# GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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## POCKET PISTOLS

**Taurus threw us a curve with the curvy Curve — it's bigger than Ruger's improved LCP-C Custom 380 ACP pocketgun in some crucial dimensions. It was also hard to shoot accurately.** **— Page 6**







## 22 LR PISTOLS

**Of these handguns based on rifle actions, which is most accurate: Ruger's new Ruger 22 Charger, a used Magnum Research Picuda, or Mossberg's 715P AR-style handgun? Find out on...** **— Page 12**







## TWO OR THREE BARRELS?

**In one of our most unusual shotgun match-ups, we compare a side-by-side, a double-barrel pumpgun, and a 3-barrel break-action for all-round honors. Bad news: There were no winners.** **— Page 18**

## HISTORICAL LEVER GUNS

**Just like in the old days, Henry and Winchester go head to head for top-gun bragging rights.** **— Page 25**




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# DOWNRANGE

## WALMART ENDING AR-15 SALES



*Todd Woodard*

**Walmart** said recently that it will stop selling semiautomatic rifles, including AR-15s, in what the retail giant says is a decision related to slumping demand.

In a June 23 interview with CNNMoney, Walmart CEO Douglas McMillon said as much: "Our focus in terms of firearms should be hunters and people who shoot sporting clays, and things like that. So the types of rifles we sell, the types of ammunition we sell, should be curated for those things."

When asked if he would discontinue sales of semiautomatic long guns, McMillon said, "Yes." He added, "We want to serve people who hunt and fish and we want to have a great sporting-goods department." Walmart spokesman Kory Lundberg told Bloomberg Business, "If you have a product customers aren't buying, you phase it out," he said. Shoppers "were buying shotguns and rifles, and so we are increasing assortment in that."

AR-15s and other modern sporting rifles were being sold at less than a third of the company's 4,600 U.S. stores. Lundberg said the decision by Walmart Stores Inc. was not political, and the Bentonville, Arkansas-based retailer would sell down its AR inventory as stores transition from summer to fall merchandise. "It's similar to what we do with any product. Being what it is, it gets a little more attention, but it's the same process for any other product," Lundberg said.

As this story was breaking in August, I did a little price shopping, and I have to say that some of the clearance deals Walmart was offering were eye-popping: Bushmasters, DPMS Sporticals, Colt LE6920 Carbines, and others for $500 to $700 out the door.

Yes, prices on ARs have come way down across the board, and if I'm being honest, I wouldn't think of Walmart as a place to go buy an MSR, so this decision makes business sense. (Also, I should note that at the height of the ammo shortage, Walmart still stocked a variety of cartridges — lines were long, prices were high, and quantities were limited, but they had 5.56mm, 308 Win., 45 ACP, 9mm Luger, and other hard-to-find items.)

I guess my reaction to the story is limited to this: I can see where super-thin margins on these rifles, combined with the political headaches they bring for a mainline retailer, makes *not* selling them a fairly easy decision. And the upside is, thousands of smaller shops are more than happy to get a few extra points on their margins — that is, slightly higher prices to consumers — as a result of the behemoth leaving this particular segment.

I would welcome correspondence from readers who purchased ARs at Walmart — what you paid, your happiness with the purchase, problems, and so forth. I'll gather them up and run them in an upcoming issue in Firing Line. And from the other side, I'm curious whether GUN TESTS readers avoided Walmart as a source of ARs, even if the prices were lower. If that was the case, email me those reasons, too. **GT**


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**Editor**.....W. Todd Woodard
**Sr. Technical Editor**.....Ray Ordorica
**Managing Editor**..... Tracey Taylor
**Contributing Editors**...R.K. Campbell
Roger Eckstine
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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

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# Tune Springfield's Range Officer

*A reader who has owned both the R.O. and the Loaded Target tells us what he did to make his pistol better — at an affordable price. Also, more on hard-to-find adjustable riflescope mounts.*

**Re "Springfield 9mm 1911s: Loaded Versus Range Officer Showdown," September 2015**

I'm a subscriber from the beginning, and I much appreciate all that you guys do. I was very glad to see R.K. Campbell's well-written review of the two 9mm Springfields, mainly because I took the plunge on the Range Officer 9mm earlier this year, and have previously owned the 9mm Loaded Target model it was compared to. One of my sons has it now.

I was tickled to death with my 9mm R.O., and I got just about the same results as you guys did, which were good. I think the extra attention to detail on the R.O. definitely showed, but not so much on the overall comparison at the range. Not sure why yours had a 7-pound trigger; mine came in at 5.5 pounds. But as regards the "match" barrels in both, particularly the R.O., and the bushing fit at that, over the last few years I've come to the conclusion that the term has lost whatever meaning it once might have had. To me, a "match" barrel and bushing means this: Oversized and gunsmith fitted. A call to Dave Williams up at the Springfield Custom Shop pretty much confirmed what I was thinking about the R.O. barrel, and to tell you the truth, this was one of those guns that I knew could do better. Okay, it became an obsession. I used to be a shrink for my last 12 or so years in the Army, but don't ask me how this happens. It just does, sometimes.

So here's what Dave did for me, and not for a relatively extraordinary amount of money either: A fitted Nowlin ramped barrel and bushing (they'll give you what ever barrel you ask for), and a very fine machine stippled front strap (not expensive, actually good looking and very functional). I went ahead and had it refinished while it was there, in a matte-black Armory Kote.



**Tough decision: Springfield Armory's Loaded Target 9mm, left, went head to head with a Range Officer 9mm in the September issue.**

When it came back, I installed an S&A magwell spare, using a 19-pound mainspring this time, and used a C&S light sear spring to improve the trigger press. I also installed an extra-power firing-pin return spring just to be sure, but it really didn't need it. Cost? Not much. Results? Holy cow. I couldn't believe the difference at the range, and that's even acknowledging how good it was to begin with.

The point is, for Springfields, I've used the Custom Shop for years and have never been disappointed. I'd encourage other Range Officer owners to consider getting their over-the-counter pistols tuned, anything

## 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.

from major to minor tweaks. It sure brought my R.O. up to what it was capable of, and didn't break the bank either. **— Neal**

*Neal, having an obsession for a tightly fitted barrel and bushing isn't a disorder; it's a sign of good taste! — Todd Woodard*

**Re "Firing Line," September 2015**

Thanks for featuring my letter last month. A few follow-ups:

S&K Scope Mounts in Pennsylvania (ScopeMounts.com or call [800] 578-9862) probably makes the best mount available today. It is quite like a Conetrol, but the rings are one piece of spring steel that wraps around the scope.

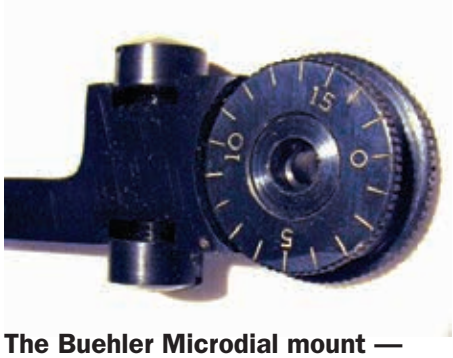
The Buehler Microdial mount is very expensive, if you can find one. It's like a regular turn-in mount except, at the rear is a dial that sets elevation by moving a threaded stud up and down on the rear mounting screw. Windage is done with standard opposing screws. This is a very slick rig compared to B&L's mounts. Rings came in ⅞-inch, 1-inch, and 26mm and 27mm sizes.

There's also the Leupold Adjusto Mount. This adjustable mount was





**Above are S & K's H1B Ring (left), which the company says is supplied with all its Insta-Mounts and scout mounts. At right is the V1B, this version being a 1-inch low matte style. It's available in medium, high, and polished versions, as well as a 30mm version, also in different heights and finishes. Photos from of S & K. At bottom are S & K rings on one of Larry's rifle.**



**The Buehler Microdial mount — difficult to find and expensive when you do find it.**

available for ⅞-inch, 1-inch, and 26mm scopes. The later ones had click adjustments for W&E. You could use a single scope for multiple rifles, but resighting was required when you moved the optic, of course.

As for the slop that B&L scopes have that vary the power by turning the whole eyepiece, you cannot detect it by pushing on the ocular. The best test is shooting several groups at 200 yards or longer. Make three shots at 2X, rotate all the way to 8X, set back to 4X, shoot three more and so on. If they all land on top of one another you're good to go.

B&Ls may often be found on Ebay for reasonable prices. Ebay's 14-day return policy is excellent when buying optics. Best to all @ Gun Tests! **— Larry**

**Re "Tactical 20 Gauges: LSI's Escort Gladius vs. Remington 870 Pump," September 2015**

There was no mention of the Weatherby 20-gauge semi-auto tactical shotgun. Are you planning on evaluating this shotgun in the near future? **— James**

*Hey James, sorry, but the Weatherby 20 gauge isn't in current development. However, in the June 2015 issue, we tested the Weatherby PA-459 TR No. PA4591219PGM 12 Gauge, which got a Grade B-. According to Weatherby's online specifications, the 20-gauge pump is configured the same as the 12-gauge model, except it's three-quarters of a pound lighter. With the proviso that it wasn't shot head to head with the others, I'd estimate the larger bore's issues would mostly translate to the 20 gauge's performance. Most important: "Coming in slightly behind the other self-defense shotgun in this test, this [PA-459 TR] pump action still performed well with only minor flaws in handling and accuracy. But it cost more, so we can't recommend it when there are better, less expensive options." — tw*



**Re "Tactical Models: Mossberg 930 Versus Remington 870 Pumpgun," February 2015**

I was a little disappointed with your rating of the Mossberg in this issue, because of the one failure to extract. I have a Mossberg 930 I bought in May 2008, which has become my wife's favorite warm-up gun when we go to the range (25 to 50 rounds just for her). Since day one, we have used Winchester 00 Buck, Ranger Low Recoil, 2¾-inch rounds exclusively, and have logged 1300 rounds and counting in it. The only time we had a failure to extract/feed like you had was when my wife did not keep the gun tight into her shoulder. She is right handed, but she shoots left handed because she is left-eye dominant. She got a hot case on her one time, which caused her to be a little skittish and not hold it tight into her shoulder. Anytime someone asks me about shotguns, I always promote the Mossberg 930, especially for women because of the light recoil and ease of use. Wish I had bought two so we wouldn't have to take turns shooting. **— Gene**

*Hey Gene: We understand you having buyer's equity in the Mossberg*



*930 Tactical Special Purpose Semi-Auto 85330 12 Gauge we tested in the February 2015 issue. As Bob Campbell and his team decided, "The Mossberg's single failure to extract did not meet the reliability standards of the Remington. You may decide this isn't important, but we cannot dismiss this malfunction that came well after break in was done." And we understand you and your wife's affinity for the 930's lesser perceived recoil, a result of its gas operation and slightly heavier weight. I would note its B grade is above average, so it's not like we hated it. The 870 Tactical was also a hundred dollars cheaper. — tw*

### Re "Downrange," September 2015

Having bought my Taurus Millennium after one of your reports, I am left with the question, "What should I do with this handgun?"

**— Tom**

*Get it fixed under the terms of the recall. Should be fine after that. — tw*



### Re "How About a Krag-Jorgensen?" September 2015

I thoroughly enjoyed your piece on the Krag. A shortened 30-40 Krag was the first high-powered rifle I fired as a boy, and my brother and I fired it a lot. I have had four since and have killed a lot of animals with them. I recommend a Weaver side mount to mount a telescope for hunting, if you can find one and a Krag drilled and tapped for one.

I find that round-nose bullets shoot better because they can load closer to the rifling. To load a pointed 180-grain close to the rifling, it becomes too long to feed through the magazine. The best ammo I've found is the Hornady 174-grain roundnose soft point), resized to .309 inch diameter. If you keep your handloads below 40,000 CUP, you will have no problems and your brass will last nearly forever. I have fired brass made as far back as 1905 multiple times. **— Ken**

### Can't Find Brass AK Ammo

The range that I shoot at will not allow any ammo that is magnetic. I would like to shoot my AK in 7.62x39mm, but have been unable to find ammo that is brass and not magnetic. Please help. **— Gary**

*A quick search on several sites turned up plenty of brass-cased 7.62x39mm ammo for your AK. On CheaperThanDirt.com alone, for instance, I found Prvi Partizan*




*brass-cased 123-grain soft points selling for $9.19/20 (AMM-6171); Arsenal brass-cased full-metal-jacket 122-grain rounds for $10.49/20 (AMM-617); and Fiocchi brass-case 123-grain FMJs for $11.94/20 (58881). — tw*

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# New 380 ACPs: Ruger's LCP-C And Taurus Curve Shoot It Out

*The curvy Curve threw us a curve — it's bigger than the Ruger pocketgun in some crucial dimensions, and it's set up for right-handers. It was also very hard for us to shoot accurately.*

New 380 ACP pistols are probably responsible for the ammunition shortage in 380 ACP — our friends at the gun shops tell us that these pistols are selling fast, and with every sale, customers purchase two to four boxes of ammunition. This time, we look at the breakthrough design of the Taurus Curve, so named because its handle is made to curve and conform to the body, as long as you are right handed. Ruger has offered a number of limited editions of the LCP in the past, but for the most part, they were simply a different finish or displayed some type of logo. The new LCP Custom pistol, however, features a vastly improved trigger similar to the RTK Sweet Pea triggers many of us added to the original LCP, and the design is considerably different as well.




