GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

$5.95 September 2015/Vol. XXVII, No. 9



NEW 380 ACP PISTOLS

Browning's 1911-380 and Kimber's Micro Carry put two good ideas together: The 1911's handling and the 380 ACP's soft-shooting nature. But only one is a true pocket pistol.

— Page 6



TACTICAL 20 GAUGES

We pitted LSI's Escort Gladius semi-auto versus a stalwart Remington 870 pump, both with sub-gauge chambers. Outcome: Less felt recoil and better handling than many 12 gauges we've tested.

— Page 12



COLLECTIBLE 22 MAGS

Both the K-frame S&W Model 48-2 and Colt's Trooper MK III were good shooters, but one had better balance and was more accurate. **— Page 16**



SPECIAL REPORT

When we took a look at a long rifle with a long history, we found a very well built 30-40 Krag. **— Page 21**





SPRINGFIELD SHOWDOWN

Range Officer or Loaded Target? Tough choice in 9mms. **— Page 25**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● READER SERVICE: 24 ● SHORT SHOTS: 31 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

GUN NEWS



Todd Woodard

Kudos to Contributing Editor Robert A. Sadowski for his new book, *Shooter's Bible Guide to Tactical Firearms*, which will help new and experienced shooters make smart equipment purchases that range from rifles and optics to ammunition and gear. He's also the author of the *Shooter's Bible Guide to Combat Handguns* and the *Shooter's Bible Guide to Firearms Assembly, Disassembly, and Cleaning*, some of which are available through Gun-Tests.com.

Sadowski said, "Long-range shooting in the United States is as old as this country. Shooters have always had a fascination with shooting at distance, whether they are plinkers, competitive shooters, or hunters. The ability to place rifle bullets in the same hole of a target or kill an animal quickly is a goal to which we all aspire. In recent years, the interest in tactical precision rifles has increased, with many factory and custom rifle makers producing rifles that can easily outperform the ability of many shooters."



This Shooter's Bible guide has instructions on shooting techniques, positions, and drills; advice on maintaining a precision rifle; and a detailed products section showcasing rifles from all across the market.

Taurus Agrees to $30 Million Settlement. Also on Gun-Tests.com, we put up a story that reviewed the legal documents behind a settlement by gun maker Forjas Taurus SA, which has agreed to settle a $30 million class-action suit with plaintiffs who claim that some Taurus handgun safeties, even when engaged, may allow the gun to fire if it is dropped.

After reviewing court documents in *Carter v. Forjas Taurus SA et al.* in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, a federal judge has given preliminary approval to a settlement negotiated the lawsuit brought against Taurus International. According to court documents, the plaintiffs alleged a faulty design in a number of pistols make them likely to discharge when dropped, even with the manual safety engaged, as well as allow them to be fired with the safety lever in the Safe position.

The affected pistols are: PT-111 Millennium, PT-132 Millennium, PT-138 Millennium, PT-140 Millennium, PT-145 Millennium, PT-745 Millennium, PT-609, PT-640, and the PT-24/7. The settlement doesn't include Taurus Millennium G2 model pistols, according to the settlement terms.

The court did not decide in favor of the plaintiff, Chris Carter, a deputy for the Scott County, Iowa, sheriff's department, or Taurus. They recently filed a joint motion asking for preliminary approval of the class action settlement in the Florida federal court. U.S. District Judge Patricia Seitz gave her approval of the settlement on July 31.

While Taurus denies any wrongdoing, the company has agreed to pay

— continued on page 31

GUN TESTS®
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

Editor.....W. Todd Woodard
Sr. Technical Editor.....Ray Ordorica
Managing Editor..... Tracey Taylor
Contributing Editors...R.K. Campbell
Roger Eckstine
Austin Miller
Robert Sadowski
David Tannahill
Ralph Winingham
Firearms Coordinators ..... Sy Ent
Kevin Winkle
Texas Custom Firearms
Social Media Editor ..... Cara Blake

TO CONTACT THE STAFF:
GunTestsEditor@icloud.com

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. Copyright © 2015, AG Media. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part is strictly prohibited. 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.

ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:
www.Gun-Tests.com
Click "Contact Us"
Or call toll free (800) 829-9084

BACK ISSUES:
Call (800) 571-1555

More On Scopes and Rifles

A reader has extensive experience with older Bausch & Lomb optics, which he shares with us. Another reader shoots more than 300 rifles a year for clients, and he's learned some stuff.

Re "338 Win. Mag. Bolt-Action Duo: Henriksen Versus Winchester," July 2015

As an old Rochester, New York boy (left when Hillary was elected senator), I can expand on Ray Ordorica's comments on B&L scopes and mounts. I have owned 50-plus of them.

The BalVar 8a you used is a fine scope, but in my experience, it has one major failing versus the original BalVar 8. When you change power in the 8a, you are rotating the whole ocular assembly. If you do it a lot, slop will develop in the assembly, and the point of impact will change at different magnifications. The original model had a ring that changed just the power. It was far better, as my BalVar 6-24 will attest.

Also, I don't like the B&L plunger mount. Once it wears a bit, it will not hold zero. The B&L (also Kuharsky Bros.) mounts were much better, but still butt ugly. If you want sleek and rugged with a no-adjustment scope, there are at least two better solutions: a Bueller Micro Dial mount, which are still around; and an S&K mount, which has windage in both bases. You set elevation with shims, which is not as hard as you might think. I mounted a BalTur (post and crosshair) on an early M70 458 using this method. It never lost zero, although you had to shoot it off a standing bench (God bless the Brits!).

Rethroating the Model 70 Winchester for 300-grain bullets might have made sense in Elmer's day, but bullets have come a very long way since then. Barnes factory ammo pushes a 225-grain TTSX out @2800 fps and shoots flatter than minute-of-elk to 300 yards, and will kill any elk that walks within that ethical range limitation.

Going to all that expense to fix a M70 was, in my honest opinion, a waste of time — mainly due to the 338 Win. Mag. cartridge for big game. My Browning A-Bolt is one of four SHOT Show specials commissioned by Mossy Oak, and it is chambered in 375 H&H with a 26-inch barrel. It will push a Barnes 235-grain TSX @3000 fps, and it shoots as flat as a 180-grain bullet in a 30-06. It is far nicer to shoot than any 338, especially the horrible 340 Weatherby.



This is Larry's BalVar 6-24 on a 300 H&H–chambered Winchester Model 70 Bull Gun that went to Camp Perry twice.

Elsewhere in this issue, why anyone would want a snubby 45 ACP is beyond me. My S&W 329 is almost as light, packs a lot more punch, and once you get a fat revolver, the longer barrel is immaterial insofar as concealment goes.

Also, why did you review AR

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.

triggers most of us have never heard of? You missed: Geissle, Timney, Rock River, Wilson, CMC, and probably the best of all, the PACT Gold trigger?

Keep up the good work. I really enjoy your publication. **— Larry**

Thank you, Larry, for shedding some light on the delightful old B&L scopes. I had suspicions about the plunger mount. I wonder how much one has to use the power adjustment to cause significant wear. My two scopes show no shifting, with the scope solidly bedded when I put sideways pressure on the ocular and turn it. I have seen the Kuharsky mounts, but not the others you mentioned.

About bullet progress, in 1991 I was testing Randy Brooks' (Barnes Bullets owner) new 300, 350, and 400-grain X Bullets in my 458 in Alaska for him, and reported several problems: one, a slight problem of petal separation; and two, they desperately needed a crimp for the 458. Randy, a good friend, listened, which is one reason why they have crimping grooves today.

Sorry, but no 225-grain bullet has the sectional density of a 300-grain bullet in the same caliber. For extreme-range shooting of any sort, the heavy bullets fly much flatter. Keith proved that many years ago and I have verified it several times myself. That's an awesome scope on a fine bull gun. — Ray Ordorica

Which Laser?

I need an opinion: Would you use the Viridian R5-G42 or the LaserMax Guide Rod laser? Please advise. Keep up the excellent work! I was going to purchase the S&W Bodyguard or the Ruger LCP until I read your test report. I will look forward to hearing from you. **— David**



Well, we didn't test them head to head, so I can't speak to the LaserMax. The Viridian was easy to install and use. Super bright. It's an A, and there aren't many items graded A+. — Todd Woodard

Re "Upgrading Ruger's Commander," June 2015

Ray Ordorica made several modifications to a Ruger SR1911 Lightweight. The article mentions checkering the front grip strap in a list of changes, but says nothing more about it. I'm wondering how that turned out. My own gunsmith is hesitant to checker my Ruger SR1911 Lightweight because he is worried that the aluminum frame is too soft. Thanks for a great publication packed with information. **— Stan**



The checkering turned out fine. See the nearby photo. I checkered my CCO a few years ago, but wanted coarser checkering on the Ruger to match the width of the existing serrations. It doesn't look pretty because of the poor job I did with the aluminum blacking compound, but these checkered front straps help greatly in keeping your hand in place on recoil. The aluminum is plenty hard enough. — Ray Ordorica

Serial Numbers for Guns

Would it be possible for you to include a list of serial numbers on the website for guns when available? It is very time consuming to hunt and peck over the entire internet for individual manufacturers' serial numbers to look up each gun that a reader may be interested in. If you could provide the serial numbers, it would greatly reduce the time it takes readers to research specific guns. **— Arlie**



You mean stock numbers or catalog numbers, not serial numbers. But you are 100% right, and when we can find them, we try to include them, though it's a more recent addition to our naming conventions — within the last few years — so some of the online records may not have the data in their listings. Sometimes, however, it's not easy to find the stock numbers, such as with the Kimber Micro Carry Advocate (shown above) in this issue. Some makers just don't put the numbers out in the open where we can get them, or the numbers change. — tw

In My Experience

I enjoy your magazine, and I do learn from your information about guns and other products that I don't have time to test myself. I have a pistol and rifle range in Dayton, Tennessee, between Chattanooga and Knoxville. I shoot in excess of 300 rifles a year for other people, some because I have mounted a scope for them, but many because they want to make sure their guns are ready for hunting season. Most people don't understand that not all rifles are accurate — in fact most

do not have what I call "Pie Plate Accuracy."

When you test three different rifles of the same caliber and rate the rifles by predetermined standards, your readers may get the impression that if they buy that model they will get the same performance. Past experience says we have a problem. Most gun manufacturers build guns that don't get shot until the buyer takes it home and shoots it. Most gun manufacturers will tell you that a 2-inch group at 100 yards is acceptable, and for the most part the buyer will accept that. I don't, and the people who come to my range usually leave with a better understanding about rifle accuracy, marksmanship, and the limits that they impose on themselves with a gun that, at best, will shoot an 8-inch group at 400 yards.

Unlike your rifle tests that compare and rate one model in one caliber, I rate gun manufacturers. I can tell you from experience which manufacturers make accurate guns, ones that will provide the accuracy to make a one-shot kill on a whitetail deer at 400 yards or hit a hog in the ear at 100 yards.

That's not to say that all the guns that one company makes have poor accuracy; even the worst companies make some tack drivers. But would you spend your money on a gun made by a company that has a track record of producing 20% of their guns that will shoot minute-of-angle groups or with a company that produces 70% of their guns that shoot that well? Some rifle companies even have a minute-of-angle guarantee.

Marksmanship is a perishable skill. One must practice regularly to maintain the skill to attempt longer shots. Why would anyone want to take a gun into the field that, off a bench under ideal conditions, can do no better than Pie Plate Accuracy?

You may also want to point out that some rifles and some ammunition don't get along. Your readers may want to consider shooting what their gun likes instead of what they like. I have read your bullet tests where you shoot different bullets into different media. It was great information, but what if my rifle won't hit a pie plate with the best choice, or the second or third choice? If you take two rifles off the assembly line back to back, identical, same caliber, same everything, one likes the bullet that you rated number one, but the other rifle likes the only bullet that failed all of your tests. Bullet placement is more important than bullet size or construction. Shoot what the gun likes, if you can find it.

I will try to write you about rifle scopes in the future. I test them all from inexpensive to really expensive and I will try to give some experience that may be helpful.

