GUN TESTS®

THE CONSUMER RESOURCE FOR THE SERIOUS SHOOTER

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TAKEDOWN AR-15 RIFLES

Tested: DRD Tactical CDR-15, Ruger SR-556 Takedown, and Windham Weaponry's RMCS-4. These packages offer multi-caliber adaptability, portability, and positively genius engineering designs. **— Page 6**

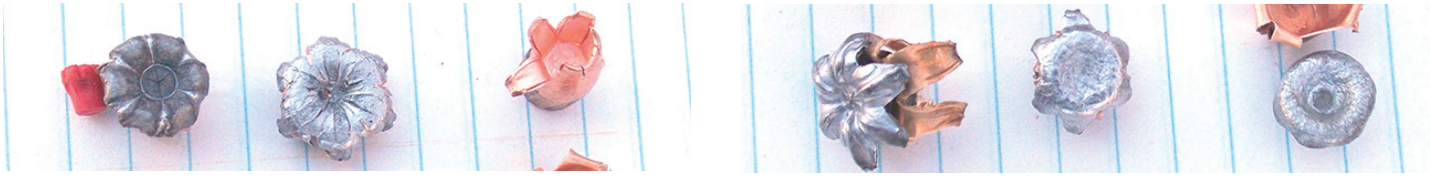






380 ACP PISTOL SHOOT OFF

We take a proven concealed-carry pistol — Ruger's base-model LCP — and pit it against the Remington RM380 Micro and Rock Island Armory's mini-1911 Baby Rock. Outcome: The Baby Rock rocks. **— Page 16**



380 ACP AMMUNITION COMPARISON

Well, if you buy a new 380 pistol based on our recommendations above, don't you want cartridges for it? We test ten new self-defense loads and recap our previous test to find one load that's ranked A+. **— Page 23**

DOWNRANGE: 2 ● FIRING LINE: 3 ● SHORT SHOTS: 28 ● COMING UP: 32

DOWNRANGE

COURT: SOME GUNS NOT 2A ELIGIBLE



Todd Woodard

The 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals has issued a decision that upholds the exclusion of certain firearms from the protection of the 2nd Amendment. In 2014, Pennsylvania resident Ryan Watson filled out an application on behalf of a trust to make and register an M-16/style machine gun with the ATF. Despite a federal law prohibiting any individual from manufacturing or possessing a machine gun after 1986, the ATF inadvertently approved his application. Afterward, Watson had his machine gun manufactured. A month after that, he received a call from the ATF saying that his application had been "disapproved."

Watson sued the ATF, claiming that the ATF had violated his 2nd Amendment rights. He argued that the federal law prohibiting the possession of a machine gun is unconstitutional under the 2nd Amendment, both by itself and as applied to him specifically, and that even if the law is constitutional, it doesn't apply to a trust because a trust isn't a person.

How did the court rule? That the law is constitutional because the 2nd Amendment does not protect the possession of machine guns. The court also ruled that trustees (and their trusts) are not exempt from this law.

In its decision, the 3rd Circuit court relied heavily on *Heller*, in which the Supreme Court ruled that the 2nd Amendment extends only to certain kinds of weapons such as those "in common use." This is a concept that started in *United States v. Miller*, which was the first case to challenge the constitutionality of the NFA. The 3rd Circuit, Heller Court, and Miller Court all held that the 2nd Amendment excludes machine guns because "those weapons [are] not typically possessed by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes." The 3rd Circuit isn't alone in this approach. The 6th Circuit, 7th Circuit, 8th Circuit, and D.C. Circuit have all come to similar conclusions.

Also, many folks who own or want to own National Firearms Act devices thought that executing their purchases through a trust might keep some provisions of the law from applying to them.

A trust can't take legal action on its own, so a trustee must take legal action on behalf of the trust. The court held that because a trustee must always take action on behalf of a trust, the same rules that apply to persons apply to trusts.

The Court said that this rule is consistent with the intent of the law. If you didn't count a trustee acting through a trust as a "person," then people traditionally prohibited from possessing firearms (like convicted felons) could set up trusts and possess all the firearms they wanted.

I know — many of us are seeing red about this decision because it has been widely said in the gun-owning community that the 2nd Amendment exists to protect ownership of *exactly* these kinds of guns. If you're not current on the writings of Franz Kafka, now would be a good time to brush up on what "Kafkaesque" means. **GT**

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Have We Praised Cooper Rifles?

Yes, but only in limited testing because of their expense. Also, Reader Jerry passes along a site that lists a lot of ballistic and price data. And Reader John locates a certain-height AR sight.

Re "New 308 Win. Bolt Guns: Howa, Mossberg Square Off," July 2016

I was reviewing the Value Guide of bolt-action rifles in your July issue. By far my most accurate rifle is my Cooper chambered in .243. Have you ever tested a Cooper? They sponsor accuracy competitions each summer in Montana and Maine, and if you want to win something, you better be able to hit a bullseye the size of a pencil eraser at 150 yards. The catch is that you have to use a Cooper rifle.

— Scott

We haven't tested a lot of Coopers, mainly because of their expense. The last one was in May 2003, a Cooper Arms Custom Classic 22 LR priced at $1895. We said, "Opening the box on the Cooper was a sheer delight, and it takes quite a rifle to impress our somewhat jaded crew. Even at the end of our test sessions, everyone who picked up the rifle still had to say, 'Man, what a lovely rifle!'"



Further: "The wood was really nice. The checkering was really nice. The ebony forend tip was really nice. The fit of the Niedner steel butt plate was really…. You get the picture. This was a looker. It reeked of quality… The balance was superb, belying the rifle's weight of 6.7 pounds. It was slightly muzzle heavy, which we liked… Intricate high-quality checkering like this that is extremely well done is sometimes glossed over or missed entirely, but one of the people who saw this rifle was a stock maker, and he said he'd spend a long time getting checkering that good. Each diamond was perfectly pointed up, especially in the corners. There were no overruns or mistakes. The lines were straight, and the pattern was tasteful. Hand work at this level has always been expensive. The AAA Claro walnut also would have been an expensive blank. Individual inletting, which the Cooper had, is yet more expense, and when you add it all up, you've got a rifle costing nearly two grand, and we think every bit of that was justifiable."

— Todd Woodard

Re "Firing Line," July 2016

In the July issue of Gun Tests, a reader was trying to compile a list of handgun ammo so that he could compare features. Sportsman's Guide has hundreds of ballistic charts, as published by Remington, Winchester, and Federal Ammo, as well as pricing for ammo. I hope this will help a fellow subscriber.

— Jerry

SPORTSMAN'S GUIDE™

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.

Jerry, thanks for passing that along. If readers want to go check this out, navigate to SportsmansGuide.com>Guide Outdoors Blog>Ballistics & Arrow Charts. — tw

Re "American AK-Mag Variants II: Century, RRA, CMMG Go At It," July 2016

In your review of the Rock River Arms LAR-47 CAR A4 CL, you stated that you could not use iron sights because the gas block was .025 inch lower than the receiver. I have seen other ARs with this set up. Diamondhead Premium sights makes backup iron sights for this set up. The front sight is .025 inch taller than the rear sight, and when installed, can be used on the Rock River Arms rifle. You can order them from Stag Arms. Great magazine, keep up the good work.

— John



John, thank you for the tip. On the Stag Arms website, the shooter can click on this path to find the different sight heights: AR15 Accessories>Sights & Flashlights>Diamondhead Premium Front and Rear Sight Set. At the bottom of the order window, there's a flagged note, "Sight Height." One of the choices is "Gas Block Height." The FAQ for the sights reads says that all of the rear sights are the same height. But if the front rail of your rifle is lower than the rail on the receiver, you will need the gas block height front sight to compensate for the height mismatch." — tw

Re "Downrange," July 2016

I know the State of Maryland has some restrictive laws, but do you really have to check them twice as much as all other States? Just kidding. **— Dave**

Sorry for repeating Maryland in the description of states with restrictive gun laws. Maryland is not twice as bad as other states. Cali may be twice as bad and widening her lead where bad gun laws are concerned. — tw

Re "Taurus 709 Slim"

I would like to ask if the Taurus 709 Slim has ever been tested in your magazine? If not, are there any immediate plans to do so? If the review is in a back issue, can you advise me of the issue and tell me if copies are available? **— Francis**

We have indeed reviewed the Taurus 709B No. 1-7090319mm Luger in the March 2012 issue. Electronic copies are available on the website. Of the gun, we said, "We found the Taurus 709B to be controllable, so even the hottest EXP rounds were not tiring to shoot. Due to its small size, we actually preferred shooting the 709B held in one hand. This could be a plus, in our view, because when fighting in close quarters the support-side hand might be busy wrestling with an assailant… Our Team Said: The 709B performed quite well. We did notice discoloration on ejected brass that told us the barrel was unlocking prematurely and allowing gas to blow rearward into the chamber. But suitable velocities for each round were recorded, and the 709B was one of the least tiring or abusive little nines we've tried." — tw





Re "40 S&W Shoot Out: Beretta, CZ-USA, Ruger, and SIG Sauer," June 2016

Two of the articles in the June 2016 issue brought a couple questions to mind: First, how would the Glock 23 score among the other 40 S&W guns you rated? For me, it's a good-shooting compact piece that, with a few drop-in accessories, is a very versatile one. I have a 357 SIG barrel, a 9mm barrel and spring, and a 22 LR conversion kit that all function well. I was disappointed that the G23 wasn't covered in your ratings.

Next: I have seen many Colt and S&W 38 Special snubbies (Detective, Chief, etc.) listed on auction sites and resting on gun store shelves, and I would prefer to own one or more of these classics rather than a new model, on the condition that they can be counted on for effective function. Have you done an article featuring these older 38s that I can use to help me decide on which guns I should consider?

I agree with Trump's platform on 2nd Amendment policy. **— Jim**

I inadvertently deleted the Glock 23 GEN 4 40 S&W when compiling the table. It earned an A grade in the May 2013 issue. The review of the gun said, "This version of the popular gun comes with several different back-strap contours that the owner can easily swap out to better suit his or her individual mitt. Neither of the two add-on grips make the grip any smaller, however. We liked the grip as it was… The Glock is all flat black, with a minimum of controls. There's the trigger with its tiny but effective

leaf that gives the gun all the safety it needs. We noted the contour of the trigger has been improved, and we liked it. The magazine release is reversible, and worked like it was supposed to. On the range we had zero problems. The trigger was decent and clean, and we were able to shoot groups in the 2.5- to 3-inch range with ease at 15 yards. The gun shot essentially where it looked. The groups centered all three test loads within 2 inches of the aim point. The gun got the best groups with the heaviest bullets… Our Team Said: We liked this gun a lot. It handles the hotter 40-cal cartridges well, and gave exactly no problems." A June 2006 test of the gun earned an "Our Pick" recommendation.

On the revolvers question, the archives are wide open to subscribers to pursue information on whichever wheelguns you're interested in. Stick with A and A- guns and you shouldn't have to worry. — tw

Re "Optics-Ready: M&P9 Ported, FNX-45 Tactical, G17 Gen4 MOS," July 2016

I have a number of 9mm handguns and 45 ACP pistols. I think the FN-FNX 45 Tactical is an outstanding handgun and is worthy of a higher rating. Granted, the 9mm pistols might be a tad more accurate for most people due to lower recoil, etc. Considering that the FNX 45 is a big-bore tactical weapon designed for more pressing uses than punching paper, the average group of 2.2 inches is sufficient.

As written, I agree that it is a soft shooter and is much more forgiving than my 45 ACP Kimbers, Range Officers, or SIG. **— Fred**





Hi Gun Tests

First, in May you folks said a story on 380 ammunition was coming soon. Is there something I could do to help speed along this article? I'm very interested. Second, as one becomes older than dirt, it is increasingly difficult to cock a semi-automatic pistol. It seems that right now, the smaller a pistol becomes, the tougher it is to load the first round. It sure would be wonderful if you published a story on a different type of pistol operating system, other than the standard Browning mechanism. Ideally, it would be a system that would simplify cocking a pistol, such as a double-roller semi-blowback approach. I'm sure somebody has figured out a way to use a cartridge's expanding gases to retard the movement of a slide and reduce the required strength of a recoil spring. **— Richard**

Hey Richard: The 380 ACP ammunition story appears in this issue. Also, in the 380 pistol story in this issue, we look at Remington's RM380, which touts needing only "one-finger" slide-racking force. It's a simple blowback mechanism. Demand will force such advantages into firearms designs. — tw

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Takedown ARs from DRD, Ruger, Windham: Who Takes the Cake?

Tested: DRD Tactical CDR-15, Ruger SR-556 Takedown, and Windham Weaponry RMCS-4. These knapsack ARs are packable and "punchy," with multi-caliber adaptability.

Espionage novels and movies are filled with rifles that are transported in a brief case, quickly assembled, then used to fire incredibly accurate shots. But is the ability to transport a disassembled AR in a small case or knapsack more intriguing than practical? Couldn't an AR already be considered a takedown rifle? Can't you just disassemble the lower receiver from the upper receiver and tote the two pieces in a duffle bag? These were a few questions team members had as we started looking into takedown AR-15s.