**The Taurus Curve, bottom, and Ruger's LCP-C Custom, top, represent, respectively, one fresh new idea and an improvement of an existing handgun. The Taurus Curve is innovative, but any standard of personal defense must include practical accuracy, and our shooters found the Taurus to be a hard pistol to shoot well. The Ruger LCP-C has already proven to be a success, and the newest version, the LCP-C Custom with improved sights and vastly improved trigger action, is easily the better choice in this shoot out, in our opinion.**

## How We Tested

Our test ammunition included were three different weights and two bullet styles: HPR's 90-grain cartridge, which pushes a Hornady XTP jacketed hollow point; the well-known Winchester USA 95-grain full metal jacket Q4206; and SIG Sauer's Elite Performance load with full-metal-jacket 100-grain bullets. We fired the HPR 90-grain JHP ammunition to confirm feed reliability with a JHP bullet, and to our surprise, the HPR was the most accurate round tested. It is also worth mentioning that previous testing of 380 ACP loads lead us to believe that FMJs might be the best choice for these pocket pistols to ensure enough penetration ("Gauging 380 ACP Loads: FMJ May Be the Only Way to Go," October 2010).

Normally, we test-fire pistols at 25 yards for service pistols and 15 yards for compacts. Here, we were forced to fire at 21 feet to give the Taurus Curve some semblance of a chance. The Taurus would have been hopeless at 15 yards, in our opinion. We found out about the




**Left: The Curve isn't going to be mistaken for any other handgun. Though unusual, it has a business-like appearance. The cocking serrations on the rear of the slide are helpful to its operation. Important features include the belt clip and laser switch (arrows).**



**Top: The Curve is thicker than the Ruger, limiting concealability.**

Curve's accuracy problems early. During dry firing at compact-pistol distance, we didn't like the crosshairs on the rear of the Curve's slide used for aiming. So after disassembling and lubricating each pistol, we began the firing portion of the test by loading each gun's magazine with the SIG Sauer Elite Performance 100-grain full-metal-jacket loads and addressing a man-sized silhouette target from Birchwood Casey at 21 feet. At 21 feet, we still found the Curve to be pretty hopeless, so we moved to 14 feet to get the measure of the sights. We found ourselves firing too slowly while attempting to form some sort of sight picture. Finally, moving into some type of rhythm we managed to make 4- to 6-inch groups on the paper; however, repeatability was poor. At 21 feet, we could make 5- to 7-inch groups. Once we stopped firing and loaded another magazine, the next group on the same point of aim was often 2 inches to the left or right. All shooters fired the Curve to the right, 4 inches from the center of the paper. In contrast, at 21 feet the Ruger easily delivered 2-inch 5-shot groups or less with the three types of ammunition.

With each handgun, we also fired combat style as quickly as possible, but still paying attention to the sights. The LCP Custom pistol was accurate enough to keep the shots in the X-ring. We experienced a failure to go into battery during the first magazine of ammunition. Checking the lube again and paying attention to the grip, we experienced a second malfunction with the second magazine load. After these two initial break-in malfunctions, the pistol never repeated this problem. The Taurus did not experience a break-in malfunction, but it did suffer from a defective magazine, which we detail in the text below.

After firing a full box of Elite ammunition, we continued with Winchester FMJ loads, putting 50 rounds through each handgun without a problem. This time, we fired for accuracy and attempted to take hostage-rescue-type shots at 21 feet.

## TAURUS CURVE 180CRVL #1-180031L
## 380 ACP, $380
## GUN TESTS GRADE: C

**We were nagged by a magazine latch malfunction, which canceled out the advantage of having a spare magazine. The Taurus has interesting features, but the bottom line is that a pistol without sights isn't useful, in our opinion. Also, it is actually larger and more difficult to conceal than the Ruger.**





**Above: The Taurus magazine pinch-type release worked okay, but one pinch release failed (below) and caused magazine malfunctions.**





| | |
|---|---|
| Action | Locked Breech Single-Action Semi-Auto |
| Overall Length | 5.2 in. |
| Overall Height | 3.7 in. |
| Maximum Width | 1.2 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 10.2 oz. |
| Weight Loaded | 12.2 oz. |
| Barrel Length | 2.5 in. |
| Barrel | Steel, 1:16 Twist |
| Magazine | 6 Rd. Detachable Box |
| Slide | Blued |
| Frame | Polymer |
| Frame Front Strap Height | 1.1 in. |
| Frame Back Strap Height | 2.5 in. |
| Grips | Polymer |
| Grip Thickness (max) | 0.9 in. |
| Grip Circumference (max) | 5.15 in. |
| Sights | Crosshair Reference Lines |
| Laser | Yes |
| Trigger Pull Weight Single Action | 5.5 lbs. |
| Trigger Span Single Action | 2.5 in. |
| Safeties | Firing Pin Block, Magazine Disconnect |
| Warranty | Lifetime |
| Website | TaurusUSA.com |







**Left and above: No matter how much we shot the Curve, we didn't improve with it.**

With concentration from the shooter, the Ruger was capable of delivering saucer-sized accuracy, although this isn't something we would like to rely on with this lightweight handgun. We did pull a few shots off with it, which wouldn't have been good for the hostage or a bystander. Following are more detailed criticisms of both the Curve and the LCP Custom:

**Taurus Curve 180CRVL #1-180031L 380 ACP, $380**

This was our price at the time of the test from GanderMountain.com. MSRP is $392.42. The pistol was introduced in late 2014 and became available in early 2015. At launch, the company said the pistol was "The world's first and only curved firearm engineered to fit the unique contours of your body. Taurus Curve is one ultra-comfortable, ultra-reliable personal defense handgun." And this: "Your body has curves, so why aren't pistols shaped to match? That's precisely the question our engineering team challenged themselves to answer — and the results are unlike anything you've seen before… An extreme departure from your typical compact 380, you'll find the Curve takes form and function to an entirely unprecedented level. With its patented, snag-free design, the Curve boasts the industry's first-ever light and laser built right into the frame. Exceptionally accurate and extremely lightweight at just 10.2 ounces, the Curve is one ultra-comfortable, ultra-reliable personal defense handgun."

There are some assertions in that statement we'll take issue with in a moment. Our initial handling of the Curve showed that its removable pocket clip allowed carry in the pants with a certain degree of security — a step above simply slipping the piece in the waistband. In our view, the carrier would need a holster for IWB or pocket carry, but the Curve is a good stab at holster-less carry.

Out of its box, we noticed the pistol isn't curved as much as the left side featured a concave surface. All the edges were knocked off, rounded,

**RUGER LCP-C CUSTOM NO. 3740 380 ACP, $419**

**GUN TESTS GRADE: A**

**We found the Ruger LCP-C Custom to be reliable, accurate enough for personal defense, and compact enough for concealed carry and pocket carry. The sights and trigger are great improvements over previous versions of the LCP. The Ruger's footprint is smaller than the Taurus, but the Ruger is lighter and developed more energy. We considered dinging it a half-grade for not coming with at least one spare magazine.**





**Above: This Gold Star holster (GoldStarHolsters.net) is readily available. Holsters are not as widely available for the Curve.**



**The Ruger gave some indication that our performance might improve the more we shot it.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Action | Locked Breech Double Action Semi-Auto |
| Overall Length | 5.2 in. |
| Overall Height | 3.8 in. |
| Maximum Width | 0.8 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 9.8 oz. |
| Weight Loaded | 10.9 oz. |
| Barrel Length | 2.75 in. |
| Barrel | Steel, 1:16 Twist |
| Magazine | 6 Rd. Detachable Box |
| Slide | Blued |
| Frame | Polymer |
| Frame Front Strap Height | 1.25 in. |
| Frame Back Strap Height | 2.0 in. |
| Grips | Textured Polymer |
| Grip Thickness (max) | 0.8 in. |
| Grip Circumference (max) | 4.5 in. |
| Sights | Fixed |
| Trigger Pull Weight Single Action | 7.25 lbs. |
| Trigger Span | 2.5 in. |
| Safety | Firing Pin Block |
| Warranty | None Written |
| Website | Ruger.com |



**Above: The LCP Custom is compact enough for carry in the average pocket. Below: The Ruger's footprint is smaller than the Taurus, mainly because it is substantially thinner. Lengths and heights are similar.**



## 380 ACP RANGE DATA

| SIG Sauer Elite 380 ACP 100-gr. FMJ E380B1 | Ruger LCP Custom | Taurus Curve |
|---|---|---|
| Average Velocity | 845 fps | 816 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 158 ft.-lbs. | 147 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 1.5 in. | 5.0 in. |
| Largest Group | 2.0 in. | 7.0 in. |
| Average Group Size | 1.7 in. | 6.0 in. |

| Winchester 380 ACP 95-gr. FMJ 2-WNQ4206BX | Ruger LCP Custom | Taurus Curve |
|---|---|---|
| Average Velocity | 860 fps | 840 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 155 ft.-lbs. | 148 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 1.25 in. | 5.5 in. |
| Largest Group | 2.1 in. | 7.5 in. |
| Average Group Size | 1.9 in. | 6.4 in. |

| HPR 380 ACP 90-gr. JHP 380090JHP | Ruger LCP Custom | Taurus Curve |
|---|---|---|
| Average Velocity | 866 fps | 830 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 149 ft.-lbs. | 137 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 1.4 in. | 4.0 in. |
| Largest Group | 2.0 in. | 6.0 in. |
| Average Group Size | 1.7 in. | 5.0 in. |

*To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a solid benchrest. Distance – 7 yards. We recorded velocity with a Shooting Chrony Master Chronograph, with the first screen set 10 feet from the muzzle.*

***Ammunition:*** *SIG Sauer Elite Performance 100-Grain Full Metal Jacket (copper-jacketed lead bullet E380B1 (GanderMountain.com #881432, $20/50); HPR 90-Grain Hornady XTP 90-Grain Jacketed Hollow Point, (CheaperThanDirt.com #AMM-3806, $22.59/50); and Winchester USA 95-Grain Full Metal Jacket Q4206 (CheaperThanDirt.com #2-WNQ4206BX, $20.89/50).*

**Right: It is difficult to gauge accuracy potential with pocket pistols, but in each case the ammunition performed reliably. We tested at 7 yards because these handguns are suitable for close-in work. All loads gave a clean powder burn and reliable function.**




**Right: During the dry fire and initial handling phase, this rater asked, "Where are the sights?"**



and smoothed for comfortable carry. The pistol didn't have sights, which we discussed briefly above and more below, and there was no slide-stop control. The magazines featured a locking tab that held the magazine in the pistol. The slide locked open on the last shot, and the magazine is removed to lower the slide.

As we noted, the pistol had a geometric design on the rear of the slide to aid in aiming. There was also an integral laser and light combination. The rear crossbars were marked at the intersection of the bore, it is claimed. The Curve, like the Ruger, featured a loaded-chamber indicator. The pistol was supplied with what is actually a trigger cover, which may have some utility in pocket carry. But we advise being careful with this cover — it is too easy to move your hand into the vicinity of the bore with this set-up. Be certain to pull the cover down when removing it, and to come from the bottom and press up when returning it to position — and never let the hand wander near the barrel. The pistol was supplied with the trigger cover and two magazines, so this outranked the Ruger's single magazine and cloth carrying case.

Using an index of superimposing the slide of the pistol over the target, we were able to make reasonably good hits at 5 yards. At 7 yards, the groups were widely spaced, perhaps 6 inches on average. When firing for accuracy at 21 feet, the Taurus delivered a 6-inch group off the bench in the hands of our best shot. We felt that this was a resounding accomplishment more attributable to muscle control than marksmanship. The groups were several inches off point of aim, and each group, fired at the same point of aim, was at least 3 inches from the other.

However, we had yet to consider the combination light and laser system incorporated into the Curve. The switch was on the right-hand side, as may be expected since this is a right-handed pistol. Press the switch forward, and the light and laser are activated. You may preset





The lights and laser on the Curve make for an interesting combination, but should not take the place of iron sights, in our view.



Due to a bad latch, we experienced several incidents with the Curve's magazine becoming loose.

the switch for light or laser only. We feel that the best program is to set the switch for the default, both systems at once. When using the lights and laser around the house, in the dark, we found some utility in the design. The room was illuminated directly in front of the sights. Limited range testing showed that the laser was delivered with a close approximation to the point of aim and may be adjusted with tools supplied with the Taurus pistol. Did the light/laser combination change our mind about the pistol's accuracy? No. For us, the pistol wasn't useful past about 5 yards. The crosshair sights did not work for us, and we can't recommend a product that has to be turned on to function. If the Curve had sights, the rating would be much different.

The Taurus Curve also had more



The Ruger suffered two break-in malfunctions and none thereafter.



The Ruger's sights were a great improvement over the previous LCP. During dry fire and initial handling, this rater noted the excellent sights of the LCP Custom, which are visible above the slide. Her daily carry gun, an early LCP, may be on the way out.

malfunctions than the Ruger, and we traced them to a bad magazine latch on a magazine, not integral to the frame. This included the magazine falling free and several short cycles caused by the magazine slipping in the magazine well. Once we isolated the magazine causing the problems, the Taurus never suffered another malfunction. We shot most of the test with a single magazine. The pistol also featured a magazine disconnect, which meant the pistol will not fire without the magazine inserted. The consensus is that this isn't ideal on a personal-defense pistol, but seems popular with makers these days.