— Bill Newman
The Ridge
TheRidgeShooting.com

Hey Bill: We appreciate your insights. We try to describe the elements of good gun accuracy in our tests (lock up tightness, frame-to-slide fit, bedding and pillar use on rifles, free-floating barrels, good triggers, and so on), and a lot of the readership asks important questions after the reviews that show they understand the important aspects of gun performance. But, ultimately, every gun is a one-off, and the only sample that matters is the gun in your hands.

A lot of the mail I get is from people who ask for reviews before they buy a particular gun, because they trust us to point out accuracy and function problems they are likely to encounter with a model. If we can make a reader aware of a potential issue, then he or she can buy with eyes wide open and address those issues before they spend their hard-earned money. I look forward to visiting further. —tw

Print Subscribers: How to Get Web Access to the Archives

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 other than your name, but we may need to contact you about material in your letter.* **GT**

Hot New Pistols from Kimber And Browning Shoot It Out

Browning's 1911-380 and Kimber's Micro Carry put two good ideas together: The 1911's handling and the 380 ACP's soft-shooting nature. But only one is a true pocket pistol.

John Browning's 1911 handgun design has been produced the world over in some of the finest factories in the world, as well as some copies beat out on a rock in Afghanistan. Some 1911s have been downsized — in what they shoot — to a variety of cartridges smaller than 45 ACP, such as 40 S&W, 38 Super, 9mm Luger, and 22 LR, to name just a few. The handguns reviewed here, the Browning 1911-380 and the Kimber Micro Carry Advocate, are likewise downsized in cartridge to the 380 ACP (aka the 9mm Kurz, or 9mm Short), and they are physically downsized as well. This has been done before in the form of several variations by Colt, the Mustang being among the best known. Older raters fondly remember the Star 380 ACP handguns that were available in both service-size and micro-size variants. Going further back, the Colt 1903 Pocket Hammerless that preceded the 1911 was a compact 32 ACP pistol that saw action all over the world. It was also chambered for the 380 ACP in later variations. The popularity of the 380 ACP round is certainly a result of its easy shooting characteristics, made even easier in the larger variants with bigger grips and more weight.

The 1911 market is huge, as is the 380 ACP market, but there are only a relative handful of firearms that combine the ergonomics of the former and the soft recoil of the latter. In particular, Browning and Kimber are not willing



The Browning 1911-380, right, isn't a large gun, except when it is compared to the Kimber Advocate.





Top: We are inserting the Kimber into the pocket. Bottom: The Kimber pistol stays well hidden and doesn't print. While carrying the pistol cocked and locked in the pocket, the safety never rode off its indent. But our shooters reached a consensus that each would probably carry the pistol in the pocket hammer down and in a well-made pocket holster.



Each handgun proved reliable but there were important differences in accuracy and handling.

to leave the 380 ACP market to Colt and SIG, so they have attempted to marry the big gun's controls with the pocket pistol's shootability in their respective handguns, the 1911-380 and the Micro Carry Advocate. Each rides on the coattails of the full-size 1911; however, only the Browning is a true miniaturized 1911. We call the Kimber "1911-like."

In this test, our shooters found out that both sidearms work well, and that the Kimber is a very good pocket pistol to boot. The Browning will not fit in an average pocket, and that makes its place in the scheme of personal-defense carry guns problematic. Here are more of our insights on these two handguns:

Browning Black Label 1911-380 051904492, $620

This was the listed price one of Browning's preferred online dealers, AbleAmmo.com, advertised. GunsAmerica.com had it selling for $599. BassPro.com had it in stock for $600. TallTalesOutdoors.com had it listed for $560, but the 1911-380 wasn't in stock.

The 1911-380 is advertised as an 85%-size 1911. The dimensions bear this out. The advantage of the 1911-380, Browning claims, is that despite its small size, the pistol is functionally a true 1911. Like many full-size 1911 handguns, the 1911-380 features extended controls for comfort and rapid manipulation. The first thing our shooters noticed is that the pistol fit our hands well, in particular, the frame doesn't cramp average-sized hands. The grip safety, a true beavertail safety with memory bump, is a nice update to the standard 1911-type grip safety. In fact, we think that the grip safety of the 1911-380 might be more useful in preventing hammer bite on such a small handgun than with the larger 45-caliber versions. A raised section at the bottom of the grip safety is intended to provide better hand fit. Those using a thumbs-forward grip may not always depress the grip safety properly, as this grip style sometimes raises the palm off of

BROWNING BLACK LABEL 1911-380 051904492
380 ACP, $620
GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Browning is a reliable handgun with familiar operation. However, it was less accurate than the smaller Kimber. The pistol has appeal and many will find its size and handling attractive. However, the Browning isn't a pocket pistol.





Note the texture of the grip-safety bump and the profiles of the ambidextrous safety levers (arrows).



The all-steel magazine gets high marks. The Browning ate everything we fed it without a complaint.

Action	Locked Breech; Single Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	7.5 in.
Overall Height	4.7 in.
Maximum Width	1.07 in.
Weight Unloaded	17.4 oz.
Weight Loaded	19.5 oz.
Barrel	4.25 in. Long, Steel, Target Crown
Magazine	8-Rd. Single Stack
Slide	Steel
Frame	Black Composite
Frame Front Strap Height	2.25 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.0 in.
Grips	Synthetic
Grip Thickness (max)	1.06 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.6 in.
Sights	Fixed; Combat-Style Rear & Front Post
Sight Radius	5.4 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	5.5 lbs., Alloy, Skeletonized
Trigger Span Single Action	2.25 in.
Safeties	Ambidextrous Slide-Lock Lever; Beavertail Grip, Magazine
Warranty	5 years, parts and workmanship
Case Supplied	Yes; ABS
Website	Browning.com
Telephone	(800) 333-3288
Made In/By	Utah, Browning Arms



Frontstrap checkering aids in getting a good grip on the Browning.



The locking lugs of the 1911-380 show precision machining. The guide rod is plastic.



The 1911-380 field-strips (below) just like a real 1911, which, arguably, it is.



the grip safety. This raised section is an advantage for most shooters, we've found. Even so, some of the shooters missed activating the grip safety during the firing tests, despite this bump. A grip safety properly disengages the trigger at about half of the grip safety's travel into the frame. We think the Browning disengaged a bit past the halfway mark, and the shooter must acclimate to this idiosyncrasy.

We were pleased to see an ambidextrous slide-lock safety. This safety offers true right- or left-hand combat capability. The left-handed shooter must have the ambidextrous safety, while those wishing to use the handgun with either hand also need this safety.

The frame was a lightweight material that Browning calls "black composite," and it seemed to us to be a mix of aluminum and polymer. The front of the grip frame was molded checkering, which we liked a lot. The mainspring housing was designed to give the shooter a good grip during shooting. The magazine used a steel body. Capacity was eight rounds. A single magazine was supplied with the pistol, which we thought was ridiculous. Two with the gun is reasonable, but three is a realistic minimum for all-round utility.

At more than 4 inches in length, the barrel was long for a compact 380 ACP pistol. But as you can see in the chronograph tables, the Browning delivered higher velocities than the Kimber. The advantage was 66 fps with the Fiocchi loading and 84 fps with the Hornady load, which we feel is significant. We will take all of the energy we can get in a short-9mm handgun. The muzzle was finished with a recessed barrel crown.

The action is described as locked breech. We cannot disagree; however, it isn't a locked breech identical to the full-size 1911. The ramped barrel doesn't use a swinging link, but rather the angled camming surfaces of the Browning Hi-Power. When the pistol fires, the slide recoils but a fraction before continuing without the barrel, making it, perhaps, the shortest

KIMBER MICRO CARRY ADVOCATE BROWN
380 ACP $796
GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Kimber was well finished and demonstrated excellent reliability and accuracy. It also fit in a pocket.





Above: The Kimber's night sights would be expensive to add to a handgun. Note serrations on the rear sight to reduce glare. Below: We liked the Kimber's all-metal guide rod better than the plastic one on the Browning.





All who handled the Kimber commented on the good texturing on and fit of the grips.



The Kimber features bushingless lockup. This is all to the good in a handgun this size. Fitting was tight.

Action	Locked Breech Single Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	5.6 in.
Overall Height	4.0 in.
Maximum Width	1.1 in.
Weight Unloaded	13.8 oz.
Weight Loaded	16.0 oz.
Barrel	2.75 in., Stainless Steel 1:16 LH Twist; Ramped
Magazine	6 Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Aluminum w/Carry Melt Treatment
Frame Front Strap Height	1.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.25 in.
Grips	G10, Brown
Grip Thickness (max)	1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.62 in.
Sights	3-Dot Tritium
Sight Radius	3.9 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	8.75 lbs., Solid Alum.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.1 in.
Safety	Frame-Mounted Lever
Warranty	1 year
Telephone	(888) 243-4522
Website	KimberAmerica.com
Made In/By	NY, Kimber USA



Compared to the Colt Defender, bottom, which is a 3-inch-barrel 45 ACP, the Kimber is tiny.



380 ACP RANGE DATA

Fiocchi XTP Hollowpoint 90-gr. 380XTP25	Browning 1911-380	Kimber Micro Carry Advocate
Average Velocity	924 fps	858 fps
Muzzle Energy	170 ft.-lbs.	147 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.1 in	2.75 in.
Average Group	3.5 in.	3.0 in.

Black Hills Factory New 100-gr. Full Metal Jacket	Browning 1911-380	Kimber Micro Carry Advocate
Average Velocity	856 fps	790 fps
Muzzle Energy	162 ft.-lbs.	138 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.8 in.	2.9 in.
Average Group	4.1 in.	3.3 in.

Hornady Critical Defense 90-gr. FTX 90080	Browning 1911-380	Kimber Micro Carry Advocate
Average Velocity	985 fps	901 fps
Muzzle Energy	193 ft.-lbs.	162 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	3.5 in.	2.5 in.
Average Group	3.75 in.	2.8 in.

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

Ammo sources: Black Hills 100-grain FMJ ($13.54, 20 rounds, Midwayusa.com.), Fiocchi 90-grain XTP ($12.19, 25 rounds, CheaperThanDirt.com), and Hornady 90-grain Critical Defense ($16.80, 25 rounds, Cheaperthandirt.com).





Fit and finish on the Kimber were excellent; the barrel in particular showed a tight fit — perhaps helpful to its accuracy.





We liked the Kimber's front sight has a tritium insert. Note the dovetail fit.

locked breech ever. However, the slide was easy to rack — unlike a blowback action that demands a heavier spring — and the barrel was easily removable, although tighter in the slide than most 1911s. The recoil spring guide was a piece of white plastic. The recoil spring plug was also plastic. The pistol field-strips as a standard, full-size 1911 does.

Before we began shooting, we lubricated the pistol along the bearing surfaces and around the barrel hood, as well as the barrel portion that contacts the barrel bushing. During dry-fire familiarization, the trigger reset announced itself with a pronounced click. The trigger action was smooth, breaking at 6 pounds even. Reset was rapid.

We began our familiarization with Black Hills Ammunition 100-grain FMJ loads, which was slowed somewhat because we only had one magazine. As advertised, it held eight rounds. With the slide locked to the rear, we inserted the magazine and released the slide to feed the first cartridge. The pistol came out of the box running. During the firing of 60 rounds of the Black Hills FMJ load, there were no failures to feed, chamber, fire or eject. The pistol proved fast on target. Drawn from a Barber Leatherworks Chameleon, the Browning came on target quickly and responded well to a trained shooter. For a pistol this size, the combat-style sights offered an adequate sight picture and proved capable during accuracy testing.

We fired combat groups at 5 and 7 yards with good results. It wasn't difficult to keep a full magazine in the K-zone of a man-sized target at 15 yards. In combat firing at close range, our shooters noted the Browning was easy to control and comfortable. The pistol gets high marks in that regard. However, on at least three occasions, the raters jerked a shot wide on the target because the grip safety wasn't fully depressed.

