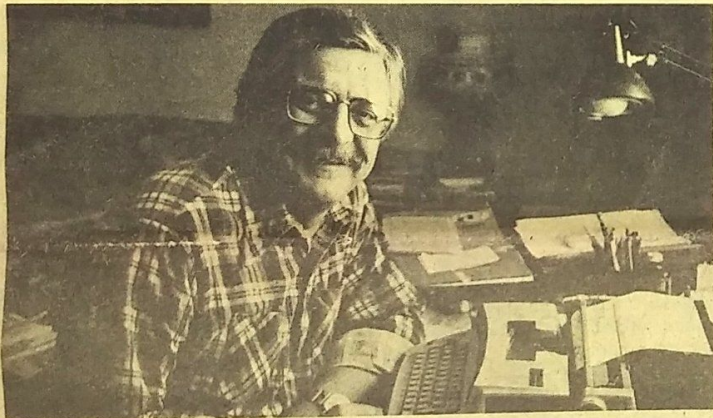




THE SIXGUNNER



MY CORNER

By J. D. Jones

"My Corner" is going to be a shorty this time in order to get the paper out ASAP.

Just got back from three weeks in Alaska. Interesting, enjoyable trip. Learned enough to go back. Only had one week of hunting for various reasons. Killed one caribou — about 125-150 yards running shot. Some good fortune and some misfortune. Chalk it all up to the Alaskan Experience. In any event, three weeks of fooling around up there barely scratches the surface of where and how to hunt. Nothing comes easy in Alaska and don't expect an easy hunt anywhere in Alaska for anything. I'd say that 85% of the stories that make it look so easy are almost pure B.S. Simply walking through some of the alders and swamps is a full time job without hunting. Add the fact that it's necessary to hump your gear and it's sometimes backbreaking labor. Going out with an outfitter is fantastically expensive. The great majority of hunters seem to be Europeans — due in part to the current highly favorable rate of currency exchange.

You can hunt Alaska without selling your house to do it if you are willing to work and have at least two or three weeks to devote to one or two animals. We'll have more about how to achieve

this in future issues along with a few names of air guides or air taxi people who will do a fine job for you.

HHI Charter Member Larry Kelly of Mag-na-port has had the most successful hunting seasons of anyone I've ever heard about. Call it two elephants and close to 30 head of other big African and Alaskan game with handguns this year. He used, almost exclusively, a .375 JDJ T/C. Next issue will start the stories and photos even though most of his film was x-rayed into garbage.

Jerry Kraft successfully collected a Dall sheep and a 68.5" moose with a 12.5" T/C .44 Mag. If this moose isn't the largest in the Boone & Crockett books taken with a handgun, I'll be very disappointed. Jerry is going to have a super story on this moose and its ability to soak up .44s.

Doesn't seem to be much new coming along in the way of information on new products in the last couple of months. Have a CZ-75 in my possession for testing. The SSK bullet molds for 265 and 315 gr. .44, 225, 275, 300 gr. .41, 145, 180 and 200 gr. .357 are available and working very well. The 315 grain .44 gives .45-70 factory load power in a Super Blackhawk. 1350 F.P.S. isn't hard to get at all. Accuracy is exceptional and penetration is greater than with any

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GRIZZLY WITH A POPGUN!

By Bill Shehane
No. 951

As I slowly stalked along an old trail leading across a burned area, I made sure that each step was on soft, quiet grass. My attention quickly changed to the direction of the wind which I thought had changed. I held the Ruger up in front of my face. The fine piece of thread which I had attached to the trigger guard assured me that I still had the wind in my favor. Ever so slowly, I peered over the next rise and there he was less than 75 yards away standing in the edge of the timber. This was the moment I had staked my hunt on and now it was time to stake my life on it.

The object of my attention and concern was *Ursus arctos horribilis*, the Indians called him the Horrible Bear, but you and I know him as the Grizzly Bear. This hunt started out in my mind

about three years ago. Here's a little background on me before I get into the hunt. Unfortunately, I started shooting handguns late in my life, 1973 to be exact. I had hunted deer, boar and groundhogs with a rifle and bow and arrow for a few years, so naturally when I purchased my first handgun (ironically a Ruger Blackhawk 357 mag.) I wanted to try my luck at handgun hunting. My fascination with handguns was accelerated by one of the clubs I belong to here in Charlotte, N.C., Long Creek Rifle & Pistol Club. We have been shooting metal silhouettes since early 1973, so when Elgin Gates and the IHMSA came along several years later we jumped right in with them and it's been going like

Continued On Page 2

other bullet. I put one through a moose head and a foot of gravelly dirt behind it. Takes rams over about like a .308 with factory 180s.

The first HHI hunt at Shawnee Ridge occurs October 4. We'll cover it next issue.

The HHI Sixgun is a reality — the first 25 are in the works now. Super Blackhawk — 6" tube, HHI Logo, numbered, special crown on the muzzle for both accuracy and appearance. Action job, white outline rear and red insert front sights, Mag-na-port, Metalife SS finish, plus a few other goodies. Modified by Mag-na-port and sure to be a very desirable collector's item. Goes for \$550.00. Max of 200 to be made. Call (614) 264-0176 for order info. Hope to have photos and full particulars next issue.

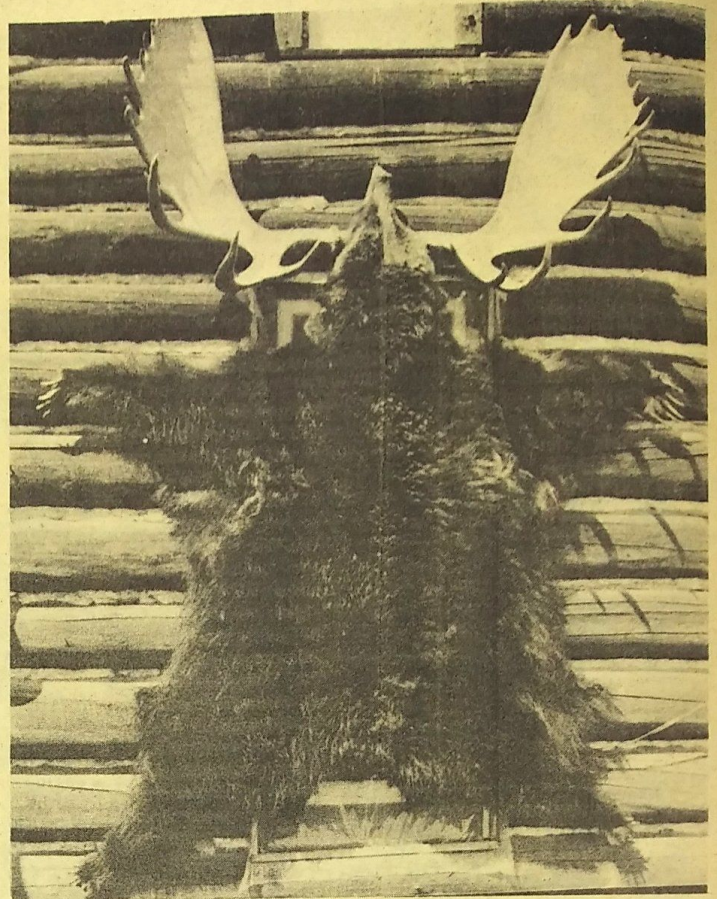
ARTICLES . . . YOU CAN WRITE! Guns, handloading, hunting, hunting tips. We need your stories for publication. Don't be shy . . . Write it up and send it in!

Several letters were received relating to NRA's failure to either act or even answer member's letters. Apparently a letter from the NRA is forthcoming for publication regarding last issue's comments. I'm certainly not anti-NRA, just the opposite, but if the jobs aren't getting done, I'm sure some

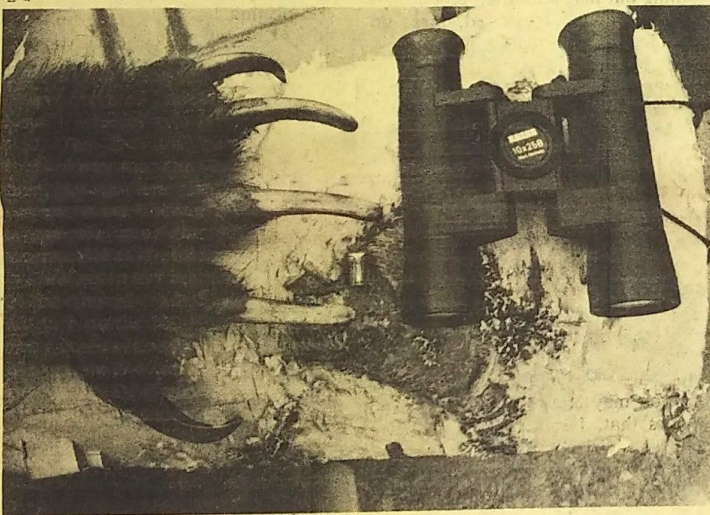
responsible individuals at NRA want to know about it.

SOAP BOX TIME: VOTE! Local, state and national elections are all important. Our own unwillingness to take the trouble to vote is an important weapon of the anti's. At this point, it strikes me that Carter, if elected, may try to push his stated anti-gun feelings into law. As a second term president, he has nothing to be concerned about. As a first term president, he doesn't strike me as having been much concerned about keeping his campaign promises, keeping our allies on excellent terms with us, inflation or a host of other things mighty important to you and me. Anderson, for whatever he stands, is the most anti-gun of the three and is strictly a loser. A vote for him is no better than not voting at all. Reagan . . . well, he is pro gun, pro America. I think he is our only hope of the three candidates for a strong, secure future.

Now that a shooting war is going on between Iraq and Iran, the hostages are probably in more danger than ever. Iran's logic of leadership borders on lunacy. This entire mideast situation is much more severe than generally indicated by the media and our government's outward reaction . . . and no one knows **who**, or even if there are any good guys out there.



That will be a fine rug.



158 grain bullet and 10X binoculars give a good indication of size of the paw.

Grizzly Continued From Page 1 gangbusters ever since.

My years of shooting silhouettes really paid dividends when I first started hunting with my handguns. I started hunting groundhogs and rabbits and my enjoyment of hunting really took on NEW excitement. Not excitement of blowing up a rabbit or a groundhog with a 357 mag., but the excitement of you and the animal on a one-on-one close confrontation and not shooting from one ridge to the next. Don't get me wrong, no one (except my son, Billy) likes to shoot groundhogs at long ranges better than I do. But that will never excite me as a long slow stalk for a 10 yard shot at a whistle pig. Being an avid varmint hunter and now a hooked handgun hunter, I wanted to collect one species of each of our local varmints and mount them life size for my trophy room. My varmint collection now contains a beautiful spotted bobcat-38 special, fox-357 mag., groundhog-.22 rimfire, magpie-22 rimfire and crow-44 mag. How's that for overkill on the crow?! Also took a big polecat (that's a skunk for you city slickers) but didn't have the stomach to

take it to my taxidermist, not to mention what my wife said she would do if I brought it in the house. Well that's enough babbling about my adventures with my new found sport, let's get back to the hunt.

The Grizzly Bear to me had always been the number one big game animal in the world. I had never been out of the continental U.S.A. hunting so my chances of ever seeing a Grizzly Bear had been very slim. On Elk hunts in Montana and Wyoming, I had seen country that I'm sure contained Grizzly, but I had never seen one or even a track. I decided early in 1978 that I wanted to hunt Grizzly Bear with a handgun. You're right, that's what everybody else said too. Why in the world hunt Grizzly Bear with a handgun? I had seen pictures of Bob Peterson and the Polar Bear he had taken with a 44 S & W and had heard of others who had taken Grizzlies with handguns, so I knew it could be done. I knew Elgin Gates, President of IHMSA had hunted all over the world and he too was into handguns so I called him one night to see if he could give me some leads on guides and out-

fitters. After taking down a few names he knew and again discussing why I wanted to hunt Grizzly with a handgun, he wished me luck and we signed off. I contacted the names he had given me, but none of the guides would say matter-of-factly that they would take me on a hunt with a handgun. I then contacted a friend of mine, Tom Smith, who is a local taxidermist and booking agent for several guides. After explaining what I wanted to do, he didn't ask why or what he just said he would see what he could do. A few weeks later, Tom called. He had just returned from the Safari Club International Convention in Las Vegas and said he had me a bear hunt if I wanted it. I really didn't believe Tom explained to the guide how I wanted to take the Grizzly because after talking to him a couple of times he seemed a little surprised when the conversation drifted to handguns. After checking the guide out with several of his hunters and also Jack Atcheson, Jr. I sent him a deposit to hunt the last two weeks in May, 1980 and really got down to some serious shooting and preparation. That's when my problems started.

My first problem was when I found out non-Canadians could not possess a handgun in Canada. I thought about shipping and selling my Super Blackhawk to a dealer in Canada for my guide and then using it. That fell through like a lead balloon. I was really getting uptight, so I called my guide to talk about my problem. I asked if he had a handgun. "Oh yeah, a Super Blackhawk Ruger," he said. Boy did I feel a little better then. I really didn't cherish the thought of hunting with someone else's handgun, but what else was I to do?

About 30 days before I was to leave problem number two came up. A serious problem I had had with my left foot and leg three years before had

recurred and my foot was swollen twice normal size and I could only walk with crutches. Straight to the doctor I went and we started with massive doses of antibiotic. In about 10 days the swelling started down and I could walk again without the crutches, but it was extremely painful. The week before I was to leave, the doctor gave me some pain pills and assured me this infection was staph and not the same infection of three years ago. With something for pain and 50 antibiotics. I thought I was ready to go. 10 o'clock on the night before I was to leave, I was so excited I had to call one more time to see how the Bear season was going.

The season started the first of May so they had been hunting for almost two weeks. The guide, of course, was hunting and my only contact was his wife. She told me they had taken one small Grizzly the first day and that was it! I planned to have two days in camp before my hunt started and so that I could get used to his gun and make sure it was sighted in for me. To make sure I would take enough bullets to sight in and practice, I asked his wife if she would tell me what bullet weight he was using. When she came back to the phone, she said 158 grain. I said, "Not for his 357 mag., the ones for his 44 mag." "This is the only handgun he has," she said. I could not believe what I was hearing over the phone. I felt numb all over. Here I was packed and ready to go, with 100 rounds of 240 grain leads that I would have one heck of a time getting into his so called Super Blackhawk. I told his wife goodbye and immediately went to my reloading bench to see what I had. Fortunately, my wife shoots a 357 mag. in silhouette matches and Billy, my son, had just primed 50 cases she intended to shoot at our next match when I returned from my trip. Looking

Continued On Page 3

through my bullets, I found over half a box of 160 Speer (Keith style) jacketed soft point 357's. The bullet really looked good for penetration until I put it beside one of the 240's I intended to use. The numbness returned. I loaded 16.5 grains of 296 and Billy seated the bullets for me. I was again packed and ready to go. My son didn't question why we were loading 357's and I certainly didn't volunteer anything about it to him.

After many hours of flying and changing planes the next day, the guide's son picked me up at the airport and we made the 300 mile drive from the airport into the beautiful Canadian Rockies. That night in camp, I met the guide and the hunters who were finishing their hunt. One had the small Grizzly I mentioned earlier and the other had struck out. I never mentioned a word about the Super Blackhawk, but asked the guide could I take it back to the bunk with me to get a little familiar with it. He said it would be O.K. I knew what that meant. He wanted to know if I could hit a bull in the butt or was I just crazy.

Early the next morning after sighting the gun in on a rock at about 50 paces, the guide suggested that we go ahead and get started hunting because this spring the green up had come early and the Grizzlies were in the timber and had been very hard to locate the last two weeks. That suited me fine and off we went after a Grizzly Bear with a popgun. The afternoon of the first day we located a large track in what looked like a large area that a forest fire had destroyed a few years ago. From the looks of the track, the guide said it was probably a week old, but a large bear. This was the first time I had seen a Grizzly track and from the looks of it, I'm glad it was a week old. I wear a size 10 boot and when I put my foot in it I could see an inch or so on each side and five long claw marks out in front. The numbness returned.

For the next seven days we rode, we walked, we glassed what seemed to be every slide and mountain in an area of 100 square miles. We saw many black bears, but most of them in the 125-150 lb. size and I didn't particularly want to take a bear that small, especially if it meant giving up a day of Grizzly hunting by skinning and capeing out the hide. I was really getting anxious to try my stalking skills, but no grizzly yet.

