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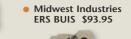
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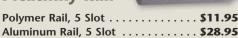
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"I STILL DON'T HAVE A FACE, AND I WILL NEVER HAVE A BODY. BUT I AM A GIANT."

BY DOUG JEFFREY

I don't have a face. Nor do I have a body.

My mind is non-existent, yet I am one of the most powerful things on earth. My influence extends to every corner of the globe. I impact the young, and I impact the old.

Most of the year, however, I am just a sleeping giant. I lay peacefully, and I lay quietly. Nobody disturbs me because nobody dares. When the winter calendar rolls into January, restlessness begins as my slumber ends. When I am fully awake, a mere three weeks later, I become the largest and most powerful presence in the firearms industry.

THE START

I came into this world 37 years ago. I was born in the Midwest, and more than 5,000 people from all over the world came to see me on that day. There were visitors from every state and more than 100 countries.

In the ensuing years, I moved from state to state. There was Georgia, Louisiana, Texas. Everywhere I went, people followed. At that time, no one could envision what the future held. No one could ever have imagined that I would become the giant that I am today.

MODERN DAY

On my most recent birthday, I had the largest turnout ever—some 64,000 people. In terms of size, the party encompassed more than 630,000 square feet—the equivalent of more than 13 acres. Put in perspective, this is the same amount of space the New Orleans Superdome or the base of the Great Pyramid of Giza cover.

If you had walked from one end to the other of my celebration, you would have covered 12.5 miles, virtually the distance of a half marathon. During the festivities, fans spent more than \$88 million. I remain a giant.

STILL STRONG

Today, almost four decades since my birth, I am stronger than ever. Just look at the numbers. Soak in the followers. People's desire to see me has not waned, and they continue to celebrate a lifestyle that they will never give up.

True, I still don't have a face, and I will never have a body. But I am a giant. I am the SHOT Show.

Live strong.

FIREPOWER

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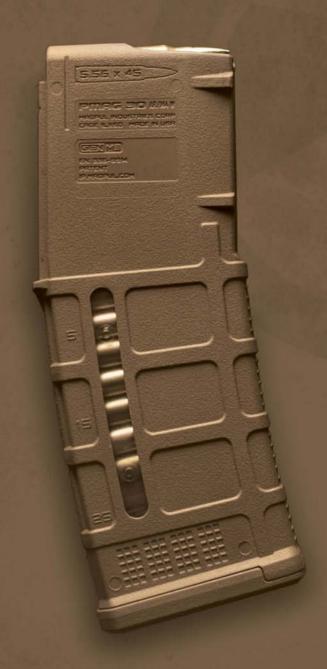
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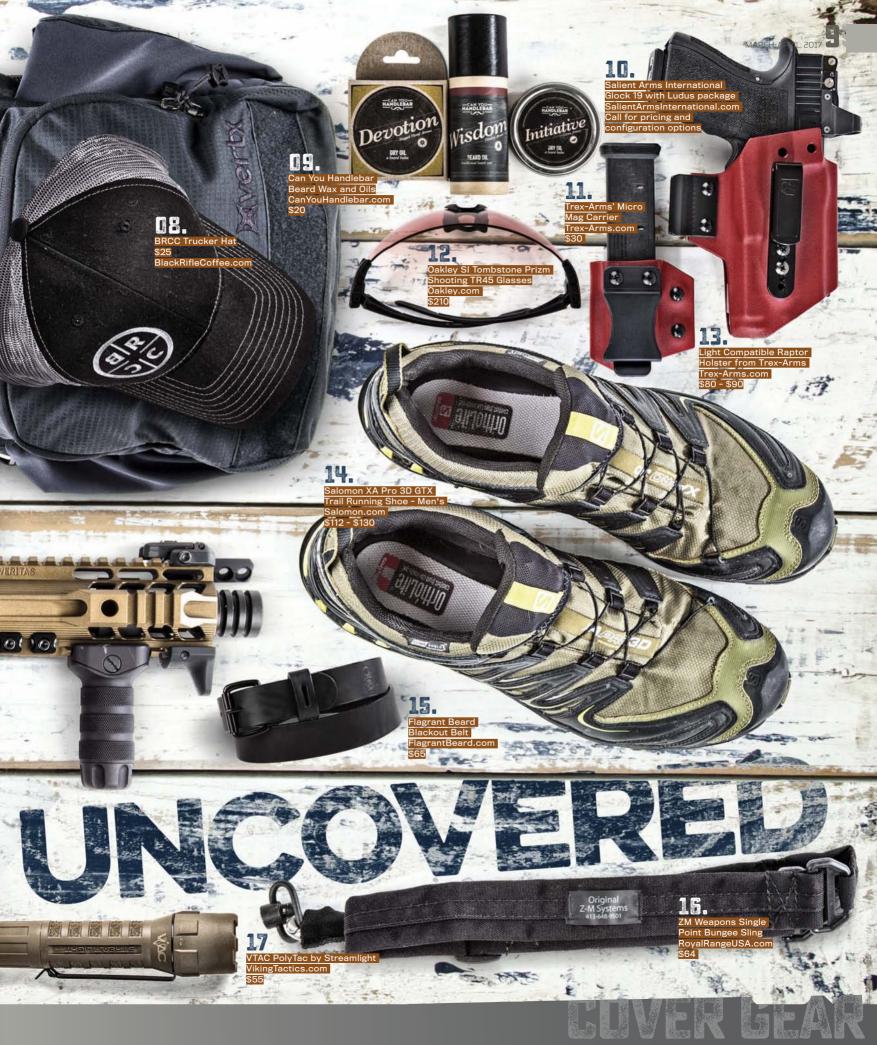


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05 [04]

O1. HOLOSUN/ HS515CU CIRCLE DOT & SOLAR

When Holosun set the HS515CU down on the conference room desk and told us to check it out, things got a little embarrassing. In other words, we had to wipe the drool away before we got it all over this micro red dot sight. Here's why it's so awesome. The 6.3-ounce micro red dot sight has the option of a 2MOA dot only or a 2MOA dot with a 65MOA circle reticle pattern. Showcasing new LED technology, the battery can reach 2 years, even if it's left on 24/7. It also has a motion sensor that will let it sleep if left motionless for 10 minutes. But, the solar technology and automatic brightness can extend the battery life. The housing material is aluminum, and the U signifies a housing design that shrouds the windage and elevation turrets on two sides. It also features a flip-up lens cover, a quick release mount and a kill flash filter.

\$350 HOLOSUN.COM

DB. BM/ PELTOR TACTICAL 100

We don't know about you, but we're fascinated by the technology that goes into "ears." So, when we had a chance to talk to a couple of the engineers about the Peltor Tactical 100, we were all over that. In essence, the ears suppress the gunshot noise while amplifying the low-level noise. Their Adaptive Frequency Response reduces background noise for clearer conversations. And there's more. They created this thing called Variable Suppression Time, and that provides optimal echo reduction when shooting indoors. The 100's also have a tethered battery door, a sleek and streamlined design, improved noise reduction rating and enhanced electronics. The noise reduction rating is 22, and these heavyweights weigh in at a grand total of 16 ounces.

