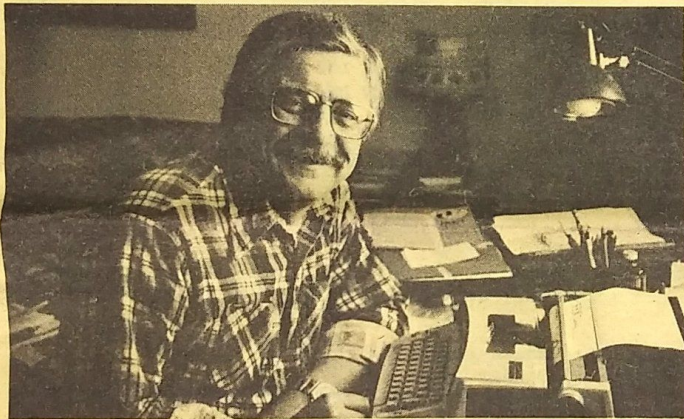




THE SIXGUNNER



MY CORNER

By J. D. Jones

With summer at its height, the competition shooters should be in their glory. I was told there were over 1200 pistol shooters at the Bullseye Nationals this year.

I recently returned from England after completing arrangements to obtain a few of the handmade Kengil single shot pistols from Gillie Howe — the father of long range pistol shooting in Great Britain. Last year in the Pistol '81 Shoot, I set a new International record with a Kengil in that no good .30-30 caliber.

This year, Terry O'Dwyer, a very congenial shooter from Cowbridge, Wales, did a fine job and fired a perfect score with another Kengil. His 300 yard ten shot group was 2.5". Caliber — that no good .30-30 again.

My gun should be in within a couple of months with others to follow. It's somewhat expensive by the time it gets here and will retail for about 2 grand.

Since the secret seems to be out, I'll mention that Dan Wesson is bringing out their .357 in stainless in the near future.

T/C has just announced owners of 10" barrels with the old style front sight can have them converted to the new style .080" width front sight with screw on ramp.

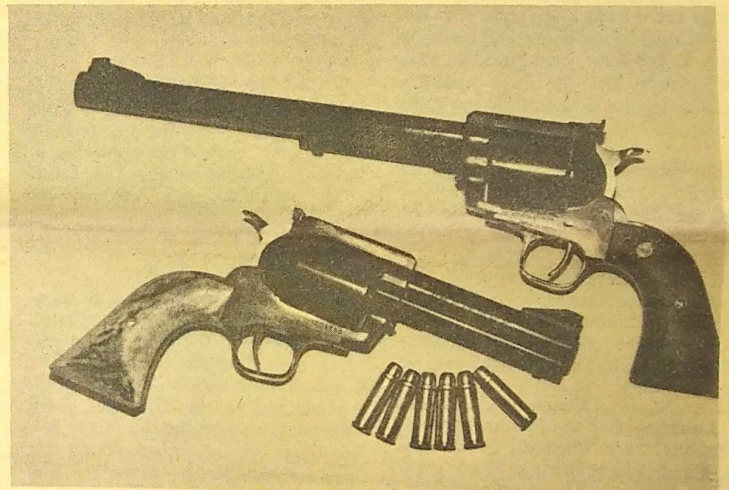
The conversion costs \$25.00 and consists of removing the soldered on front sight, replacing it with the new style, repolishing, rebluing and shipping back to you. Payment can be made by check, M.O., MasterCard or VISA. Simply ship parcel post or UPS to T/C — Attention Repair Dept. Conversion shouldn't take longer than five weeks.

Bill Siems of Federal Cartridge Corp. just announced a consumer rebate program on Federal Shotshells for the 1982 fall hunting season.

Beginning 8/1 through 11/30, participating Federal dealers will furnish rebate coupons with the purchase of Federal Shotshells in 12, 16 and 20 gauge sizes. Federal will rebate \$1.00 per box purchased with a maximum of \$5.00 rebated. Sounds as if Federal is becoming very aggressive in this highly competitive market.

Kodak Disc camera has a lot of advertising going for it. As far as a camera for hunting goes, it will take snapshots; that's all. I purchased a middle priced 6000 and gave it a good wring out. It's OK for snapshots, but even 3 1/2 x 5" prints are grainy. Film and processing are more expensive than

(Continued on Page 2)



ABILENE .44 SILHOUETTE MODEL

By John Taffin, Boise, ID

About six months after initial testing of the three Abilenes covered in THE SIXGUNNER (Aug. '81), I received the long awaited Abilene Model designed specifically for silhouette shooters and hunters.

This new model bears a great similarity to the 4-5/8" Bull Barrel .44 covered earlier, except for three modifications other than the obvious change of a 10" barrel. Of these changes, two are great and one is just so-so. The Silhouette Model is fitted with excellent sights; the flat faced Elliason rear is furnished as standard equipment, and is mated with a narrow undercut front post. For my eyes, I have about two-thirds as much daylight on each side of the front sight as the width of the front sight (1/10") in the Elliason rear sight. This is my favorite type of sight set-up, especially for long range shooting.

The second change is the serrations that grace the top of the flattened off bull barrel running from the frame to the front sight. This flattened area is .425" wide and coupled with the

serrated .670" wide top strap, the result is a very good looking sixgun. The untapered bull barrel measures a full .845" in diameter and is topped off by a recessed crown to protect the muzzle.

The change I do not care for is the new target stocks. They are beautifully figured rosewood covering the area behind the trigger guard, the front and bottom of the grip frame, but they are supplied with overly large finger grooves, and for my hand, they are ungainly and spoil the beautiful balance of the Abilene. I immediately replaced them with standard stocks, which will be replaced by genuine stag as soon as I fit them to the frame. Pachmayrs would be a welcome addition to this model, also, but although those for the Ruger Super Blackhawk fit, the pin holes are in the wrong place.

As all other Abilenes, this model also is provided with a smooth wide trigger, an excellently shaped wide hammer, and with the anvil link system, is safe to carry with six rounds.

(Continued on Page 2)

My Corner . . . Continued from Page 1

35MM with a lot less to work with. There are numerous buy through mail order compact 35MM cameras in the \$60-70 price range that will allow good, sharp 8x10 prints and totally outperform the Disc. I had my Disc processing done by Kodak so processing can't be blamed. Until the Disc is improved, I'd say buy a 35MM.

SSK Match Grade Barrels for the 1911 Colt are in production — including the .41 Avenger which gives the trajectory of a 9MM and increases energy of the .45 ACP by around 30%. Also available are .45 ACP, .38 Super, .38 Special and other special order calibers.

The complete Drop-in Kit to convert the 1911 Colt to the .41 Avenger, with dies, springs, etc. retails for \$230.00. Bullet molds — 185 grain RN and FP are also available.

Ed Lomax, an old friend from Pachmayr recently retired. I'm sure the shooting industry will miss Ed. He'll be a hard act to follow for whoever takes over his job. And Ed, may your retirement be a long and happy one.

The new GUN DIGEST just arrived today and it looks like a good one. The price is up to \$12.98 now and the book has 472 pages jam packed with information and the most complete catalog section of currently available guns to be found anywhere.

Looking for an inexpensive squirrel gun? Take a look at the H & R 903 and 904 in .22 LR. If you favor .22 Magnum, they are the M603 and 604. They are inexpensive, reliable, accurate and can be scoped with H & R's 3X Hunter/Silhouette scope. Like all current production revolvers, they need a trigger job, but represent a lot of gun, hunting and plinking pleasure for the money.

Looking for a Lyman Turbo-Tumbler? Try England, Wales and Scotland. Plenty of them there. Pipeline here should be about filled also.

Latest word on the D. W. Stainless .357 is that guns will be shipped in August! A new hammer-trigger mechanism is being incorporated into the .44 that will result in easier cocking and a better S.A. trigger.

Had trouble with a factory repairing a gun lately? A member recently did with Colt. His Trooper needed attention. He returned it to his dealer. The dealer said he returned it to Colt. When I saw it, the cylinder latch had fallen off and the sideplate looked as if it had been hammered by an apprentice blacksmith. Apparently the chisel had been used to remove and replace the screws. The dealer attributed the work to Colt.

When I saw the gun, I told the owner that I didn't believe Colt had seen the gun. I then sent it to Colt's Repair Dept., through SSK. About 45 days later, it returned in better than new condition, no charge. This is the type of service you can expect and will get from any reputable firearms company. Sometimes there is a charge — depends on the problem. If your dealer sends a gun in for you — ask to see the paperwork if it isn't right when returned. Don't ask my why, but some dealers would rather screw one up and alienate

a customer rather than box and send a gun to be properly repaired.

SOAP BOX TIME: Hinckley. No Comment. Don't want to lose my Second Class Mail permit.

* * *

Abilene . . . Continued from Page 1

The ejector rod head is large, making ejection of spent shells easy, the cylinder base pin is large with a .300" wide knurled head for easy removal, and is held in place, not by a spring loaded base pin catch, but a screw through the front of the frame and angled upward to enter a groove on the base pin. I much prefer this throwback to the original Colt SA's of 100 years ago.

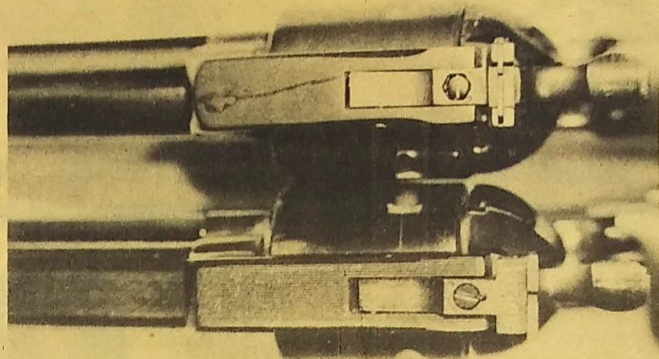
The entire Silhouette Model is finished in a deep bright blue as furnished on Smith 29's and Ruger Super Blackhawks of 20 years ago. If you've gathered by now that I like this Abilene, you're right. The action is very smooth, cocks easily, and has a good trigger pull with some creep that lets go at 3 1/2#. Barrel/cylinder gap is .004". A trigger job that would bring it down to a smooth 2-2 1/2# would be the only modification I would make to this revolver.

Winter has settled into Idaho, as most of the rest of the country, making serious testing a matter of trying to find a time when it isn't snowing or blowing. Anytime we have sun, I grab a gun and head out, whatever the temperature happens to be. So most testing was done at temperatures around 15°.

Since the .44 Magnum was introduced by Remington, a "standard" reload has been the Keith bullet cast hard over 22 grains of #2400. Five different Keith bullets were tried in the Abilene and on the 23rd shot, I felt something land on the top of my hat. Reaching up, my hand found the ejector rod assembly. As on the Bull Barrel 4-5/8" tested earlier, the stud holding the assembly had not been properly silver soldered to the barrel and let go under recoil. So, this Abilene will be returned for a new silver solder job as soon as I can bear to part with it for a few weeks. It's been a simple matter to punch out empties with a small rod until this is accomplished.

As is my norm, all loads were assembled with WW brass and CCI Magnum primers, with all firing for groups being done from a rest of a rolled up piece of carpet from the roof of my LUV 4X4.

The five different Keith bullet loads were fired first and did not provide any great results but things changed when the Lyman 429215 GC over 26 grains of H110 started punching a very tight pattern. This long barreled Abilene seems to prefer gas check bullets or jacket bullets over plain based cast bullets. The Lyman 429215 GC gives excellent accuracy over 26 grains of H110 and at 1510 fps is certainly adequate for both silhouettes and hunting. This particular bullet weighs in at 209 grains cast from linotype, sized, gas checked, and lubricated and has been a favorite of mine in both .44 Magnum and .44 Special for a long time. The 265



The "Silhouette" wears the highly regarded Elliason rear sight — it's an option on Pythons.

**Abilene 10" Silhouette Model .44 Magnum, 5 Shot Groups at 20 Yards
Temperatures: 15°**

Charge	Powder	Bullet	Group Size	M.V.
22 Grains	#2400	H & G Keith 228 Gr.	2"	1460
22 Grains	#2400	Lyman Keith 238 Gr.	1-3/4"	1460
22 Grains	#2400	NEI Keith 248 Gr.	2"	1460
22 Grains	#2400	RCBS Keith 237 Gr.	1-1/2"	1560
22 Grains	#2400	SAECO Keith 248 Gr.	1-3/4"	1590
26 Grains	H110	Lyman 429215GC	7/8"	1510
23.5 Grains	WW680	SSK 310 JDJ	1-1/4"	1320
26 Grains	WW296	Sierra 200 HP	1-1/4"	1430
22.5 Grains	#2400	Hornady 240 HP	1-1/8"	1440
23 Grains	WW296	Hornady 265 HP	7/8"	1350
24 Grains	H4227	Lyman 429244 GC	1"	1450
24 Grains	WW296	Lyman 429244 GC	1-1/4"	1460
23 H110	H110	Lyman 429244 GC	1"	1400

Muzzle velocities chronographed on Oehler Model 12, 10' from the muzzle, screens 5" apart, all velocities rounded to nearest 10'.

Hornady over 23 grains of WW 296 also looks good at 1350 with groups under 1".

Though not too seriously because of weather, and not wishing to trudge through deep snow to set targets, a few loads were fired at natural targets at long ranges. When the weather cooperates, the Silhouette Model will be tested extensively at long range including Silhouette Matches. Bad weather forced cancellation of our January match, and heavy snow during our December match made seeing the targets impossible, so I have not yet been able to fire the Abilene under match conditions. I expect it to do well.

As all Abilenes, the Silhouette Model differs from the Ruger in that it does not have a transfer bar, but rather an anvil on the hammer that pivots freely. When the hammer falls, the bottom of the anvil hits a modified transfer bar (anvil link). This causes it to pivot and the top of the anvil strikes the frame mounted firing pin, causing the gun to fire. When the hammer is down, it rests on the frame, with the firing pin at rest.

My preliminary shooting tests show the Abilene to be an accurate, well made, quality sixgun. It balances beautifully and carries easily in a shoulder holster. When I talked to Ron Fine of Mossberg, who markets the Abilene through A.I.G., I urged him to chamber the Silhouette Model in .357 Magnum. No one makes a .357 revolver with a large frame, long cylinder, and long barrel, all of which are desirable for silhouette shooting. In discussions at last year's N.R.A. show and again at the IHMSA Inter-

nationals, he relayed that they had not thought of the possibility. Now I hear a .357 Silhouette Model is on the way; it should be a great match and small game sixgun.

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Caution: all technical data presented herein reflects only the experience of the author using specific equipment under specific circumstances. Such information is intended only as a guide and should be used with caution. Other material may be totally experimental and treated as such. HHI accepts no responsibility for results obtained using data published herein.

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ARIZONA'S FIRST HANDGUN-ONLY ELK HUNT

By Philip C. Briggs, Phoenix, AZ

Originally, hunting was a means of survival, and the hunter went afield as needed, armed with the most efficient weapon at his disposal. Now, hunting is a sport and one that is politically controlled. Now I know you might not realize that on first glance, but think about it. When, what and where you hunt is specified, as is how and how many. All decisions are products of political processes — some of which are well identified and straightforward, some of which are not. Handgun hunters, to get their share of the hunts, will have to work within this process. Let me give you an example. And maybe a lesson.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department spent a lot of time this past fall and winter preparing elk hunt options, presenting them to the hunters, and collecting and compiling their input. Workshops, media presentations, meetings. Straightforward stuff.

How, they asked somewhat rhetorically, can we provide more hunting opportunities — challenging, satisfying opportunities — while correctly managing the elk herd? Should we issue more permits or reduce the waiting period, or alter the hunt structure? To help focus the process, the Department prepared several alternatives for discussion. Among the proposals was the elimination of a very popular early rifle hunt, conducted during the rut.

The early hunt is a perfect choice for those using short range weapons. If you're good with the call, you can bring an amorous bull within rock range. Bowhunters love it. Muzzle loaders do too. Handgun hunters could do well but had to hunt with the long gunners and few have decided to buck that advantage. And, of course, it is very popular with the rifle hunters. Because they did real well. Too well — over 40% hunt success. Some of the Department felt that this success ratio was far too high to be fair and that the hunt should be eliminated with the 450 permits split up among other hunts. Later in the year, the rifle hunters aren't so successful, and as the herd could probably stand the same kill, more permits could be issued, so more hunters could be afield doing what they do best. And as archers also have a lower success — some of the permits could be given to them. So that swap was one of the alternatives.

The Department had earlier prepared a long range elk management plan that had established that 15% of the available elk permits would be given to hunters using less efficient weapons. Bows and muzzle loaders were mentioned — but handguns fit that description, and have been given a large share of the javelina permits here in Arizona for similar reasons. But, because the handgunners had been silent, they'd been left out of the plan — and this option.

That didn't seem equitable to a few of us, especially as firearms hunters were losing out in these alternatives. Now, a handgun is not only a less efficient weapon, but most rifle hunters have one, so if they were going to be forced to switch, it should be to another firearm — the pistol. Not bows or muzzle loaders, which are entirely different kettles of fish.

Accordingly, a couple of us spoke to the Department staff about the idea of

allocating some of the early rifle permits to handgunners, and individually and collectively we petitioned the Commission that directs the Department to authorize such a hunt. And at their February meeting, they did. Grassroots politics in action. A good idea, carefully thought out presentations, a request from the constituency and the proposal was a reality. Almost.

Yet to come was the final setting of permit numbers.

The motion creating the handgun hunt passed quickly that day and the archers present apparently missed the fact that instructions were for an early hunt for handgunners — during the prime hunting period — which archers have traditionally had to themselves. Asleep I guess — but they didn't stay that way for long.

Soon the archers were awake and furious. Lead by the hierarchy of the Arizona Bowhunters Association, they began to protest. A letter writing campaign was orchestrated and at the next Commission meeting, they were there to argue against the handgun hunt.

"Handguns," they said, in a classic example of the pot pointing out the kettle's color, "aren't very effective weapons, and wounding losses would be high." Not only that, but they argued that, "Some would use scoped pistols that are nothing more than sawed off rifles, and they would kill far too many elk."

That these claims are contradictory and don't hold much water was lost on them in their attempt to find a valid-sounding objection to the hunt. The real reason, and one which even they were smart enough not to articulate, was what some might call selfishness — or more bluntly — greed.

"We'd have supported you if you hadn't taken our permits," one of their leaders said to me later.

Sadly, they'd acted too soon, as the Department's recommendations added 350 permits for archers over and above the loss to the handgunners. But by the time the ABA leaders stopped to ask the staff the damage was done — the calls and letters poured into the Commission. Over 200 letters — all from archers, all opposed to the handgun hunt.

Word of their actions came to us through our contacts, and we set out to find a compromise. Meetings were arranged with the ABA's leader, and with the Department's top staff. Meetings were cancelled by the ABA — they didn't want to listen to reason, I guess. The Department staff, aware of the brewing storm, and sincerely committed to providing hunting opportunities for all of their constituency, met with us, and worked out weapons regulations that would overcome the ABA's stated objections.

