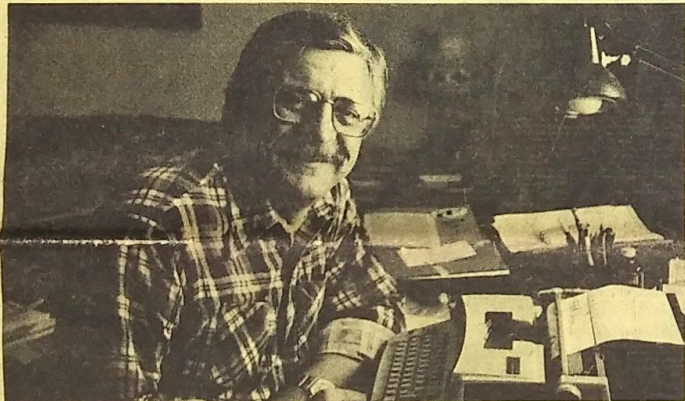




THE SIXGUNNER



MY CORNER

By J. D. Jones

THE ALASKAN EXPERIENCE

I suppose easy hunts in Alaska are possible. The stories I've read about hunting in Alaska did not resemble any of the hunting I did or like anyone I've talked with who has hunted there has done.

As a matter of choice, I choose to essentially "write off" any hunt I go on for my first time in an area prior to leaving — I'm prepared for the worst and usually not disappointed. This of course does not apply to guided hunts where you are paying plentybucks for service.

Twenty-four days in Alaska turned into more or less sightseeing, equipment testing and a learning process. I don't regret having made the trip at all. I experienced things that many dedicated hunters will never experience and I'm damn sure going back the next time a lot smarter.

First, I'm sure easy hunts do occur. They occur to all of us once in awhile. In Alaska they will occur much more frequently if you have four things going for you: (1) a lot of time; (2) a lot of money; (3) a lot of patience; and (4) a lot of luck.

There are several ways to hunt Alaska. First, guided hunts are manda-

tory for browns, grizzlies and sheep. I feel guided hunts offer your greatest chance of success, cost the most money and give the greatest chance of getting ripped off. Not just in Alaska, but anywhere, be very selective of guides and outfitters. Check them out by talking to past clients. Remember, a lot of things will be said over the phone that won't be written. Don't be bashful about the kind of questions to ask. I understand many guides and outfitters are deputized game wardens who may be willing to pull a wilderness "ABSCAM" on you. Some apparently have been caught in some infraction by Fish & Game and are only allowed to operate as long as they provide information for arrests. No info, no license. It's as simple as that. Shades of BATF! You have a right to know if your guide is an enforcement or conservation officer. No sweat with enforcement officers, but I would have my questions ready for any conservation employee who I intended to pay to take me on a hunt. Many are certainly anti-hunting. Nuff on that subject.

Air taxi pilots are available. They
Continued On Page 2



Gaertner's bear is quite large for a black. Wet hair on the head is plastered down. Undoubtedly the largest Black taken with a Herter .44 Mag.

MY FIRST — AND LAST — HANDGUN BEAR

By Russ Gaertner
No. 895

Reading my first issue of the Sixgunner inspired me to recall my best big game hunt, more for my own enjoyment than to claim any contribution to the sport. In fact, I admit to my share of mistakes on that hunt, which other handgun hunters may find helpful.

Having decided to go for a bear hunt in the Rockies, I corresponded with several guides specializing in lion and bear using hounds. Finally I settled on "Bobcat" Peters of Texas Creek, Colorado. The nickname sounds flamboyant, but he earned it when he killed a record 104 bobcats in one month as a government hunter. The choice was fortunate. "Bobcat" turned out to be

the finest imaginable guide, which also turned out to be more than I deserved.

The hunt was in the National Forest Area of the eastern foothills of the Sangre de Cristo range in May. Temperatures dropped below freezing at night and rose to 70° or so on sunny afternoons. But the factor which I underestimated was the altitude and the terrain. We hunted at 6,000 - 8,000 feet over rocky slopes and rough forests, as well as some open areas which were almost level and grassy. Approaching middle age and city living made me a poor hunter, unable to keep up with a pack of scrambling dogs. We had a white riding mule (more on him

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Average caribou in the neighborhood of 300 pounds live weight fell to the scoped 12" .45-70 at about 150 yards.

can fly you anywhere. They frequently know their areas very, very well from spending many hours every flyable day looking for game. With this type operation, you can fly, spot game in an area until you are satisfied you are in a productive area and also one you can land in. Your pilot can drop you in and fly you and hopefully your game out. For this type operation, you'd better know your stuff. If you have any doubts at all about your ability to find your way back to camp unaided in a fog, in heavy cover, in flat land or mountains, forget this route. You are talking about the very real possibility of survival on your own. I learned a little about it by getting lost myself. Sheer luck saved me from a very miserable day or two in the bush. Remember, if you are lost, it doesn't make any difference if you are 50 yards or 50 miles from camp. Plan on being 50 miles from the nearest road or human being. You may be a lot further out than that.

Drive up — walk in from the road — hunt. I'd have to say anyone who seriously thinks this is a reasonable approach is out of touch with reality. Road areas are hunted by locals looking for meat. Roads are in low areas. Seasons are early, before game gets low enough to be in "road" areas.

Terrain: The only place walking is easy is in Anchorage or some other town. Low land is swamp. Frozen, the ground is rough and hard. Soft, it's rough and mushy. Afroheads are rough to walk over. Mountains are like mountains anywhere except for Alders. You do not walk through Alders. You go around or chop your way through. And remember, you have to carry your game back to camp — or someplace a plane can get into (no helicopters permitted) so get ready to work. Are you in condition to hump 125 pounds of meat on a pack ten miles or ten yards? You cannot leave it. You must bring it out! If you don't and get

caught, a jail term is a very real probability. You can easily end up with 700 to 800 pounds of boned moose meat from a mature bull.

Equipment: The best that can be bought isn't good enough. I used Himalaya backpack, daypack, sleeping bag and coat. Expensive ones. Sleeping bag kept me warm when wet. No problems at all with the Himalaya equipment. A new pair of Browning waterproof boots did very well. Prior to leaving, I checked my hip boots and found dry rot. Bought a new pair of Seaway because I couldn't find any that looked better. Put them on just prior to flying out the first time. Got both feet wet September 3 pulling the float plane to shore (about 150 miles from civilization). Leaks in both boots. Wet feet in glacier water about five days. Right big toe still about half numb. Boot does not give enough foot support either. The people that make them and sell them should be forced to use them. I left them behind. If you have any enemies, a pair of Seaway boots would be a great Christmas present.

Rain Gear: Type would depend on the type area you're hunting. A heavy poncho that will not tear and heavy rainsuit would be a good idea. An extra light poncho to carry "just in case" would also be a good idea. Expect a light poncho to get ripped.

Optical Gear: I used Bushnell compact 7X26 binoculars. They are excellent in every respect. You can even see full field of view wearing glasses. The small, Bushnell Stalker 20X spotting scope is a real breakthrough in a high power, compact lightweight rig. A miniature sliik tripod was just right.

From time to time, I'll mention various things about hunt planning, etc. This time I was probably fortunate to get a shot at anything. After a lot of flying, floating, driving and walking, (twenty days), I lucked into four caribou doing their bouncing through

the brush. Yep, brush. If I hadn't been on one hillside and then on the other, I wouldn't have seen them. It was thick enough you could easily walk within 25 to 50 yards of a moose without seeing it, which I did on several occasions. They would have passed at about 250 yards but turned toward us, moving fast. I unsnapped the 12" 45-70 scoped T/C from its sling and waited. At about 125 yards, my hunting partner said, "I'm taking the first one," and rifled him. The others scattered. I picked one out and hammered him with a 400 grain Speer at 125 to 150 yards. He started spinning and I hit him again. He really started spinning then, so I got closer and finished him. No. 1 was a gut shot. No. 2 in the side from the front and broke his hind leg on the off side. No. 3 was a chest shot. It was obvious from the first shot he wasn't going anywhere. Probably should have just walked up close and killed him with No. 2.

The bullets were under the hide. The one that hit the leg bone was expanded to .930 inches and weighed 375 grains. The other was .831 inches diameter and weighed 383 grains. Most of the weight loss was due to parts of the jacket breaking off at the canalure. Tissue damage was extensive.

One outstanding lesson from this trip . . . the average Lower 48er has no concept of the vastness and remoteness of Alaska.

BITS & PIECES

I've been pushing for a scope of high magnification, 6 or 8X for several years. At least one manufacturer is experimenting with one. Drop a note to Redfield, Leupold, T/C and Bushnell if you would like to see one someday.

8MM Nambu Brass is now available from Midway Arms, Route 5, Columbia, Missouri 65201.

R. A. Davis, P. O. Box 688, Athens, Tennessee 37303 is having brass made

up for the Jurras HOWDAH calibers and can also furnish loaded ammo.

S & W 629 . . . available. Don't pay blackmarket prices. One idiot is reputed to have paid a dealer \$1800 for one.

Dan Wesson .44 Mag . . . Some distributors should have them now. All will have the "Power Control" brake, 6 or 8 inch VR or VR bull barrels only. Four and ten inch barrel assemblies available for those who want to use lead bullets. The Power Control system is not compatible with lead bullets according to a factory spokesman.

Ruger Redhawk . . . Who knows? Accuracy Systems Inc., 2105 South Hardy Drive, Tempe, Arizona 85282 has a new speed loader carrier belt clip that looks decent — K or N frame sizes. Five bucks each. \$2.50 shipping and handling.

Plumbilt Products, P. O. Box 303, Chalfont, Pennsylvania 18914 makes custom pistol boxes. One gun case: \$99.98 Hell of a way not to say 100 Bucks.

Wildey Auto . . . The first 150 are being assembled and tested now. Production will be slow.

The Sixgunner . . . Most magazines are in business for the express purpose of selling advertising. One is reputed to spend twice its subscription rate per each subscription obtained. The difference is made up in advertising revenue. To obtain the advertising rates of any magazine, simply write the ad manager and ask for a rate card. There is nothing wrong with this. Without advertising you would probably have very few magazines, no TV, radio and almost no newspapers. **The Sixgunner** does not solicit advertising actively. The advertisers in it are there because they want to be there. If additional advertising comes in, the revenue will go to expanding **The Sixgunner**, not cutting down on what is printed. Which leads to the cold hard facts of life that in the last year there have been three increases in printing costs. It is therefore necessary to raise HHI memberships to \$15.00 annually effective February 1, 1981.

SOAPBOX TIME:

According to the tube, Iran today called for men over age 65 to volunteer for military duty. Where the hell are all the militants? Guarding hostages? Maybe one way to get our people back would be to trade the 50,000 or so Iranians in this country going to school or just here to screw us up, for our people. If Khomeini got his people back, he could draft them.

In the face of Iran's ransom demands to free the hostages, General Motors filed a suit for 58 million dollars against Iran while one of Iran's well publicized demands is that the U. S. kill any claims against Iran. Obviously the government can't guarantee Iran any such thing. But — I'd sure hate to have G.M. looking out for me. Seems as if common sense would dictate holding off until the negotiations are finished. Looks to me like G.M. really screwed up. If that's all they care about the lives of the hostages — what do they care about you, a customer or potential customer once you are hooked?

Bill Shehane won the 1000 cast bullets of his choice from Ohio Shooters Supply for his 'GRIZZLY WITH A POPGUN' story in the October issue of **The Sixgunner**.

later), but I am no Tom Mix on good riding trails and I didn't care for a fall in rough country.

Bears were out of hibernation, but they were scarce. We scouted far and wide for several days, finding only a few tracks, all too old to trail. A day-old track is about half a day too old for a good scent. I began to figure that my 7-day guaranteed hunt was going to be a good, cheap, educational experience, lacking only a trophy.

With two days left, Bobcat spied tracks crossing an old logging "road", barely passable in Bob's jeep. These were big and fresh. Bob opined that the trail could be a long one. I followed a short distance, hoping that the bear would take an easy route, but they were soon out of earshot. I still had some altitude sickness, a nagging headache and weakness, tiring easily.

Late in the afternoon Bobcat came back for me and he was tired with good reason. "We treed the biggest damn bear I've ever seen, Russ, and a cinnamon at that!" he yelled. "We chased him all over this section, and he won't stay put long, so let's get moving."

The sun was down behind the peaks in the West, but the light was still fair as I stumbled over rocks and tangled roots in a creekbed with marshy banks, then stopped dead as Bobcat waved at me to be quiet. He listened for a long minute; I could hear nothing but a dead calm.

"Well, this is the place and he was up that big tree. He's pulled out, and the dogs are with him. I'll take a wide swing around to camp. You go back and bring the pickup in. See you." He left me at a run which I couldn't hope to follow. I decided that bear tracking is the hardest kind of hunting. And I crossed off one giant, beautiful cinnamon bear.

To add to my frustration, I got the pickup stuck between a freezing slick slope and a large tree on the track back to camp. I spent the night in the truck, having no flashlight in the pitch black, and I could not see two feet in front of my nose. When I walked into camp the next morning before dawn, Bobcat was bedded down. He had not seen hide nor hair of hounds or bear. The dogs straggled into camp and we all slept late.

The next day was my seventh and last day of the hunt. When we found nothing, I was ready to give up, but Bob asked for another day to make good his guarantee. I had been thinking that he had more than earned his money, that I should pay in full because my limitations had lost the bear. But I agreed to stay one more day. At least my altitude sickness had finally stopped.

The final day plus one was warm and fair. Around mid-morning, Bobcat found big bear tracks in a new section, an old ranch now absorbed into the National Forest. They were fresh enough to trail, but the bear could be miles away by then. We tied the mule to an old corral fence and Bobcat hurried off after the belling dogs. I followed a short distance by ear, but again soon lost them.

Around 3 p.m., Bobcat came back for me. "Didn't you hear us?" he demanded. "We chased a big bear all around here and he's treed down in a dry wash." We drove the pickup down an old trail to the dry creekbed and then ran along the bank.

Coming down to a wooded area, I finally saw a big black bear. He had come down on the ground, disdainful of the six hounds ranging around him, jumping in and out. As a dog made a dash from behind him to nip at his hind quarters, the bear swung around and swiped at the dog, which beat a hasty retreat as another dog jumped in from the bear's blind side. He made a couple of short feints at the dogs, just a couple of fast steps, and they scattered. But they were at him again when he stood still. I felt awe at his ferocity and admiration for the bravery of those tough hounds. Few dogs will stand up to a bear and stay with him, even in the absence of their owner. Those which won't are sold off to coon hunters or just left in the woods with a bullet in the head.

I also admit that that bear struck fear into me, unlike any feeling I had ever experienced. Compared to potting an antelope, a deer, or even a big elk, there was a feeling of real danger, not simply the pressure to get your game. This was excitement which made me shake with more than shortness of breath from the chase.

If a bear gets it in his head to charge, nothing short of a well-placed bullet is going to stop him. He could easily cover the 50 to 60 feet separating us before I could move more than a few paces. A bear can outrun a horse over rough ground and kill one with a single blow to break his neck. We had no back-up rifle. It was up to me to use my single-action Herter .44 Magnum accurately and quickly. Hopefully the

dogs would keep the bear busy until I could take him out.

I lined up the 1.3X Bushnell Phantom scope, a beefed-up job and a prototype of the present Magnum scopes capable of withstanding .44 recoil. As I started to squeeze, a dog crossed the field and the bear turned. I had to let up and wait for another open shot. The scope had seemed to be a good idea, but crosshairs do not show up well against a black animal in failing light. A better choice would have been a white outlined open rear sight and a yellow insert in the front blade. At less than 20 yards, accuracy is not a problem but quick sighting is needed to fire when the line is clear of dogs.

