GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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1911 45 ACPS SQUARE OFF




Colt's Combat Elite and Rail Gun go against Springfield's Loaded Model and the TRP. In the end, which one is the superstar? **— Page 6**

VALUE GUIDE: RECENT 1911 9MM & 45 ACP PISTOL RATINGS **— Pages 14-15**



PRECISION RIFLES

We fired two 308 Win. bolt actions side by side — Ruger's Precision Rifle and Tikka's T3 CTR. Our shooters liked them both, but for very different uses. **— Page 16**



TWO NEW OVER/UNDERS

In a classic example of "premature innovation," the new Benelli 828U simply does not function, feel, or shoot as well as a Browning Citori 725 Field that is based on a proven design. **— Page 22**



NEW LONG GUNS FOR 2016

We unearthed a ton of new rifles and shotguns, accessories, and cartridges that hunters, plinkers, and other shooters will see on shelves later this year... **— Page 26**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

SCALIA DIES; 2ND AMENDMENT IN PERIL



Todd Woodard

United States Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia, author of the Court's landmark Second Amendment decision *Heller v. District of Columbia*, died on February 13, 2016, at age 79. Justice Scalia was found dead of apparent natural causes at the Cibolo Creek Ranch, a resort in the Big Bend region south of Marfa in West Texas. According to the San Antonio *Express-News*, Scalia arrived at the ranch on February 12 and attended a private party with about 40 people. When he did not appear for breakfast, a person associated with the ranch went to his room and found his body. We extend our condolences to the family.

Scalia was nominated to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan. His passing is of particular concern to gun owners, whose inalienable human rights to self-defense were codified, and not established, in the 2nd Amendment. In the landmark *Heller* decision, Scalia noted that the 2nd Amendment protected existing rights to own and carry firearms that every person had, and has, as individuals, and the right to keep and bear arms is not dependent an individual's participation in a "militia" or any other body.

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), who authored the *amicus* brief for the states in the *Heller* decision, said in a statement, "As liberals and conservatives alike would agree, through his powerful and persuasive opinions, Justice Scalia fundamentally changed how courts interpret the Constitution and statutes, returning the focus to the original meaning of the text after decades of judicial activism. And he authored some of the most important decisions ever, including those which recognized our fundamental right under the Second Amendment to keep and bear arms…."



U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died in February 2016. He was 79.

It is sad and worrisome, but nonetheless true, that four other justices did not and do not agree with Scalia's decision in the *Heller* case. So his passing puts that decision, and individual gun rights, at risk again. Other than in *McDonald*, the Supreme Court has chosen not to harden the effects of *Heller* in many additional decisions. I do not mean to sound flippant or alarmist when I say that all our gains in gun rights since *Heller* are now at risk. Because ties in Supreme Court decisions result in the decisions from lower appeals courts being affirmed, it's now possible that an anti-gun-rights case from, say, the Ninth Circuit gets upheld because Scalia's fifth vote to overturn is no longer there. **GT**

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More Laments for Custom Guns

Another angle on carrying a UBG (Ubiquitous Black Gun): If you have to give it up after a legit self-defense incident, you just buy another one. And we have a price update on Walther's PPS M2.



Re "Firing Line," March 2016

Like Grant said in last month's letters section, I, too, lament the passing of the pride of custom-gun ownership and the common look of the Ubiquitous Black Gun. But, as was said, black guns are cheap and proven reliable. Also, I cannot justify carrying a nice custom pistol on the off chance that I might have to use it. In that case, I would have to surrender it to the police, and then it would months at the minimum to maybe get it back by jumping through their hoops. Yes, I would rather carry a "Rolex"-quality sidearm, but I often think that if I had to give up my Valtro, I'd don't know what I'd do.

A black gun I can give up with no emotion, and go home and get another one. I always enjoy the magazine, from the editorial remarks to the last page. **— Dave**

Re: "Special Reports," March 2016

On page 32 of last month's issue, you mention the Walther PPS M2 as a coming new product. I would like to know the approximate cost.

— Dan

Sorry about that price omission. Walther hadn't released a price at the time we assembled that data. Upside: This new gun is supposedly shipping to distributors already, but only in 9mm. The 40 S&W version is supposed to come out later this spring or early summer, said Everett Deger, director of marketing at Walther America. MSRP is $469 for the base M2 and $499 for the M2 LE edition with phosphoric sights. Magazines will come in 6-, 7-, and 8-round capacities. We found an online listing for the pistol on Kentucky Gun Co.'s website, KYGun.com, for $407 with one 7+1 magazine. Upside: Prices have dropped for the M1 edition, with some listings around $350. We tested the 40 S&W-chambered PPS M1 in the October 2009 issue, giving it an A-, along with the Springfield Armory Enhanced Micro Pistol No. PI9240LP and Kahr PM40 No. 4043. Of the PPS, Contributing Editor Roger Eckstine wrote, "If you've been carrying a high-capacity polymer pistol, the narrow PPS will be a revelation. Double-action-only aficionados will take to it immediately. Extra magazines are pricey, but the shorter five-round magazine will better adapt the PPS to ankle carry or other deep concealment. For summertime carry or as a matching backup piece, the PPS may be hard to beat." In the October 2008 issue, Roger tested the PPS in 9mm (WAP10001), and said of it: "The PPS suffered three malfunctions as shown within the first 150 rounds. All three malfunctions occurred while feeding from the supplied seven-round magazine, which featured an

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 top: Walther's new PP2 M2, the PP2 M1 in 40 S&W tested in 2009, and, bottom, the PP2 M1 in 9mm tested in 2008.

extended basepad. We switched to the six-round magazine with flush-fitting basepad and fired more than 200 additional rounds. No further problems were encountered. The individual seven-round magazine may have been the cause, or there may have been another problem that the mechanism was able to overcome simply by using the six-rounder. We liked the PPS, and if it continues to run reliably, we are satisfied with 6+1 capacity in a backup gun."

— Todd Woodard

Re: "Two New 9mm Compacts from Glock and Walther Square Off," August 2015

I have read and subscribed to GUN TESTS for many years and enjoy the reviews. I carried a Glock for many years as a federal law enforcement officer, now retired. I have shot various models of Glock, and I thought your review of the Glock 43 9mm pistol in the August 2015 issue was a fair treatment of the handgun.

However, the Glock 43 with a Strike Industries EMP +2 magazine extension is a different firearm. It's not often that an accessory changes a pistol so completely. Often, in particular, magazine extensions are finicky and can play a part in failures to feed. The Strike Industries EMP +2 magazine extension for the Glock 43 is a different creature. First, I have found it to be completely reliable and easy to install, once you master the trick to disassembling Glock mags. Second, it is easy to load to full 8-round capacity. Third, it is extremely comfortable. It is just long enough to provide a full grip, while not being overly long. This improves grip and magazine capacity makes the Glock 43 handle better. It is more accurate in practical usage. While your B+ rating of the Glock 43 is fair; I would rate the Glock 43 with the Strike Industries EMP +2 magazine extension as a solid A, but not quite a "Best Buy" because of its higher price than other models. I am amazed at the difference the magazine extension makes. It has transformed the Glock 43 into my favorite carry gun, supplanting the Smith & Wesson Shield. **— Ben**

Hey Ben: Thanks for your insights, and I appreciate you letting me know you don't have a fiduciary interest in promoting the EMP +2 magazines. I appreciate your letting other readers know how highly you regard this accessory and how it may affect the performance of the Glock 43. — tw

Re: "Firing Line," February 2016

New subscriber. Love it so far. I am unable to find the AR-magazine test referred to on page 5 of the February issue of Firing Line. How do I get to that article? Thanks. **— Clark**



Top: The Glock 43's grip as tested in the August 2015 issue. Middle: The Glock 43 fitted with the Strike Industries EMP +2 magazine extension, which Reader Ben touts as an improvement to the 43's handling and accuracy. Bottom: In more detail, the Strike Industries SI Enhanced Magazine Plate for Glock 43 is $12, product number SI-EMP-G43-BK. Find it at StrikeIndustries.com.

Hey Clark, sorry you're having trouble. You can get to that test in one of two ways. 1) Use the search function in the top-right corner of the website homepage at Gun-Tests.com You can type in any of the unique character strings, such as "MAG55630BLKP" (no quote marks) from the article and hit "search." That will take you to the online version that's resident on the website. It's the third listing, "AR-15



Magazine Testing: Price Has Little to Do with Quality."

2) Or, if you come in through the homepage, go to the right column, about halfway down, and click "Back Issue Archive." Select "2014" as the year in the Archives pull-down window, click "Go," then click on the May 2014 issue in the second row. You can either click to read the story online or download the issue as a PDF. — tw

Re: "Downrange," September 2015

Thanks, Gun Tests! When I read the September 2015 issue, y'all alerted me to a safety problem with my "truck gun," a Taurus Millennium 45 ACP compact pistol. I contacted Taurus. They denied having a safety problem, but they sent me a shipping label for my handgun. I returned the pistol to the factory on October, 5, 2015. Four months later I didn't have the pistol back, so I checked my gun's status on the website, and it said, "Repairs Complete." Still no gun.

I called Taurus. Spoke to a lady representative who informed me that the web info was inaccurate. My gun was not repairable, and if I sent them an FFL to ship to, they will send a replacement. Cost of the FFL transfer for me is $25. I complied with her instructions. February 23, no gun. Called the factory for a status update, and learned the replacement was not shipped because I did not specify what model I wanted. Maintaining my cool and informing the agent that I did not have a catalog from which to pick a replacement, he gave me a verbal description of the choices, and I picked a Model 247 G2 compact. I asked him when I could expect the gun to be delivered to my dealer, and his reply was four to six months. I do wonder if my holster and extra mag will fit the replacement. I doubt it .

I am out close to $400 with little choice but to wait another six months. However, I can tell other Gun Tests readers about this. I subscribe to several gun magazines, and Gun Tests is the only source reporting anything about this situation with Taurus. **— Lou**

Hey Lou: I can't speak for what other publications do, or don't do, regarding this settlement. But I do have some sympathy for Taurus because the terms of the settlement, according to court documents, had to be worked out with the plaintiffs and the court, so their hands were likely tied. In fact, in the matter of Carter v. Forjas Taurus, S.A., *the court has continued the hearing on final approval of the settlement until July 18, 2016. The claims period will not begin until after that time has passed. Additional details will be posted to a website, TaurusCarterSettlement.com, including various settlement offers, which include receiving a payment of up to $200, repairing existing guns, or replacing them as necessary, as you found out.*

Thanks for letting the Gun Tests *community know about this, and please let us know the outcome. If you don't get your gun back inside the delivery window they promised, let me know that as well. — tw*

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

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

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

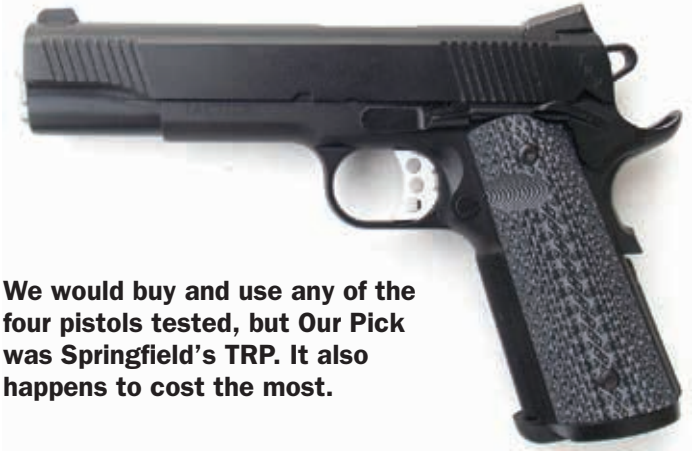
We welcome mail from our readers. To send us comments or questions about previous articles in the magazine, email us at: **GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.** *If you'll include the month and year of the article you're writing about, it's a big help. Also, please include your name, address, and phone number. We won't publish your personal information other than your name, but we may need to contact you about material in your letter.* **GT**

Colt Versus Springfield: We Test Four 45s For Top Carry Honors

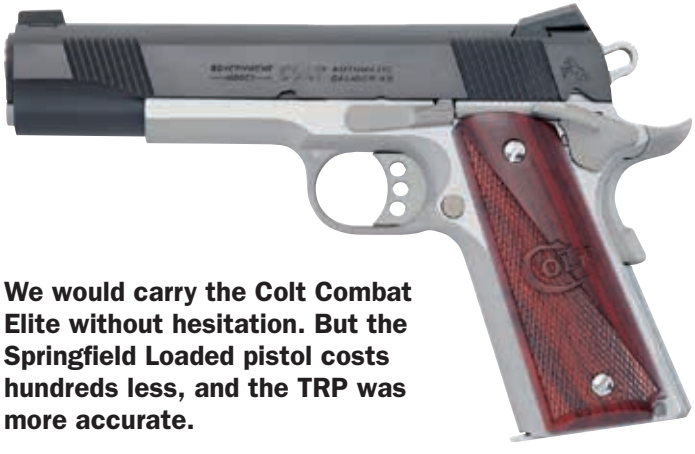
The Combat Elite and Rail Gun go against competing sidearms, namely, the Loaded Model and the Tactical Response Pistol. All are credible performers, but in the end, the TRP is the superstar.

The high-end 1911 handgun continues to be popular, so popular, in fact, that folks are willing to drop well over one thousand dollars to gain what they hope is superior performance. On a high-end pistol, "performance" often means features, such as good sights, forward cocking serrations, a good trigger compression, and attention to detail. The discerning shooter is looking for reliability first, then handling, accuracy, and fit and feel, and four handguns that are reputed to have those qualities at various price tags come from Colt and Springfield Armory. We recently tested two sidearms chambered in 45 ACP from each company that would interest nearly any buyer who was in the market for a self-defense arm. The products were Springfield's Loaded Model PX9109LP, $790; and for hundreds more, the company's Tactical Response Pistol, the TRP PC9108LP 45 ACP, $1347. To fit in that sizable price gap in the Springfield lineup, we selected Colt's Combat Elite 08011XSE, $1015, and the Rail Gun XSE 01070RG, $1199. These are actual counter prices from BudsGunShop.com, and our intent was to survey a range of pricing to see if additional dollars translated into additional performance that would matter to our test team of shooters.