We had word that the ABA leaders wouldn't oppose the handgun hunt at the critical Commission meeting in April. And true to their word, they didn't. Nope, what they did was pass out fliers at the door that told the attending archers that the handgun hunt would be cancelled — and they were out to knock off the muzzle loaders. The final touch was to pack the meeting with archers, including several young turks in camies — pressure politics — and it worked.

We lost our hunt that day, and the attending bower's applauded.

Strange. The bow hunters practically own the woods. They get the best hunts, suffer no waiting periods and face little competition for permits. They hunt with weapons that are nominally inefficient, but most rush to embrace compound bows, hang sights or scopes on them, and fling exotic arrows to improve their chances. They do as well on javelina as do rifle hunters, and with time will equal rifle hunters in some elk hunts. In truth, their privileges exist only at the pleasure of the far larger number of rifle hunters. And yet they want more.

There are some lessons to be learned from this chronicle.

Handgunners will have to organize if they expect to participate in any future elk hunts. And we have. Randall Cuberty, 5415 West Sanna, Glendale, AZ 85302, Telephone 602-931-2927, is organizing the Arizona Handgun Hunters Association which will be the Arizona affiliate of HHI. If you're an Arizona member, there will be a reduced membership — but what we want is workers — advocates — not your dollars. Drop him a line if you've learned something from this.

As to the archers — well, they haven't learned their lesson yet. But, they will.

SAFETY

By Tom South
Woodfield, OH

My job as Match Director of the Ozark Metallic Silhouette club brings me into contact with a lot of people from different walks of life and different methods of handling guns. This is written more for the beginning shooter than the advanced, but then we can all stand refresher courses. It is not MACHO to handle a gun carelessly like you are to big a man to be safe with it. A real hunter or competitive shooter has only respect for a person who obeys gun safety. Maybe the reason you are not invited out on that grouse hunt anymore is you like to climb fences with loaded guns or do not see anything, but the bird and keep shooting even in the direction of a fellow hunter. I have seen people who turn a gun sideways on a pad and slam a T/C shut, what would happen if he had not seated the primer deep enough and it was scraped across the frame on lock up. A mess of the guy next to you (maybe he is your best friend or was). You say it was an accident, but was it? Believe me, bullets hurt like hell when entering human flesh even if they are not fatal. Next there is the standing shooter who when he gets his five rounds off, turns to talk with his spotter while pointing his gun at the crowd while unloading it. No one likes to look down the bore of a .44 or .357 Mag. I guess if someone whipped out a snub nose and shot him in the leg he would know why you shouldn't point a gun at someone.

I have seen semi-autos brought off the line that were not in the slide back and lock position held in the hand in firing position, such people are fools, it is too easy to have a round in the chamber they did not know about. I have seen SA revolver shooters pointing the barrel at their head while they peeked at the cylinder to see where the empty chamber was. A cure for that is after loading the first chamber skip the

next one and then continue to load the remaining four rounds, this brings the empty chamber back under the hammer, very simple to do and may keep you from getting an extra eye between the two you were originally equipped with. The Creedmore position with short barreled guns and I mean from 10 inches or less must be used with extreme caution. With the concentration required for good scores it is very easy to let your leg slide forward and the end of the barrel to take a bite out of your leg with a hasty shot or in case of 22's the seam on blue jeans is enough to deflect a bullet into your leg or away from it. I know — I've got the scar. Dumb HUH', yet without a strap around your leg to keep the wind from blowing your pants leg in the way of your shot it is very possible.

In the field one must never fire a shot unless the target is clear and a suitable back stop is behind this target. I know we are all crack shots, but for some strange reason the dumb bullets I buy now days do not always go right where they are aimed. I for one do not want to pay for someone's cow or worse yet find a hiker or other hunter laying in the leaves kicking while his lifes blood leaks all over the woods. If you hunt with a person who is so game hungry that all they can think of is making a kill regardless, then they are not hunters and you would be better off bowling on the days they want you to take to the field. You can never be too conscious of safety with fire arms, I have seen with my own eyes holes shot through the ceiling and the walls of a house by knowledgeable gun men. They both had the sickest look on their face afterward, for they knew as I did that they had made the supreme blunder of a hunter in not checking to see if it was loaded.

In these Anti-Gun days we don't need to help out those who wish to deprive us of our sport with more statistics. HUNT SAFE.

Never carry six rounds in a revolver. A local man who lived next door to my mother was tin can plinking with a .22 and .44 Mag. While shooting his .44 the .22 fell from his holster and shot him in the back of the head killing him instantly. Yes, it can happen to you. We need you for HHI and pro gun activities so stay with us — I might want to hunt with you some day. ED: Sooner or later we all do something stupid with guns. The guy that thinks "it can't happen to me," is likely to be next!

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BIG BULLETS IN THE .45 COLT

By Paco Kelly, Tucson, AZ

The shooting world in 1873 was stunned, (the U. S. Army in 1872). The nation was hardly out of the muzzle loading era when Colt brought out a cartridge, load, and handgun that gave nearly 450 pounds of muzzle energy. If Colt didn't have to wait for the White bored through cylinder patents to run out, it would have been released sooner.

The first cartridges for the .45 Colt were in soft copper cases with a center-fire priming system that was part of the case. It carried 40 grains of Black Powder and a 255 grain swaged lead bullet. The cartridge case quickly changed to brass and a boxer type primer. Not until 68 years later was the long Colt rivaled in power . . . 1935 . . . starting in a time of near primitive arms and stretched into a time of near modern arms and smokeless powder, it reigned as the most powerful of handguns and loads and generated far more power than many rifles of the turn of the century. Why the .45 Colt round was never chambered in a popular production rifle of the times is a mystery to me.

When the .357 Magnum hit the market in 1935, a lot of bull was pushed about its power. Velocities of 1500 plus fps with the 158 grain bullet were advertised, and claims of over 800 pounds of muzzle energy published by many including Smith & Wesson. And in pressure barrels, it could have reached that . . . but not in any revolver . . . smart .45 Colt shooters held on to their guns.

The truth was, of course, the .357 was not as good as the hysterical PR types claimed, and the .45 Colt was much better than its fading image, as handloaders of the day knew. The .357 magnum was and is a fantastic development, and gets better every year, but so does the .45 Colt.

Some take issue at the Colt round being called the 'long' .45 Colt. Well, my Grandfather carried a Colt 1873 SAA in the 1890's . . . and he said the S & W cartridge of the day that held 28 grains of BP caused most gunnies and shootists to refer to the Colt round as the 'long Colt'.

When one thinks of killing power, common sense should ring a bell in any shooter's head when you think of a .451 to .454 caliber bullet cutting nearly a half inch hole through game. That's about the size the .357 tries to expand to! And when both the .357 and the .45 Colt bullets from handguns reach 100 or more yards, the only slug that will still make the half inch hole is the .45.

The big Colt slugs started out as lead, and my feeling with the costs of jacketed bullets skyrocketing, cast bullets are very good in this caliber. I used jacketed now only for very specific reasons. Even though I think 90% of even those could use cast. Like bear, and elk hunting, or Iron Ram shooting. The number of fine .45 caliber mould designs today are enough to make an old Colt shooter smile from ear to ear.

I flipped through C. W. Melander's new mould booklet . . . C. W.'s company, N.E.I., makes 31/45 caliber selections with the fall addendum for 1981, adding three more, plus a maxi

ball for 35 selections. I've used that Maxi in my custom .45 Colt/Marlin rifle with good results. Thirty of these selections are handgun designs or can be used in handguns. For this article, I obtained the 310451, a real Keith shaped 300 grainer, his 250456, which is a blunt roundnose with a collar-button shape, and the 300454 Giles round nose which has a small flat spot on the nose for the loading tube of my lever action Marlin. I have N.E.I.'s .358 Giles and found it to be very accurate and a deadly killer on game.

All of the moulds I ordered have a few things in common: they have deep lube grooves . . . for use also in rifles, fouling at the end of a gun barrel with cast bullets usually means your lube ran out too soon. They have blunt or flat noses and are of substantial weight for handguns . . . a combination giving true killing power. Now, before you think 300 grains is too heavy for handguns, the 1981 December issue of SIXGUNNER gave a goodly number of loads for .44 Magnums using well known powders with velocities in the 1400/1500 fps range levels showing pressures to be safe for modern handguns. And the cast bullet used in each case was the JDJ at 310 grains!

Now I'm not saying to push a .45/310 grain slug at 1400/1500 fps in a Colt Single Action. But, you can push one at 1200 fps in new strong Colts . . . and higher in Ruger single actions: I can't say for the Virginian, Abiline, or any other single action, because I haven't built loads for them. But, I think they look strong enough. The Contender .45 Colt barrel digested my loads without complaint. With an unknown gun start with 800 fps level loads and working up slowly, using good sound reloading practices. I do know my new S & W N frame, .45 Colt didn't do well with anything over 1200 fps, with 250 grain cast bullets. Jacketed bullets forced even lower velocities on me.

The test guns are a 10" barrel T/C, a custom Ruger single action, and my Marlin custom rifle . . . just to give an idea of what we shooters have missed not having a lever rifle in .45 Colt like we do with .357 and .44 Magnums. These loads are safe in my guns . . . as usual, you must be careful testing your guns with my loads. I doubt any known Colt SAA or S & W will take these pressures.

I started with N.E.I.'s 250 grain blunt round nose. Mainly, I started with this CB because it was heavy and blunt . . . yet not flat, giving better trajectory. But, I also had a gut reaction when I first saw this design. Looking through N.E.I.'s catalog, I was oohing and aahing over the goodies . . . when I got to the 250456 it was a . . . "Damn, I have to have that" . . . kind of reaction. I marked it for future purchase when funds were available. I think that reaction is important in experienced CB shooters . . . it's an accumulation of bits and pieces of data and information coming together in your head when you see a certain design. I recommend buying it on that reaction alone.

With this bullet, I worked up some really nice light loads, in the custom

Ruger, (5-1/2"), 16/2400 broke 1000 fps and was comfortable to shoot. It dropped into one ragged hole at 25 yards off of sandbags. At 50 yards under 2", and we had a ball keeping pop cans jumping to out past 80 or 90 yards. Did I say that was a light load? A 250 grain slug at 1000 fps churns up over 550 pounds of muzzle energy. Over 100 pounds of energy more than the original Colt load that made it famous. And my Grandfather once put down a 1300 pound horse, a real outlaw which was stomping his rider, with that original load. The 255 grain bullet at point blank range broke both the horse's shoulders . . . neither the horse nor the rider survived.

I found both Unique and 4756 were good for medium range velocities, but accuracy is not all it should be. I think it is the custom barrel's fault. I've used both powders in other Ruger SA's with excellent groups. My custom barrel is a hunk of Pope barrel and the rifling is like nothing I've ever seen before. I found 11/4756 gave just under 1100 fps and 670 foot pounds. It was showing the ragged edge of excessive pressure . . . which I don't understand because 11/Unique gave 1160 fps and no excessive pressure signs. And Unique is a faster burning powder than 4756! At 8.5/4756 and 782 fps/340 lbs. is almost a squib load with real killing power. In my older Colt SA and S & W 1917, it's safe and powerful.

I tried WW 296 and found I needed to use 18 or more grains in that big Colt case to get good ignition and accuracy. With 20/296/250, the Ruger was registering 1225 fps/833 pounds muzzle energy and 2-1/4" groups. And this load felt like a warm .357 in a Smith K frame. I hit a north bound coyote in the south end (Texas brain shot) at 75 feet. She stumbled, ran 10 yards and fell on her rump. When I got there, she was DOA. The 250 grain RN went in her right hip, crossed through her body and out behind her left shoulder. Good load, no pressure signs to worry over.

At 21/296, still no real signs of pressure to bother with in the Ruger, and velocity was 1299 fps. At 22/296, velocity was up to 1330 fps and the primers just started to show a little flattening, and firing pin bushing marks. With a little careful loading at this point, I went to 22.7/296, giving 1390 fps and almost 1100 pounds of muzzle energy. Primers were not completely flat, but were showing excessive pressure signs. The cases were not sticky in the chambers, but were no longer falling out freely. I went higher with 23 grains and 23.5 grains of 296, but accuracy went to 4" and the velocity gain with each increase in powder became less, two sure signs of that particular gun coming to the end of its ability to safely contain the building pressure. In my opinion, when you get to hard extraction, you have already gone too far. The gun may contain it, but it is being strained with each shot. Eventually, accuracy with it will be very hard to get with any load.

With 22.7/296, I have a true big bear load. A bear in an encounter that was close would get creamed. Remember that half inch hole right through that we spoke of? This CB would go right through too, with this load.

The Marlin rifle took this load well, giving 1810 fps and a fantastic 1900 plus pounds of muzzle energy. But, the Marlin could not take the stiff loads that the Ruger could. The Ruger actually could take more pressure than the rifle. Sounds kind of fishy, I know,

but I report what I find. Besides, the 22.7/296/1900 + pounds load makes this rifle able to knock down any big game it stumbles over within its range. (I feel 200 yards). I wouldn't go moose hunting with it, but if I ran into one while carrying it . . . I'd use it!

Marlin's custom rifling gives 2" groups at 100 yards. Any 200 yard mule deer is in deep jeopardy with this load.

The Heavy CB's

WW296 is made for heavy bullets in the caliber being used. When testing the 185 grain jacketed hollow points by Hornady and the 185 grain jacketed hollow points by Sierra, with 296 they gave erratic ignition and showed what a waste of time and components it was. With the 260 grain soft nose hollow point by Speer, it was a superb powder. Also, I found the difference between WW296 and H110 was only as much as I've found in different lots of either powder. Some of my peers tell me that H110 is a bit faster, and loading data can not be switched around between the two. My advice is to test this out for yourself, using several different lots of both . . . damned if I can see any real difference. The only real warning I can issue is simple . . . when using top loads in any gun, and you buy a re-supply of the powder used . . . re-test it! Today's demand for slower powders for handguns and rifles alike, have brought us into an era of fantastic new powders but . . . lot differences are greater today than ever in the past.

N.E.I.'s 310451 sized .452 and lubed with 10X were 316 grains each. Over 20-1/2 grains of WW296, I get 1140 fps out of my 5-1/2" Ruger. The 10" Contender ups that to just under 1400 fps. With 21.5, I get 1240 fps in the Ruger, and just under 1500 in the T/C. This is a top load in both my guns. The accuracy is excellent for hunting from both. I also found the added weight and resistance of this bullet would allow me to go as low as 17 grains of 296 and still burn efficiently. The blunt Keith shape of this bullet and the weight added to the 1/2 ton plus muzzle energy make it a killer of large game with deep penetration. I used this load in my Ruger to take an angry, aggressive, and dangerous range bull . . . a wild Tex-Mex mixed breed. At 110 paces, I put that big N.E.I. slug (hard tempered) right in his shoulder knuckle, my favorite quartering shot on big game. He fell into his broken shoulder, and bellowed. The noise impressed me enough to put one down into his back at about 80 paces. He collapsed at the second shot with no more noise or attempts to get up. He looked as if he were sleeping . . . a 1200 pound sleeping giant with a horn span of 20 plus inches. Some short horn he was! Postmortem: the first Keith slug put a 1" pulp channel through the shoulder joint. (The last range bull we shot for the .44 K-Express article, we weighed the shoulder joint at 22 pounds). This first CB stopped in the near lung, retaining 172 grains. The second slug went through the spine, ripped through the left lung, broke a rib low in the bottom of the chest, but stayed inside. It retained 200 plus grains.

N.E.I. makes a shorter version of this CB, at 270 grains, it fits the shorter handgun cylinders like the Colts. It is not a shorter cut with the 310 grain cherry, but a newly designed Keith type CB. It retains all the assets of the

(Continued on Page 5)

VELOCITY CHART

For Rugers, T/C Contenders & Strong Single Actions

5-1/2" Ruger				
Powder	Grain	Type	Grains	Velocity
4756	250	Grain Cast	8.5	782 fps
4756	250	Grain Cast	11	1100 fps
Unique	250	Grain Cast	11	1160 fps
Unique	250	Grain Cast	10.5	1100 fps
Unique	250	Grain Cast	9	985 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	17	1000 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	18.5	1150 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	19	1185 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	20	1225 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	21	1299 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	22	1330 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	22.5	1350 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	22.7	1390 fps
296	(too high)	250 Grain Cast	23	1401 fps
296	(too high)	250 Grain Cast	23.5	1409 fps
296		316 Grain Cast	20	1100 fps
296		316 Grain Cast	20.5	1140 fps
296		316 Grain Cast	21	1205 fps
296		316 Grain Cast	21.5	1240 fps
296		319 Grain Cast	20	1180 fps
296		319 Grain Cast	20.5	1270 fps
296		319 Grain Cast	21	1310 fps
296		319 Grain Cast	21.5	1325 fps

Rifle				
Powder	Grain	Type	Grains	Velocity
296	250	Grain Cast	20	1540 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	21	1635 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	22	1745 fps
296	250	Grain Cast	22.7	1810 fps
296	Rifle developed sticky extraction		23	— — —

T/C Contender — 10"				
Powder	Type	Grains	Grains	Velocity
296	300454	319	Cast 19	Grains 1220 fps
296		319	Cast 20	Grains 1390 fps
296		319	Cast 21	Grains 1480 fps
296		319	Cast 21.5	Grains 1495 fps
296		250	Cast 20	Grains 1390 fps
296		250	Cast 21	Grains 1465 fps
296		250	Cast 22	Grains 1505 fps
296		250	Cast 22.7	Grains 1545 fps
296		250	Cast 23	Grains 1560 fps

5-1/2" Ruger				
Powder	Grain	Type	Grains	Velocity
296	271	Cast	19	Grains 1210 fps
296	271	Cast	20	Grains 1240 fps
296	271	Cast	31	Grains 1310 fps
2400	271	Cast	16	Grains 1005 fps
2400	271	Cast	17	Grains 1040 fps
2400	271	Cast	18	Grains 1105 fps
2400	271	Cast	19	Grains 1155 fps
2400	(Warm)	271	Cast 20	Grains 1210 fps
Unique	271	Cast	8	Grains 890 fps
Unique	271	Cast	9	Grains 940 fps
Unique	271	Cast	10	Grains 1000 fps
4756	271	Cast	9	Grains 905 fps
4756	271	Cast	10	Grains 950 fps
4756	(Warm)	271	Cast 11	Grains 990 fps
Bullseye	271	Cast	4	Grains 660 fps

For Old Colt and 1917 Smith & Wessons — 5-1/2"				
Powder	Grain	Type	Grains	Velocity
H4227	250	Grain Cast	18	Grains 920 fps
H1110	250	Grain Cast	17	Grains 910 fps
W-W296	250	Grain Cast	17	Grains 901 fps
Bullseye	250	Grain Cast	4.9	Grains 709 fps
2400	250	Grain Cast	16	Grains 1000 fps
Red Dot	250	Grain Cast	7	Grains 825 fps
H4227	185	Grain Sierra H.P.	19	Grains 962 fps
Unique	185	Grain Sierra H.P.	10	Grains 1000 fps
Unique	185	Grain Sierra H.P.	11	Grains 1075 fps

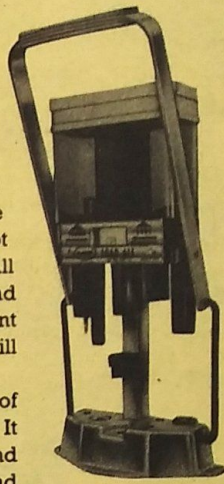
longer CB, with large deep lube groove, good front band to engage the rifling, and a square butt design. It was a little more accurate than the 310 out of my guns. I'll bet that has something to do with recoil over potential.

