GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

$5.95 March 2015/Vol. XXVII, No. 3

SIDE-BY-SIDE SHOWDOWN

CZ-USA and SIACE shoot it out in the field. One was a new hammerless model; the other a higher-end choice with external hammers. We enjoyed both, but preferred one... **Page 6**



POLYMER-FRAME 9MM SHOOTOUT

We think all three makers — SIG Sauer, Walther, and H&K — got it right with the P320, the PPQ, and the VP9 handguns, respectively. But our shooters thought one was clearly the best pick. **Page 10**







VETERAN 357 MAGNUMS

Pitted: S&W M19-4, Colt Trooper MK III, and an FN Barracuda. **Page 16**









SPECIAL REPORTS

A Yugoslavian Mauser is superb; the JOX speedloader pouch solves a revolver carry problem. **Page 22**







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DOWNRANGE

GUNS, GUNS, AND MORE GUNS



Todd Woodard

Dury's Gun Shop, which supplies FFL services and guns for Gun Tests Contributing Editor Ralph Winingham in San Antonio, has partnered with Tom Gresham of Gun Talk Radio to create a limited run of 1,000 GT20 pistols, which are SIG Sauer P220 10mm handguns. Price is $1400. All GT20s will come with a SIG Sauer hard case and two eight-round magazines. Additional accessories can be purchased from Dury's and shipped directly to you with the purchase of your one-of-a-kind GT20 pistol. Shipping will only be $25 for the GT20 and free for all additional accessories ordered. SIG Sauer is currently building this exclusive pistol, with the first shipments expected to ship by April 1. Dury's is offering two options for these pre-orders — either a $250 deposit or you may pay in full. After purchasing, you'll need to submit a copy of your preferred dealer FFL to gt20@durysguns.com if you are transferring out of state or to a dealer closer to you if you live in Texas. To see how P220s have fared in our tests over the years, go to Gun-Tests.com and type the gun name in the search window.

Winingham has been looking for one of Ruger's new Red Label shotguns to test for us, so he talked to the factory about retailers, availability, and so on. On February 3, we heard back from Ken Jorgensen, Ruger's press manager: "Ralph, we are discontinuing the Red Label. While the Ruger Red Label is a popular firearm, unfortunately, it has proven too costly to manufacture to our production standards. Cost was the reason we originally stopped making the Red Label, and we were hopeful that with the application of current design and manufacturing technology we could create a less costly firearm. In the end, we did not realize the savings we had anticipated, and the result is a cost that took us out of the price point we wanted."

Winingham wrote me and said, "I was a fan of the field gun. I took a 20-gauge Red Label into Mexico for about five years in the 1980s and shot plenty of doves with it, but I understand Ruger's decision."

In other staff news, Contributing Editors John Taylor and Austin Miller accompanied me to SHOT Show in Las Vegas in January, and they have produced more than a dozen interviews from the show covering new guns and accessories. They're available on the Gun Tests YouTube page, and as I'm publishing them, I'm linking them into the Facebook page as well. Contributing Editor Roger Eckstine and Product Coordination Editor Kevin Winkle also attended SHOT and have developed quite a few ideas for stories that include new products, and we've already acquired some of the guns, some of which are covered in our SHOT Show 2015 coverage later in this issue. I've expanded that coverage this year, but if we missed something you want us to test, please let me know. **GT**

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GUN TESTS ACCEPTS NO COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

GUN TESTS ® (ISSN No. 1042-6450) is published monthly by AG Media, Inc.; 111 Corporate Drive, Big Sandy, TX 75755-2446. Periodicals Postage Paid at Big Sandy, TX, and at additional mailing offices.

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Printed in U.S.A. Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658.

Subscriptions: $49 (U.S.) annually. Outside the U.S. and Canada $72 (U.S.) for one year, $144 (U.S.) for two years. Single copies $7.50 (U.S.). Bulk-rate subscriptions for organizations and educational institutions are available.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to: ***GUN TESTS***, P.O. Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535, or ***GUN TESTS***, P.O. Box 39, Norwich ON, N0J 1P0. **Canada Publishing Agreement** #40016479.

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What Was Wrong with the JR?

Reader Morgan was happy to see the follow-up on the JR Carbine, but he wonders what the factory did to fix it. Readers Getoff and Tashenberg want to know how to find ammo reviews.



Re "Special Reports," February 2015

Thanks for all the great reports this month. You featured my beloved 44 Special in glowing terms and tested a recent variant of my favorite 9mm subcompact, but the *pièce de résistance* was the timely follow-up on your June tests of the Just Right Carbine in 45 ACP. That first report arrived just a few weeks after I bought my JRC and prompted me to refill all my magazines with round-nose FMJ fodder. Your new report says all the things I'd hoped to read in the first one, but there is one glaring omission, in my opinion. You tell of sending the JR back to the makers, but there is no mention of what they had to do to make it right. Personal circumstances keep me from getting in a rigorous range day with my JRC to see for myself, but even if I do have feeding problems, I don't know where to tell my gunsmith to start. Were there problems in the feed ramp, bolt, extractor, or elsewhere? Other than casing damage, what should I look for? Please keep up the good work and forgive my former belief that you were never again going to report on anything of real interest to me. **— Bill Morgan**

According to Product Coordination Editor Kevin Winkle, who handled the warranty matter, JR replaced the barrel because the chamber needed to be recut. The factory turned the gun around in about three weeks.
— Todd Woodard

How to Find...

I don't know who sets up how your search feature works, but I have now spent more than 30 minutes trying to find something, and it's time to ask you, since it's driving me nuts.

In your article of 380 ACP pocket guns was the following text: "Our tests of several 380 ACP self-defense loads had three (Federal 90-gr. Hydra-Shok JHP, Speer 90-gr. Gold Dot JHP, and Fiocchi 95-gr. FMJ) that penetrated at least 13.5+ inches in water, very close to what a Remington 125-gr. JHP 38 Sp. +P did as a control — and not too many experts say the 38 Special is 'too little' gun."



I have searched by "380 ACP," "380 self-defense," "380 Ammo," and "ammunition," and I have given up, so, please tell me where I can locate your article which contains the text quoted above. If you agree with me that it would be beneficial to your readers, please put in a clickable index or other method to directly access the information (with the date and issue published, but listed by caliber, since that is what would be desired) of all the articles you have published where you test and compare self-defense ammunition (or

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.

for that matter any ammunition). I think it would be greatly appreciated by more people than just me.

— David Getoff

Check the October 2010 issue, "Gauging 380 ACP Loads: FMJ May Be the Only Way to Go." Or, to find the page with all the ammunition tests on it, go to Gun-Tests.com *and type in "Ammunition Comparisons" in the advanced search window in the top-right corner of the browser window. There's only one file in the database with that phrase in the title, and it pops right to the top. I just updated it, so it's current, too. You're right, the ammunition stories are hard to find, because they're not indexed in the internal search engine like gun features are.*

Seven years ago when we initially set up the indexing system, we only built it to search for guns, because that's what we covered almost exclusively at the time. I've added a lot more accessory and ammunition testing since then because readers asked for it. So there's really nothing in an ammo article to index like we have for guns.

The indexing system we use internally loads the guns into a proprietary database inside the Gun Tests *site. It's designed to make older material accessible for subscribers. Non-subscribers can see the headlines and a couple of paragraphs from the story, but non-subscribers can't get at the full articles or the database. Both are reserved for subscribers.*

So, if you use the "compare guns" feature on the website, you can search for Pistols>.301 to .400>Price, and a list of handguns chambered for 380 ACP and other cartridges in the defined caliber and price range will be sorted out alphabetically, for your perusal.



The same thing occurs if you select "Brand Index" at the top of the homepage, or "View by Caliber," or "View by Action." All of those sorting choices are generated by the data we load in the indexing system we use for guns. There isn't a separate system for ammo. What I have suggested is a separate pull-down tab for Ammunition in the "Accessories" header on the website to house the 19 ammo stories currently in the system. Anyway, we're aware of the problem and we're working on it. — tw

I've been a subscriber to your magazine for a very long time. You had an article on various brands of ammunition, with the pros and cons of each. Unfortunately, it got thrown out, so I can't reference it. I wanted to purchase some new 9mm ammunition and felt this might be a good time to look at alternatives. I have a Browning Hi-Power and have been using Federal for the last 30 years, which I've been very satisfied with. However, I would like to try out some of the newer types that have come out that might be worth looking at.

— C Bradley Tashenberg

We've run several different 9mm Luger ammunition comparisons over the years. As I noted above, log on to Gun-Tests.com *and search for "ammunition comparisons," without the comma and quote marks. There are links in that story to all of our ammo tests. But if you want to look at the specific issues with 9mm tests, check these out: "Which Is Better: 9mm Luger or 45 ACP? Answer: It Depends," October 2014; "9mm Short-Barrel Choice: We'd Carry 124-Grain Speer Gold Dots," October 2013; "Personal-Defense Handgun Pick: 9mm Luger or 357 Magnum?" August 2013; "Alternate 1911 Cartridges and Loads: 9mm, 38 Super, 10mm," January 2013; "Frangible Ammunition Testing: We Give Nine Loads a Fair Shot," July 2012; "9mm +P and Other Powerful Loads: Black Hills Is a Best Buy," April 2011; "A Hard Look at 9mm Luger Loadings: Speer, Fiocchi Win," September 2010. — tw*

Re "9mm Subcompact Shoot-out: Nano, LC9s, and the XD-S 3.3," February 2015



I read your "9mm Subcompact Shoot-out" article several times looking for the specific safety features of the Springfield XD-S that your testers said they liked, particularly since this pistol does not have a manual safety. But other than the reference in the "Gun-Tests Grade" summary box saying, "we liked the safety features," I was unable to find anything in the article text about these features. What are these features? Did I miss something and need to read the article again?

— Allan M. Crane

Alan, thanks for reading Gun Tests. *The features that we liked about the XD-S (above) included the firing pin block/drop safety, which most handguns have today, but also the grip safety, which only a few non-1911 types have. Unobtrusive and pressed in a natural motion as the grip is taken, this feature locks the action as soon as the hand is removed. — Bob Campbell*

Coonan 357

Has anyone from Gun Tests used a Coonan 357 Auto Mag? I have one



for personal carry, and it has proven to be the most accurate handgun I have ever fired, including my 357 S&W M&P R8 with a 5.75-inch-long barrel. **—Jim Myke**

We're in the process of getting a Coonan 357 Magnum pistol. We're debating about how to match it up: with a 357 Magnum revolver, a 357 SIG pistol, or both. — tw

Re "Firing Line," February 2015

I have a Hi-Point 45 ACP Carbine. This is my second one as the first, in 40 S&W, was stolen. It didn't have a bad trigger — it had a trigger that made it impossible to shoot with any accuracy. I sent it back to the factory, and they brought it up to being just a bad trigger. That's all in the past. My current carbine merely has a bad trigger. The article in the February 2015 issue about the "Just Right Carbine Follow-up" reminded me that I needed some info from you folks. In the "Firing Line" section of the July 2014 issue, a Mr. William B. Richards III wrote that he had a trigger job done on his Hi-Point Carbine, creating a "smooth 3-pound pull." When I received my gun, I inquired of the gunsmith at the shop if he could do a trigger job on it. He informed me that the trigger parts were made of plastic and there was nothing that could be done to improve it. Because of the articles in Gun Tests, I think he's wrong. Who can I correspond with about getting my carbine up to par? By the way, my first Hi-Point was rather ugly, but the new one's aesthetics have improved dramatically! Thanks for keeping all of us well informed.

— Dan Cheraz

Dear Mr. Cheraz : It's a pleasure to test and write about guns. The safest bet is to call Hi-Point and ask them what aftermarket trigger kits they recommend, if any. We haven't tested any of the items we found when we searched for "Hi-Point Carbine replacement triggers," so I'm leery of recommending any to you. I did reach out to Mr. Richards and ask him to send me the contact information for the gunsmith he mentioned in his letter, and if I hear back from him, I'll send it along. — tw

Re "9mms: Classic Artillery Luger Vs. 1896 Mauser Broomhandle," January 2015

I really enjoyed the article and tests on the Luger and the Broomhandle. I have always wanted both. The September 1999 issue of *Gun World* had an evaluation of the Chinese version of the Broomhandle in 9mm, and it received high marks. I ordered one from IAR in California. It is a very nice looking pistol; it came with a 20-round and a 10-round magazine, cost was $439 plus shipping and broker, etc. Other than being numbered 19106, there are no markings on it. There is a



faint marking on the hammer, but I cannot make it out with magnifying glasses and lights. I have not taken it apart, even after studying about it. I have R.J. Berger's book, *Know Your Broomhandle Mausers*, but still am wary of taking it apart. I get it out to look at it. I have read that as a young cavalry officer in the battle of Omdurman that Sir Winston Churchill was armed with a Broomhandle, and used it to his liking. Thanks for a good read, as always. **— D. J. Price**

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Setting up free electronic access to our website allows you to search the **Gun Tests** archives for specific guns — and you get access to the current issue on the web before it hits your mailbox. Also, you can check the status of your subscription account, update your mailing or email address, pay your subscription invoice or renew your subscription, and communicate with the editorial staff. Current subscribers can begin activating free online access by typing this into your browser: **Gun-Tests.com/activate.**

To create your web-access login, you provide your first and last name, the ZIP/Postal Code, and your account number. That's the first 11 digits found on your magazine's mailing label just above your name. If you can't get the account activated, contact us at **Customer_Service@GunTests.info**, or call 1-800-829-9084.