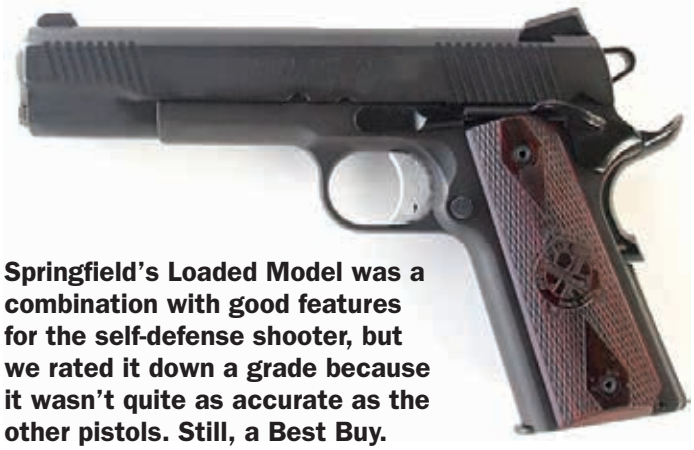
Among the most popular sidearms in terms of numbers sold are the Colt Combat Elite and the Springfield Loaded Model. A Colt Rail Gun variant is used by the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Springfield Bureau Model, similar to the TRP, by the FBI SWAT team. All four are combat guns intended to give the user an advantage in the field, so our thorough test involved a number of trained shooters who were asked to push the pistols to the limit, so we could discover the boundaries of control, combat accuracy, and absolute accuracy. We should also note



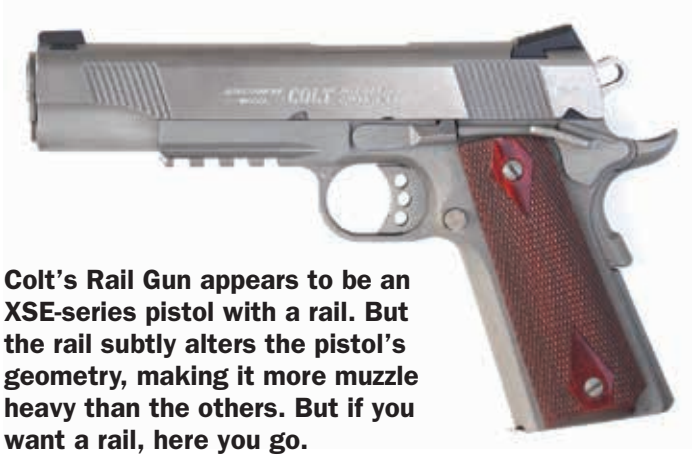
We would buy and use any of the four pistols tested, but Our Pick was Springfield's TRP. It also happens to cost the most.



We would carry the Colt Combat Elite without hesitation. But the Springfield Loaded pistol costs hundreds less, and the TRP was more accurate.



Springfield's Loaded Model was a combination with good features for the self-defense shooter, but we rated it down a grade because it wasn't quite as accurate as the other pistols. Still, a Best Buy.



Colt's Rail Gun appears to be an XSE-series pistol with a rail. But the rail subtly alters the pistol's geometry, making it more muzzle heavy than the others. But if you want a rail, here you go.

RANGE DATA

Black Hills Ammunition 200-grain SWC 45 ACP	**Springfield Armory Loaded**	**Springfield Armory TRP**	**Colt Rail Gun**	**Colt Combat Elite**
Average Velocity	870 fps	890 fps	888 fps	866 fps
Muzzle Energy	336 ft.-lbs.	351 ft.-lbs.	350 ft.-lbs.	332 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.2 in.	1.5 in.	1.9 in.	1.6 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.0 in.	2.5 in.	2.0 in.
Average Group Size	2.2 in.	1.8 in.	2.2 in.	1.8 in.

Hornady American Gunner 185-grain XTP 45 ACP	**Springfield Armory Loaded**	**Springfield Armory TRP**	**Colt Rail Gun**	**Colt Combat Elite**
Average Velocity	970 fps	963 fps	990 fps	975 fps
Muzzle Energy	386 ft.-lbs.	380 ft.-lbs.	402 ft.-lbs.	390 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.0 in.	1.4 in.	1.25 in.	1.5 in.
Largest Group	2.5 in.	1.9 in.	1.9 in.	2.15 in.
Average Group Size	2.2 in.	1.6 in.	1.6 in.	1.8 in.

Winchester M1911 230-grain JHP 45 ACP	**Springfield Armory Loaded**	**Springfield Armory TRP**	**Colt Rail Gun**	**Colt Combat Elite**
Average Velocity	871 fps	860 fps	866 fps	888 fps
Muzzle Energy	387 ft.-lbs.	377 ft.-lbs.	382 ft.-lbs.	402 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.3 in.	1.3 in.	1.8 in.	2.0 in.
Largest Group	2.7 in.	1.6 in.	2.1 in.	2.5 in.
Average Group Size	2.5 in.	1.5 in.	1.9 in.	2.3 in.

Average velocity readings were recorded by firing five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. Ambient temperature: 65 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. Benchrest accuracy figures are the average of three five-shot groups at 25 yards. Ammunition sources: Black Hills Ammunition 200-grain Semi-Wadcutter D45N120 (MidwayUSA.com, $14.57/20); Hornady American Gunner 185-grain XTP 90904 (SportsmansGuide.com, $14.72/20); Winchester M1911 230-grain Jacketed Hollowpoint X45P (CheaperThanDirt.com, $36.77/50).

Our test loads came from Black Hills Ammunition, top a 200-grain Semi-Wadcutter; Hornady, the American Gunner 185-grain XTP 90904; and Winchester's M1911 load, here the 230-grain jacketed hollowpoint X45P. As the numbers above show, Springfield's Tactical Response Pistol, or TRP for short, was the most accurate gun in the test with every ammo, save for a tie with the Colt Combat Elite with the Black Hills 200-grain semi-wadcutter.



that the Loaded Model was a rater's personal carry gun. The rater stated it came out of the box running and has never given a complaint, and it has some 5,000 rounds through it. Cosmetically, it was hard to assess the status of the Loaded by just looking. The pistol is finished in a dull, non-reflective Parkerized finish that doesn't show wear very much. The other pistols were new out of the box.

At this point we will mention the holsters used, as the Rail Gun demanded rail-specific holsters. The other three guns were easily passed around to the raters and standard holsters were used for them. For the Rail Gun, we had to invest in two holsters specific to it, with three raters doing most of the firing. We used Ted Blocker's X 16 holster in both standard and 1911 rail-gun types. The holster was used both strong side and crossdraw, with excellent results. We also used a ZZZ Custom (ZZZCustomHolsters.com) Kydex strong-side holster, which gave a good fit on the Colt's long bearing services and is relatively compact for a rail-gun holster. The other holster was a Sweetwater Saddlery strong-side pancake design that hugs the body.

At the range, we used three loads. The Black Hills Ammunition 200-grain lead semi-wadcutter bullet was our training and practice load. Next, the Hornady American Gunner 185-grain XTP represented a lightweight-bullet defense load, and the Winchester M1911 230-grain jacketed hollowpoint stood in as a heavy defense load. These are affordable 45 ACP choices likely to be used by shooters. We expected that heavy bullets with a long bearing surface would demonstrate good accuracy, but in this case, the lightest bullet weight gave the best accuracy. Also, our shooters noted the heavier push of the 230-grain load. Following are objective data about each handgun, as well as the subjective opinions of our shooters based on head-to-head firing tests:

Springfield Loaded Model PX9109LP 45 ACP, $790

The Springfield Loaded Model occupies much the same position in its company's lineup as the Colt Combat Elite. The Combat Elite is close to the Jeff Cooper description of having only what is needed — and nothing more — on a fighting handgun. The Loaded Model was a response to market pressure to offer a handgun with what originally were considered to be custom features over and above its G.I. Model and the Mil-Spec Model (the latter of which is still available from Springfield). We tested both of these lower-priced handguns in the May 2010 issue and graded the G.I. PW9108LP 45 ACP, $643, as a B+ handgun, and the similar but stainless G.I. PW9151LP 45 ACP, $693, as a C. The Mil-Spec PB9108LP Parkerized, $753, got an A grade.

As a rule, the Loaded Model is more tightly fitted than the G.I. Models, in particular the barrel, barrel lugs, and barrel bushing. Thus, in benchrest-accuracy testing, the Loaded Model may be more accurate than the G.I. 1911A1 by a noticeable margin. It was clear during this test that the Loaded Model is not the chassis for the TRP, nor could the shooter easily modify

SPRINGFIELD LOADED PX9109LP 45 ACP, $790
GUN TESTS GRADE: B (BEST BUY)

Although we rated the Loaded Model down a notch on accuracy, this Springfield 45 is a good choice for home defense, carry, IDPA, and as an all-round go-anywhere do-anything handgun.



Action	Single-Action Semi-Auto, Locked Breech
Overall Length	8.6 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	39.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	43.5 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in., Match Grade Stainless Steel, 1:16 Twist
Magazine	(2) 8-Rd. Blued Steel
Slide	Parkerized Steel; 2-Piece N.M. Full-Length Guide Rod
Frame	Parkerized Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Laser-Engraved Cocobolo
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Steel, Fixed Combat; 3-Dot Tritium
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Ambi Slide Lock Safety, Grip Safety
Warranty	Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	Springfield-Armory.com
Made In	Geneseo, Ill.



The Springfield Loaded Model is well worth its price, with a combination of Novak sights, an ambidextrous safety, and adequate accuracy.



The Springfield Loaded Model, left, featured a two-piece guide rod that is easier to disassemble. The Combat Elite, right, had a one-piece guide rod that will not work loose.





At left is the shooter's view of the Loaded Model. The ambidextrous safeties are prominent in the profile. At right are the grip safety and slide safety shown from the right side of the gun. Both worked as expected. Some shooters will disagree with the handiness of the ambi safety, but it's a helpful feature in our view.

COLT COMBAT ELITE 08011XSE 45 ACP, $1015

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Colt Combat Elite offered excellent trigger action, good accuracy, relatively light weight for a steel-frame 1911, and top-quality fit, finish, and appearance. Combat shooting accuracy was good, and speed from concealed carry excellent. We rated it down based on the lack of an ambidextrous safety.



Action	Single-Action Semi-Auto, Locked Breech, Series 80
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	38 oz.
Weight Loaded	42.5 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	Stainless Steel, National Match, 1:16 Twist; Full-Length Guide Rod
Magazine	8-Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Carbon Steel, Brushed Blued Finish, Lower & Flared Ejection Port; Front & Rear Serrations
Frame	Brushed Stainless Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Wood; Half Smooth, Half Checkered
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Novak Lo Mount Carry
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.0 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Single Side Slide Lock Safety, Grip Safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Website	Colt.com
Telephone	(800) 962-COLT (2658)
Made In	Hartford, Conn.
Made By	Colt's Manufacturing Co., LLC



The Combat Elite is a clean design and a good all around personal defense handgun.



The cut of the forward cocking serrations and the dovetail sight installation showed excellent fit.



Colt's tactical grips are a good design for concealed carry. They are half-checkered, with smooth wood toward the palm and texture for the fingers.

the Loaded Model to TRP status. The frame and slide of the TRP are much more tightly fitted, we learned, which must be done during manufacturing. Or, by the time you pay a gunsmith to tighten the frame-to-slide fit, you could simply have purchased the TRP, minus barrel fitting and front-strap treatment.

The Loaded Model featured Novak Lo Mount sights front and rear. So do the other three handguns, but only the TRP features night-sight inserts. The Loaded Model had forward cocking serrations like the others. We assessed the fit of the barrel to the slide with a stainless-steel barrel bushing to be tight enough for good accuracy potential. Its full-length guide rod may be disassembled with a large Allen wrench. A two-piece guide rod is the easier design to disassemble. Some believe a one-piece unit will work loose with extensive firing, but we did not experience this problem during our test shooting. If it were to be a problem, the simple fix would be to check the full-length guide rod for tightness and screw it tight every few hundred cartridges fired. But our experienced raters have not observed a properly tightened full-length guide rod working loose.

Trigger compression was consistent among four remarkably similar trigger actions. The Loaded Model broke at a clean 5 pounds. The initial testing was conducted by firing 150 rounds in each pistol in a series of combat drills. We drew from a strong-side holster and fired at man-sized silhouette targets at 7 and 10 yards. We also fired at the InnovativeTargets.net steel gong target at 25 yards. In addition to the commercial loads we used to ensure shooters across the country can validate our test results, we also used handloads to save money. The first was a combination of the Montana Gold 185-grain JHP and enough WW231 for 950 FPS. We fired more than 100 of these in each handgun. To confirm accuracy with lead bullet reloads, essential for economical practice, we used the Magnus 200-grain semi-wadcutter

bullet over enough Titegroup powder for 890 fps in the next 50 rounds. Both loads fed, chambered, fired, and ejected normally and showed good practical accuracy. The Loaded Model's two supplied magazines were supplemented with 7-round Brownells' magazines. The single best accuracy result we saw was a group with the American Gunner load, five rounds in 2 inches at 25 yards. This is fine accuracy for a service-grade pistol, but, overall, it was a notch less accurate than the other handguns.

Our Team Said: The Loaded Model was a combination with good features for the self-defense shooter, but we rated it down a grade because it wasn't quite as accurate as the other pistols. The matte finish, while durable, was not as well turned out as the other handguns. But for the money, it's hard to beat, so it gets our Best Buy designation.

Colt Combat Elite 08011XSE 45 ACP, $1015

The Colt Combat Elite is a specialized version of Colt's XSE guns and a stablemate to the Colt Rail Gun. The Combat Elite, like the others, is a 5-inch-barrel Government Model handgun with a steel frame. The Colt Combat Elite has the features of the Colt XSE series, including Novak sights, forward cocking serrations, a match trigger, and a beavertail grip safety. Even so, the Combat Elite is advertised as a "back to the basics" Colt, and we understand the appeal. As outfitted, the pistol was striking.

