridges. With his bow, he could shoot does, but I was restricted to bucks only.

Wouldn't you know, I kept running into does while he saw nothing! I had stopped for a breather and was watching the hillside below trying to catch a glimpse of Fred when I saw

movement. Then a large doe stepped out of the bushes 200 yards below. Soon she was followed by two smaller does. These are mule deer in our area. I was relaxed, not too much interested, leaning against a Ponderosa Pine when I suddenly came alive. A nice buck, four points (Western) was following the does up the hill. They knew Fred was below for now and then they'd stop and stare down the hill, but they weren't alarmed enough to run.

I marked their progress and a step at a time backed up so I'd be over the ridge out of sight and could hurry to intercept them. I had enough time and felt I'd get a shot.

Just then a rifle boomed out, then a second shot. Someone higher up had shot, but at a different bunch of deer. The deer I had been watching sprang into motion and quickly topped the ridge.

Fred also heard the shooting and thought I had venison, so he climbed up to me. We decided to follow the tracks and were pleased to note the running deer were headed towards our parked pickup.

In an hour we were near the pickup and had given up hopes of finding those four deer. In fact, we were talking as we walked along, deciding where to hunt next when Fred, ahead of me, suddenly stopped and started fitting an arrow to his bow. I hauled out the 44 and stepped up beside him.

There was the same four deer, 75 yards up the hill, staring at us. Fred urged me to shoot. Holding the gun in both hands I held for the buck's lungs and tried not to jerk the trigger. As the gun bellowed, the buck went down and the does bounded into the nearby cover. The buck was pawing the ground with his front feet and looked as though he might gain his feet and run off. So I sent a second shot into his shoulder. It wasn't needed. Later examination told us the first shot had done the job, destroying much of both lungs. Neither bullet could be examined for they went through the body.

We dressed the deer, and instead of dragging him to the truck, followed the does, Fred thinking he might get a shot. Archers move slowly, wanting and needing close shots, and before we knew it, hours had passed. We decided to return to the pickup and then climb the short distance to gather in my buck.

Suddenly, again Fred stopped and fitted an arrow to the string, meanwhile walking stooped over, peering under bushes. Then he drew the bow and let an arrow fly. I figured he had missed the deer that I couldn't see, for he hurriedly withdrew a second arrow out of his quiver, crept up the trail a bit and shot again.

His whoop told me he had scored. We went to the area and searched for blood, but found none. Usually the bounding, escaping deer will leave plain tracks, at least for a while, but this one didn't. Fred, however had noticed the direction the fleeing deer took. Walking in that direction, we zigzagged to cover the ground. Then I saw drops of blood, and we were on the real trail. That deer hadn't started to bleed for a 100 yards. A few moments later Fred spied the deer, piled up in a hollow some prospector had made a 100 years before.

The arrow had sunk to the feathers

and had severed arteries entering the heart. We dragged that deer down to the pickup, put our weapons in the cab and started up the hill to retrieve my buck.

We rounded a huge lava rock which had served as our landmark and came to a sudden halt. There, at the downed deer were three black bears, looking right at us. I had the impression the 300 pound one was the mother and the two 200 pounders were two year old cubs. I say, "impression" for we didn't linger, but started backing up. Once around the lava rock and out of sight, we ran downhill and got our weapons.

When we again came around the rock, not a bear was in sight. We walked up to the buck and he was just a skeleton! I tried to visualize the size of the three bear stomachs, and no matter how I tried, I couldn't stuff that much meat into that small a space. But the bears probably weren't aware that their stomachs were too small, and ate the deer anyway! Sort of like the bumble bee doesn't know scientists say his wingspan is too small to fly, so he flies anyway.

MAKE MINE

A HUNTING PARTY

By Steve Wynn, No. 4

If you are fortunate enough to live within a day or two of a hunting preserve you are only that far away from the best way under the sun to get away from it all and put yourself back in the mental condition required to really turn out the work that you should.

My typical day involves about fifteen to eighteen hours of hard work. Maybe not always hard physical work, but always a toll taking mental job. After a certain point I find that I don't always finish the jobs that I plan on, within a given time span. I find that I can't always keep my mind on my work, and sometimes I feel like I really don't care if it gets completed in time or not.

