

the nicely stained and textured grips looked a little too new. We may be nit-picking here because until we received the more expensive Cimarron revolver, we were perfectly happy with the look of the Bounty Hunter.

Cosmetics aside, however, it was easy to point out two glaring faults in the gun's construction. There was a gap between the grip and main frames large enough to show light and even insert a piece of card stock. With the load gate fully

closed, you can see past it into the cylinders. This was just too sloppy for us.

The top strap of the gun was a raised "humpback" design, and this extra metal allows for a sight notch deep enough to allow the shooter to read the squared front sight with little eyestrain. Actually, this was the most modern sight picture available from the three guns. In the loading position, this gun had the most pronounced cylinder indexing, which made loading and unloading easier than in the Vaquero. A firing pin block acts as a safety, so EAA has avoided the old

single action revolver bugaboo of having to travel with the hammer down an empty chamber. The forcing cone looks a might weak, but we encountered no malfunctions of any kind. However, the ejector rod assembly worked loose

after only 200 rounds. Otherwise, there were no rough edges. The 7-pound trigger pull was far heavier than necessary, and the short length and contour of the trigger made this gun unpleasant to shoot after a short session. Inside the small trigger guard, which is common to many dueling guns, the trigger arcs forward at just the wrong angle so that all the pressure was on the inside edge of the index finger of our test cowboy.

Ruger Vaquero BNV-455

Our recommendation: Despite our dislike of the ejection system, this was a sturdy, accurate gun with more livable sights than most cowboy guns. It's a good buy, but we'd like to see it come with antique grips.

Did Paladin carry a Ruger Vaquero? If he did, you can bet he'd replace the Ruger insignia with his own. The case-hardened color was just right, and the Vaquero has the heavy feel we expect of 19th Century steel. The clean stainless hammer and trigger push our believability, but we just can't get past the

Ruger Vaquero BNV-455

Retail Price...\$379



SPECIFICATIONS

Warranty: None Written

METAL FINISH	Blued/Case	SIGHT RADIUS	6.5 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	41 oz.	CAPACITY	6 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	11.5 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	ROSEWOOD
OVERALL HEIGHT	5.3 in.	OPTIONAL GRIPS	No
MAX. WIDTH	1.7 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA
BARREL LENGTH	4.6 in.	TRIGGER PULL WT. SA	4 lbs.

Our recommendation: Solid, but not our first pick.



The Ruger Vaquero's case-hardened color was just right, but the clean stainless hammer and trigger and flawless walnut grips seemed out of place cosmetically. However, the hammer, trigger, and grip are in perfect relation, even if the grip looks short.

In contrast to the EAA, the Vaquero's parts were solidly mated. The overall handling impression of the gun is of sturdiness and durability.

