GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

$5.95 April 2017/Vol. XXIX, No. 4

AFFORDABLE 1911 45 ACP RAIL GUNS

ATI, EAA, Armscor, and Springfield Armory battle it out to see who makes the best semi-auto priced below $900. ● Page 6





AFFORDABLE AR-15 RIFLES

Tested: The $1000 CMMG Mk4T with 1:7-twist 416 stainless-steel barrel; the $1250 SIG Sauer RM400 Classic with ambidextrous safety and magazine releases, and the $899 Springfield Armory Saint, the manufacturer's first AR-15. Check out the winner on...
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NEW RIFLES FOR 2017

Bolt actions, lever actions, and semi-autos you'll see this year. ● Page 24



NEW SHOTGUNS FOR 2017

Pumpguns, self-loaders, and break actions coming this year. ● Page 29



DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● 10 GLOCK 42 HOLSTERS: 21 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

FAKE LAW



Todd Woodard

Later in this issue, Roger Eckstine compares three pretty dang good AR-15s that folks in many parts of the country can afford and enjoy — except, most recently, in Maryland. Reason: The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Richmond, Virginia basically rewrote *Heller* and upheld Maryland's "assault weapons" ban, trampling on American Constitutional rights in the areas of the court's jurisdiction. In a decision issued February 21, the court upheld Maryland's ban on both "assault weapons" and "high capacity magazines."

The *Kolbe v. Hogan* decision is so wrong in so many ways, I can only characterize it by purloining descriptions of the media coverage of Donald Trump — fake news — and using it in the context of the decision: It is fake law. Fortunately, you don't have to take my word for it. One of the jurists writing in dissent, Judge William B. Traxler Jr., does it far better than I could ever do.

In his dissent, Judge Traxler says the majority contrived "a heretofore unknown 'test,' which is whether the firearm in question is 'most useful in military service.'" Such a "test" allows judges to find that any firearm they don't favor isn't protected by the Second Amendment, and can therefore be prohibited on a whim.

"Under the majority's analysis," the dissenters wrote, "a settler's musket, the only weapon he would likely own and bring to militia service, would be most useful in military service — undoubtedly a weapon of war — and therefore not protected by the Second Amendment." Indeed, the dissent goes on, "the 'most useful in military service' rubric would remove nearly all firearms from Second Amendment protection as nearly all firearms can be useful in military service." Using this standard, the Fourth Circuit could strip the Constitutional protection from nearly any weapon it chooses to. In dismissing the majority's test, the dissenters pointed out that "*Heller* in no way suggests that the military usefulness of a weapon disqualifies it from Second Amendment protection. That is the majority's singular concoction."

Judge Traxler continues, writing that the decision avoids the "unavoidable conclusion that popular semiautomatic rifles such as the AR-15 are commonly possessed by American citizens for lawful purposes within the meaning of *Heller*." Also, he said, the record "shows unequivocally that magazines with a capacity of greater than 10 rounds are commonly kept by American citizens, as there are more than 75 million such magazines owned by them in the United States."

More ridiculous still is the majority's description of the AR-15 as "weapon of war." My reading of the opinion suggests that because the AR looks like an M-16, the semi-auto variant of the select-fire battle rifle counts as a military firearm. Semi-automatic rifles, Judge King opines, can fire at a rate of between 300 and 500 rounds per minute. Unbelievable.

Conclusion: Traxler writes, "If the majority is correct, that the semiautomatic AR-15's rate of fire makes it a weapon of war outside the scope of the Second Amendment, then all semiautomatic firearms — including the vast majority of semiautomatic handguns — enjoy no constitutional protection since the rate of fire for any semiautomatic firearm is determined by how fast the shooter can squeeze the trigger."

Hopefully, the Supreme Court, which has been unwilling to take many Second Amendment cases, will stop treating the keeping and bearing of arms as a second-class right and overturn the decision in this case. **GT**

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GUN TESTS ACCEPTS NO COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

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

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Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658.

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

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

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Tests for 'Jumbo Shrimp' .410s

Reader Leonard believes the appearance of shotgun-bore revolvers has caused a reduction in shotshell load strength, and he wants us to prove it. Thank you, Leonard. We're on it.



Request for .410 Tests

Good evening Todd: Let's start with a fact: I love Gun Tests magazine and have had an unbroken record of subscription for over what — 15 years or more now? I never have any issues or concerns about the tests, articles, and guidance that Gun Tests has provided for all this time. I do have an "issue," a "concern" if you will. I do not, have not, and probably never will buy a Taurus Judge. I like Taurus, but not the Judge.

I think the Judge has fundamentally devolved and changed the functional and applicable nature of the .410 shotgun shell, and .410s were always the "baby" of the shotgun family anyway! Gun Tests needs to thoroughly test .410 buckshot, slugs, and the "heaviest" loads (I know — a "jumbo shrimp" oxymoron) available in .410s in both the full-sized shotguns and the revolvers side by side. The Judge, and now the Governor, have diminished the "buckshot loads/defense loads" from 357 Magnum velocities in the 1100 to 1300 fps range down to 38 Special wadcutter and 32 S&W velocities in the 700- to 800-fps range. I can throw marbles faster than that!

Hmm, let's see now: 357 Magnums vs. 38 Special wadcutters and 32 S&Ws for "defense." Which ones are better? Doesn't that sound like a Gun Tests test? These ammo manufacturers have done .410 shotgunners a tremendous disservice just to make it easier to extract the casings from revolver cylinders! Example: Nobel Sport used to offer a great, inexpensive .410 buckshot load that went 1320+ fps; now it's 800 fps. "Great for handguns" means crappy for shotguns!

And what about the low-powered .410 shotgun string? How effective can a string of low-powered pellets be on target when they are slow — staggered on impact — and inaccurate? Gun Tests needs to test the side-by-side velocities, energies, ranges, accuracies, penetrations, and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these .410 loads and applications. Barrel lengths and velocities do make a difference, especially when you're using "mouse rounds." You know, a 22 LR compared to a 223: Both are 22s, but one is a lot more powerful.

Pump and single/top-break .410 Shotguns vs. the Judge and Governor handguns. May the best guns and loads win — but I'm betting on the shotguns! **— Leonard**

Okay, Leonard, I'm discussing this with both Ralph Wininghamand Bob Campbell to see how we might get this done. It's a great idea. The .410 bore is the "baby" of the shotgun gauges, but I don't know anyone who wants to get shot by one, whether fired from a handgun or a stocked shotgun. Could be fun to find out the downrange differences.
— Todd Woodard

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.

Letter from a Young Reader

Mr. Woodard: My name is Trevor and I have been reading my Dad's Gun Tests issues for a few years now. I am thirteen and have had an interest in guns for quite some time. Your magazine has played a big part in teaching me about guns, ammo, and gun care. I remember first learning about gun safety when I was about 4 years of age. I was in our basement and stumbled upon an old cap gun from my Dad's childhood. I ran upstairs and told my Dad that there was a gun on the table. That was the defining moment that began my interest in firearms.

I was wondering if you could add to the tests a slide-pull weight. This would help other young people and people like my grandparents who may have a hard time pulling back the slide of many production handguns. Also, I was wondering if you could also add the amount of recoil each gun has in its respective test. This would also help readers like my grandparents, who don't want to have their wrists aching the next day.

On a different note, I have been interested in a Browning Hi-Power for quite awhile, though I have never shot one. I would like to know if you and your team have reviewed this gun before and if you have any personal input on it. Finally, I am interested in a 40 S&W, though, yet again, I have never shot one, so your personal input on the round would be much appreciated. Keep up the good work. **— Trevor**

Hey Trevor: Glad to see your interest in learning about gun safety first. Yes, I plan to add slide-pull weight as a standard reporting line item as soon as I buy the necessary equipment and ship the tools to the staff later this year. We probably won't add recoil energy to the measurements because it's a calculation that doesn't add much to our staff's assessment of how a certain firearm pushes on the shooter. Grip and stock design contribute to how recoil is perceived by the shooter, even when the recoil energy for two firearms is the same. But you can see how recoil energy varies by firearm and cartridge by logging on to ShootersCalculator.com and plugging in the variables listed there. Also, I hate to disappoint you, but I don't usually share my personal opinions about firearms or cartridges. The value of a Gun Tests evaluation is because we solicit a range of opinion about the side-by-side performance of firearms and aggregate that into a report in which we detail certain facts, disclose our biases or basis for making certain judgments, then render an opinion of a firearm for the benefit of the readers. When I am personally involved in a test, I'm careful not to let my opinions overwhelm the rest of the team. My hands are a certain size; my eyes see a certain thing; my tastes in what I like are just like everyone else's — personal. So, what I like about a given gun carries less weight than what our evaluations have reported. So here's some of what we've said about the Hi-Power over the years.



Top is the Browning Hi-Power Mk III No. 051002393 9mm Luger reviewed in the September 2009 issue. Middle is the Inglis Hi-Power reviewed in the January 2011 issue. Bottom is the Browning Hi-Power HP40 reviewed in the September 2000 issue.

September 2000: Browning Hi-Power HP40, $608. Grade: A. "The Hi-Power, despite its low market profile, is a satisfying gun to own, and with its history, there are enough aftermarket parts and refinements to hold its owner's interest. For single-action-only fans, this would be our first choice."

September 2009: Browning Hi-Power Mk III No. 051002393 9mm Luger, $979. Grade: D. "Yep, it's a classic Hi-Power, but with an epoxy finish. It's a single-action gun that can be carried cocked and locked. But the trigger was all of 10 pounds, not what you'd expect on a $1000 handgun. Workmanship was generally excellent, and the gun was smooth, but all the spring forces were high. The gun still won't fire with the 13-round magazine removed, a holdover from 1935."

January 2011: Inglis Hi-Power w/Stock 9mm Luger, $1650. Grade: A. "Not quite a battered old war relic, the Inglis-made Hi-Power was an interesting study, we thought. Its Parkerizing finish was slightly worn, but intact enough to make this an excellent example of a WWII-era Hi-Power. The stock added to its aura."

As far as the 40 S&W round, I've never personally owned a handgun chambered for it. It's comparatively expensive next to the 9mm Luger and 45 ACP, and loads for both of those can do what the 40 can do most of the time. Now, a 10mm — that's a different forty I have some interest in. — tw

Re "The 44 Special: An Old Number Is Revitalized by Modern Loads," January 2017

Having read everything in print by Elmer Keith since 1946 and his





book *Hell, I Was There*, I defer to his knowledge when it comes to the 44 Special and other large-caliber handgun bullets. His Lyman 429421 semi-wadcutter cast from Lyman #2 lead was designed to cut full-caliber holes for maximum penetration. Keith never relied on a soft-lead bullet because expansion stops penetration.

Soft-lead bullets are nothing new, and I have cast soft 44-caliber bullets that expand in phone books and look like the Buffalo Bore LSWC, as shown on page 20 of the January 2017 issue. Penetration was disappointing compared to the hard lead 44 bullet, which had four times the penetration.

The Fiocchi 200-grain bullet is the best bullet in the tested lot, and it would be better if it was a hard cast 429421-style semi-wadcutter.

If you have to shoot through a sheetrock wall to hit an attacker behind it, you may be disappointed. Or if the attacker is wearing a leather jacket and you have to penetrate those layers of the leather, you may also be disappointed with the performance of the soft bullet.

Shooting the Model 21 or the Bulldog with wood grips is pure torture. Fitting the Pachmayr or the Crimson Trace grips is well worth the money. I enjoy reading your magazine very much, and you can print me if you choose to. **— Jim**

It is interesting to see how cartridges come and go out of favor with shooters. We've touted the 44 Special for many years as a powerful, but controllable, self-defense and hunting round. So, now it is gratifying to see the cartridge get chambered in Ruger's new GP100 wheelgun line. The GP100 has long been loaded in 357 Magnum, 38 Special, and 327 Federal Magnum rounds, and now, some 30 years after its introduction, it comes in a five-shot 3-inch 44 Special. — tw

Re "357 Magnum Personal Defense Loads: Black Hills Is a Best Buy," February 2017

Todd, I was going through this issue and had a question on the ammunition comparison on page 29. In the second sentence of the second paragraph in the second column, it reads, "He noted that the 22 LR, as an example, was a proven, though under-regarded, self-defense round when fired from a rifle largely because of the ease with which accuracy was obtained." Because the article is about 357 Magnum personal-defense loads, was the use of 22 LR a mistake? I do enjoy the articles that you continue to put out. Thanks. **— Dean**

Well, that seems to be poorly phrased. What it means is: Even the rimfire 22 can be a decent self-defense round when fired from a rifle — that is, a longer barrel. Same with the 357 Magnum — its reputation is largely based on testing done from 4-inch barrels, as we did in that test. The lingering issue is how effective will the 357 be in a shorter barrel? We're simply recognizing that short-barrel performance can be very different for the 357 Magnum, and that's what the 22 LR reference was meant to convey. — tw

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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**

Affordable 1911 Rail Guns: EAA, ATI, Armscor, Springfield

American Tactical Imports, European American Armory, Armscor, and Springfield Armory battle it out in this race to the top for 1911-style 45 ACP semi-autos priced below $900.

Guns fitted with accessory rails, aka rail guns, are a popular choice for both self defense and home defense because of their ability to mount a combat light or advanced laser. These are nice features to have on a defense handgun, but they must be paired with features that make a difference to accuracy, reliability, and handling, such as a speed safety and a well-designed beavertail and functional grip safety on their 1911s. Good sights and a crisp trigger response are always important factors as well. But the most important factor is reliability.