**Our Team Said: We were not enthralled with the Curve's accuracy. We also think that while the pistol is designed to adhere to the curve of the body, this doesn't help with pocket carry, and the Curve grip is both thicker and longer than the Ruger. As important, the Curve isn't suited to left-handed shooters, in our estimation. Tactical trainers will point out that self-defense shooters should not be right or left handed, instead using a forward hand and a rear hand, depending upon the application and the threat. Even so, the Curve cannot be used well by a left-handed shooter, and the same goes for a right-handed shooter who tries to shoot it left-handed. A good point was the Curve's trigger action. The let-off was a clean 5.5 pounds and consistent.**

### Ruger LCP-C Custom No. 3740 380 ACP, $419

MSRP is this price. Clicking the link on the GalleryofGuns.com Gun Genie accessed from the Ruger site, we got several price quotes from dealers in the Houston area. The low was from 19Eleven Enterprises, with a walk-out price with fees and taxes, of $346.18. At Top Gun Range, walk-out price with fees and taxes was $404.79; Full Armor Firearms' walk-out price was $414.55; and the walk-out price with fees and taxes from Collectors Firearms was $430.55.

We have tested several iterations of the LCP in the past. In the June 2008 issue, the inaugural version of the pistol graded an A-. In the July 2013 issue, the #3701 model ranked a B+, the same grade as a Ruger LCP-LM No. 3718 with laser earned five months earlier. The latest test was of a laser-equipped LCP-CT, fitted with a Crimson Trace red laser. It earned an A- grade. In the Custom version, the sights and trigger action are the primary improvements. Also, the new Ruger is a quarter-ounce heavier than the older version.

The trigger broke at a smooth 7.25 pounds with little take up and no creep or backlash. The sights were very effective. The new sights were raised higher on the slide than on previous guns, but more important, they offered a good sight picture. We saw the benefit during the firing test, as noted above. Sights are important on any handgun and may be even more important on a light pistol. After all, accuracy is critical, and what power the pistol has must be delivered accurately. As one of our raters pointed out, as a trainer he will never be the person to tell a judge he taught a student to fire the handgun without using the sights. The visible rear notch and front post of the Ruger are a big help in delivering accurate fire, we found. Although designed purely for personal defense, the Ruger is accurate enough to pop a

rodent or reptile at a few yards, which is always an advantage.

The Ruger remains a compact package, with a length of 5.2 inches and a height of 3.8 inches, and it is only 0.8 inch thick. The frame was polymer. The recoil spring was tight, even stiff, but this is the price you have to pay for a small locked-breech pistol. The Taurus was just as stiff. The cocking serrations were well designed. The pistol uses a Browning-type magazine release and does not lock open on the last shot. The magazine held six rounds, and only one magazine was supplied with the pistol — it should come with a spare. Adding another costs $22.62.

**Our Team Said: The Ruger was reliable after a couple of break-in malfunctions. We fired 195 rounds through it for record, 50 of each of the three loads and then 15 more of each load for accuracy, and our shooters never experienced a problem of any type after the initial break in. All in, the Ruger LCP-C Custom 380 ACP No. 3740 was more accurate than the Taurus and was better suited for use by the non-dominant or left hand.**

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

## GUN TESTS VALUE GUIDE: RECENT 380 ACP PISTOL GRADES

| GUN NAME | ISSUE | GRADE & COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| **Kimber Micro Carry Advocate Brown 380 ACP, $796** | Sept 2015 | **Grade A-:** The Kimber was well finished and demonstrated excellent reliability and accuracy. |
| **Ruger LCP-CT 380 ACP, $559** | Jan 2014 | **Grade A-:** Ramp-up time was nil, but to fire the pistol without using the laser was a feat. |
| **Ruger LC380 No. 3219 380 Auto, $450** | June 2013 | **Grade A-:** The LC380 offers better ergonomics than many smaller 380s. |
| **Taurus 738B 380 Auto, $336** | Jan 2011 | **Grade A-:** This inexpensive no-nonsense belly gun offered great control in our action tests. |
| **Ruger LCP 380 ACP, $379** | July 2013 | **Grade B+:** The LCP performed with any ammo we loaded into it. The sights are minimal. |
| **Ruger LCP-LM No. 3718 380 ACP, $443** | Feb 2013 | **Grade B+:** The LCP-LM was easily concealed pistol; we couldn't operate the laser switch with one hand. |
| **Browning Black Label 1911-380 380 ACP, $620** | Sept 2015 | **Grade B:** The Browning is a reliable handgun with familiar operation. Less accurate than the smaller Kimber. |
| **Glock 42 380 ACP Subcompact Slimline, $480** | Nov 2014 | **Grade B:** With a Viridian green laser on it, we'd bump up the grade to an A- and probably buy it. |
| **S&W Bodyguard 380 109380 380 ACP, $419** | Sept 2013 | **Grade B:** The Bodyguard had the best integrated laser sight of all the models tested, and it was easy to turn on. |
| **Kahr CW 380 380 ACP No. 3833, $419** | Nov 2014 | **Grade B-:** We didn't like the sights, the short grip, or the long DAO trigger pull. |
| **SIG Sauer P238 Tactical Laser No. 238-380-TL 380 ACP, $829** | Feb 2013 | **Grade B-:** 1911 aficionados like the P238 for its trigger and laser activation. |
| **Colt Mustang XSP Pocketlite O6790 380 ACP, $649** | Nov 2014 | **Grade C+:** This costs a lot of money, and there are many pistols that work better for less money. |
| **SIG Sauer P238 380 ACP 238-380-NBS12, $710** | Nov 2014 | **Grade C:** Its control set should have produced a 1911-like feel, but the inconsistent trigger pull affected accuracy. |

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

# 22 LR Pistols Based on Rifles From Ruger, MRI, and Mossberg

*For plinkers and small-game hunters, a used Magnum Research Picuda performed neck and neck with a new Ruger 22 Charger, while the Mossberg 715P refused to give up any ground.*

The Ruger 10/22 rifle is the most customizable semi-automatic rimfire rifle on the market. In fact, some manufacturers have taken 10/22 rifles and radically converted them to make highly accurate target rifles or built in internally-suppressed barrels for low-noise shooting. Some have molded shells to make the 10/22 look like an M1 Carbine or a Thompson submachine gun, while others have made them into pistols, as this test recognizes. By reconfiguring the buttstock into a pistol grip and reducing the barrel length, the same receiver is used to create an entirely different class of pistol. We wanted to take a look at these pistols, two derived from a Ruger 10/22 and one from the Mossberg 702 Plinkster, to see what they offered other than just an abbreviated variant of a long gun.

We secured a slightly used model of Magnum Research's Picuda that was mounted with a fixed 4x-power Leupold scope (#58750; $440). Ruger debuted its own 10/22 pistol in 2008, calling it the Charger, and ended production in 2012 — only to reintroduce a revised variant in 2015. The original Ruger Charger was very similar in appearance to the Magnum Research Picuda, while this new Ruger 22 Charger we tested is more refined, with plenty of features to like. Mossberg's 715P pistol came out in 2014. While the Magnum Research and Ruger are similar since they share a similar operating system, their design appeals to shooters and hunters who desire precision shooting, while the Mossberg is made to satisfy plinkers.

All three pistols use a simple blowback mechanism that is the same mechanism as used in the rifle. The pistols look ungainly since they use the same receivers as the rifles. The barrels, however, are cut down in all three models. The Magnum Research and Ruger reconfigured the rifle stock to a pistol grip sans buttstock. Though the Ruger and Magnum Research grip/stock were similar, the Ruger offered more options, so a shooter can set up the pistol to suit his shooting needs.

To make the 715P, Mossberg basically takes a 702 barreled action and sandwiches it between two polymer halves to give the pistol the appearance of an AR-15 pistol. The similarity to an AR pistol is only cosmetic, as the 715P functions just like the 702. Consider it a sheep in wolves' clothing. The Charger 22 and Picuda come optics ready, requiring a user to invest in a optic and rings. A Weaver rail is built into the Magnum Research pistol, while the Ruger comes with a Picatinny rail screwed into to the receiver. We mounted a BSA Edge 2-7x32mm pistol scope (#PS27X32; $140) on the Ruger. The Mossberg has open sights and is good to go out of the box, but to keep the playing field relatively level we added a CenterPoint Tactical 30mm Enclosed Reflex red-dot optic (Model #72601; $30). Mossberg offers a red-dot sight as an option on other 715P models. The CenterPoint optic co-witnessed with the top quarter of the iron sights on the 715P, which we liked. The rail on the Mossberg



**All three pistols tested were re-engineered from rimfire rifles. The Ruger 22 Charger 4917, $309, and a used Magnum Research Picuda MLP-1722, about $600, are based on the iconic Ruger 10/22 rifle. The Mossberg 715P 37235, $308, is derived from the Mossberg 702 Plinkster.**

looks like a Picatinny/Weaver style, but it is not, as we discovered when mounting the CenterPoint Tactical red dot. Here's more about what we discovered about these rimfire rifles converted to pistols.

### Magnum Research Picuda MLP-1722 22 LR, $600 (used)

The Picuda's most distinguishing feature is a graphite barrel with a steel bore. The graphite helps dissipate heat faster than steel and is six times stiffer than steel. Both the muzzle and chamber end use a stainless-steel cap. Graphite also creates less weight, which was quite noticeable, giving the pistol good balance. Since the receiver is mostly forward from the grip on both the Ruger and the Magnum Research, the pistols are muzzle heavy. Add an optic to the pistol, and the forward weight is even more noticeable.

The 6061-T6 aluminum receiver has an integral Weaver style mount machined in the top, and it was relieved of material to lessen the weight. The receiver wore a satin-stainless steel finish that was nicely executed. The trigger group was made of polymer and used a standard Ruger-style trigger with a crossbolt safety located just forward of the trigger. In rifle configuration, this safety button is easy to access with the trigger finger of a right-handed shooter. With this pistol, however, a user with average-to-smaller-size hands must break his grip to operate the safety.

The laminated wood grip/stock was smooth and felt very comfortable in shooters' hands, either firing from the one-hand or two-hand standing position or firing prone with a rest. The trigger had noticeable slack before it engaged the sear, then the pull was crisp and consistent, with a pull weight that averaged 4.2 pounds. The Picuda came with a standard flush-fit Ruger 10-shot rotary magazine. The BX-15 magazine that came with the Ruger was not compatible with the Magnum Research pistol. Only older-style Ruger magazine will work in the Picuda. The magazine release was

## MAGNUM RESEARCH PICUDA MLP-1722 22 LR, $600 (USED)

## GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

**The Picuda was well made and offered superb accuracy and great balance, but they can be hard to find used.**





**The bolt lock-back lever is similar to the Ruger 10/22.**



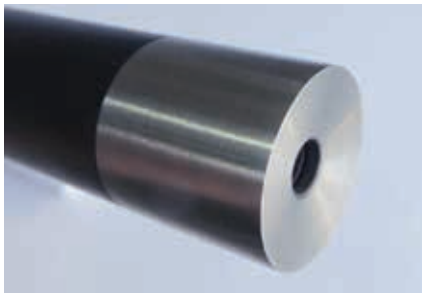
**The grip felt good in the palm and offered a high hold.**



**The Picuda was only compatible with older-style 10/22 magazines. The magazine was flush with the bottom of the pistol and not as easy to access as the Ruger's.**

**Right: The Picuda had an integral optic mount that was relieved of metal; note the large bolt handle.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Action | Blowback Semi-Auto Single Action |
| Overall Length | 19 in. |
| Overall Height | 5.75 in. |
| Maximum Width | 2.1 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 51.1 oz. |
| Weight Loaded | 56.1 oz. |
| Barrel Length | 9.3 in. |
| Barrel | Steel/graphite |
| Capacity | 10+1 |
| Bolt | Steel |
| Receiver | Aluminum Alloy |
| Grip Front Strap Height | 2.7 in. |
| Grip Back Strap Height | 3.5 in. |
| Grip/Stock | Smooth laminated wood |
| Grip Thickness (max) | 1.3 in. |
| Grip Circumference (max) | 5.3 in. |
| Front Sight | None, optic ready |
| Rear Sight | None, optic ready |
| Trigger Pull Weight (SA) | 4.2 lbs. |
| Trigger Span (SA) | 4.0 in. |
| Safeties | Trigger block |
| Warranty | NA |
| Website | MagnumResearch.com |
| Made In | U.S. |



**A stainless-steel cap sandwiched the graphite barrel sleeve at both ends.**



flush with the bottom of the pistol, and the team preferred the extended magazine release of the Ruger, since it was much easier to operate.

The bolt handle is oversized, which made it easier to operate than the small bolt handle on the Ruger and the Mossberg. It can also be locked open, another feature we liked, by pulling the bolt handle all the way rearward and pressing the bolt-lock lever built into the forward portion of the trigger guard. On the last shot the bolt does not remain open, which was a feature we would have liked.

At the range, we were quite surprised at the accuracy of this pistol. At 25 yards, some team members were able to hit pieces of broken clay pigeons with ease. Inexpensive Remington Thunderbolt ammo with a 40-grain roundnose lead bullet averaged slightly less than quarter-inch 5-shot groups at 25 yards. Most targets were one ragged hole. The other ammo tested also gave stellar groups, albeit with slightly larger groups. This gun was definitely a shooter, and when we tested it at longer ranges, the pistol continued to perform. There were no malfunctions or jams.

