GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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CLASSIC 9MMS:

The Artillery Luger and the 1896 Mauser Broomhandle both saw action in The Great War. A serviceman with any knowledge of pistolcraft would choose one well before the other. Which one? Check... **Page 6**



SUBCOMPACT 40 S&WS

The Smith & Wesson M&P40c and Beretta's Px4 Storm both exhibited first-class reliability. But we preferred one over the other for carry. See why on... **Page 12**



20 GAUGE OVER/UNDERS

Would Browning's new Citori 725 be able prove its worth when pitted against a hard-to-find veteran Model 325? Read how one's exceptional patterning was the difference on... **Page 16**



45 ACP REVOLVERS

Tested were three generations of S&W wheelguns: a Model 1917, a Champion Series Model 625-8 JM, and a Model 327 Thunder Ranch. Find out why newest isn't best on... **Page 20**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● 2014 INDEX: 26 ● SHORT SHOTS: 30 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

REMINGTON 887 SHOTGUN RECALL



Todd Woodard

Remington is voluntarily recalling Remington Model 887 shotguns manufactured from December 1, 2013 to November 24, 2014. The company has determined that some Remington Model 887 shotguns manufactured between those dates may have a defect causing the firing pin to bind in the forward position within the bolt, which can result in an unintentional discharge when chambering a live round.

"While Remington has the utmost confidence in the design of the 887 shotgun, the company is undertaking this recall in the interest of consumer safety," a statement said.

Remington has also corrected the manufacturing process to eliminate this potential firing-pin problem in shotguns manufactured after November 24, 2014. Shotguns manufactured after November 24, 2014 will also have the distinguishing punch mark on the bolt like models repaired under the recall described below.

The company asks that owners of shotguns made during the affected dates immediately cease use of recalled shotguns and return them to Remington free of charge. Shotguns will be inspected, repaired, tested, and returned as soon as possible, at no cost to the owner.

The company asks owners not to attempt to diagnose or repair the recalled shotguns.

To participate in this recall program, visit http://887recall.remington.com or call 1-800-243-9700 (prompt #3 then prompt #2) Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EDT.

Owners will be asked to provide their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and shotgun serial number(s).

Then, Remington will send boxes to the owners with written instructions on what to do next, and arrange for UPS to pick-up the shotgun(s). Remington will cover all related shipping, inspection, and repair charges.

The company asks that gun owners not return shotguns without registering in the program. **GT**



Repaired 887s will have a punch mark on the bolt (inset). This mark confirms the shotgun has been inspected and repaired by Remington under the recall program. The mark also appears on new 887s.

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Praise for the Kahr P380 Pistol

Reader Morgan thinks the CW380 got put in a bad match up with much more expensive pistols in November. Cheaper is better in our minds, however. And getting help with a red dot.

Re "A Quartet of Pocket Pistols," November 2014



I couldn't help but notice you picked the cheaper Kahr to compare to two other near-$700 guns, which is a little more than the P380 typically costs. I haven't fired the CW380, but the P380's trigger is incredible: very smooth, and though long, its pull is consistent with no grit at all. Very nice trigger and it's capable of incredible accuracy for a gun that small, much more accurate than I can shoot! It is also very comfortable to shoot. I've previously owned a Kel-Tec P3AT, which you indicated you would buy over all of the four you compared. Hogwash! It hurts to shoot, and its trigger is absolutely terrible, both heavy and gritty. I would never shoot more than one magazine at a range session with it, but the Kahr I can shoot all day. Maybe the review would have been different with the P380. Thanks for the unbiased reviews, and keep up the good work.

— Justin Morgan

More expensive is not an advantage in our rankings. In fact, less expensive is a huge advantage, assuming similar functionality. I appreciate the tip and recommendation on the P380. I've forwarded your note to Product Coordination Editor Kevin Winkle for development. — Todd

Red Dot on a Ruger

Todd, I am looking to mount a TruGlo red-dot sight to a Ruger SR9C and am looking for any information you can give me. My problem is I have a quick-mount adapter from Galloway Precision that replaces the rear factory sight, and I need info on a piece to attach a Picatinny rail section so the red dot will be able to be mounted. Can you give me any ideas on where I can get this adapter? Thank you for your help. I look forward to your magazine and read it cover to cover and have seen a lot of great ideas, but so far I have not seen anything on mounting a red dot on a pistol. Thanks again, and I will be looking forward to hearing from you on that subject.

— Robert Jones
Imperial, Missouri

Hey Robert: If it were us, we would log on to Brownells.com and look around for the piece you want,



or for your red dot sight. If you're on there for a few minutes, you'll get a prompt to chat with a technician who can help you find what you're looking for. Start the chat and get as technical as you want. They'll be able to match your pistol to the available rails. Wouldn't hurt to have

GUN TESTS REPORT CARD GRADING

Gun Tests Grade: A
A gun with this rating functions perfectly, shoots accurately, and exhibits comfortable, easy use for its owner. We may prefer one gun over others based on its unusual accuracy, superior performance, unusual features, or nice cosmetics. We recognize such a gun for these traits without regard to its cost.

Gun Tests Grade: B
We give this ranking to a gun that functions appropriately for its category, but which might not do as well in major areas as an **A**-ranked gun.

Gun Tests Grade: C
We may have reservations about some aspect of a gun's performance or pricing. We express those reservations so the reader can balance our concerns with his or her needs.

Gun Tests Grade: D
Some aspect of a gun's performance — in particular, safety, function, or accuracy — doesn't meet our standards and isn't easily resolved.

Gun Tests Grade: F
Some aspect of a gun's performance is dangerous, inappropriate for the category, or is likely to fail.

an image of the adapter handy to send during the chat. — Todd

Re "IDPA Revolvers: Ruger's Match Champion, S&W's Pro 686 SSR," December 2014

I like the articles on revolvers, such as the IDPA Revolvers in the December issue. I disagree with the statement that chamfered chamber mouths "should be standard on all revolvers."

I own an S&W TRR8 .357 Magnum 8-shooter, which I like, except for two things. First, unlike my other revolvers, the ejector star is chamfered. I don't use semi-wadcutters, so all my bullets have much more of a chamfer than you could put into a chamber mouth. The chamfer puts a sharp edge against the unsupported brass. With magnum loads, this leaves a score mark on the brass, as if you had rolled the brass on a table while pushing down on it with a knife. It concerns me that a case rupture at the base of the brass might be in my future with my reloads. I don't use maximum loads, but a rupture at that end of the case could cause serious burns.

This might not be an issue on some revolvers, except the TRR8 is also designed for moon clips. A good speed loader is almost as fast as a moon clip, but far more rugged. In the real world, bumping into something with your moon clip belt pouch can but put eight bullets out of action, even if only one is bent out of position. The recess for the moon clip sinks the ejector tab deeper into the cylinder, so the sharp edge of the ejector star is no longer in the solid brass base part of the case. The case expands and the brass is scored.

I have also found that using individual cartridges sometimes results in a click instead of a bang. I traced this to cases which, when resized, were at a very slight angle. Standing them up on a flat surface, there was a almost undetectable lean (primers were not causing this). The case may not have seated fully in the shell holder when it was resized. Without the support of the moon clip on one side, with the case rotated so the slant of the rim pushed the bullet further into the chamber, a light primer strike occurred.

For sporting events, the chamfers and moon clips make sense, so I'd give chamfering an A. But for a dependable carry piece in the woods to protect you from two- and four-legged critters, chamfering might only be a B+.

I am suggesting looking at these issues when revolvers are evaluated. It's so hard to find out these things until you have already put your money down. This is why I like your magazine. An article on speed loaders would be good as well.

— Bill Ramirez
Chandler, Arizona



For those who might not be familiar with Bill's wheelgun, it is a Performance Center product, Model 327 170269, with an MSRP of $1,329. It comes with a 5-inch barrel on a large frame made of Scandium alloy, which is part of the cost basis. The cylinder is stainless steel. OAL is 10.5 inches, and empty weight is about 35 ounces. — Todd

Holster Tip for S&W Shield

I bought a S&W Shield that I wanted to carry in an IWD holster. I tried several holsters with the usual spring steel clip. Putting these on went well, but getting them off always was a pain. I went on the Bianchi website to see if I could find a better way. I found a Safariland leather holster (Model 27) with a J-shaped spring steel clip. This holster really works great — much better than any other I tried. It goes on and off easily and holds the gun securely, both during wear and when withdrawing or reholstering the gun. I even got a left-handed version from them. You may want to check it out the next time you evaluate holsters. Love your publication! **— Mike from Idaho**

Enjoys Shooting Collectibles

I am thoroughly enjoying the "Shooting Collectibles" articles. When I originally subscribed to your excellent publication back in the mid '90s, I was in the market for new, inexpensive, reliable firearms. Your publication delivered and still does. Keep that up! Now in my later years, I have moved more and more to the "shootable military collectors" hobby/sport.

I want to shoot these old military workhorses, research all the marks and stamps, and delve into their history. I don't need tack-drivers, don't need them to be pretty, don't need them to be even mildly rare or collectible in the traditional sense. "Shooting Collectibles" is spot on and adds greatly to my enjoyment of every issue. Only thing I would ask is to flesh-out the function and assembly/disassembly some more. Thanks for a great read!

— Keith B.

Glad you like them. All due credit for those features goes to Kevin Winkle, one of our product coordination editors, who enjoys collecting and pitches that angle frequently. Also, Ray Ordorica, Bob Campbell, and Robert Sadowski enjoy pitting new versus old, and old versus old. Like with the old 9mm pistols article that starts on page 6 (Ray is the author), I will often look at the story pitch and mumble something about "nobody cares about this thing," then months later when the story comes in, I'll be enthralled with the piece. Good guns are good guns, regardless of their age. — Todd

Re "Two Old Surplus Mausers: Swedish vs. Brazilian Bolt Guns," November 2014

Thank you for running the Mauser comparison. I hope your publication is able to continue such evaluations



in the future. I acknowledge that the GT grading system was fairly applied to the weapons in the test. However, I believe the review misses aspects that appeal to shooters rather than "wall hanging collectors" to whom these guns are recommended. For those of us who actually shoot these guns, the work involved in achieving original accuracy or better are all part of the experience: chamber casts, barrel slugging, muzzle crowning, stock de-oiling and re-bedding, replacing worn or damaged parts, handloading, whether using lead or jacketed bullets, full power or reduced loads, and so on. One could tabulate the expenses and time involved, but a pleasing and relatively harmless obsession is priceless. In the future, the reviewers ought to acknowledge that such criteria affect the reader's evaluation of the standard grading process.

One historical issue on the M96 Mauser is of interest. The barrel threads were not placed there for a flash hider. The original use was for a blank firing attachment that shredded any solid matter exiting the muzzle. Aftermarket thread protectors and newly made flash hiders are available.

— B.M. Brogden, Jr.

Re "22-Caliber Centerfire Self-Loader Shoot-out: FNH Vs. Rock Island," December 2014

Read with interest your article about the 22 TCM. I read all the glowing articles in several firearms publications and purchased a Rock Island 22 TCM. After I told my son, a forensics instructor, about my purchase, he got back to me about all the negative reports on the internet from folks who purchased a TCM and had problems. On my first trip to the range, I got through two-thirds of a box of ammo (standard Armscor factory ammo) and the TCM failed to function. I could not even move the slide. The gunsmith at the shop where it was purchased managed to clear the spent casing and said I had too much oil in the chamber when I initially cleaned it fresh out of the box. I've been shooting for 60 years (since I was 8) and never experienced such a problem. However, next time out, I made sure I swabbed out the chamber with a dry patch. Got through barely one box of ammo, and it hung up again. Back to the shop. This time the gunsmith decided to send it back to the factory. About four weeks later it came back with a new firing-pin spring, new guide rod spring, plus they reamed out the chamber by 2/1000ths. Again, took the pistol to the range and got halfway through a box of ammo when it malfunctioned again. Back to the shop. Gunsmith popped the spent casing out and used a bronze brush to thoroughly clean the chamber. Again, I went to the range, got through two-thirds of a box of ammo, and once again, had a failure to eject with the spent casing firmly lodged in the chamber. This time, I could rack the slide, but to no avail as far as ejecting the casing. So I tried to gently pop it out by using a thin dowel from the muzzle. I was eventually able to grasp the rim of the casing and got it out. Cleaned the firearm and put it away. Have not done a re-try yet.

Just wanted you to know that this firearm does have its problems. The factory should take measures to correct the situation or fewer consumers will purchase it and become disappointed with the results.

— Fred Shultz

Seems like you gave it more than a fair shot. If Bob Campbell had experienced any malfs with it, he would have said so. — Todd

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9mms: Classic Artillery Luger Vs. 1896 Mauser Broomhandle

These both saw service in The Great War. Any serviceman with the humblest knowledge of pistolcraft would seize the Luger ten times over the intricate, but fussy and relatively clumsy Mauser.

We were delighted to have this pair of rare and costly 9mm handguns to evaluate, thanks to a collector in Houston who sent them along with a bunch of fine accessories to our Idaho office. They were an Artillery Luger (about $2500) and an 1896 Mauser Broomhandle (about $2000), both with very good bores and in overall nice — though refinished — condition. Accessories for the Luger included a new wood stock, two eight-round magazines, a new 32-round drum magazine with loader and leather pouch, and a reproduction leather holster with a two-magazine pouch. The Broomhandle came in a new wood shoulder-stock/holster with leather, and a bunch of stripper clips.