On one side of the debate, a takedown AR can be discreetly carried without the normal gun case that announces to all what is inside. A takedown AR is something one might consider adding to his bug-out gear should flood, fire, or worse coming knocking on the door. Takedown ARs also have the ability to swap calibers, allowing a user to perhaps opt for 300 AAC Blackout on a pig hunt, use the 5.56mm NATO for home defense, and 9mm for low-cost training. This caliber-swap feature gives these ARs the ability to use whatever ammo is available at the moment. We've all experienced the ammunition shortages of the recent past, and there is no reason to think it won't happen again. These ARs can feed whatever ammo is available. Another plus on the takedown AR side is easier cleaning.

On the other side of the debate, parts that are assembled and reassembled wear faster than parts that are fixed, and the more complicated a design, the more likely it is to break and the harder it is to get spare parts. Also, we wondered how zero might shift when removing then replacing the same-caliber barrel? And, how would a different caliber affect point of impact? Of course, price is always a consideration, and the cost of these takedown ARs is high — more than four times the cost of an entry-level 5.56mm AR priced at about $550. Can't a shooter just buy two rifles and set them up with optics at the same cost or less?

To answer these and other questions, we gathered three models from DRD Tactical, Ruger, and Windham Weaponry. These manufacturers have taken the modularity characteristics of the AR to a new level, each offering its own unique takedown design. Operationally, the DRD and Windham are direct-gas-impingement models; the Ruger uses a piston system.

All in, these takedown rifles get smaller by separating the barrel from the rail, which we estimate as a reduction in length of about 8.5 inches. With all three takedown ARs, the rifle is broken down into three main components. One thing to note: The rails or handguards on these rifles are not compatible with aftermarket parts. You must use the handguard the AR is shipped with because it is a key part of the takedown design. You can, however, customize these ARs with other aftermarket parts like stocks, pistol grips, triggers, sights, controls, muzzle devices, and so on.



Let's get small. The Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4 (top) had the smallest footprint when disassembled, compared to the DRD CDR-15 (middle) and the Ruger SR-556 Takedown (bottom). It also offered more caliber options for a similar cost. All the rifles were accurate when taken apart and put back together, but we preferred the simplicity of the Ruger's takedown system.

Getting Started

We had no issues assembling and disassembling any rifle, and we did not baby them. Some takedown methods were faster and simpler than others. If assembly time is a factor for our readers, the DRD at 10 seconds and the Ruger at slightly more time would win hands down, but we do not think a barrel swap would be made in

a high-stress situation. Still, it was comforting to know that we could tear them down and build them back in less time than it takes to load a 30-round AR-15 magazine by hand. We felt the piston-powered Ruger had a slight advantage since the gas tubes, which are part of the DRD and Windham gas systems (except with the Windham 9mm barrel), are fragile. More care is needed when storing spare barrels and assembling barrels to receivers. We became quite adept at the takedown procedures and favored the simplicity of the Ruger. We also liked the DRD's takedown system because it allowed the user to tighten the barrel nut with a wrench, if one desired. The Ruger and Windham did not allow this. The Windham takedown procedure was more complicated, and the rail and sling swivel needed to be managed when swapping calibers, as we will get into.

We found differences in point of impact (POI) when changing calibers, which we expected due to different bullet weights and muzzle velocities. If we owned these rifles, we would zero the rifle with one caliber then tape a cheat sheet to the scope, so when the barrels are swapped from, say, 5.56 to 300 Blackout, the optic is adjusted accordingly. Another approach is to have an optic with a quick-release mount zeroed for each caliber and re-mount the optic in the same place when using that caliber. This fix is expensive, can lead to mixing up optics with barrels and bolt carrier groups (in the case of Windham), and involves loosening and tightening parts, which can promote wear.

Downside: We found impact shifts at 25 yards with all the rifles and calibers. Upside: Those shifts stayed within a 5-inch circle on average, and even less with some rifles. Swapping barrels in the Ruger from 5.56 to 300 Blackout gave us shift of 1.5 inches down in elevation, which we anticipated, but were pleased to see it was small and repeatable. The DRD also showed a similar shift from 5.56 to 300 AAC BLK, again an expected and repeatable thing. With the Windham, the 25-yard shift between 5.56/300 AAC BLK/7.62x39mm was about 1.75 inches on average in elevation and windage. The biggest shift in POI at 25 yards was with 9mm ammo, which was dead on in elevation, but POI shifted five inches to left. An unexpected benefit would be that as long as the shifts in POI were repeatable, it would be easy to alter the sights on the fly. At 100 yards we found that, once zeroed, the POI remained within about 1 minute of angle on the 5.56/300 AAC BLK/7.62x39mm calibers.

How We Tested

Our testing procedure was to shoot, swap barrels, shoot, and swap barrels again. We were able to get good accuracy out of these rifles, perhaps as good as rifles that are not takedown models. The DRD and Windham came in Plano hard cases, the Ruger came in a soft case. For regular transport, we acquired a VooDoo Tactical Discreet Level III Assault Pack ($90; VoodooTactical.net), which is a discreet looking knapsack-size pack (17 by 8 by 3 inches) you would carry gym clothes in. The Ruger carry case is slightly larger (22.5 by 7 by 7.5 inches) and has Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment (MOLLE, pronounced Molly) straps, definitely making it look more tactical and less discreet. Also, a removable patch with the Ruger logo is on the bag. The padding in both knapsacks hides any outlines the rifle might make. The main section of the VooDoo pack holds the complete lower assembly with an optic mounted and the barrel assembly. The second compartment holds the handguard. Two smaller outside pockets could hold a total of six 30-round magazines. The Ruger knapsack has three pockets, one of which holds the lower, while the other two pockets hold the upper/rail in one pocket and the barrel in the other. The pocket that holds the rail/upper does not allow an optic to mounted, which made the pocket less useful, though we could zip







Barnes 300 AAC BLK ammo (top) gave the DRD nice, tight groups like these at 100 yards. With the new SIG Elite ammunition (middle), the Ruger put two bullets into almost the same hole. Bottom, the Windham fired this nice three-shot group at 100 yards with the 7.62x39mm caliber conversion using Hornady Steel Match ammo.

up all components in the pack. We would like a slot cut into the pocket to accommodate and optic and use a hook-and-loop strap to secure it. In comparison, to tote a typical 16-inch-barrel AR broken down into a lower and upper receiver, a pack or duffle bag that is at least 24.5 inches in length in needed.

We used two optics, a Burris AR-332 ($349; CheaperThanDirt.com) with a Ballistic CQ reticle—a donut style reticle—that could be illuminated red or green and is designed for 5.56 or 7.62 ammunition with holdover aiming points built in. It was a good match when swapping calibers. The mount is built into the sight and is at the proper height to attach to an AR. Illumination is manually adjusted via a knob, and the sight runs on one common CR2032 battery. Short Picatinny rails are attached to the sight so a small reflex sight can be paired with the AR-332 for close shooting. The second optic used was a TruGlo SCP TAC 1-4x24mm ($116; OpticsPlanet.com) with a Mil-Dot reticle. It features a capped windage turret and an elevation turret that is uncapped so the user can dial in elevation. It came with an AR-ready mount, and we felt this was also a good pairing for these rifles because the multiple aiming points on the Mil-Dot reticle could be synced up with the calibers. We'd tape our cheat sheet to the eye piece.

Obviously, there's a lot going on with these rifles, so here's the low-down on these takedowns:

DRD Tactical CDR-15 5.56mm NATO, $2091 300 AAC Blackout Caliber Conversion Kit, $299

The DRD Tactical CDR-15 was designed to be compact and transportable in a small hard case or knapsack. It comes optic-ready in a hardside 18 by 14 by 7-inch Plano case that stores the entire rifle, magazines and ammo. The top lid holds the barrel assembly, handguard, and two 30-round magazines. The bottom half of the case holds two additional 30-round magazines and the complete lower

DRD TACTICAL CDR-15 5.56MM NATO, $2091 300 AAC BLK CALIBER CONVERSION KIT, $299

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The CDR-15 had the most secure barrel attachment method, was accurate with minimal loss in zero between different-caliber barrel changes, and had no loss in zero with the same-caliber barrel changes.



Action Type	Semi-Automatic; Gas Impingement
Overall Length (Min/Max)	32.5 to 35.7 in.
Overall Height (no optic)	7.75 in.
Weight Unloaded	6.8 lbs.
Weight Loaded (30 Rds.)	7.8 lbs.
Upper Receiver	Midlength Free-Float Rail; Low-Profile Gas Block
Lower Receiver	Black 7075 T-6511 Billet Aluminum; Magpul MOE Grip
Barrel (5.56mm NATO)	16 in.; 1:7 RH Twist; 4140 Steel
Optional Barrel (300 AAC BLK)	16 in.; 1:7 RH Twist; 4140 Steel
Muzzle Device	A2 Birdcage; 5/8x24 TPI
Buttstock	Magpul MOE, Adj. 6-Pos.
Length of Pull	10.7 to 14.0 in.
Handguard	13 in.; DRD QD Rail
Magazine	(1) Magpul PMAG 30-Rd.
Rear Sight	None
Front Sight	None
Sight Radius	NA
Trigger	7.5 lbs., Mil-Spec Single Stage
Safety	Left Side 2-Pos. Lever
Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Dust Cover	Yes
Forward Assist	Yes
Warranty	None Stated
Telephone	(678) 398-9059
Website	DRDTactical.com
Made In/By	Georgia, USA/DRD Tactical



A metal cap protects the chamber end of the barrel and gas tube.



All the barrel nut needed was to be finger tightened. Note the notches in the silver colored barrel nut which allows the user to tighten it with a buffer tube wrench.



The DRD's hard-side Plano case measured 18 by 14 by 7 inches and held the entire rifle, magazines, and ammo. On some of the cut outs, we would have liked finger holes to more easily remove components.

5.56MM & 223 REMINGTON RANGE DATA

Aguila 5.56mm NATO 62-gr. FMJ-BT	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2995 fps	2996 fps	2979 fps
Muzzle Energy	1235 ft.-lbs.	1236 ft.-lbs.	1222 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.23 in.	0.22 in.	0.24 in.
Average Group	0.51 in.	0.50 in.	0.51 in.

IMI 5.56mm NATO 55-gr. FMJ	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	3107 fps	3108 fps	3170 fps
Muzzle Energy	1179 ft.-lbs.	1180 ft.-lbs.	1227 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.78 in.	1.00 in.	0.27 in.
Average Group	1.18 in.	1.01 in.	0.57 in.

Federal American Eagle 223 Rem. 55-gr. FMJ	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2894 fps	2895 fps	2907 fps
Muzzle Energy	1023 ft.-lbs.	1024 ft.-lbs.	1032 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.50 in.	0.29 in.	0.52 in.
Average Group	0.73 in.	0.39 in.	0.60 in.

HPR Black OPs 223 Rem. 62-gr. OTP	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2682 fps	2741 fps	2727 fps
Muzzle Energy	990 ft.-lbs.	1034 ft.-lbs.	1024 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.98 in.	0.71 in.	0.24 in.
Average Group	1.03 in.	0.86 in.	0.67 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired three-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 100 yards for 5.56mm NATO, 300 AAC Blackout, and 7.62x39mm. We recorded velocities with all the rifles using a ProChrono digital chronograph with the first screen placed 15 feet from the muzzle. Special thanks to Eastern Outfitters (EasternOutfitter.com) of Hampstead, North Carolina, for their assistance.

and the upper receiver assembled with an optic and the stock completely collapsed. We found the TruGlo compact scope when mounted to the DRD did not fit in the cut out. The smaller Burris did fit. There is also a slot for a suppressor. All the components fit into high-density polypropylene foam trays and are secured with hook-and-loop straps. We heard no rattles during transport, and all the parts are balanced in the case. On some of the cut-outs, we would have liked finger holes to more easily remove components. The CDR-15 came with a 5.56x45mm NATO barrel assembly; the 300 AAC BLK barrel assembly kit came at an additional cost, bringing the total to $2390 not including optic.

Both the upper and lower receivers are machined from 7075 T-6511 billet aluminum. The lower has an enlarged trigger guard that allows shooting with gloves. The magazine well is flared, and the design allows your trigger finger to lay comfortably along the side of the lower receiver. The trigger, magazine release, and selector lever are all mil-spec, while the stock and grip are



After the barrel is installed, the handguard is slipped over the barrel then the retaining pin is pushed in and the cam lever rotated in to lock it in place. Note the notch in the rail that mates with the upper.

Magpul MOE. The hardcoat-anodized Type-III black finish was evenly applied and quite nice. The barrels for either caliber are hammer forged and chrome lined. The 5.56 NATO barrel and the 300 AAC BLK barrel both have a 1:7-inch twist rate. The barrels have a Parkerized finish and use mid-length gas tubes. The handguard is DRD's proprietary QD 13-inch rail with a Picatinny rail at 12 o'clock. It is also compatible with Magpul L-4 rail panels.

The upper receiver and complete lower receiver are

one component in the DRD takedown system — quite different from the Ruger and Windham. The second component is the barrel assembly, which includes the barrel, barrel nut, muzzle device, gas block and gas tube. DRD supplies a metal cap that protects the chamber end of the barrel and end of gas tube, which we thought was a great idea since the end of the gas tube is fairly fragile. The barrel nut screws into the metal cap so no debris can get in nor can the gas tube be bent or dented during transport. The handguard is the third component and uses a retaining pin and a cam lock to secure the handguard to the upper receiver.