STARTING AT \$80 3M.COM

05. ELITE SURVIVAL SYSTEMS/AVENGER **GUNPACK**

Designed to carry on the belt, with the handle or over the shoulder, the GunPack is constructed of 1000 denier nylon. The main compartment includes an adjustable holster to fit most handguns. It also has MOLLE straps on the side.

ELITESURVIVAL.COM

D2. MTM CASE-GARD/ ACR4 AMMO CRATE LITILITY ROX

Good things really do come in small packages. The ACR4 Ammo Crate Utility Box is designed for ammo storage, but you can mix things up a little and throw in survival, shooting or hunting gear, too. This 17.2x10.7x5.5-inch box is a brute.
Constructed of high-impact polypropylene plastic, the ACR4 has two extra-strong handles that enable you to carry as much as 65 pounds of gear inside. Not only does it have a stackable design, but it is double padlock tabbed for security. The 570-cubic inch crate is ideal for one flat or 10 boxes of 12-gauge target loads. For ATV attachment, it has four tie-down points.

STARTING AT \$17 MTMCASE-GARD.COM

04. HOG SADDLE/ MNN7 HNG SANNI F

This rifle rest is tailored to special operations and law enforcement. Designed by a Marine Scout Sniper and OIF veteran, the HOG Saddle (green rest), CNC machined from aluminum, is designed to be rugged so it's impact- and corrosion-resistant. At 15.8 ounces, it's portable. It's also versatile, as it is universal to any tripod that has 1/4-20 or 3/8-16 thread attachments. It also opens 1/4-inch wider than the original model, and it features a retention button screw that prevents accidental disassembly in the field. It has 1/4-inch-thick recessed urethane pads engineered to absorb recoil. (The PIG Saddle is also shown.)

\$309 HOGSADDLE.COM

DG. FAB-DEFENSE/ SSR-25 SNIPER STOCK

If it's sniper related, it's cool. The SSR-25 is no exception. The SR-25/M16, which is made of reinforced polymer composite and 6061 hard-anodized aluminum, has an adjustable cheek rest with seven height options, and it is 125mm high. For rapid deployment, it features a two-stage screw-based monopod. To optimize a sniper's posture, aim and stability, the SSR, which weighs 550 grams and is 290mm long, runs an ergonomic design. It also has a MIL-spec EPDM rubber buttpad.

STARTING AT \$194 FAB-DEFENSE.COM & THEMAKOGROUP.COM

BLADE LENGTH

5.21 INCHES

BLADE THICKNESS

0.190 INCHES

BLADE HRC

58/60

BLADE FINISH UNPOLISHED GRAY

BLADE MATERIAL

8CR13MOV HIGH CARBON STAINLESS STEEL

SCHRADE SHASTAMCNASI

This is a looker. No doubt. It is just one nasty, wicked blade. In a self-defense situation, this McNasty will get the job done. It pretty much says, "Stand back." And the message is very clear.

SCHRADE.COM

SEE

HANDLE MATERIAL

TP

OVERALL LENGTH

8.39 INCHES

OVERALL WEIGHT

8.96 OUNCES

BY A STAFF WRITER | PHOTOS BY HENRY DE KUYPER

0

0

0

0

BLADE LENGTH

3.2 INCHES

BLADE THICKNESS

0.125 INCHES

BLADE HRC

57/59

HANDLE MATERIAL

BLACK G-10 EPOXY, GLASS LAMINATE BLACK OR SILVER

BLADE MATERIAL

154 CM PREMIUM BLADE STEEL

EMERSON KARAMBIT SE

If you're one of those cats who does not like moving parts, you're going to dig this one. Emerson's SF Fixed Blade Karambit is based on the claw of a tiger, and you know how unstoppable those are. There are a few other words that can be attached to this, too, such as efficient and reliable. And let's be honest. It's got a whole lotta wicked, as well.

EMERSONKNIVES.COM

\$264

OVERALL LENGTH

Street earth

7.6 INCHES

OVERALL WEIGHT

6.4 OUNCES

NEW KNIVES

A STATE OF THE STA

ALL THE KING'S MEN

FROM "DAGGER 22" BY MICHAEL GOLEMBESKY. COPYRIGHT © 2016 BY THE AUTHOR AND REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, LLC; US.MACMILLAN.COM. PHOTO BY GUVENDEMIR @ GETTYIMAGES.COM

wo AK-47s opened up. The rounds made a whistling sound as they passed closely overhead. The gunmen were close. The sound of the weapons' interworkings could be heard, not muffled by distance, like two metal pipes being slapped together.

Everyone moved to cover while a few commandos pulling security on Main Street engaged. They returned fire on a walled compound directly west of them. Small puffs of dirt drew everyone's eyes onto the target as the commandos' rounds smacked the wall, forcing the gunmen to go to the ground inside the structure.

"Compound, three o'clock, hundred meters, two dudes!" someone yelled out.

The ground force held their position. Phil was not going to allow them to be drawn into another compound again. That lesson had been learned. No, these remaining fighters were trapped and in no rush to leave the security of the compound in broad daylight. The ground force maintained a steady stream of suppressive fire on the area.

Yuri had already started working on targeting the compound. There would be no stalemate this time, no bogged-down momentum ... just one simple bomb.

The remaining fighters hiding in the shelter must have spooked when they saw the ground force moving back into the area. This induced them into firing the first shots rather than waiting to be discovered. It would have only been a matter of time before they were discovered by the commandos getting ready to sweep the area for survivors. The Taliban's only option was to sit, wait, and hold their fire until they felt their luck had run out.

Andy pushed Dagger 22's vehicles all the way back down to the north side of Cemetery Hill after parting ways with the ground force and ATVs. They were set up in a blocking position to cut off any escape route into the hills.

Phil declared troops in contact over SATCOM. It only took a few minutes for the SOTF air officer to get a section of aircraft retasked and routed to BMG. Everyone in the valley knew that air was on station; the crackling sound of the engines vibrated through the

clouds and filled the morning sky. Back at the FOB, the sound drew spectators from out of their tents and work areas to see what was going on. After the all-out-brawl in Daneh Pasab on April 6, it was safe to assume that they were about to see another large explosion.

Inside the TOC, all three radio nets chattered away at the same time as I listened in. It was like an orchestra warming up for a performance—Bernie called out directions over the team frequency, while Phil was making the case for a bomb drop to the SOTF, and Yuri checked in the fast movers circling overhead. They were all different instruments getting ready to come together to perform a deadly song for the last fleeting remnants of the Taliban's presence in Daneh Pasab. The music was about to start. You could feel it in the air.

"Yuri, we're good," Phil said, after getting approval to drop on the compound from the SOTF.

This was the same building that George and Billy had used during their second night mission down into Daneh Pasab. Yuri already had a grid to the target compound but wanted a more precise one to pass up to the aircraft. The pilots were once again flying blind to the battlefield below by the stationary cloud layer that seemed to never go away.