These are the times that I need to get myself mentally rejuvenated. I more or less stumbled on the method that puts me back into "condition." In the summer of '78 I had asked J.D. about a reputable place to hunt wild boar. J.D. had hardly let me finish when he replied, "Telico Junction, when are we going?" A call to Joe Meeks and his able staff set us up with an open date for the following spring. Now all we had to do was to find out how many people really wanted to go. By the time that we had the last of the "firm commitments" from everybody, Joe Meeks had a hunting party of thirteen coming in for the hunt. He said that he would rather hunt with a few less so that he could get a chance to really talk to each hunter, and spread some of that good ole southern hospitality, but he saw no problems with the number what we had arriving. Good thing too, everybody was really keyed up for this hunt.

It was unknown to us at this time, but this was the first of what was to become a twice a year trip for several of us, and every trip has shown us something different, exciting, and worthwhile.

After the first morning in the woods came to an end, several of the group had already made their kill. Over the comfort of a hot lunch, the stories began to flow. Right then and there we had a showing of colors, but did not see the light. It was beginning to take on the look of a real hunting "party." The "early kill club" decided to tag along in the afternoon for what it was worth. The dogs were taken from their pens and put into cages for the trip into the hunting area. Some carried cameras, others carried smaller guns to backup someone if needed. .45 autos, four inch .44's and even a Devel converted Smith M-39. Although they did not think that they would have much to do, they found themselves in a position of envy. They had the honor of rescuing a small boar that was caught by the dogs. They played bird dog for the rest of us and really had a ball. The pressure to get a good shot through the fury created by the dogs was off of them, and onto us. If they got winded, they could coast until they were refreshed and catch up later. The pressure was off of them, but they could get in on almost everything imaginable. But the real thrill of the hunt, is the hunt.

On my second trip to Telico, I was lucky to get a shot at, and drop a nice boar, within the first hour in the woods. Now it was my turn, I'd follow the other ten guys around! The experience of playing bird dog was now going to be mine. Chasing after the dogs and boar was a lot easier when you had two hands free to grab trees on the way up or down the hills. Getting in on the others' excitement while they made a kill was going to be a big pleasure and I was not to be disappointed.

The next two trips to Telico consisted of about ten or eleven people again. We had already realized that the fun was in numbers. With the exception of the last hunt, when I tried to kill one with a spear, the best times that I have had have always come while tagging along while some of the other guys were after their boar. I have more fun telling the stories of the other peoples hunt and kill than could ever be imagined. On one of the hunts, when I had killed a boar early. I was working a ridge trying to push a wounded boar down to where the hunter was, my instructions were to shoot the boar if he tried to get back to where he had been thought to originally come out of. As things were, he tried to and I shot him before he got away into the rough country. Things like this happen occasionally and you can save a lot of headaches for someone who may not be able to continue the chase.

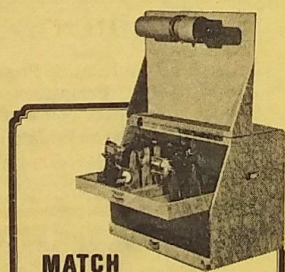
The friendship found hunting in a group cannot be beat. You learn quickly, and you learn more, in such a short time that you are amazed that you didn't think of the hunting party earlier. You find out what loads do in comparison to other loads. You find out what they do on actual animals and you do not have to speculate. You find out the habits of animals very quickly because you can get in on as many kills as you can make it too. You find out what clothes and boots are worthy and which ones should be junked. Little secrets that Joe Blow back home would never let you in on are discovered from someone a little bit freer with information, maybe out of friendship, maybe out of the simple fact that he is

(Continued on Page 16)

OSS 1000 BULLET AWARD

Last month's award went to Al Pfitzmayer for his story on Cape Buffalo.

* * *



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"like that with everybody. You can swap tales, ideas and knowledge until you think that you will never remember the important ones.

Hunting "parties" are really the way to go, but you should take several steps to make it more successful. First: Contact the place that you have decided upon and explain what you are planning on doing. If they are willing to take on eight or ten people they will let you know and all you have to do is fill it up. Second: Don't take anybody at their word only. If the preserve requires a deposit, you must get a deposit in for those that are planning on going. Let the money count! If the deposit for someone doesn't come forth, you will have to let him know that there is somebody else out there waiting for that spot he wants held. Often I have seen people readily say that they will go hunting only to find out that they never have any intention of going. People that often appear sincere still talk without thinking. I talked to a hunter arriving as we were leaving, there are two of them that showed up out of planned party of ten. The other eight never even bothered to call and say they weren't going, but waited for somebody to call them and then said that they weren't going, or forgot about it.