Firing for accuracy off the benchrest, we used three different 380 ACP loads. These included the Black Hills 100-grain FMJs, Fiocchi

90-grain XTPs, and the Hornady 90-grain Critical Defense loads. Groups were fired at 15 yards rather than the customary 25 yards due to the small size of the handguns. The Browning delivered adequate accuracy, but the pistol was difficult to handle consistently due to its small size and small sights. Groups ranged from 3 to 4.5 inches, with the smallest groups fired coming after we were familiarized with the Browning's firing characteristics. The best group of the day was a 3.1-inch effort with the Fiocchi 90-grain XTP. Clearly, the Browning was accurate enough for home defense or personal defense at limited range, but in our tests, the smaller Kimber pistol was more accurate in bench rest fire.



All raters felt the Browning sights offered a good sight picture on this handgun and did not snag.



The front barrel bushing is all 1911 on the Browning. That's a target crown on the barrel.



The Browning's steel slide was similar to a full-size 1911.

Our Team Said: The Browning 1911-380 is a pistol that will appeal to the 1911 fan as a novelty, a neat 85% scale 1911. For those interested in its suitability for personal defense, the Browning fits in the same niche as the Walther PP, the Astra A60, and the Beretta 84, among others. It is an easy handgun to use well and was accurate enough. However, the 1911-380 is nearly as heavy as many compact 9mm handguns and was not considered to be a pocket gun by our shooters.



The Browning is a bit large for pocket carry, in our estimation. The Browning butt is visible in the same pocket that concealed the Kimber. These are work pants with large pockets.



The Browning is a comfortable handgun to fire. But the initial combat groups with the Browning were not impressive. We had to work on the grip and deal with a sometimes-difficult trigger.





When our shooters were firing and moving quickly, the Browning gave good results. We found the 1911-380 handles much like a full-size 1911.

Kimber Micro Carry Advocate Brown 380 ACP, $700

OsageCountyGuns.com listed this at $699. GunsInternational.com had it for $700. Cabelas.com listed it for $800. The Kimber is a much different handgun than the Browning, and not solely as a result of dimension. The pistol isn't as close to the 1911 template as the Browning. Close enough for intuitive handling if you are familiar with the 1911, but the details differ greatly. These differences may be a deal breaker in either direction. If you do not like the 1911 grip safety, the Kimber is your choice.

Elsewhere, the Kimber we tested was well made and finished, with a blue-steel slide and anodized-aluminum frame. The checkered wooden grips were very attractive. The Kimber was supplied in a padded case with a spare 7-round magazine with finger extension, but the magazine we used for our measurements was a 6-round design.

The sights were good combat sights equal to the Browning. The Kimber, however, featured three-dot sights with tritium inserts, a big advantage on a personal defense pistol. In common with the Browning, the Kimber uses the internal extractor common to other 1911 handguns. However, the Kimber does not use a grip safety. In this design, with a pistol bordering on tiny, a grip safety would have been difficult to incorporate into the design. As we discovered, the grip safety wasn't ideal when used in the Browning. The frame of the Kimber extended in a generous beavertail tang that aided in comfortable firing. The hammer of the Kimber rides deeper in the slide than the Browning, which will be a good thing if shooters opt to carry the pistol with the hammer down while in the pocket.

The pistol disassembled much the same as any other 1911, except that the pistol featured a metal one-piece guide rod and wound recoil spring. The Kimber also uses the angled camming surfaces of the Browning type instead of the 1911 swinging link. When the pistol is disassembled, there is a loaded spring under the



The Kimber proved completely reliable with all loadings. Kimber's Micro Advocate is a handsome handgun and a formidable pocket pistol.



The Kimber is fast on the draw. Our shooters found out that the Kimber isn't difficult to control despite its small size.



Some attention is needed when reassembling the Kimber. The extra spring maintains pressure on the slide stop. It gave no trouble.

slide stop to maintain pressure on the stop. Reassembly isn't difficult, but attention must be paid to the small wire ejector, which must be depressed.

There was no magazine safety, which the Browning does incorporate. Few American-designed pistols use the magazine safety, and no service pistol that we are aware of in use in this country still uses a magazine safety. The Kimber featured a positive firing pin block. The slide-lock safety, well, isn't a slide-lock safety. The thumb safety does not lock the slide. This allows loading the pistol with the safety on. On this subject, we found the safety to be a positive. While carrying the pistol cocked and locked in the pocket, the safety never rode off its indent. Just the same, the raters reached a consensus that each would probably carry the pistol in the pocket hammer down. In a proper, well-made pocket holster, cocked and locked is viable, and every pocket pistol should be carried in a holster. The safety may be applied with the hammer down, which doesn't have much value. Do not move the safely to the on position with the slide off the frame, or the safety may fall out of the frame.



The Kimber's thumb safety (arrow) proved positive in operation. Indent was tight.

A feature of the Kimber we did not like was the heavy trigger. The trigger operated with minimal take-up followed by firm consistent pressure, but it broke at 8.75 pounds when the company claims it should be set to 7.0 pounds. Just the same, we did great shooting with the pistol.

To get started, we lubricated the Kimber and then loaded both magazines with Black Hills Ammunition 100-grain ball ammo. We concentrated on the magazine without the finger rest during control testing, as this is the magazine we think most shooters will be carrying in the pistol to get the smallest size possible.

The advantage in control, if any, was slight with the larger magazine. By the same token, the extra height did not seem to adversely affect concealed carry. The Kimber proved tractable and gave good results in short-range drills. Despite the shorter grip and sight radius, the Kimber demonstrated groups superior to the Browning's. When firing off the bench for best accuracy, the heavy trigger was more of a challenge than in combat shooting. All raters commented that the pistol was as easy to fire quickly and to keep on target as the Browning, probably because of the light recoil of the 380 ACP cartridge. There is usually a penalty in felt recoil when moving to a small frame, as is very true when considering the 40 S&W or 45 ACP compact pistols. With the 380, each pistol was easy to use well; the larger gun just kicked even less. When firing the first few groups, we registered a number of 4- and 5-inch groups at 15 yards, definitely in the pocket-pistol class of not-so-hot accuracy. Finally, after some effort, we were able to print a number of groups in the 3-inch class. The best group came with the Hornady 90-grain FTX, which shot a 2.5-inch cluster at 15 yards.

We reran our results, because it was counter-intuitive that the larger gun wasn't as accurate as the smaller gun. We fired the remaining JHP loads and 40 rounds of the Black Hills ball in each handgun on the combat course, running the guns in tandem rather than in separate testing. The Kimber outpaced the Browning again.

Our Team Said: The Browning offered another round in magazine capacity, an ambidextrous safety, and greater energy due to higher velocity. However, the Kimber exhibited groups at least as good as the Browning in combat firing and better accuracy off the bench. The Kimber costs more dollars, somewhere between $80 and $100, probably, depending on where you shop. Part of the cost is seen in the Advocate's superior fit and finish, tritium sights, and a spare magazine. For us, the Kimber was the better pistol, and it would have earned an A grade except for its too-heavy trigger.

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

Tactical 20 Gauges: LSI's Escort Gladius vs. Remington 870 Pump

Less felt recoil and better handling ability are the main selling points of two shotguns we put through their paces, with our team preferring the Model 870 pump over the LSI semi-auto.

There is a comfort zone for shooters of all shapes and sizes, even when handling a tactical shotgun designed to stop a threat quick, fast, and in a hurry. The recoil produced by short-barreled, multi-round shotguns is often a major element in the purchasing decision – with quite a few potential home- and self-defense shotgun owners choosing to downsize from a 12 gauge to a 20 gauge to lessen the guns' shoulder shock for all members of a family.

At the suggestion of a reader, we ventured into the world of sub-gauge self-defense shotguns by pitting a new entry into the market, a Legacy International Escort Gladius Magnum semi-automatic 20 gauge, against the veteran Remington Model 870 pump action that is offered in a tactical 20 gauge with an adjustable stock. While 20-gauge tactical shotguns can be harder to find than their larger 12-gauge cousins, these two models seem to be readily available. The Legacy Escort Gladius Magnum carries a price tag of $579 while the Remington Model 870 sells for $529, making them a fairly close match up on price.

Proper and effective close-quarters action with a tactical shotgun in real life is a combination of smooth handling and reliability, plus a heavy dose of confidence that the firearm will do its job in the right way at the right time. The Hollywood versions of never-empty short-barrel shotguns blasting a bad guy so hard that the impact sends him flying through a window are simply unrealistic. Anyone who believes the Hollywood depictions might be accurate should look up Newton's Third Law of Motion: "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction."

That said, felt recoil from the short shotguns can be quite unpleasant, particularly when using heavy loads of buckshot or slugs. Anticipating this potential shoulder punch can cause a shooter to flinch or move off target. Because of the often-uncomfortable shoulder shock from touching off a 12-gauge load, some self-defense authorities recommend shooters consider switching to sub-gauge shotguns as their self-defense tool of choice. For close range shots normally encountered in the self-defense situations, dropping to a 20 has little or no



The Legacy Sports International Escort Gladius Magnum semi-auto, left, was very closely matched on heft and handling ability by the Remington 870 pump.

reduction in stopping power, while there can be a reduction in recoil.

As Carl W., one of our readers, brought to our attention, Legacy International has just released a new tactical shotgun that offers close-quarter shooters a sub-gauge option at a moderate price. The Escort Gladius Magnum semi-automatic 20 gauge features many of the bells and whistles favored by tactical devotees and is available for an MSRP of $579.

To put the new semiautomatic to the test, we matched it against a veteran pump-action shotgun, the Remington Model 870, which is one of the most popular versions of tactical shotguns in the field today. Our Remington 20-gauge pump also featured an adjustable stock and extended magazine, retailing for $529.

While high demand and low supply limited our selection of 20-gauge ammunition (we found empty spaces on gun store shelves for many 20-gauge rounds), we were able to scrounge up a few boxes for our range work. Our test rounds included Winchester Super X 2.75-inch loads of No. 3 Buckshot (20 pellets) with an average muzzle velocity of 1,200 fps; Winchester Double X 3-inch turkey loads of 1⅝ ounces of No. 4 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,200 fps; and for the slug work, we used Fusion 2.75-inch, ⅞-ounce Sabot Slugs with an average muzzle velocity of 1,450 fps. For our function fire and clay target testing, we used both Federal 2.75-inch Game Loads with ⅞ ounce of No. 7½ shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,210 fps and Winchester Xpert 2.75-inch Game/Target loads with ¾ ounces of No. 6 steel shot moving at an average of 1,325 fps.

Patterning tests with the buckshot and birdshot loads were conducted on Birchwood Casey Eze-Scorer 23-inch by 35-inch Bad Guy targets set at no more than 10 paces; and slug comparison tests were conducted on Birchwood Casey Shoot-N-C 12-inch by 18-inch Eze-Scorer BC Transitional targets set at 20 yards.

In addition, we also conducted

LEGACY ESCORT GLADIUS MAGNUM NO. HAD20A01801T33H 20 GAUGE, $580

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

Attractive and functional tactical features, plus good handling characteristics, earned this sub-gauge shotgun high marks in our testing. A lighter trigger pull would have been nice, and we were slightly disappointed in its shot placement on targets.



Action Type	Semi-Automatic	Buttstock Length of Pull	14.25 in.
Chamber Size	3 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Comb	Adjustable
Overall Length	40.0 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Heel	Adjustable
Capacity	5+1	Forearm	Black Synthetic
Weight (Unloaded)	7.5 lbs.	Forearm Length	12 in.
Barrel Length	18 in.	Front Sight	Fiber Optic, Elevation Adjustable
Barrel	Matte Black Steel; w/Muzzle Brake	Rear Sight	Adjustable Ghost Ring
		Trigger Pull Weight	8 lbs.
Receiver	Matte Black	Safety	Crossbolt
Choke	Cylinder, Fixed	Warranty	5 Year
Buttstock	Black Synthetic w/Pistol Grip Black-Rubber Buttpad; Built-in Shell Holders	Telephone	(800) 553-4229
		Website	LegacySports.com
		Made In	Turkey by Hatsan Arms Co.



The adjustable comb and two-round holder in the stock were nice touches that added to the LSI's functionality.