Regarding the Artillery Luger, one must remember these guns are all very old. They were used a century ago in the First World War, this one having been made in 1915. They saw hard and heavy use and there are not a whole lot of them left. Those with pristine finishes command prices in the realm of $5000 on up, depending on condition and relative rarity of the individual gun. Thus, the price for this one is within reason for a good-looking representative sample with what we thought was an excellent barrel.

The Mauser looked at first to be pristine. However, we soon found out it had been refinished by a master who maintained all the markings and original surfaces very well indeed. There was some pitting here and there, such as under the grip areas and along the sides if you looked carefully, but whoever did the rework really knew his stuff. The subsequent bluing was probably done by hot-dip process, as there were none of the signs that accompany rust bluing. Nevertheless, the gun looked just great. Sadly, that was the only good part of this gun.

We tested them with two types of ammunition, 115-grain Independence FMJs and Black Hills 124-grain +P JHPs. Without further ado, here's what we found.





The top pistol in both images is the 9mm Mauser Broomhandle with the Artillery Luger below it. In the bottom image, both have new wood stocks. That leather on the Mauser's stock is in the right place to comfort the face. The Mauser had problems, but the Luger worked like a charm. The Luger's new and attractive slab stock came from Numrich as a set with a new leather holster, magazine pouch and sling. The Luger had amazing balance with or without the drum magazine in place. The loaded drum added 2.4 pounds to the setup.

Artillery Luger P08 9mm Luger, ~$2500

It's late in the war and the enemy is fast approaching your machine-gun nest. Suddenly, the machine gun jams and your job begins. You and a handful of other servicemen now have to defend the nest against oncoming forces, so you grab your *lange Pistole 08* with its drum magazine holding 32 cartridges, elevate the rear-sight slide to the specified 600 yards, put the flat stock tight against your shoulder and, with your buddies, cut loose at the advancing enemy. We are talking, of course, about the most common original use of what has become known as the Artillery Luger, though the Germans knew it as the Long Pistol 08, and the war in this case was the

9MM LUGER RANGE DATA

Black Hills 124-gr. +P Jacketed Hollowpoint	Artillery Luger P08	Mauser 1896 Broomhandle
Average Velocity	1370 fps	1315 fps
Muzzle Energy	516 ft.-lbs.	476 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.9 in.	2.7 in.

Independence 115-gr. Full Metal Jacket	Artillery Luger P08	Mauser 1896 Broomhandle
Average Velocity	1125 fps	1080 fps
Muzzle Energy	323 ft.-lbs.	298 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	2.0 in.	2.6 in.

Velocity was recorded at 10 feet using an Oehler 35P chronograph with proof channel. For accuracy, we fired five-shot groups at 15 yards from a two-handed rest.

First World War. During that conflict, the Artillery Lugers were generally used to protect machine-gun nests and artillery installations. The guns were commonly fitted with removable shoulder stocks made of simple slabs of wood, which made them into fairly useful carbines. The cartridge was the then-new 9x19 Parabellum, or 9mm Luger, which came into being in 1902. First adopted by the German navy in 1904, that country's army took it up in 1908 (some sources say 1906) and the rest is, well, history.

The earliest loads for the 9x19 featured a truncated-cone bullet of 124-grain weight. Shortly after the beginning of WWI, the Germans changed the bullet to a round-nose configuration similar to what is commonly seen today in FMJ rounds, the weight remaining 124 grains. (Thanks to Lewis Curtis's "Introduction to 9mm Parabellum" at CartridgeCollectors.org for this hard-to-find information.) Unfortunately, we don't know the original velocities of these early rounds. Best guess would be in the neighborhood of 900 to 1000 fps out of the long-barreled Luger.

Our first impression of the long Luger was that it felt just great. It was well balanced, and if you didn't look at the barrel, you might not otherwise notice its extreme length. We had been prepared for a muzzle-heavy weapon, but that was not the case at all. The barrel had thin walls, and the extra length was only noticeable in the gun's need for a longer holster. That fine balance was a most pleasant surprise to us. The next happy note was the trigger pull. These are commonly bad to horrid on Lugers. Not here. This was an excellent trigger by any standards. It was not a hair trigger, requiring 5.4 pounds to let it off, but it was entirely controllable with minimal to no creep. The gun turned out to be not what you'd call a tack driver, but with the right ammo we felt a serious target shooter could be competitive and would have a whole lot of fun with one of these in NRA centerfire matches. And he could even adjust the sights.

The front sight was adjustable for windage. This required a small tool with two pins sticking out the front, which we didn't have, but which would be simple to make. The rear sight was adjustable for elevation by means of a slider, which gave enough elevation for 800 yards. The sight picture was the common German small inverted V front blade nestled in the rear sight's small upright V. Our shooting team thought the sights and the sight picture were not ideal for target shooting, but would be okay for someone with good eyesight. However, this was not designed for punching paper. It was a serious military weapon, and that is the light in which we examined it.

The gun's finish had been redone long, long ago. All the velvety and dead-flat rust bluing of the original was gone, leaving slight dishing on the markings and rounded-over flat parts all over it. While the job was not horrid, it was not at all good. The other test gun, the Mauser, had been redone by a master, who left all the markings sharp and all its corners okay and the flat areas flat. Pity he wasn't the one who redid this old Luger. The good part of the Luger was that all the numbers matched, including the firing pin, though not the magazine. Two magazines came with it, one with the old-style wood plug in the bottom, and the other a modern replacement by Mec-Gar ($37). The original fed entirely reliably with both types of ammo, but the new replacement was not so good with the hotter JHP Black Hills ammo.

In the refinishing process, someone who ought to have known better took all the straw-colored hardened bits — including the trigger, safety, ejector, and takedown lever — and polished them, thereby destroying more of the gun's collector value. The straw coloring is not exactly durable, but it does add greatly to the aura of the gun. The wood grip panels were also in fine shape, though the tops were worn off the checkering diamonds. The mechanism was all crisp, though the safety's operation was on the too-loose side, we thought.

Our accuracy testing gave about 2-inch groups with the Independence 115-grain rounds and a bit better with the hotter Black Hills 124-grain ammo. That is not as good as we hoped, but test conditions were miserable, with rain falling on top of heavy snow on the ground, and we believe the gun would do much better under better conditions. Our five-shot groups showed many rounds touching, with one or two shots enlarging the groups. One group of the Black Hills had four shots in 1.2 inches, and some of the three- or four-shot clusters with the other ammo were within half an inch. We tested without the use of the shoulder stock because we found the stock to be largely clumsy, and it put the gun and its sights too close to our eye. We had many failures to feed with the hotter ammo, and one or two with the new magazine and the 115-grain ammo. The gun clearly favored the 115-grain full-metal-jacket rounds and the



The Luger with its drum magazine and loader. Will it work?



Here's the cocking arm extended. We learned to be careful. The spring is powerful.



The spring is now cocked and secured with the button. The next step is to fit the charger on top of the mag extension.



The charger is snapped in place. The task is to fit all those cartridges into the drum. The loader is mandatory for that.



The lever is about to press on the loaded cartridge. The next step is to place the next round into the opening.



Releasing the loading lever lets the round slip very easily into the magazine.



Okay, they're all in, the mainspring has been gently released, and the loading accessory removed. The loaded magazine weighs 2.4 pounds.



All set to go: the drum is loaded, the charger removed, the gun ready. If you want to attach the stock, do it before inserting the drum magazine. This drum was not an inexpensive accessory, and it provided a great look at how the guns were used in WWI.

original magazine for smooth and reliable function.

The Luger came with a newly manufactured drum magazine that we just had to try. The magazine was made by Numrich (Gunpartscorp.com), and that company kindly supplied all the accessories. The drum magazine had all the characteristics of the originals. These drum magazines gave the Luger shooter 32 rounds. Commonly, those troops using the drum magazines were issued several, which were hung from the belt in some kind of holster or pouch. Photos of those used during WWI show them apparently to have been made of some soft material, but our drum magazine came in a new and very stiff leather pouch. While the workmanship on the pouch was very good, the magazine was so tightly held that it took several tools and nearly an hour to get the magazine out, which is not what you want during an armed conflict. We also got a new black-leather holster for the gun, along with a lovely leather holder for two eight-round mags complete with shoulder strap. The holster had a cleaning rod included, and all the black leather

ARTILLERY LUGER 9MM LUGER, ~$2500

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

This gun was known to the Germans in WWI as the Long P08 Pistol. We call it the Artillery Luger. Despite its having been refinished, this classy old Luger has all matching numbers, and because of the rarity of the species, commands a good price. The barrel was in excellent condition, and the gun shot well.





Overall Length	12.7 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Barrel Length	7.8 in.
Sight Radius	7.0 in.
Front Strap Height	3.0 in.
Back Strap Height	3.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	35 oz.
Weight Loaded (8 rds)	38.3 oz.
Weight Fully Loaded (32 rds. 115-gr.)	73.4 oz.
Capacity	8 or 32
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.9 in.
Frame	Blued Steel
Barrel & Toggle	Blued Steel
Grip	Checkered Wood
Trigger Pull Weight	5.4 lbs.
Trigger Span	3.3 in.
Warranty	n/a
Made In	Germany



These are all new, made of black leather, provided by Numrich. That paddle on the left, we believe, is part of the third object, which is a magazine holder for two eight-rounders. That mag pouch has a long strap attached, and seems to be part of the setup to lock to the holster flap. The holster had the correct inner strap to help drag the long handgun out. The item on the right is the stiff-leather holster for the drum magazine. We had trouble getting the drum out of it without damaging the part. We'd avoid this pouch.





The Luger comes apart easily into these components. They all looked to be in pretty good condition, and all the numbers matched. We'd like to own one of these.

Left: The rear part of the firing pin comes out with the twist of a screwdriver and a controlled push to deal with the spring. It goes back together easily. The main body of the firing pin has the matching numeral 50, that all the Luger parts had.

goods looked to our amateur eyes to be pretty close copies of original German equipment. We would avoid the leather pouch for the drum magazine and save ourselves a bit over $47, but we liked the beautiful long holster and the two-mag pouch, which were part of a set that also included the beautiful plank-like shoulder stock, all for $170.

We loaded the drum magazine with 115-grain FMJ, which we thought would give it the best chance to work properly. To load it, the technique is to first cock the extremely powerful spring inside it by extending the lever and hauling on it. Be careful! It slipped once and gouged a chunk out of a tester's chest. First, the spring must be locked securely in the fully tensioned position by means of a small button. There is another spring inside the magazine that must be overcome, this spring being responsible for feeding the final dozen rounds after the coil spring has done its job. We found it easiest to load a few rounds by hand with the mainspring cocked and locked. Then we put on the loading device that came with the drum magazine as part of the kit ($400). This was essentially identical to the original German setup. It is mandatory to have the loading device to fully load the drum magazine. This loading device slipped over the end of the magazine, where it locks in place. To get each round in, the lever is pressed, driving the already loaded rounds down into the drum. This takes lots of force as the drum nears capacity. With the lever depressed, a new round is placed on top of the magazine in the resulting gap. Releasing the loading lever lets the new round slip easily back into place. This was unusual, worked like a charm, and seemed like magic. As noted, it took lots of force to get the final rounds into the drum. With all 32 rounds loaded, the main spring must be released, and one does that with the loading tool still in place. Again, do that with great care.

With the main spring released against the stack of cartridges, take off the loading tool by pressing a

button. Off it comes and you're ready to go.

The drum magazine was an extremely tight fit into the gun. This gave us fits. The force needed to get the magazine into the gun commonly caused it to go in too far. We then had to forcibly pull it out until the magazine lock snapped in place. Then, and only then, would the rounds feed. And feed they did! We ripped off quite a few, rapid fire, offhand, noting that the gun was easy to use, and recoil was greatly reduced by the 2.4 pounds added to the gun by the fully loaded magazine. We then decided to try the stock, but discovered it had to be put on with the drum removed. More agony, but we got the drum mag out, the stock on, and the drum back in. We then found the setup to be clumsy, and the short stock placed the gun much too close to our face. We thought a competent handgunner would be far more comfortable using the gun with the drum without the stock. As noted, the drum mag worked very well for the most part, but unfortunately we had failures to feed during the firing of the last 11 rounds. We had a double, followed by a failure to feed, clearing of which required removal of the magazine. Note that the Luger cannot have its safety put on with the toggle open. Therefore, jam clearings must be done with the gun in firing condition, and extreme caution must be used. We pulled the mag, cleared the jam, and tried again. We again got a failure to feed, and gave it up for the final six rounds. Actually, we were ecstatic that the first 21 rounds had worked perfectly, with that ungodly powerful spring shoving against them. We believe the secondary spring was too weak for the system. It seemed to be a much lighter spring than that found in the standard magazines, which generally require a tool to pull down the follower for the final two or three rounds.

Our Team Said: We liked this gun very much. If we wanted a Luger, we'd get an Artillery model. We are still somewhat in awe of the fine balance of this old pistol. It has been said the Lugers were designed to balance the force of the ammunition's recoil with the dynamics of the toggle. That means one's search for the best ammo could pay great dividends in reliability and, most likely, accuracy. We would buy a gun in similar condition as well as the drum magazine with its accompanying loading tool, as well as the holster, mag pouch, and stock group. We'd pass on the drum pouch.

Mauser 1896 9mm Luger, ~$2000

The overall handling of this gun is not for beginners. First, to load it from the ten-round stripper clips, you have to lock the bolt rearward, which is done by pulling the bolt all the way back on the empty magazine. The follower then locks the bolt open. As soon as you load the ten rounds and pull out the stripper clip, the bolt flies forward and chambers a round. But you cannot pull the bolt back to load the gun without putting the safety in the firing position. So you're stuffing rounds into a gun that's all ready to shoot. Therefore, once the ten rounds are stuffed into the gun and before pulling out the stripper clip, be sure the gun is pointed in a safe direction. That's just ducky in a wartime situation and when the gun always works. But what if you have a jam!