One evening I spotted a bear that looked the right color, but after putting the spotting scope on him I could not see the large hump that distinguishes the Grizzly. The bear looked to be a large cinnamon colored black and I decided to try to stalk. After about 30 minutes of climbing, I was where I could look around a large rock and probably see the bear. As I looked around the rock, I saw that the bear I thought was so big was only about 150 lbs. and there I was with the pistol and not the camera. At about five yards away the bear saw me and turned and ran straight up the mountain.

At least I had a little excitement and fun after busting my hump for so long after a Grizzly.

The next morning we rode into a long canyon where I thought I had earlier spotted diggings in a shale slide. We climbed the mountain and set up a camp to glass the area for the day. Late that afternoon about 6 o'clock, across the canyon on the next mountain, I spotted what I knew immediately was the largest bear I had seen yet.

Through my binoculars I could see that he was solid black, but hard as I tried I could not put a hump on him. I ran back to where the guide was glassing the other valley and we put the spotting scope on him. Not a Grizzly, but a very large black. I knew he was a taker and because we could skin him out in camp that night, I decided to try and stalk him. The guide and I went through a few hand signals he would be giving me to direct me to the bear after I got on the other mountain. Down the mountain I went. I looked at my watch as I started down, 6:45 and plenty of daylight left. I went down as fast as I could and as I entered the timber at the bottom I could hear the river roaring up the canyon. How in the world am I going to cross this river? I started up the river and soon found a log jam and two big pines across the roaring white water that looked to be over my head. Boy did I want to forget this whole thing now! Across the pines I went, clawing each log like the bear I was after would do, on all fours. Glad that was over, I started my climb up through the timber and up the other mountain the bear was.

After climbing about 30 minutes, I finally broke out of the timber onto the slope. Ringing wet with sweat, I sat down on a rock to see if I could see my guide on the other mountain for directions to the bear. Finally I found him, but he could not find me. I was in complete camouflage clothing and he was having a hard time seeing me. I started moving around the mountain in the direction I thought would put me above the bear. Ever so often I would look back at the guide to see if he had spotted me yet. Finally, I saw him waving his arms and I sat down to take my directions. From the directions he gave, it looked like all I had to do was move straight down the mountain to see the bear. As I started down, I could see why the bear was so intent on staying out on that slope that long. The grass was long and green and plenty of it. I moved to a large rock in front of me and as I looked over it, there he was down the mountain a little more than 50 yards.

Even at 50 yards, he looked big. His belly almost touching the ground as he moved along slow and easy. The wind was blowing from the bear to my left so I knew he could not smell me. I started down the mountain as the bear faced away from me feeding. I soon got to where I thought I could be directly over him. As I peered over the rise; 20 yards to my left was my bear! I sat with my knees up and my Blackhawk between my knees to rest and savor this moment before I took the shot. I placed the bullet behind and below the left ear where his neck meets his shoulder and squeezed the trigger. As the bullet hit the bear, he immediately went down and fell out of my sight. I sat for a minute and watched my guide start down the other side of the mountain before I started down after the bear. As I reached the spot where I hit the bear, there was a foot or more circle of blood, tissue and black hair on the rocks and below was a vertical drop down the mountain to the timber and the river I had crossed.

I could see every few yards or so where the big bear had bounced off the rocks leaving blood and hair. I thought how the hide might be scraped up.

Not realizing how late it was getting and not knowing any better, when I got to the timber I started in, expecting to find my bear up against a tree in the timber. I could hardly see. I looked at

my watch and it was 8:30. Even though I could see on the slope I could not see at all in the timber. I called out for my guide as I knew he should be across the river by now. He answered and was directly below me and coming up the mountain to me. Not really thinking clearly, I again started toward my guide below me in the timber. As we met, he told me to follow him up the mountain out of the timber.

I showed him where the bear hit the ground the last time before rolling into the timber. He saw the blood and marked the spot and said let's get to our horses before it's too dark and ride back to camp. "No way was I going to leave that bear," I said! "Would you like to go in there with a popgun and get a bloody stinking bear out at night?" he asked. "Any Grizzly in the canyon could smell that bear and come in and get it," he continued as I felt the numbness again.

As we got back to camp that night and relayed the ordeal to the outfitter, he suggested we go back in early the next morning with the guide's black Lab and let the dog find the bear.

Needless to say, I didn't sleep much that night and was up and ready to go long before the guide was. As we rode back into the canyon, I was looking up and down the river for Ravens. I knew they would find the bear first. No Ravens in sight. Duke, the Lab, sniffed and searched everywhere but found nothing but hair and dried blood.

Discussed and frustrated, I sat on the side of the mountain and ate my lunch, thinking about the last eight days and trying to blame everyone for my bad luck. I was thinking about how much money I had paid the outfitter and how hard it was to save for the hunt. Also, I thought how tired and sore I was after climbing those mountains!

As all this went through my mind, I also thought about what I had said earlier to a younger Grizzly hunter in camp with me. He too was disgusted and blaming all his bad luck on everyone else. I told him that just about the time you are ready to give up, you may have your chance. And besides that, I said to him, whoever told you Grizzly Bear hunting was easy? Yeah, that's what I had said all right and here I was feeling the same way.

Half mad and half disgusted, I started back up to where we had the horses tied. I got on my horse and led the guides horse back down to where he was.

He was taking a nap after he ate his lunch as was customary each day at 12:00. I woke him up and told him I wanted to get out of this canyon. I wanted to go back up higher, close to the snow in that old burn where we saw the big tracks the first day. I was sick and tired of that canyon and what had happened there yesterday.

We rode out and by 5:00 that afternoon, we were setting up to glass the burn from about one-half mile away. After maybe 30 minutes of glassing, we rode on into the edge of the burn and my guide set up to glass another slope behind us. All of the mountain tops around us were still covered with snow, but not near as much as when we were there the first day and saw the track.

I told my guide that while he was glassing behind us, I would slowly move through the burn and when he saw me top out for him to come on through and pick me up. If he didn't see me top out in an hour or he saw a bear we could stalk, he was to come in

then and get me. We had about two hours of light left so I felt we would probably see at least some black bears.

As I slowly stalked the trail where this story began, the first thing I noticed about this bear was the large hump between his shoulders. At this range of less than 75 yards, I knew I could hit the bear and probably place the bullet where I wanted to. Then I realized what I was hunting with: a popgun the guide had said.

So on my hands and knees as so many times before on groundhogs I had stalked, I moved closer as he fed.

Boy, is he beautiful I thought! I believe the beauty of the bear and the excitement of the moment kept my mind off of the danger I was now in. At about 30 yards as the bear turned facing me I froze trying my best to disappear behind small new growth not over 12 inches high. He then gave me what I was waiting for, a 30 yard broadside shot.

On my knees now and almost ready to fire, I had to pull down. He took one step and was now almost completely out of sight over a small hill. I could smell him. Boy was I glad he couldn't smell me!

I could hear him, grunting with each step like an old fat man after a big meal. As he was now completely out of sight, I got off my knees and covered the 30 yards slowly to where he went over the hill.

Expecting him to be on down the ridge, I peeked over the hill.

He wasn't down the ridge, he was just over the rise in a small pocket not over 10 yards away. I could see the matted mud on his long hair at the base of his short tail. Long dark hair like steel wool, I thought. How beautiful! Back on my knees again with the hammer back and a center hold half way back of his rib cage as he was quartering away, I fired.

Many times shooting rabbits and groundhogs, a 357 mag. had left my ears ringing, but now I could not believe how the blast was so quiet. The bear quickly turned facing me and as I quickly moved to his left and down the hill, he turned to his wound in his side and growling and snapping his jaws he bit at the wound.

The roaring will be a sound I'll never forget. Saliva was pouring over his teeth as he continued to bite his side. As his rage continued, I fired two more quick shots just under his neck. At that time, he rolled over on his back and died.

Never once did I take the muzzle off of the bear after I fired the first shot and now I realized I was only five steps away.

I felt the numbness again and as I held the Blackhawk on the great bear's head both my hand and arms were shaking uncontrollably. I spent the next few minutes just sitting and looking at the bear, not even thinking of what could have happened, but what had happened.

With about 15 minutes of light left, my guide finally found me and the bear. We quickly made some pictures and both sat in quiet, admiring the horrible bear. It was almost 11:00 when we got into camp that night and after we ate and congratulated each other, I put my tired and sore body to bed.

Little did I know that I would not sleep a wink, but go over and over the events that I had encountered that day. Twice I got out of my sleeping bag and went out and looked at the bear.

Grizzly *Continued From Page 3*

We spent most of the next day skinning the bear out and taking pictures. The hide could not have been in better shape, not a rub anywhere. The bear was deep brown and tipped in silver and squared seven feet. What a trophy! A closer examination of the bear showed that my first shot which entered his left side five ribs back penetrated 36" of bear and we recovered the Speer bullet just under the hide on the right side of his neck. The other two shots completely penetrated and exited the bear just below the center of the chest. Both heart and lungs were destroyed with the first shot.

When the Canadian game officials checked my bear, his age was estimated to be 30 plus years old and his skull scored 19 15/16 Boone & Crockett points. This was indeed the most exhilarating adventure of my life.

GEORGIA WHITETAIL

By Allan Crawford
No. 411

The past deer season in North Central Georgia was a bit disappointing to many hunters as well as the State Fish and Game officials. So much so, that the limit for the '80-'81 season has been stretched to allow three animals.

I was fortunate enough to score a kill opening morning with a relic long gun I own, a model 81 Remington Woodsmaster in .300 Savage caliber. This thing is heavy as lead but in my opinion is a fine semi-auto piece for rapid controlled fire. With meat in the freezer, I wanted any other kill to be with one of my handguns.

About two weeks following my first kill, the weather bureau promised some frost and cold weather which we were in dire need of for decent game movement. Not much moves in hot Georgia weather. I left all the shoulder guns at home and embarked with my Super Blackhawk .44 mag and T/C Super 14 .41 mag as sole tools for collecting my second deer.

As usual, the weather people had their heads somewhere dark and uncomfortable when they made their predictions for good hunting weather. Not a hint of frost and wind showed to help diminish the leaf cover. But, what the hell; I was packed and not going to be deterred by a little sweat running off my nose and down my back.

I am the only handgun hunter in the club I belong to and was the object of some rather crude remarks as I headed for my stand the next morning. Just because I had a 7 1/2" barrel wheelgun on my hip and an apparition that resembled an unmounted howitzer tucked under my arm was, to me anyway, no reason to liken me to Pancho Villa or any of his friends.

I was in my tree stand by sunrise and at first light began picking avenues to sight and shoot through the thick leaf cover. At 10:00 I was considering return to camp, as the 70° plus weather was hardly conducive to much game movement. Brunch and a snooze before the evening hunt appealed to my more readily satisfied desires when those pleasant thoughts were interrupted by a clattering of rocks in the draw that cut across about sixty yards to the west of my position. "No animal could possibly be that noisy," was my initial thought. The four legs and chest of a deer came into view at the head of the draw. I was really surprised.

I chose the T/C for a try at the deer

as my recent paper pounding trip had been very gratifying. The deer continued to amble along with its head obscured, denying any chance to determine its sex. However, it was an either sex day so that situation was not really a factor. I braced the T/C alongside the tree and drew a bead on the shoulder/neck juncture of the deer. This would allow, due to the quartering angle of its approach, lung/heart damage and bone impact on the offside shoulder. The only leaves that came off the trees that morning fell around me when the hammer came down on the W/W 210 gr. factory load in the T/Cs chamber. The deer hit the ground like a giant hand reached up and yanked it down. I saw no movement at all so I proceeded to climb down and see what I had gotten. On the way to the deer I drew the old .44 to make sure the beast didn't jump and run. This proved to be unnecessary as the good sized doe I had dropped was very, very dead. It field dressed 147 pounds.

I suppose associating with J.D. Jones for years (I never heard of this guy Crawford in my life! JDJ) made me inspect entry/exit points before anything else was done. The slug had hit some four to five inches higher than I had expected, but the resulting tissue and bone damage was excellent, in fact the higher hit might have been more effective to lungs and heart.

This kill was the only one in the club made by handgun and it is my intention to hunt solely with them next season. Three with a handgun would be great, especially for me, huh, J.D.? Maybe the "not older but better" cliché applies to my marksmanship, rather than my looks or character.

(Seems like Allan and I might have raced against each other in the '50s and didn't know it. Bumped into each other in the mid '60s fooling around with boats. He rode as my observer in a boat race once — swore he'd never get in another one with me as long as he lived and has kept his word to date. I showed him how to hurt himself on motorcycles in the mountains and tried to kill him by taking him hog hunting in the Smokies three months after he had had a heart attack in retaliation. Figured if I could kill him off on a hill I'd stand a better chance with his wife. He didn't co-operate; haven't seen him in six years — age has got to improve his looks — couldn't get any worse — same for his shootin'! But it's sure good to hear from old friends. JDJ)

RENEWALS

Charter No. 473 through No. 596 must renew now. This is your only notification. Please renew your membership today! !

HUNTING TIP

Carry a disposable butane lighter on your hunt. It not only has the obvious uses, but also makes a great sight blackener with the flame turned up high.

The SIXGUNNER is published bi-monthly by J. D. Jones, Director of Handgun Hunters International and circulated to members of the organization. Rates are \$12.50 per year. Second Class Postage paid at Bloomingdale, Ohio. For change of address, mail new address, old address and membership number to: HHI — P. O. Box 357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910.

SILHOUETTES OF THE REAL THING

By Philip C. Briggs



The anemic auto round, adapter and 256 Mag control load. T/C with Schiermier fore-end in the background.

Now, if I Only Had . . .

All of us at one time or another have looked through our battery and wished for something different. Maybe a less powerful pistol to use in training spouse or kid, or a surrogate pistol that duplicated your main gun, but chambered for something cheaper to shoot. Or maybe a little of both so you could tune up for that fall deer hunt with your unlimited on rabbits.

What stopped you from dashing out and buying an alternative pistol then was cost. Colt Ace's are neat, but not cheap. Convertible revolvers are the answer — but not if you've already bought the magnum version. Extra barrels for your Merrill or T/C cost less than a new pistol — but still aren't cheap. And nobody makes a .30 carbine version of your .308 unlimited gun.

But there is an inexpensive alternative — your existing pistol. And an adapter cartridge or conversion unit. The idea's not new of course, but variety hasn't been large.

Not until Harry Owen of Sport Specialties got into the act anyhow. Harry makes a stupefyingly large selection of both adapters and conversion units. Adapters look like the parent cartridge, with a chamber inside for a smaller cartridge, which is generally of the same caliber. Conversions are what shotgunner's call tubes, short pieces of a smaller caliber barrel shaped to fit the parent chamber and slip down the barrel ways.

Although Harry has a large assortment of adapters and conversion units, he's concentrated on but a few sub-caliber cartridges, namely the 22 LR, 22 WMR, 22 Hornet, 32 ACP, and 30 M1. There are a couple that use the 25 ACP, and a few shotgun units that use bigger rifle and pistol cartridges.

The 22 rimfires come in two versions, so that they can be used in centerfire guns, or in the convertible T/C. The former uses a rimfire-centerfire conversion device that's loaded in behind the cartridge before firing. The other versions just rely on the T/C's conversion to fire the little round — and thus are easier to use.

Most of the conversion units are intended for pistols, and most of those are designed to fire a rimfire in the

T/C. At \$35, the unit is an attractively priced alternative to a new barrel.

The adapters will of course fit any rifle or pistol chamber, and are economical at \$15 with a nickel back.

With the wide selection of rimfire and centerfire versions most anybody should be able to find a sub-caliber conversion for something in their battery, and have their Colt and shoot it too.

J.D. sent along a couple of Harry's adapters for me to try, one in 25 ACP/256 mag, the other 32 ACP/30-30. Just so happened I had two 256's, and a 30-30 on hand, so I acquired some ammo from Frontier and Federal, and took the whole works to the range.

I ended up that day on Black Canyon Range's public shooting range with dads, moms, kids and friends on both sides as far as you could see. Everything from 22's to black powder cannons going off. Oh well.

During a break in firing I set up my target frame at 25 yards, and the skyscreens for the Oehler M33 chrono at 10 feet. After getting organized, sandbagged, switched on and loaded I lined up the sights of the octagon barreled 256 mag T/C on the target and touched off a 25 ACP. No report, no recoil. Damn I thought, all this hassle and it won't work. Glancing down at the M 33 I'm surprised to see it staring back with 943. It did go off! Talk about minimal recoil! The rest of the test string was the same, hard to tell against the background noise that it had gone off. The 32 ACP in a specially built 30-30 Remington rolling block unlimited gun felt the same. Tiny cartridges in big pistols are definitely friendly.