An extra-large bolt handle and easily accessible safety and magazine cutoff were considered pluses by our shooters.



This shotgun's lengthy forearm provided a solid, steady hold and allowed for the addition of even more bells and whistles.





The adjustable Ghost Ring rear sight bracketed by two green optic bars, shown at left and inset, provided for fast target acquisition. They were paired with a red-optic front sight.

field tests with a recent introduction into the optics market — a LaserLyte Center Mass laser —as part of our review of the two shotguns. The laser sight easily installed on the test shotguns and featured both a single green dot (better in daylight) and a Center Mass ring of eight green laser dots around a center dot (designed for low-light conditions). The CM-K15B model we were provided is a hybrid aluminum-and-nylon military-style unit that retails for $220.

Here are our findings:

Legacy Sports International Escort Gladius Magnum Semi-Automatic HAD20A01801T33H 20 Gauge, $580

The price as listed was from the GalleryofGuns.com Gun Genie. Introduced in 2014, this 20-gauge semiautomatic brings style and class to the sub-gauge tactical shotgun arena. We liked the looks and feel of the shotgun out of the box, noting it has the heft of its 12-gauge cousin with an empty weight of 7.5 pounds.

Here are some of the bells and whistles that find favor among the tactical crowd: adjustable comb, full pistol grip on the stock, add-on forearm pistol grip, extended-length forearm complete with Picatinny rails, muzzle brake, and adjustable Ghost Ring sight. The shotgun even features a built-in holder for two extra rounds in the stock and a magazine cut off to convert the shotgun to a single shot.

With an overall length of 40 inches and the add-on features contributing to its slightly higher weight than the Remington, we found the Escort to be one of the most pleasurable tactical shotguns we have shot in some time. Target acquisition with the Ghost Ring sights (red bar front and two chartreuse bars bracketing the rear ring) was quick and easy.

As noted earlier, we also utilized the LaserLyte Center Mass laser sight for some of our range time, finding that the sight installation and adjustment was very quick and easy. Shot placement was slightly better with the laser sight than with the Ghost Ring, and the eight-dot ring really improved target acquisition in low-light conditions.

With the slugs fired at targets set downrange at 20 yards, we were able to consistently place five rounds in a

REMINGTON MODEL 870 NO. 81180 20 GAUGE, $530

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The popular work horse of tactical shotguns lived up to its reputation. Good trigger, good handling and good patterning performance combined for its good ranking.



Action Type	Pump	Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.25 in.
Chamber Size	2.75 to 3 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.5 in.
Overall Length	36.75 to 39.75 in. Adjustable	Forearm	Black Synthetic
Capacity	7+1	Forearm Length	9 in.
Weight (Unloaded)	7 lbs.	Front Sight	Brass Bead
Barrel Length	18 in.	Rear Sight	None
Barrel	Matte Black	Trigger Pull Weight	4.0 lbs.
Receiver	Matte Black	Warranty	2 Years
Choke	Cylinder, Fixed	Telephone	(816) 243-9700
Buttstock	Black Synthetic with Pistol Grip	Website	Remington.com
Buttstock Length of Pull	12.25 to 15 in. Adjustable	Made In	U.S.A.

Adjustable to a length of pull ranging from 36.75 inches to 39.75 inches, the fit was right for all members of our test team. The comb was a little low and hard on the cheek — slightly adding to the felt recoil.



A solid, basic design that has served shooters well for more than six decades, the only fault we could find in the Remington's receiver was the safety was a little harder to find because of the design of the tactical stock.



The 9-inch checkered grip helped make the slide action slick and a pleasure to shoot.





A textured, full pistol grip on the 870's stock had a good feel and helped provide a solid shooting platform during rapid fire.



Our female shooters found the handling ability and function features of both of the test shotguns to be equal. This is the Escort Gladius Magnum.

4-inch circle, although the Escort seemed to consistently hit just a little low. Slightly low patterns were also encountered with both the turkey loads and the No. 6 steel shot. However, the shotgun's fixed cylinder choke kept all the pellets within a 16-inch pattern at 10 paces – providing what we would consider an effective assailant-stopping group.

There were no malfunctions with any of the loads, including during the function-fire tests. The Escort handled five rounds fired as fast as we could pull the trigger.

With the caveat that some of our more experienced shooters are pretty set in their ways, several of our test members preferred handling and shooting the Escort without the add-on pistol grip attached to the forearm. They found the shotgun easier to control and fire with the standard forearm hold, particularly with its heavy 8-pound trigger pull.

Some members of our test group also expressed a little concern about putting a semi-automatic into play during a self-defense situation, pointing out that some semis have been known to jam at the wrong time. We found the Escort worked every time and did its job when the shooter did his or her job.

Our Team Said: We liked the looks and heft of this tactical shotgun, and we gave it extra points for its tactical features and Ghost Ring sights that allowed for very quick and accurate target acquisition. A slightly heavy trigger pull and slightly larger patterning performance were the only minor faults noted in our evaluation.

Remington Model 870 Pump No. 81180 20 Gauge, $430

This was the price at BudsGunShop.com. MSRP was $100 more. A favorite tool of law-enforcement agencies and many individual tactical shooters, this 20-gauge version of a solid shooter is your basic, get-it-done self-defense firearm. The Remington Model 870 20 gauge with tactical features and a quickly adjustable stock just feels good to handle. Quick to bring onto targets and a reliable workhorse, the Remington may lack some bells and whistles but makes up for that with solid, dependable performance.

The Model 870 pump-action shotgun was introduced in 1949 as a streamlined, rugged, reliable and inexpensive shooting tool. This 20-gauge version we tested lived up to that reputation. With its additional features of an adjustable stock and extended magazine, the 20-gauge tactical shotgun provided the same simple and effective service as its predecessors. There is a reason that the Model 870, which was Remington's answer to the legendary Winchester Model 12 pump, has become one of the best-selling shotguns in history.

Slightly lighter than the Escort, tipping the scales at 7 pounds, the Remington had good balance for a short-barreled shotgun with an overall length of 36.75 to 39.75 inches, depending upon stock adjustment. All of our test members were able to settle into a snug, comfortable fit with the Remington, although the hard synthetic comb was just slightly uncomfortable when touching off the heavier loads.

We really appreciated the trigger touch off of just 4 pounds – among the lowest we have ever encountered in tactical shotguns. The 9-inch-long forearm was back to the basics in features, but provided a firm, comfortable hold when combined with the textured full pistol grip on the stock. Shucking rounds through this slide action was slick with no functioning problems or hang ups.

A single brass bead as a front sight on the 18-inch barrel did not cause any target acquisition problems; and when the LaserLyte laser sight was installed by use of the Tri-Rail Mount on the barrel, putting pellets and slugs on paper was nicely enhanced.

Producing the same group of 4 inches with the slug rounds, the Remington hits were all center mass – right where we were aiming. We could touch off the five rounds a little quicker with the LaserLyte green dot as it found the target, but the groups remained consistent at 4 inches. With the No. 3 buckshot and No. 6 steel shot, we consistently achieved solid 14-inch groups right on the center mass where we were aiming with the Remington. The firearm seemed to fall right back on target as each fired round was ejected and a new one was fed into the chamber.

We noted that the safety at the back of the trigger guard was slightly harder to reach than the safety on the Escort. The tactical stock's pistol grip extended just a little farther out around the safety. It was deemed a minor problem, but was worth noting.

During the rapid-fire tests, the Remington performed flawlessly. Five shots fired in rapid succession were touched off in a smooth and effective manner time after time.

Our Team Said: We were pleased with the very solid basic functioning, comfort and handling of this pump – it does its predecessors proud. Trigger touch off and patterning performance were both very good. About the only downside we could find was slightly higher felt recoil from the heavy loads.

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

A Pair of Collectible Long-Barrel 22 Magnums from S&W, Colt

Both the K-frame S&W Model 48-2 and Colt Trooper MK III were shooters, but one had better balance and was more accurate. We would choose one to shoot and the other to collect (maybe).

In 1959 Winchester unveiled its latest brainchild, the 22 WMR cartridge. The debut of the new rimfire excited shooters since it pushed a 40-grain bullet at a velocity of 2,000 fps. A similarly size 40-grain bullet from a 22 LR at the time had a velocity of about 1,200 fps. With more speed also came good accuracy. For larger varmints like fox, raccoon, and coyote, the 22 WMR was a good choice if used at short to medium range. Plus the 22 WMR had minimal recoil and cartridges cost less than any 22 centerfire ammo.

A few months after the cartridge debuted, Smith & Wesson had a revolver chambered for it and named it the Model 48. The transition to the new round was easy for S&W since they were already manufacturing the K-22 Masterpiece chambered in 22 Long Rifle. Colt was a little behind the curve, but it did chamber the round in fewer than 1,000 of the Officer's Model Match revolvers and a very few Colt Diamondback revolvers. It wasn't until the debut of the Trooper MK III that Colt took the cartridge more seriously.

Many of our testers have experience with the round in rifles, revolvers, derringers and semi-automatic pistols. We wanted to determine what would be a good double-action revolver platform for the 22 WMR, and so we acquired two previously untested firearms, a S&W Model 48-2 and a Colt Trooper MK III, both with long 8-inch barrels. The S&W graded about 90-85% and the Colt 95-90%. These were two lovely blued revolvers with wood grips. They had obviously not been fired often, but we still went through our battery of pre-range testing of the cylinder-to-frame headspace, cylinder-to-barrel tolerance and the alignment of the chambers with the bore, using gauges from Brownells.com. All checked out fine, with the Model 48-2 cylinder gap measuring 0.002 inch and the Trooper MK III gap measuring 0.003 inch. There was no wiggle nor play in either cylinder, and they locked up tight. The screw heads on both guns also looked like they have not seen a screwdriver since the factory. These were sharp-looking revolvers in excellent condition. In doing research prior to the purchase, we collected prices for these firearms on the used market, and those price ranges are reflected in what dollar amounts we cite below:

Smith & Wesson Model 48-2
22 WMR, $900-$1300

In 1959 when the first Model 48s came off the production line in Massachusetts, they were available in three barrels lengths: 4, 6, and 8.375 inches. Since that introduction, there have been at least four model variants.



Top: The Model 48 uses S&W's K-frame, which was built to handle the 38 Special cartridge. The frame allows for a slimmer, more compact revolver compared to S&W's N-frames of the time. Our Model 48-2 featured a smooth magna-style wood grip with S&W medallion inset. Our shooters liked this grip better than the Colt's. The 8-inch-barrel Colt we tested had spectacular bluing a checkered walnut grip with a gold Colt medallion inset. On the top of the barrel was a pinned ramped front sight painted green for better visibility. Sights on both guns suffered when used on black or dark-surface targets.

The model variant is indicated by a dash and number, and this was a "-2" variant that began production in 1961, changing the cylinder stop and removing the fourth screw at the front of the trigger guard. The 48-2 variants were produced until 1967 when another design change was made. Today, under the Classic Series, S&W reproduces the Model 48 in 4- and 6-inch models. The Model 648 is the modern stainless variant.

The Model 48 uses S&W's K-frame, which was one of S&W's most important revolver innovations built specifically to handle the 38 Special cartridge. Since being introduced, the K-frame has been used in the Model 10, 17, and 19, chambered in 38 Special, 22 LR, and 357 Magnum, respectively. The frame allows for a slimmer revolver compared to S&W's N-frames of the time.

Our Model 48-2 featured a smooth magna-style wood grip with S&W medallion inset that gave the revolver a full feel in hand without feeling bulky. All testers liked this grip better than the Colt's grip. Under the wood grip we found a flat main spring and a squared butt. Most, if not all, S&W revolvers built today have a round butt to reduce manufacturing costs. The rear backstrap was serrated for a surer grip. The finish was blued, and even for its age, was still nice with bluing only missing from some sharp edges. The barrel was a whopping 8.375 inches long, and even with the long barrel, the S&W had excellent balance, actually making it feel like the barrel was shorter. The top of the barrel was serrated, and the front sight consisted of a serrated ramp to a Patridge sight.

