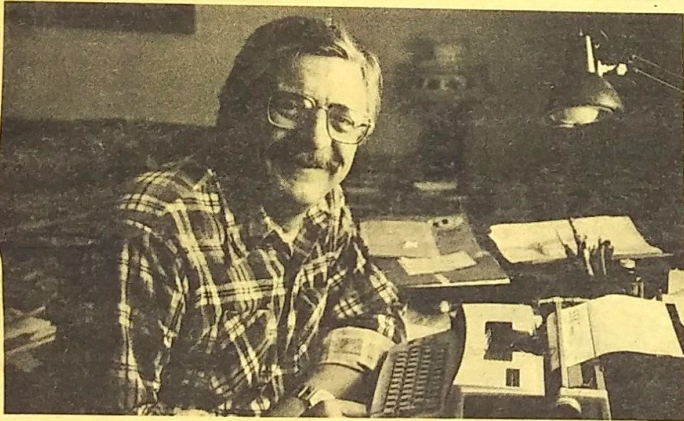




THE SIXGUNNER



MY CORNER

By J. D. Jones

1982 looks as if it's going to be lean but interesting for new and useful products for handgun hunters. Most of the gun manufacturers seem to have shot their wad in 1981. Colt, however, is introducing a new revolver which we'll have a report on in the next **Sixgunner**.

Sierra, always interested in the newest trends in the shooting world has just announced four new bullets. Two intended for rifles. (.284-140 SPBT — .224-55 Blitz) and two for pistols. The .224 diameter 55 gr. Blitz should be a winner in the .222-.223 and .226 JDJ T/Cs. Its light construction should insure long range "varmint" expansion in the .22 caliber "handfle" cartridges.

In addition, there is an all new 140 grain .357 diameter and 210 grain .429 bullet featuring new "Power Jacket" construction. 110, 125 and 158 grain .357 bullets are also available in "Power Jacket" construction. The "Power Jacket" is a pre-serrated jacket combined with Sierra's hollow cavity design. This bullet should be used when fast expansion is desired. It's strictly an offering for handgun hunters and I believe if they are successful, more designs for hunting handguns could be forthcoming.

Personally, I'd like to see the "Power Jacket" in the 240 grain .44 and 240 grain .45. Write Mike Bussard (Sierra, 10532 S. Painter Ave., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670) for your copy of the new Sierra catalog. I'm sure Mike would be interested in any comments you might have about this new bullet construction.

Old West (P. O. Box 2030, Chula Vista, CA 92012) manufactures a wide variety of leather goods. Write Jerry Kalhous for your free catalog.

Bonanza Sports (412 Western Ave., Fairbault, MN 55021) has introduced a new scale, "E-Z Just" shellholder for the Co-AX press, same system for the Co-AX primer seater which just might make it a decent priming tool and carbide pistol dies in .38-357, .44 Spe-Mag, .45 ACP, .32 S & W Long, 9MM Luger and .30 carbine. Their catalog is free on request.

Devel Corporation will be supplying a new eight shot magazine for the 1911 Colt autos and similar guns which use identical magazines. It'll hopefully be available in February. Changes are internal and exterior dimensions of this eight round magazine are the same as the standard seven shot Colt magazine. Ross Seyfried and Mickey Fowler used

Continued On Page 2



Elvin, Ray and a fine Utah mountain lion.

UTAH MOUNTAIN LION

By Ray Caione, Downey, CA

I waited a long time for this trip to Utah for a Mountain Lion. For the first time in my life, I wanted Christmas to be over so I could get on my way. The days passed very slowly and at last the big day came for me to leave. The weather should have been cold, so I dressed very warm. The closer I got to Cedar City, Utah, I had to shed more clothes. My heart sank a little, the weather there should have been very cold with lots of snow. My guide, Elvin Davis, met me and he, too, seemed worried about the weather conditions. Anyone who hunts knows the weather has a lot to do with your success.

On December 27th, we got our license and tag and hit the road to the hills. If you have ever hunted with hounds, you are in for a real treat. The dogs work as hard if not harder than we do. We arrived at the cabin we had rented on the top of a plateau overlooking a beautiful valley. A person could see for miles, and it was the most beautiful country I have ever seen! We

got things unloaded, then got the horses saddled up, took the dogs and off we went, looking for tracks.

We looked until the sun was beginning to sink, but no sign of mountain lion tracks. In hunting mountain lions, a person must remember that they are the cleanest animals in the world. They make a kill for their meal, and when the meal spoils, they will make a fresh kill. They will eat nothing spoiled. Sometimes when they kill a deer, (their favorite), they will come back two or three days to feed on it. They usually return to their kill every day at about the same time.

Back at the cabin just before dark, we unsaddled the horses, then fed them and the dogs. I've never seen such well trained dogs as Elvin's. Most all dogs have no manners. Now each of these dogs has his own plate. Elvin fills all the plates while all the dogs wait. When all the plates are filled, he calls each one by name, and they all eat together.

Continued On Page 2

My Corner . . . Continued from Page 1 these magazines to place first and second at the World IPSC Combat Pistol Match held in South Africa. The new magazine will list for \$18.75 plus postage. (Devel, 3441 W. Brainerd Rd., Cleveland, OH 44122).

Sorry about that guys, the .45 Auto in the "What's in a Name" contest is to be called the OMNI; a name not submitted by any HHI member. Thanks for trying.

Detonics is marketing a kit to convert 1911's and Detonics to a higher powered .45 round. Cases must be made from .308 type brass which is a lot of work.

Weaver — just announced a stainless steel 4X rifle scope and 2X pistol scope via an ad. A month ago, a Weaver representative told me they didn't know what they were going to do in the way of pistol scopes but nothing would be ready until next summer. Another case of one executive not knowing what the other is doing? ? ?

Federal, as usual, is on the move. How about a new Magnum pistol primer, new .22 long rifle pistol match cartridge and a new .22 long rifle .22 silhouette cartridge? Federal ammo is consistently accurate and uniform. The company is exceptionally progressive. New also is the .44 Mag 220 grain load using the 220 Sierra silhouette bullet. Now, there is even a Super Slug for deer hunters limited to shotguns. How about hollow pointed — in 10 gauge and a 1 1/4 oz. 12 gauge!

Lyman has several new products of interest. The Orange Crusher is a big, strong compound leverage press that handles the full length belted mag cases with room to spare; that's not true of most presses. Two new "Turbo-Tumblers"; the models 600 and 1200. The 1200 will clean over 100 .30-06 cartridges at a time and it is the quietest available. The 46th edition Lyman Reloading Handbook will be available in late spring. The Multi-Standard tungsten carbide dies feature extra bullet seating stems. If you haven't seen a Lyman catalog lately, write: Paul Beck, Lyman, Route 147, Middlefield, CT 06455 for your copy.

The 9MM Boondoggle! According to the Pittsburgh Press final bids for construction of a new 9MM pistol for the armed services are due January 8. The only U.S. company bidding is S & W. Beretta, Heckler & Koch and Sig-Sauer are the only other companies bidding. Colt submitted a proposal to convert existing .45s to 9MM and according to the Press, Army officials expect a major problem in conversion due to the age of the existing .45s. (The newest ones in the inventory were manufactured in 1945. Initial procurement funds are expected to be included in the 1983 budget. Plans call for purchasing 212,000 new pistols over the next five years.

I know one custom gunsmith who does a certain amount of work under government contract who has a contract with the Navy to convert four .45's to 9MM for evaluation. Apparently the Navy isn't worried about the old age of the .45s. Obviously, the military requirement is for a 9MM rather than a .45 but I can't help wondering why not a 9MM sub-machine gun instead of a pistol? A pistol's usefulness in combat may be damn important to an individual for a few minutes, but can have absolutely no effect on the outcome of any battle, much less a war. A 9MM submachine

gun has offensive capabilities as well as defensive. Anyone that thinks a good pistol is a more effective combat weapon than a good submachine gun simply is ignorant of the facts of modern weaponry. A submachine gun is also probably superfluous in view of the full auto M-16 or CAR-16 in the hands of almost all U.S. troops. So why all the fuss over a 9MM? There are more than a few excellent designs readily available.

The RCBS Green Machine is now available. It's a straight line progressive loader for .38 Special .357 Magnum only; capable of 500 rounds per hour production. Co-incidentally, the suggested price is \$500.

Speer introduces "Blazer" .38 Special Ammunition. Its Standard 125 Gr. JHP, 148 gr. Match HBWC and 158 gr. RN Lead bullet ammo is significantly lower cost than brass case ammo. Performance is the same as brass case ammo. The Blazer utilizes a Berran primer and aluminum case capable of 50,000 PSI prior to yield. I see absolutely no reason not to buy this lower cost ammo if you do not intend to reload the cases.

AIN'T IT A DIRTY SHAME:

The anti-gunners would damn sure like to see you unarmed and dependent on your local police for protection. The following is a true story involving one of our local police and a local sporting goods store clerk.

The cop comes into the store and announces he is becoming a police officer and wants to buy some .38 bullets.

Clerk: Do you mean for reloading?

Cop: Yeah.

Clerk: How about these 125 grain hollow points? (Showing him an opened box of 100 Sierra 125 gr. H.C.s.)

Cop: Yeah, that's what I've been using. (Pays for them and leaves.) 30 minutes later, the cop re-enters the store.

Cop: Hey, there's something wrong with these bullets!

Clerk: What's wrong with them?

Cop: They just fall right through.

Clerk: What do you mean; they just fall right through?

Cop: They just fall through and out on the ground when I try to load the gun.

Clerk: Wait a minute . . . are you trying to load the gun with just those bullets — not cartridges?

Cop: Whatever you sold me — they won't work — they just fall right through the gun.

Clerk: I asked you if you wanted bullets for reloading and you said yes and that's the bullet you were using.

Cop: Yeah, for reloading — that's what you do when the gun's empty — reload it.

The story is true — wording is not exact, but as close as the clerk can remember it. Pity of the matter is the clerk sold him a box of .38 Special ammunition and he is now running around with a badge and presumably loaded gun.

Sho' does make me feel a lot safer now that he's on the force; not that he's probably all that much worse than what you have protecting you and yours in many cases. And we sit back and put up with it. If you have a good police force, let them know you appreciate them!

Soap Box Time:

Don't tune in your national news tonight; it's all bad news anyway. The state of the economy stinks. We're more interested in what's going on in

Poland than our own back yard. Industry blames all its troubles on the Japs. So what else is new? It's the same song being played every night.

Well, as far as I'm concerned, it's a fact that the American public is buying a lot of imported cars simply because they are better than U.S. built. Detroit has the word on that and now we're beginning to see improvement in some of the vehicles coming out. Sure, there are people on layoff. Some of those working aren't spending money because they're worried about their jobs.

The fact of the matter is that we live in the best country in the world and have it better than any other country in the world. If you don't think so, why not leave? Our "bad times" are far better than most everyone else's "good times".

It's about time for some positive thought. The hell with the negative attitude about the future of our country. Don't listen to the bad news tonight. Instead, call a friend and tell him that springtime is going to set things open up. Interest rates will stabilize. More people will be working and spending money to create jobs. But positive people and positive action is going to make it happen; not some fool who can only see the bad in everything.



Federal's new 220] grain .44 Magnum factory load and the 220 grain Sierra bullet it's loaded with.

Mt. Lion . . . Continued from Page 1 Our own dinner was out of this world. It was cooked on a wood stove. There was steak and all the trimmings, including wine.

The next day, we hunted all day hard . . . very hard. If a person isn't used to sitting in the saddle all day, well, need I say more? We had hunted every day for 17 days. Every day I just felt like this would be my day. On the 18th day, we still had no cold weather, nor had we had any snow. However, today was the last day I could leave my business to hunt. I told Elvin, "It's today or never!" Some of the local guys had been hunting just as long as we had with no luck, either. We decided against the horses, so we drove up the mountain, parked the truck and turned out the dogs on a cold trail.

For such a long time we never saw hide nor hair of the dogs, then Elvin said, "Listen, Ray! I hear those dogs hot on the trail of a mountain lion." My heart began to pound because within hours, I had to leave for home. We had been hunting every cold trail we found, only to have them lose the scent when the lion would make it to the rocks and ledges. Today was to be different. This was to be a red letter day bringing a suitable reward to a guide and hunter that refused to give up, even under adverse conditions. My guide tried to discourage me from continuing the hunt after one week of

warm dry windy weather, but we decided not to quit and now we were on a hot trail. I knew we could do it, no matter what . . . I couldn't give up.

When we got to the top of the mountain, we could see the dogs again. They were trying to straighten out the tracks and determine which way the lion had traveled last. About that time, three local hunters rode up on their horses. They could hear the dogs on the heated trail and asked Elvin if they could turn their dogs on our track. Elvin said that it was all right, so their dogs joined Elvin's on our track. By this time, I had to say, "Ray, old boy, slow down! Patience, boy . . . The dogs will catch this one."

Upon checking the track in the sand again, we found that the lion had come out of the ledges and had doubled back into them, another pattern of the mountain lion. Many of the lions like to live up in the ledges. They come down to kill a deer, eat their fill, then return to the ledges and return again to the kill when they get hungry. The dogs trailed up and up into the ledges, until they faded out of hearing, making it necessary for us to either climb the ledges or go around by the trail to the other side.

It was about eight miles around by the trail, however, only a fraction of that distance up through the rocks. Elvin and I chose to take the short route; however, the local hunters on the horses had no choice. Because of the rough terrain, they had to ride around the trail. The trail was so rough and could only be traveled by trail-wise horses and experienced riders. We all arrived on the other side about the same time and found the dogs still working the track. They were still having a lot of trouble in the rocks. After a while, the dogs got the track going again and it was downhill all the way. The dogs crossed the trail where the riders had come up, giving full mouth and running hard. Looking across to the other side the canyon, we got one of the greatest rewards ever received by a hunter.

We saw the lion on the ground, running underneath the ledges. Then we saw it jump up into the only tree on the hillside. A sight I'm sure none of us will ever forget. We were all running to reach the tree, as the tree was small and those dogs thought they could whip the lion. It took us only a few minutes to arrive at the tree. Elvin caught all the dogs and tied them away from the tree and my trophy. This excitement had been growing since last year when I was here hunting and didn't get one. I sat down for just a few minutes and looked at this magnificent animal.

What great beauty he has, I thought to myself. He never took his eyes off of me. He looked me right in the eye. I wished I could take him home as he was, but I shot him with my .357 Colt. One shot through the heart for an instant kill! We loaded him up on the horse and took him back to the cabin. The next morning, we got everything ready and loaded and drove into town. I am so proud of my trophy which is 6'7-1/4", and I plan on having a full mount of him.

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Phil and his buck — a real trophy with a pistol.

ANTELOPE X 2

By Philip C. Briggs, Phoenix, AZ

I crawled the last twenty yards to the crest of the ridge with the Redhawk still in its special behind-the-back holster, out of my way, and secure from damage or debris. This was the first stalk of my long-awaited hunting trip to Wyoming, and all the work to get ready, including a last minute effort on the part of Dan Devlin of Renegade Holsters and Leather Company (P. O. Box 31546, Phoenix, AZ 85046. Phone 602-971-5900) to finish the jointly designed prototype holster had finally paid off. I'm here!

And the antelope aren't! They've moved out of revolver range.

When I made application for antelope and deer permits early in the year, I hadn't thought much about weapons. Later, as I talked with Ron Miller, who had hunted these areas before and invited me along, the more it sounded like shooting a pronghorn in this corner of Wyoming was about as challenging as shooting dogs in the back yard. Sometime during the summer, as the discussions continued, I decided to give the goats a sporting chance and use a pistol. Which one to use was left for later consideration.