But do they shoot? To find out I fired three five-shot groups with the 25 ACP adapter in the 256 T/C and started to do the same in an original Hawkeye. Frontier 50 grain FMJ loads for the little round averaged 948 fps for five shots from the T/C, and 932 fps in old Hawk. Group size averaged 4.8 inches from the T/C, and the bullets tumbled into the target from the Hawkeye. Control groups firing 87 grain Sierra/17.5 gr. RL-7 from the T/C averaged 1.6 inches (and 2133 fps). The T/C doesn't normally shoot real well then, but better than four-five

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A NEW SQUIRREL GUN

By Wayne Randall
No. 320

Having an understanding wife helps when one is into handguns and hunting. This past Christmas my wife presented me with a Smith and Wesson M17 8-3/8" .22. Not having a good .22 handgun for field use, I greatly appreciated the gift.

S&W are great guns as they come from the box, but I found some things that improved this ones performance. First I added a set of Pachmayr rubber grips. These grips give me a solid and consistent feel in all types of weather. The rear sight blade was replaced with a white outline blade. The front sight on the M17 is the target style instead of the quick draw ramp. Not wanting to try and file the sight to the quick draw style I used a different approach. I took a center punch and made a mark near the top of the front blade. Then using a small drill bit, I carefully drilled into the blade a short distance. I then used a small amount of Lee's Red Ramp liquid and filled the hole. When it dried, I filed the excess off. This arrangement shows up very well in dark woods.

Since Minnesota has passed a handgun hunting bill into law this spring, I thought this gun would make a fine small game handgun.

Last Fall I used two of the new "Super" .22's, Remingtons Yellow Jackets and CCI's Stingers. I shot several squirrels with a rifle and both brands of ammunition. The Stringers offered better penetration while the Yellow Jackets expanded better. At rifle velocities these .22's were two hot for squirrels, as they ruined too much meat if the squirrels weren't hit in the head. At handgun velocities I feel these would be perfect ammunition for small game.

I decided to test these two cartridges to see which was the most accurate in my particular gun. Five groups of five shots each were fired with the "Super" .22's.

The Remington Yellow Jackets averaged 2" at 25 yards with a range of 1.5" to 2.25". The Stingers averaged 1.25" at 25 yards with a range of .875 to 1.75". The Stingers proved to be the most accurate by a large margin. With more penetration and less expansion, the Stingers should be perfect for edible small game.

For varmints the Stingers should perform equally as well. The larger varmints should offer more resistance to the bullet and increase expansion. I will find out for sure this Fall when the Fox and Raccoon seasons open. I'll let you know how they workout.

HHI

P. O. Box 357 Mag
Bloomingdale, OH 43910
614-264-0176

MAG-NA-PORT WINNER

Delbert Roberts Charter Member 165 is the winner of a free Mag-na-port job compliments of Larry Kelly who selects his favorite article in each issue of *The Sixgunner*. Keep your stories coming in . . . yours may be the next winner.

PERFORMANCE!

By William A. Kachenko
No. 208

S & W Model 28 with four-inch barrel loaded with 158 HP Hornady/15.0 gr./2400/CCI-550 . . . with this gun and load I hit the deer behind the shoulder at 80 yards. This range is too far for the .357 in my opinion, but not for the .44. Followed up this deer one hour later for about 150 yards at which point blood trail "petered out." I jumped the deer about 100 yards further out. He was laying under a pine tree next to swamp. As he ran into the swamp I could see that he was very weak and stumbling. I never found anymore sign after entering the swamp.

As for the .44, I have shot four deer with it. The first two were with the Speer 240 JSP-Magnum/24.0/H-110/CCI-350 out of my S & W Model 29, with 6 1/2" barrel (Serial No. 153XXX). Can somebody out there tell me what year this handgun was manufactured? The first deer, my first buck (spike) ran about 300 yards before succumbing to the wound. Upon dressing, I found that he was shot through the liver. The bullet completely penetrated him from side to side.

The second deer, a good eating yearling, was hit in the heart at 25 yards and ran 25 yards after shot. Again the bullet exited.

After those two deer, I changed my load to the 200 HP Hornady with 27.0/H-110/CCI-350. Had to exchange the S & W rear sight for the Behlert sight. This sight is a super one for those who don't have enough adjustment in their current sight.

The third deer was a large doe (164 lbs. dressed) shot at 40 yards. Deer fell on impact and could not get back up. Hit her between the top of the shoulder and under the spine. She also required another shot to dispatch her. These bullets also exited side to side.

The last deer was another good eating, yearling. Standing broadside at 50 yards, upon the shot jumped straight up and ran off. As with the first yearling that exhibited the same trait, this one was also heart shot. During dressing I found only the bottom 1/3 of the heart. The deer ran 40 yards after being shot.

I have also shot deer with my companion piece, a Ruger 44 Carbine. Using Sierra 180 JHC, ahead of 27.0/2400/CCI-350. The load out of the rifle blew an entrance hole five inches in diameter in top of the spine as the deer was bedded down when shot. Upon skinning, there were several holes exiting, showing that this bullet blew up.

Hog hunting compared to deer hunting is very different. I have found wild boar to be very tough to kill.

Again using my S & W Model 29 with Speer 225 J.S.W.C.H.P. (Whew!) ahead of 23.5/H-110/CCI-350. After hunting two long days at Telico Junction in Tennessee, I found a suitable boar lying down (range 30 yards). At the first shot and to this day I still don't know whether my shot hit the ground first or what????, but the bullet hit the shoulder and lodged under the skin in the armpit. That was as far as it got! At the shot the boar jumped up and just stood there. The next shot I missed . . . the third shot hit him under the eye and dropped him like a ton of bricks. This bullet penetrated into the rear ham. Neither of these bullets expanded at all. Both were recovered.

The other boar, shot broadside at 15 yards, kept going as I fired double-action my now converted S & W Model 28 to .41 Magnum. I was using Sierra 170 JHC ahead of 25.0/H-110/CCI-350. This bullet is definitely not for big game. I shot him eight times and the bullet acted like a shot-shell load as it blew up into tiny pieces after entering.

I just bought a T/C Contender with 10" bull barrel in 30 & 357 Herrett. This a whole different "ball of bullet lube." Can somebody give a few good loads for boar and deer? As you can see, I am very partial to the .44 Magnum, but it works fairly well for me.

HOW NOT TO TEST A NEW HANDGUN

By Wayne Randall
No. 320

The sun was bright and warm as I arose to begin a day of testing a new .357. A couple of boxes of factory .357's, a couple of boxes of reloads and the 4" Highway Patrolman were quickly packed into my shooting box.

As I was leaving the gun room I tripped over a cat and spilled two boxes of shells. Had serious thoughts of using wife's cat for target. Looking through the refrigerator, I noticed a package of meat. The package was added to my cooler along with a couple cans of beer.

Starting out, I noticed the gas gauge of my 4 wheeler was sitting on empty. Would have to stop for gas before heading to my private shooting range. Had to spend my last ten dollars.

Finally headed towards shooting range. Road in bad shape due to heavy rains. Got Blazer stuck. After a lot of work I got Blazer out. Tore hole in muffler. Cursed out loud. Nobody around to hear anyway.

Arriving at the gravel pit, I found two teenagers already there. Declined offer to join them. Decide to have beer and relax. Beer warm. Should have bought ice when I got gas.

Teenagers finally leave in a cloud of dust. Flying gravel breaks a taillight. So far day is real bitch! See gopher standing on edge of gravel pit. Seems as if would improve day if gopher was decapitated. Hit rock two feet in front of gopher. Ricochet hits truck tire. Gopher gone and tire flat. Day not improving.

By the time tire is changed, I am hungry. Pile up wood for fire. Forgot matches. Search truck and find half a book. Lucky wife smokes. Get fire going and open meat package. T-bone steaks. Probably in trouble at home. Steak tastes good cut in strips and roasted over fire. Drink second warm beer with strips of T-bone.

Time to put up targets. Forgot tacks. Doesn't matter. Someone broke frame apart for firewood. Get targets to stay on tree with branch. Gun shoots fine once sighted in. Wish gopher would return. On second thought am out of tires. Shoot up half my ammo. Saved the rest for another day. Time to head home.

Arrive home and unpack gear. Feed dogs and wife's cat. Wife is upset. Informs me I can make my own damn supper. T-bones were for afternoon barbeque. Long day. Time for bed. Head for bedroom and trip over wife's other cat. Next time take cats along on trip. Maybe they can catch gopher.

INGRAM .30-30

By Ronald R. Gibbens
No. 789

When I started shooting Metallic Silhouette I found out just how flat shooting my T/C .357 Mag isn't, even when stuffed with 17 grains of H-110 behind a cast 158 gr. SWC. A nearby silhouette range was operated by a "try em before you buy 'em" sporting goods store about ten miles outside Grand Forks, ND. After I finished shooting the .357 Mag I'd go into the store and drool over a .30-30 Ingram barrel behind the counter.

Due to a flat wallet, I stuck to the .357 for awhile. It was cheaper to shoot than factory .30 caliber jacketed bullets but soon I figured it was lacking in power and wearing out screwdrivers adjusting sights during matches. That 15" .30-30 Ingram barrel looked good to me. Let's see — a long slim .30 cal bullet has got to be ballistically better than the .357 cal. bolts I've been shooting. Gordy, behind the counter says, "Try it before you buy it." He digs out five .30-30 factory rounds and sends me outside. I lay down and attempt to hit a chicken gong. The accuracy of the barrel really suffers because the action pops open when I pull the trigger. Even the Williams sights don't seem to help. Since my other T/C barrels lock up tight, this automatic opening seemed handy, but I couldn't seem to hit anything. Four out of the five rounds made the barrel pop open. (Ed: Don't shoot any gun that opens on any shot until it's corrected.)

When we looked at the locking bolt, it looked like it was made like the old T/C bolts; one piece shaped funny. After talking to a .30 x .223 Ingram barrel owner, I found out that T/C bolts would fit if a new hole was drilled for the retaining pin and the split bolts were shaved about two-thousandths to fit in the Ingram lug. (Ed: Do not stone or file bolts!) I made a deal with Gordy and took the barrel home. When I made all the changes I found that the gun would lock up when unloaded but not when an empty or loaded case was in place, even when using new unfired cases. Further investigation showed the welds holding the lug to the barrel had a crack and the rim of the case would not fit flush with the face of the barrel. Well, after working on this thing for three or four hours it was now midnight. Tomorrow I'll call Dave Ingram, since I found his address in some gun magazine. Correcting headspace should be a piece of cake. Next day I called information in Arizona — no Dave Ingram and the operator gave me the number for the Chamber of Commerce in Flagstaff. I called them and the lady says I'm not the first to call looking for Dave Ingram. She referred to her files and gave me the number of the United States Postal Investigation Dept. while mumbling something about reports at the Better Business Bureau.

I called the Postal Inspectors and was told the man handling the Ingram case would call me the next day. I then called Gordy (whom I'd bought the barrel from) and he said he'd trade back and we made a deal on a T/C .30-30 barrel. (Ed: Damn good move.)

While I waited to find out more about these Ingram barrels, I found out that the fella with the .30 x .223 had his fore-end dovetail shoot loose and fore-end fall off.

Today I received a call from the

Continued On Page 7

Arizona State Postal Inspector. He stated that the state has decided not to prosecute Ingram, even though he has a reputation for not refunding money and not filling mail orders off and on for the past three years. So, no matter how nice his barrel may look to you, plan on taking care of any problems that may occur on your own! The Inspector couldn't even tell me how to reach Ingram today, even after years of investigations.

I plan on using a T/C 10" .357 Herrett for deer hunting this fall — the guys I hunt with haven't quit laughing since I told them (in July). Maybe I'll write later on how it goes.

JUNKPILE CHUCK

By Tom Frick, No. 23

Much of the rich farmland of North-western Ohio was once a damp area known as the Black Swamp. Many years ago the area was crisscrossed with a regular system of drainage ditches, some which are quite wide and deep. These large ditches or "cut-offs" have a lot of gullies eroded into them. The farmers have used these gullies as trash bins for several generations.

The result is rather effective control of the erosion and a well protected home for various forms of wildlife.

A handgun hunter's prime quarry for about six months of the year in the Midwest is the Woodchuck (*Marmota Morax*). Its various names are related to its habitat: woodchuck in woodlots, groundhogs in ditchbanks and hill-sides, and whistle pig along railroads.

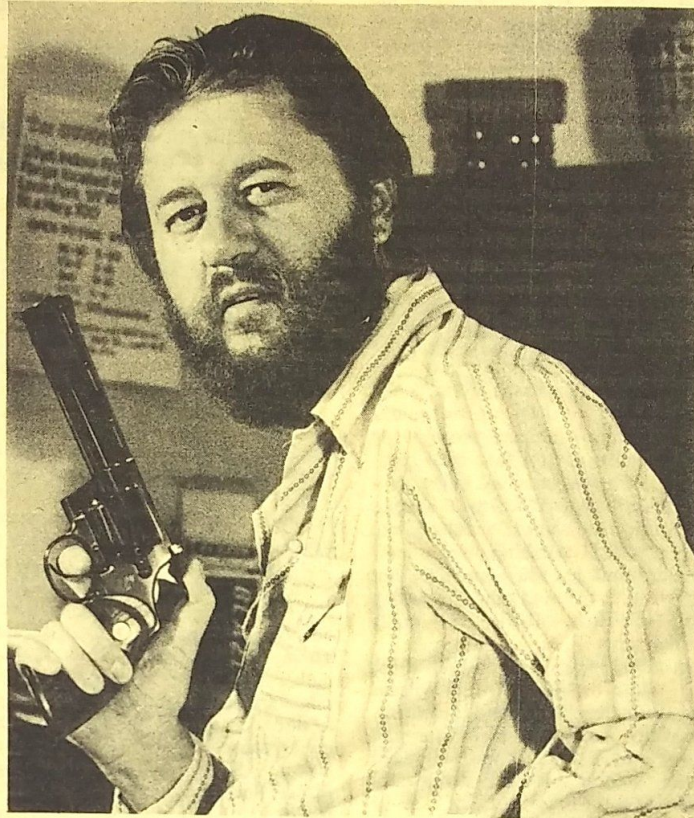
An interesting subspecies dwells in the above mentioned trash-filled wash-outs: the "Trashus Digunderus" or in plain American, the "Junkpile Chuck". This varmint lives only a few feet from soybeans, red clover, and lush grass. His den is located under several feet of broken machinery, old fencing, and discarded bedsprings. He is quite safe from both two and four legged predators and often attains an age and size greater than his brothers in more exposed areas.

An early June visit to a farming friend brought an invitation to defend his newly sprouted soybeans from these voracious varmints. I parked the "Blazer" at the end of the lane near the cut-off and suited up in Camo. Armed with my scoped T/C 22 Hornet and "Cutter" mosquito repellent, I began to stalk. As an afterthought, I slipped into my Jackass Shoulder Rig containing a six inch .357 M19.

After glassing a rusty chuck hotel from afar, a slow, quiet stalk brought me alongside a defunct refrigerator crowning the washout. Toenails on tin! Squeaks in old fencing! A large dusty brown form leaped out of the junk and perched on top an old electric stove about ten feet away. Frozen! Staring! We played the eyeball game without a blink. Five minutes was all I could take. The M19, somehow in my hand at the first scratching noise, was ever so slowly raising towards this mini-grizzly, cocked and locked. He must have seen my finger beginning to stroke the release lever to a smoking hollowpoint.

Olympic divers couldn't have duplicated the beautiful backflip dive into the trash heap! As I eased the hammer back to safety with my thumb, an inquisitive chirping whistle began from somewhere beyond the refrigerator.

MINNESOTA HANDGUN HUNTING



Mike Slaback.



Plaques presented by HHI to Rep. Battaglia and Sen. Chmielewski.

Unlike most other progun organizations, HHI emphatically does not claim credit for obtaining legalization of handgun hunting in Minnesota. The fight started years ago. Most organizations jumped on the bandwagon 6-8 weeks prior to showdown day — if at all.

Mike Slaback, who happens to be a valued HHI member, was directly involved in this fight for years (prior to

Fifteen slow sweaty digital minutes brought no end to the whistling and no Mr. J. P. C. out into the open. Moving slowly and quietly, I backed away and out into the bean field, dropped down on all fours and circled around behind the old stove. The bottom of the ditch was too dark for the scoped T/C so I stuck with the .357.

Slowly rising, two hands steady, once more cocked . . . and there he was, through the tunnel of old fencing roll, chirping away on his mound — eyes still glued on that refrigerator.