There are two ways to find guns we've reviewed. The Compare Guns feature (top left corner of the page under the logo) allows you to input several descriptors and narrow the search results. Or you can use the Search function. If you search for a common item, such as "22 LR," you'll get tons of references. Basically, the search function finds every instance of the searched-for topic and lists the accompanying articles the topic appeared in. The more specific and unique the reference, the better the search. We do our best to list the catalog numbers for guns we've tested, so that's usually a good place to start. There's also an "Advanced Search" area to help you narrow the results.

We welcome mail from our readers. To send us comments or questions about previous articles in the magazine, email us at: **GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.** *If you'll include the month and year of the article you're writing about, it's a big help. Also, please include your name, address, and phone number. We won't publish your personal information without your permission, but we may need to contact you.* **GT**

SxS 20-Gauge Showdown: CZ-USA and SIACE Shoot It Out

The obvious operational differences were not the telling factors in our giving the new model side-by-side the nod over its old-style counterpart. We simply preferred the new CZ-USA Ringneck.

Every once in awhile, veteran shotgun enthusiasts might think back to the old days when hunting and target shooting proceeded at a slower pace, with a little more emphasis on fine form. Not that there is anything wrong with the quality over and under, semi-automatic, or pump-action shotguns on today's market, but in many minds, the old side-by-sides just give off an image of a little more class. A lot of today's veteran hunters started their shooting careers with an old double barrel handed down to them by their father or grandfather. Unfortunately, many of those old side-by-sides kicked like a mule and had so much drop in the stock that the shooter really had to work at obtaining a proper sight picture to hit anything.

Times have changed, and now the younger generation seems to have adjusted to modern technology with



Pitting two side-by-sides against each other on a dove hunt provided an excellent opportunity to examine the handling ability and knock-down consistency of old-style versus new-style shotguns, with the hammerless CZ, top, edging out the double-hammer gun from SIACE of Italy. Seldom seen in shooters' hands today but fondly remembered, side-by-side shotguns are wielded by a select few scattergun enthusiasts in the field and on clay target ranges across the country. While their popularity has waned, the double guns do have an aura of nostalgia about them like no other smoke pole.





The case hardening and engraving were a tad better on the SIACE, left, which we can attribute to the higher price for the side-by-side, and we were quite pleased with the old-style look of the fine scattergun. Right: The CZ's case-hardened receiver was very attractive, our shooters said. We were very pleased with the Ringneck's Greener top cross bolt and bottom locking lug system, which is one of the oldest and most dependable locking systems ever devised. The locking system was a little stiff in the beginning, with the cross bolt extending out just a little; but performed admirably after a little break-in.

new model scatterguns that are easier to shoot and handle. Fine side-by-sides are few and far between on today's field and clay target ranges, but they have not been totally forgotten. We decided to jump into our time machine and take a little venture back to the days when side-by-sides were king. To cover the bases and pit old versus new within a reasonable price framework, we selected a used old-style SIACE Model 350G with double hammers and double triggers, available for about $2,000; and a recently introduced CZ-USA Ringneck hammerless with a single trigger, retailing for $1,022. Both of the doubles were 20-gauge models with screw-in internal chokes.

As most shooting instructors will point out, shooting a side-by-side can be a little more difficult to master than shooting down a single-barrel sight plane. The wider two-barrel image can be a distraction for a shooter who should be focusing on the target. If you are looking at the barrel and not the target, chances are the shot string will not be in the right place at the right time, and you'll miss.

In many cases, a shooter will slightly lift his or her head off the stock of a side-by-side when taking a shot (also related to having a wider sight plane and other design features of the double guns) causing the shot to go high. Shooting a little high is fine for flushing quail, grouse or pheasants, but can play havoc with a clay target score.

A similar shooter adjustment is required when the firearm features double triggers rather than a single trigger. When the front trigger only fires the right barrel and the back trigger only fires the left barrel, the shooter has to remember to switch from front to back to touch off two shots. With practice, this switching procedure is not a problem, but for double-trigger newbies, there is most definitely potential for confusion.

Although each of the 20-gauge double guns were designed to handle up to 3-inch shells, we decided to limit our test ammunition to lighter loads, with the understanding that increased recoil can be a major factor when shooting lighter side-by-sides. Our test ammunition included Noble Target Trap 2.75-inch loads, 2.5 dram equivalent, packing 7/8 ounce of No. 7.5 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,210 fps; and Federal Game 2.75-inch loads, 2.5 dram equivalent, with 7/8 ounce of No. 7.5 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,210 fps. The only ammunition malfunction we encountered was with a single Federal shell that had its primer seated too deep for the firing pin of either of the side-by-sides to touch off. Here are the rest of our findings:

CZ-USA Ringneck Side-by-Side No. 06103 20 Gauge, $1,022

Advertised as an economical side-by-side meeting the need of upland-game hunters and designed specifically to handle flushing birds like quail or grouse, the CZ Ringneck

CZ RINGNECK SIDE-BY-SIDE NO. 06103
20 GAUGE, $1022

GUN TESTS GRADE: A- (OUR PICK)

If a shooter is looking for an economical side-by-side shotgun that produces a high-quality 20-gauge shooting experience, the Ringneck fits the bill. It has the heft and feel of a well-balanced double. The only downside we found was with the trigger — a trip to a local gunsmith to adjust the pull is recommended.



Chamber Size	3 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.75 in.
Overall Length	45.25 in.	Forearm	Semi-Beavertail with Schnabel Tip
Capacity	2	Front Bead	Brass
Weight (Unloaded)	6.25 lbs.	Rib	8 mm (flat)
Barrel Length	28 in.	Trigger (Right)	8.5 lbs.
Barrel	Gloss Black, Chrome Lined	Trigger (Left)	10.0 lbs.
Receiver	Color Case Hardened	Warranty	Five-Year Limited
Choke Tubes	Internal (C, IC, M, IM, F)	Telephone	(800) 955-4486
Stock	Turkish Walnut with Prince of Wales Grip	Website	CZ-USA.com
Buttstock Length of Pull	14.5 in.	Made In/Assembled In	Turkey
Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.75 in.		



The Prince of Wales–style stock helped make the Ringneck a pleasure to shoot and provided good heft and feel.



The forearm checkering was just a little flat for our tastes. The grain in the wood was very pleasing to the eye.



The 20-gauge Ringneck is built on a proportionate frame that helps make it handle like a smooth shooting tool.

is already in limited production due to the introduction of the new CZ Bobwhite model. That is just how fast the firearms market can change, which is both good news and bad news for scattergun enthusiasts.

We found our test model was both pleasing to the eye and had a fine heft that was comparable to the big bore of the family, a 12 gauge. The 20-gauge Ringneck is built on a proportionate frame that helps make it handle like a smooth shooting tool.

Although the Turkish walnut stock was plain, not a lot of grain or swirl in the wood, we liked the look of the forearm. The hand-checkered Prince of Wales–style grip that was rounded at the bottom was cut 20 lines to the inch and provided a good grip. However, the checkering on our model's semi-beavertail with Schnabel tip was not as sharp and was a little flat for our taste.

The case-hardened box-lock receiver and trigger guard was a nice touch on what is considered a field gun.

Tipping the scales at 6.25 pounds, we found the heft and smoothness of the shotgun to be quite a pleasure. With 28-inch barrels and an overall length of 45.25 inches, the Ringneck had a length of pull of 14.5 inches, a drop at the comb of 1.75 inches, and a drop at the heel of 2.75 inches. Our team had no problems adjusting to the fit.

On the down side, when we tested the pull of the mechanical triggers, we found the right barrel touched off at 8.5 pounds and the left barrel touched off at 10 pounds. Both pulls are too heavy for smooth performance with a scattergun. Even allowing for the stiffness of a new gun, we would recommend a trip to a gunsmith to adjust the triggers down to a more preferable touch off of about 5 pounds.

Another feature that fell into the unnecessarily stiff category was the Greener cross-bolt locking system. On several occasions, the back end of the bolt was still slightly exposed when the action was closed and the top lever did not return to center. The shotgun was still operable, and after several hundred rounds there appeared to be a much better bolt fit.

On both the dove field and the clay target range we found the Ringneck would do its job without any malfunctions and very little felt recoil. As noted earlier, a little adjustment is necessary to switch from looking over a single barrel

SIACE MODEL 350G NO. 44943 SIDE-BY-SIDE 20 GAUGE, $2,000

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

A little quicker and whippy when bringing it onto a target than the Ringneck, and not producing the high-quality patterns of the hammerless shotgun, we would still recommend the SIACE for those looking to relive the old days.



Chamber Size	3 in.
Overall Length	46 in.
Capacity	2
Weight (Unloaded)	6 lbs.
Barrel Length	29 in.
Barrel	Polished Blued Steel
Choke Tubes	Briley Thin Wall (SK, IC, M, IM, F)
Buttstock LOP (Front Trigger)	14.5 in.
Buttstock LOP (Back Trigger)	13.75 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Comb	2.0 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Heel	3.25 in.
Front Bead	Brass
Rib Width	0.25 in. (Flat)
Stock	Hand Finished and Checkered, Select Walnut
Forearm	Hand Finished and Checkered; Select Walnut
Trigger Pull Weight (Front)	7 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (Back)	6.25 lbs.
Warranty	Limited
Telephone	+39 030 89 12 613
Website	SIACEarmi.com
Made In/Assembled In	Italy



Although quite a bit lighter than the trigger pulls on the Ringneck, we still found the hammer gun was a little tough to touch off and would recommend adjustment by a qualified gunsmith.



Designed for an English-style shooter, the SIACE forearm on top was comfortable until lengthy shooting sessions heated the barrel. Shooting gloves would be recommended for anyone firing a lot rounds through this double barrel.



A straight-grip stock with no butt plate — just checkered wood — gave us a momentary concern about recoil, but we found the kick from our test loads to be bearable.

to sighting along a side-by-side, but once the brief adjustment period was over, putting the Ringneck on target was quite easy.

Patterning the double barrel on paper with the Noble ammunition, we discovered one of the reasons our shooting performance was better than average. At a range of 30 yards and using the Modified choke in the left barrel, the CZ produced a very solid 50/50 pattern (50 percent above the center and 50 percent below) within a 30-inch circle. Inside the 20-inch circle at the center of the target there were 196 of the 296 pellet hits for a solid center punch of 66 percent. This performance was the best of all our patterning tests.

With the improved cylinder choke in the right barrel, the Ringneck was a little less impressive, with a 37/63 pattern and 108 of the 187 hits in the 20-inch circle. There were three 3-inch holes in the overall spread that would have allowed a clay target or bird to escape untouched.

The CZ Ringneck comes with five internal chokes (Cylinder, Improved Cylinder, Modified, Improved Modified, and Full), and we would recommend that any new owner spend a little time on the patterning range to find out the best combination of choke and shot load for his particular shotgun. That practice also takes away the excuse of blaming a shotgun for the shooter missing targets.

Our Team Said: We were particularly pleased with the heft and balance of the CZ Ringneck, which had a more solid feel than the SIACE, our shooters said. Not having to adjust to double hammers and double triggers made the shotgun a little easier to use for the less experienced members of our test team, although the difference was not considered a major issue. The excellent patterning performance with the Modified choke was big plus, as was the slightly heavier weight that helped our shooters swing smoothly through targets.

SIACE Model 350G Side By Side Hammer Gun 20 Gauge, $2,000

A touch of class radiates from this tiny double that was made by SIACE in Italy during 1999 for resale in the U.S. by New England Arms of Kittery Point, ME. The solid snap as the hammers are pulled back into place is like music to the ears of veteran scattergun enthusiasts remembering the old days. With a hand-engraved, case-hardened side lock receiver and hammers, plus a checkered opening lever; and the hand-checkered English-style straight grip stock of Grade 2 wood, the 350G's eye appeal was a big plus in this match-up.

Very slim and trim, the SIACE offers 29-inch barrels threaded for Briley thin-wall chokes (two Skeet, one Improved Cylinder, one Light Modified, and one Modified) that help make the shotgun surprisingly light at just 6 pounds. With an overall length of 46 inches, a drop at the comb of 2.0 inches and drop at the heel of 3.25 inches, our shooters needed a little more adjustment time to get the shotgun to shoot where we were looking. The additional drop in the stock is typical of the old-style side-by-sides put into service by U.S. shooters.

Another old-style feature was the stock's butt plate, which was just hand-checkered wood rather than a plastic or rubber recoil pad. As we expected, felt recoil was just a little heavier with the SIACE because of both the lighter weight and the lack of a recoil pad, but we did not consider this a deal breaker. The SIACE trigger pull was also a little heavier than we like, with the right barrel touching off at 7 pounds and the left barrel touching off at 6.25 pounds. They were lighter than the Ringneck, but still more than the preferred touch off of about 5 pounds.