Among our test handguns, Armscor's Rock Island Armory Tactical 2011 w/TruDot Sights, $590, being shot above by Contributing Editor R.K. Campbell and inset, is the most pleasing offering we have yet fired from this maker, and we grade it a solid Best Buy. (All images showing the muzzle of the pistols are taken with a remote camera and no operator downrange.)

American Tactical Imports Firepower Xtreme Hybrid FXH-45 45 ACP, $600

The first thing we noted is that the FXH Hybrid is delivered in a Gun Guard-brand hard case. Good choice. The pistol includes one Ammunition Storage Components magazine. The FXH departs considerably from previous experience with the 1911 and with other ATI pistols. The frame is polymer, with removable grips. The pivot tube and magazine release are typical of a 1911. The ambidextrous safety received high marks for its design and sharp functionality. The beavertail grip safety is a good design. The frame features three finger grooves, which are molded directly into the polymer grip. The trigger guard is elongated and allows for the use of gloves. The Picatinny rail is also molded directly into the frame.

While we found the design interesting, and the originality of the frame precludes the pistol fitting into the 1911 holsters we had on hand. The other polymer-frame pistol fits both the DM Bullard inside-the-waistband holster and the Ted Blocker X16. The design of this pistol may make it difficult to find a holster for it.

The slide uses a standard barrel-bushing guide rod. The cocking serrations are large and allow for smooth handling. There are three indentations in the slide near the muzzle that may be used as forward cocking

Our test handguns chambered in 45 ACP also included, from left, the American Tactical Imports Firepower Xtreme Hybrid FXH-45 45 ACP, $600; the European American Armory Witness Elite 1911 Polymer 600347 45 ACP, $470; and the Springfield Armory Range Officer Operator PI9131L, $873.



1911 RAIL GUN RANGE DATA

Fiocchi 230-gr. FMJ	**EAA Witness 1911P**	**Rock Island 1911 w/TruGlo**	**Springfield Armory Range Officer Operator**	**ATI Xtreme Hybrid**
Average Velocity	854 fps	869 fps	860 fps	866 fps
Muzzle Energy	372 ft.-lbs.	385 ft.-lbs.	377 ft.-lbs.	382 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.5 in.	2.2 in.	2.2 in.	2.6 in.
Largest Group	3.0 in.	2.6 in.	2.5 in.	3.4 in.
Average Group Size	2.7 in.	2.4 in.	2.4 in.	3.0 in.

Black Hills Ammunition 185-gr. TAC +P	**EAA Witness 1911P**	**Rock Island 1911 w/TruGlo**	**Springfield Armory Range Officer Operator**	**ATI Xtreme Hybrid**
Average Velocity	1030 fps	985 fps	996 fps	1021 fps
Muzzle Energy	435 ft.-lbs.	398 ft.-lbs.	407 ft.-lbs.	428 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.1 in.	2.0 in.	1.7 in.	2.5 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.4 in.	2.0 in.	3.0 in.
Average Group Size	2.3 in.	2.3 in.	1.9 in.	2.8 in.

Hornady Zombie Max 185-gr.	**EAA Witness 1911P**	**Rock Island 1911 w/TruGlo**	**Springfield Armory Range Officer Operator**	**ATI Xtreme Hybrid**
Average Velocity	999 fps	986 fps	975 fps	968 fps
Muzzle Energy	409 ft.-lbs.	399 ft.-lbs.	390 ft.-lbs.	384 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.3 in.	1.9 in.	1.7 in.	2.3 in.
Largest Group	2.6 in.	2.3 in.	2.2 in.	3.1 in.
Average Group Size	2.5 in.	2.2 in.	2.0 in.	2.7 in.

Notes: *Average velocity readings were recorded by firing five-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first skyscreen. Ambient temperature: 45 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. The accuracy figures are the average of three five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 25-yard target.*

Ammunition notes: *We purchased the Fiocchi 230-grain FMJs for $147/500 rounds from CheaperThanDirt.com; the Black Hills Ammunition 185-grain TAC +P rounds for $26.50/20 from VenturaMunitions.com; and the Hornady Zombie Max 185-grain rounds for $20.50/20 from CheaperThanDirt.com.*



This is the advantage of the rail-gun front: Mounting a combat light such as this Viridian so the shooter can illuminate targets in the dark.



We tested three brands of ammunition in 185-grain and 230-grain variations, including one +P load with good results. Accuracy testing from the bench was conducted at 25 yards with open sights, and it's fair to say the EAA was a 2.5-inch gun at that distance, the Rock Island was a tad better than that, and the Springfield was a 2-inch gun with two ammos, the Black Hills 185-grain TAC +P and Hornady's Zombie Max 185-grain load.

serrations. The slide features three ports on each side, even though the barrel is not ported.

The FXH slide has a flat-top design. The rear end of the slide features a removable plate to allow the placing of an adapter mount for a red-dot scope. This is a big plus and a feature the other handguns did not have. The front sight features a fiber-optic insert for better visibility. The face of the rear sight is serrated, which was a nice addition. We really like the sight picture. According to ATI, the sights can be replaced with many aftermarket Glock sights that are available.

The pistol had many good features and showed promise — until we checked the trigger. When handling the unloaded pistol, and the slide was racked and the hammer cocked, we had difficulty pulling the trigger. One of the raters commented, "This is the heaviest 1911 trigger that I have ever tested." He carefully made certain

the grip safety was fully depressed and that the safety was off. The scale measured at an estimated 14 pounds of trigger press. Then, he could not make the hammer fall again. The pistol was racked repeatedly. To attempt to make it function again, we tried a gunsmithing trick known as the "poor man's trigger job." The hammer was held back, and the trigger was pressed a dozen times, with no change. This is supposed to burnish all of the working parts. After the "trigger job," we tested the pull again, and the trigger began to break at 6.5 pounds. The pistol was then dry-fired a dozen times.

The next day at the range, the slide was racked and the pistol would not fire again. We unloaded the pistol and could not get the hammer to fall again. Finally, using the previous technique, a tester was able to get the hammer to drop. The pistol could not be fired for the test and evaluation at that time.

We planned to send the gun back to the factory under warranty to get it fixed, but gave the ATI pistol an initial F rating because the defect was so serious we could not even fire the pistol during testing. The next step was to return the pistol to the factory. The rater who contacted ATI's customer service never mentioned this was a Gun Tests Gun, as is our policy. He contacted the company on a Tuesday, emails were traded, and a Fed Ex label was mailed to the rater. The pistol was shipped out on a Thursday, arrived at ATI the next day, and the rater had the pistol back the following Tuesday. Darned good service, we have to say.

The note in the box with the returned gun said that the trigger had been adjusted. The match trigger quite possibly had not been set properly from the factory. It had probably contacted the magazine release and failed to break the sear. Also, the note mentioned that the warranty work included a slide-stop upgrade, which is okay, but we had not detected a slide-stop problem during testing. The trigger now broke at 7.1 pounds, which is a little heavy,

ATI FIREPOWER XTREME HYBRID FXH-45
45 ACP, $600
GUN TESTS GRADE: D

There isn't much we can say about this pistol. The features are high tech, with much utility as a shooter and even for some competition. But we could not convince the pistol to fire without a trip back to the factory. Warranty response was timely.



Action	Semi-Auto, Single Action
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded w/Magazine	32.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	36.5 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	416 St. Steel, 1:16 twist
Magazine	8-Rd. detachable box
Slide	416 St. Steel; removable top plate
Frame	Polymer; 2 aluminum inserts
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Black Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Fixed, interchangeable with Glock
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	7.1 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Slide Lock Safety, Grip Safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(800) 290-0065
Website	AmericanTactical.us
Made In	Summerville, S.C.





We were looking forward to testing this handgun, but it simply did not happen. The ATI malfunctioned with the first few magazines of 230-grain FMJ ammunition, and after a trip to the factory, it wasn't very accurate. There are better options in this test.



Pity about the reliability, because, otherwise, the ATI has many interesting features. The front sight is a bright fiber-optic unit that allows fast acquisition.



The rear sight is among the best designs we have seen on a 1911. The rear end of the slide features a removable plate to allow the placing of an adapter mount for a red-dot scope.

EAA WITNESS ELITE 1911P POLYMER 600347 45 ACP, $470

GUN TESTS GRADE: B-

We liked the EAA Witness 1911P version. Fit and finish are good, and the pistol shoots better than its light weight would indicate. The feed reliability is good and so is the combat accuracy. It was the least accurate pistol off the bench rest on the first go-round, but that didn't faze the raters who wanted a good carry gun. The flaw with the magazine latch, however, could have dire consequences.



Action	Semi-auto single action
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	32.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	36.5 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	Steel, 1:16 Twist
Magazine	8-Rd. detachable box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Polymer single-stack grip; steel insert, flat mainspring housing; 4-slot Picatinny rail, extended beavertail safety
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Black polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Fixed
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	6.6 lbs
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Slide lock, grip safety
Warranty	Lifetime
Telephone	(321) 639 4842
Website	EAAcorp.com
Made In	Tanfoglio, Italy



The EAA Witness 1911P is an interesting full-size handgun that is sure to become a popular concealed carry pistol because of its light weight. We liked the 1911P save for the magazine-release problems. This is what a tie-up looks like when caused by a faulty magazine latch.



Left: Initial results in combat firing with the EAA pistol showed excellent control due to a combination of good sights. The post front sight (below left) offers good sight acquisition. The rear sight, right, is tall enough to snag on the belt to clear malfunctions.





but we found it to be smooth enough. Still, the heavy trigger probably played into the less-than-stellar accuracy showing we detail below.

The returned pistol was loaded with the same mix of ammunition, the supplied magazine, and a mix of Mec-Gar and ACT MAG magazines. There were a total of five failures to cycle during the first 40 rounds of ammunition. After this break-in period, the pistol functioned normally. We really liked the sights. Felt recoil was not uncomfortable, despite the pistol's light weight. In fact, we would say it was more comfortable that the EAA. Combat shooting was comparable to the other pistols. We then settled it into the benchrest to fire a number of groups with the same ammunition as previously fired in the other handguns. The ATI pistol was the least accurate tested; however, one bright spot was a single 2.25-inch group with the Hornady 185-grain load. Overall, the pistol did not deliver the accuracy we would have liked for the price.

Our Team Said: Considering the break-in malfunctions and substandard accuracy, we would not buy this pistol. We struggled over whether to maintain the gun's original F grade or to revise the grade, and we chose the latter. We've described the gun's initial lack of function, so the Gun Tests reader knows exactly what happened. But the factory warranty service was fast, and the gun did eventually start shooting. It just wasn't that accurate. So we raised the grade to a D because of the presence of good features and good factory attention. But to make it crystal clear, none of our shooters would buy this test gun.

European American Armory Witness Elite 1911P Polymer 600347 45 ACP, $470

The Witness moniker was used in a line of popular CZ 75 clones. EAA chose to go with name recognition for this new polymer-frame handgun. This pistol is a rarity in the 1911 world because it is produced by Tanfoglio in Italy. The Witness 1911P is a 1911 clone with a more conventional appearance than that of the ATI FXH. This pistol is geared toward personal

defense rather than competitive use. Which is fine since self defense is the most common role of the 1911, and a role that this pistol serves well. The frame isn't made completely from polymer but features a steel insert that is serialized. The pistol features an unusual combination of a short trigger and a mainspring housing that isn't completely flat or completely arched. The common rule in 1911 pistols is that a short trigger has an arched housing and a longer trigger has a flat housing. In this gun, the combination worked out well. In fast combat shooting, a short trigger with a good reset is preferred by many expert-level shooters.

The pistol's slide is well finished. The pistol does not have an ambidextrous safety. The beavertail grip safety is well designed and releases its hold on the trigger about halfway through its travel. The trigger releases cleanly at 6.6 pounds. The pistol is delivered with a single Mec-Gar magazine. The Witness 1911P has a standard GI guide rod. The recoil-spring plug is made of plastic. The Picatinny light rail includes a steel insert. The slide is conventional, with standard cocking serrations. The ejection port is lowered in a more modern fashion. The sights are well-designed combat sights. The front side is dovetailed in place, a good feature. The rear sight is high enough to allow racking the slide on a belt or other object if need be. The sight picture is excellent. Barrel and slide fit are good. The 1911P is tighter than the ATI pistol, we thought. Some effort is required to rack the slide. Fit in the rail-gun holsters we had on hand was good.



A couple of things are important to note about the Witness 1911P. Its front end allows it to fit inside standard 1911 rail-gun holsters, as shown. This pistol is a rarity in the 1911 world because it is produced by Tanfoglio in Italy, and the polymer frame includes a steel insert that is serialized.



Fired off-hand in combat drills, the steel-frame rail guns were most controllable. That should come as no surprise because the extra weight dampens recoil.



The Rock Island 1911 proved compatible with every magazine tested. The Rock Island 1911 featured a full-length guide rod and monolithic side and dust cover. Off-hand, the Rock Island rail gun was comfortable to fire, with modest recoil.

To evaluate the pistol, it was necessary to add a number of 1911 magazines to the test. We were not going to confuse the issue, so we used only magazines that had been previously tested. The pistol was well lubricated and the magazines were loaded with Fiocchi 230-grain full-metal-jacket ammunition. We began firing the pistol in combat drills at 5, 7, and 10 yards. There was a single failure to feed with the first magazine. There were no other failures during our testing. This is standard operating procedure with a tightly fitted 1911. However, we began to suffer several function problems that were traced to the supplied magazine. The first problem was that the magazine latch was releasing the magazine while firing. Some rounds simply stopped in the magazine well, and others fell out. The pistol fired reliably with Wilson Combat, Chip McCormick, and D&L Sports magazines during the test. GI-type, Colt, and Mec-Gar slipped the release. These magazines had previously been proven reliable in other handguns. It took a bit of extra ammunition to start the test over once we had placed aside the magazines that fell out of the magazine well. We were correct; the pistol did function correctly with some magazines, and not with others. This is not a good thing, and it limits the functionality of the pistol. When it comes to actually firing the pistol, it proved comfortable to fire, although it was the lightest 1911 we tested. While the long slide-recoil impulse isn't as abrupt as it is with

ROCK ISLAND ARMORY TACTICAL 2011 W/TRUDOT NIGHT SIGHTS 45 ACP, $590

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (BEST BUY)

Has a lot of features for its modest price: Light rail, good barrel fitting, a set of TruDot night sights, a quality beavertail safety, and an ambidextrous slide-lock safety. Reliability and accuracy were very good. Exhibited the best trigger pull of the group.