The rear was fully adjustable with a plain black notch. The rear of the sight was serrated to reduce sun glare. We liked the sights a lot, even though we have become accustomed to 3-dot and fiber-optic front sights. In the black of the target, the sights could get lost. Under the barrel was a partial lug that allowed the front of the ejector rod to lock into place.

The full spur hammer was checkered nicely and offered plenty

SMITH & WESSON MODEL 48-2 22 WMR, $900-$1300

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Model 48-2 offered a better grip, trigger, and overall balance plus at lower cost. We would prefer one with a 6-inch barrel, but this was a shooter.





Crane-to-frame lock up was tight. This was a quality piece.



The cylinder-to-barrel gap gauged at 0.002 inch.



That long barrel looks hard to handle, but it really wasn't. Still, we'd prefer a 6-inch barrel.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	13.62 in.
Overall Height	5.7 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.4 in.
Weight Unloaded	42.85 oz.
Weight Loaded	47.85 oz.
Cylinder Gap	0.002 in.
Barrel Length	8.37 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Finish	Blued Steel
Cylinder Material/Finish	Blued Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	4.3 in.
Grips	Smooth Wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.5 in.
Front Sight	Patridge
Rear Sight	Adjustable
Sight Radius	8.37 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.1 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	10.2 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.8 in.
Trigger Span Double Action	3.5 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	Lifetime for Original Owner
Telephone	(800) 331-0852
Website	Smith-Wesson.com
Made In	Springfield, MA



Under the grip panel we found a square-butt frame. Most current S&W revolvers have a round butt to reduce manufacturing costs. The rear backstrap was serrated for a surer grip.

of grip. And while the cylinder latch was the full-size old style, we liked the extra traction it provided, and it worked with precision. The ejector pushed empty cases free from the cylinder. The chambers in the cylinder were recessed so the base of the 22 WMR cartridges were flush with the rear of the cylinder. The wide trigger was designed for target



The grip of the S&W (right) was longer and thinner than the shorter and stockier Colt (left).



The frames and mainsprings on the S&W (bottom) and Colt (top) show the different design philosophies between the two manufacturers.

22 WMR RANGE DATA

CCI Maxi Mag 40-gr. TMJ	S&W Model 48-2	Colt Trooper MK III
Average Velocity	1379 fps	1183 fps
Muzzle Energy	168 ft.-lbs.	124 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.7 in.	1.2 in.
Average Group	0.8 in.	1.3 in.
Federal Game-Shok 50-gr. JHP	**S&W Model 48-2**	**Colt Trooper MK III**
Average Velocity	1028 fps	1026 fps
Muzzle Energy	117 ft.-lbs.	117 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.4 in.	0.9 in.
Average Group	0.6 in.	1.1 in.
Remington Premier 33-gr. V-Max	**S&W Model 48-2**	**Colt Trooper MK III**
Average Velocity	1436 fps	1564 fps
Muzzle Energy	151 ft.-lbs.	179 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.9 in.	0.7 in.
Average Group	1.1 in.	1.2 in.

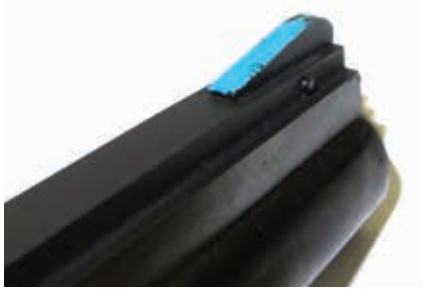
To collect accuracy data, we fired six-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 15 yards with open sights. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph set 15 feet from the muzzle.



This isn't a terrible group, but it is not what we expected from a well-made revolver like the Colt Trooper MK III.



Federal Game-Shok 50-grain jacketed hollowpoints consistently grouped under half an inch at 15 yards in the 48-2.



The Colt's previous owner painted the front sight.



The S&W's front Patridge sight was sharp and well defined.

work with fine serrations.

Getting to the trigger, we found a lot more to like in this S&W. The trigger pull seemed less in double action than what the scale measured at 10.2 pounds. We felt minimal stacking in double action and thought it was smooth. In single action, the trigger was fairly crisp, and we credit the trigger and grip to the small groups we were able to squeeze out of the S&W. With Federal Game-Shok 50-grain jacketed hollowpoints, we were able to get under half an inch for a 6-shot group at 15 yards. The Colt was a different story.

We were reminded that loading 22 WMR cartridges requires the rounds to be fully seated in the chamber. There is no gravity assist as with centerfire rounds. In use, the 48-2 was a fine revolver though testers thought the barrel was too long, making it a dedicated plinker as well as a small-game hunter. A full-size across-the-chest shoulder holster would be required to tote this revolver around with ease. Testers would more than likely opt for a 6-inch variant over the 8-inch variant. Though the longer barrel was helpful at longer distances — due to the longer sight radius and more barrel time to generate more velocity — we still would want a more manageably sized revolver. We doubt we would mount a scope or red dot on this revolver since we might reduce the value.

Our Team Said: The 48-2 was better balanced and more accurate than the Colt and it was less expensive than the Colt. A shorter 6-inch barrel would be more convenient than the 8.375-inch barrel.

Colt Trooper MK III 22 WMR, $900-$1500

The Colt Trooper MK III was introduced in 1969 to reduce the production cost of the previous Trooper model. Built on a new J-frame, the MK III was a modern step forward for Colt, using a transfer bar mechanism and coil main spring in lieu of the traditional flat-style spring. On introduction, it was offered in 4-, 6-, and 8-inch barrel variants in 22 LR, 22 WMR, 38 Special, and 357

COLT TROOPER MK III 22 WMR, $900-$1500

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

The Trooper MK III looked good and was well made, but the barrel put the revolver off balance and its sights were not refined. Trigger stacking was noticeable.





Lock up was tight; the MK III was well made.



The cylinder-to-barrel gap of the Colt measured .003 inch.



From this view, it seems obvious that the barrel of the Colt was designed for a 38 Special but drilled and reamed to 0.224 inch to accommodate the 22 WMR.

Action	Double Action
Overall Length	13.3 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width (Cylinder)	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	47.8 oz.
Weight Loaded	52.8 oz.
Cylinder Gap	0.003 in.
Barrel Length	8.0 in.
Capacity	6
Frame Material/Finish	Blued Steel
Cylinder Material/Finish	Blued Steel
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	9.3 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	12.2 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, CT



The MK III coiled mainspring was a departure for Colt. This was the likely culprit in the stacking we felt in the trigger.



Muzzle to muzzle shows the difference in barrel diameter on the Colt (left). That extra weight threw off the balance.



The flared butt of the S&W (left) felt better in hand than the Colt (right).



Left: The Colt's sight picture was okay, but it was not as refined as the S&W's, right. The sight picture on the 48-2 was clear, though a dot, bead, or fiber-optic would make the front sight stand out more.



Left: The Colt's rear adjustable sight was more user friendly because it was marked. The S&W's rear sight at right was plain and was lost at times when we were firing at a black or even a fairly dark target.



The trigger on the Colt Trooper MK III, left, was smooth and felt comfortable, even during double-action fire. But we noticed stacking in its operation that we didn't like. The Smith's trigger, right, was wide and finely serrated — well suited for target work.

Magnum. This model was produced until 1982. The 8-inch-barrel variant we tested sported a deep-blue finish that was spectacular and a checkered walnut grip with a gold Colt medallion inset. The steel frame was squared off, and the rear backstrap was serrated for a more positive grip. Removing the grips exposed the coiled main spring, which was a departure from Colt's flat springs. On the top side of the barrel was a pinned ramped front sight. A previous owner painted the ramp green to better see the sight. Sights on both guns suffered when used on a black or dark surface targets. Tester also felt the Colt's front sight was not as refined as the S&W's Patridge. The MK III's rear sight was fully adjustable and indicated to the shooter which way to turn the screw to increase or decrease elevation or windage. The S&W's rear sight did not have indicators. Under the barrel was a half lug that encased the ejector rod.

Like the S&W, the Colt's chambers were countersunk. It seemed more obvious with the Colt that these revolvers were re-engineered from a 38 Special/357 Magnum revolver down to a 22 rimfire since there was a lot of space between chambers, and the barrel of the Colt was designed for a 38 but drilled and reamed to 0.224 inch to accommodate the 22 WMR. This thicker barrel, combined with the 8-inch length, made the MK III muzzle heavy. Looking at the muzzle side by side, the S&W barrel looked like a skinny pencil compared to the stout barrel of the Colt. The grip was also an issue with some testers. It felt too short and too chunky compared to the S&W's grip. The small grip and muzzle heavy balance were not a good combination.

The cylinder latch worked positively and the ejector fully shucked empties. The cylinder locked into the frame confidently. The hammer spur offered plenty of traction to cock the revolver. The trigger was smooth and felt comfortable, but during the double-action pull, we experienced stacking — so much so some testers did not want to shoot the revolver in DA mode, as the stacking affected aiming. The S&W definitely had a better trigger in DA. In single action, the Colt trigger was better, but still not as nice as the S&W.

The trigger, sights, and grip showed in accuracy testing. We tried to get a group under an inch using a rest, but could not, even with the three different ammo types and bullet weights. We expected more from the Colt.

Our Team Said: From the outset it was clear there were major differences between these seemingly similar revolvers. In the hand, the Colt felt muzzle heavy. We also thought its sights were less refined, and the trigger was not up to snuff. Many felt the Colt had a place in completing a collection, but the cost did not justify the purchasing the revolver for plinking or small-game hunting.

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

Special thanks to Eastern Outfitters (EasternOutfitter.com) of Hampstead, North Carolina. **GT**

How About a Krag-Jorgensen?

When we took a look at a long rifle with a long history and a short military career, we found a very well built 30-40 Krag.

The Krag-Jorgensen rifle was invented by Capt. Ole Krag and Erik Jorgensen in Norway in the late 1800s. Denmark adopted the design first, in 1889, preceding Norway's acceptance of it in 1894. The Danes had it chambered for the 8x58R cartridge and used it until at least 1940. The first Norwegian cartridge for this rifle was identical to that which has become known as the 6.5x55 Swedish, but the proof-testing cartridges were of lower pressure than those used later in the history of the 6.5x55. Krag ammunition manufactured in this country is limited to about 40-42,000 psi, well within the rifle's capabilities.



The Krag gave us a pleasant workout with two types of moderate-pressure ammunition. We think any shooter would enjoy one of these rifles.

By 1890 every major power in the world had a bolt-action rifle for its military services except the United States. After deliberation over more than 50 entries, in 1892 the U.S. decided on the Norwegian Krag-Jorgensen, with a few modifications, as a replacement for the single-shot 1873 "trapdoor" Springfield with its 45-70 black-powder cartridge. According to Frank De Haas in *Bolt Action Rifles*, 3rd Edition (1995), as finally adopted and produced at Springfield Arsenal, the Krag fired a 200-grain round-nose bullet at a velocity of around 2000 fps. The Krag was used by the U.S. Army in the Spanish-American war of 1898, as was the old 1873 Springfield. The U.S. Navy used the Lee 6mm rifle in that conflict. The Krag rifle saw action in a few other conflicts in U.S. hands as well, but was quickly replaced by the 1903 Springfield 30-06. Although its military life with U.S. forces was short, it saw service up until at least WWII in other nations.

The Krag had its limitations. It could not be stripper-clip loaded, though the infantryman could top off the five-shot magazine without opening the bolt. Each cartridge should be inserted so the rim of the next one would be behind the preceding one, though the Krag's magazine lines them up perfectly all by itself as you close the box. In fact we were unable to intentionally foul the loading process. The Krag's ballistics were a good step behind those of the majority of other countries' rifles at the turn of the century. However, the rifles were well made and turned out to be mighty sturdy despite the so-called limitation of having only one bolt lug. We tested our sample with Remington 180-grain PSP Core-Lokt and with HSM (Montana) 165-grain soft-point boattails. Here's what we found.



The heart of the Krag is its magazine. The box held five rounds, and with one in the chamber and the cutoff activated, the shooter had five in instant reserve. We could not jam this magazine. The machining in this rifle was awesome.