Despite the preservation of the markings and sharp corners, there were indications this gun had something of a hard life before it was refinished. The arrows point to pits here and there on the gun. The pistol was a collection of Mauser parts, with none of them having matching numbers. Right: Here's more of the incredible machining that went into these century-old pistols. This is the follower of the 10-round magazine. No castings.

Once you have a jam (we had plenty of them) you have to manipulate the bolt with one hand while fishing out the problem with the other. We had an empty case stick in the bolt face with a fresh round jammed towards the chamber. The clearing of this was exceedingly dangerous. We were able to hold the bolt open while retrieving a suitable tool with the other hand and then pried the stuck empty out of the gun. We then eased the bolt forward and got it going again, but in cold, wet, dark conditions as we found them on our range day, this was not the happiest sort of gun testing we've done.

We had other problems with the 1896 Mauser trying to get it to work. We tried the Black Hills 124-grain JHP load first, and after one shot stopped to wipe the blood off our hands and the back of the gun. During recoil, the hammer on this one was vicious in the extreme. We slid our hand down the grip and tried another shot, and after two attempts the round fired. The gun flipped so badly we then resorted to grabbing the front of the magazine with our off hand, but the gun still kicked up and out of it whenever it fired. We had to drop the hammer at least two times for each shot, and then it got to be three, and eventually it failed to fire a round after four attempts.

We took the gun down for cleaning and photos, and it was then that we discovered the problem with the Black Hills ammo not chambering fully. The problem was that the Black Hills bullet had a slightly straight side to the bullet that protruded into the lands, requiring the seating effort of the driving hammer before the firing pin could dent the primer properly. We had better luck with the Independence 115-grain FMJ, but still had misgivings about its ability to reliably fire a shot, or feed, or eject properly. This sort of thing does not build confidence in the shooter. The second, milder ammo gave

MAUSER 1896 9MM LUGER, ~$2000

GUN TESTS GRADE: D

Despite its ungainly appearance, the Mauser actually is a comfortable handgun, though this one bit us severely with the hotter ammo. This example had been refinished by a master craftsman, and it had an exceptional barrel that looked about like new, but the gun had many feeding and ejection problems.







This is where many empties ended up on the way out of the 9mm Broomhandle. One of our jams had the empty stuck all the way to the rear, with a hot round trying to get into the chamber.



Marked to 1000 yards, the Mauser's rear sight was as well made and intricate as the rest of it. With good eyes, the V-shaped sights work just fine.

Overall Length	11.0 in.
Overall Height	6.1 in.
Barrel Length	5.2 in.
Sight Radius	9.1 in.
Front Strap Height	3.0 in.
Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	39.3 oz.
Weight Loaded (10 rds. 115-gr.)	43.4 oz.
Capacity	10
Maximum Width	1.6 in.
Grip Thickness (max)	1.6 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.1 in.
Frame	Blued Steel
Barrel	Blued Steel
Grip	Serrated Wood
Trigger Pull Weight	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.7 in.
Warranty	n/a
Made In	Germany



Here are some of the intricately made parts that snap in and out of the Mauser when it's field stripped. Good luck if you have to do that in a muddy trench during midwinter.



Right: The Broomhandle is not difficult to get apart, but usually some internal pieces will fall out. They go back in only one way, and there are a few tricks, but the insides are well worth seeing for the masterful machining.

much less muzzle flip, and slightly better accuracy and reliability, but enough failures to fire and feed that we quickly lost all interest in this handgun.

Takedown is simple. Clear the gun, and then release the bottom of the magazine and take it off with the attached follower and spring. Then cock the hammer and lift the little tab under it. Now you can slide the guts out the back and watch as a few fitted parts fall out. They go back in easily, so don't fret. Once inside the gun, we found that none of the numbers matched, or were even close to each other. When we broke the gun down, we found it impossible to get the cross pin out that holds the bolt into the breech area of the barrel. We tried long and hard but had to give up, as we didn't want to force or break anything. The rest of the takedown procedure worked just fine, though, revealing the massive amounts of thoroughly machined parts inside these old guns, and that's always a treat to see.

Our Team Said: All in all, we thought this was one of the worst guns we've tested. Its accuracy was on the order of 2.5 inches with both types of ammo, which was not horrible. But unlike the Luger, there were no clumped shots and thus no promise of increased accuracy in better weather. The 30-caliber version we tested in January 2011 was utterly reliable, and had about the same accuracy. It also had all-matching numbers, which in our experience is a good place to start if you want a reliable old complex auto pistol. This one fired most of the time with the Independence ammo. It may be that the gun will work better after a search for its favorite ammo.

It took lots of effort for us to avoid pitching the Mauser into the woods — and we're not alone. As one well-informed source told us, this particular version of the Broomhandle never got officially accepted for any sort of military use. It just doesn't work. We read the German military ordered some 150,000 of these in 9mm during WWI, which probably hurt their war efforts.

Written and photographed by Ray Ordorica, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.* **GT**

Smith & Wesson M&P40c Vs. Beretta's Storm Compact Forty

This pair demonstrated first-class reliability, achieved with two different schemes. Also, the Beretta was more accurate from the bench, but the S&W demonstrated superior combat accuracy.

What is there to say about two 40-caliber handguns that never stuttered? A lot. There are significant differences between the handguns that lead us to believe one is the superior defensive handgun, at least for our testers. When faced with an attack by a psychopath with no sense of the moral dimension of his crime, we wish to be as well armed as possible. Unfortunately, society frowns on an individual walking around with a shotgun slung over the shoulder. Or, a full-size service pistol may become a drag on the hip. This means that the compact handgun is a popular compromise. Among the most popular concealed-carry types is the compact 40 S&W pistol.

The term subcompact is applied to those handguns with both a short barrel and slide and a shortened grip, both of which have significant downsides. The shorter barrel generates less velocity. The shorter grip prevents an ideal firing grip. The smaller grip helps some shooters, but it depends upon the individual's hands and determination in practice. So to see how these and other performance factors are handled, we looked at a pair of subcompact handguns: The Smith & Wesson Military & Police Compact M&P40c 109203 40 S&W, which lists for $569, but which we found at CheaperThanDirt.com for $480. The Beretta Px4 Storm SubCompact JXS4F20FC 40 S&W was $511, also from CTD, with a list price of $582.



While the handguns are similar in size, we feel the Smith & Wesson, left, makes more efficient use of space. The barrel is longer and the long sight radius makes the speedy shooter more accurate.





Of course, these 40-caliber handguns produce more recoil than their 9mm counterparts. For self-defense, we always want to put more energy on the target. However, we recommend that anyone considering the 40-caliber compact should master the 9mm first. We found these handguns are significantly more difficult to use than 9mm compacts we've previously tested. Top is the Smith & Wesson Military & Police Compact M&P40c. Bottom is the Beretta Px4 Storm SubCompact 40 S&W.

The primary difference between the two was their actions. The Smith & Wesson is a double action only. The trigger press is reset by the slide, and it is the same press for each trigger pull. The Storm features a double-action-first-shot trigger. A long press of the trigger fires the first shot. The slide cocks the hammer in recoil and

the following shots are single action. Notably, the person using a double-action-first-shot handgun must learn two trigger actions. In our view, it takes less training time to master the DAO trigger, but there is an argument for the superior accuracy of the single-action trigger press.

Also notable, these 40-caliber handguns demonstrate more recoil than their 9mm counterparts, due to them expelling more bullet weight and bullet energy. In a self-defense scenario, we always want more energy on the target, if the shooter can put the bullet on the target. However, we recommend that anyone considering the 40-caliber compact handgun should take time to master the 9mm first. We found these handguns are significantly more difficult to use than 9mm compacts we've previously tested.

Beretta Px4 Storm SubCompact JXS4F20FC 40 S&W, $511

The Storm uses the same type of polymer frame as the Storm service pistol but it differs significantly from the larger iteration, in that the subcompact uses a tilting barrel-locked breech lockup, while the full-size Storm uses a rotating-barrel.

In the hand, our shooters found the frame was stippled in the appropriate areas for good adhesion. We didn't think abrasion from these spots is likely to tear covering garments when the pistol is worn concealed. Like most other double-action-first-shot pistols, the Storm has a high bore axis, mainly because it takes more room to house a double-action-first-shot trigger mechanism. Therefore, we found the center line of the bore sits higher above the hand than the Smith & Wesson. Our shooters said the trigger finger must sweep downward and to the rear to properly control the trigger, but the trigger reach wasn't overlong. We liked the curved shape, and the double-action trigger was relatively smooth at 12 pounds with no stacking. The single-action trigger press was a clean 5.5 pounds with rapid reset.

BERETTA PX4 STORM JXS4F20FC 40 S&W, $511

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Storm isn't the lightest 40-caliber subcompact, but it is among the easiest to fire in comfort. It isn't overly heavy for concealed carry and offers good accuracy, as our shooters showed. Like most other double-action-first-shot pistols, the Storm has a high bore axis and noticeable muzzle flip.

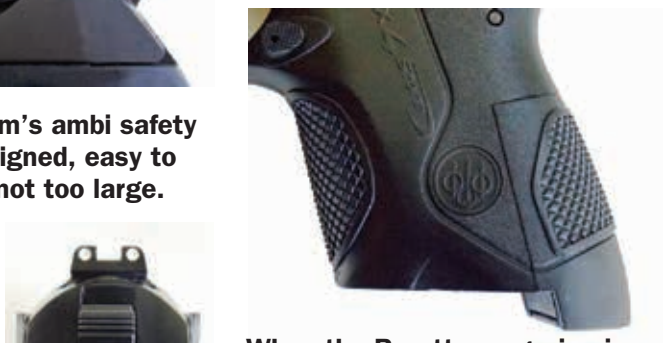






Above: The Storm's ambi safety lever is well designed, easy to manipulate but not too large.

Action	Locked-Breech Semi Auto, DA First Shot
Overall Length	6.3 in.
Overall Height	4.8 in.
Maximum Width	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	26.1 oz.
Weight Loaded	32.2 oz.
Barrel Length	3.0 in.
Barrel	Steel
Capacity	10+1
Slide	Blued Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	1.75 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.6 in.
Grips	N/A
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.0 in.
Sights	Fixed Steel
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	12.0 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Manual Safety and Decocker
Warranty	1-Year Limited
Telephone	(800) Beretta
Website	Beretta.com
Made In	USA



When the Beretta magazine is removed, a good amount of the gripping area is removed as well.

The Storm's sight picture is clean and uncluttered. We thought the sights were suitably fast for self-defense use.





Above right: The Beretta's slide lock is a good design for rapid manipulation. The take down wedge is just in front of the slide lock.

The Storm featured an ambidextrous combination decocking lever and safety. When the hammer was cocked, the lever was pressed to lower the hammer without contacting the firing pin. The pistol may be carried on Safe or Fire.

The grip frame was larger than the Smith & Wesson's, and this resulted in a larger grip and more comfort in firing. We found the grip frame fit most hands well, but some of the raters with big hands had their small fingers in a precarious grip on the frame. There were also grip inserts supplied, but the pistol fit most hands well enough. None of the raters had such a large hand that we had to change the grip insert. Also, the base pad of the magazine was an important part of the firing grip.

Elsewhere, the pistol was supplied with two 10-round magazines, and our team gave them high marks. They were well made and finished without visible weld marks. The slide was beveled at the rear. The slope of the slide angled to polished flats. There were modest forward cocking serrations. Slide-to-barrel fit was good, and the barrel was nicely crowned, we noticed.

The slide stop was slightly extended. During rapid fire and rapid magazine changes, the slide lock was handy and did not require the shooter to change his grip to actuate the slide lock. The pistol featured a light rail that is short but which still accommodated a variety of lights.

The pistol came with good combat-type sights. During firing, the traditional 3-dot sight arrangement gave good results in terms of accuracy. We thought the Storm was more comfortable to fire than the S&W, even though the higher bore axis of the Beretta resulted in more muzzle flip. This isn't a contradiction—recoil into the hand isn't felt as much because the muzzle rises more. During firing, beginning with the safety on and drawing from a Barber Leatherworks Chameleon holster, our time to target was acceptable, with practice. However, times were never as fast as with the Smith & Wesson, even when the draw began with the safety off with the Storm.

The Storm delivered good groups in rapid fire in the single-action mode, but the double-action-first-shot trigger simply wasn't as controllable as the Smith & Wesson, in the opinion of our shooters. Firing from

SMITH & WESSON M&P40C 109203 40 S&W, $480

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Smith & Wesson is a credible handgun with good design, good reliability, and good combat shooting performance. It is lighter than the Storm and overall was a favorite of our shooters.







The Smith and Wesson features a handy takedown lever just in front of the slide lock.



The M&P40c's cocking serrations are attractive and offer a good gripping surface.

The Smith & Wesson's ambi slide lock is a good feature for shooters who want to work the gun with either hand.

Action	Locked Breech DAO Semi-Auto
Overall Length	6.7 in.
Overall Height	4.3 in.
Maximum Width	1.3 in.
Weight Unloaded	21.9 oz.
Weight Loaded	28.0 oz.
Barrel Length	3.5 in.
Barrel	Steel
Capacity	9+1
Slide	Blued Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	1.75 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.7 in.
Grips	N/A
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Sights	Lo Mount, Similar to Novaks
Trigger Pull Weight	6.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.6 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	USA



Despite the abbreviated light rail, we were able to mount combat lights with good results.