During our ventures onto the dove field and sporting clays range, we found the SIACE was a little harder to bring to bear on the targets. The shotgun is set up to handle rising birds such as quail and grouse, with our team having good success at those types of targets. High incomers and sharp crossing targets were a little different story; a good deal of practice was required before any consistency could be achieved.

Cocking the hammers to get ready for a shot and then switching from the front trigger to the back trigger took a little adjustment time. Some team members struggled a little more than others, but we did not find cocking the hammers each time and switching triggers to be major obstacles in smooth operation of the shotgun.

Moving onto the patterning range, we found that the after-market Briley chokes did not fare as well as the factory internal chokes that came with the Ringneck. The Modified choke in the left barrel produced a 34/66 percent pattern with 153 hits (61 percent) in the 20-inch center. However, there were three 3-inch holes in the pattern. With the Improved Cylinder choke in the right barrel, the result was a 33/67 percent pattern with 86 hits in the 20-inch center and four 3-inch holes. Both barrels of the SIACE seemed to shoot slightly low left on the 30-inch pattern, which could be the main reason more adjustment time was necessary to make target hits. Once again, we recommend spending practice time on the patterning range to find the right combination of chokes and ammunition for your specific shotgun.

As noted earlier, we were expecting a little more recoil from the SIACE, and our expectations proved to be correct. The higher felt recoil was noticeable, particularly with the smaller-framed members of our shooting team.

Our Team Said: This double barrel more closely resembles what we picture when reflecting on the classic SxS of the old days. Double hammers and double triggers did require a little adjustment time, and the SIACE was just a little whippy. However, if a shooter is determined to take a trip back to the days of tweed shooting jackets and high-topped boots, this little side-by-side would be an excellent companion.

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

Polymer-Frame 9mm Shoot Out: P320 Versus PPQ M2 Vs. VP9

We think all three makers — SIG Sauer, H&K, and Walther — got it right. These handguns are reliable, with not a single malfunction. But our shooters liked the Heckler & Koch the best.

During the past few months, SIG Sauer, Walther, and Heckler & Koch have introduced pistols that feature striker-fired actions. These handguns are designed to compete for the hearts and minds of institutional buyers and concealed-carry-permit holsters as well. The improvement in rapid-fire combat shooting is provable, and absolute accuracy is improved over the original SIG P250, Walther P99 and HK P30. The question is, which handgun is the most improved and the best buy for the money — that is, the most reliable and accurate?

In this test of three 9mm striker-fired models, we were firing handguns intended for personal defense in the home, concealed carry, and practical competition. We are certain each maker is hoping to compete with Glock for institutional sales as well. At first glance, the handguns appeared similar. Each featured a polymer frame, a light rail, and similar sights. Each was relatively simple to operate. None had a manual safety as part of the design. Some features, such as the sights and the magazines, were similar. A casual shooter might sign off on all three handguns, but that isn't what we do.

Our shooters noticed the trigger actions were markedly different, and grip texturing and handling were considerably different. As the firing sessions progressed and the brass stacked up, the shoot out turned into a strong challenge between the Walther and the HK pistol. These worthy competitors traded places several times in the firing evaluations. The SIG P320 brought up the rear, in our estimation. Here's why:

Our test guns here were the SIG Sauer P320, top right, the Heckler & Koch VP9, bottom right, and the Walther PPQ M2 Navy SD, below, being shot by Bob Campbell. The Walther has a threaded barrel for attaching a suppressor.









SIG Sauer P320 320F9BSS
9mm Luger, $579

This was the actual price at CheaperThanDirt.com at the time of our test. The SIG P320 struck a familiar pose. The P320 is an adaptation of the P250 to a striker-fired mechanism. The frame, magazine, and barrel are the same as the P250. Likewise, the P320 is a modular design, so the grip frame and slide may be changed around the serialized metal chassis. The grip frame may also be exchanged for larger or smaller units. A quick search found grip modules at SelwayArmory.com for $40. The test gun came with the medium-grip full-size frame. This grip frame seemed to suit the raters across the board. However, it was as handy or as inexpensive as having the two spare frame inserts supplied with the other handguns. The HK pistol also comes with side panels to modify the grip. There are simply more possibilities for fine tuning hand-to-gun fit with the other makes, we believe.

The SIG weighs 29.5 ounces unloaded, making it the heaviest handgun tested. The slide had a Nitron finish and forward cocking serrations. The serrations offered sufficient purchase for manipulation. The controls included a slide lock, magazine release, and takedown lever. The SIG magazine release was a trapezoidal shape. We had the impression of pressing forward as well as in with this release. It seemed a bit faster than the Walther in use. The HK is much different, with a paddle-type release.

The grip frame was pebbled on the

front strap, back strap, and each side in the same pattern. While it featured the lightest texture of the three handguns, it worked OK in helping us hold the gun. There were no finger grooves. This was the largest grip of the three handguns.

The magazine received high marks. Capacity was 17 rounds compared to 15 rounds in the competing pistols. There were grooves in the handle to allow a strong grasp on the magazine in the event it got stuck.

Trigger compression was consistent at 7.75 pounds, the heaviest of the three handguns tested. This trigger bears some discussion. While it is called a double-action-only design, it behaves more like a single-action trigger. The striker block moves slightly to the rear as the trigger is pressed, which gives SIG a leg to stand on in terming it a double action. There was no lever in the trigger to prevent lateral discharge.

The sights of the three handguns were equal, as far as sight picture goes. Each was a steel unit with the popular 3-white-dot design. The SIG sights were dovetailed into place front and rear, as were the HK's sights. The Walther, however, had a staked-on front sight. We prefer the dovetail.

The SIG was supplied with two magazines and a plastic range holster. While not service grade, the holster was an aid on the range. With the other handguns, we were scraping to find a holster during the test period. We were able to use a Hidden Hybrid holster, designed as an IWB, but which has a belt slot for OWB use (HiddenHybridHolsters.com). Molded for the SIG P226, it worked OK for use at the range, but we don't recommend it for carry.

Prior to range testing, we field-stripped the SIG. Field strip was simple enough, using a takedown lever. The pistol does not have to be decocked for disassembly, a plus in our view. The pistol came with white grease on the rails, so we did not lubricate it further.

We used Federal American Eagle 115-grain FMJ ammunition for our

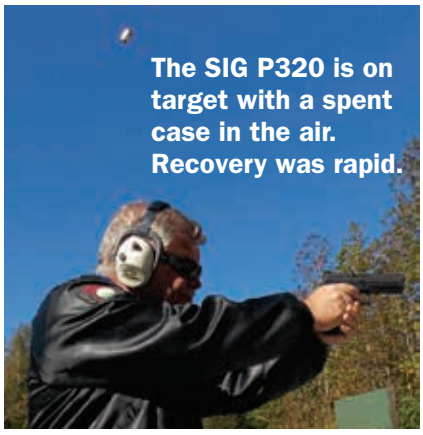
SIG SAUER P320 320F9BSS 9MM LUGER, $579

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The P320 has the highest magazine capacity of any handgun in this test and is supplied with a useful range holster. The pistol's reliability was flawless. The lack of an easily changeable grip strap and the heavy trigger were demerits. The pistol was also the heaviest, which limits its appeal.



Action	Locked Breech DAO Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.0 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	29.5 oz.
Weight Loaded	36.5 oz.
Barrel Length	4.7 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	17-Round Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.4 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.6 in.
Grips	Textured Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.25 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.6 in.
Sights	Steel, 3-Dots
Trigger Pull Weight	7.75 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.5 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(603) 610-3000
Website	SIG-Sauer.com
Made In	USA



The SIG P320 is on target with a spent case in the air. Recovery was rapid.



The magazine button is different but fast and comfortable.





Left, the SIG P320 compared to the P250, right. The modification to make the P320 striker fired should prove popular.



Grip texture was well executed. Note that the grips are finished the same, both on the straps and the outer panel. There were no finger grooves, and this was the largest grip of the three.

The SIG's trigger doesn't have a lever in the center as the other two do. This is a consideration worth noting for some shooters.

familiarization runs because it's affordable ($14.49/50 at MidwayUSA.com). We drew the pistol from the supplied holster and fired at man-sized targets at 5, 7, and 10 yards for 100 rounds. The pistol came on target quickly. The slide rode higher above the hand than the other pistols, which limits fast recovery, but a 30-ounce 9mm isn't difficult to fire and control. Trigger compression was short, which makes up for the 7.75-pound pull weight, to an extent. Trigger travel was about 0.4 inch, and we thought the reset was fast. The pistol performed adequately in the range drills, with no failures to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. The SIG P320 was rated the most comfortable to fire, as far as recoil goes.

In combat drills, the SIG P320 made a good showing. In absolute accuracy, the pistol was limited by the heavy trigger but exhibited an average group size of 2.2 inches at 15 yards with the most accurate load, the Hornady 115-grain XTP. The SIG demonstrated the highest velocity with the Federal American Eagle load and the Federal 147-grain HST +P load used in accuracy work.

Our Team Said: The SIG Sauer P320 is a credible handgun, but we found it lacking in important areas. The trigger is OK for a service pistol, but most of us would like a lighter trigger for better accuracy. But the SIG trigger doesn't have a safety lever, so it would not be wise to offer a lighter trigger without re-engineering it. The P320 also wasn't as friendly to diverse hand sizes as were the other guns. Finally, the P320 was the largest and heaviest pistol tested, which works against it as a personal carry sidearm.

Heckler & Koch VP9 9mm Luger, $630

This was the price of our test gun from TopGunSupply.com at the time of the test. The Heckler & Koch VP9 is based on the HK P30 pistol. The grip frame and magazines are identical. The Heckler & Koch pistol features grip inserts and also side panels, which we rate above the other handguns for versatility.

The pistol's grip frame fit most hands well, and we found the grip

HECKLER & KOCH VP9 9MM LUGER, $630

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (OUR PICK)

The HK pistol came off the best of the striker-fired conversions, we believe. Ergonomics are excellent. Hand fit can be customized, with more extra panels than the other handguns. The HK was the most accurate by a margin. The HK isn't the lightest handgun, but it is light enough.





The VP9 features a wide range of grip panels, allowing excellent hand fitting.

Action	Locked Breech DAO Semi-Auto
Overall Length	7.25 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.14 in.
Weight Unloaded	26.5 oz.
Weight Loaded	32.6 oz.
Barrel Length	4.1 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	15 rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.5 in.
Grips	Textured Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.25 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Sights	Steel, 3 Dot
Trigger Pull Weight	6.0 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.63 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(706) 568-1906
Website	HK-USA.com
Made In	Germany



The HK VP9 cleared leather quickly and gave excellent results during the combat drills. In the opinion of our testers, the HK VP9 pulled away from the others in performance as the test progressed.

Building on the popular HK P30, the new VP9 seems even more accurate. Handling is excellent.



With a light rail, a good trigger, and excellent sights, the VP9 is a good personal-defense choice and deserves its solid A rating.



9MM LUGER RANGE DATA

Hornady 9mm Luger 115-gr. XTP 90252	SIG Sauer P320	HK VP9	Walther PPQ
Average Velocity	1105 fps	1090 fps	1112 fps
Muzzle Energy	311 ft.-lbs.	303 ft.-lbs.	315 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.9 in.	1.5 in.	1.8 in.
Largest Group	2.5 in.	2.0 in.	2.2 in.
Average Group	2.2 in.	1.7 in.	2.0 in.

Black Hills 9mm Luger 115-gr. TAC +P	SIG Sauer P320	HK VP9	Walther PPQ
Average Velocity	1198 fps	1166 fps	1204 fps
Muzzle Energy	366 ft.-lbs.	347 ft.-lbs.	370 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.3 in.	1.8 in.	1.9 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.2 in.	2.5 in.
Average Group	2.4 in.	2.0 in.	2.3 in.

Federal 9mm Luger HST 147-grain +P Federal-P9HST4	SIG Sauer P320	HK VP9	Walther PPQ
Average Velocity	1059 fps	1030 fps	1020 fps
Muzzle Energy	365 ft.-lbs.	346 ft.-lbs.	339 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.0 in.	1.7 in.	2.0 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.3 in.	2.5 in.
Average Group	2.3 in.	1.9 in.	2.3 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups using a solid 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. Sources: Hornady 9mm Luger 115-grain XTP 90252, $15.49/25 from CheaperThanDirt.com; Black Hills 9mm Luger 115-grain TAC +P, $25.20/20 from MidwayUSA.com; Federal 9mm Luger 147-grain HST +P Federal-P9HST4, $51/50 from Luckygunner.com.



The VP9, left, isn't HK's first striker-fired pistol, but it may be the best. At right is another good Heckler & Koch striker design, the P7M8.



The HK pistol was brilliantly fast during combat drills.



All the handguns were fast to reload. The HK's paddle-type magazine release was never a problem.

texture to be particularly good. The curve of the grip also fit most hands well. We changed the grip inserts back and forth more with this handgun than the Walther, and found it offers a good range of hand fit. The smallest size and the thinnest panels would be indicated for personal defense and concealed carry use.