Third: Make sure that the people that are going will do their share, and are compatible. Everybody has heard the stories about the hunting trip that was not as planned because somebody didn't do what they were expected, and said that they would do. Usually it is the dishes. I read recently about one group that was fixing breakfast only to find that the one responsible for the dishes last night had not done them and was still in bed. Well, they went ahead and washed up all the dishes except for those that his breakfast was served on, and left that one dirty, and served his breakfast on it. Serves him right.

Fourth: Make sure that you clarify feelings on the steps to take if an animal is wounded and the hunter is unable to get a clear shot. If the animal may be getting away, should others take a shot? We have never had any trouble with this, due to stating our feelings ahead of time. I have heard of several hunters wounding an animal and never finishing him off, although he may have been helped out by someone in position to get another shot . . . if he had the go-ahead to shoot. Five: Follow the guides instructions to the letter. If he says to hold your fire; Hold it. I can remember one hunt when "hold it" was shouted by the guide. The hunter did not know that other hunters were in line with the intended target, in a thicket. Always know exactly where the others are if hunting with or without a guide.

Once you end up with that hunting party and the plans are finalized you have the best way under the sun to spend about two or three days in the woods and get yourself back up to that mental condition that enables you to turn out work like you want to.

Talk your boss into going. You'll have a lot more to talk about over coffee than you usually do. You both will discover the other side of each other.

Make your plans now, and make it a party. You'll want to make it at least an annual event. If you can't find

enough interested people right away for the first time hunt, call me at (419) 339-3941. By the time that you get back and show the photos to all your friends and start talking, you'll have more than enough interested people ready for the next hunt.

FIRING LINE

My favorite .44 Mag load is a factory load. I have gone through 37 different hand loads and none approach the Remington 240 JHP in my RSB. 1½" five shot groups at 25 yards from the JHP but the JSP spreads to 4" to 5" at the same distance. As a dedicated handloader, (my wife says "crazed" is a better definition), I find this both frustrating and inspiring.

Sherman Harms, No. 833

Just wanted to say I enjoy reading each issue of *The Sixgunner* and look forward to being a member of HHI for many years to come. Winning my charter membership at the IHMSA Ohio State Championship in August of 1979 has turned out to be my most valuable prize to date. Thanks.

Bruce Smith, No. 249

Mike Slaback and I are planning a bear hunt this fall in Northern Minnesota. Any HHI members that would like to go, please contact me: Wayne Randall, RR 2, Box 87, Lake City, MN 55041.

Even though I got skunked last deer season, I still enjoy reading about other members that connected with handguns. Maybe my luck will take a turn for the better this year. With all the pressure from the anti-gun forces; gun owners, especially handgunners, need to support as many pro-gun groups as possible. We also need to be on the lookout for "anti-gun" articles and T.V. programs and write calm, intelligent letters, showing our disapproval of them. I've written to several newspapers and politicians. They have never printed any, but I think I'm being heard. We cannot afford to lose ANY ground in our fight to keep and bear arms.

Douglas R. Scates, No. 984

I want everyone to know how much I enjoy *The Sixgunner* and being an HHI member. How about a recognition award for an outstanding HHI member. My nominee would be Jon Powers. I ran into him again at the Second Chance Shoot. I had taken a 16-year-old with me. He's just beginning and loves gun related anything. I pointed Jon out and he got all excited as he had read about Jon's Magmatic. I introduced Jeff to Jon at the practice range and asked him to allow Jeff to look at his pistol. (Gas operated experimental .44 Mag). Jon's reply was that he could shoot it. Well, if you could only have seen the look on the face of this young man! After conversation and shooting the Magmatic, Jeff was ecstatic. "He talked to me just like I was his friend. He's really a great guy!" This is why I think Jon should get special recognition. He is open and willing to devote his time and energies to promote handgun interest. Keep up the great work . . . Love *The Sixgunner*.

Jim Yeoman, No. 216

Editor's Note: We have a lot of "good guys" in HHI as well as several

who have made considerable contribution to the sport. Personally, being involved with the Outstanding American Handgunner Awards is enough for me right now. As HHI grows, we possibly will make awards for something, but first, there has to be a larger organization so the awards would be meaningful.