To assemble, lock the bolt carrier group rearward then remove the end cap from the barrel assembly and insert the barrel and gas tube into their respective holes in the lower/upper receiver component. Finger tightening suffices for the amount of rounds you will most likely be carrying in case with the rifle. The barrel nut has the same cut-outs as the buffer tubes, so you can also use a wrench if you were going to run a high round count through the rifle. Next, pull the retaining pin and unlock the cam lock on the rail and slide the handguard over the barrel. Align the notches, push the retaining pin back, and lock down the cam. Insert a magazine, and you are ready to fire. We liked the fact we did not have to remove the upper from the lower receiver. With the Ruger and Windham, we needed to assemble the upper to the lower prior to inserting the barrel.

With 5.56 NATO and 300 AAC BLK ammo, including sub-sonic SIG Elite ammo, we loaded six magazines and packed them and the rifle in the Voo-Doo knapsack and carried it onto the range where we assembled the rifle and got on target at 25 yards then got our dope for 100 yards. The DRD handled well. The action was the smoothest of the three rifles, with the Ruger coming in second, our shooters said. Though the DRD's trigger was mil-spec, we still eked out some nice groups at 100 yards. Without

RUGER SR-556 TAKEDOWN 5924 5.56MM NATO, $2199 300 AAC BLK CALIBER CONVERSION KIT, $449

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The SR-556 Takedown has the simplest takedown method, least felt recoil, and was the most accurate. It also had the highest cost, but was good to go out of the box.



Action Type	Semi-Automatic; Two-Stage Piston; 3-Pos. Regulator
Overall Length (Min/Max)	32.75 to 36 in.
Overall Height (not including optic)	7.75 in.
Weight Unloaded	7.1 lbs.
Weight Loaded (30 Rds.)	8.1 lbs.
Upper Receiver	7075 Forged Aluminum; Manganese Phosphate/Hardcoat Anodized
Lower Receiver	7075 Forged Aluminum; Manganese Phosphate/Hardcoat Anodized; Magpul MOE Grip
Barrel (5.56mm NATO)	16.12 in.; 1:8 RH Twist; 41V45 Chrome-Moly-Vanadium Steel
Barrel (300 AAC BLK)	16.12 in.; 1:7 RH Twist; 41V45 Chrome-Moly-Vanadium Steel
Muzzle Device	Ruger Flash Suppressor; ½x28 TPI
Buttstock	Magpul MOE SL, Adj. 6-Pos.
Buttstock Length of Pull	11.1 to 14.9 in.
Handguard	Ruger KeyMod Rail
Magazine	(3) Magpul PMAG 30 Rds.
Rear Sight	Ruger Folding; Windage Adj.
Front Sight	Ruger Folding; Windage and Elevation Adj.
Sight Radius	17.0 in.
Trigger	4.5 lbs., Ruger Elite 452 Two Stage
Safety	Left Side 2-Pos. Lever
Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Dust Cover	Yes
Forward Assist	Yes
Warranty	NA
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
Website	Ruger.com
Made In/By	USA/Ruger

In the Ruger knapsack, there are pockets for the lower, the upper/rail, and the barrel.



The Ruger logo is on a removable patch to "unbrand" the case.



The bolt carrier group from Ruger uses a gas carrier key; the piston rod pushes off the piston carrier key.



waiting for the barrel to cool, barrels were swapped. Gloved hands are important when swapping hot barrels. With the 300 AAC BLK barrel, groups were lower in elevation, which we expected, and windage was spot on. This allowed us to use the vertical aiming points on the reticle or adjust elevation to find zero for the 300 AAC BLK barrel.

The DRD ran well, with no issues; even sub-sonic rounds cycled through the DRD rifle. After numerous boxes of ammo fired down range, the rifle came apart easily and just as easily re-assembled. Fouling on the gas tube did not interfere with a barrel swap, and the barrel nut did not seize up.

Our Team Said: The DRD offered good accuracy in both calibers with minimal change in point of impact. Using a reticle with additional aiming points on the vertical axis could make the POI change between cartridges even less of a factor. We liked the storage cap and the ability to use a wrench to tighten the barrel down. It took no time to disassemble and re-assemble the rifle, though we had to be careful with the gas tube. In the hard case, the rifle was easy to tote, and in the knapsack, it was just as easy. If we were to change anything, it would be the 7.5-pound single-stage trigger. For those shooters who want a gas-impingement AR capable of shooting the two most popular AR-15 rounds — 5.56/223 Rem. and 300 AAC BLK — this is a good option.

Ruger SR-556 Takedown 5924
5.56mm NATO, $2199
300 AAC BLK
Caliber Conversion Kit, $449

The additional 300 AAC BLK caliber conversion kit brought the total cost to $2648 without an optic. We've



The 4-position gas valve on the Ruger is marked 0, 1, 2, and 3, with 0 closing the valve. The 3 setting allows the most gas into the system.

tested three Ruger SR-556 series rifles prior to the SR-556 Takedown and have graded them A-, so our expectations were high. The SR-556 Takedown uses the same two-stage four-position gas valve system found in the earlier rifles. This system, in our opinion, provided less felt recoil than the others, and it ran smoothly. We liked that we could regulate the gas to the piston, especially when shooting subsonic ammo to ensure proper ejection. There are four settings marked 0, 1, 2, and 3, with "0" closing the valve so the SR-556 acts like a single-shot rifle. The "1" setting allows the least gas to enter the system or is the lowest setting; "3" allows the most gas or is the highest setting. Like the other SR-556 models, the Takedown uses a forged lower and upper receiver. The lower features a Magpul MOE SL stock, which had the least amount of wiggle of all three rifle stocks and offered a nice cheek weld. It also features a Magpul MOE pistol grip, Mil-Spec selector lever, bolt release, and magazine release.



The Ruger's front sight is adjustable for windage and elevation, so it keeps its zero as long as it's attached to the barrel.



We thought a VooDoo Tactical Discreet Pack was better to tote the rifles since it held more magazines and was less "gunny" than the Ruger knapsack.

The trigger is Ruger's two-stage Elite 452 AR-Trigger that we found to the best of all three triggers tested. Ours averaged a 4.5-pound trigger pull. We liked the bit of take-up in the first stage and the short, crisp break

Takedown Component Dimensions

	DRD Tactical CDR-15	Ruger SR-556 Takedown	Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4
Rail or Upper/Rail Length	13 in.	18.5 in.	15 in.
Lower Length	16 in.	15.75 in.	15 in.
Barrel Length	19 in. (w/end cap)	17.87 in.	18.75 in.

Note: Typical AR-15 with 16-in. barrel has an upper receiver that is 24.5 inches long, depending on muzzle device, and a lower receiver that is 15.75 inches, depending on type of collapsible stock.

in the second stage. In our opinion, the trigger helped us achieve some excellent accuracy.

Bolted to the upper receiver is Ruger's proprietary KeyMod handguard that is thin and comfortable to hold. Rear folding sights are mounted on the top of the upper. The barrel is cold hammer-forged Mil-Spec 41V45 chrome-moly-vanadium steel, chrome-lined, and is capped off with Ruger's flash suppressor. It also sports Ruger folding sights. Since the Ruger was equipped with sights, it was the only rifle in our test ready for action out of the box. The Windham and DRD need BUIS or optics before being used. The Ruger's front sight can be adjusted for both elevation and windage, so zero stays with the barrel. The Ruger was the heaviest of the three rifles and that helped contribute to less felt recoil. It and the DRD had the most comfortable stocks. We could carry four loaded magazines in the outside pockets of the Ruger knapsack; the VooDoo pack held six in the outside pockets.

The Ruger breaks down into three key components: lower receiver assembly, upper receiver/handguard assembly, and barrel/piston system assembly. To take the Ruger down, the first step is to pull out the pivot and takedown pins and remove the bolt carrier group. Next, move the slider bar on the underside of the handguard toward the rear of the rifle. Then twist or rotate the barrel assembly clockwise with the muzzle facing away from you and pull the barrel free from the handguard. The rear of the barrel has lugs that mate with grooves in the upper. Very repeatable. The upper and lower are then disassembled like a standard AR-15. One thing to note, if the bolt carrier group is in the forward most position, it will exert a forward force on the barrel, which can make inserting the barrel difficult. Lock the bolt carrier group back when the upper and lower are together or insert the bolt carrier group after the barrel is locked in place.

Once we had performed the procedure a few times, we were proficient

WINDHAM WEAPONRY RMCS-4 5.56MM NATO/9MM/300 AAC BLK/7.62X39MM, $2971

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-

The RMCS-4 offered twice the calibers and was accurate with all four, but the takedown method was slightly more complicated.



Action Type	Semi-Automatic; Gas Impingement
Overall Length (Min/Max)	32.75 to 36 in.
Overall Height (not including optic)	7.75 in.
Weight Unloaded	7.1 lbs.
Weight Loaded (30 Rds.)	8.1 lbs. (5.56mm)
Upper Receiver	7075 Forged Aluminum; Manganese Phosphate/Hardcoat Anodized
Lower Receiver	7075 Forged Aluminum; Manganese Phosphate/Hardcoat Anodized; Magpul MOE Grip
Barrels, Common Specifications	16.0 in. Long; 4150 Chrome-Moly-Vanadium Steel
Barrel (5.56mm NATO)	1:9 RH Twist, M4 profile, ½x28 TPI
Barrel (300 AAC BLK)	1:7 RH Twist, Medium Profile, ⅝x224 TPI
Barrel (7.62x39mm)	1:9.5 RH Twist, M4 profile, ⅝x24 TPI
Barrel (9mm)	1:10 RH Twist; M4 profile, ½x36 TPI
Muzzle Devices	A2 Style Flash Hider
Buttstock	M4 Style, Adj. 6-Pos.
Buttstock Length of Pull	11.1 to 14.9 in.
Handguard	Windham Weaponry Quad Rail
Magazine (5.56mm/300 AAC BLK)	(1) Aluminum 30-Rd.
Magazine (7.62x39mm)	(1) Magpul AK PMAG, 30-Rd.
Magazine (9mm)	(1) Colt Type 20-30-Rd.
Rear Sight	NA
Front Sight	NA
Sight Radius	NA
Trigger	7.6 lbs.; Mil-Spec Single Stage
Safety	Left Side 2-Pos. Lever
Cartridge Case Deflector	Yes
Dust Cover	Yes
Forward Assist	Yes
Warranty	Lifetime
Telephone	(207) 893-2223
Website	WindhamWeaponry.com
Made In/By	Maine/Windham Weaponry

The hard case measured 40 by 16 by 5.5 inches and held all the components. We wanted still more space to accommodate an optic.





Three magazine wells adapt the rifle to a variety of magazine types. The 5.56/300 AAC BLK is shown attached to the lower, the 9mm magazine well is next, then the AK magazine well.

300 AAC BLACKOUT/7.62X39MM/9MM LUGER RANGE DATA

Barnes VOR-TX 300 AAC BLK 110-gr. TAC-TX	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2320 fps	2339 fps	2261 fps
Muzzle Energy	1315 ft.-lbs.	1339 ft.-lbs.	1249 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.50 in.	0.41 in.	0.45 in.
Average Group	0.76 in.	0.62 in.	0.59 in.

Hornady Custom 300 AAC BLK 110-gr. V-MAX	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2329 fps	2374 fps	2318 fps
Muzzle Energy	1325 ft.-lbs.	1377 ft.-lbs.	1313 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	1.10 in.	0.84 in.	0.96 in.
Average Group	1.20 in.	0.92 in.	1.03 in.

SIG Elite 300 AAC BLK 125-gr. Sierra Match King	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	2158 fps	2185 fps	2134 fps
Muzzle Energy	1293 ft.-lbs.	1325 ft.-lbs.	1264 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.20 in.	0.08 in.	0.28 in.
Average Group	0.47 in.	0.41 in.	0.57 in.

SIG Elite Subsonic 300 AAC BLK 220-gr. Sierra Match King	**DRD Tactical CDR-15**	**Ruger SR-556 Takedown**	**Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4**
Average Velocity	1000 fps	1075 fps	958 fps
Muzzle Energy	489 ft.-lbs.	565 ft.-lbs.	448 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.62 in.	0.58 in.	0.88 in.
Average Group	0.87 in.	0.74 in.	0.95 in.

Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4	**Tulammo 7.62x39mm 122-gr. FMJ**	**Hornady 7.62x39mm 123-gr. SST**	**Winchester 7.62x39mm 123-gr. SP**
Average Velocity	2320 fps	2091 fps	2208 fps
Muzzle Energy	1458 ft.-lbs.	1194 ft.-lbs.	1332 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.70 in.	0.47 in.	0.40 in.
Average Group	0.75 in.	0.53 in.	0.51 in.

Windham Weaponry Model RMCS-4	**Atlanta Arms 9mm 147-gr. FMJ**	**Aguila 9mm 124-gr. FMJ**	**SIG V-Crown 115-gr. JHP**
Average Velocity	1014 fps	1337 fps	1146 fps
Muzzle Energy	336 ft.-lbs.	522 ft.-lbs.	335 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	0.80 in.	1.00 in.	0.42 in.
Average Group	1.00 in.	1.17 in.	0.58 in.