As I crawled back away from the ridge crest, I wondered if perhaps I'd been a bit rash to leave the rifles at home.

After we'd been successful in our permit applications, Ron and I both decided to apply for a second (doe or fawn) license in the same area. When those came, I began to think seriously about which pistols to take.

I had the Redhawk for an extended test for an article in the **IHMSA Silhouette**. Big Red and I got along famously from the start. Right off, I started shooting it in competition and did quite well, taking first in Triple A Revolver at our Arizona State Championships with a 47X60 (24.4 grains H4227/Hornady 240 grain FMJ/Federal primers and cases) and a second in the same class at the IHMSA Internationals with a 72X80 (23.0 grains H110/Hornady 240 grain FMJ/Federal primers and cases). Big Red was picked as a natural for the less wary doe, but still I figured I'd have to

be prepared for some heavy-duty sneaking to get within my self-imposed 50 to 100 yard range limit. Having a shoulder or hip holster dragging in the dirt as I moved didn't seem like the hot setup. What I needed was something completely out of the way, more like a small of the back hide-out gun holster — even though the Redhawk is a tad larger than your average pocket pistol.

A meeting with Dan Devlin revealed that he was far too busy to build a custom holster — but that he might be able to spare the time if he could count it as development work on a marketable holster design. Sounded good to me, and after some sketching and scratching (heads and asses, both), Dan ended up with a radical cross-draw for use with big, long barreled pistols (like 8-3/8 Smiths, or 10 inch Contenders), and I, using a left hand version behind me, ended up with my out of the way, creep and crawl holster. (It worked fine, by the way, and Dan has added it to his line.)

For the last several years, I've gone pistol hunting with both short range ("real pistols") and long range guns. I'll use the first one opening day or in heavy cover, or if things are working well, and hold the long ranger in reserve for open country, when things get tough, or I'm out to kill something (no more Mr. Nice Guy). With the Redhawk selected, I decided to rig out for a 300 yard shot on the buck for insurance.

Sifting through my available choices, I decided my 8mm IHMSA offered the best blend of knockdown and flat trajectory. Concern over rifle bullet performance in a pistol led me to select the Hornady 8mm 125 grain spire point (at rifle velocities, it's a varmint bullet) over a load that provided about 2600 fps muzzle velocity. (125 grain Hornady/43.0 grains H322/IHMSA brass/Federal 210 primer.) For the hunt, I bolted the barreled action into one of H-S Precision's (P. O. Box 512, Prescott, AZ 86302, Phone (602) 445-0607) new foam stocks with an aluminum v-bedding block molded in. I topped the rig off with my Sierbert modified 6X Leupold scope (it started

out as a 12X AO). The load shoots well in this rig, as it will print three-quarter to one inch five-shot groups at 100 yards from sandbags.

This combination is too large and heavy for a holster; as is my custom with these big pistols, I outfitted it with a set of Michaels of Oregon's detachable sling swivels and one of their camo utility slings.

Antelope hunting in Wyoming is done from vehicles by most; we used a 4X4 to scout likely looking areas, driving between lookouts. When the binocs or spotting scope revealed an animal of interest, and if he was accessible, we'd made a stalk. Some were short — a few hundred yards, some a half mile or more. None were successful that first day.

There are so many antelope in Wyoming that it's impossible to drive a road without occasionally finding goats grazing within any range you might like — from short to ridiculous. Drive around and shoot is all some do, and I fell subject to the temptation, trying a few 300-plus yard shots at a couple of modest bucks that first day. Now this was a balmy fall Wyoming day, and I'd never shot in such wind. I never did hit one — not so sure I wanted to, either — or maybe it was the gods of the hunt trying to keep me honest.

We drove directly from camp to a vantage point the next morning, and in a few minutes, had a herd in view and a



The Redhawk in the Renegade holster — out of the way for serious stalking.

stalk laid out. Back to the main road, south to another view point and we lost track of them in the rolling sagebrush covered ridges.

While sitting there looking, another, much larger herd skylined on a ridge, moving south, apparently heading for a nearby waterhole. On down the road a half mile or so, and out of the truck to set up an ambush. Packs, pistols, ammo grabbed up, and we're about to strike off for a suitable lookout when

the lead animal steps into view on a ridge a good distance away. We're in plain sight; so much for the ambush. Ron and Chuck Obert, our local connection, scan the herd as it materializes into view.

Hell, I think, why not try a shot from here. "Ron — pick me a buck that's not on the skyline."

While he's looking, I set my pack down, load the 8, set the safety and get into position.

"The last one," he instructs, "not big, but OK."

My mind was reviewing the distance and the wind — it didn't seem to be blowing much, and it looked to be plenty far. My mental computer selected a hold — top of the back, just behind the shoulder — and with a conscious decision to fire, the little man in the back of my head that controlled the trigger let the round go.

It was right over the back, not as far as it looked, and the buck bolted. The rest of the herd wasn't startled though, and the buck quickly stopped, rejoining the herd. Reloading from the rounds I'd laid next to me, I tracked him in the 6X, waited for him to step clear of some does. He did . . . I dropped the crosshairs a little and thought bang.

In that slow motion that follows, the pistol settled back down on the pack, and through the scope, I saw the buck drop like he fell in a hole.

Ron and I picked up our packs and hustled over. It was 330 paces to where he laid, and the wind had played tricks with me again — only this time, it had pushed the bullet over into his neck, a good 18" down range from my hold. Oh well — the wind giveth and the wind taketh away.

The day's weather continued to deteriorate, and the radio promised worse. Ron took a large male fawn (thought it was a doe, it was that big) that afternoon, and we generally spent the day looking and sneaking around.

Near dark, almost back to camp, we spied three up a draw. We drove on, and parked along the road at a spot that would allow an unseen approach to the ridge overlooking the small herd. Earlier that afternoon, I'd decided the weather was liable to end our fun early and that I'd best fill out my doe tag as expeditiously as possible. Accordingly, I pulled the 8 out of its case, slipped into my pack and set out to take a doe; Ron and Chuck trailed a safe distance behind.

(Continued on Page 4)



The sage was so over grazed it made an excellent rest — not your normal sort of pistol shot, but then antelope aren't "normal" pistol targets.

THE SIX STOCK

By J. D. Jones

Well, it's obvious from the ad I'm going to be prejudiced in favor of the Six "glass" stock for the XP 100 in its various forms.

The factory Remington stock seems to work fairly well with the .221 but has durability problems with anything that develops much recoil. Many of them have defective joints from the factory. I've had two crack at the joints and change point of impact drastically on a .250-3000.

The simple fact of the matter is that to get the most accuracy and provide durability and comfort in an XP a stock change is necessary.

I've never seen a thumbhole stock that allows the shooter to get his hand directly behind the stock. A properly built stock will allow the shooter to hold the gun in a direct extension of the bone in his forearm. The Six stock does this and is set up for offhand as well as creedmore or any other position shooting. It has a relief area over the thumb knuckle so it doesn't take your hide off in recoil.

Strength is a main consideration. I've broken the handle off of two wood stocks and one glass one twice. It can be a thrilling experience. This shouldn't be a problem with the Six stock. Testing was extensive with a SSK .375 J.R.S. (Jones Rhino Stomper) which is a .358 Winchester maximized for case capacity. It's capable of 2100 or so with a 270 grain Hornady spire point. Less extensive testing was conducted with the .458 x 2" which is capable of just about as much recoil as I want. So far nothing has come apart or bitten me.

The handle of the Six stock is designed with every man in mind and seems to work well. With glass, if it doesn't fit you exactly the way you like it to — change it. It's a simple job to build up with body putty or file something down here or there.

It's available two ways; with the Power bedding block which allows complete interchangeability of different guns in the same stock or the plain version that an action must be "glasses" into. It's the strongest, most versatile and most comfortable stock I'm aware of. Finishing the stock is something for someone who is pretty handy with his hands or a bodyman.

Lee Six was one of the innovators of fiberglass stocks for rifles in benchrest and hunting. His firm is reputable and well known. Cindysix however, claims to do most of the work, so for their brochure write: Cindysix Enterprises, 6564 Hidden Creek Dr., San Jose, CA 95102.

WRITERS GUIDE

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

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

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

GO AHEAD, TAKE A LOOK.

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK.

Tough. Accurate. Reliable. Precision-built. The smoothest action going. Take a good hard look at the new .44 DA Super Comanche. Go ahead, examine the Smith & Wesson Model 29, the Dan Wesson, the Ruger Redhawk. Now compare the features that make this the standout among all magnums: The precision-lapped, heavyweight bull barrel for target accuracy. The matte finish, ventilated rib for more efficient heat dissipation, less glare and less target mirage. The oversize grip that soaks up recoil, allows for better control and a faster recovery for a second shot. The super-wide trigger for a more comfortable, controlled pull.



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Illustrated catalog \$2.00. For nearest dealer, call toll free 800-631-0722. In N.J. call collect (201) 440-2700 or write: Stoeger Industries, 55 Ruta Court, S. Hackensack, N.J. 07606. Stoeger Canada, Ltd., 165 Idema Road, Markham, Ontario L3R-1A9

Antelope X 2 — Continued from Page 3

From the earlier unsuccessful stalks, I had learned that a look or two over the ridge to check things out rarely went unnoticed on the other side. No peeks this time. As I approached the ridge, I dropped first into a crouch, then a crawl, and finally, belied the last 20 yards to a small clump of sage on the ridge crest and peeked through.

Perfect. A small buck, a doe and a fawn, browsing along just below me. On the way up, I reviewed holds in my mind just to make sure the first shot would count. Slipped the 8 on to the top of the closely cropped sage, I slid back to get a full field of view, and scoped out the trio; no mistakes here, I had to take the doe. Oddly, all three had horns visible from where I was — but the bigger, short horned one lacked a check patch. Must be a doe. Target identified, my mind went into automatic fire control, setting the cross-hairs low on the chest, just behind the front leg. The hold steady on the selected spot and the little man pulled the trigger.

Replaying my mental tapes, I heard a thump and saw the doe in the 6X as

her front legs folded, and she dropped from sight in the deep sage.

I laid there for a few seconds, watching the other two. They strolled off, unalarmed. Ron and Chuck, who'd been waiting behind me were puzzled when I finally rolled over, sat up and turned around.

"Want to shoot a buck, Ron?"

A shake of the head. Chuck was not so sure about this pistol stuff, and my first day's shooting in the wind hadn't done much for his confidence in me.

"Did you get her?" he asks. "Oh, yes! She's down there in the sage." This shot was so easy, it was anticlimatic.

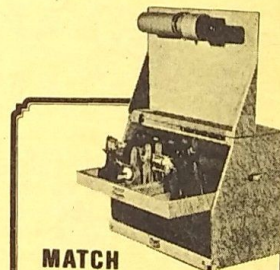
We walked down into the draw, and there she laid at 94 paces. Chuck just grinned. Nothing to it really. Just like shooting dogs in the back yard.

Next issue, I'll tell you about the mulie buck and that 358 JDJ. (He's not kidding when he calls them hand cannons.)



PLL

Tom Frick and John Linebaugh win the Precision Loaders Logs for their articles in the last Sixgunner.



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By Gary Geraud, Broken Bow, NB

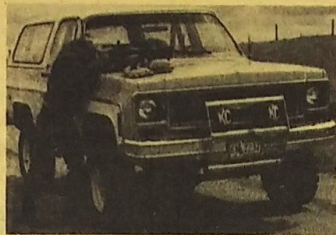
Living in south eastern Wyoming gives a person genuine year-round shooting opportunities. I probably expend most of my ammo during the warmer months when "me and my T/C" take on the local population of gophers, prairie dogs and jack rabbits. A good buddy of mine, Joe Stuemke (a fellow HHI member) and I have spent a lot of time blasting away at these diminutive vermin and along the way we've come to learn a few of the ins and outs of the trade.

First of all I probably ought to explain that I am considered by many to be somewhat of a fanatic when it comes to T/C's. I've been so impressed with these guns that I've sold all of my rifles and use T/C's exclusively, for all of my hunting and shooting. Joe has retained a little bit more of his sanity in this respect (although not much) in that he still owns a few rifles, I don't know why though, he can't hit anything with them!

In the last couple of years we've learned that long range varmint shooting is definitely within the realm of the T/C. For this kind of shooting the major factors to be considered are optics, cartridge selection, bullet construction and overall accuracy potential of the gun. If a little time is spent with a T/C it will shoot every bit as good as a factory bull barrel rifle!

Joe and I first started out with a factory 14" barrel chambered for the .233. The first scope that I tacked on my barrel was a Thompson Center 3x RP which was OK if a person didn't want to shoot at anything much further than 150 yards. With factory ammo this combination would group right around 1-1/4" to 1-1/2" at a hundred yards. Out past 150 yards, even if the accuracy was there, a guy wasn't going to hit much because you simply couldn't see much. It was readily apparent that more magnification was needed. At the time, a 4x pistol scope was tops. We decided to go ahead and try a regular rifle scope, reasoning that the recoil of a .22 cal. centerfire in a 14" Contender could be mastered. The first rifle scope tried was a really old Weaver 8 power that Joe had laying around his store. I borrowed it from Joe and put it on my .223 barrel. It worked like a charm! Typically, we shoot off of sandbags, so our shooting style, using these limited eye relief scopes, is very similar to shooting a rifle. The major exception being that the left hand is placed on top of the right hand (for a right handed shooter) and some downward pressure is exerted by it to help dampen the gun's inclination to jump back. I always use this type of hand placement but Joe sometimes prefers to place his left hand, palm down, on the top of the scope. Irregardless of the style used, the important point is that rifle scopes work extremely well on a T/C when the caliber is restricted to .22 (anything larger kicks too much — we tried!)

It wasn't long before we had tried all sorts of scopes up to and including a Leupold 24x. We've come to the conclusion that for most long range varmint hunting a 10 or 12x is just about right. Anything greater just has too limited a field of view, even though it looks great when the cross hairs are on the target. One afternoon I was spotting prairie dogs for Joe. I was using a 10x



Joe Stuemke shooting from the Geraud portable benchrest. Lift kit on the Blazer gives a better position for shooting as well as for getting over rough stuff.

on my T/C while Joe was trying out a 24x Leupold. I would spot a dog right away but it would sometimes take several minutes before I could describe adequate terrain enabling Joe to get on the same dog. A 24x has a lot of magnification at 300 yards. The cross hairs can be laid right on the eye of a jack rabbit at that range. In fact, it can be quite comical to listen to two guys spotting a prairie dog or gopher that you can't see with the naked eye. Conversation can center around terrain descriptions such as "it's near that little yellow flower with the bumblebee on it", etc. If you haven't done it before, it's sort of mind boggling.

What's a guy with a handgun doing shooting at such a small target at these ranges? Are the cartridges adequate for decent killing power? You bet! The best that's presently offered from the factory is undoubtedly the .223 in a 14" barrel. I've clocked some factory 55 grain loads on my Oehler in the low 2700 f.p.s. range. Handloads utilizing a 50 grain bullet will normally run in the 2800's. If the bullet used is thinly jacketed then this velocity range will give good kills to around 300 yards on prairie dogs. Bullet selection is important. I've seen prairie dogs hit with factory 55 grain bullets at pretty close ranges, in the neighborhood of 150 yards, crawl a few feet before dying. I've acquired a distinct preference for Hornady 50 grain SX bullets. They are very lightly constructed to give good expansion. I also prefer a 50 grain over a lighter 40 or 45 due to the 50's superior ballistic coefficient. It packs more punch at the longer ranges. Joe and I probably shot around 30 jack-rabbits last winter at ranges from 150 yards on out to 350 yards and I can only recall one rabbit that was able to crawl around after being hit with the 50SX. Prairie dogs that are hit solidly in the body at .223 velocities with this bullet won't even move from the spot where they were shot, out to around 300 yards. The trick is hitting them at that range!