"Well, ain't you goin' to shoot 'im?" Bobcat whispered at my elbow. I didn't answer, concentrating on the shot.

Finally — actually less than a minute after we had got into position — I had a clean opening and squeezed off the shot. It looked good, but as I brought the gun down out of recoil, I saw that the bear had just sat back on his hams. He took a feeble swipe at a dog. I lined up and took three more shots in less than 5-6 seconds, and he collapsed.

"Stop shooting!" Bobcat yelled, then he rushed down to the bear, drawing his little Ruger Single-Six .22 Magnum with full jacketed loads. He leaned over from behind the bear and put two slugs into the top of the skull. As I ran up, I was sure the bear had been dead.

"I thought I saw him move," Bobcat said. I realized that he feared the dying bear might revive long enough to rip open a valuable hound, as they swarmed over him, biting and chewing at the dead animal's pelt.

I was still shaking, as excited as I had ever been in my life. It was the perfect climax to a frustrating week. Bob congratulated me and we took a few pictures in bad light, then Bobcat got the pickup and backed in within a few yards of the bear. We pushed and shoved him into the back, estimating his weight at well over 300 pounds. But the excitement was not over yet.

As we pulled up and stopped near the old corral fence where the mule was tied, he got a whiff of bear and started to dance and strain at the rope. All domestic animals, especially horses and mules, are terrified by bears.

I got out and admired my bear again, then asked, "You're not going to try to load that mule in with the bear, are you, Bob?"

He smiled, cocky because he had delivered on his guarantee despite all of my problems and the high odds against him, and snapped, "Watch me." He stuck his hand into the bear's gaping mouth, covering it with blood. "If I smear blood on Whitey's nose, he'll just smell blood and not the bear." It sounded good, but I don't know whether he had ever tried it.

As he walked a few steps toward the mule, the nervous animal bucked and reared, ripping up the old fence post and the rail with his rope tied to it. He bucked and ran across the old pasture, dragging the rail, with Bobcat trying to catch him. They disappeared in a grove of trees. Fortunately, Bob was too busy to see me laughing my head off.

When he came walking back half an hour later, I kept the smile off of my mug. He had lost the mule, and he was made, to put it mildly. Whitey turned up a week later at a working ranch on the Forest boundary.

Back at camp, we field-dressed the bear, and the dogs got big chunks of

the entrails as their reward for a job well done. The first shot from my Herter had done the job, placing a handloaded Norma 236-grain JHP in the shoulder/lung area with the quick kill probably due to damage to the spinal cord and heart/lung nerves.

The bear was a prime boar, about six or seven years old, with perfect teeth and a thick winter coat. I had a rug made with open mouth. It measured a bit over seven feet across the wicked front claws and six-and-a-half feet from snout to tail. He was lean with just a thin line of light fat showing between the skin and muscles.

We broke camp in the morning and drove into town. Our first stop was the game warden's place. He examined my bear carefully, especially the paws, looking for trap-caused injuries. He found none, of course, but the idea was to detect possible illegal practices. A favorite trick of unscrupulous guides is to trap a bear or lion, cage him for a week or more with little food and water, then haul the caged animal out into the forest in an easy hunting area. When a client is ready to start his hunt, the helper releases the weakened animal on the path which the guide will take. Even a poor guide and untrained dogs can easily catch such game, and the hunt is usually over by noon. The hunter is none the wiser unless he knows what to look for. Highly illegal and very unsporting, but very profitable.

I still had another shock on the drive back to Bobcat's place. He rolled up his shirt sleeve and showed me a ragged scar from elbow to wrist, with some deep pits in the scarred area. This covered possibly 35% of his lower left arm.

"Guess how I got that," he said. I couldn't. "Well, I was reading how Dan'l Boone and some of the other old frontiersmen killed bears with just a knife. I figured I was as good as they were. So I got the pack out and bayed up a good bear. I held the knife low and stuck my left arm in his face. When he bit into it, I stuck the knife up into his heart. I killed him, but the trouble was that he shied back when he felt the knife and his teeth pulled a lot of skin off of the arm. But it wasn't too bad," he finished. Then he added, "And that's the truth," as he saw the scandalized stare on my face.

"My God, Bob, didn't you worry that he might kill you?"

"Yeah, I thought of it, Russ, but if I can't live the way I want to, it's not worth living anyway, I figure." I couldn't argue with that, but I doubt that many brave men could be found who could bring themselves to try that trick. From my acquaintance with the man, I believed his story then and I still believe it.

As a final note, let me add that the direct quotes in this story represent my best memory, but the exact words may have differed. I've tried to paraphrase what was said accurately, and the incidents are entirely true, of course.

That handgun hunt stands out in my mind as the best I've ever experienced, despite all of my problems. Some rifle hunters have commented, quite sincerely I'm sure, that hunting with dogs doesn't seem very sporting. My answer is that a hunter's chance of stalking a full-grown boar in the wild is close to nil, at humane handgun ranges. I'm not talking about a tame sow in a National Park where they learn to beg food and live on garbage. Furthermore, I challenge any rifle

Continued On Page 4

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I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

J. D. Jones
Editor

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Bear *Continued From Page 3*

hunter to walk up to point-blank range and watch a riled-up full-grown male fighting dogs. If he can honestly say that he doesn't know a new height of excitement and stark fear, unlike anything he's ever felt on any rifle hunt, I miss my guess.

I proved that it takes more luck, combined with a top guide and his hounds, than good sense, perhaps, but I wouldn't trade that experience for anything else I've known. I also consider this kind of hunt the ultimate test of the handgunner, who has to be quick and accurate with the heaviest load he can manage under exhausting conditions in poor light. And he had best not hit a \$5-10,000 hound, or he will have to face a tough guide who is madder than the bear.

That's the top challenge of my idea of hunting's most challenging kind of sport.

TOP TEN ANNOUNCED

The Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Foundation has made its selection of the "Top Ten" nominees for the Awards in 1981. The nominees are: Col. Rex Applegate, Lucy Chambliss, Jimmy Clark, Elgin Gates, Steve Herrett, Roy Jinks, Larry Kelly, Frank Pachmayr, Harry Reeves and Hal Swiggett.

The Awards presentation and dinner will be held at the Denver Hilton on May 1, 1981 in conjunction with the NRA Show.

If you wish to express your opinion of who should win the 1981 Award, write to: OAHAF, P. O. Box 45-70, Bloomingdale, Ohio 43910.

MISSED!

By Kevin Truman, No. 849

I enjoy reading the stories in *The Sixgunner*. Every time I read it, I want to go out and shoot. I use a Ruger Super Blackhawk and 240-245 grain cast bullets over from 19.0 to 21.0 grains of 2400 and CCI Magnum Primers.

This is my first year for hunting deer with a handgun and it's like a whole new sport.

Opening day, my neighbor and I went out with our .44s. In two hours and 45 minutes, we saw eleven deer — all does or else too far away. There was a lot of shooting going on and as we hadn't seen any deer for a while, we decided to call it a day.

I didn't get out the next morning at all, and didn't get out that evening until 6:25. In thirty minutes, it was starting to dusk up, so I headed in. In about 200 yards, I looked up and there was a good buck . . . looked like a 4 point . . . and two does walking across the hill! I got my .44 out, put the sights right back of his shoulder, eared it back and squeezed the trigger and it goes "CLICK". I pulled it back, squeezed it off and it went "CLICK" again. They were still walking across the opening and I was loading as fast as I could. By the time I finished, I was shaking so hard I couldn't hit him and probably didn't hit the hill!

Don't think I'll unload till I'm home for sure from now on . . .



This One of One Ruger by Mag-na-port closely resembles the HHI Sixgun. This gun was won in a raffle at the Outstanding American Handgunner Awards by John Reinhart, No. 495.

Handgun Hunters International is proud to announce the availability of a Custom Limited Edition Sixgun based on the proven Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum Revolver.

Only two hundred of these guns will be made. They will never again be duplicated. Mag-na-port Arms was chosen to do the actual conversion work for three reasons: (1) The Mag-na-port Custom Limited Edition Rugers are the most desirable and valuable Rugers to be had; (2) Mag-na-port's work is superb; (3) Kelly is vitally interested in promoting handgun hunting personally.

It is expected the value of the HHI Sixgun will increase at a very rapid rate.

Details of the conversion are as follows:

Basic Gun: Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum Revolver.

Barrel: Reduced to six inches in length. Special crown for appearance and accuracy. Mag-na-ported.

Sights: Front — Red Insert. Ramp dressed and dull finished to prevent the possibility of glare. Rear — White Outline Blade.

Ejector: Aluminum housing replaced with stainless steel.

Action: Sealed to prevent cylinder rotation. Once broken, the seal will not be replaced. Seals bear letters HHI Gold Filled. Each gun will be given an action job to smooth the action, lighten the trigger pull and decrease lock time by addition of an SSK heavy duty mainspring.

Stocks: Ruger with the emblem replaced with a FEDERAL .44 Magnum case head and dummy unfired primer.

HHI Logo: EDM'ed into the top strap and Gold Filled.

Numbered: The HHI number of each gun will be engraved on the top strap, i.e.: 44 of 200. Knife purchasers serial numbers will be matched.

Identification: Each barrel will be stamped above the cylinder pin with a special M-N-P stamp to identify the gun as a genuine Mag-na-port conversion.

Finish: Metalife SS; a very hard, extremely rust resistant industrial hard chrome that appears to be a mildly polished stainless steel. All lettering Gold Filled.

Holster: Contact: DeSantis Leathergoods, 1601 Jericho Turnpike, New Hyde Park, New York 11040. Phone 516-354-6211. Or contact: John Taffin, 6410 Pomona Road, Boise, Idaho 83704, phone 208-375-6981, who makes rugged custom rigs for any handgun.

Price: \$550.

Conditions of Sale: \$250 deposit required. Balance due within 30 days of notification of completion of gun or deposit forfeited unless other mutually satisfactory arrangements are made.

HHI membership mandatory.

Long Range Rugers

John Taffin, No. 76

Upon returning from the University of Montana after finishing the last summer of my Master's Degree Program, my wife and I spotted a new gun store in town. We went in to meet the owner and I noticed a different Ruger Single Action from any I had encountered before. It was in fact one of the most beautiful single actions I had ever seen. After examining it and looking at the price tag of \$125.00, it was sadly given back to the owner of the shop. As we left the shop and sat in the front seat of the pickup, my wife said, "You know you really want that gun, why don't you buy it as a graduation present?" (Aren't understanding wives wonderful?)

Single actions, big bore single actions that is, are my passion, so I

would still be kicking myself if I hadn't purchased that Ruger. It was, and still is a very rare Ruger .44 Magnum flat-top with 10" barrel. It had been reblued in a bright blue reminiscent of the beautiful blue job of the Smith & Wessons of days gone by, the front sight had been replaced with a Keith long range ramp sight with three gold bars inlaid in the face for long range sighting and as an aid in judging distances. The grip frame had also been refinished in a gray lacquer much like the gray finish of the aluminum lightweight single-sixes of the fifties.

I made three alterations after buying it. I fitted it with a wide Super Blackhawk hammer as most of my other Rugers but left the stock trigger as I did not want to alter the trigger guard by

filing out the hole to accept the wide Super Blackhawk trigger. I don't know if the factory still supplies these old model wide triggers and hammers. If they do they are a welcome addition to old model Ruger SA's. I hesitated to change the trigger guard because of the rarity of 10" flat-top Rugers. A few years back I rescued an even rarer 7 1/2" flat-top .44 from a gunsmith before he cut it back to 4-5/8". A friend mentioned he had taken it in and luckily for me the gunsmith had been too busy to perform the amputation. When I told the friend how rare it was he sold it to me for \$150.00. The 7 1/2" flat-top and the 10" flat-top both were made in very small quantities.

I also cut three coils from the main-spring of the 10" flat-top and fitted it with rosewood stocks. All in all it is an extremely attractive revolver. Even greater pleasure came when I shot it. There were some chuckles as I walked into the local pistol club indoor range with that "long barreled cowboy gun," and took my place on the firing line between the accurized .45 auto's and K-38's. But they stopped when the first five .44 special rounds through the 10" went into a clover leaf group with all shots touching each other. I knew I had a real shooter, at least with light loads. I later settled on a standard .44 Magnum load of 180 gr. hollow point ahead of 25 gr. No. 2400, and was very pleasantly surprised to find that I had one of those rare revolvers that you never think of selling. It's that special kind of sixgun that just doesn't miss. I don't know if it is the combination of long sight radius and superb balance or just plain confidence but that flat-top shot like a rifle. Gallon cans at 100 yards just didn't stand a chance. To go along with the 10" I acquired a Goerg Shoulder Holster which is so trim and lightweight, no other shoulder rig comes close. I recommend it highly.

Since the 10" flat-top has been such a favorite I recently decided to have a custom Ruger built along the same lines. Upon purchasing a Ruger new model Super Blackhawk 7 1/2", I was very disappointed to find that it could not always be relied upon to cock on all chambers. Since it definitely needed an action job I decided to go the whole route and have it completely customized. The Super was sent to Trapper Gun in Michigan with the instructions to rebarrel it with a 10" Douglas Bull Barrel and to smooth up the action with a maximum No. 3 pull. I've not been a fan of the Ruger Super Blackhawk nor the new model Transfer Bar System. I prefer the old standard grip frame and the time proven old Colt Style Single Action. But this trapper conversion was something else. When they do an action job, it is smooth! That also provided a light 1 3/4 lb. trigger pull that is superb. I understand that action jobs done properly on the new model Rugers should also last for a long period of time. While Trapper had my Ruger, they also provided a satin nickle finish, which looks quite a bit like subdued stainless steel, and a white outline rear sight, and red ramped the front sight. The rear sight was left blue, with the rest of the gun in satin nickle. The Super Blackhawk grip frame has never fit my hand properly and this was magnified by the extra long bull barrel. I toyed with the idea of replacing the super grip frame with a stainless grip frame made for the .357 Blackhawk, but instead decided to try the Pachmayr grip. This really makes

Continued On Page 5

Long Range *Continued From Page 4*
a difference. Pachmayr rubber grips on model 29's tend to chew up my hand with full power loads, but on the Ruger they do the job. The filler behind the trigger guard keeps the 10" custom from feeling muzzle heavy and the rubber surface provides a solid grip. This combination of satin nickle finish and rubber grips also is a much better combination for bad weather than a bright blue finish and rosewood stocks.

The Super Conversion is quite a bit heavier than the flat-top because of the larger grip frame which is steel instead of aluminum, plus the heavier bull barrel. The factory 10" barrel tapers from .783 at the frame to .706 at the muzzle, while the Douglas barrel goes from .793 to .731. The Douglas barrel has just enough more weight to compensate for the steel grip frame. Even though the custom job feels heavier it balances much the same as the flat-top.

The barrel on my conversion is marked "Traper Gun long range." If anyone contemplates building a custom long barreled revolver or even purchasing a new 10 1/2 Super Blackhawk to gain a great, or even significant increase in velocity — forget it. Velocities will vary from revolver to revolver and from load to load because of factors other than barrel length, but there have been enough tests conducted to conclude that the average gain in velocity from a 7 1/2" to a 10" or 10 1/2" barrel is only 30-50 FPS. In some cases longer barrels will actually reduce the muzzle velocity.