A feature of the XSE series is a concave gap beneath the trigger guard just at the top of the front strap. This concave area serves to lower the bore axis into the shooter's hand. An advantage of the 1911 type is a low bore centerline, and this dished out portion helped even further. A properly designed beavertail grip safety also lowered the bore axis, resulting in less leverage for the muzzle to rise against in recoil. The Colt uses the Series 80 firing pin block or drop safety. The Springfield 1911 handguns use a lightweight firing pin and heavy-duty firing-pin spring as a drop safety. The lightweight firing

COLT RAIL GUN 01070RG 45 ACP, $1199

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Colt Rail Gun is an all-stainless 1911 with impressive performance. Novak sights, an ambidextrous safety, a rail mount and excellent performance gave the pistol a lead over the Combat Elite with equal features and then some.



Action	Single-Action Semi-Auto, Locked Breech, Series 80
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	39 oz.
Weight Loaded	43.5 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in., National Match Stainless Steel, 1:16 Twist;
Magazine	8 Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Brushed Stainless Steel; Lower & Flared Ejection Port
Frame	Brushed Stainless Steel; 1913 Accessory Rail
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered Double Diamond
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Novak Carry w/Dots
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Ambidextrous Slide Lock Safety, Grip Safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Website	Colt.com
Telephone	(800) 962-COLT (2658)
Made In	Hartford, Ct.
Made By	Colt's Manufacturing Co., LLC



The Colt uses a standard recoil-spring guide rod, which results in less difficulty in field-stripping.



The Colt ambidextrous safety worked well, but we prefer the Springfield design. It is anchored by the right-side stock (arrow).



The M1913 Picatinny Rail offers the versatility to attach tactical lights or laser sights to the receiver of the Colt Rail Gun.

pin design of the Springfield passed rigid FBI testing, so its field function shouldn't be a worry for the self-defense shooter.

The Colt slide was nicely finished in blue. The frame was stainless steel. The slide featured forward and rear cocking serrations, Novak sights with white outline and a scalloped ejection port. Fit of the barrel hood, barrel bushing, and locking lugs gained our approval. The slide rolled smoothly on the link, showing excellent fitting. The barrel feed ramp featured the relatively new Colt dimple in the ramp that works well in feeding every bullet design we have tried. The beavertail grip safety was well designed and seemed identical to the Springfield. The pistol's slide-lock safety was not ambidextrous. Because tactical training involves using the handgun with either hand — regardless of the shooter's favored hand — this is a demerit among high-end 1911s. The Rail Gun cost a few dollars more but features both a rail and an ambidextrous safety.

In character, this back-to-the-basics Colt features a full-length guide rod that's one piece, which is less likely to work loose but which is more complicated to field strip. The grip safety properly releases its hold on the trigger about half way into compression. The mainspring housing is not heavily serrated, but offers some adhesion. The grips are attractive, half checkered and featuring the Colt logo. The purpose of the tactical grip is to afford the user good abrasion when firing but also to allow good hand adjustment, quickly, during movement. They work as designed, although we prefer the Ahrend's Grips original tactical grip design. The front strap was not checkered, in contrast to the TRP, which featured a checkered front strap. The Colt had an advantage with a nice 5.0-pound trigger compression, exactly one half pound lighter than the TRP, and in our view, the Colt trigger was tighter with less take up. The Colt was supplied with two magazines.

The Colt was lubricated and the magazines loaded with ammunition for the initial testing with the allocated 150 rounds to each pistol. The Colt Combat Elite cleared leather quickly and proved accurate and controllable in combat-style shooting. There were no failures to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. The sights were properly regulated for 230-grain loads. While the Colt was tight, there were no break-in malfunctions. A combination of good sights and a great trigger gave good results on the silhouette targets. The pistol was not lubricated again during range work as the raters passed the pistol around and fired, loaded magazines, and finally picked up the brass. The Colt showed reliability and clearly was an effective personal-defense handgun. We thought it was a better shooter than the Loaded Model, but at something of a price premium.

Firing off the benchrest, the Colt's smooth trigger compression gave good results. The pistol was slightly more accurate than the Rail Gun and more accurate than the Loaded Model as well. The single best group came with the Hornady American Gunner 185-grain XTP at 1.5 inches, although the average with this round was larger.

Our Team Said: This pistol was reliable, accurate, and handled well. We would carry the Colt for personal defense without hesitation. But the Springfield Loaded pistol has more features for the money, and the TRP is more accurate. Also, we rated the Combat Elite down based upon a lack of an ambidextrous safety that most pistols in this price range have. If the pistol was designed as a clean and classic Colt, so be it, it succeeds.

Colt Rail Gun XSE 01070RG
45 ACP, $1199

Colt's Rail Gun appears at first as simply an XSE-series pistol with a rail. While this is true in basic terms, the pistol's geometry is subtly altered, making it more muzzle heavy than the other handguns, and it seems to absorb recoil better, although it weighs little more than the other 1911s and is lighter than the TRP.

The Colt Rail Gun featured a stainless-steel frame and slide. The finish was well polished. The checkered cocobolo grips were double-diamond designs. These double diamonds offer a classic appearance and also reinforce the area that attaches to the grip frame. These grips were well made and worked well, but in the opinion of our testers, they do not offer the adhesion of the TRP's G10 grips. The fit of the barrel to the slide and the bushing to the barrel were excellent. The fit wasn't so tight the pistol cannot be field-stripped with the fingers. Just the same, we used a bushing tool. After disassembling 1911 handguns over the course of a few weeks and cleaning them before accuracy testing, a bushing wrench came in handy. The Colt Rail Gun does not use a full-length guide rod, but, rather, the original short guide rod. For fast cleaning and easy maintenance, this is the preferred set up. As one of the more experienced raters noted, for an issue handgun, the Rail Gun set up is superior. Separating it from the TRP's set up, we think the latter is better suited for a well-trained smaller team or individual. As a consensus, we all agreed with this proposition.

The slide-lock safety was an ambidextrous unit that allowed the use of the Colt by either hand, an upgrade over the Combat Elite, in our view. There were no problems with the Colt safety; however, we prefer the Swenson-based design of the Springfield. The Colt safety was supported by the right-hand grip panel, less obviously than on the Springfield. The Colt beavertail grip safety was well designed. Shooters who occasionally let the palm of the hand rise off the standard grip safety during firing will find that all of the beavertail safeties will work about the same for them. Our shooters noticed very little difference in where the safeties engaged in the sweep of the beavertail's movement.

The Rail Gun trigger compression registered 5.5 pounds, with exactly the same weight and feel as the TRP. The pistol featured forward cocking serrations and a 16-pound recoil spring. The hammer of the TRP

required less effort to cock. The sights share a common design with the other pistols, Novak Lo Mounts, with white-dot inserts. The primary difference between this gun, the Colt Combat Elite, and the Springfield Loaded Model is the rail. If you must have a rail, this is the gun to choose from among these four, but we note that Springfield also offers a TRP rail gun, the PC9105LCA. We do want to emphasize that the balance of the pistol is slightly changed with a rail, according to half of the raters, and that was without a light mounted. It's just something to consider when you've narrowed the field and you're trying to make your final buying decision. In this test, only the TRP felt better during combat firing.

Our Team Said: The crew was split on the easy maintenance advantage of the Rail Gun and the full-length guide rod and increased rigidity of the TRP. If we were arming a battalion, the Rail Gun is the best, we feel. In contrast, the TRP feels more like a SWAT-trained officer's firearm. The TRP's self-luminous iron sights are also an advantage. As for absolute accuracy, the Rail Gun was more accurate than either the Loaded Model or the Combat Elite, but not as accurate as the TRP. The best effort hovered around a 1.25-inch group with the American Gunner 185-grain XTP, but the average was not as good as the TRP's.

Springfield TRP PC9108LP 45 ACP, $1347

The Springfield Tactical Response pistol was originally offered as an affordable version of the Professional Model. The fit and finish were noticeably superior to the Loaded Model, and to our eyes, it was on par with the much more expensive Professional Model. (Bud's listed one for $2,345.)

The TRP pistol we tested was supplied with two magazines, a plastic range holster, and dual magazine carrier. The TRP uses a lightweight firing pin and heavy firing pin spring as a safeguard and does not incorporate a firing pin block into the action. When racking the slide of the TRP, we believe the fit was tighter than the Colt Combat Elite or

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY TRP PC9108LP 45 ACP, $1347

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (OUR PICK)

This is a first-class 1911. The Springfield offered excellent reliability, accuracy, and night sights, a big advantage. Excellent slide-to-barrel fit and frame-to-slide fitting.



Action	Single-Action Semi-Auto, Locked Breech
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.7 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	42 oz.
Weight Loaded	45.5 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in. Match Grade Stainless Steel, 1:16 Twist; Full-Length Guide Rod
Magazine	(2) 7-Rd. Stainless Steel w/Slam Pads
Slide	Carbon Steel, Black Armory Kote
Frame	Carbon Steel, Black Armory Kote
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Black & Grey G10 Checkered
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Low Profile Combat; 3-Dot Tritium
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	5.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Slide Lock, Grip
Warranty	Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	Springfield-Armory.com
Made In	Geneseo, Ill.





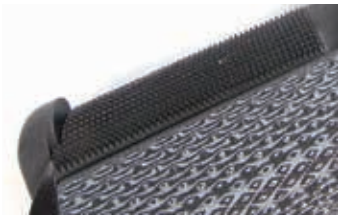
The Springfield TRP is a well-made 1911. We would pay the higher price to get this superior handgun. Part of its appeal is a hard-use Teflon-based finish, but it is also delivered with goodies, right, including a latchable and lockable hard case, two magazines, a plastic range holster, and magazine carrier.



The TRP's ambi safety earned high marks. Because we grade for both right- and left-handed use, an ambi safety provides an edge in the outcome. The composite G10 black-and-gray grip panels provided a firm grip on the gun that showed up in combat accuracy and control.



We used three holsters in testing the 1911s, all with good results. Left to right are the Blocker X 16, useful for crossdraw and strong-side carry (TedBlockerHolsters.com), the Sweetwater Strong Side Pancake Holster (SweetwaterSaddlery.com), and the ZZZ Custom Kydex Tactical Grade for the Colt Rail Gun (ZZZCustomHolsters.com).



Here's a closer look at the TRP's frontstrap texture. Some testers said it was too sharp, but control of the gun was top-flight.

Rail Gun and much tighter than the Loaded Model. But better fit wasn't the only edge. The Springfield racked up features to offset the $332 price differential between it and the Combat Elite, and the $148 difference between it and the Colt Rail Gun. However, at $557 above the Loaded Model, you will need a good reason to justify the price difference, and a lot of training and practice, to make use of the TRP's superior performance. If you do not need or desire these features, they are irrelevant, but some are good to have.

The Springfield TRP features a Teflon-based coating that proved durable during our testing and it was self lubricating. Still, we lubricated the pistol just the same as most users will. The fit of the slide to the frame was tight, with very little lateral play. The cocking serrations forward and rear are a bit longer than the Colts'. The Novak sights were identical, save the TRP featured self-luminous tritium inserts, which are a pricey and helpful upgrade. The full-length guide rod offered reasonably rapid disassembly by use of an Allen wrench compared to a two-piece guide rod that may be unscrewed by hand. We only report on what we observe, and the Springfield full-length guide rod did not loosen and was easy to field strip. The slide-lock safety was ambidextrous and gave the TRP another advantage. Fit and crispness of the slide lock safety and magazine release were each excellent. The trigger action was clean and broke at 5.5 pounds.

A big advantage was the TRP's checkered front strap, which presented 20-lines-per-inch checkering that gave good adhesion when firing. Coupled with checkered G10 grips, most of our shooters liked how the gun felt during tactical firing. One of the female raters felt the checkering was too sharp for her palm. Our most experienced rater also found the abrasion to be a bit sharp and saw the checkering left an outline in his palm. To control the pistol in stressful times, with sweaty or wet hands, these textures are helpful. The strategy to avoid tearing your hands up during high-volume shooting is to wear gloves during the bulk of your practice. Outside the test, we should note that one of the raters used a TRP for more than a year as a daily carry gun and eventually changed to a Novak Custom Gun, largely based on abrasion and weight of the TRP.

Elsewhere, the grips were made of G10 composite and were well turned out and offering good abrasion. They were slightly thicker than the Colt Combat Elite grips. The TRP also featured a magazine chute. Be aware that this chute isn't compatible with every type of bumper pad. We used the supplied magazines and five Brownell's 7-round magazines. We fired the Springfield on the same combat course, with the same ammunition, and fired each pistol at the same time with raters alternating with each handgun. We made several observations. The Colts and the Loaded Model were faster from leather and faster on target. The Colt Combat Elite was lighter, and perhaps the tactical grips made for better speed. The difference wasn't great but was noted. However, once on target, the Springfield TRP's superior checkering and abrasion made a difference. The pistol was more controllable than the Colts. To less experienced raters, there was little difference. For those grasping the TRP as tightly as possible and controlling the trigger, the TRP was the more controllable handgun in rapid fire. During combat firing the TRP showed an advantage in delivering rapid hits and controlled double taps.

Also, the Springfield TRP proved more accurate than the other pistols. The single best group was a 1.25-inch group with the Winchester 230-grain JHP, the hottest load tested with the most energy and recoil. The heavier trigger of the TRP was not a significant factor in benchrest accuracy, we found. On a bright sunny day, the sun glinted on the night sights, which is worth noting.

Our Team Said: If you do not need the extra features of the TRP, and are not willing to master the gun, the difference in price may be a deal breaker. However, for that money you get tritium night sights, an ambidextrous slide lock safety, front strap checkering, a magazine guide, a hard-use finish, superior combat accuracy and superior bench rest accuracy. An aftermarket Teflon finish alone would cost nearly the price difference between the Colt Combat Elite and the Springfield. We rated the Springfield TRP the best performer in this race, and we'd pay the extra money for it if we could afford it. While not a Best Buy, it is Our Pick.