The HK VP9 features a striker-fired action, in contrast to the original double-action hammer-fired HK P30. The trigger was pleasant, and light and smooth enough at 6.0 pounds. There was no creep or backlash. Our raters agreed this had the smoothest trigger of the three. The frame was stippled in a crescent pattern on both the front and rear straps and the sides. While similar to the Walther, we rated the Heckler & Koch pistol the better design by a small margin.

Coupled with good hand fit and a lower bore axis than the SIG P320, the pistol felt better in the hands of most testers. On top, the slide was thinner, and the HK pistol featured forward cocking serrations and well defined rear cocking serrations on the

slide. A neat touch was the cocking assist blocks in the rear of the slide. They may be removed if desired. For critical use, these cocking assists would allow a trained user to rack the slide with one hand. This would be superior to using the sights for leverage against an object, we feel, and may appeal to the tactically minded shooter.

The Heckler & Koch pistol also featured a red cocking indicator. It was visible at the rear of the slide when the pistol was cocked. The extractor also protruded when the chamber was loaded, giving both a visual and tactile indication of the gun's status.

The Heckler & Koch pistol featured good combat sights, each dovetailed in place in the slide. The dots were green in bright light and gave excellent contrast when firing for accuracy. These were the best sights encountered, we felt.

The pistol came with two magazines, both well made. The pistol featured an ambidextrous slide lock that worked well in practice for easy use by right- or left-handed shooters. The sole bone of contention was the magazine release. It was ambidextrous, but functioned differently from the Browning push button we are used to. Our senior rater has considerable experience with another striker-fired HK — the P7M8. He rated the HK magazine release highly, saying it made for a more secure grip and a more secure magazine latch unlikely to be tripped by accident. The rest of the team rated it even with the others. Anyone choosing the HK will be able to quickly acclimate to the magazine latch, we feel, and there are no drawbacks to its operation.

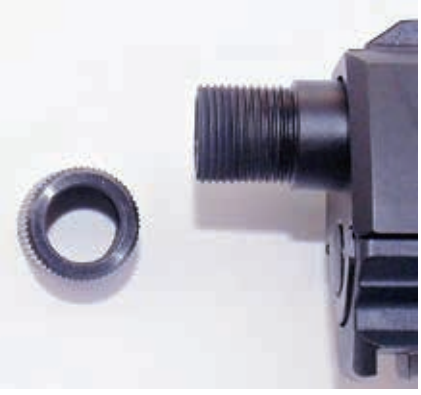
In firing during combat drills, the HK generated more felt recoil than the SIG, but it wasn't uncomfortable, and it was more comfortable to fire than the Walther. During combat drills, the pistol performed well. The sights were well regulated for 115-grain loads. The pistol's low bore axis resulted in little muzzle flip. The pistol demonstrated the

WALTHER PPQ M2 NAVY SD 2796082 9MM LUGER, $576

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Walther PPQ was reliable, and it seems well made. The sights are OK, but we prefer a dovetail installation. The trigger action was good, with a rapid reset. The magazine release was too light, we felt, for a defensive handgun. The sights were not well regulated for 115-grain ammunition.





This version featured a threaded barrel for easy addition of a suppressor.

Action	Locked Breech DAO Semi-Auto
Overall Length	7.75 in.
Overall Height	5.3 in.
Maximum Width	1.0 in.
Weight Unloaded	24.5 oz.
Weight Loaded	30.5 oz.
Barrel Length	4.5 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	15-Round Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer
Frame Front Strap Height	2.25 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.6 in.
Grips	Textured Polymer
Grip Thickness (Maximum)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (Maximum)	5.5 in.
Sights	Steel; Adjustable Rear
Trigger Pull Weight	5.4 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.6 in.
Safety	No Manual Safety
Warranty	1 Year
Made In	Germany
Website	WaltherArms.com
Telephone	(479) 242-8500



The pistols were tested with combat lights. The Viridian light worked well with the Walther.



The Walther has a European look many find pleasing. Grip texture was adequate, we felt.



Left: The PPQ had an adjustable sight the others lacked.

The mag-release button needed more tension on it, raters said.





The Walther PPQ M2 Navy SD featured a lever in the trigger that protects the trigger from lateral discharge. The HK uses the same system, the SIG does not.

slowest velocity with three out of four loads clocked. In the HK, the Federal 147-grain HST +P went 1030 fps in the VP9 versus 1020 fps from the Walther.

In bench accuracy, the Heckler & Koch VP9 was the most accurate pistol. It shot the tightest group, a 1.7-inch cluster fired with the Hornady 115-grain XTP.

Our Team Said: The Heckler & Koch VP9 9mm has the best combination of features for personal defense in this trio. The trigger action, sights, the grip frame's range of adjustment, and the feel going to and engaging targets make it the best gun in this test, we believe.

Walther PPQ M2 Navy SD 2796082 9mm Luger, $576

The model with an unthreaded barrel was $531 at CheaperThanDirt.com, but we tested a slightly more expensive threaded-barrel gun for $576. Even so, the Walther was the least expensive handgun tested. The Walther was similar to the other handguns in that it featured forward cocking serrations and a light rail. The pistol breaks down differently, however, by using two levers in front of the trigger guard. Field stripping wasn't a problem, we found.

The trigger was similar to the HK's; however, compression was lighter at 5.4 pounds. When working with this trigger, one of our raters came straight off the SIG and its 7.75-pound trigger. He double-tapped the Walther when he did not intend to. The Walther trigger was lighter, and like any trigger, it must be mastered if the handgun is carried for personal defense. We found the trigger to be controllable, and it offered good combat accuracy. All raters said that it felt lighter than it actually registered on the trigger gauge.

The grip frame was roughened for adhesion similar to the HK. However, in addition to finger grooves on the front strap, this pistol also featured raised areas on each side of the grip. While some raters were neutral on this feature, others did not like this.

The Walther was supplied with two magazines. They hold the same 15 rounds as the HK, but one of the Walther magazines featured a bumper pad or finger extension. It does not increase capacity, but it bulks the gun up. Only the largest hands would find it beneficial. The Walther uses a reversible button-style mag release. The pressure required to activate this release is lighter than the SIG. However, there were no inadvertent magazine-release incidents. Still, the raters agreed that the magazine release was too light for a service or personal-defense handgun.

The Walther's sights were different. They were not mounted in dovetail slots in the manner of the other handguns we tested. The front was a post, and the rear, interestingly, was adjustable for windage with a set screw. During the testing, the 147-grain load fired high, which was expected, but the 115-grain +P load also fired high, as did the generic 115-grain ball load. The other handguns did not fire high. The Walther shot well in combat drills, but all commented that the PPQ M2 exhibited the hardest felt recoil. This was most noticeable with the Federal 147-grain HST +P loading.

Our Team Said: On the upside, the Walther PPQ M2 never failed to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. It was a reliable handgun. The sights were different, but usable. We did not like the magazine release; in our opinion, it needs to be tighter. Also, the trigger wasn't ideal for personal defense.

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

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Are Used 357 Mags from Colt, S&W, and FN Worth the Money?

Should you consider one of these 1970s-era revolvers, or are you better off buying new? The competitors: a Smith & Wesson Model 19-4, a Colt Trooper MK III, and an FN Barracuda.

The 357 Magnum has an excellent reputation as a defensive round. On medium-sized game like whitetail deer at modest distances, it is effective as well. The round has been around since 1934; General George Patton carried an ivory-handled S&W 357 Mag during WWII. It is a versatile cartridge with many bullet types offered by a variety of manufacturers. Plus, 38 Special ammo in standard and +P loadings can be used in a 357 Magnum as a low-recoil alternative when training or plinking. We wanted to see if we could find a bargain in a full-size revolver with a 4-inch barrel that we could use for personal protection, and we came across two such contenders, a Smith & Wesson Model 19-4 that rated about 90 to 95 percent and a Colt Trooper MK III that rated 80 to 90 percent. Both featured 4-inch barrels, adjustable sights, and wood grips. We also came across an uncommon choice in this chambering, an FN Barracuda, available in the 1970s on a limited basis. It is unique due to the availability of an interchangeable cylinder, which could be switched between 9mm Luger and 357 Magnum. Here's more about these interesting and affordable choices, along with our recommendations.



Colt Trooper MK III 357 Magnum, $600+

The Trooper was first introduced in 1953, with the MK III variant debuting in 1969. The Trooper MK III tested was produced in 1970 and was a design meant to be more cost effective to manufacture compared to other Colt models like the Python. The MK III uses Colt's J-frame and a transfer-bar safety mechanism that required the trigger to be completely pulled for the hammer to hit the firing pin, which was built into the frame. The firing pin would then hit the cartridge primer to fire the round. The MK III also used coiled springs, a departure from the flat springs used in Colt's other SA and DA revolvers.

The Colt sported a gorgeous deep-blued finish with a case-hardened hammer. The trigger was wide and grooved more coarsely than the Model 19. The hammer spur was also wide and nicely checkered. The grip was

Right, top to bottom: In the 1970s, 357 Magnum revolvers were the weapon of choice for LE, personal protection, and outdoorsmen. Can you save a few bucks by buying a used revolver that rates 80 to 95 percent? We reviewed three used handguns to find out: a Smith & Wesson Model 19-4, a Colt Trooper MKIII, and an FN Barracuda. Of the three, our shooters would search out the M19-4 as a wheelgun to add to their current-day collection. The FN was also interesting, and we'd buy it if its 9mm cylinder were included.

COLT TROOPER MK III 357 MAGNUM, $600+

GUN TESTS GRADE: C+

The Trooper MK III looked good and felt good in the hand, but this particular revolver had been fired with hot loads and was in need of servicing to get it back in shape. This is one of the problems with buying used, of course, so watch out for this.





The Model 19-4 had a wider, larger grip than the Trooper MK III shown here.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	9.3 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	43.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	45.8 oz.
Barrel Length	4.0 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Blued Steel/Medium
Cylinder Material	Blued Steel, Fluted
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.1 in.
Grips	Checkered Walnut
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.8 in.
Front Sight	Serrated Ramp
Rear Sight	Adjustable
Sight Radius	5.3 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.7 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	12.1 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.8 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.5 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	NA
Telephone	(800) 962-2658
Website	ColtsMfg.com
Made In	Hartford, Conn



The cylinder was countersunk so cartridge bases were flush with the outside edge of the cylinder.

Our initial check indicated the Trooper was tight and in good condition.





Right: Notice the star-shaped impression from the ratchet and the bases of cartridges; this indicates many high-pressure loads were fired in this Trooper. This doesn't mean we'd completely pass on it, but it is an area to look for when you go shopping for your own.

similar looking to the Smith's Magna grip, but the Colt's were slimmer, like the FN, making the gun feel less fat in hand compared to the Model 19. A gold-plated Colt medallion was inset in the grips. The butt did not flare out like on the Model 19, and some testers preferred the Colt's grip.

The top strap and top of the barrel had a matte finish to diminish glare. The front ramp sight was serrated to further diminish glare, and it was pinned in place so it could be replaced. The Model 19's front sight was machined as part of the barrel. The rear sight was adjustable for windage and elevation, and the direction marks were clearly indicated, unlike the Smith's. Testers tended to slightly prefer the Smith's sights to the Colt's, but noted the Colt's sights were what was expected in a modern handgun.

The cylinder latch was rounded yet provided a good grip to pull on, though most testers felt the S&W-style push-latch was more natural. The ejector rod was enclosed in an under lug that went halfway up the barrel, just like the M19. From the initial look, the Colt tfelt tight, but as we continued checking out the Colt, we saw a few red flags.

When we slowly cocked the hammer for single action, we noticed the cylinder did not completely rotate and the cylinder bolt did not snap into the bolt slot in the cylinder. We needed to ever so slightly rotate the cylinder so the bolt would lock into the cylinder. Not good. When we smartly cocked the hammer we did not have this issue, nor did we have the issue when dry firing in double action. Our first thought was that the hand was off. The second red flag was when we looked at the recoil shield of the frame with the cylinder swung open. We could see that the ratchet had peened the frame, leaving a slight star-like impression. We could also see where the base of cartridges left marks in the bluing, clearly showing the cartridge base and primer. This indicated to us that the previous user had fired hot high-pressure loads in the Colt. We also noticed that one of

the sideplate screws was buggered. Someone had opened up the Colt, and that made us suspicious. We flushed out the 44 years worth of old lubricant with Gunslick Gun Flush. Grit dripped and cleaner ran out, and we flushed it until it ran clean. That took care of the cylinder locking issue when the hammer slowly cocked.

When we called Colt about servicing, there was an initial charge of $150 to $200 to examine the piece and determine the next steps. That would increase the price of the revolver substantially, and the team felt that was more than they wanted to spend.

We tested the Colt with the standard range rod, and it passed. Using a Clymer GO headspace gauge, we checked each chamber and discovered that the Colt was within spec. The Colt has a rebated cylinder, which means it is recessed to allow the rim of the cartridge to almost touch the frame at the rear of the cylinder. Revolvers with non-rebated cylinders, when viewed from the side, the case rim can be seen. The S&W and FN had recessed chambers, so the cartridge sat flush with the rear of the cylinder. When the cylinder of the Trooper was opened and closed, we noted there was no binding, and the same when cocking or dry firing in DA. After our inspection, we determined the Colt was safe to shoot, albeit the Colt had seen some service and uncouth tinkering.