OBJECTIVES

MISSION
Stop a potential spring offensive by the Taliban

U.S. Army Special Forces, Afghan Commandos and Marine Corps Special Operations Team 8222

LOCATION

Daneh Pasab, Afghanistan

TIME OF DAY Morning

"HALO, stand by to copy grid," Yuri called the two-story building used to be. Yuri knew this bomb would be coming in really a better position to recalculate the grid using the PSS-SOF (precision strike suite, special operations forces) program on my computer.

All two-dimensional maps and imagery inherently have a certain amount of error in them. Most predominant is in elevation it's unavoidable. By using the PSS-SOF program, I was able to refine the location and elevation of the target to a more precise degree, which made for a safer and more accurate strike on the ground.

It took me about two minutes to rework the ten-digit coordinates and pass it back to him. I listened as Yuri radioed the 9-line to the aircraft and waited for the read-back of the grid to ensure it was the same. Yuri may have been the one calling in the 9-line and clearing the aircraft for release, but I was the one who generated the grid that was being dialed into the bomb. If it was wrong, it would be more my fault.

JTACs looked out for each other, because we all knew that tragedy was only one control

"Read back correct," said Yuri. "DUDE one-

Hearing that, I grabbed my handheld radio off the charging station and ran out the door to the TOC. I wanted to see the impact. I needed to see it. This bomb landing on target represented the end of the Taliban's presence in Daneh Pasab. The remaining fighters were pinned down in a building, and the F-15 had a 10-digit grid to it. This was it.

I scrambled around and climbed up the side of the shipping container to get a view. Standing on top, I could barely see over the multiple rows of lush trees that lay between the FOB and the impact location. I couldn't see the structure but still would be able to see if the bomb detonated in the right vicinity.

The late morning air was hot and stifling. It slowly cooked the area under a thin blanket of clouds just thick enough to block the view of the ground from the aircraft's camera, but translucent enough to allow the heat from the sun to penetrate, causing a greenhouse effect in the valley.

I stood and watched, waiting to hear the call the ground force was so close to the target grid, less than two hundred meters, Yuri made the decision to use a GBU-38, a fivehundred-pound JDAM with a .05-millisecond delay on it. It would have just the right amount of delay and explosives to punch through the dense mud roof and blow out the building from the inside.

"DUDE one-one, in from the north. DUDE one-one, cleared hot."

The crackling sound of the fast-moving aircraft rattled the sky over the FOB, followed shortly by a large rising plume of smoke to the south. A few seconds later, the loud thump of the detonation reverberated north toward us. Cheers and hollers could be heard emanating from around the FOB, as spectators of all nationalities looked on from the Hesco perimeter walls.

"Target," Yuri called, informing the pilot that the bomb hit where it was intended to.

The JDAM had punched right through the center of the one-level building and exploded inside. The blast blew out all four walls and collapsed the roof, which was almost fully intact. The last remaining fighters were dead, either vaporized or crushed, or a little of both. And just like that, all gunfire ceased.







COMPETITIVE SHOOTING

BY NICO DETOUR, PHOTOS BY JAIMEE ITAGAKI



Every stage presented challenges, said Detour (left). The Marine vetera added that it's important to learn from each competition so you can go into the next match stronger.

It's a feeling you can't ignore. It starts early in your shooting career and seems to grow on a daily basis. As your skills expand, so does the feeling. Every time you go the range it seems to grab hold of you tighter and tighter.

Finally, you can stand it no more. You have to go to the next level and compete. You have to see how your skills match up against the others, and challenge yourself to improve even more.

In the following stories, you'll read a firsthand account of a retired Marine Corps veteran's first venture into competitive shooting. He will also reveal 8 key items you need to know before you lunge into the world of competitive shooting. And finally, a professional shooter addresses the skills you need to enjoy success on the competition circuit.

— Editor

Here I stand in the middle of the Nevada desert, preparing to drag a wooden man-like dummy they call "Leroy" 25 feet. In my head, I am also preparing my next DOPEs and target-engagement plan. There is also a possibility I was trying to formulate a way to boost up my height.

Being 5 feet 7 inches, I knew I would have a better chance shooting over the 5 ½-foot dog house if I suddenly gained a few feet, but I would settle for a few inches, too.

The mischievous match director was not very friendly to those of us that are, shall we say, "vertically challenged." I opted to drag Leroy an extra five feet and let him give me a hand. By hand, I mean torso, which I used as a stepping stool, so I wouldn't need to be on my tiptoes and balance to take my shot.

NEW TO THE GAME

Being a new competitive shooter, I had to think outside the box on almost every stage. My mindset of the Marine Corps static firing line was not going to come into play during this three-day competition. Luckily, much like the Marine Corps, I had a great squad I could bounce ideas off of.

All of the competitors in my squads were

highly experienced and very helpful. It was a huge benefit to have people around who could provide insight to a strategy at each stage. Having multiple ideas to build on helped me figure out what I felt would work the best

Every stage presented its own unique challenges ... from timing my shots on a spinner target, to trying to find a stable position on a ladder six feet in the air. To me, the biggest challenge was in the sequences in which you shoot and the rounds count per target. The sequences constantly transition from anything from near to far, or left to right, or right to left or whatever crazy order the match director decided. I learned, firsthand, how important it is to follow the sequence. If you didn't follow the sequence, it would result in a missed shot, thus limiting your chances to score hits.

FELLOW SHOOTERS

The shooters are what really made the whole experience. Over the course of the match, we got to know each other, and we shared countless laughs as we progressed from stage to stage. Even though we were technically competitors, everyone was willing to lend a hand to help one another. If your kestrel broke and you lost all your data, if you were short on rounds toward the last stages, or if you simply needed advice on the upcoming stage, they were willing to help.

These fine ladies and gents made the whole experience worthwhile during my first precision rifle match. I look forward to shooting with them all again.

— Nico Detour

"MY MINDSET OF THE MARINE CORPS STATIC FIRING LINE WAS NOT GOING TO COME INTO PLAY DURING THIS THREE-DAY COMPETITION." Nico Detour is new to the competition game, but he is anything but unfamiliar with shooting.

The 28-year-old Southern California resident is a Marine veteran who deployed to Afghanistan. After four years in the Marine Corps, he retired as an E4 corporal. In the civilian world, he is a firearms and marksmanship instructor for U.S. Optics, and he has been competing in small-time shooting matches for close to three years. He has also been competing in Competition Dynamic matches and Precision Rifle Series (PRS) matches, where he recently won the tactical division.

In the following story, Detour reveals key items you need to know before you break into the competition circuit.

WHO CAN COMPETE?

Anyone can compete, as long as you are 14 or older. Of course, the organizations don't want to babysit, so an adult should not drive off and leave a younger shooter alone

For the entry-level guy, all you need is a rifle and a scope. Come out, do your best and have a good time.

CLUB OR INDIVIDUAL?

The purists will tell you that competition is individual-based, but the team events are by far my favorite matches. In these, the competitors hike to get to the various stages, where you find your target and shoot. These are more challenging.