Krag-Jorgensen 1898 Springfield 30-40 Krag, about $1500

From a brief look at Internet prices, a good Krag can be had for anywhere from $750 up to $2500 for rarer numbers. Better condition commands a higher price. We had the loan of a fine old Krag Model 1898 rifle with an excellent bore, lots of remaining bluing and fine wood, though the metalwork was showing signs of incipient



The arrow points to a cam-lock at the front of the rear sight. It's shown in the locked position. Loosen it and the entire sight pivots for windage adjustments.

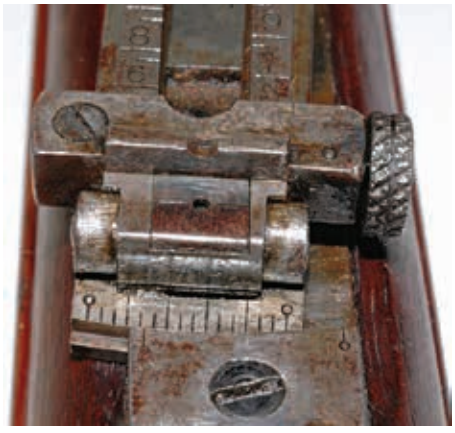


The ladder gives up to 2000 yards of precise aiming.



Left: With the lock lever loose, the sight can give the shooter about 5 feet of windage at 100 yards.





Left, the rear sight is centered. Note the small hole in the ladder, which is used with the ladder raised. The sights were small, but well made and gave an excellent sight picture. Right, each of the small windage marks gives about 4 inches of windage at 100 yards. Each long mark is a foot, and there are five long marks, for 5 feet of drift. This sight setting shown will give about 17 inches. We moved the sight half a notch each way, and got shots two inches to the right and then 2 inches to the left of center.

This little device holds the striker spring in place and delivers the blow to the primer. There was no investmen casting in the late 19th century.



To get the bolt back into the rifle, be sure the extractor (arrow) is pointing toward the right, as shown. Then just twist the bolt to the right — the extractor will pop back into place. This is a simple process, if you know about it.



rust and neglect here and there. The bore on our test sample was bright, there was no pitting, and the rifling was strong throughout. The faded cartouche on the stock showed a manufacturing date of 1901, difficult to read. The full-length stock was good walnut with some nice tiger figure on it, a few nicks and dings, but no major problems. The steel butt plate had a spring-loaded round door that still worked, but was getting rusty. Nothing was inside the hole in the stock. The various parts of the rifle were all there and were all in good working order.

We ran a few patches through the bore, but before we shot it we decided to take apart the bolt to clean off the old oil and check out how it was made. First we had to get the bolt out of the rifle. The method is to clear the rifle and withdraw the bolt as far as it'll go. Then lift up on the front tip of the extractor, which is on top of the bolt, and while lifting it, move the bolt handle a bit more open, or counterclockwise. The long extractor will come out of its race and swing toward the right as the bolt opens a bit more. To get the bolt back into the rifle, make sure the extractor rail is pointed toward the right side of the rifle as you lay the bolt into place. Then simply rotate the bolt handle toward the closed position and the extractor will pop back into place. This is a simple process, but if you don't know it you'll never get that bolt out.

Bolt disassembly is easy. Pull back on the striker and twist it left until the cocking piece snaps clear of the lug on the bolt body, and then the striker assembly can be withdrawn from the bolt body. To get the striker assembly apart, put a little pressure on the striker spring and shove the striker cap (the actual firing pin) to the side and take it off. Then all the parts come off easily. As with so many early rifles, the machining on this century-old Krag was mind-boggling. We can't even imagine how the bolt body was machined. The keeper for the firing-pin spring, which actually was the firing pin itself, was

KRAG 1898 SPRINGFIELD 30-40 KRAG, ~$1500

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

With its bulging box on one side and curved plate to guide the ammo on the other, the Krag is not a beautiful rifle on the outside. But it worked well in its day, and good examples still do today, with a fine inner beauty.



Overall Length	49.2 in.	Capacity	5+1
Barrel Length	30 in.	Action Finish	Blued
Sight Radius	24.2 in.	Action Type	Bolt
Overall Height	7.3 in.	Barrel Finish	Blued
Length of Pull	13.5 in.	Magazine Type	Box
Weight Unloaded	9.0 lbs.	Stock	Walnut
Weight Loaded, 6 rds. 200-grain.	9.35 lbs.	Trigger Pull Weight	4.8 lbs.
		Made In	U.S.A.

Our test sample had mighty nice wood on it, with some figure throughout. That lever on the action just in front of the trigger is the magazine cutoff, shown in the cutting-off position.





The Krag was the first smokeless-powder rifle adopted by the U.S. armed forces, in 1894. That curved lip on top of the magazine box is where you put your thumb to open the magazine. You can see where the '03 Springfield 30-06 got its striker shape.





Left: One of the slickest bolts we've experienced, the Krag's was also a showpiece of beautiful machining. Right: It was not difficult to get the bolt apart, but there was a trick getting it out of the rifle.



Yes, the Krag has only one locking lug, but they are by no means weak rifles. They just need care, and common sense. Note the nicely recessed head. To get the bolt out, you lift up on the front of the extractor and twist the bolt a little more.

a hollow chamber that tipped to the side to come off. As noted, takedown of the bolt was simple, but we used a big bench vise to help us put it back together. The padded vise held the bolt body while we shoved against a strong spring and rotated the cocking piece back into place.

The magazine cutoff is an odd feature. With it deployed (down), the bolt will not pick up the next round. That way the rifleman can keep feeding singles into the rifle with five rounds in reserve. An upward flick of the thumb releases the magazine cutoff. We had the nagging notion that the cutoff lever was backwards from how we'd have designed it. It just seemed wrong. Then we found out the action of the cutoff arm was apparently reversed from the original Norwegian design at the behest of some U.S. specification.

The rifle also had a Mauser-type wing safety, unmarked as to safe or fire positions. All the way to the right (clockwise) locked the bolt shut and the striker rearward. We found the trigger to be stiff but relatively clean. The long barrel gave a long sight radius, and the sight picture was excellent, we thought, though the blade and notch were on the small side. That rear sight had lots of charm to it. Releasing a serrated cam lever at its front allowed the entire sight to pivot for windage changes. We later found it to be right on the money when exactly centered.

Elevation was controlled by a locking wheel at the right side. Loosen it a quarter turn and you could then slide the follower up from 100 yards to 400 with the ladder down, and with it raised, up to 2000. There was a tiny hole for precise use at longer ranges, i.e., with the ladder up. We liked this setup better than the later spring-loaded, pinch-to-move elevators on similar sights. This one was easier to use and more precise. The front sight was a flat-topped blade with no protective ears. It was pinned into a slot in the inset front ramp.

Although the Krag is supposed to be cranky with non-round-nose

GUN TESTS
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

1. To Change Your Address

If you are moving, please attach your present mailing label to this form, and enter your new address here:

Name _____

Company _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

2. To Order/Renew

To order, or extend your current subscription, enter your name and address above, and check the subscription term you prefer:

__ One year: $49
__ Two years: $98
__ New subscriber
__ Renewal

These rates are good in U.S. and Canada only. For all other countries: 1 year $72 (air), 2 years $144 (air).

3. To Give a Gift Subscription

Enter your name and address above and your giftee's name and address below. The subscription rates stated above apply to gifts.

__ Send a One-Year Gift
__ Send a Two-Year Gift

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Return this coupon (or a photocopy) to:

GUN TESTS
P.O. Box 8535
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

bullets, both our relatively pointy test cartridges fed well enough. The rifle had modest recoil, and judging from our sample, the Krags were nicely balanced despite their long 30-inch barrels. However, that long barrel took a while to swing from here to there. Other than that, we found the handling of the Krag to be without reproach in just about every way. The bolt was mighty slick whether feeding, ejecting, or just sliding back and forth.

Ejection was straight up, and you had to work the bolt briskly to get the empty out of the rifle and out of the way. It took a knack to open the magazine box easily, just like it took a knack to get the bolt out of the rifle. The magazine held five rounds, and they moved in a clockwise circular pattern from the box to the feeding ramp.

Our first groups were with the 180-grain Remington ammo and were not great, around 3 inches, with (always) two very close and the third out there somewhere else. But with the HSM 165-grain ammo, groups averaged around 1.5 inches, which we thought was not at all bad for a century-old rifle. The 180- and 165-grain bullets struck at the same elevation. Everything about the rifle worked perfectly, though we noted a slight reluctance to feed the last round from the magazine, with both types of ammo.

We could not trace the cause, but it was quickly overcome with a slightly greater push on the bolt. The student of old shoulder artillery will have himself a field day examining this design, and if he has an example good enough and rewarding enough to shoot, he will find it to be lots of fun on the range.

Not many Krags have been sporterized, because restocking means cutting lots of wood away around the magazine. Many full-length rifles have been altered to look like the somewhat rarer carbines. Genuine carbines bring a premium, so be careful. There are serial numbers that tell the true story, and any collector or reference source can fill you in on the correct carbine number range. Only 5000 official 1898 carbines were produced, compared to about half a million total Krag production from 1894 to 1904. In the early 20th century many full-length rifles were cut into "NRA Carbines" for sale to members of that gun-owners' organization.

There were quite a few sub-species of the Krag, and they are beyond the scope of our report here, but there's lots of stuff out there for the fan to find for himself. There are also collectors' organizations. By the way, in Al Linden's wonderful book *Restocking a Rifle*, there is a photo of a Krag with a custom maple stock and suigi finish that will forever dispel the idea that the Krag is a homely rifle.

Our Team Said: We thoroughly enjoyed our outing with the Krag, and suspect any shooter will also like it. Reloaders are advised to keep the pressure down. If we owned this one, we'd find and reload round-nose bullets of 200- to 220-grain weights, just to keep ourselves as honest as is this old rifle.

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

30-40 KRAG RANGE DATA

Remington 180-gr. Core-Lokt PSP	**Krag Model 1898**
Average Velocity	2410 fps
Muzzle Energy	2320 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	3.6 in.

HSM165-gr. SPBT	**Krag Model 1898**
Average Velocity	2475 fps
Muzzle Energy	2240 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.7 in.

Velocity was recorded using an Oehler 35P chronograph with proof channel. The first screen was 10 feet from the muzzle. For accuracy, we fired three-shot groups at 100 yards from a machine rest.

Springfield 9mm 1911s: Loaded Versus Range Officer Showdown

Springfield Armory's Loaded Target and RO pistols are very similar in design and execution, and a lot of readers have asked us how to choose between them. One came out a nose ahead.

There are many good reasons for purchasing a 1911 in the non-traditional 9mm Luger cartridge. Compared to 45 ACP, 38 Super, and 10mm, 9mm Luger ammunition is less expensive and easy to come by. Also, the 9mm is only improved when fired from the 1911, with that platform's solid ergonomics, reliability, and distinctive appearance. In a 1911, the 9mm is easy to shoot well, despite a history in which 9mm target guns were seldom as accurate as a properly set up 45. As it turns out, the 9mm 1911 with modern ammunition is plenty accurate. Some shooters might also worry that 9mm 1911s might be less reliable, but we can only say that in our small sample of hundreds of rounds, two tested 1911 9mm handguns were reliable.

Where do such guns fit in? For one, the 9mm 1911 is a great target and competition handgun. Just as a cowboy-action shooter may choose a 38 Special SAA for economy and low recoil, an IDPA shooter may find the 9mm affords economical practice without creating waves in the arm from recoil. The self-defense shooter need not worry either, because with +P loads, the 9mm is no slouch in the wound-ballistics department.



In essence the pistols are identical in features. The Loaded Model in stainless simply had a couple of extras such as forward cocking serrations, a full-length guide rod, and ambidextrous safety. We'd buy either one and just shoot the heck out of it.





At the end of the day, what matters is the shooting. Our team found these 1911s chambered in 9mm Luger make for a very pleasurable shooting experience. Top is the Springfield Armory 1911 Range Officer PI9129LP, $704 actual retail, and bottom is the stainless Loaded Target PI9134LP 9mm Luger, $873. The RO was a skosh more accurate than the Loaded Target during this test.