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

VALUE GUIDE: RECENT 1911 PISTOL RATINGS (9MM & 45 ACP)

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Springfield Loaded Target PI9134LP 9mm Luger, $873	Sept 2015	A	Function of the Loaded Model was flawless. Stainless construction is always a plus.
Springfield 1911 Range Officer PI9129LP 9mm Luger, $704	Sept 2015	A	An easy-shooting 9mm 1911 with first-rate fit, finish, and barrel-to-slide fit. Adjustable sights.
Colt's Mfg. Co Series 70 O1970A1CS 45 ACP, $953	Aug 2015	A	Excellent trigger action, good accuracy, relatively light weight for a steel-frame 1911.
Colt's Mfg. Co 1991A1 No. O1991 45 ACP, $745	Aug 2015	B+	Accurate and reliable. Some of the 1991A1 pistols have a nicer trigger than ours.
Colt's Mfg. Co. Gold Cup Trophy O5070X 45 ACP, $1249	July 2015	A-	Excellent trigger action, good accuracy, and sights that offer good adjustment. No break-in.
Metro Arms Co. Bullseye M19BE45C 45 ACP, $1294	July 2015	B	Ramped barrel, ambi safety, good sights, and one of the best factory triggers.
S&W 1911 E-Series SW1911TA 108409 45 ACP, $1399	May 2015	A	The SW1911TA was Our Pick over the very good SIG TACOPS.
SIG Sauer 1911 TACOPS 1911R-45TACOPS 45 ACP, $1213	May 2015	A	Accuracy and handling cannot be faulted. Reliable, accurate enough for any task.
Ruger SR1911 CMD-A Model 6711 45 ACP, $899	May 2015	A	Good looks, decent accuracy, a good trigger, and nothing that doesn't belong.
Colt Mfg. Co. Commander XSE O4012XSE 45 ACP, $940	April 2015	A	Consistently the more accurate handgun. Ambi safety, forward serrations, frame cut.
Remington R1 Commander 96336 45 ACP, $573	April 2015	B	This is a traditional 1911 Commander with no extraneous features.
Shooters Arms Mf'g Commodore CIA HG1009-N 45 ACP, $429	Nov 2014	D	Not reliable with hollowpoints and showed annoying quirks with the original slide lock.
Kimber Tactical Pro II 45 ACP, $1317	Oct 2014	A	Kimber's quality control and attention to detail really shine in this pistol.
SIG Sauer Carry Scorpion 45 ACP, $1213	Oct 2014	B+	Quite accurate. Cerakote coating, frame rail, and G10 scaled grips were good features.
Ithaca Gun Co. M1911-N #1911-C45G10 45 ACP, $1799	Aug 2014	A	Excellent fit and finish, flawless operation. Holds its own against similarly priced 45s.
Roberts Defense Super Grade Pro 45 ACP, $1549	Aug 2014	A-	An early feeding problem with Lawman ammo resolved itself. Sights weren't regulated.
SIG Sauer 1911 C3 1911CO-45-T-C3 45 ACP, ~$650 (Used)	July 2014	A	The pistol is just the right size, with the Commander slide on an Officer's Model frame.

Log on to **Gun-Tests.com** to read complete reviews of these products in the designated months. Highly-ranked products from older reviews are often available used at substantial discounts.

VALUE GUIDE: RECENT 1911 PISTOL RATINGS (9MM & 45 ACP)

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Rock Island Armory Tactical II Compact 51479 45 ACP, $591	July 2014	B	The RIA has features that allow this little pug-nosed 45 to shoot like a big gun.
American Classic ACC45B 45 ACP, $506	July 2014	D	This Commander-length 1911 had promise. However, the pistol failed to feed reliably.
Springfield Range Officer PI9128LP 45 ACP, $1015	May 2014	A	Superbly fitted by any standard. Excellent adjustable sights.
Rock Island 1911 Standard GI 51421 45 ACP, $300	April 2014	A-	This pistol isn't a real GI 45, but it is pretty close. Better accuracy than the average GI gun.
American Tactical Imports 1911GI HGAFX45GI 45 ACP, $500	April 2014	B	Fitting and trigger should have been better. Sights and beavertail are good additions.
Para-USA Expert Commander No. 96748 45 ACP, $799	Jan 2014	A	The Para is true to original Commander in that it has a lightweight frame.
Colt's Commander Series 80 No. 04091U 45 ACP, $974	Jan 2014	A-	The Colt was not the most accurate pistol, but it was consistent with every load.
Kimber Pro Custom Defense Package (CDP) II 45 ACP, $1331	Nov 2013	A	The lightest pistol and the only aluminum-frame pistol in this match up.
SIG Carry Stainless 1911CA-45-SSS 45 ACP, $1142	Nov 2013	A-	A Best Buy. Excellent fit/finish, good reliability, great accuracy. Lacks an ambi safety.
Ruger SR1911CMD No. 6702 45 ACP, $829	Nov 2013	B	The loosest tested, the least accurate, and had a faulty magazine.
Kimber Raptor II 45 ACP, $1434	July 2013	A	Clean, simple lines, clever detailing, and nice contrast of the zebrawood grips.
Rock Island Armory Standard GI No. 51421 45 ACP, $410	June 2013	B	The RIA GI pistol gives the shooter on a budget more than he expects.
Springfield Armory EMP No. PI9209LP 9mm Luger, $1345	June 2013	A	The EMP handled like a small 1911, but without the big kick of the larger round.
Remington 1911 R1 45 ACP, $729	Oct 2012	A+	Simply a smashing pistol with a number of improvements, including high-visibility sights.
Auto Ordnance 1911 Series 80 45 ACP, $667	Oct 2012	A	This is a GI pistol that is true to the original template with an improved drop safety.
Regent R100 45 ACP, $500	Oct 2012	B	The design is good, but the change in the grip frame left the raters cold. Reasonably priced.
Remington Rand 1911A1 45 ACP, ~$1000	Oct 2012	B	The Remington Rand has two things going for it — history and emotional attachment.

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308 Win. Bolt Guns: Ruger's Precision Rifle vs. Tikka T3 CTR

Finding: The Ruger Precision Rifle, $1399, is solely designed for precision shooting. The Tikka T3 CTR, $950, is more of a crossover rifle, straddling hunting and precision rifle use.

We admire long-range competitive shooters for doing something we mere shooting mortals find nearly impossible. Their ability to manage distance, wind, and overly complicated reticles on specialized rifles to deliver hits on targets that can hardly be seen with the naked eye is both an art and science. Usually a precision centerfire rifle is custom-made, costing upwards of $3,000 or more with a wait time that can take years, depending on the popularity of the custom-rifle builder. Adding a suitable optic can increase the cost an additional $1,000 to $2,000, plus bipod and other pieces of gear, not to mention quality ammo. All in, a shooter could easily sink $7,000 into a set up before even sending a single piece of lead downrange.

Firearm manufacturers, seeing the shooting public's interest in long-range shooting, are offering rifles advertised as "tactical" and "precision" to attract long-range hunters and weekend paper punchers. We all know that setting a barreled action in a black polymer stock does not make a precision rifle. But lately, some large firearm manufacturers have begun mass-producing accurate rifles that rival some custom-built rifles without the wait or the high cost. These mass-produced precision rifles can handle many long-range chores, and some of them come in compact lengths and have the ability to add muzzle devices, such as suppressors. We wanted to take a look at a few of these rifles to get a sense of their accuracy as well as their consistency, ease of use, ability to be customized, and cost. We began looking at such rifles in the January 2016 issue when we compared three bolt actions from Savage, Ruger, and Howa, all chambered in the very accurate 6.5 Creedmoor round. Our favorite in that test was the Savage Arms Model 12 Long Range Precision 19137, followed by the Ruger Precision Rifle 18005 and the Howa HB HKF92507KH+AB. Here we take a second look at the Ruger Precision rifle, this time in 308 Winchester, against a Tikka T3 CTR. The 308 Win. is a common and popular round, with many factory ammunition options available. We tried the spectrum of 308 Win. ammunition and bullet weights, from inexpensive Sellier & Bellot 150-grain soft-point hunting rounds and Norma USA's 168-grain Sierra hollowpoint boattail to expensive 175-grain boattail Sierra MatchKing hollowpoints in the Federal Premium Gold Medal match ammo line, as well as



The Ruger, top, is nearly $450 more than the Tikka due to the built-in features, and it is highly adjustable, unlike the Tikka. Both rifles shot at least one test ammo under a minute of angle; that is, in groups smaller than an inch at 100 yards. The Ruger, in fact, shot all the ammunition selections into less than a minute, the same as it did with 6.5 Creedmoor ammunition. That kind of consistency is hard to find in factory rifles. The optic shown on the Ruger is a Leupold Mark 4 4.5-14x50mm LR/T riflescope, which we easily moved between the rifles' rails using Warne Maxima-series steel rings.

Hornady 155-grain TAP FPDs. Both rifles were fired from a sandbag rest as well as from seated and prone positions. We also made sure the temperature, wind speed, and humidity conditions were similar when we shot these rifles, even though these factors have more affect on targets at farther distances than the distance tested. Barrels were allowed to cool after each string.

Test firing was conducted at 100 yards, though that distance may seem short compared to what these rifles' makers say the products can do. This is the most common rifle-range distance many shooters have access to. Members of this particular test team had experience with high-end SIG Sauer SSG 3000 and Sako TRG M10 and TRG 42 rifles, and numerous chassis-style rifles with Remington, Savage, and custom-rifle-maker barreled actions, as well as long-range hunting rifles like the

TIKKA T3 CTR 308 WINCHESTER, $950

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The CTR was well balanced and operated smoothly. If you want a rifle to both hunt and dabble in long-range shooting, then the CTR would be a good choice.



Action Type	Bolt, Two Lugs 70-Degree Lift	Stock	Fiberglass-Reinforced Copolymer Polypropylene
Overall Length	40.1 in.		
Barrel	20 in.	Stock Length of Pull	13.1 in., Adj.
Sight Radius	N/A; Picatinny Rail	Trigger Pull Weight	2.9 lbs., Adj. 2-4 lbs.
Overall Height	6.7 in.	Safety	2-Pos.
Weight Unloaded (No Optic, Empty Mag)	7.5 lbs.	Accuracy Guarantee	1 MOA
Weight Loaded	9.3 lbs.	Warranty	2-Year Limited
Action Finish	Blued	Telephone	(301) 283 2191
Barrel Finish	Blued	Website	Tikka.fi
Magazine Type	(1) 10-Rd. Detachable Steel Box	Made In	Finland

Right: The tapered two-lug bolt has a Sako-style extractor. Inset: An oversized knob allows for easy manipulation; it can also be replaced. Working the bolt in the action was very smooth.









Left: The cheek riser allows better eye placement when mounting a large-objective scope. Right: Note the slots in the spacers, which allow them to be removed without completely unscrewing the recoil pad screws.

The ambidextrous magazine release is pressed forward to dump the magazine. The magazine was easy to feed into the CTR. The steel magazine is rugged. Replacements are harder to find than PMags for the Ruger and much more expensive.



Savage 11/111 models and Remington Model 700 varmint rifles. A Leupold Mark 4 4.5-14x50mm LR/T scope (Brownells.com, $900, #526-000-150WB) was moved between rifles Warne Maxima-series steel rings to ensure there was no optic variability. The Mark 4 series has been used by the U.S. Marine Corps on the M14 rifle and with the U.S. Army's M24 sniper weapon system. One might consider it to be a benchmark in tactical scopes. It is made with a one-piece 30mm tube and a 50mm objective. The M1 TMR (Tactical Milling Reticle) reticle is located in the second focal plane, so it stays one size even as the magnification power is increased. To use the Mil-Dot ranging features, the scope must be set to the highest magnification. We bore-sighted the rifles prior to starting range work. Here's what our shooters found out at the range:

Tikka T3 CTR Compact Tactical Rifle 308 Winchester, $950

Tikka has been building rifles in Finland since 1918, and in 1983 Tikka and Sako, another Finnish rifle maker, merged. They are now part of the Beretta Holding Group. The T3 series is Tikka's latest generation of rifles manufactured by Sako and imported into the U.S. since 2002.

The CTR features the rigid, one-piece T3 action with extra metal on the sides and top of the receiver. Metal work was well executed with a non-reflective matte-black finish. A Mil-STD-1913 Picatinny rail was bolted on top of the receiver. The receiver was broached, not drilled, to give the bolt a smooth action. Bolt manipulation was impressive; slick and as smooth as glass. When the shooter operates the bolt, only the lugs make contact with the receiver, so the two-lug bolt moves easily and smoothly. Bolt lift is 70 degrees, so it cleared the Leopold's eyepiece with ease. The rifle cocks when the bolt handle is lifted. The polymer bolt knob is large and slick, so it can easily be palmed when firing in position. The bolt handle can also be removed

if a user chooses. Empty cases are ejected via a spring-loaded plunger ejector similar to a Sako extractor. A visual and tactile cocking indicator protrudes from the rear of the bolt so a user knows the rifle is cocked. The bolt-release stop is located on the left side of the receiver. Press the rear portion of the bolt stop, and the bolt assembly can be withdrawn from the receiver. A two-position safety is located on the right side of the receiver and falls under the thumb of a right-handed shooter. Press it rearward to lock both the trigger and bolt.

According to Sako, both Tikka and Sako barrels are manufactured the same way. All Tikka rifles, including the CTR, have a 3-shot-MOA precision guarantee; Sakos have a 5-shot MOA guarantee. There is no break-in procedure for Sako and Tikka barrels because of the manufacturing processes. They are ready to go right out of the box, according to Sako. The CTR is equipped with a 20-inch cold hammer-forged barrel with a semi-heavy contour and an 11-degree crown. The muzzle is threaded ⅝x24 inch, so it is compatible with standard U.S. muzzle devices such as suppressors, flash hiders, and muzzle brakes, a plus on our grading scale. The muzzle threads are protected with a screw-on cap. Rifling was a 1:11-inch twist rate and four grooves.

The bottom metal is lightweight aluminum with an oversized trigger guard that is glove friendly. A slight bevel in the magazine well speeds up magazine reloads. The CTR feeds from a steel, center-feed detachable 10-round box magazine. It ships with one magazine. The ambidextrous magazine release is located in the forward portion of the trigger guard and is pressed forward to drop magazines free. We liked the fact that the release can be operated by the shooter's trigger finger without having to break his grip on the rifle, plus the magazine sits flush with the bottom of the trigger guard, so it is easier to reload, even when shooting in the prone position.