40 S&W RANGE DATA

Fiocchi 180-gr. Full Metal Jacket	S&W M&P40c	Beretta Px4 Storm
Average Velocity	899 fps	878 fps
Muzzle Energy	322 ft.-lbs.	308 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	3.0 in.	1.9 in.
Black Hills 155-gr. Jacketed Hollowpoint	**S&W M&P40c**	**Beretta Px4 Storm**
Average Velocity	1050 fps	1025 fps
Muzzle Energy	379 ft.-lbs.	361 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	3.5 in.	3.0 in.
Nosler 200-gr. Jacketed Hollowpoint	**S&W M&P40c**	**Beretta Px4 Storm**
Average Velocity	890 fps	909 fps
Muzzle Energy	351 ft.-lbs.	366 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	3.0 in.	2.3 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups off a bench rest. Distance: 15 yards. We recorded velocity with a Shooting Chrony Master Chronograph. The first sky screen was set 10 feet from the muzzle.



The Smith & Wesson magazine is shorter and the witness holes are in the side of the magazine body. The Beretta is a longer magazine and the witness holes are in the back of the magazine.

the benchrest at 15 yards, the Storm proved to be more accurate than the Smith & Wesson. The best group with Fiocchi's 180-grain FMJ load was under 2 inches. This is good work for a 3-inch-barrel handgun. However, the Storm's barrel was shorter and developed less velocity and energy. Also, the Beretta fired about 2 inches low with most loads. If this is a line-wide problem, it should be corrected by the factory, in our view.

Takedown is simple. The shooter must press a bar out of the left side of the frame to unlock the slide and barrel from the frame.

Our Team Said: The Beretta was rated down because loads shot from it struck low on target, and this should be fixed with a taller front sight. The pistol was certainly reliable and offered combat accuracy and slow-fire accuracy. The Beretta also features the better grip and is more comfortable to fire.

Smith & Wesson Military & Police Compact M&P40c 109203 40 S&W, $480

The team recently tested a Smith & Wesson M&P9c, and this pistol is dimensionally identical to that handgun. However the 40-caliber version exhibits more recoil. While recoil was heavier with the fast 155-grain loads alongside



The Storm proved to be reliable and accurate. The best group came with Fiocchi 180-grain training loads.

180-grain loads, all were controllable with effort from the experienced raters. Less-experienced raters found the 40 S&W compact skirting the edge of control. The M&P40c features frame stippling that works well in giving the shooter proper grip when firing. The raters used each pistol as issued without changing the grip inserts. Large hands may need the larger insert, but this doesn't change the fact that some hands — and not always the largest — found the small finger hanging over the bottom of the grip. One rater gave up and curled his pinky finger under the magazine rather than attempting to find purchase on the abbreviated grip. Still, we thought the grip remained comfortable despite the shorter length.

We liked the ambidextrous slide lock. While buried in the frame more than on the Beretta, it worked well in speed drills. The double-action-only trigger broke at a smooth and consistent 6.5 pounds. This trigger was controllable in rapid fire, with a rapid reset. Speed to an accurate first shot was better than the Beretta. Our shooters found this pistol to be less accurate than the 9mm version tested lately. On several occasions, the rater firing for accuracy found himself adjusting his grip due to recoil, which played into less accuracy. For accuracy shooting with pistols, we do not use a machine rest because we want our results to more closely reflect what our readers can expect with a given gun. To the best of our knowledge, there is no concealed-carry version of a Ransom Rest.

The slide was well serrated for cocking, and there were no forward cocking serrations. The sights were good combat sights. The Smith & Wesson was more concealable as a result of the short frame, but the grip does not allow a full firing grip with every hand. The Smith & Wesson's barrel was longer than the Beretta and produced more velocity and energy. After firing the pistol extensively with three loads, there were no failures to feed, chamber, fire, or eject.

Our Team Said: The Smith & Wesson was the superior pistol in combat shooting, according to our testers. The Smith & Wesson was also lighter. For concealed carry and combat shooting, we like the Smith & Wesson based upon its work at the range, suitability for concealed carry, and simplicity of operation.

Written and photographed by Bob Campbell, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.* **GT**

Browning O/U 20 Gauges: New Model 725 Versus Veteran 325

New versions of veteran shotguns are sometimes worth extra money at the counter. But would that be true when a new Citori 725 went against a hard-to-find, but willing, Citori Model 325?

Browning over-and-under shotguns have been a staple on the shooting market for longer than many veteran wingshooters would like to remember. In the simplest terms – they work. Naturally as time rolls on, innovations to help make the shotguns more user friendly, handle and perform better, and just make them more appealing to the eye are tossed into the mix. A good example is the transformation of Browning offerings in the Citori Model 25 line, as in 325, 425, 525, 625 and the current 725.

The latest smokepole to find its way into hands of hunters and target breakers is the Model 725 in 20 gauge that hit the market in 2014. The main new features to the subgauge over and under are internal — such as a mechanical trigger system, back-bored barrels with lengthened forcing cones, and the Invector-DS choke tube system introduced with the 12-gauge Model 725 a couple of years ago.

To see just how much the Citori had changed, we were able to obtain a Browning Model 325 20 gauge in very good shape. Last produced in the late 1990s, the Model 325 was the first in the line of X25s and has become quite scarce — their owners don't seem to be too anxious to part with them. The Model 325 we got our hands on had been in the gun safe of an acquaintance for quite some time, but was in excellent shape and provided a good example of how shotguns can change and still stay the same. The veteran 20 gauge featured 30-inch ported barrels and inertia triggers.

While the new Model 725 field version we used in the test carries a suggested retail price of $2470, the veteran used Model 325 in very good shape, if one can be found, is priced at about $1,500. We did not consider the price difference to be a major factor in our evaluation. As Gun Tests readers often point out, we'll talk about the guns, and the reader can decide if his budget can take the hit.

To check out the two 20-gauge shotguns in a variety of shooting situations, we selected the following test ammunition: On the target range and at the patterning board, we used Winchester AA Target 2.75-inch loads packing ⅞ ounce of No. 8 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1200 fps, and Remington Premier STS Target 2.75-inch loads with ⅞ ounce of No. 8 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1200 fps. For tests in the field, we used Federal Game 2.75-inch loads with ⅞ ounce of No. 7.5 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,210 fps.



Although the price-tag difference between the two models in our test was about $1,000, it was the performance on the patterning board that was the determining factor in our giving the nod to the new model of Browning over-and-unders. The Browning Citori Model 725, right, shined in our testing and edged out the Browning Citori Model 325 as our pick in this match up.

There were zero malfunctions with any of the loads in both of the test shotguns. Here are our findings:

Browning Citori Model 725
No. 0135306005 20 Gauge, $2470

Released to the general public in late 2014, the Citori Model 725 in 20 gauge follows a long tradition of Browning's ventures into the subgauge market.

BROWNING CITORI MODEL 725 NO. 0135306005
20 GAUGE OVER/UNDER, $2470
GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The new kid on the block handles well and patterns like a dream, which gives it a slight edge over its veteran predecessor.



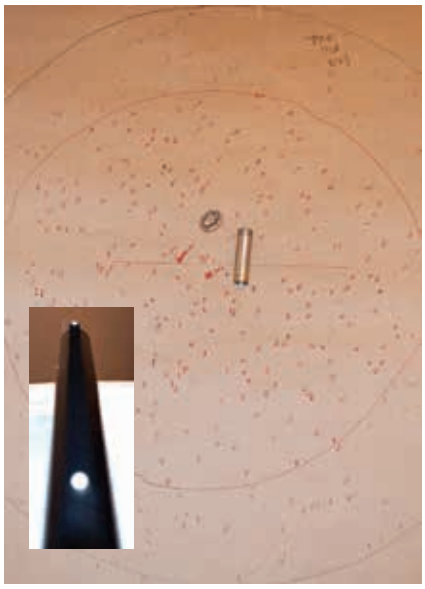
Action Type	Over/Under	Buttstock Length of Pull	14.5 in.
Chamber Size	3 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.5 in.
Overall Length	43 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.6 in.
Capacity	2	Forearm	Checkered Walnut Gloss Oil (Grade II/III)
Weight (Unloaded)	6 lbs.	Front Bead	Ivory
Barrel Length	26 in.	Rear Bead	Ivory
Barrel	Polished Blued Steel, Chrome Lined	Rib Width	0.25 in.
Receiver	Low-Profile, Silver-Nitride Finish, Roll Engraving	Trigger	5 lbs. (Bottom & Top), Mechanical
Choke Tubes	Invector DS Flush-Fit, IC, M, F	Warranty	Limited
Stock	Checkered Walnut Gloss Oil (Grade II/III)	Telephone	(800) 333-3288
		Website	Browning.com
		Made In/Assembled In	Japan



Not showy, but providing nice class to the field gun, the silver nitride receiver with roll engraving of flushing birds on both sides was a nice touch in upgrading the X25 line.



The shape of the forearm was not your typical Schnabel, but we liked the feel of the design and the way it helped the shooter glide into targets.



The Invector DS chokes that came with the Model 725 lived up to their billing with the Modified choke producing a very solid pattern at 30 yards. The number of hits in the 20-inch circle were excellent and were the best results of all our patterning-board tests. Inset: Two ivory beads provided an effective system for properly mounting the shotgun.

This field shotgun is both quick and smooth in the handling department, measuring right at 43 inches long and weighing only 6 pounds. With a length of pull of 14.5 inches, the shotgun had a drop at the comb of 1.5 inches and a drop at the heel of 2.6 inches. These dimensions are right on the average mark for an out-of-the-box shotgun, and our team had no problems adjusting to the fit.

Unlike the 12-gauge versions of the Model 725, there is no palm swell in the pistol grip. However, the thin grip with fine checkering was a pleasure to hold and handle. The same checking provides a high-quality grip on the forearm, which is in a modified Schnabel shape.

We really liked the 5-pound touch off of both of the Fire Lite mechanical triggers in the Model 725. Smooth and crisp, the trigger pull on a shotgun may not be as important as the touch off on a centerfire rifle, but a good pull does help put a pattern on targets.

On the clay target range, on the patterning board, and in the field, we found that the new Browning lived up to its advertising claims. Just a little quicker to move with its 26-inch barrel, the Model 725 smacked targets with authority and provided the best pattern when the smokepole was put through its paces on paper. At a range of 30 yards with the Modified choke, the new Browning produced a nearly perfect 54-46 percent pattern (54 percent above the center and 46 percent below) with the pellet spread of the Winchester AA load nearly even across a 30-inch circle. Inside the 20-inch circle at the center of the target, there were 220 pellet hits (yes, we count them) for a solid center punch of 60 percent. This performance was the best of all our patterning tests.

With the Improved Cylinder choke, the Model 725 produced an identical 54-46 percent pattern, with 157 hits in the 20-inch circle for a 51-percent center punch.

Results with the Remington shotshell load were not quite as impressive, but were still quite good.

The Modified choke produced a 40-60 percent pattern with 208 hits (58 percent) in the 20-inch center circle; and the Improved Cylinder choke produced a 42-58 percent pattern with 149 pellet hits (55 percent) in the 20-inch center circle.

The Invector DS chokes, which are designed with a brass alloy band at the base of the tube that helps prevent gas and grit from fouling the barrel, are promoted as producing high-quality patterns. In our tests, they did their job.

Our Team Said: It is not a given that the new model on the block will outperform a seasoned veteran, but with the Model 725 in 20 gauge, that is exactly what occurred. The shotgun handled well on the clays course and excelled in the patterning stage of the test. It is well worth the higher price tag, compared to the veteran model in the test, in our opinion.

Browning Citori Model 325 No. 28977NWC33 20 Gauge, $1500

While not as ancient as the legendary Browning Superposed, this Browning Model 325 subgauge dates back to the 1990s and was among the first shotguns produced as part of the X25 series. It has stood the test of time to be recognized by many wingshooters as one of the finest subgauge field shotguns available to scattergun devotees.

The Model 325's ported 30-inch barrels are both unusual and prized by those who favor a smooth shooting, well-balanced 20 gauge. The longer barrels tend to smooth out the swing of most shooters, and as veteran shooting instructors will tell students: "shooting is a game of smooth, not fast."

Only slightly heavier than the newest offering in the X25 line, the Model 325 tipped the scales at 6.5 pounds and had an overall length of 46.75 inches. The heft and balance was quite nice, and with an easily adjustable Triple Trigger system, tuning the length of pull for each shooter was a snap. We also liked the feature of various trigger offerings — wide checkered, narrow smooth,

BROWNING CITORI MODEL 325 NO. 28977NWC33 20 GAUGE OVER/UNDER, $1500

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The older-version Browning was narrowly edged out by the newest in the X25 series on the patterning board, but is still worthy of any shooter's consideration as a quality shooting tool.



Action Type	Over/Under
Chamber Size	2.75 in.
Overall Length	46.75 in.
Capacity	2
Weight (Unloaded)	6.5 lbs.
Barrel Length	30 in.
Barrel	Blued Steel, Chrome Lined
Choke Tubes	Invector Plus; IC, M, F
Buttstock	Checkered Walnut
Buttstock Length of Pull	14 to 14.7 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.5 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.25 in.
Forearm	Checkered Walnut (Schnabel)
Front Bead	Ivory
Rear Bead	Ivory
Rib Width	0.4 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	4.5 lbs. (Bottom) 5.25 lbs. (Top)
Warranty	Limited
Telephone	(800) 333-3288
Website	Browning.com
Made In/Assembled In	Japan



Although not as impressive as the engraving on the Model 725's receiver, the clean, crisp look of the Model 325's silver nitrite receiver was still pleasing to the eye of the beholders.