At 800 to 900 fps (9 Unique/10-4756) the Ruger shot into 1-1/4" groups at 25 yards off sandbags. At 1200 fps, I could still keep the 270 grain in nice round tight 2" groups. With bearing down hard almost the same 2" at 1350 fps. But make no

mistake, 270 grains/1350 fps or 300 grain/1240 fps out of the Ruger recoils like any heavy loaded .44 Magnum. With the 1350 fps load (22.2/296) and over 1000 pounds of energy fired out of the Marlin velocity topped 1700 fps and nearly a ton of energy.

I saved the 300 grain Giles for last because I like this shape best. It reminds me of a big fist in a closed, but solid boxing glove. I have it in .357 and it is very good in my handguns and two .357 Magnum rifles. It flies flatter than

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Keith shaped slugs and kills as well. N.E.I. also makes it in .410 caliber, but not in .429 . . . and I don't know why. It would make a good .44 Magnum load and would be the berries in my .44 K-Express. I hope C. W. Melander reads this. I'm sure if enough shooters wrote asking for it, he would do it.

The .454 Giles in my alloy sized and lubed is 319 grains. It feeds through my lever action like commercial ammo, and has a flat spot right on the top of its nose for tube loading guns. I have two loads I like best. One out of my rifle is of dead soft lead over 2.8 grains of Bullseye, for an almost silent load with 177 pounds of muzzle energy. With that weight, shape, and size, it's a killer of small pests and game out to 50 yards. It groups minute of rodent, and will knock all nine lives out of a ferret cat without the people living around you calling the police about shots fired. The second load is 21/296 for 1" groups and 3" for 100 yards. At 1670 fps (Marlin, 1480 T/C) and a ton of energy, it will kill anything in North America. Just like the .44 Magnum rifle with heavy loads, this Marlin and this load lets you know it has been fired; but the .45 Contender push recoils . . . whereas the .44 Magnum Contender tries to rip your wrist off! This load out of the Ruger would knock a charging bear on his butt with a good hit or two. And I know it kills deer at past 150 yards, 'cause I dumped a 180 pound muley with a hit high behind the shoulder. It went right through, making a mess of shoulder

blades and lung tops.

If I could only buy two moulds or two different cuts in the same mould block to save money . . . and added up all the data from these tests, mixed it well in my head. When the fizzing stopped, the two designs, for rifle and handgun, would be 250456 and 310451. The collar button and the Super Keith. If only one were to be picked for all my .45's, that's easy! It would be the big Giles. This one could do it all from squibb loads to bear busters . . . the .45 Colt long sure has come a long way in 110 years. I wonder how the .357 will fare by the year 2035?

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If you're looking for a hunt this fall, Loma Alta, P. O. Box 3042 Early, Brownwood, TX 76801, Telephone (915) 643-4211 or (915) 646-3097, has made a generous discount available to HHI Members.

They hunt exotics or native game. Prices look reasonable and there is a wide variety of hunting available. Mark Hampton and M. R. Thomas have hunted boar with this outfit and seemed well pleased. It's worth checking out.



HANDGUN HUNTING: GETTING STARTED

By Robert Nunnally, Lyzella, GA

In recent years here in Georgia, as in many other states, a new dimension in big game hunting has been opened up for those willing to take the challenge.

To some seasoned riflemen, tackling whitetails, bear or other big game with a handgun may seem like an unnecessary and senseless handicap, but for those wishing to put a little of the sport back into sport hunting, this does it!

With the handgun, you actually possess some advantages over the rifle or shotgun hunter in that your weapon is lighter and more compact than his. It is easier to maneuver through thick brush and it's easier to manage while climbing into a tree stand. This, however, is where your advantages end and the challenge begins.

You must be doubly familiar with your weapon, its sights, its trigger, and most of all, its limitations. A handgun's limitations and strong points are mostly relative to the limitations and strong points of the shooter and particular caliber chosen. While practice may not make perfect, it will bring you a whole lot closer to bagging your buck than any amount of luck ever will. The greater your shooting and hunting skill, the greater your chance for success. No matter how well equipped a hunter may be, if he has not spent adequate time at the range, he will surely fail under field conditions where extreme temperatures, varying light conditions and improvised rests are the rule.

The first step, of course, for the beginning handgun hunter is selecting the proper weapon for the game and type of shooting he expects to encounter. The myriad of options open to the handgun shopper can be mind boggling. So where do you start?

First, determine if you want a revolver or a single-shot. After all, shot placement is the key, so don't be swayed by the lure of six shots versus one. In most situations, the first shot is the one that will count as it will be the only good one that you will get. If you do opt for a revolver, there is only one really versatile and effective caliber available. The .44 Magnum. There are many fine .44s, both single and double action, on the market. A single action offers simplicity, reliability and a relatively inexpensive price tag, while the main advantage to the double actions available today is the availability of the stainless steel guns — that is, if you consider stainless an advantage. If the stainless construction is not important to you, a good single action such as the Ruger Super Blackhawk would be your best choice since the double action feature itself is virtually useless in most hunting situations.

Of the factory Super Blackhawks available, the 7½" barrel is more satisfactory to me for hunting than the 10½" with a custom 6" being even more handy. You will lose very little velocity and gain a lot of advantages handling characteristics with the moderate length barrels.

While there are scope mounting systems available for revolvers and a couple are good, I feel that open sights are definitely the ticket if you do choose a wheelgun simply because of the inherent limitations of the .44 and all revolver calibers when in the hands of relatively inexperienced handgun

hunters.

Selecting ammunition for your .44 revolver should be done with one principle in mind . . . whether you shoot factory ammo or load your own. You are not, no matter how hard you try, going to get varmint rifle accuracy or range from a revolver. Therefore, you should select the heaviest load, both bullet and powder charge, that you and your gun can handle effectively. With this combination, you will get excellent penetration and therefore extensive bone and tissue damage on almost all species of North American game. Trying to shoot light bullets at slightly higher velocities is a lost cause when big game is encountered with a handgun, because a large portion of the bullet's energy can be spent before it enters the main cavity of the animal's body. This is due to the thin jacket construction and soft alloy cores of these lighter H.P. bullets. Fast expansion prohibits deep penetration.

The other practical option for the beginning handgun hunter is the single shot pistol. The only experience I have had with single shots has been with the Thompson Contender, although there are others on the market. The Contender is strong, reliable and very accurate when treated with respect and used with any of the factory chamberings as well as many of the wildcat calibers available for it today. The Contender also offers the unique option of having additional quickly interchangeable barrels and therefore calibers, available for use with just one frame at a very nominal price considering the versatility afforded the shooter. Of the factory chamberings available, the .35 Remington, .357 Herrett, .30-30 Winchester, .30 Herrett and .44 Magnum are the best choices for big game hunting. My personal preference of the factory chamberings would be with the two .35s. You will read pros and cons concerning both of them, but a deer or bear would never know the difference assuming handload ammo in both. You can, of course, buy .35 Remington ammo at any gun shop. Handloading the .357 Herrett is necessary, but simple. Both Herrett calibers are based on the .30-30 Winchester case. Both can be safely hot loaded to propel the 200 grain R.N. around 2150 fps and the 250 grain at around 1850 fps. (Speer lists a maximum of 1944 with their 180 in the .357 Herrett.) Both of these are higher levels of velocity than recommended by the reloading manuals for a .35 caliber Marlin rifle.

These chamberings produce downrange bullet energy retention two to three times that of the highly regarded .44 Magnum.

To take full advantage of the accuracy potential of the Contender, a good quality handgun scope will be necessary. The 2 or 4 power Leupold would be the best choice. For the shooter just starting to use a handgun scope, the 2 power would probably be the best choice because of the increased field of view and less apparent shake than that of the 4 power which should be reserved for those already accustomed to using extended eye relief scopes. The Burris 6 power is absolutely out of the question as even the most experienced handgun hunters have complained of its limited eye

(Continued on Page 7)

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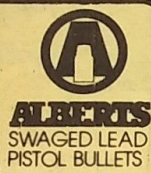
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It didn't take much snow in the barrel to do that!

relief. (Editor's Note: Has been discontinued.)

To mount your scope on your Contender, consider only one option: the SSK T'SOB scope mounting system or a facsimile of it. This is a lightweight, compact and very strong mounting system utilizing up to four Weaver-type scope rings. I can guarantee that your scope will stay put under even the heaviest recoil of the big JDJ wildcat calibers.

Now that you have decided on your hunting handgun, you must decide on the most practical way to transport it to and from the field. Assuming that you have no problem with laws concerning concealment of a handgun while hunting, a good quality shoulder rig should be sought unless you have selected a fairly short revolver, in which case a belt and holster rig might be in order. There are many fine shoulder rigs offered to accommodate revolvers or Contenders, with or without scopes. A properly adjusted shoulder rig is comfortable to wear and can provide easy access to your handgun along with the best protection you can give it. Also, in the case of inclement weather, your gun can be worn inside your rain gear yet on top of your other clothing.

In the case of a scoped 14" Contender, you might want to consider a sling rather than a holster outfit. Your gun would be exposed to the elements, but it can also be worn under rain gear. It surely is a handy way of carrying a handgun. The sling is my preference. Slings and swivels for the Contenders are offered by Michael's of Oregon and SSK. These are made to work with either factory grips or with Pachmayr's fine rubber replacement grips.

Basically, that's it. Just be sure to go ahead and buy the best equipment you can afford now. Quality is priceless. Blown chances at game due to equipment failure aren't.

Next issue, I'll get into more detail about other factory chamberings and some of the many powerful wildcats available for the Thompson Contenders. Also, I will explore the advantages and disadvantages of carrying afield the ultimate handgun: the XP-100 Remington, in its many forms.

SILHOUETTE GUN

By Charles Able, Carlsbad, NM

Recently I wrote an article on a short barreled Ruger .44. Now my long barrel Ruger is demanding equal time. The gun that I am talking about is the 10-1/2 inch Ruger Silhouette Super Blackhawk.

My first experiences with long barrel started some time ago with a 10" custom barrel on a Ruger .44 Blackhawk. I thought I wanted a 12", but the gunsmith talked me into 10". That one was a good gun and I used it a lot over the years. Later, I sold it — it was one of those guns that one sells and wishes like hell he didn't later on.

With handgun silhouette shooting becoming more popular, Ruger came out with a 10-1/2 barrel on the Super Blackhawk. This was like a dream come true for me. I could now get one of the long barrel guns without having to pay a gunsmith to make one up. This custom work can be very costly

and the waiting around till it's finished will drive you nuts.

Ruger used to make some long barrels for some of the old flat top models, but that was back when J.D. Jones was young and good looking and they have long since become hard to get. I was at a gun show the other day and saw a Ruger 10" .375 flat top for \$1000.

The longer barrels are a big help when you are trying to make a hit at long range. From 60 yards to 100 yards the extra barrel length can make the difference on getting the game or not. I've had 4" 100 yard groups with the 10-1/2" Ruger and some a bit better than that. Five inch groups are about the best I can do with the 7-1/2". I don't like to shoot the 4" and 5" barrel .44 beyond fifty yards, though I have made some good hits at long range with the short barrel guns.

The long barreled Ruger I have and hunt with weighs 54 ounces. I don't like the ejector housing that comes on the Ruger. A good friend of mine was going to trade off an old flat top with the steel housing, so we did some trading and I got the housing that I like and put it on my Ruger. I would like to see Ruger make all the housings out of steel the way they used to.

It seems to me that the Ruger 10-1/2" is one of the most accurate .44 revolvers on the market today. The 10-1/2" is a working gun and they will stand up to a lot of shooting. The long barrel that makes it so good for silhouette shooting also makes it one of the best for hunting. A man could put a scope on the gun and no doubt take out a lot of the human error in sighting the gun, but I don't like scopes on revolvers.

I've tried it three times on .44 revolvers and I have yet to come up with one that I like. The only handgun that I put on a scope and liked was a T/C 14" .30-30 caliber. I put a Leupold 2X on it and that gun would shoot like a rifle. The only thing that I did not like about the gun is it was too much like a rifle. I have no doubt that the T/C, XP-100 and guns like that are the most accurate handguns on the market today, but they are not revolvers and I like the revolvers for most of my shooting. Most of my shooting today is 35 yard to 65 yard and if a man takes advantage of anything that will make a good rest the revolvers will put meat in the pot.

One thing that helped me a lot with the 10-1/2" is some good grips. The ones that come on the gun are not bad and on 4-5/8 or 7-1/2 barrel I like them very much, but with the longer barrel there seems to be something missing. I tried some of the grips that I have made but they still were not any better. I have an old pair of Herrett's oversize grips that I got a long time ago; they are not much to look at, but I tried them and I did the best shooting that I have done to date. The extra 3/8" of wood on the bottom of the grip frame seemed to help.

Just because the Ruger 10-1/2 has a long barrel doesn't make it a good gun. Accurate cylinder barrel alignment, cylinder-barrel gap, good trigger, good sights and reasonable over all quality are necessary to have a good, serviceable gun.

Ruger did their job right on the 10-1/2". The one I have will stay in 1-1/2" to 2" groups at 25 yards, 3" to 3-1/2" groups at 50 yards and 4" to 6" groups at 100 yards. A revolver that

(Continued on Page 14)



VIRGINIAN DRAGOON STAINLESS .44

By John Taffin

For more than a year now, I have been shooting every .44 caliber handgun I can acquire, and report on it in THE SIXGUNNER. Recently, when I needed to present a gift to a friend for keeping the snow off the roof of my mountain retreat this past winter, I decided to kill the proverbial "two birds" and purchase a sixgun I could test first.

One of the few .44's that I had never fired was the Virginian, so it was decided to order one of these with the idea that it would be evaluated before giving it away. My young friend was elated at the prospect of a new .44 and was more than willing to have me put it to the test first.

Fortunately for me, Interarms was offering a special one time deal to firearms licensees of a Dagoon at half-price. The revolver offered by Interarms on this deal was a stainless .44 Magnum with a choice of barrel lengths with the 8-3/8", the longest offered, being chosen.

Having examined Dagoons in the past, I did not like their appearance because of the case-hardened frame. Only Colt can case-harden and obtain the proper colors. No one else should even attempt it. To my way of thinking, a full blue Dagoon would look much better. Now this objection is overcome with the introduction of an all stainless Dagoon.

The stainless Dagoon is a big sixgun. Examining my test gun, I found a finish equal to, or better, than any other stainless I've encountered. The grip frame is nicely fitted to the frame proper, and the grips, which are walnut, are also matched up very well with the grip frame. However, the varnished finish looks "tacky", distracting from the overall appearance. A little varnish remover and a good oil finish is needed here. They are large and comfortable and feel good in the hand.

The action on my test .44 feels smooth with a 3 pound trigger pull with the normal SA creep. The hand, locking bolt, and trigger are all large and strong with the basic action being the Colt style with a half-cock loading notch. This means that this sixshooter is in reality a five shot revolver.

One of the worst things about the Dagoon is the so-called safety or "Swiss-safe". This is nothing more than a longer than normal cylinder pin which can be pushed backwards to keep the hammer from falling. This is a positive, fail-proof safety, which is a good way to get killed in a dangerous situation. Two or three hands are

necessary to remove this safety, and this could be fatal. Forget it!

Interarms encourages the use of five rounds by providing "dimples" on each side of one chamber, the idea being to leave this chamber empty and line up a dimple on each side of the top strap so the hammer may be safely lowered on an empty chamber. The old SA method of load one — skip one — load four — cock the hammer — lower on an empty has always worked well for me, but the dimples are a good idea for beginners.

The top strap of the Dagoon is not flattened as on the Colt New Frontier and the rear sight melts nicely into the frame. The front sight is a ramp style but being a stainless, it is gray with a red dot (?) insert, a combination that was impossible for me to see in bright sunlight. Both front and rear sights had to be blackened before I could do any serious shooting. The rear sight leaves a lot to be desired. Lowering it to the lowest position, it still shot 4" to 6" high at 25 yards; a slightly higher front sight could cure this. When the rear sight screw was run through its click settings, it came completely out of the frame on the tenth click. Not a very precise instrument, to say the least.

Difficulty with extraction was a normal procedure on my first trip to the range for two reasons: Roughness of the cylinder grabbed the fired cases. After a few hundred rounds, the cylinder roughness disappeared with no further difficulty here. I probably should have wire brushed the cylinder first.

The second problem is caused by the "Swiss-safe". Since the cylinder pin is longer than normal, the ejector rod does not fully extract the empties. If I were keeping this sixgun for myself, the cylinder pin would be machined to regular length and the ejector rod housing opened up to allow full extraction. As it is now, the ejector rod must be pushed stoutly to pop out the empties.

The stocks felt good, but it didn't take much recoil for them to start shifting, the problem being the gripping on the grip frame. It is much too small to hold the stocks against .44 Magnum recoil and the battering simply caused the hole in each stock to enlarge, allowing the grips to shift with each shot.

All of the problems encountered could be solved very easily. The dot on the front sight should be left off; the new Silhouette Dagoon has a black post front sight with a solid faced black

(Continued on Page 14)



HANDGUN HUNTING IN ALASKA: PART II

By Larry Kelly, Mt. Clemens, MI

I flew into Anchorage and took care of some company business at the Great Alaska Bush Company prior to flying on to Cold Bay on the Alaska Peninsula where Clark Engle greeted me with, "How you been doin', you fat old S.O.B.?" I knew then that Clark still had a warm spot in his heart for me. As usual, a storm was coming up and Clark had to get all the hunters into camps that day. Knowing how I love moose meat, Clark handed me a package of moose steaks his wife, Audrey, had marked Larry Kelly on the outside of the package. "Here's your steaks, get your gear, Larry Rivers will fly you to camp. The guides are already there and camps are set up." Clark's still organized, I thought to myself. I was thankful that I wouldn't have to sit in Cold Bay for a few days. Larry Rivers was a nice fellow, showing me the physical highlights and volcanos on the flight to the main camp. When we reached the main camp, the tide was up and there was no way we could land on the beach. "Instead of going back, I'll drop you off on a peninsula and try and get back for you." When I got out of the plane, I told Larry, "If you don't come back, I'll leave my gear here and walk to camp. I know the country and will find camp easily as I have hunted there before." "No, you wait here," said Larry. "I'll be back one way or the other for sure." Changing his mind, he said, "I won't leave you here all night."