**Our Team Said: The Picuda is an excellent small-game-hunting firearm, plinker, and informal target pistol. But it was overpriced when compared to the other pistols. Upside: The Picuda is such a close copy of the Ruger that many aftermarket items made for the Ruger will work on the MRI handgun, so it's not quite a dead end in terms of evolution and improvement.**

### Ruger 22 Charger Pistol 4917 22 LR, $309

Opening the box containing the 22 Charger, we saw added value right away. It comes with a steel UTG adjustable bipod, carrying case, Picatinny rail mount, and BX-15 magazine. The new Charger also features a threaded barrel for use with a suppressor or flash hider, something the team appreciated. The grip is an AR-15 A2-style that is not only better suited for the rifle-to-pistol conversion, but the grip can be replaced with many aftermarket AR-15 grips. The 22 Charger comes with a nice blued finish on all metal parts — just what we expect on a 10/22. The 10-inch barrel is tapered, making the pistol less muzzle heavy. In fact, it had better balance than the Picuda. The polymer trigger group offered a good trigger with slight creep, but a consistent pull of 4.2 pounds. It also featured an extended magazine release that made reloads easier. In fact the 22 Charger was the easiest pistol of the three to reload.

The stock is made of brown laminated wood with a forward sling-swivel stud installed to attach the bipod. The forend of the stock was narrow and thin, the better to grasp, and has a coarse grooved texture. Shooting it with one hand on the pistol grip and the other grasping the forend was comfortable, and for offhand shooting, was fairly steady. The bipod could be quickly removed or attached, which was a feature we liked. The use of an A2-style grip clashed visually with the laminated wood cosmetics, but, in hand, it was something good to hold. Compared to the Magnum Research, the grip was located closer to the receiver, so balance was less muzzle heavy. The grip also allowed small-to-average-hand-size shooters the ability to operate the safety button without breaking their grips. The team liked the fact the grip could also be replaced with nearly any AR-15 aftermarket grip.

At the bench, the 22 Charger was as much of a tack driver as the Magnum Research pistol, with the difference in accuracy measured in hundreds of an inch. The bipod was handy when shooting seated at a bench or prone, and was simple and easy to remove if we wanted to shoot one- or two-handed in another position. The BX-15 magazine was also easy to load, even to the last round. Again, the 40-grain Thunderbolt rounds provided some team members with one ragged hole. Dancing a pine cone downrange or hitting bits of clay pigeons downrange was easy.

**Our Team Said: The 22 Charger offered**

### 22 LR RANGE DATA

| Remington Thunderbolt 22 LR 40-gr. RNS | Magnum Research Picuda | Ruger 22 Charger | Mossberg 715P |
|---|---|---|---|
| Average Velocity | 1058 fps | 1052 fps | 937 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 99 ft.-lbs. | 98 ft.-lbs. | 78 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 0.1 in. | 0.1 in. | 0.5 in. |
| Average Group | 0.2 in. | 0.3 in. | 0.5 in. |
| **American Eagle 22 LR 38-gr. Copper-Plated HP** | **Magnum Research Picuda** | **Ruger 22 Charger** | **Mossberg 715P** |
| Average Velocity | 1169 fps | 1183 fps | 1066 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 115 ft.-lbs. | 118 ft.-lbs. | 96 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 0.3 in. | 0.3 in. | 0.5 in. |
| Average Group | 0.4 in. | 0.4 in. | 0.8 in. |
| **CCI Mini-Mag 22 LR 40-gr. RNS** | **Magnum Research Picuda** | **Ruger 22 Charger** | **Mossberg 715P** |
| Average Velocity | 1150 fps | 1135 fps | 1085 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 117 ft.-lbs. | 114 ft.-lbs. | 96 ft.-lbs. |
| Smallest Group | 0.2 in. | 0.4 in. | 0.8 in. |
| Average Group | 0.3 in. | 0.5 in. | 0.9 in. |

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

**the most features and more value than either of the other pistols. Accuracy was excellent. The ability to customize the grip was a plus. If we could add anything to the 22 Charger, it would be some sort of lanyard loop at the rear of the wood stock so we could attach a one-point sling and shoot the pistol using the sling to steady our hold, and the sling would allow easier carry when the owner was hunting small game.**

### Mossberg International 715P Autoloading Pistol 37235 22 LR, $308

The 715P is built from the 702 rifle, which is manufactured in Brazil and imported by Mossberg International. The pistol is meant to look like an AR-15 pistol with molded charging handle, A2 grip, and rails. The 715P accomplishes this by encasing the 702 receiver and trigger mechanism, along with a 6-inch barrel, in a polymer shell. The 715P is noticeably lighter than the other two pistols and can quite easily be fired with one hand. The grip area is styled after an A2 grip and is comfortable to hold. The forend is vented with holes and features screwed on quad rails. These are not real Picatinny or even Weaver rails.

At the end of the forend, at the 6 and 12 o'clock positions, are handstops that help keep a user's hand from slipping onto the A2-style flash hider during firing. The 12 o'clock handstop also houses the front-post sight, which is adjustable for elevation similar to an AR-15/M16 A2 front sight. You will need an AR front sight adjustment tool to change elevation. The rear sight is made of polymer, with a knob to adjust windage. Knob direction is indicated, so there is no guessing. A faux Picatinny rail spanned the distance between the front and rear sights. At the very rear of the pistol is a lanyard loop so you can attach a one-point sling. To remove the receiver for maintenance from the polymer shell, 10 screws must be removed. Both the Ruger and Magnum Research Picuda require the user to remove one screw to separate the receiver from the stock.

## RUGER 22 CHARGER PISTOL 4917 22 LR, $309

## GUN TESTS GRADE: A

**Ruger definitely did a good job enhancing the new 22 Charger with more features, which make this pistol more adaptable to a variety of shooting situations.**





**The threaded muzzle allows users to attach suppressors or flash hiders easily — just screw off the cover and screw on the accessory of your choice.**



**A Picatinny rail comes mounted on the 22 Charger.**



**The A2 grip was well placed for pistol balance and could be swapped for an aftermarket grip.**



| | |
|---|---|
| Action | Blowback Semi-Auto Single Action |
| Overall Length | 19.25 in. |
| Overall Height | 6.25 in. |
| Maximum Width | 1.9 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 49.6 oz. |
| Weight Loaded | 57.1 oz. |
| Barrel | 10 in. Long; 1/2x28 Threads Matte-Black Steel; 6 Grooves, 1:16 RH Twist |
| Magazine | 15+1 BX-15 |
| Bolt | Steel |
| Receiver | Aluminum Alloy |
| Grip Front Strap Height | 2.7 in. |
| Grip Back Strap Height | 3.5 in. |
| Grip | A2-Style Polymer |
| Stock | Brown Laminate |
| Grip Thickness (max) | 1.2 in. |
| Grip Circumference (max) | 5.0 in. |
| Sights | None, Picatinny Top Rail |
| Trigger Pull Weight (SA) | 4.2 lbs. |
| Trigger Span (SA) | 2.0 in. |
| Safeties | Trigger Block |
| Warranty | None Written |
| Website | Ruger.com |
| Made In | U.S. |



**The bipod that came with the pistol was completely adjustable and easy to attach and remove.**

**Left: The forend was slim for a sure two-handed grip. It also lessened the weight of the Charger pistol.**

The mechanism works exactly like the 702 rifle and allows the bolt to be locked open. Pull rearward on the bolt handle then push it in to lock back the bolt. When the last round is fired, the magazine follower locks back the bolt, a feature some on our team liked. A trigger-block safety is located just forward of the trigger within easy reach of a right-hand shooter's trigger finger. The polymer is inset around the safety button, so the safety is not easy to knock on or off. Just forward of the safety button is an ambidextrous magazine-release lever, which is rotated downward to remove the magazine assembly. Working the lever was not as easy as with the Ruger, and was indeed a two-hand operation — one hand to rotate the lever and a second hand to remove the magazine. The magazine did not drop free, but we imagine with continued use it might.

The magazine assembly is constructed using a 702 style magazine upper section attached to a polymer lower section. The polymer section gives the 715P the appearance of being a 30-round AR-15 magazine when inserted into the pistol, while allowing the magazine to be loaded with 26 rounds. There are witness holes at 16, 20, and 26 rounds and a button to compress the magazine spring to more easily load rounds. There are actually two magazine springs; the spring depressor separates the two springs. The magazine was a breeze to load, and when inserted into the magwell, it locked with a confident click.

As we tried to mount the CenterPoint Tactical red dot with integral Picatinny mount we found that slots in the top rail were not to Picatinny specs, so we clamped the optic onto the rail much like you would to a grooved receiver. With the sight attached, we could just see the top quarter of the iron sights through the red dot. Many team members liked the 715P with the red dot, and it proved to be quite an accurate blaster. Since the sights are molded into the polymer shell, a handgun scope like the ones used on the other

## MOSSBERG INTERNATIONAL 715P AUTOLOADING PISTOL 37235 22 LR, $308

## GUN TESTS GRADE: B-

**The 715P is a fun-to-shoot plinker, but the magazine release was a two-hand operation. It has sights, but an inexpensive red dot brings out the best in this pistol.**





**The handstops at 12 and 6 o'clock help ensure the shooter's hand does not come in contact with the flash hider.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Action | Blowback Semi-Auto, Single Action |
| Overall Length | 16 in. |
| Overall Height | 9.75 in. |
| Maximum Width | 2.3 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 48 oz. |
| Weight Loaded | 61 oz. |
| Barrel Length | 6 in. |
| Barrel | Steel |
| Capacity | 26+1 |
| Bolt | Steel |
| Receiver | Aluminum Alloy |
| Grip Front Strap Height | 2.75 in. |
| Grip Back Strap Height | 3.5 in. |
| Grip | Polymer A2 Style |
| Stock | Polymer w/Rail |
| Grip Thickness (max) | 1.3 in. |
| Grip Circumference (max) | 5.0 in. |
| Front Sight | Adjustable Post |
| Rear Sight | Adjustable Aperture |
| Trigger Pull Weight (SA) | 5.1 lbs. |
| Trigger Span (SA) | 2.5 in. |
| Safeties | Trigger block |
| Warranty | 1-Year Limited |
| Website | Mossberg.com |
| Made In | Brazil |



**The magazine's top portion is steel, while the bottom portion is polymer and looks like an AR-15 30-round magazine.**



**The arrow on the bolt indicates the movement of the handle to lock the bolt to the rear.**



**Left: The ambidextrous magazine-release lever required one hand to operate, while a second hand was needed to remove the magazine; note the safety button (arrow) inset in the polymer just to the rear.**

two pistols is not a great option. The high-mounted red dot is a better choice.

At the range, we fired the 715P with both eyes open to get the full effect of the red dot. The pistol proved to be fast on target, much faster, obviously, than the magnified handgun scopes. Trade-off: Since the dot is not as refined as the crosshairs in the scopes, accuracy was not as good. "Good" is relative, since we were able to keep five-shot groups at 25 yards under an inch.

**Our Team Said: The 715P was fun to shoot, and because it looked like an AR-15 pistol, it had a definite cool factor. The price was nearly the same as the Ruger, but the Ruger offered more value, in our estimation.**

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

## VALUE GUIDE: TOP-RANKED 22 LR SEMI-AUTO RIFLES & PISTOLS

| GUN NAME | ISSUE | GRADE & COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| **High Standard Supermatic Citation 10X 22 LR, $1275** | June 2014 | **Grade A:** The 10X pistol is a high-quality competitive rimfire semi-auto that is a joy to own. |
| **Smith & Wesson Model 41 22 LR Pistol, $1000** | June 2014 | **Grade A:** The Model 41 semi-auto is renowned for its accuracy on bullseye targets. |
| **Ruger 10/22 TD Model 11100 22 LR, $389** | Aug 2012 | **Grade A:** We liked the simplicity of this rifle's easily-cared-for stock and stainless barrel. |
| **CZ USA 512 No. 02160 22 LR Rifle, $465** | April 2012 | **Grade A:** Once on the shoulder, the 512 semi-auto rifle was easy to handle and pointed quite naturally. |
| **Savage Model 64 TR SR V No. 4520022 LR Rifle, $325** | April 2012 | **Grade A:** With its sniper-style stock and low price, we found this rifle hard to resist. |
| **Remington 597 Stainless HB TVP No. 80852 22 LR, $595** | April 2012 | **Grade A:** Handsome and well balanced, this rifle was a conversation starter. |
| **Ruger 22/45 Lite No. 03900 P45MK3ALRPFL 22 LR, $499** | Feb 2014 | **Grade A-:** We liked the suppressor-mounting system on this lightweight pistol. Fun to shoot. |
| **Walther Umarex 1911 Gold Cup Trophy No. 2245708 22 LR, $455** | May 2012 | **Grade A-:** An extremely well-mannered rimfire pistol that would make a great trainer for a centerfire handgun. |
| **Ruger SR-22R No. 1226 22 LR, $625** | Feb 2010 | **Grade A-:** Putting the Ruger 10/22 and the AR-15 designs together in one rifle turned out to be a success. |
| **Colt M4 Carbine No. 2245050 22 LR, $576** | May 2010 | **Grade B+:** The Colt covers all the bases in duplicating the AR-15 experience. Trigger pull weight too heavy. |
| **Henry U.S. Survival Rifle 22 LR, $165** | March 2003 | **Grade B+:** Incredibly light. Put a decent trigger into it and stick it in your backpack. |
| **Ruger 10/22 K10/2T 22 LR Rifle, $495** | Oct 2007 | **Grade B+:** Accurate. Good, but not great, trigger. Excellent barrel. Didn't like difficult magazine extraction. |
| **Armscor AK 22 22 LR Semi-Auto Rifle, $220** | April 2006 | **Grade B+ (Buy It):** Intimidating appearance. A good, solid rimfire. AK-47 owners might upgrade this to Grade A. |
| **Legacy Sports Puma Wildcat PPS2250S 22 LR, $550** | Feb 2010 | **Grade B:** This is one of the few rifles that might sell based solely on visual or emotional appeal. |

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# 12 Gauges: Side-By-Side, Double-Barrel Pump, and Tri-Barrel Guns

*Graded as self-defense weapons and as clay-target tools, the three-barrel Chiappa would be our pick of the litter over the Silver Eagle Ptarmigan SxS and DP-12 double-barrel pumpgun.*

**Meeting** or exceeding the needs of modern day double-gun enthusiasts seems to be a driving factor in some of the recent offerings by firearm companies that stretch the bounds of innovation. Tagging along on this trek into a bold new world, we have responded to reader requests by examining three 12-gauge double-gun selections that range from old school to double gun plus to double gun on steroids. The three shotguns in this test are the TR Imports Silver Eagle side by side; the Chiappa Firearms Triple Threat three-barrel break open; and the Standard Manufacturing DP-12 double-barrel pump action. All three shotguns carry a price tag in the moderate to high price range — $1297 for the Silver Eagle; $1,599 for the Chiappa; and $1699 for the DP-12. Because they are all double guns of one sort or another, we tested them both as self-defense firearms and as possible clay busters, and we graded them for both categories in what certainly may be one of the most unusual match ups in Gun Tests history.