Action	Semi-auto single action
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded w/Magazine	39.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	43.5 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	Steel, 1:16 twist
Magazine	8-Rd. detachable box
Slide	Parkerized steel
Frame	Parkerized steel , slab-sided, square dust cover, 5-slot Picatinny rail, beavertail
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered wood
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	2-dot adj. TruDot rear; TruDot single dot front
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in. skeletonized trigger shoe
Safety	Ambi. slide lock safety, grip safety
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(775) 537-1444
Website	Armscor.com
Made In	Marikina, Philippines



The Rock Island Tactical offers the best performance of any Rock Island pistol we have tested.



Because of the length of the bottom of the slide, the Rock Island rail gun will not fit a rail-gun holster made for standard Colt and Springfield rail guns.



The pistol's monolithic steel-frame design differs from previous Armscor models. That slab-sided steel frame and slide covering a 5-inch barrel makes the Rock Island Armory a range gun or a house gun. The Picatinny rail is nicely integrated into the whole front end when the slide is closed.

a Commander-sized 1911, the recoil is heavier because it is not a heavier steel-framed gun. The EAA Witness 1911P is a comfortable gun to fire compared to other 1911 pistols with a 4-inch barrel and light weight frame, our shooters said.

The combat-shooting groups were good. The pistol performed well once the magazine issue was resolved. One tester felt that the lighter EAA pistol was faster from leather than the RIA pistol or the Springfield. When it came to bench accuracy, we expected the pistol to perform on par with Commander-model 1911s.

The good, tight fit of the pistol and its smooth trigger gave us more than what we bargained for in accuracy. We used three different types of ammunition for the accuracy test. These included the Black Hills Ammunition 185-grain TAC +P, Fiocchi 230-grain FMJs, and Hornady 185-grain Zombie Max rounds. This gun's best group of the day was a 2.1-inch cluster with the Black Hills Ammunition 185-grain TAC +P. Feed reliability was good. Accuracy was consistent.

Our Team Said: The pistol would be a great carry gun, with a Government Model sight radius and Commander-size lightweight feel. The combat accuracy was good and the bench accuracy was acceptable. The initial break-in malfunction did not trouble us because it was not repeated. The magazine issue must be resolved. At this point, a new magazine-release assembly or perhaps a new magazine-release spring are indicated. At present, the pistol is reliable only with certain magazines. We also would have preferred an ambidextrous safety.

Rock Island Armory Tactical 2011 w/Tru-Dot Sights 45 ACP, $590

This was the price from Pennsylvania-based SarcoInc.com at the time of our test, and a recent check of the site showed they still had some supplies of this pistol in stock. The pistol is a monolithic steel-frame design that differs from previous Armscor models. The most noticeable difference between this handgun and the others is the

weight. This is a true 5-inch barrel steel-framed pistol. We feel that the EAA Witness 1911P pistol is the carry gun, and the Rock Island Armory is the range gun. The pistol features the subdued matte Parkerized finish of a typical Rock Island pistol. The Picatinny rail is nicely integrated into the frame. However, this rail is longer on this pistol than the EAA or Springfield and will not fit into normal rail-gun holsters.

The sights are excellent all-around models, a TruDot self-illuminated iron sight combination that allows for clear sights in dim lighting. The sight picture during the range testing was excellent. The pistol features a flared ejection port. The barrel-to-slide fit is good, and the pistol features a standard barrel bushing paired with a full-length guide rod. The pistol includes a well-designed ambidextrous slide-lock safety that is supported by the right-hand grip panel. The beavertail grip safety is well designed and functions as intended, giving up its hold on the trigger about halfway into compression. The trigger is halfway between a long and short trigger and worked well for us. The trigger compression is a nice 4.5 pounds, the cleanest and lightest of any of the four pistols. A combination of front-strap serrations and a checkered mainspring housing provided excellent grip when firing.

We began the combat drill with a well-lubricated pistol and Fiocchi FMJ ammunition as well as a good mix of magazines. The pistol sailed through 50 rounds without issue. During the accuracy stage, a single cartridge failed to load into battery, which is either a short cycle caused by shooter error or a break-in malfunction. It didn't recur.

The RIA pistol was drawn from a belt-slide holster. Combat shooting was excellent, and the pistol was comfortable to fire.

We also found this heavy pistol was fast to target, and the front sight simply hung on the X ring as we controlled the pistol and got good hits. The pistol did well in accuracy testing, showing itself to be more

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY RANGE OFFICER OPERATOR PI9131L 45 ACP $873

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The Springfield Range Officer Operator exhibited good fit and finish. The Match Grade barrel lived up to its name. The Range Officer Operator is the most accurate pistol tested, but the pistol was only incrementally more accurate than the Rock Island Tactical pistol. Feed reliability was faultless.



Action	Semi-auto single action
Overall Length	8.5 in.
Overall Height	5.4 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded w/Magazine	38.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	42.5 oz.
Barrel Length	5.0 in.
Barrel	Match-grade stainless steel, 1:16 twist, supported ramp
Magazine	(2) 7-rd. blued
Slide	Parkerized carbon steel; GI recoil system
Frame	Parkerized carbon steel, w/3-Slot Picatinny rail
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Checkered Cocobolo
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.4 in.
Sights	Fixed Novak rear, fiber-optic front
Trigger Pull Weight Single Action	6.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.5 in.
Safety	Slide lock safety, grip safety
Warranty	Limited lifetime
Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Website	Springfield-Armory.com
Made In	Brazil, finished in U.S.



Forward cocking serrations and a fiber-optic front sight are advantages found on the Springfield.



That's a flared and lowered ejection port the arrow is pointing to, perhaps one of the reasons the Operator ran without a hitch. But the downside of this view is the lack of an ambi safety, which lefties and weak-hand righty shooters might want.



The barrel bushing has a tight fit, but most shooters can manipulate the parts with their fingers for tool-less breakdown.



The Springfield uses the now-standard rail that is compatible with rail gun holsters.



The Springfield demonstrated robust cartridge ejection. That's a spent hull marked by the arrow.

consistent than the EAA. The Rock Island Tactical pistol was not as accurate as the Springfield Armory pistol, but we feel that the Armscor has plenty of accuracy for most uses. The best group of the day with the Armscor was a 1.9-inch-wide cluster shot with the Hornady Zombie Max ammo, the critical-defense bullet with a green tip.

During firing, one tester came away with a moderately sore thumb. As most of us rest our thumb on the 1911 safety while firing, the sharp edges of the Rock Island slide-lock safety left a red line down the shooter's thumb. This could be fixed by polishing and radiusing the edge, and that fix should be done because it could become increasingly uncomfortable with heavy loads.

Our Team Said: The Armscor Rock Island Armory Tactical pistol came out of the box running. The pistol looks good and has good features, including an ambidextrous safety that both the Springfield and the 1911P lacked. Accuracy wasn't quite as good as the Springfield's, but the modest price is appealing for this level of performance.

Springfield Armory Range Officer Operator PI9131L 45 ACP, $873

This was the price from CheaperThanDirt.com at the time of our test. Springfield has used the Range Officer as a designation for its "value line" of 1911 handguns for many years now. The primary difference between the Range Officer guns and the company's high-end pistols is the finish. The Range Officer model features a nice Parkerized finish, not a high-polish look. The pistol's finish isn't the blue or two-tone of the Springfield Operator. The lack of an ambidextrous safety is also a cost-cutting measure. The Range Officer Operator is, on average, about $240 dollars less than the full-blown Operator.

Springfield advertises the Range Officer line as having a match-grade barrel. Our accuracy testing indicates that the barrel and bushing are well fitted. The Springfield Range Officer Operator features a Picatinny light rail. The slide is similar to the Loaded Model, with Novak white-dot rear sights and a fiber-optic front sight. The pistol features a scalloped ejection port, a lightweight hammer, a target trigger, and a well-designed beavertail safety. What it does not have is an ambidextrous safety. This could be a deal-breaker for the left-handed shooter.



We were caught in the rain at one point and kept firing. The Springfield gave good overall results wet or dry, our shooters found.

Trigger compression is clean at 6.5 pounds. Accuracy and reliability should be the same as other versions tested, and we were not disappointed. The Springfield was lubricated and then fired with the same Fiocchi FMJ loads that were used to test the other pistols. Initial firing was at 5, 7, and 10 yards. The pistol fired 50 rounds of this 230-grain FMJ ammunition without a single failure to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. The fiber-optic front sight came on target quickly with good sight acquisition. The pistol did not display any break-in malfunctions. Combat accuracy was good. It only makes sense that the heavier guns were more accurate and easy to shoot on the firing range. The RIA weighs 1 ounce more than the Springfield. As far as control goes, the Rock Island Armory pistol was more comfortable to fire, as far as momentum goes, but this is difficult to describe in print. In bench shooting, the Springfield's excellent barrel fitting and tight barrel bushing contributed to practical accuracy. We would have liked a lighter trigger action, but the 6.5-pound trigger pull was smooth. The best effort was a five-shot group with the Black Hills TAC-P at 1.7 inches. However, the Hornady Zombie Max equaled this and the average for each load was within 0.1 inch of the other, an unusual showing. The shooter was firing to the best of his ability, and possibly the firearm and ammunition were capable of better accuracy.

Our Team Said: The Springfield Range Officer Operator is an excellent pistol, giving Springfield fans good performance at a fair price. The Springfield was the most accurate pistol tested. The lack of an ambidextrous safety is more important to some than others, and the Springfield did not suffer a stoppage of any type. The pistol may have earned an A+, save for the lack of an ambidextrous safety. So if that feature doesn't matter to you, then go ahead and mark up your copy of the magazine with our compliments.

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

AR-15 Carbines for Less Than $1300: The Winner is a 'Saint'

The Springfield Armory Saint is the gun for everyone, but SIG Sauer's M400 Classic nears perfection. We were disappointed in the CMMG Mk4T, which to our eyes looked unfinished.

A staff member recently paid $2300 for a complete AR-15 carbine without regret. But you may have noticed complete uppers selling for as little as $400 during the last rounds of holiday sales and complete carbines selling for less than $700. Why pay more? One answer would be to take advantage of the latest technology in terms of manufacturing, helpful features and improved ammunition. Forged rather than cast aluminum is now the standard, and machining is more exact thanks to computer numerically controlled (CNC) automation. The efficiency and versatility of barrels have been upgraded to take advantage of heavier bullets able to land a more effective blow at greater distance. Barrels with twist rates of 1:8 inches and even 1:7 inches have replaced the original-issue lands and grooves that spun the bullets at a rate of 1:9. Handguards are now modular platforms for lights, lasers, and sights, and ambidextrous fire controls are becoming more popular as well.

With the desire for a more up-to-date AR-15, we went shopping and found that we didn't have to break the bank — just get comfortable within a price range of about $900 to $1250 dollars. What we came up with was three AR-15s with upgrades that distinguished them from more traditional models.

- The $1000 CMMG Mk4T may still use the M1 buttstock and grip, but the 416 stainless-steel barrel offered a 1:7 twist on the inside and a bead-blast finish on the outside. The free-floated handguard offered Keymod machining on three sides, and the Picatinny top rail extended 11 inches from the receiver.
- At first glance, the $1250 SIG Sauer RM400 Classic looked like a standard model with only a flat-top rail above the receiver to break up the profile. But the safety and the magazine release were ambidextrous. Barrel-twist rate was 1:7, and breaking down the rifle revealed a reduced-mass hammer.
- Springfield Armory's $899 Saint, the manufacturer's first AR-15, was treated to a Bravo Company BCM Gunfighter stock and Keymod handrail. Takedown revealed nickel-boron coating of hammer and trigger components, plus a tension screw to fix any gap between the upper and lower ends of the rifle. Barrel-twist rate was 1:8. All three-rifle barrels were marked 5.56 NATO.

To find out if any of the above added up to improved performance, we tested for accuracy from the 100-yard







Top to bottom, our test carbines were the $1000 CMMG Mk4T with a 416 stainless-steel barrel with 1:7 twist; the $1250 SIG Sauer RM400 Classic, which looked like a standard model but which had some hidden goodies, and Springfield Armory's $899 Saint, the manufacturer's first AR-15.

