

actually be easier to pick up.

The 686 Plus comes tapped for a scope mount just like the 6-inch target models, but the supplied adjustable rear sight is excellent. It should be pointed out that in the early days of hopping up the 1911 auto pistol, gunsmith Armand Swenson equipped his custom guns with this very same sight, purchased from S&W.

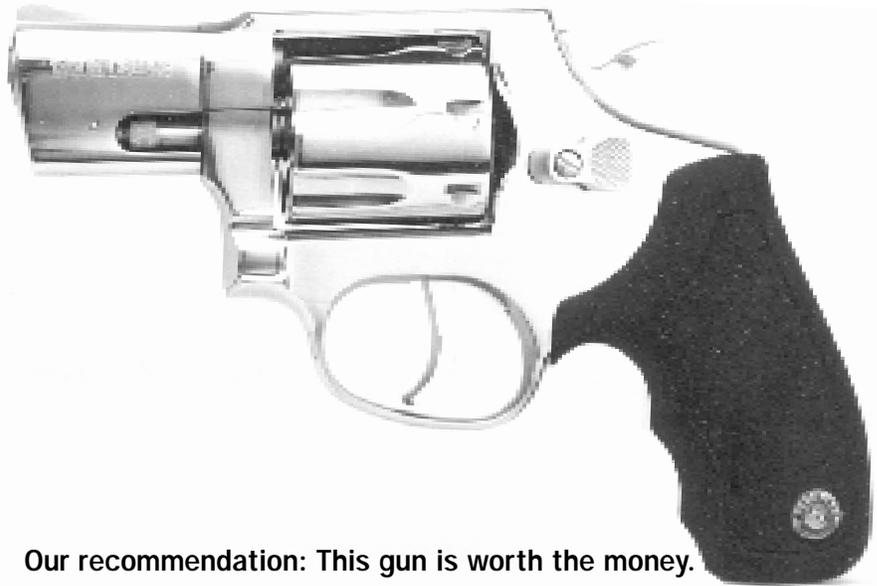
Initially, we sought to challenge the guns in a test of pure accuracy by placing targets at 25 yards and shooting five five-shot groups from a bench rest. We chose this distance to ensure we touched the limitations of each gun. For speed tests, we also fired the guns at paper targets designed to represent an 8-inch plate rack at 10 yards, recording elapsed times. We strove for variety in our choices of bullet weight and configuration.

Our accuracy and time-trial testing revealed serious flaws—and strengths—of the individual guns. The two revolvers had to make do with short tubes, 2.5 inches for the S&W 686 Plus and only 2 inches for the Taurus 617. One thing these short barrels had in common was a dislike for the Winchester 158-grain lead semi-wadcutter. With that round, both guns shot 5-inch patterns—five shots with that round was too large to call a group. (The most remarkable feature of this round, besides its gold color, was the hole it punched in the paper target—measuring 0.485 inch in diameter. Keep in mind, a .45 ACP case will fit cleanly through this hole. If it were accurate, this would surely be a Bullseye shooter's dream round.) Otherwise, the 686+ was well below 3 inches with every ammunition tested. Why shouldn't it be? This is S&W's top target gun with the barrel refinished to snubby length. Within these five-shot

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Taurus 617SS2KL

Retail Price...\$395



Our recommendation: This gun is worth the money.

SPECIFICATIONS

Warranty: One Year

METAL FINISH	SS	SIGHT RADIUS	3.75 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	29 oz.	CAPACITY	7 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	7 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	Rubber
OVERALL HEIGHT	4.75 in.	OPTIONAL GRIPS	No
MAX. WIDTH	1.5 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA/DA
BARREL LENGTH	2 in.	TRIGGER PULL Wt. DA	9 lbs.



The Taurus butt was thinner than the Smith's, measuring 0.75 inch wide.



Less than 7 inches long, the Taurus 617 will go nearly anywhere a small-framed revolver can go. Downside: Polished stainless steel is not our first choice for a concealment gun.

With a short sight radius, service-style rear notch and humble front sight, you've got to be ready for the fast trigger action. It loads up and releases quickly.