To collect accuracy data, we fired three-shot groups from a bench using a rest. Distance: 100 yards for 5.56mm NATO, 300 AAC Blackout, and 7.62x39mm. Because only the Windham rifle shot 7.62x39mm and 9mm Luger rounds, they are broken out at the bottom. The 9mm rounds were shot at 25 yards with optics. We recorded velocities using a ProChrono digital chronograph with the first screen placed 15 feet from the muzzle.

and could swap the barrel on the Ruger very fast. Strong fingers were not a requirement with the DRD and Ruger as they were with the Windham. We also liked the fact we did not have to align a gas tube. The Ruger barrel/piston system assembly was sturdy. If we accidentally dropped it, we felt it would not be an issue, but if we dropped the DRD or Windham barrel/gas tube assembly, there was a possibility the gas tube could be damaged.

Not a disqualifier by any means, just a function of the different systems the rifles employ and the care needed to assemble each rifle.

Ruger did a good job identifying the optional 300 AAC BLK caliber conversion kit from the 5.56 barrel. The piston housing and magazines are clearly marked "300 BLK," even though magazines for the 5.56 and 300 AAC BLK are the same. This is important because we did not want to accidentally load wrong ammo into a barrel chamber.

At the bench, the better trigger of the Ruger helped us attain the best accuracy, on average, than the other rifles, though all performed well. We did note that the Ruger barrels provided the most muzzle velocity, the Windham barrels the least. With inexpensive Aguila 62-grain FMJs and Federal American Eagle 55-grain FMJs, one team member was able to shoot three-shot groups of 0.22 and 0.39 inches, respectively, at 100 yards with the Ruger. In 300 AAC BLK with SIG Elite 125-grain Sierra Match King cartridges, we shot a 0.8-inch 3-shot group at 100 yards. We don't typically do double takes, but with 300 AAC BLK groups, the Ruger almost put two bullets through the same hole. We did not adjust the gas regulator, instead using it on the "1" setting to see if the subsonic would run, and we had no issues. It was 91 degrees at the time of the test, so ammo burn was efficient. Cold weather and variances in ammo may require an adjustment, and we were glad we could make adjustments. We also fired the rifles extensively before swapping barrels to see if residue would make disassembling more difficult, and it did not.



The barrel fits snugly and securely, though with different systems. The Ruger (top) used a series of lugs that locked into grooves in the receiver; the Windham (middle) and DRD (bottom) used a single notch located at 12 o'clock to align the barrel.

Our Team Said: The SR-556 Takedown was the easiest rifle to disassemble and reassemble, and it shot small groups due to the weight and trigger. We liked the piston system, and the rubber buttpad produced less felt recoil. We also liked that the rifle could be used out the box with iron sights. We did notice that with an optic, the SR-556 upper receiver component could would not fit into the knapsack pocket. The Ruger was the most expensive package, but if you prefer piston-system ARs, this is a good choice.

Windham Weaponry RMCS-4 5.56mm NATO/9mm Luger/300AAC/7.62x39mm, $2971

What the Windham lacked in speed and ease of barrel swaps, it made up for in extra barrel-conversion calibers, which we thought were quite cleverly designed. The unique feature of the RMCS-4 is its ability to swap magazine wells when swapping barrels to 7.62x39mm and 9mm. The RMCS-4 is similar to Windham's other ARs built with forged 7075 T6 aircraft aluminum upper and lower receivers. The RMCS-4 uses a standard M4-style stock and A2-style pistol grip. The controls — selector lever, magazine release, bolt carrier release, and trigger — are standard Mil-Spec. The rail/handguard is quad style and a little dated, compared to the KeyMod and MLOK styles now being offered. The rifle comes in a large Plano hard case with an extruded foam insert that holds an assembled rifle, three additional barrels, two additional BCGs, two additional magazine wells, three magazines, sling, and conversion tool. The TruGlo scope, when mounted, did not fit in the case, and with the Burris optic mount, it was a tight fit.

To take down or swap barrels between 5.56 NATO and 300 AAC BLK, lock back the bolt carrier group. A bail on the underside of the handguard is flipped, allowing the retaining block to slide toward the muzzle, revealing two barrel-retaining arms. We needed extra finger strength to flip the bail, and at first used a flat-blade screwdriver to flip the bail and the screwdriver's plastic handle to snap the bail back. With use, the bail became easier to manipulate, but you still needed strong fingers to operate it. The barrel-retaining arms are easily rotated 90 degrees outward to disengage from the barrel. The barrel/gas tube assembly is then pulled out from the handguard.



Three bolt carrier groups are supplied with the Windham; one for 5.56/300 (far left), one for 7.62x39mm (middle), and one for 9mm (far right).

At first, we had a few issues with removing and replacing the barrels due to the forward sling loops attached to the gas blocks. The 9mm barrel does not have a sling loop. The loop, if not managed properly, can slip into a notch on the bottom Picatinny rail and not the allow the barrel to be pulled free. When inserting the barrel, the loop can pivot toward the barrel and not allow the barrel to be fully seated. Not a deal-killer, just a trait of the takedown design. We would add a small section Picatinny rail cover at the end of the bottom rail to avoid the sling loop hanging up on the rail. It would also keep the bail and barrel retaining block from accidentally sliding off the Picatinny rail. Or we would relocate the sling loops to a small section of rail mounted to the bottom Picatinny rail. Like with the DRD, the gas tube of the Windham needed to be aligned, but unlike the DRD, the Windham's handguard is attached

to the upper receiver, so you need to look through the handguard to ensure the gas tube aligns with its hole. The handguard has a cut out, so alignment was not that big of an issue. Still, we did need to be more careful and take more time with the Windham barrel assemblies that had a gas tube.

We packed the Windham with one barrel in the VooDoo pack and found it was just as easy to tote as the DRD. In the hard case, the rifle mounted with the TruGlo scope did not fit into the foam cut out. Otherwise, the hard case was balanced well when carried, but like the DRD case, was not as discrete as the VooDoo knapsack.

To change to 7.62x39mm, the upper receiver is separated from the lower receiver. A small retaining pin in the front of the trigger guard is compressed with a supplied tool and the trigger guard pivoted away from the magazine well. Using the magazine-release button, the magazine well is slid up and off the lower and replaced with a magazine well compatible with AK-style magazines. A smart feature, we thought, since we have had hot and cold experiences with ARs adapted to 7.62x39mm that use AR-style magazines adapted to the 7.62x39mm. Once the magazine insert is installed, AK magazines fit into the gun in the same roll-and-lock method as used when changing a magazine on an AK rifle. When replacing the upper on the 7.62x39mm caliber, the barrel is swapped as well as the bolt carrier group. The 7.62x39mm-compatible bolt carrier group is marked "AK" along the side.



The Windham's controls were standard Mil-Spec, as was the stock and pistol grip, which we would swap out.



The Burris AR-332 optic uses a donut-style reticle with additional aiming points on the vertical axis, so compensating for different POIs on elevation was easy.

The bolt head also has three rings milled into it to separate from the other two bolt carrier groups. We wanted the markings a bit bolder. There is no bolt-carrier release in the 7.62x39mm configuration. Like an AK rifle, the bolt does not lock back on last round fired.

To change to 9mm, the user follows the same process with a magazine well designed for skinny Colt-style 9mm magazines. After swapping the magazine well, the barrel and bolt carrier group are swapped. The 9mm caliber conversion uses a blowback system, so there is no gas tube. The 9mm bolt carrier group is more clearly marked "9mm," and it is noticeably different and heavier than a typical AR bolt carrier group. The magazine well was flared, so inserting the skinny magazine was simplified.

At the range we found that the Windham rifle, even with the heavier trigger and Mil-Spec furniture, competed head-to-head with the DRD and Ruger in accuracy, coming in a close second to the Ruger. Quarter-inch three-shot groups at 100 yards with Aguila and IMI were quite pleasing. On average, in 5.56 the Windham gave us 0.57-inch groups. In 300 AAC BLK, the SIG Elite was most accurate load with a 0.28-inch best three-shot group at 100 yards. It averaged about 1 MOA with the 300 AAC BLK ammunition across the board and had absolutely no issues. Swapping barrels between these calibers was fast once we were familiar with the system, but its assembly was not as fast as the other two rifles.

When swapping to 7.62x39mm, we had initial feeding problems with steel lacquered cases, so we lubed the bolt carrier group and changed to Winchester ammo with brass cases. Then we rotated in steel Hornady and Tulammo rounds and the issue worked itself out. At 100 yards, we averaged between 0.5- and 0.75-inch three-shot groups, which impressed us. With the M4-style stock, the recoil in this caliber was much more noticeable. In 9mm the operation of the rifle noticeable changed with the heavier bolt carrier group cycling. Accuracy at 25 yards shifted 5 inches left, which was repeatable. The Colt-style magazine worked fine, but we also wondered that because the magazine wells are removable, if a magazine well compatible with Glock, S&W M&P or Beretta 92 magazines could be designed to make this caliber conversion even more efficient for a user who owns one of these handguns.

Although the caliber conversions make the Windham very adaptable with different calibers, the trade off is a changing point of impact. One cannot expect the 9mm barrel to shoot like the other calibers; that is why we feel an optic with an easily adjustable reticle be mounted so it can be adjusted for each barrel's zero. We found that across the span of barrels, each barrel shot to the same point of impact when removed and replaced. Repeatability is a wonderful thing.

Our Team Said: We liked the versatility with the caliber conversions allowing the rifle to used for hunting, self defense, and training. We appreciated the repeatability of point of impact, and accuracy was good. Reliability was good, even after the initial hiccup with the 7.62x39mm cartridge. The sling loop was a minor nuisance at the beginning, but we soon learned to handle the rifle more efficiently. Markdowns: We'd replace the stock, pistol grip, and trigger if we owned this AR to make it more comfortable to shoot.

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

380 ACP Shoot Out: Ruger LCP Takes On Remington, Rock Island

We take a proven pistol partner — Ruger's base-model LCP — and pit it against the Remington RM380 Micro and Rock Island Armory's mini-1911 Baby Rock. We think the Baby rocks.

New pistols chambered for the 380 ACP continue to flow out of factories because these generally smaller handguns feature reduced recoil firing the 9mm Kurz or 9mm Short, two other dimensionally accurate names for the 380 Auto cartridge. The 380's case is about 2mm shorter than the popular 9mm Luger case, though their bullet diameters are the same. The advantage of chambering ammunition with a short overall length helps keep these guns concealable.

One, the Ruger LCP, has sold in greater numbers than perhaps any other modern 380 ACP pistol, and with good reason, if the results in this magazine are any guide. In the June 2008 issue, we tested a just-released LCP and gave it an A- grade, saying of it, "This gun did what it was designed to do. Perhaps the grips could be more effectively textured, but we'd hate to spoil its looks. The Ruger LCP may be limited in its application, but could prove invaluable in its service." Head to head against the Kel-Tec P3AT, we said that Ruger had basically refined the Kel-Tec, in our view. The checkering on the slightly wider LCP grip frame was finer, which resulted in the Ruger jumping around in the hand more than the Kel-Tec. In that first look eight years ago, we narrowly preferred the Kel-Tec. Then in 2009, Ruger issued a recall for the LCP because the company had received a small number of reports that the gun, "...can discharge when dropped onto a hard surface with a round in the chamber." The company offered a retrofit of a different hammer mechanism to cure the problem, which was offered at no charge to the customer, and the little gun kept on chugging. In the February 2013



Top to bottom are our primary test guns from Remington, Ruger, and Rock Island Armory. Good news: All proved to be solid guns, and their light recoil resulted in excellent combat results at 5 yards. The LCP's sights are just bumps on the slide, but the pistol is useful and reliable. It came out of the box shooting and never stopped. Accuracy was the best of the pistols tested. The Remington looked promising out of the box and did well in combat firing drills. When we came to accuracy testing at 15 yards, it lagged behind. If you desire a 380 ACP pistol that is easy to use well and combat accurate, the bigger RIA pistol is tops. For pocket carry, the humble Ruger LCP runs ahead of the pack.

issue, we tested a variant of the LCP, the Ruger LCP-LM No. 3718, which mashed together Ruger's tiniest pistol with LaserMax's trigger-guard laser sight. The laser was nicely integrated into the pistol. In that test, we noted, "the female tester in the group had a hard time racking the slide. As pistols get smaller they can be harder to use and operate." We also said, "More seasoned testers did not like that the slide did not lock open on the last shot, like it did with the SIG P238 and Walther PK380." That pistol earned a B+ grade, and Our Team Said, "The Ruger was the best choice for deep-conceal carry" in that test. Then in the October 2015 issue, we tested a Ruger LCP-C Custom No. 3740 against a Taurus Curve and gave the upgraded LCP-C an A grade, saying of it: "We found the Ruger LCP-C Custom to be reliable, accurate enough for personal defense, and compact enough for concealed carry and pocket carry. The sights and trigger are improvements over previous versions of the LCP. The Ruger's footprint is smaller than the Taurus, but the Ruger is lighter and developed more energy." So, clearly, this is a capable, consistent handgun that has survived nearly 10 years because of its merits — simple operation, light weight, reasonable shooting characteristics, and affordability.