There are, however three distinct advantages. First, a longer sight radius is gained which will aid most shooters in placing their shots more precisely. Second, the heavier, longer barrel noticeably reduces recoil. But the greatest advantage is the reduction of noise. When I first started shooting, ear protectors were seldom seen. No real shooter would wear such things. But as I grow older and wiser, and especially as certain sounds were not very distinguishable, I found myself always wearing ear protectors when shooting full power magnum loads. But I have found they are not as necessary for the 10" barrel as they are for barrels of 7 1/2" and less. That extra 2 1/2" seems to move the blast just far enough from the ears to reduce the noise and make it bearable.

I gained a personal fourth advantage. I put the original 7 1/2" barrel in my parts box along with a cherished steel ejector rod housing, a stainless steel grip frame, and a Colt ejector rod. All of these are awaiting the right old model .357 Blackhawk to be made into a custom .44 Special.

The most obvious comparison to make would be to test the Douglas Barreled Super Blackhawk against the 10" Flat-Top. I was curious to see which would shoot the best. The Flat-Top has a 3 1/2 lb. pull which I'm used to while the Super should have an edge with its aforementioned 1 1/4 lb. pull. The rebarreled Super came from Trapper with a barrel-cylinder gap of .003" while the Flat-Top was factory issued with a gap of .006". I would expect the Flat-Top to do better because of its more natural grip and because it is an old friend. However that Super sure looks strong. I would hesitate to run many thousands of rounds of full power loads through the Flat-Top, but the Super looks like it should last forever. Since my SA arsenal consists of 10 Colts, one Great

Western, and eight Rugers excluding .357's and .22's, no one revolver gets any kind of workout that would damage it. But if I had to pick one revolver to depend upon for many years of hard service it would be the new model Super Blackhawk with an action job.

Not being an accomplished target shot, on a good day I can keep them all in the black and often cut clover leaves. I'm certainly not a great shot but a good shot. Usually I find I can shoot better one handed instead of two handed. Two hands make more sense, but it is uncomfortable for me to shoot two handed because I have a large chest and shoulder development. I run into the same problem trying to swing a golf club. In testing the two Rugers I decided to shoot from a rest using a pad on top of the pickup and also some long range shooting both off hand and sitting using the leg for support.

The first three shots from the Flat-Top Ruger using my load of 25.0 gr. No. 2400 behind a 180 gr. Sierra hollow cavity went into 3/4". This was shooting at 25 yards resting my left hand on the top of the pickup and cupping my right hand in my left. When I tried the 10" Super my first three shots went into a 7/8" group using the same load which because of the sight set up on the Super printed 4" low at 25 yards. The Super would have to be used with the heaviest of .44 bullets to raise the pattern up.

I took a friend with me who had very little experience shooting heavy handguns so we switched to 8.5 gr. unique and Lyman No. 429421 250 gr. bullet. This load gives about 1000 FPS, potent but certainly not in the Magnum category, and they are pleasant to shoot. After shooting both 10" sixguns with these light loads we switched to 22.5 gr. No. 2400 and 240 gr. Hornadays and No. 429421

We soon "retired" the Flat-Top and shot the 10" Super Trapper custom exclusively. The combination of Superior pull, Pachmayr grips, and heavier weight made it a joy to shoot and the Superior sights made it much easier to hit with. And the light trigger pull just required a touch when the sight picture was right. Hits at a 6" rock at 100 yards came regularly using either bullet. We set up three grapefruit cans at 150 yards and I managed to hit two of the three out of a cylinderful standing, shooting one-handed without a rest. I now really had confidence in that Special Super .44. Before the afternoon was over, my friend with coaching, hit a 6" rock at 100 yards three times out of six shots shooting in a reclining position using his right knee for support.

Although I normally load down to 20 gr. No. 2400 with the 240-250 gr. bullets, we put more than 150 rounds of the 22.5 gr. load through the Super with no recoil discomfort. We quit because the gun was too hot to hold. For any one buying a first .44 Magnum I would recommend they look seriously at the factory 10 1/2 Super Blackhawk. The addition of Pachmayr grips and a trigger job are an absolute necessity, and a white outline rear sight and colored front insert would also be very desirable for under \$300, this would result in a first class sixgun for hunting, silhouette shooting, or long range plinking. I found that I really like the satin nickle finish on my custom Ruger as there is less glare than the standard blue job.

This conversion is not the only work

I've had done by Trapper. I had a Smith & Wesson 1950 frame built up to match the contours of a 5" ribbed target barrel, and my ideal sixgun (FGB 1980) and the Smith were both rebled by them. Their blue jobs are strictly top notch and reasonably priced at \$40.00 on their last list. They also put a Douglas bull barrel on a Bisley SA .44 Special and then nickle-plated the entire revolver. It shoots where you aim it and is very attractive. I've tried three of their finishes plus quite a range of gunsmithing work and while there were a few minor points I didn't like all in all, I would recommend them without reservations. Their delivery time has been anywhere from three to eight weeks. Their address is Trapper Gun, 28019 Harper, St. Clair Shores, Michigan 48081. Contact for a catalog and price list of their custom work.

My Flat-Top will now be put away to be taken out on an occasional session of lone range plinking, my custom Ruger Super Blackhawk will now ride in my shoulder holster during hunting season and will be used for unlimited class silhouette shooting. I intend to put many rounds of 22.5 gr. No. 2400 and heavy bullets through and I'm sure it will still be doing the job many years from now.

.44 FUN LOAD

By Jim Yeoman, No. 216

I had experimented with No. 9 shot and Speer capsules in my Ruger Super Blackhawk but was pretty unimpressed with them.

Measuring the inside of the shot capsule, I found it pretty close to 00 Buck. The cap wouldn't quite seat on three of them. After flattening one of them slightly with a light tap with a hammer, the cap seats perfectly. The three pellets and cap weighs about 170 grains. This compares with 158 grains filled with No. 9 shot.

I started out with 9 grains of Unique, CCI 350 primer with a healthy crimp. I haven't found any reason to change. I had reservations about the capsules jumping or opening up in recoil so I watched them closely until I was satisfied that everything was working right.

Proof is in the testing and snapping off the first shot at a seven yard combat target put two pellets in the 10 ring and one in the 9 at one o'clock. I found that as I moved back, the one pellet impacted farther and farther away from the other two. I concluded the "everytime" flyer was the flattened pellet.

The accurate two stayed in the black for quite a distance but at 25 yards "you pays your nickel and takes your chances"!

I had a lot of enjoyable shooting with this strictly fun load and once three of us were together plinking and one of the guys hung a beer can on a bush that was waving all over in the breeze. After several shots were wasted on this elusive target, I loaded a couple of my 3 in 1's and let fly. As the can flew off the branch, my buddies thought they were with the reincarnation of Ed McGivern. After several other spectacular hits that day, I became a legend. They haven't found out about the 3 in 1's yet.

Fun possibilities with this round are unlimited. Imagine the looks from your friends when you put 18 holes in a target with six shots. Because it is mild, trouble free and a lot of fun to use, it's my favorite .44 load.

NEW YORK! CHICKEN OF THE MONTH!

By J. D. Jones

How chicken can you get? Dick Rau and Jim Krall know that if the New York authorities get hold of you, it's plenty chicken.

On November 1, 1980, Dick and Jim were hunting turkeys near Duke Center, Pennsylvania. While taking a break, they were fired on from a distance of around 25 yards by Greg Higley who was using a three inch 20 gauge loaded with sixes.

Both Dick and Tom received multiple head, neck and shoulder wounds. As the closest hospital was in Olean, New York, they went there for medical treatment and were admitted. Their injuries were not critical, but certainly substantial. The Pennsylvania authorities were notified and investigated the incident. Higley made a statement to the effect that he saw something, thought it was a turkey and fired.

On the next day, November 2, 1980, both Rau and Krall, while still in the Olean General Hospital, were issued Citations by a New York official for hunting in New York without a license. They were informed they were one hundred and thirty-three yards inside the state of New York when they were shot!

I'm informed when Rau and Krall appeared before a J.P., they were informed of the charges and told their fine was \$100. No "how do you plea" or anything. Higley was charged and fined the following: Hunting without a license, \$100; Hunting turkey without a New York tag, \$25; Negligence, \$50. All paid their fines and presumably are glad to get the hell out of New York. Cut that \$50 fine for negligence in half to \$25 each for the guys that were shot and it equals the same degree of severity as the fine for not having a turkey tag. That's 25% of the fine for hunting without a license. Does that tell you anything about New York values and fairness?

Put yourself in the place of the guys that were shot, laying in the hospital the day after it happened with your head, neck and shoulders liberally peppered with No. 6's and some jerk comes in and gives you a ticket for hunting without a license in a state you don't think you were hunting in.

What would happen if they had been carrying handguns . . . legal in Pennsylvania . . . but worth a mandatory jail sentence in New York? You Pennsylvania guys hunting near the line had better watch yourselves. Can any New York game warden, cop or whatever call at will the location of the state line within 133 yards if there isn't a marker? ? How many markers do not exist on roads, much less in the woods? You've got my vote, New York, for "Chicken you know what" of the Month!



1st HHI HUNT

The first of what I hope are many HHI hunts took place at Shawnee Ridge Hunting Preserve on the first weekend in October.

Margot and Ken Whitworth, Rich Winters, Tom Frick, John Borkowski and I spent some very enjoyable time together. Everyone scored, although Tom's hunt was really nip and tuck. I think the general opinion was that everyone wanted to try it again.

As it turned out, our attendance at the hunt was only half of those who were originally reserved. Changed work schedules, cancelled vacations and even a blown engine on the way to Shawnee contributed to attendance being lower than planned. I'm sure some lasting friendships were made, though. Hope you can make the next one!

WOOLLY BOAR

Johnny Musacchio sat across my table with tears in his eyes while he told me he couldn't make it to the first HHI Boar Hunt. Since we hunt and shoot together, he asked if I would like to go in his place. WOULD I?! But, I'm not ready and I'm not a member. We got J. D. on the phone at 11:00 p.m. He said that I was more than welcome and I could join when I got there. This was Wednesday.

Thursday evening was spent locating a holster . . . Found a Bianchi shoulder rig. The S & W 29 8-3/8 was only two weeks old, so I didn't have a chance to get used to any potent loads. One trip to the metal chicken-roost produced very good accuracy with 20 grain 2400 with 215 grain O.S.S. — SWC cast bullet. This was as far as I got. I didn't want to take a chance with another load because of uncertain point of impact. Besides, we wanted to see what Johnny's hard cast bullet would do.

Friday night, midnight, after six hours of driving, I pulled up to Shawnee Ridge Lodge. Met J. D. and the other members, had coffee, B.S.'ed and then sacked out.

Saturday morning the guides took us up the mountain. I was elected to take a stand above a well-used trail. In four hours, five goats and one ram walked by. Two small boars were running by. I wanted a BIG boar!!!

The guides and the other hunters came back past my stand, and we all went back to the lodge for lunch.

After lunch, J. D. took out his case of T.C.'s and a big box of ammo. Everyone got a chance to try them out. We cut down some trees, split some wood, dug some holes, made little ones out of big ones, and shook a lot of leaves off the trees with those beautiful handguns.

Back to business . . . up the mountain again. We walked with the guide and dogs for a good while — saw one nice goat. Passed him up . . . I still wanted that boar.

We were about to call it a day and start back when about ten sheep appeared on the horizon. I pictured one of those massive heads on my family room wall. Right then, I decided to forget the boar for now. We crept up the hill to get closer. The light was very poor. All but one ram went over the other side of the hill and out of sight. This one ram hesitated momentarily at about 35 yards, trying

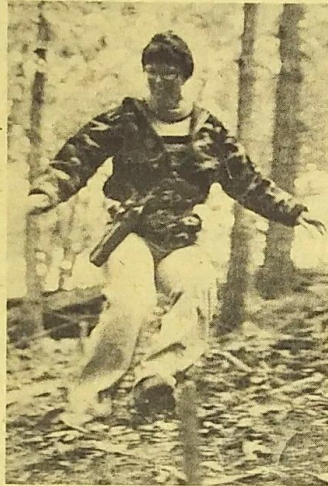
to figure out what was coming. He found out . . . a 215 grain SWC. The shot hit him low. He ran in a half-circle around us. Three shots later, I sat down beside him and we had our picture taken. The guide said that sheep don't go down very easy. Besides, I was very excited.

Before the year is over, I'll have a boar head next to this ram.

This was my first attempt at anything bigger than groundhogs with a handgun. Now I've got the fever.

When I got home, my wife said she didn't know boars had wool. "The next one won't!" I promised.

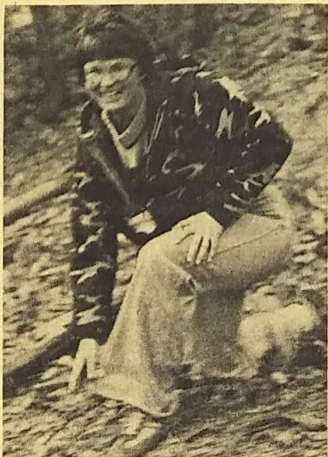
John Borkowski, No. 1011



Margot Whitworth goes downhill - - -



And down . . . (smiling).



And gets back up (still smiling) with the best of them!

I recently hunted for the first time and it was a unique experience in that it was with the group from HHI at the Shawnee Ridge Preserve.

I spent the morning with my husband, who was after a boar, which he succeeded in getting.

In the late afternoon, about 5:00 p.m., the owner of the preserve, Paul Richter, took my husband and myself out to hunt a turkey. After walking for about 20 minutes, we found a group of about ten turkeys. We followed them for several minutes, until I could get a clear shot at one big gobbler with a beard. I took two shots and missed and everything scattered, but after they settled down, I was able to shoot again, and the turkey dropped with one shot. The bullet, a 265 cast bullet with 22 grains of H10 powder, passed through the back just above the thigh, about 1" below the spine. I shot it from the Ruger .44 at about 50 feet. There was a slight problem in retrieving the dead turkey, as a little pig grabbed it by the neck and ran off with it before we could get to it! We did recover it.

Margot Whitworth, No. 899

I was hunting with a T/C re-chambered to take the .430 JDJ with a cast bullet of my own design. The hunt began in the morning with my wife and I behind our guide, Ron, and with J. D. taking pictures. About 10:00 a.m., we saw our first boar, a small one about 100 pounds. He was being chased by dogs that were with another guide (Charlie). We were almost charged, but he changed his mind when Ron threw a small log at him. When Charlie and his hunters caught up to the dogs and us, they took two very nice Barbarosa rams.

At this point we switched guides. We went with Charlie and the dogs. Shortly after leaving the others, we found five nice boar. Only one was a black Russian, which is what I wanted. As I was preparing to shoot a rather long (75 yard) very down hill shot, the boar took off running and with the dogs close behind. I was lucky because the dogs followed the black one. The dogs had him at bay about 100 yards from where we first saw him. This is where I took my first shot. Not a good hit (30 yards), too excited and out of breath after running. The 290 grain cast hollow point went through the lower left ribs and out the other side (some loss of lower lungs). The boar ran about 75 to 80 yards and the dogs bayed him again. Second shot a little better, removed a few chops behind the ribs. Boar is still standing but not going anywhere. Third shot removed some of the tenderloins behind the front shoulder and above the spine. The boar went down this time and stayed down. The weight was about 200 to 225 pounds. Tissue damage was massive.

Comments: Food was great and in abundance. Guides were very good (my first experience behind guides). Accommodations excellent. Area was very rugged, more than expected. Company was excellent. Hunting in general was very good. I would definitely come back.

Ken Whitworth, No. 694

RAM!