I watched him take off and then decided to get my guns out. I loaded my 5" S & W M-29 with Remington 240 grain JSP and slipped it into my Thad Rybka holster. I then loaded my 8" Ruger Super Blackhawk that my gunsmith, Jerry Kraft, had made up for me. It was scoped with a Leupold 2X in the new Weaver clamp on

mount. I had a sling on the Ruger and could carry it like a rifle over my shoulder. I loaded the Ruger with a 240 grain Hornady Full Metal Jacket ammo as this was the gun I was hoping to take my brown bear with. I checked out the guns with one shot each from a rest and they were still on zero.

About that time, Clark landed with George Wells. He is a Californian and was my hunting partner. Clark told us to walk to camp and he would see to our gear as soon as the tide went down. George and I arrived at camp 3½ hours later. We met our guides. Bob Gerlack was to guide me, and Joe Flores was George's guide. It wasn't long until we were planning the next day's hunt over a cup of coffee.

The first day it rained all day.

All we saw was lots of sign and no bears. Couldn't even use the glasses in the rain.

On the second day, George and Joe stalked a 9 footer, but the bear spooked before they could get a shot at it. I kidded George quite a bit because he was carrying a .460 Weatherby. Had to be making tracks 6" deeper than if he was hunting with a pistol. Bob and I also spotted a large brown bear on the second day, but it was too late in the day to attempt a stalk.

On the third day, George shot an 8½" brown bear. It took three shots from his .460 to keep him down. Wow! I thought, those bears are mighty tough! Damned near bullet proof. I hope my .44 does the job.

George and his guide left to go to the caribou camp. The following day, Bob and I had the whole area to ourselves. We positioned ourselves on a lookout so we could see the carcass of George's bear, hoping that another brown bear, wolverine or wolf would feed on it. In the next three days, we saw a lot of bears, and some looked to be of large

size, but were not stalkable for one reason or another. There just isn't any point in trying a stalk that doesn't have a chance of success. On the eighth day, we spotted a large dark bear. He was crossing the valley towards our lookout. When he reached the river, he stopped, stood up, then for no apparent reason, headed back for the mountains. We watched him walk across the side of the mountain and over two hills of volcano rocks and then he disappeared.

"I imagine he's going to bed down for the day. I can't guarantee he's a big one, but I think we should make a try for him. We won't have much time if we jump him in his bed," Bob said. Let's give it a try," was my reply. I was shivering from the cold and was looking forward to walking so I could warm up. It took 2½ hours to reach the first of the two hills. "We'll leave our packs here. Be very quiet," Bob said to me. He told me we would make our stalk from the left side of the hill. I didn't agree with Bob, because I figured the bear would get our scent. I thought we should go up on the right side of the hill. "No way. If we go up on the right, he will hear us. On the left, he will only get our scent," Bob said. "When we've reached the top of the hill, you'll have to be very quiet," Bob said. "OK," I mumbled back. What's he think I'm shooting . . . a magnum rifle? . . . I thought to myself.

Bob is an excellent guide and I requested him for the hunt. I agreed to his stalk, but really I didn't think the bear would be there. The stalk was only really a warm-up walk as far as I was concerned. As we started up, Bob said there was to be no more talking. I shifted the Ruger around behind me on the sling so I'd have both hands free to climb. We were almost to the top when

Bob motioned for me to get the Ruger ready. I nodded ok, but left it as is. Looking down, I thought, "I'm keeping both hands free to hold on." When we were again almost to the top Bob motioned for me to get the gun ready again. I could see that he was upset, so I unslung my Ruger, checked the scope and followed the few more steps to the top. "There he is," whispered Bob. I couldn't believe what I was hearing! I was so sure that bear wouldn't be there! Looking below me, the large dark bear was starting up the side of a hill at a lope 60 yards away. I sat down, using a boulder for a rest. The scope was on his shoulders as I squeezed the trigger. As I eased the hammer back while bringing the .44 out of recoil a second shot, he was biting his shoulder. Before I could fire, the second shot, he collapsed and rolled down into a draw. A huge boulder blocked our view of him. We waited for him to show, but he didn't. We didn't know what happened to him. "You watch the spot and I'll get down closer," said Bob. When he reached a spot where he could see the bear, he yelled for me to follow him. It was harder climbing down than going up. When I reached Bob, I looked down and could see the back and head of the bear. "Give him another shot," said Bob. I placed another shot between his shoulders, but the bear never moved. After we checked the bear to make sure that he was dead, which was a little bit tense, I asked if it was a small one. "No, he's not small," was Bob's answer. Bob didn't say he was a big one either, I thought to myself.

Half of the bear was in a hole and it took us two hours just to get the bear in a position to take photos and skin him. Every once in a while, Bob would say, "He's big! He'll go over 8 feet." Then, "Wow! This guy will go 9 feet." The more bear we got out of the hole, the bigger he got. Later, we found the brown bear measured just under 10 feet. The .44 Hornady FMJ had gone in behind the shoulder and penetrated his heart for a one shot kill. I was one mighty pleased handgun hunter. The bear's skull measured 27½", a half inch from Boon and Crockett and ranks 11th in the Safari Club Book. (Editor's Note: Obviously No. 1 in the HHI Book.)

Now the work would just begin. I went back for our packs while Bob started the skinning. On the way out, I packed all the gear and skull while Bob packed the wet hide. I couldn't even lift Bob's pack, it was so heavy. There wasn't any moon that night, which made walking back to camp in the dark very dangerous. My next hunt was for caribou and I didn't want to sprain an ankle or break a leg. We reached camp at midnight, ate, and hit the sack. The next day, Clark arrived with more moose meat and to check on us. Clark told me that he would pick me up the next morning and move me to the moose camp. That night, sitting in camp, drinking hot chocolate and feeling only how a hunter feels when he's got the big one, I noticed the wind picking up. If the wind got too strong, I would never get out of this camp to go caribou hunting. Windy it got! 40-70 MPH winds hit us for seven straight days. Bob and I sat tight, waiting for the winds to slow down so Clark could get us out. All hopes for caribou were gone.

Bonus Bear . . .

On the fourth day of the storm, I

stepped out of the visqueen and driftwood shack to do what everyone has to do when they drink too much coffee. "Bear," I said to Bob. He quickly put the telephoto lens on his camera and started taking pictures of the bear walking down the creek towards the beach. The bear never looked in our direction and the wind was blowing at about 40 MPH from the bear to us. There was no way he could get our scent. As the bear stepped down to the beach, he started running towards the shack. "Ooooooooooooooh!" I said. "This is really going to be close. He's going to run down the beach right by the shack." As the bear neared the shack, he ran up the embankment right at us. I pulled my 5" M-29 .44 Magnum out of my Thad Tykba cross crawl holster. Bob readied his .375 H & H rifle. Both of us were hollering and screaming at the bear, and Bob shot over his head. At the shot, the bear stopped and looked at both of us. The expression on his face reminded me of a big Irish Setter dog. The brown bear then came full bore right at us. Bob fired a second shot in the sand in front of him as we backed into the shack. He kept telling me not to shoot. We backed into the shack and when the bear was in the doorway, head and shoulders inside the shack, I shot.

Bob was having trouble with his gun and had backed up into the table, knocking everything over. I had backed into the stove, knocking that over. I pointed the .44 at the bear's chest from three feet away and fired. When I shot, I expected the mighty .44 to blow the bear right out of the doorway, or at least to do a little more than get his attention. He only turned his head and looked directly at me as if the muzzle blast had bothered him. Bob fired, then I fired again. The bear turned and I fired two more shots in his shoulder. Bob fired in his shoulder again. I put my last two in his rear as he turned around and started running. Bob stepped out of the door and fired as the bear went bellowing down the beach. My Model 29 was empty and so was Bob's .375 H & H. I ran to my cot and quickly grabbed my T/C .375 JDJ and fired my last shot into the bear. He went down. Bob reloaded his rifle and reloaded both guns. We both cautiously approached the bear to make sure that he was dead; then ran back to the shack to get out of the wind and rain and calm down. I have heard many stories about problems with bear but have never experienced any problems until this time. Bob and I had a cup of coffee and discussed the whole episode.

I knew why Bob had held off shooting the bear. A guide is supposed to avoid any encounters with bears. There would have to be statements made out for the Game Department, and so on. All the time we were shooting the bear, Bob was cussing. I told Bob not to feel badly because we had done everything possible to avoid killing him. Bob agreed that we shouldn't have let the bear get as close to us as he did before firing. We counted our empty brass. We had shot 16 times and the bear was loaded with holes from the .44 and .375 from one end to the other. Bob skinned the bear and it measured 7¼'. The skin would have to be turned over to the Game Department.

Neither of us could come up with an explanation to the bear's behavior. He appeared to be in good health and he certainly wasn't provoked by us. The

only solution we could think of was that the bear had been in the shack before and decided he was going back in come hell or high water.

A few days later, it dawned on me that each shot I fired with the Model 29 was single action. I never fired it double action.

HUNTING AT THE Y. O. RANCH

By Albert L. Pfitzmayer
Franklin Square, NY

As I watched in complete disbelief, my eyes traced the fantastic journey of three large male ibex bounding and racing up what seemed to be a sheer rock wall. My guide whispered "try and take the big black one when he comes to rest on the ridge wall". It was almost certain that he would pause and turn to look back at us, the light recoil of the 243 was hardly noticeable as the big horned ibex sagged and then fell out of sight. "Good shot" bellowed my guide, Tommy Thompson, "it sure is a pleasure to see a good long, well placed shot like that. We were both pleased as we climbed back into the dust covered battered jeep. My mind flashed back old memories of past gone wonderful African hunts I had been a part of. Now, I was in my own country, the United States, Texas, to be exact.

Had I never hunted the African plains, or stalked the bush country, the realization of the Y. O. Ranch near Mountain Home, Texas, could just as well been the Narok Road leading from the game warden's check point in Narok, Kenya, East Africa. One hundred and twenty-five miles of Y. O. hunting land is about as close to East African hunting that anyone can get. A good bonus of none of the extravagant air fares or the twenty one hours of jet lag, and the ever present rigors of customs inspectors. Not to mention the firearms ordeal or import firearms and game fees, the unmentionable political mine fields sure make it hard for a big game hunter to ever forget the African adventure, it surely will make a man say "thank God for the Y. O." A nice place where a hunter goes out in the morning with peace of mind, relaxed and in high spirits with plenty of good food at hand which certainly can't be overlooked.

Before hunting the Y. O. the importance of being a good shot should be considered. Anyone who hunts the ranch, must be a darn good shot. Should your shooting be on the fair to midland side, better you should breathe some range air, and while you're there take a few shots to refresh your not so precision, marksmanship abilities. A few days at the range can really make the difference when you finally set the cross hairs on any of the magnificent long range game that will tempt you to collect. Guide Tommy Thompson will not pow wow about game animals until you have utilized the Y. O.'s two-hundred yard range. Tommy, your quick sighted guide is fast to tack up a target or two, and will glass for you as you adjust your scope, or give the rear sight on the hand gun the necessary clicks to the right.

My long time friend and hunting companion, Ralph Galile of the famed New York Telephone Company, hunted with us on this safari. Ralph had with him his Pet Remington Model 700, in caliber .243 Winchester. Nothing less than his Leupold 2x 7x

variable scope sat on top of it. Ralph, in his own self-made style is one of the finest hand gun hunters I have ever had the pleasure to watch. He spent three full days moving the atmosphere around with the use of his 243, trying for a score on a black buck. On the third day old Ralph was convinced by his bride to put the long gun next to the fireplace back at the cabin and get with the 44 revolver. Ralph took the hint in good taste, calmly sat down the next day with his Smith & Wesson, Model 29, 44 Magnum 8 3/8 inch barrel revolver and flattened a trotting black buck out at one hundred and fifty yards. Shortly afterwards, that same day, his lovely raven haired bride Camille, with the not so productive 243 Remington established herself in the Burkett Book of Records by bagging a record double curl and a half Spanish Ram of which is now duly recorded and authenticated in the Tropaeology Journal of the Burkett Trophy Game Records of the World, Fredericksburg, Texas. Even old Ralph was pleased with that.

The pace slowed down for a few days due to high wind conditions and wind direction changes. After a number of mysterious vanishing feats, we were finally able to close in for a shot at a Regal Axis buck. Trying to take an Axis buck with a .357 Magnum revolver does leave much to be desired. However, we had performed revolver shooting demonstration earlier in the week for, the folks at the Y. O. Ranch which included splitting a playing card in half, end on, backwards using a hand mirror or using the reflection of a diamond ring to cut a card in half. To say nothing of old Ralph shooting upside down backwards. So I guess the people and the dubious guides were convinced that we could handle ourselves with the hand guns. However, playing cards or match heads don't move, and game trophies do and can. After crawling the last few of two-hundred yards towards three feeding Axis bucks, my guide Tommy suggested that I try to keep two looming cedar bushes ahead, between the three Axis bucks and ourselves. Before we moved on in close for a shot he glassed the majestic bucks and slowly hummed, his approval was quickly recognized that one of the big Axis bucks was an eight pointer, in full velvet.

Tommy assured me that an opportunity such as this would not present itself for sometime to come. Together we squirmed our way to a point of interception about fifty yards down wind of the big bucks. Two of the Axis bucks had spooked and made off without a trace, or us ever noticing their silent departure. The largest of the three bucks was now facing us testing the wind, he knew something was wrong. It was clearly visible that in a moment the big buck would vanish into the heavy cover. The only point visible was the tip of his nose and those magnificent trophy velvet horns, and I had to chance a shot and hope game that the bullet would get through the maze of low hanging branches. The old Colt Python spoke, but once the 146 grain Speer half jacket hollow point collided with the tip of the nose of my pristine Axis buck. Little time was wasted getting on through to the spot where the big buck had fallen.

We paused briefly and thanked the man above for our splendid good fortune. The big Axis buck was a sight never to ever be forgotten by us. A full eight points, with a rigid formation of

horn, shielded by a protective encasement of velvet. That night at the chuck wagon (super table) we all re-hashed the days chain of events. I was deeply impressed by old Ralph's evaluation of the black buck hunt he had recently undertaken, and I was subsequently convinced by my wife Phyllis, that our last day at the Y. O. Ranch should be terminated by a black buck hunt.

After a scrumptious breakfast the next morning, we motored out to the far reaches of "black buck" country. "Look out there" our guide Tommy whispered, gesturing with his trigger finger, "black buck females" he muttered. Female black bucks are orange colored on their sides, while on the other hand a good mature male black buck is dark black with white undersides. We tried to maneuver into a position of elevation and to enjoy a view of both sides of the ridge. My 10 x 50 glasses strained the open flats as I searched along with Tommy for the elusive black buck. An hour passed, my wife spotted him first, a long image far out on the heat distorted plains. It was a black buck for sure, and a nice one at that. He was trotting what seemed to be straight in at us, but angling to the right. Towards the ridge at our backs, our guide related that the lone buck was heading towards or joining up with the females that we had spooked earlier in the day, and would probably pass to our far right about 300 yards out if the wind direction doesn't shift and give our position away.

I had previously loaded my 243 FN Mauser with three, Nosler 100 grain partition bullets. The time was quickly approaching to test the wind bucking abilities of the small high velocity bullets. The 4 x 12 Redfield scope slowly glided along with the beautiful image of the black buck, quickly seeking out the opportune moment to resolve and conclude the hunt. The customary tale telling "puff" was faintly audible as the handsome black buck settled to the cactus bed that seemed to cushion his fall. It was all over, almost as quickly as it started.

Our five days at the Y. O. Ranch had to be the fastest span of time that I was ever caught up in. We secured the trophy black buck to the tail gate section of the jeep, and slowly picked our way back towards one of the criss crossing dirt paths used by numerous game animals before us. Our guide made sighting of one of the water wind mills that dot the Y. O. and zeroed in on the main road. Goodbyes are always sad for me to say. A taste of Y. O. hospitality and a feeling that not many people share in the lifetime of a sincere hunt, regardless of success or failure, the people of the Y. O. Ranch make it a reality.

LATE CHRISTMAS PIG

Mike Doyle, St. Clair Shores, MI

"That's a good boar! Wait for a broadside shot and please watch the dogs."

These words were whispered by our 20 year-old guide Randy, who is employed at the Shawnee Ridge Hunting Preserve in Southern Ohio.

The actual hunt began with a Christmas present on December 24, 1980.

My 14 year-old son Mike, gave me a 10-1/2" Ruger S.B.H. for Christmas. He works every Saturday at a local restaurant, cuts grass, shovels snow and any other job he can get to make a buck. He then turns around and spends

(Continued on Page 10)

\$228.00 of those hard earned dollars on dear old dad.

I was so shocked and surprised, that I believe if you looked real close you could have seen a tear or two.

Mike had heard me say that I had to shoot silhouette in the unlimited class because of modifications made to my 4-5/8" Ruger .45 colt. "My Michigan Deer Rifle"

Now, I could shoot in production class. This was super, except that with such love and thoughtfulness involved in that 10-1/2" I had to do something special.

So, I had the top strap engraved. "To Dad with Love". M.J.D. to M.J.D., 12-25-80.

Come to find out engraving is also a no-no under I.H.M.S.A. rules. Although I think it would take a real "B-----" to use these engraved words against me in a match.

Only one thing to do though; I sold the 4-5/8" .45 Colt, bought another 10-1/2" S.B.H. for silhouette; took my pride and joy to Mag-na-port in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. A bunch of A-No. 1 good people.

In less than three weeks I had my new "Michigan Deer Rifle."

The S.B.H. was cut to 6" — ported — white outline rear — yellow front insert action job and hard chromed. Pachmayer grips were the finishing touch. Firing over 1000 rounds helped to come up with two loads that are now my favorites.

Lymans .429421 sized to .4295, lubed with R.C.B.S. lube tips my scale at 243 grains. (Two ingots of Lino-type and three of wheelweights).

The above bullets are put up in any .44 Mag. case. (tumbled and trimmed to uniform length) in front of 9.0 Gr's. of unique with standard primers — or — 24.0/H 4227 and CCI Mag. primers.

Velocities are unknown and I don't care what they are. These loads are accurate and pleasant to shoot.

The unique load is my "grab it; let's shoot load" and the H-4227 load is for hunting and silhouette. According to the loading manuals this one is in the magnum range. So be it!

Michigan's 1981 deer season involved 3 days of looking at 20 some bald heads, so the 6" remained a virgin.

By the end of the 1981 Holiday Season plus an overdose of friends, relatives, company and visiting. I had to shoot something!