Recoil! Heard the smack of the HP

going home 15 yards away, but don't remember the bark of the .357. He lay under about three feet of barbed wire and old bedsprings, but was the largest chuck I had ever sent to groundhog glory. I got my backside full of cockleburrs and scraped up my arm, but managed to extricate the varmint for photos and statistics. He measured 30" from tip to tip and was a foot across the middle. Later, in the fall, he would have been a real heavyweight.

The tail skinned out and salted down makes a fine trophy, particularly a large one like this 8-1/2 incher.

The load was WW case, CCI mag primer, Remington 158 gr. SJHP, pushed by 8 grains of Unique. The frontal high chest shot exited between the shoulder blades through an inch-wide hole, indicating some expansion; much interior pulping of tissues and organs.

Got a new 4" M29 44 mag, a day off coming up, and I'm getting the itch. Guess I'll go look up another "Junkpile Chuck"!

LUCKY 7

By Mike Mitchell
No. 711

My first sixgun was a 1962 vintage Ruger Single-Six Convertible. I did a lot of shooting in the next few years after that with the Single-Six and other pistols including the .44 Magnum. I wasn't a good shot. At least not good enough with the Magnum to attempt to use it for my annual deer hunt in Pennsylvania. While I can shoot at paper targets to evaluate new loads and to sight in, I find paper punching boring for practice.

In January 1979 I learned the sportsmens club of which I am a member was staging a "jug" shoot every second Saturday. While all the rules hadn't been firmed up as yet, it was basically 25 shots, in five shot stages, at one gallon milk jugs full of water at 100 yards. To qualify as a "kill" the jug had to be knocked off the railroad tie it was sitting on. Guns were to be limited to pistols with iron sights, 10 1/2 inch maximum barrel length and traditional pistol calibers. Firing was from the standing position only with no forearm hold of the pistol allowed.

I showed up at the first shoot with a .44 Magnum I had sighted in for that distance with a cast bullet load utilizing the Lyman 429421 mold. The results for myself and most of the other shooters were less than spectacular during the first few shoots. A score of three or more "kills" was good and five to seven was a winner. Then we started getting better. I found the pistol I was using simply wasn't accurate enough. I located an old model Ruger Super Blackhawk and things started to pick up. I also found Lyman No. 429215 with the Hornady gas check to be more accurate than No. 429421 or No. 429244 and easier to shoot. They also seemed to have a better effect on the jugs.

As we got better, replenishing our supply of jugs became a problem. One of the members obtained a supply of 3/8" steel plate. It was quickly cut to 6 x 10 inch size to simulate jugs, and bases were welded on them. This eliminated the jug supply problem and also the lost targets we suffered with jugs since a marginal hit would many times result in a "wounded" jug that did not fall. Winning scores were now around 10 or 11 by the end of the summer of 1979.

By this time I had improved considerably since I had also started into the Handgun Silhouette game and I decided hunting with a handgun would not be such a handicap for me anymore. Since I was having good success with cast bullets in the .44 magnum, I worked up a load of 16 grains of Blue Dot, CCI 300 primer behind the Lyman No. 429244 gas check cast 1-20, tin to lead, and deeply hollow pointed. While not quite a maximum load it appeared to be as high as I could go without causing too much

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Lucky 7 *Continued From Page 7*
leading with this relatively soft bullet.

My first chance to use it came in November 1979 on the weekend before Thanksgiving. I was one of a group of ten going to a preserve in Tennessee primarily for wild boar. To make a long story short, it was more of a shoot than a hunt. There seemed little challenge until my turn came. I found myself looking at six boar 20 yards away who were only concerned about the two dogs hounding them. Five of the six were small. The only large one, all black, presented a perfect broadside standing target except for the pig behind him. Afraid the bullet would not stop in the big one, I held fire. After a few seconds the small one took off, but as he did so the large one was right behind him going up the hill. I had a quick snapshot at his chest as he was turning. He went down instantly squealing and rolling downhill. Once he stopped rolling he never moved. The bullet had gone into the chest and stopped at the top of the shoulder, mushroomed perfectly. The pig weighed approximately 200 pounds.

Arriving home on the Monday before Thanksgiving I picked up my newly purchased Ruger Super Blackhawk (7½" barrel). The gunsmith had done a fine job on the trigger giving me the 2½ pound pull I wanted. I decided to use it for the deer season which started the following Monday.

Seven a.m. Monday morning found me in my tree stand. This was the fourth year I had used this stand and I had managed to get a buck with a rifle each year so far. Experience had obviously shown it to be a good stand, the only question in my mind was how much of a difference an iron sighted pistol versus my scope sighted rifle would make. The rain had just stopped and it was a warm morning for that time of year in northern Pennsylvania. It was also quiet. The dark skies made visibility poor, so the valley was not ringing with shots as it usually does at that time on opening day. About 7:45 a.m. a doe came out of the brush 30 yards to my left. She was feeding, walking slowly and frequently looking back as a doe followed by a buck often does. I looked behind her but could see nothing. When she was directly in front of me at a distance of 35 yards she laid down. By this time approximately five minutes had passed since I first saw her. She occasionally looked back over her shoulder while bedded down. Still nothing! I finally gave up the idea she was being followed and continued to scan around the stand. As I turned to my left I saw a buck walking away from me. I raised and cocked the Ruger, but found I just couldn't distinguish his profile through the brush. He continued to angle away from me and I found myself thinking that I would have to resign myself to such things happening when I gave up the rifle. As I watched him, he started to turn and come back. I realized he was headed toward the doe. As a touch of buck fever started to come over me, I told myself to settle down. I did and raised the pistol to be ready when he stepped into a small clearing behind the doe. When he was in the clear I fired at his chest. He never moved; simply fell over the way a ram silhouette does. The doe ran off and I re-cocked the pistol. I could see he was still alive but unable to rise. I quickly came out of the tree and when I reached him fired my second round into his neck. He had an unusually high seven point rack. My

.430JDJ

By John Taffin
No. 76

I'm hooked! For years I felt the only real handgun was a good single action, preferably in .44 or .45, be it Colt or Ruger. For me, at least, a heavy loaded .44 Special, .44 Magnum, or .45 Colt SA was the perfect sixgun. My first handgun was a Ruger Single-Six, followed by a Ruger .357 flat-top, and then a Colt .38-40 x 4¼", (oh, how I wish I still had that one). These were followed by countless other single actions, many long since traded off, with the good ones still in my shooting collection. Now I also have double actions, M29's, M19's, 1950 .44 Specials, a Python, and even three Colt semi-autos, but 95% of my shooting has been with Single Action Sixguns.

Now all of that has changed. I had been talking to J.D. on the phone about his newly designed series of .44 caliber bullets and the fact that I needed a heavier than standard bullet for a 10" custom Ruger Blackhawk that had too much front sight. To make a long story short I ended up with a new mould throwing a 320 grain bullet that is perfect for my needs and I'm getting 1350-1400 fps with it, but that's another story.

In the process of our conversation, J.D. told me of his .430 JDJ Wildcat and the bullets he had designed for it, especially in 320 grain plain base, and 350 grain gas check. I was enthralled with its wildcat as it was in my favorite caliber: forty-four. I soon had a custom contender barrel on the way, 12" in length and chambered for the .430 JDJ, with an SSK custom scope base installed, a Leupold M8-2X scope, and the best looking crown I have ever seen on a barrel. This barrel was very impressive looking with a deep blue finish, and fitted with an SSK special bolt spring for tight lock-up in the T/C action.

My wife had started my conversion to single shot handguns by giving me a Super 14 .30-30 for Christmas. (She also started my passion with .44 Specials, giving me a 1950 target for Christmas in 1959, and also gave me my leather-working tools in 1960. It's great to have an encouraging wife.) When my custom .430 barrel arrived, it was promptly sent off to Mag-na-port for their EDM process of cutting recoil reducing slots in the barrel. While waiting for the barrel to return, I ordered the necessary .444 RCBS dies and the .444 brass upon which the .430 is based.

The .430 JDJ is the simplest of wildcats. All that is necessary to make this intriguing cartridge is to trim the standard .444 cases by .100". This was done simply by setting my case trimmer with feeler gauges. No case forming or necking up or down is necessary, just trim the cases, de-burr, and you are ready to go.

I always resize new brass, and this was no exception. However when I tried to resize the new Remington brass I found it took considerable effort to accomplish this, the die being much too tight. In talking with J.D. about this, he felt the dies were made overall tight to assure feeding in lever actions of the .444 Marlin. I had to make one

first shot had gone high and right, hitting him in the top of the shoulder.

After nine deer I finally had the confidence to take my seven pointer the hard way.



Top gun Super 14 .44 Magnum rechambered to .430 JDJ, SSK mounts, Leupold M8-4X. Bottom gun: Custom SSK .430 JDJ barrel, SSK mounts, Leupold M8-2X.

change in my RCBS dies to be able to reload .430's. I could not get a crimp with the .444 crimping die until I also removed 1/10" from the bottom of the die with a grinder, polishing with a moto-tool. Lyman .444 dies work as is.

The .430 brass was loaded with 260, 320, and 350 grain JDJ bullets over 42.0 No. 3031, and I also loaded some Thompson gas check No. 429244 bullets over the same charge. The cartridges are easy to load except for trying to throw charges of No. 3031 through my 23 year old Lyman No. 55 powder measure. Since No. 3031 is a long grained powder it took considerable effort to do this so I had an excuse to buy a new powder measure. The acquisition of an RCBS measure resulted in ease of throwing charges.

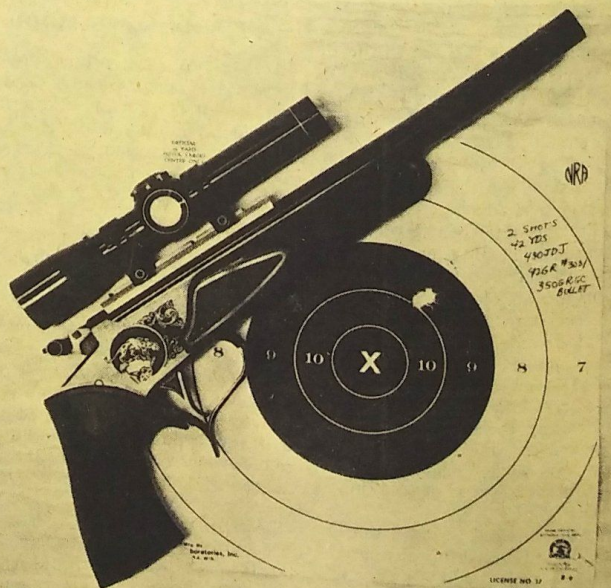
When I got ready to fire the .430 barreled Thompson Center Contender for the first time, I approached the task with some trepidation. I expected horrendous recoil, but was pleasantly surprised at the lack of same. My first firing was using the Thompson gas check over 42.0 grains of No. 3031. It took a few shots to get the scope sighted, and then I settled down to shoot a ¾" group using a bedroll as a rest on the top of my Luv 4x4. This load was so pleasant to shoot that I skipped over the 260 and 320 gr. bullets and went directly to the 350 gr. load.

The first shot with this load resulted

in my left hand getting rapped by the T/C lever. The recoil is stout but not a problem for anyone used to heavily loaded revolvers, if you watch the placement of the off-hand. In addition to Mag-na-porting, my T/C is equipped with pachmayrs both fore and aft and I'm sure this helps a great deal. When I fired the second shot with the 350 gr. load I could not find the hole in the target. This is until I walked up to the target and found two holes just barely overlapping giving a ¼" group at 42 yards.

I have now fired over 250 rounds through my 12" custom barreled T/C .430 JDJ, and around 100 rounds through a Super 14 .44 Magnum rechambered to .430. The 14" barrel does not have Mag-na-porting now but it is on its way to Mag-na-porting. Neither barrel has even had a swab through it and both show no signs of leading whatsoever using hard cast bullets.

What kind of accuracy can you expect from the .430 TC? At 25 yards I get one ragged hole firing three shots; at 50 yards cloverleafs are the norm, and I have fired quite a few 1½" groups at 100 yards. One morning after firing 100 rounds, I shot for a group to see what effect heating would have on the .430 barrel. I got an 1½" group, 4" high, the same place as the first shots. My .430 is sighted in for 25



Two shots, 42 yards from a rest with 42.0-3031-350 grain cast bullet.

yards which puts it 4" high at 100 yards and back on again at 175 yards. I was able to hit a 3" piece of pipe serving as a horizontal target holder about half the time at 175 yards holding dead own with the cross hairs of the M8-2X Leupold.

I've gotten one shot at game with the .430 T/C. Shooting at 80 yards at a young chuck lying on a rock, I held the cross hairs on his belly and took his back off. Two subsequent trips yielded no shots. Shooting in a five gallon bucket filled with sand, gravel, and water mixture resulted in the bucket splitting open on the third shot. Tremendous power, all loads punched through 10 layers of 3/4" chipboard blowing 4" exit holes in the back side. Shooting into green fruitwood logs I was able to find a medium that would stop the .430 bullets. The 320 gr. over 42.0 gr. of No. 3031 penetrated 7" and even though cast very hard mushroomed out to .60 caliber. I have no doubt that this load would shoot right through an elk, perhaps I'll find out this fall.

I like the .430 tremendously. It's a big cartridge case measuring 2.125" long and both loading and shooting it conjures up visions of the old time buffalo hunters and their sharps rifles. My experiments have been conducted with 12" and 14" barrels and I have a 10" on the way now. This is the first time I've gotten really excited about a new caliber in a long time. The .430 is easy to load, accurate, powerful and recoil is manageable. What more could anyone want?

My favorite load for the .430 is the 320 grain JDJ bullet over 42.00 gr. of No. 3031 for 1485 FPS. The same loading sends the 350 gr. bullet at 1525 FPS. Compare these loads with the .44 magnum:

(.44 Magnum 240 gr. bullet at 1400 FPS, M.E. of 1044 F.P.)			
350/42.0/No. 3031	1525 FPS	M.E. of 1806	F.P.
320/42.0/No. 3031	1485 FPS	M.E. of 1566	F.P.
320/42.0/4322	1450 FPS	M.E. of 1491	F.P.
260/50.0/4322	1680 FPS	M.E. of 1628	F.P.
265 Horn/45.0/4198	1825 FPS	M.E. of 1950	F.P.

Even though the above loads show mild pressure in my T/C, dropping easily from the chamber, all loads should be approached with caution. There is a lot of room for experimenting with the .430 using No. 3031, H322, and NO. 4198 powders. I fired comparison tests using the 320 gr. bullet and both the .44 Magnum and the .430 JDJ. The .44 Magnum showed tremendous power using this bullet over 23.5 gr. of WW680 for 1350 FPS from my 10" Ruger, but it was over shadowed by the .430 in every case. Cans of tomato soup literally explode when hit by the .430 load, the can being utterly destroyed.

Four other shooters have tried the .430. All approached it with fear and all exclaimed "not bad at all" after the first shot. All of them wanted to fire it again; and again, and again!

Whole new vistas have been opened up to me. This is my first experience with scoped sighted single shot handguns. In fact I've looked down my nose at the Contender as being something less than a handgun. That is all in the past. I'm not about to get rid of my single actions but they will surely see less use in the future.

I've said the recoil was manageable. Is it really? Well, 50 rounds of a 250 gr. bullet over 20 gr. No. 2400 in my



Full recoil of the 42-3031-350 grain load. Barrel is not yet ported. It definitely bounces, but isn't uncomfortable to shoot.

model 29 gives me a sore hand. However on one morning outing I fired 100 rounds of the 320 gr. bullet at 1350 FPS in my custom Ruger 10" .44 Magnum followed by 100 rounds through the .430 JDJ. The only problem was a sore spot on the top of my trigger finger where it was being rapped on recoil. Both my T/C and Super Blackhawk have pachmayr grips which

aid in taming recoil substantially.

If you are interested in the .430 JDJ, and I don't see how anyone could not be, write SSK Industries, Rt. 1, Della Drive, Bloomingdale, Ohio 43910. You might also ask him about the JDJ line of bullets and other SSK goodies such as springs, sights, .45-70 and .30-40 Krag TC barrels and other items for handgunners.

.430 JDJ

By Johnny Lemke
No. 753

Not to long ago J.D. Jones and I were discussing handgun hunting during a phone conversation and the topic of big bore handguns came up. This is when I first learned about the series of cartridges and barrels offered by SSK Industries for the Contender. At the present time they are offering these barrels in: .338 JDJ, .375 JDJ, .411 JDJ, .430 JDJ, 45/70, and 50/70. Since I have been planning on using a handgun for all my hunting this year, J.D. suggested I try the .430 on Elk.