5.56MM NATO & 223 REMINGTON RANGE DATA

Black Hills 223 Remington 60-gr. V-Max New Manufacture	**SIG Sauer RM400-16BC**	**CMMG MK 4T**	**Springfield Armory Saint 916556B**
Average Velocity	2738 fps	2726 fps	2756 fps
Muzzle Energy	999 ft.-lbs.	990 ft.-lbs.	1012 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	0.6 in.	0.8 in.	1.0 in.
Black Hills 5.56mm NATO 69-gr. OTM New Manufacture	**SIG Sauer RM400-16BC**	**CMMG MK 4T**	**Springfield Armory Saint 916556B**
Average Velocity	2770 fps	2761 fps	2800 fps
Muzzle Energy	1176 ft.-lbs.	1168 ft.-lbs.	1202 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.1 in.	01.0 in.	1.0 in.
Black Hills 5.56mm NATO 77-gr. OTM New Manufacture	**SIG Sauer RM400-16BC**	**CMMG MK 4T**	**Springfield Armory Saint 916556B**
Average Velocity	2599 fps	2598 fps	2635 fps
Muzzle Energy	1155 ft.-lbs.	1154 ft.-lbs.	1187 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	0.9 in.	1.2 in.	0.8 in.
Black Hills 5.56mm NATO 77-gr. TMK New Manufacture	**SIG Sauer RM400-16BC**	**CMMG MK 4T**	**Springfield Armory Saint 916556B**
Average Velocity	2670 fps	2659 fps	2699 fps
Muzzle Energy	1219 ft.-lbs.	1209 ft.-lbs.	1246 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.0 in.	1.1 in.	1.0 in.
SIG Sauer 223 Remington 77-gr. OTM Match Grade Rifle	**SIG Sauer RM400-16BC**	**CMMG MK 4T**	**Springfield Armory Saint 916556B**
Average Velocity	2376 fps	2345 fps	2440 fps
Muzzle Energy	966 ft.-lbs.	940 ft.-lbs.	1018 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.0 in.	0.9 in.	0.9 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired 5-shot groups from a sandbag rest. Distance: 100 yards. We recorded velocities using an Oehler 35P chronograph, with the first sky screen set 10 feet from the muzzle.

line at American Shooting Centers in Houston. To find out what it was like to operate these guns at speed, we visited the Impact Zone Range in Hempstead, Texas for some timed close-quarters fire. For our distance work we mounted a SIG Sauer 3-12x42mm Tango4 optical scope ($900 MSRP). At the Impact Zone Range, our rifles shared a $420 1x20mm SIG Sauer Romeo 4b Compact Scope with a tiny 2-minute-of-angle red dot.

Choice of ammunition for AR-15s used to be limited by the 1:9-inch-twist barrel. Maximum bullet weight was considered to be 69 grains. We tested our 1:7/1:8-twist-barreled carbines with 60-grain V-Max 223 Remington rounds plus 5.56mm ammunition topped with 69-grain OTM (open-tipped match), 77-grain OTM, and 77-grain TMK (tipped Match King) rounds from Black Hills Ammunition. We also tested with 77-grain OTM 223 Remington rounds manufactured by SIG Sauer.

Our action test was designed to tell us more about trigger response and maneuverability than could be culled from a static benchrest session. We set up a



For our accuracy tests, we used a SIG Sauer Tango4 3-12x42mm scope ($900). It featured locking return to zero, a visible gauge for revolutions on the elevation turret, side-mounted parallax adjustment, and an illuminated horseshoe-dot reticle. The 30mm tube was mounted using offset SIG Sauer Alpha aluminum scope rings. The design of the rings added mass for strength and helped us keep track of the top loops; that is, which were front and back and which sides were left and right. We checked them with alignment rods and found the rings were bored straight and true. As a result, very little windage adjustment was necessary when changing it from gun to gun.

three-target array with just 10 feet between each target. To change the shooter's perspective and in effect reduce target area, we staggered the targets. Target-left was placed 5 yards downrange, target-right 7 yards downrange, and the center target 10 yards downrange. With the shooter lined up on the center target, the object was to land as many hits as possible into the central A-zone of each paper target within a fixed 10-second time limit. The A-zone measured 11 inches tall and about 5.75 inches wide. Upon an audible start signal, the shooter raised the carbine from low ready (about a 30-degree angle to the horizon), switched off the safety, and engaged each target with only one round before moving on. Target order was dictated as a circuit of left, center, right, left, center, right, and so on. This test was performed cold, "one and done" with no makeups. Keeping all the shots inside the A-zone was important, but for our purposes we wanted to know what characteristics were helping or hindering the shooter. Let's see if our money was well spent.

CMMG Rifle, Mk4T 5.56mm, SBN, CO, 5.56mm NATO, $1000

The CMMG Mk4T was the tale of two rifles. The upper, including the mix of Picatinnny and Keymod rail, was more modern than the lower, which offered more traditional components, such as the plastic grip with single finger groove and the buttstock that was sans any padding. The only upgrade we spied was a relief in the takedown pin that helps keep the punch, or bullet tip, from sliding off under pressure. But that's not really new, either. The buttstock was properly applied and showed only the slightest wiggle. Soldiers and law enforcement who wear plates or body armor might not complain about the bare-plastic buttplate, but most shooters will want something more friendly. We applied a snap-on buttpad from Limbsaver and was pleasantly surprised at how much more comfortable it was to shoot. For sling attachment there was a

CMMG RIFLE, MK4T 5.56MM, SBN, CO, 5.56MM NATO, $1000

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Looking past the outdated grip and buttstock, this is a very good rifle that deserved a much better trigger.



Action Type	Semi-automatic, direct impingement	Magazine	Detachable
Overall Length	32.25 to 35.40 in	Rear Sight	NA
Overall Height w/o Scope	7.3 in.	Front Sight	NA
Weight Unloaded	6.1 lbs.	Sight Radius	NA
Weight Loaded	7.6 lbs.	Trigger	7.2 lbs., single stage
Upper Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Safety	Thumb safety
Lower Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Barrel Length, Twist	16.1 in., 1:7 in.	Dust Cover	Hinged
Muzzle Device	Birdcage-style flash hider	Forwards Assist	Yes
Buttstock	M4-carbine type, adj.	Warranty	Lifetime
Buttstock Length of Pull	10.4 to 13.4 in.	Telephone	(660) 248-2293
Handguard	Keymod, Picatinny	Website	CMMGinc.com
		Made In	U.S.A.



Smooth machining and sturdy construction made the CMMG handguard the favorite in our tests. With so much ventilation, it never seemed to heat up. The bottom and sides featured a Keymod pattern for near-unlimited mounting options. The circular cut was for a quick-detachable sling loop.



The seam line on the CMMG hammer indicates this is a cast part, which is not unusual. But most such components are polished and tumbled to refine its surface.



The CMMG Mk4T swung from target to target effortlessly, but we pulled one shot wide left. While handling was superior, the creep-ridden trigger was a detriment to accuracy under stress. Firing from the bench, patience was an option, but at speed, the poor trigger finally caught up to our shooter and foiled his aim. We saw this one selling for $885 at retail.

SIG SAUER M400 CLASSIC RM400-16B-C
5.56MM NATO, $1250
GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Extraordinary accuracy. Featured one of the most consistent triggers we've tried and costly ambidextrous controls. A free-float handguard would likely make this the perfect carbine.



Action Type	Semi-automatic, direct impingement	Magazine	Detachable
Overall Length	32.25 to 35.5 in	Rear Sight	Flip up, single aperture
Overall Height w/o Scope	8.5 in.	Front Sight	A1-type, fixed
Weight Unloaded	6.6 lbs.	Sight Radius	14.75 in.
Weight Loaded	8.1 lbs.	Trigger	7.6 lbs., single stage
Upper Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Safety	Thumb lever
Lower Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Barrel Length, Twist	16.0 in., 1:7 in.	Dust Cover	Hinged
Muzzle Device	Birdcage-style flash hider	Forward Assist	Yes
Buttstock	M4-carbine type, adj.	Warranty	Limited lifetime
Buttstock Length of Pull	10.4 to 13.4 in.	Telephone	(603) 610-3000
Handguard	2-piece polymer	Website	SIGSauer.com
		Made In	U.S.A.



The trick to adding an ambidextrous safety is making the offhand side comfortable to use. The selector lever did not interfere with our left-handed shooter's trigger finger. The left-side magazine release worked best when pressed on its rearward edge. We'd prefer SIG's L-shaped bolt latch on all our AR-15s. The hideaway grip was more comfortable than most. Note the auxiliary QD-sling attachment point, upper right.



If any aspect of the SIG Sauer M400 classic justifies its price tag, it would be the trigger. Note the reduced mass and glasslike surface area of the hammer. The trigger-pull weight of 7.6 pounds was secondary to its precision. We saw this rifle selling for as low as $819, which would be a bargain at that price.

fixed steel sling loop at the heel of the butt plate, or you could utilize the slot that ran parallel to the buffer tube beneath the cheek piece. There was, however, a relief on each side of the handguard about 2.5 inches ahead of the receiver for attaching a quick detach (QD) button-style sling loop. The CMMG's single-finger-groove plastic grip is almost extinct because the divider can be uncomfortable and never really seems to be in the right place.

The fit between the top and bottom end of the CMMG Mk4T was admirably tight, yet the takedown pin was easy to operate. Detent at the safety was heavy and secure without any rough edges. Working the charging handle was smooth and revealed no linear movement. We did, however, find the bolt catch to be weak. American Shooting Centers is a public range, and placing the rifle in the racks during cease fires with the bolt locked open required care because any impact to the buttstock would release the bolt. The other rifles did not suffer this complaint.

From the beginning, we discovered an inordinate amount of creep in the trigger. So much so that we almost took to calling it a three-stage trigger. Operating the trigger in a controlled press, the trigger seemed to find two stopping points before finally breaking a shot. As our tests continued and the trigger broke in, we sometimes experienced only one stopping point before break. About every 20 to 25 shots, the trigger would pull straight through. In measuring trigger-pull weight, we arrived at an average of about 7.2 pounds. However, the range in resistance spanned from about 6.75 pounds to almost 8.0 pounds. Over ten trigger pulls we never got the same reading twice. And yet, accuracy from the bench was on par with our other test carbines.

The art of shooting groups from support is about being patient. Our days at the range were somewhat windy, so waiting for a lull before releasing a shot was standard procedure. Taking into account

the creep in the CMMG trigger, we patiently worked our way to the break. The result was sub-MOA groups (less than 1 inch center to center) from two of the five test ammunitions, including our lightest bullet and our heaviest. The Black Hills 60-grain V-Max rounds produced 0.8-inch-wide groups, and the 77-grain SIG Sauer rounds printed 0.9-inch-wide groups. All in, our CMMG rifle displayed 1-MOA accuracy on average for all shots fired, despite our difficulties with the trigger.

During our action tests, we landed four A-zone hits on targets left and center. The target to our right showed three A-zone hits and a stray shot in the D-zone, furthest from center. The test shooter said he was on target inside the A-zone, but the trigger didn't respond. He called it a stutter. In the confusion the shot was released off line or as one might say, out of time.

Our Team Said: The CMMG Mk4T showed extremely good balance. It was very easy to move quickly, and the gun always felt light. We really liked the handguard. Comfortable to hold, the handguard offered the most versatility of our three rifles. We also liked the bead-blast finish on the barrel. The old-fashioned buttpad didn't bother us because it was properly fit, but we'd definitely change out the grip. If the Mk4T had either of the triggers found on the SIG Sauer or Springfield Armory carbines, it might have been the accuracy champ of this test.

SIG Sauer M400 Classic RM400-16B-C 5.56mm NATO, $1250

With its A1 front-sight assembly, two-piece plastic handguard and M4 buttstock, the M400 Classic did not appear to be a carbine with the type of upgrades we were looking for. But upon closer inspection, we noticed that the safety and magazine release were ambidextrous. The buttstock, although appearing very much in the M4 tradition, was modified to offer holes on each side for a quick-detach sling loop. The metal loop at the heel of buttplate was free swinging. There was another location for a QD sling from either side at the rear of the

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY SAINT ST916556B 5.56MM NATO, $900

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Saint is one of the most user-friendly versions of this user-friendly platform. We'd prefer a free-float sling attachment, but the Saint is handsome and well made at a good price.



Action Type	Semi-automatic direct impingement	Magazine	Detachable
Overall Length	32.25 to 35.5 in.	Rear Sight	Flip-up, dual aperture
Overall Height w/o Scope	8.8 in.	Front Sight	A1-type fixed
Weight Unloaded	6.5 lbs.	Sight Radius	14.75 in.
Weight Loaded	8.1 lbs.	Trigger	7.75 lbs., single stage
Upper Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Safety	Thumb safety
Lower Receiver	Forged 7075-T6 Aluminum	Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Barrel Length, Twist	16.0 in., 1:8 in.	Dust Cover	Hinged
Muzzle Device	Birdcage-style flash hider	Forward Assist	Yes
Buttstock	BCMGunfighter	Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Buttstock Length of Pull	10.4 to 13.7 in.	Telephone	(800) 680-6866
Handguard	2-piece polymer	Website	Springfield-Armory.com
		Made In	U.S.A.



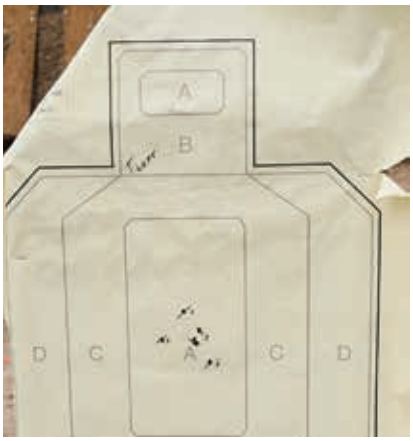
The most comfortable buttstock in our test was the BCM Gunfighter buttstock from Bravo Company Manufacturing, available in multiple colors and patterns from $55 to $70 from BravoCompanyUSA.com. Moving the stock on the buffer tube required squeezing the stock bottom to top against a stout spring. But lockdown was secure and rattle-free, as well as sleek and simple with a QD sling point.



The Saint's hammer and trigger components were nickel-boron coated for reduced wear, increased lubricity, and easy cleaning. We saw these selling on GunBroker.com for around $765, another bargain.