It only took one phone call to another laidoff tool and die maker to confirm a trip to the nearest pig farm — Shawnee Ridge.

Steve Patton and I arrived Tuesday, January 12. We slept in Steve's truck and were dressed and armed before our 8 a.m. breakfast. Steve, Randy, our guide and I were on our way up the first "mile high" hill by 8:45.

The combination of 20° degree temperatures — a couple inches of fresh snow — heavy clothing and 43 year old bones made for a hard three hours before Randy spotted our pigs.

They were huddled together on the ground and covered with snow.

They hadn't even gotten up for breakfast!

The dogs — a Heinz variety — roused one of the seven or eight pigs up and Randy's words came forth. "That's a good boar! Wait for a broadside shot and please watch the dogs."

At this point my old reservations about hunting inside a fence came back to me. "This isn't really hunting."

By this time all the pigs were up.

Two were definitely larger than the rest and all decided to split. Now we were going to hunt.

About a half hour later the dogs caught two big guys alone. They were side by side — each facing a different direction to keep track of the dogs. Finally, they unwound with one facing me, so I dropped the hammer on him.

The 243 Gr. Keith entered to the chest side of the right front shoulder. The pig let out a squall, lifted his broken shoulder, did a 360 and dropped.

The slug exited the left side taking the last rib and leaving an 18" to 20" long .44 caliber hole all the way through. Estimated weight was 160 to 170 pounds.

Pig number 2 exited at mach 2 and didn't offer Steve a shot because of the dogs.

After gutting my trophy we headed for the club house and an overdue lunch.

Lady Luck, in the form of several 1/2 breed dogs, began to shine on us. They caught the scent of the other porker. After another up and down session, Steve got a shot at about 75-80 yards. The 180 Gr. slug from his .300 Winchester Mag. took the second pig through the lungs. He spun around and ran downhill for about 50 yards before piling up. Estimated weight was 200 to 225 pounds, with a good 1" of fat under his hide.

My Christmas present, a Mag-na-port beauty gift of love and a good hunt had made me happier than a kid in a candystore.

SQUIRRELS, DOGS AND HANDGUNS

By Wayne Randall, Lake City, MN

Few people realize dogs can be very helpful when hunting squirrels. One of my favorite pastimes is squirrel hunting early in the season. The weather is usually warm and after a rain the woods are very quiet. Most people think I am nuts to try to hunt when there are so many leaves on the trees. They think I'm really crazy when I tell them I hunt with a .357 magnum. One skeptic was silenced when he tagged along one day. The magnum dumped two squirrels with no meat damage, while he missed twice with his .22 rifle!

Later in the season when the leaves are gone the hunting gets tougher. The squirrels can see better and are long gone before you can get within range. If a dog is your companion, the odds turn in your favor. A dog in the vicinity causes the squirrels to sit tight and try to hide in the treetops. As your dog circles the area, the squirrel will move around the tree to avoid being seen. If you are standing still, he will move to get away from you dog and sometimes offer you a perfect, clear shot. This technique has worked very well for me.

Almost any breed of dog will be of some help. Naturally the hunting breeds will work best. When they scent a squirrel they will follow its scent to a specific area. When this happens start looking in the treetops for ole bushytail. I own two Labrador Retrievers. Being of a hunting breed, they enjoy hunting and they work a patch of woods very carefully for any sign of game. An added benefit is that they also retrieve the game when it is shot. This helps immensely when a squirrel falls into thick weeds.

7MM TCU — .223 REMINGTON DATA

Caliber: 7MM TCU
Barrel: Thompson/Center Contender
Brass: Remington
Primer: Federal No. 205 Small Rifle

Bullet	Description	Weight	Dia.	Powder Type	Charge Wt. Grains	Velocity FPS			Pressure Cup	Cart. OAL
						10" Barrel	14" Barrel			
Speer	Hollow Point	115 gr.	.284"	IMR 4198	23.0	2030	2180	49800	2.455"	
Speer	Hollow Point	115 gr.		IMR 3031	25.5 c	1855	2020	37200		
Speer	Hollow Point	115 gr.		IMR 4895	26.5 c	1845	2020	37900		
Speer	Spitzer	130 gr.	.284"	IMR 4198	22.5	1950	2080	51360	2.565"	
Speer	Spitzer	130 gr.		IMR 3031	26.0 c	1880	2050	42800		
Speer	Spitzer	130 gr.		IMR 4895	27.0 c	1860	2025	42900		
Sierra	Spitzer	140 gr.	.284"	IMR 4198	22.0	1875	1985	51100	2.585"	
Sierra	Spitzer	140 gr.		IMR 3031	24.5 c	1760	1920	40500		
Sierra	Spitzer	140 gr.		IMR 4895	25.5 c	1750	1890	40400		
Nosler	Partition Spitzer	150 gr.	.284"	IMR 4198	21.0	1760	1880	49400	2.650"	
Nosler	Partition Spitzer	150 gr.		IMR 3031	24.0 c	1750	1885	43500		
Nosler	Partition Spitzer	150 gr.		IMR 4895	25.0 c	1725	1855	42900		
Sierra	Spitzer Boat Tail	160 gr.	.284"	IMR 4198	20.0	1715	1815	50200	2.595"	
Sierra	Spitzer Boat Tail	160 gr.		IMR 3031	22.5	1570	1705	36700		
Sierra	Spitzer Boat Tail	160 gr.		IMR 4895	23.5	1580	1710	38200		

Key: c Compressed Charge

Caliber: .223 Remington
Barrel: Thompson/Center Contender
Brass: Remington
Primer: Federal No. 205 Small Rifle

Bullet	Description	Weight	Dia.	Powder Type	Charge Wt. Grains	Velocity FPS			Pressure Cup	Cart. OAL
						10" Barrel	14" Barrel			
Speer	Spire Point	40 gr.	.224"	IMR 4198	22.5	2830	3105	49000	2.115"	
Speer	Spire Point	40 gr.		IMR 3031	25.0 c	2535	2840	38000		
Speer	Spire Point	40 gr.		IMR 4895	26.0 c	2545	2855	39800		
Speer	Spitzer	45 gr.	.224"	IMR 4198	22.5	2730	3045	49600	2.180"	
Speer	Spitzer	45 gr.		IMR 3031	25.0 c	2485	2800	28900		
Speer	Spitzer	45 gr.		IMR 4895	26.0 c	2490	2790	39800		
Speer	Spitzer	50 gr.	.224"	IMR 4198	22.0	2645	2905	49800	2.260"	
Speer	Spitzer	50 gr.		IMR 3031	25.0 c	2510	2790	42100		
Speer	Spitzer	50 gr.		IMR 4895	26.0 c	2475	2765	42400		
Speer	Spitzer	55 gr.	.224"	IMR 4198	21.5	2535	2800	49400	2.290"	
Speer	Spitzer	55 gr.		IMR 3031	25.0 c	2485	2780	45400		
Speer	Spitzer	55 gr.		IMR 4895	26.0 c	2465	2750	45800		
Hornady	Spire Point	60 gr.	.224"	IMR 4198	21.0	2460	2700	51400	2.395"	
Hornady	Spire Point	60 gr.		IMR 3031	24.5	2480	2750	49400		
Hornady	Spire Point	60 gr.		IMR 4895	25.5	2470	2735	50300		

Key: c Compressed Charge

NOTE: This loading data must be used with caution. Velocity and pressure readings represent average values obtained under controlled conditions in our ballistics laboratory using the components specified. The valves shown may vary substantially with the components, barrel and reloading techniques employed. The barrels used in development of these loads for CONTENTER pistols were ordinary production barrels, modified only to the extent required for making pressure measurements. They are therefore subject to the normal tolerances found in sporting arms and may not be representative of all barrels of this manufacturer. We suggest that the MAXIMUM powder charge weights shown be reduced for initial loading by 10%. The loads may then be increased only as pressure indications permit.

This information is offered by Du Pont without charge as an aid and guide to handloaders, to be employed at their own discretion and risk. Safe reloading practices should be observed at all times. Since we have no control over the circumstances of loading, the condition of the firearm, or the components used, we assume no liability for the results obtained, and we guarantee only that our powder meets our manufacturing standards.

Black Powder Cat

By Joe Stuemke
Sarasota, WY

In 1976 I lived in Michigan and did most of my hunting in Alaska or B.C. I had hunted elk with George Lyons of Collburn, CO the previous fall and since I had a good hunt I booked a cougar hunt with him in 1976. George was to call me when he felt the time was right. I'd then immediately fly into Grand Junction.

On January first George called and said they were getting a nice snow. He predicted good hunting if I could be there in a day or two. Three days later, I flew into Grand Junction, but the snow had melted off. Our hunting area was about 80 miles into Utah so we were hoping for the best and got the worst.

We parked the trailer, unloaded the dogs and horses and got ready for the next day's hunt. When morning came the weather was cold with lots of frost. George said maybe we're in luck if the

dogs can get a hot track before the sun burns the frost off. About 9:00 the dogs cut a fresh track. Two hours later the dogs couldn't get it straightened out. The rest of the day was up and down steep canyons with a few old tracks found and some cold trailing by the dogs. Ended up with a tired hunter and no cougar that day. This went on for ten days — warm weather — short runs — sore feet — short nights — long days. No cats and no snow predicted.

We decided to give it up. I flew back to Michigan where we were getting 3-4" of snow every day. George said he would call if things looked good later. If I could get away we would try it again. So, owning Cougar Masonry Co. and knowing I need a cougar for the office and hoping I can get Uncle Sam to pick up some of the tab for the hunt I should be able to get away if George called.

(Continued on Page 11)

On March 1st George called and got me out of bed at midnight. Said, "It's snowing and supposed to snow for the next couple of days". He hadn't had any hunters since I'd been there, but the trailer was still there and we could give it a try if I wanted to. I told him I never unpacked from last time and would be on the first flight in the morning arriving at Grand Junction at 3 o'clock.

George was waiting with the horses, dogs and sunshine. It had quit snowing and the snow was just about gone. With this kind of luck a guy doesn't need friends. George brought another guide along in hopes of the hunting being good and calling in a couple more hunters. It looked like the only luck we were going to have was bad. We got to camp about an hour and a half later, unloaded the horses in the corral and threw our gear in the trailer. It was still light, so we decided to take the truck and dogs up a couple of canyons to see if we could cut any old tracks and give the dogs a run.

We drove up a canyon about seven miles from camp as far as possible and walked in about three more miles. The only thing we saw were a couple of old tracks that the dogs wouldn't even cold trail on. The only snow left was what was in the shade. The rest had melted off. I figured this hunt was going to be just like the last one. It was starting to get dark so we headed back for the truck in hopes of getting all eight or ten of the dogs caught before dark. From the top of the canyon we could see the truck about 1/4 mile away.

Just as George started to call them; the dogs turned it loose in full chase up the other side of the canyon. I saw a cat go over the rim about 100 yards ahead of the dogs. Running after the dogs, George said, "We are in luck, they've got the cat treed." We stopped and were trying to decide how to get across the canyon when George's head dog Blackie came back over the rim and down into the canyon where they jumped the cat. He started treeing down in the bottom. Now George is not a very gentle man. As his best dog came back off a hot chase and began barking "treed" where the cat had been, George said, "Let's pick the dumb S.O.B. up and get over to the other dogs." So we dropped off the rim and it was straight down with nothing to hang on to. George is more than a little P.O.ed at his dog to say the least so it didn't matter how rough it is going down — we're going. But low and behold when we get down to Blackie he's 20 feet up a tree trying to grab hold of this big old cat by the tail. There stands George with a big grin on his face as if to say, "I knew old Blackie didn't come back for nothing." About this time the cat knocks Blackie out of the tree. He hit the ground pretty hard and decided to stay at the bottom of the tree and bark from now on.

By this time it's getting dark. George said, "I don't know how good the other cat is they got treed, but this one looks real big, so go ahead and shoot him cause it will be dark before we can get to the other one." (I forgot to say at the beginning that this was all before I saw the light and I was using a rifle to hunt with.) I had my .50 cal. Hawken which the other guide had been carrying for me. As he handed it to me he said, "You might want to fire a cap or two before you load, because I fell in a patch of snow back there and got it full of it." I fired three caps, poured the powder and rammed the bullet down

the barrel. All this time the cat is getting a little nervous. I took aim, fired. Nothing happened — just a little pop. I did this about six times. It wouldn't fire!

George had left his .45 at the trailer which he normally never does. Hell, he sleeps with the damn thing. George looks at me and then Trent — hands me his knife. By luck, Trent was carrying a .44 cal. Black Powder Pistol. He handed the pistol to me and said, "You're choice". I became a Handgun Hunter right then and there. My first shot at 30 yards broke his back and knocked him out of the tree. By this time a couple of the other dogs had come back, so we had dogs all over the cat and visa versa and the guide yelling and trying to keep the dogs from being torn up. It was a real circus for 50 yards down the hill till we got the dogs pulled off. Then it took me two more shots to do the cougar in. By now we were only 300 yards from the truck and it was all down hill.

That was the easy part. It was an hour and a half in the dark to get the other dogs off of their treed cat and back to the truck. After 1500 miles by air, 100 miles by truck, 3 hours of hunting and a handgun and a trophy cougar I figured that was a real good day for a fat kid from the big city.

The next day we took the old tom to the Game Dept. to have him checked. He weighed 167 pounds and was 7 1/2" long. The skull measured 16 1/4", but was just short of the book after a day drying time.

Now having moved to Wyoming and being in the outfitting business, I see the other side of the life of a guide. It's not always so easy, but I sure do enjoy it.



William B. Baker, Ed Lomax and Frank Pachmayr.

Pachmayr Gun Works, Inc. announces the retirement of Edward C. Lomax, effective June 1, 1982. Ed was Sales Manager and Marketing Director with the Los Angeles based manufacturer since 1972. He will continue to be associated with Pachmayr Gun Works as a consultant in the sales and marketing area.

More than 120 people from all over the United States attended a gala retirement dinner on May 27th in Los Angeles. According to founder, Frank Pachmayr, Mr. Lomax was instru-

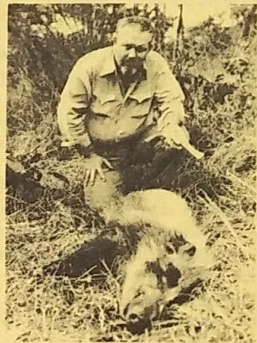
mental in the wide acceptance and success of the famous Pachmayr rubber hand gun grips.

Also, William G. Baker, Jr., President and Managing Director of Pachmayr, Inc., announces the new appointments of Luther Bell, Jr., as Sales Manager, and Bruce D. Baker as Director of Marketing.

Editor's Note: Congratulations and my best wishes for a successful retirement. But I'll miss you . . . JDJ.

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Dear Friends:

In keeping with Thompson/Center's ongoing product improvement program, the Contender pistol has undergone a minor design change in the trigger guard area. This has resulted in an easier to open Contender pistol.

Many shooters have noticed this improvement and have requested a factory conversion to their older pistols. T/C is now providing a conversion to alter older pistols to the 1982 configuration. The conversion will be performed only at the T/C factory service center in Rochester, New Hampshire.

The popularity of the Contender Pistol on Silhouette courses where it is used by both men and women of varying strengths has necessitated a design change which will be incorporated into production in 1982. All Contender Pistols bearing serial numbers of 195,000 or higher will contain this new "Easy-Open" design feature.

Basically the trigger, trigger guard and various other trigger assembly parts have been redesigned plus the pivot pin has been relocated to provide maximum leverage (advantage) when opening the action.

Older model Contender Pistols can be converted (at the Factory) to incorporate the new features of this improved design! This conversion will

not affect the interchangeability of Contender barrels regardless of their date of manufacture!

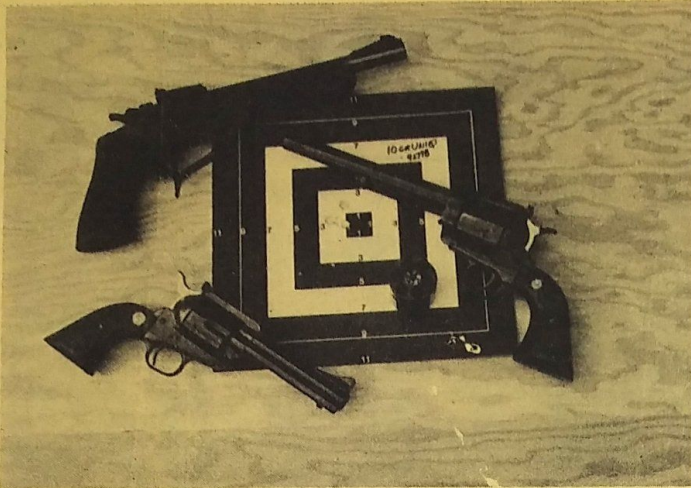
If you now own one of the older model Contenders (serial numbers less than 195,000) and wish to take advantage of this conversion offer, return the receiver only to our factory and enclose a letter requesting our "Easy-Open" conversion. On older forends (those with checkering) it is necessary to file a small portion of wood to give sufficient clearance for the trigger assembly to operate properly. If you have one of these older forends, we will alter it properly if you return it with your receiver.

The total cost is \$45.00 which includes return postage. You may pay by check, money order, MasterCard or VISA. If you are using one of these charge cards, we will need your complete number and expiration date.

Your receiver will be returned to you via U.P.S. to the address you indicate in your letter. If you prefer a different method of shipment, please note this in your letter. We anticipate that the total time (including shipping) will not exceed five weeks.

Ship via Parcel Post or U.P.S. (no license required) to: Thompson/Center Arms, Attention: Repair Department, Farmington Road, Rochester, New Hampshire 03867.

Very Truly Yours,
 Tim Pancurak



Three .44-40 test guns. Rehammered T/C, converted Abilene and a new production Colt New Frontier.

NEW LEASE ON LIFE FOR THE OLD .44-40

By John Taffin
Boise, ID

"Forty-four". Just the sound of it makes my heart beat a little faster. Forty-fours are my passion to the extent that I have thirteen (not unlucky at all) .44 Specials, fifteen .44 Magnums, and two Contenders which are chambered for the .44 Wildcat on .444 Marlin Brass, the .430JDJ.

Could anyone really want more with all of these? Definitely, yes. Although two of my .44 Special Colt SA's have extra .44-40 cylinders, they are around 70 years old and I'm very careful what I put through them. A Navy Arms replica 1875 Remington .44-40 is part of my collection also, and although very accurate it is not heavy enough for more than factory type loads and the cylinder is so short that even the standard .44-40 bullet, the Lyman Conical No. 42798 must be deep seated to allow cylinder rotation.

In 1873 Winchester introduced the .44 WCF (Winchester Center Fire) mated with the famous Winchester '73 lever action rifle. Since the new cartridge contained 40 grains of black powder it soon became known by its more common name today, the .44-40.