To determine which organization to compete in, it really depends on where you live. There are local clubs. In Southern California, there is a high-powered club that holds events monthly. It's a good small match, and there are no big prizes. It's just an opportunity to challenge yourself in friendly competition.

To begin, seek out local clubs. They might be 2-3 hours away, but they will be a lot cheaper than the fees the larger organizations charge. The difference might be a \$23 entry fee compared to \$200 or \$300.

FIRST MATCH

No one likes to admit it, but the first match is the hardest. It's the write-off match. Everyone is nervous, and some manage to do okay the first time. Others

SHOTER SHOTER BY NICO DETOUR WITH DOUG JEFFREY, PHOTOS BY JAIMEE ITAGAKI

are not quite ready, and they do horribly, like I did.

I had a laundry list of issues, but what helped me is I documented every stage. I wrote down things like "Bad wind calls" or "The data for the rifle is bad." Or, "On this stage, I had no idea how to tackle barricade so I need to practice this."

My first match was tough, and most shooters experience the same story. Come out

In addition to having a full spectrum of gear, Nico Detour says it's important to compete with a positive and experience it. Meet people, watch how they attack the stages and see how you can improve. It's a mind-opening event, and everyone is constantly learning. Get out and do it. Do not be afraid.

STARTING RIFLE

For the beginner, a Ruger Precision Rifle is a good rifle. It is offered in 6.5 Creedmor, .308 and a few other calibers. It's a good competition rifle right out of the box, and you can pick them up for about \$1,000 to \$1,400.











" ... IT IS IMPORTANT TO A SHORT-TERM MEMOR' MOVE TO THE NEXT STAGE CANNOT BEAT YOURSE

GEAR NEEDED

You'll need a wind meter. GeoBallistics has one that goes for about \$80.

The specialty pillows or support bags run \$150 to \$200. It's also important to have a spare parts kit, and the exact one depends on what system you are running. You can find one for about \$150.

Check SIG Sauer for a range finder. Their Kilo2000 goes for about \$500. There are better ones, but they are going to break the \$1,000 mark, and that is a big commitment for a new shooter. The Bushnell CONX works well for me, and it goes for about \$580.

Make sure you have a tool kit. Remember, that you have an explosion going off in your rifle. There's the vibration, you might bang it on a barricade and things come loose. It's important to have that so you can fix any issues that occur. Believe me,

You'll have to re-level it, tighten it and zero it again, so bring the right tools to the job. You do not need every tool. Just buy the ones for your system.

A good tripod will run you \$250, but it is not match essential. A HOG Saddle goes for about \$300, but it is not matchessential either.

You'll also need hearing protection and spare magazines. It depends on the platform, of course, but those will go for \$30 to \$120, depending on the company.

You will also need an arm board or something like that. You can use something as simple as a Big 5 Sporting Goods wrist coach. The key here is you need quick access to your data as you are engaging targets. These are a definite advantage.

Finally, you need a device to carry it in. For

I've had scopes come loose in matches.

MOVING FORWARD

able to wear around all day.

MENTAL STRENGTH

From a mental standpoint, it's good to be tough mentally and have a desire to constantly improve. A positive mindset is also critical. You might go out there and have a shit day and record a zero on a stage.

That will piss you off, but it is important to

next stage. You cannot beat yourself up all

day. Keep in mind that you will have rough

have a short-term memory and move to the

There are a number of ways to improve. Being a Marine, sure it helps, but I will tell you that some of the top shooters on this circuit are not military, nor have they been in the military. They are just civilians who love shooting and take it seriously.

this, you really do not have to have the top of the line. You can really use whatever bag

you have. Use a JanSport until you figure out what to carry. Eventually, you might end up with something from TYR Tactical or RE Factor Tactical, but just get something that provides good organization and is comfort-

focus. Put in the hard work. Establish a training regimen. Go home and work on your weak areas. Do your homework, too. If a match has targets at 1,400 yards, make sure your data goes out to 1,400 yards.

You'll pick up tips and tricks along the way. A lot of competitors have been gracious to help me.

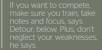
The key is to practice, train, take notes and

COMPETITION REWARDS

Somewhere inside, you hope you win. That's why you go in to the competition. Your first match may be tough, but you will grow from there. When you win, it's thrilling and gives you bragging rights among friends.

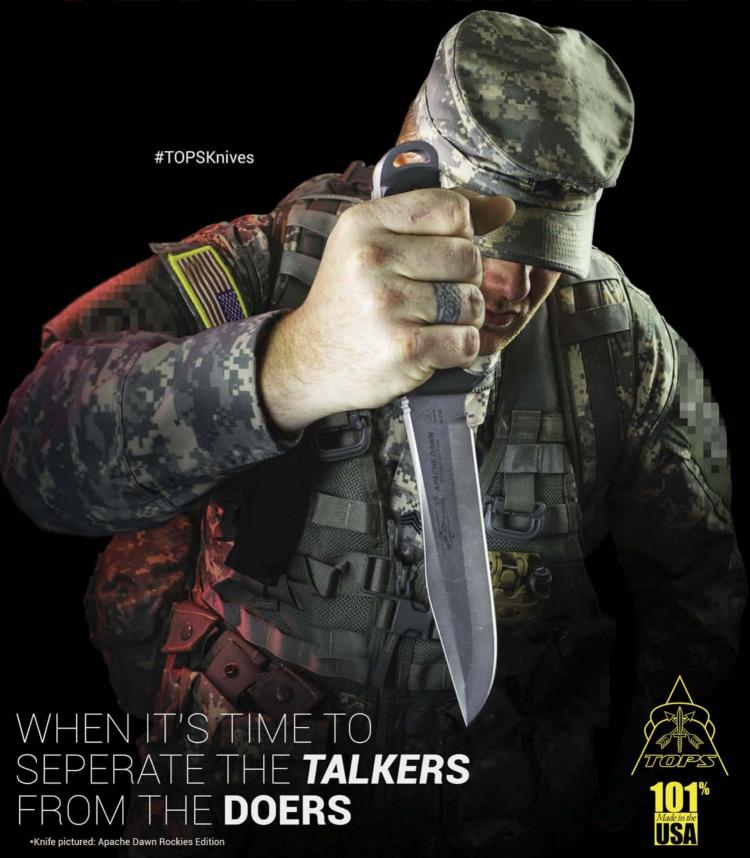
At the bigger events, there will be prizes, which can be rifles, scopes or a combination of rifles and scopes. Financially, there is some incentive to do well.

I like to win. Everyone does. But competition is more of an achievement of gauging progress. My first match was real rough, but I have grown through this year. I have got a real positive attitude. I will keep going from there, and I will push myself. 🕀





TOPS KNIVES





SHOOTER

STORY BY DOUG KOENIG WITH DAVID ASHBURY
PHOTOS COURTESY OF LISA CINQUINO

Doug Koenig's first shooting competition took place at a small event in the midst of a New Jersey winter in 1986. It was 18 degrees on the range, and he was using his first competition handgun—a 1911 he and his father purchased at a local gun shop.