An Allen screw with nylon tip was seated directly below the lug on the upper. Referred to as the Accu-Tite Tension system, the screw could be adjusted to apply pressure to the lug to reduce play between the upper and lower ends of the rifle. Adjustment required removing the grip.



With just 10 seconds to land as many hits as we could on three staggered targets, the SIG Sauer M400's precise trigger made it possible to land the most accurate hits under stress during our action tests.

receiver just below where the buffer tube was attached. The grip was certainly not traditional, offering a very friendly profile, including a pinkie ledge, at the bottom and an extended backstrap up over the web of the hand. The upper circumference was reduced, guiding the index finger to the trigger. The bottom of the grip was removable, and there were fittings to hold popular batteries such as the CR123 or AA inside. A Magpul dual split aperture flip-up rear sight was attached to the top rail that ran the length of the receiver. Spring loaded at rest, there was a platform on each side that released the sight instantaneously to its vertical position.

The ambidextrous controls worked quite well, and the safety lever on the off hand did not interfere with the shooter, be he right-handed or left-handed. Operation was very smooth and secure. Magazine release from the left side was a little easier if pressure was applied more toward the rearward edge than over the center of the button. One by-product of this arrangement was an extension of the lower portion of the bolt lock/release lever. Whereas releasing the bolt is aided by the larger platform, setting the lock means pressing down on the smaller end. If we were to describe the bolt lock/release assembly as a seesaw, the typical lower end could be seen as being constructed without the seat. On the M400, there is an extension that adds surface area in an L-shape, making it much easier to operate.

While the plastic handguard and the buttstock showed a little bit of play, fit and function of the more important parts of the M400 Classic were exceptional. The trigger presented a crisp break at about 7.6 pounds of resistance with barely an ounce or two in variation from shot to shot. Shooting the Black Hills 60-grain V-Max 223 ammunition, we were rewarded with five-shot groups that measured an average of just 0.6 inch across. Our best-of-test group measured 0.4 inch across. The Black Hills 77-grain OTM rounds were next best, showing an average five-shot group measuring about 0.9 inch. All remaining rounds produced 1-inch groups.

During our action tests, we found the fixed front sight a little distracting, even though we had it aligned (co-witnessed) with our Romeo4 red-dot sight. Nevertheless, we were able to score A-zone hits with all 12 rounds fired before time ran out. Thanks to the precise trigger, the shooter always felt he was in complete control.

Our Team Said: When it comes to paying more for a rifle, or any firearm for that matter, it's easy to check off a list of features to justify a higher price tag. Whereas there is nothing special about the front sight, buttstock, or handguard, upgrades to the magazine release, safety levers, and the bolt catch are more expensive to manufacture or supply than a fancy handguard or buttstock. In addition, the fit and finish of the operational parts, most important the consistency of the trigger, makes this carbine worth the extra money.

Springfield Armory Saint ST916556B 5.56mm NATO, $900

Springfield Armory of Illinois has been producing its own versions of the iconic M1A rifle for many years, but Springfield, like several other manufacturers, is known primarily as makers of handguns, or for that matter bolt-action rifles. Now more are jumping into the AR-15 market. In our view, the advertising campaign that preceded the Saint's introduction underscored that the AR-15 is not just for the military. Rather, the AR-15 is an ideal defensive weapon necessary for the legally armed defense-conscious American. In fact, it wasn't that long ago that SIG was in a similar position. As such, the challenge for Springfield Armory was to offer an AR-15 that distinguished itself from the competition and was affordably priced.

The visual theme of the Saint was that it looks to be one piece instead of an upper and lower, or as some say, it looks monolithic. The full-profile barrel creates a line that grows from a polymer handguard by Bravo Company that was flat on the sides, adorned with sections of pebbled finish for grip. Its solid visual form led us to refer to it as a forend rather than a handguard. The top rail was not really functional as a connection point, but it provided venting. One set of Keymod holes was located on the underside at 6 o'clock. Instead of being located at 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock, additional Keymod holes were located in a line upon the surface area that angled upward to the top rail (10 o'clock and 2 o'clock). Visually, this made them less obvious. We think mounting accessories in the arc between the top rail and the sides shows a lot of promise for easy control.

Two additional components from Bravo Company contributed to the Saint's distinctive lines. The BCM Gunfighter grip provided a steeper angle than the others, including the Magpul grip found on the M400. The Gunfighter grip offers an extended backstrap to shield the web of the hand and the knurled side panels that provided excellent traction. The base of the grip was hinged to expose a storage space that was water resistant, thanks to a rubber gasket. The BCM Gunfighter buttstock offered sleek lines with no protruding levers that might catch on gear, such as the straps of a chest rig. The buttplate had a thin rubber pad smoothly integrated; it was more friendly to clothing or bare skin for that matter. There was a slot for threading a sling and also



We think the $900 Springfield Armory Saint lived up to its advertising by being very easy to live with for a beginner or expert. The Bravo Company furniture consisting of a handguard, grip, and buttstock gave the Saint a contemporary streamlined appearance. The trigger was easy to manage, offering a slight sense of compression before let-off. From support, the Saint produced average groups measuring 1 inch across or less for each test ammo.



We were able to deliver more total rounds within the time limit with our Saint than our other rifles. Perhaps this was a product of being the last carbine tested, meaning our shooter was practiced and adrenalized from shooting the SIG Sauer and the CMMG Mk4T. Then again, the BCM Gunfighter stock, handguard, and grip made the Saint the most comfortable to shoot.

a hole on each side for attaching a QD sling loop. The buttstock was adjustable for length by compressing the lower panel running in line with the buffer tube. The detent spring was quite heavy and the grip necessary to compress it proved awkward. But we loved the buttpad and the overall contour of the stock. One last more subtle upgrade was the trigger guard from Bravo Company that left more room for a gloved finger without necessarily having to unlatch the bottom panel.

One of the ways that we suspect the suggested retail price of the Saint was held down was by utilizing an A1 front-sight assembly. The rear-sight assembly (sometimes referred to as BUIS or backup iron sight) was a flip-up design. Putting it into action required lifting it from its horizontal position. A spring detent pin was compressed to fold it down. Two apertures were supplied, but the larger aperture was too open, in our opinion. In use, it seemed to all but disappear.

The hammer and trigger components were treated to a silvery nickel-boron coating. We liked this because it simply wipes clean, making it easy to keep track of debris buildup and wear. Also visible with the top end hinged away was the Accu-Tite tension system consisting of a synthetic non-marring screw that mated flush beneath the bottom of the connecting lug. This removed any slack between the upper and lower ends of the rifle.

Working the Saint trigger differed from that of the SIG Sauer. Whereas the SIG Sauer presented direct pressure against a solid object, the Saint's trigger offered a subtle compression before reaching its breaking point. We think this made the trigger a little more user friendly in that there seemed to be more time for the shooter to completely refine a shot. Higher-level shooters might prefer a hard break without overture, but it's certainly not a distraction that will inhibit the experienced shooter. The Saint was the only carbine in the test that listed a heavy tungsten buffer among its specs, and it showed by delivering less felt recoil to the shooter.

From the 100-yard line, the Saint delivered 1.0-inch five-shot groups with the Black Hills 60-grain V-Max, 69-grain OTM rounds, and the 77-grain TMK ammunition. The Black Hills 77-grain OTM was best, producing 0.8-inch-wide groups, and the SIG Sauer 77-grain OTM ammunition produced an average five-shot group measuring 0.9 inch across. We noticed that across all choices of ammunition the Saint produced the most velocity from each round. Pushing the SIG Sauer 77-grain OTM rounds to an average velocity of 2440 fps, the SIG Sauer ammunition, marked Match Grade Rifle, was still nevertheless well below the 2750 fps printed on the box. Given the test barrel used to produce this data was likely 20 inches or more in length, we think this was still somewhat out of spec.

As was the case with the M400 Classic, the front sight was not visible with the Tango4 optical scope mounted. But it was visible when we used the Romeo4 red-dot scope. During our action test, we simply ignored the sights and read the dot. The result was more shots fired within the allotted time limit. Although the drill was shot cold, we couldn't help but be more warmed up by the time we reached the third gun. After our run with the Saint, all three targets showed five hits. Targets left and center showed four A-zone hits, but one shot on each target was outside of the A-zone. Target right showed five A-zone shots. Between the friendly trigger, which our shooter was able to stage as we moved from target to target, and some adrenalin, we had added one full circuit, even if all 15 shots weren't perfect.

Our Team Said: Priced at $900 MSRP, the Saint should be extremely competitive for first-time buyers. Actually, there is little here that would put off the sophisticated shooter as well. Yes, we would have preferred a flat-top gas block with rail for attaching a folding front sight, and we're not exactly sure how to connect a sling to the front end without pulling on the barrel, but we're not sure there is much else wrong. If the buttstock was somewhat stubborn to move, it was nevertheless rock solid and more comfortable than most. So was the grip and handguard. The trigger was forgiving in any situation, and construction was first rate.

Written and photographed by Roger Eckstine, using evaluations from Gun Tests team testers. **GT**

Holsters for the Glock 42: We Test Ten for Everyday Carriers

We liked some better than others, but we were surprised to find no bad holsters. Some were less versatile than others, but all showed good development and could be right for you.

The Glock 42 380 ACP is becoming a very successful handgun since its introduction three years ago, which has lead to many makers large and small rolling out holster rigs for this handgun. The Glock 42 is exceptionally well balanced but light, so it may require a little extra effort to be certain the Glock 42 is sheathed with a balance of speed and retention. Short and light guns sometimes roll out and require extra effort to holster securely. Fortunately, a number of makers offer good designs for this handgun, as we recently found out.

The Glock 42 is every bit a concealed carry handgun, and we think it is too important to go cheap on a holster for this activity, and you probably need more than one holster to cover all the different ways you or your spouse might carry it. Some of the holsters we tested below represent a good deal for the price and seem to do as well as others with more features. Here's what we thought about ten holsters that may suit your Glock 42 needs:



The Jeremiah Joshua 1:9 holster spreads the weight of the pistol out well. The back surface of the Jeremiah holster is smooth and comfortable. Note the good draw angle and how the Jeremiah holster is well riveted for security.

Jeremiah 20:11 Holsters
IWB Joshua 1:9, $65
JeremiahHolsters.com

This is a hybrid holster with good leather backing and a strong Kydex holster. The belt clips are sturdy and the rig is comfortable. This is an IWB designed for use in the kidney position over the right-hand trouser pocket. However, it is adjustable for height and cant. The raters agree the holster is comfortable and fast. If you are carrying the Glock 42, you may wish to carry a more compact holster for greater concealment, but you will not find a faster holster or one more comfortable. Draw angle is particularly appreciated.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A
(BEST BUY)

zZz Custom Works
UC Stealth Holster, $80
zZzCustomHolsters.com

The basic holster in this line is $60 and the goat-leather-back option adds $20, which comes up to the price as tested. A lot of design and effort went into this holster. This holster is intended for the popular appendix carry. However, it is adjustable for other jobs. The holster back is covered in goat skin to make for a more comfortable ride. The skin is soft near the belt, so this is money well spent. The angle is ideal for the draw. The maker claims a tester carried the holster without a belt, using the belt clip alone for stability. We do not recommend this, but the holster-belt clip attachment is solid. The holster is compact and offers good speed.





The zZz holster is a compact design with good features. For inclement weather with space at a premium, the zZz holster is a first-class option. The goat skin cover for the rear of the UC Stealth is a recommended option.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A





The Jason Winnie is a classic design for those who prefer leather. The holster is well finished, and the leather construction is comfortable when worn. Note the belt clip is rigidly sewn to the holster body.

Jason Winnie IWB J211,$74
JasonWinnie.com

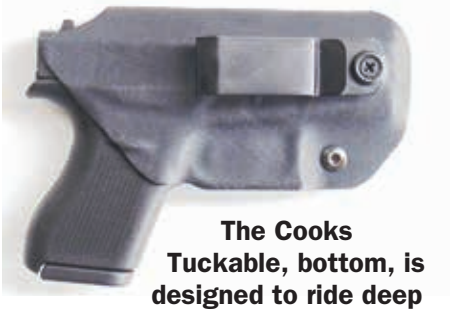
The Jason Winnie IWB is a traditional leather IWB design. The spring-steel belt clip is sewn into a strong attaching component on the face of the holster. The backing is well finished, and the holster edging is excellent. This holster, we believe, offers a good choice for those who carry a larger handgun in the same type of holster and wish to maintain commonality with the larger handgun. The belt clip is strong and the holster, designed for behind-the-hip carry, offers a good, sharp draw. Retention is good.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Cook's Holsters
Tuckable IWB, $48
CooksHolsters.com

This holster features a long belt clip attached toward the bottom of the holster. The spring-steel belt clip is well designed. We tested it as both an IWB and a tuckable. Worn under the shirt with the shirt tucked in, we were able to draw and deploy the Glock quickly. This is a good set-up for a light handgun. At first, we





The Cooks Tuckable, bottom, is designed to ride deep in the trousers. It is a good design for under-the-shirt wear. The Cooks IWB, top left and right, is larger than some but comfortable and well molded for each handgun.

were concerned because very little pressure was felt when holstering the handgun. Yet, when the Glock was drawn, we had to give a good tug on it to get the handgun out. This is ideal. When worn properly, the design all comes together. This is a good choice at a fair price.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Cook's Holsters IWB
w/Adjustable Belt Clip, $58

This holster is similar to the zZz holster, but with a different draw angle as tested and illustrated. It is also slightly larger. However, this holster and the zZz each have a considerable angle and possibility of adjustment. Cant angle is adjustable up to 25 degrees. The holster is marginally less expensive than the zZz design; however, the zZz is more compact and offers the goatskin option. The Cooks IWB is a good design, perhaps not as impressive as the Cooks Tuckable.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

PJ Holster Pocket Holster, $40
PJHolster.com

This holster is made of thin Kydex at .060 inch thick. The design seems to follow the curve of the leg when



The PJ Holster Pocket Holster is a good design we found useful for pocket carry, below.