The easily adjustable trigger on the Model 325 is a nice touch on a veteran shotgun and was appreciated by our team members requiring different LOP requirements. We really liked the touch off of 4.5 pounds on the bottom barrel and 5.25 pounds on the top.



A sure and pleasant-feeling grip for shooters, the forearm on the Model 325 over/under was the same Schnabel style used in all but the newest version of the X25 shotgun line.



Ported barrels are designed to help reduce recoil, although recoil with 20-gauge loads is not normally a major consideration for most shooters. We did not observe any difference in the felt recoil with the two shotguns, but did note the increased muzzle blast with the Model 325's ported barrels.



Breaking clays was a pleasure with both the Browning Citori Model 725, at the ready with Ralph Winingham, and the Browning Citori Model 325, with little difference noted in target breaks or handling.

or wide smooth canted. Utilizing an inertia trigger system that requires the firing of the first barrel to engage the second, the Model 325 triggers touched off at 4.5 pounds for the bottom barrel and 5.5 pounds for the top. We found this to be acceptable in both cases, with no problems with the minor difference in bottom and top touch off.

As for the fit of the veteran, the drop at the comb of 1.5 inches and drop at the heel of 2.25 inches was close enough to the measurements of the Model 725 that we could find no appreciable difference in the handling quality.

When we moved onto the patterning range, we found that the internal Invector Plus chokes for the Model 325 were not up to the performance level of the Model 725's Invector DS chokes.

Just like the Model 725, the veteran 20 gauge produced more consistent results with the Winchester loads in both the modified and improved cylinder chokes. The modified choke produced a 48-52 percent pattern with 117 hits (52 percent) in the 20-inch circle; and the improved cylinder choke produced a 38-62 percent pattern with 80 hits (50 percent) in the 20-inch circle.

Using the Remington ammunition, the modified choke produced a 49-51 percent pattern with 146 hits (64 percent) in the 20-inch circle; and with the improved cylinder, the pattern was 34-66 percent with 71 (45 percent) in the 20-inch circle.

While we were satisfied with the patterning performance with the Model 325, it did not meet the standard of the new model. We found no discernible difference in target hits or field performance between the two models. It should also be noted that several after-market choke tubes, both internal and extended, are available for the Model 325 that could improve the patterning performance.



The similarity in weight, handling ability, and appearance of the Browning Citori Model 325, left, and the Browning Citori Model 725 had our team ranking the two 20-gauge shotguns as nearly dead even until patterning performance gave the 725 a slight edge.

Our Team Said: The minor differences in the looks and feel of the veteran compared to the new kid on the block had us ranking these two shotguns as dead even — until we took a trip to the patterning board. While producing acceptable results with the two loads used in the test, the Model 325 just could not match the exceptional performance of the Model 725. Other than that minor hitch, the veteran model, if you run across one, should be considered a very fine addition to a wingshooter's collection of shooting tools.

Written and photographed by Ralph Winingham, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.* **GT**

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Three Generations of 45 ACP Revolvers from Smith & Wesson

In our estimation, the Champion Series Model 625-8 JM is a best-in-class 45 ACP revolver when compared to an older M1917 and a newer Model 327 Thunder Ranch, our shooters said.

Shooting the 45 ACP cartridge in a revolver may seem like an oxymoron, but the round has a long history of being matched up in revolvers starting at the turn of the 20th century. The issue in 1917, other than World War I, was a dearth of the new M1911 pistols as the U.S. became involved in the war. Tooling up for 1911 production was not an option since it would cost too much time. Remember, at the turn of the century, revolvers ruled the roost and all manufacturers were building double-action revolvers. With plenty of 45 ACP ammunition in inventory, the U.S. military turned to Colt and Smith & Wesson, which chambered the 45 ACP in their heavy frame revolvers.

S&W is credited with the idea of using moon clips, because there's a trick to firing the rimless 45 ACP cartridge in a wheelgun. Revolvers use rimmed cartridges, which headspace on the rim. Rimless pistol cartridges headspace on the case mouth. Insert a 45 ACP in the cylinder chamber and it will fit and probably fire the round. But the issue now becomes, how does the shooter eject the cartridge? The solution S&W came up with was a moon clip that holds six rounds, or a half-moon clip that holds three rounds. Both Colt and S&W used moon clips in what the U.S. Military named the United States Revolver, Caliber .45, M1917. We tested one of these old warhorses against two other generations of 45 ACP revolvers recently to see if the relic stood the test of time.





Top: To load a moon or half moon clip, each cartridge is pressed into one of the U-shaped slots in the clip. The clip fits in the 45 ACP cartridge's extractor groove. Bottom: To remove an empty case still attached to the clip, the demooner is inserted into the tube and the notch on the tube provided leverage against the clip to twist the empty case free.



On top is the newest 45 ACP revolver from Smith & Wesson, the Model 325 Thunder Ranch ($1329) from S&W's Performance Center, which offered light weight and a dubious accessory rail. In the middle is the S&W Champion Series Model 625-8 JM ($979), which had the best handling, smoothest action and best accuracy. On the bottom is the M1917 ($600-$800), the first revolver S&W chambered in 45 ACP. This particular gun has been modified from its original configuration.

A newer generation is the S&W Champion Series Model 625-8 JM, with the JM standing for Jerry Miculek. This is the revolver that Mr. Miculek uses to shoot un-

Godly fast; it took him 2.99 seconds to fire six shots, reload and fire six more shots with this model revolver. Testers really liked this revolver, though it seemed the plainest of the three revolvers, looking a lot like a Model 686. This revolver is very popular with IDPA shooters and other competitors. Now we know why — it loved to be run and run hard at the range.

The newest generation is the S&W Performance Center Model 325 Thunder Ranch, which is constructed from lightweight materials and offers a few modern updates on revolver design, which we thought were good intentions. But we learned we did not like having an accessory rail under the barrel. It's a good idea to incorporate a tactical light or laser sight onto a revolver via an accessory rail, but it's a bad idea to have the rail in a place that could potentially injure the shooter. More on that in a minute.

We looked at these N-frame revolvers through two lenses, one being defensive and the second being competitive. As testers pawed over the three revolvers, comments on the 45 ACP 6-shooters ranged from "novelty" and "antique" to "convenient" and "practical." The 1911 shooters leaned toward the positive end of the grading spectrum, while others seemed bothered to shoot a semi-automatic cartridge in a revolver. Nonetheless, we put the wheelguns through their paces, and here's how the generations fared.

Smith & Wesson M1917 45 ACP, $600-$800

The M1917 we acquired had been modified. The S&W roll mark on the barrel was not centered, which was a clue this revolver had some work done to it. The end of the barrel was cut down, and the round front-blade sight was re-soldered onto the barrel. It had a chrome finish, the lanyard loop was removed, and a pair of stag-horn grips replaced the original checkered wood grips. Evidently, TED — the initials or first name of the former owner are engraved on

S&W MODEL 1917 45 ACP, $600-$800

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

Testers appreciated the accuracy of this old warhorse, but the design was dated and is more appropriate in the role as a collectible shooter.





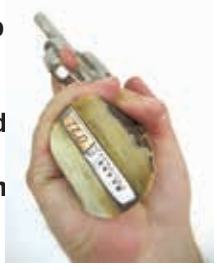


This is a typical target from the M1917 using a rest. Age has not deteriorated accuracy in this former combat pistol.

Action	Double Action, Hammer-Mounted Firing Pin
Overall Length	9.4 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.7 in.
Weight Unloaded	34.5 oz.
Weight Loaded	37.6 oz.
Barrel Length	4.0 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Steel/Large N-frame
Cylinder Material	Steel, Fluted
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.8 in.
Grips	Stag Horn
Grip Thickness (max)	1.4 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.5 in.
Front Sight	Round Blade
Rear Sight	Fixed Groove in Frame
Sight Radius	5.5 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.7 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	11 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	3.2 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.7 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	n/a
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	Springfield, Mass.



The ejector rod was long enough to eject empties or live ammo.



The lanyard loop was removed and "TED" had the hole plugged and a brass plate soldered in place.



The bulbous ejector-rod top locks into the pin in the underlug; note how the pin projects out from the lug.



Revolver sights from the early 20th century were fine; they are quite different on the modern revolver.

a brass plate soldered to the butt to cover the lanyard hole — wanted a barbecue gun. That is, a gun that creates conversation where smoked meats are consumed.

Original S&W M1917s had a 5.5-inch barrel and were blued. After WWI, arsenal-refinished models may have a Parkerized finish. S&W built the M1917 using the Second Model 44 Hand Ejector, which was originally chambered in 44 Special and then 455 Webley for use by British troops during WWI. The M1917 used a shortened cylinder with chambers machined with a shoulder so that 45 ACP cartridges headspaced on the case mouth like they do on semi-automatic pistols. It was possible, but not practical in combat, to separately load 45 ACP cartridges into the chambers of S&W M1917 revolvers and fire the rounds. Empties, however, needed to be pushed out from each individual chamber using a rod. Tedious, but doable, as we found out. Moon clips were far easier and efficient. Moon clips come in six-round, three-round and two-round sets. We tested with six- and three-round clips.

A dozen or so moon ($1.40 each) and half moon ($2.25 for a pair) clips were ordered from Numrich Gunparts Corp. (GunPartsCorp.com) along with a case removal tool ($10.65). We became very proficient at quickly loading clips and unloading clips using a tool. We also became very proficient at destroying half moon clips while trying to remove empty cases. The cartridge removal tool was a notched tube. The tube held six cartridges, and after each clip was unloaded, empties were dumped into our reloading bucket. We felt the half moon clips were nostalgic and easier to conceal for a reload when carrying concealed, but the loaded full-moon clips, though bulky in a pocket, were fast to reload. We found that we could come close to the same reload time as we have with a semi-automatic pistol, just with reduced round counts.

For 45 ACP ammo we chose two 230-grain FMJ factory loads —

S&W CHAMPION SERIES MODEL 625-8 JM 160936
45 ACP, $979

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The 625-8 JM had excellent balance and accuracy, and we would not hesitate to buy this revolver for competition or defense.







The 625-8 felt best in hand with good balance and smooth working trigger in double action.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	9.5 in.
Overall Height	6.4 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.7 in.
Weight Unloaded	40.3 oz.
Weight Loaded	45 oz.
Barrel Length	4 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Stainless Steel; Large N-frame
Cylinder Material	Stainless Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.3 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.3 in.
Grips	Smooth Wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.3 in.
Front Sight	Gold Bead Patridge
Rear Sight	Adjustable Notch
Sight Radius	5.4 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	12 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.9 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.3 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	Springfield, Mass.



Note how the clip holds the rimless 45 ACP cartridges in the extractor groove.



Punching out empties was fast since empty cases cleared the cylinder chambers.



We would chamfer the chamber mouths to making loading easier and faster.

RANGE DATA

Winchester White Box	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**
45 ACP 230-gr. JHP	**M1917**	**Model 625-8 JM**	**Model 327 TR**
Average Velocity	632 fps	832 fps	821 fps
Muzzle Energy	204 ft.-lbs.	354 ft.-lbs.	344 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.3 in.	0.6 in.	2.5 in.
Hornady Steel Match	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**
45 ACP 230-gr. HAP	**M1917**	**Model 625-8 JM**	**Model 327 TR**
Average Velocity	615 fps	815 fps	779 fps
Muzzle Energy	193 ft.-lbs.	339 ft.-lbs.	310 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	2.1 in.	0.3 in.	2.3 in.
Reload	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**
45 ACP 185-gr. SWC	**M1917**	**Model 625-8 JM**	**Model 327 TR**
Average Velocity	805 fps	1005 fps	913 fps
Muzzle Energy	266 ft.-lbs.	415 ft.-lbs.	343 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.7 in.	0.6 in.	2.4 in.
American Custom Ammo	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**	**Smith & Wesson**
45 Auto Rim 200-gr. TMP/FN/FB	**M1917**	**Model 625-8 JM**	**Model 327 TR**
Average Velocity	536 fps	778 fps	771 fps
Muzzle Energy	128 ft.-lbs.	269 ft.-lbs.	264 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.2 in.	0.8 in.	1.8 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 15 yards with open sights. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph 15 feet from the muzzle.

Hornady Steel Match and Winchester white box — and a reload using 185-grain SWC bullets, which we use for training and competition. We also found a source for 45 Auto Rim ammo by American Custom Ammo (AmericanCustom.tripod.com, acrammo@sum.net, [850] 689-4553) loaded with a Rainer 200-grain TMP/FN/FB bullet. The 45 Auto Rim cartridge was developed around 1920 by Remington-Peters specifically to fire in M1917 revolvers without the use of clips. These cartridges have a thick rim and headspace on the rim. They were loaded to 45 ACP military standards.

The M1917 was still in good condition even for its age. The lock up was tight with little wiggle. The cylinder locked in the rear and in the front via the ejector rod and a pin set in the under lug. The end of the ejector rod had a belled end, so slamming your palm on it to eject empties was comfortable. Opening the cylinder, we noticed the stepped chambers. The ejector center pin also allowed the moon clip to drop over it. In hand, the revolver had a nice heft, and the stag-horn grips were hand filling with plenty of texture — decorative and usable — though noticeably shorter than the grips of the other revolvers.