At 17 years old, he had been an avid hunter for most of his life. As a senior in high school, he was poised to join his father's construction business as a carpenter.

After that frigid day in New Jersey, he was on the brink of something else, too, because that was the first step on his way to becoming one of the greatest competition shooters of all time.

In the following story, Koenig reveals how he stays on top of his game.

— David Ashbury

To prepare for competition, I normally take a couple of days after the previous event to regroup, make sure I have the right ammunition together, the right range bags, and all the gear I'll need to start training and practicing. It will typically take me a day or two to convert my range over to the next type of event.

I have my own private range, but it is just one stall. If I'm set up for the Bianchi Cup and I've got to get ready for Team Challenge, I've got to take down my targets, rearrange my barricades and clean up the range for the next competition. Between getting the shooting gear together and the range converted, it is the better part of a week.

When it is time to mentally prepare for a competition, I start to think about the different scenarios I'll be faced with at each event. I think about the match, and I begin to get myself "in the moment."

Over the years, I've taken a lot of notes during all these matches, so I like to sit down and review those notes. I remind myself of any issues that occurred during the match or mistakes and errors that came up during practice. The notes help me bring back those moments, and then, it is just a matter of working on the fundamentals and on any of the weaknesses I have going into that event.

Preparation for me is just being able to get better every day or every time I'm at the range. Once I start working on being better and being more prepared mentally for a competition, my confidence level starts to go up.

For me, it is all about confidence, and confidence comes from being well-prepared. Once I get to a competition, it is important to really have it all together. There's going to be something, maybe equipment or gear that will break or malfunction, no matter

Doug Koenig has won the Bianchi Cup 16 times. how prepared I am. I've got to be able to overcome that.

PHYSICAL PREP

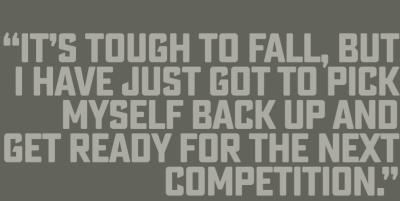
To prepare physically for competition, the single most important thing is cardio. Anything that works at getting my heart [rate] up is important. I've always run, lifted and exercised my whole life, but now, I work with a personal trainer. He has watched what I do and helped me develop workout routines for both in-season and off-season.

In the off-season, we work on strength, and I work on physically getting myself back in shape so I can handle the demands of the season—travel, training, practice—and the stress of the matches.

When we're in-season, we do things a little differently; we'll do more recovery workouts, more stamina training.

As for science-related physical training, we do a lot of training and exercises that will help me—strength-wise—better gain the positions from which I shoot. All of the weight training that's out there now—for football or baseball—is sports specific and won't necessarily work for me, so we've developed a training regime that has helped with my reaction time, the speed of my draw, help me go prone quicker and help me move from position to position.

The training is constantly evolving, but the off-season has more weight management.







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"FOR ME, IT IS ALL ABOUT CONFIDENCE, AND CONFIDENCE COMES FROM BEING WELL-PREPARED."

and some things I am not. It's tough to fall, but I have just got to pick myself back up and get ready for the next competition.

ADVICE FOR NEWBIES

If I were to give advice to a newcomer, I would say to visit WhereToShoot.org, which is part of the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Enter your zip code and pull up some shooting clubs in your area. It is

THE MENTAL APPROACH

In preparing for competition, I absolutely visualize. It is really no different than in other sports. Visualization is like a form of meditation for me.

Before I'm going to shoot a stage, I'll typically sit there quietly, close my eyes and see myself doing what I want to do, what I want to achieve, how I'm going to shoot a course.

If it is "stand-there-and-shoot" stage, I want to visualize what my draw will feel like. I want to see myself draw the gun and picture what my shots are going to look like.

It is almost as if you're watching a movie of yourself doing it, and the more I do that, the better I get at doing it. The cleaner and clearer the visualization process can be, the better I will do in competition.

SUCCESS AND STRESS

People ask if success adds stress to every new competition. I think it does.

From my perspective, I have a personal expectation level for myself, most of which is based on my preparation and experience. Plus, I've got a lot of sponsors that are on board with me and, obviously, they benefit when I do well.

Also, stress comes from the event, itself, regardless of how I do. For example, there was the time I could only get three shots off at a barricade at an NRA World Action Championship in Australia. It is hard to say if it cost me the match, but it was on day one, and I'd be ignorant to say everything I did after that would have gone the way it did. But the malfunction definitely took me right out of the running. It really knocked me out, and the end result was that if those three shots were fine, I would have won the match by six or seven.

After that, the pressure level changes, and

When he is fighting back from failure, Koenig looks in the mirror and tells himself to be the best he



it changes the whole match. It is like any sport, including football. If it's 40–0 in the third quarter, the pressure is off the winning team. It's different if it is a three-point game.

It is the same in the shooting events. If I have a problem on day one or two—as opposed to at the very end of the match—I know I am out of it, and the pressure is off. It's different if I'm going into the last event on the last day and there's a chance to win. It's a pressure cooker, for sure.

WORKING THROUGH ADVERSITY

To overcome failure, I have to look in the mirror and tell myself to be the best that I can be, physically and mentally. If I can do that, that's what I'll be happy with.

Working hard at something ... that makes me successful. To me, there's no substitute for effort. If I go 100-percent in, sometimes it'll work out, but sometimes it won't.

It is about putting the time in. There are some things I am going to be in control of

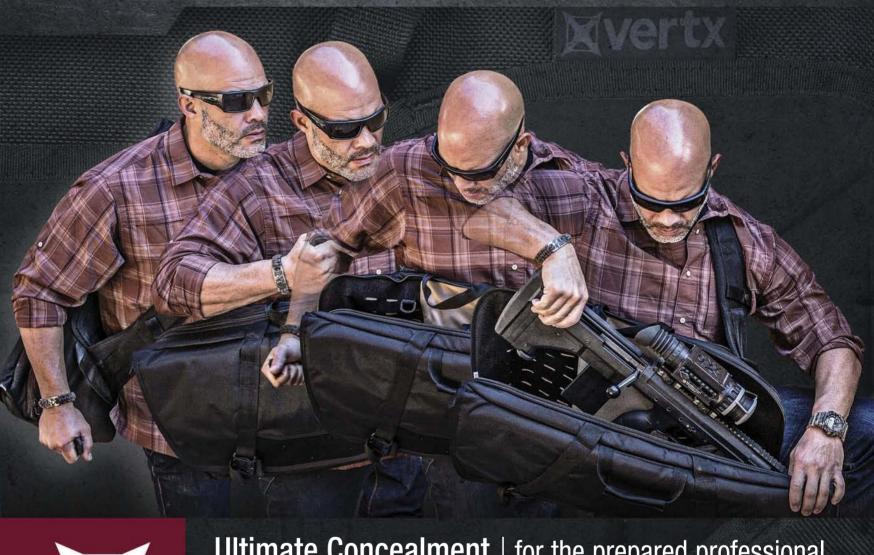
a great resource. It will tell you the cost, what types of shoot disciplines that club has to offer and how to join.