Received my 10 inch .430 barrel in time to work up some moderate loads for the hunt. When we started hunting, I found out Shawnee doesn't have any downhill. It's all uphill! Didn't know Ohio had hills like that. The group split up. I went with Charlie (a guide) and an eight year old boy and his father. After only 300 to 400 yards, the dogs bayed four hogs. I couldn't get a decent shot and as it was early, didn't want to shoot anyway.

A couple hours later after climbing a couple of ridges, the dogs bayed two small hogs. I didn't want either of them. They were holed up in brush and briars. J. D. came down the ridge from above them with a camera and telephoto lens. He went in to take pictures and the hogs broke in his direction. Said the lens makes them look close and big while he was hanging from a tree.

On the other side of the ridge we spotted two Barbarosa rams standing at about 45 yards. I eased around until I got a fairly clear shot and stuck a 265 grain Hornady in one from a frontal shot. He reared up, spun, started blowing blood out the entrance, ran about 50 feet and piled up. We found the bullet went in low in the neck, took the plumbing off the top of the heart and exited the flank. Penetrated about 36 inches. I'd guess the ram at about 220 pounds.

A little while later, the boy, with the stock of an M-94 .30-30 under his armpit, with his dad's hand taking up the recoil, shot the other ram, dropping him on the spot with a spine shot. He wasn't dead when we got to him and J. D. heart shot him with a CZ-75 9MM and W-W Silvertips. It did a good job and expanded real well.

I'm very pleased with the .430's performance. It's accurate and powerful. I just got it back from Mag-na-port, but haven't shot it since porting.

Shawnee's accommodations were fine except for toilet facilities that were a little rough around the edges due to a water shortage.

During our shooting session, a chipmunk made the mistake of running across the range. One of the worst cases of overkill I've ever seen was done with the .430. (Note: Tied Steve Wynn's field mouse with a .338 CJMK.)

Rich Winters, No. 264

Buzzed home at noon-thirty, kicked off loafers and suit, jumped into Levis and Texas boots; camo vest over western shirt and transformation was complete: from super salesman to Handgun Hunter in thirty seconds! Checked the gunbag one last time — only four magnum revolvers — should be enough as J. D. always has a couple of extras. About four hundred rounds of .44's and .357's. Might get through two days, can't be too conservative.

A Michigan Dasher purred up the drive; Ken and Margo Whitworth helped load up the gear — took more junk than both of them — wondered if the shocks would hold. A couple of blocks back to I-75 and the HHI hunt was on the road!

Shawnee Ridge is located near the Shawnee State Forest hills in the beautiful Ohio River Valley. Wild country for us flatlanders; checked it out in August on vacation. Pulled in at suppertime; great home cooking by the Richters. Met everyone else and swapped hunting and gun stories until "too-late".

Breakfast over; Why do all these hunts have to start with a marathon hill climb? Must be an endurance test. Finally we hit a clearing in the hardwood forest. "Someone should take a stand here." Ron, our guide must have been a mind reader. Hope I wasn't too obvious a volunteer.

It was a beautiful crisp clear autumn morning, just right for a snooze. NOISE! Movement downrange! Wonder what the trophy fee for grey squirrel is? . . . No more action. Ron

Continued On Page 7

1st HHI Hunt Continued From Page 6 and the others came off the side trail and headed back towards the top, and I changed positions to watch for game pushed back downhill.

Shortly a herd of hogs played nose-to-tail through the clearing and on down the mountain like a string of sausages; none big enough to take so let them go. Back to favorite hunting position. Game radar still working as I woke to a bunch of smelly goats slipping down through the trees towards the clearing. The Spanish and Angora goats weren't my kind of critter. Working drag on the goats were six Barbarossa Rams. Most were average but a couple had the double curls plus of a trophy ram; one in particular had real heavy horns, not extra long but thick and solid. Had to have him as the wife wanted a sheepskin lap robe and this was the largest I had seen.

The lead goat got crosswind, stopped then led them all straight away down the mountain. No shot. Put the old model "Super" back in its Jackass cradle and cursed that stinking old goat. Just then a nasty spotted boar led the dogs full tilt downhill right at me. I swung up on the framework of an old tree stand and watched them streak by underneath. As the last dog passed under the rotted boards gave way and dumped me a -- over teakettle right where the boar pounded through thirty seconds before.

Lunch time. A couple of guys had connected so a happy group of hunters headed back the easy way -- downhill. Ken, Margo and their guide, old Charlie, took another route which led to Ken's story. After lunch was hand cannon, bull session, and ballistics testing and experimenting time. (Plinking to ordinary folks). I had tried them before so just watched the uninitiated get their sore hands. Tried some of J. D.'s heavy .44 loads, 265 grain over a ton of 296-powerful! Should have changed my sights but just figured to hold a little low with the borrowed rounds.

Late afternoon found Ron and I stalking the six big rams. Located my chosen trophy and tried to maneuver for a clear shot. No soap. They led us around the mountain twice at least. Surprisingly enough I was keeping up in spite of easy living and pencil pushing. Just before dusk we finally cornered them near an old graveyard on top of that Ohio "mountain". My ram was in the clear.

The old Ruger settled low behind the front leg for a high engineroom or spine shot. Mistake. Didn't allow for the over three inches of wool on top of the back. The shot knocked the old ram off balance but he took off like a scalded cat with the others bunched around him. We stalked them again when they stopped and saw red on top of one's shoulder, but I thought the horns were smaller than the one I shot at. Ron ahead, we tried to stalk closer but those rams were skittish as white-tails now. Slipped closer and tried to glass them with my 8 x 26 Nikons, but the light gathering ability was not good enough in the deep woods twilight. Off again and round the mountain one more time. Still no positive I.D. so no shot. They turned down into a deep ravine and the guides figured if we didn't push them anymore, we could pick them up near there in the morning, and it was too dangerous to go scrambling around those rocky cliffs in the dark.

Sunday morning brought another



Rich Winters dusted a dandy ram with a 10 inch .430 moderately loaded using a 265 grain Hornady bullet. The bullet wasn't recovered as it penetrated almost the entire length of the ram.



Ken Whitworth with what he wanted . . . a jet black Russian Boar. Ken used a .430 and a 290 grain cast H.P. bullet of his design dropped from a Lyman mold he modified himself.

great breakfast, then ole "hound dog" Ron and I with Ken and his camera headed upslope to pick up those rams. We found them coming up out of the ravine deep into the preserve. Closing up on them, we counted only five. The red shouldered one was there and in broad daylight, we could see it was some kind of stain; blood would have turned brown or black. The dilemma was to find the sixth ram. Was he

down, dead or wounded, or just separated from the rest? We combed the ravines and gullies until lunchtime but couldn't find number six. Forget lunch; those skittish rams weren't letting us catch up and time was running out. Finally Ken spotted them after about three more trips around the central mountain area. We stalked closer and counted six. The missing ram had rejoined his brothers. We

again glassed for wounds but couldn't confirm any hits.

Finally we cornered them at about twenty-five yards. "Take the big horns" Ron suggested, "you must have missed him." Just then the lead ram turned his right side towards us. There was the white tuft of inner wool.

"There's my ram!"

"Sure enough. Bust him when he's closer."

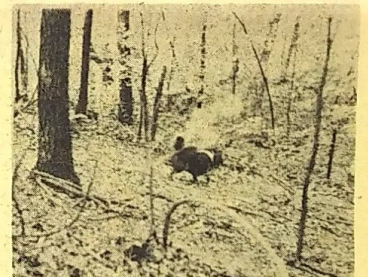
I'd switched to an old Model 29 with S & W 240 HP's that morning after breakfast as that was the only combination that hit where I looked that day. The first blast staggered him -- still on his feet -- one more in the boiler -- lots of blood but not going down -- broke him down with shoulder shot -- still struggling so cut the spine back of the skull with finisher. Damn Ram sure took a lot of killing.

Yesterday's hit skinned a patch on top of the back, just parted the fur. Today's blew up the liver, holed the heart, and pulped the lungs. Third S & W round totally disintegrated on the shoulder bone, no frags large enough left to penetrate the body cavity, where others had complete penetration; final neck shot chopped the spine like an axe and went on to bury in the ground.

Photo'd and field dressed, Ron backpacked the ram up to a road. "I've chased him so long no one's gonna jeep him back. Let's carry him all the way back down," Ron declared.

I used my S & W "chainsaw" to cut down a small tree to make a pole and we strung that old ram between us, switching off all the way down. I thought Paul would split a gut laughing when he saw us coming.

HHI Hunting is a great way to go! Try it! **Tom Frick, No. 23**



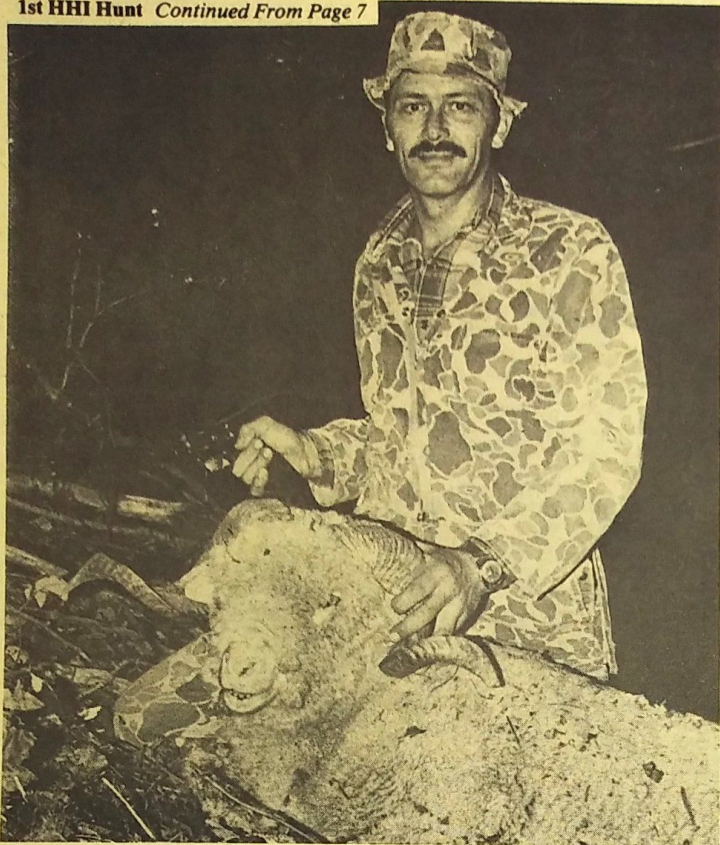
Unfortunately the dog ruined this photo by getting in between the camera and hog, but that cloud visible above him is the result of Ken's 290 grain .430 bullet impacting on the hog.

A BIG 'UN!

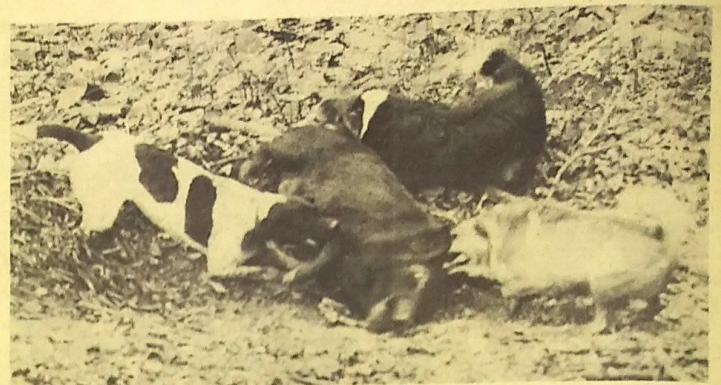
Shawnee is divided into two parts with a fence between them. Hogs, sheep and goats generally inhabit the larger, rougher area for general hunting. The smaller area is utilized for breeding, special animals such as four horned rams, fallow deer, turkeys and exceptional boar to name a few. These "special" animals are usually outstanding trophies and command a special price. Hunting in this area is not usually as challenging as in the larger area due to its size and number of animals present. Although getting a decent shot at a deer would probably be plenty challenging.

After having hunted hogs since 1961 without ever having a crack at a really big one and also not feeling that a 200 pounder would be much of a challenge to the .411 JDJ I was fooling with, I decided to do in a big one if I found the animal and shot I liked. I am more frequently intrigued by an unusual shot

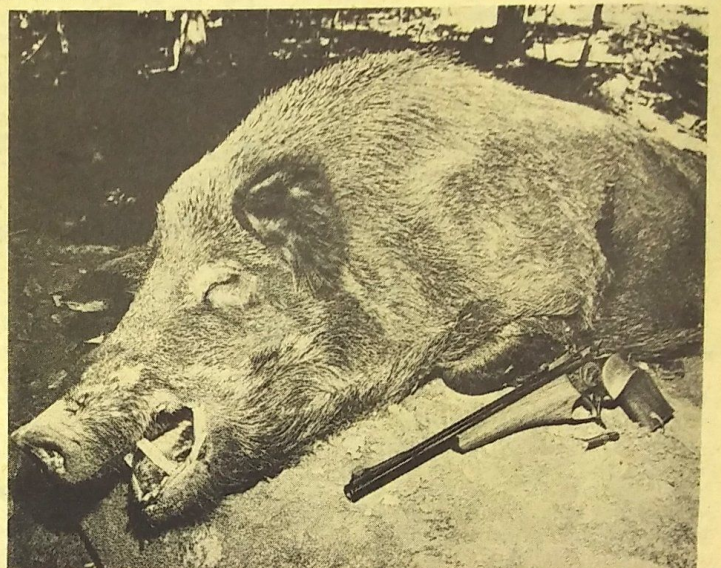
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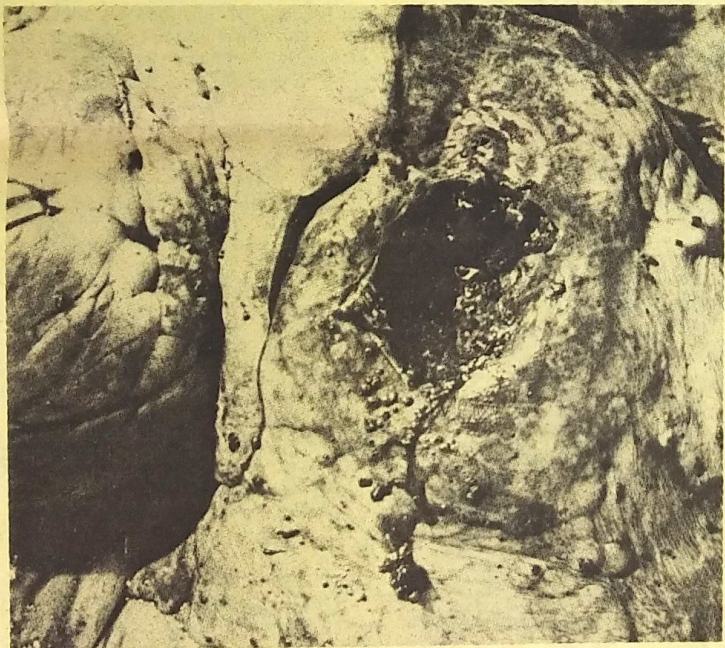
John Borkowski with his late evening Woolly Bear. John used an M-29 with a moderate load behind a 215 grain cast bullet.



Not at all anxious to fight before the hog was hit, all three had to get in their licks when he was down.



The Super 14 .411 and cartridge looks small in comparison to a really big hog.