The single-stage trigger on the CTR

RUGER PRECISION RIFLE 18001 308 WIN., $1399

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Ruger is set up for long-range shooting and offers a lot of adjustment options. Out of the box, this is an easy-to-shoot rifle that is very accurate for the price point.



Action Type	Bolt, Three Lugs, 70-Degree Lift
Folded Length	30.60 in.
Overall Length	38.25 to 41.75 in.
Overall Height	7.3 in.
Weight Unloaded (No Optic)	9.7 lbs.
Weight Loaded	11.5 lbs.
Barrel	20 in. Long; 4140 Chrome-Moly Steel; 1:10 RH Twist w/5R Rifling, 5 Grooves; 0.75 in. Muzzle Diameter; ⅝-24 Threads
Upper Receiver	CNC Machined 4140 Chrome-Moly Steel; 20-MOA Picatinny Top Rail
Lower Receiver	7075-T6 Aluminum; Type III Hard-Coat Anodized
Grip	AR Style
Magazines	(2) Magpul PMags, 10 Rds.
Magazine Compatibility	M110, SR25, DPMS, AICS, Some M-14
Stock	Folding Ruger Precision MSR, w/ Adj. LOP, Cant, Cheekpiece
Stock Length of Pull	12.0 to 15.5 in., Adj.
Trigger	Ruger Marksman Adjustable; 2.25 to 5.0 lbs., Single Stage
Safety	AR style
Handguard	Samson Evolution KeyMod
Sights	None Provided
Accuracy Guarantee	None Stated
Warranty	None Written
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
Website	Ruger.com
Made In	USA



The threads on the Ruger Precision Rifle's muzzle are protected with a screw-on sleeve. Underneath, the thread dimensions are ⅝-24 for attaching suppressors.



The stock is adjustable for length of pull, cant, and comb height. Loosen a camming lever (right arrow) to adjust the cheekpiece to the desired height, then tighten. The lever for LOP is on the left. A Picatinny rail on the toe allows attachment of a monopod.



A Sampson Evolution free-floated handguard sheaths the barrel and allows KeyMod rail sections to be attached.

averaged a crisp 2.9 pounds with no creep. We thought the trigger was well suited for precision work. It can also be adjusted from 2 to 4 pounds, but to do that, the barreled action needs to be removed from the stock, which we thought was bothersome.

The traditionally styled stock is super light weight and is made of fiberglass-reinforced copolymer polypropylene. The barrel is free floated all the way to the action, with two hex screws holding the barreled action to the stock. Gripping areas are textured and offered provide plenty of grip without being too sticky. A polymer cheek riser provides a high cheek weld, helpful when mounting large-objective optics, which may raise the sightline. By adding or removing spacers, the length of pull could be adjusted. Using a screwdriver to loosen the butt-pad screws allows the spacers, which have slots, to be easily added or removed without completely removing the butt pad screws. For a single shooter who might only perform this task once, it's not that big a deal. But it's a tedious process when the LOP needs to be adjusted for clothing or a different shooter.

The rifle had a nice balance and it carried well, with some testers thinking this rifle could easily be used on long stalks. Shouldering the CTR felt similar to a traditional compact hunting rifle; where the CTR made its personality known was on the sand bags. Our experienced shooters could easily shoot one-MOA groups or better with three shots. The Hornady TAP FPD performed the best with 0.52-inch three shot groups. The bolt operated smoothly, chucking empties with authority from the smallish ejection port. Even though the ejection port was small, there was still plenty of room to single load rounds.

Our Team Said: The CTR was well balanced and operated smoothly. The rounded forend was adequate for bench work, but for better precision work, the stock would need to be replaced with one that had a squarer front profile. Of course, replacing the stock would most likely mean the rifle would be less hunter friendly. We would leave it as it is If you want a rifle to both hunt and dabble in long range shooting then the CTR would be a good choice.

RANGE DATA

Federal Premium Gold Medal 308 Win. 175-gr. Sierra MatchKing BTHP	Tikka T3 CTR	Ruger Precision Rifle
Average Velocity	2532 fps	2546 fps
Muzzle Energy	2490 ft.-lbs.	2519 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.8 in.	0.5 in.
Average Group	1.0 in.	0.8 in.

Hornady TAP 308 Win. 155-gr. TAP FPD	Tikka T3 CTR	Ruger Precision Rifle
Average Velocity	2611 fps	2751 fps
Muzzle Energy	2347 ft.-lbs.	2605 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.5 in.	0.3 in.
Average Group	1.1 in.	0.6 in.

Norma USA Match 308 Win. 168-gr. Sierra MatchKing HPBT	Tikka T3 CTR	Ruger Precision
Average Velocity	2641 fps	2644 fps
Muzzle Energy	2607 ft.-lbs.	2608 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.7 in.	0.5 in.
Average Group	0.9 in.	0.9 in.

Sellior & Bellot 308 Win. 150-gr. SP	Tikka T3 CTR	Ruger Precision
Average Velocity	2754 fps	2737 fps
Muzzle Energy	2527 ft.-lbs.	2494 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.1 in.	0.5 in.
Average Group	1.3 in.	0.8 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 100 yards with optics. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph set 15 feet from the muzzle.

Serrations on the Tikka's trigger offer a no-slip press. The single-stage trigger broke at a crisp 2.9 pounds. It can be adjusted between 2 and 4 pounds, but the barreled action has to be removed from the stock to make the change.



Ruger Precision Rifle Model 18001 308 Win., $1399

If one-hole groups are gratifying, then the Ruger Precision Rifle will make some shooters very happy. Introduced in 2015, the Precision Rifle is Ruger's foray into long-range shooting with a rifle that combines design elements of a tube gun and typical chassis rifle. Basically, tube guns bed the action and barrel in a straight line tube stock. Gary Eliseo of Competition Machine Inc. (gotxring.com) builds one of the more popular tube-gun chassis that use actions from the mass-produced-firearm manufacturers like Remington. Tube guns are renowned for their accuracy and are in use with F Class,

long-range prone, and High Power competitors. Remington's XM2010 and Accuracy International's AX rifle systems are other examples of tactical rifles that also use tube gun design features.

Ruger builds the Precision Rifle around its American action and adjustable Marksman trigger, with the tube holding the action, barrel and stock in a straight-line configuration, like competition tube guns and AR rifles. The straight-line design better manages recoil compared to a traditional stock, providing better accuracy. Twist and torque is magnified by a traditional stock and is lessened with the straight-line set up. Ruger refers to the main components of the Precision Rifle in a similar fashion to an AR, calling the top an "upper" and the bottom portion a "lower." These upper and lower components do not disassemble like on an AR, however. Tools are required. For routine maintenance, the Precision Rifle is disassembled like a typical bolt action. The lower portion holds the safety selector, the same type as an AR. In fact the Precision Rifle uses many AR components. The handguard, stock, safety selector, and pistol grip are all compatible with AR-15 aftermarket products. So the rifle is very adjustable, which we liked a lot. The barrel can also be easily swapped out using an AR wrench and headspaced like with a typical bolt action. This, too, is a good feature, especially as barrels wear and accuracy erodes with use. The magazine is an AR-10 style and ships with two 10-round Magpul PMags. It also accepts AICS magazines and works with some M14-style magazines. We found this to be very convenient. The cost and availability of a 10-round PMag is not expensive (Brownells.com, $19, #100-011-562WB) or hard to find, in contrast to additional T3 CTR magazines, which list for $150 per mag from some suppliers.

The Ruger's one-piece upper is constructed of 4140 chrome-moly steel. The action has a three-lug bolt with a 70-degree lift. The bolt handle



Top: The Ruger Precision Rifle's magazine-release paddle is pushed forward, toward the arrow, to dump magazines. The Magpuls did not fall free; we had to pull them out. Note the front edge of the magazine well (right arrow) is flared so it can be raised against a barrier and still allow magazines to be exchanged.



The CTR ships with one steel, center-feed detachable 10-round box magazine. The rifle's bottom metal is lightweight aluminum. The CTR's oversized trigger guard is glove friendly, whereas the RPR's guard is a little snug, in our opinion. There's a slight bevel in the magazine well to speed mag changes. Also, the magazine sits flush with the bottom of the trigger guard, so it is easier to reload, even in prone.

is a large, smooth pear-shaped knob. We liked it fine as is, but it can be swapped out if so desired. A bolt disassembly tool is located in the bolt shroud. We thought the action was smooth, but not as silky as the Tikka. Like the Tikka, the ejection port is small, yet it offered unimpeded tossing of empty cases and allowed loading of single cartridges. Since the PMag's follower has a bolt hold open in the follower, the bolt will not close when the magazine is empty. This is a minor inconvenience when you want to load one at a time.

The 20-inch medium-taper barrel is cold hammer forged 4140 chrome-moly steel with 5R rifling and a 1:10-inch twist rate. The muzzle is threaded to accept muzzle devices. Ruger does not have a break-in recommendation, other than cleaning the barrel before shooting as a safety precaution to remove any obstruction that may reside there after shipping. Other than that, there is no break-in recommendation, as on the Tikka.

The handguard is a Sampson Evolution KeyMod model that allows adding rail sections to mount accessories like sling swivels and bipod. The Ruger comes with a Picatinny rail section and KeyMod QD swivel mount, which we thought was convenient and useful. Bolted on top of the action is a 20-MOA Picatinny rail, which cants the scope for more elevation at extended ranges. Ruger was smart to add this, we thought. Between the 20-MOA rail and the Sampson handguard, there is about 20 inches of rail to mount all sizes of optics, including night-vision equipment.

Aft of the action is Ruger's proprietary Precision MSR stock, which attaches to the rifle via an AR-style buffer tube. The tube itself is attached to a hinge so the stock folds to the left side of the rifle and locks into place. The rifle can be fired with the stock folded. The stock is adjustable for length of pull (LOP), comb height, and cant. This feature allowed a shooter to modify the stock to fit his stature and shooting style. It also made for more solid shooting positions, which translated into smaller groups downrange. A series of cam levers allow fast adjustment for the LOP and comb. The levers can be reversed for lefties. Allen wrenches are required to adjust cant.

The soft-rubber recoil pad is



The Ruger's 3-lug bolt head has a 70-degree lift; the rear of the bolt assembly stores an Allen wrench to adjust trigger-pull weight.

sticky. A Picatinny rail on the stock toe allows attaching a monopod for added stability. We feel the stock would be sturdy enough to compete in a field-shooting–type competition, where it could get banged up during stages and fast positioning. It was not fragile by any means. A button on the left side is pressed to fold the stock, and a lever locks it folded into place. This is a nice feature, especially when transporting the rifle. It snaps back into place when extended. With the stock folded, the bolt can be removed by pressing the bolt-stop release. This is a bit awkward to perform the first time, as you want the stock folded only part way. The stock also has three quick-detach (QD) swivel mount points.

The lower is made of 7075-T6 aluminum forging. The magazine well is flared to aid magazine reloads, and the front edge of the magazine well is also flared so the rifle can be braced against a barrier or support when shooting — another small detail that aids usability. The safety selector rotates 45 degrees to activate "Fire" or "Safe" modes, and this is easily accomplished with a flick of a right-handed-shooter's thumb. The user has the ability to reverse the selector for a left-handed shooter or replace it with an aftermarket ambi selector. Just forward of the trigger guard is the magazine release, a large flat paddle that is pressed forward to release the magazine. Magazines did not drop free; instead, they had to be pulled free. With more use, the plastic PMag may drop free when empty. We found this release easier to operate than the Tikka's with bare or gloved hands. The trigger guard is small, which could be an issue with a large-handed shooter wearing gloves, though we had no problems with it.

Shouldering the Precision Rifle takes some muscles, but this rifle was not designed to shoot from the shoulder, though you could in a pinch without needing to do bench presses every day. All team members were able to get comfortable and solid in a seated or prone position with the Ruger without straining muscles. It is an easy rifle to shoot. The single-stage trigger is set at 2.5 pounds, and very crisp with no creep. It allowed shooters to aim and fire the round with little movement. Just a touch was required. The trigger is adjustable using a Allen wrench through a slot in the magazine latch — another nice feature. Most competitive tube guns place the bolt under the cheek of the shooter so bolt manipulation is fast and less disruptive to the shooting position. The Ruger's bolt is more forward but is placed over the trigger so manipulation is still fast.

Some of our shooters were able to get ¼-MOA with the Hornady ammo, and with all ammo types, we averaged under 1-MOA which we thought was impressive. Though we did not have enough PMC Bronze 147-grain FMJ ammo to collect data in both rifles, we were able to run some through the Ruger and got a 0.1-inch group. Enough said. The Ruger definitely liked all bullet weights, but it had a preference for lighter 308 bullets during our test.

Our Team Said: The Ruger provides a comfortable and familiar platform due to the AR-style features. It is a heavy rifle dedicated to long-range shooting and accuracy with numerous types of ammunition. The features on this rifle make it very adjustable by the owner. After the test, some team members who admit to being jaded about being marketed the "next hot thing" every year, were nodding their heads, saying this rifle definitely has potential.

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

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Over/Under Shoot-Off: New Benelli Can't Beat Browning

In a classic example of "premature innovation," we found the new Benelli 828U simply did not function, feel, or perform as well as a veteran Browning Citori 725 when fired head to head.

When a firearm manufacturer with a reputation of producing high-quality, durable semiautomatics ventures into the under/over market, a lot of shooters will take notice. Such is the case with the new Benelli Model 828U that made a big splash at the January 2015 SHOT Show. The company's first attempt at offering shooters a stack-barrel, rather than a semiautomatic, prompted our readers to call for our shotgun test team to put together a match-up of the Benelli 828U with a comparable model made by another firearm manufacturer. The recent release of the Browning Citori Model 725 Field seemed to be perfect timing for the head-to-head competition. We pitted the Benelli 828U, retailing for $2,500, against the Browning 725, retailing for $2,470, both at the clay-target range and on the patterning board to see if the new smokepole performed as advertised against a proven product sitting in the rack beside it.