Just got my .375 JDJ T/C. Hot damn! What a gun! Long, lean and mean! Looks like a small Howitzer. Loading is no problem. Run a .444 case into the F. L. die and the case is formed. I took it out to the range and had to take a crane with me to drop that loaded .375/444 case in the gun. I fearfully lined up the T/C 3RP scope on the bull and squeezed one off. Wowee! Ouch! My hand's still in place but there's blood on the gun. Got my left hand behind the break-open lever. Won't do that again . . . Cut the heck out of my middle finger. Got plenty left, though. Took only three rounds to sight it in. The next four, two-272 grain gas check cast bullets and two 275 Hornady Spire Points went into one hole .565 outside diameter at 25 yards. Fifty yard cast bullet groups were 2-3 inches and 4-5 inches at 100. That's not bad for the first time out. Looks good, shoots great and will probably accept tactical nuclear warheads!

Larry Rogers, No. 48

Just finished reading "The Sweet .17" in *The Sixgunner* and Highlands word touched my heart. Having been a .17 fan for years, my experience with the .17 Remington is that it is over bore capacity and the smaller wildcats such as the .17 x .221, .17 Ackley Bee, or .17 Hornet are not. T/C offered several .17s but dropped them from production for some reason. How about SSK supplying unchambered .17 barrels for the little rounds?

R. D. Herring, No. 773

Editor's Note: The .17s are real fun guns. I occasionally shoot a 7 inch .17 Ackley Bee (25 gr. at 2600 fps) but for power at pistol barrel lengths, the little cases are far behind the .17 Remington. T/C dropped production of .17s because of the lack of demand. SSK doesn't sell unchambered barrels, only fully chambered. Any of these small .17s are available.

I received my knife, No. 24/100. Only one word to describe it . . . OUTSTANDING! My friend in the states took delivery of by SBH in a letter, and he said: "I took delivery of your SBH and it is beautiful." I thank you for making the pair available.

Charles Warren, No. 664

Just finished reading the June issue of *The Sixgunner*, which prompted me to write this letter. First, I have been a handgun nut for 25 years, being heavily influenced during my teens by

the T.V. western craze. My first handgunning interest was S.A. western fast draw, which I am still heavily involved in, being the 1980 National Champion. My interest in fast draw prompted me to take up holster making, as I couldn't afford the "expensive" (\$39.95 at the time) steel lined commercial fast draw rigs. Now, some 20 years later, I turn out some of the world's finest hand-made holsters, Jayhawker Custom Holsters. . . . A few words about holsters. In the June issue of *The Sixgunner*, Mr. J. L. Rhodes asked about a holster for a custom Ruger S.B.H. with a 4-5/8 inch barrel. He had ordered a Threeperson's holster from El Paso Saddlery. This is where it pays to know your gun. As I'm sure you know, all new model Ruger Blackhawks and Super Blackhawks are built on the same frame. This means that a shortened SBH will fit correctly in a factory holster for a 4-5/8 357 New Model Blackhawk, etc.

While the El Paso Saddlery holster is a fine choice, Bianchi, Safariland, Roy's Custom Leather Goods, and George Lawrence Co. all make similar holsters to the original Myres Threepersons. The Lawrence Keith holster is Elmer's modification of the Threepersons, which includes a snap down retaining strap with extra long tab for quick clearance. The original, true Threepersons holster is still available from S. D. Myres.

While on the subject of holsters for field use, I want to mention the traditional Mexican loop holster of the old west. Available today from Bianchi as their Model 1873 and in a number of different versions from El Paso Saddlery, these made excellent field holsters if one wishes a hip holster. The gun seats deeply and for most purposes, has no need for any retainer, although a hammer spur thong is usually supplied. The holster rides high and out of the way, yet has a wide skirt on the back to add to the wearer's comfort. Also, one advantage of such a holster in the field is its loose fit on the belt. While a defense holster must fit the belt very tightly, a holster that is easily shipped for and aft on the belt is nice in the fields. Such things as sitting, squatting, etc., are often made easier and more comfortable if the holster is moved slightly. The simple Mexican loop holster has withstood the test of time and makes an excellent field rig today. This is based upon the assumption that one is using a revolver, though there is no reason that such a holster couldn't be produced for the big hunting single shots. Enough for this time. If there are any other HHI members out there interested in fast draw, I would like to hear from you. I also collect fast draw rigs, and I'm interested in buying any holster manufactured by Andy Anderson.

Bob Arganbright, No. 645

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