Wanting still more velocity and power I got to toying around with a few ideas and finally had a 14" factory barrel rechambered to .225 Winchester. Now this is a chambering that a person definitely does not want to use factory ammo in. The factory stuff is absolutely too hot! This is a handloading proposition only. Like any other cartridge that is handloaded, careful attention to handloading techniques and pressure signs should keep a person out of trouble. I have found this chambering to be my favorite for varmints. I've been using loads that push the 50 grain Hornady

SX a little under 3100 f.p.s. The effect that this gain has on bullet performance is amazing. At 200 yards, with a good body hit, a prairie dog will be completely blown in half. It just about equals the performance that the .223 will give you at 100 yards. With a spotter, I've hit several prairie dogs out around 400 yards. All of them have been killed instantly. Think about this. At 400 yards, the 50 SX fired at 3100 f.p.s. still has more than twice the energy remaining, that a .22 high velocity long rifle hollow point has at the muzzle! Like I've said before, the trick now, is to hit them at these ranges!

Accuracy is now the name of the game. Careful attention to reloading techniques is basic. I keep all of my cases trimmed and I uniform all of the flash holes. It's amazing how irregular and rough the flash hole can be on the inside of the case. I've seen some flash holes that have had little ridges that protrude about 1/32" up into the case for a distance approximately half way around the flash hole! Primers should be carefully and uniformly seated. I clean flash holes every time I reload to help insure consistency. I also turn case necks. Out of round necks are a real detriment to accuracy. Anymore, I've been using Bonanza Bench Rest dies and they seem to be doing a pretty good job. Bullet seating depth is another critical area to watch. I've found that seating the bullet about 1/4 turn of the seating stem back from the rifling will give me best accuracy, with most barrels. I do have a barrel or two that likes to have the bullet seated much deeper. In fact in one of them I have the bullet seated almost a full 1/8th inch from the lands. Experimentation is the key here. A person should take the time and experiment. I had one particular barrel that I was about to give up on. It just wouldn't group any better than 1-1/2". I started seating the bullet deeper and finally found a seating depth where the group size shrank below one inch!

To me the factory trigger return spring is horrible. It has about a 4 pound pull which is not conducive to accuracy. I have substituted SSK trigger return springs for the factory springs in all of my frames. The SSK spring is excellent. It's real light, enabling the trigger pull to become a real joy, instead of a chore. I've also substituted SSK barrel lug springs for the factory lug springs. The SSK spring is much heavier than its counterpart and I can't help but feel that this should help the lockup a little.

Another item that Joe and I felt needed improvement for pure accuracy is the fore-end. We felt that it wasn't totally satisfactory for two reasons. It doesn't always bear evenly and uniformly against the barrel and its

contoured shape allows the gun to wobble around too much in the sandbags (particularly when 16x and up scopes are used). To cure this, I had my brother help me make some new fore ends out of oak 2 x 4's. He routed the barrel channel for me and cut out the receiver slot and drilled the screw holes for me. I then glass bedded the fore end to the barrel. This affords an extremely stable combination and barrel to wood contact problems are virtually eliminated by the glass bedding.

With the new split bolt that the factory has recently introduced it is possible to buy a dozen or so bolts from them and then mix-match them to a particular frame until maximum lock-up is achieved.

I have a couple of T/C's that I've set up especially for bench rest shooting. They both incorporate everything that I've just mentioned. Both use SSK barrels. One is chambered for 22 PPC and the other is chambered for .218 Mashburn Bee. A 24x Leupold is used on both of them. I haven't had a chance to shoot the .218 much but it shows terrific potential. Now the 22 PPC I have shot quite extensively for over a year. To date, my best 3 shot group at 100 yards (off of sandbags) with it measures .1093" and my best 5 shot group measures .296". I can't shoot that good with it all the time. However, it will consistently shoot in the mid 3's or low 4's. One afternoon I

OAHA

The Outstanding American Handgunner Award Foundation is pleased to announce the Top Ten Nominees for the prestigious award this year are as follows in alphabetical order:

John Ashbrook, Congressman-OH, an active aggressive pro-gun legislator. Lucy Chambliss, an internationally recognized Gold and Bronze Medal winner in several handgun disciplines. Jim Clark, holder of 64 national handgun records and innovative gunsmith. Keith Gaffaney, NRA President and pro-handgun advocate. Dean Grennell, Managing Editor of *Gun World* magazine and author of hundreds of handgun articles, is a well known and respected authority on handguns. Larry Kelly, inventor of the Mag-Na-Port gas venting system is a promoter of handgunning and one of the world's foremost handgun hunters. James McClure, Senator-ID, has an enviable record as an active leader in the political fight against gun control. Frank Pachmayr, "the" pioneer in .45 accuracy, holds in excess of 100 firearms patents. Harry Reeves, international multiple medal winner, U.S. National Champ and active in I.S.U. and N.R.A. affairs. Hal Swiggett, contributor of firearms articles since 1947, has promoted and hunted with handguns extensively.

All of the above named will be honored at the 10th Annual Awards program on April 3, 1982 at The Hilton Hotel of Philadelphia. One of the nominees will receive the 1982 Outstanding American Handgunner Award.

This date should not conflict with any N.R.A. function. You are cordially invited to attend. The Award Program consists of a cocktail hour, dinner, program and Awards Presentation. Numerous valuable door prizes will be given. If you wish to attend, please write HHI, P. O. Box 357 MAG, Bloomingdale, OH 43910. If we have enough members attending, it may also be possible to schedule an HHI get-together of some kind.

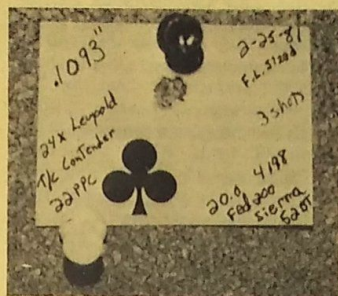


Top gun is the rechambered .225 with a Weaver T 10 in a T'SOB base. Bottom is the 218 Mashburn Bee and 24X Leupold. Note Fore-ends!

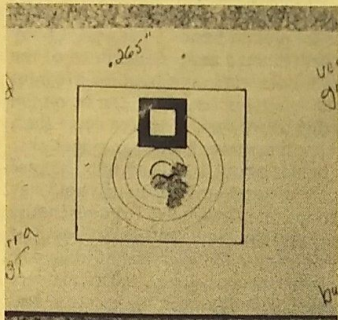
fired ten consecutive three shot groups and came up with an average group size of .3588". The biggest group out of the ten shot string went a half inch. T/C's will shoot! My .225 varmint T/C will shoot 5/8" all day long. Joe Stuemke has a .223 set up like my PPC only he has a 25x Lyman on it. It will shoot almost as good as my PPC.

It's quite an education hanging a 24 or 25x scope on a T/C and shooting with it. It doesn't make you a better shot instantly. In fact you may not shoot quite as well for a while because it shows you what a lousy trigger pull you have! The magnification is so great even the slightest movement is noticeable on the target. Try dry firing with one sometime while holding a sight picture on a target at 100 yards. It will take an awful lot of practice before you are able to keep the cross hairs anywhere near where you had them to begin with before you pulled the trigger!

I've listed below a few loads for the cartridges mentioned. Some of these loads are on the warm side. Pay particular attention to the temperatures when they were chronographed. Pressures rise as temperature rises. It should be of interest to note that the .223 data was taken from the same barrel that was later rechambered to .225. Most of my chronographing was done



Best 3 shot group — .1093" at 100 yards with the SSK .22 PPC barrel.



Best 5 shot group with the SSK .22 PPC — .296".

during cold weather and I reduce the loads accordingly for the summer.

Caliber: .223 14" barrel

Bullet	Powder	Grains	Primer	Case	Temp.	Ave. Velocity
55 FMJ	military	round		military	60	2,733 f.p.s.
Hornady	IMR					
50 SX	4198	21.0	fed 200	military	40	2,876
50 SX	BLC2	26.0	cci 450	military	31	2,764
50 SX	BLC2	26.5	cci 450	military	31	2,828
50 SX	BLC2	27.5	cci 450	military	31	2,877
50 SX	3031	25.0	fed 200	military	30	2,918
50 SX	H4198	21.5	fed 200	military	49	2,877
50 SX	H4198	22.0	fed 200	military	49	2,907

Caliber: .22 PPC 14" barrel (accuracy loads)

52 Sierra	IMR					
HPBT	4198	20.0	CCI BR	Sako		
HPBT	4320	26.5	CCI BR	Sako	50	2,641

Caliber: .225 14" barrel*

Hornady	Bullet	Grains	CCI BR	W/W	Temp.	Ave. Velocity
50 SX	3031	29.5	CCI BR	W/W	36	2,787
50 SX	3031	30.0	CCI BR	W/W	36	2,903
50 SX	3031	30.5	CCI BR	W/W	36	2,954
50 SX	3031	31.0	CCI BR	W/W	36	3,063
50 SX	4064	31.5	CCI BR	W/W	52	2,928
50 SX	4064	32.0	CCI BR	W/W	52	2,982
50 SX	4064	32.5	CCI BR	W/W	52	3,067

*SSK will not chamber for the 225 Winchester — the 226 JDJ — a wildcatted 225 is available.

7 BR WHITETAIL

By Mark Chapman, Galena, OH

This November deer season I went to Michigan and I decided to take my XP 100 7mm BR. To make a short story shorter, that Monday we entered the woods with the temperature about 30°F. After the sun came up the temp went to about 60°F and as I am sure many hunters know, when you dress for cold weather and the sun warms you up, the sand man cometh. As I was sitting against a tree with visions of big buck dancing through my head, I was brought to instant high gear by the shot of a hunter down the trail from us.

As we watched the trail two doe walked to within 50 yards of us. At the next shot (a miss) both does ran down trail to within 35 yards of me. I can remember tracking the nearest doe

with the XP and the gun jump as the doe fell, the sight alignment and trigger pull must have been automatic as I can't remember any of it. I walked up to the doe and put a neck shot on her with my .44 as she was still moving.

After field gutting we noticed some things that might be of great interest.

First off, the entrance hole from the .44 and the 7mm BR did not show (no blood).

Second, the .44 did much less damage to meat than the 7mm BR.

The .44 I used was an Abilene 4 5/8 Blue (No, it's not for sale.) The load was new WW cases, WW Mag Primers, 240 gr. Speer Halfjacket, and 23.5 gr. of 296 Ball. I would guess this load was moving at about 1200 fps. The result on the deer was a .44 cal hole through the neck (bone and all) at 5 feet with no blood-shot meat around the exit hole.

The 7mm BR was much different. The bullet went through both shoulders taking out the lungs and the

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top of the heart. The exit hole was large enough to put a thumb through all the way to the chest cavity with blood-shot meat around the hole. This from a range of about 30 yards. This load was Federal Nickel Match 308 brass run through RCBS dies and fire formed. CCI regular Large Rifle Primers, 30 gr. of WW 748 and a 140 gr. Nosler Partition bullet. I guess this load at about 2100 fps.

From these observations and the things I have read I have made the following conclusions:

When hunting deer-size game with rifle-type bullets of small bore (30 cal. and smaller), (a) the bullet must pass through the vitals. This means that it must be of strong construction and travel fast enough to get there. (b) The bullet must exit if a blood trail is required for tracking. The entrance hole will probably plug with hair.

To get a faster kill the bullet should expand, but this should be secondary to penetration as I have read of many accounts of the use on varmint or deer where they broke up on bones and did not penetrate. To get around the problem of bullet construction (penetration vs. quick kill expansion) I have formed the following opinion.

Use a bullet of standard construction as this will allow for penetration from all angles and put maximum amount of resistance to the bullet in the target area. When shooting from the rear or front, the bullet has the entire length of the deer to expand and expend energy. When shooting from the side hit the shoulder bones. This will give enough resistance to the bullet to get some expansion. Or use one of the speciality bullets like Nosler where the forward section will expand or blow off but the rear will penetrate.

This is a "for — what — it's — worth" idea, but it seems to work for me.

I would welcome other shooters of small bore rifle case handguns to send me their observations (pro or con). However, when it comes to the larger bores the bullet size reduces the necessity for expansion at rifle case handgun velocities. This is similar to the necessary use of expanding bullets in the .357 in relation to semi wadcutters in .44's and .45's.

Next time out! Boar! M. Chapman, 5846 South Old State, Galena, OH 43021.

"1981" HANDGUN HUNTING REPORT

By: Larry Kelly, Mt. Clemens, MI

This year's highlight was my thirty-five day safari in Zimbabwe. With a handgun I took four of the African "Big Five" — a big lion, cape buffalo, leopard, two bull elephant (45. lb and

70. lb), two sable, kudu, several impala and baboons. All species were taken in the Zambesi Valley, an area I consider excellent for trophy hunting. The handguns used were a Thompson/Center single shot in a .375 J.D.J. wildcat cartridge, Sterling Arms new X-Caliber .44 magnum, also a single shot pistol, a Ruger six shot .44 magnum, and a five inch model 29 Smith & Wesson used as a back up gun.

After returning from safari I left for a twenty-one day Alaskan hunt booked with Hal Alward. During this hunt I took dall sheep, caribou and passed up an easy 70 yard shot at a 60" bull moose. I regretted that decision for the following fifteen days, since I was only able to stalk smaller bulls and ended up empty handed. My second hunt in Alaska was booked with Clark Engle for brown bear in Cold Bay. On this trip I took a 9' 8" bear with the .44 magnum Ruger. An excellent trophy with a skull measurement of 27 3/16 and an excellent dall ram with the 375.

In the past, I've had poor experiences with Alaskan Outfitters and swore I'd never go back. But, luckily I found Hal & Clark and can look forward to booking more Alaskan hunts in the future.

I'll get some stories and photos out as soon as I can.

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KAIBAB TROPHY

By Jim Betush, Chandler, AZ

My buddy and fellow Arizonan, Jim Peoble and I pulled into our mule deer hunt campsite deep in Arizona's Kaibab National Forest, located 35 miles south of the Utah border. We had just gotten out of the truck for a look around, as we were wondering whether or not we had picked a good spot. Just then, across a small ravine, 3 does and a nice 3 point (western count) were spotted calmly feeding. They were about 150 yards distant and slowly moving away. Jim had on his open sighted Merrill Sportsman in 7mm Merrill caliber. I only had a High Standard Citation .22, hoping for a chance at some small game for camp meat. (Damn!) I did have a pair of binoculars in reach, so Jim dropped himself into a Creedmoor position (ala metallic silhouette) with me as his spotter. I had a great deal of confidence in Jim and his Merrill as he is one of the best all around handgun silhouetters in Arizona. Anyway, to make a long story even longer, mule deer are not as dumb as I was led to believe! One of the three ladies also doubled as the buck's bodyguard. She refused to move out of the line of fire! Had I been on the ball, the scoped .358 JDJ T/C I'd borrowed from fellow handgun hunter Phil Briggs would have been uncased. I have no doubt that a suitable shot would have presented itself. As it was, with an open sighted handgun, we decided that it was best not to chance a close encounter of the worst kind. After all, we had only been in the woods for 10 minutes and we still had 3 1/2 days left to hunt! If nothing else, it sure made a good "if only" story once we got back home. In case you're interested, we never did see that 3 point again.