The distinction between a shooter's tools and a shooter's toys is sometimes hard to determine and often depends upon an individual's access to expendable income. In the arena of double-barreled shotguns, this distinction has been kicked into what some would call novelties, with the introduction of smokepoles that stretch the bounds of creativity.

The three 12-gauge shotguns we tested included a TR Imports Silver Eagle Ptarmigan side by side; a Chiappa Triple Threat three-barrel break open; and a Standard Manufacturing DP-12 double-barrel pump action. The DP-12's action was to pump once, then shoot twice.



**While the Chiappa is too short and heavy to serve as a quality clay-target shooter, it did perform well on self-defense targets, with most patterns just a little low and left. When fired like a pistol with the stock extension removed, the Chiappa was muzzle heavy and not pleasurable to shoot.**



**Ranging from a standard side-by-side Silver Eagle, right, to a three-barrel Chiappa, center, and a double pump-action DP-12 at left, these three shotguns all fit into the category of being at least "double guns" of a sort. Our evaluation pointed to the pluses and minuses of each design when tested in both self-defense and clay-target situations.**

Evaluating the shotguns, we gave equal footing for their effectiveness on both paper and clays. Admittedly, there was a little head shaking and comments of "What were they thinking?" in some cases, but each of the shotguns was treated with equal respect on the range. For our shooting evaluations, our test ammunition

included Winchester 2.75-inch Sabot Slugs pushing 400-grain slugs at 1450 fps; Royal Buck 2.75-inch loads of nine pellets of No. 00 buckshot with an average muzzle velocity of 1345 fps; and Remington ShurShot Heavy Dove 2.75-inch loads of 1 1/8 ounces of No. 6 shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,255 fps. In addition, we tested each firearm on clay targets with Nobel Low Recoil 2.75-inch loads moving 7/8 ounce of No. 8 shot at an average muzzle velocity of 1200 fps. We encountered no misfires with any of the loads, although the Silver Eagle failed to eject several of the heavy loads during the self-defense testing. Here are our findings:

### TR Imports Silver Eagle Ptarmigan Side-by-Side GH200ACE1228 12 Gauge, $1297

This is a classic-style side-by-side shotgun that can evoke memories of gentlemen and ladies hunting grouse or quail over well-trained pointers. We were a little puzzled about the depiction of gold inlaid ducks on each side of the receiver. However, we did like the looks of this double gun, and the heft, feel, and balance were quite satisfactory when engaging clays or birds. Putting it into use as a self-defense shotgun — not so much.

Sporting 28-inch barrels, with an overall length of 45.25 inches and tipping the scales at just 7.25 pounds, this Silver Eagle has the makings of a fine wingshooting tool. The splinter forearm with Schnabel tip was pleasing to the eye, but we felt the checkering was just a little to flat for our tastes. If a shooter plans to send a lot of lead down range, the barrels will become quite hot and uncomfortable without the protection of a larger forearm, so we'd advise wearing gloves during shooting sessions. We had no problems picking up clay targets over the sunken rib barrels with a single brass bead as a front sight.

A trigger pull of 6.25 pounds with both barrels was just barely in our preferred range and did not affect our shooting experience.

## TR IMPORTS SILVER EAGLE PTARMIGAN SIDE BY SIDE 12 GAUGE NO. GH200ACE1228, $1297

## GUN TESTS GRADE: D (SELF DEFENSE)

## GUN TESTS GRADE: C+ (CLAY TARGET)

**Expecting this standard double to trail in the self-defense category, we were nonetheless impressed with the buckshot groups it put on paper, but we were very disappointed in the No. 6 shot patterning. While patterning a little low left with No. 8 shot, we found it handled clay targets satisfactorily, but not great, and was a little muzzle heavy.**



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Action Type | Break Open Side by Side | Buttstock Drop @ Comb | 1.5 in. |
| Chamber Size | 2.75 to 3 in. | Buttstock Drop @ Heel | 2.5 in. |
| Overall Length | 45.25 in. | Forearm | Schnabel; Checkered Turkish Walnut |
| Capacity | 2 | Forearm Length | 9 in. |
| Weight (Unloaded) | 7.25 lbs. | Front Sight | Brass Bead |
| Weight (Loaded) | 7.5 lbs. | Rib | ⅜ in. (sunken) |
| Barrel Length | 28 in. | Trigger Pull Weight | 6.25 lbs. (Both barrels) |
| Barrel | Matte Black | Warranty | 5 Years |
| Receiver | Silver & Gold Engraved Steel | Telephone | (866) 419-6271 |
| Choke | Screw-in Internal (Cyl, IC, M, IM, F) | Website | TRImports.com |
| Buttstock | Turkish Walnut, Half Pistol Grip | Made In | Turkey |
| Buttstock Length of Pull | 14.75 in. | Imported By | TR Imports, Fort Worth |



**Comfortable to handle with crisp checkering on the pistol grip, the Ptarmigan needed a better recoil pad and less drop in the stock, in our view.**



**A splinter forearm with Schnabel tip, we liked the feel and handling ability of the grip and were able to move into the path of clay targets with ease. Like all classic double guns, the slender forearm did little to help a shooter avoid hot barrels after lengthy shooting sessions.**



**Pleasing to the eye with classic style, we liked the looks of the engraving and inlay of this side by side, designed for birds and clays rather than self defense.**



**Right: A single brass bead front sight on a sunken rib provided simple, easy target acquisition.**

As is often portrayed in Hollywood Westerns (with exposed hammers) or current-day confrontations, the hero or heroine in a movie uses what's available — i.e., a long-barreled side-by-side — to shoo off some bad actor. Better tools for the job of self defense aren't available in such settings, because it's not cinematically correct to own and know how to use the right tool for the job of protecting you, your family, or your property. We suspect such movie depictions are what lead Vice President Joe Biden to advise a couple of years ago, "… [I]f you want to protect yourself, get a double-barreled shotgun. I promise you, as I told my wife, we live in an area that's wooded and somewhat secluded. I said, 'Jill, if there's ever a problem, just walk out on the balcony here, walk out, put [up] that double-barreled shotgun and fire two blasts outside the house.'" Setting aside the legal implications of Biden's advice and looking only at the tactical considerations, Dr. Jill Biden would then be empty — lack of capacity being one of the big drawbacks of the side-by-side or over/under used for self defense. Moreover, when we looked at the Silver Eagle in this role, we found it did not pattern well with self-defense loads. While producing decent patterns with slugs (about a 7-inch group at 20 paces) and buckshot (about a 5-inch group at the same distance), both groups were unacceptably low (6 inches below the center of the target) and to the left. Changing point of impact on a side-by-side is a tricky proposition.

More disturbing, several times during the testing with the heavy self-defense loads, the Silver Eagle failed to eject the shell from the right barrel, and the hull had to be knocked out with a cleaning rod. And, the action of the side-by-side was very stiff, and unless the shotgun was closed with authority, the top lever remained slightly off center.

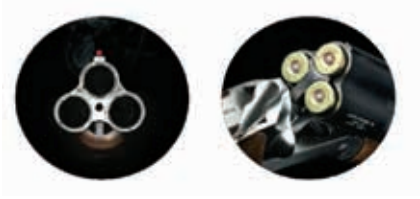
We also experienced very poor patterning results with hunting loads filled with No. 6 shot, which we fired at paper 30 yards downrange. The Improved Cylinder choke in

## CHIAPPA TRIPLE THREAT NO. 930-032
## 12 GAUGE, $1599
## GUN TESTS GRADE: B- (SELF DEFENSE)
## GUN TESTS GRADE: D (CLAY TARGET)

**The novelty of having three barrels with three different chokes will be attractive to some, but the high price tag and performance on targets beyond 20 yards just did not impress us. We found the shotgun to be too heavy and too unwieldy for anything other than close-quarter self-defense action.**



| | |
|---|---|
| Action Type | Break Open |
| Chamber Size | 2.75 to 3 in. |
| Overall Length | 36.0 in. |
| Capacity | 3 |
| Weight (Unloaded) | 8.25 lbs. |
| Weight (Loaded) | 8.5 lbs. |
| Barrel Length | 18.5 in. |
| Barrel | Matte Blue |
| Buttstock | Checkered Walnut, w/removable section for pistol grip conversion |
| Receiver | Matte Blue |
| Choke | Rem Choke, Internal (SK, IC, M, IM, F) |
| Buttstock Length of Pull | 14.75 in. |
| Buttstock Drop @ Comb | 1.5 in. |
| Buttstock Drop @ Heel | 2.25 in. |
| Forearm | Checkered Walnut |
| Forearm Length | 9 in. |
| Front Sight | Brass Bead |
| Trigger Pull Weight | 6 lbs. (All three barrels) |
| Warranty | 1 Year |
| Telephone | (937) 835-5000 |
| Website | ChiappaFirearms.com |
| Made In | Turkey |



**Here's what the front and back of the Triple Threat looks like — three tubes stacked in a triangular arrangement. Adding barrels adds weight, and this one was muzzle heavy.**





**Left: The Triple Threat can be easily converted to a pistol-grip firearm with the removal of the back 7 inches of the stock. Right: Here the stock in detail; note the metal separation band.**



**The skeletonized action lever was a nice touch, and we liked the 6-pound trigger pull, but the three-barrel is designed to always fire the right barrel, then the left, and then the top. In our view, this negates having interchangeable chokes to fire certain loads at certain times.**



**To be able to consistently get the DP-12 on target, we utilized a LaserLyte Center Mass laser sight (Model CM-K15B, $220) that would increase the already high price tag for the high-capacity self-defense pumpgun. Note the sight on the top of the Picatinny rail and an ejected shell from the bottom ejection port that has caught on the shirt of this shooter during our testing.**



**Designed like a classic side by side, the Silver Eagle handled clay targets reasonably well and was enjoyable to shoot on the clay target range. Putting the side by side through its paces on self-defense targets proved to be disappointing.**

the right barrel produced an unbalanced 26-74% top/bottom pattern, and the Modified choke in the left barrel produced an 8-92% top/bottom pattern. The No. 8 load results were slightly better, with an IC pattern of 48-52% top/bottom pattern and a Modified pattern of 25-75% top/bottom.

Once we adjusted our shooting strategy to account for the low-left-pellet patterning of the firearm, we were able to handle a variety of clay targets. But making this accommodation isn't the ideal strategy.

**Our Team Said: As expected, the TR Imports Silver Eagle Ptarmigan Side-by-Side was the best of the trio in handling clay targets. It would be moderately acceptable as a bird and clay shooter, but for self-defense, we'd only choose it as a last resort.**

### Chiappa Triple Threat Three-Barrel Break Open 930-032 12 Gauge, $1599

Three-barrel firearms are not extremely unusual, although typically two shotgun barrels will be topped with a rifled barrel rather than the three 12-gauge barrels of this model. In this case, what we found was a very muzzle heavy and short (total length was 36 inches) shotgun that packed quite a punch.

When the stock extension was removed — a rather easy process in which the recoil pad is taken off and a supplied wrench is used to loosen the retaining bolt inside the stock — we were reminded of an old John Wayne Western. In the movie El Dorado, a character named Mississippi played by James Caan is incapable of accurately firing a handgun and is given a cut-down side-by-side loaded with buckshot. That handcannon in the movie packed a punch on both ends, just like the Chiappa does when it's in "pistol" mode. The shooter may look cool carrying the device, but shooting it isn't much fun, our team said.

Ranked as reasonably attractive rather than just plain weird, we found the 8.25-pound heft of the Chiappa to be pleasant enough. However, with its 18.5-inch barrels, the muzzle-heavy shotgun was much better suited for point-and-shoot targets rather than for clays in the air. It handled like a club, in our estimation.

