GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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CALIBER CONVERSIONS

Three pistols From Rock Island Armory, Glock, and SIG Sauer can swap calibers to match different shooting needs. But is this versatility worth your money? In one case, yes, in another case, 'F.' **● Page 6**





45 COLT SINGLE-ACTION REVOLVERS

Tested: Ruger Vaquero Bisley No. 5129, the Uberti 1873 Cattleman Old West No. 355131, and a Second Generation Colt Single Action Army. Which one is rated a Best Buy? Find out on... **● Page 14**



SMALLBORE MATCH UP

Tested: CZ-USA 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready, $373; Ruger American Rimfire Standard, $309; and Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel, $248. Three dang-good guns, so which one gets the nod? Check it out on... **● Page 21**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● CUSTOMER SERVICE: 31 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

GUN NEWS



Todd Woodard

Remington Outdoor Company announced that it has emerged from Chapter 11 after successfully implementing its plan of reorganization previously confirmed by the Delaware bankruptcy court on May 4, 2018. The plan provides a comprehensive balance sheet restructuring of the company and converts more than $775 million of the company's debt into equity. The plan received support from more than 97% of the voting lenders and noteholders.

Remington Outdoor Company, headquartered in Madison, N.C., makes products for the hunting, shooting sports, law enforcement, and military markets and includes such brands as Remington, Bushmaster, DPMS/Panther Arms, Marlin, H&R, Dakota Arms, Parker, AAC, Barnes Bullets, Storm Lake, and Tapco.

Banks Attack Law-Abiding Gun Owners. NRA-ILA reports that Citigroup and Bank of America announced changes to their corporate guidelines that are aimed at preventing law-abiding Americans from exercising their constitutional rights.

According NRA-ILA's analysis, Citigroup's new policy for the nation's fourth largest bank will withhold business from companies that fail to sufficiently curtail the Second Amendment rights of their customers. Specifically, the policy requires "new retail sector clients or partners" to refrain from selling standard-capacity magazines, to prohibit the sale of firearms to law-abiding adults aged 18 to 20 years-old, and to ignore a vital statutory safety valve provision that permits a Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) to transfer a firearm three days after a background check has been initiated. Citigroup has also stated that it will further scrutinize the firearms manufacturers they do business with.

Bank of America's policy targets gun manufacturing. Bank of America Vice Chairman Anne M. Finucane announced that the company no longer intends to lend money to arms manufacturers that produce certain configurations of commonly-owned semi-automatic firearms. Finucane stressed that the bank will no longer finance "military-style firearms" for "civilian use."

On March 29, Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.), who sits on the Senate Banking Committee, issued a stern warning to Citigroup CEO Michael L. Corbat. Sen. Kennedy urged Citigroup to refrain from "penalizing Americans who choose to exercise their 2nd Amendment rights," and instead to focus on the company's many shortcomings. Sen. Kennedy also reminded Corbat that "The very fact that Citi remains operational is due entirely to the generosity of the American taxpayers." That makes this gun owner wonder if all of Citi's bailout funds have been repaid. **GT**

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More On Self-Defense Insurance

Readers Don, Will, Nevin, and Ron were glad to read the ins and outs of these gun-owner programs. Reader Brian wants to relay bad experiences he's had with Ruger American Rifle magazines.



Re "Buying Self-Defense Insurance: Important Factors to Consider," May 2018

Mr. Woodard: Thank you for the surprising but timely article on self-defense insurance. As a former insurance professional, I was aware of the "hidden" differences in insurance policies of all kinds, but I was unaware of many of the differences in types of self-defense insurance for gun-toters like myself — particularly regarding bail bonds. What a great and timely article for your readers who believe in concealed carry/home defense! I am sharing the article with others whom I know are interested in but are wary of insurance protection, and I'm sure it will result in new subscribers for Gun Tests. The article had invaluable information regarding all aspects of "self-protection" from dangerous perpetrators, including prosecuting attorneys and overzealous police investigators. The article covered all the areas that I had questions about, plus others that I hadn't considered.

When I moved to Colorado, I enrolled in a state concealed-carry class when my Arkansas carry license expired. I was very surprised when the instructor often repeated the phrase, "$100,000." When a member of the class finally asked the reason for the phrase, we were advised that was the cost to defend ourselves when we had to defend ourselves using a gun. At the time, I lived in the Aurora/Denver area which, like Illinois, uses the majority of the state's population to set the rules for the rest of the state. Obviously, these adjacent/sister cities are like Chicago, extremely liberal. We were advised that the (liberal) prosecutors determine the need for self-defense — not the police — and overwhelmingly prosecute the homeowner/gun owner, regardless of the outcome. So, the need for self-defense insurance is almost a required purchase for those of your Colorado readers who choose to protect themselves.

Thanks again for considering such a topic for your readers. There's much more to owning a gun than pulling a trigger. Love the magazine, which was a gift. Please keep up the good work! **— Don**

Gentlemen of Gun Tests, I very much appreciated your article on self-defense insurance. I'd bet a week's pay that less than 50% of gun owners in America have such insurance. Yes, your publication is called "Gun Tests," but I subscribe because I'm interested in your not-

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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.

swayed-by-commercial-considerations opinions about all things related to gun selection, ownership, and use. Maybe other readers don't see any value in your articles on other non-gun subjects (like holsters, powder dispensers, optics, etc.), but I don't have time to look into all these things. Keep up the great work! **—Will**

Dear Sirs: Thank you very much for this excellent and timely article. I learned a lot from it. It will stay in my files. As a follow-up, may I suggest doing a companion piece, in a tabular format, that shows a number of the more common insurance plans (e.g., NRA, Second Call Defense, etc.), and compares their features (as described in the subject article) and costs. I think this would be very helpful, and it would complement the material in Mr. Cooper's article. Thank you for your consideration. **— Nevin**

As an LTC instructor, I find your magazine invaluable! I quote from it often and share many of your excellent articles with students. Well done and kudos to all. Duane complained about your including an article about buying self-defense insurance. You often have many articles deviating solely from "gun tests," which I find refreshing and usually very informative. The issue of self-defense insurance is one which I pound into my student classes and endorse. About half buy the Texas Law Shield insurance, which we support.

If an LTC shooter does not have self-defense insurance, he is a financial disaster waiting to happen. We've had students who have had to mortgage their homes to pay for legal representation. After a legal shooting is no time to shop for a lawyer. We all have car, home, and health insurance. Self-defense insurance is an affordable natural extension of minimizing our risks. Keep up the great work! **— Ron**

Re "Threaded-Barrel Bolt Guns in 300 Blackout and 308 Win.," May 2018

In my opinion, the Ruger American bolt guns have a serious problem that develops over time. Gun Tests has given the rifle good reviews, and I like the accuracy, weight, handling, and cost of my 243 Win. and 308 Win. However, the plastic rotary magazines develop defects that are only revealed over time.

If you use the rifle once a year, you might never know. But if you use the rifle week over week over week, loading the magazine, carrying the rifle long distances, unloading and doing it all again, the magazine will literally fall apart, based on my personal experience. Not just fail to feed, which is the first step as they decline, but actually fall apart. The weight of the ammunition being jostled in the magazine as you walk causes the thing to disintegrate, I believe.



Ruger has replaced two at no cost, which is good, I guess. I'm starting to feel guilty asking for replacements, but the product is plastic and snapped together. You can't reasonably take them apart or fix them (I've tried). What Ruger should do is strengthen the magazine and start selling them for $10. It is ridiculous to pay $350 for a rifle and then be expected to pay $35 (typical price for an extra magazine) for a magazine that will only take a few months of hard use. The price is different, but I've never had a problem with the magazines in Tikka bolt guns, despite years of hard use.

Not sure if you should do a follow-up test and article to comment on how parts hold up over time, or if this letter might help someone considering a bolt gun. **— Brian**

Re "Programmable Automatic Powder Dispensers Compete," June 2018

I look forward to each of your issues. I just wish each issue was larger and had more pages of info. I just read your review of programmable automatic powder dispensers and found the information you presented to almost concur with what I've read about the reviewed dispensers in the customer-review section of the Brownells website about two months ago. I don't remember the exact models of the powder dispenser reviews I read on the website, but I do remember the conclusions. Hornady and Lyman didn't get praise, and the RCBS was the only one worthy of consideration, though it didn't receive quite the praise you give it. I was looking to purchase one because both the powder dispensers I have, a Lyman #55 powder measure (which won't metered extruded powders uniformly) and a Lee dispenser (which won't fit and operate on my Lyman T-Mag II press) aren't cutting it. After reading the reviews on the automatic dispensers, I decided to wait til something better came out. I'm still waiting.

Also, as I was reading the review, I wondered if you had ever done a review on reloading dies, specifically why all the Lyman dies I own — which I bought before I had access to the internet and realized there was other stuff out there — cost so much less than say, the RCBS dies I now see. So I was wondering, if you haven't tested them, maybe you should test different manufacturers dies to see how they rate. Most of the Lyman die sets I bought were priced around $50; the RCBS die sets I see usually start at $109, so I'm wondering exactly what I get for the additional $59 per die set? I'm sure there are other die sets you are familiar with that I have never heard of, that you could also test against the Lyman and RCBS dies.

I've been trying to get into reloading for the past 10 years, but every time I sit down and try to get started, something doesn't function as specified, so I have to wait, save money to fix the problem, and when I think



I've solved all my problems, something new occurs. Frustrating.

I realize I could throw individual charges by hand, and I've taken the NRA-approved reloading class twice, but I bought a progressive press, the T-Mag II, and all the accessories to save the time you're supposed to get using a progressive press. So I really don't want to single-stage the process. Thank you for your time. **— Scott**

Scott, we haven't tested dies. I will route the idea to Roger Eckstine for development. — Todd Woodard

What About the 17 WSM?

I am a subscriber to Gun Tests magazine and am a little disappointed that after checking the archive, I have found no assessment of the 17 Winchester Super Magnum or any rifles chambered in that caliber. I believe this round has been on the market for approximately five years and is a very hot round, despite its being a rimfire that is fairly inexpensive to shoot. Its performance and affordability is very appealing to me, and I believe your other subscribers might feel likewise. Please do what you can to feature this round and any rifles chambered in this caliber. Thank you in advance. **— John**

Yours is the first request I can recall for that round. But I will go see what I can dig up. — tw

Re "New Kit-Gun Revolvers from Charter Arms, S&W, Heritage," May 2018

I've been a long-time subscriber. Your articles provide a great combination of technical data plus hands-on personal opinions. I like the summaries you provide in the Value Guides. As a Heritage owner, I appreciated the comparison to the more-modern designs from Charter Arms and S&W. I agree with the limitations of the Heritage sights, although mine shoots to point of aim. It requires a side holster to travel, so it's not really a kit gun. All that considered, the Heritage can swap cylinders to load 22 Magnums. The heavier frame handles the higher velocities, plus there's a variety of 22 Magnum ammunition. Besides, it looks cowboy cool. **— Rick**



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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**

Caliber-Conversion Pistols From Rock Island Armory, Glock, SIG

The ability to swap calibers to match different shooting needs creates versatility for these three pistols. But which one is the best at the task? One's a clear winner, and one is graded F.

We wanted to take a look at pistols that are capable of centerfire-caliber conversions. A pistol with the ability to train in a more affordable caliber, or have the ability to increase power, speaks to our practical side since multiple pistols in multiple calibers can be expensive. We also like that a shooter is essentially using the same grip, sights, and trigger, so he doesn't have to adapt to a pistol with different grip angle, sights, or trigger weight and pull. We also think having a pistol that can adapt to different calibers means ammo is easier to find for your pistol. With these thoughts in mind, we acquired a SIG Sauer P226 Nitron in 9mm ($1087) and a Caliber X-Change Kit in 357 SIG ($370). The total setup cost $1457. If you own a pistol capable of caliber conversion, then you just need to opt for the caliber-conversion components. The total for the 40 S&W Glock G35 Gen3 ($560), Glockstore.com Double Diamond 9mm conversion barrel ($160) and Magpul 27-round magazine ($22) set us back $742. The Rock Island Armory (RIA) TCM TAC Ultra MS HC comes from the factory capable of firing both 9mm and the hot-rod 22 TCM round; total cost is $960. Part of our evaluation was to also see how difficult it was to convert between calibers, and we found it was as easy as field-stripping the pistol and dropping in replacement parts. Across the board, we found that no gunsmithing expertise was required, and you can swap back to the factory caliber easily.

For accuracy testing we benched all three pistols in their paired calibers and fired at targets set at 25 yards. We performed speed drills at 10 yards, firing a magazine as fast as we could while still keeping hits in an 8-inch-diameter-or-smaller target. During close range work, we also performed a variety of magazine reloads and tactical reloads. Overall, we found a lot to like with the conversion kits, and in the case of the Glock, you could be firing 9mm out of a 40 S&W Glock for less than $200. The cost of a new Glock pistol in a separate chambering is nearly three times that amount. We also discovered that swapping calibers poses point-of-impact issues with the Glock, but not with the RIA. The SIG, set up with separate slide assemblies and magazines, was the best choice because there were no point-of-impact issues. The RIA had us very happy in 9mm, but in 22 TCM, we had numerous failures to eject 22 TCM cases — a no go, in our opinion. Here are the details.