Although he had worked very little with the .430, J.D. was impressed with its power and penetration. His enthusiasm carried over and before long I had a .430 barrel in hand.

The .430 JDJ is based on a .444 Marlin case. It only takes the simple procedure of shortening the case a .10 of an inch to 2.125 maximum length and they are ready to load. You can use regular .444 Marlin dies to load the cartridge.

For bullets I used the Northeast Industrial Inc. mould made to SSK's specifications. It is an aluminum mold that drops both a 315 grain solid base and a 350 grain gas checked bullet.

During my initial testing I used bullets cast from linotype. I found that these bullets would penetrate like solids. I was really impressed with the penetration of the 350 grain bullet cast from linotype. My shooting target stand is made from oak 4x4's and they didn't seem to even slow down the linotype bullets from the .430.

Since the .430 is to be used for hunting I switched to wheelweights for my bullet material. When fired into sand at 50 yards they expanded up to .60 caliber with around 90% weight retention. The bullets cast from linotype very seldom expanded at all when shot into the same medium. One other fact worth mentioning is that my barrel wouldn't group the 315 grain bullets cast from linotype. When I changed the bullets cast from wheelweights they started grouping as good as the 350

grain bullets.

J.D. had suggested a load of 42.0 grains of H-322 as a good one with both bullet weights. As it turned out H-322 and H-4198 proved to be the best two powders in my gun. Listed below are the loads that worked best in my gun:

315 grain bullet 10" barrel	
H-4198	33.0 gr @ 1411 fps
H-322	41.0 gr @ 1406 fps
H-322	42.0 gr @ 1548 fps
350 grain bullet	
H-4198	33.0 gr @ 1408 fps
H-322	41.0 gr @ 1474 fps
H-322	42.0 gr @ 1535 fps

You will note that with 41.0 gr. of H-322 the 350 gr. bullet gave higher velocities than the 315 gr. bullet. I checked this several times and the results were the same. I feel this is due to the fact that H-322 is a relatively slow powder for the 10" barrel of the Contender and the heavier bullet allows for more efficient combustion.



The .430 JD with Redfield 2 1/2 X scope mounted on SSK Industries scope base.



A close-up of SSK's Magnum-Proof scope mounting system.

It is worth noting that these loads were a long ways from maximum. You could open the action of the Contender and the cases would fall out. Loads tried on either side of these listed didn't prove as accurate. As with any hunting load you must find a happy medium between accuracy and velocity. That is what these loads represent. Recoil also became intolerable as the loads were increased.

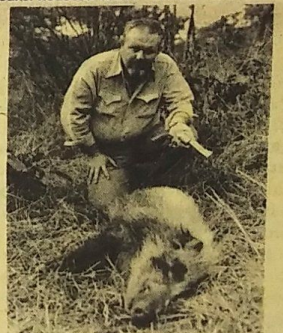
The old saying you can hit only as good as you can see really holds true with handguns. To solve this problem I have installed a 2 1/2 X Redfield Magnum Proof scope on my .430. The scope is mounted using one of the slickest handgun scope bases I have ever seen. It is made from aluminum and is of one piece design. It utilizes the four existing sight holes, plus you drill and tap two more screw holes in the barrel for the front of scope base. This gives you six mounting screws for the attachment of the scope base to the barrel. This base also allows you to use three scope rings to secure the scope. This base is also made by SSK Industries and will stand up to the heaviest of recoil.

The finishing touch for my hunting cannon is a set of Pachmayr grips and fore-end. This rubber grip helps absorb the recoil of the .430. Recoil is one thing that the .430 JDJ has plenty of. If the .44 mag punishes you then the .430 isn't for you.

As with any new caliber or gun I can't wait to try it on game. By the time you read this I should know how it performs on Elk because come October 1, I'll be Elk hunting.

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HORSES, HOGS AND HANDGUNS

By Bill Buckman HHI
No. 24

A trophy kill to most northeast Texas hunters is usually considered to be a heavy horned ten point whitetail deer or a forty pound vicious bobcat. To some though, the ultimate trophy to bag in this area of the state is a three hundred fifty to four hundred fifty pound River Bottom Hog with a two to four inch set of razor sharp tusks.

A Sulphur River Hog is similar to those found on special preserves, having the ancestry of some long lost domestic pig. Now, these hogs to us, are not Mexican or Russian boars; they're not razorbacks or "pine-rooters." They're just plain old wild hogs. The older folks around here refer to them as "bush hogs." They roam all over bottomlands of northeast Texas and really test a hog hunter's skill when they know someone is hunting them. All you have to do to bag a trophy River Bottom Hog is find a good set of hunting horses, get five or six trained hog hunting dogs, (Catahoula, Catahoula Leopard Cross, Louisiana Cur or Yellow-Black Mouthed Cur or hand me down "Hawg" hounds) find a "guide or outfitter" who knows the area, and be prepared to spend many hours in the saddle. Be ready for the scratches from tree limbs, sores from thorns, and bruises from bumping trees. You must instill in yourself that no matter what, you're going to find a wild hog and get after it. A good hunter must absolutely possess stamina, bravery, and most of all patience beyond the imagination. It must be handled with every detail working to perfection. If the hog slips up he gets caught or killed. If the hunter slips up he gets seriously hurt or at the least, scared half to death.

The northeast Texas area, unfortunately for the hogs, is home for a different breed of cowboys who enjoy capturing hogs for a hobby. They learned this trait from their fathers and grandfathers who used to run hogs in the bottoms and capture them, break their deadly tusks and then sell them as domestic hogs years ago. Many interesting and exciting tales have been related to me by the Belcher, Bivins and Smith families who have made this area their home for generations. The ammunition used to capture hogs by these cowboys is a good strong lariate, a "piggin' string" and a taste for dangerous excitement. One of these fearless hog hunters is my good friend, Donnie Smith, a descendant of one of the families mentioned earlier. When he isn't working cattle on his or someone else's ranch or isn't working rodeos for his dad or uncle's famous Wing Ranch Rodeo Company, Donnie and some of his sidekicks hunt hogs. Knowing of my desire to tack one of these Red River county trophies on my den wall, Donnie recently arranged for me to go with them to the bottoms on a hog hunt.

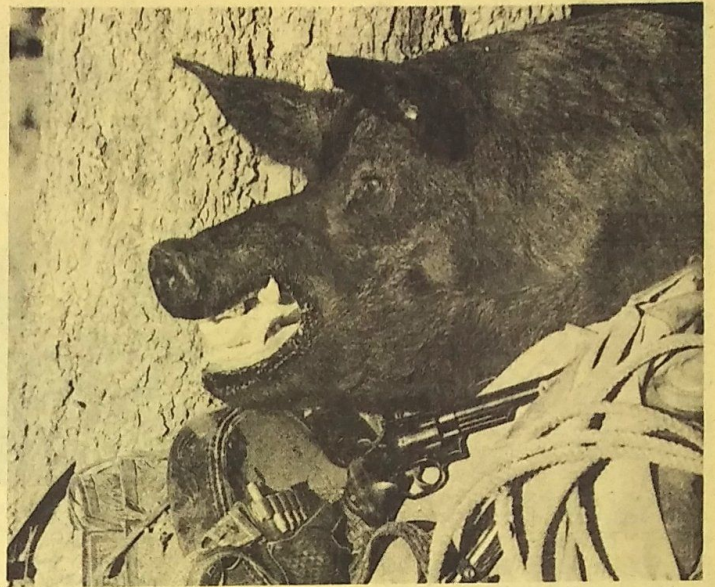
He and another hog catcher, Dugan Augustus had caught six or eight hogs in the last few weeks with one going over four hundred pounds. Dugan is a ranch foreman on a twelve thousand acre Red River County Ranch that has the Sulphur River for its southern boundary so his ranch is quite well populated with the hogs. The ranch house sits on a beautiful fifteen acre

lake with a surrounding thousand acres or so under conservation by Dugan's wife, Loretta. She likes to raise a few orphaned whitetail deer and provide a refuge for many a passing wild duck on the lake.

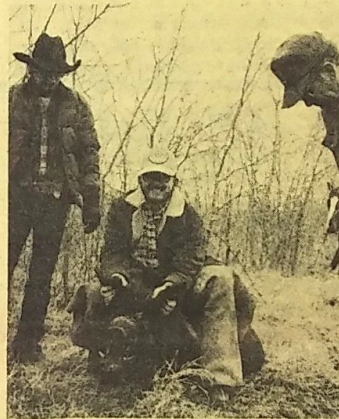
I told Donnie I would like to do a story for Handgun Hunters International and he made the arrangements with Dugan. The arrangement financially was perfect. Donnie would furnish his dogs, my horse, and plenty of patience to me for only our friendship. Dugan would furnish the land, his dogs, and his time for a very nominal fee. I would pay this fee only after shooting the hog of my choice.

My first hunt would be on Saturday, January 12. I hardly slept a wink on Friday night. I worried about, strangely enough, not the fear of a wild hog attacking or a missed trophy shot, but how I was going to stay on a horse for five or six hours. I had tainted memories of a horse injury at a younger age and had not been on a horse to speak of in some fifteen years. Yet at eleven the following morning all this was blotted from my mind as my first hog hunt was under way.

Three other cowboy hunters joined Donnie, Dugan and myself. Although we found lots of fresh hog signs early, the fairly high winds sent us in about three o'clock. High winds, keep you from having good ear contact with the dogs and it is imperative you stay in contact with the dogs and their baying at all times on a hog hunt. But, even though the hunt was called off, I had gotten "hog huntin' fever" and another outing was planned for the following Wednesday. After a small rainfall on Tuesday night, five of us go after them again on Wednesday morn. Around two o'clock we found a few hog tracks not over an hour old. This was a smart hog. Apparently he had heard us coming and led the dogs right into the water of the bottomland near Shawnee Creek, a tributary of Sulphur River. By four o'clock we are some two or three miles from our vehicles. We take a shortcut through the timber which is primarily standing in water and mud. On into the bottom we began crossing a slough where the water was a little deeper than we'd been going through. As we cross the slough the dogs happen right upon a hog bedded down on a high mound at the edge of the water. The hog steps out in the water and starts fighting the dogs. We hurry over in time to see one of Donnie's dogs, Dee, come out with her left lung literally hanging out from a slashing by the wild hog's tusks. Donnie and Kenneth start bandaging Dee and Dugan calls for me to shoot. (His command would mean I didn't owe him if I didn't want the hog). We're off our horses now and Dugan, Calvin and I wade across the slough to the big hog that has now stepped out of the water into some brush still fighting the dogs. I have drawn the S & W 29-6½ from my hip and approach the hog. I must be ever so careful about shooting because the dogs are in and out at the hog trying to get the hog's ear. I get off one nervous, quick and frantic shot which I tried to place at an angle behind the shoulder but through some brush. I must have pulled low on the



Note the extreme difference in head shape between Bill's hog and razorbacks shown in previous issues. Most "Tennessee" hogs have a flat head, long snout, and distinct "bumps" on the snout if they have much for upper tusks.



That's one happy Buckman lifting that hogs head.

hog or hit some brush, for he goes into the water crossing the slough, right toward Donnie and Kenneth and poor little Dee. I can't fire again because of them, but suddenly as he gets on land and close to them, the dogs turn him around, angling off to the side but Old Red is at his side biting on his ear. Suddenly, the hog catcher Donnie, is doing his stuff. He dives on the hog's back, knocking him off his feet, which makes a hog helpless. Instantly Dugan puts a noose on his nose, closing those dangerous jaws. Then Dugan puts a few "dallies" and half hitches on his feet. In just seconds I had been a bit

embarrassed by missing the quick shot, yet astonished at the capture, by hand mind you, of a three hundred to three twenty-five pound boar with tusks of 1½ to 2 inches. It is very near darkness, we have no horse with us to carry the hog out and the thickness of the underbrush forbids us dragging him out. In addition, we're not exactly sure of our location. We finally decide to castrate the boar and release him for a later hunt and try to get out of the timber before total darkness catches us. More importantly now though, was to get Dee to the vet and the other dogs that were cut (five or six) need to rest and heal up before my next hunt.

Now you talk about having the fever. I've really got it now and it looks as though it will be two weeks before I can go again. So, we now plan on waiting a couple of weeks, giving the dogs a chance to heal. Heal they do and even Dee started doing fine.

Then, ten days later, Richard King of Arlington, a famous silhouette rifle and pistol smith, and his wife, Vickie come down to visit. Richard and I are shooting when Donnie drives up. It seems Dugan is ready to go again and Richard and I are invited to go the next morning. Just hours before, Richard and I had been taking photos of the big four hundred pound plus hog he'd caught six weeks earlier and corn fed awhile by Donnie before being killed. It took only a few seconds for Richard to let us know he was gung ho ready but all he had brought with him were

Continued On Page 11

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unlimited pistols and I didn't have a holster to go with any of my longer barreled revolvers. Then I thought of my business partner Morris' S & W 57 -6" 41 Mag. We borrowed Morris' 41 and shoulder holster, ammo and practiced awhile so Richard could get used to the 41. At 6:30 the next morning we're ready. The wind is 15-20 mph and the temp. a cool, damp 32°. We rendezvous with Donnie at 7:30 and the wind had died down a little. It's pretty cold but beginning to look like hog hunting weather. We met Kenneth and two other local hog hunters, Lindy and Greg Guest. The next thing is a forty minute drive to Dugans at the Angelina Ranch. By ten we are headed to where the big hog had eluded the dogs ten days earlier. Today we have replaced Dee, who's on the injured list with Lindy's dog Cisco. A total of seven horsemen and six dogs. Water is up in the bottom due to a good rain a few days earlier. We have expectations of seeing a hog on high ground but by 11:30 we had seen no signs. Dugan suggests we spread out and head in the direction of the trailers hoping to flush out one or see some tracks. Around 12:30, Donnie, Kenneth, Richard and I somehow meet up. Shortly afterwards Donnie spotted some possible fresh tracks of a hog. We are now without the main hog dogs at our sides so we began following the tracks. They lead us down into a deep bottom. Fortunately Dugan's dog, Joe, shows up in the bottom. Joe is the brain of the pack and an excellent tracker. He started smelling and then disappeared. We keep tracking. Donnie and Lindy are off their horses trailing when off in the distance we hear two or three dogs barking. We are all listening to the dogs a mile or so away.

Donnie tells Lindy he believes that it is old Joe barking. I wonder how Joe could get that far so fast but Donnie is really getting that serious look on his face and he and Lindy hurry to their horses. We start through the woods in a good lope, dodging limbs and stopping occasionally to listen for the bark of the dogs. We hear someone from another direction coming in a truck. As we pass the edge of a clearing we see its Dugan and Greg pulling Donnie's gooseneck trailer to save us a long ride. Kenneth goes to tell them what is happening. We still have a good way to go before getting to the dogs. They are now out of the bottom and in an open field of tall sage grass, bushes and briars. (perfect place for a hog to bed down in) the dogs have sure enough got a hog bayed in the briars but he breaks and runs across the pasture. We now have one advantage and two disadvantages. The disadvantages are if the hog goes one direction he goes into the water covered Shawnee Creek Bottom where the dogs were eluded before, and also we are approaching several cross fences which he could run through. The advantage is the long run across the pasture is taking his wind and he may just give up to a fight. Donnie turns back to me and tells me to hurry for this is him: the trophy with the big ivory. Hurry I do but the hog is heading into some cross fences. All he has to do is zip right through the fence and we will be slowed down looking for a gate. Just as he gets to the fence though he turns around. He is through running. He wants to fight and fight he does. He backs up close to the grown up fence line and the dogs start in on him. He begins to rip away at the dogs. I jump off my horse with my

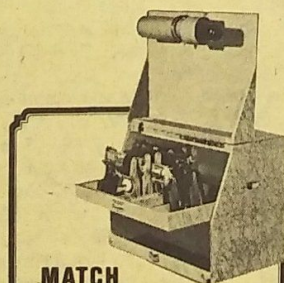
"Smith" drawn. I really felt strange being out in the opening without a tree to climb, especially with Lindy hollering out that the hog might charge us. I'm ready to fire but there are just too many dogs on him. He's now broadside to me but Donnie's dog, Lightfoot, is on the other side. Suddenly he turns straight at me and I'm some forty feet from him. I feel good with the Smith in my hand and seemingly I'm looking at the best shot I'm to have . . . between the dogs noses and right into the hog's forehead . . . boom. . . .

As the big 44 barrel rises in recoil the barking stops and the hog is down instantly. It is impossible to describe the fantastic feeling I have at this instant but a picture taken at that instant showed me to have a slight buckeling of the knees. I look at Donnie who has dismounted and is walking to me with congratulations, for I had just shot the trophy many dream of. This trophy boar will probably be the finest trophy of my life and to my surprise, Richard had grabbed my Nikon and had taken pictures of all the action.