While pump-action and semiautomatic shotguns are the overwhelming favorite field guns throughout the shooting community, over/unders are the kings of clay-target shooters. Because of reasons like their better handling ability, two-choke option, and the fact that most clay target shooting is limited to taking only two shots at a time, stackbarrels reign over clays. That truism may be one of the reasons why the release of a first-ever over/under produced by veteran semiautomatic manufacturer Benelli was greeted with such fanfare. Shooters of all ages seem to be fascinated with new toys from names they know — particularly if the latest and greatest will help break a few more clays or help fill up the game bag a little quicker.

When the new Benelli Model 828U was introduced, devoted fans of Benelli semiautomatics rushed to get more information. At the same time, and with a lot less fanfare, over/under manufacturer Browning Arms introduced a field version of its popular Citori Model 725, which is the latest in the Citori Model 25 line that dates back to the 1970s. A tweak here and a tweak there have been billed as making the new Model 725 Field a top pick for clays and birds.

We should note that the version of the Benelli made available to us was a 26-inch-barrel anodized-aluminum receiver model, while the Browning provided featured 28-inch barrels and a silver nitrite receiver. We made allowances in our testing for the slightly better handling characteristics that are generally attributed to longer barrels and a heavier gun, ensuring these factors did not influence our evaluation.



Putting patterns on paper allowed our team to determine why the Browning Citori Model 725 Field, top, outshined the new Benelli Model 828U on the clay target range. The side-by-side comparison also highlights the difference in the features of the two shotguns — one that resembles something that appears to have been constructed with semiautomatic parts and one that follows in the footsteps of time-tested stack barrels.

The ammunition we selected for our testing on the target range and at the patterning board was Winchester AA Extra-Light Target 2.75-inch loads packing 1 ounce of No. 7½ shot with an average muzzle velocity of 1,180 fps. Also, we fired 2.75-inch Nobel Low Recoil Target loads with ⅞ ounce of No. 8 shot and an average muzzle velocity of 1,200 fps. Here are our findings:

Browning Citori Model 725 Field 0135303004 12 Gauge Over/Under, $2,470

As noted earlier, this is the latest version of a long line of Browning over-and-unders that have found favor with the shooting public. At first glance, there are only

minor differences in the appearance between this field model and its sporting-clays cousin introduced about five years ago. The new model features a rounded forearm designed with a slight palm rest, high-relief engraving on the receiver, and ivory front and mid-bead sights.

Internally, the Browning has a mechanical trigger system, back-bored barrels with lengthened forcing cones, and the Invector-DS internal choke tube system, with Improved Cylinder, Modified, and Full tubes included with the Field model, the same features introduced when the original Model 725 hit the market.

This field shotgun provided a solid, well-balanced platform for handling clays and birds, as expected. It tipped the scales at 7.75 pounds and measured 44.75 inches in length, with our team finding no fault in its heft or handling ability.

The shotgun's length of pull was 14.25 inches, with a drop at the comb of 1⅝ inches and a drop at the heel of 2.5 inches. These dimensions are right on the average mark for an out-of-the-box shotgun, and our various team members had no problems adjusting to the fit.

We liked the feel and looks of the checkering on both the pistol grip and the newly designed forearm. Our shooters documented no handling problems in any of our testing.

With birds in the air, we should note we were particularly impressed with the trigger-pull touch-offs of 4.5 pounds for the bottom barrel and 4.25 for the top barrel. The Fire-Lite mechanical triggers in the Model 725 are both smooth and crisp, going the extra step to help a shooter stay on target when touching off a shot.

Our trip to the patterning board before field testing on the clay target range with the Browning was an eye-opener. We have patterned several Browning shotguns featuring the Invector DS (Double Seal) chokes and found the tubes seem to pattern very well. This Model 725 Field was no exception. Firing the Winchester Extra-Lite No. 7½ shot shells at a range of 30 yards, we found the

BROWNING CITORI MODEL 725 FIELD NO. 0135303004 12 GAUGE, $2,470

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

This is another in a long line of solid, fine-handling over and unders. This new field model patterned well, broke targets well, and looked good while doing its job.



Action Type	Over/Under
Chamber Size	3 in.
Overall Length	44.75 in.
Capacity	2
Weight (Unloaded)	7.75 lbs.
Barrel Length	28 in.
Barrel	Polished Blued Steel, Chrome Lined
Receiver	Low Profile Silver Nitride, w/Roll Engraving
Safety	Non-Automatic
Choke Tubes	Invector DS Flush-Fit (IC, M, F)
Buttstock	Grade II/III Checkered Walnut, Gloss Oil Finish
Buttstock Length of Pull	14.25 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.6 in.
Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.5 in.
Forearm	Grade II/III Checkered Walnut, Gloss Oil Finish
Front Bead	Ivory
Rear Bead	Ivory
Rib	¼ in.
Trigger Pull Weight (Bottom)	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (Top)	4.25 lbs.
Trigger Reset	Mechanical
Warranty	Limited
Telephone	(800) 333-3288
Website	Browning.com
Made In/Assembled In	Japan

The time-tested system of cocking the hammers by opening the action is very effective in the Browning. Note the cocking system on the monoblock of the barrels. We encountered no problems with shells ejecting from the Browning, unlike the temperamental system in the Benelli.



Good-looking wood and checkering, plus a fine weight and heft, helped the Field model of the Model 725 earn good marks. Even with the standard recoil pad, there were no problems with shoulder shock from loads used in our testing.



The barrels measured 28 inches in length and were not ported. Still, we found the balance and handling of the Model 725 to be excellent with little felt recoil.



Modified choke in the top barrel produced a 57-43 percent pattern (57 percent above the center and 43 percent below) and the Improved Cylinder choke in the bottom barrel produced a 62-38 percent pattern. Shooting just a little high is exactly what a field shotgun should do to handle rising targets.

We were particularly impressed with the pattern spread, finding a very solid and uniform distribution of hits. Both the Modified and Improved Cylinder tubes delivered just under 40 percent of the strikes within a 20-inch circle around the center of the targets. There were 202 hits in the 20-inch circle with the Modified choke and 164 hits with the Improved Cylinder choke.

This solid, uniform patterning performance with no holes that might allow a clay or bird to escape undamaged was verified on the clay-target range. We smacked most targets with authority. A ragged pattern that might only cause a chip to fly off a clay target is acceptable on the range, but a crippling shot on a bird in the field because of ineffective pellet trauma is not. We found the Browning hit targets hard when the shooter puts the pattern in the right place at the right time. Recoil with the Browning using the two light loads was well within the comfortable range, and spent shells were ejected with authority each and every time — there were no malfunctions of any kind.

Our Team Said: This shotgun, whose predecessors date back more than 40 years, is a true tribute to the solid, reliable, high-quality Browning over-and-unders on the market today. It handled very well on the clay-target course, excelled on the patterning board, and helps a shooter look sharp to his compatriots while serving as a solid shooting tool.

Benelli Model 828U 10701 12 Gauge Over/Under, $2,500

Perhaps because of the well-known reputation of Benelli as the maker of fine semiautomatics, even a casual observer will notice the new Model 828U almost appears to have

BENELLI MODEL 828U NO. 10701 12 GAUGE, $2,500

GUN TESTS GRADE: C

Although Benelli has a reputation for producing high-quality semiautomatic shotguns, we found the company's new over/under was lacking in both appearance and performance. Poor patterns, weak target hits, and uninspiring features all contributed to our low grade for this shooting tool.



Action Type	Over/Under	Buttstock Drop @ Comb	1.5 in. (Adjustable)
Chamber Size	3 in.	Buttstock Drop @ Heel	2.1 in. (Adjustable)
Overall Length	43.5 in.	Forearm	Checkered Walnut
Capacity	2	Front Bead	Red Optic
Weight (Unloaded)	6.5 lbs.	Rib Width	⅜ in. (Fiber Optic)
Barrel Length	26 in.	Trigger Pull Weight (Bottom)	4.5 lbs.
Barrel	Crio Steel, Chrome Lined	Trigger Pull Weight (Top)	4.0 lbs.
Receiver	Anodized Aluminum	Trigger Reset	Inertial
Safety	Automatic	Warranty	10-Year Limited
Choke Tubes	Crio Flush Fit (C, IC, M, IM, F)	Telephone	(800) 264-4962
Buttstock	AA Grade Satin Walnut	Website	BenelliUSA.com
Buttstock Length of Pull	14.75 in.	Made In/Assembled In	Italy



The free-floating locking plate located in the receiver is designed to engage the locking lugs on the barrel's monoblock to provide a stronger, tighter seal. Whether this system will hold up long term remains to be seen.



Free-floated barrels cut down on the weight of the Benelli, but the feature did not seem to affect the handling ability of the shotgun during our testing. Note the red fiber-optic sight and carbon fiber rib, which we found to be interesting for an over/under shotgun. But these are "love it or hate it" features on a traditional design. The feel and heft of the Benelli's laser-engraved forearm was not as solid and pleasant as the other test shotgun. The feel was of a forearm on a semiautomatic.



We thought the laser checkering, finish, and appearance of the Benelli's stock was more like that of a semi-auto, rather than a pricey over/under. An integrated system promoted as being able to tame recoil still resulted in an uncomfortable punch, even with light loads.

been constructed with some semiautomatic parts or features. The shotgun just does not have the feel and look of a standard over-and-under. Most noticeable is the shotgun's patented locking mechanism that incorporates a free-floating locking plate in the front of the aluminum receiver. The plate features four contact points with the barrel and moves forward and backward on springs as the shotgun is opened and closed.

It is designed to provide a stronger, tighter seal, but to our eyes, it looks like something that could be found in a semiautomatic shotgun. While we had no problems working the system, our experience leads us to believe that over time, and after extensive use in the field and on the range, we worry that there may be issues that develop with the mechanism. Time will tell.

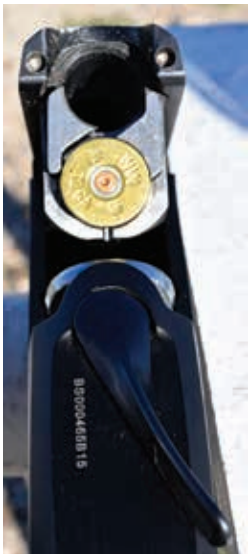
The new Benelli also features its Progressive Comfort recoil reduction system, a removable trigger group, Crio free-floating barrels, a carbon-fiber rib and red fiber-optic sight. In addition, the Model 828U has a unique lever that re-cocks the hammers when pushed to the right, rather than relying on opening the action to reset the hammers as in standard over-and-unders.

With the lighter aluminum receiver and other features, including the 26-inch barrels, the Model 828U weighed 6.5 pounds and had an overall length of 43.5 inches. Even with the light loads used in the testing, recoil was significantly more noticeable than with shots fired in the Browning. This is a simple function of physics; a lighter gun will deliver more recoil momentum to the shooter's shoulder than a heavier gun. The trade-off in the field is that most shooters will take a lighter gun that carries better, because just one extra pound adds up over several miles of kicking pheasants up.

The Benelli also failed to eject any of the light loads from the bottom barrel, which caused us to consider whether there was a problem with the impulse-driven ejectors that might require gunsmith work. One of our test-team members scrounged up a heavier load (a 1-ounce, 1,230 feet per second shell) that did eject from the bottom barrel. Our conclusion was that the Model 828U system doesn't like light loads — not a good thing in a light firearm.

Elsewhere, we thought the stock, forearm, and barrel finish on the Benelli seemed to closely resemble the features of a semiautomatic, rather than exhibiting the typical look and style of an over-and-under in its price range. If a shooter favors the looks and feel of a semiautomatic, the Model 828U may be just the ticket.

Utilizing an inertia trigger system that requires the firing of the first barrel to engage the second, the Model 828U triggers touched off at 4.5 pounds for the bottom barrel and 4 pounds for the top. However, we noticed there was a little creep or spongy feel to the pull with both triggers, unlike the crisp, sharp pull of the Browning. As for the dimensions of the new introduction into the over-and-under market, the drop of the adjustable comb was set at 1.5 inches and drop at the heel was set at 2.25 inches when we assembled the shotgun for testing. The length of pull was 14.75 inches. Overall, our test team members were satisfied with that configuration.



Throughout our testing, the bottom barrel of the Benelli 828U failed to eject a spent shell. In particular, the shotgun seemed to have a problem with light loads.

We did find that the balance point of the shotgun was slightly behind the lightweight, aluminum receiver, rather than the preferred point right between the hands as with the Browning. This caused the Benelli to be a little harder to move into targets — similar to the movement required to push a semiautomatic through targets — rather than the glide-through handling of a well-balanced over and under.

For our firing tests, we set up at the patterning range where we quickly discovered that the Crio Flush Fit chokes (Cylinder, Improved Cylinder, Modified, Improved Modified and Full) included with the package were not a match for the Browning. The modified choke in the top barrel produced a 39-61 percent pattern, with 306 hits (46 percent) in the 20-inch circle around the center. However, 76 percent of the total hits in the 30-inch circle were in the lower left quadrant and there were four, 3-inch holes in the pattern, mainly in the outer 10-inch ring.

Results with the Improved Cylinder choke were substantially worse. That pattern was 13-87 percent, with 153 hits (28 percent) in the 20-inch center circle. There were only 38 pellet hits above the center of the target and several large areas with no strikes at all.

This tendency to shoot low and left went a long way toward explaining why our team's target busting experience with the Benelli was much less than satisfactory. To consistently break targets, particularly those with any distance on them, we had to hold high and right, not the accepted and typical practice of shooting where you look. We achieved very few hard, solid breaks with either of the two test loads fired at various targets, both close and far, using the Benelli.

Our Team Said: We were disappointed in the looks, feel, and handling ability of Benelli's first venture into the over-and-under market. Add in the sub-par patterning performance, plus some ineffective target busting time on the range, and our shooters said the new 828U stack-barrel does not live up to the standards of the high-quality semiautomatic firearm innovator.

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

New Long Guns Coming for 2016

Our team of writers canvassed the massive Las Vegas show to find the hottest rifles, shotguns, optics, and new ammunition headed for your local gun shop later this year.