Glock G35 Gen3 40 S&W, $560
Double Diamond Threaded Barrel, $160
Magpul PMAG 27 GL9, $22

One team member had a G35 Gen3 on hand, having won it at a GSSF match. We tested this pistol in the







Above, left to right, are the Rock Island Armory TCM TAC Ultra MS HC No. 51943 9mm Luger/22 TCM, the Glock G35 Gen3 40 S&W, with Double Diamond Threaded Barrel and Magpul PMAG 27 GL9, and the SIG Sauer P226 Nitron No. E26R-9-BSS 9mm Luger and SIG Sauer Caliber X-Change Kit in 357 SIG. The RIA ran strong in 9mm, but choked on 22 TCM, which surprised us. Though the SIG Caliber X-Change Kit in 357 SIG costs more, we felt the slide-conversion kit meant no zero/point-of-impact loss between different chamberings. The Glock ran flawlessly, but we noticed a shift in impact between the chamberings.

RANGE DATA

Glock G35 40 S&W	**Winchester White Box**	**Handload**
Factory Configuration	**180-gr. FMJ**	**155-gr. JHP**
Average Velocity	1072 fps	1154 fps
Muzzle Energy	459 ft.-lbs.	458 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.30 in.	2.20 in.
Average Group	2.55 in.	2.45 in.



From left are the 40 S&W 155-gr. handload, the 40 S&W Winchester White Box 180-gr. JHP Q4238, the 9mm Armscor 124-gr. full metal jacket, and the 9mm Hornady 115-grain XTP.

Glock G35 9mm Luger	**Armscor**	**Hornady AG**
Double Diamond Barrel	**124-gr. FMJ**	**115-gr. XTP**
Average Velocity	1150 fps	1163 fps
Muzzle Energy	364 ft.-lbs.	345 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.40 in.	2.09 in.
Average Group	2.62 in.	2.61 in.

SIG P226 9mm Luger	**Armscor**	**Hornady AG**
Factory Configuration	**124-gr. FMJ**	**115-gr. XTP**
Average Velocity	1096 fps	1116 fps
Muzzle Energy	331 ft.-lbs.	318 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.45 in.	1.60 in.
Average Group	1.72 in.	1.75 in.



From left are the 357 SIG 125-gr. JHP, the 40 S&W Winchester White Box 180-gr. JHP Q4238, the 9mm Armscor 124-gr. full metal jacket, and the 9mm Hornady 115-grain XTP.

SIG P226 357 SIG	**Federal American Eagle**	**Federal Premium PD**
Conversion Kit	**125-gr. FMJ**	**125-gr. JHP**
Average Velocity	1350 fps	1349 fps
Muzzle Energy	506 ft.-lbs.	505 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.01 in.	1.63 in.
Average Group	2.30 in.	1.85 in.

RIA TCM TAC 9mm Luger	**Armscor**	**Hornady AG**
Factory Configuration	**124-gr. FMJ**	**115-gr. XTP**
Average Velocity	1065 fps	1085 fps
Muzzle Energy	312 ft.-lbs.	301 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.30 in.	1.32 in.
Average Group	1.95 in.	1.49 in.

RIA TCM TAC 22 TCM	**Armscor**
Factory Conversion	**40-gr. JHP**
Average Velocity	1924 fps
Muzzle Energy	329 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.90 in.
Average Group	2.00 in.



From left are Armscor USA's 22 TCM 40-gr. JHP and 9mm Luger 124-gr. FMJ and Hornady's American Gunner 9mm Luger 115-gr. XTP JHP.

To collect accuracy data, we fired five-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 25 yards with open sights. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph with the first screen set 10 feet from the muzzle. ***Ammo sources:*** *Armscor USA 22 TCM 40-Grain JHP F AC 22TCM-1N ($19.41/50 from CheaperThanDirt.com); Armscor Ammunition 9mm Luger 124-Grain Full Metal Jacket FAC9-4 ($10.50/50 from SelwayArmory.com); Hornady American Gunner 9mm Luger 115-Grain XTP Jacketed Hollow Point 90244 ($16.50/25 from MidwayUSA.com); Federal Premium Personal Defense 357 SIG 125-Grain Jacketed Hollow Point P357S1 (50) ($60/50 from MidwayUSA.com); Federal American Eagle 357 SIG 125-Grain FMJ AE357S2 ($44.50/50 from CheaperThanDirt.com); Winchester USA 40 S&W 180-Grain Full Metal Jacket Q4238 ($17/50 from MidwayUSA.com).*

past and given it a high grade. As an action-shooting competition pistol, the G35 offers plenty of power — it makes high power factor in 40 S&W — has a consistent trigger, adjustable sights, longer sight radius, and oversized controls. It took on average about 17 pounds of effort to rack the slide. We ran Winchester

white-box factory ammo loaded with a 180-grain JHP bullets through it and were served with 2.55-inch groups at 25 yards.

We liked how the G35 performed in 40 S&W. The 40 S&W is a snappy caliber that can be difficult to control in a smaller pistol, but with the G35 we felt we could easily handle the recoil. Converting the G35 to 9mm could create a more cost-effective training pistol that also used a milder-recoiling round. The G34, which is Glock's 9mm equivalent to the G35, is very popular in action shooting competitions, and, in essence, we would be recreating the G34 pistol. That meant we would need a 9mm barrel and a 9mm magazine.

You cannot simply take a G34 barrel and drop it into a G35. It won't work. The breech block is cut differently, and it will not mate up with the slide. The outside diameter of the 9mm factory barrel is smaller than the muzzle hole in the slide. The outside diameter of the 40 S&W barrel is much larger than a factory 9mm barrel. A conversion barrel needs to have the basic outside dimensions of the host barrel to operate. There are numerous manufacturers of Glock caliber-conversion barrels, and we chose the Double Diamond model manufactured for Glockstore.com. This barrel is available in a variety of finishes and with a threaded or non-threaded barrel. We chose the stainless finish to differentiate it from the stock 40 S&W barrel, and we opted for a threaded muzzle so we could use a muzzle device like a compensator or a suppressor. The Double Diamond is a match-grade replacement barrel manufactured from 416 stainless steel forging and uses standard groove and land rifling. This barrel also offers full chamber support and holds a tighter tolerance than the factory Glock barrel. If we wanted to shoot lead bullets, we have that option with the Double Diamond barrel. Of course, it shoots plated and jacketed bullets, too.

We noticed the Double Diamond conversion barrel had a thicker wall than a factory Glock 9mm barrel. It

GLOCK G35 GEN3 PI3530103 40 S&W, $560
DOUBLE DIAMOND THREADED BARREL, $160
GUN TESTS GRADE: A (40 S&W), A- (9MM)

The G35 in 40 S&W is a good competition pistol. Changing to 9mm makes it more versatile and more affordable to shoot, even though the point of impact changes every barrel change.



Action	Locked Breech, Striker-Fire, Semi-Auto
Overall Length	8.6 in.
Overall Height	5.1 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	27.1 oz.
Weight Loaded	36.0 oz.
Barrel	5.3 in. long; hexagonal rifling; 1:9.84 RH twist
Capacity	15+1 (40 S&W), 27+1 (9mm)
Slide	Matte black steel
Frame	Matte black steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.5 in.
Grips	Textured polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.4 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	6.2 in.
Sights	Front fixed, rear adj.
Sight Radius	7.55 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	5.0 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.8 in.
Slide-Retraction Effort	17.0 lbs.
Magazines	2; polymer, double stack
Safety	Trigger lever
Warranty	1 year
Made In	U.S.A.
Website	US.Glock.com





Left: At 10 yards, this is the G35 with 40 S&W Winchester loads; notice the shots group low. Right: This is the G35 with 9mm conversion barrel; notice the shots group high.

The Double Diamond conversion barrel in 9mm has an outside diameter that is the same as the outside diameter of the Glock factory 40 S&W barrel.





Sight picture with the G35 was typical Glock.

ROCK ISLAND ARMORY TCM TAC ULTRA MS HC NO. 51943 9MM LUGER/22 TCM, $960

GUN TESTS GRADE: A (9MM), F (22 TCM)

The TCM TAC Ultra is an excellent Commander-size double-stack magazine 1911 platform when chambered in 9mm. In 22 TCM, we experienced numerous failures to eject.



Action	Locked Breech, single action, semi-auto
Overall Length	8.0 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	41.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	47.0 oz.
Barrel	4.25 in.
Capacity	17+1
Slide	Parkerized steel
Frame	Parkerized steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.6 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.2 in.
Grips	Textured black G10
Grip Thickness (max)	1.4 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.6 in.
Sights	Front dovetail fiber optic, rear adj.
Trigger Pull Weight	3.0 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.5 in.
Slide-Retraction Effort	17 lbs. (9mm), 15 lbs. (22 TCM)
Magazines	2; steel, double stack
Safeties	Rear frame lever; beavertail grip
Warranty	Limited lifetime
Made In	Philippines
Website	Armscor.com

The RIA barrels' outside diameters are the same, but it is obvious the bore diameters are not.



The RIA magazine well is slightly flared, and because the double-stack magazines are tapered, reloading was fast.



The magazines were marked 22 TCM (arrows), but they also worked with 9mm ammo.



dropped into the G35 slide and fit perfectly. You can use the factory 40 S&W recoil rod guide assembly and we did, but thought we might run into issues with mild 9mm ammo not being able to cycle the slide properly.

Because factory Glock 9mm and 40 S&W magazines have similar outside dimensions but different feed lips, you could, in a pinch, run a factory 40 S&W magazine with 9mm ammo. We don't recommend it, however, because the 9mm rounds in the 40 S&W will not feed reliably. You may get lucky and all rounds will fire without issue, but we can guarantee you will have reliability issues at some point. Our solution was a 9mm dedicated magazine. You could use a factory Glock 9mm magazine in the 40 S&W receiver, which we did because some testers had plenty of 9mm Glock magazine available. We also chose a Magpul PMAG 27 GL9 magazine. This is a polymer-body magazine with a 27-round capacity. When inserted, the Magpul magazine extends from the butt of the pistol and is designed to meet the overall length requirements for a 170mm competition magazine in certain competition shooting disciplines. Unlike the Glock factory magazines, the Magpul uses polymer feed lips. The Magpul magazine also incorporates a controlled-tilt follower and stainless-steel spring. The floor plate is easily removed for cleaning and has ridged edges for better grip. There are indicator holes built into the body to determine remaining round count. The Magpul also drops free loaded or unloaded.

At 25 yards we fired the G35 with the 9mm Double Diamond barrel for accuracy and found it to be quite acceptable for an action-shooting pistol. Our best five-shot group was with Hornady American Gunner loaded with 115-grain XTP ammo that measured 2.09 inches. We quickly noticed a difference in the recoil between the calibers and that the G35 shot high with 9mm ammo when using the same point of aim. This can be a compromise when only swapping barrels to change

calibers. Since the sights on the G35 were adjusted for our 40 S&W 155-grain handload, we knew we would have to adjust our point of aim. Not a show stopper by any means, just something to keep in mind. In close-range shooting at 10 yards and using the same point of aim, we were able to shoot groups that showed the difference between the two calibers. We liked how the G35 performed in 9mm and just adjusted our point of aim when shooting 9mm and ran the G35 hard to see if we could trip it up. No problemo. The Magpul was as boringly reliable as the Glock, even after we dropped the magazine loaded and unloaded on cement deck.

Our Team Said: The Glock Double Diamond caliber conversion was the least-expensive caliber-conversion option of the three pistols tested. It proved to be reliable and consistent. If we wanted a caliber conversion for competition training, we'd opt for a complete slide assembly and zero the sights to the same point of aim. If we wanted to shoot inexpensive 9mm ammo through a G35 without spending a lot, we opt just for the barrel. The Magpul magazine was what we expected from Magpul — durable and reliable.

Rock Island Armory TCM TAC Ultra MS HC No. 51943 9mm Luger/22 TCM, $960

We tested the RIA TAC caliber conversion a few years ago and gave the 22 TCM caliber a high grade while the 9mm conversion had a lower grade due to failures to feed JHP ammo. This time around the situation flip-flopped. We first ran the RIA with 9mm ammo and found we really liked this pistol. The TAC uses a 1911-style Commander-size platform reconfigured to accept a double-stack magazine. The girth of the grip was comfortable to grasp even for users with small hands. The front grip strap is also serrated for a surer grip. This TAC wore an all-business, nothing-fancy, Parkerized finish that was well executed. The grips are G10 composite with contrasting textures and offer better fit and adhesion than the grips we tested last go around.

SIG SAUER P226 NITRON NO. E26R-9-BSS 9MM LUGER, $1087
SIG SAUER CALIBER X-CHANGE KIT 357 SIG, $370
GUN TESTS GRADE: A (357 SIG), A (9MM)

There is a reason the P226 is an iconic pistol. Although pricey, the separate slide assembly ensures point of aim with each cartridge. This is Our Pick.