Seeking to take some of the LCP's market share, Remington officially introduced the RM380 Micro at the 2015 NRA Annual Meetings and Exhibits. The RM380 is a double-action-only pistol with second-strike capability. It operates from a delayed blowback action and has an aluminum frame. Remington produced an unusual marketing angle for the gun, claiming its slide-racking force was very low. That was something we asked the test team to evaluate in particular.

Also introduced at the 2015 NRA Annual Meetings & Exhibits in Nashville was Armscor's Rock Island Armory Baby Rock 380 ACP 1911 51912, though it had been shown as a prototype as early as the summer of 2014. At introduction, Rock Island President and CEO Martin

RUGER LCP 3701 380 ACP, $229

GUN TESTS GRADE: B+

This is the basic LCP that's coming up on its 10th anniversary soon. It's a light handgun that is the smallest of the three pistols tested. We would have liked better sights, and would pay more for the LCP Custom, which has better sights and trigger. But the stock LCP has appeal to those with limited funds.



Action	Semi-Auto, Locked Breech Double Action
Overall Length	5.2 in.
Overall Height	3.8 in.
Maximum Width	0.82 in.
Weight Unloaded	9.8 oz.
Weight Loaded	10.9 oz.
Magazine	6-Rd. Detachable Box
Barrel	2.75 in., 1:16 RH Twist, 6 Grooves, Blued Alloy Steel
Slide	Blued Alloy Steel
Grip Frame	Black Glass-Filled Nylon
Frame Front Strap Height	1.25 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.0 in.
Grip Thickness (max)	0.8 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.5 in.
Sights	Integral
Sight Radius	4.1 in.
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	9.1 lbs.
Trigger Span	2.5 in.
Safety	Firing Pin Block
Warranty	None Written
Website	Ruger.com
Telephone	(336) 949-5200
CA Approved	No
MA Approved & Certified	No





Above: The checkered grip frame provides a secure and comfortable grip, but most hands will have a finger dropping off. For that, there's a grip extension floorplate, right, that can be added to the magazine for better grip.

Chamber condition could be checked visually through a cutaway in the barrel and the downward position of the extractor.



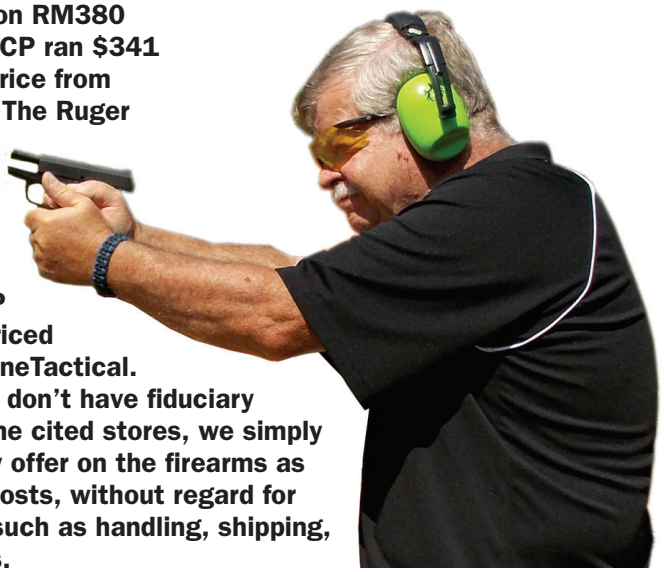
Tuason called the pistol a "mini 1911" and said it was a single-stack pistol with a seven-round magazine. We previously tested a similar concept (an 85% 1911) in Browning's Black Label 1911-380 in the September 2015 issue, giving it a B ranking. Also in that test was the smaller, but still 1911-style Kimber Micro Carry Advocate Brown, which got an A- grade and was much better in the pocket.

While we conducted accuracy testing with our standard three loads, combat firing and initial break in was accomplished with six different loads. In order of use, they were: Winchester USA 95-grain FMJs ($40/100 @ LuckyGunner.com), HPR 90-grain JHPs ($28.75/50 @ LuckyGunner.com), Fiocchi Shooting Dynamics 90-grain JHPs ($15.19/50 @ ShootersGuide.com), Winchester Train & Defend 95-grain FMJs ($22/50 @ MidwayUSA.com), Gorilla Ammunition 95-grain JHPs ($28/20 @ Ableammo.com), and the Black Hills Ammunition 60-grain Xtreme Defense ($25.57/20 @ MidwayUSA.com).

Initial firing was done with Winchester FMJ loads, then we poured more than 100 rounds through each pistol for reliability testing and during combat firing at 5, 7, and 10 yards. Here's how the Ruger LCP, the Remington RM380, and Rock Island Baby Rock did:



We tested the Remington, Rock and Ruger pistols with a wide range of ammunition. They all functioned well. Ammunition sources: Fiocchi Shooting Dynamics 90-grain Jacketed Hollow Point 380APHP, $15.19/50 @ ShootersGuide.com; HPR 90-grain Jacketed Hollow Point 38090JHP, $28.75/50 @ LuckyGunner.com; Black Hills Ammunition 60-grain Xtreme Defense D380N420, $25.57/20 @ MidwayUSA.com.



Right: The Remington RM380 Micro 96454 380 ACP ran $341 as a recent online price from BudsGunShop.com. The Ruger LCP 3701's price from the same store was $229. Armscor's Rock Island Armory Baby Rock 380 ACP 1911 51912 was priced at $356 at TombstoneTactical.com. As always, we don't have fiduciary relationships with the cited stores, we simply note the prices they offer on the firearms as real-world counter costs, without regard for additional charges such as handling, shipping, tax, or other upsells.

Ruger LCP 3701 380 ACP, $229

This was the list price of this pistol at BudsGunShop.com at the time of our test. The Ruger Lightweight Compact Pistol is a locked-breech semi-automatic pistol that holds 6+1 rounds and shares almost identical dimensions with the Kel-Tec P3AT. The Ruger LCP is familiar to many readers, so we'll begin with it as the testbed for the new Remington and RIA pistols.

The Ruger's steel slide rides low on a polymer frame. The pistol features a double-action-only trigger press of 9 pounds. The handle portion of the frame is pebbled for good adhesion, and the front strap is stippled. The rear strap is checkered at the bottom of the frame. The sights are small and snag free. There is an obtainable sight picture from a solid benchrest, but neither this pistol nor the Remington offers much in the way of a good sight picture even at modest range. The cocking serrations offer a good gripping surface for manipulation. The magazine release is positive. The pistol does not hold the slide open on the last shot, but there is a slide lock that may be manually engaged to keep the pistol open.

The pistol is neat, small, and recently Ruger has lowered the price. At $229, the Ruger is a proven pistol well worth its price. We would have been willing to pay $112 more had the Remington had significant improvements, and in fact the Remington does. A hold open for the last shot and an ambidextrous magazine release are nice to have. The grip feels slightly better. But the RM380's sights are no better, in practical terms. So, after the dry fire and handling evaluation, we conducted combat firing drills. The Remington displayed no meaningful advantage over the Ruger in combat shooting. Also, there were no malfunctions of any type with the LCP.

Before firing for accuracy, we often fire a test group to become familiar with the trigger and note any sharp edges. We fire several groups for record and submit the average. We had not noticed the stacking of the

380 ACP RANGE DATA

Black Hills	**Rock Island Armory**	**Remington**	**Ruger**
60-gr. Xtreme Defense	**Baby Rock 51912**	**RM380 Micro 96454**	**LCP 3701**
Average Velocity	1255 fps	1237 fps	1229 fps
Muzzle Energy	209 ft.-lbs.	203 ft.-lbs.	201 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.0 in.	4.5 in.	4.2 in.
Largest Group	2.8 in.	5.5 in.	4.7 in.
Average Group	2.4 in.	5. 0 in.	4.4 in.
HPR	**Rock Island Armory**	**Remington**	**Ruger**
90-gr. JHP	**Baby Rock 51912**	**RM380 Micro 96454**	**LCP 3701**
Average Velocity	965 fps	940 fps	952 fps
Muzzle Energy	186 ft.-lbs.	176 ft.-lbs.	181 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.7 in.	4.7 in.	3.8 in.
Largest Group	3.6 in.	6.3 in.	5.0 in.
Average Group	3.2 in.	5.3 in.	4.5 in.
Fiocchi Shooting Dynamics	**Rock Island Armory**	**Remington**	**Ruger**
90-gr. JHP	**Baby Rock 51912**	**RM380 Micro 96454**	**LCP 3701**
Average Velocity	989 fps	955 fps	941 fps
Muzzle Energy	195 ft.-lbs.	182 ft.-lbs.	176 ft.-lbs.
Smallest Group	2.3 in.	5.5 in.	3.9 in.
Largest Group	3.2 in.	6.5 in.	4.6 in.
Average Group	2.8 in.	6.0 in.	4.3 in.

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

Remington trigger at the end of travel during combat drills, but the difference between the Remington and the Ruger trigger was noticeable in accuracy testing. The Ruger did a better job at 15 yards, with a best group of 3.8 inches fired with the HPR 90-grain rounds.

Our Team Said: The Ruger is reliable, but so are the other pistols. The Ruger is the most affordable pistol and yet gives up little to the Remington in combat shooting that we can detect. It is also the smallest pistol tested. All in, the Ruger is a Best Buy in affordable protection.

Remington RM380 Micro 96454 380 ACP, $341

This is the first new pistol made at Remington's new Huntsville, Alabama factory. Our test gun has an MSRP of $436, and the Crimson Trace Laser-equipped version lists for $638. The price above was a recent online quote from BudsGunShop.com.

The Remington RM380 is light and slim even for a 380 ACP pistol. It weighs only 12.1 ounces. The pistol is a single-stack magazine design, as are the other pistols. The RM380 pistol has a slightly extended grip tang that prevents the slide biting the hand, a common problem with 380 ACP pistols. The slide is steel with generous cocking serrations. The sights are more than bumps on the slide, but not as large as those on the RIA pistol. They are no larger than the Ruger LCP's — barely adequate for close-range use — but snag free. The hammer rides in a recess in the slide without any type of protrusion. The barrel has a pronounced bell near the muzzle that mates it to the slide. There is some lateral motion of the slide when it is grasped; however, it isn't loose enough to be called sloppy.

The frame is lightweight aluminum alloy. The anodizing is well done, matching the blued slide. The grips are removable. On either side of the grips are long finger grooves designed for either right- or left-hand use. These grooves slightly reduce trigger reach. A very nice touch all raters liked is the serrated front strap. This is well done, and, frankly, it's a feature that seems above the modest price of the Remington RM380. The grips are lightly pebbled. Overall adhesion and abrasion cannot be faulted, our testers said.

The pistol's double-action trigger breaks at 10 pounds. The trigger is smooth with modest stacking at the end. There are those who have stated that the trigger has no noticeable reset. This simply isn't true, nor is a trigger without reset possible. The reset is faint, but detectable. When conducting high-speed drills, every shot must be fired with accuracy, not simply to see how quickly the magazine may be emptied. The proper high-speed technique is to ride the reset just to the reset and fire

again. The RM380 allows this. The pistol is supplied with two 6-round mags, one with a modest finger rest.

During the first two magazines, 12 rounds, the Remington failed to completely cycle three times. The pistol was properly lubricated. The pistol fired an additional 88 rounds of mixed loads with no malfunctions, so we marked the initial missteps down as a break-in malfunctions.

It was interesting that we expected the Remington to outpace the Ruger LCP due to the slightly longer grip. As it turned out, in combat shooting the Ruger gave up little to the Remington. The impression of larger sights on the Remington is more of a case of slide design than actual superiority to the Ruger. We liked the smooth trigger, and the ambidextrous magazine release was also an aid during firing and quickly reloading.

Firing for accuracy, we shot the Black Hills 60-grain Xtreme Defense, the HPR 90-grain JHP, and the Fiocchi 90-grain JHP. Accuracy firing was limited to 15 yards. Controlling a double-action-only trigger coupled with a gun with small sights and a 12-ounce weight isn't conducive to accuracy. Despite the best efforts of experienced raters, the Remington gave a poor showing compared to the Ruger LCP, with its heavy trigger being one negative factor. Also, the RM380 fired 8 inches above the point of aim, on average, with each loading. Grouping was poor, we felt. So, we rated the pistol down a full grade on poor accuracy, and coupled with poor sight regulation, we rated the pistol down another half grade.

The editor asked the raters to take a hard look at the force required to rack each slide, as this is an important consideration for many shooters and something Remington is promoting as a plus for its pocket pistol. Slightly built individuals, those with arthritis (one rater), and the elderly may have difficulty racking a slide. In agreement with Remington's claims, the RM380 was the easiest to rack, hands down. We could hold the slide in one hand and rack the pistol by moving the frame with one finger.