However, the very next morning after posting myself on a rather comfortable stump located in a beautiful stand of ponderosa pine, about 9:30 along comes the subject of this report, a real beauty of a 5 point. (I've been in Arizona for two years now and I've still not gotten used to the "Western Count" method of counting points. So, if I'm talking to anyone from back home in PA, that sucker was a 12 point!) Anyway, he presented a 125 yard broadside shot. The only problem that I discovered as I slipped into a Creedmoor position, was that a low hanging branch obscured his lower half. As the .358 JDJ was sighted in at 4" high at 100 yards, I had to be extremely careful not to overshoot his back. With this and a jillion other things in mind that could go wrong, I slowly started my squeeze and promptly was rewarded with the explosion that signified the starting of the RCBS 200 gr. cast flat nose on its way at 1900 fps, courtesy of 38 grs. of H-4198. I don't remember the jolt of the recoil at all, but I was quickly rewarded with a resounding slap of "my" bullet hitting home. The big muley crumpled like a ton of bricks. I quickly reloaded and placed the cocked T/C over the previously mentioned stump and waited for what seemed like an eternity for him to try to get up. With the 4 power Leupold I could see the blood spurting from the wound, and although I had hit him higher than I had intended, he appeared to be down for good. I've never experienced



Jim's mule buck with the SSK .358 JDJ, T'SOB base, 4X Leupold and Drake Enterprises sling.

anything other than one shot kills before (last one in PA was with a .44 Mag.) so after approximately 5 minutes I got up and started to cross the ravine to tag my trophy. As I did so, the S.O.B. promptly got up and trotted away! No time for a second shot now as he was only a few yards from the crest of the hill. Besides, I had neglected to recock the T/C after letting the hammer down a few minutes earlier! After hastily considering bidding farewell to such a cruel world, I gathered my wits and started to track him, as I was sure his wound was terminal. I had only taken a few steps when I heard a shot just over the next hill. Seems that Jim Peoble and his trusty Merrill had been headed in my direction, after hearing my shot earlier. The muley had not chosen his escape route with great care as he came within 50 feet of Jim, presenting an easy target. I was treated later that day to a mouthwatering feast of deer heart. That was a first for me, and I'm already looking forward to next year's hunt, so I can try it again.

After completing our stay, which included fighting off the flies on Thursday and waking up Saturday to find our camp "buried" under 4 1/2" of snow, we discovered the cold weather had killed the truck's battery. Luckily it was Saturday and we soon found another hunter with a four wheel drive to help us get out of there. All's well that ends well, and since Jim and I did not get another chance at a second buck, we decided to share the venison from "our" buck. Next time I'll not wait till I walk up to my fallen buck to apply a finishing shot. Seems the alloy I used was a bit too hard for reliable expansion at 1900 fps. Only missed the spine by 1/2" and I guess it only stunned him for a few minutes. I'll try wheel weight metal next year. Anyway you look at it though; the .358 JDJ is one hell of a hand cannon. And thanks to the efforts of people like Phil Briggs, Arizonan's no longer have to go out of state to enjoy handgun hunting. I don't feel I'm giving up a thing to the rifle toters except about 5 pounds or so.

(The .358 will take 8x10 200 meter chickens with the above cast bullet load).

Editor's Note: I assume the shot struck at the top of or above the lung and under the spine. I had one try to get up after a similar hit from a .270 Win. several years ago.

HOTSHOT HANDGUNNER

By Wayne Randall, Lake City, MN

During the fall, I spend five days a week working and thinking about handguns and hunting on the weekends. The upcoming weekend was no exception. Thoughts of squirrels racing through treetops filled my mind on Friday afternoon. On the drive home from work, I listened to the radio. Bad News! Rain all weekend. What should I do?

Immediately upon arrival at home I rounded up my hunting gear. One S&W M17 with holster and belt, one box of CCI stingers, and one pair of Bushnell 7X lightweight binoculars. Transformation from lowly worker to Hotshot Handgunner in less than half an hour! Hunting time is also saved by the fact that I can walk out my backdoor and be in the woods in five minutes.

Upon entering the woods, all was quiet. I stood for a few minutes, leaning against a tree. Suddenly a grouse flew off his perch and landed on the forest floor, about 25 yards away. Aha! A chance to bag the wily ruffed grouse with a handgun. This doesn't happen very often in this part of Minnesota. Grouse are considered shotgun game. The grouse strutted around for awhile and then headed for thick brush. It was now or never. I aimed for the spot where his neck met his body and pulled the trigger. Chalk up one grouse with a broken neck. What a shot! My ego went up two notches.

I continued on my hunt. Walking down a deer trail I spotted a squirrel sitting on a stump approximately 30 yards away. Slowly I brought up the S & W and took deadly aim. Chalk up one squirrel, shot through the head. The Hotshot Handgunner strikes again. Ego up two more notches!

More squirrels could be heard chattering further down the trail. Stalking squirrels early in the season when the trees are still in full leaf, is very challenging. Sharp eyes and alert ears are as important as covering several acres of woods. Patience pays off very well in this type of hunting.

Suddenly a squirrel leaped from the forest floor to the side of a tree. Easy shot. No need to take careful aim. The furry animal was no more than 20 feet away. The gun went boom and the squirrel went zip. I couldn't believe I had missed. I spent five minutes looking for the squirrel or some sign that I had connected. None could be found so I continued down the trail. Another bushytail was spotted and successfully stalked to a range of 15 yards. Another clean miss! By this time my ego had returned to its original setting.

A chattering squirrel brought me back to my senses. A fifty yard stalk brought me to a range of about 20 yards. One more try. Taking careful aim I hit a branch a foot in front of the squirrel. This one immediately retreated to a hole in the oak tree. This was the last straw. My ego, which was already deflating, was now flat. I had all of this I could take. I headed home with my grouse and one squirrel.

The moral of this story is to let over confidence get a grip on your trigger finger. It is good to be confident, but we all can miss at anytime!



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A deposit of \$100.00 will be required to assure your spot on the ranch hunt. No refunds will be made unless you fail to obtain a permit. Call to co-ordinate the area you must obtain a permit for (614-264-0176).


Any Wyoming — or other area HHI member who will help other members interested in hunting please call.

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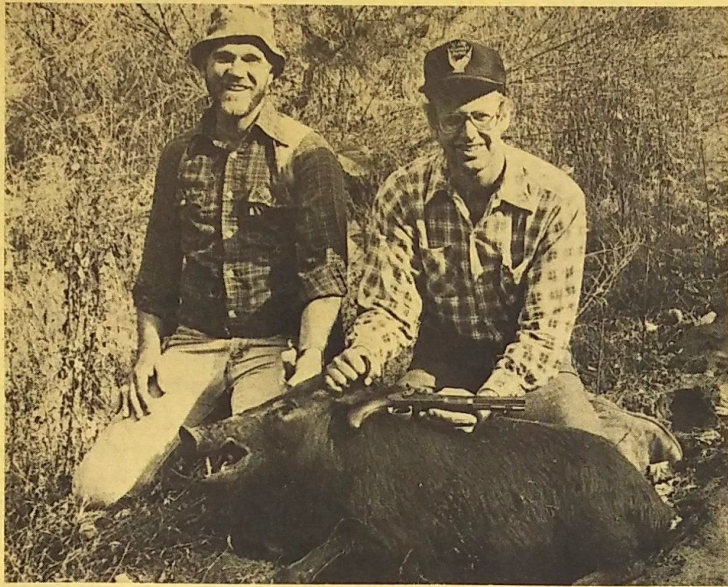
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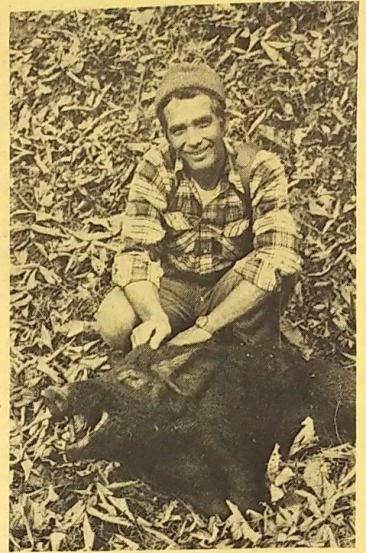


Joe Meeks, TJHP owner and Steve Wynn with the boar Steve took with the Lyman Plains pistol.

them along with some precautions which I had tested in the week or so that I had to work with the gun before traveling down here for a long awaited hunt. I had discovered that after about three or four shots the fouling was heavy enough to make a difference in the fit of the maxi ball to the barrel. But after six shots I found that I could no longer hold the normal four inch group at 25 yards. Even then I was periodically checking the ball to confirm that it was still seated against the powder where it belonged.

When Monday morning arrived I was more than ready. The past two years, my work has allowed me the privilege of getting away in the early spring and again in the fall. But with an increase of almost 40% in the photography business I couldn't get away for the coming spring hunt.

Monday morning also proved that everyone else was ready too. Our guides for the hunt were to be Lark Cardin, a veteran of many years of boar hunting, and fairly recent newcomers, Bill and Troy, Joe Meeks' newly acquired son-in-law.



Claude Widner (Thomasville, NC) made a fine shot on this black boar.

NOVEMBER 1981 HHI HUNT

By Steve Wynn, Elida, OH

Converging on Englewood, Tennessee, home of the famous Tellico Junction Hunting preserve were HHI members from four states. From California came Dave Sherman with a Ruger single action chambered for the ancient .45 Colt cartridge, but, at a velocity that Sam Colt never thought possible in his old design.

Claude and Raymond Widener were joined by fellow North Carolinian Sam Pierce, and from Pennsylvania came the likes of Rick Verne and Tom Welsh. If my memory serves me correctly, all of the above came equipped with .44 magnums ranging from Redhawks to Blackhawks.

Representing the state of Ohio, the founding state of the **Handgun Hunters International**, were Dave Cottrell, with an S & W 41 magnum and Don Davis with a .44 magnum. I was going to put my trust in a newly in-

troduced .50 Caliber Lyman Plains Pistol which J.D. had sent me to play around with for a while. (I'm having so much fun with it that some six weeks later I still haven't returned it!)

We spent the remainder of Sunday evening unpacking after using what daylight remained to do some last minute target shooting and load testing. While everyone else checked their leather gear I made sure that the barrel of the .50 was fouled well enough to help secure the T/C 370 grain maxi ball. I was planning on carrying the Plains Pistol muzzle up whenever the traveling got a bit bumpy to help prevent the slug from moving away from the powder charge of 50 plus grains of 3FG.

It should be noted that although Lyman does not recommend the Pistol be used with the various mini or maxi balls on the market I was using



Ray Widner (Thomasville, NC) is a Super Blackhawk Shooter.



HHI Hunters — B. Sherman, Ray and Claude Widener, D. Cottrell, S. Wynn, Tom Welsh, D. Davis, Sam Pierce and R. Verne. Good companions, good hunters and good shots.

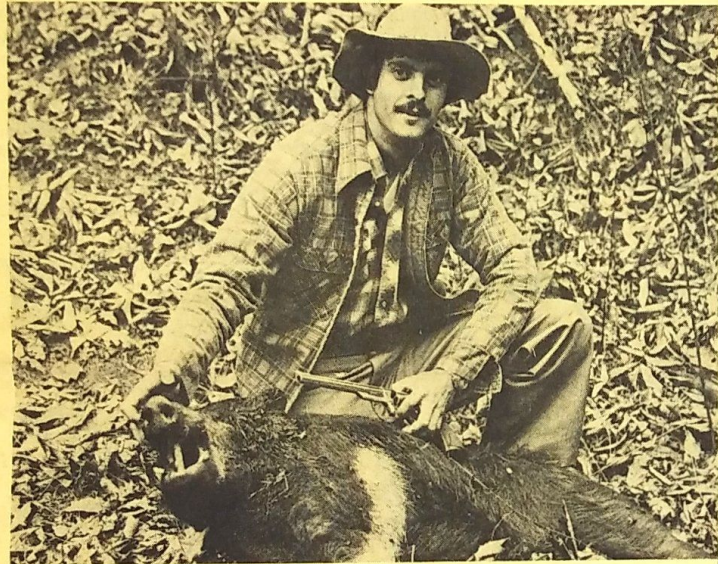
Monday morning yielded about three or four boar, and I don't think any of them would have required a second shot to finish them off. I think the boar that eventually got a second shot put into them were really insurance shots. An excellent exhibit of fine shooting by all involved.

After a lunch of fine Tennessee cooking, Tellico's head honcho, Joe Meeks elected to return to the woods with us to join us for the remainder of the first day. After about an hour into the afternoon, we found ourselves in the infamous "sinkhole", a thick brushy canyon that is surrounded by three walls of even thicker brush. In the middle of the canyon you find a lot of deep depressions that give this area its name. In the bottom of one of these is a deep cave which they have tried to close up. Believe me, you would not want to fall into the sinkhole only to find yourself slipping into the cave. It appears to go almost straight down.

Joe and I had started up a path toward the top when a boar broke away and came straight down at us. Now some may call it a charge but it wasn't, we just happened to be in the path of the boar. With no chance of getting a shot at the boar with the dogs on him the way they were, we had three



Don Davis (St. Mary's, OH) used a T/C .44 Magnum on this nice Corsican ram. Lark has been a guide at Telico since he was a pup.



Rick Verne (Brockway, PA) used .44 on his boar.

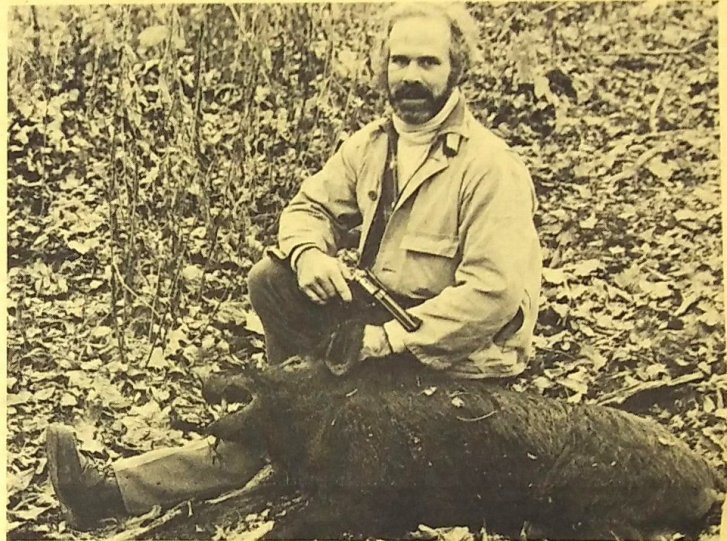
options, run, climb, or get out of the way and hide. Seeing that there weren't any trees sturdy enough to climb, and the thought that the only way to run was down the hill, and no doubt we'd have to go back up hill. That left me only one thing to do. I decided to climb into the thickest pile of brush that you could ever imagine. By the time that Joe came back up the hill I was still trying to get out of it. The boar had broken off to my left and eventually left me enough room to get a shot without the possibility of hitting a dog.



Dave Sherman (Clovis, CA) with his .45 Colt Ruger Sixgun and the hog he took with it at long range.



The Lyman .50 Plains pistol and boar taken with it and a T/C maxi-ball.



Tom Welsh (Brockway, PA) harvested his black boar with a short barreled custom .44 Magnum.

The 370 grain maxi ball entered behind the heart and traveled toward the front, exiting around the right shoulder, leaving a lot of blood and destroying the right shoulder.