The trigger pull on all three barrels was an acceptable 6 pounds. As advertised, the three-barrel shotgun always fires the right barrel, then the left, and then the top. It is impossible to touch off all three rounds at one time — a good thing — but the fixed sequence negates any possible choke selection that would allow a shooter to put different loads into play in a different order.

We found the shotgun was designed well and functioned every time. Recoil was slightly mitigated by the weight of the shotgun when fired from the shoulder, but we would have preferred a better recoil pad.

Patterning performance with the self-defense loads was marginal. Consistent groups of about 5 inches in diameter with the slugs and about 6 inches from center to center with the buckshot at 20 paces were slightly low left of the middle of the targets.

With the No. 6–shot loads at 30 yards, the top barrel produced a 56-44% pattern (56% above the center and 44% below); but the right barrel results were 29-71% and the left barrel results were 25-75%. Shots with No. 8 loads were consistently about 48-52% for all three barrels.

Unfortunately for the shooters testing the Chiappa, its short length and heavy weight were not conducive to consistent clay-target busting. We could not swing the heavy three-barrel gun satisfactorily.

**Our Team Said: The plus of having a reliable third shot, based on the assumption that a pump-action or semi-automatic may fail to function at the wrong time, would have to be balanced against the heft and cost of this three-barrel firearm. We found the shotgun to be an acceptable, yet heavy, self-defense tool that has limited clay-target-breaking capabilities.**

### Standard Manufacturing DP-12 Double Barreled Pump-Action 12 Gauge, $1699

At first glance, one of our test team shooters described the DP-12 as a "double gun on steroids," and we had to agree that he was right. This high-capacity shotgun

would fit right in with the weapons featured in video games or movies depicting combat scenarios of the future.

Designed as a bullpup, the DP-12 is 29.5 inches long with a thermal-coated aircraft-grade aluminum receiver, Picatinny rails for sights and accessories, and a capacity of 14 rounds in the magazines, plus two in the chambers. In theory, the shooter can send a lot of lead downrange quick, fast, and in a hurry.

However, we found that the addition of the provided pistol grip on the forearm was absolutely necessary for quick and effective cycling of the pump action. Without the pistol grip, the forearm was too large and uncomfortable to hold, in the opinion of our shooters.

The two 18.9-inch barrels are mounted side by side and the firing sequence is always right barrel then left barrel. There's no selector switch. We noted that if the ambidextrous AR-style safety is put in Fire mode and one barrel is touched off, the safety cannot be reengaged until both the fired and unfired shells are ejected or the second shot is fired. This must be a design requirement to make sure the right barrel always fires first, but we were uncomfortable with the feature of carrying a loaded firearm off safety or having to eject a live round to make the shotgun safe.

To load the DP-12, move the forend and slide assembly forward. Slide the action closed with chambers empty so that the bolt sled will aid in locating the ammunition. The tubular magazines can be filled simultaneously by using two fingers while the firearm is stable, upside down, and pointed in a safe direction. Turn the gun so the loading ports on bottom behind the trigger guard are facing upward. With fingers on the base of the round(s), insert the round(s) into the loading/ejection port and slide the round(s) into the magazine using your fingers. The rounds should slide under and should be held in place by the magazine hooks. The magazine hooks must be pulled up to manually release shells

## STANDARD MANUFACTURING DP-12 NO. DP01130 PUMP-ACTION 12 GAUGE, $1700

## GUN TESTS GRADE: C (SELF DEFENSE)

## GUN TESTS GRADE: F (CLAY TARGET)

**This shotgun brings a hefty amount of firepower into a potential fight, but we found the unique double pump to be too heavy, too unwieldy, too hard to put on target, and too pricey. It's a high-priced toy rather than a high-performance shooting tool.**



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Action Type | Pump | Buttstock Length of Pull | 14.25 in. |
| Chamber Size | 2.75 to 3 in. | Buttstock Drop @ Comb | None |
| Overall Length | 29.5 in. | Buttstock Drop @ Heel | None |
| Capacity | 14+2 | Forearm | Black Synthetic with Pistol Grip |
| Weight (Unloaded) | 10.25 lbs. | Forearm Length | 10 in. |
| Weight (Loaded) | 12.0 lbs. | Sights | None |
| Barrel Length | 18.9 in. | Picatinny Rails | Yes |
| Barrel | Matte Black | Trigger Pull Weight | 10.0 lbs. (both barrels) |
| Receiver | Thermal Coated Aircraft Grade Aluminum | Warranty | 1 Year |
| | | Telephone | (860) 225-6581 |
| Choke | Screw-in, Max Spread | Website | STDGun.com |
| Buttstock | Black Synthetic with Pistol Grip | Made In | U.S. |



**Two Max Spread chokes on the double barreled pump did open up the pattern with both buckshot and birdshot, although all patterns were very high. Close-range encounters using buckshot or slugs proved to be the best shooting situation for the firearm.**



**Above: The ambidextrous AR-type safety, right arrow, was easy to use, though we noted the safety could not be reengaged unless both barrels had been fired. The action-release lever on the front of the trigger guard (left arrow) took time to master, but functioned well.**

**We found that without the pistol grip added onto the forearm, the double pump was uncomfortable to cycle because the Picatinny rail on the bottom of the 3.5-inch wide forearm dug into the shooter's hand. With the pistol grip on, pumping the shotgun was simple and easy.**



## VALUE GUIDE: GRADE 'A' SHOTGUNS (ALL TYPES & GAUGES)

| GUN NAME | ISSUE | GRADE & COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|
| **Beretta A400 Xplore J40AA88 28 Ga. Semi-Auto, $1550** | May 2015 | **Grade A:** Very responsive with rapid cycling, this handsome shotgun was a pleasure to shoot. |
| **Remington 870 Express Tactical Pump 81200 12 Gauge, $442** | Feb 2015 | **Grade A:** The 18.5-inch barrel handled quickly in close quarters with both buckshot loads and full-power loads. |
| **Browning Citori Model 725 20 Ga. O/U 0135306005, $2470** | Jan 2015 | **Grade A:** Handles well and patterns like a dream. |
| **Stevens M320 Home Defense No. 19495 Pump 12 Gauge, $270** | Oct 2013 | **Grade A:** Inexpensive; we could find no fault in it as an effective self-defense tool. |
| **Benelli Ultralight No. 10802 12 Gauge Semi-Auto, $1649** | Feb 2013 | **Grade A:** This one is an easy winner as a field gun or as an all-round pick. |
| **Remington M1100 Sporting 25315 12 Ga. Semi-Auto, $1211** | Feb 2013 | **Grade A:** Proven workhorse, and it's our pick for the competition fields. |
| **Benelli Ultralight Semi-Auto 28 Gauge, $1760** | Dec 2012 | **Grade A:** Fine choice for youngsters or women; seasoned veterans will also like this light, quick shotgun. |
| **CZ-USA M720 06039 Semi-Auto 20 Ga. Reduced Length, $499** | Oct 2012 | **Grade A:** It would be difficult for us to name a better first shotgun for beginning shooters. |
| **Browning Citori XS Sporting 12 Ga. Over/Under, $2120 (used)** | April 2012 | **Grade A:** Pleasure to shoot and handle. This used gun costs less and is a real bargain. |
| **Mossberg 500 No. 55216 Pump Turkey Thug 12 Gauge, $409** | March 2012 | **Grade A:** This style of shotgun stock is what old-school shooters cut their teeth on, and it is still effective today. |
| **H&R Pardner 12 Gauge Pump NPI2C8, $200** | Aug 2010 | **Grade A:** Has good features for the price. Fit was tight and the ability to mount a scope helpful. |
| **Browning Maxus Stalker 011600204 12 Ga., $1379** | Dec 2009 | **Grade A:** The semi-auto Maxus is the most versatile shotgun Browning has ever made. |
| **Benelli SuperNova Pump 20115 3.5-inch 12 Ga., $599** | Dec 2009 | **Grade A:** The Benelli SuperNova is a superb shotgun for waterfowling, one of the best pumps we have seen. |
| **Browning Silver Hunter Twenty 011350605 3-in. 20 Ga., $1079** | Dec 2009 | **Grade A:** The frosted, matte finish didn't distract; the semi-auto Browning properly ejected every shell we fed it. |
| **Caesar Guerini Tempio 3-inch 12 Gauge Over/Under, $3195** | Oct 2009 | **Grade A:** The more you walk, the more you'll opt for the Guerini. Three free service trips, lifetime warranty. |
| **Beretta AL391 Urika 2 Gold J39TB18 12 Ga. $1550** | Aug 2009 | **Grade A:** This 3-inch semi-auto proved reliable; it kept going with no cleaning even after a thousand rounds. |
| **Taurus Judge 4510TKR-3BUL 45 LC/410-Bore Revolver, $620** | Aug 2009 | **Grade A:** It is a very handy, easily carried revolver that did exactly what it was supposed to do. |

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from the magazine tubes.

The magazines may be filled to capacity with seven, or fewer, 2.75-inch shotshells in each tube. To load the chambers, pull down the action bar release on the trigger guard and maintain downward pressure to unlock forend. As the company notes in the manual, do not hold the forend behind the Picatinny rail — doing so will short-stroke the action and pinch your hand.

Also, the procedure for loading a shell directly into the chamber of the DP-12 is different than most other shotguns because of the combined loading and ejection port. To load a shell into the chamber of the DP-12, use the following procedure:

Ensure the muzzle is pointed in a safe direction before loading. Engage the safety by ensuring the pointer is selecting Safe. Pull down the action bar lock and maintain downward pressure to unlock the forend. Move the forend so that it is about a half-inch from the rearmost position. Inspect that the shell lifters are down against the top of the receiver and are not blocking access to the chamber. Place a shell or two shells in the chamber(s) and cycle the action forward to chamber the inserted shells. Move the forend fully rearward and then fully forward to chamber two rounds from the magazine tubes, one in each barrel. The gun is now ready to fire with the safety on. One round may now be placed into each of the magazine tubes to replace the two that have been chambered.

Tipping the scales at 10.25 pounds unloaded and 12 pounds with 16 rounds in the magazines and chambers, this is a heavy and bulky firearm whose firepower feature dominates any favorable handling factors. We could pump out a lot of lead downrange, but it was not a pleasant experience.

Fired at targets simulating self-defense situations, the DP-12 produced groups of about 5 inches across with both slugs and buckshot when a LaserLyte Center Mass laser sight (Model CM-K15B, $220) was added to the top Picatinny rail. Without the rail, the accuracy of the DP-12 was poor at 20 yards and embarrassing at 30 yards.



**The DP-12 bullpup-style shotgun featured a short, flat stock that did little to absorb recoil. Its bottom-ejection spit empty hulls down the shirt of our test shooters.**

A trigger-pull weight of 10 pounds for each barrel was also very disappointing. When the pull is that heavy, there is almost no possibility of a smooth touch off on any type of target.

With both the No. 6 and No. 8 loads, patterning results with the DP-12 were dismal. The right barrel produced only 63 pellet hits with the No. 6 shot, all well above the center of the target at 30 yards. The left barrel punched 123 pellets through the paper with a 75/25 spread.

Results with the No. 8 loads were nearly as bad, with an average pattern of 80-20 and 182 pellet hits. That could go a long way toward explaining the shotgun's complete failure on the clay target course. Admittedly, this weapon was never designed for clay target shooting, but if a product is introduced to the double gun market, it seems to us that it should have some features that would apply in all double-gun scenarios.

**Our Team Said: Taking a wallet hit of about $1,700 for a bulky, high-capacity shotgun that would be an extreme overkill of firepower in most self-defense situations seems to be unjustified, in our opinion. However, if you are that someone with a lot of expendable income interested in a multi-shot blaster rather than a fine shooting tool, the DP-12 could be your new toy.**

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

# Henry v. Winchester Leverguns: Two 44-40s Take Us Way Back

*We took a Henry Original Rifle and compared it to a Winchester 1892 Limited Takedown, both chambered in this venerable cartridge suitable for rifles and pistols. Result: A lot of fun.*

The original Henry rifle saw the light of day in 1860. It was an invention of B. Tyler Henry, who was hired by Oliver Winchester around the time the company took the name of New Haven Arms Co. Before that, the company, in which Mr. Winchester owned much of the stock, was named Volcanic Arms Co., and included both Mr. Smith and Mr. Wesson. Due to financial problems, the control of the Volcanic company passed to Mr. Winchester, who was a majority stock holder. Marketing of the 15-shot repeating Henry began in 1862, and quite a few were sold to soldiers of the Civil War. Most of the Henry rifles had brass frames, but some were of iron. The Henry rifle took a rimfire 44-caliber cartridge, known as the 44 Henry Flat, that fired a 200-grain or, slightly later, 216-grain bullet at about 1100 fps. The later bullet had a larger flat area on the nose. After the Civil War, the Henry rifle was redesigned into the side-loading 1866, the first rifle to carry the Winchester name. It again generally had a brass frame and used the 44 rimfire cartridge. Then came the 1873 Winchester and with it, the rimfire cartridge gave way to the 44-40 centerfire. A few revolvers, including the 1873 Colt Peacemaker, were chambered for the 44 rimfire, and once the idea of one cartridge for both long and short guns caught on, a great many period revolvers were chambered for the 44-40, originally a rifle cartridge. Having his sidearm and long gun in the same caliber was mighty handy when you were a long way from nowhere, much less any supply center. Neither the 44 Henry nor the 44-40 cartridge was suitable for buffalo, but did good work on deer and similar-size targets.