Compare heart (left) to the hole in the lung by the 300 grain Barnes. Dark area of lung (about 2/3) is "shocked". This was out of the 400 pounder.

or one that appeals to me for some reason or other more than a particular trophy. The .411 is a .444 necked to .41. I was using a 300 grain Barnes pointed soft point at about 1700 F.P.S. That's a couple hundred under what I figure is attainable, but wanted to duplicate an approximate 100 yard impact velocity. I roughed it in with a couple offhand shots about two to three inches high at 25 to 30 yards. An hour later, a turkey's head popped over a stump at about 30 yards. I rested my shoulder against a tree and holding low on the stump under the turkey's head, squeezed one off. Wood flew and so did the turkey. The bullet entered the stump about three quarters of an inch low and gave complete

penetration. We found it with the nose knocked off and jacket dented a little. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Boar presented an in one lung and out the other shoulder shot that I liked. The 300 Barnes centered the left lung, went through the shoulderblade and left about a 50 caliber hole through the inch thick armor of the off-shoulder and kept right on going. Bullet impact was very visible. He immediately tried to run, staggered and went down in 30 to 40 feet. I suspect something the size of a horse would have dropped in his tracks. Cut into two hams, pork chops and the rest ground into sausage, the meat came to 189 pounds. I figure 400 pounds to be a realistic live weight. It isn't the best hog I've eaten, but it

certainly isn't the worst, either. I'd like to make it clear anyone there could have killed this hog if they had chosen to spend the additional money; hunting

skill certainly did not have anything to do with it.

JDJ

HUNT OF SEVERAL LIFETIMES

By Jerry Kraft, No. 10

It felt good to be back in Alaska in August, even though it had only been spring since Kelly and I had been here brown bear hunting. Kelly got skunked and I took an eight and a half foot brown bear. I was disappointed with it since I had to use my rifle to get it. This time was going to be different. Neither one of us took rifles along. We had booked with outfitter Clark Engle for sheep and possibly moose. We both wanted a sheep with a handgun and weren't going to settle for one with a rifle.

We flew into base camp on the same day as three other hunters. Clark told us to go with the other three hunters to check the sights on our rifles. I told him we didn't have any. He looked kind of funny and said he could loan us a couple. We said, "No thanks, we're going to hunt with pistols." I'll never forget the expression on his face as he exploded with "HANDGUNS FOR A SHEEP HUNT?"

Kelly had his 14" scoped .375 JDJ and I had a 12.5" scoped .44 Mag — both T/Cs. I also brought my custom 5" M-29.

We took the guns and checked them out with three shot groups. Clark, Kelly and I really felt better after Kelly and I shot smaller 100 yard groups with the scoped T/Cs than the rifle hunters did with their rigs.

That afternoon, we split up and went to separate spike camps to try for sheep.

Sheep hunting will let you know if you are in good shape or not. The first day out, I knew I wasn't. But, our first stalk got me within 75 yards of a 35 or 36 inch ram. I passed as I was counting on a 40 incher. Then for the next 6 days of climbing, sliding, pain and pure exhaustion, I regretted that decision. Every stalk was a bummer and I couldn't get closer than 300 yards to a ram that didn't look half as good as the first one. On the seventh day, I was whipped. Crawling out of the bag at 4:30 a.m., I almost said the hell with it, I'm going to sleep all day. But I didn't, and it turned out to be my lucky day. We spotted 13 rams in one bunch and three hours later, I was looking at them from about 100 yards. Most of them were small and the big one was behind a boulder. They couldn't see or smell us but sensed something was wrong. The whole band became nervous and started milling around, waiting for the big boy to tell them what to do. He stepped out from behind the boulder where he had been standing and I busted him in the shoulder with a Federal 180 grain H.P. .44 from the 12.5 inch scoped T/C. He went down at impact and was dead when I got to him. The others, without a leader,



World Record Handgun Moose?

Jerry Kraft and what is most probably the largest moose ever killed with a handgun. He used his personally customized 5" M-29 and Federal 240s to bag this giant in Alaska.

didn't know what to do. There were sheep all over the place . . . running, stopping, looking, coming back. Gradually, they all left. Looking down at the 36" Dall, I knew those seven days of hell had been worthwhile.

I was luckier than I knew because I flew back to main camp the next morning and that's when the snow storm hit.

The first day of the storm was clear enough to hunt, after that, forget it. I stayed in camp for three days in the snow. We all wondered how Kelly was doing in the high country in the storm. It ruined his hunt and he and the guide had to walk out leaving all gear, sleeping bags, cameras, etc. on the mountain. It's probably still there.

Meanwhile, it was clear enough to hunt the first day of the storm. The guide took me to a look-out about two miles from camp and after glassing for awhile, spotted a bull moose with horns that would go around 50 inches. The guide said the stalk would take about three hours. We had enough time to do it, but two hours later, lost him. Looking for him, I spotted a monster that was all HORNS. He wasn't very far away and immediately disappeared.

We started very slowly in his direction and 30 minutes later as I topped a little rise, he stood up . . . 40 yards — broadside big as a house, in front of me and in the open. I yanked out the 29, cocked it on the way up and busted him in the shoulder with a 240 grain Federal S.P. I could see stuff fly off him and immediately followed it up with two more. He dropped. I stood there with the 29 cocked. Heart pounding, couldn't see him. Did I imagine it? Man he was HUGE! Did he really go down? I wanted to run to where he was but forced myself to slowly, carefully walk toward him. I finally saw a blob of black that had to be him. I resisted the urge to shoot.

Next, the tip of an antler appeared. Then about 6 FEET of antler! The moose had fallen flat on his belly as his legs buckled and was laying in an upright position. Great for photos because we couldn't have moved him. His antlers and the rest of him were enormous. The job of getting this guy out was not simple and wasn't done till after the storm was over. The three .44 holes would have fit into a coffee cup. I think they just kept pounding in the same place till the third one got far enough in to kill him.

The moose rack was 68.5 inches wide and will probably win the Safari Club annual competition and rank well in Boone & Crockett and Rowland Ward records. I don't ever expect another hunt like this. Either the sheep or a moose with a handgun is a once in a lifetime proposition. A moose the size of this one doesn't ever appear to most hunters and is a one in several hundred lifetimes proposition.

Good guides, good equipment, hard hunting and most of all . . . luck, plays an important part in any hunting. I hope this trip didn't use up all of mine.

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Kraft with his Dall ram taken with the 12.5 inch scoped T/C .44 magnum and Federal 180 grain loads with one shot from around 100 yards.



HARD WAY ELK

By Larry Kelly, No. 2

I consider elk hunting with a handgun the most challenging sport in North America. In most areas where elk are found, the terrain is rugged. Sometimes the snow is deep. Thin air at high altitude doesn't help the city hunter, either.

Fifteen years ago, my brother-in-law got a 6X6 in Idaho with a Ruger .44 Magnum. For fifteen years, I've hunted elk without success. I passed on several spikes and forkhorns, but never had a chance at a mature bull. That elusive elk became an obsession with me. Fifteen years is a long time to hunt without a shot. But I still wanted a big bull as bad as ever.

This year, I had a chance to hunt the Mescalero Apache Reservation in New Mexico. The Reservation is known for its large elk herd and for being a very expensive hunt. Curious, I didn't know what to expect. I visualized seeing dozens of bulls grazing, and shooting the bull of my choice from a four wheeler . . . or getting ripped off again on another expensive hunt.

As usual, the truth was in between the two extremes. The first day was a little of the worst. My guide was an Apache and a couple hours after we began riding at daybreak, I knew he wasn't a hunter. I knew I was just being taken for a horseback ride and maybe one of the other kind, too. The "guide" kept asking me where I wanted to go. I kept telling him to take me where the elk were. He always called "cows", "does", "bulls", "bucks". We didn't have a lot of conversation. As usual when elk hunting, I saw mountains, trees, the horses rear ahead of me and NO elk.

That night I requested a different guide and was given a 20 year old Apache named Roy. Roy turned out to love hunting and knew how to do it. At 5:30 the next morning, we were standing in a large valley, listening to

five different elk bugling. Roy picked one and we headed into the timber in the dark after him. We could hear their shrill whistles, grunting and occasionally one would attack a sapling. In the darkness, it sounded like we were right on top of them. Twice we were close to a bull before it was light enough to see him and he moved away. I don't know if it was the same or different bulls we were close to, but they were sure stirred up. After all those years, it was really exciting! Finally, it started to get light. A bull was raising Cain ahead of us. We stayed on him as the light began to filter through the trees and objects began to take dim shapes. We couldn't see anything, but knew we were close by the sounds. In the half-light, Roy suddenly got excited and said "Get ready!". I couldn't see anything! I hunted for a rest close by and there wasn't any, so I backed up against a tree. Roy whispered "hit him . . . hit him". I whispered "I can't see him," as I cocked the .375. He very excitedly said "Just hit him now . . . it's a good one!" Excited — and feeling very foolish, I just stood there because I couldn't spot the elk in the half light. Suddenly I saw him moving through the brush like a ghost. As I raised the gun, I picked out an opening ahead of him and as he entered it, I put the crosshairs of the 2X Leupold at the back edge of his shoulder and touched her off. Right on top with the flash crash of the .375 the 270 grain Hornady "whocked" as it hit the magnificent bull and he dropped. I reloaded and ran the 70 yards up to him but a finishing shot wasn't necessary. I finally had my 6X6!

When we opened him up, we found the 270 grain Hornady had demolished his lungs and kept right on going. We had to cut the bull into three pieces to get it down to where we could get a truck to it.

We heard six shots while we were dragging and later met the hunter and his guide. He had missed all six times. I'll never forget the expression on his face as he looked at me in disbelief and pondered a one shot kill with a handgun. That hunt was worthwhile regardless of the cost.

Since I filled out on elk early, I decided to check on the Y-O Ranch in Texas for blackbuck so I gave Hal Swiggett a call. He made the arrangements and I arranged to meet old friends Orville and Linda Cox who live in Houston, at the Y-O. Orville had hunted the Y-O previously and has taken deer and bear with handguns.

As my wife Barb and I drove from New Mexico to the Y-O, I thought of my friend Wicka who last summer had gotten a running blackbuck at 200 yards with a rifle. He was all wound up

over the beauty of blackbuck and couldn't get over how spooky they were. In fact, after dinner and couple of drinks, he offered to bet the cost of the hunt that I couldn't kill one with a handgun. Now, no self-respecting handgunner would turn down a bet like that, even if he had to sell his house to pay off if he lost!

I also had time to think of this year's hunting with the .375 JDJ T/C. I thought Jones was crazy when he told me about necking the .444 Marlin to .375 and putting it on a T/C. At the same time, I had been doing so badly hunting with a pistol I was even thinking about hunting with a rifle. I can't see sights very good anymore either, so a scoped .375 got to sounding better, because I didn't want to have to go to a rifle. Then after I shot a mixed string of about 10 220s, 235s, 270s and 300s off the hood of the truck in about a 30 to 40 MPH wind and kept them in about six inches at about 110 yards, I decided to try one. It didn't kick much and had power and accuracy to spare. Loading it is easy. Just run a .444 case in a full length sizing die and the case is formed. The only load I've used is CCI Magnum primers, 44.0 grains of H-322 and the 270 grain Hornady spire point except for about 10 with the 300 Hornady FMJ over the same powder charge. Velocity is about 1900 F.P.S.

This year is the best one of my life for hunting — as far as the .375 goes — it's dropped two elephants and over 30 head of other big game without losing an animal. I've got confidence in it and confidence is what it takes to nail a fast running blackbuck.

Well, after three misses, I was convinced a blackbuck is a small target and they only very seldom stop running. Seemed like getting within 200 yards of them was largely a matter of luck.

Late in the afternoon of the last day, I decided to walk upwind into the fairly strong wind that was blowing. Using trees for cover and moving slowly like in deer hunting, it wasn't long until I spotted a grazing blackbuck. I kept easing up on him till I got to within about 100 yards of him; lined up and bang — the .375 did its job again.

In the meantime, Orville had taken a shot at a running blackbuck at about 150 yards with his 6" M-29. His miss was close, but he didn't get a chance for another shot.

The Y-O is a huge place. It has about 125 square miles and all kinds of

Continued On Page 11



Orville Cox, LeRoy Vinegar (Y.O. Guide) and Kelly with an elusive Black Buck taken with the scoped .375 JDJ T/C.

Elk *Continued From Page 10*
 historical buildings and Texas Ranger relics. It's quite a place and has all kinds of exotic game. I think it is really a great place to visit and hunt. Their address is: Y-O Ranch, Box 300, Mountain Home, Texas 78058.

DEER KILLS MAN

For the second consecutive year in Ohio, a fatality has occurred as the result of the attack of a semi-domesticated whitetail buck in rut.

Last year's fatality was an older man. This year, Kim Heller, age 35, on assignment for the Wildlife Commission, entered a privately owned 600 acre fenced-in area containing whitetail deer and exotics and was attacked by a whitetail buck. He took refuge behind a tree. The deer struck the tree, dislodging a limb which fell, striking Heller in the head and knocking him down. The 8-point whitetail buck gored him severely. Heller apparently entered a pond to escape the deer's attack. He apparently failed to immediately obtain proper medical attention. One hundred and seventeen stitches were required to close his wounds. Heller died of gas gangrene three days after entering Mt. Carmel Hospital.

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TOMORROWS HERITAGE

By Ray Rusch, No. 911

He was screaming mad and coming my way fast. I could follow his progress by the swaying of the trees, but as yet I couldn't make him out. Then, suddenly, he was visible, glowing in the morning sun, and fifty feet away across a deep dry wash.

Northeastern Iowa is crisp and colorful in early October. The usually blue skies set off the gold and crimson leaves of large tracts of timber riding the rough hills. If there's a better time or place to be out of doors, I haven't found it.

I had risen at 3:00 a.m. so as to be able to make the 100 mile trip north from my home town of Dubuque, Iowa with a couple of friends. They were going to hunt squirrels, but I had something different in mind. That something was neither particularly rare nor unusual, but different enough to fall into my classification as "extremely desirable."

For the past several years, I have been hunting more and more with my handguns. During that time, I have usually taken less game than my rifle or shotgun toting friends, but have enjoyed myself thoroughly. I have also given much thought to the various aspects of the sport of hunting — in particular, the idea of a "trophy".

Naturally, what one man deems a trophy, another man might despise or ignore. A hunter from the south or midwest might call a relatively small moose a "trophy", while a native Alaskan would see it as nothing out of the ordinary. On the other hand, an Alaskan might brag about a wild turkey that would make the average Kentuckian yawn. Beauty really is in the eye of the beholder.

Then there are the lists of various trophies such as "Boone and Crockett," and the individual state lists, all of which contain certain select animals (usually "big" game) and the rules that define a trophy by their (the lists) individual standards. The difficulty of such lists, of course, is that the restricted definitions of a trophy (usually the size of the antlers, horns, or skull) ignore such factors as color, weight, age, primeness of pelt, relative beauty, and desirability. They also ignore small game and varmints.

Which brings me to the point I wish to make: i.e. I believe we must now redefine what a "trophy" is. From rabbits to elk, from ducks to bear, each species has something special to offer, and must be recognized as trophies in their own right and for various reasons. A trophy can be a trophy not only because of its size, but because of its inherent beauty, or its unusualness, or because of the difficulty or danger the hunter encounters in collecting it. Handgun hunters know better than other hunters that a fox can be a greater trophy than a polar bear, and a particularly unusual color phase of the red squirrel may be harder to collect and hence, more valuable to a particular hunter than a trophy pronghorn.

Now we handgun hunters have a special feeling for our sport. We also seem to instinctively understand the deeper meaning of the outdoors and man's relationship to it. The sum total of our hunting heritage seems to have been handed to us to protect, to nur-

ture, and to expand for future generations. We will be tomorrows heritage. And what that heritage is depends in part on how we choose to value the animals we hunt.