The Colt had big sights that were easy to pick up, and in DA, the trigger pull was smooth. Accuracy was on par with the other two revolvers.

Our Team Said: The Colt had issues from past hard use, suggesting that we pass on this particular revolver. If we were to buy this revolver, we would definitely send it back to Colt for servicing. But we wouldn't buy one in this condition.

Smith & Wesson Model 19-4 357 Magnum, $450-$750

The Model 19-4 was the fourth engineering design change to the Model 19, hence the "-4" nomenclature. This revolver was derived from the 357 Combat

SMITH & WESSON M19-4 357 MAGNUM, $450-$750

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Testers understood why the Model 19-4 was such a popular revolver back in the day. This was an older "pre-lock" revolver we would seek out to buy, enjoy, and pass down.





The S&W had a hand-filling grip that helped reduce felt recoil.



The chambers were countersunk so the cartridge bases sat flush.



The backstrap was serrated and exposed between the stocks. This transmits recoil.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	9.5 in.
Overall Height	5.7 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	40.9 oz.
Weight Loaded	43.7 oz.
Barrel Length	4.0 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Steel/Medium
Cylinder Material	Steel, Fluted
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.3 in.
Grips	Checkered Wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.5 in.
Front Sight	Grooved Ramp
Rear Sight	Adjustable
Sight Radius	5.3 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.2 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	11.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.8 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.5 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	NA
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	Springfield, Mass.

The Magnagrip flared at the bottom, making the Model 19-4 a handful.





The Model 19-4 was tight and looked like it had not been fired much.

FN BARRACUDA 357 MAGNUM, $450-$750

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

The Barracuda was a well-made revolver. It likely would have moved up a grade if the 9mm cylinder had been included.





Here we use a 6-round Tuff Quick Strip to load the FN. The Tuff Quick Strips allowed the user to load two rounds at a time fairly quickly. The flexible strips also laid flat in our pocket with no cartridge rattle.



With the cylinder open, a button screw on the right side of the frame could be pressed to remove the cylinder and crane assembly. A 9mm cylinder is available for the handgun, but one wasn't included in our sample — too bad.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	8.3 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	37 oz.
Weight Loaded	39.8 oz.
Barrel Length	3.0 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Size	Blued Steel
Cylinder Material	Blued Steel, Fluted
Frame Front Strap Height	2.2 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.2 in.
Grips	Checkered Wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Front Sight	Ramp
Rear Sight	Fixed Notch
Sight Radius	5.0 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.7 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	11.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.9 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.3 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	NA
Telephone	(703) 288-3500
Website	NA
Made In	Belgium



Testers noted they could hold high on the grip, so the pistol was manageable even when shooting rapid double action. The front of the trigger was squared off like on a SIG or Beretta pistol.



The Barracuda came with fixed sights. They needed a dab of white paint to stand out more.

Magnum first produced in 1957 and then later designated the Model 19. Bill Jordan, the U.S. Border Patrol officer, noted fast-draw shooter, and gun scribe, helped convince S&W to build a 357 Magnum on a K-frame. Jordan thought the set up would be perfect for law-enforcement use. Previous 357s were built on the larger and heavier N-frame.

The Model 19 proved to be a success in LE circles and with civilians. The Model 19 was discontinued in 1999, but its DNA lives on in the Model 66, which is an updated stainless-steel version.

The Model 19-4 we tested was built between 1978 and 1979 and wore a nickel-plated finish with a casehardened trigger and hammer. Some did not care for the nickel finish. The trigger was wide and grooved, while the hammer spur was wide and checkered. It sported S&W's signature Magna checkered wood grips that fill the space behind the trigger guard and provided a hand-filling grip. The grip flared out at the butt. Testers were split on the grips — some liked the grips, others not so much. Some felt they were too big and did not absorb recoil as well as modern-day rubber grips. The left grip was scooped out where a right-handed shooter's thumb would fall to allow use of speedloaders. Nickel-plated S&W medallions were inset into each of the wood stocks. The serrated backstrap was exposed between the grip halves, and some shooters said there was more felt recoil than with softer, rubber grips.

The sighting plane was matte nickel with long grooves along the top strap and barrel to kill glare. The ramp front sight was also serrated, which lessened glare as well. The rear sight was matte blue and adjustable for windage and elevation. The bottom part of the rear sight was also serrated, which also helped reduce glare. Testers liked the sights. Our shooters had no complaints with the sights or the trigger in either double or single action. It was smooth and crisp — exactly what shooters expected from an S&W revolver.

357 MAGNUM RANGE DATA

Winchester White Box 38 Special +P 125-gr. JHP	Colt Trooper Mk III	Smith & Wesson Model 19	FN Barracuda
Average Velocity	771 fps	899 fps	932 fps
Muzzle Energy	165 ft.-lbs.	224 ft.-lbs.	241 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group (open sights)	2.8 in.	2.0 in.	1.3 in.
Average Group (open sights)	2.9 in.	2.4 in.	1.4 in.

Winchester White Box 357 Magnum 110-gr. JHP	Colt Trooper Mk III	Smith & Wesson Model 19	FN Barracuda
Average Velocity	797 fps	1272 fps	1312 fps
Muzzle Energy	155 ft.-lbs.	395 ft.-lbs.	420 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group (open sights)	1.6 in.	1.6 in.	1.95 in.
Average Group (open sights)	2.0 in.	1.9 in.	2.55 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 25 yards with open sights. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph set 15 feet from the muzzle.

The Model 19 had a full-size cylinder latch that was simple to operate and securely locked the cylinder in place or allowed it to swing free with a push of the latch. The ejector rod mated with a pin in the barrel under lug, adding another locking point for the cylinder. This old Smith was tight. The chambers in the cylinder were countersunk so cartridges fit flush with the rear of the cylinder.

The Smith had a safety built into the mechanism that blocks the hammer. That safety would not allow the firing pin to hit a cartridge primer unless the trigger was pressed. Also, the trigger cannot be cocked when the cylinder is swung out for loading.

All our checks — range rod, headspace gauge, and visuals — indicated that the Smith had not been fired often. We did note there was a nick near the muzzle, but that ding was on the outside edge, not near the rifling.

If it had been near the rifling, we'd be suspect that the dent would affect accuracy. At the range, we fed the revolver 38 Special +P and 357 Magnum ammo. Testers liked how the Model 19 handled. They felt the revolver was a good weight, even with hot 357 Mag rounds. Some stated they would swap the Magna grips for aftermarket rubber ones. Accuracy was adequate, nothing special, about what we have come to expect from 357s.

Our Team Said: The Model 19 would make a good defense gun, but most would prefer a blued version, since the nickel sparkled even in dim light. Hunters in the group said they would use it for whitetails at bow-hunting distances. All agreed that it had a good trigger, and everyone said this is a handgun they would definitely buy if they located one in good condition.

FN Barracuda 357 Magnum, $450-$750

The Barracuda was an attempt at FN to get into the law-enforcement market in the 1970s. At that time, LE was already looking into semi-automatic pistols, so this revolver didn't have a problem to solve. What the Barracuda offered over what the Colt and S&W was a quick-change cylinder. Two cylinders were available, one chambered in 357 Magnum and one in 9mm. The 9mm cylinder required use of moon clips. Our test revolver did not come with the extra cylinder, and testers felt that was a pity as it would make the revolver more useful and therefore more valuable in their eyes. The Barracuda passed the range-rod test with a standard size head. There was some wiggle in the cylinder.

The FN had a nice deep-blue finish. A slight drag mark was noted on the cylinder. The finish on the chunky hammer and trigger was casehardened. Both the trigger and hammer were serrated for a sure grip.

A 3-inch barrel with fixed sights came on the Barracuda. The metal around the rear sight was built up, so it felt and looked like it was adjustable. With the added metal, we thought FN should have included an adjustable rear sight. A notch on the side of the rear sight and the ramp could hold a dab of white paint to make the sights stand out more. The top of the frame and barrel were serrated. The front of the trigger was squared off like on a SIG or Beretta semi-auto pistol, but this was more aesthetic than practical. The grip was similar in feel to the Colt and smaller than the Model 19.

To open the cylinder, the shooter pushed the cylinder latch forward like on the S&W. It locked up in the rear, where the extractor pin fits into the rear of the frame. At the front of the ejector rod, there was a hole for a pin in the ejector shroud to snap into. With the cylinder open, a button screw on the right side of the frame could be pressed to remove the cylinder and crane assembly. The FN had a sideplate on the right side.

The FN felt good in the hand and felt heavier than it looked.

Testers said felt recoil was manageable with the Barracuda, and it was as accurate as the Smith and Colt. Testers noted they could hold high on the grip, so the pistol was manageable even in rapid DA. Like the other revolvers, the full-length ejector rod spewed out empty cases with ease.

Our Team Said: The Barracuda performed well, but the lack of aftermarket parts and not having the 9mm cylinder knocked this revolver down a half point. All agreed the trigger was serviceable, and it looked like the revolver was built to last.

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

GUN TESTS VALUE GUIDE: 4-INCH+ 357 MAGNUM REVOLVERS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE & COMMENTS
Colt Python 357 Magnum (1988), $2500	April 2013	**Grade A+:** True revolver aficionados should start saving up to buy one of these classics.
Ruger GP100 No. 1705 357 Magnum, $759	March 2014	**Grade A:** In rapid fire, the Ruger was very controllable and a pleasure to shoot due to the weight.
Taurus Model 66 No. 66SS4 357 Magnum, $591	March 2014	**Grade A:** We would buy this one in a second for trail carry and home defense.
Smith & Wesson 686 Plus No. 164194 357 Magnum, $790	March 2007	**Grade A:** Consistent, accurate, and slotted for 7 rounds of either 38 Special or 357 Magnum.
Ruger GP100 No. KGP-141 357 Magnum, $615	Aug 2006	**Grade A:** Functioned with the most consistency and would likely offer the most durability.
Ruger GPF-340 357 Magnum, $423	April 2000	**Grade A:** We trust this gun to be ready and shoot accurately. It was best firing the full magnum loads.
Colt Python 357 Magnum, $595 (street)	April 2000	**Grade A:** Colt did not drop this model line because it was a poor product.
Smith & Wesson 686 Magnum Plus 357 Magnum, $542	April 2000	**Grade A:** It shoots easily and well, the sights won't fail and need replacement.
Smith & Wesson Model 19 Combat Magnum 357 Mag., $457	March 2000	**Grade A:** If you wanted to explain to someone what a revolver should be, the M19 would be an appropriate icon.
Smith & Wesson 686-5 (6-inch) 357 Magnum, $534	May 1999	**Grade A:** With the right ammo, it shot more accurately and carried an extra round of 38s or full-bore 357s.
Ruger GP100 Match Champion No. 1754 357 Magnum, $899	Dec 2014	**Grade A-:** The Match Champion is undoubtedly one of Ruger's best revolvers.
Smith & Wesson Model 686-2 357 Magnum, $900 (1988)	April 2013	**Grade A-:** You can't go wrong with a Very Good, Excellent, or Like New Model 686-2.
Ruger GP100 No. KGP161 357 Magnum, $701	March 2011	**Grade A-:** The GP100 was comfortable to shoot when firing full-house defense loads.
Smith & Wesson 686 No. 164224 357 Magnum, $829	March 2011	**Grade A-:** Our staff thought that improving upon the single-action trigger might be impossible.
Taurus 608 357 Magnum, $465	Oct 2002	**Grade A-:** Shoots full-power 357 Magnum not just six times but eight, and accurately.
Ruger GP100 KGP-161 357 Magnum, $474	May 1999	**Grade A-:** The $474 GP100 was handsome, strong and accurate. Its double-action operation was good.
Smith & Wesson Pro Series 686 SSR 178012 357 Mag, $999	Dec 2014	**Grade B+:** The 686 SSR is ready to go for IDPA Stock Service Revolver competition.

Log on to **Gun-Tests.com** to read complete reviews of these products.

Mitchell's Mauser

After a good and thorough cleaning, the Mitchell M48 looked and performed like new, but was in fact mighty old.

Our first look at the Mitchell Mauser gave us hope that here we had an essentially new 98 Mauser to play with. The bore, finish, wood and all the stuff that came with it looked new, except that some of the accessories showed some age marks. This version came with a fancy certificate along with a leather sling, bayonet in scabbard, leather frog or bayonet hanger, leather ammo pouch, and a field cleaning kit. The certificate stated the rifle had been in military storage since its manufacture in Yugoslavia during the 1940s. It went on to state the rifle had been inspected and tested every five years since its storage, essentially stating these are not newly made replicas, but older original Mausers. The M48 Mausers were made in Yugoslavia after WWII — presumably in 1948 and after — so there is no reason to doubt these are in fact all original. They came from a factory or arsenal that has been in Yugoslavia since the late 1800s.