Start by attending some local matches just to watch and talk. In the shooting sports, people are always there to give a helping hand, tell you about their sport and show you the gear. A lot of times, there are opportunities to handle the equipment, maybe test-fire some guns and get a feel for the sport.

Use those clubs and shooters as valuable resources to get started. Figure out what you'd like to do, how to practice, and what gear to buy and what not to buy. That's how I did it.

Most importantly, do it to have fun. It's great to win, and it's great to be supercompetitive, if that's your personality. However, if someone's going into the sport just for that, they're really missing the boat. It should be about having fun, getting outside, being around friends and family, and enjoying the shooting sports. That is what ultimately drives me to this day.

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CZ-USA'S POLYMER-FRAMED STRIKER-FIRED P-10 G IS A TOP PERFORMER

STORY BY TODD BURGREEN & PHOTOS BY STRAIGHT 8



SITES OF INTEREST

ECHO VALLEY TRAINING CENTER WWW.ECHOVALLEYTRAINING.COM

BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION WWW.BLACK-HILLS.COM

HORNADY MFG. INC WWW.HORNADY.COM

WINCHESTER AMMUNITION WWW.WINCHESTER.COM



he introduction of the CZ-USA P-10 C polymer-framed striker-fired handgun is a sure response to the U.S. market that continues to ex-

pand and generate firearm sales among both civilians and law enforcement consumers.

The striker-fired CZ P-10 C is a departure from other CZ handguns such as the P-07 and legendary CZ 75, which are traditional hammer-fired designs. We're going to first roll through a little firearms evolution and then check out this new gun that was officially introduced at the recent SHOT Show.

EVOLUTION OF HANDGUN DESIGN

What is the difference between the classic hammer-fired handgun designs and the polymer-framed striker-fired variants now preponderantly used by LE and military units around the world? This is a valid question, and we can use the exploration as a vehicle to explore what the CZ P-10 C offers.

Firearm evolution is a slow, tedious matter at times with breakthroughs and improvements coming in bits and pieces that are influenced

by a multitude of factors, such as manufacturing techniques, metallurgy, cartridge improvements, technology, armed conflict and countless other factors as experienced in individual countries and cultures.

From the late 19th Century, semi-automatic handguns were typically hammer-fired steel frames and most likely single-action (the exposed hammer was cocked rearward when ready to fire). The Mauser 1896 "Broomhandle," the Browning 1911 and Hi Power serve as good examples of this progression.

In the 1930s, the double-action/single-action (DA/SA) hammer-fired handgun genre arrived in the form of the German P38. Its emergence was just as revolutionary as the polymer striker-fired Glock's arrival 50 years later. (Yes, other examples exist before each; however, both are recognized as the most successful, establishing the handgun genre to follow.)

The Walther P38 was spawned by the German military because they wanted a replacement for the classic Luger, which had tight tolerances, intricate interplay of many parts and unreliability when exposed to

trench conditions. On top of those reasons, other factors included Luger's high cost and low production capability due to the need for extensive hand fitting. German military planners requested the new handgun design be simple, with as few parts as possible.

Officials also wanted component interchangeability, ease of disassembly/assembly and reliability. The P38 design concepts held firm into the 1980s until the advent of polymer-framed striker-fired handguns displaced it.

The function of the DA/SA trigger mechanism is similar to a DA revolver. The DA/SA trigger will cock and release the hammer when the hammer is in the down position, but, on each subsequent shot, the trigger will function as a single-action. On most DA/SA pistols, there is the option to cock the hammer before the first shot is fired, if time or the situation permits. This removes the heavy pull of the double-action.

The DA/SA hammer down carry on a live chamber with either safety engaged or not, combined with the longer heavier DA trigger pull, reminds one of the revolver's trigger, which most were more familiar with and considered inherently safer and less prone to accidental discharges. The DA/SA handgun design is still going strong today, and there are numerous models being produced by multiple manufacturers, including CZ.

While examples of striker-fired handguns predate 1982, this date is critical with the

CZ-USA

BARREL: 4.02 INCHES

OVERALL LENGTH: 7.3 INCHES

WEIGHT: 26 OUNCES

SIGHTS: DRIFT-ADJUSTABLE
LUMINESCENT METAL THREE DOT

GRIPS: POLYMER STIPPLED
ACTION: BROWNING SHORT RECOIL
FINISH: BLACK NITRIDE

CAPACITY: 15+1

MSRP: **\$499**

WWW.CZ-USA.COM

ACCURACY TESTING RESULTS

LOAD	ACCURACY	AVERAGE VELOCITY
FEDERAL 124-GR HYDRA SHOK	3.0 INCHES	1,100 FPS
BLACK HILLS 115-GR JHP EXP	3.33 INCHES	1,170 FPS
WINCHESTER PDX 1 147-GR	4 INCHES	990 FPS
HORNADY XTP 115 GR	3.25 INCHES	1,155 FPS

Glock striker-fired handgun entering service. Though this is an article on the CZ P-10

MADE IN CZECH REPUBLIC

C, there can be little debate that current semi-automatic handguns were redefined by the 9mm Glock 17 in terms of capacity and polymer construction. Polymer-framed striker-fired handguns are inherently lighter, thinner and simpler due to the limited number of parts.

There are less large steel parts needed; thus, there are fewer parts to break. Generally speaking, this makes the gun easier to maintain and more reliable. The fact that law enforcement and the military picked up striker-fired weapons fairly quickly bears out

this truth. The striker-fired weapon works without an external hammer. Instead, the firing pin, or "striker" sits captive inside the slide while the gun is not being put through the firing process. This leads us to the P-10.

THE DETAILS

Chambered in 9mm, the P-10 C is the initial striker-fired handgun offering from CZ-USA, and you can be sure that other calibers with various barrel and grip sizes are sure to follow.

The overall length of the P-10 C is 7.3 inches, it has a 4.02-inch barrel and the frame fea-

tures a MIL-STD 1913 accessory rail.

The P-10 C nitride slide is equipped with front and rear cocking serrations with the external extractor visible. The external extractor also serves as a loaded chamber indicator. The cold hammer forged barrel features land and groove rifling with a polished chamber and wide feed ramp.

The handgun weighs 26 ounces empty. Three interchangeable backstraps are included. Few will argue against the CZ 75 being one of the best feeling double-stack magazine

"THE CZ P-10 C'S COMBINATION OF GOOD SIGHTS AND EXCELLENT TRIGGER ... PRODUCE A WEAPON THAT CAN RUN PLATE RACKS AT 25 YARDS WITH MONOTONY."

designs ever created. The P-10 C follows this high standard. The stippling around the grip is a good balance of "aggression" for control with slippery/sweaty hands, yet it is not prone to aggravate flesh or clothing during long hours of concealed carry.

CZ had the foresight to provide sections of stippling on either side the frame above the trigger guard. These areas serve as "memory" points for the thumb and finger. This is a nice touch and shows CZ's attention to detail.