To see how these historical rifles and cartridges fare today, we got the loan of a new, U.S.–made Henry rifle and also a new Japanese-made Winchester 1892, both in 44-40 WCF. We tested them with a Black Hills Cowboy Action load, a 200-grain round-nose soft point. Here's what we found.



**Right: The Winchester 1892, left, was much shorter and lighter than the Henry. Both were close approximations to top-of-the-line rifles from the 19th century. They were a lot of fun, but our nod went to the Japanese Winchester as being the better-done of these relatively costly rifles.**

### Henry Original Rifle
### Model H011 44-40 WCF, $2300

This rifle presented us with a lovely, flat, polished-brass surface



**Bottom: The muzzles tell the story. The Miroku-Winchester 1892 on the left has an octagonal barrel. It has sharp edges and flat flats. The finish is dull, yet shiny enough to look like rust bluing. The Henry on the right was buffed so much the flats of the octagonal portion of the barrel were nearly round. The joint where the front of the barrel twists to the side has a bad and unsightly depression from excess buffing. Making the barrel shiny at the cost of the overall look of the rifle was, we thought, a huge blunder, and many of us would not buy this rifle because of it. You might like that glassy shine. We don't. It's all wrong.**

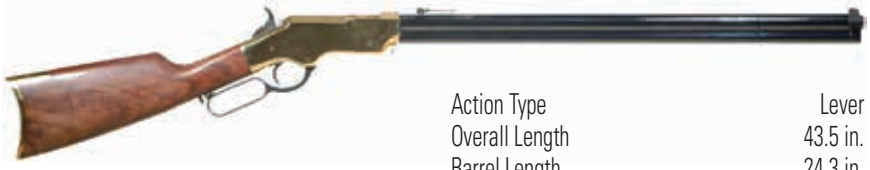
on its nicely made action. The brass was glossy as a mirror, well protected in the box against marring. The highly polished, deep blue of the barrel made a nice, if inappropriate, contrast, and the walnut of the short stock was a really decent chunk of wood. The crescent butt plate was also brass, as was the magazine follower. The lever was blued steel as was its lock. There was a trap door in the butt with a hole 7.5 inches deep, big enough to hold a bunch of cartridges or what-have-you. While the overall look of the Henry Original lever-action rifle was eye-catching, it could have been a whole lot better looking, we thought.

The biggest problem was the octagonal barrel, and we eventually decided we could not live with it. All its corners were so badly buffed that it was nearly round in some places. The flats of the barrel were anything but flat. Compared to originals, or to the Winchester 1892 against which we tested this rifle, or to the Uberti Henry version that sells for $900 less, this barrel looked like a reblue done by an amateur home gunsmith with access to a powerful buffing wheel and very little skill in its use. The rounded, dished edges were also glaringly apparent between the barrel proper and the rotating five inches of the barrel up front, the edges dipping inward toward the separation point, emphasizing it. The steel was all polished like a mirror, but that's all wrong. Originals would have been rust blued, which imparts a dull but rich look. To look right, each of the five remaining sides of the octagonal barrel should have been dead flat, the edges between flats quite sharp, and the bluing should have been a good deal less shiny. We thought the barrel treatment was a tragedy because a great deal of effort went into making this an extremely close copy of an original Henry in look, operation, barrel length, stock and action configuration, and sights.

The magazine is integral with the barrel. The bottom of the magazine is slotted full-length for the cartridge follower. The inletting, what little of it there is, is excellent. If someone

## HENRY ORIGINAL RIFLE MODEL H011
## 44-40 WCF, $2300
## GUN TESTS GRADE: C

**Not small or light, the Henry weighed 10 pounds fully loaded and measured almost 44 inches in length. Made in the USA, it offered a good piece of history, but we thought it could have looked a lot better.**





**The entire front five inches of the Henry's barrel twists to the side to permit loading the 13 rounds. The mechanism was stiff at first, but got better with use. The instructions did not tell how to open this — an important omission, in our opinion.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Action Type | Lever |
| Overall Length | 43.5 in. |
| Barrel Length | 24.3 in. |
| Sight Radius | 21.6 in. |
| Overall Height | 8.0 in. |
| Stock Length of Pull | 13.3 in. |
| Weight Unloaded | 9.4 lbs. |
| Weight Loaded | 10.0 lbs. |
| Capacity | 13 |
| Action Finish | Polished Brass |
| Barrel Finish | Glossy Blued |
| Magazine Type | Tubular, Integral |
| Stock | Walnut |
| Trigger Pull Weight | 9.6 lbs. |
| Warranty | Limited Lifetime |
| Telephone | (201) 858-4400 |
| Website | HenryRifles.com |
| Made In | U.S. |



**The makers went to a lot of trouble to get the Henry just right. The contours, materials, function, and even the sights are pretty close to how they were in 1860. That's not an easy task. The brass was flat, strong, and perfectly polished.**



**The trap in the butt was deep and would hold lots of stuff. All brass, it was well fitted. The wood was great, too.**





**Right: The sights on the Henry were excellent by comparison to those on the Winchester. They were also pretty much on the money, which is good because they're not easily adjustable. The lovely ladder rear sight was correct for the rifle, and would provide lots of fun on distant targets.**

### 44-40 WCF LUGER RANGE DATA

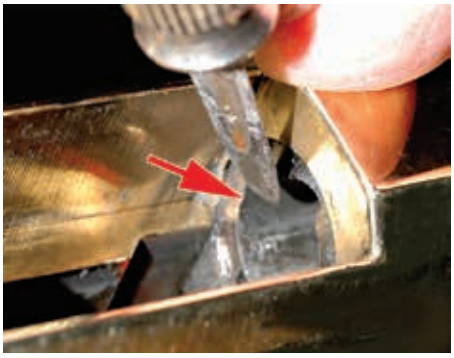
| Black Hills 44-40 200-gr. RNSP Lead | Henry Original | Winchester 1892 Takedown |
|---|---|---|
| Average Velocity | 1195 fps | 1125 fps |
| Muzzle Energy | 634 ft.-lbs. | 562 ft.-lbs. |
| Average Group | 1.5 in. | 1.8 in. |

*Muzzle velocity was recorded at 10 feet using an Oehler 35P chronograph with proof channel. We fired three-shot groups at 50 yards from a machine rest.*

***Ammunition Source:*** *Black Hills Cowboy Action Ammunition 44-40 WCF 200-Grain Lead Flat Nose DCB4440N1 (MidwayUSA.com #216128 $40.90/50).*



**This is why you don't want to let the magazine follower fly down on the loaded rounds. This was our mistake in the Henry. The bullet was driven fully into the case from the impact of the follower. Don't shoot these!**



**We found a burr around the entry to the chamber, and removed it with a scraper. It didn't seem to help the sticky loading, which eventually went nearly away.**

wanted to spend more time and effort on this already somewhat costly rifle, he could draw file the barrel flats, and then rust blue the steel parts. If one goes to all that trouble, he might consider getting the receiver engraved, something like the 1-of-1000 version of this rifle ($3500). And if one goes to all that trouble, the finish on the excellent wood can be scraped off and the wood can be given a decent oil finish. What's on there does not bring out all the fine wood has to offer (it looks milky in some light), though it protects it quite well. We believe that because Henry Rifles went to the extreme trouble to make this rifle within the U.S., they also ought to have figured out how to make the barrel look right.

One of our staff owned an original 1873 Winchester octagonal-barrel rifle made in 1875, in pristine condition. It looked fabulous, and that's what Henry needs to do with this rifle. Of course the modern owner can just overlook this history and enjoy shooting this rifle.

The Henry instruction manual is one of the worst we've seen. The rifle came with both a written manual and a disk that you stick in your computer to find out how to disassemble and reassemble your rifle. But what if you don't have a computer? What if the disk is broken, as ours was? The flimsy little disk got shattered into several pieces before we could use it, so it was entirely useless. The written manual needs to contain all the instructions on loading and unloading, and any disassembly notes for the rifle that anyone might ever need, never mind what's on the disk. The manual did not have that information. How do you open the magazine? Not in there. Did the rifle's lever need to be open or closed during that process? Not clearly spelled out. We read through the foggy manual and eventually found out how to open the magazine, but what about the proper lever position during loading? The last sentence in Step 1 of the loading procedure: "Do not push the loading lever forward." Okay, that means it has to remain closed, essentially in the firing position, during the loading operation. But wait! The first sentence in Step 2 of the loading procedure is: "First make sure the loading lever is fully forward." Huh?

Because we understand the operation of such firearms, it was easy for us to understand that yes, the lever could be in the fully open position, all the way forward, to load the rifle. That will keep the first round out of the carrier until the lever is closed. But with the bolt closed, the first round will go into the carrier, ready and waiting for the first cycle of the lever. Bottom line, it does not seem to matter what position the lever is in during the loading process. In either case the rifle's chamber will not be loaded until the loading lever passes through one full cycle. If the lever is fully open when you load the magazine, the carrier stays empty. The lever can simply be closed without picking up the first cartridge. With the lever closed, the carrier will receive the first cartridge you put into the rifle, but it won't raise that cartridge up to the chamber until you move the lever fully open and close it again. You can load one more round into the magazine by leaving the lever closed during the charging process. Further, with the lever left closed, the hammer is not cocked and doesn't have to be lowered if you want to carry the rifle with the magazine loaded and the chamber empty. We were able to load 13 rounds into the magazine. Another round could be stuck into the chamber to make it 14, but we didn't like that idea because it puts your hands at the front of the rifle with a round all ready to go in the chamber.

But how do you get the magazine open to load your rounds? The forward five inches of barrel is actually a collar that pivots to the side, which opens the magazine tube for the insertion of cartridges. The instructions did not tell us how to pivot the collar to the side, not in so many words. Here's how: There's a

brass magazine follower driven by a long spring within the magazine tube. With the rifle empty, this brass piece sits just in front of the action. To open the magazine, first make sure the rifle is empty of all live cartridges by cycling the lever carefully to eject each round. Your hands will be near or in front of the muzzle during the loading procedure, so you don't want any rounds in the rifle. Then pull that brass follower all the way to the muzzle and, as we found, use great strength and lots of wiggling to finally force the carrier a little farther toward the muzzle so the forward five inches of the muzzle can be pivoted to the side. This reveals the open end of the magazine tube, into which you put your cartridges. Our rifle's magazine-opening operation was exceedingly stiff at first. We worked it time and again, and finally it started to work more easily, as the burrs or whatever was in there got worn down. With the magazine open, put your desired number of rounds into the magazine, and it's a good idea to tip the rifle so they slide down easily instead of dropping full-length against the previous round's nose. Be sure to use only flat-nose bullets.

Once you have all the desired cartridges into the magazine, control the follower with your thumb and twist the muzzle extension back into line and gently ease the follower down to rest on the nose of the last cartridge in the magazine. We had a slip during early testing, and the follower slammed down onto the last of four cartridges in the magazine. The force drove the bullet into the cartridge case. At the very least this would raise pressure, but could also cause a nasty jam if you loaded another few rounds on top of the damaged one. The damaged round did not feed easily, so it had to be coaxed into the chamber and then ejected back out.

On the range we found the Henry's feeding to be sticky. Closing the lever the last little bit took some force. That got better as we went along. Also, more to the point, the feeding was entirely smooth with a

## WINCHESTER 1892 LIMITED SERIES DELUXE TAKEDOWN 534154140 44-40 WCF, $1900

### GUN TESTS GRADE: A

**We were impressed with Miroku's rendering of the Winchester. There was little wrong with it. It had good wood, excellent workmanship, and it worked. If you can find one, buy it.**



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall Length | 38.0 in. | Action Type | Lever |
| Barrel Length | 20 in. | Barrel Finish | Blued |
| Sight Radius | 16.1 in. | Magazine Type | Tubular |
| Overall Height | 6 in. | Stock | Walnut |
| Stock Length of Pull | 13.0 in. | Trigger Pull Weight | 5.6 lbs. |
| Weight Unloaded | 6.8 lbs. | Warranty | None Written |
| Weight Loaded | 7.3 lbs. | Telephone | (800) 322-4626 |
| Capacity | 9+1 | Website | WinchesterGuns.com |
| Action Finish | Blued | Made In | Japan |

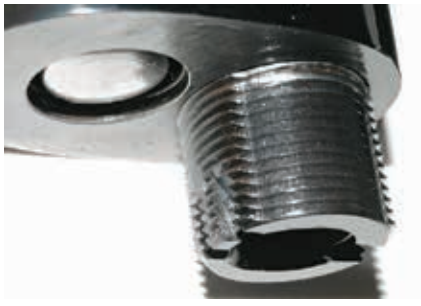


**The lever at the front of the magazine tube swings out from its notch under the barrel. This is the first step in taking the rifle down into its two major components. Unscrew the lever five or more turns to finish taking the rifle down.**



**Be sure to cock the lever before trying to unscrew the barrel from the action. Note that the unscrewed tube protrudes past the muzzle. This takedown feature makes for easy transportation and storage, not to mention much easier cleaning. Black-powder shooters will appreciate the ability to easily clean the barrel.**





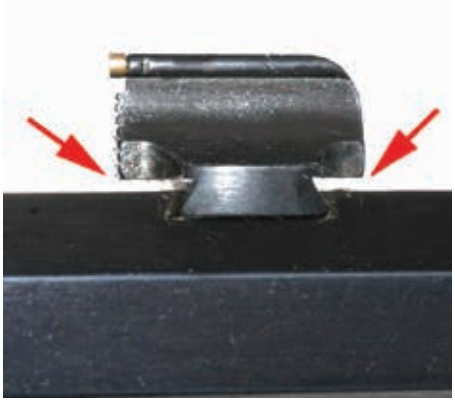
**Left: The mating surfaces on the Winchester's takedown area were well made. The rifle locked together with no motion. The sights were both mounted on the barrel, so the rifle always retains its accuracy. Right: The simple interrupted thread of the barrel joint makes for easy takedown. The barrel is rotated only 90 degrees to get it apart. It's important to read the excellent manual for details.**



**The 1892 had a capacity of 9+1 rounds. There was a good tang safety for safe operation of the hammer and for unloading the rifle.**



**The 1892's checkering was machine done and excellent in appearance. The walnut was also high quality. Lockup was tight, too.**



**Would you like this sight on a rifle costing nearly two grand? No, neither would we. If the front were lower, the rear sight would not have had to be raised so high to center the hits.**



**This sight shouldn't appear on such a fine rifle as the 1892, never mind that it might be correct for the period. Get something better!**

different batch of the same ammo, so the problem seems to have been due to a cartridge-length variance. The rounds lifted into line with the chamber easily, but during the final closing of the lever, the lever was sometimes reluctant to go all the way home. We found a razor-sharp burr on the back of the chamber, which might have interfered with the headspace enough to cause stickiness. We deburred the sharp edge, but didn't notice a significant change. We encountered this occasional stickiness as the carrier was being driven downward during the last bit of lever movement. As noted, ongoing use tended to smooth it up, and by the end of our testing it was a minor issue.