Clean wood is rare to find on old Mausers, and this had it in spades. The top wood seemed to be walnut, but the main stock was hard teak. The bolt is bent downward and its bottom sliced off. The bolt, shroud, safety, extractor, and butt plate are in the white. They were made that way, not ground down to bare metal as some have claimed.



Here is the bayonet and its scabbard that came as part of the package. The other items are the frog to hold it, a sling, and a magazine pouch, all made of leather. They showed a bit of age. In addition there was a cleaning kit. We left the leather goods in their sealed plastic bags to help preserve them for the rifle's owner. The bayonet was outside its wrapper when we got the rifle.

There is, in fact, lots of commentary online to the effect that these so-called all-original rifles from Mitchell's have been gussied up, restamped (all the numbers of our test rifle match, even the stock), reblued, refinished, and the like. Was this rifle ground down, restamped with all-matching numbers, and then reblued? Then how come the crest is pristine? Was the metal completely buffed, reblued, new barrels stuck in and the wood sanded and refinished? No, it was not, because in the first place there would be no profit in doing so. Also, the stock is by no means skimpy. It's proud of the wood everywhere, which refinished wood would not be. The M48 rifles were made after WWII, and they could easily have been put in storage because there was no great need for them. Because the Germans had nothing to do with the making of these rifles that came from an ancient armory or factory, there is no reason the Yugos would have used older German stamps to mark them, and that puts the lie to some claims the numbers don't have the right font characteristics. At any rate, we took a look at the rifle as it was, not from the viewpoint of the conflicting opinions online.

One thing is for sure, this rifle has all nice stuff throughout. The barrel is pristine. The stock is in excellent condition, as is the bluing. The accompanying certificate told us the stock was in fact "teakwood," not walnut. We wonder about that, but don't have any teak on hand to compare with it. It does look like photos of teak we've seen online. The wood is very hard, has some decent grain, and has a dull finish of some sort. It seems to be a reasonable stock wood. All in all, we thought the rifle looked pretty good, and would make a fine display for

some folks, whether or not it would satisfy every Mauser collector. Of course the intent is for it to be shot, so of course we shot it. We did that with three types of ammo, mil-spec hardball of unknown origin from 1983 with a 198-grain, steel-jacketed, boat-tail bullet; Remington 170-grain Core-Lokt SP; and PMC 170-grain PSP. We were going to try another mil-spec steel-case ammo from Romania, but it would not chamber. Here's what we found.

Mitchell Mauser M48 Collector Grade 8x57 JS (8mm Mauser) $450,

Although it looked mighty good, the rifle didn't have milled parts throughout. The trigger guard and floor plate were stampings. The forward stock-retention ring of the Mitchell M48 Mauser is one of the later, stamped and welded-up ones. Missing is the hole in the butt for removing the firing pin from the bolt sleeve. Early on, we found a problem that the buyers of these ought to address right from the start. The wrap-around or cup-like butt plate is polished steel, left in the white. There was apparently nothing much put on it to preserve it, maybe a wipe of Cosmoline, but not enough to protect it once the rifle is removed from its plastic wrapping. The butt plate began to rust almost immediately, and when we tested it in wet snow we really began to have problems. Our fix was to restore its look with Scotch-Brite and then put a heavy coat of wax on it to prevent rusting. We strongly advise you to do the same thing to actively prevent rusting of a major, highly visible, portion of this old rifle.

The rifle had the secondary locking screws on the action-retention bolts going through the trigger guard. The bolt handle was bent downward and the bottom of the knob was flattened. The bolt was in the white, as were the bolt shroud, firing pin cap, and the safety. The magazine follower was beveled to allow the bolt to run forward with the magazine empty. The left side of the action

MITCHELL'S MAUSER M48 8X57MM, $450

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Looking very much like a wartime Mauser 98K, the Mitchell Mauser M48 is not German, but Yugoslavian, made after WWII in the late 1940s and preserved unused since then. The stock is teak, which in this offering has similar density to that of walnut. We liked the way this one shot and felt with the mil-spec ammo.



Overall Length	43.0 in.	Action Type	Bolt
Barrel Length	23.2 in.	Barrel Finish	Blued
Sight Radius	20.0 in.	Magazine Type	Box
Overall Height	6.7 in.	Stock	Teak
LOP	13.1 in.	Trigger Pull Weight	6.5 lbs.
Weight Unloaded	8.6 lbs.	Warranty	Money-Back Guarantee
Weight Loaded	8.9 lbs.	Telephone	(800) 274-4124
Capacity	5	Website	Mauser.org
Action Finish	Blued	Made In	Yugoslavia



Although it's not pretty, the sliced-off bolt bottom allows easy operation of the bent bolt handle without the need to cut a hole into the side of the stock.



The wing safety is time tried. The rifle retains the typical Mauser clip-loading and thumb slots, and the standard bolt release with integral ejector. Workmanship on this Mauser was quite good overall, we thought, and the stock shaping and finish were really well done. It's an interesting piece.



The stamped trigger guard had some sort of steel filler at front and back to add strength. We'd never seen this before. The guard and the floorplate looked mighty good, even though they weren't milled parts.



The front "barleycorn" or inverted-V sight has a hood that cuts down glare. The cleaning rod screws in, and two of them are needed to clean the bore.

had "PREDUZECE 44" in Cyrillic letters, verifying its Yugoslav origin. The top of the front action ring had a nicely imprinted crest. Below that was "M 48A."

The rear sight was, from what one collector told us, made to the pattern of an early German version, with the yardage markings (to 2000) on both the top and bottom. The front sight had a dust cover, which was nice to see. It aided our shooting efforts. The wood was like new with a dull finish that begged for some linseed oil. But if it is in fact teak, it might not take oil well. The trigger pull was two-stage, with some creep to the final pull. It broke at 6.5 pounds. We wiped the like-new bore and took it to the range.



This polished, cup-like plate started to rust as soon as it got out of its bag. We removed all traces of rust and heavily waxed it.

The thumb cutout for clip-strip loading was as on earlier wartime Mausers, and the rear sight is just like early wartime Mausers.





Top: The rear sight has its markings to 2000 yards on both sides, so you can see it without lifting your head above the trench, where it was designed to be used.

Bottom: This stamped floorplate may not look good, but it operates just like the milled ones dating back to 1898. The action screws have locking screws.



Our first group was with the mil-spec ammo (unknown origin), and went into 2.3 inches at 100 yards from our bench rest. With the military ammo, the rifle printed right where it ought to have, dead center and a touch high with the rear sight all the way down. However, a problem showed up right away. The rifle would not reliably eject. It fed and fired perfectly, but the spent case just lay there, no matter how vigorously we worked the bolt handle. The ejector was not stuck in the Cosmoline, and it had good spring force. It protruded the correct amount (not much). The few cases that did eject just dribbled out of the rifle. A good Mauser will fling them far. On inspection we found that despite our initial cleaning, some odd crud remained inside the magazine box that apparently was flaking off and interfering with ejection. Once that was removed, ejection was as it ought to have been.

The two soft-nose commercial loads were much "softer" than the military version. We well recall the excellent surplus 8mm from several decades ago that was like new. It was mighty hot stuff, made in Canada and intended for the Bay of Pigs (never got there), and was not watered down like the commercial ammunition for these old rifles has to be these days. The Remington ammo did give decent accuracy, but the PMC was nothing to write home about. Also, a 170-grain bullet at less than 2200 fps is a mighty light load for what, with the right fodder, can be a mighty rifle.

Our Team Said: We liked this rifle. All in all, we couldn't fault it. We've seen much better — or perhaps we should say more desirable — military Mausers, but not within the past, oh, 40 years. If we wanted an excellent-condition, safe-to-shoot, Mauser made after the design of the late-war Wehrmacht's rifles, we'd not hesitate to buy this one.

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

JOX Loader Pouch Test

Here's a simple way to carry extra rounds for your wheelgun.

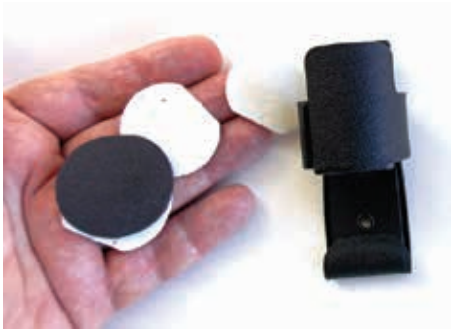
Many Americans choose a revolver as their concealed-carry handguns. Most carry a snubnose revolver; a few carry a 4-inch barrel 357 Magnum like those tested elsewhere in this issue. Their faith in the revolver is understandable. Our raters observe that criminals often run in packs. The natural polarity between good guys and bad guys may erupt into a gun battle. While high-round counts are not the norm, the possibilities are endless. At any rate, after you win the fight, you will wish to reload the handgun, which means carrying spare gun loads — a somewhat more difficult task than







The Kydex JOX speedloader pouch (JOXloaderpouches.com, $43 plus shipping) is designed for concealed carry. It attaches to the belt with a J hook that goes over the top of the belt and hooks securely. The attachment is rigid. Excess movement and momentum are minimized. The JOX carrier sets high on the belt, allowing both a sharp draw and good concealment.





Top and bottom: The pouch comes with cushions/spacers in the bottom. Spacers allow cartridges with different overall loaded lengths to be carried with best fit and little to no rebound or shake and no noise. Pressing 'outboard' releases the speed loader from the pouch.

with magazines for a self loader. We believe the reason the revolver reload isn't carried as often is because of the bulk of speedloaders, and carrying loose ammunition in the pocket is a bad choice. Revolver speed strips help, but are far from ideal. In our view, a revolver speedloader is best, but they are about as wide as the revolver cylinder, which makes for a bump on the belt with conventional old-style speedloader pouches.

A new product caught our attention that seems to solve a lot of problems for those carrying the revolver. The JOX speedloader pouch (JOXloaderpouches.com, $43 plus shipping) is designed for concealed carry. The JOX is made of Kydex and attaches to the belt with a J hook that goes under the belt and hooks securely. The attachment is rigid. Movement is minimized.

The carrier rides high on the belt. The top is open. The JOX unit retains the speedloader by pressing outward on the outboard side of the pouch. The speedloader is then inserted. The carry is secure, and since the JOX carrier is molded for the individual speedloader — HKS, Safariland, SL, etc., there is minimal rebound.

We recommend the pouch be threaded onto the belt before the final belt loop is threaded, as it is difficult to mount the JOX unit after the belt is fastened. This is a good thing, as the JOX carrier is tight on the belt.

To draw the speedloader, press the speedloader slightly outboard, and the carrier's grip is released. The carrier must be worn forward, where it cannot interfere with drawing the revolver. The carrier also must be accessible to the strong hand for a proper speed load. As for concealment, the carrier may be concealed under a light covering garment or a pulled-out shirt. The footprint, when it is noticed, is smaller than a cellphone carrier. Since most of us already carry a cellphone, the JOX carrier should not be noticed. When the speedloader is inserted in the carrier, the depth or height the speedloader rides in the carrier is affected by the cartridges used. A Glaser Safety Slug has a light and short bullet. The Speer Gold Dot 125-grain load is another overall cartridge length, and the Winchester 158-grain SWC yet another, not to mention 200-grain handloads for the 357 Magnum cartridge. While the carrier and speedloaders work OK with most loads, there is a superior option. The JOX pouch is supplied with spacers carried in the bottom of the pouch. These spacers serve multiple duty. They cushion the nose of the bullet to prevent damage. They also eliminate any rattle. But they also may be stacked or removed as needed to properly set the height of the speedloader.

Our Team Said: After considerable testing and wearing the JOX speedloader pouch, our raters find it good kit with no drawbacks. You should carry spare ammunition for your wheelgun, and this pouch solves a lot of problems.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

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

Cool New Guns at SHOT 2015

Our team of writers canvassed the massive Las Vegas show to find the hottest ideas coming to your local gunshop this year.

At the 2015 SHOT Show in Las Vegas, GUN TESTS staffers ran across tons of new products that we're working to include in future tests. Following are some of the items we saw that intrigued us, for one reason or another. Some of the descriptions below are from *SHOT Daily*, a trade magazine published at the show for the dealers and distributors who attend. Used with permission.

— *Todd Woodard*

CMMG

The all-new CMMG MK47 Mutant rifle platform caught our attention. It's chambered for 7.62x39mm, the upper and lower receivers are built from 7075-T6 billet aluminum and feature a uniquely designed upper and lower receiver engineered to manage the dimensions and pressures of the 7.62x39mm cartridge while keeping weight to a minimum.

The rifle, which runs on the proven carbine-length direct-impingement gas system and sports a 16.1-inch free-floated medium-taper barrel with a 1:10 twist rate, utilizes the heavier bolt carrier group derived from the AR10, but shortened. The lower receiver is designed to accept existing AK47 magazines and uses a standard hook-and-latch release system. A full-length Picatinny rail rides atop the receiver. All models ship with one Magpul PMAG 30-round 7.62x39 magazine. The MK47 Mutant T ($1,450) features an A2 muzzle compensator, a CMMG single-stage trigger, an A4 six-position collapsible buttstock, and an A2 pistol grip. The MK47 Mutant AKM ($1,650) features the same trigger, a CMMG SV muzzle brake, a Magpul CTR buttstock, and a MOE Pistol grip. The MK47 Mutant AKM2 ($1,850) comes with a Geissele SSA two-stage trigger, Magpul CTR buttstock, and MOE Pistol Grip.