We have had calls to choose between two closely matched stablemates from Springfield Armory, and both the Loaded Target PI9134LP and the Range Officer PI9129LP are traditional full-size 9mm pistols. This simply means that they are based upon the 45 ACP's frame. They are very similar to 38 Super pistols, save for a breech face of 0.384 versus 0.405 inch for the 38 Super. By changing a barrel and opening the breech face, the 9mm pistol may be converted to 38 Super. As you may imagine, converting a 38 Super to 9mm is a bit easier since the larger breechface usually works okay with both cartridges. (Exceptions: The Para USA LDA 9 and the Springfield EMP 9mm are 9mm pistols that are a bit smaller in dimension than the full-size Springfield pistols. They cannot be converted to the 38 Super.)

The full-size 9mm handguns are designed to fill a niche for those favoring the 9mm, or those simply wishing to own a lighter-kicking 1911 than one chambered in 45 ACP or 40 S&W.

The 9mm Range Officer has the same forged national match frame and slide as the Trophy Match and TRP 1911s. It gets the same precision fit as those more expensive pistols, Springfield says. Likewise, it uses the same match-grade stainless-steel barrel and bushing and is topped with a fully-adjustable rear target sight. This is a great help to us in adjusting point of aim to point of impact when we're shooting different bullet weights. It has a single-sided thumb safety.

The Loaded 9mm Stainless Steel has a polished finish on the flat surfaces and bead-blasted matte finish on the rounded areas. The 5-inch barrel is a match-grade stainless steel unit. The slide features slanted serrations on the front and rear, where the RO has only rear cuts. The mainspring housing is flat and includes the company's integral locking system, or I.L.S., which replaces the mainspring housing of the handgun. When engaged, the I.L.S. prevents the hammer from moving by locking the mainspring cap, making the gun inoperable. Elsewhere, the pistol has a lightweight Delta hammer and a beavertail grip safety with raised memory pad for positive engagement. The extended thumb safety is ambidextrous, and its long aluminum match-grade trigger separate it from the RO. The pistol is fitted with a two-piece full-length guide rod. The grips are held in place with Torx grip screws that look nice and distinguish it from the RO.

During the evaluation, both handguns were field stripped. Interestingly, the Range Officer slide easily slipped on the Loaded Model Frame. The Loaded Model slide, however, was too tight on the Range Officer frame to function. Since modern 1911 handguns are not disassembled and thrown into a barrel on Guadalcanal for cleaning, then assembled regardless of original set up, this is acceptable and also interesting. The Range Officer seemed to have the tighter barrel bushing lockup. The barrel was a tight fit overall. We were surprised

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY 1911 RANGE OFFICER PI9129LP 9MM LUGER, $704

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

This was an easy-shooting 9mm 1911 with first-rate fit, finish, and barrel-to-slide fit. The adjustable sights are excellent examples of the breed. This is a great gun, but we prefer the stainless Loaded Model for its ease of maintenance.

Action	Locked Breech Single-Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.3 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	40 oz.
Weight Loaded	44 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in. Long; 1:16 Twist Stainless Steel
Recoil System	GI Style
Magazine	(2) 9-Rd. Stainless Steel
Slide	Forged Carbon Steel, Parkerized, Rear Serrations
Frame	Forged Carbon Steel, Parkerized
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Cross Cannon Double Diamond Checkered Rosewood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Rear Sight	Windage & Elevation Adjustable
Front Sight	Post, Dovetailed
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	7.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.4 in.
Safety	Slide Lock, Grip
Warranty	Lifetime
Made In	Geneseo, Ill.
Made By	Springfield Armory
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	Springfield-Armory.com



Some will prefer the Range Officer based solely on its somber appearance. You could do worse.



The pistol comes with useful accessories and packaging.



Left: This is a 15-yard group from the Range Officer during sighting in. We were able to adjust the sights to get the piece dead on target in just a few clicks. Inset: Sight picture was excellent.

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY LOADED TARGET PI9134LP
9MM LUGER, $873

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Function of the Loaded Model was flawless. The pistol features stainless construction, always a plus in a tactical handgun. The forward cocking serrations and ambidextrous safety are helpful for tactical shooting. The Loaded pistol's nice trigger made the deal for us.

Action	Locked Breech, Single-Action Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.3 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	40 oz.
Weight Loaded	44 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in. Long, 1:16 Twist; Match-Grade Stainless Steel; Supported Ramp
Recoil System	2-Piece National Match, Full-Length Guide Rod
Magazines	(2) 9-Rd. Stainless Steel
Slide	Forged Stainless Steel; w/Matte Rounds; Polished Flats; Front & Rear Serrations
Frame	Forged Stainless Steel; w/Matte Rounds; Polished Flats
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Cross Cannon Double Diamond Checkered Rosewood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.5 in.
Rear Sight	Elevation & Windage Adjustable
Front Sight	Post, Dovetailed
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.4 in.
Safety	Slide Lock, Grip
Warranty	Lifetime
Made In	Geneseo, Ill.
Made By	Springfield Armory
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	Springfield-Armory.com





Here's the accessory package.



Take note of powder marks on the Springfield Loaded Target Model's barrel. The crown appears to be a perfect cut. The LT has a full-length guide rod, which is sometimes criticized for making field stripping more complex.



The full-lugged barrel with a feed ramp is the ideal recipe for strength and accuracy. We stuffed many types of ammunition into the pistol and it never failed.

that the barrel bushing was only finger tight with the Range Officer.

But what matters is the shooting, and what our team found is that these 1911s chambered in 9mm Luger make for a very pleasurable shooting experience. An accurate 1911 in 9mm is even more enjoyable. Here's more of what we learned about them when firing them side by side:

Springfield Armory 1911 Range Officer PI9129LP 9mm Luger, $704

The price shown is what this SKU listed for at BudsGunShop.com. The Springfield Range Officer, in our opinion, is among the best buys in a 1911 handgun. We established this in previous testing of the 45 ACP model. The pistol is designed to offer target-grade accuracy at an entry-level price. Compared to the Loaded Target at $873 from the same retailer, the savings are significant. You would be able to purchase a lot of 9mm ball for practice with the money saved.

The finish of the Range Officer is the same Parkerized or matte finish applied to the Springfield Mil Spec and the Springfield GI 1911A1. The pistol arrived in a foam-lined hard case with the usual manuals and promotional items, as well as a spare magazine, cleaning rod, and range holster and double magazine pouch. These are useful implements and a big plus; you do not have to buy a range holster. In our view, the provided holster isn't professional grade for carry, but it is useful. They are well made for plastic and have adjustable tension.

The Range Officer features a forged frame and slide. The barrel, barrel bushing, and link are stainless steel. The trigger bow is stainless steel, while the trigger face is aluminum. Our gun's trigger action was smooth, with little creep, and a break weight of 7 pounds. This is nearly 2 pounds heavier than the 45 ACP version previously tested.

The pistol's front strap was smooth, in common with the Loaded model, while the checkered mainspring housing offers a degree of abrasion.

Coupled with attractive rosewood grips, our shooters said the pistol offered a sure grip when it was being fired. (The grips are described by the company as cocobolo, but they do not feature the distinctive black piping or streaks found in true cocobolo, we believe.)



The Range Officer slide would have functioned on the Loaded Model stainless frame, we found.

But the Loaded Model stainless slide was too tight to function on the Range Officer's Parkerized frame.

The skeletonized hammer was nicely serrated. This is fine for lowering the hammer; however, the rear sight would interfere with thumb cocking, we think. Our shooters would prefer to carry the pistol properly cocked and locked as a result.

The pistol was visually identical to the Springfield Range Officer 45, save for the size of the hole in the barrel and the 9mm markings. The slide, barrel, extractor, and other parts are tailored to the 9mm. An important point is that the 9mm barrel is a ramped design. The traditional 45 and most 38 Super and 9mm handguns feature a two-piece feed ramp with the requisite 1/32-inch gap between the two parts of the feed ramp. The ramped barrel supports the case head in a superior manner. Feed reliability should be better with this design. The tolerances may even lend themselves to simpler manufacture. This design, one of the raters noticed, seems to impart a more robust lower locking lug. The consensus was that the ramped barrel is a good thing. Quite possibly, there may be no stronger 9mm handgun for the enthusiastic handloader. One of the raters noted that his LW Loaded Model 45 with ramped barrel has passed the 20,000-round mark without a problem. So we give this feature a hearty thumbs-up.

The sights were identical between the two handguns. The front post appeared to be a Novak, with a solid dovetail installation. The front posts were identical, with excellent fit into the slide. The rear sights were adjustable for windage and elevation. During the test, we used a lot of different bullet weights that proved interesting. Without adjustable sights, there is simply no means of achieving the perfect zero. More important, these handguns proved accurate enough that the perfect zero is useful, say for competition or even for small-game hunting. In our experience, there are few personal-defense handguns likely to be as accurate as these two. When firing 9mm Luger loads in variations of 92 grains to 147 grains, the divergence in the point of impact with the same

We used a variety of loads during the test program. All fed, chambered, fired, and ejected normally in both pistols.



9MM LUGER RANGE DATA

Fiocchi Extrema 124-gr. JHP	Springfield Armory Range Officer	Springfield Armory Loaded Target
Average Velocity	1115 fps	1129 fps
Muzzle Energy	342 ft.-lbs.	350 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.7 in.	1.8 in.
Largest Group	2.0 in.	2.2. in.
Average Group	1.8 in.	2.0 in.

Black Hills Factory New 124-gr. JHP +P	Springfield Armory Range Officer	Springfield Armory Loaded Target
Average Velocity	1224 fps	1249 fps
Muzzle Energy	412 ft.-lbs.	429 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.5 in.	1.6 in.
Largest Group	1.8 in.	1.9 in.
Average Group Size	1.6 in.	1.7 in.

Hornady XTP 147-gr.	Springfield Armory Range Officer	Springfield Armory Loaded Target
Average Velocity	913 fps	930 fps
Muzzle Energy	272 ft.-lbs.	282 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.3 in.	1.6 in.
Largest Group	1.6 in.	1.8 in.
Average Group Size	1.5 in	1.7 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired three 5-shot groups from a sandbag rest at 25 yards. To capture velocity data, we used a Competition Electronics chronograph with the first skyscreen set 10 feet from the muzzle.

Ammo sources: *Fiocchi 124-grain XTP, $14.09/25 from CheaperThanDirt.com; Black Hills Ammunition 124-grain JHP +P, $15.08/20 from MidwayUSA.com, and Hornady 147-grain XTP, $16.29/20 from MidwayUSA.com.*

sight picture could be as much as 4.5 inches. (We fired Fiocchi 92-grain Mono Block hollowpoint and Fiocchi 147-grain JHPs to see what the divergence in point of impact was at 25 yards.) Velocity ranged from almost 1400 fps to 900 fps. In each case we were able to adjust the sights to the correct height for precise shooting with every bullet weight. The same applied to the Loaded Target Model's sights.

Each pistol is a true Series 70 type without a firing-pin block or drop safety. Instead, drop safety is attained by use of a lightweight firing pin and heavy firing-pin spring.

The final test before actually shooting them for accuracy was dry-firing, with attention to the trigger action. The wide beavertail felt good during this drill, with a speed bump that helps funnel the hand into the frame. The RO's grip safety released its grip on the trigger about halfway into the safety's travel, about where we expected it to disengage.

The pistols were lubricated for range work and the magazines loaded. Like many of you, we have partial boxes of 9mm left over from range tests. We carefully catalog what is used and split the loads between test guns. In this case, we had on hand a good supply of diverse ammunition. We fired 140 rounds in each Springfield of a mix of Fiocchi 115-grain Extrema, Fiocchi 124-grain JHP, HPR 124-grain JHP, and Winchester 115-grain USA. Each handgun came out of the box running. Initial firing was taken in running combat courses at 7, 10, and 15 yards.