Action	Locked Breech, DA/SA, Semi-Auto
Overall Length	7.7 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.5 in.
Weight Unloaded	34.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	40.0 oz.
Barrel	5.0 in.
Capacity	15+1 (9mm), 12+1 (357 SIG)
Slide	Nitron-finished stainless steel
Frame	Nitron-finished alloy
Frame Front Strap Height	2.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	3.3 in.
Grips	Textured polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.3 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	5.6 in.
Sights	SIGLite night sights 3-dot, fixed front and rear
Trigger Pull Weight (DA)	9.1 lbs.
Trigger Pull Weight (SA)	4.9 lbs.
Trigger Span (DA)	2.9 in.
Trigger Span (SA)	2.6 in.
Slide-Retraction Effort	17 lbs. (9mm), 19 lbs. (357 SIG)
Magazines	2; steel, double stack
Safety	Decocking lever
Warranty	Lifetime
Made In	U.S.A.
Website	SIGSauer.com



Classic SIG controls; the decocker (arrow) can be operated with the firing hand or support hand, depending on the operator's hand size.



The SIG P226 and Caliber X-Change kit efficiently changed the P226 in 9mm to 357 SIG. Since the Caliber X-Change kit comes with a slide, the sights can be zeroed for each caliber.



We liked how SIG color-coded the recoil spring to the caliber. No mix ups.

The thumb safety gave us confidence and the trigger was excellent, in our opinion. It broke at a crisp 3 pounds on average. The rounded hammer has a serrated texture, so cocking the pistol was easy with no slipping. The beavertail grip safety was easy to engage, even if our grip was not perfect from a draw. The mainspring housing was straight and it offered a checkered finish for gripping. The slide serrations at the rear are coarse, and the slide took 17 pounds to retract when set up in 9mm and 15 pounds in 22 TCM. This pistol was easy to operate.

Sights consisted of an adjustable rear sight and a fiber optic dovetailed into the slide. The fiber optic is well suited for action-pistol shooting and defense situations. They are not precision sights by any means. With the RIA, the red fiber optic showed well on dark targets, but the bottom edge of the red dot is obscured by the rear sight when making the top edge of front sight flush with the top edges of the rear sight, as you would when precision target shooting. The receiver incorporates a Picatinny-style rail to mount a tactical light or laser.

We really liked the RIA in 9mm. This is a pistol that many shooters picked up off the bench and fired it as if they had owned and trained with it for years. The accuracy we achieved with Armscor 124-grain FMJ was 1.95 inches and with Hornady American Gunner 115-grain XTP was 1.50 inches, which we attribute to the crisp trigger.

Packaged in the hard case is an extra barrel chambered in 22 TCM and a recoil spring. We would have liked the recoil springs colored coded, as they were soon mixed up during initial handling of the pistol and conversion kit. The 22 TCM spring is the thicker and heavier spring. To convert calibers is as easy as field stripping a Government-style 1911, swapping barrels and recoil spring, and re-assembling. The RIA was easy to tear down and did not have much slide/receiver wiggle, a sure sign the pistol could be an accurate shooter. Also included in the hard case were two steel-body magazines that are compatible with both 9mm and 22 TCM cartridges.

The 22 TCM cartridge is similar to the 5.7x28mm round used in the FN FiveseveN pistol, a small-caliber high-velocity round that offers little recoil and is designed for defense. Introduced in 2012, the 22 TCM uses a 5.56 NATO case cut down and resized to accept a 22-caliber bullet. Only Armscor manufactures 22 TCM cartridges, so finding ammo easily at the local gun shop might be a problem. If you have access to the internet, 22 TCM is easy to find and order online. When we chronographed the round, it clocked at 1924 fps.

We loaded up the two magazines with 22 TCM cartridges and discovered that this pistol is a fire-breathing round that is loud, but offered very little recoil. Surprisingly, the 22 TCM also had nearly the same point of aim and point of impact as the 9mm rounds we tested. No need to change our point of aim as we were required to do with the Glock G35 using the 9mm conversion barrel. Accuracy with the 22 TCM was good. We were intrigued







Near right: The TCM featured a nice beavertail and grip-safety speed bump, plus an ambidextrous thumb safety. The G10 grips offer two types of texture. We liked these grips. The RIA double-stack grip was comfortable for most shooters. Far right: The E2 grip is more ergonomic than previous grips, in our opinion. The girth of the pistol is slightly decreased and better for operators with small hands. Bottom: Controls on the G35, namely the slide stop and magazine release, are oversized for faster and more positive manipulation during competition.



The bigger case size on the 357 SIG restricts magazines for it (left) to carry 12 rounds. The 9mm magazine holds 15 rounds, and both were clearly marked for those capacities.





Left: The sight picture with the P226 was clean and helped us shoot more accurately. Right: The RIA's sight picture was bold and worked well for action-pistol shooting and defense training.



The RIA trigger has an overtravel stop that can be adjusted, though we felt it was fine as it came from the factory. The front grip strap is wider than the typical 1911 to accommodate the double-stack magazine.

to continue when we experienced issues. After the first full magazine, we noticed the RIA would not eject empty 22 TCM cases. We needed to work the slide a few times for the extractor to catch the rim of the cartridge and eject it. These failures to eject happened enough that we stopped wasting our time with the 22 TCM. We converted it back to 9mm and burned through the rest of the test ammo.

Back in the shop we torn down the RIA slide to examine the extractor and found that it was fine.

Our Team Said: We would buy the RIA in 9mm in a heartbeat. Compared to other double-stack 9mm 1911 pistols, the RIA was a bargain, yet it performed like a premium-priced pistol. But the 22 TCM conversion simply wouldn't run well enough.

SIG Sauer P226 Nitron
No. E26R-9-BSS 9mm Luger, $1087
SIG Sauer Caliber X-Change Kit 357 SIG, $370

There is a reason the P226 is an iconic and popular pistol worldwide. Our sample was a Nitron model with the E2 one-piece grip designed to have less girth than pervious P226 models. Small-handed testers liked the textured E2 grip circumference, the angle of the grip, and the texture. The P226 wore a well-executed matte-black Nitron finish, and the controls were very familiar to those testers familiar with SIG's classic DA/SA pistols.

On the left side of the receiver is a decocking lever, which is easy for shooters with average-to-large hand sizes to operate effectively with the shooting hand. Shooters with smaller hands need to reposition the grip or use the thumb of their support hand to operate the decocking lever. Rotating the lever decocks the P226 from full cock to half cock and changes the trigger mode from SA to DA. The hammer was serrated, so there was no slipping when thumbing back the hammer to fire in SA mode. Since the P226 uses a double-action/single-action trigger, managing the trigger is quite different than the striker-fire Glock and the single-action trigger of the RIA 1911. Some testers like the fact the DA/SA trigger can be preloaded with finger pressure, much like a DA/SA revolver trigger, and then followed through — or not — to fire the pistol when on target.

The P226 uses a 3-dot sighting system that, in our opinion, is better for more precision shooting due to the fact the top edge of the front sight can be made flush with the top edges of the rear sight without the dot in the front sight being covered or obscured by the rear sight. We liked these sights.

In double-action mode, the trigger pull averaged 9.1 pounds. The trigger pull was smooth and consistent. In SA mode, the trigger had a bit of take up but broke cleanly at 4.9 pounds. We had one tester bench the P226 at 10 yards and placed nearly a full magazine in one ragged hole with both 9mm ammo brands tested. At 25 yards, the P226 liked both the Armscor 124-grain FMJ and Hornady American Gunner 115-grain XTP hollow-point loads. We were able to produce 1.72-inch and 1.75-inch groups with those brands, respectively.

SIG offers a Caliber X-Change Kit for the P226, so we procured a kit in 357 SIG with the intent of increasing the power over the 9mm. The kit consists of a slide assembly and steel body and a double stack magazine compatible with 357 SIG ammo in a hard case. The kit was expensive compared to the other options, but we soon grew to appreciate the separate slide and magazine.

If we had a 40 S&W SIG pistol on hand, we could have just swapped out a 357 SIG barrel and used the 40 S&W magazine, since the 40 S&W and 357 SIG share the same magazine. Going from the smaller caliber to larger caliber, with the SIG requires a slide built to withstand the pressure of the more powerful 357 SIG caliber.

The 357 SIG cartridge was introduced in 1994 and is unique in that is it a bottleneck cartridge, similar to the 22 TCM but with less downsizing. The idea behind the 357 SIG was SIG Sauer and Federal Premium ammunition necked down the 10mm case to fit a .357-inch bullet and mimic the velocity and energy of a 125-grain 357 Magnum revolver cartridge in a smaller, semi-automatic pistol platform. Recoil is about the same as a 40 S&W, but the 357 SIG has noticeably higher muzzle blast. The round was adopted by numerous law-enforcement agencies, with most of those agencies having good results with power, penetration, and compact nature of the firearm. The popularity of the 357 SIG was never stellar and the round has declined more rapidly in popularity than the 40 S&W in LE circles, probably due to the cost of the round and the better ballistics and higher magazine capacity in recent 9mm ammo loadings.

To exchange calibers in the SIG, just field strip the P226 and reassemble with the Caliber X-Change slide assembly for 357 SIG. The slide assembly is complete with internal parts such as the firing pin mechanism, extractor, recoil spring, barrel, slide and sights. It is also clearly marked on the breech block of the barrel the caliber of the barrel. We did note that swapping barrels and exchanging calibers can be confusing. We had a tester accidentally load 40 S&W in the 357 SIG magazine and try to chamber the 40 S&W round in the 357 SIG barrel. Of course that did not happen, but remember to keep ammo separate to lessen confusion.

The P226 outfitted with the 357 SIG slide assembly performed without fail. The 357 SIG caliber has noticeably more recoil and muzzle blast than the 9mm, which we expected. We liked the fact we could zero the sights to the 357 SIG load.

Our Team Said: The Caliber X-Change kit efficiently changed the P226 in 9mm to 357 SIG. We liked the fact the kit had all the components assembled, so all that was required was swapped slides and magazines. Though this option was the most costly, we thought it was also the most effective since the sights and recoil spring were specifically designed for the 357 SIG.

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

SHORT SHOTS

New M&P45 M2.0 in Flat Dark Earth Comes with Truglo TFX Sights. Smith & Wesson Corp. has announced its new M&P45 M2.0 in Flat Dark Earth (FDE) finish. Chambered in 45 Auto, the M&P45 M2.0 pistol joins the previously released M&P9 and M&P40 M2.0 Flat Dark Earth pistols with Truglo TFX sights in the M&P M2.0 pistol line. The pistol features a 4.6-inch barrel and has no thumb safety. The new pistol is a striker-fired design that features a lighter trigger and aggressive grip texturing. The Truglo TFX sights use encapsulated tritium and fiber-optic technology for enhanced visibility. The molded polymer frame is topped with a Cerakote FDE slide, has four interchangeable palmswell grips, includes an 18-degree grip angle, and comes with a one-year limited warranty and lifetime service policy. MSRP: $699.



Remington Model 1911 R1 Tactical Series Now Available. A 45 Auto line we've been watching for, the Model 1911 R1 Tactical, is now available in retail locations. Some of the line's specifications include an adjustable match-grade trigger, 5-inch match-grade stainless-steel barrel, mated frame and slide, PVD coating, and an ambidextrous extended thumb safety that allows easy operation in either hand. Also, there are machined VZ Operator G10 grips, wide front and rear cocking serrations, a checkered mainspring housing, and Trijicon front and rear night sights. It comes with a railed stainless-steel frame for accessory mounting. Three models are available. The No. 96385 (shown at right) is an 8+1 with a 5-inch barrel utilizing a 1:16 twist. It measures 8.5 inches long and stands 5.75 inches tall. It weighs 38 ounces and lists for $1250. The No. 96486 45 Auto is a 15+1 with the same dimensions that weighs 41 ounces dry and lists for $1275. The No. 96488 is likewise a 15+1 with a threaded barrel that will list for $1299. If you can handle the girth of these new guns, self-defense shooters will ask themselves, "Why not a 45 with 16 rounds aboard?"



Apex Offers New Action Enhancement Kit for the Smith & Wesson SDVE. The Apex kit supposedly fixes this pistol's long, heavy factory trigger pull by reducing trigger-pull weight 2.0 pounds from the factory setting, reducing pre-travel by 20%, and reducing over-travel by 10%. The Apex Action Enhancement Kit for the SDVE pistol combines the Apex Action Enhancement Trigger and Apex Spring Kit for the SDVE into one package. It's made for Smith & Wesson SD & SDVE Series semi-auto pistols (SD9, SD40, SD9VE & SD40VE), but not for the Sigma Series pistols, which can be improved with the Apex Sigma Spring Kit. In the Apex package comes an Action Enhancement Trigger for the SDVE, a trigger return spring, a striker block spring, an SD striker spring, and a sear spring. Also, in three YouTube videos, Apex's Scott Folk walks you through the proper procedure for disassembling, installing Apex parts, and reassembling the slide and frame of the SDVE pistol. Price: $55.