Upon examining the hog we found that the 240 gr. Sierra JHC (24 gr. H110 1250 FPS) had hit the forehead two inches high between the eyes and only about one half inch off center. The bullet separates with the jacket going to the left ending up some five inches in the shoulder. The lead core split the heart and is yet to be found. The big black "listed" (small white stripe around the belly) was estimated to weigh near 450 pounds. His lower tusks were right at three inches long with both uppers being two inches. The tusks were definitely sharp enough to cut flesh as evidenced by three bleeding dogs, one of which had to be taken to a vet.

Over and over I have recalled the memories of the fifteen hours in the saddle, the three days of hunting, chasing, listening to the baying of the dogs and being climaxed by the downing of the dangerous but beautiful northeast Texas trophy boar. I realize that if it had not been for the dedicated patience and leadership of those I hunted with none of it would have been possible.

I haven't got a ten point buck or a forty pound bobcat as yet but I'll guarantee you this, I've got a trophy boar hanging on my wall that means more to me than any trophy I'll ever bag . . . and yeah, I took it with a handgun.



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SUPER 14 IN 222 REM

By Fred Sleezer
No. 867

In keeping with Thompson/Center's policy of offering new calibers and chambering cartridges already in their line-up for different barrel lengths, T/C is offering the 222 Remington in the 14", or Super 14 barrel for 1980. I recently acquired a triple deuce 14" barrel and have had the opportunity to do some load and field testing.

First, some comments about the barrel. It is a straight .810" from breech to muzzle and tips the scale at 33 oz. sans sights. When T/C says bull barrel, they aren't kidding. At least if the barrel doesn't shoot, you have an elegant, though expensive, crow bar.

I decided to put together a state-of-the-art chuck and crow marauding handgun. Along with the new barrel, I added the Pachmayr grips and fore-end, and the SSK heavy duty bolt spring and light-pull trigger spring. Since iron sights for serious varminting are next to useless, I mounted a Leupold 4X EER and Leupold mount. The total package, when assembled, weighed five pounds!

Now this is hardly in the "trail gun" category, and doesn't lend itself well to being carried in any type of holster. Perhaps Phil Briggs' idea of installing a short sling will prove to be the best solution. Thus far, I have simply carried my T/C by hand in the field and have found this to be a reasonable compromise. The overall balance point is just in front of the trigger guard and my hand seems to span the scope/frame configuration easily.

The 222 Remington needs no further introduction to readers of **The Sixgunner**. I choose this caliber not only for its proven accuracy, but also because I already had on hand the dies, cases, components, etc. Although other writers have given the 222 some bad press in the 10" configuration, I found its performance in the 14" barrel to be excellent. I have listed below the results of selected loads:

Charge	Powder	Primer	Bullet	Overall Length	14"	Av. Vel.	
					Ex. Var.	10"	14"
16.5	2400	Fed 205	50 Blitz	2.20	97	2643	2903
17.0	IMR 4227	Fed 205	50 Horn. S.P.	2.16	144	2640	2787
19.0	IMR 4198	Fed 205	50 Speer SPitz	2.16	54	2535	2756
21.0	H 322	BR 4	50 Horn SX	2.16	60		2756
22.0	H 322	BR 4	50 Horn SX	2.16	54		2702
23.0	H 322	BR 4	50 Horn SX	2.16	38		2848
22.5	3031	BR 4	50 Blitz	2.20	77		2631
20.5	RL 7	BR 4	50 Horn SX	2.16	77		2763

NOTES: Instrumental at 10', temp. 80°. Some of the above loads are max and should be approached with caution. The 10" data is taken from the T/C loading manual and is shown for comparison only. The overall lengths listed for the above loads exceed the SAAMI max of 2.13. While my loads showed approximately 1/32 clearance from the leade in my barrel/frame combination, each individual T/C should be checked to guarantee that the bullet is not engraving the rifling. This may prohibit the action from closing sufficiently to allow the safety to disengage or cause excessive pressure.

Prior to developing some of the loads listed above, I had worked up the 20.5 RL 7/50 SX combination. This load has produced several 10 shots groups in the 1.2" category at 100 yards using sandbags for fore-end and wrist support. To my way of thinking, this is excellent accuracy for any hand-

gun, and probably is approaching the outer limits of my holding ability and the scope's target definition. Although I have not yet had the time for extensive testing, the 23.0 H322 load appears to have excellent potential — I use H322 in my 30 Herrett silhouette loads and it has produced some groups that have to be seen to be believed.

During the course of this summer, I have had the opportunity to bust several chucks with this rig at ranges from 50 - 175 yards — all were DOA with any solid hit. However, unless you can bench press 450 lbs., shooting this 14" T/C piece standing is an exercise in futility. It is so muzzle heavy that it is nearly impossible to shoot effectively in any position that is unsupported. I have found that the best field position for most occasions is the Creedmoor silhouette — there the muzzle heaviness helps promote a near bench rest steadiness. Problem is, the chucks don't always understand your problem and won't stick around while you "assume the position."

In my neck of the woods, the crows all seem to have their Ph.D. in hunter detection. Drive up to them in a vehicle and they will gladly debate local politics with you all afternoon. Let them spot you on foot and they disappear faster than lemonade on the 4th of July. Sound familiar? Maybe that's why the first crow I nailed with my T/C 222 was so memorable.

He was no doubt the village idiot. I say that only because I had already missed him once about 30 seconds before he departed for the great cornfield in the sky. After a close encounter of the worst kind, the crow landed on a split rail fence about 125 yards away from me and proceeded to alert all his buddies in the next three counties. He was sitting with his south end heading north and probably (luckily) hadn't spotted me. When the hammer fell (the 2nd time), I heard a solid thwack and expected to see a blizzard of black feathers darken the sky. But all Mr. Crow did was slump over the fence as though he had decided to take an afternoon siesta. Looked like a towel draped over the arm of a waiter at a French restaurant.

Somewhat doubting the shocking power of my "super varmint," I walked up to survey the damage. Upon arrival, the super explosiveness of the 50SX bullet was readily apparent as the chest cavity of the ex-crow looked as though he had swallowed a lighted M-80, only to discover his mistake too late. I'm certain that my T/C 222 will stamp the one-way ticket of other crows in my neighborhood, but I will always remember the look of amazement written on this crow's face when he realized he had tempted fate for his last time.



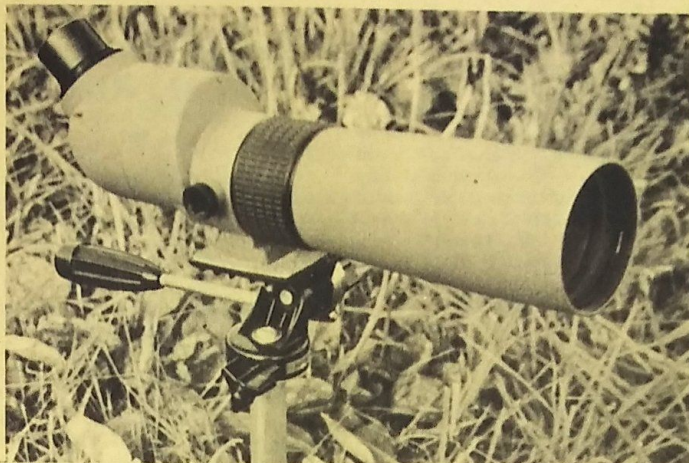
HANDGUNS & SPOTTING SCOPES

By Mike Barach

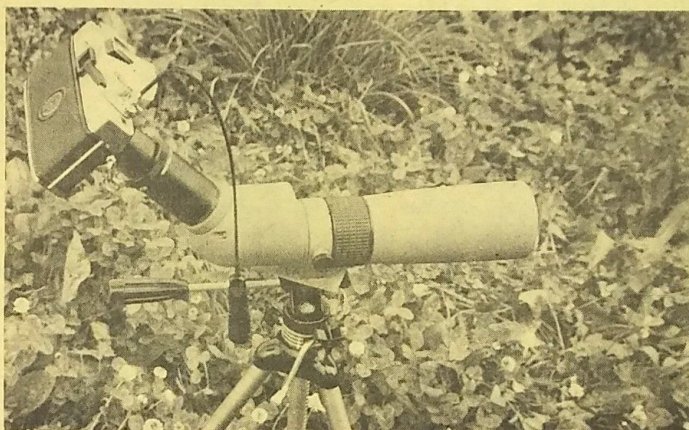
You may be asking yourself what an article on a spotting scope has to do with handguning. Well, how about the fact that it saves you time — money — ammo — and indirectly aids in more accurate shooting on your part, whether it be zeroing in a handgun or accuracy testing handloads. How? Have you ever walked down to the fifty-yard target stand, set up your targets, walked back to the bench, picked up your handgun and tried to level your sights on a target? It's highly probable that you'll be bouncing the sights all over the place, unless you're in top physical condition, which most of us aren't. So after putting up a half-dozen targets and returning to the bench, a breather to return respiration and heart beat back to normal and you're ready to start shooting. This is when a good spotting scope is worth its weight in gold! After a string of shots are fired there's no need to run down to the target to see how the load's performing. You merely peer into the scope with the target in full view and make any necessary adjustments. Now this idea is nothing new as I'm sure there have been a countless number of handgunners before my time that did the same thing. I could go on and on about the merits of having a good spotting scope at the bench, but I'm sure most of you are already aware of them. My purpose in writing this article is to acquaint you with what I feel is a versatile, high quality, scope for use with handgun, rifle, and taking 35mm pictures at long range.

Bushnell's Spacemaster 45 degree view Spotting Scope is one of the finest I've ever used. If you've taken a look through a cheaply made scope the difference is readily apparent in clarity, brilliance and ability to sharply focus in on an object. The Spacemaster does all these things and more. The body of the scope is 13" long and weighs 44½ ounces. The objective lens is 60mm with all optics being fully coated and color corrected. The finish is a crackled neutral gray color. The Spacemaster also has a built-in adjustable tripod mount. My test model was of the 45 degree view, fixed power type, however the Spacemaster also comes in straight-view 20x45x zoom, 45 degree view zoom, and the standard straight-view fixed power. Interchangeable eyepieces for the fixed power models start at 15x and progress to 20x, 22x wide angle, 25x, 40x, and 60x. For target spotting the 25x is more than enough magnification at 100-150 yards. For use in hunting woodchucks, prairie dogs, etc., at longer ranges the 40x is just about all the stronger you can go without sacrificing too much light and distortion that gradually increases away from the focusing point. This holds true with just about all spotting scopes, but some are worse than others.

Focusing the Spacemaster is easily accomplished by rotating the large black collar on the body of the scope. The 45 degree view also rotates at this point for viewing from the left, right, upright, or any position in between. This feature is very handy for the handgunner when at the bench, or a prone rifleman. With the scope mounted on a tripod, it can be placed in a suitable position on either side of the shooter and after shooting, full



45° Eyepiece Bushnell Spacemaster.



Spacemaster with camera attached. Cord for camera is a cable release.

view of the target is easily seen. The shooter need never leave his seat, save for target replacement and if the wife is along you can relax while she hangs a fresh batch of targets.

Bushnell offers special mounting adapters for use of the Spacemaster as a telephoto lens. Magnification depends on the strength of the eyepiece used. Starting with the 15x, the Spacemaster would be comparable to a 750mm to 1500mm lens or 15x-30x. The varying degrees of magnification are obtained by sliding the camera mount in or out. The power of the eyepiece and the corresponding telephoto magnification are engraved on the mount in different colors for the various power eyepieces. The 20x provides 1500mm to 2160mm or 30x to 43x, and the 25x, which is the highest you may use, offers 2160mm to 3000mm or 43x to 60x. If you're into cameras, you're aware of the advantages this scope offers in its ability to be used as a telephoto lens. Magnificent 35mm pictures of wildlife may be taken from a long distance without the fear of spooking the animal when the shutter releases.

Complete instructions for using the Spacemaster as a telephoto lens, as well as tips for taking good pictures with it, are furnished with each scope. An F-stop/shutter speed scale is also included as a guide for proper exposure. Since the scope isn't meter-coupled, it makes adjusting the shutter speed necessary rather than the F-stop, for correct exposure. This type of adjustment isn't difficult, but takes some getting used to. More attention should be given to a sturdy, movement free tripod, preferably using a cable release and the camera's mirror lockout to reduce blur due to the extremely high

magnification of the scope. It takes some time and patience to obtain good pictures, but when properly set up the only limitations are the willingness of the wildlife to appear in areas where they may be easily photographed.

I've been using the Spacemaster regularly for the last four months, both at the shooting bench and while woodchuck hunting, and I'm very pleased with it. The quality and craftsmanship are first-rate and I'd recommend it to anyone looking to purchase a well-made spotting scope. I've learned through the years that it doesn't pay to compromise and settle for a less expensive piece of optical equipment. In most cases you'll get what you pay for in optics and I believe it's worth it to have to wait a while longer in order to save up the extra bucks to buy a scope such as the Bushnell Spacemaster.

The 45 degree-view retails at \$290.00 with all eyepieces except the 22x wide-angle, which is \$295.00. Additional eye-pieces cost \$37.00. The camera mount & adapter runs \$34.95 and \$10.95 respectively. The straight view Spacemaster goes for \$235.00 and the 20x-45x zoom \$295.00. For more information on Scopes, Binoculars and other Bushnell products write: Howard Palmer, Bushnell Optical Company, 2828 East Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, California 91107.

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CHOOSING A BULLET

By David A. Kline
No. 545

As we all know, most handguns shoot bullets at lower velocities than most rifles, therefore bullet performance is, in some cases even more important in handguns than rifles.

I have a T/C Contender 30-30 Win. and .41 Magnum, both with ten inch bull barrels. Wanting to bet a better idea of just how my handloads might react on game, I conducted a couple of simple tests.

I used two mediums to fire into, one being water-soaked rags to simulate muscle and dry magazines to simulate heavy resistance, as in cartilage and bone.

The targets were engaged at 50 and 100 meters in three round groups for each load. Penetration, expanded diameter and weight retained by the bullets were measured and averaged to make the following chart easier to read and compare.

Load No. 1 consisted of 110 gr. RN Speer .30 caliber bullets and 25.0 grs. of H4227 for 2100 fps MV. Load No. 2 used 125 gr. Sierra Spitzers and 23.8 prs. of H-4227 yielding 2000 fps MV. Both of these loads are one grain under Sierra's listed maximum for Contender 30-30 Win loads.

Load No. 3 was a 200 gr SWCHP Speer backed by 18.5 grs of 2400 with about 1600-1700 fps MV in the .41 Mag.

I took a five gallon plastic bucket and cut out the bottom and put it down into another five gallon bucket. (Two buckets deep) Then I placed water-soaked rags into the buckets and packed firmly. Holes were punched into the buckets to allow excess water to drain off.

These rags were everything from diapers to blue jean pants. I made sure I cut out all buttons and zippers that might adversely effect bullet expansion. About three gallons of water were used, so my final target was a firm interwoven, fluid-filled media, roughly resembling muscle tissue.

Continued On Page 13

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By the way, my primary concern for checking these bullets performance is for deer hunting. The average PA whitetail deer isn't large, but again it isn't that small either, perhaps less than 15 inches through the shoulders.

At 50 meters the 110 gr. RNSP bullets performed beautifully in wet rags. They all had the classic mushroom shape. Penetration was 11.08 inches, diameter .600 inches and retained weight was 107.0 grs.

The 110 gr RNSP bullets at 100 meters performed almost the same with penetration 11.66 inches, expansion at .523 inches and retained weight 2.0 grs heavier.

With 125 gr. spitzers at 50 meters one bullet had no expansion at all, when the other two expanded very little and the jackets and cores separated. Penetration was 20.16 inches, expansion .458 and retained weight was 120.0 grs.

The same bullet at 100 meters penetrated 17.25 inches, expanded .383 and retained 121.0 grs. Two of these bullets had no expansion with only the tip of the lead nose breaking off. I believe one could reload and fire these bullets again if he wanted to.

Next I took dry magazines (not Hunting and Shooting!) and bound them tightly with reinforced masking tape. The 110 gr RNSP bullets at 50 meters almost disintegrated. All that was left was a piece of twisted and ripped jacket with the base barely visible in some places. Penetration was 3.50 inches, diameter .595 inches.

At 100 meters the 110 gr RN bullets performance was about the same. Penetration was 3.33 inches, diameter .691 inches and one bullet weighed 55.0 grs, the other two were just jackets.