The PJ holsters belt loop isn't adjustable but sits at the perfect draw angle for carry over the rear pocket. It isn't going to break or lose its shape. The PJ holsters pocket holster offers a sharp clean draw and is as well molded and comfortable as Kydex can be.

worn. There are two types of pants pockets, jeans that are top loading and crews and khakis that are side loading. This holster seems best in the front pocket of a side-loading design. Fit is good, and the pocket holster was ready to use as delivered. Retention is good, and to an extent the outline masks that this is a gun holster. This holster does not use the

molding of the holster to retain the handgun; the pistol will fall out of the holster. Body pressure is used to add retention as the holster is worn. To draw, blade the hand into the pocket and hook the holster lip on the pocket and pull. This is a good design at a good price.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A
(BEST BUY, POCKET HOLSTERS)

PJ Holster IWB, $50

This is a solid design — literally. The monolithic design uses a belt loop that does not screw into the holster nor does it offer adjustment. It is one piece with the holster body. The draw angle is what is often referred to as the FBI tilt. The holster's belt loop is well designed and hooks at the bottom. It is possible to get it over the belt with effort, but we prefer the professional attachment — weave the belt through the loop, catching belt loops properly as well. Retention is good.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

JM Custom Kydex AIWB Standard, $77; AIWB w/Anti-Rollout, $85 JMCustomKydex.com

This appendix holster was tested in two variations. One is the standard model, which may be obtained with either solid, split, or soft belt loops. The solid loops have great appeal for rigidity and were preferred by our 23-year-cop rater. Others preferred soft loops. As long as they are properly done, it is a matter of preference. The standard AIWB holster works fine with the Glock 42; however, with certain body types (hint, over 40), the handgun suffers a certain roll out. This occurs when a handgun with a relatively short slide or light weight is pressed over at the belt line. Another version of the AIWB was tested with the $10 option of the anti-roll-out feature. This feature is well worth its cost. While everyone will not need it, the anti-roll-out option solves a legitimate problem with short-slide handguns and appendix carry. Speed and retention are good.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A



To test rollout, we missed one belt loop and pressed on the JM Custom Kydex holster. The anti-rollout feature works.



Above: JM Custom Kydex offers two good designs. The standard model appendix holster, right, is also suited for standard IWB carry. The anti roll out option, left, is for those that experience movement or roll out with the appendix carry. Below shows the innovative anti-roll-out design from JM.



Wright Leatherworks Pocket Holster, $54 WrightLeatherworks.com

Wright is a custom maker, and they use quality leather to craft this holster. The stitching is good, and the design is compact for pocket carry. A Kydex holster of this dimension would probably not work well. The holster body features a welt that covers the body and maintains rigidity and also keeps the holster stable in the pocket. The balance of speed and retention favors retention. The handgun may be holstered and the holster held upside down, and the Glock will not budge from the holster. The Wright Leatherworks holster fits in pockets the PJH holster, as an example, will not. However, the holster requires a considerable break-in period before real speed is available. The holster fit is tight as delivered. After considerable flexing and 100 draws from the holster, it began to offer a level of speed. The raters were split on this. If you order a custom-grade leather holster of any type, IWB or OWB, this is to be expected, one says, while another disagrees. Just the same, the holster is compact and secure, and after the break in, there were no complaints. Consider your needs before ordering a true custom grade leather holster.



GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Our Team Said

These holsters all have good points, and though diverse, they do basically the same job. They are well suited to concealed carry. If you use different draw angles, the adjustable IWB should be chosen. If you never wish to tighten a screw, the PJ holster should be your choice. If you wish to jam the Glock into the smallest pocket and do not mind a serious break-in period, the Wright is hard to beat. If you wear crews, the PJ holster is an obvious choice.

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

New Rifles at SHOT 2017

Our writers poked all around the firearms industry's annual show in Las Vegas to find interesting new semi-autos, lever actions, and bolt-action rifles coming to your local gun shop this year.

At the 2017 Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in Las Vegas in January, GUN TESTS staffers saw that although new modern sporting rifles do not dominate the introductions of rifles this year, another major manufacturer has entered that AR-15 market with a product that's selling well. So now's the time to buy your AR because prices should be falling.

Of course, you should find plenty new to like elsewhere in the 2017 rifle world, with new rimfire offerings, new youth offerings, and plenty of threaded muzzles for those suppressors that may be deregulated soon. — *Todd Woodard*

Barrett (barrett.net)

The Barrett Lightweight Rifle is a bolt-action rifle designed to be carried farther on long days in the field and perform at critical moments. The carbon-fiber stock is crafted provides an ultralight, yet stiff, platform. The actions are scaled for their specific caliber, and precision barrels are contoured for their application. SRP: $1800.



The Barrett Lightweight Rifle is a departure from the norm for Barrett. The stock is crafted from carbon fiber to provide an ultralight yet stiff platform. The actions are scaled for their specific caliber, and precision barrels are contoured for their application.

Bergara (bergarausa.com)

The B14 Series BMP (Bergara Match Precision) Chassis Rifle is new from the ground up. The main chassis is machined from 7075 T6 aluminum and incorporates QD-swivel attachments and Magpul M-LOK slots. The B14 action and barrel incorporate a barrel nut that allows shooters to replace or change barrels, and the magazine well is contoured so it can be used as a support brace. With a near-vertical AR-style grip, the BMP is comfortable and allows for ambidextrous use. It's available in 308 Win. and 6.5 Creedmoor, with threaded #5 contour barrels. This rifle has a sub-MOA guarantee and weighs 9.5 pounds. SRP: $1700.



The B14 BMP is the new long-range precision rifle from Bergara. The main chassis is machined from 7075 T6 aluminum.

Browning (browning.com)

John M. Browning designed the original Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) in three months, and variants of the classic design have served with distinction from World War I until the Vietnam War. For 2017, Browning commemorates 100 years of the BAR by offering a special semi-auto sporting version — the BAR Safari 100th Anniversary model. It will feature a steel receiver with special engravings of military and hunting scenes, highlighted in gold finish. The stock is Grade V Turkish walnut in oil finish, and production is limited to 100 rifles in 30-06 with a 22-inch barrel. SRP: $2700.



Browning's BAR Safari 100th Anniversary model will feature a steel receiver with special engravings of military and hunting scenes highlighted in gold finish. The stock is Grade V Turkish walnut in oil finish, and production is limited to 100 rifles in 30-06.

A new BAR MK 3 DBM semi-auto featuring a matte-black finish, an 18-inch barrel, a black composite stock and forearm, a 10-round detachable box magazine, integrated Picatinny scope mounts, a front sling swivel stud, and two QD-sling-swivel cups is also available for 2017. Available in 308 Win. SRP: $1500.

Browning's new X-Bolt Medallion Safari Grade bolt-action rifle features a deep-polished blued and fluted heavy sporter barrel, with gold-accented engraving and receiver engraving in a polished blued finish. The stock is a gloss-finished, checkered, grade IV/V walnut, with a rosewood forend and pistol grip caps. It's available in short-action calibers, including the 6.5 Creedmoor, and other chamberings up to 375 H&H. SRP: $1870 to $1900.

Also new in the X-Bolt lineup is the Hell's Canyon Long Range model, which features a Cerakote burnt-bronze finish on all exposed metal surfaces. The heavy sporter contour barrel is fluted. The composite stock has textured gripping surfaces and a palm swell, and is finished in A-TACS AU Camo, with Dura-Touch Armor Coating. Available in 6.5 Creedmoor, 270 WSM, 300 WSM, 26 Nosler, 7mm Remington Magnum, 28 Nosler, and

300 Winchester Magnum. SRP: $1230 to $1300.

Browning's AB3 bolt-action rifle will now be offered in a Micro Stalker model that features a black composite stock with a 13-inch length of pull for smaller-stature shooters. The new AB3 Micro Stalker has features found on Browning's latest value-price bolt-action design, including a 60-degree bolt lift, a detachable magazine, an Inflex recoil pad, a bolt-lock override button, and a free-floating barrel. Available in 243 Win., 6.5 Creedmoor, 7mm-08 Rem., and 308 Win. SRP: $600.

Bushmaster (bushmaster.com)

The new Minimalist SD Carbine from Bushmaster has an AAC Square Drop Handguard that's compatible with Key Mod accessories, a lightweight FNC 1:8 twist barrel, and a mil-spec Mission First Tactical Minimalist stock and pistol grip. An ALG Defense trigger and an AAC 51 T flash hider/silencer mount are standard. It is available in 5.56 NATO or 300 Blackout. SRP: $1170.

The ACR Designated Marksman has a mid-weight FNC 1:8 twist barrel, allows for toolless barrel change, and comes with a high-reliability piston system. It also has a PRS-style buttstock, a Geissele two-stage trigger, and an AAC 51 T flash hider/silencer mount. Extra barrels in 18.5, 16, 14.5, or 10.5 inches are available for $585 (per barrel). SRP: $2570.

CMMG (cmmginc.com)

The MkW ANVIL XBE, an all-new mid-sized AR-rifle platform, is chambered in 458 SOCOM. The new MkW ANVIL utilizes CMMG's Powerbolt design, that allows the rifle to use a modified AR10-sized bolt for increased durability. The rifle is also built on an AR10-sized frame, with the upper receiver shortened by ¾-inch to minimize weight and increase ergonomics. It comes with a 1:14 twist 16-inch barrel, a billet upper and lower receiver, and a single-stage mil-spec trigger, and weighs 7.5 pounds. SRP: $1850.



CMMG's MkW ANVIL XBE is an all-new mid-size AR rifle platform, chambered in 458 SOCOM.

The MkW ANVIL XBE2 is similar to the XBE, but comes with a Geissele SSA two-stage trigger, a Magpul MOE pistol grip, and a CTR carbine stock, with a six-position receiver extension. SRP: $2150.

CZ-USA (cz-usa.com)

The evolving needs of military forces led to the further development of the Bren platform. Whereas the 805 was built to a specific set of pre-determined requirements, years of input and data from use in the worldwide war on terror were put together in a smaller, lighter Bren 2 package. A shorter gas system allows for barrel lengths down to 8 inches, with settings for normal use, suppressed use, and adverse conditions. The aluminum receiver is shorter and thinner, shaving weight from the rifle. The Bren 2 is currently available only for military/LE special order.

CZ's first stainless rimfire, the 455 American Stainless Synthetic, is designed to be a hardy rifle that can be passed down through generations. With the same swappable barrel system as all of CZ's 455 rifles, both the barrel and action are finished in a matte bead blast. Barrel length is 20.5 inches, and the bolt and bolt handle are finished in black nitride. Available in 22 LR, 17 HMR, and 22 Magnum. SRP: $434 to $451.

Famous for its use in rimfire competition, the 455 Training Rifle Rustic shares all the same popular features of its 452 predecessor—a 24.8-inch barrel, a tangent rear sight, and a beechwood stock with a Schnabel forend. The biggest difference is the ability to swap the barrel and/or stock—a trait of all CZ 455s. Designed as a rifle for introducing youth to the shooting sports, the Training Rifle is shipped with a 5-round magazine, but single-shot adapters and 10-round magazines are available. 22 LR only. SRP: $400.

Built to be an ideal first gun for young shooters, the 22 LR Scout has a 12-inch length of pull. With its simple leaf rear and blade front sights, learning the basics of sight picture has never been easier. The 11mm dovetails on the receiver make adding a scope a breeze. The muzzle is threaded 1/2x28, allowing



CZ-USA's Bren 2 took years of input and data from use in the worldwide war on terror and put it all together in a smaller, lighter package. A shorter gas system allows for barrel lengths down to 8 inches, with settings for normal and suppressed use.

for suppressor-hearing-safe shooting without the need for muffs or plugs. Shipped with a single-shot adapter to teach ammo conservation, any of the 455's magazines will fit. SRP: $340.

Several new chamberings have been added to the 527 American bolt-action rifle line. These include the 7.62x39 with a 21.9-inch barrel and a 6.5 Grendel with a 24-inch barrel. Both feature newly developed flush-fitting bottom metal and a 2-round magazine. Extended 5-round magazines are available. Both rifles ship with one-inch scope rings. SRP: $733.

Another new addition to the 527 line is the Rustic. It has the same features as the standard American but wears a beechwood stock that has been hand-finished to give it an aged patina look. It is available in 7.62x39 or 6.5 Grendel. SRP: $733.

The suppressor-ready CZ 527 is happy shooting steel or taking down hogs. Chambered in 300 Blackout or 7.62x39, it's got enough knockdown

power for most medium game at shorter ranges. Using flush-bottom metal, it ships with extended 5-round magazines but can work with factory flush mags as well. SRP: $748.

Built on the incredibly precise 557 short-action, the new Varmint model adds a stout 25.6-inch barrel in a heavy profile that tapers to a 0.863-inch muzzle. Anchored in a newly designed walnut stock, it has a healthy palm swell, laser-cut stippling, and a flat forend. New for 2017 is the addition of 243 Win. to the available chamberings. SRP: $865.

DPMS (dpmsinc.com)

The new DPMS GII AP4-OR utilizes GII technology with a forged monolithic bolt carrier, dual ejectors, an Aermet extractor, a steel feed ramp, and reduced bolt geometry. The upper receiver has been improved for left-handed shooters, and the rifle, optics-ready, is shipped without open sights. Available in 308 Win. SRP: $1,350.