Model 19 Revolver Reintroduced to Classics, Performance Center Lines. Smith & Wesson has reintroduced two configurations of its Model 19 revolver, chambered in 38 S&W Special +P and 357 Magnum. For the first time in 20 years, the Model 19 will be available as a catalog item, in both a Classics and Performance Center version. The Smith & Wesson Classics series of revolvers, MSRP $826, have been enhanced with modern internal components, but mimic the look and feel of classic models. The Model 19 Classic revolver features walnut grips, a 4.25-inch barrel, a black adjustable rear sight, and red ramp front sight. The revolver has a highly polished blued finish and traditional thumbpiece for a classic look. The Performance Center Model 19 Carry Comp, MSRP $1092, is designed for concealed carry and includes a tritium front night sight, custom wood and synthetic boot grips, and a 3-inch PowerPort vented barrel for recoil management. The revolver features a trigger overtravel stop and Performance Center tuned action. Both the Model 19 Classic and the Performance Center Model 19 Carry Comp have 6-round cylinders.



Single-Action Revolvers: Best Buy Is Uberti's Cattleman 1873

We take a look at single-action 45 Colt revolvers from Colt, Ruger, and Uberti to find the best choice for cowboy action shooting, recreation, hunting, and personal defense.

In this installment, we test a trio of revolvers from Uberti, Colt, and Ruger in stainless steel, antique or original finish, and nickel plating. We included a Bisley grip frame and two barrel lengths to give readers a broad range of choices if they're interested in 45 Colt single-action revolvers of the traditional style with fixed sights.

The test handguns were the Uberti 1873 Cattleman Old West No. 355131, a Second Generation Colt Single Action Army 45 Colt, and a Ruger Vaquero Bisley No. 5129. Part of our interest was how the longer barrel of the Colt, at 7.5 inches, compared to the 5.5-inch tubes on the others when drawn from leather. Also, we were curious how the Ruger Bisley performed with some pretty stiff loads when pitted against the standard plow-handled grip frame of the Colt and Uberti. For wheelgun aficionados, the comparison of a Colt Single Action Army (SAA) to any of its derivatives always creates interest, and in this case, there's a 2nd Generation SAA that many seek out ahead of more-modern-production versions.

Cowboy Action shooters are thought to have the most interest in single-action revolvers, but there are many more SAA-type revolvers sold than there are cowboy shooters, even considering that such competitors need two guns in action and often have one in the shop as well. Folks love single-action revolvers for recreational shooting, for hunting, collecting, and even for personal defense. Yep, if you take the National Rifle Association Handguns 101 course, you will see the list of reasons for owning a handgun, and single-action revolvers fit into every niche, including collecting. As an example, one of our raters has a great deal of law-enforcement experience, and the first time he arrested (on personal time) a lawbreaker at gun point, he used a Colt Single Action Army.

With all of these factors in mind, we went on a bargain hunt, checking gun stores, online sources, and pawn shops to find lightly-pistols in good testing condition. We did not wish to pay too much for the Colt, but we knew we would spend more than a thousand dollars because of their scarcity. And we wanted to pay just a percentage of the new price for the other revolvers. To our thinking, $100 is real money, so if we could find a shooter and save that cash, then we'd have a bargain.

For a thorough evaluation, our shooters fired the three revolvers on a general shooting course and then for



Here are the 45 Colt single-action revolvers that squared off in this test. Top to bottom are the Ruger Vaquero Bisley No. 5129, the Uberti 1873 Cattleman Old West No. 355131, both with 5.5-inch barrels, and a Second Generation Colt Single Action Army with a 7.5-inch barrel. While we liked all the revolvers for various reasons, the plain Uberti was the price leader and a good performer. But our favorite is the Colt, which is three times as expensive, of course.



These revolvers are slow to load, but we had a pile of brass in short order. The Uberti, left, kicked the most off hand. The long-barrel Colt, center, was the most pleasant to fire, likely a result of its weight. The Ruger, right, was the most accurate off the bench.

accuracy from a solid benchrest. On the action course, shooters drew the revolvers from standard belt holsters and fired at targets at 5, 7, and 10 yards. We also fired offhand at 15 yards to test accuracy and handling. The ammunition used in the general firing course was the Black Hills Ammunition 250-grain cowboy load. This loading is designed for low recoil and good accuracy.

When it came to benchrest accuracy, we were able to properly line up the fixed sights and fire three loads. These included the Fiocchi 45 Long Colt 250-grain Cowboy Action, Hornady's 45 Colt 185-grain Critical Defense brand, a personal-defense loading, and the 45 Colt Buffalo Bore 255-grain semi-wadcutter, an outdoors and hunting load. The three single-action revolvers completed the test without any type of problems. Even after firing 50 cartridges, cylinder rotation never slowed. The hammers cocked smoothly, and the trigger action was consistent. The ejector rods worked as designed, and the cylinders rotated smoothly. Here's what else we found:

Uberti 1873 Cattleman Old West No. 355131 45 Colt, $400

We bought this revolver used but in very good condition, saving about a hundred dollars off the price of a new pistol listed online at MacksPW.com for $500. It lists for $489 on the Uberti-USA.com website. The revolver is manufactured by Uberti. Models of this type have been offered by several importers, including Cimarron. The Rooster Edition, by Cimarron, features the same finish and also a set of John Wayne–style grips. The revolver features a popular finish variously called the Original, Distressed, or Antique. The finish is intended to provide the appearance of a handgun that is more than 100 years old. While the intent isn't to fool anyone, the pistol has the well-worn look of a period revolver or one that may have appeared in a Wild Bunch movie. The revolver even has patent dates engraved in



Ammunition choices for the 45 Colt are plentiful. We used Cowboy Action loads from Black Hills and Fiocchi, a personal-defense load from Hornady, and Buffalo Bore's outdoors load. Even with the Buffalo Bore load, the Ruger was comfortable to fire.

RANGE DATA

45 Colt Fiocchi Cowboy Action 250-gr. LRNFP 45LCCA	**Uberti 1873 Cattleman**	**Colt SAA 2nd Gen.**	**Ruger Vaquero Bisley**
Average Velocity	755 fps	790 fps	723 fps
Muzzle Energy	316 ft.-lbs.	346 ft.-lbs.	290 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.2 in.	1.8 in.	1.8 in.
Average Group	2.8 in	2.3 in.	2.2 in.

45 Colt Hornady Critical Defense 185-gr. FTX 92790	**Uberti 1873 Cattleman**	**Colt SAA 2nd Gen.**	**Ruger Vaquero Bisley**
Average Velocity	980 fps	999 fps	970 fps
Muzzle Energy	394 ft.-lbs.	409 ft.-lbs.	386 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.4 in.	2.0 in.	1.7 in.
Average Group	2.9 in.	2.5 in.	2.0 in.

45 Colt Buffalo Bore 3E/20 255-gr. SWC Standard Pressure	**Uberti 1873 Cattleman**	**Colt SAA 2nd Gen.**	**Ruger Vaquero Bisley**
Average Velocity	960 fps	990 fps	974 fps
Muzzle Energy	522 ft.-lbs.	555 ft.-lbs.	537 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.9 in.	1.9 in.	1.7 in.
Average Group	2.4 in.	2.2 in.	2.1 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired three five-shot groups with each loading from the Brownells.com Bullshooter shooting rest atop a solid benchrest. Distance, 25 yards. We recorded velocity for each load with the Competition Electronics Pro Chrony 15 feet from the muzzle. ***Ammo sources:*** *Fiocchi 45 Long Colt 250-grain Cowboy Action load ($28.49/50 from SportsmansGuide.com), Hornady 45 Colt 185-grain Critical Defense ($18.42/20 from SportsmansGuide.com), and the 45 Colt Buffalo Bore 255-grain semi-wadcutter ($39.09/20 from CheaperThanDirt.com). Also, we used the Black Hills 250-grain cowboy load on the action course ($38.97/50 from VenturaAmmunition.com).*

UBERTI 1873 CATTLEMAN OLD WEST NO. 355131
45 COLT, $400
GUN TESTS GRADE: B+ (BEST BUY)

We really liked the Uberti 1873 single-action revolver. The revolver is designed to look as if it had been used hard for many years. The finish isn't a lack of blue, rather, it appears well worn. The grips are plain walnut. The Uberti exhibited the best trigger of the test. The revolver's accuracy, while good, was not as good as the other two revolvers. Cowboy Action Shooting doesn't demand great accuracy, but it demands fast handling.



Action	Single Action
Overall Length	11.0 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.6 in.
Cylinder	6 rounds; fluted steel
Weight Unloaded	39 oz.
Weight Loaded	42 oz.
Barrel Length	5.5 in.
Frame	Steel
Front Strap Height	2.1 in.
Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Grips	Walnut
Grip Thickness (Max.)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference	6.0 in.
Sights	Fixed
Sight Radius	6.5 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	3.0 lbs.
Safety	No manual safety
Warranty	None
Telephone	(800) 264-4962
Website	Uberti-USA.com
Made In	Italy



The Galco Wheelgunner holster is a great all-round outdoors holster that suits the Uberti.



The Uberti features copies of the original roll marks of the 1873 revolver (arrows). Some shooters really like the original or distressed finish.



The Uberti features a hammer-mounted firing pin.



The grips had a decent fit to the frame.

the receiver, a nice touch. It is an attractive finish for those who like this type of revolver. For others, only a bright new nickel or highly polished stainless revolver will do. The finish doesn't affect function, and it certainly has its place.

The grips are simple wooden slabs. The grips are not aged with the metal finish, but if the user prefers, aging them is simple enough to accomplish. The Uberti features a 5.5-inch barrel, among the most popular original barrel lengths, and the standard groove rear sight and half moon front sight. The revolver features the original type action (Old Model), wherein the firing pin is mounted on the hammer and there is a positive half-cock notch. The revolver is loaded by placing the hammer on half cock, opening the loading gate, and loading the cartridges into the chambers. The Uberti cannot be carried safely with six cartridges in the chambers. The hammer must be lowered on an empty chamber. This is accomplished by loading the revolver in this manner: load one, skip one, load four, cock the hammer and lower the hammer on an empty chamber. This is the only way to safety carry a loaded single-action revolver with the original action. Some shooters adopt this carry even with the modern transfer-bar single-action revolvers, such as the Ruger. This is certainly reasonable, particularly for the shooter who owns more than one single-action revolver. If you own a Ruger and a Uberti, just load each with five rounds, and there is no question you are safe.

The action of the Uberti is smooth enough. The feel is different than the other two revolvers as far as operating the action. The hammer is easily cocked. The trigger action breaks at a crisp 3.0 pounds. We could not have asked for a better trigger action. This is a revolver that seems intended for efficient use in Cowboy Action shooting. We have no idea how many rounds were fired in this revolver before we purchased it, but the piece seemed tight and locked up well. The grip frame is the

COLT SINGLE ACTION ARMY SECOND GENERATION
45 COLT, $1240

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Colt Single Action Army was well finished, felt good in the hand, was quite accurate, and it is a collectible handgun as well. The nickel plating is attractive and has lasted for decades without blemish. The Colt is a great gun and is Our Pick. However, the Uberti offers practical accuracy and handling that are more than good enough for CAS shooting and most pursuits at a fraction of the price of the Colt.



Action	Single Action
Overall Length	13.5 in.
Overall Height	5.5 in.
Maximum Width	1.6 in.
Cylinder	6 rounds; steel
Weight Unloaded	43.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	46.0 oz.
Barrel Length	7.5 in.
Frame	Steel
Front Strap Height	2.1 in.
Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Grips	Simulated mother of pearl
Grip Thickness (Max.)	1.5 in.
Grip Circumference	6.0 in.
Sights	Fixed
Sight Radius	6.5 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	5.5 lbs.
Safety	No manual safety
Warranty	None
Telephone	(800) 962-COLT
Website	Colt.com
Made In	U.S.A.



The cylinder base pin (arrow) is a snug fit, with no apparent wear. The Colt is plainly marked.



This Galco is an excellent all-round field holster.



This early-1970s Colt is in fine condition, save the grips are not original — a demerit in collector's value. In shooting, they worked fine. The Colt employs a hammer-mounted firing pin (arrow).



This Colt features the original half-moon front sight.

original grip type; today there are SAA-type revolvers with extended grip frames and transfer-bar ignition as well. Most of us prefer the original for general shooting.

We carried the revolver in a Galco Wheelgunner holster ($59.20 from Brownells.com). The Wheelgunner is an excellent field holster and incorporates a hammer thong for proper retention. We drew without the thong applied in this case. Retention is good due to the fit of the holster, but the Wheelgunner should be deployed with the thong attached to the hammer for outdoors use.

The Uberti is an easy gun to like. The cylinder indexed tightly and the hammer was the easiest to cock. The revolver, like all plow-handled single-action revolvers, was comfortable to fire and use, so results on the shooting course were good. The revolver recoils, the thumb contacts the hammer and cocks it for another shot, and you are back on target. While the 4.75-inch-barrel versions are faster from leather, the 5.5-inch barrel makes for a fast-handling revolver that offers excellent pointability and accuracy offhand.

All our shooters praised the Uberti's trigger. Loading and unloading the revolver was not difficult. Recoil was modest with the Cowboy Action load, and the personal-defense loading was not difficult to control. Fired off the benchrest, the Uberti jolted us with the Buffalo Bore load, but we were getting a lot of horsepower at nearly 1000 fps. The Uberti kicked more than the Colt, but only by a small margin, likely because the Colt was slightly heavier. The Ruger was very comfortable to fire off the benchrest, even with the Buffalo Bore load.