With 125 gr Spitzers at 50 meters penetration was 4.37 inches, expansion .750 inches. Two recovered bullets weighed 79.9 and 44.7 grs, with the other being an empty jacket.

The same bullet at 100 meters penetrated 4.91 inches, expanded .725 and only jackets were recovered.

For deer hunting it would appear

that 110 gr RNSP bullets would always expand up to 100 meters and perhaps disintegrate when encountering very heavy bone. The 125 Spitzer would expand when heavy resistance was encountered, but would not reliably expand in muscle tissue.

The 125 Spitzer in some cases would penetrate too far and most likely pass clear through a deer, where 110 gr RN bullets probably would not.

Up to 100 meters velocities and trajectories are about equal, so I would pick the 110 gr RN load over the 125 Spitzer, for a good shocking deer stopper. With bullets heavier than 125 grs, I would not expect decent expansion at handgun velocities.

Sometime I would like to test the 110 gr RN at 150 and 200 meters to see if they will still expand reliably.

In wet rags at 50 meters the .41 Mag 200 gr. SWCHP Speer penetrated 16.50 inches, expanded .546 and weighed 199.0 grs. Performance at 100 meters was almost identical.

The recovered bullets mushroomed and were flat across the top with a small dimple in the middle from the hollow-point. When the same bullet was fired into dry magazines at 50 meters penetration was 3.25 inches, expansion .908 inches and retained weight was 123.3 grs. Two of these bullets separated core from jacket.

At 100 meters the 200 gr SWCHP penetrated a mere 2.00 inches, expanded diameter was 1.070 inches and retained weight was 140.7 grs. Again two of these bullets separated core from jacket.

In my mind this load would be a good one for deer up to 100 meters, although penetration did suffer when heavy resistance was encountered. With the 110 gr RN and 200 gr SWCHP proper bullet placement would greatly enhance bullet performance.

I feel these tests will make me a better handgun hunter by better understanding my bullets' potential before hunting, but of course, killing the game is the real test.

Ford 4X4 for the day to scout out old buildings that set back from the road.

Since barns are normally located within shouting distance of a house or other buildings it is very important for safety sake to think out your approach ahead of time. Know which directions are safe to shoot and if the barn is indeed empty. Know your limitations and stick to them.

In most old buildings you will find a portion of floor made of concrete. These slabs of concrete offer ideal protection for groundhogs. Normally they will burrow under from all sides creating a maze of tunnels and sleeping nooks. There will be one or two large, obvious holes, used as the front door. Other holes will be found around the building, used as escape holes and as points from which they can check for danger. Don't forget, groundhogs can be real crafty varmints at times, especially if they have been shot at before. They also like to burrow in, under corn crib floors, mangers and even under farm equipment if it sets in one place long enough.



When handgun varmint hunting, don't overlook spots like this. Old farm buildings can provide you with some challenging shooting.

Groundhogs become very accustomed to their surroundings. Strange noises, voices and vehicles will alert them making them extra cautious. Remember, as you are casually walking around in a barn your footsteps are only inches above the groundhogs home. Stalking to within a few feet of an old hog can be a real trick. As equipment goes, just about any good centerfire handgun will do just fine. .22's are out, unless you never want to take a second look at what you shot. Close quarter shooting like this usually means that the groundhog will be within a diving leap or at best a short run from his hole. It is common to get a shot at hogs while they are setting at the entrance to their home. A hit with even the hot .22's will not drop him where he sits. Over the years I've lost several hogs that have been hit with .22's but were able to reach their hole, a natural instinct. This makes for a rather empty story for farmer Jones when you tell him about the groundhogs you shot for him but you can't show him one.

Through experience I've found that of the many revolver combo's available to the handgun hunter a four to six inch revolver in .357 mag. or larger works well. Since shots are usually short and quick the advantages of a long barrel, longer sight radius, etc. are minimal. An item that really improves your chances is the bright color front sight inserts. They show up like crazy and allow for a quick pickup of sights to target in poor light which you are likely to encounter when in a building or hunting late in the evening. Scoped handguns are out for obvious reasons; poor light, close ranges and quick shooting. Ear protection may be considered also. Ever hear a .44 mag fired inside a barn!

My handloads have ranged from light .357 and .44 hollowpoint bullets

to the heavier jacketed soft points and cast bullets, all loaded from mild to full magnum charges. In recent years my loads have seldom been at or even near full magnum loads. A couple loads that I have used with success have been: 180GR (.44 Cal), Sierra JHP, 9GR WW231, CCI Mag primer: (.357 Cal) 158GR Speer JSP, 14.5GR H110, CCI Mag primer. Very mild loads, pleasant to shoot but still gets the job done. Even at reduced velocities the larger bore calibers will produce a large wound channel in respect to the size of the animal. Massive hemorrhaging and an acute case of shock will usually drop him in his or her tracks.



This old sow had been on my list for six years. She finally made that last mistake. The gun is a 6' Colt Python, custom tuned by Jim Schneider. (Schneider Gunsmithing, 404W Garbry Rd., Piqua, OH 45356). Jim's specialty is building reliable revolvers for both the field and range.

One thing easy to overlook is checking out your sight settings. If you're accustomed to shooting at ranges from twenty five yards or more you had better check it out at close range, three to ten feet. This may sound silly but you will find that you may have a tendency to shoot low at these close ranges. Be sure to check your sight settings. If you spend much time stalking in or around old buildings where groundhogs live you will have shots at these close ranges.

Once you and your equipment are ready to go, start scouting out your community for farms and old buildings that look promising. Talk to farmers. Get to know these very important landowners. They will help you find game and will be pleased to have these unwanted varmints removed.

Once you're on location and ready to shoot, expect anything. One last note. Barn cats and sometimes the neighbors pet cat like to hang out around barns and you will sooner or later walk up on one. If it is the neighbors pet, please restrain yourself. If it's a stray, well the decision is yours. Good Luck.

PA SEASON

Bob Williams (1129 8th Ave. Juniata, Altoona, PA 16601) is working on this with one of the State Representatives. Nothing to report now, so the self-addressed envelopes haven't been returned. Suggest you contact your local State Representative concerning your interest in a special handgun season. Interest ran about six to one in favor of a special season in Bob's mail.



Load	Media	Range Yards	Penetration		Weight
			Inches	Diameter Inches	
110 gr RNSP	Wet Rags	50	11.08	.600	107.0
110 fr RNSP	Wet Rags	100	11.66	.523	109.0
125 gr Spitzer	Wet Rags	50	20.16	.458	120.0
125 gr Spitzer	Wet Rags	100	17.25	.383	121.0
200 gr SWCHP	Wet Rags	50	16.50	.546	199.0
200 gr SWCHP	Wet Rags	100	15.66	.505	199.3
110 gr RNSP	Dry Magazines	50	3.50	.595	Jacket (3)
110 gr RNSP	Dry Magazines	100	3.33	.691	Jacket (2) +55.0
125 gr Spitzer	Dry Magazines	50	4.37	.750	Jacket +79.9 & 44.7
125 gr Spitzer	Dry Magazines	100	4.91	.725	Jacket (3)
200 gr SWCHP	Dry Magazines	50	3.25	.908	123.3
200 gr SWCHP	Dry Magazines	100	2.00	1.070	140.7

All Three Round Averages

GROUNDHOGS, DOWN ON THE FARM

By John Reinhart
No. 495

To the average hunter, varmint (groundhog) hunting consists of his favorite scoped rifle, a good pair of binoculars, wide open fields and 100 yard plus shots. Although this style of hunting does produce results I have found that going after groundhogs within a few feet of their home with a handgun can provide more action and create more of a challenge to the hunter. More specifically, scouting out an old barn or deserted farm building and if groundhogs are living in or around it, clean it out. Most landowners will welcome you with open arms if you are able to remove such

varmints from their buildings. Due to the decline of livestock on many farms here in west central Ohio, many barns set empty, slowly falling apart with little or no activity around it. In such situations it seems like from out of nowhere groundhogs appear, maybe one or two or several. I've had farmers tell me that they had never seen a groundhog on their farm before and then they're everywhere, usually first spotted either in or just leaving the family garden. I've had farmers offer to pay me for each one I kill, buy my ammunition and recently had one courteous farmer insist that I take his

PRACTICIN'

By Mark Kowack
No. 429

When shooting for strictly recreation, we're mainly out for a good time. But, when we begin working to develop our skill for a specific purpose, the situation changes. Serious practice, with its frustrations and difficulties, far out weigh real satisfaction at first. Discipline needs to be applied while working to achieve proficiency, but it can still be fun.

A word of caution. When getting advice, watch it! Seems like most of the local "experts" you'll talk to have fired very few rounds through a handgun, but are still quick to spout off with erroneous words of wisdom.

My handgun practice has been mainly with hunting big game in mind but with an eye towards self-defense too. I use my old model Super Blackhawk .44 Mag almost exclusively, but will occasionally shoot my wife's Ruger Single-Six .22. I do both live and dry firing. Additionally, I follow a regular exercise program with one exercise specifically for my handgunning.

Live firing includes slow fire at various distances, up and downhill as well as on the level. Also, rapid, controlled fire at short ranges (single and multiple targets), various positions, unsighted fire, moving target and snap shooting.

I don't do enough of any of these except slow fire standing. All positions should be practiced as well as shooting using natural rests.

Firing at paper, I seem to do more poorly than on 'fun' targets. I prefer cans and rocks. The best practice situation I recall was shooting ground squirrels in a pasture on a 200 acre ranch my wife and I previously lived on. Still haven't matched that set-up.

Rapid, controlled fire is easily enough understood as necessary for defense but it can also be useful in hunting. In the *Sixgunner*, Vol. I, Issue II, I wrote in "Arrival of a Handgun Hunter," how I killed my last bear with repeat shots as it ran up and away from me. Repeated, controlled shots. What I'm using is called the "press" — making the gun go off at the instant I want it to rather than unexpectedly as in a surprise break.

Multiple target practice — fun and helps develop poise and control.

Unsighted, one hand fire. Again, until you've done it, you have no idea where the shots will go. Snap shooting, is for familiarity and in the event I need it, either for hunting or defense. I am against just blasting away without a target or purpose. I probably take too much time to shoot but handgunning has its own set of difficulties for me and by practicing I find I'm holding back less and less and both speed and accuracy are improving.

Dry firing, with snap caps, is done almost every day and is vitally important. It helps keep me sharp even without live firing. For targets, I use magazine pictures of elk, deer and bear in different positions — it's really helpful. My second bear was in a pose very similar to one of the pictures I use and the familiarity I'd gained in dry firing made this shot easier to pull off successfully.

I shoot to about 135 yards. Most shots will be under 100, with the great majority 50 or less. With practice, a person will find they have capabilities beyond what they'd ever imagined.

Shooting slumps and other problems

are all a part of it. There are trying times. I've been going through one recently, when I felt like giving up handgun hunting and getting a rifle. But, problems conquered open doors for me and lead to greater efficiency. My failures teach me more than my successes.

The exercise I do for my handgunning is to use what's called a wristroller. A round stick about 1" to 1½" in diameter with a light rope secured to its middle and the other end tied to weights. With outstretched arms, shoulder height, roll hand over hand, the rope between your hands. When the weight reaches the hands, roll it the opposite way back to the floor. Repeat and add as much weight as you can handle. I find this better than squeezing a rubber ball. For one thing, my arms are held in a position similar to when I'm shooting.

A lot of work and detail goes into achieving handgunning proficiency and safety. Different people will have different methods of practice, of course. It's important, though, to remember that you're working to be ready in a real life situation when you'll have to do the job NOW with no excuses and second chances. With the practice, you'll experiment — new grips, stances, loads, maybe different guns. Be careful! Talk to and read knowledgeable people. With time, you'll have enough experience to be somewhat of an authority in your own right. But, it'll still require lots of concentration and work. With these will come that special satisfaction that comes to a handgunner when he's been practicing'.

WHAT'S YOUR BEST .44 MAG LOAD?

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Practice Makes The Handgunner

By Richard A. Hall, No. 362

I began my apprenticeship into handgunning back in 1968 with a Savage Model 101, .22 caliber, single-shot pistol. The cost, I believe, was \$19.50 and I carted home a 500 round carton of .22 long rifle shells to warm up with. My practice started and stayed at 20 feet until I knew just where the little gun shot. I practiced every night after work, behind our barn, until I could hit the primers on 20 gauge shotgun shells that were empty, from the pigeon shoots we had.

I carried the Savage .22 on our nightly coon hunts, tending my trapline, and we killed our freezer full of beef every year with it. Hundreds of barn rats were shot while trying to raid the crib in broad daylight. The little gun surely earned its keep. A few other .22 pistols, some from Colt, others from Ruger, Harrington & Richardson, kept me into .22's until 1978.

In that year, I purchased my first centerfire handgun. With my income tax return check I bought a Sturm & Ruger, New Model .45 caliber Blackhawk with four and five-eighths inch barrel. I then learned to reload for it, as the price of factory ammo and the amount of practice I was doing at that time just didn't jive with my billfold. If you are a working man, and you shoot a centerfire handgun or you plan on buying one, get into reloading just as soon as you can afford to. In fact, you cannot afford not to. With reloads, you can practice as much as you like at less than half the price. By casting bullets, you can get the design you want in bullet shape that suits your needs and save even more money by not having to buy factory brands. It's just one more aspect of handgunning that makes you more of a professional, and the joy and pleasure you will receive from it is an added bonus feature.

Once you get into centerfire handgunning, you just can't quit. I had read so much on the .357 magnum that I just had to have one to be with the "in" crowd.

Money was tight, so I got a part time job in order to get the new gun I had in mind. Three weeks later, I had a Smith & Wesson, Model 13, .357 with a four inch heavy barrel, and three boxes of the .38 Specials plus P loads. A few more weeks and a set of dies, shell holder, and bullet moulds were bought. The gun was the nicest double-action that I had ever had my hands on. I practiced shooting into an old Buick that I taped my targets to at a modest three yards. At that range, my six shots could be covered by a fifty cent piece from the hip, double handed.

I then bought some magnum loads and tried them from the hip at the same range. "Boy," the shots could only be covered by the car! My shots were all over the side of the Buick, some high, some low, here and there. I believe that if one wants to shoot magnums, the handgun should at least weigh around the 40 ounce mark to handle properly. If not, stick to Specials or plus P loads in Specials.

Then came the big .44 magnum in the way of Ruger's New Model Super Blackhawk. I knew that a lot of practice would have to go into it before I could handle it properly. After the first heavy loads, namely, six of them, I went directly to the .44 Special. The gun handled well enough with the heavy factory loads, but the price factor was

Continued On Page 15

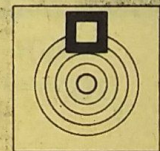
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its downfall. I wanted to save the higher priced .44 magnums for something other than practice, and save the factory loads for hunting big game.

Two days later, I had enough .44 Specials hulls that were in much need for reloading, but I was without the necessary dies and shell holder that were needed for the work. Money has always burned a hole in my pocket, as my Grandmother used to say, so I headed for my friendly gun shop down the road, to see what he had. The shop had the dies, the shell holder, but no moulds to cast my own, so I had to purchase some ready-made bullets for my new gun.

The following morning, I was in business for some practice, except I forgot my targets. Tin cans were used as I didn't have anything else to shoot at. The cans did a lot of bouncing around, and I think I even had more fun with them in the process. My brother-in-law showed up about that time with his Charter Arms .44 Special and we really had a ball. We stayed there until we had shot all our rounds, then gathered up the empty hulls and headed home.

We try to practice when the opportunity presents itself, with a .22 pistol or something in a centerfire. It is only with practice that we become proficient handgunners. You don't learn to walk overnight.

FIRST LOVE NEVER DIES

By Dave Shoe
No. 40

Until I was a senior in high school, guns were a no-no on my family owned farm in western Ohio. My brother borrowed an old Colt .22 semi-auto from his girlfriend's father. This incident would ruin us on the subject of guns forever.

Groundhogs had made swiss-cheese of what once was prime pasture for our dairy cows. Dad finally relented (over Moms protests of dangerous weapons) to give us some instructions and let us use guns.

A hog came out behind the milking parlor every evening while we finished the milking and watched as the cows were released.

After using two boxes of .22 ammo in the borrowed pistol and a Savage bolt rifle, Dad turned us loose. I decided to try stalking the hog with the pistol before my brother released the herd.

Crawling through Blackthorn and weeds taller than the Holsteins, I asked myself if I were sane to try to put this varmint out to pasture with a pistol.