At the 2016 SHOT Show in Las Vegas, Gun Tests staffers ran across many dozens of new products that we're working to include in future tests. Following are some of the rifles, rifle ammunition, shotguns, and long-gun accessories we found interesting. If there's something in particular you want us to test, please drop me a note at GunTestsEditor@icloud.com.

— *Todd Woodard*

Barnes Bullets

Barnes Bullets has added two new loads to the VOR-TX line of premium ammunition. The first is a 130-grain Tipped Triple Shock load for the 308 Winchester. It is rated at 3,170 fps, and it takes the 308 Winchester into a new realm of velocity. SRP: $45.69 for a 20-round box. The second load is an 190-grain LRX bullet for the 300 Winchester Magnum. This bullet's ogive and cannelure design gives it a high B.C., and the nose cavity engineering ensures it expands reliably at lower velocities. It is rated at 2,860 fps. SRP: $61/20.

Bergara USA

The Woodsman rifle is new from Bergara. This bolt-action hunting rifle weighs 7.4 pounds in long action and 7.1 pounds in short action. It has a hinged floor plate and comes with a 22- or 24-inch, No. 3 contour barrel. The stock is American walnut, and available chamberings include 6.5 Creedmoor, 7mm Rem. Mag., 308 Win., 30/06, and 300 Win. Mag.

Browning

Browning's biggest shotgun news is that the Sweet Sixteen is back. Like its most revered predecessor, the new A5 Sweet Sixteen is built on a smaller, lighter receiver for reduced weight and a sleek feel. The A5 uses



Bergara USA Woodsman



Browning A5 Sweet Sixteen



Browning BAR MK 3 Semi-Auto



Browning X-Bolt Hell's Canyon Speed Bolt-Action Rifle



Browning X-Bolt Long Range Hunter

kinetic energy to power the recoil-operated Kinematic Drive System for reliable function with any load and under the full extremes of weather, temperature, moisture, or grime. The A5 16-gauge receiver is constructed of aluminum with a black anodized bi-tone finish. The stock—shim-adjustable for length of pull, cast, and drop—and forearm are gloss finish walnut with a close-radius pistol grip and sharp 18 lines-per-inch checkering. The gun uses Browning's Invector DS choke system; three chokes will be supplied with 2¾-inch chambered barrels in 26- or 28-inch lengths. Weight: 5 pounds 12 ounces. SRP: $1,700.

Browning also will introduce a new updated BAR semi-auto rifle for 2016 called the BAR MK 3 that features a new receiver profile, engraving, and a new stock and forearm design. The lightweight alloy receiver has a satin-nickel finish with high-relief engraving and is drilled and tapped for scope mounts. The stock and forearm are Grade II walnut with cut checkering in oil finish. Barrel lengths are 22, 24, or 26 inches, depending on chambering.

Browning has introduced the new X-Bolt Hell's Canyon Speed bolt-action rifle, which features a composite stock with A-TACS AU Camo and a Cerakote Burnt Bronze finish on the barrel and action. The barrel is fluted and includes a threaded muzzle brake. Chamberings include 243 Win., 6.5 Creedmoor, 308 Win., 7mm-08, 270 Win., and 30/06, all with a 22-inch barrel. Rifles chambered for the 270 WSM and 300 WSM will have a 23-inch barrel; those chambered for the 26 Nosler, 7mm Rem. Mag., and 300 Win. Mag. will have a 26-inch tube. Additional features include an adjustable Feather Trigger, detachable rotary magazine, bolt unlock button, and the X-Lock scope-mounting system. Weight ranges from 6 pounds 5 ounces to 6 pounds 13 ounces. SRP: $1,200 for standard calibers, $1,240 for magnums.

The Long Range Hunter is also new from Browning. It features a composite stock with carbon-fiber finish, stainless-steel receiver in matte finish, and a 26-inch matte-finish fluted barrel. It comes with a threaded muzzle brake that is easily removed for suppressor installation. Weight ranges from 7 pounds 3 ounces to 7 pounds 8 ounces. It will be available in 6.5 Creedmoor, 270 WSM, 300 WSM, 26 Nosler, 7mm Rem. Mag., and 300 Win. Mag. SRP: $1,430 to $1,470.

The Browning High Grade Program moves into its fourth year with limited-production Citori 725



Browning High Grade Citori Grade VII 20 Gauge



Browning Buck Mark BXR Rapid Expansion Matrix Tip



Browning's rimfire loads are 22 LR with 40-grain lead round-nose bullets, a 40-grain lead hollowpoint, and a 37-grain fragmenting bullet for varmints. They have a distinct black-oxide coating on the bullet and will be offered in 100- and 400-round packages.



Cimarron Model 71 .45-70



Cimarron Doc Holliday 12-Gauge Double-Barrel Shotgun



CMMG Mk47 with KRINK muzzle device

Grade VII small-gauge shotguns being offered in 20- and 28-gauge and .410. SRP: $6,270. Browning has also expanded the Citori 725 Sporting and Field over/under lineup to include 28-gauge and .410 models. SRP: $3,200.

The new Citori 725 Field small-gauge models will feature a silver-nitride finish receiver accented with high-relief engraving. Stock and forearm are Grade II/III walnut with a close-radius pistol grip in gloss oil finish. Available with 26- or 28-inch and ventilated rib barrels; the weight is 7 pounds 3 ounces. SRP: $2,540.

Browning's new line of ammunition, which will be manufactured by Olin-Winchester, includes Buck Mark–logo centerfire rifle hunting loads include the BXR Rapid Expansion Matrix Tip in 243 Win., 270 Win., 30/30 Win., 308 Win., 30/06, 300 Win. Mag., and 300 WSM. The other centerfire rifle loads are topped with the BXC Controlled Expansion Terminal Tip bullet. These boattail bullets have a brass tip and the jacket is bonded to the core. They are available in most of the same chamberings.

The shotshell loads come in three categories. The BXD Waterfowl Extra Distance loads, BXD Upland loads, and BPT Performance Target loads.

CCI

CCI is offering a California-legal bullet and called CCI Copper-22. The projectile is constructed from a unique mix of copper particles and polymer compressed into a 21-grain hollowpoint bullet. Muzzle velocity of 1,850 fps.

Cimarron

For 2016, Cimarron is offering three Model 71s to choose from. The Model 71 Premium 24 is chambered in 45-70, has a case-hardened receiver, checkered walnut stock, sling-swivel studs, and a 24-inch barrel. SRP: $1,940. The Model 71 Classic 24 is similar to the Premium but with a blued steel receiver. Cimarron's Model 71 Hogzilla Killa has a 19-inch barrel and is chambered for the 45/70. But, this carbine is fitted with a barrel-mounted rail to allow for the mounting of an extended-eye-relief scout-style scope. SRP: $1,847.

The legendary Billy Dixon carried an 1873 Springfield Trapdoor U.S. Model Officers Rifle while serving as civilian scout for the U.S. Army during the Red River Indian Wars. The Cimarron Officers Model is a faithful reproduction of Dixon's original rifle, which is on display at the Panhandle Plains Museum in Canyon, Texas. It comes in 45/70 only. SRP: $2,403.

Doc Holiday fans will be excited to see the Cimarron "Doc Holliday" double-barrel shotgun, which is very close to Doc's original short-barreled double with hammers that was handed to him by Virgil Earp at the real Gunfight at OK Corral. It comes in 12-gauge. SRP: $1,605.

CMMG

CMMG has unveiled the Mk47 lineup featuring a KRINK muzzle device. Similar to the original Mk47 MUTANT design, these new rifles are built around the 7.62x39mm cartridge and feature a shortened AR-10-size bolt-carrier group that is paired with a unique upper and lower receiver to minimize weight and increase ergonomics. One of the primary benefits of the Mk47 design is its ability to accept existing AK magazines and drums. Three models are available. SRP: $1,550 to $1,750.

CZ-USA

CZ has no shortage of new rifles for 2016. New centerfire rifle introductions in the compact 527 line include a 527 American in 221 Remington Fireball with a detachable five-round magazine. The second new 527 is in the Varmint configuration and is chambered for the 17 Remington. In the 557 Sporter line, CZ has added two short-action offerings. Both have walnut stocks and four-round detachable magazines. CZ's new model 557 Urban Counter Sniper is designed to excel at engaging targets within 400 yards. Chambered in 308 Winchester, the short 16-inch barrel only sacrifices 150 fps compared to a standard barrel, and its three-prong flash hider serves as a QD for a suppressor.

The Scorpion EVO 3 S1 Carbine line from CZ has five additions. All are chambered for the 9mm Luger and come with a threaded muzzle in the ½x28 pattern. Two come with a faux suppressor and two with a muzzle brake.

The CZ model 805 Bren S1 Carbine has four additions to the lineup. All are chambered for the 223 Remington/5.56x45 NATO and come with a threaded muzzle in the ½x28 thread pattern. These carbines are shipped with either a 10- or 30-round magazine, and two come in basic black and two in flat dark earth.

CZ has a host of new scatterguns in almost every category. The CZ 712 Green G2 adds a little color to the mix with a green anodized receiver. SRP: $500. The CZ 712 3-Gun G2 for the 3-Gun game has n extended bolt handle and oversize bolt release make manipulating the action easier, and the ATI fluted magazine extension bumps capacity to 9+1. It ships with three extended black choke tubes.

In the break-action arena, the Upland Ultralight Green gets a splash of color on its anodized green receiver. It has all the same great features of the Upland Ultralight, including five interchangeable chokes, laser-cut checkering, and a mid-rib. It comes in 12- and 20-gauge. SRP: $762 to $768.

Built specifically for ATA shooters who compete in both trap singles and doubles, and want one gun to do it all, the All-American Trap Combo ships with two sets of barrels. One is a single-shot "un-single" with a dial-adjustable aluminum rib. The other is a standard barrel set with a stepped rib. SRP: $3,400.

The flagship of CZ's over/under line, the Redhead, gets a new one-piece CNC receiver. With a silver receiver and ejectors, the Redhead Premier is available in 12- and 20-gauge with auto ejectors and 28 and .410 with extractors. SRP: $1,057.



Some of CZ-USA's new offerings for 2016 include, from top: 557 Sporter .243 Win./.308 Win.; Scorpion EVO 3 S1 Carbine; 712 3-Gun G2 with extended bolt handle and oversize bolt release; 712 Green Semi-Auto; Drake Over-Under, 712 Synthetic in Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades camo; and Redhead Premier Over-Under.



Daniel Defense DD5V1 7.62x51mm



Empire Rifles Webley & Scott Bolt-Action Rifle



FNH USA's upper assembly units come in four configurations and mate to your AR-15 lower.

Daniel Defense

Daniel Defense has released its much-anticipated rifle for the 7.62x51mm NATO (.308) cartridge. The new DD5V1 has innovative features such as a four-bolt connection system, an optimized upper receiver, an improved bolt carrier group, ambidextrous controls, a configurable modular charging handle, and a cold-hammer-forged barrel. It also features a Geissele SSA two-stage trigger. SRP: $2,900.

Empire Rifles

The new Webley & Scott Empire bolt-action rifle is built by Howa Machinery and boasts the same exquisite fit and finish that Webley & Scott is known for. Each rifle comes with a high-quality Minelli walnut stock, three-position safety and two-stage trigger, jeweled bolt, knurled bolt knob, and 22-inch, No. 2 contour, deep-blued gloss barrel and receiver. It will initially be available in 270 and 30/06. SRP: $899, rifle only; $1,049, rifle and scope package.

Federal Premium

As one of the largest ammunition manufacturers in the world, Federal Premium is offering three new 3rd Degree 20-gauge loads. 3rd Degree uses a multi-shot, three-stage payload with No. 5 Premium lead, No. 6 Flitestopper lead, and No. 7 Heavyweight shot.

There are also 10 new loads in the American Eagle rifle line, including a 300 Blackout load, the OTM 120-grain 6.5 Grendel, and 140-grain 6.5 Creedmoor. Now devotees of both of these .264-caliber rounds, which continue to grow in popularity, have an affordable factory-ammo option.

FNH USA

FNH USA has expanded its rifle accessory line to include upper assembly units. FN 15 upper assemblies are now available in popular configurations like the FN 15 Carbine, Rifle, Tactical Carbine, and DMR. SRP: $799 to $1,299.

Hornady

Hornady's new ELD-X and ELD-Match bullets feature a Heat Shield tip that resists heat deformation in flight. ELD-X component bullets will

be available in 6.5mm, 7mm, 30, and 338 calibers. Those same calibers will be loaded in Precision Hunter ammo for a variety of long-range cartridges. The same calibers will be offered with ELD-Match bullets, and Match loads will be offered for the 6.5 Creedmoor and 338 Lapua.

Howa

New from Howa is the Alpine Mountain Rifle with a Nikko Stirling Panamax 3-9x40 riflescope. The Alpine Mountain Rifle is available in 243 Win., 308 Win., 7mm-08, and 6.5 Creedmoor. It features a HACT two-stage trigger, Cerakote Gray barreled action, Pachmayr Decelerator recoil pad, and the Ammo Boost detachable-magazine system.

SRP: $1,221, rifle only; $1,188, with the Mag Kit; $1,477, for rifle, Mag Kit, and scope package.

Howa is also offering a new chambering for its Mini-Action short-action rifle. It's now available in 222 Remington. Scoped packages, using the new Nikko Stirling Panamax riflescope, are also available. SRP: $608 to $782. Stock colors for this model include black, OD green, or Kryptek Highlander.

Iver Johnson

The HP 18 is a departure from the customary Iver Johnson shotgun. Designed for the tactical operator or law-abiding civilian looking to protect its castle, this 40-inch semi-automatic shotgun is available in 12- or 20-gauge and comes with a 18.5-inch barrel fitted with a muzzle brake. The pistol-grip stock is modular; the buttstock can be removed, leaving only the pistol grip. The high-profile rear sight is fitted to a Picatinny rail and there is a fiber-optic front sight. The HP 18 has an unloaded weight of 6 pounds 6 ounces.

Kahr

Recently approved for civilian sale by the ATF, the Thompson T1-14 offers a 14.5-inch barrel with a permanently affixed Cutts Compensator, putting the total barrel length at 16 inches. This rifle is chambered for the 45 ACP, weighs 13 pounds, and has a walnut fixed stock and a vertical foregrip. It comes with one 20-round stick magazine. SRP: $1,461.