Our Team Said: Though the Uberti was the least accurate of the three revolvers, it was accurate enough for most purposes. We rated the Uberti down based on accuracy, and fit, which did not equal the other handguns. The action was not as tight as the Colt, but it was certainly useful. However, in the end, based on its low price and good performance, we rated the Uberti the Best Buy of the test. Short of handling heavy hunting loads and delivering long-range accuracy, the Uberti

was comparable to the other revolvers and qualifies as a bargain.

Colt Single Action Army Second Generation 45 Colt, $1240

This revolver is the second generation of Colt production, between the original lots and the current production run. The Second Generation was in production from the 1950s to the 1970s. The 2nd Generation is generally regarded as superior to the later Colts because it was built on the same machinery, more or less, as the first-generation revolvers. The senior rater involved had tested both first- and third-generation revolvers and did not like them as well as this revolver.

The Colt figured heavily in this shoot-out. It is the original action, the same as the Uberti and all new-production Colts as well. However, this revolver, made in 1973, features a tighter action that required more force to cock but which is very tight. The single-action trigger press is crisp at 5.5 pounds. Manipulating the revolver was not difficult. The nickel finish was flawless, very well done and without blemish after 45 years. The grips are a synthetic material rather than the original Colt grips. They are well done and attractive, and these aftermarket grips, while useful, lowers the price of the Colt to collectors. The Colt was drawn from a Galco Single Action Outdoorsman revolver holster ($103 from GalcoGunleather.com). While the barrel is 2 inches longer than the other revolvers, the piece came out of the holster quickly, and while slightly slower than the other revolvers on the draw, the Colt points well and came on target quickly. In the firing tests, the Colt did well. In the end, the Colt demonstrated the tightest group in the firing course — we hesitate to call a test of single-action revolvers a combat course — and overall gave the best showing. The 7.5-inch barrel exhibited good balance and a good natural point. Recoil seemed the least of the test, probably because of the gun's greater length and weight.

RUGER VAQUERO BISLEY NO. 5129 45 COLT, $550

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

The Bisley did exactly what it was supposed to do. The grip frame and trigger helped in accurate deliberate fire. The Ruger was the most accurate revolver tested. We liked the appearance, and the finish certainly cannot be faulted. The well-polished stainless finish was evenly applied, the sights were well regulated, and the trigger action felt fine. But the Ruger was the least handy in rapid-fire offhand shooting and was slowest coming out of the holsters.



Action	Single; reverse indexing pawl
Overall Length	11.0 in.
Overall Height	5.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.6 in.
Cylinder	6 rounds; beveled high-gloss stainless steel;
Weight Unloaded	41 oz.
Weight Loaded	44 oz.
Barrel Length	5.5 in. long; 1:16 RH twist, 6 grooves; high-gloss stainless steel
Frame	High-gloss stainless steel
Front Strap Height	2.1 in.
Back Strap Height	3.4 in.
Grips	Simulated ivory
Grip Thickness (Max.)	1.6 in.
Grip Circumference	6.0 in.
Front Sight	Blade, fixed
Rear Sight	Integral top groove
Sight Radius	6.5 in.
Trigger Pull Weight	4.5 lbs.
Safety	Transfer bar
Warranty	None
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
Website	Ruger.com
Made In	U.S.A.



The Ruger Bisley is a distinctive revolver with excellent fit and finish. The Ruger features transfer-bar ignition with a frame-mounted firing pin. The flat face of the hammer (arrow) hits the head of the firing pin inside the receiver slot.



DM Bullard's exotic leather is a good match for the Ruger Bisley.



The Ruger ejector rod allowed positive ejection and was a good fit to the barrel.

VALUE GUIDE: SINGLE-ACTION REVOLVERS

GUN NAME	ISSUE	GRADE	COMMENTS
Heritage Mfg. Small Bore Revolver RR22B4 22 LR, $195	May 2018	A-	The Heritage Mfg. functioned fine, offered a manual thumb safety, and shot to point of aim.
Chiappa 1873 SAA 22 Buntline, Model: SAA1873-22, 22 LR, $339	Sept. 2017	A	The Buntline offered all we expected in a rimfire Buntline, plus it came with a reasonable price.
Ruger Bisley Vaquero, Model No. 5130 38 Sp./357 Magnum, $835	Jan. 2016	A-	The more modern Bisley-esque grip made the Ruger more popular. Stainless construction.
Uberti Cattleman Bisley 346040 38 Special/357 Magnum, $609	Jan. 2016	B+	It was well made, had a beautiful finish, and furnished good accuracy.
Ruger New Model Blackhawk No. 5242 45 Colt/45 ACP, $650	June 2015	A	This flattop had a smaller grip frame, an indexing pawl, a transfer-bar safety, and a reasonable cost.
Colt New Frontier Model P4840 45 Colt/45 ACP, $1818	June 2015	A-	The New Frontier was traditionally operated SAA revolver with a very crisp trigger — and a high price.
Ruger New Model Single-Six #0624 22 LR/22 WMR, $569	Sept. 2014	A-	The Ruger had excellent sights. Loading and unloading were tedious.
Heritage Mfg. Rough Rider RR22MB9, 22 LR/22 WMR, $230	Sept. 2014	C	We did see some of the bluing start to wear on the butt, and the front blade sight loosened.
Traditions Frontier Series 1873 SAT73-126 38 Sp/357 Mag, $609	May 2014	A-	The Frontier was favored by testers who preferred traditional SAAs. Low price is appealing.
Ruger New Vaquero No. 5108 38 Sp/357 Magnum, $739	May 2014	A-	The Ruger would get the nod if high-volume CAS-style shooting was on the agenda.
Colt 2nd-Generation Second Dragoon, 44 Cal., $800	Aug. 2013	A	On the range the big gun did excellent work for our testers. Accurate and powerful.
Colt 2nd-Generation 1860 Army, 44 Cal, $650	Aug. 2013	A	We would be happy to own two of these and would even use them for home protection, if needed.
Colt 2nd-Generation 1851 Navy 36 Cal., $650	Aug. 2013	A	We were mighty pleased with the feel of this gun, with its balance like that of the 1873 Colt.
Cimarron Evil Roy ER4104 357 Mag, $770	Aug. 2012	A	The Evil Roy was our favorite because of the smooth function of the action and accuracy.
Ruger New Vaquero NV-34 No. 5107 357 Magnum, $719	Aug. 2012	C	A modernized single-action revolver. Cosmetics were cheapened by the grips, we thought.
Heritage Mfg. Big Bore Rough Rider No. 357 Mag, $500	Aug. 2012	C	Cylinder was loose when the hammer is in the load/unload position.
Cimarron CA081 44-Cal. Second Model Dragoon, $349	July 2006	A	On the range, the Cimarron distinguished itself. With FFg GOEX we made many tiny groups.

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

Our Team Said: Fired from the benchrest, the Colt gave credible results but was the second most accurate revolver, behind the Ruger. Also, it got a demerit for the bright nickel finish. In common with the stainless-steel Ruger and other revolvers we have tested, on the firing range the Colt's front sight glinted in the sunlight. This wasn't a problem during one overcast firing session, but it became an issue when the clouds parted. The front sight glint could be cured with a dab of nail polish, and that didn't seem to be worth a half-grade ding. If you're looking for authenticity and reliable function, spend the money for a real Colt.

Ruger Vaquero Bisley No. 5129 45 Colt, $550

We found this revolver at Tombstone Tactical (TombstoneTactical.com) for $668.52, so we saved $118.52 by buying a used version from a pawn shop. The Ruger Bisley may not have been unfired, but it appeared as new. There was a light scratch on one of the cylinder flats. Elsewhere, the Ruger showed good fit and finish. The stainless finish isn't brushed, but appeared well polished. The Bisley features a 5.5-inch barrel, the same as the Uberti; however, the Ruger, with its massive frame, is heavier. The Ruger features white synthetic grips. They are well fitted and attractive.

The Ruger features a modern transfer bar system with a trigger break at 4.5 pounds. The curved trigger has a different feel than the flat SAA trigger. The Ruger is loaded with the hammer down. The loading port is opened and the cylinders loaded one at a time. The hammer does not have to be on half cock for the revolver to be loaded.

The transfer bar system is simple enough, and it makes for a significant improvement in safety. The transfer bar does not touch the frame-mounted firing pin unless the trigger is completely pressed. With the trigger pressed, the transfer bar rises from its lowered position. The hammer then strikes the transfer bar, and the transfer bar strikes the firing pin. This system prevents the danger of carrying a loaded cartridge in the cylinder under the firing pin. The transfer-bar system should also make for greater safety in the event of a burst cartridge case head or a flowing primer. While a dedicated single-action shooter may be safe with the original system, the occasional shooter is better served with the transfer-bar system, we feel.

The primary difference in handling between the Ruger Bisley and the other revolvers was in the grip shape. The Bisley grip was designed for target shooters and is named after the Bisley target range in England. The revolver was intended to allow a bent-wrist grip and easy cocking. While the grip accomplished this, the Bisley revolver was never as popular as the standard SAA grip. The way the Bisley sits in the hand is quite comfortable. The bore axis seems lower. The Bisley grip is well suited to target shooting.

We drew the Ruger Bisley from a DM Bullard Combat holster. This holster was finished in hippo hide ($285 at DMBullard.com). When working on the action



The Ruger Bisley grip fit all hands well for deliberate target work. It was not the best choice for action.



After a hard few days of work, none of the revolvers malfunctioned. This is the Colt with its 7.5-inch barrel.

We used two hands in some of the firing stages.



course, however, our shooters said the Ruger Bisley was not as fast and accurate as the Colt or Uberti revolvers. The grip is comfortable, but the thumb must reach high to cock the hammer. There is no easy way to get around that. The Bisley-type grip is simply more difficult to manipulate. We feel that for most shooters, it would be a second choice for Cowboy Action Shooting or personal defense. However, during the fast-shooting test, the raters found the Ruger Vaquero Bisley comfortable to fire. Recoil isn't a consideration, even with heavy loads. The action was smooth, and the long trigger controllable. The revolver cylinder turned easily and the ejector rod worked smartly.

Moving to the bench, the Ruger Bisley came into its own compared to the action shooting test. Rather than last in line, the Ruger moved to first in results. Felt recoil was lighter as well, even with the powerful Buffalo Bore loading.

Our Team Said: The Ruger Bisley was rated down a grade based on its showing on the firing course. In our view, the standard plow-handled grip of the Colt Single Action Army types proved a better match for fast shooting. The Ruger is accurate, however, and for those taking game at modest range, this fixed-sight revolver can do the job.

The Ruger Vaquero Bisley is a nice modern revolver. If the ability to carry the revolver safely with six loaded cylinders is a requirement, the Ruger is the only revolver you need consider. If maximum untimed accuracy is important, the Ruger was more accurate than the much more expensive Colt Single Action Army.

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

Threaded-Barrel Rimfire Rifles: Savage, CZ, and Ruger Compete

When does a low price simply mean something is inexpensive, but not cheap? That's the case with the Savage Mark II, which came in well under three bills and shot its way into our safe.

As we noted a couple of issues ago, the shooting community is seeing more and more factory-supplied threaded barrels on rifles to allow application of muzzle devices, including sound suppressors. In that previous test of 308 Winchester and 300 Blackout bolt rifles, we noted generally better accuracy with the rifles when fitted with the cans, but we didn't cover how much more pleasant the centerfire rifles were to shoot. Our shooters noted a marked difference in recoil at the shoulder, and, perhaps more profound, the lack of muzzle blast and report created better shooter conditions behind the gun. A lot of things can contribute to flinching and missing, and noise and a sharp push into the shoulder are two of them.

This time, we cut way down on the noise — to practically nothing, which has its own appeal — by shooting three rimfire bolt-actions side by side with a suppressor. We realize one of the drawbacks of shooting quieter is the initial cost of the cans as well as the red tape. We can't do much about the red tape other than to say get yourself an NFA trust, depending on where you live. But we can offer a strategy for making the can work across many firearms, so you can amortize its cost per shot. But first, the rifles.

We ordered all three rimfires online from BudsGunShop.com. The rifles, a Ruger American Rimfire, a CZ-USA 455, and a Savage MKII FV-SR, were delivered in less than a week to 2nd Amendment Arms and Ammo in Katy, Texas (2ndaaa.com, [281] 475-3160), a preferred Bud's FFL who charges only a $10 transfer fee per gun with a Texas License to Carry and $20 per gun without the TLC.)

Our first test rifle was a ***Ruger American Rimfire Standard 8305 22 LR, $309.*** Ruger's American Rimfire line is already extensive, and new models will build it out further. The 8301 is similar to our test 8305 model, with the former having a barrel length of 22 inches rather than the 18-incher on our rifle. Other 22 LR chamberings in the line include the 8351, which has an 18-inch stainless tube; the Talo Distributor Exclusive 8331, which comes with a Muddy Girl Camo Synthetic stock; and The Shooting Store Distributor Exclusive Model 8334, which has an OD green synthetic stock that contrasts with the black comb modules. Other chamberings include 17 HMR









At left are three pretty good rimfire bolt actions. Top is the CZ-USA 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready 02114 22 LR, $373. It had the best overall shooting performance with a suppressor attached. Center is the Ruger American Rimfire Standard 8305 22 LR, $309. It shot all our test ammos, ranging in weight from 36 to 40 grains, under 1.1 inches at 50 yards. The third rifle from top is the Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel 28702 22 LR, $248. It loved the Eley Hollow subsonic ammunition. All three fed and fired without incident, and they're affordable, easy ways to affix a suppressor. We preferred the Savage, but you really can't go wrong with any of them. Bottom, one of the things we spent time doing at the American Shooting Center range was waiting on wind. When we had one of three wind conditions we liked, we dialed in the appropriate windage and fired five well-aimed rounds as fast as possible before the wind shifted. Attached to the Savage is the SilencerCo 45 Osprey suppressor used in the test.

SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer	**Savage Arms MKII FV-SR**	**CZ-USA 455 American**	**Ruger American**
Model	**Threaded Barrel 28702**	**Syn. Suppressor-Ready 02114**	**Rimfire Standard 8305**
Cartridge	**22 LR**	**22 LR**	**22 LR**
Price	**$248**	**$373**	**$309**
Action	Bolt; steel cylindrical receiver	Bolt; steel cylindrical receiver	Bolt; hexagonal receiver
Length, Overall (in.)	34.75	34.5	37.0
Height, Unboxed (in.)	7.0	7.0	7.0
Height, As Tested (in.)	9.75	9.6	9.6
Width, Maximum (in.)	3.25	2.5	2.8
Weight, Unboxed (lbs.)	6.0	5.9	5.5
Weight, Range (lbs.)	7.25	7.0	7.1
Barrel Length/Twist (in.)	16.5; 1:16 RH	16.5; 1:16 RH	18; 1:16 RH; 6 grooves
Barrel Finish/Material	Matte-blue carbon steel button rifled, fluted, target	Matte-blue carbon steel; cold hammer forged	Satin blued alloy steel; cold hammer forged
Barrel Free-Floated	Yes	Yes	Yes
Barrel Muzzle Diameter (in.)	0.870	0.613	0.635
Barrel Muzzle Style/Device	½"-28 thread; checkered steel thread protector	½"-28 thread; checkered steel thread protector	½"-28 thread; knurled steel thread protector
Stock	Black synthetic; checkered pistol grip & forend	Black synthetic; soft-touch finish	Black composite; 2 cheekpieces; grip serrations Power Bedding system
Stock Length of Pull (in.)	13.5	13.75	13.75
Stock Comb Style	Straight	Straight	Straight
Stock Drop @ Comb (in.)	1.5	1.1	1.1
Stock Drop @ Heel (in.)	2.0	1.25	2.1
Stock Cast (in.)	None	None	None
Stock Handedness	Ambidextrous	Ambidextrous	Ambidextrous
Stock Forend Style	Sporter; plain	Sporter; plain	Sporter; serrations
Stock Buttpad Thickness (in.)	0.3; contoured black plastic	0.3; contoured black plastic	None
Stock Sling Swivel Studs	1 butt, 1 forend	1 butt, 1 forend	1 butt, 1 forend
Stock Grip Cap	Black plastic	Black plastic	Black plastic; Ruger logo
Trigger-Pull Weight (lbs.)	2.4; AccuTrigger; adjustable	3.1; adjustable	3.6; Marksman adjustable
Trigger Style	Single stage	Single stage	Single stage
Trigger Guard Material	Black composite, integral	Matte-black steel	Black composite, integral
Safety	2-pos. slider button	2-pos. bolt-mounted lever	2-pos. tang-mounted slider button
Magazine	(1) 5-rd. single stack	(1) 5-rd. single stack	(1) 10-rd. 10/22 BX-1; rotary flush-fit black polymer
Magazine Release	Grooved steel tab; rear of magazine	Plastic tab; front of magwell	10/22-style extended rear of magazine
Bolt	Blued steel; two extractors; 60-degree throw, one-piece bolt handle	Stainless steel; two extractors; 60-degree throw, integral hollow ball handle	Stainless steel; two extractors, 60-degree throw, blued ball handle
Bolt Release	Trigger	Trigger	Receiver-mounted lever
Sights	None	None	Front: Williams green fiber optic; Rear: adj. folding leaf
Optics Mounting Hardware	Picatinny rail installed; alum.	11mm receiver dovetail	⅜" receiver grooves; drilled & tapped for Weaver #12
Warranty	1-year limited	5-year limited	None written
Telephone	(800) 370-0708	(800) 955-4486	(336) 949-5200
Website	SavageArms.com	CZ-USA.com	Ruger.com
Made In	Westfield, MA	Czech Republic	Mayodan, NC

(Model 8311 with a 22-inch barrel; Model 8312 with an 18-inch barrel) and 22 WMR (Models 8321 and 8322, with 22- and 18-inch barrel lengths, respectively).

Our second rifle was the ***CZ-USA 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready 02114 22 LR, $373.*** Like the Ruger, the CZ 455 02114 is part of a sizable line of rimfires offered by the Kansas City, Kansas-based importer. Among the other offerings in the 455 line are the CZ 455 American Combo Package, which comes in 22 LR and also ships with a 17 HMR barrel, along with everything you need to make the caliber change. Other interesting models include the 455 American Stainless, which comes with a swappable 20.5-inch barrel finished in a matte bead blast. For those of you who don't foresee ever buying a suppressor, the American Synthetic is similar to our test gun but is not suppressor-ready. The price difference is so small, $421 for the threaded rifle and $385 for the non-threaded barrel, we don't see the value in the threadless version.

The third rifle was the ***Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel 28702 22 LR, $248.*** The shooter may wonder if the $248 price suggests that this rifle is cheap. It is inexpensive, but not cheap. One example of value was the receiver-mounted Picatinny top rail, which allowed us to pop on a Nikon scope with ease and bore-sight the rifle in minutes. Very handy. Also, there's the adjustable AccuTrigger, which came out of the box at 2.4 pounds.

The Savage presents as a much bigger product than the others, mainly because of the heavy target, free-floating, button-rifled barrel. The tubes on the others tend more toward Sporter contours, as the dimensions at the muzzles suggest (0.870 inch for the Savage and 0.613 inch for the CZ and 0.635 inch for the Ruger). Range weights were close as well, with the Savage at 7.25 pounds, the CZ at 7.0 pounds, and 7.1 pounds for the Ruger. As such, any of these three would be totable for a day of squirrel or rabbit hunting, even with a suppressor. The Savage's black synthetic stock is a drawback, to our eyes, because it doesn't have enough height for the shooter to rest his face on. We fired most of our bench rounds with the cheek off the stock because pushing down onto it wasn't comfortable with the tall rings we used (which provide a more erect head position). For long-term use as is, the shooter would need shorter rings or a strap-on cheekpiece pad, or a different stock. Obviously, the first two options are more affordable. We would also have liked more capacity for both the Savage and the CZ, which came with 5-round stick magazines compared to the rotary Ruger's 10-round magazine. Also, for all three, we would have liked at least one extra mag to have come with the rifle. If you decide to buy one of these rifles, plan to buy three to five more magazines at the outset. Also, we believe the CZ and the Savage have a small disadvantage in that the magazines aren't flush-fit like the Ruger's. The five-rounders didn't stick out the bottoms of the first two







Our test ammunition included both supersonic and subsonic rounds. At sea level, the speed of sound is roughly 1125 fps. Subsonic ammo is easier to suppress at the muzzle, and it doesn't create the downrange "crack" as the bullet breaks the sound barrier. Our test ammunition included Armscor 36-grain High-Velocity Hollow Points, Eley Subsonic 38-grain Lead Hollow Points, and Winchester M-22 40-grain Black Copper-Plated Lead Roundnoses. The Eley produced the best accuracy results overall.



Suppressors are expensive and they are hard to transact, so we've been working to get a can big enough to handle the larger diameters of rounds we test, while being able to adapt to smaller calibers. The SilencerCo Osprey 45 ($756 at SilencerShop.com) is a monocore baffle design normally set up for 45 ACP. For this test, we bought a separate piston, arrow, that fits the ½x28 threads on these rimfire rifles. It cost $77 from PayneFirearms.com.

RANGE DATA

22 LR Armscor 36-gr. HVHP 50015	CZ 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready		Ruger American Rimfire Standard	
	Unsuppressed	Suppressed	Unsuppressed	Suppressed
Average Velocity	1241 fps	1281 fps	1271 fps	1272 fps
Muzzle Energy	123 ft.-lbs.	131 ft.-lbs.	129 ft.-lbs.	129 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.3 in.	0.8 in.	1.1 in.	1.0 in.

22 LR Eley Hollow 38-gr. Lead HP	CZ 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready		Ruger American Rimfire Standard	
	Unsuppressed	Suppressed	Unsuppressed	Suppressed
Average Velocity	1000 fps	1022 fps	1046 fps	1058 fps
Muzzle Energy	84 ft.-lbs.	88 ft.-lbs.	92 ft.-lbs.	94 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.0 in.	0.5 in.	1.0 in.	0.9 in.

22 LR Winchester 40-gr. Lead RN	CZ 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready		Ruger American Rimfire Standard	
	Unsuppressed	Suppressed	Unsuppressed	Suppressed
Average Velocity	1187 fps	1200 fps	1195 fps	1189 fps
Muzzle Energy	125 ft.-lbs.	128 ft.-lbs.	127 ft.-lbs.	126 ft.-lbs.
Average Group	1.1 in.	0.8 in.	1.1 in.	1.1 in.

To collect chronograph and accuracy data, we set up at American Shooting Centers in Houston (AMShootCenters.com). We recorded velocities using an Oehler Model 35 Proof Chronograph ($595 from Oehler-Research.com) with the first screen set 10 feet from the muzzle. Velocities were recorded with an air temperature of 90 degrees and 90% humidity. For bench-accuracy shooting at 50 yards, we fired the rifles off Caldwell DeadShot shooting bags. Accuracy is the average group size for five five-shot groups, measured center-to-center of the widest-apart bullet holes in each group, then rounded to the nearest tenth of an inch. Suppressed data was collected with a SilencerCo 45 Osprey, $756, with a 9mm Osprey ½x28 piston, $71 from SilencerShop.com in Austin, Texas. ***Ammo sources:*** *Armscor 36-gr. High-Velocity Hollow Point 50015 ($2.16/50 from BudsGunShop.com); Eley Subsonic 05400 38-gr. Lead Hollow Point ($7.36/50 from BudsGunShop.com); and Winchester M-22 40-gr. Black Copper-Plated Lead Roundnose WINS22LRT ($48.49/1000 from BudsGunShop.com).*

rifles much, but they were noticeable when shooting standing with a competition-style support arm resting on the chest and the support hand under the magwells on the CZ and Savage.

How We Tested

To collect chronograph and accuracy data, we set up at American Shooting Centers in Houston (AMShootCenters.com). We recorded velocities using an Oehler Model 35 Proof Chronograph ($595 from Oehler-Research.com) with the first screen set 10 feet from the muzzle. Velocities were recorded with an air temperature of 90 degrees and 90% humidity, with 20-mph 6 o'clock winds. For bench-accuracy shooting at 50 yards, we fired the rifles off Caldwell DeadShot shooting bags. Accuracy is the average group size for five five-shot groups, measured center-to-center of the widest-apart bullet holes in each group, then rounded to the nearest tenth of an inch. Suppressed data was collected with a SilencerCo Osprey 45 ($756 at SilencerShop.com) directly after we shot the unsuppressed data for each round.

The riflescope for the Savage was a Nikon M-223 series 3-12x42mm No. 16305. The scope is equipped with a side-focus turret for parallax correction and a one-piece 1-inch main tube that is nitrogen-filled and O-ring-sealed. The glass lens elements are fully multi-coated and offer sharp target images. Adjustment clicks gave the expected eighth-inch bullet impact movement at 50 yards, and we could adjust the click-stops while keeping the head on the stock because the adjustments have tactile clicks. Eye relief was 3.9 inches. It costs $460 at OpticsPlanet.com. We mounted the scope to the Savage's Picatinny top rail with Weaver's Six Hole Tactical Rings.

To get things going on the Ruger and the CZ, we mounted a 30mm Leupold VX-R 3-9x40mm Matte FireDot Duplex scope (Leupold #110686, $500 at OpticsPlanet.com) on them. The FireDot scope has an illuminated dot right in the center of the duplex reticle. Its intensity can be stepped down by a switch on the left side of the scope — a useful setup for low-light conditions. An illuminated reticle in full sunlight doesn't make sense until you shoot the VX-R with the fiber-optic FireDot reticle. The bright dot allowed us to center on the target X-rings for precise shot placement. The proprietary MST (Motion Sensor Technology) automatically deactivates illumination after 5 minutes of inactivity, yet reactivates instantly as soon as any movement is detected. The 1/4-minute-of-angle precision finger click adjustments for windage and elevation were helpful in getting each round

Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel	
Unsuppressed	**Suppressed**
1238 fps	1261 fps
122 ft.-lbs.	127 ft.-lbs.
1.1 in.	1.0 in.

Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel	
Unsuppressed	**Suppressed**
1014 fps	1025 fps
87 ft.-lbs.	89 ft.-lbs.
0.7 in.	0.5 in.

Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel	
Unsuppressed	**Suppressed**
1172 fps	1179 fps
122 ft.-lbs.	123 ft.-lbs.
1.0 in.	0.9 in.

zeroed because the different bullet weights changed elevation and were susceptible to wind effects.

We used high matte-blued-steel Warne 30mm 22-caliber rings (about $40 at MidwayUSA.com), which have an asymmetrical reversible side clamp to fit a ⅜-inch or 11mm dovetails, with the Ruger having the former and the CZ having the latter. This horizontally split design securely mounted to our firearms with Torx-style T-15 socket cap screws, which we torqued to 25 in./lbs. of force. The solid asymmetrical reversible clamp can be flipped 180 degrees and used on wider or narrower dovetails for the best fit. If we were going to use different optics on these rifles, we'd probably opt for Weaver's T-22 Base Pair to convert grooved receivers to accept Weaver-style rings, allowing for a variety of scope mount configurations (WeaverOptics.com #48459 T-22 Base Pair, $13.45).

The Suppressor

What we've been attempting to do with suppressors for a few years now is to pick a system that will work on the widest-diameter caliber that we usually shoot, the 45 ACP, then use that for all the sub-calibers we test. Reason: Suppressors are expensive and they are hard to transact, so we haven't been able to get a dependable match up of the devices. So we decided to go big and live with what might be a slight lessening of the suppression when we drop to 40 S&W, 9mm, or in this case, 22 LR. For this test, we attached a SilencerCo Osprey 45 ($756 at SilencerShop.com), a distinctive pistol can that sports a monocore baffle design. It has an offset (or eccentric) appearance, which allows this polygonal suppressor to hold 30% more internal volume than a traditional round-tube silencer at the same length.

The SilencerCo Osprey 45 provides shooters a hearing-safe 131.3 dB output with 45 ACP ammo. With a black-oxide aluminum shell and stainless-steel internals, the Osprey 45 weighs 11.1 ounces and measures 8 inches in length. To fit our 22 rifles, which were threaded ½x28 TPI at the muzzle, we used a 9mm Osprey piston, $71, the current price at Silencer Shop in Austin. If we use this suppressor on other rifles or pistols, we simply have to buy the appropriate piston for that caliber and thread pattern. The Osprey comes with a tool to remove the piston and a user manual. To install the piston in the end attaching to the muzzle, the user slides the piston (a stainless cylinder with spokes on one end) into a spring inside a threaded adapter, which then screws into the suppressor body.

Installation on the rifles was simple: With the magazine out of the rifle and the bolt out of the action, we screwed off the thread protector, then tilted the rifle muzzle upward and started the Osprey onto the provided muzzle threads. We had no trouble attaching the suppressor to any of the rifles. We advise removing the bolt and magazine as absolute safety steps because the working hand gets in front of the muzzle when removing the thread protector and installing the can. We then screwed the Osprey down as far as it would go on the muzzle threads, aligned it with the top of the barrel, and tightened the locking collar. With the bolt out of the gun, we then checked to ensure there were no obstructions in the barrel.

We shot the Osprey and found the report to be very quiet with the supersonic rounds, and we heard practically no sound with the subsonic rounds. In fact, with the Eley Hollow subsonic round, we could hear through the stocks the mechanical sounds of the bolt parts moving during the shot, but not the report. That's a very unusual sensation and one that's easy to get used to in short order.

Test Ammunition & Results

At sea level, the speed of sound is roughly 1125 fps. Subsonic ammo is easier to suppress at the muzzle, and it doesn't create the downrange "crack" as the bullet breaks the sound barrier.

Our test 22 Long Rifle ammunition included Armscor 36-grain High-Velocity Hollow Point 50015 ($2.16/50 from BudsGunShop.com); Eley Subsonic 05400 38-grain Lead Hollow Point ($7.36/50 from BudsGunShop.com); and Winchester M-22 40-grain Black Copper-Plated Lead Roundnose WINS22LRT ($48.49/1000 from BudsGunShop.com).

As shown in the nearby Range Data tables, the Savage shot the best groups, near 1-minute-of-angle, with the Eley subsonic hollowpoints. Average group sizes were 0.7 inches unsuppressed and 0.5 inches suppressed. Notably, the CZ also shot the Eley into 0.5-inch groups suppressed. The average group sizes for the CZ/Eley combo were 1.0 inches unsuppressed and in the Ruger, 1.0 inches unsuppressed and 0.9 inches suppressed.

Accuracy wasn't as good with the Armscor 36-grain

SAVAGE ARMS MKII FV-SR THREADED BARREL
28702 22 LR, $248
GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

Affordable and a great shooter. Shot lights out with the Eley subsonic load, which would make it a great varmint or small-game rifle when silence is golden.





One of the nice things about the Savage is the already-affixed top rail. Just drop on your optic of choice and hit the field.



Machining on the muzzle threads was clean and burr-free. The SilencerCo slid on and off easily.





We didn't like the magazine treatment on the Savage as well as the Ruger's. The magazine stuck out the bottom of the stock right where we'd like to get a standing hold. At right, the magazine itself was well built, with little flex and perfect function.



The big bolt handle was an unexpected plus on the Savage. Normally, rimfire bolt handles are small, because they don't need to be worked hard to move around 22 LR casings. But this one allowed us to push and pull with great hand control.

High-Velocity Hollow Points. The best group average with this ammo came in the suppressed CZ, 0.8 inches. But its unsuppressed average was 1.3 inches. In the Savage and Ruger, that ammo shot 1.1-inch average groups unsuppressed and 1.0-inch groups suppressed. The heavier but still supersonic Winchester M-22 40-grain lead roundnose rounds shot unsuppressed average groups of 1.0 inches and suppressed average groups of 0.9 inches in the Savage, very close to the CZ's 1.1 and 0.8 readings, followed by the Ruger at 1.1 inches unsuppressed and suppressed.

Velocities are important to gauge how near each round was to going subsonic. The Eley, of course, had all velocities below supersonic, at 1000 fps unsuppressed and 1022 fps suppressed in the CZ, 1046 fps and 1058 fps unsuppressed/suppressed in the Ruger, and 1014 fps and 1025 fps unsuppressed/suppressed in the Savage. It's interesting to note that in all three rifles, the suppressed readings were higher. That trend held with the other ammos as well, with the Armscor's velocities being 1241 fps/1281 fps unsuppressed/suppressed in the CZ; 1271 fps/1272 fps unsuppressed/suppressed in the Ruger; and 1238 fps/1261 fps unsuppressed/suppressed in the Savage Mark II.

Here are more detailed notes about how each rifle performed individually.

Savage Arms MKII FV-SR Threaded Barrel 28702 22 LR, $248

Obviously, if this gun shot, it would be the Best Buy of the test, coming in $125 below the CZ and $61 below the Ruger. This was further compounded by the Savage having a Pic rail already installed. You could argue that the Ruger was better equipped because it came with open sights, but for our uses, that didn't matter to us. In the box came the rifle with the rail, a lock, and manual. The manual was for the Mark I, Mark II, Rascal, Model 93, B.Mag, Models 300, 305, and 310.

This looks like a big rifle, despite

RUGER AMERICAN RIMFIRE STANDARD 8305 22 LR, $309

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

This is a well-thought-out rifle with a lot of flexibility. We liked its cheekweld best because of the high comb module. It was the least accurate gun in the test, but only by small margins. If you already own a 10/22 and have magazines on hand, this might jump to being your top choice with no argument from us.





Here's the Ruger's buttstock modules, with the higher-comb version already installed.



The muzzle end of the Ruger accepted the Osprey silencer easily. The front sight provided a useful index for getting the metal box on squarely.



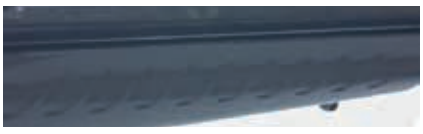
Nice, clean machining all over the Ruger. Good finish on the blued parts. The arrow points to the receiver dovetail groove, which wasn't continuous as on the CZ, which we preferred.



We preferred this treatment of the magazine well. The flat surface across the stock made a better platform for standing, our shooters said. Of course, Ruger's longtime-favorite rotary magazine (inset) allows the shooter to tuck 10 rounds right into the belly of the gun.



Above: The safety selector switch is easy to get to and positive in engagement. Below: The forend has a razzmatazz serration treatment.



its short barrel length of 16.5 inches. The thick diameter at the muzzle (0.870 inch) suggests how heavy the fluted barrel contour is, but the unboxed weight is just 6 pounds, slightly more than the CZ at 5.9 pounds and the Ruger at 5.5 pounds. It wasn't overly muzzle heavy, with the balance point of the rifle with a scope occurring right over the magwell. The lightweight Osprey did make it more front heavy, but that's not an issue off bags, a bipod, a backpack, or other rests. With a scope and full of ammo, it weighed 7.25 pounds. So if you were going to use the Savage as a varmint or small-game rifle, its short overall length (34.75 inches) would be handy enough coming out of a pickup.

The bolt-action rifle had a black synthetic stock with a sporter forend, which rolled on the bags a little. The straight comb was comfortable, and the 13.5-inch length of pull was just a little short for our shooters. There was a sling-swivel stud in the forend to attach a bipod or sling. The shape of the stock worked for both right-handed and lefty shooters. This version didn't include the AccuStock bedding system, but the barrel free-floats in the barrel channel. It has checkered panels on the wrist and forend. At the range, we noticed the pitch of the stock and low comb caused the shooter's face to sit above the stock. Also, we noticed a faint mold line on top of the stock, which we would trim with an X-Acto knife if we shot other positions with it.

All three had adjustable triggers, which we were glad to see. To adjust the AccuTrigger in the Mark II, make sure the firearm is unloaded and the bolt is open before removing the stock and adjusting the trigger. We were happy with the pull at 2.4 pounds as delivered, and we dropped the rifle on its butt and sides to ensure that the sear didn't release with the safety in the Fire position. That pull weight was much better than the Ruger at 3.6 pounds as it came out of the box, but which we adjusted down to 3.0 pounds. Same for the CZ at 3.1 pounds out of the box, but which we

CZ-USA 455 AMERICAN SYNTHETIC SUPPRESSOR-READY 02114 22 LR, $373

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

Clean lines and the best shooter with the suppressor on. Would have liked a slightly higher comb or less pitch in the stock. This is the most expensive gun in the test, and perhaps it will speak to you. Its barrel-change ability might break the tie for some.





The safety operation on the CZ was on par with the Ruger. It had a crisp engagement and an easy-to-understand implementation.



The finely-checkered steel thread protector was an outward sign of the build quality of the CZ 455.



Right, top and bottom: We had no feeding or function problems with the CZ's 5-round magazine. It inserted easily and the tab in front (arrow) released it easily. We didn't like that it stuck out the bottom, however.





Here's another example of nice execution on the CZ 455. This 11mm dovetail allowed the shooter to slide rings attached to the scope from the front and push them all the way back.

tinkered down to 3.0 pounds.

Though we didn't adjust the Savage's trigger, it's worth noting how to do it. Remove the stock and insert the AccuTrigger supplied tool into the bottom of the trigger return spring to engage the spring-tail with the slot on the tool. Turn the trigger return spring with the trigger adjustment tool. To adjust for a heavier pull, turn the tool clockwise. The maximum trigger pull is at the point where the spring clicks when rotated. Turning the tool counter-clockwise gets a minimum trigger pull. This occurs when the large coil contacts the top surface of the trigger and provides resistance the user can feel.

Operationally, the Savage was very well mannered. Installing a riflescope was easy because it came fitted with a 1913 rail, a plus over the grooves on the Ruger and CZ. We had no issues installing or removing the SilencerCo suppressor on the threaded barrel. The thread protector was easy to remove and install. We liked the big bolt handle better than the others because it provided a lot of grasping surface opening and closing the action. We had no misfeeds out of the supplied 5-round magazine, which was easy to seat. We otherwise had no failures to fire or extract, and ejected brass shot close or far depending on how hard we worked the bolt. There was a thin plastic buttpad on the Savage. We'd like to see a thin rubber buttpad to create more stick on the shoulder, but some will argue that's exactly what they don't want.

The safety on the Savage Mark II FV-SR has two positions. The Safe position has the safety button fully rearward toward the shooter and the red dot on the right rear of the receiver covered. This blocks the trigger but does not prevent the bolt from being opened. The Fire position has the safety button pushed toward the target, exposing the red dot on the action. Everything worked perfectly, except for one mishap. During one string, we were working the bolt actively, and suddenly the gun wouldn't fire. We

had accidentally knocked the switch to Safe.

When kneeling and standing, we could run the 60-degree bolt throw comfortably without having to take our cheek off the stock. The big bolt handle aided this process as well. However, in these other positions, the high scope position atop the rail and rings made us cheek-weld the gun to the side of the jawbone. It wasn't uncomfortable, but it did feel different on the other rifles.