Since the gun was chromed and the sights were fine, it was like looking into the sun when firing at times, especially when the sun glinted off the chrome finish.



The differences between the M1917 (right) and the 625-8 JM (left) show how barrel designs have evolved.

The action needed some attention, as the revolver was difficult to cock single action, and with the small hammer spur and minimal knurling, we had the feeling the hammer would slip, but it never did with any of our testers. The trigger was also smooth and thin. We assumed a range rod would find this gun out of spec, but it passed. We also assumed at the range we need a large piece of cardboard to find where the bullets were hitting, and we were quite wrong. It gave impressive groups and bested the new Model 325 TR by a significant margin. This pistol was a shooter if you took the time to align the fine sights. In double action, the M1917 was harder to control than the other two revolvers. Most testers shot the M1917 well, but we simply shot the other revolvers better. The ejector rod pushed empties well out of the cylinder chambers with ease. Loading with either moon clip was fast.

Our Team Said: We appreciated this old revolver, and shooting it helped us better understand how these revolvers evolved. This

chopped up M1917's mechanism needs to be looked at by a gunsmith prior to purchasing, but if it passed, then we'd get a tooled leather holster and matching belt for informal shooting. Since the M1917 was modified, it had lost all collector value, and though it was a nostalgic shooter, it was too dated for serious defense or competition.

Smith & Wesson Champion Model 625-8 JM 160936 45 ACP, $979

The Model 625-8 JM (Jerry Miculek) revolver is one of S&W's Champion Series revolvers designed in collaboration with professional shooter, Jerry Miculek. The initials "JM" and a lightning bolt were engraved on the sideplate and on the grip; other than that it looked like a husky Model 686. The 686 uses S&W's medium size L-frame; the 625-8 JM is a large N-frame. Jerry Miculek uses a modified S&W 625 with a 5-inch barrel for USPSA/IPSC competition and a different 625 JM, similar to the one tested, which is also modified for IDPA matches.

As a competition revolver, the 625-8 JM was well set up. In fact, it is one of the most popular revolvers at IDPA matches in the Stock Service Revolver division. This revolver is designed to run and run hard. A rapid-fire drill conducted on all the revolvers had shooters with revolvers in hand pointed down range at a 45-degree angle at an IDPA target 15 yards away, then we fired six shots, reloaded, and fired six more. The 625-8 JM was the fastest of all the revolvers. We also wore the 625-8 JM as our daily conceal carry with a Safariland Model 567 belt rig — we used the same holster for all three revolvers — and found the setup to our liking, though the 325 revolver was more comfortable to tote due to its light weight.

The range rod test proved all chambers were aligned with the barrel's bore. It dropped through with ease. The lock up was tight with minimal wiggle. The 625-8 was equipped with a small cylinder latch which worked precisely, giving testers confidence in the revolver.

S&W PERFORMANCE CENTER MODEL 325 THUNDER RANCH 170316 45 ACP, $1329

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

The 325 Thunder Ranch was an attempt at updating the .45 ACP revolver design, but the grips and accuracy did not meet our expectations of guns built by the Performance Center.





Action	Double Action
Overall Length	9.5 in.
Overall Height	6.2 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.7 in.
Weight Unloaded	31 oz.
Weight Loaded	34.1 oz.
Barrel Length	4 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Scandium Alloy, Large N-frame
Cylinder Material	Stainless Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.2 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.3 in.
Grips	Textured synthetic, finger grooves
Grip Thickness (max)	1.2 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.3 in.
Front Sight	Interchangeable Gold Bead
Rear Sight	Adjustable Notch
Sight Radius	6 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.1 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	11.1 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.6 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.1 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	Springfield, Mass.



Note how the grips are pulling away from the frame, causing gaps — not acceptable on a PC piece, in our view.



These are the type of sights we expect on a modern revolver, though we felt the sights could have been better for defense work.



Note the ball detent that locks the cylinder into the frame; that's also a stubby ejector rod.



At the muzzle note the steel barrel, locking nut and aluminum sleeve which make up the barrel.



Here are the three tapped holes to attach a Picatinny/ Weaver style accessory rail.

The trigger was wide and grooved, and the trigger pull was slick making the double-action pull feel less than what it measured. There was no trigger stop, which is one feature we thought would plus up the 625-8 JM.

The fit and finish on the 625-8 JM was superb. The grip fit the frame well, and the matte stainless finish was pleasing to the eye and functional. We saw no glare when shooting in the sun. The rear sight was adjustable and matte black. The front sight blade wore a gold bead and was interchangeable. Both the 325 TR and 626-8 JM had similar sights, which testers liked on both guns. Some would replace the front blade immediately, but all agreed the sight picture was good and fast to acquire.

Testers suspected the smooth grips would be too slick, allowing the revolver to move during recoil, especially in rapid fire. They also assumed the felt recoil from the wood grip would be noticeable. What we found is the revolver had a perfect combination of heft to help absorb recoil. In rapid fire, testers grew to like the grips and found they could get a higher hold on the revolver, and we did not experience slippage with the grip. We didn't beat any fast-shooting records, but we were able to quickly fire the revolver. Reloading was fast with the moon clips, and the ejector fully pushed empties clear of the cylinder. The longer ejector rod was favored by our testers.

We would chamfer the chambers, like the 325's chambers, to make loading faster. The thick-rimmed 45 Auto Rim cartridges are loaded one at a time and quickly showed testers the speed of reloading with moon clips.

With Winchester White Box and Hornady Steel Match, both loaded with 230-grain bullets, we were able to get 0.2-inch six-shot groups when we did our part. The 45 Auto Rim cartridges also gave similar groups in the 625-8 JM. That impressed us.

Our Team Said: We would not hesitate to purchase the 625-8 JM and use it in competition or as a defense weapon. It was a pleasure to shoot and is a bargain, in our opinion.

Smith & Wesson Performance Center Model 325 Thunder Ranch #170316, $1329

The Model 325 TR is the newest design. This revolver was built with input from Thunder Ranch honcho Clint Smith and wears the Thunder Ranch logo in white on the right side of this matte black revolver. The 325 TR comes out of the Performance Center with a steel barrel covered with a sculpted aluminum sleeve, scandium alloy frame, and stainless-steel cylinder. It weighs about 31 ounces, the lightest of all revolvers tested. Fit and finish of the metal was excellent. Since all of these revolvers are N-frames, the 45 ACP cylinder looks too small for the frame, and in the case of the 325 TR, because of the way the barrel is assembled, the steel barrel and cylinder gap can be held to a close tolerance.

The front-sight blade wore a gold bead; a night-sight dot would have been better, according to some testers. The blade can be replaced, and that was a nice feature. Especially since this revolver is designed for defensive work. The rear sight was plain black; some thought a white outline would be better; the same comment was made of the 625-8 JM. The back side of the rear sight was serrated to reduce glare, a good touch.

The 325 TR uses a ball detent lockup at the front of the crane that solidly locked into the frame, which we liked. The ejector rod was short compared to the other revolvers and enclosed in a streamlined under lug. The stubby ejector rod was similar to rods found on snubnose revolvers. We became proficient with the set up, and, as always, used gravity to help unload the revolver. The rod was short due to an accessory rail that could be attached to the underside of the barrel for adding a tactical light or laser sight. We did not like this set up since it required our hands to be close to the cylinder gap and hot gases. If we were operating a light or laser's activation button/switch and needed to fire at that moment, then our hand was in jeopardy of getting a blast of hot gases. We don't think the gases are as severe as a plasma torch, but it might be enough to temporarily put us out of action. If we were to use the rail and a light setup, we would need extra training to become proficient.

Range rods freely fell through the barrel and into all the cylinders. Accordingly, we anticipated that this revolver would be an accurate shooter. We were wrong. The accuracy with the Model 325 TR was mediocre with the 45 ACP and 45 Auto Rim ammo we had on hand. We were not impressed. The 325 TR also had the most felt recoil of all the revolvers, due to its light weight.

The grips also rubbed our fur the wrong way for such a tricked-out piece. The grips had gaps between the gun side of the grip and the frame. We've fired big-bore revolvers with these style grips before and had a good experience. With the 325 TR, we found in rapid fire the light weight of the revolver and the grips did not help with accuracy. We felt beat up after firing the 325 TR.

The 325 TR was fast to load and reload; the chamfered chambers helped increase reload speed, our team said. The smaller cylinder latch proved easy and fast to use. Looking at the data, the 325 TR seems to prefer lighter bullets. Part of the efficiency with these revolvers is to use the same ammo used in a 1911 or other 45 ACP semi-automatic pistols, and the ammo tested was ammo we regularly use in our 1911s and Glocks.

Our Team Said: The light weight made this a nice carry. For competition, we would prefer a heavier revolver. Testers wanted to like the 325 TR because it had striking looks, but in use it did not perform to expectations, especially for the price. Thus, we would pass on the 325 TR. We appreciated the weight and excellent lock work, but its accuracy left us wanting more. We would also deep-six the accessory rail and get new grips if we owned this revolver.

Written and photographed by Robert Sadowski, using evaluations from Gun Tests *team testers.* **GT**

2014 PRODUCT INDEX

HANDGUNS

American Classic ACC45B 45 ACP — July
American Tactical Imports 1911GI No. HGAFX45GI 45 ACP — Apr
*Auto-Ordnance Thompson Custom 1911TC — Mar
Beretta 92A1 Compact INOX with rail J90C9F20 9mm Luger — Nov, Dec
Beretta CX4 Storm PX4 JX4P415 40 S&W — Mar
*Browning A1 Desert Tan 1911-22LR — Mar
*Browning A1 Compact Desert Tan 1911-22LR — Mar
Colt Commander Series 80 No. 04091U 45 ACP — Jan
Colt Mustang XSP PocketLite Polymer O6790 380 ACP — Nov
Colt Police Positive Special (Second issue) 38 Special — Apr
*Colt Python 357 Magnum (1988) — Dec
*CZ 75 B Omega — Mar
*CZ P-09 Flat Dark Earth — Mar
*CZ P-09 Suppressor-Ready — Marv
*CZ USA CZ 75 P-07 Duty 91178 9mm Luger — Oct
*CZ USA 75D PCR Compact No. 91194 9mm Para. — Oct
*Diamondback Firearms DB15 Pistol — Feb
*Double Tap Defense .40 S&W — Jan
*Double Tap Defense 410/.45 Colt — Jan
FNH USA FiveseveN IOM Pistol 5.7x28mm — Dec
Glock 21 Gen 3 45 ACP — Dec '13, Dec
*Glock 41 Gen4 Tactical .45 ACP — Mar
*Glock 42 380 ACP — Mar
Glock 42 Subcompact Slimline 380 ACP — Nov
*Glock G19 9mm Parabellum, — Oct
Glock Model 41 45 ACP — May
Heckler & Koch P2000SK #709302-A5 9mm Luger — Oct
Heritage Manufacturing Rough Rider Combo RR22MB9, 22 LR/22 WMR — Sep
High Standard Supermatic Citation 10x 22 LR — June
Husqvarna M40 9mm — Jan
Ithaca Gun Co. M1911-N #1911-C45G10 45 ACP — Aug, Dec
*Kahr/Cabela's Black and Orange Auto-Ordnance 1911 — July
*Kahr/Cabela's Robin Eggshell Blue PM9 — July
*Kahr CM9 9mm Parabellum — Oct
*Kahr CT40 — Jan
*Kahr CT45 — Jan
Kahr CW 380 No. 3833 380 ACP — Nov
*Kahr CW9 9mm Parabellum — Oct
*Kel-Tec PF-9 9mm Parabellum — Oct
*Legacy Sports International Citadel M1 Carbine — Mar
*Magnum Research Desert Eagle DE1911U Undercover — Jan, Mar
*Magnum Research Desert Eagle 1911G — Sep
*Magnum Research Desert Eagle 1911C — Sep
*Metro Arms Classic Compact Commander 1911 — Oct
*Mossberg Duck Commander Shotguns — Mar
Mossberg International 715P — Mar
Para USA Black Ops Recon 9 — Mar
Para USA Expert 9mm — Mar
Para USA Expert Commander No. 96748 45 ACP — Jan
Para USA Warthog 9mm — Mar
Remington Arms R51 9mm — Mar
Remington Model 51 380 ACP — Aug
Remington Model R51 9mm Luger — Aug
Roberts Defense Super Grade Pro 45 ACP — Aug
Rock Island Armory Micro Mag Standard 51687 22 TCM/9mm Luger — Dec
Rock Island Armory Tactical II Compact 51479 45 ACP — July
Rock Island 1911 Standard GI No. 51421 45 ACP — Apr
*Ruger 9mm LCR No. 5456 — Nov
Ruger 22/45 Lite No. 03900 P45MK3ALRPFL 22 LR — Feb, Dec
Ruger GP100 Match Champion Revolver No. 1754 357 Magnum — Dec
Ruger GP100 No. 1705 357 Magnum — Mar, *Dec
*Ruger GP100 No. KGP161 357 Magnum — Dec
Ruger LCP-CT 380 ACP — Jan
Ruger LCRx .38 Special +P — Feb
Ruger Model SP101 #5765 KSP-242-8 22 S / L / LR — Oct
Ruger New Model Single-Six Convertible #0624 22 LR/22 WMR — Sep
Ruger New Vaquero 5108 38 SP/357 Magnum — May
Ruger SP101 Model #5718 357 Magnum — Sep
Ruger SP101 #5759 327 Federal Magnum — Sep
*Ruger SR9C KSR9C/3313 9mm Parabellum — Oct
*S&W M&P 9 Shield No. 180021 9mm Luger — Oct
S.A.M. Commodore, Century International Arms HG1009-N 45 ACP — Jan
SIG Sauer 1911 C3 1911CO-45-T-C3 45 ACP — July
SIG Sauer P238 238-380-NBS12 380 ACP — Nov
SIG Sauer P290RS-380 — Mar
SIG Sauer P320 Modular Pistol — Mar
*SIG Sauer Swiss Arms SG 553 — Nov
S&W Model 329PD Alaska Backpacker IV150545 44 Magnum — Nov
S&W Performance Center Model 629-6 170135 44 Magnum — Nov
S&W Performance Center Model 629-8 44 Magnum — Nov, Dec
S&W Performance Center Model 657-5 41 Magnum — Nov
*Smith & Wesson 686 No. 164224 357 Magnum — Dec
*Smith & Wesson 686 Plus No. 164194 357 Magnum — Dec
*Smith & Wesson Model 686-2 357 Magnum — Dec
*Smith & Wesson 686-5 (6-inch) 357 Magnum — Dec