The same year saw the introduction of the now legendary Colt Single Army .45 or Model P which was chambered for the .44-40 in 1878. A number of other rifles and sixguns were chambered for the .44 WCF, notably the beautiful little Winchester Model 92, the Colt pump action rifles, Smith & Wesson Frontier revolvers in both single action and double action persuasion, Remington SA's, and Merwin-Hulberts. Marlin also chambered their lever actions for the .44-40, and probably the best sixguns in this caliber were the Colt New Service and the Smith & Wesson New Century, or "Triple-Lock".

The old .44-40 was also very popular outside of the United States as travelers knew they could find .44-40 cartridges just about anywhere. Various loadings were available from round balls, and shot loads, to high velocity loads for rifles only. Today only one load is produced (at over \$20.00 per box!) which clocks out around 800 fps from a revolver, and 1200 from a '92 Carbine. Of the 36 calibers of the Colt Single Action, the .44-40 was the second most popular, overshadowed only by the .45 Colt. The Colt SA so chambered was marked "Colt Frontier Six-Shooter".

For a long time I've wanted a really first class .44-40 sixgun that would be strong enough to develop this grand old cartridge to its fullest potential. Since the .44-40 is basically a .45 necked down to .44, the cartridge is a bottleneck which means it is handicapped by having very little metal in the cylinder to begin with, and especially weak in the bolt cut area. This is why heavy loaded revolver enthusiasts of the '20's and '30's went to the .44 Special for their full house loads.

By starting with a larger cylinder such as the .44 Magnum and rechambering, I reasoned that there would be sufficient steel left in the cylinder for any safe load. Approaching a local gunsmith with the idea of rechambering a .44 Magnum cylinder to .44-40, the reply was "Sure, no problem" and to make it even better he quoted a very reasonable \$35 to do the job.

But, when I mentioned what I had in mind, to see what could really be done with the .44-40 in a good strong sixgun, he immediately began to show me some of the "blown apart" .44 Magnums he had! Three Rugers and a Sauer with half the cylinders missing and the top straps completely blown off were shown as a warning.

Being assured that I would be cautious and walk softly and slowly he agreed to go ahead with the project on the chosen .44 Magnum, an Abilene "Single Action". The Abilene is a relatively new sixgun which had been manufactured by U.S. Arms and is now marketed by Mossberg under the A.I.G. Corporation. My particular Abilene is a beautifully finished large frame single action with a 7 1/2" barrel, wide hammer, and wide smooth trigger. With an unfluted cylinder of 1.729" diameter, and 1.754" length, and groove diameter of .428", this looked like the perfect candidate for the conversion.

Strength is also evident in the top strap of the Abilene which is .330" to .300" thick, back to front. Combining both traditional and modern designs, the

Abilene has the half cock loading notch, and the old original Colt design of a screw in the front of the frame to hold the cylinder pin against recoil. If any failure would occur in reloading, it would be the brass, not the Abilene.

Before attempting the conversion, the Abilene was first thoroughly tested in its original .44 Magnum persuasion to see if it was a shooter. It was! Here are some test results. All groups were fired at 20 yards using a rolled up piece of carpet as a rest, with all loads assembled with WW brass and CCI Magnum Primers. Loads were chronographed with an Oehler Model 12, skyscreens spaced at 5', with the first screen 10' from the muzzle.

.44 MAGNUM ABILENE 7 1/2"					
LOAD	POWDER	BULLET	WT.	MV	GROUP SIZE
25 Gr.	No. 2400	Sierra JHC	180 Gr.	1406	1"
26 Gr.	H110	Lyman 429215GC	209 Gr.	1460	1"
26 Gr.	WW296	Hornady JHP	200 Gr.	1409	5/8"
22 Gr.	No. 2400	Lyman 429421	238 Gr.	1487	2"
23 Gr.	WW296	Hornady FP	265 Gr.	1360	1 3/4"

With a .44 Magnum shooting this well it would seem a good idea to leave it alone, but the decision was made to go ahead with the conversion, and then return the Abilene to the factory to be re-fitted with another .44 Magnum cylinder.

At the outset some goals were set. Using the standard .44-40 conical bullet, Lyman No. 427898, I wanted to reach 1300 fps. With heavier .44 Magnum bullets such as the Lyman 429421 Keith SWC, seated out in the proper crimping groove in the longer cylinder, the hope was to reach 1100 fps.

It might be well to examine the advantages and disadvantages of going from a .44 Magnum to a .44-40. First the disadvantages. On top of the cost of the conversion, is the cost of brass. Locally, 50-.44 unprimed brass go for \$8.25, while the same in .44-40 is \$10.40. Magnum brass is straight walled and thick; .44-40 brass on the other hand, is bottlenecked and thin. This also means that carbide dies are not available for .44-40 and it is necessary to lube cases before resizing.

Conversion would actually be a step backwards as velocities would be lower in .44-40's with the same bullets as opposed to .44 Magnums. The .44-40 being designed for bullets in the .426 range and the .44 Magnum for .430 bullets means greater neck expansion each time the .44-40 is loaded.

When the .44-40 is fired in a .44 Magnum cylinder re-chambered to .44-40, the neck expands outwards making a case that is virtually untapered, then the neck is brought back down again, when the .44-40 brass goes through the sizer, and back out again when expanded to accept the bullet.

Obviously, this puts a great deal of stress and fatigue on the case necks. The .44-40 brass sizes easily because of the thinness of the neck section, but case failure is high with 16 of my original 200 cases lost by the fourth loading. The common problem is longitudinal cracks or wrinkles in the case necks. By starting with a .357 Magnum cylinder, the inside dimensions of the chamber could be better controlled, cutting down on neck expansion somewhat. Custom dies that do not resize the necks so much would also help.

Now to list the advantages. None. Nil, Zero! There is absolutely no practical reason for the conversion. However, this was a nostalgic project, not a practical one. The goal was to see what the .44-40 would do, not try to make it better, or even as good as the Magnum.

Loading the .44-40 requires a little extra care compared to other sixgun cartridges. Too much lube and case necks will acquire dents, also the brass is fragile enough to buckle if the case contacts the sizing die off center. Unique is the best powder for standard loads, but not for the heavier loads I desired. So two powders popular for Magnum cartridges, Hercules 2400 and Hogdons H4227 were selected. And after extensive testing, 4227 seems the best for accuracy combined with lowest pressure signs.

The results of my testing are included in the accompanying chart. CAUTION!!! These loads were safe in my revolver, under my conditions. The hottest loads were fired when the temperature was 15° and could give much different results in warmer temperatures. The same loads could be unsafe in another converted revolver. Do not use any of these loads in factory .44-40 revolvers. The results could be disastrous!

All loads were assembled with WW .44-40 brass. Groups were fired at 20 yards using a rolled up piece of carpet on the roof of my LUV 4x4 as a rest, with all loads chronographed on an Oehler Model 12, skyscreens placed 5' apart, with the first screen 10' from the muzzle. Loads marked with an asterik were fired at 15°; the others at 40°. Loads so marked would probably give higher velocities at higher temperatures. All velocities and groups are five shot averages.

CHARGE	POWDER	BULLET	WT.	MV	GROUP SIZE
20.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1062	3/4"
20.5 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1136	1"
21.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1142	1"
21.5 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1166	1 1/8"
22.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1205	1 1/4"
22.5 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1203	3/4"
23.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1245	1 3/4"
*23.5 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1284	1"
*24.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1329	1"
*24.5 GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1337	1 1/4"
19.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 429421	238 GR	1073	1 1/2"
20.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 429421	238 GR	1180	1 1/4"
21.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 429421	238 GR	1155	1 1/4"
22.0 GR	H4227	LYMAN 429421	238 GR	1154	7/8"
10.0 GR	UNIQ	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1078	3/4"
18.5 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1237	1 1/2"
19.0 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1270	2 1/2"
19.5 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1292	1 1/2"
20.0 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1312	2"

*20.5 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1357	2"
*21.0 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	205 GR	1347	2"
19.0 GR	No. 2400	LEE 214SWC	209 GR	1248	1 3/8"
19.5 GR	No. 2400	LEE 214SWC	209 GR	1323	1 1/4"
*20.0 GR	No. 2400	LEE 214SWC	209 GR	1325	1 1/2"
*20.5 GR	No. 2400	LEE 214SWC	209 GR	1354	1 1/2"
*21.0 GR	No. 2400	LEE 214SWC	209 GR	1328	1 3/4"
*20.0 GR	No. 2400	SPEER JHC	200 GR	1310	7/8"
*17.0 GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 429421	238 GR	1066	1 1/4"
*17.0 GR	No. 2400	260 JDJ	254 GR	1116	1 1/4"

My goals had been reached. Safely. At this point I chose to stop even though further progress seemed feasible. My "new" .44-40 falls somewhere in power between a handloaded .44 Special and the .44 Magnum. I won't ask for anymore from it. Nothing of any real practical value was accomplished except my curiosity is satisfied, and I have a heavy frame, accurate, top quality .44-40 Sixgun. The old timer really does have a new lease on life.

After my experimenting with new loads for the .44-40 revolver, J.D. sent me a 10" T/C barrel rechambered to .44-40. The same problem encountered with the rechambered .44 Magnum cylinder made itself evident with the T/C. Neck expansion is too great for long case life, but the results were interesting. The .44-40 becomes a real "Magnum" when fired from a TC. All of these loads extracted easily with no extreme pressure signs.

CHARGE	POWDER	BULLET	WEIGHT	MV
22. GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	193	1651
23. GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	193	1725
24. GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	193	1748
25. GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	193	1813
26. GR	No. 2400	LYMAN 42798	193	1796
24. GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	193	1479
25. GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	193	1505
26. GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	193	1567
27. GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	193	1600
28. GR	H4227	LYMAN 42798	193	1667

A properly chambered cylinder or TC that mates with the .443" neck diameter of the .44-40 brass as opposed to the .455" neck of the .44 Magnum would make an excellent handgun. That extra .012" expansion is just too much for the thin brass of the .44-40. The possibility exists that new brass could be made from .444 Marlin brass, but it would require special dies and a custom neck reamer.

A HANDGUN IS A HANDGUN, IS A HANDGUN, . . .

By Allan Crawford, Lawrenceville, GA

This bastardization of a classic quote is not intended to be used tongue in cheek or sarcastically, but rather to emphasize the fact that we do not need to create classifications within our chosen sport.

As Bob Robertson stated in his "Back to Basics" article in the last issue, I do not mean to put anyone else on trial for their opinions, but I do feel that Mr. Robertson's statement about putting handgun hunting "back on course" is a bit strong. True, J.D.'s trip to hunt antelope was an outstanding example of what can be done with a handgun. But, this is an isolated case by some of the best shooters anywhere! And Bob, note I did say handgun. For I feel and I am sure this is echoed by many, that the fact remains that the XPs and T/Cs are pistols and are hand held just as your wheelgun is, therefore what possible difference could the caliber and/or style of the gun make?

I am sure that before you made the statement about sawed off rifles that you tried one of these, particularly the T/C, for comparison sake. Scoped or open sighted, it really doesn't matter, the skill involved in hitting consistently from 100 yards is not any less than that talent involved in operating with a revolver. Conversely, when you only have one chance at a target your level of skill should be higher because you can't have five more chances to try and correct your error. If you have not had the pleasure of trying to hold on to a hand cannon and hit something with it then you have missed a rare treat, that no handgunner should miss.

On a personal vein, I converted 100% to T/Cs two or three years ago, because of their versatility and superior

quality. I feel my proficiency has improved significantly since my conversion. Also, I do not think the silhouette shooter automatically becomes a handgun hunter. The thought of spotting a deer and throwing myself into an instant Creedmore to fire is an exercise in slapstick. Again personally, I went into silhouette to improve my craft, to become a better shot and to be able to use the equipment I chose efficiently.

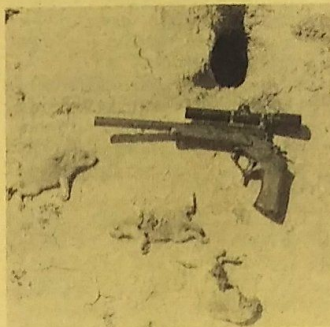
I agree on the statement that there are opportunists that carry both rifle and handgun and only if the game walks within spitting distance will they attempt to use a handgun. These are individuals I do not consider as handgun hunters, not those who have worked hard and deprived themselves of a few of life's goodies to buy a quality firearm and trained themselves to a point of proficiency within that gun's limits.

Don't condemn us just because we use more exotic handguns, Bob! We are all working for the same thing and along with you we want to be recognized for our skills with these guns regardless of their size, shape or caliber. We really are on the same course!

HUNTING TIP:

By Wayne Randall

Try using an old golf glove with the trigger finger cut out on your shooting hand. In hot weather, the glove will provide a positive grip, even when your hand is sweating. In cold weather, slip your gloved hand inside a heavier glove. This will provide additional warmth and will still allow the outside glove to be removed quickly for a shot at game.



Three in a row at about 100 yards!

PRAIRIE DOGS

By R. D. Herring, Bartlesville, OK

Now that spring has returned to the Southwest and summer is on its way, the time has come to shoot prairie dogs. I generally only hunt prairie dogs in the late spring — the middle of May or so into early June. The young ones are grown enough by then to be out of the den and munching on green pasture grass.

A year and a half ago, I purchased a Super 14 barrel in .223 Remington to go along with my .22 K Hornet bull barrel (with JDJ hot loading). These two barrels make a mighty handsome set of prairie dog busters.

A shooting buddy of mine wanted a good varmint barrel for his T/C. We decided it would make an interesting comparison for him to have a Super 14 in .222 Remington to shoot side by side with my Super 14 in .223 Remington. Both are equipped with 4X Burris handgun scopes in Leupold bases and rings.

The accuracy load for the .222 uses either the 50 grain Hornady SX or 50 grain Sierra and 19.5 grains of DuPont 4198. The accuracy load for the .223 uses the same bullets and 21.0 grains of DuPont 4198. The accuracy of both T/Cs was nearly identical. I did have the opportunity to test my .223 at 100 yards. Using a bench rest and sandbags, I could consistently achieve five shot groups that would go under a quarter. I did not have the opportunity to test the .222 at 100 yards using a bench rest. At the 50 yard line, both the .222 and .223 would print a five shot group well under one inch in diameter.

The proof of performance is in the prairie dog towns of western Kansas. Both calibers are pleasant and mild to shoot. The .222 seems to have slightly less felt recoil. Performance out to 100 yards appears to be identical. Much of our T/C shooting was at about 75 yards. Both T/Cs will pick a prairie dog up off the ground and turn 'em inside out at this distance.

I did get to take the .223 out to 140 yards. For prairie dogs and other long range work, I prefer to shoot off of a sandbag rest from the hood of a pickup. I prefer to hold the T/C firmly with my right hand with my left holding down on top of the scope. Some prefer to wrap both hands around the grip. (Pachmayr, of course.)

For the average shooter wanting to increase his fun hunting prairie dogs, it's a true challenge to hit the young dogs — moving or sitting still at 100 yards. Either the .222 or .223 will give most satisfactory results with 14" barrels and a good quality scope.

SWAMP DEER FEVER

By John Bergeron, Fardoche, LA

After two years of shooting my T/C 14" .30-30, it finally happened. I killed my first deer, with my T/C. When I bought my T/C, every time I went hunting I had it with me, but I always had my rifle (S & W 7mm Mag.).

After two years of hunting, I knew there was only one thing to do. I sold my rifle.

The first day of the '81 deer season found me sitting in my stand an hour before daylight. An hour after daylight, to my right, there was a doe feeding on an old road on which my stand is located. As she fed across the road, about 100 yards, I placed the crosshair of the 4X Leupold on her to see what it felt like. As I watched through my scope, something to the right of her caught my eye.

As I lowered my T/C, two spike bucks just walked across the road, behind the doe. By the time I got the T/C up, they were in the woods. I just couldn't believe I let two legal bucks walk across the road without me shooting. I was learning just how hard it is to scope a moving deer with a handgun.

Man, I was sick! I just couldn't believe I let that happen to me. I started thinking about my 7MM.

About 11:30 a.m., after seeing several does and yearlings, I saw the same two spikes. It happened to me again! They just walked across the road and I didn't even have time to shoot.

I didn't shoot because I didn't have a perfect shot. I'm not talking about just shooting. I was taught not to shoot without a perfect shot if at all possible.

At noon, I decided to go home and eat. On the way out, there was a nice buck, standing on the pipe line at about 300 yards. Boy, if I had my 7MM Mag.!

After lunch, I thought every hunter in the woods came by my stand to talk and rag me about my pistol. Finally, around 3 o'clock, everything settled down. I was sitting in my stand, just enjoying the woods and the many sounds when I looked to my right. I couldn't believe it. Standing at 150 yards was a real nice buck.

With my heart about to pump out of my chest, (when there is no excitement in hunting, I'll quit. I'm 35 and have killed over 100 deer), I raised my T/C to make absolutely sure. I checked him out with my 7x50s . . . sure enough, he had six nice points. When the crosshair was behind his shoulder, I squeezed the two pound trigger. I wouldn't recommend this light trigger for just anyone.

The buck jumped the road and hit the woods. I noticed its right front leg didn't seem to function right. I sat in my stand as quiet as could be and listened. The deer didn't fall, he just seemed to quit running. I didn't hear him hit the water, either, so I knew he couldn't be far.

I reloaded and eased down out of the stand. I knew that the 125 grain spitzer I had loaded had hit the right spot. My heart is in excellent shape, but at the rate it was pumping, I thought it would explode!

Instead of walking straight down the road, I eased into the woods to cut his trail at an angle. I've hunted this stand for seven years and I've killed many deer from it, so I know about what to

(Continued on Page 14)

expect. I had an idea about where the deer would be. As I eased through the woods, I thought if that deer gets up and runs, I'd just as soon throw my T/C at him, because I'd never hit him running, anyway.

Lo and behold, there he was, about 60 yards from the roadbed. As I dragged him back to my stand, I felt good. I felt more excitement than since I killed my first rifle deer.

When my son walked up to my stand, all I saw was teeth. This year he will hunt with his own T/C. At 15 years old, he is an excellent shot.

I have a problem, though. This year while hunting this stand and another, I saw several real nice bucks. I didn't shoot at them because they were out at about 250 yards and the .30-30 just doesn't have enough power at that range. I know without a doubt I can hit a standing deer's vital area at that range. I need a long range barrel for my T/C, but I don't know which one to choose. How about it, which one of your Cannons do you recommend? I need help real badly. It's getting late and I need to practice.

Editor's Note: The .30-40 Ackley with 165 grain Hornady seems the flattest shooting. At 250 yards, the .30-40 Krag, .300 Savage, .338 JDJ, .358 JDJ, .375 JDJ, are all OK. The .411, .430, .444, .45-70 will all do well, but don't shoot nearly as flat as the others. At this point, I'm not convinced anything under .30 caliber is suitable for anything but varmints. . . . JDJ.