CMMG MK47 Mutant Rifle

Beretta USA

Of all of Beretta's new product lines this year, we were most taken with the A300 Outlander ($775 to $875, depending on stock option), a field-grade 12-gauge gas-operated-action semi-auto that handles 2¾ or 3-inch shells and is built on an aluminum-alloy receiver that results in a 7.1-pound empty weight. The 28-inch vent rib barrel uses the Beretta MC3 interchangeable choke tube system and features a front, metal bead sight. The stock is available in black synthetic, wood, or a Max-5 camo finish that also covers the metalwork.

We also spent a lot of time handling the new 692 over/under series in 12 gauge with 3-inch chambers. It incorporates the Beretta Steelium Plus barrel system that features a forcing cone lengthened to 360mm as opposed to the more-standard 65mm. A wider receiver is also incorporated; it places more weight between the hands for improved handling. The Beretta B-Fast System is also included in the 692 series. The device allows a complete drop-and-cast adjustment with extreme ease and quickness. The new 692 Series will offer the following models: 692 Sporting ($3,520) with 30- or 32-inch barrels and a standard field comb (a left-hand model is also available); 692 Sporting with the B-Fast adjustable comb and 30-inch barrels ($3,870); and the 692 Skeet ($3,870) with the B-Fast comb in barrel lengths of 28 or 30 inches (left-hand models come with 30-inch barrels). The Sporting Series Models utilize the OCSP-HP interchangeable choke-tube system that includes M, IM, IC, C, and Skeet tubes. The Skeet Series models use the OBSK-HP package that includes M, IM, IC and two Skeet tubes.



Beretta A300



Beretta 692



Beretta M9A3

Other single-barrel introductions included the A400 Extreme ($1,745 to $1,895), a gas-operated 12-gauge built on an aluminum-alloy receiver; and the A400 XPLOR Action variant ($1,550 to $1,750), a slimmed-down version of the gas-operated A400.

Other two-barrel introductions include the Silver Pigeon 1 Sporting Sub-Gauge ($2,899) which will be available in 20 and 28 gauge, as well as .410, with the receiver scaled to gauge, and a newly designed side-by-side, the 486 Parallelo ($5,350), which

is built on a round-body action with the new Triblock barrel that provides the same feel as the demiblock barrel while providing more strength and eliminating visible welding lines.

Of the company's new rifles produced under the Sako and Tikka banners, we were most impressed with Tikka tactical bolt-action series, the blue steel T3 CTR ($1,100) and CTR Stainless ($1,225) models. Offered in 260 Rem. and 308 Win., they feed from a detachable 10-round steel magazine. Additional features include a black synthetic stock with a fixed cheekpiece, stock spacers to allow length-of-pull adjustments, an aluminum trigger guard and magazine release, Teflon-coated bolt with an oversize tactical knob, and a Picatinny upper receiver rail for optics mounting.

Other rifle introductions included the Sako Finnfire II ($1,095), a premium-grade bolt-action rimfire chambered for 22 LR and 17 HMR, the bolt-action Sako A7 Big Game with a Roughtech Stock ($1,200), designed for extreme conditions and which has a single-stage trigger user-adjustable between 2.2 and 4 pounds; and the Tikka T3 Lite Compact ($675) designed for smaller-statured shooters and youths.

Beretta announced its improved M9 9mm semiautomatic handgun made specifically to bid for the U.S. Army's sidearm—the M9A3. Though the Army rejected the new Beretta M9A3, shooters will appreciate the improvements to the classic design. Built on the Vertec thin grip frame with a reduced grip circumference, the Beretta M9A3 comes with a wraparound backstrap for those with larger hands or for those who prefer a fuller grip. The 5-inch barrel is threaded for a suppressor and the sights are tritium night sights with a removable front dovetail sight.

Colt's Manufacturing Company

Colt's Manufacturing Company has several new handgun introductions for 2015, including new models in the Rail Gun, XSE Series, 1991 Series, and Gold Cup lines. There



Colt Gold Cup National Match

are three new additions to the Colt Rail Gun family: The O4012RG Colt Combat Commander Rail Gun 45 ACP with Picatinny rail, $1,198; the Lighweight Commander Rail Gun, O4840RG, $1,198; and the O1880RG Government Model Rail Gun 45 ACP with a hard-coat-anodized aluminum receiver, $1,198.

Two new handguns will join the Colt XSE Series, the O4662XSE Lightweight Commander adds a 9mm option to this family, $1,104. A stainless Government Model (O1092XSE) chambered in 9mm will also be offered in the XSE family, $1,104. In Colt's classic 1991 Series, the new O1992 model will be chambered in 9mm to go along with existing chamberings in 45 ACP and 38 Super. MSRP is $907. The new-for-2015 O5870A1 Gold Cup National Match features the Series 70 firing system along with a classic flat-top slide. MSRP is $1,250.

Browning

To us, this company's most interesting introduction for 2015 was the Black Label 1911-380 semi-auto pistol ($670), which combines two of John M. Browning's original inventions—the 1911 pistol and the 380 ACP cartridge. The Black Label is scaled down to 85 percent of the size of a 45 ACP 1911 handgun. This new single-action 1911 is built upon a precision-crafted composite frame



Browning Black Label 1911-380

and is made in the U.S. Features include an extended ambidextrous safety, a beavertail-grip safety, a skeletonized hammer, and a machined steel slide that wears fixed combat-style sights. With a 4.25-inch barrel, it has an overall length of 7.5 inches and weighs 17.5 ounces empty. The finish is black matte, and the magazine holds 8 rounds. It ships with an ABS case.

In 2015, Browning will expand its AB3 bolt-action rifle line to include short-action calibers to include 243 Win., 7mm-08 Rem., 308 Win., 270 WSM, and 300 WSM. MSRP: $600. Browning is also expanding its X-Bolt line to include the new X-Bolt Eclipse



Browning X-Bolt Eclipse Target

Target and Eclipse Varmint models. Both feature a laminated gray-satin thumbhole stock with a Monte Carlo cheekpiece. MSRP: $1,070.

Over/under shotguns dominate Browning's new 2015 product offerings. The Browning High Grade program moves into its third year with a pair of Citori 725 12-gauge Sporting models. These over/unders receive as many as 30 hours of hand-engraving and touch-up prior to being precisely set into finely wrought, high-grade walnut. The new Citori 725 Sporting Grade V will feature a receiver with deep-relief engraving in a silver-nitride finish and a 30- or 32-inch barrel ($5,340). The new Citori 725 Sporting Grade VII has a blued receiver with deep-relief engraving and gold accents. The stock and forearm feature oil-finish Grade VI/VII walnut with close-radius pistol grip and palm swell. A John M. Browning Signature fitted case is included ($6,270).

For 2015 Browning will also expand the Citori 725 target shotgun lineup to include the new Pro Sporting and Pro Trap models that will feature



Citori 725 Sporting High Rib

a Pro Fit adjustable comb and Pro Balance system in the stock that allows shooters to fine-tune the balance point for a perfect mount and swing. MSRPs for both are $4,000.

A new 725 Feather 20-gauge features a lightweight alloy receiver with steel breech face and hinge pin. This new lightweight model will be offered with a 26- or 28-inch barrel ($2,550). The new Cynergy Micro Midas 20-gauge over/under has a 13-inch length of pull designed for smaller shooters, ($1,870).

CZ-USA

A new 1911, a special limited-edition CZ 75, and some interesting new guns from Dan Wesson make up CZ's new handgun introductions this year. The first "Made in the USA" handgun to bear the CZ name is, appropriately, a 1911. The CZ 1911 A1 ($839) is a government-size model that is built without a trigger safety, as many 1911 aficionados prefer.

CZ will issue a special-edition 40th Anniversary CZ 75 9mm ($1,499). Only 1,000 guns will be produced. The anniversary model is based on the CZ 75B and features a highly polished blue-steel slide and frame.

The CZ Scorpion EVO 3 S1 Pistol ($849) is a 9mm civilian-legal semi-auto version of CZ's famous Scorpion sub-machine gun. With a black composite finish, it features a blowback action with 7.75-in. barrel.

The new CZ 805 Bren PS1 Pistol ($1,982) is a civilian-legal semi-auto version of the CZ 805 Bren. It has an 11-inch barrel that features a two-port muzzle brake. Chambered for 223/5.56mm, the action is housed in a one-piece aluminum upper receiver with a Picatinny rail and uses STANG magazines (two 30-round magazines are included). It uses the same sight system as the Scorpion, along with the accessory arm-brace adapter.

Under CZ's Dan Wesson banner, three new handguns join the product line this year, including an updated version of Wesson's highly accurate double-action revolver in 357 Magnum. This year the Dan Wesson Model 715 ($1,168) ships with a 6-inch barrel and heavy shroud.



CZ-USA 1911 A1



CZ-USA 805 Bren PS1 Pistol



CZ-USA CZ 75 40th Anniversary Limited Edition



CZ-USA CZ Scorpion EVO 3 S1 Pistol



Dan Wesson Valkyrie



Dan Wesson Silverback 1911 Two-Tone

The new DW Valkyrie 45 ACP ($2,012), a variation of the CCO, has a Commander-length slide on a compact Officer frame. The new Dan Wesson Silverback is currently the only two-toned 1911 in the Dan Wesson line. It will be available in 45 ACP ($1,883) and 10mm ($2,064).

New rifle introductions included CZ's Sonoran rifle in the flat-shooting 26 Nosler ($3,199), and on the rimfire side, the 455 Ultra Lux ($449) joins the 455 platform this year. Another new 455 model is the 455 Varmint Thumbhole Fluted 22 LR in a brown laminate stock ($549).

FN America

FN America, LLC plans to launch seven new products under the FNH USA brand for 2015, including compact variants of its popular FNS striker-fired pistol and additions to its FN 15 modern sporting rifle line.

The FNS-9 Compact and FNS-40 Compact offer the same features as the standard models but have 3.6-inch barrels and were designed to be snag-free for better concealment and a faster draw. MSRP is $599.

A total of five new variants of the FN 15 line of modern sporting rifles are also available, including the industry's first ARs to feature the Magpul M-LOK accessory mounting system. MSRP is $1,479. The FN 15 DMR includes many of the same features as the FN 15 Sporting but features an 18-inch match-grade, cold hammer-forged barrel with a 1:7 twist to enhance stability and accuracy for heavier grain precision shooting ammunition. MSRP is $1,899. The FN 15 MOE SLG is the first AR-15 to feature the Magpul MOE SL trigger guard, forearm, hand guard, stock and rear sight assembly. MSRP is $1,169. The FN 15 Sporting was designed for competition — chambered in 223 Remington, it features an 18-inch match-grade chrome-lined barrel, a Timney competition trigger and a Magpul grip and buttstock. MSRP is $1,749. The FN 15 Patrol Carbine has a 16-inch alloy steel, button broached, chrome-lined barrel, Samson flip-up rear sight, and a Midwest Industries drop-in 7-inch quad rail/forearm. MSRP is $1,219.





FN America FNS-9 Compact and FNS-40 Compact, top, and FN 15 MOE SLG Rifle, bottom.

Magnum Research

A new and somewhat radical rimfire rifle joins the Magnum Research product line this year. The MLR22ATU Ultra 22 LR is built around a high-tech modular 18-inch barrel attached to a stainless-steel breech and muzzle caps inside a thin-walled aluminum shell. A patented heat sink located inside the barrel helps deliver improved accuracy. The Ultra 22 LR ($544) is a semi-auto that measures 36.2 inches in length overall and weighs 4.8 pounds. It utilizes the Ruger 10/22 trigger group and Ruger 10/22 rotary magazines. The barrels are also sold separately and can be installed on Ruger 10/22 rifles to upgrade accuracy.

The DE1911GSS ($904) is a full-size 1911 single-action semi-auto chambered for 45 ACP. It features a 5.05-inch barrel, a trigger pull factory set between 3 and 4 pounds, a stainless-steel matte-finished frame with black appointments, checkered wood grips, and a high-profile rear sight that is drift-adjustable for windage with a serrated and pinned front-sight blade.



Magnum Research Ultra 22 LR MLRATUT



Magnum Research DE1911GSS

Marlin

For those looking for more power, there is Marlin's new 1895 GSBL-45-70 Govt. ($1,150). This lever-action carbine features a tubular magazine and a stainless-steel-barreled action with an 18.5-inch barrel that uses adjustable Williams FireSights with a front-sight hood. The metalwork is finished in FNC (ferritic nitrocarburizing), which darkens the stainless steel and creates a durable scratch-resistant finish. The laminated stock and forend are painted, and a big-loop finger lever makes for fast cycling.

An additional 1895 series gun is the 1895 Limited Edition 45-70 Govt., the second gun in a multi-year series. It features scrollwork on both sides of the receiver; an elk in 24-carat gold inlay is on the left side, and the classic Marlin horse and rider is on the right. SRP: $1,350.