Above, two new from Howa: Top, the Alpine Mountain Rifle w/ Nikko Stirling Panamax 3-9x40 Riflescope and the Mini-Action Short-Action Rifle in .222 Rem.



Kahr Thompson T1-14 .45 ACP



Legacy Sports International Ammo Boost Detachable Magazine Kits and Spare Magazines for Remington Model 700 Rifles.



Iver Johnson IJ600



LWRC DI Rifle in 5.56 NATO

Legacy Sports International

Ammo Boost detachable magazine kits and spare magazines now fit Remington Model 700 rifles in short- and long-action chamberings. These magazine conversion kits will work in all Remington Model 700 rifles except the ADL model. SRP: $98.

The new Pointer Break Action single-shot shotguns are a great way to teach beginners how to shoot. Available in 12- and 20-gauge and .410, these single shots all come with 28-inch barrels and a fixed, Modified choke. Every Pointer Break Action comes with a manual push-button safety, a hammer safety, and a transfer-bar safety. Length: 43.5 inches, weight: 4.8 to 5.4 pounds. SRP: $188.

Lehigh Defense

Staying true to form, Lehigh Defense continues to offer alternatives to traditional ammunition. The new 380 ACP Xtreme Defense (XD) load will penetrate more than 14 inches in 10 percent ordnance gelatin while retaining 100 percent of its weight.

Liberty Ammunition

Liberty is continuing its trend of offering high-velocity, light-for-caliber projectiles, and new for 2016 is its copper monolithic, a fragmenting, hollowpoint lead-free hunting load for the 308 Winchester. With a 3,500 fps muzzle velocity, it generates 2,700 foot-pounds of energy.

LWRC

The DI rifle chambered in 5.56 NATO was built from the ground up as a completely new direct-impingement rifle featuring many of the same high-performance attributes found in its popular Gas Piston-Luxury AR lineup. Features include a Monoforge upper, modular one-piece free-float rail, and a LWRC cold-hammer-forged spiral-fluted barrel. The rifle also has fully ambidextrous lower controls. Barrel length is 16 inches with a 1-in-7 twist. The rifles weighs 5.9 pounds.

Merkel

The R15 is a new bolt-action rifle designed to specifically meet the expectations of American hunters and shooters. It features a newly designed receiver with three lugs for maximum strength and safety, and a 60-degree bolt throw for fast follow-up shots. The receiver is mated to a cold-hammer-forged barrel and the R15 utilizes a direct trigger with a

pull weight of less than 3 pounds. Two models will be offered: a Grade 1 walnut-stocked version and a fiberglass-reinforced black synthetic-stocked version. Both are available for standard and magnum cartridges: 243 Win., 6.5x55, 270 Win., 308 Win., 30/06, 9.3x62, 300 Win. Mag., and 7mm Rem. Mag. The walnut R15 weighs 7 pounds 4.4 ounces, the synthetic R15 weighs 6 pounds 9.8 ounces. SRP: $799, walnut; $699, synthetic.

Mossberg

The new 500-ATI Scorpion shotgun is the perfect balance of time-tested Mossberg 500 reliability and the functionality of ATI components. It is available exclusively through TALO Group Distributors. Mossberg has teamed up with ATI to outfit this model with an exceptional set of components, bringing an unprecedented stock, a heat shield, a sidesaddle, and an accessory rail together in a single coordinated package. The gun features an 18.5-inch barrel and six-round capacity (2¾-inch shells).

Mossberg's newly designed and handsomely appointed 930 Pro-Series Sporting shotgun is a competition-ready features include a beveled loading gate, premium Pro-Series coatings, Cerakote-finished receiver, Briley chokes, and a HiViz TriComp sight. The new ergonomically designed walnut stock includes Mossberg's Stock Drop System.

Mossberg has upgraded the MVP Scout rifle scope package with a new scout scope from Vortex. This new Vortex Crossfire II Scout Scope features extended eye-relief for forward mounting on the MVP Scout rifle for quick target acquisition. Vortex Viper rings are provided in the package.

New for 2016 are five Patriot bolt-action rifles that feature Kryptek Highlander camo stocks with matte blue metal finishes in 243, 270, 308 Win., 30/06, and 300 Win. Mag. Mossberg has also updated its MMR AR 15 platform rifles to include a Magpul M-LOK forend, MOE grip, and removable and adjustable rail-



Above: Mossberg's 500-ATI Scorpion and the Patriot Bolt Action w/Kryptek Highlander Camo Stock.



Above: Remington's 200th Anniversary Model 700 CDL in .35 Whelen and the Remington 870 Super Mag Turkey Pump with a 3.5-inch chamber.



Rock River Arms IRS Series in 5.56 NATO

mounted sights and a muzzle brake.

Remington

To celebrate its 200th anniversary, Remington is offering a new Model 700 and special versions of the Model 7600 with celebratory engraving. There will be a limited number of only 2,016 units offered in each model and special features will include high-polished carbon steel, engraving with gold inlays, and C-grade American black walnut stocks with a special laser engraving pattern.

For the popular and affordable Model 783 line of bolt-action rifles, Remington has added a scoped combo package. These rifles will have a pillar-bedded Mossy Oak Break Up synthetic stock, the standard CrossFire adjustable trigger, and a Super Cell recoil pad and come with a 3-9X riflescope. Available chamberings include 223 Rem., 243 Win, 270 Win., 308 Win., 30/06, and 7mm Rem. Mag. SRP: $451.

The Limited Edition Model 700 for 2016 comes in the CDL Model which has a satin stainless action, a 24-inch barrel, a satin-finished American walnut stock, a laser-engraved floor plate, and "LIMITED" etched on the left side of the receiver. It also has the X-Mark Pro trigger. It will be chambered for the 35 Whelen.

For 2016 Remington is offering two new home-defense 870s. They are the same as the black synthetic 870 Home Defense models except they are fitted with traditional hardwood stocks. Both have 3-inch chambers and an 18.5-inch barrel with a fixed Improved Cylinder choke. One comes with a four-round tube; the other holds six 3-inch magnum shotshells. SRP: $450 to $475.

Rock River Arms

The Rock River IRS Series rifles integrate low-profile folding sights, which can be used as a primary or backup sighting system. The series also features a new tuned and ported muzzle brake that helps reduce muzzle climb and is equipped with either a 16- or 18-inch barrel. Chambered in 5.56 NATO, it weighs between 7.6 to 8.4 pounds. SRP: $1,540 to $1,620.

Savage

Savage continues its innovation and response to shooter demand with several new rifles for 2016. First is the Model 16/116 Lightweight Hunter. This rifle tips the scales at 5.65 to 5.8 pounds. It comes with a synthetic stock and a 20-inch barrel. Available in 223 Rem., 243 Win., 270 Win, 308 Win., and 7-08 Rem. SRP: $729.

Stainless barrels and hardwood stock options now come to the Axis II package line. All Axis rifles sport the adjustable AccuTrigger and the package Axis II models include a premium quality, mounted and bore sighted Weaver Kaspa 3-9x40mm riflescope. SRP: $600.

For magnum rimfire enthusiasts, Savage has added three new models to the B-MAG line. They include a Target Beavertail model ($548), a Heavy Barrel model ($402), and a Sporter model ($506.) The B-MAG was built around the 17 Win. Super Magnum cartridge, which creates



Above: Savage A17 Sporter Semi-Auto W/Thumbhole Stock in .17 HMR and the Lightweight Hunter.



SIG Sauer SIGM400 Predator 5.56mm, 300BLK



TriStar TT-15 Over-Under 12 Gauge Trap Shotgun

unprecedented rimfire velocities of up to 3,000 feet per second.

More rimfire news from Savage includes new models in the A17 line. The new target models feature heavy barrels and gray wood-laminate stocks. SRP: $571, Target Sporter; $631,Target Sporter Thumbhole.

The new Model 42 Takedown shotgun-rifle combo gun breaks down with a simple push of one button and includes an Uncle Mike's Go Bag so you can easily transport it. The Model 42 fires rimfire rounds from the top barrel and .410 shotgun shells from the bottom. The 42 is available in 22 LR over .410 or 22 WMR over .410. SRP: $500.

SIG Sauer

SIG has a redesigned its SIGM400 Predator hunting rifle. Based on the direct-impingement SIGM400 action, the new Predator offers a series of enhanced features optimized for hunters in 5.56mm or 300 Blackout. The hammer-forged stainless-steel barrel is 18 inches for the 5.56 NATO and 16 inches in 300BLK. Barrels come threaded for the addition of muzzle devices or silencers. A top Picatinny rail allows for optics to be mounted, and the ALG aluminum free-floating handguard features M-Lok attachment points.

The semi-automatic SIG MPX Carbine is a modular 9mm that maintains all of the ergonomic superiority of the short-barrel rifle and pistol variants, but now with a 16-inch hammer-forged barrel. It has a full-length aluminum KeyMod handguard and can be turned into an SBR with a simple conversion kit. SRP: $2,055.

Traditions Performance Firearms

The Crackshot is a new rimfire rifle available in 22 or 17 HMR. It has a 16.5-inch barrel and weighs just over 4 pounds. Lightweight and easy to carry, it's great for plinking and small-game hunting. The easy takedown feature makes for quick disassembly and easy transport. The Dual Safety System includes a hammer block and manual trigger block safety.

TriStar

TriStar's new trap shotguns are the TT-15, available in top-single, unsingle, and over/under options. Each model features a Monte Carlo stock and fully adjustable comb made from Turkish walnut. The TT-15 is fitted with a high-standing three-point adjustable rib, auto ejectors, and a fiber-optic front sight. The over/under TT-15 includes five extended color-coded Beretta/Benelli choke tubes while the top-single and unsingle models include three choke tubes. The TT-15 over/under has 32-inch barrels, weighs 8 pounds 8 ounces, has a 14.6-inch length of pull. SRP: $1,099. The top-single and unsingle come with 34-inch barrels. SRP: $999.

Weatherby

Weatherby is doing something in 2016 it has not done for 17 years. It will be offering a new cartridge, the 6.5-300 Weatherby Magnum, made by necking down the 300 Weatherby Magnum to 6.5 caliber. It is capable of pushing a 127-grain bullet in excess of 3,500 fps. Weatherby will be loading all of the ammo for the 6.5-300 WM here in the United States at its Paso Robles, California, factory. Initially, three loads will be offered. A 127-grain Barnes LRX, a 130-grain Swift Scirocco II, and a 140-grain Swift A-Frame.

Weatherby 6.5-300 Weatherby Magnum



With its new Laminate H-Bar rifle, Weatherby combines the best attributes of the Vanguard with features deemed nonnegotiable by the benchrest and varmint-hunting community. The Vanguard Laminate H-Bar rifle comes with a sub-MOA accuracy guarantee and is fitted with a cold-hammer-forged 22-inch, No. 3-contour barrel, measuring 0.740-inch at the muzzle. The Vanguard action is affixed to an oil-finished birch-laminate stock that has a quick-and-easy locking system for adjusting both length of pull and the height of the comb. SRP: $1,449.

The Vanguard Accuguard now offers Accumark accuracy at a much more affordable price. The Accuguard rifle is accompanied with an accuracy guarantee; with premium ammunition, it will produce a three-shot group measuring 0.99-inch or less from a cold barrel. The Accuguard includes a match-quality two-stage trigger, user adjustable for pull weight. SRP: $1,099.

Weatherby has also renovated the Mark V rifle, which marks the first significant refinements of this classic rifle since its original introduction in 1958. All new Mark Vs will feature the new LXX trigger, an ergonomically enhanced stock, a hand-lapped barrel, and a sub-MOA accuracy guarantee. The new Mark V stocks now have a slimmer forearm and sharper, more distinctive lines and contours. The grip diameter has been reduced, a slight right-hand palm



Above: Weatherby Laminate H-Bar and Vanguard Accumark.

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swell has been added, and overall weight has decreased.

Winchester

In 2016, Winchester Repeating Arms will celebrate its 150th anniversary. To commemorate this historic milestone, five special firearms will be offered, highlighted by a Commemorative Model 1866 "Yellow Boy" lever-action rifle. This polished brass beauty is faithful to the original and is embellished with some of the most authentic Ulrich-style engraving ever offered on a factory Model 1866. The Model 1866 150th Commemorative Custom Grade will be offered in 44/40 Win. and comes with a custom-grade V/VI walnut straight-grip stock with a satin oil finish. Its deeply polished full-octagon 24-inch barrel features a gold barrel band and special script and scroll engraving. SRP: $3,330.



Winchester Model 94 150th Commemorative Lever-Action Rifle

Two more commemoratives include the 94 and 1873 rifles. The Model 94 150th Commemorative lever-action rifle will be offered in 30/30 Win., with 24-inch full-octagon barrel. SRP: $2,670. The Model 1873 Commemorative will be offered in 44/40 Win. and will feature Fancy Grade V/VI walnut straight-grip stock and rifle-style forearm with classic cut checkering and deep-relief scroll engraving. The full-octagon 24-inch barrel is deeply polished. SRP: $3,330.

Compiled by Gun Tests *staff. Some of the descriptions above are from* SHOT Daily, *a trade magazine published at the show for the dealers and distributors who attend. Used with permission.* **GT**

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

- Semiautomatic Tactical Shotguns: Benelli Model M4, $1,999; a Beretta Model 1301, $1,075; and a Mossberg Model 930 SPX, $836.
- Full-Size 10mm Pistols: Glock G20 Gen4, the SIG Sauer P220-10 Match Elite, and the RIA Tac Ultra FS.
- IWB Holsters: Barber Leather Works Snaps and Straps and Chameleon models, Stealth Gear Onyx, Discrete Defense Solutions IWB, Hidden Hybrid Holsters HHS S1, KT-Mech.com Gunfighter IWB, Alien Gear Cloak IWB, Gold Star Holsters IWB, Mernickle Holsters PS 2; Master's Holster 5317 reversible IWB, Tagua 4 in 1 holster, Blackhawk Tuckable holster, Gun Mate IWB, Quest IWB, and Falco IWB holster.

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