WILDCATTING BY COMPUTER

By Tom Shippy
Hudson, WY

Robert Hutton of the Hutton Rifle Ranch, 1802 S. Oak Park Dr., Tucson, AZ 85710, markets Homer Powley's computers for determining muzzle velocities and chamber pressures of any cartridge available or any that you might be thinking of "wildcatting". These are easy to use slide rules that every serious handloader should be familiar with. I don't know the exact current price for the package which includes a computer, a PSI calculator, powder chart and instruction manuals, but an SASE to the above address will give you the details. I believe it's around 16 or 17 bucks, and it's money well spent.

The PSI calculator is furnished for calculating load pressures in pounds per square inch. Most of the computer's recommended loads will fall around 45 to 46,000 PSI. You may set a limit at a higher or lower pressure level and calculated loads that fit your requirements. For example: T/C sets a pressure limit of 45,000 PSI for cartridges with the case head size of .422 as is found in the .30 Herrett and the 6.5 and 7MM JDJ cartridges based on the .225 Winchester. Many commonly published .30H loads exceed this level. Smaller cases such as the .222 Remington family and the wildcats based on these can be loaded to 50,000 in the T/C without adverse effects. Conversely, wildcats such as the .358 JDJ, .375 JDJ and the .30-40 Ackley should be held at a slightly lower pressure limit. The whole line of thinking behind J. D.'s line of hand cannon cartridges was to utilize cases such as .444 Marlin that have the capacity necessary for large amounts

of slower burning powders. These large amounts of slow burning powders yield high velocities while keeping the pressure at a level suitable for cases with a large diameter head.

In order to gain an understanding of how the computer works, let's take a cartridge, run it through, and see what we come up with. SSK uses the .225 case, blown out, for both the 6.5 and 7MM JDJ.

Let's assume that we wanted a 6MM done the same way. The 6MM is big in bench rest shooting and found most often in 6 P.P.C., 6x47 or a 6 Bench Rest. Many long range varmint shooters like the 6MM Remington feeling it'll buck the wind better than the smaller diameters. Let's just see what kind of velocity we'll get using a light 60 grain bullet. Gary Geraud measured the water capacity of his 7 JDJ at 41.3 grains. Using this figure, we set it at the "start" index on the slide rule. (By the way, the recommended way to get this figure is to weigh the empty case plus the bullet. Then fill the case with water, seat the bullet to the desired depth and weigh again. The difference is the water capacity in grains.) For plotting wildcats and cartridges I don't have on hand, I use Ken Waters' table of water case capacities listed in the 8th Edition of the Handloader's Digest. These capacities are figured with a bullet seated to the base of the neck.

Anyway, with the case capacity set on the slide rule, the amount of powder recommended can be read just below, in this case, 35.4 grains. Then locate the weight of the bullet, 60 grains and directly above it we find the ratio of the charge to the bullet weight, .59. The next step is to set the bullet sectional density, .145, opposite the ratio of charge to the bullet weight. There's a chart on the back of the slide rule listing sectional density values for most of the bullet weights available. Any not listed can be figured following instructions in the manual. Lining the sectional density figure with the ratio of charge to bullet weight figure causes arrow # 2 to point at the computer's recommended powder. Thus we find that 35.4 grains of 4064 or 4895 is the computer's recommended load.

Now to estimate the velocity of this load through our gun, (and that, of course, is a Contender) we need to find the barrel length to the base of the bullet. The correct way to do this is to chamber an unloaded round, and measure on a cleaning rod the distance from the muzzle to the bullet point and add the bullet length to that figure. If it's for a case that you don't have, but one that's shown in a manual, using the length from the end of the case to the neck/shoulder junction should suffice.

In our example since it's an improved case, we'll estimate about where the new neck/shoulder junction is located. Subtracting this length from our 14" barrel we find the barrel length to be 12.25. This barrel length is set at the correct caliber, 6MM and we are thus able to read the expansion ratio opposite the case capacity figure. The expansion ratio for our example is 4.45. On the back of the computer we set the ratio of the charge to the bullet weight, .59, at the arrow and read the velocity at the expansion ratio. Some of the figures will fall in between those listed so a closer estimate is derived by interpolating. 35.4 grains of 4064 or 4895 with a 60 grain bullet shows a velocity around 3165 fps in a Contender. (Editor's Note: We'll find

out soon — the 6 JDJ reamer is on order.) The velocity given sometimes seems a little optimistic, but when comparing two or three cartridges, the comparisons seem to be pretty reliable and valid. The same 60 grain 6MM bullet in a necked up .223 shows approximately 2900 fps with 25.6 grains of 3031 being the recommended load.

With the information we have so far on our 6MM/225 Improved wildcat, it's an easy matter to turn to the PSI calculator and figure on approximate pressure for our load. Our first step on this slide rule is to set the case capacity (41.3) at the grains of powder used (35.4). Step 2 says to find the expansion ratio and the ratio of charge to bullet weight which we've already done. Step 3 — we set the ratio of charge to bullet weight at the expansion ratio on the slide provided. Then on Step 4, we're able to read the pressure opposite the muzzle velocity. The pressure for this load is approximately 44,200 PSI. (Editor's Note: About maximum for this case head size and long gun life.)

While loading manuals should be consulted, chances are the barrel lengths used in their tests won't match the barrel length you're using. The seating depth is more than likely different and this throws another variable into the works. Powley's system depends upon the user finding the actual seating depth and the actual adjusted barrel length. There are so many wildcats available in XPs and Contenders that the loading manuals can't begin to cover all of them. Powley's computer allows the handloader to find a useful load for any wildcat he may be working with.

How valid can all of this be? As you know, the same load chronographed in two different guns is apt to vary considerably. By the same token, if you had two pressure barrels set up to measure the same cartridge, your results would probably differ. Likewise, reloading manuals differ considerably in the loads and velocities they come up with. It isn't unusual for the starting load in one manual to be the maximum or near maximum load in another. I think the Powley computer and PSI calculator are probably as valid as most other methods and to the average handloader trying to work up loads, this may be the best method.

Everyone probably has a cartridge that they feel would be the ideal one on which to base a wildcat. The beauty of the Powley system is that it allows us a chance to do all the wildcatting we want to do on paper without having to invest in custom reamers, dies and chambering jobs. After looking at several possibilities, then we can decide if our cartridge has enough merit to warrant the expense. Again, while there are bound to be variables, I think the comparisons between cartridges plugged into the computer are high in validity. Keep in mind when doing this that the recommended load will have pressures around 45 to 46,000 PSI. This is too much for the larger cases, such as a .45-70 for example, in a T/C. However, a load can be figured for whatever pressure limit you may set; or you may take your favorite load, run it through, and have a good idea of the approximate pressure.

Let's look at a large diameter case and make an adjustment of Powley's recommended load to come up with a load with less pressure. The .30-40 Ackley with a 165 grain bullet is real

popular with Gary Geraud, Joe Stuemke and some of their buddies in Saratoga, WY for long range shooting. It's a .30-40 Krag maximized for case capacity by blowing the shoulder forward in a rechambered T/C or an SSK barrel. Skipping over all the steps involved, we find Powley's recommended load to be 50.9 grains of 4320 which will give the 165 grainer an approximate velocity of 2414 fps. Now Powley didn't know that some of us would want to shoot cartridges like this in a Contender so his loads are figured for pressures that may be excessive for a case this size in a T/C. The pressure for this one did compute to 44,900 or 45,000 PSI approximately. The best bet then is to come up with a slower burning powder that'll allow lower pressures as 4320 and anything faster would mean higher pressures in the same amounts. Moving to the left on the powder scale (towards slower burners) lowers the pressure approximately 10% per powder step. Two steps to the left of 4320 we find 4350 which for the same amount of powder (50.9 grains) should yield approximately 20% less pressure or 36,000 PSI. This amount of 4350 can be increased keeping in mind that a 5% increase or decrease in powder will produce a 10% increase or decrease in pressure. 53.4 grains or 4350 @ 39,600 PSI which is a 5% increase in powder charge and a 10% increase in pressure. Increasing the original powder charge by 10% to 56.0 grains yields a pressure figure of approximately 43,200 which may or may not be too high, depending on a multitude of factors. As always, everyone should start out rather low and work up to any loads slowly whether the loads were derived from Powley's computer, a manual, or from a friend. If memory serves me, 54.0 grains or 4350/165 Hornady BTSP is Gary's favorite light bullet load in the .30-40 Ackley. Using a slower powder allows better loading density which seems to be desirable. If you wished to stay with a faster powder, 4320 in this example, you could lower the pressure by lowering the amount of powder according to the preceding 5 to 10% ratio.

I've run a lot of different cartridges through the computer and it's made a believer out of me. Some of the velocities may seem a little optimistic as mentioned before and some of the pressures may vary when compared to available pressure data. Ballistics seems to be an exercise in variables. Results in some cases seem to be surprisingly close to pressure tested results. For example, I ran the necessary data through for a 14" .300 Savage with a 150 grain bullet. Powley's recommended load was 40.9 grains of either 4064 or 4895 for a pressure of 45,700. For 40 grains of 4064, same bullet, DuPont showed 45,400 and for 40 grains of 4895, they listed 45,900.

A few loads the computer showed that might be of interest:

.358 JDJ/250 grain/46.5 grains
4064/4895/2086 fps.

.375 JDJ/270 grain/44.8 grains
3031/2000 fps.

.30-30/150 grain/32.0 grains 3031/
2245 fps.

7 JDJ/120 grain/35.4 grains 4064/
4895/2455 fps.

6.5 JDJ/129 grain/35.4 grains 4320/
2315 fps.

.223/50 grain/24.4 grains 3031/3082
fps.

(Continued on Page 15)

(Continued from Page 14)

7 TCU/139 grain/25.5 grains 3031/2100 fps.

7 TCU/162 grains/24.3 grains 3031/1922 fps.

All of the above were figured for 14" barrels. None of these loads are recommended without dropping back and working up. While the computer usually recommends loads for pressures near 45,000, the above .375 load computed to 40,000 PSI.

I've found the computers to be useful interesting tools applied to handloading in general; not just wildcats.

(Continued from Page 7)

will stay in 6" at 100 yards is damn good for hunting.

Because I was running behind in my custom knife orders and had lots of irons in the fire I decided not to make my own holster. Well, I looked in some of the gun shops and decided that I was not as busy as I thought.

I could not believe what the holsters are costing nowadays. It had been a long time since I had priced any, and the only holster that I found that would fit my 10-1/2" Ruger is one that I wouldn't have if they gave it to me, much less pay for it. The better holsters were running \$40.00 to \$60.00 for 7-1/2" and I knew that the 10-1/2" would cost much more than that.

By working after work and one weekend I had my holster as well as three others I needed plus a belt for \$21.00 worth of leather and the time it took to make them. They may not be as pretty as the \$100.00 rigs, but they get the job done and it feels good to know I made them myself.

I don't know if I will use the 10-1/2" Blackhawk on deer this year or not since I got a new Redhawk with a 7-1/2" barrel; but if I could get a Redhawk with a 10-1/2" barrel, I could have my cake and eat it too. The Redhawk is also coming out with a 5" barrel according to the parts book that came with mine.

Dragoon . . . Continued from Page 7

rear sight that looks promising from the pictures I've seen. The problem with the stocks can be solved by using a larger grip pin. This could be easily accomplished by the home gunsmith. Pachmayrs will soon be available and would be a most welcome addition.

Weighing over three pounds, the Stainless Dragoon .44 is a big revolver. The cylinder measures 1.725" in length with a diameter of 1.730". Case heads are recessed which means loads such as those using the N.E.I. Keith bullet are too long for the cylinder. The barrel is untapered, measuring a full .780" at both breech and muzzle, and the top strap width is .685" with a thickness of .345". The grip strap is the Ruger

style, one piece, attached with five screws. However, the grips are wider in cross section than the Ruger SA and do feel good. The balance with the 8-3/8" barrel is perfect.

How does it shoot? After a lot of off-hand shooting at various ranges to get the feel of it and break it in a little, the Dragoon was tried with a variety of hand loads. No mechanical malfunctions of any kind occurred during the testing. This is not a sixgun for target, or mid-range loads as the slower the bullet moved, the wider the groups. Full house loads and heavy bullets performed very well, however. The 900-1000 fps loads, which normally cut one hole groups in most .44 revolvers, looked like shotgun patterns from the Dragoon. I would guess the barrel twist of the Dragoon has something to do with this.

Except for the minor distractions pointed out, I do like the Stainless Dragoon. A custom rear sight, plus a little gunsmithing would make it a really first class revolver. Interarms manufactures these sixguns in their plant in Virginia and now catalog four calibers: .44 Magnum, .41 Magnum, .45 Colt, and .357 Magnum, with barrel lengths from 5" to 12" with a new 10-1/2" .44 Silhouette just now being offered.

**Test Gun: Virginian Dragoon
Stainless — .44 Magnum — 8-3/8"
Distance: 25 Yards, Padded Rest
CCI Mag Primers, WW Brass
5-Shot Groups**

Bullet	Weight	Charge	Powder	Group Size
Lyman 429421	240 gr.	10.0	Unique 3"	
Lyman 429421	240 gr.	20.0	2400	2-1/2"
Lyman 429421	240 gr.	22.5	H110	1-3/4"
Lyman 429421	240 gr.	21.8	H4227	1-3/4"
Lee 214429 SWC	202 gr.	22.0	2400	2-1/4"
SSK 260429	253 gr.	20.0	2400	1"
SSK 310 429	309 gr.	22.0	WW680	1-1/4"
SSK 310 429	309 gr.	23.5	WW680	1-1/2"
3K 295429	302 gr.	22.0	WW680	1-1/4"
3K 295429	302 gr.	23.5	WW680	1-1/4"
Speer 200 HP	200 gr.	27.7	WW296	1-1/2"
Sierra 220 FMJ	220 gr.	27.9	WW296	1-1/2"
Hornady 240 FMJ	240 gr.	20.0	2400	1-1/2"
Speer 240 HP	240 gr.	22.0	2400	1-1/2"
Hornady 240 HP	240 gr.	22.5	2400	1-1/4"



FIRING LINE

I'm considering buying a S & W 629 but know someone who had two in a row where the cylinder developed excessive looseness (front to back along the axis) after a couple of boxes of ammo. Did you ever hear of this? Do you have any information on the Wilsey .45 Magnum? Have you ever had a chance to work with one. If so, what's your opinion of it? . . . John Linke, Ft. Richardson, AK.

Editor's Note: One man's "excessive looseness" might not be another's. Almost all revolvers develop some end play in the cylinder. Without some looseness, the cylinder won't turn. I don't consider .003" end play excessive. Most guns have more than that. The M-29 is somewhat noted for its dropping the bolt and letting the cylinder rotate backwards on firing. This is commonly referred to as "skipping" by people who don't know what is happening.

I know of a lot of M-29s that were essentially worn out in 500 rounds during their period of really bad production. Current production from what little I see of the 29 and 629 appears to be better put together than they were a few years ago. I guess you just have to take your chances.

Every time I talk with the factory about the Wilsey, it's always next month or whatever. At this point, I'm not believing it till I have one in hand . . . JDJ.

John Hinckley not guilty! This stunning announcement came over the T.V. on Monday night, June 21. America is the greatest country in the world, but this is too much. When a person

can shoot a Press Secretary, Washington, D.C. police officer, a Secret Service agent and the President of the United States and be found not guilty, it is time for us to take a hard look at our judicial system.

Hinckley will now be committed to a mental institution until he can convince the doctors he is sane. He then can walk away and never be re-tried for these crimes.

It seems to me that a hearing to determine Hinckley's sanity should have been held first. (Editor's Note: Why bother — there is a better solution.) When Hinckley was found insane, he could have been committed with a lot less cost to you and me, the taxpayers of this country! At such time Hinckley can prove his sanity, he should be tried for his crimes.

The anti-gunners keep saying confiscation of handguns will keep crime down. How can crime go down when criminals are not prosecuted for their crimes? Taking away our handguns, that are used for sporting purposes, will not now or ever reduce crime . . . Wayne Randall, Lake City, MN

My favorite handgun is a 4-5/8" Ruger in .45 Colt. It started out as a 7-1/2". It went to the gunsmiths for him to cut it back to a 4-5/8" and relocate the front sight. Next the orange insert from sight, white outline rear, hammer jeweled, trigger job and Pachmayr grips were added. I carry it in a modified Bianchi III Crossdraw. Shoots like a dream, balances beautifully and it's just down right good to look at.

I'm loading Speer 250 grain SWC lead over 8-9 grains of Unique, CCI 300 primers and Remington cases. The load is accurate, comfortable and I think there's enough there for deer season. Time will tell . . . Jon Palisin, Hermitage, PA

How about sharing more on this 6.5 x 223 in the "14"? The 6mm x 223 has stirred a lot of interest down here in OK, but I haven't seen or shot one as yet. I've thought the idea for a workable T/C Wildcat would be a .25x 223 or .25x 222 Remington Mag. Any comments from you or your readers? Should be hell on wheels for prairie dogs or coyotes or whitetails.

Happiness is pulling into a dogtown with your shootin' partner and seeing acres of dogs and saying in unison — "Let's T/C 'em." . . . R. D. Herring, Bartlesville, OK.

Editor's Note: I haven't shot the 6.5 x 223 in a 14" tube. The 6.5 JDJ will stay around 1/2" groups with 100 grain at 2600 and 120 grain at 2400. Since all the 6mm x 223s are Wildcats, I don't see that they could have stirred up much interest. The 6 x 47 has been around a long time and it's slightly superior to the 6 x 223. The .25-35 Ackley Improved seems to do well in a 14" T/C. The .25-222 has been around as long as the case has without ever achieving much success. As far as deer, I just can't see anything under .30 caliber in a pistol at this time, for all around use. If you only take standing broadside shots and don't have to worry about losing them in heavy cover, anything will kill them . . . JDJ

The quality of THE SIXGUNNER keeps improving and HHI is great. I hope all the membership holds true and keeps this organization going. HHI has been the most enjoyable association of people I've been acquainted with. I hope I can make the next hunt. I'd love to go to Africa, but there's no way I can ever get more than seven days off. Hazards of duty, I suppose. Looking forward to HHI goodies — shirts, etc. I'm sure limited supply will go well . . . Larry Rogers, Petersburg, WV

Just thought I'd drop a few lines about how much I enjoy each issue of THE SIXGUNNER. I've dropped " - - - " in favor of it. If you've read one technical article on a new gun, you've just about read them all. I really enjoy reading hunting articles, THE SIXGUNNER is tops!

I've been an Emergency Medical Technician and have worked on an ambulance service for seven years and as an Operating Room Technician for over three years now, so I've seen quite a bit of trauma and violent death, but the picture of the dead native in the article by Larry Kelly this last issue kind of made my toes want to curl. To say that it was gross is an understatement.