When the smoke, and I mean smoke, cleared he was done except for the field dressing. But first we had to get him out of one of the sinkholes. (I think I would have chosen a better spot for the kill, if I'd had a choice.)

Although no bullet was recovered, I was really pleased with the performance of the Lyman Plains Pistol. The maxi ball had caused massive tissue damage and even if it hadn't hit anything vital, the severe blood loss surely would have caused nearly as quick a death as this almost instant one shot kill.

(Continued on Page 10)



Dave Cottrell (Lima, OH) did some fast shooting with his S & W .41 Magnum at the sinkhole.

SILHOUETTES OF THE REAL THING

By Philip C. Briggs, Phoenix, AZ

HANDCANNON MULIE

"See that little meadow in the creek bottom? Well, look left of that, in the shadow of that steep ridge face. I think that's a buck."

Ron Miller, Chuck Obert and I had spent a frustrating couple of opening morning hours spread out along the top of this ridge, listening to everybody else (it seemed) get some shooting while all we'd got was bugged-out eyeballs from trying to find horns on the few does we'd spotted.

Now Ron has a hunch — or maybe it's just wishful thinking. Anyhow, we decided to drop down a tributary drainage and take a closer look.

Once off the ridge, the drainage rapidly develops into a high walled gully, with lots of turns and a narrow flat, grassy bottom. There's deer tracks in the dried mud and just in case we might turn a corner and find ourselves face to face with a decent buck, I stop to load the pistol.

I've a few loose rounds stashed in a handwarmer pocket of my parka. Breaking the T/C open, I drop one of the panatela-sized rounds into the chamber. Under the tug of the 250 grain Speer bullet, the 358 JDJ goes into battery with a sound much like dropping a couple of .400 Nitro Express rounds into a double rifle. Come to think of it, this cartridge isn't much smaller!

Based on the 444 Marlin, JD offers this 35 caliber wildcat as one of a line of what he calls 'Hand Cannons' — and my limited testing getting ready for this trip has left me with no reason to disagree with the tag.

The barrel, SSK scope base and RCBS custom dies had come only a couple of weeks before I'd left for Wyoming and I hadn't much time to work with loads. That first weekend, I tried two loads, which used the 250 Speer spitzer, on the silhouettes after our monthly match was over: 42.0 grains/H322/Federal 210 primer/R-P Case; 44.0 grains/H4895/Federal 210/R-P Case. It took a few rounds to get the 4X Leupold sighted in, and I saved a few for friends. Still, the ten or so I tried on the animals shot well enough to send a few javelina tumbling, and make several chickens flat disappear. Based on JD's data, I'd guess either load gets about 1900 fps at the muzzle; each are two grains below his top.

I settled on the H4895 load for hunting, and had 40 ready to go the next Sunday for final sight in. Review of various ballistics tables indicated this bullet was flatter and hit harder at long range than the more obvious choice, Speer's 180 grain flat point, being but 5.0 inches high at 100 yards for a 200 yard zero; 1395 ft/lbs. of energy remains at 200 yards. (That's two and a half times what a 240 grain bullet out of a 44 mag revolver has at the muzzle!)

Once I had the scope adjusted to center the 100 yard groups five or so inches high, I set out to shoot up the rest of the 40 rounds at rocks on the 200 meter backstop. Shooting sitting down, behind a set of buffalo sticks, I managed to keep the scope off my forehead (ever get scope warts?) and

bloody the forefinger on my left hand on the opening lever (there's just not enough room behind the spur for my two-handed grip at these recoil levels).

I could hit the rocks easily, but my wrist, not (yet) having teflon bearing pads, by and by began to signal QUIT, and being as how I hope to be shooting a lot more years, I did.

Now, don't get the idea that my shorts are trimmed in lace, nor that the pistol is a frightful device. It's a hell of a hunting handgun for big game, but it bites on both ends and shooting a lot of rounds in a test session is not going to be a lot of fun.

Almost to the main channel now we're hurrying along quietly, having confirmed the lone deer was a buck. We round the last corner and find three does on the opposite hill, watching us. So much for our abilities to be quiet. Not wanting to spook the buck (who also has two does with him) with these three, we park ourselves and let them mosey away.



Briggs and his 3 point mulie. The pistol is an SSK barreled T/C in .358 JDJ Caliber. It performed as advertised — it's a cannon!

Once they're out of sight, we cross the creek bottom, climb the bank a ways and sneak a peek upstream. Can't see far enough. Our plan is to go up another tributary, on this ridge and once out of sight of the creek bottom, circle over and around to come back down to a vantage point overlooking that grassy meadow he's in.

We're most of the way up this tributary when we run into a fourth member of our party. We compare notes and continue our stalk. Ozzie decides to tag along as we work our way to a crest to scope things out. Across the creek, maybe 300 to 400 yards away now, are those two does. I duck back, collect Ron, and we start to circle back to that overlook, staying out of their sight. For some reason, Ozzie heads off in their direction. Looks like the stalk is blown. Once they see him, it'll be splitsville for the three of them.

Ron and I decide to get as high as possible quickly, and set out for the top of the low ridge above us — maybe they'll come up the next tributary over and we'll be able to get a shot.

Once on top, we slow down, and I've

just barely recovered my breath when they come up the ridge top toward us at full tilt. So much for the stalk and my choice. The buck's leading and the two does are strung out behind. I check the short line for a fourth, or more antlers (neither are seen) and turn my attention back to the three point.

He's running flat out, not bounding and passing us at 125 to 150 yards away. Ron sits down and takes a shot with his .243 Model 70. Then, almost instinctively, I do something those hunters you read about in the slick magazines never do . . . I raise the pistol, swing the crosshairs across the buck's chest and touch off a round. Now those guys never seem to take a shot they aren't sure of, and frown on this sort of thing. Oddly though, although a miss was certainly a possibility, it never entered my mind.

The buck stumbles, and slows.

"Ron, I've hit him."

Ron's standing now to better see the deer as it circles back down the hill, and sits down partly out of his sight. "Want me to finish him?"

"No!" — I've reloaded and when the deer stops about 200 yards out, I drop down into a kind of Creedmoor, rest the pistol's fore-end on my knee

I drag the buck out into the grassy meadow bottom while I wait for Ron and Ozzie. Rolling him over, I find the entrance hole high on the back, about mid-body. The bullet entered from above and behind at a steep (over-taking) angle, and the big slug should have exited low in the chest in front of the front leg on the off side.

But it hasn't. In fact, I can't find any sign of an exit. Could the 250 have blown up? Doubtful . . . but it hasn't come out.

It wasn't until I butchered the deer four days later that I solved the puzzle.

The big slug had turned on a rib and plowed through the chops the length of the deer, leaving a small round hole through 24" of meat, before breaking up the neck vertebra as it exited from the neck on the side it went in on. I'd missed the exit as I'd slit the buck's throat upon reaching it. Low and slow slugs will turn and follow major bones like this on occasion if the striking angles are shallow like this, and just keep on going. I doubt it expanded, and the only blood-shot area was a tennis-ball sized sphere around the entry. Impressive.

Ron and Ozzie arrived shortly and we shed our gear to get some photos before turning to the messy part. Chuck shows up in a few minutes, too. He'd seen the whole thing from the other hillside. He's pleased with my success, and Ozzie, who had grave doubts about this guy with the funny pistols (which he hadn't expressed) is impressed with that last shot — 95 paces it was and running.

I'm impressed too — boy does that pistol work! It really hits hard!

And you know what else? My left forefinger hurts again!

Editor's Note: This is the first indication of any of these heavy for the caliber bullets doing anything but penetrating in a straight line. If you have had similar experiences with handgun hits, let us know about them.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
HHI Hunt . . . Continued from Page 9

By the time that the first day ended, HHI members had killed nine boar and I don't think that more than one or two hogs were passed up for a chance at a bigger one. All the hogs were good sized boars that would do even the most discriminating hunter proud. It's a possibility that the recession has cut into the number of hunters making trips to hunting preserves, but, if that is the case, the quality of the boars has been the best that I have seen there since early 1979 when I made my first trip.

All in all, the HHI members that made the November 1981 HHI Hunt such a success have left a hard record other groups to follow, including sportsmanship, handling of firearms, and the very fine placement of the shots, ranging from almost pointblank to 85 plus yards, where Claude Widener put two shots into a 4-5 inch group in the side of a boar. This is what Handgun Hunting is all about.

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.44's: OF BULLETS AND MOULDS PART II: THE HEAVY WEIGHTS

By John Taffin, Boise, ID

In the last issue, we looked, in depth, at the "Keith" Bullets over 22 grains of 2400 tested in three different .44 Magnum DA's. Now we switch to the real heavyweights, those bullets weighing from 250 to 350 grains.

Recoil is always a factor when testing .44 Magnums and especially so when firing overweight bullets. A 350 grain bullet at 1300 feet per second, recoils, and recoils stoutly. Because of windy conditions, it was impossible to shoot from a rest off my Luv pickup roof. To compensate for the wind blowing my chronograph set-up over, it was necessary to mount it low in front of the Luv and all chronographing was done firing off hand, one handed.

This resulted in a lot of punishment to my shooting hand. More than I realized until I saw blood show up on the front of the trigger guard and back of the hammer even though I was wearing a light glove. The hammer slapped me behind the thumb and the front of the trigger guard caught me on the trigger finger. Dedication is fighting a cold wind and bleeding for H.H.I.!

While I did the actual firing, my hunting and shooting buddy, Joe Penner, sat in front of the pickup, eating chicken soup and reading the clock. Aren't friends wonderful? Seriously, Joe helps me a lot, especially when chronographing loads, and it is appreciated.

Recoil was a problem, but it was not the fault of the gun or loads. Upon firing the 260 grain bullets, relaxing, and riding with the recoil, I established a bad habit. When I tried to fire the heavier loads without holding on tight, I plain got bitten. Recoil will not be a problem on these loads if the shooter hangs on TIGHT!

For this segment of the series on .44 bullets, five bullets were chosen with weights ranging from 252 grains to 354 grains when cast from type metal. The bullets used were:

Number	Weights	Manufacturer
(1) # 260429	252 grains	N.E.I.
(2) # 294432	257 grains	SAECO
(3) # 310429	327 grains	N.E.I.
(4) # 315429GC	335 grains	N.E.I.
(5) # 350429GC	354 grains	N.E.I.

Bullets #1, #3, and #5 are all J. D. Jones designs available only from SSK Industries, (Rt. 1, Della Drive, Bloomington, OH 43910). These will hereafter be referred to as 260JDJ, 320JDJ, and 360JDJ. Bullet #2 is the heavyweight designed by SAECO for Silhouette Shooters and will be referred to as the 265 SAECO. The 4th bullet was designed by Lew Schafer for his .444 Schafer Magnum and is available from Three K-Industries (3701 Overland Rd., Boise, ID 83705). N.E.I. manufactures all of the JDJ and Schafer designs, but they are not available from N.E.I. The SAECO may be ordered directly from SAECO (525 Maple Ave., P. O. Box 778, Carpinteria, CA 93013). See December 1981 issue of **Sixgunner** for prices.

All of the JDJ designs are identical in appearance when loaded since the extra weight is in the body of the bullet. SAECO approaches this differently and puts the extra weight in the nose of their heavy weight

silhouette bullet. The JDJ designs have as much weight in the nose as practical to begin with and still be able to use them in M-29s and Super Blackhawks.

All of the JDJ bullets are of the modified truncated cone design with a flat nose and long straight body and cast easily from the N.E.I. aluminum mould blocks. The 315429 GC designed by Schafer is an elongated round nose design. This is the only bullet in this series not cast personally by myself, but were provided by Three-K Industries of #2 alloy so they are somewhat heavier at 335 grains than if cast from straight type metal.

With some heavier loads in both the 360 JDJ and the 335 Schafer, bullets could not be seated far enough in the case to reach the crimping groove. In fact, the round nose Schafers were flat nosed bullets by the time they were seated in the .44 Mag cases. A properly designed seating die would avoid this.

The SAECO heavyweight is a long nosed, blunted bullet designed for knocking over Silhouette targets. It also does very well on Jacks and Badgers when fired from the .430 JDJ. This design has one wide grease groove and a gas check. This bullet was cast from a SAECO four cavity mould that is the easiest mould to use of any mould I have. Bullets almost seem to cast themselves and drop out with no effort whatsoever. Every mould is a law unto itself and this particular mould is just about perfect.

The heaviest JDJ bullet and the Schafer also have gas checks. For grease grooves, the JDJ designs have 2, 3, and 3, from lightest to heaviest, and the Schafer also has 3 lube grooves.

While chronographing, all loads were fired into wet sandy dirt for a depth of 12 to 14 inches and some of the heaviest loads mushroomed even though cast of hard type metal. When fired into hard fruitwood, penetration averaged 8" with mushrooming also. Shooting into pine is futile. They just plow through.

Thirty loads were assembled using these five bullets and four powders: #2400, WW296, H4227, and WW 680. All loads using the 335 and 360 JDJ were compressed loads.

Here are my test results:

Test Guns: Ruger Super Blackhawk with 10" Douglas Bull Barrel, Barrel/Cylinder gap of .003", 1-3/4" trigger pull.

Ammunition: WW cases, CCI Magnum primers, all charges thrown "light" with RCBS measure, weighed to given charge using powder trickler. All bullets sized .430.

Chronograph: Oehler Model 12, Temperature 40°.

Load numbers 23, 29, 30 would not seat deep enough into .44 Mag cases to reach crimping groove. Of all loads fired, only two showed enough pressure to be "sticky" in The Super Blackhawk cylinder. Load # 29 resists easy extraction by ejector rod, load # 30 is just plain too hot with cases stuck to the point that I could not push

Bullet	Load	Powder	Velocity	Group Size (20 Yards)
(1) 260JDJ	21.0	# 2400	1409	1-1/4"
(2) 260JDJ	22.0	# 2400	1529	2-1/4"
(3) 265SAECO	21.0	# 2400	1434	1-3/4"
(4) 265SAECO	22.0	# 2400	1594	1"
(5) 260JDJ	22.0	WW296	1276	3/4"
(6) 260JDJ	23.0	WW296	1395	1-1/2"
(7) 265SAECO	22.0	WW296	1275	1-1/4"
(8) 265SAECO	23.0	WW296	1396	1-1/2"
(9) 260JDJ	23.0	H4227	1406	2"
(10) 260JDJ	24.0	H4227	1438	1-1/4"
(11) 265SAECO	23.0	H4227	1436	1-1/2"
(12) 265SAECO	24.0	H4227	1475	1-3/4"
(13) 320JDJ	20.5	H4227	1269	1-3/4"
(14) 320JDJ	21.0	H4227	1280	1-3/4"
(15) 320JDJ	21.5	H4227	1378	2"
(16) 320JDJ	22.0	WW680	1332	1"
(17) 320JDJ	22.5	WW680	1389	2-1/4"
(18) 320JDJ	23.0	WW680	1398	1-1/4"
(19) 320JDJ	23.5	WW680	1412	2"
(20) 320JDJ	24.0	WW680	1434	2-1/4"
(21) 335SCHAF	21.5	WW680	1236	1"
(22) 335SCHAF	22.0	WW680	1322	1-1/2"
(23) 335SCHAF	22.5	WW680	1357	1-1/4"
(24) 350JDJ	20.5	WW680	1276	1-3/8"
(25) 350JDJ	21.0	WW680	1284	1"
(26) 350JDJ	21.5	WW680	1321	1"
(27) 350JDJ	22.0	WW680	1353	1-3/4"
(28) 350JDJ	22.5	WW680	1350	1/2"
(29) 350JDJ	—	H4227	—	—
(30) 350JDJ	—	H4227	—	—

them out with ejector rod but had to tap them out. These loads are not recommended, in fact, none of these loads are necessarily recommended. With bullets this heavy and velocities this high, you are on your own.