FN (fnamerica.com)

The FN M249S is a semi-auto version of the M249 SAW light machine gun, originally developed by FN Herstal as the FN MINIMI and adopted by the U.S. military in 1988. The rifle features the signature 18.5-inch FN cold-hammer-forged, chrome-lined barrel and operates from a closed-bolt position. Chambered in 5.56 NATO, the rifle will accept a magazine or a linked ammunition belt and offers a 4- to 6.5-pound trigger. The rifle weighs 16 pounds, is 40.7 inches long, and has an 18.5-inch barrel. SRP: $8800 to $9500.

The FN 15 DMR II has been re-engineered and features an all-new FN proprietary rail system with M-LOK, to provide extreme rigidity and less deflection, ensuring that all mounted accessories remain affixed without shift. Like its predecessor, the rifle offers an 18-inch match-grade cold-hammer-forged barrel with a 1:7 twist, a Surefire Pro Comp muzzle device, and an upgraded mil-spec lower with a Timney trigger and Magpul MOE grip and buttstock. SRP: $2000.



FN's M249S, a semi-auto version of the SAW battlefield rifle, features a cold-hammer-forged, 18.5-inch, chrome-lined barrel, and is chambered for 5.56 NATO.

The FN 15 Tactical Carbine chambered for the popular 300 AAC Blackout is duty-ready straight out of the box. Equipped with the new FN proprietary rail system, the carbine offers a stronger, more rigid platform for accessories and optics. In addition, the FN 15 Tactical Carbine 300 BLK II, like its rifle and carbine siblings, features a 16-inch alloy-steel cold-hammer-forged and chrome-lined barrel, a carbine-length gas system, a low-profile gas block, a Surefire ProComp muzzle brake, and Magpul MOE furniture. SRP: $1600.

Improving upon the existing platform with the addition of FN's proprietary rail system, enhanced mil-spec lower receiver, and match-grade free-floating chrome-lined, cold-hammer-forged barrel, the second-generation FN 15 Tactical Carbine offers extreme durability and performance. Features include the three-prong flash hider, the mid-length gas system, and the H1 buffer to decrease recoil. It's fitted with a Magpul grip and buttstock and the M-LOK accessory-mounting system. SRP: $1600.

Howa (legacysports.com)

The Kuiu Vias and Verde rifles from Howa are built on the 1500 action and are available in the most popular chamberings, with a 20-inch lightweight, 22-inch standard, or 24-inch magnum contour barrel. All metalwork is finished in a gunmetal-gray Cerakote finish, and the barreled action is pillar-bedded in a Hogue Overmolded stock. Other features include a two-stage HACT trigger, a three-position safety, and sling swivel studs. SRP: $782 to $811.

The Lithgow Arms LA101 Crossover rimfire rifle (available from Howa) comes in 22 LR, 17 HRM, and 22 Magnum, and features a Cerakote titanium-colored finish, a cold-forged barrel, an adjustable length of pull, a threaded muzzle, and a two-position safety, and is compatible with CZ 45 and 455 detachable magazines. SRP: $1079.

The German-made Webley & Scott



The Verde is built on Howa's legendary 1500 action and is available in the most popular chamberings, with a 20-inch lightweight, 22-inch standard, or 24-inch magnum contour barrel. The action is pillar-bedded in a Hogue overmolded stock.

semi-auto rimfire rifle from Howa has a 19-inch standard or bull barrel and is housed in a carbon-Kevlar stock. Features include a threaded muzzle, a 10-round detachable magazine, and an interchangeable Picatinny rail. SRP: $362 to $463.

Marlin (marlinfirearms.com)

For 2017, Marlin has announced the return of one of its most popular rifles, the 1894 Cowboy. Available in 357, 44 Magnum, and 45 Colt, these American-made rifles feature a straight grip American-black-walnut stock, a receiver and bolt machined from solid steel, a polished 20-inch octagonal barrel, and Marble sights. SRP: $1041. The SRP for the standard 1894 with a round barrel is $789.

To further celebrate the reintroduction of the 1894, Marlin is offering a limited-edition version in 45 Colt with B-grade American-black-walnut stock, highly polished metalwork, and an engraved gold-inlaid receiver. Only 1,500 rifles will be offered. SRP: $1,350.

Another lever-action that has been missing from the Marlin line is the 444. Chambered for the 444 Marlin and built on the 1895 action, this rifle



For Marlin collectors, the limited-edition 1894 is sure to be a hit. Available in 357, 44 Magnum, and 45 Colt, these American-made rifles feature a straight-grip American black walnut stock, a polished 20-inch octagonal barrel, and Marble sights.

has an American-black-walnut pistol-grip stock, 22-inch round barrel, and Marble sights. SRP: $789.

Mossberg (mossberg.com)

Mossberg has added two new MMRs to its line. The Tactical Optics Ready MMR is offered with or without a Vortex StrikeFire II red/green dot sight. This is an optics-ready AR-15 shipped without open sights. It has a 6-position stock, a forward-assist M-LOK handguard, a 1:8 twist barrel, and the new Mossberg JM Pro drop-in 4-pound trigger. SRP: $1253 to $1400.

The other new MMR is the MMR PRO. This rifle is similar to the optics-ready MMR but comes with an 18-inch, 1:8 twist 416 stainless barrel with a SilencerCo ASR muzzle brake. SRP: $1393.

Mossberg has several additions to the Patriot line. First is the Patriot Predator, which comes in a synthetic, flat-dark-earth stock with a 22-inch barrel and threaded muzzle. It is available in 223, 243, 308, and 6.5 Creedmoor. SRP: $441.

Two additional Patriots are available in 223: the Patriot Synthetic and Super Bantam. Both retail for $396. Mossberg also offers a Patriot Revere with high-grade walnut stock, rosewood grip and forend caps, and an upgraded blue finish. Finally, in addition to the Patriot Predator, four more Patriots will now be chambered for the 6.5 Creedmoor.



Mossberg's MMR is now available in two new models, one with a muzzle brake.

Remington (remington.com)

Four new bolt-action rifles are available from Remington for 2017. The new 700 Magpul is a cross between a hunting platform and a tactical platform, with adjustability in the comb and length of pull allowing a custom fit. In addition, the 22-inch heavy barrel is threaded for the addition of a silencer or other muzzle device. It also has a detachable magazine. It's available in 308 Win. and 260 Rem. SRP: $1175.



Remington's 700 Magpul is fitted with an adjustable Magpul hunting stock and a detachable magazine.

Continuing a 12-year run of CDL SF Limited rifles chambered in classic cartridges, this year you will see the rifle in .300 Weatherby Magnum. SRP: $1225.

Remington's 700 AWR (American Wilderness Rifle) is a big-game rifle with a stainless-steel-barreled action and a durable Cerakote coating. It also has 5R rifling and a durable and rigid stock. It replaces the XCRII line of 700s and is available in 270, 30-06, 7mm Magnum, and 300 Magnum. SRP: $1150.

An addition to Remington's popular 783 line is a rifle with a walnut stock. It will be available in 308, 270, 30-06, and 7mm Magnum. SRP: $500.

Ruger (ruger.com)

The new 10-22 Takedown Lite features a cold-hammer-forged barrel tensioned in an aluminum-alloy barrel sleeve. It has a threaded muzzle and is fitted with a thread cap. Easy takedown enables quick separation of the barrel from the action for ease of transportation and storage. It also has the Ruger Modular Stock System with a low comb and standard length of pull, but ships with an additional high-comb standard length-of-pull stock module. SRP: $660.

Savage (savagearms.com)

Savage has introduced several MSR rifles. The new MSR 15 Patrol and MSR 15 Recon have button-rifled 16-inch barrels with 5R rifling, a long-lasting Melonite QPQ finish, and zero-tolerance headspace control. These rifles also feature the proven 223 Wylde target chambering and a standard gas system. SRP: $850, MSR 15 Patrol; $1000, MSR 15 Recon.

The new Savage MSR 10 Hunter and MSR 10 Long Range address some long-standing shortcomings of MSRs designed for larger cartridges. Both feature a compact AR10 design that feels and handles more like an AR-15, and both utilize custom-forged uppers and lowers. Available chamberings include the 308 Win. and 6.5 Creedmoor. The Hunter has a 16- to 18-inch barrel, and the Long Range has a 20- or 22-inch barrel. SRP: $1400, MSR 10 Hunter; $2200, MSR 10 Long Range.



Ruger's new 10-22 Takedown Lite features a cold-hammer-forged barrel tensioned in an aluminum-alloy barrel sleeve. The modular stock has a low comb and standard length of pull, but the rifle ships with an additional high comb, standard-LOP stock module.

Along more traditional hunting rifle lines, Savage offers the 11/111 DOA Hunter. Available in many popular big-game chamberings, it has a black synthetic stock, a matte blue finish, Weaver Grand Slam rings, and a Bushnell Trophy Scope. SRP: $684.

Savage line extensions include a purple version of the popular, youth-oriented Rascal rifle. SRP: $191.

Also, Savage has added a 22 LR to the A series. SRP: $281.

The B Series of rimfires is expanded with the introduction of the B17, B22, and B22 Magnum bolt-action rimfire rifles. They feature a new ergonomically designed stock with a higher comb, a top-tang safety, and target-style and vertical pistol grips. All in all, the B Series includes a dozen new models in configurations that include heavy and suppressor-ready barrels. All B Series rifles feature a 10-round rotary magazine and the AccuTrigger. SRP: $281 to $413.



Savage's new rimfire lineup includes the bolt-action B22 and the semi-auto A22.

Uberti (uberti.com)

Uberti has two new 1886 rifles for 2017. The first is the 1886 Lever Action Sporting in 45/70 with a 26-inch barrel, a color-case receiver, an octagonal match barrel, a walnut stock, and fully adjustable sights. SRP: $1880.

The other is the 1886 Lever Action Hunter Lite. It is also available in 45/70, but with a 22-inch, round, match-grade barrel and half-length magazine. SRP: $1830.

Weatherby (weatherby.com)

Last year Weatherby announced a new bolt-action rifle designed for women. It was called the Camilla, but it never made it to market. It is ready for delivery this year. It's a good-looking rifle, ergonomically configured to fit women shooters. Available in four short-action chamberings. SRP: $850.



Weatherby's Vanguard Adaptive Composite rifle is intended for precision work. The Speedlock system is a quick and easy locking system for adjusting both length of pull and comb height.



New guns from Winchester for 2017 include the Grade I Short Rifle version of the Model 1866 lever-action, top; the XPR Hunter Mountain Country Range bolt-action, middle; and the new XPR Hunter Compact model with a 13-inch LOP, bottom.

The heart of the Vanguard Adaptive Composite (VAC) is the renowned Vanguard action. It is affixed to a composite target stock that features the Speedlock system, a quick and easy locking system for adjusting both length of pull and comb height. The full and lowered forend offers an improved grip for shooting while standing as well as a stud to which a bipod or a sling can be attached. Available with a threaded 20-inch #3 contour barrel, the VAC is chambered for the 223 Rem., 6.5 Creedmoor, or the 308 Win. SRP: $1270. For 2017, Weatherby will be chambering the 6.5 Creedmoor in select Mark V rifles such as the Accumark, Accumark RC, Ultra Lightweight, Terramark, Terramark RC, Arroyo, Arroyo RC, Outfitter, and the Outfitter RC.

Winchester Repeating Arms (winchesterguns.com)

For 2017, the legendary Model 1866 lever-action is now available in a Grade I Short Rifle. The receiver, crescent buttplate, and forearm cap are brass with a bright-polish finish. Stock and forearm are Grade I American black walnut with a satin-oil finish. A folding ladder rear sight and Marble Arms gold bead front sight are standard. Available with a 20-inch barrel in 44-40 Win. and 38 Special. SRP: $1300.

The XPR Hunter Mountain Country Range bolt-action features a polymer stock in Mossy Oak Mountain Country Range camo. Other features include an MOA trigger system, Perma-Cote matte-blued metal surfaces, a detachable box magazine, a steel recoil lug, a two-position thumb safety, and an Inflex Technology Recoil Pad. Available in all popular cartridges, from 243 to 338 Win. Mag. SRP: $600.

Two new XPR Hunter Compact models are also being offered. The XPR Hunter Compact features a 13-inch length of pull. It will be offered for all popular short-action cartridges, from 243 Win to 325 WSM. SRP: $550. The XPR Hunter Compact Mossy Oak Break-Up Country camo version has a suggested retail of $600.

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.*

New Shotguns at SHOT 2017

At the show, we saw guns for hunters, such as the 3.5-inch-chamber Benelli Super Black Eagle 3; for collectors, we saw Browning's B15 over/unders; and for NFA, the Shockwave.

At the 2017 SHOT Show in Las Vegas, versatility best explains the new offerings for this year. Manufacturers are building new pursuit-driven shotguns and tweaking current offerings to provide even more niche specialization of their products. It doesn't matter whether you're looking for a duck-blind gun or a behind-the-truck-seat compact scattergun, there is no lack of diversity in the shotgun category this year.



Browning's B15 over/under shotgun line has been enhanced by the gunsmiths of Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal. These B15s will be offered in four grades, each with a choice of exceptional engravings and unparalled wood quality.



For clay-busting, Browning's Micro Trap, top, and BT-99 Trap and come with adjustable buttplates and combs.

Benelli (benelli.com)

The 12-gauge Super Black Eagle 3 is available in black synthetic, Realtree Max-5, Mossy Oak Bottom Lands, and Gore Optifade Timber. This inertia-driven shotgun, that features an oversize bolt handle, bolt release, and safety, is chambered for 2.75, 3-, and 3.5-inch shells. The shotgun ships with a carbon-fiber rib and five chokes, and either a 26- or 28-inch barrel. SRP: $1900, black; $2000, camo.