All of which takes me back to my opening tale. A red squirrel had answered my call and was busy scolding me from across a dry wash. Pretty as he was, he was a disappointment, for two years ago during deer season, I was sitting in the same place watching several squirrels playing in front of me. Those squirrels, black with white tail tips (actually greys) were the most beautiful animals I had ever seen. I would have collected one of them that day except my only weapon was the 12 gauge loaded with slugs. Ears and tail tips are not my idea of a good trophy.

Now however, I was back. I knew what I wanted; I had the proper equipment (A Ruger target Mark I) and I had taken enough squirrels already this season with a handgun to be fairly certain of my markmanship.

Only it was not to be. The timber had changed. There was now less undergrowth and consequently more red squirrels and fewer greys. And no blacks — at least not that I could find. I was disappointed to say the least, and hoped desperately that the black strain had not died out.

Sighing, I checked my watch, noting the late hour. I decided I may as well collect a squirrel for stew while I was here, and lined up on the noisy, tail waggin' red. On the second shot he went suddenly quiet and fell, hitting the ground with a thump. I took three more shots on the way back to the car, collecting two greys and one more red. I was feeling better, and I began to think...

Now, I know a stand of timber along a steep bluff where the red are much larger than normal. They also chuckle like a demented hyena. . . .

But that's another story.

WANTED!! YOUR STORIES MORE ARTICLES NEEDED PRACTICE

By Christopher W. White, No. 511

The importance of practice cannot be overemphasized. No matter how good we are, or think we are, we all need to practice. Some of the best known marksmen, such as Bill Jordan, can make it look so easy, but still, they practice.

Riflemen and shotgunners need to practice, but those of us who choose the shotgun by necessity, or preference, need to practice a greater amount because the shotgun is more difficult to shoot. If we choose to hunt with a handgun, we have an obligation to the game we hunt to be competent enough to make clean kills.

Practice can take many forms and to expand our skills, we should vary our methods. If practice becomes boring

work that is a chore you hate to go through, it is your own fault for not using your imagination! All practice should be done in a manner designed to point out errors so that they can be corrected.

Not all practice need be done with a loaded gun. In fact, some of the most useful practice is done with an unloaded gun in your own home. If you practice at home, it is imperative that your gun is unloaded. Check it, double check it, then check it again. Never, Never point it any direction not safe for a live round to go off.

Practice should be done with a realistic objective relative to the type of shooting you intend to do. If you are into combat shooting, or handgunning moving varmints at close range, you need to practice a smooth double-action pull. One method to do this, is to balance a dime on the barrel while you practice your double action dry-firing. It is not necessary to continually hold a sight picture while performing this practice. Hold the gun in your hand and practice your double-action pull, but if it is not smooth, you will lose your dime. Barrels with flat tops and ribs are the easiest, but it can be done on guns with round barrels, also. Do not forget to practice with your weak hand also, as you never know when it will be necessary to use it due to injury, or your position.

Dry firing is necessary to practice your grip, trigger pull, and sight picture. However, dry firing at a blank target on the wall is boring, so take a picture of a game animal out of a magazine, tack it to the wall, and try it that way! While you are at it, think about bullet placement, range, winds, lead, etc. If your gun is sighted in at fifty (50) feet with a six o'clock hold, where will you hold on a woodchuck at twenty-five (25) feet or seventy-five (75) yards?

Practice loading and unloading. Use whatever leather gear you will be using to hunt with. Carry your ammo the same way as you will be when hunting. Practice slowly at first, then set a time limit for yourself. For safety's sake, do this with dummy rounds. If you reload, dummy rounds are easy to make. If you don't reload, ask a friend to make you some. If worse comes to worse, you could get desperate and buy them from a gunshop. Remember: DUMMYS . . . NOT BLANKS!

Practice drawing your weapon. If you are hunting, it will be normally be more important that you can draw your weapon smoothly and quietly, then with speed, although speed might be necessary at times. If you spook an animal and your gun is holstered, he'll probably be gone before you can put your hand on your gun. If you see the animal first, however, any sudden moves may startle him. I once surprised a woodchuck at all of the five (5) yards while stalking a hedgerow. We stared at each other while I slowly and carefully drew my .357 and ventilated his chest. Apparently he was not startled by my slow movement but probably would have dived into his hole had I moved suddenly.

Practicing with live ammo is a lot more fun, at least to me, than dry firing, but even that can get stale without any imagination. Shooting at a black circle on a sheet of paper is fine for testing loads or sighting in, but for practice, try a change. Buy picture targets, make them, have them printed, or whatever else you wish to do. I have

Continued On Page 12

Practice — *Continued From Page 11*
 never seen an animal with a bullseye on him yet, so practice with a realistic target. Any picture target will have shading irregularities, etc., that you can use to sight on. Again, think about the bullet placement.

If you have access to some relatively unsettled countryside, your practice may be made even more interesting. Try a large dirt bank for starters. (Don't forget safety, check for any people, houses, livestock, rocks that might cause ricochets.) Take a friend along, preferably one that will join in the shooting and a couple of empty six packs of soda or beer cans. One point however, the six packs have to be

empty prior to arrival to the shooting location, as guns and booze **DO NOT** mix. . . . Besides, the cans are your targets. Take turns tossing the cans up on the dirt bank while the other tries to hit them as they roll down the embankment. It's the cheapest and easiest moving targets I've ever used. Don't forget to clean up your area and dispose of the cans properly. Please don't use bottles, as they are far too dangerous to be left around, and impossible to clean up.

I'm sure that you've gotten the idea by now, but let's hear from the rest of you. How do you tune yourself up to be a better shot?



CORSICAN

By William Aurand, No. 992

Last year while attending the Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the booths and displays of various hunting preserves caught my eye. After a closer inspection of some of these displays, I decided to attempt a preserve hunt with my handgun. First, I had to decide on which preserve I wanted to hunt and what type of animal I wanted to hunt.

In the weeks following, I checked every outdoor magazine I could get my hands on, looking for the addresses of preserves. I managed to locate the addresses of several big game hunting preserves in Pennsylvania. After receiving their information and price lists, I decided on a Corsican Ram hunt at the Tioga Boar Hunting Preserve in Tioga County. The trip was planned for March 9th and 10th. This gave me about a month to practice with my T/C 44 Magnum and to iron out the details of the hunt.

Finally, March 9th arrived. My wife Karen and I loaded the truck and headed for Tioga County. (It's about 150 miles from our home in Central Pennsylvania to the preserve.)

We arrived at the preserve around 3:00 p.m. and were greeted by the owner-operator, Pete Gee. We were pleased to hear that I was the only one booked to hunt on the 10th. Pete informed us that most hunters prefer Saturday and Sunday hunts. My hunt started on a Monday.

Pete's wife showed us to our room and told us dinner would be ready around five o'clock.

While waiting for dinner, I went outside to the shooting range for one last target session before the hunt.

After a delicious meal featuring Bar-B-Qued Boar's ribs, and an evening of pool playing, Karen and I went to sleep with anticipation of the next day's activities.

Morning came quickly. It was cold and windy. The ground was covered with a thin blanket of snow.

After a hearty breakfast of eggs and sausage, Pete introduced us to our guide. His name was Tom. After one last check of our equipment — gun, ammo, binoculars, camera (Karen planned to take pictures of the hunt), etc., we began our hunt.

As the three of us entered the main hunting area of the preserve, Tom informed us they have between 1000 and 1100 acres of ground on the preserve. We hunted for an hour and a half without seeing any sheep. We saw several Boar and one nice Fallow deer in that time.

Then, in a clearing about 150 yards to our right, Karen spotted two sheep lying on the ground. We moved in for a closer look. When we were about 100 yards away, they spotted us and stood up. With the aid of my binoculars, I was able to identify them as two young Corsican Rams with about half-curl

horns. I passed them up.

After a short time we came to a steep ridge with a huge brushy hollow at the bottom. Tom told us to position ourselves so we could see out across the edge of the hollow. He said he would circle around to the other side and try to flush anything out that may be inside. Twenty minutes later, Karen and I heard the brush crack and spotted several Boar making their way across the top of the ridge about 100 yards away. A few yards behind them was a beautiful full-curl Ram. When I first spotted him, he was over 100 yards away. Suddenly, he spotted us and out the mountain he went.

Tom rejoined us and we started tracking the Ram. About 45 minutes later we spotted him again. I attempted a stalk but I couldn't get within 100 yards of him. He saw me again and was gone. Tom had a hunch where the Ram was headed, so he told Karen and I where to go. He said he would make a circle and come back to us. Tom was right. The Ram was exactly where he said it would be, in a brushy little hollow well protected from the wind. I came in from the one side and Tom came in from the other. The Ram was confused. He didn't know where to go. He tried to cut past me at about 40 yards. When he went by, everything was automatic, the hammer on my T/C came back, the sights aligned on the sheep's shoulder and the .44 sounded off. The Ram jumped straight in the air and crumpled in a heap. It was an instant kill.

I was elated, my first handgun hunt was a success. Tom said it was an exceptional trophy with each horn measuring about 23 inches in length and 8 inches at the base.

Bullet performance was excellent. The Speer 240 grain magnum hollow point was backed with 21 grains of I.M.R. 4227, loaded in a Remington case and ignited by a C.C.I. 350 magnum primer. It entered just behind the left front shoulder, breaking a rib. It shattered the lungs, doing extensive internal damage, and smashed the right front shoulder.

The bullet was recovered from the shoulder and still weighed a hefty 224 grains on my Ohaus 5-0-5 scale.

I suggest to anyone that hasn't tried a preserve hunt to do so. It's a super experience.

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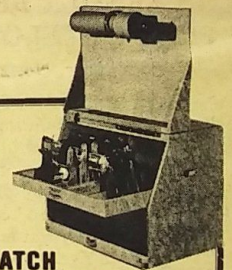
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GETTING STARTED IN RELOADING

By Mike Slaybaugh, No. 807

With the price of ammo being what it is today, it doesn't take the average handgunner very long to decide that there has to be a better way.

I decided to start handloading about nine months ago when I broke up with Uncle Sam and had more time to do some shooting. I couldn't afford to buy as much factory ammo as I'd have liked to shoot.

Economy is the reason many give for handloading their own ammo and it is certainly a valid reason. But when you consider the investment that many of us have in our reloading equipment and components, a neophyte may question our reasoning. For those of you who haven't started reloading yet, don't despair because you can do as I did.

I started with a Lee Loader which will set you back less than \$15.00. They are made for most popular pistol and rifle cartridges. All you'll need besides your Lee Loader is a soft hammer or mallet and your reloading components: Primers, powder and bullets. The Lee Loader will turn out very satisfactory handloads, but let me forewarn you and tell you that it is a slow and noisy operation. The loader comes with complete instructions that are very easy to follow.

We will assume that you have been saving that precious brass from your high priced factory ammo. No matter what kind of reloading equipment is used, there are certain things that must be done to convert your brass back into shootable ammo. Some methods

combine the first two steps, but this is what has to be done. (1) Remove old primer; (2) Resize case to hold bullet; (3) Install new primer; (4) Add the correct powder charge; (5) Seat a bullet of the correct weight. That's it, basically. It is a simple mechanical operation that even I, who seem to have more than the average number of thumbs on each hand, can accomplish.

The reason I said that using the Lee Loader is slow and noisy is that you supply all the force with that soft hammer or mallet to do all the steps needed to reload your brass. You drive out the primers with a punch (do 'em all at once) then you drive the deprimed case into the correct end of the loader to resize it. With the case in the loader, you reprime it, and then you have to drive the reprimed case back out. Well, you get the idea. It's a good way to work out your frustrations.

One other disadvantage that I should point out about using the Lee Loader type tool is the fact that they come with just one powder measure that can only be used with a limited number of powders. My loader for .44 Mag lists three, depending on bullet weight. Mine lists 23.0 grains of Hodgdon H-4227 for bullets from 180-240 grains; 23.0 grains of Dupont IMR 4227 for bullets of 180-215 grain and 22.5 grain of Dupont IMR 4198 for bullets of 225-255 grain. Using one of these loaders, you are stuck with those choices. To be safe you **MUST** use only those powders with those bullet

weights with the powder measure supplied. **DON'T EXPERIMENT**, to do so could lead to dangerous pressures which could damage your handgun or even yourself!

I've turned out many hundreds of rounds of ammo using a Lee Loader for my Ruger Super Blackhawk and I can tell you that it is quite an event when you touch off your first handload. Damn, it really went off! And the gun's still in one piece, too. Maybe you didn't kill that attacking bear can, you'd better give it a couple more. The sights need some adjustment with those new handloads, but they really work!

Welcome to the world of reloading. After your initial surprise that your reloads really work, you'll feel pride. You produced those cartridges and there is no reason that you couldn't use them to take your fall venison or whatever game you choose. And that's the name of the game!

In another article, I'll tell you how to get more speed and variety out of your new reloading operation along with a few tips and hints I've learned in the short time I've been reloading. While you're getting your Lee Loader, why not pick up a reloading manual or two? The Speer No. 10 is very good. You will need a manual in the future.

See you later . . . I've got to go hunt down some man-eating rabbits that are terrorizing the countryside. Keep your powder dry!

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

YOUR ARTICLES NEEDED NOW

guide's advice.

As we got closer to the new bait area, Leroy told me that a large bear had been working on his bait. He estimated, by the bruin's tracks, that he would weigh over two hundred pounds field dressed, which is not bad for the time of year. The tracks he was referring to were approximately five inches wide and that usually makes for a decent size blackie.

After I had climbed up the tree and sat down, Leroy made it up half way and handed me the rifle. He watched me load the gun, wished me luck, and headed back to the truck. I finally got comfortable and began checking out the shooting possibilities. Leroy was right about one thing, there was brush and lots of it. Having a wide field 2½ power scope on top of the 308 didn't hurt things any. The bait, which consisted of bacon grease and meat scraps, was approximately eighty yards to the left of where I was facing. We were about an hour late getting to the stand. It was 6:05 p.m. then and I was usually sitting in a hemlock, observing the bait area, by 5:00. I just hoped we weren't too late.

Counting the mosquitos was one sure way of passing time for they were abundant. I had a fairly accurate count going when I heard a noise in the leaves. Glancing up, this large black object caught my eye. There was my trophy, eighty yards away on the up hill side from the bait. Sniffing the air for danger, the bear was making sure the coast was clear. This is when I realized why I had been hunting from a tree stand. Hesitating to believe my eyes, I was looking at an animal of enormous size that didn't make any noise while approaching. As the large

my back yard helped prepare my shooting skills needed for the hunt. I had nothing but good feelings about the load I was using: 22.3 grains of 2400, pushing a 240 gr. Sierra J.H.C. This was a handful but I found it to be very accurate.

Rain hit us hard the first three days of hunting which discouraged the normal movement of bears. Only one of four hunters spotted a bear those wet and miserable evenings. This particular bear offered no shot for the Pennsylvania bowhunter. Thursday and Friday evenings were pleasant but unlucky for seeing bears.

Saturday morning found me in camp alone for the others had various commitments to meet back home. I'll have to admit, I had very little optimism left. After six hours a night, (sitting on a hard oak board), for five nights in a row, and not seeing anything, had me in a firm state of depression. Even though the guide kept reassuring me, I began to wonder about his optimistic feelings.