The first 28 loads are safe in my sixgun, in fact, I think I could go higher with many of these loads, but they may be too hot for another .44 Magnum. Using WW680 and 320-360 grain bullets, maximum case capacity seems to be attained before maximum pressures are reached. This is not true using H4227, WW296, H110, or #2400. Be very careful!

The muzzle velocity of load # 4 was suspected so it was rechecked the second day. On the first day's testing, this load averaged 1606 fps and when rechecked the following day the average dropped only 12 fps to 1594 fps. This load and bullet may be this fast due to increasing pressure and velocity because it reduces case capacity somewhat compared to the 260JDJ bullet which is 65 fps slower with the same powder charge. With factory .44 Magnum loads in the 40,000 # pressure class, you may be interested to know that J. D. had loads # 15 and # 20 checked and they came out 34,100 #, and 34,300 # respectively. Three hundred twenty grains at 1400 fps with less pressure than 240 grain factory loads shows what an excellent powder WW680 is for heavy bullets!

Loads were chronographed one day and checked for accuracy another. This is where I ran into trouble. I should have known better but even though loads 29 and 30 had shown excessive pressure, I decided to fire them for grouping. Load # 30 which attained 1372 fps using the 350JDJ over 21.0 grains of H4227 cracked the forcing cone on my Custom Ruger!

Load # 29 which was the same bullet over 20.5 grains of H4227 probably started the trouble. These two loads are dangerous . . . DO NOT USE! They are included here to let you know how far NOT to go!

From the accuracy testing, it looks like the best loads are:

260 JDJ 22 gr. WW 296 @ 1276 fps, 3/4"

350JDJ 22.5 gr. WW680 @ 1350 fps, 1/2"

Five other loads grouped into 1":

265 SAECO 22 gr. # 2400 @ 1594.

320 JDJ 22 gr. WW680 @ 1332.

335 SCHAF 21.5 gr. WW680 @ 1236.

350 JDJ 21.0 gr. WW680 @ 1284.

350 JDJ 21.5 gr. WW680 @ 1321.

Since all loads were fired without the aid of a machine rest, but by using a rolled up piece of carpet on the roof of my Luv, I am surprised and very pleased at the size of these groups. Even more surprising is the heavy 350JDJ bullets over 20.5 to 22.5 grains of WW680. As a group, they are the most accurate and the heaviest load and bullet gave the tightest group of all.

This same load of 22.5 grains of WW680-350JDJ in a 4-5/8" Abilene clocked 1272 fps with a 1" group.

Shooting heavy bullets is a real experience. I especially like the 350 JDJ, BUT DO NOT, repeat DO NOT use any powder except 680 with this bullet.

Next issue, Part III: The Gas Checks.

375 J.D.J.

By Tom Shippy, No. 26

I used to subscribe to the theory that in order to have an efficient pistol cartridge you needed a small case stoked with a fast burning powder operating at high pressure levels. While these ingredients do perform well in many cartridges, the .221 fireball and .30 Herrett for example, the opposite also works. Namely, large cases filled to near capacity with slower burning powders. Many silhouette shooters are using powders like 3031 (not way down on the burning rate) and 4320 (3rd slowest of the IMR powders according to Speer's manual No. 10) with excellent results in both large and small cases. I tried 3031 in my Merrill .30 Herrett a while back just as an experiment as I've had good results with 4227 in this cartridge. 26 grains of 3031 with 130 grain Hornady spire left a lot of unburned powder in both the barrel and the case. I didn't do any

(Continued on Page 12)

accuracy testing with this load but roughly figured out approximate sight settings for silhouette. The first time out with this load I hit 30 targets of which three failed to fall. I should point out that I was forced to use large pistol primers in these bottleneck cases because the firing pin in my Merrill wouldn't do the job on rifle primers. Maybe the incomplete burning was due to the choice of primers, I don't know, but anyway a fairly slow burning powder yielded fair results for the first attempt with it at a silhouette match. My basic loads for the .44 Magnum, 20 to 22 grains of 2400 with a 250 grain cast bullet, leave residue in the barrel but will still outperform all of the factory loads I've tried in the accuracy department. To further illustrate my point, when Vern Juenke chambered my .270 VJ (222 Remington Magnum improved necked to 270) the load he recommended for silhouette shooting used 4320 with a 130 grain bullet. This powder wouldn't have been my first choice in working up a load but it works so well I've no reason to experiment further. It leaves a little residue in the barrel but leaves little else to be desired as proven by Ken Juenke's string of 40's with a similar combination. Gary Geraud, Saratoga, Wyoming, has been getting excellent results with several TC wildcats and standard cartridges using 3031 and 4320. I've been trying to get him to write up some of his results in long range varminting and handgun benchresting. It would make for fascinating reading as he and Joe Stuemke have been doing some real unique testing with contenders.

Anyway, getting to the point of all this, the .444 Marlin case used in making the 375 J.D.J. is a large capacity case that requires quite a few grains of powder to fill. The basic idea behind this wildcat is to use large amounts of slow burning powders keeping the case nearly filled and the pressures low. That this works well was further verified the first time I shot the pistol from the bench. At 50 meters 3 270 grain Hornady spire points backed by 40 grains of H322 (not maximum) cut into each other. That's a good way to start load testing. The very first round I fired from this pistol I hit a turkey at 150 meters offhand. With my offhand shooting rating about a three on a scale of 1 to 10, I was really tickled. It's hard not to like a gun after initial impressions like that. SSK barrels are premium grade barrels which generally tend to shoot tighter groups than the average barrel off the factory line. The lockup on the two SSK barrels I have are as tight as they can be and still open. In fact, the first time I put the .375 on my frame it took a lot of effort to open. Holding the tang with the right hand and smacking it hard with the left opened it only after several attempts. After the initial time it opens slightly easier but there is still not a bit of play. This can be attributed to good fitting and the SSK heavy duty bolt spring.

Case forming for the .375 is a snap. Lube a .444 Marlin case and run it in the full length sizer die. It's a good idea to size the case a little at a time, trying the case in the chamber until it just closes and then set the lock ring. I sometimes smoke the cases or look for a ring on the shoulder — just a real faint ring as too heavy a ring indicates a little more sizing is in order. Sizing the case too much could result in short case life and poor accuracy. (ED:

Doesn't seem to make any difference in this case — I haven't lost one yet!) Of course, this isn't unique to this wildcat but a good general reloading procedure.

My .375 barrel arrived Mag-Na-Ported and also with one of SSK's full length ribs which provided a sharp contrast to the bluing of the barrel. (ED: All barrels now hard chromed.) It's an attractive rib with the appearance of brushed aluminum with a micro for the rear sight and a Lyman 17A on the front. This setup works real well for silhouette which I plan on trying with cast bullets. I noticed that this rib is now available machined and ready for scope rings. This would be a good rig for these hand cannon calibers as would the shorter custom scope bases they've had available for some time. I've had two of these and have been real pleased with both. They accommodate six hex head screws which should hold this mount on any chambering a person is brave enough to hold on to.

I took my .375 JDJ antelope hunting last fall and only had a few hours on a Saturday morning as our state silhouette match was to start at 1:00 P.M. After trying to stalk a couple of bucks and covering several miles of terrain I was pretty sure I was going to have to go home empty handed. Besides, after the first few shots are fired opening day and with all the activity in the field the antelope tend to get real spooky. Some will even run at the first sign of a vehicle over a mile away. We spotted a small buck 4-500 yards away and since it was nearly 10:00 decided to give it one last try. Staying behind a series of low ridges we were gradually closing in on where the buck was last seen. Topping a small knoll we practically stumbled into another nice buck that was lying watching the open area to the south. I've often wondered if he had been lying low there all morning unbothered by all the activity around. From his vantage point he could scan most of the area where danger was apt to approach. Maybe that's how smart bucks get to be big bucks. Anyway, I drew up on him offhand from about 100 feet or less and shot over him by about a foot. (I have concentrated more on my off-hand shooting this year and its been about time.) Of all my misses, I'll bet 90% have gone high. He took off like a scalded hound and I'll be damned if I could find him in the 4X Leopold I was packing. I had just mounted it one week previous and hadn't tried tracking anything in it. You might say I hadn't prepared as well as I could have. Actually I'm still not real used to scope mounted handguns. As luck would have it he stopped broadside about 200 yards away and I hit him in the lung area just a little further back than I would have liked. This shot was taken from a laid back position with the barrel between my knees. He was hard hit and we could instantly see his off side covered with blood as he turned and started off. Knowing that he wouldn't go far or I should say hoping that he wouldn't go far, we elected to stay put and watch from a distance. The tenacity of antelope can sometimes be surprising. Antelope can go for miles seemingly running on adrenalin alone after losing a lot of blood. This one made it around a bend and down into some brush about 100 feet and laid down. By the time we got to him he was dead. His horns measured 14½" and compared

to last years 12 inchers (also with a pistol) he looked pretty good. The load used was 43 grains of H322 with Hornady's 270 spire point. Another load I've been wanting to try is 46 grains of IMR 4895, Federal 215 primer, and the same Hornady 270 grain bullet. This hunting load delivers 1950 fps. but probably shouldn't be used as an everyday load.

The ballistic co-efficient of .375 bullets is higher than one might expect. The 270 grain spire point's co-efficient is .485 which is the 8th highest in Hornady's new 3rd edition. This includes all the needle looking match bullets such as Hornady's 162 grain 7mm whose co-efficient incidentally was .725 in their old manual and is only .560 in their 3rd edition. I thought at first I must have been looking at the figures for their 162 grain spire point but not so; it shows .520. Another change was their 200 grain .338 spire point which jumped from .384 to .403. I had noticed once when seating these in the .338CJMK that the nose shape had changed on a new batch of bullets and I had to adjust the seating stem. I don't spend a lot of time pouring over tables like these but I thought this was interesting. Apparently the figures we re-evaluated or the bullet shape changed slightly.

Sierra's 300 grain spitzer BT .375 bullet has a co-efficient of .583 and I

believe this ranks it 7th highest in their manual.

Larry Kelly pretty well proved the effectiveness of the .375 J.D.J. on big game with his African safari. With 300 grain FMJs he completely shot through two elephant's heads and with the 270 Hornady killed more game than I can remember. Lacking elephant in Wyoming and having struck out last season on elk I decided to run a simple penetration test of my own. Using the 270 Hornady (300 grain FMJ's are outa sight in price) I lined up treated fence posts and shot at and around them. I say at and around them because I had just taken off the scope and hadn't reinstalled iron sights. The first shot that landed zippered through all three 5½-6½" diameter posts. Two others stayed in the back half of the 3rd one. The load was the same one I killed the antelope with — 43 grains of H322. With 300 FMJ's Kelly has said the penetration is simply amazing. Around here the only use I can think of for those would be shooting through trees and I'll probably get around to that someday also.

Of big bore cartridges chambered in handguns the .375 J.D.J. appears to be one of the most versatile available. It grows on a person. Just ask Larry Kelly what he's going to use for most all his hunting this year.

THE COLT SINGLE ACTION: (1873-1981)

By John Taffin, No. 76, Boise, ID

On February 23, 1876, a board of officers at Springfield Arsenal met to decide between three single action revolvers for Army use. These Sixguns were the Colt Model of 1873, the Smith & Wesson Schofield of 1874, and the Remington Model of 1875. When the tests were completed, the Colt Single Action Army was an easy winner, the Smith & Wesson and Remington SA's perished, but the Colt SA has lived to be a grand old man of 108, but alas, now even the Colt has died.

1981 marks the final death blow for one of the greatest handguns of all time. The Colt Model P, Thumbuster, Single Action Army, Equalizer, Peacemaker, or whatever your favorite title may be has gone down for the third and final time.

Sam Colt should always be remembered for the Powerful Walkers and Dragoons, the elegantly beautiful .36 1851 Navy, and the best of the lot, the .44 1860 Army which combined portability with power. However, Sam'd died before the cartridge firing Colt Peacemaker of 1873 was born and some other unknown designer must be credited for giving handgunners not only the best handgun of the 19th century, but one that almost made it to the 21st century and whose progeny such as the Ruger Super Blackhawk most certainly will.

The Colt SA and its contemporaries such as the Remington, the Smith & Wesson, the Merwin & Hulbert, and even the Colt and Remington Cap-N-Balls have never been recognized by historians for the significant role they played in the development of America. At the same time, the screen writers and fiction writers have made the sixgun the pivotal point of our history. The real truth lies somewhere in between.

When the then new Colt fixed ammunition revolver was supplied to the Army for testing, Smith & Wesson

already had been in production for four years with their .44 break-top SA's. When the patent ran out, Colt was quick to adopt a bored-through cylinder from Smith along with a fixed top strap from Remington. The Army began buying Colt SA .45's and during the period from 1873-1893, 37,000 "Peacemakers" were purchased for issuance to the regular Army. The Colt factory never officially used the term "Peacemaker" which was coined by one of the distributors for Colt. The factory referred to the Colt SA simply as the Model P.

From 1873 to 1941, the Model P was chambered in 36 calibers from the .22 Rimfire to the .476 Eley, with the most popular being the still lively .45 Colt. Of 357,000 revolvers, 160,000 were chambered for the powerful .45 Colt. The .45 was followed in popularity by the .44-40 (71,000), .38-40 (50,000) and .32-20 (43,000). All figures are approximations of course. Two of today's most popular chamberings, the .357 Magnum and .44 Special both numbered about 500 apiece before lagging sales, worn out machinery and war time demands brought the production of the SA to an end. The .357 Magnum which came into being in 1935 only saw a few years of production and many of them were shipped to England at the beginning of the War. Heavy loading of the .44 Special was accomplished by Elmer Keith and others but was the firearm of connoisseurs, not the average shooters. DA's and Auto's were the rage in the '20's and '30's and there was little demand for, and small notice when the Peacemaker died.

During the '50's, Westerns were the most popular fare on T.V. and Colt SA's were once again wanted by the public. It was at this time that Bill Ruger introduced his excellent .22 Single-Six which was soon followed by

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Colt . . . Continued from Page 12

the .357 Blackhawk and .44 Blackhawk. Colt bowed to demand, retooled, and brought the Single Action back to life in 1955. The new-old revolvers were beautiful, well put together and terribly over priced at \$125. The first productions were .45's in 7 1/2" and 5 1/2" with the quick draw craze soon bringing the 4 3/4" .45 SA back to production. At this time, the .38 Special chambering was also available, with the .44 Special being introduced in 1957 and the .357 Magnum in 1960. There were a few made with extra .45 ACP cylinders and at least one in .256 Winchester. So the 36 Calibers of the Pre-War Colt were considerably pared down in the post war years.

In 1961, the fine New Frontier was introduced and subsequently chambered in all four calibers (.45, .357, .44, .38). All of these bring premium prices now with the .38's and .44's bringing four figures. For those interested in such things, here are the production totals of the Post-War Colt SA's: (figures approximate)

	Single Action	New Frontier
.45 Colt	37,000	1,600
.38 Special	11,700	50
.44 Special	2,200	250
.357 Magnum	17,400	2,200

The New Frontiers of 1961-1974 make excellent hunting handguns but are much too valuable to be used as such. Two other variations were also available with the Post War Colts: The 12" Buntline Special, available only in .45 with slightly over 4,000 being produced and the 3" Sheriff's Model, about 500 being produced in 1960. These sold very slowly and their original price tag of \$139.95 has now grown to \$3,000 or more.