Benelli's 12-gauge Super Black Eagle 3 is available in black synthetic, Realtree Max-5, Mossy Oak Bottom Lands, and Gore Optifade Timber. This inertia-driven shotgun features an oversize bolt handle, bolt release, and safety, and can take up to 3.5-inch shells.

Browning (browning.com)

As Browning enters its fifth year of the High Grade Program, it's now offering a Citori 725 12-gauge Trap model in Grade V and Grade VII models. The Grade V will have either 30- or 32-inch barrels. SRP: $5340. The Grade VII will be available with 30- or 32-inch barrels. SRP: $6400.

Another addition to the smoothbore lineup includes a Citori 725 Sporting Golden Clays 12-gauge with either 30- or 32-inch barrels. It will have Sporting Golden Clays engraving on the right, left, and bottom of the receiver. SRP: $5350.

Browning will also be offering a B15 over/under shotgun that has been exquisitely enhanced by the gunsmiths of Fabrique Nationale d'Herstal. These B15s will be offered in four grades, with a choice of exceptional engravings and wood quality. Along those same lines is an A5 High Grade Hunter with special engraving that depicts pheasants on the left side and mallards on the right, surrounded by intricate scrollwork. The 12-gauge has 3-inch chambers and 26- or 28-inch barrels, and will be offered in a gloss finish with grade 2.5 walnut. SRP: $1860.

The A5 and Maxus Wicked Wing shotguns are semi-auto waterfowlers that feature receivers and barrels coated in a duck-blind-mud- and water-resistant Cerakote burnt bronze camo finish. Banded extended choke tubes, Briley extended bolt handles, and oversize bolt releases are standard, as are composite stocks in Mossy Oak Shadow Grass Blades camo. Both 3- and 3.5-inch models are available. SRP: $1980, A5 Wicked Wing; $1740, Maxus Wicked Wing.

For clay-busting, the BT-99 Trap and Micro Trap come with adjustable buttplates and combs. Both feature a Graco Pro Fit adjustable comb and buttpad plate. The Micro version has a 13.75-inch LOP; the full-size version has a 14.4-inch LOP. The Micro is offered with 30- or 32-inch barrels, and the full size can be had with 32- or 34-inch barrels. SRP: $1800.

The Cynergy Composite Ultimate Turkey over/under shotgun is available in Mossy Oak Break-Up Country camo. This is a 12-gauge with a 3.5-inch chamber, and it comes with either 24- or 26-inch barrels. It has a Marble Arms Bullseye rear sight, a fiber-optic front sight, and a short Picatinny rail to mount

red-dot optics. Five Invector-Plus choke tubes, including the Extended Ultimate Turkey and Spreader, come with the shotgun. SRP: $2340.

CZ-USA (cz-usa.com)

The All-American — featuring drop-in replacement parts, including locking blocks — is the sporting clays half of the company's Trap Combo. It has a four-way comb, combined with adjustable buttplate hardware. All-Americans fire the bottom barrel first, the purpose of which is to reduce recoil going into the second shot. Blacked-out extended chokes in a mid-thread pattern, a blacked-out action, and select wood round out the package. SRP: $2500.

For competitors who want a nicer version of CZ's affordable 612 Trap, the Target model has select-grade wood with a glossy oil finish. The metal gets a deep polished blue. It also features a tuned trigger system, raised rib, and comfortable Monte Carlo stock. A set of extended chokes and a pair of Bradley-style white beads are standard. SRP: $549.

For those wanting a light pump gun to carry in the field, CZ has put together a new candidate. Built on a gauge-specific 7075 aluminum action, this 28-gauge has a deep glossy blue finish and select-grade Turkish walnut. It includes a set of interchangeable chokes and a full forend and pistol grip. With 28-inch barrels, the shotgun weighs a scant 5.4 pounds. SRP: $429.

For waterfowl, CZ's Swamp Magnum is the only over/under in the line that has an automatic safety that engages every time the action is opened, making it more duck-blind-friendly. The polymer stocks are available in either black or Realtree Max-5 camo, and all the metalwork is blacked out. SRP: $929 to $1029.



CZ-USA's All-American (top) is a high-end competition gun. The Swamp Magnum over/under (bottom) is built for the duck blind.

Escort (hatsan.com.tr)

The Mission semi-auto is available in 20- or 12-gauge, with 3-inch chambers. The 28-inch barrels are chrome-plated, with a ventilated rib, a Hi-Viz Spark front sight, a stainless receiver, and a Turkish walnut stock sporting rubber grip panel inlays. Sling swivels, five extended chokes, and a hard case come standard. SRP: $715.

Iver Johnson (iverjohnsonarms.com)

Two new .410 shotguns from Iver Johnson should appeal to those looking for a behind-the-seat truck gun or a shotgun sized for youths.



The new .410 IJ700 Iver Johnson shotgun folds in half, making it an ideal truck or camp gun. It is astoundingly light at 4 pounds 8 ounces, and it comes with a blued barrel, a silver receiver, a walnut stock and forend, a rubber buttpad, and sling swivels.

The Iver Johnson IJ700-18 has an 18-inch break-action barrel and is only 34 inches overall. It weighs just 4 pounds, 8 ounces. It comes with a blued barrel, a silver receiver, a walnut stock and forend, a rubber buttpad, and sling swivels.

The shotgun's most unusual feature is that it folds in half for storage and transport. The IJ700-26 is the same gun but with a 26-inch barrel and an overall length of 41.5 inches. SRP: $175.

Mossberg (mossberg.com)

The Shockwave is an ATF-approved shotgun with a 14-inch barrel and an overall length of only 26 inches. This 12-gauge is built on the 590 action and features a Raptor grip and corncob forend with a strap. With a matte-blue finish and cylinder bore, the 590 Shockwave is a whole lot of wickedness in a defensive-style shotgun. SRP: $455.



Mossberg's Shockwave is an ATF-approved 12-gauge Cylinder-bore shotgun with a 14-inch barrel.

The 510 Mini Muddy Girl 410 is designed for the young shooter who is looking for a bit of feminine flair in her first scattergun. It has an 18.5-inch barrel, a ventilated rib, and a fixed Modified choke. It is also adjustable for length of pull and is covered in the vibrant Muddy Girl camo. SRP: $469.

The Mossberg Compact Cruiser AOW is available with an 8- or 10-inch barrel, an ATI T3 pistol grip and folding vertical handgrip with a strap, a parkerized finish, and a Cylinder-bore choke. SRP: $910 to $980.

Stevens (savagearms.com)

Stevens has added the new 555 Compact to its 555 over/under line. The shotgun has a mid-length forend and a compact, 13.25-inch LOP, making it perfect for smaller-framed shooters. Like the original 555, it features a light aluminum receiver that's scaled to gauge. In addition, it sports a Turkish walnut stock and forend, shell extractors, a manual safety, and a single, selective mechanical trigger. It ships with five interchangeable choke tubes. Available in .410, 28-, and 20-gauge. SRP: $692.

Stevens is also offering an enhanced

version of the original 555. It has an Imperial walnut stock and laser-engraved filigree ornamentation. It is available in .410, 28-, 20-, and 12-gauge. SRP: $863.

Stoeger (stoegerindustries.com)

Stoeger's has three new shotguns in 2017. The M3000 Tactical has either a field or pistol grip and an 18.5-inch barrel. This inertia-driven gun will accept 2.75- or 3-inch shells and has a fixed Cylinder bore. SRP: $599, field stock; $649, pistol-grip stock.

The P3000 Tactical is a pump-action 12-gauge available with a field or pistol-grip stock and an 18.5-inch barrel. It, too, will accept 2.75- or 3-inch shells, and it has a fixed Cylinder bore. SRP: $299, field stock; $349, pistol-grip stock.

The P3500 12-gauge is offered in either black synthetic or Realtree Max-5, with a 28-inch barrel. It will accept 2.75- or 3-inch shells, and has a red-bar front sight and a ventilated rib. Accessory chokes are available.



Stoeger's M3000 Tactical can be had with either a field or pistol grip and with an 18.5-inch barrel. This inertia-driven gun will accept 2.75- or 3-inch shells, and has a fixed Cylinder bore. The similar P3000 is a 12-gauge pump.

Tri-Star (tristararms.com)

The Viper Max is designed to shoot 2.75-inch light target loads as well as 3.5-inch turkey loads. It features a two-piston system, and a light- and heavy-load piston are included with the gun. The spare piston stores in the top of the forearm so it is always with the gun. It is available in Realtree Max-5 with a 26-, 28-, or 30-inch barrel. A black synthetic version with a 28-inch barrel is an option. A fiber-optic sight and three choke tubes are included. SRP: $640 to $730.

The Double Trap Adjustable (DTA) comes with 30-inch barrels, an adjustable high-post target rib, ported barrels, and color-coded extended chokes. It also features a fully adjustable buttpad system that allows the shooter to change LOP. The buttpad can be adjusted for cast, moved up or down, and tilts for a perfect fit. The Monte Carlo stock has an adjustable comb in Turkish walnut and is drilled for a recoil reducer. Weight is 8.8 pounds. SRP: $1,450.



Tri-star's TT-15 DTA (top) is very user-friendly. The Viper Max is a versatile turkey gun, available in camo or black synthetic.



Winchester's SXP Shadow Marine Defender (top) has a synthetic pistol grip. The SX4 Waterfowl comes with 3- or 3.5-inch chambers.

The Mono-Trap has a 34-inch barrel with porting and extended chokes. It features a Monte Carlo stock in Turkish walnut with an oil finish. A target rib with a fiber-optic sight is standard. The TT-15 MT is an entry-level trap gun and ships with Modified, Improved Modified, and Full chokes. SRP: $1,035.

Winchester Repeating Arms (winchesterguns.com)

The Super X4 12-gauge autoloader is based on the Active Valve gas system and offers enhanced ergonomics, with easier to access operating controls. It's advertised as lighter and faster cycling than its predecessor. The shotgun is offered in four models—the SX4 Composite, SX4 Waterfowl, SX4 Field, and SX4 Field Compact—all with 3- or 3½-inch chambers. SRP: $800 to $940.

The new SXP Shadow Defender and Shadow Marine Defender pump shotguns feature synthetic pistol-grip stocks with textured gripping surfaces and are supplied with two interchangeable comb pieces. Offered in 20- and 12-gauge, with 3-inch chambers, the alloy receivers are drilled and tapped for bases and rings, and a tactical ribbed forearm offers better control.

The Marine Defender features matte hard-chrome plating on the barrel, magazine tube, and slide arms for added resistance to wear and the elements. Barrel length is 18 inches. The 12-gauge Defender retails for $450, the 20-gauge for $470. The Marine Defender retails for $500 in 12 gauge, and $520 in 20 gauge.

The new SXP Turkey pump shotgun is available in either 12- or 20-gauge and features a composite stock and forearm in a matte-black finish. The black alloy receiver is drilled and tapped for scope bases, and Truglo fiber-optic adjustable sights are standard. The 12-gauge version has a 3.5-inch chamber with a 24-inch barrel. SRP: $440. The 20-gauge has a 3-inch chamber and 24-inch barrels. SRP: $440.

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COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

● **Three-Way A5 Showdown:** We take a new Browning A5 Sweet Sixteen, $1700, and match it against an A5 Sweet Sixteen made in 1960, $650, and an A5 Light Twelve made in 1969, $750, to see how the current production shotgun matches up against history.

● **22-Caliber Training Handgun Shootout:** In this installment we look at some of the best 22-caliber pistols for all-round target shooting and training for marksmanship and personal-defense practice. Some handguns are just fine for general plinking, but the modern shooter demands the ability to train with combat lights or even a red-dot sight, and all 22 LR pistols are not this versatile. We collected two 22-caliber handguns and two 22-caliber conversion units for the purposes of comparison. The firearms tested included the Smith & Wesson Victory, Beretta's Neos, Tactical Solutions' Glock Conversion Unit, and Colt's 22 Ace Conversion Unit.

● **38 ACP Super Ammo Showdown:** The 38 Automatic Colt Pistol Super cartridge isn't the most popular handgun cartridge, but in the loyalty of a small following, it is unique. The 38 ACP, introduced in 1900, is no longer in regular production. This is because the original 38 ACP, introduced in 1899, was later upgraded to the powerful 38 ACP Super. The cartridge case dimensions are identical. The Super is the much hotter cartridge. We were able to find 12 personal defense loads for testing and four FMJ loads. The full-metal-jacket loads were SIG Sauer's 125-grain choice, Fiocchi's 129-grain selection, the Privi Partisan 130-grain ball, and the Winchester 130-grain unit. The personal-defense loads of full-power 38 Super are similar to the 357 Magnum with 110- to 125-grain bullets, but much more controllable with less muzzle blast and recoil. They were the Buffalo Bore's 115-grain JHP, 124-grain JHP, and 147-grain. From Cor-Bon we selected the 100-grain Pow'RBall, a 115-grain JHP, and the 125-grain DPX. From Federal, we picked up some American Eagle 115-grain JHPs. From Double Tap, we selected 115-grain JHPs, TAC JHPs, and 125-grain bonded JHPs. We also fired SIG Sauer Elite 124-grain V Crown JHPs and Winchester 125-grain Silvertips.

● **22 LR Field-Rifle Shootout:** We selected four self-loading rifles to find a good-quality plinker/hunter/fun gun. The candidates: Ruger 10/22 M1 Commemorative Rifle, $340; the Mossberg Plinkster, $160; Marlin's 7000, $225; and the Ruger 10/22 Stainless Takedown Mossy Oak, $409.

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