For the last 10 years, a .44 Mag. revolver has been my # 1 love, but I've read the articles in THE SIXGUNNER about the .375 JDJ cartridge. I was wondering what type of load you'd recommend for whitetail deer. What type of scope (a low power) brand, velocities and M.E., bullets, the work please? Any help will be greatly appreciated. Keep up the great work . . . Thomas M. Black, Hampton, KY

Editor's Note: I haven't found any reasonable .44 Mag. load that won't work on whitetail. The

240 Hornady Hollow Point over 24.0 grains of WW 296 always gives good performance on deer or hogs. . . . JDJ

The HHI SIXGUNNER is the best and most interesting firearm/shooting publication I receive. I wish to renew my subscription and have enclosed a check for \$15.00.

I have been involved with tuning, reloading, fast-draw, shooting and hunting with handguns since I was 15, some 25 years ago. My favorite calibers are the .22 LR in a Colt Woodsman, .44 Mag. in the S & W M-29, .45 ACP in a Colt Government Model that I accursed myself. Thanks for your leadership and hard work . . . Dr. Donald G. Zarlengo, Bakersfield, CA

I'd like to agree with Bob Robertson and his article "Back to Basics". In addition, I'd like to add two more points. First, some of these "super" T/Cs can't even be carried in holsters. One of the things I enjoy about handgun hunting is that your hands are free while hunting. The second point is that any single shot handgun doesn't offer that quick second shot when needed. I realize that the first shot is all important, but it's nice, and many times for me very important, to have a weapon where a second or third shot is only a trigger pull away. I'm proud to be a member of HHI — keep up the good work . . . Ron Desiderio, Leonardo, NJ

Editor's Note: Any Super 14 with or without scope can be carried in either shoulder or hip holster. Many prefer to sling them. Slings are starting to catch on with revolvers, too. Weight wise, a 5" Redhawk and a 14" T/C .45-70 with Pachmayr grip and forend weigh the same. I couldn't care less what you use to hunt as long as it's of adequate power. . . . JDJ

The Editor, Handgun Hunters International:

I am presently incarcerated in a Federal Correctional Institution at Englewood, Colorado for a non-violent crime.

Within the last several months, the gun control issue has received a great deal of publicity from the Morton Grove, Illinois decision to outlaw handguns. I have listened to arguments both pro and con on gun control but have never felt strongly one way or the other, that is until I heard about Morton Grove, Illinois. Their ordinance banning handguns prompted me to sit back and really think about the gun control issue. After many hours of contemplation on this issue, I must admit that I was spurned from supporting gun control legislation of any kind in this country. The far reaching implications of gun control scared me.

First off, does not the Second Amendment of the Constitution guarantee us the right to keep and bear arms? I firmly believe that the Second Amendment was made a part of our Constitution for a very good reason. I kept thinking, what is so important about the right to keep and bear arms? What did the very men who founded our country consider so important about the right to keep and bear arms? One major difference between these great men and the American people of today is that they were once subjected to tyranny, and the American people of today have never known tyranny. I can't help but believe that the men who wrote our Constitution thought the Second Amendment was a safeguard against tyranny.

Recent memories of Poland, Afghanistan, and Czechoslovakia are enough to make me shiver while thinking about gun control in this country.

Even though I had already come to a stand against gun control, I had to admit that the gun control advocates had some protests that I thought might help cut our violent crime rate. I suddenly thought, what better place would there be to conduct a poll on gun control and how it would affect violent crime than in a prison with convicted felons. I made a questionnaire using issues from gun control advocates and anti-gun control organizations as well as some questions of my own. Over a three week period, I questioned 50 convicts. My polling was not restricted to any one ethnic group but came from our four major races, Native American Indian, White, Spanish American, and Black convicts. The greater majority of those I questioned were convicted of violent crimes. As you can see from the results of my poll, gun control cannot and will not work as an effective means of curbing violent crime.

I can only hope that the American people will stand up for their rights and not allow a few "Pied Pipers" preaching gun control to lead this country into a land where freedom does not ring.

Your freedom is a terrible thing to lose, I know.

If you were going to commit a crime such as armed robbery or murder, which would you prefer, a handgun or a long gun?

Thirty-eight inmates said they would prefer a handgun while twelve said they would prefer a long gun.

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45-70, .375 JDJ, .17 Remington and 50 other CUSTOM CONTENDER Barrels. CUSTOM CONTENDERS — CUSTOM SCOPE MOUNTS for HANDGUNS that will stay on. CUSTOM RIBS — HEAVY BULLET MOLDS in .357, .41 and .44 Caliber — Spring Kits — White Outline Sight Blades — Hard Chrome Plating — Rechambering — Custom XP 100 Conversions. Stamp For Information. S S K INDUSTRIES Rt. 1, Della Drive Bloomingdale, OH 43910 614-264-0176 SUPPORT HANDGUN HUNTERS INTERNATIONAL

2. If you were on the streets today, which would you prefer to carry, a handgun or a long gun?

Forty-four inmates said they would prefer to carry a handgun while six said they would carry a long gun.

3. If there was a nationwide law banning handguns plus a stiff jail term for offenders, would this deter you from obtaining and carrying a handgun?

Forty-nine inmates said NO, such a law would not deter them from obtaining a handgun while one inmate said yes.

4. If handguns were made inaccessible, would you "make do" with a long gun or even a modified one such as a sawed off shotgun with a pistol grip?

Fifty inmates said they would make do with a long gun while not a single one said no.

5. If there was a nationwide law requiring the registration of all handguns, do you think such a law would cut our violent crime rate even in a few percentage points?

Forty-eight inmates said no; it would do nothing to cut our violent crime rate, one inmate said it would help cut violent crime, and one inmate was not sure.

6. If there was a nationwide law banning all handguns and making it a felony offense for offenders, do you think this would cut our violent crime rate a significant amount?

Forty-eight inmates said no, while two said yes.

7. Which do you think would do more to cut our violent crime rate? (A) Tougher gun control laws. (B) Longer prison terms for those convicted of crimes with a weapon. (C) Neither A nor B.

One inmate said A, thirty-six inmates said B, and thirteen said C. . . . George T. Malvaney, No. 16691-034, PMB Box 1000, Englewood, CO 80110.

Editor's Note: 'Nuff said!

Any HHI hunter lucky enough to draw his antelope license in south central Wyoming this year is in for a treat. HHI member Joe Steumke, Box 1347, Saratoga, WY 82331 has talked HHI member Steve Hockman, Box 235, Saratoga, WY 82331, into helping him with the HHI antelope hunters this fall.

You've heard J. D. and Gary Geraud talk about Joe Steumke and you've heard me talking about Steve Hockman, so between 'em, there's going to be a few trophies hanging on someone's wall next year for sure. On top of that, Joe and Steve have a side bet going for which party bags the best antelope.

I don't know Joe, yet, but hope to meet him in July, as I'm going out to fish and handgun some prairie dogs with Steve. (Steve guides for everything from fishing to elk treks.)

I'll have to put my money on Ole Hock 'cause the ranch you guys will be hunting on is FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY THOUSAND acres of prime antelope territory. Steve has worn out two Jeeps and a truck learning every nook and cranny of it. If his party doesn't get several trophies, my name ain't Bud McDonald, HHI No. 334, Manassas, VA

Enclosed please find a money order for my renewal. Reading THE SIXGUNNER has been a big help by learning from the experiences of other handgunners. . . . John Theyl, Boynton Beach, FL

I thought I'd send a hunting tip or two that might help some of the squirrel hunters out there. The first one is using the slingshot to aid in getting a shot at squirrels. When a fox squirrel is cutting up in the top of a tree and you can't locate him because of too many leaves as is the case many times in the early part of the season, just find his approximate location and fire a rock up past the feeding fox squirrel. But be ready with your gun and have another rock ready. As a rule, the first rock will just put him on the alert. But the second rock should bring him right down to the hunter. At times, they come down to the lowest branches, but he will come down out of the top. This doesn't work on gray squirrels as they usually leave the tree (in a hurry). The slingshot can also be to push a hiding squirrel out in the open. Sometimes they run, but often, they just shift to a spot where they can be shot. It helps to keep them from running if you wait a few minutes before you sail a rock up at them.

I've also found a good replacement material for the rubber band reed in the Burnham Brother's close range predator call. I never did like the sound put out by the rubber band reed. So I took it out and replaced it with a strip of 8MM movie film. I use regular 8MM film and not the Super 8 film. Also, I only put the rubber band back on one end to hold the reed in place and the call together. The pitch put out by the film strip is much higher than that put out by the rubber band reed. It works real well on foxes, but I haven't tried it out on coyotes yet.

Another Trick I use on squirrels is to lip-

squeak to get them to stop for a shot. If a squirrel is traveling through the trees and is on the way to a feeding tree, he probably won't stop until he gets to the area he will feed in. But a fox squirrel can very often be tricked into stopping long enough to get a shot by lip-squeaking. It also works on squirrels on the ground. A word of caution: If the squirrels are spooked, this will work in reverse, and will only spook them more. But if they are not spooked, and have not seen you, they should stop. The sound I make is made by sucking air in through the corner of my mouth, not the front of the mouth. By sucking in the air slowly, I get a high pitched squeak. If I suck it in quickly, I get a sound much like a squirrel's bark. It may take some practice to get the sound right, but if you get it right, it's a very handy trick. Some may get better results by sucking through the front of the mouth, but the corner works best for me. I haven't tried this too much on gray squirrels because there aren't too many gray squirrels where I hunt. But the ones I've tried it on works fair to good. Fox squirrels are the best. . . . Jerry Hart, Mattoon, IL

Here is my check for \$15.00 to renew my subscription to THE SIXGUNNER and membership to HHI. Keep them coming. I LOVE IT! . . . John E. Shaw, Mingo Junction, OH

How about a column in THE SIXGUNNER on individual State Laws on hunting with handguns. It could be written by members of each representative state. Example: North Dakota allows deer hunting only (other than non-game animals) with a handgun, but limits it: Minimums are 6" barrel, .256 bullet diameter, 1.28 case length. Keep up the good work . . . Ron Gibbens, Rock Lake, ND

Editor's Note: Sounds good — all we need is the up-to-date regulations from each state. Let's have them. . . . JDJ

I've enclosed a \$125 money order for the Bushnell-HHI binoculars offer. Thanks to all involved in this offer. I've wanted a good set for years and could not afford to pass this up. I carry my HHI Sixgun in a Safariland shoulder holster and use Pachmayr grips. It likes Winchester 240 grain J.H.P.s and Remington 240 grain L.S.W.C. (Medium Loading). It's the finest pistol I've ever shot, silky smooth, deadly accurate and a joy to shoot and show off. . . . John C. Oswald, East Sparta, OH

Hope this letter finds you all OK and still shooting. I had a heart attack back in February and was out of action for a while. I'm just beginning to get my mind straight again and think about getting back into action. . . . D. T. Reynolds, Lavina, TN

Best wishes for a speedy recovery . . . JDJ

This past fall while browsing the many tables at a local gun show, I came across a display of holsters and belts. The one that caught my eye was a shoulder rig, bandolier style, strapped on a mannequin. (I had been using a T/C shoulder rig for a couple of years and although acceptable, it just hadn't fit the bill.) I struck up a conversation with a young gent behind the table. He was Larry Saukko of Excelsior, MN. I asked Larry if he could make a holster for my Super '14' that I could use on a shoulder belt like he had displayed. "Sure!" he said. "Bring your Contender out so I can make a pattern."

The following week, I called Larry and set up an appointment. Upon arriving at his house, we discussed just what I had in mind. This was over an unusual cup of coffee that I'm sure Larry hasn't forgotten yet. I said that I wanted a holster that would fit both my Super '14's in .41 with a 4X RP scope and my iron sighted .30-30 Winchester. No problem, Larry said — let me have a week to work on it. And he did. A week later, I picked up my shoulder rig and it surely was super! Both T/C's fit perfectly. Needless to say, I have already sold my other Contender holster. This past week, Larry just finished another holster for my Smith .41 Mag. which I can use on the same shoulder belt or I can wear it on my hip if I prefer. When I picked up the latest holster, I spent a couple of hours in Larry's workshop. He went into many details of leather work that I had never heard of. I asked him if he would show me just how he went about making the holsters and that maybe I could get an article in print on it.

Larry said that he had been making holsters off and on for 33 years. He started on holsters in the third grade at school. He just couldn't find the right belt and holsters for his cap guns. Soon his friends were asking him to make holsters for them. After five years or so, his interest turned to other things. Then eight years ago, he took up the trade again, making holsters for a friend that ran a gun shop in Anoka, MN. He did this until 13 months ago when a friend suggested he take some of his work to a local gun show. He did,

and the response was terrific. Now Larry makes most of the gun shows within our four to five state area. He uses Grade "A" oak tanned cowhide leather, 5-6 and 7-8 ounce, depending on the type of holster. Machine stitched, all leather is hand edged, sanded, dyed and saddle soaped, a time consuming job.

All reverse sides of unlined leather are smoothed. Metal lined, suede and leather lined are available. 1/2" latigo rawhide for hammer straps is par. Wood blocking is available for long guns. Slots are cut into the belt for attachment of bullet loops, not just sewn on like so many you see. Any color of leather you want. It takes six to seven hours to complete one holster. All in all, it's a real fine product.

Larry is open to suggestions and wants your thoughts on what you want in a holster. This makes it partly your own creation. Prices are competitive and reasonable. They run in the \$43-\$45 range for a 6" metal/suede lined holster. About \$60 for a Super '14'. The belt is in the \$33-\$38 area, depending on what you want on it. No brochures are available at this time. If you have any interest, give him a ring at (614) 474-3068. If you see him and his wife, Sandy, at your local gun show, stop by and look over his products, and say you read about him in THE SIXGUNNER. . . . Al Zink, Minneapolis, MN

Please find enclosed a list of magazines, their publishers and addresses that refused advertising space to the NRA for the new ad campaign, "I'm the NRA". As I'm sure you and most readers of THE SIXGUNNER know, the ads feature people from all walks of life, describing what the NRA means to them. Participants in the ad campaign range from former astronaut Wally Schirra to a nine-year-old boy pictured with his BB gun. Each ad presents a different personal view, the view of the subject of the ad, on the future goals and purposes of the NRA.

We need everyone's support in writing letters of disappointment to the publishers of these magazines regarding their misguided decision not to do business with the 2.2 million members of the NRA. After all, we the members, are the NRA. I would appreciate your publishing this list in the next issue of THE SIXGUNNER. . . . Robert Nunnally, Lizella, GA

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

National Geographic Society
Attn: George E. Moffat
Advertising Director
1251 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

THE NEW YORKER

The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
Attn: Robert F. Young
Advertising Director
25 W. 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036

SUNSET

Lane Publishing Company
Attn: Bill Lane, Jr.
Chairman of Board & Publisher
Menlo Park, CA 94025

CALIFORNIA

New West Communications Corp.
Attn: John Marin, Publisher
P. O. Box 69990
Los Angeles, CA 90069

TEXAS MONTHLY

Mediatex Communications Corp.
Attn: Michael R. Levi, Publisher
P. O. Box 1569
Austin, TX 78767

SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco Magazine, Inc.
Attn: Roger O. Walther, Publisher
973 Market Street
San Francisco, CA 94013

In the April issue of THE SIXGUNNER, there were some questions about .30 caliber cast bullets for the T/C. I have a Hoch mold that has a 145 grain bullet. Unfortunately, I haven't had the time to work with it much. Once I do my part, it promises to be a consistent M.O.A.

shooter in my 14" .30 H. It is a T/C barrel with an S.S.K. bolt spring and recrown.

All of Hoch's molds are nose pour, and cut to order. When you order a mold from him, you have to specify groove diameter, desired weight, if it is going to be sized, or shot as cast, brand of gas check to be used, if any, and anything else you can think of. Each mold is a one of a kind, and has its own Serial Number. Last time I checked, he charged \$40.00 for a mold up to .50 caliber.

R. Hoch, 62778 Spring Creek Road
Montrose, CO 81401

Old West also makes a good looking mold made from brass.

Old West Bullet, 180 Thompson Road
Grand Junction, CO 81503

I surely hated to miss out on that antelope hunt. I had my wife talked into it within a week after J. D. returned from the first hunt. I had my money ready, just waiting for the word to send it in. Since then, I managed to get transferred up into the mountains, between Lake Tahoe and Sacramento. To make a long story short, I didn't get the word until it was a couple of weeks too late. I surely hope you'll put together another "western" (eastern to me) hunt.

Back of my move . . . there is still a lot of wilderness here, and I'm looking for a light-weight, big bore to pack, just in case I cross any skunks, coyotes, wild dogs, snakes, or two legged varmints. I've tentatively decided on a Star P. D. Do you know of any other pistol that might be better, or of any problems anyone has had with the Star P. D.?

If there are any other members up here on the Georgetown Divide, I surely would like to hear from them. . . . Dale Crosno, Georgetown, CA

How about offering HHI members a holster like the one offered by IHMSA a few years back. They had Baker holsters make up some of their shoulder holsters with their logo and put the member's number of the holster. They were offered to members at a savings of 25% off retail.

Would it be possible to have more than one HHI hunt a year? Some of us cannot always get away when they are held. I could get you some information on Wild Hill Preserve in Ely, Vermont. This might attract some of the members in the Northeast that couldn't make it to Ohio or Tennessee. If you liked the idea, I would be willing to set it with up Bill Richter. I was supposed to go sheep hunting at Wild Hill this week but was unable to because of four feet of snow still in the preserve (2,000 acres) and some damage to one of the lodges because of the unusually high snowfall this year. Last year, I bagged a 235 pound boar with my S & W M-29 and my buddy bagged a 250 pounder with his 10 1/2" Ruger Super Blackhawk. Bill and Marlene Richter are fine people.

Will you be offering any more handguns customized by Mag-Na-Port? I was a little too late to get my number (045). I'm saving up now in the event that you do so in the near future.

Do you send out a new membership card with renewals?

Please keep up the great work with HHI . . . Joe Picariello, Waltham, MA

Joe:

Thanks for your letter of April 23rd.

One answer to a time:

It's simply too expensive to get into the holster business when you consider the variety of models, etc. IHMSA hasn't repeated their offer — if they would have made money, they would have.

We have been having at least two HHI hunts a year and as many as four. I doubt if I would try to hold a hunt anywhere where members would have to cross New York or Massachusetts. You cannot legally cross New York with a handgun unless you are a resident, and Massachusetts is a problem for non-residents.

Hard telling what will come along as custom guns or offers — some sell and some don't. Still have HHI guns available.

Membership renewals do not get a new membership card.

Good Shootin'!

. . . . JDJ

HANDGUN HUNTERS INTERNATIONAL

P. O. Box .357 MAG
Bloomington, OH 43910
Annual membership is \$15.00

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Check _____

M.O. _____

Cash _____