Although it is not generally known, Colt did make one Colt SA in .44 Magnum. The regular frame of the Colt SA is too small for the .44 Magnum, even though some with more courage than sense have so chambered their Peacemakers. In 1972, a factory prototype Colt Single Action Army was produced in .44 Magnum on a larger frame, with a longer cylinder and grips. This sixgun, from the pictures, is a dead ringer for the A.I.G. Abilene except for the fluted cylinder!

In 1974, the Post War Colt Single Action was discontinued, so the SA died the second time. However, Colt retooled, made a few changes such as new hand design and ratchet design on the back of the cylinder, and did away with the cylinder bushing. The first of the "Third Issue" Colts were shipped in 1976. The "New" Colts were available in .45 and .357 with the .44 Special coming back in 1978 and after a 40 year absence, the Colt SA is once again available, albeit for a very short time, in .44-40.

Colt has offered virtually every barrel length and finish in all four calibers in both SA and New Frontier Models plus Buntlines in .45, .44 and .44-40 and a special run of 3" Sheriff's Models in a dual cylinder .44 Special/.44-40 combination.

In spite of all the models offered in 1981, Colt announced that the end of the year would be the end of the Single Action. It was inevitable that the Colt would die. With price tags of \$475 to \$575 on a sixgun that is basically the same firearm it was over 100 years ago, the end had to come. Colt SA's are beautiful, perhaps the best looking

sixgun ever designed. But the newest cartridge they are chambered for (.357) is 46 years old, and when it is possible to buy two Ruger Super Blackhawk .44's plus a considerable amount of ammunition for the same price as one Colt, only a Single Action Nut like myself would buy one.

Since the Colt came back to life for the third time, one SA, and two New Frontiers have been added to my collection. A selection of barrels and cylinders have been hoarded away for the day when I stumble onto a good buy in an old shot-out Colt SA that I can rebuild, but even if the Colt had stayed in production, it has been priced out of my class and it is doubtful I would have ever purchased another new one.

Should the Colt SA have lived this long? If I had to carry a handgun daily for defensive purposes, I certainly would not feel inadequate with a 4 3/4" SA in .45 or .44. While it would not be my first choice (.45-1911) or second choice (S & W 4" .44 Special), it would certainly serve the purpose and no other handgun is any faster, probably not as fast as a Single Action for the first shot. Having participated in fast draw, I was never able to get faster with any other type firearm than my Colt SA.

Nostalgia has kept the SA Colt alive, our memories of Western movies and T.V. Westerns have maintained an artificial life support system for the old Colt. When inflation was coupled with removal of the life support, the Colt had to die. It will be missed.

How good are the Colt SA's? Being privileged to own six Single Actions (two .45's, four .44 Specials), two Bisleys (both .44 Specials), two New Frontiers (one .45/.45ACP, the other .44 Special/.44-40), I feel qualified somewhat to judge.

Some of my Colt SA's were tested, in three chamberings: .44 Special, .44-40, .45 Colt. These results show that Colt's are definitely First Class Sixgunners.

Sixgun	Load/Bullet	Group Size (20 Yards)	Velocity
7-1/2" NF .44 Special	17.5 # 2400/429421	1"	1250 fps
	7.5 UNIQ/429421	1"	980 fps
4-3/4" SA .44 Special	17.5 # 2400/429421	1-1/4"	1101 fps
	7.5 UNIQ/429421	1-1/4"	843 fps
7-1/2" Bisley .44-40*	9.0 UNIQ/42798	5/8"	
	10.0 UNIQ/42798	1-1/8"	
7-1/2" NF .44-40**	9.0 UNIQ/42798	1"	
	10.0 UNIQ/42798	7/8"	
7-1/2" SA .45 Colt	9.0 UNIQ/454190	1-1/4"	
	9.0 UNIQ/454424	1-1/2"	

NOTE:

* 7-1/2" Bisley is fitted with Post War .44 Special barrel and original .44-40 Cylinder.

** New Frontier 7-1/2" .44 Special using Bisley .44-40 Cylinder.

Bullet # 429421 is Lyman Keith (246 Grains), # 42790 is Lyman .44-40 Bullet (205 Grains), # 454190 (250 Grains) is standard .45 Conical Bullet; # 454424 is Lyman Keith (250 Grains). All loads which were not chronographed are in the 900-1000 fps range.

For those not familiar with the Pre-War Colts, the Bisley is a variation of the Standard Single Action which basically differs in three areas: (1) a wider, lower hammer spur; (2) a wide "target" trigger; (3) a radically altered grip frame which is big in the backstrap and deep behind an oversized trigger guard. This results in the most comfortable grip ever devised for shooting and the worst for "Quick Draw".

The Colt SA has been the basis for many custom guns in the past,



Colt New Frontier versatility. Top .44 Special and .44-40. Bottom .45 Colt, .45 ACP, .45 Auto Rim.



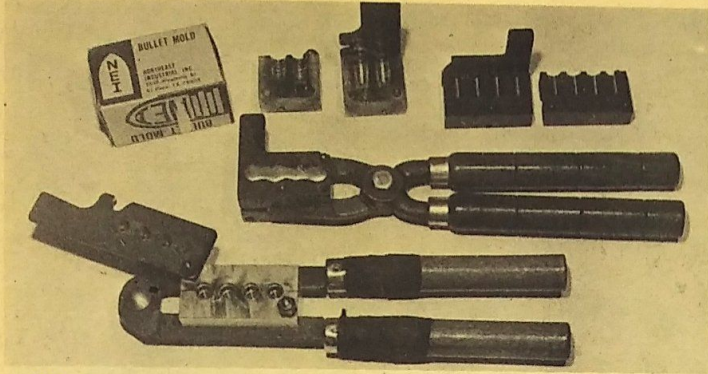
The 10" Custom Ruger and 4-5/8" Abilene. Both show extreme accuracy with heavy cast bullets. Bullets shown are a variety unfired and recovered. Action, very tight and perfectly timed.

There are a number of imitators still around, especially foreign repros that are still using the basic Colt lockwork which is almost 150 years old. Ruger went a different route, keeping the best features of the Colt and modernizing it with adjustable sights, frame mounted firing pin and a coil spring lockwork that is virtually indestructible.

The Colt is dead but Rugers, Abilenes, Dragons, and El Dorado's live on. It's too bad Colt didn't "modernize" the Single Action in 1955 when it was resurrected. Perhaps it would still be alive if they had. Pure pleasure is the only way to describe shooting Colt SA's. They are heavy enough to dampen recoil in .357 Magnum; and factory velocities in .45 and .44 Special are very mild. However, both the .45 and .44 Special can be loaded up for game getting power: 1000 fps for the .45/260 and 1200 fps for the .44 Special/240. One of my future projects will be to work on modern loads in .44-40 in a New Frontier and an Abilene .44 Magnum rechambered to .44-40. No practical purpose, just curious.

Versatility is the word for Colt SA's which can easily become two or three sixguns just by adding new cylinders. My two New Frontiers have the capability of firing five cartridges: .44 Special with extra .44-40 Cylinders, .45 Colt with extra cylinder that handles both .45ACP and .45 Auto Rim loads. Old timers knew that .38-40 and .41 Long Colt barrels were identical and all they had to do was switch cylinders. One wildcat, the .401 Eimer Special was built up using rifle brass and a Colt SA .41 and duplicated .41 magnum ballistics 50 years ago. Many of the pre-war SA .44-40's became .44

(Continued on Page 19)



NEI aluminum and SAECO steel 2 and 4 cavity molds for heavy bullets. Both types of molds work well.



The grip shape of the Colt Bisley (top) and hammer are different from those used in the S.A. Army.

Specials by dropping in new cylinders. The Single Action Colt, especially in 4-3/4", just plain "feels good" in the hand, carries well in a hip holster and is the one sixgun I would like to own in an engraved version sometime before I'm called home. The design is such that the Colt looks deadly efficient and

yet beautifully elegant; it's a good feeling to be around a campfire with a Single Action tucked in the waistband. The Colt may be dead but it will live on for many years. As long as men (and women) appreciate good guns, the Colt SA will never die.

TRICK SHOOTING

By Albert Pfitzmayer
Franklin Square, New York

According to Guinness, the most renowned trick shooter of all time was Annie Oakley. For almost 35 years, she demonstrated her ability to split playing cards by cutting them in half with the end on cut. She also could hit coins in mid-air, and concluded most of her acts by shooting a lit cigarette from the lips of her husband's mouth.

In the interest of all dedicated shooters, with safety first and last, I have never attempted any such live target feats. For many years, both my wife and myself have enjoyed the practice makes perfect routine whenever our leisure time would allow. My wife and I both could be found working hard at the pistol range to perfect our trick shooting styles.

Our trick shooting has captivated both the young and the old, people from all over the world. My wife, Phyllis, takes special pride in selecting a youngster out of the audience, whereby she positions herself in a direction to afford her young admirer a perfect view down range as she shoots backwards with a hand mirror. Not to lose anyone's attention, she usually splits a card backwards with a mirror.

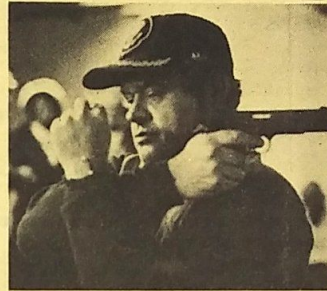
On a few successful days, we have been able to conclude our act by splitting a playing card backwards with the optical aid of a diamond ring or any flat polished stone that reflects light. After all the hand guns are safely enclosed in our gun boxes, we pass out the matched, split playing cards to all the youngsters and oldsters who ooh and ahh, as they examine their treasured souvenirs. In Kenya, East Africa, we have entertained thousands of tribesmen, Kenya Rifle and Pistol Association, civilians, military and police combined. After every shooting demonstration, we always hold an hour or two conversation with the crowd.

Imagine being challenged to a friendly bow and arrow turkey shoot by a young, proud Masai warrior or trying to explain that it's the bullet that hits the target first, not the boom. I truly love the African people for their honesty and sincere captivation as we perform our trick shoots for them. We always stress the point, that our handguns are only as safe as the people that handle them. We usually have to stretch a rope across a point that separates the shooters from the audience. Prior to the trick shooting demonstration, both my wife and myself give a brief, but convincing safety talk before a shot hits the paper.

Recently on one of our safaris to Africa, we were requested to perform our trick shooting demonstrations as a

fund raiser to send an African Pistol Team to the Olympics. We were delighted at the invitations, and for a hectic three weeks, our trick shooting demonstrations raised an astounding sum of money for the African Team. We dedicated our talents by being able and available as fund raisers for any and all worthy causes.

There are a number of difficult shooting tricks that always seem to please the crowd. Splitting a playing card in half, shooting backwards using a finger ring with a good reflective stone never fails to intrigue the audience. Shooting backwards at a target with a mirror in the left hand extended, the right hand extended with an S & W Model 29, .44 Magnum also is a good concluding phase of a trick shooter's presentation. My wife's specialty is shooting double action with the revolver upside down using the small finger as the trigger finger. In various points of the clock style positions.



Al demonstrates shooting while aiming through a diamond ring.



Phyllis shooting cards in half with the Python inverted at the Nairobi Police Range.

The safest and easiest way to embark into the field of attempting to try your hand at trick shooting would be, Number One and in order:

1. At least an expert handgun shooter.
2. Have at least 5 years experience with the handgun.

3. Never start on an indoor range, to become familiar with sight alignment and backward shooting, an outdoor range is a must for beginning trick shooters.

At the top of the list, without a doubt, first and last, the rules of safety must apply, such as being aware of a safe backstop. Never practice trick shooting fundamentals alone. Try to have another shooter on hand to observe where every shot has printed on the paper. Avoid a group of shooters all attempting to out do each other. Two hard working shooters each observing the other's faults are quick to notice mistakes rather than a large group.

The easiest trick style shooting to master would be shooting straight on standard single action target competition stance, attempting to split a playing card in half. First, start at 25 feet. After the flutter of the halves of the playing cards become consistent, then send the card down to the 50 foot marker. Working into tricks such as splitting a bullet on an axe blade are easily mastered after the splitting of the playing card has been thoroughly mastered.

Sight alignment, trigger squeeze, breathing, and foremost, safety, all equally play an important role in a good presentation, not only for your audience, but for yourself. Every shooter is pleased with a good shooting performance. Safety fits perfectly into such a delivery. Imagine the trick shooter pointing his revolver or automatic at the audience each time a new shooting position is assumed. The image of the professional trick shooter's safety performances should be absolutely flawless. Through continued extensive efforts on behalf of my wife and myself, we have projected the image of the American handgunner throughout a number of African and European countries. Our names are easily forgotten, but I know our audiences long remember our match accuracy and professional application of "safety first and last" through trick shooting.

THE HIT MAN

By Doc Rogers, Petersburg, WV

That would probably be my title if the local groundhog population could talk. In the last six years, I have come to enjoy the pursuit of this crafty and challenging prey. My relentless pursuit of this lowland grizzly has been with

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the tenacity of a mafioso hit man, and fortunately, my success has been just as good. My six year total is 629. Each year's tally has grown — from 32 the first year to an even 150 this year. I'm sorry I can't say the entire total was taken with handguns, but it wasn't. I did manage to bag 14% of these hogs (88) with 11 different handguns.

The harvesting of this many groundhogs has given me a wealth of experience in sharpening my hunting skills and has allowed me to evaluate the performance of many handguns. I would like to share these experiences with fellow HHI members. Maybe you can learn from my mistakes and my good fortunes.

There are several ways to hunt groundhogs. Each way has its own merits. I've tried just about all of them, and I've formed definite opinions. One common way, but less than satisfying to me, is to ride country roads and look for 'hogs. When some are spotted, you quickly leave your car, set up, and shoot fast before the 'hogs hit their holes. This is not a very productive way for handgun hunters. The 'hogs seen under 100 yards usually leave very fast and success for a shot is not all that great over 100 yards. The modern groundhog knows its vehicles well.

A second, more satisfying way to shoot 'hogs is to find a large, newly cut hayfield, and get a good position on the high side and middle of the field along its edge. From this vantage point with a good pair of binoculars, 8 x 40's or 10 x 40's, a lot of ground can be covered with your eyes with little stress on your legs. This is really the fun way to start new 'hog hunters. Shooting is usually medium to long range, a definite minus for handgun hunters. Sure, the newer calibers, .30 and .357 Herrett, the JDJ's, and the rifle calibers in pistols are potent enough for 'hogs from 200 to 300 yards. But how many average handgun hunters can shoot that far accurately with open sights or 4 power scopes? I've been shooting for a while and have become quite proficient, but I don't mind admitting that misses are more frequent than hits beyond 75 yards. A rig like my self-assembled .243 and 6 x 18 Redfield scope make very long shots almost easy. I clean quite a few beyond 300 yards with a personal best of 485 (36") paces. The

success is just not as sweet as when I burn one at 75 yards with my Model 29.

Another favorite way to shoot 'hogs in my area is to walk from medium size field to medium size field in a circuitous route. Shoot a while in one field, walk to another field and shoot some more. If you're lucky enough to find four or five fields close together, you can get some good exercise and good shooting by moving frequently between fields. Be careful, too many consecutive days shooting will make the survivors wary. I've found that once weekly rounds usually leaves lots of action. This kind of shooting can be productive for handgun hunters. Fast and quiet entrance to each field usually finds a few 'hogs feeding. Close to medium range shots are likely. This kind of shooting is still exciting to me, but it's not the best.