REMINGTON RM380 MICRO 96454 380 ACP, $341

GUN TESTS GRADE: B-

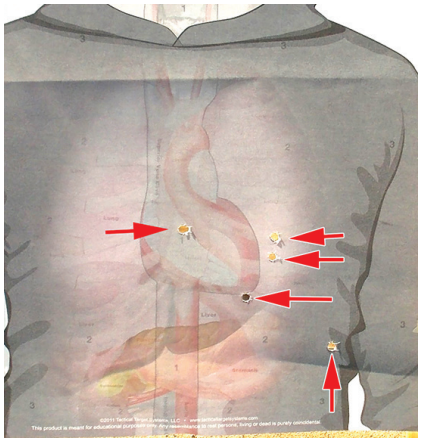
We really wanted to like the RM380, and, overall, we did. After a modest break in, the RM380 proved reliable, and we liked the ambidextrous magazine release and last-round hold-open features. The trigger was usable in rapid fire. What we did not like was heavy stacking of the trigger that was most noticeable in benchrest testing and poor accuracy. Sight regulation was also badly off.



Action	Double Action Only, Blowback
Overall Length	5.25 in.
Overall Height	3.9 in.
Maximum Width	0.95 in.
Weight Unloaded	12.0 oz.
Weight Loaded	14.1 oz.
Barrel Length	2.9 in.
Barrel	Steel
Magazine	6-Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Steel
Frame	Aluminum
Frame Front Strap Height	1.5 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.5 in.
Grips	Synthetic
Grip Thickness (max)	0.9 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.75 in.
Sights	Fixed
Trigger Pull Weight Double Action	10.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Double Action	2.6 in.
Safety	None
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Website	Remington.com
Telephone	(800) 243-9700

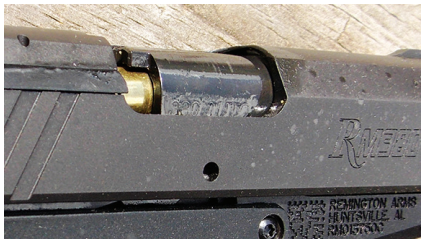


Light and good looking, the RM380 demonstrated excellent combat results at close range. However, off the bench, its results lagged behind the others.



The initial group with the Remington wasn't promising and did not improve even as we grooved into the trigger.

The Remington pistol failed to close the slide a few times during the first couple of magazines. But we gave the Remington a pass on the break-in malfunctions; they were not repeated in extensive firing. Self-defense shooters should still take note of that.



One rater, with long fingers, could wrap his fingers over the slide and rack the pistol with one hand with the thumb on the backstrap. The LCP was not difficult to rack, but it was harder than the Remington. The RIA slide has plenty of leverage and isn't any more difficult to rack than the LCP with the hammer cocked.

Our Team Said: The choice between the two DAO pistols seemed close until the accuracy run. We liked the Remington's slightly longer grip, checkered front strap, ambidextrous safety, the fact that the slide locks open on the last shot, and that fact that the trigger may be cycled dry fire without racking the slide. But 15 yard accuracy with a best group of 5 inches was poor. A winner on every other count the pistol had to be rated down for accuracy.

Rock Island Baby Rock 51912 380 ACP, $356

This was the counter price for an in-stock gun at TombstoneTactical.com. The Baby Rock is a 1911-like 380 ACP pistol. When we say 1911-like, many may compare the pistol to the Kimber 380 or the Browning 380 pistol previously tested. The Rock is longer than the Kimber and shorter than the Browning, not a bad place to be. The Rock is a true miniature 1911. The pistol features a plunger tube on the frame and also uses a grip safety, something the other small 1911 handguns do not. The slide is machined from steel. The extractor is an external type. The ejection port is generous. There are two sets of cocking serrations front and rear. The forward set is smaller but effective.

The sights are excellent for a small pistol. The front sight appears attached by a tiny set screw. The rear sight is dovetailed in place. These sights are useful for shooting to 25 yards or more. The slide lock and magazine release are 1911 types, positive in operation. The grip safety is a beavertail type we liked very much. The slide lock safety is positive in operation. The safety was never difficult to use, but it was stiff in operation when first manipulated. It became smoother in use. A definite click was heard when the safety was taken off.

ROCK ISLAND ARMORY BABY ROCK 51912 380 ACP, $356

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

The Baby Rock has a lot going for it. The only true demerit was a stiff slide-lock safety. This loosened up during testing, and the fact is, many will prefer a safety with a positive detent. Combat shooting gave good results. Accuracy was excellent for a pistol this size.



Action	Single-Action Semi-Auto; Locked Breech
Overall Length	6.6 in.
Overall Height	4.6 in.
Maximum Width	1.1 in.
Weight Unloaded	22 oz.
Weight Loaded	24.1 oz.
Barrel Length	3.75 in. Steel; 6 Grooves, 1:16 Twist
Magazine	7-Rd. Detachable Box
Slide	Parkerized Black Steel; 3 Front Cuts; 5 Rear Cuts
Frame	Parkerized Black Steel
Frame Front Strap Height	2.3 in.
Frame Back Strap Height	2.8 in.
Grips	Checkered Black Polymer
Grip Thickness (max)	1.1 in.
Grip Circumference (max)	4.6 in.
Front Sight	Serrated Front Blade; Dovetail Cut
Rear Sight	Two-Dot Low Profile; Dovetail Cut
Trigger Pull Weight	4.5 lbs.
Trigger Span Single Action	2.25 in.
Safeties	Slide Lock Lever; Grip
Warranty	Limited Lifetime
Telephone	(775) 537-1444
Website	Armscor.com



The Black Hills Xtreme Defense load clocked a blistering 1255 fps out of the Baby Rock.



Fired off hand, the Baby Rock gave excellent results. The Rock exhibited the greatest accuracy, velocity, and energy readings — probably a result of its longer barrel and better sights.



The pistol features forward cocking serrations. A bold front post allowed fast hits on target.

GUN TESTS

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Note the spent case in the air and the RM380 is already back on target. Recoil is light, and the design lends itself to good control.



The RM380 proved reliable with 60-grain Black Hills Ammunition Xtreme Defense loading.



Compact at 5.16 inches long and 3.6 inches tall, the LCP fits a variety of holsters. The Ruger is flat and easy to handle.

Our 1911 fans rated this as ideal.

The front strap is smooth with a slight recurve at the base. The rear strap features a grooved mainspring housing. The hammer is a steel skeletonized type. The trigger breaks cleanly at 4.5 pounds. Our raters felt that this trigger is as good a single-action trigger as we have felt from the factory. The pistol isn't heavy, but at 22 ounces, it weighs almost as much as both of the other pistols tested put together.

The pistol was lubricated and taken to the firing range. The Rock was supplied with a spare 7-round magazine. The Remington also is delivered with a spare magazine; the Ruger is not. The pistol was loaded with the same mix of ammunition the other handguns were fired with. In combat drills there were no malfunctions of any type. There were no break-in malfunctions as with the Remington, and the pistol fired 100 rounds of mixed ammunition without issue. In combat firing the pistol was far more accurate than either of the pocket pistols. At 5 yards, a smooth DAO trigger is good enough for center hits, but by the time you get to 10 yards, the heavier weight of this solid-feeling 380 and straight-to-the-rear trigger compression of the single-action lockwork are great advantages. The raters conducted fast-paced drills and rapid mag changes that were not possible with the DAOs.

One foible, and it was shooter induced. On two or three occasions, the rater did not fire when he meant to because the grip safety was not completely depressed. (And this is our 1911 fan!) Simple firing-grip adjustment and attention to detail quickly solved this issue.

In benchrest accuracy testing, the Rock walked away from the other handguns. The single best group was a 2.0-inch effort with the blistering hot Black Hills Ammunition 60-grain Xtreme Defense at 1250 fps. The Rock's groups were half that of the Remington. The Baby Rock was by far the most comfortable pistol to fire from the benchrest.

Our Team Said: If you like cocked-and-locked carry, or even hammer down in the pocket, then you should make room for the Baby Rock, because it is quite a shooter. It only remains to be seen if production will meet demand.

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

380 ACP Loads Update: Choices Are Getting More Interesting

A 'heavy' 99-grain load from Federal is the hands-down winner among this set of ten 380 Auto choices. We also liked the solid-copper Black Hills Extreme Defense and Hornady XTP rounds.

In the October 2010 issue we published a report on 380 ACP defense loads. The work was interesting and reader feedback intensive. During the tests, the loads proved accurate and reliable. The problem was the balance of expansion and penetration. We had either adequate expansion or good penetration but not each in the same loading. Some loads penetrated as little as 9 inches, with the average load at 12-13 inches. Expansion was modest in most cases. A load must penetrate bone and clothing to have effect on an assailant. As a result, we felt that the full-metal-jacketed non-expanding bullet was a viable choice because there was a chance it would reach vital areas and create a stoppage. Surprisingly, even FMJ loads penetrated but 14 inches in water in that test. So, the search was on for a loading that might offer superior performance to the original test choices.

This time, we tested ten different loads using the same media — water and water jugs — and came away with a couple of loads that showed good promise for personal defense.

Is the 380 ACP Enough for Self Defense?

Since our initial test, many readers have continued to ask us about the effectiveness of the 380 ACP outside the ability to make highly accurate cranial shots. If the bullet cannot be counted on to reach the vitals, then it would hardly be of much use even if it did expand. However, FMJ loads do not necessarily solve every problem. A lightweight FMJ bullet is far more likely to stop short in penetration than a heavier bullet of moderate velocity. Often, a heavier-for-the-caliber-bullet will penetrate



As testing progressed, the loads gave interesting performance. Top row from left are the Hornady Critical Defense Flex Tip, the Winchester Defend hollowpoint, and the Cor-Bon DPX hollow point. Bottom row, from left, are the Federal Premium HST jacketed hollow point, Hornady XTP JHP, and the Fiocchi 90-grain JHP.



We initially tested nine different 380 ACP loads, as shown, without a single failure to feed, chamber, fire, or eject. We later added the RIP load, not shown.



During the course of the test, the Baby Rock never failed to feed, chamber, fire and eject. The loads were reliable. For a full review of the pistol, check the 380 match up on page 6.

380 ACP SELF-DEFENSE LOAD PERFORMANCE DATA

Gun: Rock Island Armory Baby Rock w/3.75-in. barrel	Average Velocity (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Average Accuracy (in.)	Power Factor (pf)	Expanded Width (in.)	Retained Weight (gr.)	Penetration In Water (in.)
56-gr. Ruger ARX	1209	181	2.6	68	0.355	100%	13
60-gr. Black Hills FMJ D380N420	1240	205	2.0	74	0.355	100%	13
62-gr. RIP JHP	1280	225	2.6	79	Frag	50%	9
80-gr. Cor-Bon DPX	1104	216	2.5	88	0.46	100%	14
90-gr. Fiocchi JHP 380APHP	927	172	2.5	83	0.50	75%	12
90-gr. Hornady FTX	920	169	2.1	83	0.50	100%	11
90-gr. Hornady XTP 90104	933	174	1.6	84	0.52	100%	13
90-gr. HPR XTP	878	154	1.8	79	0.45	100%	13
95-gr. Winchester	884	165	2.4	84	0.54	100%	10
99-gr. Federal HST P380HST1S	1043	239	2.4	103	0.70	97%	13

Notes: *Average Velocity readings were recorded by firing 10-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono chronograph. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first skyscreen. Ambient temperature: 60 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. ● The accuracy figures are the average of two five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 15-yard target. ● To calculate IPSC power factor, multiply bullet weight in grains by the velocity in fps, then divide by 1000. ● The retained-weight column shows the recovered bullet weight as a percentage of the actual bullet weight.*

380 ACP SELF-DEFENSE LOAD PERFORMANCE DATA (2010)

Gun: Browning Hi-Power w/5-in. barrel	Average Velocity (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Average Accuracy (in.)	Power Factor (pf)	Expanded Width (in.)	Retained Weight (gr.)	Penetration In Water (in.)
90-gr. Federal Hydra Shock	980	191	2.0	88	0.49	95%	13.5
90-gr. Speer Gold Dot	955	181	2.5	85	0.52	100%	13.5
95-gr. PMC Starfire	845	150	3.8	80	0.46	95%	13
95-gr. Win. PDX Bonded	955	192	2.3	90	0.60	96%	9
95-gr. Fiocchi FMJ	967	197	3.0	90	0.36	100%	14
102-gr. Rem. Golden Saber	910	187	2.6	92	0.54	98%	12.5
125-gr. Rem. JHP 38 Sp.+P*	893	221	4.0	111	0.64	96%	14

Notes: *Average Velocity readings were recorded by firing 10-shot strings over a Competition Electronics Pro Chrono chronograph. The muzzle was 10 feet from the first skyscreen. Ambient temperature: 102 degrees. Elevation: 815 feet above sea level. ● The accuracy figures are the average of two five-shot groups. For accuracy, we fired the test gun from a benchrest at a 15-yard target. ● To calculate IPSC power factor, multiply bullet weight in grains by the velocity in fps, then divide by 1000. ● The retained-weight column shows the recovered bullet weight as a percentage of the actual bullet weight. *The Remington 125-grain JHP 38 Special +P was fired from a 2-inch-barrel Colt Detective Special.*



The Federal HST load offered the heaviest weight bullet and excellent performance. About one in five lost their jacket.



more even at lower velocity.