On the range, our first three shots at 25 yards to verify the sights put two shots nearly touching and a third about 2.5 inches away. The hits were two inches high and two inches left. A tap or two on the rear sight slid it in its dovetail enough to get the hits centered. From the machine rest at 50 yards, the Henry put its three-shot groups into 1.5 inches on average. The trigger was extremely stiff at 9.6 pounds and with a slight touch of creep. We wanted it a lot lighter. Our hits at 50 yards were about three inches above the point of aim, which we thought was close enough. There is no manual adjustment for elevation on the normal leaf, but the rear sight rotated to present an adjustable ladder sight for extreme distance. This would be fun at some shoots that have an optional distant target for extra points.

**Our Team Said: While this rifle is not inexpensive, we believe many will like it for Cowboy Action shooting, or to just have something a little bit different from all the other rifles in one's collection. Accuracy was entirely adequate, we thought, the limit being the sights and the shooter's eyes. We suggest a heavy coat of wax be applied to the brass bits because the balance point puts the forward part of the receiver in one's hand, and the shiny brass won't stay shiny long with normal abrasion from carrying the rifle. Overall, we'd give this rifle a C grade. We personally would not buy it. Henry needs desperately to fix the awful barrel polishing, reduce the trigger pull by half, and fix the poor owner's manual. We'd give them an A+ for the concept of recreating an historic all-American rifle within the U.S. Now it needs to be done right.**

**Winchester 1892**
**Limited Series Deluxe**
**Takedown 534154140**
**44-40 WCF, $1900**

Our sources say only 500 of these were made in this caliber in 2008, and a further 500 in 45 LC, so the price is relatively moot. We found one for sale on GunsInternational.com for $1865, and found a recent sale of one NIB on GunsAmerica.com for $1695. If you want one and can find one, pay what's demanded and be glad you have it.

The test rifle had a 20-inch octagonal barrel with flats like the Henry ought to have had, and a dull finish that resembles rust bluing. Made by Miroku in Japan, the Winchester gives good evidence the Japanese do a far better job of octagonal-barrel rifle finishing than comparable U.S. companies. To wit: the flats are dead flat, no waviness end for end, and the corners between the flats are as sharp as they need to be for best appearance. The bluing is not shiny but not dull, actually a close approximation to early rust bluing. The barrel flats are, however, blemished with the impressed stamping of the rifle name, caliber designation, company name, trademark notice, and importer's name. They might as well have included the names of Oliver Winchester, his grandmother, his dog, where he is buried, and his phone number. All of that stuff does not belong on the barrel, ruining the appearance of an otherwise classy rifle. If importation demands it, hide it somewhere.

Inletting, metal and wood work, polishing and bluing were all first class. The wood, however, had a milky look in some light, as did the Henry. However, there was no open grain, and the finish was both dull and hard, offering great protection

to the rifle. One problem with non-oil modern finishes is that once the finish is indeed marred, it's difficult to hide the marring. With an oiled stock, marring is much easier, and the dent might remain, but a wipe with linseed oil will take care of the overall looks quickly and easily.

This rifle had a nice feature in the form of a tang safety that blocked the hammer from going all the way forward. Some of us didn't like it because it might induce the hunter to carry the rifle with the hammer cocked and the safety on. We believe the hammer ought to be down until you're ready to shoot. Cocking it as the rifle is brought to the shoulder is easy and noiseless, and just as fast as shoving the tang safety forward. The hammer cannot strike the firing pin unless the trigger is pulled, so carrying the rifle with a round in the chamber and the hammer down is entirely safe. The tang safety can well be used after chambering a round and before lowering the hammer. Another good use is to keep the tang safety in the safe position when you need to cycle live rounds out of the rifle to unload it.

The rear sight was the dreadful early buckhorn style. Even the original (ca. 1862) Henry rifles had a superior rear sight. This one blocks too much of the landscape, and though it might be original, enough of the rest of the rifle is not original, so why not put a decent rear sight on it? Windage was by drifting, as on the Henry, and elevation was by a wedge. The front bead had a gold insert. The front blade was fitted in a dovetail, but it didn't match the barrel height. The front and rear of the front sight hung in the breeze, quite slipshod in appearance. A rifle costing nearly $2000 ought to have a better-fitting front-sight blade. They might cost all of 50 cents when bought in bulk. The makers clearly used what they had on hand instead of a sight made specifically for this rifle.

The stock wood was of excellent-quality walnut, and it had a semi-pistol grip that we liked. It gave good control of the rifle. The checkering was attractive and functional. The action was smooth and it locked tightly, our inspection showed.



**We would prefer the lighter, shorter Winchester over the heavy Henry. However, the Henry is a current production gun, and the Winchester 1892 Deluxe Takedowns were a limited run, so they can be hard to find.**

Now, then, how do we take the rifle down? Read the excellent manual that comes with the rifle first, and all will be answered. The short version: Unload the rifle, fully open the lever, drop down the little lever under the muzzle, and unscrew the magazine from the rifle at least five full turns. Then grasp the barrel and action at the splitting point and unscrew it a quarter turn. Carefully remove the forward part and don't bang up the interrupted thread that holds it together. Such a design on a lever rifle makes keeping the barrel clean a lot easier. To put it back together, reverse the process. Remember that the little lever at the end of the magazine tube fits into a notch under the barrel, so take care to line it up and don't force it, and that notch will stay pristine a long time.

We wiped the rifle inside and out with oil, per the instructions, to rid it of preservative, and took it to the range. There we discovered a very smooth rifle with a far better trigger than on the Henry. However, the sights were just as hard to see, and though we got some decent groups, we feel that the eyesight of the shooter and lighting conditions will affect the proven accuracy as much as any variance in ammo types. Our Winchester averaged 1.8-inch groups. We had to raise the rear sight significantly, to the second notch of five, to get our hits centered at 50 yards. With the sight all the way down, the shots landed a good nine inches low. Windage was perfect.

**Our Team Said: We much preferred the feel and balance of the Winchester to that of the Henry, much as, we suppose, Western cowboys and travelers preferred it when both rifles were essentially new to the world. We would prefer the Winchester over the heavy Henry with its earlier design, but both worked in outstanding manners to capture the spirit of the old West. If we were going Cowboy Action shooting we'd surely acquire one of the Winchesters over the Henry. No, it's not quite as much a chunk of history, but it's a great little rifle. That means it weighs a lot less than the Henry, and was far more lively. We'd certainly change that rear sight, and we might also put a post instead of a bead up front, but that's a personal preference. We'd buy the 1892 in a heartbeat.**

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

# Walther Makes First 45 ACP Pistol

*New to the Walther line of pistols is the PPQ 45 Auto.*

**Walther's** new PPQ in 45 ACP is the first true production Walther in that chambering in the company's history, Walther says. The gun is equipped with the Carl Walther quick defense trigger, traditional front and rear slide serrations, and ambidextrous controls like other PPQs. The PPQ 45 Auto will hit the market and be available in retail stores on October 1, 2015.

Cyndi Flannigan, Walther Arms' vice president of sales and marketing, says of the new pistol, "This new caliber and product offering is a benchmark for Walther and the PPQ. We have built it to the same exact German standards that have made this model so well received, and it is a superior choice for home defense and personal protection." We'll soon see about that.

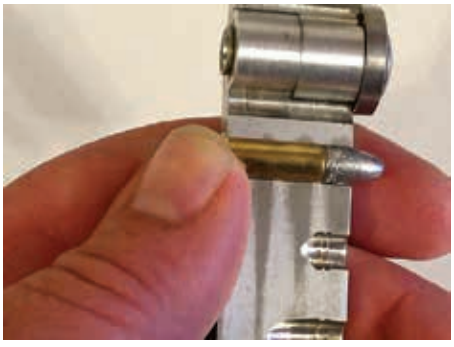
The PPQ 45 is a striker-fired polymer-frame pistol with a factory-claimed 5.6-pound trigger. If that proves to be true, it will be one of the better out-of-the-box triggers we've tested. The new PPQ 45 has three safeties, a mil-spec Picatinny rail, an overall length of 7.4 inches, a magazine capacity of 12 rounds, and a polygonal-rifled 4.25-inch barrel.



### Handloading 22 LR Kit

Up until recently, 22 Long Rifle ammunition has been hard to find and expensive, so a company created the Sharpshooter's 22 Reloader kit that supposedly allows you to load your own 22 Long Rifle ammo and lower your cost to about 80 cents per box of 50, or $8 per brick.



The Sharpshooter reloader kit includes a tool to cast, cut, and crimp your 22 Long Rifle ammo. Additional tools include the primer cleaner and packer, primer funnel, measuring tool, and eyedropper. They also sell priming compound, or they show you how to make your own using matches or capgun materials.

For more information, visit 22LRreloader.com. If you've used the kit, please send us an email and let us know how you like it.

### Turnbull Announces New 1911 Commander Heritage Pistol

Turnbull Restoration & Manufacturing Co. of Bloomfield, New York will have a new pistol in the lineup for 2016. The Turnbull 1911 Commander Heritage will be the newest member of the Turnbull family of 1911 pistols, joining the BBQ line as well as Turnbull Commander Custom. The new pistol, in keeping with 1911 tradition will be available in 45 ACP.

The new Turnbull Commander Heritage will follow the lines and look of the classic 1911 pistol. The Commander Heritage will feature a blued slide, nitre-blued parts, and the frame will be finished in Turnbull Color Case Hardening — something that Turnbull pistols are known for among collectors.

"The 1911 is genuinely the most beloved and known pistol design in the world," said CEO and Founder Doug Turnbull. "Over the years, we have worked to improve the inner workings while maintaining the look and feel of the classic original. The new 1911 Commander Heritage does just that."

The 1911 Commander Heritage will feature a 4.25-inch barrel in an overall 8-inch-long pistol and weigh in at 34.5 ounces unloaded and 42 ounces fully loaded with seven rounds in the magazine and one in the chamber. It

***continued on next page***



— *continued from page 31*

also carries double-diamond deep-checkered walnut grips and Novak 3-dot sights and will come with 2 magazines.

Customers will have the option of upgrading the sights and ordering custom serial numbers and custom engraving on their guns. MSRP on the Turnbull Model 1911 Commander Heritage starts at $2850 and is expected to start shipping in February 2016. All components are made and assembled in the U.S.A. Check Turnbullmfg.com for more information on the gun.

Turnbull is also providing Negrini luxury gun cases for the new Turnbull BBQ series of 1911 pistols. The cases will come with every new BBQ 1911 for no extra cost, or they will be available for purchase for $280.



The brown Italian leather cases by Negrini are fitted specifically for the BBQ pistols to hold and protect the pistol and magazines in transit. The outside leather and inside fabric carry the Turnbull logo. The double-wall designs are travel certified and feature dual number 3-position tumbler locks. Negrini cases are made by IntelCase Company in Quistello, Italy. Check Negrinicases.com for more information.

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

## COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- Higher-Retention Holsters: Want to open-carry? Then you need a suitable holster. We test Hogue Incorporated's $50 ARS Stage One Carry, Galco's M4X and M6X each priced at $45, Blackhawk's $79 GripBreak and the $32 Evader from Bianchi. In addition we tested three holsters from DeSantis, the $52 Facilitator, the $40 Quick Safe, and the $68 Prowler. Also, a trio of holsters from Safariland; The $50 578 ProFit (Long and Standard) and the $50 6378 ALS. We also tried Blade Tech's $124 WRS Level 3.
- Puma 1873 SAA 22 Buntline Special Report: A low-cost, high-fun Buntline Rimfire six shooter.
- Pistol Caliber ARs: Stag Arms 9T vs. Tresna Defense JAG9G BU. Oneis good-to-go out of the box, while the other is not — but it offers the convenience of magazine compatibility.
- And see other readers' comments in Firing Line...

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