My all time number one way to burn 'hogs is what I call the fun-house way. I hunt on a number of farms that have old, decrepit houses and barns. I can easily sneak from house to barn and back again. There are always several holes around each building. Many times I've caught a 'hog on its way to its den, or in the grass, feeding. This kind of action requires a fast draw, fast shootin', and some good sneakin'. My fun-house way never has a predictable outcome and has sharpened my hunting skills and the 'hogs' defensive skills a great deal the last few years. Two of my most memorable kills have come by this method. The first occasion saw my friend, Rod, and I walking along several buildings. Suddenly, a groundhog made a mad dash from one house to another. As I said, "There he goes," I drew my 8-3/8" Smith .44, thumb cocked it, came into a two-handed combat stance, fired, and hit the sucker through both lungs while he was running full stride 12 paces away. I looked at Rod. He still had his hand on his gun in his holster. All of this action took a maximum of three to four seconds. To say he was shocked and I was surprised was an understatement. I guess practice makes perfect. I've duplicated this feat three times, twice with a 6" Python, and once with a 5" Ruger Super Blackhawk.

My second unbelievable kill came while stalking along an old barn. I heard some scratching on the inside floor behind the wall I was walking along. When I was 3' from the end of

the wall, a groundhog looked around the wall at me. Even though my gun was out, I couldn't get on him. The 'hog immediately turned tail and went around the wall. Instinctively, I suppose, I took one step forward, stuck my 8-3/8" Model 29 180° around the corner of the wall (pointing the opposite direction of my body) and fired. I paused a second, almost too afraid to look around the wall. Finally, I peeked. I just about wet myself when I saw Mr. 'Hog four paces away . . . DEAD! The 250 grain lead SWC caught him between the shoulders and wiped out his spine. To say I was shocked, again, was another understatement. An 8" revolver, 24 gr. WW 296, a lead slug, and a blind shot — unbelievable.

My fun-house way of hunting 'hogs is exciting, and is an excellent way to improve shooting skills. This will probably remain my number one way of shooting 'hogs. It's tailor made for the handgun hunter.

I think now a summary of firearms and loads used in my groundhog kills may be helpful to some of the newer handgun hunters. Eighty-eight kills has allowed me to form some definite opinions on guns and loads.

9mm Parabellum

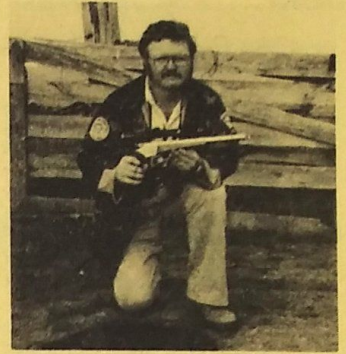
My 9mm Browning Hi Power (that I bought for \$103 retail) has accounted for only two 'hogs. Years ago, I settled on a load of 6.0 grains of Unique and the 115 grain Sierra Hollow Cavity bullet for best accuracy. One 'hog was hit in the head at five yards and the other in the shoulder at nine yards. Both ran about five yards to their holes and died in the entrance. The 9mm is definitely not a dependable one shot stopper. I'll let NATO and our services use it. I pass.

.38 Special

Again, I have limited experience with rounds. I've burned two 'hogs with my hideaway gun, an S & W Model 15, 2". I use 6.0 grains of Unique under a 148 grain Hornady Hollow base wadcutter — hollow point forward. Both 'hogs were hit through the shoulders and were instantly killed. The wound channels were tremendous for the size of the bullet. This is one .38 Special load that I find socially acceptable, if you get my drift.

.357 Magnum

I've used a 6" Ruger Blackhawk, a 4" Python, and a 6" Python. The loads used were 14.4 grain 2400 and a 158 grain Hornady hollow point, 15.5



Doc Rogers with his .375 JDJ and a well perforated groundhog.

grain 2400 and a 146 grain Speer hollow point, 15.2 grain 2400 and a 158 grain Hornady flat point, 16.5 grain WW 296 and the 150 grain Sierra Hollow cavity, and 18.2 grain WW 296 and the 125 grain Sierra Hollow cavity. All of these loads have killed equally well if placed in the shoulder-lung area. They are about 85% one shot stoppers. Placed outside this vital area reduces stoppers to less than 10%.

The 4" Python just doesn't balance quite right in my large hands. The Ruger and the 6" Python balance perfectly, especially when Pachmayr grips are used. Any 'hogs in their sights (and two deer in the past) are in mortal danger. I've shot four or five 'hogs running with the 6" Python. This revolver is simply without peer as to balance. It's just a shame there's not a bigger hole in the barrel. The Ruger could be just as good if I could get a decent trigger pull on it. It did give me one remarkable shot. I saw a smart 'hog in a hole under an old log cabin. He would peek at me every once in a while. This game lasted for over 30 minutes. I got bored and decided to chance a shot. I took careful aim on his nose when his head popped out. As the gun recoiled, all I could see was a cloud of dust at the 'hog's hole. I figured I shot low in the den's entrance. After walking the 46 paces to the hole, I found Mr. 'Hog dead. The 146 grain Speer Hollow Point had entered the 'hog's open mouth and removed the

(Continued on Page 16)

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entire back of his head. That has been my longest .357 Magnum kill.

.45 ACP

The only .45 I've owned — a nickle Mark IV — is more of a story than the kills it has made. I was shooting with a boy one day when he pulled this one new out of the box. He immediately ran a clip full through it and only kept one round on a 25 yard target. He declared the pistol to be a piece of junk. I offered to relieve him of it. Not wanting to take advantage of me, he sold it for \$130. Since then, I have shot 1-1/2" groups at 25 yards and a high of 92% on a PPC course. Its performance on groundhogs, however, has been a puzzle to me. I've only killed three 'hogs with it, probably too limited experience for a fair appraisal. Two 'hogs took three hits and one took four hits in the lung-chest area. All 'hogs were hit equally with Sierra 185 grain Hollow cavity 7.5 grain Unique and lead 200 gr. SWC 7.5 gr. Unique. I know these loads should be better than my experience and I really can't explain the results. I'm a revolver man and I hate to chase brass. I really haven't tried all that hard to develop other loads or look into this matter any further.

.44 Magnum

This is the caliber that has been my number one groundhog hit getter. (That is, until this year, but that story comes later.) Killing groundhogs was very difficult with a .44 early in my career. I started with a stock Super Blackhawk. This is not exactly the easiest gun to start shooting. The trigger pull was miserable. After a year of practice and a new trigger spring, I managed to get a few hits out to 40 yards. Three summers ago, I was walking through a field of 18" to 24" grass. Rifle shots were out of the question, so I figured a stalk might scare up something. Suddenly I had groundhogs everywhere. I pivoted and shot the Ruger as fast as possible. After just a few seconds, I had three 'hogs down and saw three more running away. Apparently I had stumbled on a den of groundhogs. That's the most furious shooting I've ever had. I'd give anything to have that situation over again. With a few years experience, all of those hogs would be in mortal danger now.

My standard load in those early days of the Ruger was 21.5 gr. 2400 and a Hornady 240 gr. Hollow point or a Speer 225 gr. Hollow point. All worked equally well and all proved to be about 95% stoppers even on non-mortal wounds.

After a year of using the Ruger, I really got hooked on .44s. I bought an 8-3/8" and a 4" Model 29. The sights of the 8" seemed to be glued to all targets it faces. I dropped the fast draw 'hog mentioned earlier the first year I had the 8". A source of fantastically beautiful 240 grain lead semi-wadcutters opened up. After much experimentation, I settled on a load of 24.0 gr. WW 296 under this bullet as my standard .44 Magnum load for the 8" Smith. I use it to this day. It seldom fails me. I've managed to kill 26 groundhogs with this load. Twenty-five of these have been one shot kills. Most of these have come by my multiple field walking technique. Several kills stand out.

I've already mentioned my fast draw kill and the around the corner shot. A kill this summer demonstrates the accuracy of my standard load. One day

after sitting and glassing a field, I sensed something watching me. Glancing to one side, I noticed a groundhog eyeing me. He was only 50 or 60 yards away and had only his head and shoulders out of his hole. It was too easy a shot for my 18 power scoped .243, so I decided to wait for him to come out of his hole. And waited I did. After about 20 minutes of peek-a-boo, I decided this fellow wasn't coming out. I rested my elbow on my knee and slowly squeezed the M29's trigger. The 'hog disappeared at the shot. I figured I missed him so I sat a while longer and watched the field. Later, I walked 65 paces to the hole, and low and behold, the 'hog was in the hole with a .44 caliber hole through his neck and spine. That is MOA accuracy.

The 8" Smith also demonstrated the toughness of groundhogs and the not quite perfection of the .44. I was walking around a field and spotted a 'hog feeding in the middle of the 150 yard wide field. I decided to see how close I could get. At 25 yards, the 'hog saw me and started running. I shot double action twice and single action four times. He died at the entrance of his hole. A postmortem showed two hits around the diaphragm, one in the abdomen, and one behind the shoulder. Four of six hits and he ran about 50 yards to his hole and never lost stride. So much for 100% stoppers and easy killing groundhogs.

My 4" Smith is much harder for me to shoot. Mag-na-porting and a trigger job haven't helped me too much. I've killed eight 'hogs with it, but probably have missed twice as many. The 250 grain lead bullet always shot too high. The Hornady 200 grain Hollow point with 12.5 gr. Unique has been my most accurate and controllable load. Forty-five yards has been my longest kill. All hits have been 100% stoppers.

Larry Kelly worked over my Super Blackhawk. He cut the barrel to 5", Mag-na-ported it, and Metal-lifed it. I added a set of Pachmayr grips and a trigger spring. This gun has become my most frequent carried .44. Just this summer, I made kills at 42, 44 and 47 yards, all with the 250 gr. lead load — all fired offhand. Thanks, Larry.

My only other .44 Magnum is my HHI Super Blackhawk. It's still sealed and in the box. I've been tempted to shoot it. I'll look at it a while longer.

Thompson/Contender

Here I've mentioned the gun and not just one caliber. Until 1981, I had not seen a T/C. I thought all the T/C articles in the **Sixgunner** were written by handgun heretics. It just couldn't be a true handgun. My father got a stock .222 Remington T/C for shooting squirrels. I borrowed it and worked up a load of 23.4 gr. WW 760 under a 50 gr. Sierra spitzer. I could easily shoot 1/2" 25 yard groups with the 2 1/2" power Bushnell Phantom scope. Four groundhogs fell to this gun this summer, but its performance was less than satisfying. All 'hogs were shot sitting at less than 50 yards. Each was hit in the lungs or shoulders and each ran about 15 to 20 yards before dying. That might be satisfactory to many, but I'm demanding in my handgun performance. I expect a gun to produce one shot kills or at least stopping if I do my part with shot placement. I realize four kills is not a lot of experience, but I'll pass on the .222 T/C, too. I like big holes in my gun barrels anyway.

About this same time, I was softening on my "T/C is not a handgun" bit. I mellow, but it takes a

while. I reviewed all of J. D.'s data on his hand cannons and finally came to the conclusion that the .375 JDJ was the gun for me.

I got one of the jewels from him. It was beautiful. Metal-lifed, Mag-na-ported, superb trigger pull, and as long as my pickup. I put a T/C 3X Recoil Proof scope on it. My cast bullet source made some 270 gr. lead gas checked bullets. I put these over 42 gr. of IMR 3031. It took only three shots to get it sighted in, then I proceeded to fire a 3/4" group at 25 yards. I duplicated this group with the 270 gr. Hornady Spire point bullet over the same amount powder. Hot mama! J. D. didn't lie. I sure had a shooter. That moment started a love affair that has since made us inseparable. I've almost completely ignored my other guns over this cannon. Who cares if it bloodied my finger? Who cares if it caused tendonitis in my wrist? Who cares if it makes my .44s feel like .22s? That sucker is one shootin' fool.

The .375 has done an unbelievable job on groundhogs. My first 'hog was a lulu. I sneaked up on one during one of my hit and run hunts. I decided to shoot at 10 yards. The 'hog was flattened at the crack of the gun. Parts flew everywhere. I looked around and found pieces about six feet away. The hell with knockdown power. This gun shoots tactical nuclear warheads.

The next four groundhog kills really increased my confidence. Three were taken between 20 and 35 yards. The last was a 92 yard shot at one 'hog feeding and walking. The 270 gr. lead bullet hit the 'hog in the lungs broadside. He died instantly. The entrance and exit holes were about .375 size. The edges appeared burned. I guess that round really sizzles. Internal damage was about equal to my .30-06 at the same distance.

I got a little cocky after these five and proceeded to miss the next four 'hogs. I finally figured out my misses were due to my limp wristed hold I'd acquired from my overconfidence. I resumed my firm hold and killed the next 12 'hogs I shot at. Put down 17 'hogs for 1981. The last 12 kills were made from 30 to 52 yards. All but one were neck or shoulder shots, standing and unsupported. Despite its recoil, the T/C hit each 'hog exactly where it was aimed. The only blown shot was one at 37 yards. I pulled it and hit him in the abdomen. There ended my one shot stoppers for the .375 JDJ. I managed to roll him just before he entered his hole. Nobody's perfect. Despite this one foulup, I've proven to myself that the T/C .375 JDJ is one fine handgun that is hard to beat.

I hope I've been able to enlighten a few of you future hit men. To fill the contract, you need to tailor the gun to the job. There's not just one good gun and caliber; several will do. You just have to experiment, learn to shoot fast and straight, and make your own rules. Good luck and have fun!

HANDGUNNERS MAKE GOOD HUNTERS

Dave Cottrell, Lima OH

Sitting here now in a warm house with snow on the ground looking through the window, the days of the November H.H.I. boar hunt seem distant. The memories and the excitement however, are warm and clear as the blue Tennessee sky.

It began early in the day with cold air and bright autumn sun. A sense of excitement and adventure filled us all as we loaded into two pickups to travel the short distance from the comfortable accommodations to the hunting grounds themselves at Telico Junction Hunting Preserve.

Lark, Steve, Don and I sat quietly as we watched a well-beaten path across the sinkhole before us. Then Lark had Don move to a tree-stand across the valley and Steve moved to the paths in the valley below, seeming to make an impenetrable barrier as we watched and waited. The silence broke again, this time with the sound of hooves and rustling, as Troy and his party forced a group of six hogs, all of good size ahead of them across the canyon from us.

I seemed a spectator as the others maneuvered the hogs and seemed to be forcing them into our range. The watching was over with a jolt, as Lark, my guide nudged me into a kind of tense alertness, he told me to draw my gun. The hogs had come across the sinkhole faster than I had expected. They broke onto the path from the Kudzoo vine some twenty yards ahead of us. The one in the lead seemed fine to me as I cocked the hammer of my S&W 41 mag. Leveling the sights I carefully squeezed the trigger. Damn, a clean miss, as the boar bounded off. Two of hogs bounced up the hill in a huff. The one of interest to me, however, seemed dazed and perturbed, then turned and came charging down the hill at full bore. This time he was not quite as fortunate as my shot was right on target. I hit him square between the shoulder blades, breaking his spine, and turning him end over end in a sommersault ending some three to four feet in front of me. Being a novice at this type of hunting, the typical buck fever had no place in my shooting, as there was not enough time for it to concern me.

The afternoon was more fruitful for the others as we went back into the hills with dogs to rodeo our stubborn quarry into range. The remaining seven H.H.I. hunters all made kills in the afternoon, avoiding any woundings or escaped hogs. Since this was my first hog hunt, it was a pleasure to do it with such well prepared hunters, doing their part so well and guides that were so professional. It only goes to show again that handguns and handgunners can and do make good hunters.

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