Marlin 1895 GSBL-45-70 Govt

Mossberg

This is a big year for Mossberg, which launches new models in the rimfire, hunting, and tactical rifle lines. The new Blaze autoloading rimfire rifle series will be available in a number of configurations and stock finishes, but all share a 16.5-inch barrel, blue metalwork, a synthetic stock—and all are fed from 10- or 25-round detachable magazines.

A variant on the Blaze action is the AK-47. A dead ringer for the original, this rifle offers the same action, magazines, and barrel lengths as the AK-47. The Blaze version also comes with an adjustable fiber-optic rear sight and the distinctive AK raised front sight.

The new Mossberg Patriot bolt-action series are classically styled hunting rifles. Some models feature fluted 22-inch barrels, other utilize plain barrels. The rifles are fed from a detachable box magazine that holds three magnum rounds and four standard-caliber rounds.



Part of Mossberg's big rollout of new rimfire, hunting, and tactical products for 2015 are (top to bottom) the Blaze rimfire, Patriot scoped Deer Thug, MVP Bipod, and Blaze AK-47.

Two new model series also join the target and tactical line. The MVP LC Bolt Action Target Rifle is available in 5.56mm NATO/223 Rem. and in 7.62mm/308 Win. The MVP bolt-action design accepts and feeds from standard MSR-style magazines. The 5.56mm features a 16.5-inch barrel (1:7 twist) while the 7.62 version sports an 18.5-inch barrel with a 1 in 10 twist. They are bedded in a lightweight aluminum target-rifle chassis that only makes contact with the receiver on the V-shaped bedding and recoil lug area.

Springfield Armory

One of the updated lines we liked was Springfield Armory's Marine Corps Operator, which has a new grip. You can see a video of the gun on our YouTube page. In the video, shooting legend Rob Leatham details the features and benefits of the updated Marine Corps Operator 45 ACP PX9110MLP, $1299 MSRP. It's a



Springfield Armory Marine Corps Operator

Loaded package with new G10 grips that have a very aggressive pattern to help you control the gun. The new grip pattern is basically a series of notches and grooves that help keep your fingers from sliding on it without being so abrasive, Leatham explains. The frame has an olive-drab Armory Kote finish.

Remington

The big news in Remington shotguns this year is the introduction of the new V3 gas-operated 12-gauge semi-auto. The new V3 handles both 2¾- and 3-inch shells using the compact SASG2 Gas System. This gas system places the gas ports directly in front of the receiver; this not only provides a self-cleaning action, but it changes forend design to produce a central, between-the-hands balance point that Remington claims promotes more instinctive point-and-swing characteristics. A light-contour ventilated rib barrel, with twin bead sights, further optimizes swing characteristics. All models are 12-gauge, use Rem. Choke 2 interchangeable choke tubes, and feature a 14¼-inch length of pull. The V3 will be available in the following configurations: The V3 Field Sport 12/28 RC VT SYN-BLK ($895) features a black synthetic field stock, a 3-round magazine capacity, and a 28-inch barrel. The V3 Field Sport 12/26 RC VT SYN-BLK ($895) is the same gun with a 26-inch barrel. The V3 Field Sport 12/28 RC VT SYN-BLK ($995) offers the Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades finish on the receiver and stock. The V3 Field Sport 12/26 RC VT SYN RT APG ($995) features a 26-inch barrel with a Realtree APG finish on the stock and receiver. The V3 Field Sport RC VT ($995) is available with a satin-finish walnut stock in 26- and 28-inch barrels.



Remington V3 12-Gauge Semi-Auto

The Remington Model 700 Muzzleloader reinvents the front loader. Built on the Remington 700 bolt-action, the inline can use up to 200 grains of powder to increase the range as well as the accuracy. With a 250-grain projectile, it can clock 2,400 fps, making it a legitimate 300-yard deer rifle. MSRPs start at $949.

Ruger

The new Ruger SR1911 Lightweight Commander-Style pistol, $899, is an aluminum-frame version of the popular SR1911 Commander-Style pistol. This new two-tone model features a black-anodized-aluminum frame with a satin-stainless finish on the slide, and it weighs 7 ounces less than the all stainless-steel version. It comes factory equipped with an integrated, polished titanium feed ramp and features hardwood grip panels for concealed carry, as well as front-strap serrations for improved grip. Ruger says the titanium feed ramp will improve reliability and durability over other materials. The SR1911 Lightweight Commander-Style pistol features a 4.25-inch barrel and weighs 29.3 ounces with an empty magazine. It ships with two 7-round magazines, a bushing wrench, cable locking device, and a soft case.

The Ruger Gunsite Scout Rifle will now be chambered for 5.56 NATO, with a hybrid chamber to accurately shoot both 5.56mm and 223 Rem. Additional features include a 16.1-inch cold-hammer-forged medium-contour barrel with a 1:8 twist. A Ruger flash suppressor is included, and it can be removed to attach other barrel-threaded accessories.



Ruger SR1911 Lightweight Commander

The Ruger American Rifle series will now be available in true left-hand actions in the following calibers: 223 Rem., 22-250 Rem., 243 Win., 7mm-08 Rem., 270 Win., 308 Win., and 30/06 Sprg. The Ruger American Ranch Rifle will now be available in 5.56 NATO/.223 Rem. and 300 BLK.

Savage Arms

A pair of new quick-handling but modestly priced over/under shotguns and four new 20-gauge pump actions make their appearance this year under the Stevens banner. The Stevens 555 ($692) over/under is available in 12 and 20 gauge. Both guns are chambered for 3-inch shells and feature a Turkish walnut stock, a single selective mechanical trigger, shell extractors, a tang-mounted safety, and chrome-lined barrels threaded for choke tubes.

The Stevens 320 pump-action series has quickly built a reputation for solid and affordable performance in a 12 gauge. For 2015, Stevens adds four new 20-gauge models to the series. All offer the same features as their 12-gauge counterparts, including dual-slide bars, a rotary bolt, synthetic stock, and a 5-round tubular magazine capacity. The 320 Field Grade ($235) features a 26-inch vent-ribbed barrel and standard field stock. The 320 Security Ghost Ring



Stevens 320

($260) offers the same features, but is equipped with a Ghost Ring sight.

The recently introduced Savage AXIS bolt-action rifle now comes in a heavy-barrel varmint version. The new AXIS Heavy Barrel ($386) features the same composite stock, pillar bedding, 4-round detachable magazine, sling-swivel studs front and rear, and button-rifled barrel of the standard AXIS line, but adds a 22-inch heavy contour barrel. Another addition to the AXIS line for 2015 is the AXIS II XP scoped-rifle series.

Savage created a new class of rimfire rifles with the B.MAG series. Built specifically for the 17 Winchester Super Magnum (which produces 3,000 fps from a rimfire cartridge), Savage added features normally reserved for centerfire rifles. This year Savage adds to that product line with two new versions, the B.MAG Stainless Heavy Barrel ($408) and the B.MAG Gray Laminate Thumbhole Stock ($566).

Smith & Wesson

The new M&P22 Compact Pistol ($389) is chambered for 22 LR and is 15 percent smaller than the full-size 9mm/.40-caliber M&Ps. It features a 10-round magazine capacity (it ships with two 10-round magazines), ambidextrous manual safety, and reversible magazine release. The trigger is factory set at 5.8 pounds. A Picatinny dust-cover rail accommodates accessory lights or lasers. The 3.65-inch barrel is threaded to accommodate suppressors and is shipped with a threaded protective muzzle cap. The barrel material is carbon steel with an aluminum-alloy slide and a polymer frame. Sights are a white-dot front and a two-white-dot rear that is adjustable for windage and elevation. Overall length is 6.65 inches. Empty weight is 15.03 ounces.



S&W M&P22 Compact Pistol

From the Smith & Wesson Performance Shop, this year will see a new series of ported M&P pistols designed for competition use. The series includes 9mm and 40 S&W pistols in barrel lengths of 4.25 and 5 inches.

All include ported barrels and slides to reduce recoil and rise. Additional features include a user-adjustable trigger stop, three palm-swell grips with a textured backstrap to allow users to custom-fit the pistol to their hand, a Performance Center sear that produces a 4.5-pound trigger pull with a fast reset, and removable mounting brackets that allow shooters to install a variety of popular competition red-dot sights.

Weatherby

A new over/under and additions to the pump and semi-auto shotgun lines highlight Weatherby's new 2015 offerings. The Orion I over/under ($1,099) uses the proven Orion low-profile steel receiver with a 12-gauge 3-inch chamber, features a walnut stock, and comes with a 26- or 28-inch lightweight, chrome-lined, vented barrel. Other features include a brass bead front sight and Weatherby IMC chokes in IC, M, and F.

The new SA-08 Waterfowler ($799) is a lightweight (6.5 pounds) synthetic-stocked semi-auto in 12-gauge fully covered in Realtree Max-5 camo. It is offered with 26- or 28-inch barrels, and IMC choke tubes (IC, M, and F) are included. The SA-08 Kryptek ($699) is a 20-gauge semi-auto designed for younger shooters. It has a 12.5-inch length of pull, a 24-inch vent-rib barrel with a brass bead front sight, and the supplied choke tubes are IC, M, and F. The SA-08 Volt ($699) is the same shotgun with a bright-green spatter paint finish. Each weighs a trim 5.75 pounds.

In the pump-action line, the PA-08 Synthetic Compact ($399) offers a synthetic stock and a 12.5-inch length of pull for younger shooters. It is chambered for 20 gauge and has a 22-inch vent-rib barrel and brass bead front sight. It ships with IC, M, and F choke tubes. The PA-08 Waterfowler ($429) is a pump-action chambered for 12 gauge that is offered with 26- or 28-inch vent-rib barrels.



Weatherby Orion



Weatherby PA-08

The SA-08 Turkey ($799) is a semi-auto available in 12 or 20 gauge with a synthetic stock covered in Realtree Xtra green camo. The 22-inch barrel features a vent rib with a fiber-optic front sight; a Picatinny rail mount is included for mounting optics. It ships with one XF choke tube.

The Vanguard Series 2 Volt Compact ($749) features an injection-molded synthetic stock in bright-green splatter paint with a length of pull that's adjustable from 12.5 to 13.625 inches. Metalwork is matte blue, and the barrel is a 20-inch No. 1 contour. The two-stage trigger is adjustable to 2.5 pounds, and the rifle comes with a three-position safety. The Vanguard Series 2 Saratoga ($749) features the same trigger and safety matte blue metalwork. But the synthetic stock has an American flag pattern finish. The Vanguard Series 2 Kryptek ($749) is the same gun with a Kryptek Highlander Reduced finish on a synthetic stock.

The Mark V Arroyo RC ($2,800 to $3,000) features the same stock/bedding plate with a KUIV Vias camo pattern and a dark tan Cerakote finish on the metalwork.

Winchester Repeating Arms

For 2015, Winchester Repeating Arms will introduce the innovative new XPR bolt-action rifle. The new XPR will feature the proven M.O.A. Trigger System, an adjustable three-lever trigger preset from the factory at a crisp 3.5-pound pull with no perceptible overtravel. The XPR receiver is constructed of precision-machined chromoly steel barstock.

— *continued from page 31*



Winchester XPR

The full-diameter bolt body creates a more rigid component and is coated with nickel Teflon for smooth operation. A short 60-degree lift offers fast bolt operation.

A button-rifled chromoly steel barrel with a recessed target crown is free-floated in the stock to eliminate pressure points. The XPR will be offered in 270 Win. and 30/06 with a 24-inch barrel and in 300 Win. Mag. and 338 Win. Mag. with a 26-inch barrel. SRP: $540.

The Model 94 Short Rifle will now be offered in 450 Marlin with a 20-inch barrel. SRP: $1,230. A new Model 70 Ultimate Shadow Hunter SS model will also be introduced. It features a lightweight synthetic stock in the new Mossy Oak Break-up Country camo pattern. Available in most popular short-action and long-action calibers. SRP: $1,100 to $1,140.

Winchester Repeating Arms will now offer its SXP pump shotgun in 20-gauge models for 2015. A SXP Field 20-gauge and SXP Field Compact 20-gauge will feature a satin-finished stock and forearm, an alloy receiver in black-matte finish, and an Inflex Technology recoil pad ($430).

The new SXP Black Shadow in 20 gauge ($400) will feature the synthetic stock and forearm with textured gripping surfaces with black-matte finish.

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

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- Lightweight 45 ACP Revolvers: The S&W Model 325PD and the S&W Performance Center Model 625-10 both feature scandium alloy N-frames, alloy barrel shrouds, steel barrels and titanium cylinders.
- Commander Shoot-Out: Honoring a request from the reader, we test the Colt XSE Commander and the new Remington R1 Commander for quality, accuracy, and reliability — and value.
- AK-47 Accuracy: This rifle doesn't have the best reputation for making small groups on paper. But could it have more to do with the ammo? We find out.
- 308 Battle Rifle Shoot Out: Two full-size 30-caliber battle rifles square off. The PTR 91 GI Model and the Century International Arms C 91 are similar rifles, but there is a large difference in price.
- Gauging the 20 for Home Defense: We look at the 20-gauge shotgun on its own merits.

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