Ambidextrous slide and magazine release controls round out the CZ P-10 C package. All of the controls are configured in a way as to minimize any possible snagging on holsters or controls.

The striker-fired handgun follows the previous standard set with no manual safety present. The P-10 C arrives with two 15-round magazines, and the current MSRP is \$499.

The one thing I normally do with a handgun is switch out its factory sights, but there is no need for this. It comes standard with well-designed metal three-dot sights dovetailed into the slide. While not tritium, the P-10 C sights are luminescent and can be "charged" with a flashlight to retain visibility for a period of time in low-light conditions. Target acquisition is fast due to the dot giving a fast and clear "flash" at close range, and it allows for more precise aimed fire at a distance. This automatically draws your attention to the front sight. You will automatically focus on the most important part of your sighting system—the front sight.

The P-10 C slide mass and shape is engineered to aid in increased muzzle control for double taps or longer strings of fire. The gun's low bore axis, relative to the shooter's hand, allows for a very stable sight picture

The P-10 C is CZ-USA's first striker-fired handgun. More options are due to be released mid-year, said company officials no matter how many or how rapidly rounds are fired. Combined with the frame undercut trigger guard and deep beavertail, the low bore axis aids in minimizing muzzle flip.

IT'S ALL IN THE TRIGGER

The P-10 C's 4-4.5-pound trigger pull and short reset are the stars of the show. This is not a misprint. It's a striker-fired handgun with sub-5-pound trigger out of the box. The svelte trigger is proof of CZ engineers listening to feedback from the field and then making it happen.

As far as I am concerned, the "secret" to striker-fired handgun success is minimal operating controls, high-cartridge capacity-to-size ratio and relentless reliability. Plus, let's not forget the infamous political advertisement ... "It is the trigger stupid." The CZ-USA P-10 C follows this formula and improves upon what was previously thought possible with striker-fired handgun triggers. The CZ P-10 C offers repeatable 4.5-pound trigger pull with a minimal reset. This consistency and short reset allows for rapid multiple shots placed on target.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The majority of range testing with the CZ P-10 C took place at Echo Valley Training Center. Two main T&E priorities were the focus—make sure that reliability was beyond reproach and to find out if the P-10 C offered something beyond the other polymer handguns on the market.

Firing began with basic drills to get acclimated with the trigger, sights and overall feel. To ensure nothing adversely interacted with the P-10 C to cause malfunctions, I used a multitude of bullet profiles and weights. The 9mm loads tested included 115-, 124- and 147-grain JHP and FMJ loads from Black Hills, CCI, Federal, Hornady and Winchester.



Several magazines' worth of ammunition were spent engaging plate racks and mansized steel targets. Drills quickly moved past stand-and-deliver drills to more dynamic action involving movement, magazine reloads and firing from behind cover. Years of training with various entities provided a background of what is acceptable performance for a defensive handgun. The P-10 C's simplicity of operation and consistent trigger pull allowed for rapid engagement of targets. This is further accentuated with well-laid-out ergonomics, ensuring that the hand is near optimum grip position as soon as the P-10 C clears the holster.

After initial reliability and accuracy were verified, I began manipulating the P-10 C from the holster. General holsters such as Yaqui slides and other similar types meant for no specific weapon allowed for the P-10 C to be tested to its max.

Also, I used more of a point shooting or flash





of aftermarket accessories. All other factory triggers pale in comparison.

COMPLETE PACKAGE

Let's review how this performed. The P-10 C's iron sights quickly orientate the shooter's eye to the front sight. The trigger allows for rapid follow-up shots. The CZ P-10 C's combination of good sights and excellent trigger, along with CZ quality control, produces a weapon that can run plate racks at 25 yards with monotony.

Along these lines, the P-10 C can deliver multiple hits on IPSC-style targets at close range using point-shooting techniques that

to its overall design.

The design team's attention to detail is instantly sensed. Crucial items such as magazine release button shape, and a design that allows you to get your hand as near the bore axis, are seamlessly interfaced between handgun/shooter.

The P-10 C is one of the flattest shooting handguns I have shot. By flattest shooting, I am referring to minimal muzzle flip with the sights tracking smoothly between trigger breaks.

CZ's years of experience and researching

what was already on the market allowed for their engineers to take the nebulous concept of "feel" and translate it to one of best shooting pistols on the market right out of the box.

Many may ask what the CZ-USA P-10 C offers to shooters compared to other polymerframed striker-fired handguns already on the market. The answer lies more with refining the striker-fired concept started more than 35 years ago than anything revolutionary. Combined with a manufacturer intimately familiar with quality weapon production, the CZ P-10 C benefits from lessons learned.

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"FOR ENGAGING TARGETS AT KNOWN DISTANCES, HOWEV-ER, THIS THING IS GOLD."

our years ago I was hunting in the Cleveland National Forest in Southern California. Let me give you a perspective on this.

The zone I was hunting has a statistical 6% success rate during our short deer season. There are some trees, but it's mostly chaparral, and shots on target are expected to exceed 200 yards. It would be wrong to equate a Southern Cal hunt as a desert hunt. It is more of a semi-arid hill country hunt.

For this hunt, I had elected to take my Winchester Model 70 afield. I have a Leupold low power scope on that rifle that I have used for years. On a hunt like this, you take what is given to you.

When I spotted a deer at 700 meters, I knew that I had only moments to take my shot. I shouldered my rifle and looked through the scope. The point of intersection on my reticle was actually larger than the body of the deer. (In fairness, the deer that we have in So Cal are really nothing more than German Shepherds with small antlers).

I simply could not ethically take the shot because I had no real knowledge if my round would hit vitals. I watched helplessly as my deer scampered over the next ridge.

I was taught years ago that zooming in on a target was problematic. Finding the target through a zoomed-in scope would be next to impossible, and watching your reticle bounce around with each heartbeat would make shooting too difficult. As a result, I have typically kept my low powered scopes on the lowest power.

All bets are off when I am shooting long distance competitively. I want the highest advantage possible to win. This typically means a really long, heavy, free-floated barrel; competition trigger; 20 minute of angle; Picatinny rail and the best optic I can find. When I'm shooting into the next zip code, I want the optical power to see as far into the distance as possible. I also want to

be able to clearly see where my point of impact is going to be.

At this distance, we don't use holdovers. Well ... up to a few hundred yards maybe. When we go out long, we adjust our scope based on "DOPE" so that the impact is where we are putting that reticle. Will my reticle be bouncing around as the vibration of the blood going through my arteries pulsates? Yes ... to a point, but that is the reason we take such a stable shooting position, because that helps minimize this. This brings us to the review.

When Leupold said they would be gracious enough to provide their VX-3i 6.5-20x50mm CDS Target scope, how the hell could I say no to that! I instantly got excited.

At the Artemis Defense Institute we typically have guite a few guns lying around in various states of construction. One of those guns is a Remington 700 with a 24-inch heavy barrel. And guess what? There was no optic. Until this review.

FIRST LOOK

The VX-3i is a target scope, meaning it is designed for being able to view and engage targets from extreme distances. It also presupposes that the shooter might be in less-than-ideal conditions.