My brother yelled that I had crawled past the critter and I jumped into a Weaver Stance learned from some magazine articles back in 1965. I steadied my sight picture and squeezed the trigger slowly, from then on I jerked, firing three more shots rapidly.

My brother yelled, "You got him the first time, don't waste the ammo." He and Dad came out to view the remains while I stood there shaking and dreaming that I had outgunned both Roy Rogers and the Lone Ranger.

That incident started me in the right direction. Dad bragged to other area farmers that I had gotten a hog with at least a dozen other old wounds that was hard put to die. Since then I have hunted groundhogs with everything from .22 through .44 mags, but none will compare with my first.

FIRING LINE

Got an IHMSA-type problem. I've recently lost three well hit rams with my T/C .357 Herrett 10". My load is: 200 gr. .358 dia Hornady Spire Point, 28.2 IMR 4198 (DuPont/NRA Load), CCI 200 Primer, M.V. = 1729 FPS.

Is the problem most likely bullet construction, lack of velocity, or just plain bad luck? If it's bullet construction, can you recommend another, tougher, 200 gr. slug? How about loading data? The Milek/Sierra data scares hell out of me and I won't use Speer's pistol-powder loads; neither Hornady/Pacific nor Hodgdon publish anything for heavy bullets.

Finally, my current chicken-javelina-turkey load is: 180 gr. .358 dia. Speer Flat Point, 29.4 IMR 4198, CCI 200 primer, MV = 1800 FPS.

I used to use this on rams as well, but it lost too many and is clearly less powerful than the 200 Hornady load. The question is: How well will this work as a hunting load? Will 1800 FPS open up the Speer 180 on deer or should I reserve it for larger animals and use 158 JSP's on deer?

Mike Grove No. 212

Ed. The 200 Hornady Spire is probably the best .35 caliber bullet for this application. The 250's have more knockdown but recoil a little more.

The Sierra book's comments about the .30-30 not being much good seem to have created doubt about the manual's credibility, however even though the DuPont data is considerably lower than the Sierra, I see no reason not to use the Sierra data assuming good loading practices for the particular gun. The .357 H is not tempermental at all. I do not like pistol powder loads in any bottleneck case except for reduced loads.

I'd turn on the 200 Hornady a little more. I doubt seriously if the 180 Speer will work on Whitetails as well as a good 158 J.S.P. if you don't want to leave anything standing open the .357 H up to the .358 JDJ. It'll do 2200 w/200 and 1900 w/250 at low pressures.

Here in Alaska there is great opportunity for handgun hunting especially here in Ketchikan where the deer (Sitka Blacktail) season lasts four months and the limit is three bucks. Black bear runs 10 months and the limit is two!

Anyway, I have done a little handgun hunting — one black bear with a .44 Smith 8-3/8" — 250 gr. H & G cast over 23.5 grains H-110. I am now in the process of trying for deer this year with my Smith 25-3 .45 Colt. I tried the 25-5 model and found it not to be very accurate with it's long cylinder and Smith's new "freebore funnel" maybe great for catching all the particles and prevent "spitting" but it is not conducive to accuracy — especially with the cast bullets I've used.

Anyway, I sold it and purchased a commemorative model (at \$100.00 more). This model I feel is superior to the current 25-5 in that it has the shorter cylinder (M-27 length) and the barrel does not have Smith's new "freebore funnel."

I feel that the bullet has too far to travel before contacting the forcing cone and has gained enough speed to shed lead and jacket material when it hits. (My observation.) My most accurate load so far is the 250 gr. Hornady over 14.5 grains Blue Dot with a

CCI No. 350 primer. I know I'm treading on tender ground with this, but it seems not to show pressure signs. My cases are W.W. Another load that performed almost as well as 21.0 grains IMR-4227 under the 250 gr. Hornady and CCI No. 350. I have never been able to get jacketed .451" bullets to shoot well nor my cast .452" Saeco SWC-K, but the Hornady .452 works O.K., but only with the two loads mentioned that I've tried. I find the .45 Colt much more challenging to work with as it seems quite tempermental accuracy wise.

I would appreciate any load data and results from members or yourself in regards to both the .45 Colt and the .45 Auto Rim (in M-25-2).

Kermit G. Johnson, No. 944

Let's hear about the .45 Colt loads. I feel Magnum Primers are a must in this big case. I have no experience with the S&W and all my Ruger or T/C loads are probably too much for the Smith. I generally use 8-10 grains Unique, CCI Magnum Primer and a 250 Tarus or Keith cast bullet for lighter loads. The .45 Colt has always been difficult for me to get excellent accuracy from in any gun.

I would like to see you publish a compiled data chart showing all the favorite .44 Mag handloads for silhouette and hunting. Not just what produces the most FPS, but also the most accurate. Thanks much for a great paper.

Tom O'Brien No. 375

Let's hear about those .44 loads!

I enjoy your publication very much. It's about time we have a mag that lets the average guy speak out. I find you get more honest dope than articles written by pros.

Having hunted game in all New England states, Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland with all kinds of rifles and shotguns, I am just now turning to the handgun for hunting.

All tests I have made indicate that the old Keith 429421 straight Linotype (238 grs.) 350 CCI M primer and 22 grs. of 2400 is the load in my S & W 29. I feel no revolver bullet is going to expand enough so just put a big .44 cal hole right through for a good blood trail (if necessary) and you have it, provided you place the bullet in the heart-lung-liver area. I am sure the game will not know the difference between a .308 or .44 Mag if his lungs are shot up and if he does it won't make much difference in the end result. I have shot deer in the chest area with 150 gr. bullets in .308 and 30-06 and had them take off with little or no blood trail because the projectile blew up inside. The deer bled and ran till his chest cavity filled with blood then succumbed, giving me a hell of a hard trail to follow!

Paul D. Schwemin, No. 109

Reference M. Kowack's problem with the core creeping out of Speer 225 grain JHP bullets.

I fired hundreds of these things back in the early sixties mainly because they are excellent in the .44 magnum. The solution to Kowack's problem is simple. Crimp the case mouth over the front edge of the lead shoulder in lieu of at the point where the jacket is

crimped into the core.

They're not as pretty when seated this deep but if all cases are trimmed to uniform lengths and a hard crimp applied the problem will cease. Might not be a bad idea to back off on top charges and work back up as this slightly deeper bullet seating does decrease the usable powder space, but only by a tad.

I might also add that this bullet and the 240 grain Remington JHP are the only two commercial bullets available that will expand when pushed out of short barrels. I shoot most of my deer-size game with a 4" Model 29 and I know. But there is a fly in this glass of buttermilk too. The Speer 225 JHP jacket is not tapered as is the case of most other jacketed bullets and if this bullet is pushed to about 1400 fps or better, the lead nose will shear completely off. The jacket is too heavy to rupture at velocities attainable out of most revolvers. On the bright side, retained weight is excellent.

I, for one, do not subscribe to the theory that lightweight hollow points should be used on game larger than 150 pound whitetails. Best bet for penetration with the .44 magnum are: 240 grain Norma; 265 grain Hornady (a dandy); Lee 429255 or Lyman 429421 cast from four parts linotype and one part plumbers lead. Linotype alone tends to shatter or break off if heavy bone is struck at close range.

Layne Simpson, No. 747

The "Soap Box Time" article by Bill Carpenter was very good... and although old ladies and cripples would be drafted before me I wish some sort of definitive action is needed so that Iran and those others so inclined to ignore our principals and power would think again about engaging in this international hanky-panky anymore.

Allan Crawford, No. 411

AUTO MAG

Any members knowing of a supply of AUTO MAG parts please contact Terry Crouch, 3205 Cassius Ct., Anchorage, AK 99504.

The Sixgunner, February 1980 had an article on an old Luger 9mm. Some of the old Lugers and Walthers made before WW II are among the best I have ever seen or reloaded for. American factory ammo simply will not work too well in some of them as it does not produce the proper recoil impulse. Some of the Lugers in particular need heavier loads to function and most will not feed S.P. or H.P. ammo without throating which should be done by a gunsmith familiar with the particular type pistol giving trouble. Most of the .32s and .380s will work using FMJ bullets loaded to maximum overall lengths and max or near max loads found in many loading manuals.

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The same thing can usually be said of the Lugers, but in the 9mm the heavier 124 grain FMJ and Speer 125 S.P. bullets will provide a different recoil impulse than the lightweights. Many of these old guns also have other problems so each must be treated individually.

It's been very interesting reloading for these guns. There is nothing wrong with factory ammo but sometimes it will not give the best performance. Because of this many a collectable old Luger has been sold cheap — my father did this one time. He took it as payment of a debt, ran into the ammo problem and sold it.

While Lugers are considered mostly for target and self-defense, I do know of one getting a nice buck. GayLord had come home from Nam and had gone hunting with some friends. He sat down under a bush and a little while later looked up. There about fifty feet away was a large buck. He couldn't get Long Tom (Marlin 12 ga. Goose Gun) without scaring him. So he managed to ease out his Luger, get a good head shot and got him. He said that he sat there for about ten minutes before he could get up. It was a once in a lifetime thing and a rare one at that. Not too long after that, he went out on a flight and when he got back home, someone had broken in and had stolen just one item, yep the Luger. How about anyone with experience loading for 8mm Nambu let me know what worked.

D. M. Terry, No. 301
Rt. 11, Box 36
Irondale, AL 35210

Just finished reading the August issue of *The Sixgunner* and enjoyed reading it as I have all the previous issues. A number of thoughts usually run through my mind when reading of the experiences, opinions and other information of fellow members in HHI, however, I usually don't bother to write to offer my opinion(s) due to laziness more than anything else. This time I feel obligated to speak up in regard to a few things I've just finished reading. First off, I sat and watched "The American Handgun War". Since you know me pretty well you're probably aware that during the showing of the film, my blood pressure must have gone up forty or fifty points. I've only seen one other anti-gun documentary that even came close to this piece of propaganda and that was "The Guns of Autumn." The film was expertly done and I must say that if I was an impartial viewer, I wouldn't have been after its end. The handgunners of this country better wake up and I mean now! If the networks were to show one of these anti-gun segments a month the opposing sentiment would be both overwhelming and I'm afraid disastrous to our sport. It's not only up to us to bring the impartial people over to our side through educating them, but it's also up to us to support the NRA-ILA and other worthwhile organizations with what contributions we can, no matter how small. Likewise, in regards to the companies that manufacture firearms and related accessories. This anti-gun movement directed towards handguns (for the time being) has got to be crushed by the entire shooting fraternity. I hesitate to say once and for all, because I know better, but at least temporarily. The majority of us have been lax too long. It's time to drum up new members for not only HHI, but also the N.R.A. Letters to your Congressmen are the

best method in opposing any upcoming gun legislation. "Our" time is now. We may not have another chance once our right of gun ownership is taken away. So what do we do, start moving or wait until the anti-gunners have already snuck in the back door? It's up to you.

I was reading Bob Woodring's letter and I had to chuckle over his statements about the ability of a 29 to take a steady diet of "heavy" loads. Bob, I'm afraid I have to side with J.D. on this one. I've got a 29 that lasted approximately 400 rounds with 24.0 grs. WW-296 and Sierra's 240 grainer before it decided to quit and that was in the middle of a silhouette match in P.A. several years ago. I had a custom pistolsmith go over the action and tighten up the slop in the cylinder. It lasted for a good while longer, maybe 700-800 rounds of factory stuff, and the load mentioned above, and 30.0 grs. of H-110 behind the 180s. It started to skip a chamber in recoil (backup) and the cylinder loosened up a good bit from the nice tight fit that it had when the smith had finished with it. I had it reworked again only this time I had all of the action parts Metalfied in an attempt to keep it shooting. I know of two other fellas right off the top of my head that are having similar problems with their 29s. It took these two a while longer though because they were using more moderate cast-bullet loads than jacketed ones. I told both of them that the guns are going to start throwing fits after they'd been shot for awhile, but I suspect that they didn't quite believe all of what I was saying. The 29s are both in need of repair as I write this. I've said that 29s have in my estimation, been inferior for a lot of years. Sad and blunt, but it's true. I also owned a Model 158, .41 Mag back in the mid-70s. It too was a pile of junk from day one. I returned it three times to the factory because of spitting and three times it returned, still spitting like a coal-miner with a mouthful of chew-tobacco. I pawned it off after that and vowed not to buy another Smith. I didn't until 1978. I shouldn't have bothered. In order to keep my statements in their proper perspective, I'm not slamming Smiths because I don't like them. Just the opposite is true. I've always like the feel of the guns and the accuracy is excellent, however, the quality has been sub-par for better than ten years or so and it's a shame, especially when a company at one time could and justly did declare its handguns to be the best in the world. Until the quality takes an upsurge, I for one won't buy another Smith even at the retail price, let alone the black market prices I've seen advertised.

Mike Barach, No. 007

I'd like to answer Bob Woodring, No. 515 on Mag-na-port. I have shot the T/C Contender in .430 JDJ both ported and unported and there is a definite difference. Three different shooters all say the porting is definitely worthwhile and we have photographs showing the difference in recoil and also have observed the difference as each gun was shot by a shooter as another person watched. Maximum benefit from Mag-na-port cannot be gained unless the firearm has considerable recoil to begin with. I personally would not bother with it on

anything less than .44 magnum (.41 magnum?).

John Taffin, No. 76

Enclosed are my dues for another year. I am very proud of my charter membership in this organization and hope to continue as an active member for many more years. I wish to all members health, happiness and many safe years of handgunning.

David T. Smith, No. 151

Many letters have been received with renewals, saying essentially the same thing.

JDJ

I enjoy the stories in the *Sixgunner*. I wish writers would include more reloading information in the stories, or perhaps include a "My Pet Load" column like Lyman used to do in reloading books, now discontinued. I'd like pet loads for target, plinking, big game in 38 Special, 357, 44 Special, 44 Mag, 45 Long Colt (Ruger) and 35 Rem. Contender.

Our gun club was in danger of losing its land. I wrote the NRA for advice and help — didn't even get an answer, but I do get lots of letters wanting me to beat the bushes for new members!

Robert Koch, No. 680

Handguns: A politically loaded term. To some the source of endless hours of pleasure, to others an evil machine that somehow overpowers its owner and creates crime, misery and death. Yes, handguns are controversial. They have taken on an emotional stigma that causes many otherwise pro-gun people to turn away from the Second Amendment. Or to read it selectively, as if it protects only rifles and shotguns. Such an attitude is welcomed by men like Pete Shields, anti-gunners who see handgun registration (ultimately confiscation) as a foot in the door. The door to total confiscation of all guns. Just like the English have, with the same effect on crime and criminal access to guns. Since 1920 when England began pistol licensing, the criminal misuse of handguns has not declined. In England, where guns are outlawed, only the outlaws have guns. That is the society Peter Shields would like to see us living in. Unarmed and defenseless.

Fortunately, in the USA we have an organization of great age and respect working to protect our rights as gun owners. And yet we have to wonder, where was the N.R.A. when silhouette blossomed? Were they riding the crest of a wave of popular support for a handgun sport? Did they dig in at the beginning and extend N.R.A. influence and knowledge to the long range shooters? Did they organize and expand the game through the N.R.A. network of Field Reps? How many of you have ever even met an N.R.A. Field Rep?

Now, handgun hunting is becoming more popular. Guns and ammunition unavailable just short years ago fill the diverse needs of our highly specialized and uniquely demanding sport.

Even said Colt Firearms has entered the field with a Python hunters package. And yet, it's been since September of 1979 that the *American Hunter Magazine* ran a handgun hunting article. According to Mr. Earl A. Shelsby, Jr., Editor of *American Hunter*, they usually run about one article per year. I am not advocating turning *American Hunter* into a clone of *American Handgunner Magazine* or *The Sixgunner*. But I do think that once again the N.R.A. is missing an opportunity. And lately their missed opportunities seem to be concentrated in the area of handgun sport.

As J.D. pointed out in the last *Sixgunner*, N.R.A. help was not forthcoming when he needed it. This seems a rather serious shortcoming for a pro-gun organization that asks all gun owners to look to them as the permanent voice on the Second Amendment.

Is it possible that the reforms of 1977 (Cincinnati Annual Meeting) have begun to erode? Will we again be saddled with an N.R.A. leadership ready to sell us down the river? Prior to 1977 the N.R.A. policy was to sacrifice handguns on the altar of hysteria and hypocrisy. Could it be happening again?

Michael J. Slaback, No. 129

John R. Musacchio, President of Ohio Shooters Supply, has announced that beginning with the October 1980 issue of *The Sixgunner* he will donate 1000 cast bullets of the winners choice to the author of his favorite article in each issue. This kind of support is really appreciated by all of us.

... Thanks John!

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