The pistols were drawn from strong-side belt holsters from Nelson Holsters (NelsonHolsters.com) and Rocking K Saddlery. (RockingKsaddlery.com) These are excellent leather holsters, one for concealed carry and one for Wild Bunch competition. Leather was chosen partly to preserve the finish of the Range Officer and partly because these holsters exhibit a good balance of speed and retention. In working the pistols through fast drills, the superior trigger action of the Loaded Model seemed to give slightly better results in combat shooting.

After the combat shooting drill, a few targets were fired off the barricade to test for divergence of point of aim and point of impact with the 92- and 147-grain loads, but no great effort was made to record accuracy. At this point we broke the 300-round mark in each pistol without any type of malfunction. None of the loads fired at this point were +P loads, but we used a +P for accuracy testing. There were no malfunctions in the Range Officer or Loaded Target pistol.

The Range Officer was cleaned and prepared for accuracy testing. We used three loads, a previous favorite for personal defense, Fiocchi's 124-grain XTP. A plus-pressure choice was Black Hills Ammunition 124-grain JHP +P. The heavyweight load was Hornady's 147-grain XTP. These loads, fired from a solid bench rest at 25 yards, proved to be consistent and accurate in both pistols. The most accurate group was fired with the Hornady XTP in the RO, a 1.3-inch cluster. Also, the Range Officer never failed to feed, chamber, fire, or eject.



The barrel bushing of each pistol is tight. Note the forward cocking serrations of the Loaded Target.



We liked the grips and checkered mainspring housing of each Springfield.



The Nelson Holsters (Nelsonholsters.com) pancake-style model proved fast and secure during testing.





The adjustable rear sight of the Springfield pistols gave excellent utility. The Novak front post is fast but still produces topnotch accuracy in a combat pistol.

Springfield Armory Loaded Target PI9134LP
9mm Luger, $873

This was the price from Bud's Gun Shop at the time of the test. The Springfield Loaded Model Target is a logical extension of the successful Loaded Model line. The pistol was well fitted, well finished, and overall was an attractive handgun. Much that is said of the fitting of the Range Officer applies to the Loaded Model, but there were differences. The barrel fit of the Range Officer appeared tighter, but this is difficult to quantify between

good, tight 1911 handguns. For an additional $169 dollars in the Loaded Model, you get forward cocking serrations, a full-length guide rod, stainless-steel construction, and an ambidextrous safety. The shelf of the standard Range Officer slide lock safety and the Loaded Model were identical, we noted. The right-hand lever (for left-handed shooters) of the Loaded Model safety was well designed and supported by the stocks, we saw.

To our eyes, the biggest advantage of the Loaded Target was its stainless-steel construction, an obvious plus for a hard-use pistol to be worn in all types of weather. The full-length guide rod (FLGR) is sometimes criticized as adding to the complexity of field stripping. However, the FLGR also prevents the pistol from going out of battery when jammed against the barricade and may be an aid when firing heavy loads.

Range gear and appointments with the Loaded Model mimic the Range Officer's. When the sum of the advantages of the Loaded Model are added up, it seemed to us that it was a pistol better suited for tactical use. The forward cocking serrations, full-length guide rod, and stainless-steel construction are good to have. The ambidextrous safety is a help to allow use of the handgun by either hand. A left-handed shooter would prefer the set up even more.

During the initial range evaluation, the Loaded Model fired the same mix of ammunition as the Range Officer, 40 Fiocchi 115-grain Extrema rounds, 35 HPR 124-grain XTPs, 25 Fiocchi 124-grain JHPs, and 40 Winchester 115-grain USA cartridges. There were no failures to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. During testing of sight regulation and the ability of the sights to be zeroed, we also used the Fiocchi 92-grain hollowpoint. All proved reliable, as did the Fiocchi 147-grain XTP. These sights are fully the equal of any we have tested from any maker, including the well-respected Bo-mar sight.

One of the raters also fired some of his favorite personal-defense load, the Hornady 115-grain Critical Defense, and found each pistol reliable with this load. He loaded the Loaded Model, put it in the Nelson holster, and carried it on his long trip home. One of the raters, a big fan of the 9mm +P and 9mm +P+, noted we had neglected the hot loads during our test. So he fired rounds from his personal cache in each pistol, including the Winchester 124-grain +P, the Winchester 127-grain +P+, and the Hornady 135-grain Flex Lock. The pistols remained reliable, and he noted control was excellent.

When firing in the offhand range drills, combat shooting and during tactical movement, the pistols were basically equal. All raters, in fact, enjoyed these handguns more than practically any other we have tested. They simply run well and do not offer recoil sufficient to produce pain in the arm. Even the dedicated 45 ACP shooters admitted the 9mm is much easier to use well.

While much was equal between the handguns, the lighter trigger compression of the Loaded Model was deemed an advantage. When we moved to the bench firing, we expected the trigger compression to give the Loaded Model an advantage. However, as it turned out, the Loaded Model did not deliver the accuracy of the Range Officer. None of the three loads tested gave the same accuracy with the Loaded Model as the Range Officer, although all were accurate. The most accurate loading in the Loaded was again the Hornady 147-grain XTP, with the best effort being a 1.6-inch group.



The addition of an ambidextrous safety was a big plus for tactical use. It allows for either-hand operation by the shooter, and it's more functional for full-time lefties.



The Loaded Target Model has several advantages that proved to be a winning combination, in our opinion. The stainless construction is one of them.





Left: We found the 9mm pistols were enjoyable to use. This is the Loaded Target Model. Right: Fired one hand or offhand, the Range Officer 9mm produced excellent results for us.

Our Team Said

In this test, the Range Officer was more accurate by a margin, and it might be even more accurate with a better trigger action. The Range Officer exhibited a tighter lockup, and it might be the handgun a careful handloader could use as a vehicle to produce very tight groups. For the dedicated target shooter, we think the Range Officer is the better choice.

For the tactical shooter, the practical advantages of the stainless Loaded Target make it a better buy. But the truth is, you can't go wrong either way.

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

S&W J-Frames Now With Lasers

Smith & Wesson is now making a quartet of carry revolvers available with the LaserMax CenterFire Laser Sighting System.

Smith & Wesson Corp. will make three more lightweight J-Frame revolvers — the Model 442, Model 637, and Model 638 — available with factory installed LaserMax CenterFire laser sighting systems. They join the popular Model 642, which was equipped with a factory-installed LaserMax CenterFire laser in January 2015.

The factory-installed CenterFire laser is designed to fit the revolver frame. Located under the bore, the new sight features LaserMax's Controlled Activation feature, which enables the user to operate from



concealment without revealing his or her position.

The LaserMax laser also incorporates ambidextrous tap-on/tap-off activation, a 10-minute auto time-out feature, and the ability to choose a solid or pulsed beam.

"The benefits of having a laser sighting system on your personal self-defense firearm are well known," said Jan Mladek, general manager of Smith & Wesson and M&P brands. He said the addition of the LaserMax laser sight helps enable positive target acquisition and enhanced accuracy in low-light conditions.

A staple in the Smith & Wesson line since 1952, the J-Frame revolver has served as a backup gun by law enforcement and as a primary self-defense firearm by thousands of licensed permit holders.

The details of the laser-equipped models are on the following page:

— continued from page 2

Class Members up to $200 for pistols that were returned, in addition to an enhanced lifetime warranty and training for the firearms. The minimum that class members will receive is $150. The proposed settlement would cover repairs of up to 200,000 handguns @ $150 each, up to the "aggregate cap" of $30 million.

Taurus will also pay $9 million in attorneys' fees.

According to the court documents, the lawyers and law firms of Bailey & Glasser LLP and Morris, Haynes, Wheeles, Knowles & Nelson represent current owners of the pistol. As "Class Counsel," they negotiated on behalf of Carter to have the Brazilian gun manufacturer provide owners of the named handguns ("class members") extended warranties, training and $30 million to settle the allegations made in the lawsuit.

According to the lawsuit, the named Taurus pistols may "contain a drop-fire defect that may cause the pistols to fire when dropped from a normal height, and a false safety defect which allows the pistols to unintentionally fire even when the manual safety lever is in the 'on' or 'safe' position and the trigger moves rearward."

Carter, who was working as a narcotics agent, dropped his gun on the ground during a pursuit and it fired, even though the safety was on. No one was shot.

According to the lawsuit, Taurus was aware of the defects in their guns since 2007. According to a release from the plaintiffs' lawyers, several owners of Taurus firearms have suffered grievous injuries following discharges after accidental drops, leading to months of surgeries and medical complications. The Sao Paulo Military Police in Brazil recalled all 98,000 Taurus 24/7 pistols issued to their personnel after discovering the pistols could be discharged without the trigger being pulled.

A final approval hearing has been scheduled for January 20, 2016. GT



Safeties on several PT-series pistols (shown is a PT-145 Millennium) were alleged to be faulty in a class-action lawsuit filed in Florida. A settlement of up to $30 million has been approved by a district court. Once the dust settles, we will note in previous reviews of the affected Taurus products that the safeties may be defective.

GUN TESTS
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

— continued from page 31

Model 642 LaserMax

Caliber	38 Sp. +P
Capacity	5
Action	DAO
Barrel Length	1.875 in.
Overall Length	6.31 in.
Weight	15.5 oz.
Front Sight	Fixed
Rear Sight	Integral
Frame	Aluminum Alloy
Cylinder	Stainless Steel
MSRP	$539

Model 637 LaserMax

Caliber	38 Sp. +P
Capacity	5
Action:	Single/Double Action
Barrel Length	1.875 in.
Overall Length	6.31 in.
Weight	15.5 oz.
Front Sight	Fixed
Rear Sight	Integral
Frame	Aluminum Alloy
Cylinder	Stainless Steel
MSRP	$539

Model 442 LaserMax

Caliber	38 Sp. +P
Capacity	5
Action	DAO
Barrel Length	1.875 in.
Overall Length	6.31 in.
Weight	15.5 oz.
Front Sight	Fixed
Rear Sight	Integral
Frame Material	Aluminum Alloy
Cylinder Material	Carbon Steel
MSRP	$539

Model 638 LaserMax

Caliber	38 Sp. +P
Capacity	5
Action	Single/Double Action
Barrel Length	1.875 in.
Overall Length	6.31 in.
Weight	15.5 oz.
Front Sight	Fixed
Rear Sight	Integral
Frame	Aluminum Alloy
Cylinder	Stainless Steel
MSRP	$539

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

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- Puma 1873 SAA 22 Buntline Special Report: A low-cost, high-fun Buntline Rimfire six shooter.
- We respond to reader requests by examining three 12-gauge "double-gun" selections: TR Imports Silver Eagle side by side, $1,297; the Chiappa Firearms Triple Threat three-barrel break open, 1,599; and the Standard Manufacturing DP12 double-barrel pump action, $1,699. Because they all have at least two barrels of one sort or another, we tested them both as self-defense firearms and as clay busters.

GUN TESTS
THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

Customer Service Contacts

If you have a problem with your magazine subscription, damaged or missing issues, need to change your mailing or email address, or renew your subscription, visit Online Customer Service at:
Gun-Tests.com
Click "Contact Us"

CALL TOLL FREE: 800-829-9084

SUBSCRIPTION DEPARTMENT
Gun Tests (US)
P.O. Box 8535
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

Gun Tests (Canada)
Box 7820 STN Main
London ON
Canada N5Y 5W1

QUANTITY REPRINTS
Reprints of **Gun Tests** articles are available.
Minimum Order: 1,000.
Contact:
GunTestsEditor@icloud.com

EDITORIAL OFFICES
Gun Tests *welcomes letters or email concerning our articles. Please include your name, telephone number, and hometown.*

We will respect your request not to publish personal information. Email comments to GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.
Or "Like" the **Gun Tests Magazine** Facebook page.
Twitter: @GunTestsMag
YouTube: Gun Tests Magazine

Because of daytime testing requirements, the writers and editorial staff can't answer phone inquiries. But the staff responds to email. If you have a question or comment about Gun Tests evaluations, please email individual writers at: GunTestsEditor@icloud.com. Thanks for your understanding.