In our experience, modern shooters tend to look at the 380 as a lighter alternative to the 9mm, but a better comparison is between the 38 Special snubnose and the 380. So, as a point of reference, we included a middle-of-the road 125-grain JHP 38 Special +P load fired from a 2-inch-barrel revolver to represent an average for performance with the 125-grain

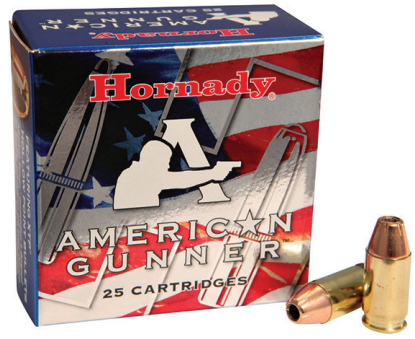


The Black Hills Ammunition Xtreme Defense bullet was the sharpest profile of any bullet we have ever tested.





Fiocchi's JHP opened dynamically and lost the bullet jacket.



The Hornady American Gunner XTP provided consistent expansion.



JHP. It makes a striking example of how the 380 ACP fares against what we believe is at least an adequate 38 Special load. Also, for your convenience, we've listed the performance of the first round of 380 ACP loads we tested six years ago. Also, the top-ranked loads from the first test were the Fiocchi FMJ 95-grain No. 380FMJB and Speer Gold Dot 90-gr. No. 23606.

Test Setup

We fired horizontally into gallon jugs at 10 feet. The jugs are 6 inches deep, so measuring penetration was a simple thing if the bullet penetrates at least two jugs. Often the bullet barely penetrated the third or was found resting in place at the bottom of the jug, allowing interpretation of the distance traveled.

We used a Bersa 380 ACP in the last test program, but this time we used the Grade A-rated Rock Island Baby Rock 380 ACP reviewed elsewhere in this issue. We did not use one of the DAO pocket guns also included in that test because, frankly, it would have been a struggle to generate enough accuracy to hit the water jugs. We felt that the Baby Rock was a good choice for providing enough accuracy in a downsized handgun, and the accuracy section of the test demanded a pistol of sufficient size to make accuracy testing viable as a comparison of the loadings. Accuracy was conducted at 15 yards in respect to the limitations of the caliber. Here's what we thought of each load.

Federal Premium 380 ACP 99-Grain HST JHP P380HST1S, $20/20 @ MidwayUSA.com

This load gave unexpected results. This is the fastest load tested over 70 grains, and it is heavier than the average 90- to 95-grain JHP. Yet velocity was high at a solid 1043 fps average. Energy was greater than any other load tested in this match up or in 2010. Recoil was greater than the other loads, but it was not uncomfortable. Performance was excellent, with penetration to a full 13 inches and expansion to .70 caliber. This is the load to beat and is easily the most impressive JHP loading. The two non-expanding loads equaled this penetration, and the Cor-Bon JHP exhibited an inch greater penetration, but with less expansion.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A+

Black Hills 380 ACP 60-Grain Xtreme Defense D380N420, $26/20 @ MidwayUSA.com

Costing $1.30 per shot, this 60-grain load uses a solid all-copper projectile. Penetration is superior to the Ruger ARX solid bullet. Velocity is slightly higher. Penetration was on the level with the Cor-Bon 70-grain JHP and the Federal 99-grain HST. The all-copper bullet is intended to cause damage by a cutting motion as it spins into the target rather than expansion and to offer adequate penetration in all situations.

The Rock Island 380's magazine spring was stiff, and when loading the Black Hills round and thumbing the





Cor-Bon's JHP tried to open, but this is the averarge performance.





HPR's load is smooth and accurate. The XTP bullet expanded, but not as well as faster loads.





Ruger's branded ARX is an interesting and affordable combination.







The Hornady Critical Defense load gave viable results, but we would have liked more penetration.

rounds into the magazine, raters noticed that the nose was quite sharp. We did not need bandages, but we could have had we not noticed the edges early. This bullet is a good choice for personal defense. Among non-expanding loads, this bullet is much superior to a FMJ bullet, in our view. It is also superior to the ARX-type bullet, based on design and performance. Another component of the load was light recoil. This was easily the most pleasant load to fire. Accuracy was likewise outstanding, being bested only by the Hornady XTP and the HPR loads. If you do not trust JHP loads in your 380 ACP, this is the best choice.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Hornady American Gunner 380 ACP 90-Grain XTP Jacketed Hollow Point 90104 $16.50/25 @ MidwayUSA.com

The American Gunner XTP gave credible results, including the best accuracy of any load tested this time around. The XTP is a proven bullet that offers good expansion in most scenarios.

The XTP posted 933 fps velocity. Expansion was adequate, winding up at the 12-inch threshold. Expansion was adequate at .52 inch. This is an affordable load with good quality control and wide availability.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Ruger Self Defense 380 ACP 56-Grain PolyCase ARX $20/25 @ MidwayUSA.com

The Ruger ARX load is designed to offer an alternative for those who feel that JHP loads do not offer adequate penetration. The ARX load is reliable and accurate enough for personal defense, although it was the least accurate load tested with the Baby Rock and also in a side test with a Beretta 84. Penetration was equal to the Black Hills Ammunition non-expanding load; however, accuracy was not as good. We feel that the LeHigh-designed all-copper bullet used in the Black Hills ammunition has greater potential for doing damage due to its construction. The Ruger ARX is more affordable.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A

Fiocchi Shooting Dynamics 380 ACP 90-Grain JHP 380APHP, $17.50/50 @ MidwayUSA.com

This Fiocchi load doesn't use the XTP bullet, although Fiocchi also offers a 90-grain Extrema load using the XTP bullet. This load was typical of 90-grain JHP loads, although faster than the HPR and FTX loads at 927 fps. Penetration is 12 inches, tied with the Winchester Defend and the Hornady XTP. Expansion is reasonable, though the jacketed hollowpoint bullet generally separated from its jacket. There are two advantages to this load: price and quality control. It is more affordable than most, coming in at 35 cents a round.

GUN TESTS GRADE: A-



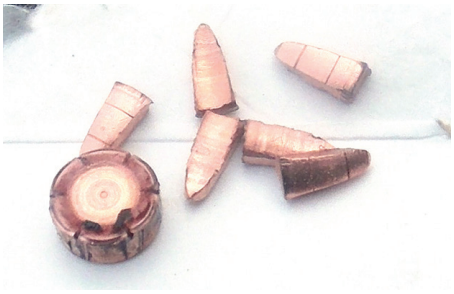


Winchester's JHP offered rapid expansion. We would have liked more penetration.





The RIP loading peeled off its petals. Penetration was shallow.



We fired five RIP loads to collect six petals from the water. Most exited the jug.

Cor-Bon DPX 380 ACP 80-Grain DPX Hollow Point DPX38080/20, $24/20 @ MidwayUSA.com

This ammunition has been very hard to find at the time of the writing. The Cor-Bon jacketed hollowpoint uses an all-copper bullet. The price is reasonable for an all-copper JHP, in our view. This is load is fast at 1104 fps on average. Accuracy and function were acceptable. The Cor-Bon load is tough to rate because penetration was adequate, but expansion was disappointing at .46 caliber. Expansion was typically one shard outstretched. However, the load did expand and did penetrate adequately. The slower and more affordable HPR JHP was nearly as good a performer. The HST was clearly superior in the JHP loads, so the Cor-Bon load suffers in comparison.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Hornady Critical Defense 380 ACP 90-Grain Flex Tip eXpanding $20/25

The Critical Defense was designed for civilian scenarios rather than police scenarios, according to Hornady, and offers good expansion in most situations. The red plug in the nose was found floating in the water jugs as we tested this bullet. It travels with the bullet and instigates expansion. However, this bullet did not expand as well as the XTP in the jugs. Penetration was an inch less on average and expansion slightly less as well.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

HPR HyperClean Ammunition 380 ACP 90-Grain Hornady XTP JHP, $31/50

This load is accurate, clean burning, and offers good function. We ran across an interesting expansion threshold in this loading. It is 49 fps on average slower than the Hornady XTP loading, which uses the same bullet. As a result the HPR load exhibited .45-inch expansion versus .52 inch with the Hornady load, but also penetrated an inch deeper. One shooter or the other may prefer either load. Overall, it is an affordable and credible choice that lost a step on expansion.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

Winchester W Defend Reduced Recoil 380 ACP 95-Grain JHP, $20/20 @ MidwayUSA.com

The Winchester jacketed hollowpoint exhibited good function, a clean powder burn, and good accuracy. Expansion is good, and second only to the Federal HST. However, penetration at 11 inches was on the lower end of what we like in a defense load. The load has its good points, but we rated it down based on penetration.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B

G2 Research RIP 380 ACP 62-Grain Hollow Point, $36.40 @ AmmunitionDepot.com

This load promised 1250 fps and delivered 1280 fps on average from the Baby Rock. However, velocity ranged from 1260 to 1320 fps with a high deviation. Accuracy was not great, but no worse than some of the other loads. Energy was the second highest, just short of the Federal HST. The bullet is an all-copper design with six petals. The petals are designed to break off during penetration and travel on their separate path. Each petal weighs about 6 grains, which does not install confidence in their ability to penetrate. The base traveled to about 6 to 9 inches in water. The shards were found in the first water jug. Some exited the jugs, so claims of radial dispersion seem borne out. The bullet is sharp, so caution must be applied when loading the magazines, and the Baby Rock has stiff magazines. Feed reliability was perfect. The low penetration puts this load toward the bottom, and the high price isn't consummate with its performance, in our opinion. This load would be useful for pests at short range, as it is highly unlikely to ricochet in one whole piece.

GUN TESTS GRADE: B-

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

Ruger Aims to Expand Support For In-House Suppressor Line

The company announced it will supply replacement threaded barrels for its SR22 pistols. Also, the 6.5-300 W'by cartridge is now official, and Daniel Defense's 308 Win. rifle is available.

Ruger is rolling out additional support for its new line of rimfire suppressors, the Silent-SR 22 line.

The Ruger Silent-SR sound suppressor was designed and built by Ruger utilizing fluid dynamic simulation and computer numeric controlled (CNC) machining equipment. Based on samples we've handled, the Ruger Silent-SR is easy to disassemble and clean. Each piece snaps together to seal the baffles and keep the byproducts of combustion away from the tube and end caps.

It is also strong and light, utilizing a titanium tube, aluminum rear cap, and stainless steel threaded mount, baffles and front cap. It measures 5.37 inches in length, 1.1-inch in diameter, and weighs 6.3 ounces.

Of course, what matters is how it reduces sound pressure levels of 22 LR, 22 WMR and 17 HMR pistols and rifles by up to 40 dB. It features a standard ½-28 thread pattern for compatibility with most threaded rimfire firearms.

The outer tube and muzzle mount are interlocked to prevent accidental disassembly when removing the suppressor from your firearm. A disassembly tool is included.

Also, Ruger is making it easier to attach the suppressor to your existing SR22 pistol.

The Ruger SR22 Threaded Barrel Kit 90520, $150, is a genuine Ruger factory accessory compatible with Ruger SR22 pistols bearing serial numbers 361-7XXXX and higher.

The threaded barrel accepts any ½-28 (Class 2A) muzzle device, including the Ruger Silent-SR. This kit contains a factory-manufactured stainless steel barrel for optimal fit and function. Barrel changing is quick and easy with no gunsmithing required, and a barrel cap, adapter, and wrench included. Note that the replacement barrel does not fit the 4.5-inch-length barrel model.









From top: Ruger's rimfire suppressors are the Silent-SR 22 line.They reduce sound-pressure levels of 22 LR, 22 WMR and 17 HMR pistols and rifles by up to 40 dB. The Ruger SR22 Threaded Barrel Kit 90520, $150, fits SR22 pistols with serial numbers 361-7XXXX and higher. The barrel features a standard 1/2"-28 thread pattern. Barrel changing is quick and easy with no gunsmithing required.

Worth noting: Ruger cannot bill to or ship to the following states and cities: California, Connecticut, Washington DC, New York, and Chicago, IL.

SAAMI Announces Acceptance of the 6.5-300 Weatherby Magnum Cartridge

The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI), the firearms and ammunition industry's technical standards-setting organization, recently announced the acceptance of a new cartridge and chamber, the 6.5-300 Weatherby, introduced by Weatherby, Inc.

In keeping with Weatherby's DNA, this is a high-velocity centerfire rifle cartridge that, when combined with high Ballistic Coefficient (BC) projectiles, targets the bolt-action rifle, long-range shooting market.

"Our combined industries are driven by mechanical and ballistic engineering innovation," said Randy Bimson, director of technical affairs and technical advisor of SAAMI. "SAAMI takes great pride in the fact that our industry's engineers and ballistic laboratory staff are among the most knowledgeable and skilled in their field and continue to routinely bring new and innovative products to the market."

SAAMI was founded in 1926 at the request of the federal government and tasked with coordinating the industry's technical data, creating and publishing industry standards



for interchangeability, reliability, performance, quality and product safety and promote safe and responsible use of firearms.



Daniel Defense Releases Ambush 308 Win. Hunting Rifle

Daniel Defense has released a new 308 Winchester rifle designed specifically for North American hunters: The Daniel Defense Ambush 308 in Kryptek Highlander. With an MSRP of $2949, it is available from stocking Daniel Defense dealers.