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2014 PRODUCT INDEX

*Smith & Wesson Governor Apr
*Smith & Wesson K-Frame Model Combat Magnum Apr
*Smith & Wesson M&P Bodyguard 380 Apr
Smith & Wesson M&P9c No. 209004 9mm Luger Oct, Dec
*Smith & Wesson Model 10 38 Special Apr
*Smith & Wesson Model 19 Combat Magnum 357 Mag. Dec
Smith & Wesson Model 41 22 LR June
Smith & Wesson Model 60 #178013 357 Magnum Sep
*Smith & Wesson Model 66 Apr
*Smith & Wesson Model 69 Combat Magnum Apr
Smith & Wesson Model M&P22 No. 122000 22 LR Feb
Smith & Wesson Pro Series 686 SSR NO. 178012 357 Magnum Dec
*Smith & Wesson SDVE Apr
*Springfield Armory EMP No. PI9209LP 9mm Luger Oct
*Springfield Armory XDM 3.8 XDM9389BHC 9mm Para. Oct
Springfield Armory XDM 3.8 XDM9389CBHC June
Springfield Armory XDM 5.25 Competition XDM95259SHC 9mm Luger June
Springfield Range Officer PI9128LP 45 ACP May
*Steyr Arms L-A1 Service Pistol Apr
*Sturm, Ruger & Co. LCRx Revolver Feb
*Taurus 24/7 G2 24/7-G29SS-17 9mm Parabellum Oct
*Taurus 85 View Feb
*Taurus First 24 Judge Kit July
Taurus Model 66 No. 66SS4 357 Magnum Mar, *Dec
Taurus Model 94 22 S, L, LR Oct
Traditions Frontier 1873 Single Action No. SAT73-126 38 Sp/ 357 Mag May, Dec
*TriStar Raptor ATAC Turkey Shotgun Apr
Walther Arms P22Q QAP22522 Tactical Pistol 22 LR Feb
Walther Arms PPQ M2 5-Inch Mar
Walther Arms PPQ M2 22 LR Mar

LONG GUNS

*Adams Arms AR Pistols Nov
Alexander Henry 12-bore Double Rifle Aug
*American Tactical TAC-PX2 12-Gauge Jan
*American Tactical TAC-SX2 12-Gauge Jan
Armalite AR-10(T) 10TBNF 7.62x51mm NATO / 308 Win May, Dec
*ArmaLite AR-31 Mar
*ArmaLite Defensive Sporting Rifle 10 Nov
*ArmaLite Defensive Sporting Rifle 15 Nov
*ArmaLite Defensive Sporting Rifle 15F Nov
Arenal Inc. 5.45x39-caliber SLR-104UR Feb
*Arsenal Inc. SLR-104UR Feb
Baikal Model MP-94 #489330 223 Rem./3-inch 12-Gauge Aug
*Benelli Ethos 12-Gauge Mar
Brazilian 1908 Mauser 98 7x57 Mauser Nov
Browning BAR Safari 338 Win. Mag. Feb
Browning BPS Stalker No. 012212304 12-Gauge May
*Browning Citori 725 Trap and Skeet models Nov
*Cimarron Firearms Daudsons Armory Model 1883 Side Lock Mar
*Cimarron Firearms Daudsons Armory Model 1889 Box Lock Mar
*CMMG Mk4 K AR Pistol Sep
*CMMG Mk4 RCE July
*CZ-USA 455 Varmint Tacticool Suppressor-Ready Mar
CZ-USA 512 Rifle No. 0216 22 WMR Apr, Dec
CZ-USA 527 Varmint #03066 17 Hornet Feb
*CZ-USA 550 Badlands Mar
*CZ-USA 550 Varmint Tacticool .308 Win. Mar
*CZ-USA 550 Sonoran Mar
*CZ-USA 557 Mar
*CZ-USA 557 Carbine Mar
*CZ-USA 557 Sporter Manners Mar
*CZ-USA Magnum H.E.T. II Mar
*FNH-USA FN 15 Carbine Mar
*FNH-USA FN 15 Rifle Mar
Grizzly Custom Marlin 336RC 30-30 Win. Brush Hawg Package Jan, Dec
Henry Repeating Arms Lever Action Rifle H010 45-70 Government Sep
Husqvarna Mauser Model 38 6.5x55mm Swedish Nov
James Erskine 12-Bore Double Rifle Aug
Just Right Carbine (Glock-based) 45 ACP June
Kel-Tec Sub-2000 40 S&W Mar
*Marlin Firearms 336C Limited Edition Mar
*Marlin Firearms Model 338 MX Mar
*Marlin Firearms Model 338 MXLR Mar
*Marlin Firearms Model 444 Marlin Mar
*Marlin Firearms Model 1895 CB in 45-70 Gov't Mar
Marlin Model 1895GS 45-70 Government Sep
*MasterPiece Arms 6mmBA Bolt Action Rifle Sep
*MasterPiece Arms 6.5mmBA Bolt Action Rifle Sep
Mossberg Model 27718 Mar
Mossberg Model 27738 Mar
Mossberg Model 27739 Mar
Remington 870P Police Magnum No. 24888 12-Gauge Jan
Remington 870P Police Magnum No. 24901 12-Gauge Jan
Remington Limited Edition Model 700 CDL Mar
Remington R-15 VTR Predator Carbine 223 Remington Oct
Remington VersaMax Tactical 3 Gun Mar

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2014 PRODUCT INDEX

Rock Island Armory M5 Matte Nickel Pump Shotgun #51329 3-in. 12-Gauge Feb
Rock River Arms LAR-8 Mid-Length A4 308A1239X 7.62 NATO Mar
Rock River Arms LAR-15 Varmint A4 AR1520X 223 Rem./5.56mm Oct
Rossi Circuit Judge Model SCJ4510 45 LC/410 Bore Jan
Ruger 77/17 Rotary Magazine Rifle K77/17-VHZ #7212 17 Hornet Feb
*Ruger AR-556 M4-style, direct impingement Modern Sporting Rifle Nov
*Ruger Collector's Series 10/22 Carbine Rifle Nov
*Ruger Gunsite Scout Rifle Nov
*Ruger LC9s Sep
Ruger No. 1, 400 Jeffery June
Ruger SR-556VT Autoloading Rifle #5914 5.56 NATO Oct
*Ruger SR-762 Jan
Ruger SR-762 Autoloading Rifle No. 5601 7.62x51 NATO / 308 Win. Sep
Ruger Red Label Mar
Savage Arms 93R17 BRJ No. 96770 17 HMR Apr
Savage Arms B.Mag Sporter No. 96901 17 WSM Apr
Savage Model 24v 222 Rem./3-Inch 20-Gauge Aug
SIG M400 RM400-16B-EC 223 Rem./5.56x45mm NATO July
SIG Sauer 516 Patrol R516G2-16B-P 223 Rem./ 5.56x45mm NATO July
SIG Sauer 556 SWAT Patrol Rifle R556-16B-PS-RD 223 Rem./5.56x45mm July
SIG Sauer P228 9mm Luger Nov
SIG Sauer SIG516 Carbon Fiber Mar
SIG Sauer SIG556xi Russian Mar
SIG Sauer Model 716 Patrol ODG, R716-16B-P-ODG, 7.62 Nato Mar
*Smith & Wesson M&P10 Apr
*Smith & Wesson M&P15-22 Multi-Color Apr
Springfield Armory Socom 16 No. AA9625 7.62x51 NATO / 308 Winchester Sep
Springfield Loaded M1A MA9826 7.62x51mm NATO / 308 Winchester May
Thomas Kennedy 14-Bore Percussion Double Rifle Aug
Thureon Defense 45 ACP Carbine June
Tristar Raptor A-TAC Home Defense No. 20120 12-Gauge Jan, Dec
Weatherby Model PA-08 Synthetic No. S1228PGM 12-Gauge May
Weatherby SA-08 28-Gauge Deluxe Mar
*Weatherby WBY-X PA-08 Typhon TR Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X PA-459 Typhon TR Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X SA-08 GH2 (Girls Hunt 2) Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X SA-459 Black Reaper TR Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X Series 2 Blaze Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X Series 2 Kryptek Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X Series 2 Typhon Jan
*Weatherby WBY-X Series 2 Typhon TR (Threat Response) Jan
Winchester 1300 Pump Action 3-in. 12-Gauge Feb
Winchester 1886 Limited Series 45-70 Sep
Winchester Model 1873 Short Rifle #534200137 357 Magnum/38 Special June
Winchester Model Super X Black Shadow No. 51225192 12-Gauge May, Dec
*Winchester Repeating Arms Model 1873 Mar
*Winchester Repeating Arms Model 1885 Hunter Rimfire single-shot Mar
*Winchester Repeating Arms Model 1892 Large Loop Carbine Mar
*Winchester Repeating Arms SX3 12-gauge 3.5- inch Long Beard Mar
*Winchester Repeating Arms SXP Field Compact Mar
Windham Weaponry VEX-SS Varmint Ext #R20FSSFTSKV 223 Rem. Oct

ACCESSORIES/MISC

3 Speed Holster Aug
*Arsenal Inc. SM-13 AK Mount Jan
*ATI Scorpion X2 Revolver Grip July
Barber Leather Works Crossdraw July
*Birchwood Casey Sharpshooter Stand and Target Kit Nov
Brownells 30-Round Gray AR-15/M16 Magazine w/SS Spring 200200 May, Dec
Brownells Glock 17 Sight Upgrade Kit Mar
Burris FastFire III #300234 July
Bushmaster Firearms Master Lubricant & Protectant Feb
Bushmaster Squeeg-E Universal Cleaning System Feb
*Bushnell AR Optics 4.5-18x40mm Riflescope Jan
*Bushnell Equinox 3x30mm Digital Night Vision Monocular Jan
Bushnell First Strike Reflex Red Dot No. 730005 July
Bushnell TRS-32 Apr
CAA CBSACP Stock (AR-15) May
Cammenga AR-15 EasyMag 30-Round EM3556 May
CB's Leather Works Holster June
Command Arms Accessories 30-Rd. Polymer Magazine May
Command Arms Accessories AR-15 Countdown Magazine May
*Concern Kalashnikov IZ132 Saiga upgrade Sep
*Concern Kalashnikov SU2 Saiga upgrade Sep
*Concern Kalashnikov SU3 Saiga upgrade Sep
Crimson Trace LG-617 laser grip June
Crimson Trace LTG-73g flashlight attachment June
D. M. Bullard Bodyguard holster June
D. M. Bullard Leather Combat holster June, Dec
Desbiens Gunleather Covert OWB holster June
Fobus Holster Paddle June
GG&G 45-Degree Offset Accessory Rail Feb
Glockparts guide rod June
*Hot Shot Tactical P-Rail Light Mount Jan
HT Holsters Speed Draw June
IMI Defense Polymer 30-Round AR-15 Magazine May