The last evening of the hunt, I would try a new bait area. Leroy insisted I leave my revolver in camp and take his Winchester, Model 100, 308. He explained that just a few days ago he had built the stand and hadn't trimmed any limbs out of the way for a good clear shot. Also, the shooting distance of this stand would be well over seventy-five yards through the brush. Since the Winchester had a low power scope mounted on it and my Ruger didn't, I reluctantly took Leroy's advice. I hated to do this because I had spent so much time practicing, but most of all, I really wanted to take a bear with a handgun. But, from past experiences, I have always found it wise to take your

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* * *

CHICKENOUT BEAR, FIRST ANTELOPE

Mark Hampton, No. 227

Only a few hours of hunting time remained. The last six days of hunting had produced no sightings, no shots, no bears. Although deeply discouraged, I somehow managed to keep still in my tree stand. Eighty yards through the brush were two five gallon buckets. A little bacon grease and a couple of meat scraps occupied one of the buckets, while the other had been swiped clean. Aggravated by the swarming mosquitos, I heard something unusual in the leaves. I looked up and there he was, materializing like a ghost. Only this ghost was big and blacker than the ace of spades. As he sniffed the air for danger my heart began to pound. The bear cautiously strolled toward the bait presenting a beautiful broadside shot. Nervously I eased the gun up and . . .

Bear hunting over bait is not the most productive method for adding a bear rug to your trophy room. As a matter of fact, it's not even the most exciting. So I can't honestly tell you why I chose this method over stalking or treeing them by dogs. Hunting over bait requires patience and lots of it. Sitting in a tree stand and remaining motionless for countless hours is not cut out for everybody. But, I was ready and willing to accept the challenge.

My Ruger Super Blackhawk, supporting a 10½ inch barrel was the weapon I chose for this hunt. Prior to my departure for Maine, the guide informed me that the average shot to be taken, would be under 40 yards. Shooting a seven inch steel disc from

black bear cautiously walked toward the bait, I eased the Winchester to my shoulder. Following him through the scope, I was waiting for an opening in the brush. I could see it coming and prepared myself for the trigger squeeze. The bear entered the clearing as my first bullet caught him behind the shoulders. Touching off another quick one in the same area, the bruin fell and began growling and pawing at the ground. These growls were loud and the excavating that was done by his paws seemed fierce. My third and final shot served as the "coup de grace".

After returning to camp, we hung the bear on a set of scales and found him weighing 215 pounds. His hide measured a tad over six feet, from tip of nose to tail, with his paw width at 5½ inches. I was very pleased with my trophy along with being very lucky. The only thing I regret is that I wish I could have bagged him with my handgun.

Since this hunt, I've decided it will be to my advantage to have a handgun mounted with a scope. I've obtained a Super 14 44 mag. topped by a Leapold M8-2.

I've just returned from Wyoming and I would like to mention how this gun worked so far. Using Factory 240 gr. H.P. Winchester, it dropped my antelope at approximately one hundred and sixty yards. Luckily for me there were two witnesses. The bullet exited through the lung area doing a great deal of tissue damage. The antelope ran about 15 yards and dropped dead. It was not a Boone and Crockett Head, as a matter of fact, it only had horns about six inches long, but for me, it was truly a handgunners trophy.

JDJ BULLETS

By John Taffin, No. 076

If you have been reading the S.S.K. ads, you have probably noticed that S.S.K. Industries is now offering heavy .44 caliber bullets in both 315 and 350 grain weights. I first got interested in heavy bullets for my Ruger Custom Super Blackhawk 10" because the front sight was too high, causing 250 grain bullets to shoot well below the aiming point. I surmised a heavy bullet would solve this problem but 265 grain Hornadys are \$13.00 a box, plus they aren't heavy enough.

So when J. D. asked me if I'd like to play with a couple of new moulds he had designed, I jumped at the chance. I soon had D. C. moulds in 260, 315, and 350 GC designs. (They are now also available in 225 grain). These bullets are designated by number by their manufacturer, but I prefer to call them 260 JDJ, 315 JDJ, and 350 JDJ after their designer. The moulds themselves are quality equipment that fit the RCBS and Lyman double handles. The blocks are made from aluminum bar stock with a generously sized sprue plate that is hardened, anodized, and teflon impregnated, the other parts being stainless steel. They are available only from S.S.K. at \$30.00 for a D. C. mould with one bullet weight, and \$35.00 for two different weights.

They cast extremely easy if the manufacturers directions are followed, one of the most important being to smoke the moulds thoroughly after cleaning them. The bullets drop from the mould with ease if the joint on the handle is tapped before the mould blocks are opened.

Now to the bullets themselves. The JDJ series of bullets are of the modified truncated cone design. One idea was to come up with a bullet that would give the shortest possible jump from case to rifling. The bullets have a shoulder (front band) that is also rifled upon firing and the portion ahead of the shoulder and behind the cone is wide and straight. This results in self-centering in the forcing cone until the body of the bullet fills the rifling. All bullet weights look the same when loaded in .44 magnum brass as the extra weight comes from a longer body with more grease grooves and/or the addition of a gas check. All bullets loaded in .44 magnum cases fill the cylinder of a Ruger Super Blackhawk right out close to the end of the chamber.

I have tried these bullets in the .44 Special, .44 Magnum, and the .430 JDJ. For the .44 Special, I used the 260 grain bullet over my favorite load of 7.5 grain Unique with excellent results in a couple of Colt Single Actions and also in my Custom Ruger .44 Special. One of my .44 Specials is a 1950 4" Target Smith & Wesson that shot consistently low with standard weight bullets and I wanted to try the 315 JDJ in it. There is no loading data available so I tried this bullet over 7.0 grain Unique. This 4" 1950 is relatively light with slim ivory stocks, but nevertheless recoil was mild, all cases extract simultaneously, and I was able to lower my rear sight all the way down and sight in exactly at 25 yards. This is what I had hoped for so the 315 JDJ fills a real need for me in this favorite old sixgun.

As mentioned earlier, I was primarily interested in the heavy 315 JDJ bullet to use in my 10" Ruger.

These bullets weighed out at 319 grains lubed and sized with my hard alloy. Again, there is no published data available on this heavy bullet in .44 Magnum, so I decided to try No. 2400 and walk carefully. Rounds were loaded at 1/2 grain intervals starting at 18-1/2 and stopping at 20 grains. All loads shot well, and even the 18-1/2 grain load recoiled more than a standard .44 Magnum load. By the time I reached 20 grains of No. 2400, cases started to stick and recoil was heavy with the Pachmayr grip stinging the palm. It was time to back off and stick to 19.5 grains of No. 2400 as a maximum load giving 1350-1380 FPS velocity. In talking with J. D., he felt No. 2400 was too fast for this heavy bullet and suggested I try WW 680 with a 23.5 grain load . . . beautiful! It's accurate, 1" groups at 25 yards are normal, recoil is not objectionable, and velocity averages 1380 FPS. That's with a 320 grain bullet, not a 250 grain bullet!

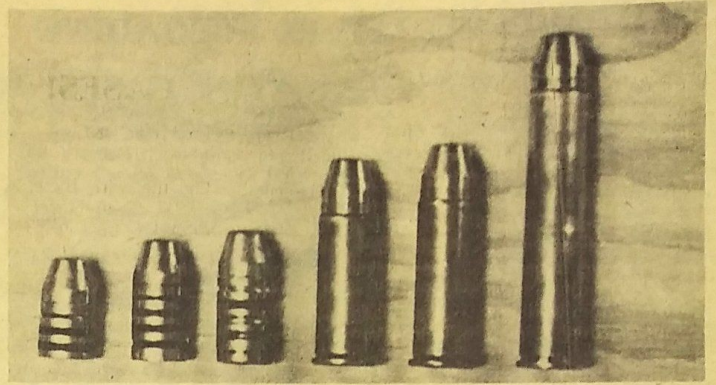
I've now shot 100's of these loads in my Super Blackhawk and the power is amazing. Tomato soup cans just disintegrate. It penetrates 8" of hard fruitwood logs lengthwise. I've tried it once on silhouettes. When this 320 grain bullet hits chickens, they don't fall over, they tumble end over end. When the rain and hail came down, I couldn't see the rest of the targets through my glasses, so I will have to wait until next month to see what it will do to Rams. I expect spectacular results. This bullet is highly recommended for heavy loads in .44 Magnum revolvers but I think extra caution is needed if used in Model 29's. There is no way a Smith will handle the heavy loads that a Ruger will.

I really appreciate having this heavy 320 grain bullet, but J. D. did not design these just so I could have a heavy .44 bullet. The 320 grain and the 350 grain bullets were designed for the .430 JDJ to be used in rechambered or rebarreled T/C Contenders. The .430 has been covered in two articles in the October *Sixgunner*, and you are referred to those for information on this fascinating wildcat.

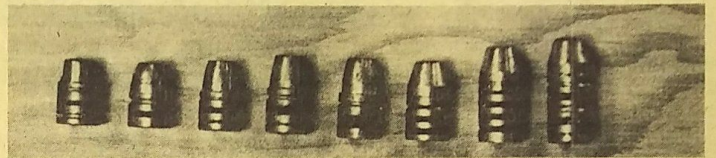
Forty-four shooters now have four new bullets to play with: 225, 260, 320, and 350 grain. The 260 is perfect for .44 Specials; the 260 and 320 for .44 Magnums; and the 320 and 350 for the .430. Personally, I have not tried the 225 grain bullet, but I foresee fascinating velocities with it. I have driven the others from 1400-1800 FPS with little or no barrel leading. They look great, they cast great, and they shoot great.

Especially try the 320 grain load in .44 Magnum considering 19.5 grain No. 2400 and 23.5 grains WW 680 as maximum. I think you'll like the results. Write S.S.K. Industries, Route 1, Della Drive, Bloomingdale, Ohio 43910 for information on these bullets and numerous other goodies.

Note: You are on your own regarding any loading data. These bullets are so new we have only limited experience with them.



265, 320 and 360 grain SSK bullets. 320 loaded in the 44 Special, 44 Mag and .430 JDJ.



JDJ bullets compared to other .44s. The overall length of the 429421 Keith bullet at 242 grains is about the same as the 265 grain JDJ bullet. Due to placement of the crimp groove, the JDJ bullet has more room for powder and doesn't jump as far to rifling.

HANDGUN GRIPS — THEY'LL DRIVE YOU CRAZY

By Larry C. Rogers, M.D., F.A.A.F.P. No. 048

That's right folks, they sure will. Of all the custom features you can add to your piece, the grips, from my experience, cause the most heartache and headache. There are probably as many kinds of grips as there are guns. I'll try to comment on my selection process in the past years to give our newer members some ideas.

The first two guns I'll discuss have proven to be the most difficult to fit to my hands. My Ruger .357 Blackhawk and .44 Super Blackhawk are extremely accurate pistols, but they've driven me crazy trying to hold on to them. I'm 6'3" and 240 lbs. My hands are not exactly ballerina size. That small, short, smooth, narrow grip feels like a fork handle in my hand. Each time I fire, the Rugers rotate about 90-100° in my hand. It's not a painful experience, but repeat shots are very slow since the gun has to be moved after each shot. Accuracy suffers from inconsistent grip.

A friend of mine has a Blackhawk, too, and decided to try some Herrett Shooting Stars. Everyone said they're the greatest. Not for me, though. They weren't much wider than the factory originals — ok for you smaller guys. They were at least longer than the grip frame, so my pinkie had a place to rest. I still felt I could do better.

Next I tried a set of Virginian grips. They weren't much different than the stock Ruger's. Long, smooth, thin and just not enough meat for my large hands. Another set of duds.

J.D. finally helped me find the light when I visited him. His Pachmayr neoprenes felt good to me. I got a pair of the large size for my Super Blackhawk. All problems were answered. The Pachmayrs are wider than other grips, longer than others from front to back, and offer a slip free surface with stippling on the neoprene. Since they don't slide with the shot, repeat shots are faster. The neoprene softens the recoil markedly and has helped reduce my groups

another inch at 50 yards. A definite winner!

My next gun, a Colt Trooper, came with small grips the size of the frame. Shooting with these was like holding the bare grip frame. It was a real bummer with full power loads. I found a pair of factory target grips for the Trooper. They were wider, longer, and had more stippling than the smaller grips. I never searched for better grips since this is a seldom used gun. I believe, though, the factory target stocks will suit most general purpose needs, especially for those of you with medium size hands.

Next I acquired two Model 29's. Larry Kelly Mag-Na-Ported both. A local ex-PBI gunsmith did action jobs on them that are unbelievable. These guns can really shoot, but did they ever eat my hand with that fine, sharp, stippling on the factory target stocks. At that time I had been reading a lot of Jeff Cooper. He highly recommended custom grips by Fuzzy Farrant of California. I sent the Fuzz a drawing of my large hand and anxiously awaited some hand filling grips. Was I surprised when they arrived! Even with bilateral palm swells the grips are only about 80% as wide as factory S & W stocks. The edges of the finger grooves are very sharp, and the wood on the rear of the grip did not even cover the backstrap of the grip frame. Control was impossible. Each shot was a struggle just to keep the gun in my hand. Sorry, Jeff; you may be Numero Uno with .45s, but I'll pass on your Wheelgun recommendations. Fuzzy was definitely in Raunch City with my grips. By the way, they're for sale — real cheap.

An ad by G.F. Galef & Sons of New York City attracted my attention. I ordered a set of target grips with finger grooves. These were very nice grips considering their obvious mass production. They're slightly wider than Smith factory stocks. There's a cutaway for

Continued On Page 15

Grips

Continued From Page 14

speed loaders. The finger grooves are smooth and deep cut. The wood, from the Philippines, is nicely grained and is very attractive. The only problem with them is that the pinkie can't fit more than half way around the bottom of the grips. The pinkie still supports the lower part of the grips nicely, though. The smooth finish is a problem in double action firing, but some skip relief checkering like on the Herrett grips solved that problem. This is a very nice grip for medium to large hands. I still use these at times. The Galef grips are also very similar to Colt's Jay Scott grips and Mustang grips.

I was so satisfied with the Pachmayrs on my Ruger that I ordered two sets for my 29s. They were as much an improvement over the Galef grips as the Galefs were over the factory stocks of the Python and M29. The stippling prevents slipping in double action firing. The neoprene again softens recoil and their large size nicely fills my large hands. These Pachmayrs put pleasure in shooting the big boomer, even with full power loads. Two sizes are available for most guns — for those with average hands and a large size for those with large hands.

The final pistols I've had to stock were two Pythons. The factory stocks really didn't displease me all that much. They filled my hand nicely. The checkering was not excessively sharp and helped control in double action firing. I think the factory stocks are a good all around choice for many people — a rare find in the multitude of factory stocks.

I had liked the Galef and Pachmayr stocks so much that I bought a pair of each for my Pythons. The Galef's finger grooves were smoothly finished with no sharp edges. There was enough lumber in the grips to fill my hands. In fact, the Galefs are a tadd on the large size for my gorilla hands. The finger grooves are as much an aid for single action firing as for double action firing. Double action firing, however, is a little more difficult due to the smoothness of the wood. The Python just rolls back in the hand after firing. As before, checkering the wood helps reduce the roll greatly.

Pachmayrs, like on the M-29s, were big winners on the Pythons. Recoil was like that of hot .38s with full power .357s. The grips did not slip during double action firing, but also did not give as much finger control on the grips as the Galefs during single action firing. They're still the best all around grips for my Pythons.

In summary, factory Python grips are OK, not great, Factory M-29 grips are dogs — good for kindling wood mostly. My sample of Fuzzy Farrant's were worse than the 29s. I wouldn't even waste a match on them. Galef stocks are excellent for single action firing, fair for double action — a good hunter's choice. Pachmayrs are probably the best of the lot. They are cushioned, give good control, allow a constant, nonchanging hold and just plain feel good.

Personal preferences, hand size and shape combine to provide the stockmakers with a challenge. Unfortunately, some of the products don't quite measure up to the challenge.