Prior to installing the bolt, the shooter ensures there is no ammunition in the chamber. Then we rotated the front baffle to line-up the bolt guide with the extractor, pulled the trigger fully rearward and held it in that position, then inserted the bolt into the firearm, pushing it forward. To remove the bolt, which we did a lot to ensure the gun couldn't be fired when we installed the suppressor, with an empty gun and the muzzle pointed in a safe direction, we moved the safety forward to Fire, lifted the bolt handle and pulled the bolt fully to the rear, opening the action, then pulled the trigger fully rearward and held it in that position. When the bolt seemed to bind or stop, it usually meant we had lost engagement on the trigger. Savage noted the presence of a cocking indicator on the back end of the bolt, the purpose of which is to visually show when the firearm is cocked. This is not a loaded-chamber indicator. When cocked, the hat-shaped part of the indicator protrudes from the rear of the bolt about a quarter inch. Once a shot is fired, the indicator moves forward.

Our Team Said: It was the most accurate gun in the test. We liked the feel of the magazine fit and lock, and the steel body of the magazine seemed bulletproof and was rigid and resisted flexing. We liked the bolt handle, and the AccuTrigger was excellent. It has a short overall length, which makes it suitable for use with a silencer. With the right ammo, we can see shooting this out to 200 or 300 yards, which would likely require replacing the rail with a 25-MOA rail. We checked the buyer reviews at Bud's, and this rifle got a 4.5 out of 5 stars. We'd have to agree that this is an excellent rimfire for the money.

Ruger American Rimfire Standard 8305 22 LR, $309

The 8305 came with two interchangeable standard length-of-pull stock modules that provide comb height options for scope or iron sight use. We knew immediately that we wanted the taller comb, so we simply screwed out the rear sling swivel stud, pulled off the standard-height stock module, and slipped on the taller one. It took about three minutes, in part because we had a little trouble fitting the second module into the stock cavity. Once the taller module was on, we noticed no wiggle or movement in the unit. If the gun is destined for a younger shooter, compact stock modules are available at ShopRuger.com.

The Ruger came with one detachable, flush-mounted 10/22 BX-1 10-round rotary magazine, but the rifle will accept all 10/22 magazines, including the BX-25, BX-25x2 and BX-15. A 10/22-style extended magazine release provides removal of the flush-mounted magazine. We were able to simply push the lever firmly and the mag would drop out. Under the action is a Power Bedding integral bedding block system. The rifle's hammer-forged barrel is mated to the steel action, and this barreled action sits on a pair of V-notch supports that bed the action. This free-floats the barrel and is said to provide accuracy. Holes in paper determined that that was mostly true, but the Savage did a lot better with the Eley.

The Ruger Marksman Adjustable trigger is a great touch in a rimfire. It is a single stage, but in some respects it feels like a two-stage trigger. On the bench, the shooter's trigger finger contacts the blade in the trigger shoe and engages the trigger mechanics. In a two-stage, the first stage actually takes some of the draw weight, so the second-stage release requires a minimal amount of pressure to release the sear. The Marksman trigger allows the shooter to start the trigger press as the crosshairs come onto the target, then break the shot when it's centered up. Draw weight isn't reduced as the trigger finger pulls the blade into the shoe, but the timing feels somewhat the same. We found ourselves working the trigger in and out as the hold settled in the X-ring or drifted out. Also, the pull is user adjustable between 3 and 5 pounds. Ours came set at 3.6 pounds with a repeatable break point, so we could have left it as it came out of the box. Because the capability was there, we went ahead and dialed it down to 3.0 pounds.

To access the pull-weight set screw, remove the barreled action from the stock. The set screw is located on the outside, forward edge of the fire control housing and is treated with a thread-locking compound, so it was difficult to move. Turning the screw in (clockwise) will increase the trigger pull weight; threading the screw out (counter-clockwise) will reduce the trigger pull weight. There are about six full turns of adjustment. Turning the screw in no more than half-revolution increments, we got the trigger-pull weight down to 3 pounds.

The lightweight black synthetic stock has a rakish look, with forend contouring and grip serrations. The slider tang safety is positive and sure, and it doesn't offer an opportunity to accidentally move it when working the bolt. A ⅜-inch rimfire scope groove is machined into the receiver, which is also drilled and tapped for Weaver #12 bases (not included). All told, we preferred having a Picatinny rail already mounted, as on the Savage, and we preferred the CZ-USA's open-ended 11mm dovetail groove rather than the Ruger's discontinuous set of rear grooves.

We enjoyed working the Ruger's 60-degree bolt. The shooter could ride the crosshairs through recoil and quickly chamber another round without having to readjust head position. The bolt knob had ample scope clearance, which wasn't an issue with our tall rings, and we really liked the receiver-mounted bolt removal-release, which allows the bolt to be readily extracted out the rear of the action without requiring a



See any similarities? From left are the bolt faces for the CZ-USA 455 American, the Ruger American Rimfire Standard, and the Savage Arms MKII FV-SR. The two extractors help get a grip on the thin rimfire case rim. We had no failures to feed or eject during this test. Must be a good design.

pull of the trigger. Ruger claims this is a "unique safety feature among rimfire, bolt-action rifles," and perhaps it is a one-of-a-kind treatment. We don't know that for sure, but we do know we prefer the Ruger's bolt release over the CZ and Savage mechanisms, which require pulling the triggers to let the bolts slip out and to pull the triggers to slide the bolts back in.

The Ruger has a two-position tang safety. The safety selector is located behind the bolt sleeve. The safety selector can be moved from the Fire position to the Safe position only when the firing pin is cocked. Fully raising the bolt handle cocks the firing pin. The cocking piece will protrude from the bolt shroud when the firing pin is cocked. We liked this safety better than the Savage's and as well as the CZ's lever. It was visible, accessible, and easy to operate.

On top of the Ruger are a Williams fiber-optic front sight and adjustable V-slot folding-leaf rear sight, a feature the others lacked. Out front, the bolt-action rifle featured a ½x28-threaded barrel with a thread protector and a matte-blued finish. Like the others, the Ruger has 1:16-inch right-hand rifling.

This rifle's dimensions are in range of the others. Out of the box, it weighed 5.5 pounds, and loaded out at the range, the Ruger weighed a tenth of a pound more than the CZ and about a tenth less than the Savage. Overall length was a handy 37 inches, with a 13.75-inch length of pull, which we liked better than the Savage. After handling and testing the Ruger, our shooters said that it was easy to manipulate in and out of vehicles.

Like on the others, we couldn't see any cast in the stock, and both left- and right-handed shooters could shoulder the rifle comfortably. The stock was a thin sporter shape like on the others, which made it roll around on the bags. It just took a little patience to get the bags to support the rifle in the 10-ring.

The stock had two sling-swivel studs, one in the butt and one in the forend. There was no buttpad or buttplate per se, but the stock module had an area on it that was buttpad-ish, with serrations in the composite comb module. Like with the other rimfires, recoil wasn't an issue. But we'd prefer something just a little more tacky on the butt. The pistol grip had a grooved texture molded into it.

The 10-shot magazine loaded easily, and the cartridges fed smoothly. Only one rotary magazine came with the rifle. It fits flush with the bottom of the stock, reducing the chance of it hanging on clothing or car parts and making that area easier to handle than having the magazines stick out as on the CZ and Savage. All ammunition tested functioned perfectly.

Our Team Said: The Ruger is a fine firearm, but in this test it is squeezed from the bottom and the top by the Savage and the CZ. It would be our third pick, but that wouldn't be so bad.

CZ-USA 455 American Synthetic Suppressor-Ready 02114 22 LR, $373

The CZ 455 is the latest generation of the CZ bolt-action rimfire, and it has steadily replaced the 452 line as CZ consolidates all of the receivers onto one common platform. This, combined with the new interchangeable barrel system of the CZ 455, allows the user to easily change the stock configuration as well as the caliber of the rifle.

We've become more interested in the 455s because of this flexibility. When the shooter removes two action screws, he can take off the stock and loosen two set screws that retain the barrel. Then, if desired, on goes another tube, such as in 17 HMR. Headspace is not an issue because the barrels are pre-fit and drop-in. We can see using our existing rifle and adding the extra barrel and forming our own Combo unit.

The 455 also has an adjustable trigger, which can be tuned by taking the barreled action out of the stock, a hammer-forged barrel, and a billet-machined receiver. Improvements the company says the 455 brings include new manufacturing technology and tighter tolerances for improved accuracy and smoother operation.

On our test CZ 455 02114, we liked the synthetic stock, which meant not having to worry about banging up a pretty wood one on the wood-stocked versions. Its black synthetic stock has a soft-touch finish and is in the American style with a high, flat comb intended for use with a scope. We preferred the even-higher Ruger comb because we could apply some pressure with the cheek. The CZ stock was just low enough so we could touch the stock with the cheek, but we couldn't settle on it as we did with the higher Ruger module.

Our test rifle had a 16.5-inch barrel that comes from the factory with ½x28 threads. The SilencerCo Osprey went on and off the CZ easily and without incident. It tied for producing the smallest average groups in the test, 0.5 inches with the Eley, and, overall, it shot the best suppressed, bringing in groups below an inch with all three ammunition brands.

Our Team Said: The CZ-USA 455 is a very well mannered, stable, easy-to-shoot rifle. It costs quite a bit more than the Savage, so you'll have to decide if it's worth it.

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

SHORT SHOTS

Brownells Introduces 10/22-Compatible Receiver. Brownells recently rolled out the BRN-22 Receiver for custom rimfire rifle builds. The BRN-22 is fully compatible with the popular Ruger 10/22, so you can choose from the many barrels, stocks, triggers, and other custom components for the 10/22 platform. According to the Brownells website, the BRN-22 receivers are machined from 6061 aluminum billet "to exacting tolerances." Brownells touts the machined receivers as better than forged, and points to the smooth, clean interior "to realize that a machined receiver can be held to much tighter tolerances for a precise fit with other parts." After machining, BRN-22 receivers get a matte-black Type 2 hardcoat anodized finish. There's also a pre-drilled cleaning-rod hole at the rear of each Brownells BRN-22 receiver for easy cleaning of the bore from the chamber. The Standard BRN-22 has a factory-style 10/22 top profile, including the same drilled-and-tapped scope mounting holes so it will be compatible with the largest number of aftermarket scope bases and sights. The Railed BRN-22R has an integral Picatinny top rail for scope mounting. And those configurations in the BRN-22T and BRN-22TR receivers are compatible with Ruger 10/22 Takedown barrels, stocks, and accessories. Downside: These are stripped receivers only, or receivers with barrels, and as such, they must be delivered to FFLs. The BRN-22 Stripped Standard Receiver is Brownells #078-000-429WB and sells for $80. The BRN-22R Stripped Railed Receiver #078-000-430WB sells for $90.





Arkansas Game and Fish Commission Approves Big-Bore Airgun Hunting. The Arkansas Game & Fish Commission has unanimously passed new general hunting regulations that allow the use of big-bore air rifles for harvesting whitetail deer during modern gun season. Tennessee recently allowed the practice as well. This rule change, effective for the upcoming hunting season, will allow pre-charged pneumatic airguns 40-caliber and larger, which produce muzzle energy greater than 400 foot-pounds, to be used in hunting whitetail deer. Additionally, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission requires that the projectile used in these big-bore air rifles be capable of expansion upon impact with its target. While most states do allow hunting of small game with air rifles, Arkansas is the 10th state that has approved the use of big-bore air rifles for hunting big game species. Richard Turner, president of Umarex USA, said, "The timing is perfect for the introduction of the 50-caliber Umarex Hammer, which we're making at our facility in Fort Smith, Arkansas." The Umarex Hammer is a pre-charged pneumatic air rifle that generates up to 705 foot-pounds of energy at the muzzle and has been used on

— continued on page 32



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Short Shots continued on page 31

hunts for several large deer species, including red stag, fallow, and axis buck. The 50-caliber Hammer has also been used to harvest an American bison, Canadian black bear, wild hog, African simitar oryx, and wildebeest. Umarex developed the 50-caliber Hammer to offer hunters an alternative to firearms and archery for the safe and humane harvesting of big-game species. Hunters who can no longer manipulate the draw of a bow or crossbow will be able to continue hunting with the Hammer. This regulation change goes into effect immediately for the 2018 season in the state of Arkansas. Umarex USA is working in conjunction with the Airgun Sport Association and many state regulatory agencies to open big-bore air-rifle hunting in states where it is not currently allowed. The Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission announced that starting with the 2018 hunting season, big-bore PCP air guns 35-caliber or larger, such as the 357 Caliber Benjamin Bulldog (shown below), will be legal to hunt deer, elk, and bears during the Tennessee Modern Gun Season. The Benjamin Pioneer Airbow will be legal means to harvest deer, elk, bears, and turkey during the Modern Gun Season for all hunters and during the archery season for disabled hunters.



COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

● Bargain Hunter: We test a quintet of 357 Magnum double-action wheelguns to find which one is worth hunting for: Smith & Wesson Combat Magnum Texas Range Edition, $800; Smith & Wesson Model 66, $420; a Taurus Model M66 Nickel, $325; and two 4-inch Ruger GP100 revolvers in stainless and blued finishes, $500 and $480, respectively.

● Big Bore, Big Power Single-Action Revolvers from EAA, BFR, and Cimarron. The 44 Magnum is a substantial caliber, and a substantial and strong revolver is required to fire that round. Tested: EAA Bounty Hunter, Cimarron Bad Boy, and BFR Short Cylinder.

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