At the rifle's core is a free-floating, 18-inch cold hammer forged barrel, which comes standard with Daniel Defense's Superior Suppression Device Extended, for reduced muzzle-flash. This barrel connects directly to the upper receiver and free-floating KeyMod handguard with a 4-Bolt Connection System and patent-pending barrel extension. DD claims this results in increased stability, better accuracy, and reduced weight. The Ambush 308 is fed via a bolt carrier group featuring a redesigned geometry and a slick, low-friction coating that ensure smooth, reliable feeding under most any circumstances.

Ambidextrous controls make operating the rifle — including dropping the magazine, releasing the bolt, and switching the safety selector — intuitive and comfortable for right- and left-handed shooters. The charging handle is also ambidextrous, as well as user-configurable, and can be set up on either side with a larger or smaller handle to accommodate magnified optics or iron sights for a snag-free setup.

A 2-Stage Geissele Super Semi-Automatic (SSA) Trigger is the fire-control let-off. The configurable Daniel Defense Ambush 308 has an overall length between 35.375 inches and 39 inches, depending on buttstock adjustment, and weighs 8.6 pounds empty. Its rail system features a 15-inch Picatinny top rail and KeyMods at the 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions. The rifle is available in multiple colors /patterns, including Kryptek Highlander, with plans to offer it in Realtree Xtra pattern soon.

Located in Black Creek, Georgia, Daniel Defense has two locations and a combined 137,000 square feet of manufacturing space.

Kahr Arms Introduces Two Gold Handguns, Free Magazine Promotion, New Cerakoted Handguns

Kahr Arms introduced a number of mid-year products Gun Tests readers may want to know about:

Sports South will offer a limited-edition Cerakote Gold double-action CT3833CG micro-compact pistol in 380 ACP. You'll have to ask your local FFL to order the Cerakote Gold finish, which can only be purchased through Sports South.

The CT3833CG features a 3-inch conventionally rifled barrel, an overall length of 5.5 inches, a height of 4.4 inches, and weighs 11.4 ounces. The pistol has a black polymer frame and a stainless steel slide. The gold features can be found on the slide, trigger, and the slide-stop lever. It ships with two 7-round magazines and has a MSRP of $439.

A similarly finished pistol, the CW3833CG in 380 ACP, is offered through Davidson's. The CW3833CG features a 2.58-inch conventional rifled barrel, an overall length of 4.96 inches, a height of 3.9 inches, and it weighs 10.2 ounces. The pistol has a black polymer frame and a stainless steel slide. It is shipped with two magazines and has a MSRP of $439 as well.

If the Cerakote Gold is too flashy for you, Kahr has also introduced "Black Armor" 9mm and 45 ACP handguns, the CM9 and the CM45, respectively. Officially called



Top row, left to right, are Kahr's "Black Armor"-finished CM4543CB 45 ACP and the CM9093CB 9mm. The finish is officially called Cerakote H-190 Armor Black. On bottom, left to right, are two 380 ACPs offered in a limited-edition Cerakote Gold finish. At left is the double-action CT3833CG and on the right is the CW3833CG. All are distributor exclusives, which means your dealer has to order them.

Cerakote H-190 Armor Black, the pistol has a flat-black stainless-steel slide with a black textured polymer grip and black appointments.

Both the CM9093CB and CM4543CB were developed exclusively for MGE Wholesale. Consumers can ask their favorite firearms dealer to purchase these exclusive models from MGE Wholesale.

The 9mm features a 3.1-inch barrel, black polymer frame, and a stainless steel slide, coated in matte-finish Cerakote Armor Black. The 45 ACP pistol features a 3.34-inch barrel and also has a black polymer frame and stainless steel slide in Cerakote Armor Black. The overall length on the CM9 is 5.42 inches and 5.79 inches on the CM45. The weight on the 9mm is 14 ounces and the 45 ACP is 17.3 ounces. The 9mm has a 6+1 capacity and the 45 has a 5+1 capacity. Both handguns offer a trigger-cocking DAO function, lock breech, "Browning-type" recoil lug, and a passive striker block with no magazine disconnect. Both guns have drift adjustable white bar-dot combat rear sights with a pinned-in polymer front sight. The MSRP on either the CM9093CB or the CM4543CB is $487.

Also, Kahr Firearms Group is kicking off a free magazine promotion on many of its Kahr 40 S&W pistols. To qualify, just purchase a Kahr 40 S&W until September 30, 2016 and Kahr will send one free magazine.

This 2016 summer promotion is only offered on Kahr 40 S&W pistols which include model numbers: CM4043, CW4043, CT4043, PM4043, PM4043N, PM4044, PM4044N, PM4143, PM4143N, KP4043, KP4043N, KP4044, KP4044N, KP4143, KP4143N, M4043, M4043N, M4048, M4048N, K4043, K4043N, K4044, K4044N, K4048, and K4048N.



To receive a coupon for a free magazine, log onto the Kahr website at Kahr.com/MagPromo2016.asp and fill out the online form or download the coupon, fill it out and mail, email, or fax it along with a copy of the firearm receipt and the firearm serial number. The new firearm must have been purchased during the summer promotion period to qualify.



Traditions Firearms Now Shipping Crackshot Rifle Line

Old Saybrook, Connecticut-based Traditions Performance Firearms is now shipping the Crackshot rifles, which are single-shot models available in 22 LR or 17 HMR with new 20-inch barrel lengths. This gives the small-game hunter a choice between 16.5-inch or the new 20-inch barrels.

Also, all Crackshot rifles now come with an easy takedown feature that allows the sling stud to be removed and used as a tool to remove the forend and barrel for a convenient backpack carrying option without the need of carrying extra tools.

The Crackshot weighs just over 4 pounds. Its Dual Safety System includes a hammer-block safety and manual trigger block safety. There is also a youth version available for children and small-framed shooters. The Crackshot comes with a one-piece base for mounting an optic and is available in a variety of camo patterns and finishes. MSRPs for all Crackshot models range from $219 to $354.

SIG Sauer Announces Relocation of Ammunition Manufacturing to Jacksonville, Arkansas

SIG Sauer, Inc. has finalized plans to relocate its ammunition manufacturing operation from Eubank, Kentucky to a permanent site in Jacksonville, Arkansas. This follows a preliminary announcement by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson at the 2016 Las Vegas SHOT Show.

SIG Sauer will relocate its Elite Performance Ammunition manufacturing operation to an existing, and soon-to-be renovated, building in Jacksonville and anticipates employing 50 people in the initial relocation phase, with additional jobs planned for the future. The new site provides significant room for expansion, a key factor in the company's decision to relocate to Jacksonville.

"We have been searching for a permanent relocation site for our ammunition division for several years and now, coupled with an excellent physical location and exceptional economic incentives provided by the State of Arkansas, we have found the ideal site," said Dan Powers, president of the SIG Sauer Ammunition Division. "The new location in Jacksonville gives us the room we need to expand as we continue to grow and is also beneficial from a shipping and logistical standpoint. SIG Sauer is committed to becoming a major player in the world-wide ammunition markets. Our advanced technology will allow SIG Sauer to design and develop world-class, precision-performance ammunition, and our new facility will ensure room for even more state-of-the-art equipment, and a much larger ballistics test lab to facilitate our manufacturing and R&D processes."

SIG SAUER® when it counts®

SIG Sauer anticipates being up and running in the new Jacksonville ammunition facility by the end of the year. SIG Sauer also makes silencers, optics, airguns, and other accessories.

LaserLyte Trigger Tyme Revolver

LaserLyte is introducing the



next generation of its Trigger Tyme laser training handgun replicas, the Laser Trainer Revolver. The Trigger Tyme Revolver was designed with a familiar size, feel, and balance of Smith & Wesson J-frames and Taurus Model 85 revolvers, so it fits into standard holsters for quick-draw training. It also gives shooters the same grip angle and trigger pull for the most realistic laser training experience. The integrated muzzle laser is activated by a 5.5-pound trigger pull, giving instant feedback on shot placement and is compatible with any LaserLyte Trainer Target. The trigger-activated laser module is a 650 NM, 5MW, Class IIIA device that takes three A76 batteries to operating, giving the training revolver a 50,000-shot life before new juice is needed. It weighs 11 ounces and is made of high-impact ABS polymer. It measures 6.5 inches in length, 1.35 inches in width, and stands 4.3 inches tall. Of course, the $150 MSRP Trigger Tyme Laser Revolver LT-TT85 cannot accept live ammunition.

Receiver-Mounted Shell Carrier for Remington, Mossberg Pumps

Nampa, Idaho–based Adaptive Tactical, LLC has released its new Receiver-Mounted Shell Carrier for both Remington and Mossberg pump-action shotguns.



The design allows for quick access storage for up to six 12-gauge shells on the left side of the receiver.

The shell carrier is made from synthetic rubber that will flex to hold shells securely without losing its shape over time. This easy-to-install and nonpermanent design will keep shells close to the receiver for faster reloads while reducing the risk of snags. The streamlined, lightweight Receiver Mounted Shell Carrier features a shaped mounting plate, which fits closely to the receiver's contours.

The Receiver Mounted Shell Carrier for Remington Shotguns is compatible with Remington's 870, 1100, and 11-87 lines, as well as Mossberg 500, 88 and 590 models. Both carriers are 6.75 inches long and weigh 5.3 ounces.

Meopta Introduces New MeoRed Reflex Sight

Meopta's new MeoRed compact reflex sight is the company's smallest such device, and it has a lower profile than its predecessor, the MeoSight III, allowing users to co-witness with most iron sights. The sight is parallax free and weighs just over an ounce, so it allows fast, close-quarter target acquisition with both eyes open and accurate shooting on the move.

Designed for use on handguns with cutout slides, AR platforms, or shotguns, the MeoRed is positioned for tactical use, as well as three-gun competitions, target shooting, and hunting close-range moving game, such as hogs. It is made from aircraft-grade aluminum alloy and is fully waterproof and shockproof.

The MeoRed comes with an integrated MIL-STD 1913 mount in addition to an interface plate for a Docter mount and features easy to use windage (180 moa) and elevation (120 moa) adjustments. Illumination of the 3-moa red dot is activated by pushing the control button located on the left side of the sight and the



brightness level of the red dot is continuous and adjustable. To turn the unit off, press the button and hold.

The MeoRed is powered by one CR 2032 battery for up to 300 hours of run time and features a low-battery indicator dot that signals when the battery is running low. There is also an auto-off function that turns the unit off after three hours of continuous operation if the function button has not been touched. The battery compartment is on the right side of the sight and can be accessed without taking the sight off the gun. It is secured with two screws, ensuring constant battery contact during extreme recoil. About $520 MSRP.

Cabot Pandemonium Is a One-Of-A-Kind Engraved Pistol

In 1981, Otto Carter was an art student at Texas' Abilene Christian University. One day, a friend showed Carter his recently purchased 1873 Colt single-action revolver commemorating the Abilene Centennial. It was engraved by Weldon Lister using 1800s-style scrollwork. Carter was entranced.

After earning his bachelor of fine arts degree, Carter continued as a sign painter at Ellison Edwards Sign Co. But he never forgot the beauty and artistry of that Colt. In 2002, further inspired by James B. Meek's The Art of Engraving, Carter took a firearms engraving course led by FEGA Master Mike Dubber. The seed planted by the Colt took root.

"Engraving has a steep learning curve," Carter admits with a laugh, "It takes years of patient perseverance to master." Carter applied his growing talents to a range of objects, including

– continued on page 32

– *continued from page 31*

motorcycles, watches, jewelry and firearms. After thousands of hours of dedicated labor, Carter earned the title Master Engraver.

His engraving career began with traditional scrollwork. "You can't play jazz without first learning music theory," Carter says. His journey into non-traditional firearms engraving began with a Celtic design laboriously carved into a revolver handgun. It opened-up a world of possibilities. Carter began engraving a variety of non-traditional designs on firearms: snakeskin, cattle brands, tribal symbols and skulls and flames (inspired by art work commissioned by Big Daddy Roth).

Carter's firearms engraving reached new heights with two recent pieces. In 2014, he engraved a Bond Arms Derringer in the Aztec style, complete with a matching ring. In 2015, he completed an H.R. Geiger-inspired 1911 (a firearm for which Carter has a special affection). In 2016, 1911 manufacturer Cabot Guns saw Carter's Geiger gun and approached the engraver with an open-ended commission.

Carter agreed to engrave the Cabot 1911 inspired by a little-known design



language from the Victorian era. "I've been fascinated by the Aesthetic Movement for years," Carter says. "It doesn't have the rhythmic flowing patterns of traditional scrollwork. It has a chaotic composition, with large fields broken up by geometric brackets and banners separating different pattern motifs."

"We're delighted with the result," Cabot Founder and President Rob Bianchin opines. "It's a unique piece that required over 150 hours of concentrated effort from one of the world's most skilled and creative firearms engravers."

Christened "Pandemonium," the Carter-engraved Cabot 1911 has been purchased by a dealer for resale. If interested, send an email to info@cabotguns.com and the company will forward your contact information to the dealer who is holding "Pandemonium." **GT**

COMING UP IN GUN TESTS

● Three AR Pistols: Kel-Tec PLR-16, Spike's Tactical The Jack, and CMMG Mk4 K. We test three AR-style pistols that run the spectrum from a full-out custom build to a dirt cheap — relatively speaking — polymer model.

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