'CATTIN' CASES!

By Gary Geraud, No. 467

I sure am having fun with these barrels! I got my SSK .30-40 barrel rechambered to .30-40 Ackley Improved. I'm very happy with this chambering. Thought I would send you some load data on the two. Note that this is the same barrel.

Even at 45.0 grains, that is just a hair under 2,300 for a 180! Not bad, I don't think. 41.0 is the Max. that Dupont recommends for the standard Krag, at 2,083 — The Improved at 45.0 is 198 fps faster. I would trade a thirty dollar chambering job for 200 fps any day! (Editor's Note: Figure 3 fps per degree temperature difference.)

I took out my other .30-40 barrel (the .30-30 factory that you rechambered for me) to the range with a 3x T/C RP scope on it and was absolutely amazed at its accuracy. I only shot on paper for one three-shot group (after I got it sighted in) and that group measured 7/8" center to center!

(Editor's Note: Used .30-40 R.P. case, CCI BR2, 41.0, 4064. Bullet unknown).

I finally got around to setting up the paperboard dividers, like you suggested. At one hundred yards, a 180 gr. Sierra BT fired with 41.0 4064 out of the factory 1 in 14 twist barrel showed evidence of upsetting. The entrance hole was perfectly round, as were the next six dividers, but when it went through the seventh and out the last one, the hole was oval. A guy would definitely want a 1 in 10 twist for hunting purposes with the heavier bullets.

I'm going to concentrate on the 165 gr. bullets for my rechambered factory barrel. I plan on hunting deer and antelope with the standard .30-40 using 165 gr. Hornady B.T. and I'm going to use the Improved with the 180 Sierra B.T. for elk. (I didn't draw a moose — RATS). At 300 yards, that Improved with the Sierra is still moving along at 1865 fps and has 1390 ft. lbs. of energy. Not bad! In fact, at 1,000 yards, the Improved with the 180 Sierra still has more energy than a hot loaded .44 mag. with a 240 has at 150 yards! Now that ought to boggle the mind of those of us who like to sit at home in front of the fireplace and memorize ballistics tables.

Mr. Cal Duff of Cal's Gun Room located at 405 1st Street, P. O. Box 405, Dubois, WY 82513 did the rechambering for me. He also got in a .30-30 Ackley reamer for me and I've sent up a barrel for that. He mostly does rifle smithing, but I'm going to

RENEWALS

Charter Members No. 597 through No. 743 must renew now. This is your only notification. Please renew today! The \$12.50 rate goes to \$15.00 on February 1, 1981.

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.30-40 Krag

T/C Contender SSK Barrel: 14"

Cases: Remington
Primers: CCI-200
Bullet: Sierra 180 gr. Spitzer Boat Tail

Grains:	Powder:	Velocity:	Variance:	Temperature:
44.0	4350	1,861	52	63
45.0	4350	1,927	39	60
46.0	4350	1,977	47	60
47.0	4350	2,015	53	50
39.0	4064	1,995	72	62
40.0	4064	2,047	97	62
41.0	4064	2,083	35	58
42.0	4064	2,135	25	58

.30-40 Ackley Improved

T/C Contender Rechambered SSK Barrel: 14"

Cases: Winchester
Primers: CCI-200
Bullet: Sierra 180 gr. Spitzer Boat Tail

Grains:	Powder:	Velocity:	Variance:	Temperature:
*41.0	4064	2,042	- - -	75
41.0	4064	2,134	- - -	76
42.0	4064	2,181	- - -	76
43.0	4064	2,186	- - -	76
44.0	4064	2,229	- - -	76
45.0	4064	2,281	25	88

* fire forming load

convert him! He thought I was a little nuts shooting a .30-40 Krag in a handgun, let alone wanting it rechambered to the Improved version! I'm going to

have to show him that .375 JDJ case you sent me. Hell, I'm just shooting smallbore right now!

FIRING LINE

Last year I bought the first pistol I ever owned, a T/C Super 14 30-30. My pistol created quite a stir when my buddies realized how accurate it is. One guy bought a 14" .30H and killed five buck deer with it his first season of handgun hunting. Our Louisiana limit is six. I haven't got my first yet, but the Lord will provide. If any members in the area would like to get together for a hunt, give me a holler.

J.B. Bergeron, No. 553
Box 66
Fordoche, LA 70732

I have read with interest the comments about the S & W M-29 not being able to stand up to full bore loads. I can't speak for all M-29's, but mine was purchased in the late 70's. It has digested close to 2000 rounds of full bore loads. It does not spit load or lead the bore with proper cast bullets. The accuracy is still there also. It will stay within 1-1/2" at 25 yards. While not as tight as when new, it still functions perfectly.

My favorite load for it consists of the following: Sierra 240 240 gr. JHC, 22.0 gr. of 2400, Rem. cases and CCI Mag primers.

Wayne Randall, No. 320

I'd like to comment about an article concerning the man hunting grizzly bear with the .357 Mag. I know how much of a heart-breaker it would be to have a hunt ruined because of the Canadian handgun laws, but the .357 is in no way close to being adequate for hunting any kind of bear let alone an animal the size of a full grown grizzly. Evidence to that fact is that one bear was wounded and escaped during his hunt.

I don't think it was a sportsman-like thing to do by trying for the second

bear and running the great risk of leaving a second bear wounded like he had the first.

I know it is easy for me to sit back here and say what he should have done but I think some other arrangement could have been made to get him a handgun with adequate power. Possibly his guide could have borrowed a heavier caliber gun from one of his friends or acquaintances. Enough said. . .

Dwight Stearns, No. 123

Ed: If another gun had been available it would have been used.

Some of the loads that I like are: 38 Special — 125JHP — 5.5 Unique-CCI 500 primer; .357 Mag — 125JHP — 8.7 Unique and CCI 500 primer. I use Zero Bullets and the .38 load killed a buck last fall. In the .44 Mag I like CCI Magnum primers under 18.5 AL-8-Speer 200 gr. JMHP or 14.5 Blue Dot under the Speer 240.

I've been asked "Why no 150 grain .44 Mag bullets for high velocity?" Any idea?

D.M. Terry, No. 301

Ed: A 150 grain .44 would simply be too short for its diameter. It would lose velocity very fast, lack the ability to penetrate very well if it was to expand at all and probably shoot too low to sight most guns in with. It would be a very short range proposition. The old original Super Vel 180 grain was made with a very thick jacket. Expansion was very "iffy" from pistols as it was designed for rifles. It did penetrate very well at close ranges (normal hunting) and was exceptionally accurate. I still have a few specially loaded that will get over 2000 F.P.S. from a 7.5" SBH. Don't try to get that though — this uses an experimental WW ball powder. Currently Super Vel 180s, Federal 180s and the Sierra 180 HP are thin jacketed for reliable expansion at handgun velocities.

I just got a nice brown/grizzly with my M-29 6.5" and the Sierra 240 H.P. and 24.5 grs. of H-110. One shot — fantastic penetration. So far have killed Dall, moose caribou, goat and javelina. I recommend the Sierra 240 for any heavy game at no more than 1400-1450 F.P.S. as if pushed any faster it will expand and not penetrate very far.

Bob Robertson, No. 309

Ed: How about some stories of your hunts? In many areas of Alaska there is a terrible argument over what is a brown or grizzly. It's the same bear — some say over 50 miles from the coast its a griz — some say it has to be over 100 miles and then there is the mountain griz and on and on! Whatever, anyone who takes one with a handgun can be proud of it.

I'm interested in and have started toward seeing what can be done to legalize handguns for big game in West Virginia. I'd appreciate WV residents interested in helping contact me.

I guess I've got a rare 29. It's digested about 1850 rounds of 22.0-2400-23.5 gr.-296 with 240/250 gr. bullets and 1200 9.0 Unique 250 grain lead loads and hasn't screwed up once. No skips, backups, lockups and only slight play in the cylinder.

Larry Rogers, No. 048
Box 929
Petersburg, WV 26847

Charles Warren — ASC c/o USMCA, APO NY 09146, wants to hear from other overseas members interested in helping start a silhouette range in the Wildflocken area.

I'm working toward approval of handgun hunting in Washington. The Game Department is reviewing their policy due to my input this fall and I'm to appear to make a formal presentation this winter. With any luck we'll have handgun hunting in the '81' season. Washington is the last western state to disallow handgun hunting of big game.

Ted Krauss, No. 478

GOOD LUCK — Anyone wanting to help Ted write him at Rt. 1, Box 326, Spokane, WA 99204.

Don Munro — Box 125, Harris, NY 12742 wants to meet other HHI members.

Best .44 Mag loads: 180 Sierra H.P. over 25.0 grains of 2400, Lyman Keith 42941 over 20.0 grains of 2400 and 23.5 WW 680 under the .320 JDJ bullet. I've had good results with Lyman 454424 over 20.0-2400 in my Ruger (Ruger T/C load only) and 9-10 grains of Unique in my Colts.

John Taffin, No. 076

The 45-70 Contender does work on varmints. I've been using it on prairie dogs and the last time out had three that you could pick up with one hand.

Gerald Boyd

It didn't suprise me on the lack of support from the N.R.A. It's up to us "foot soldiers" to slug it out. If we do, our elected officials will take notice. Most of the politicians like their positions and will do about anything to retain their seat of power. Most of the population believes the 2nd Amendment is part of the Constitution. I do not fear we can win this war even without too much help from the big boys in D.C.

Bar Stuart, No. 497

Although Shehane ended up with a fine trophy and I congratulate him for it, I think he was very lucky. Not all grizzly bears can be killed with three shots from a .357 Magnum. Regarding the final stalk and the kill, I feel he was extremely unwise for going it alone. As for his guide, I think he was guilty of gross negligence for allowing his client to stalk a grizzly alone with a handgun.

I have hunted Alaskan brown and Kodiak bears with a handgun (.44 Auto-Mag), but ALWAYS with a partner for back-up, armed with a heavy caliber rifle. Bear hunting with a handgun without a rifle back-up is crazy. Anybody that does so must have a death wish.

Terry W. Crouch, No. 106

Ed: People who skydive, fly, race cars, boats, motorcycles, climb mountains, scuba dive, etc. are often accused of having a death wish — not all of them do.

As a handgunner and also licensed guide (Get Lost Guiding Service), I've killed a fair amount of game with .357s and .44s. I specialize in lion although I don't guide full time. Anyone going through Payson, AZ look me up and we'll chew the fat, shoot the bull and maybe even load up the mules and go down to the big cypress thicket and see if the hounds can pick up a cat track.

Richard E. Beeler, No. 222



Beeler and friends after a successful hunt.

I have been handgun hunting since 1959, and have bagged six deer, one wild boar and a corsican ram. The first two whitetail were taken with 19 grain of ALCAN AL-8 250 gr. Lyman Keith bullet — instant kills. Four were taken with 22 gr. of H-110 Sierra 240 gr. H.P. On the boar I used the Hornady 265 S.P. 17 gr. Win 630. On the Corsican ram I used a load I'll never use on anything else except woodchuck. It was 26 gr. H-110 with the Hornady 200 H.P. clocked at 1590 average — two hits in the shoulder and both bullets blew up.

I do not think we need a special PA season as we have 12 days of buck and two days of antlerless deer. The handgun hunter in the woods is a dedicated person. He chooses a firearm that is harder to master — he picks his shots. In PA you are allowed one deer a season, I'll take mine with the BIG .44.

Edward Wegrzynek, No. 305

A couple of years ago I ordered and paid for an Ingram T/C barrel with dies. After a year I gave up. I then received a letter from the Arizona postal authorities. I gave them the requested info and called Ingram. During a short and sharp conversation, I requested my money back and got it two weeks later.

Jerry Highland, No. 099

How about HHI t-shirts, hats, belt buckles, etc. It would help "spread the word."

Wayne Nolan, No. 519

Ed: T-shirts — maybe by spring!

44 Mag load — Speer 240 Magnum soft point, 20 grains of 2400, WW case, CCI LP Mag primer.

On opening day of hunting season this load, from my new 6" S & W Model 29 at a distance of slightly over 50 yards, hit a forked horn mule deer buck that was facing almost straight away from me looking over his left shoulder, in the side of his left thigh, travelled length of body, went through top of heart and exited at front of left shoulder. No bones broken except for a rib or two that got nicked. The buck bounded wobbly away and was dead in 50 yards. I guessed his weight at 200 pounds. Entrance and exit holes about .44 caliber. This is the first head of big game I've killed with this bullet and I'm happy with the penetration, confident that it will do the job on an elk.

Mark Kowack, No. 429



I have now been stationed in Northwest Florida and was wondering if someone in this part of Florida who could point me in the right direction for some deer and boar hunting???

Bruce C. Sacavage, No. 292
3310 Seabrook St.
Pensacola, FL 32505

I'm an Alaskan. I've lived and hunted here for 12 years. I'm not a trophy hunter. When I hunt, the meat is very important. Every year I hunt moose and caribou. This tradition will be passed from father to son. In the August **Sixgunner**, Mr. Woodring criticized the hunter that took two caribou. He seems totally uninformed about Alaska and its ways and life styles, yet eager to criticize. I thought I was reading Sierra Club of Federal Parks Service literature. In Alaska you have to hunt with aircraft, ATV or boat. It's the only way you can get to areas with game during open season. It's just impossible to pack a moose very far. Alaska is a world apart from any Lower 48 hunting. The only way to understand what life is like on the last frontier is to taste it. You won't find out much from magazines.

Dan Bogdansky, No. 016



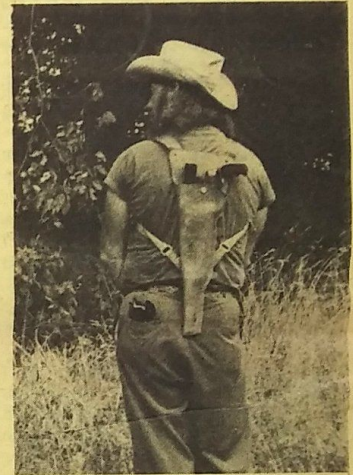
I would like to comment on the .357 Mag. controversy. I feel the .357 is OK on deer if bullets penetrate the central nervous system. Lighter bullets seem best for this purpose as they shoot flatter and can be more accurately placed. Ranges should be under 60 yards and body shots never attempted. This limits your opportunity so much the .357 is not really practical for deer. After all, they can be taken with a claw hammer if the range and position is right! I'm looking forward to life membership in HHI when it's available and 50 more years of HHI.

Boyd Annas, No. 33

Let's keep HHI rolling. Any chance of a monthly paper? I'm going to be using 26.0 grs. of H-110 under the 200 gr. Hornady .44 H.P. in my SBH for deer this year. It shoots great and not at all uncomfortable.

Jon Palisin, No. 569

Ed: We need more articles to expand the paper to monthly!



This is a holster I made up for the long barrelled T/C. The straps can be pulled tighter and make it fit higher on the back, but not much. They can also be loosened enough to allow it to fit over a fully loaded day pack or over the top bars of an expedition bag.

It can be drawn out without lifting up from the bottom, but lifting it up makes it easier to get out. It fits pretty tight. It also has a flap to cover the gun in case of rain, but I took it off and rarely use it. I don't have any leather working tools. I just wet the leather down good, wrap the gun in thin glad wrap. Fold the leather around the gun. Block it and dry it with a vacuum cleaner blower. Double stripped and glued the edges. Then used a small bit to add the holes for sewing. Had to use bow string serving for thread... but it all works.

Jerry Hart, No. 166

HANDGUN HUNTERS INTERNATIONAL
P.O. Box .357 MAG
Bloomington, OH 43910
Annual membership is \$12.50.

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