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2014 PRODUCT INDEX

Jeffrey Custom Leather BTP	July
JM Holsters Paddle	July
K Bar J Leather holster	June
K.L. Null Holsters Super Speed Scabbard	June
*LaserLyte V4 Laser (FSL-4)	Oct
LaserMax Guide Rod Laser GL30/30SF/30S LMS-119	Mar
LaserMax Guide Rod Laser SIG Sauer P229 LMS-2291	Mar
LaserMax Uni-Max Green LMS-UNI-G	Mar
LaserMax Uni-Max Micro LMS-MICRO	Mar
Legends In Leather Justice	June
*Leupold Custom Shop TS-32X1 Reticle	Feb
Leupold DeltaPoint #66135	July, Dec
LHS Holsters Falcon	June
Limbsaver AR-15/M4 Snap-on Recoil Pad	Apr
Limbsaver Magpul Carbine Stock Recoil Pad	Apr
Limbsaver Pro Handgun Grip	Apr
Magpul ACS-L Carbine Stock	Apr
Magpul AR-15/M16 PMag Gen M3 MAG557BLK	May
*Magpul Ladder Rail Panel	July
Magpul PMag 30 AR/M4 Window Gen M3 MAG556BLK	May
MasterPiece BA Chassis System	July
Meprolight (Kimber) ML-10224 Tru-Dot Night Sight System	Apr
Milt Sparks 60TK Holster	June
Mossberg 500 Tactical Rail Center Mass LaserLyte laser	Mar
N82 (Nate Squared) Tactical	Aug
NHMTG AR-15/M16 30-Round Magazine MA02L	May
Nikon Monarch 4-16X42mm BDC Riflescope	Apr
OKAY Industries USGI 30-Round Mag	May
Pink Pistol Holsters IWB	Aug
Pistol Packaging Inc. Mag-Jic Holster	July
*ProMag AR-15 Flat-Top Scope Riser	July
ProMag Industries 30-Round Black Polymer Magazine	May
ProMag Industries 30-Round Blue Steel Magazine	May
ReadyShot Target system (Glock Model 21)	Jan
Rinehart Leather Pink Pistol Holsters Pocket/Purse Holsters	Aug
Sharp Shooting Stock, ARSNL (AR-15)	May
Side Guard Holsters Double Tuck Clip IWB	Aug
Side Guard Holsters Double Tuck Clip IWB Reinforced	Aug
Side Guard Holsters Slide	June
SIG Sauer AR-15 30-Round Polymer MAG55630BLKP	May
*SilencerCo Salvo 12 suppressor	Sep
Statureman Custom Holsters	June
Storm Lake Threaded Barrel #842-000-096WB	Apr
S.W.T. 30-round AR-15 Magazine	May
SwapRig CargoPack Cargo Pants Holster	Aug
*Tac-Con 3MR Trigger System	Jan
Talon Holsters IWB Holster	Aug, Dec
Tauris Holsters Cowhide	July
Talon Holsters Pocket/Wallet Holster	Aug
Taylor Freelance Seattle Slug	June
Ted Blocker Holsters G1	June
Ted Blocker Holsters S18 IWB	Aug
Ted Blocker Holsters S19 IWB w/Thumb Break	Aug, Dec
Ted Blocker Holsters X 16	July
Tenebraex KillFlash SunGuard Anti-Reflective Device	Jan
Thermold Master Molder Magazine 30-Round M16/AR-15 M16AR1530	May
Troy Industries BattleMag Magazine AR-15 30-Round Polymer	May
Trijicon Dual Illuminated RMR #RM04	July
Trijicon TriPower	Apr
TruGlo Tritium Fiber-Optic Brite-Sites	Mar
Versa Carry System	Aug
Viridian Reactor TL (RTL) taclight	Aug
Wild Bills Concealment Fusion Paddle	July, Dec
Wilson Combat Barrel #965-397-017WB	Apr
Wilson Combat Summer Companion IWB	Aug
Wright Leather Works Cobra IWB/OWB	Aug
Wright Leather Works Dutch Small of the Back	July
Wright Leather Works Predator Pancake Holster	June, Dec
Zev Technologies GlockWorx Ultimate Fulcrum trigger	Apr
zZz Custom Works Holsters Kydex IWB	Aug
zZz Custom Works Standard Holster	June
AMMUNITION	
9mm Luger v 45 ACP	Oct
45 ACP Buffalo Bore 230-Grain +P FMJ No. 45230	Mar
45 ACP Buffalo Bore 230-Grain No. 45230FMJ Flat Nose	Mar
45 Colt Buffalo Bore 255-Grain SWC 3E/20	Mar
45 Colt Buffalo Bore Standard-Pressure 225-Grain Wadcutter No. 3L//20	Mar
45 Colt Winchester 255-Grain Lead Roundnose X45CP2	Mar
Cor-Bon 160-Grain DPX	Sep
Cor-Bon 165-Grain Pow'RBall +P	Sep
Federal 165-Grain Hydra-Shok JHP	Sep
*TrAAcker AA Sporting Clays 12- and 20-Gauge	Apr
*Winchester Win3Gun	Feb
Winchester Silvertip 185-Grain X45ASPD	Sep
Winchester W Train & Defend	Feb

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Taurus 'Curve' Really Is

The company has rolled out a curved-frame contoured 380 ACP.

The new Taurus Curve handgun is a body-contoured .380 ACP that employs a curved grip frame. About the size of today's smart phones, this little USA-manufactured double-action-only semi-auto pistol packs 6+1 rounds in a 5.18-inch-long package. This curved polymer frame has a carbon-steel slide and a stainless-steel barrel.



"We challenged our engineers to develop a handgun that was comfortable to wear. We wanted it to be as comfortable as wearing a watch every day," said Sarah Perry, director of marketing for Taurus. "We wanted a concealed carry firearm that was designed for wearing against the contours of your body." MSRP is $392.

Other features include a loaded-chamber indicator, a built-in locking system, a trigger protector, a built-in lanyard, and a belt clip for wearing the pistol without a holster.

Also included is an integrated LaserLyte LED light/laser combo system built within the frame and a bore-axis sighting system designed for instinctive point shooting at close distances. This subcompact handgun does not include traditional sights.



MANUFACTURER CURVE SPECS

Caliber	380 ACP
Action	Double Action Only (DAO)
Capacity	6+1 rounds
Barrel Length	2.5 in.
Overall Length	5.18 in.
Overall Height	3.7 in.
Overall Width	1.18 in. (0.88 in. grip)
Sights	N/A
Lights/Laser	Integrated LaserLyte System
Trigger Pull	5 to 7 pounds
Unloaded Weight	10.2 oz.
Slide	Carbon Steel
Barrel	Stainless Steel
Grip	Polymer with Metallic Subframe
Safeties:	Loaded Chamber Indicator; Taurus Security System
Accessory	Trigger Protector
Holster	Integrated Side Belt Clip
Slide Finish	Matte Blue

Magnum Research Launches Three Stainless Desert Eagle 1911 Models

Magnum Research, Inc.'s Desert Eagle 1911 product line are now offered in stainless steel. All three models have the Series 70 safety and trigger configuration, which some shooters prefer over the Series 80 action mechanism.

The full-sized DE1911GSS features a 5.05-inch barrel, 8.625-inch overall length, slide width of 1.28 inches, and a weight of 36.2 oz. The slide thickness is 0.92 inches, grip thickness of 1.30 inches, and a trigger pull of 3-4 lbs. Trigger reach is 2.77 inches. The grip has front strap checkering at 20 lines per inch, a high-profile sculptured rear sight that's drift adjustable for windage and a pinned-in white dot front sight. It ships with two 8-round magazines. MSRP is $904.

The slightly smaller DE1911CSS has many of the same features as the 1911GSS, but it has a shorter barrel length of 4.33 inches, overall length of 7.87 inches, and weighs 33.9 ounces. MSRP is $904.

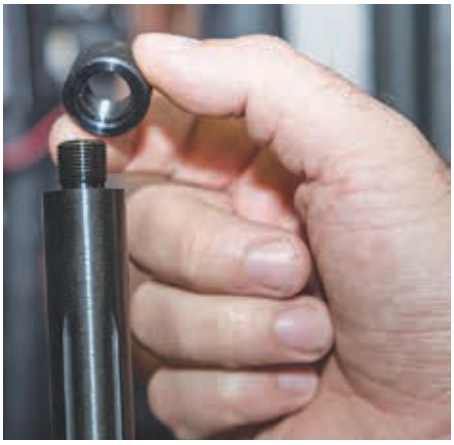
The "U" undercover model was introduced last year, and it now features an aluminum anodized frame and a stainless-steel slide. The DE1911USS has a barrel length of 3 inches, height of 5 inches, an overall length of 6.85 inches, and weighs in at 25.8 ounces. MSRP is $1019.



Top: The full-sized DE1911GSS features a 5.05-inch barrel and 8.625-inch overall length. Middle: The DE1911CSS has a barrel length of 4.33 inches and overall length of 7.87 inches. Bottom: The "U" undercover model features an aluminum anodized frame. The DE1911USS has a barrel length of 3 inches and an overall length of 6.85 inches.

Savage Arms Expands Line of Suppressor-Ready Rimfire Rifles

Savage Arms is expanding its rifle lineup with three new suppressor-ready rifles, all of which feature ½-inch 28-pitch threaded muzzles with twist-off thread protectors.



Each is equipped with a heavy, fluted barrel, oversized bolt handle, and a 5-round detachable magazine, as well as Savage Arm's user-adjustable AccuTrigger.

The bolt-action Model 93 FV-SR chambered in 22 WMR and Model 93R17 FV-SR chambered in 17 HMR weigh 5.5 pounds. Other specifications include overall length of 35.25 inches, and barrel length of 16.5 inches. The 93R17 FV-SR is part number #96699, $358. The 93 FV-SR is part number 93207, $358. The 93R17 FV-SR has a rate of twist of 1-in-9 inches, and the 93 FV-SR has 1-in-16 inches barrel twist.

The semi-automatic Model 64 FV-SR (#45110, $231) chambered in 22 Long Rifle weighs 5 pounds. Other specifications include a rate of twist of 1-in-16 inches, overall length of 36 inches, and barrel length of 16.5 inches. It is equipped with a 10-round detachable magazine.

All three come with buttoned-rifled carbon-steel barrels, one-piece optic/accessory rails, and checkered synthetic stocks with black matte finishes.

Colt M.A.R.C. 901s Introduced

Colt's Manufacturing Company has introduced the new M.A.R.C. 901 (Modular AR Carbine) product family. This family of modular and customizable carbines features four new models: LE901-16SE, LE901FDE-16SE, LE901-18SE, and the AR901-16S.

All of the new LE901 models are multi-caliber, single serial number, modular rifle systems chambered for .308 Winchester. The lower receiver and bolt carrier design allow users to easily swap the upper receiver group for any Colt Mil-Spec upper chambered for 5.56 x 45 NATO (.223 Remington).

Joyce Rubino, vice president of marketing for Colt's Manufacturing Company, said, "The new M.A.R.C. 901 models allow our customers to more easily move between various caliber and accessory configurations for target shooting, hunting or tactical purposes."

All new "SE" models in the M.A.R.C. 901 family feature a monolithic upper receiver with a fixed rail at the 12 o'clock position and provisions to mount rails at the 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions. The AR901 features a flat-top upper receiver and a tubular forend, with provisions to mount rails at various positions.

These modular rail positions make the firearm more customizable and comfortable for users. The design allows shooters to position rail sections where needed for accessories such as bipods, lasers, lights, and more. With the choice to mount only necessary rail sections, users can reduce the weight and diameter of the upper receiver. The profile of the upper receiver is also smoother, with fewer sharp edges.

The three SE models all also feature ambidextrous operating controls for the magazine release and bolt catch, and a single-side reversible fire selector. All three of these models are designed with a free-float barrel, VLTOR buttstock and locking folding sights. Unique to the LE901FDE-16SE is the flat dark earth finish on the upper and lower receiver, along with FDE furniture. For users who prefer a longer barrel, there's the LE901-18SE with its 18-inch barrel.



Colt AR-901-16S, top, Colt LE901 16SE, bottom.

The LE901-16SE and LE901FDE-16SE models weigh 8.42 pounds, and all models have 1:12 right-hand twist barrel-rifling rates.

The AR901-16S features a free-floated barrel and user-configurable tubular handguard with rail mounting provisions beyond the standard 3, 6, 9, and 12 o'clock positions to include rail mounting positions on 16 different planes. The AR901-16S has a B5 Bravo buttstock and measures 34.24 inches in length with the stock retracted and 37.5 inches OAL with the stock extended. Its barrel has a 1:12 RH twist and the package weighs 8.24 pounds.

Viridian Reactor 5 Green Laser Shipping for Kahr 9 & 40 Pistols



Viridian has introduced Reactor 5 green laser sights for Kahr 9mm and 40 S&W polymer-framed pistols. The Reactor 5 green laser and holster combination fits all Kahr 9mm and 40 S&W polymer-framed pistols (series: P, TP, PM, CW, CM, & CT). MSRP is $239. The laser includes Viridian's new ECR Instant-On hybrid holster. The Enhanced Combat Readiness Instant-On feature shuts the laser off while holstered and ignites the laser immediately when drawn.

— *continued from page 31*

Seekins Precision Releases SP-10 308 Rifle

Lewiston, Idaho-based Seekins Precision announced its first offering in 308 Win, the SP10 large-frame AR rifle, $2489. Based on the iRMT upper receiver, CNC machined from 7075-T6 billet aluminum, the top Picatinny rail extends over the barrel mount to strengthen the receiver and provide more space to mount optics. Coupled with the receiver is the Seekins Precision SP3R free float handguard, which is flat on the bottom. The 18-inch stainless steel match-grade barrel is contoured to balance the rifle for superior handling performance and weight reduction. The lower receiver is also machined from 7075-T6 billet aluminum and is ambidextrous in the magazine release, selector switch, and bolt switch. There's also a 3.5-pound tuned



fire control trigger, a proprietary buffer system housed in a carbine-length tube, and a Magpul STR stock.

Franklin Armory's AR 17 WSM

Franklin Armory's F 17-L rifle chambered in 17 Winchester Super Magnum is a rimfire cartridge, so it is not classified as an "assault rifle" in many states. The F 17-L features a gas-piston system with a rotating locking bolt that is very similar to the original Eugene Stoner design. MSRP is $2000.

Compiled by Gun Tests *staff.* **GT**

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- Personal Defense Rifles: Beretta ARX 100 Vs. Colt's LE6920.
- Combat Auto and Pump Shotguns: Mossberg 930 versus Remington 870 Tactical 81200.
- Bullet Penetration in Homes: An important consideration in home defense is the prospect of the penetration of a wall by an errant bullet or a bullet that has penetrated an intruder. We test penetration of bullets in pine boards, bricks, cinder blocks, wallboard, and other media with 12-gauge birdshot, 12-gauge reduced-recoil buckshot, 12-gauge buckshot, 12-gauge slugs, 12-gauge #4 buckshot, 22 LR, 22 Magnum, 32 ACP, 380 ACP, 38 Special, 9mm Luger, 357 Magnum, 45 ACP, and 223 Rem. rifle rounds.

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