A detachable shroud extends from the forward end of the scope, protecting against ill-placed sunlight, as well as serving secondarily as lens protection. This is pretty standard stuff, but there have been instances in the past, especially during an all-day shooting event, that sunlight pretty much took out the possibility of an adequate sight picture.

The scope is long, and this is necessary for the extreme magnification that it can provide. It also has the obligatory turrets that are required for changing zeroes on the fly. In a hunting environment, there is really no value in having the ability to adjust your zero in the field. You simply don't have

the requisite time. For a temporary target at distance, we need stadia lines in the reticle to visually change point of impact at distance. For more information on this, check the primer sidebar.

As the UPS driver asked me for my signature on his Star Trek Tri-corder, I twitched with anticipation. Sitting in front of me was an oversized box that I knew contained a high quality scope.

As is typical with Leupold scopes, the black matte finish looked outstanding. The VX-3i has an interesting addition that I don't believe I have seen on other scopes: A focus adjust knob on the left side of the scope. This is a major improvement over the traditional setup. Most commercial scopes have an optical focus mechanism at the end of the scope. The problem with this concept is that, depending on the aggressiveness used to adjust the zoom, it is possible to knock the focus ring out of adjustment. By placing the adjustment knob to the left, this is no longer a problem.

It is also ridiculously easy to re-focus, depending on the eye pro you have on. I have noticed a slight variation in my visual acuity, depending on the particular pair of sunglasses I have on. Typically, it is not enough for me to mess with the focus adjustment on regular scopes. With the side adjustment knob on the VX-3i, it becomes so easy there is no excuse for not having a clean, crisp viewfinder.

There were, however, a couple of things that gave me initial pause about this beast. First off, as I mentioned, it is big. That translates to a fairly high height over bore. I





realized quickly that my traditional low-rise rings would not stand a chance of creating enough clearance for this scope. I was a little concerned that even mid-rise rings would be too shallow. I went ahead and put on some high-rise Night Force rings (because we happened to have a pair here in the shop and made sure that I used a cheek pad for extra height on the comb of the stock).

Also, (and this turned out to really be not much of an issue after the scope had been mounted) there is very little eye relief on the scope. Well, that is not really a fair statement. There is a very narrow band that allows for proper eye relief. When you look through a scope, you want to see a full field of view. If you see black around the visual picture, you are either too close to the scope or too far away. What you are looking for is an image that appears to only be limited to the physical dimensions of the scope housing.

Typically, when someone pulls a scope out of the box, they hold it in their hands and look at an object in the distance. I am no different. The first thing I noticed is that I had to be about three to four inches away for a proper sight picture. Most of my other scopes allow for a variance of a couple of inches greater. This seemed like it might create a bit of a problem in the field, but once the scope had been mounted to the rifle, the eye relief proved to be a non-issue.

Once mounted on the Remington, the rifle instantly took on a new feel. With the Leupold running along the action and extending far down the heavy barrel, the Remington took on the look of a true long distance rifle.

Since we are ... well, boys, ... my instructors played with the rifle at our shop, taking dry fire shots from sniper positions at different targets from our offices across the street. The scope seemed to operate well in this "tacti-cool" environment.

PROVING DAY

Monday was proving day at the range. For long distance shooting we head down to northern San Diego County to the famous Pala Range. Pala is a semi-private range built on the side of a long sloping hill on the Pala Indian Reservation. Aside from being a really nice and friendly range, it also happens to literally be across the street from the Pala Casino. A morning of shooting is accentuated by a lunch at the buffet.



"TARGET ACQUISITION WAS QUICK AND EASY, AND A SLIGHT ADJUST-MENT TO THE FOCUS KNOB MADE THE IMAGE CRISP AND CLEAR."

One of the other really cool things about Pala is the fact that they have preset steel targets set up out to 880 yards. While not extreme long distance, this is about as good as it gets in Southern California without having to head out to the desert and BLM land.

We set up on a traditional shooting bench and opted to forego the Harris Bipod that I have mounted on the rifle. Instead, we used a shooting bag. I set up a paper target at 100 yards and opted to also use a steel target at 100 yards as well.

I settled in behind the rifle and, with the magnification set at zero, found the red steel 100-yard target. Target acquisition was quick and easy, and a slight adjustment to the focus knob made the image crisp and clear. Now, I had bore sighted the rifle back at the Artemis Defense Institute, so I had an idea

Target acquisition was quick and easy.

that it would be quick to zero, but you never can be sure.

My first shot at 100 yards was well over the red target. Yep, I had forgotten about the 20 minute of angle rail on the rifle. Sigh. Taking off the turret caps, I adjusted my elevation down about 20 clicks. My second shot was a solid "ping" on steel.

I then moved over to my paper target. Checking to make sure that the scope rings and mounts were still tight, I fired a three-shot group into the bullseye of the target. All three shots fell within a minute of angle square and were exactly three inches high of the bullseye and about four minutes of angle to the left. Adjusting the windage knob, I fired a second three-shot group and brought the cluster directly above the bullseye.

Cool. Now it was time to start going out















to distance. I brought the rifle out to the 300-yard steel target. At this distance there should be no need to adjust my scope. I sighted in on the target. Just for fun I started zooming in the scope. Wow.

A large image of a red steel target quickly filled my field of view. One shot, and the distinct "ping" of lead on steel rang out. OK, I said. Let's now see what she does out to 600 yards.

For this I consulted my tables and my DOPE, which is an acronym for Data On Previous Engagements. Basically, this is a record log of what a projectile does at distance, based on specific record-keeping of ballistics and other variables.

Based on a 600-yard shot and understanding what the projectile would do given the previous performance of the rifle—but guessing on how the scope would work—I made the adjustments necessary to the elevation knob on the scope.

The goal is not to "hold over" the target. The goal is to adjust the scope so that the reticle will always rest square on the target at the known distance.

One shot, and the distant "ping" range out. Ha! OK. Let's go out to 880!

Here, I noticed for the first time, the target finally appearing smaller in my scope, but it was large enough that my reticle did not completely cover the target. After adjusting the scope, and again adjusting the focus, I decided to fire a single shot purposefully to the right of the target and into the hillside.

The rifle recoiled and returned to the target. After what seemed like an eternity, a small puff of dirt exploded to the right of the target. Proper elevation had been dialed in. Now to see how the windage worked.

I took aim at the distant steel target and

fired. At this distance, especially with other shooters now engaging their own targets, I did not expect to hear anything. I had to rely on not seeing a dirt plume. As the Remington returned to the target, I waited ... nothing.

I fired a second shot.

Again ... nothing.

The third time I purposefully aimed to the right again and fired ... a dirt plume at distance. Awesome. Two solid hits.

JOB WELL DONE

Col. Jeff Cooper once said that the only interesting rifles were accurate ones. This is a true statement, but you need to be able to actually see a target to determine a rifle's accuracy. The Leupold VX-3i does the job.

Without, any hesitation I would recommend this scope for distance target shooting. As a scope for hunting? Sure, it will do the job, but honestly I would prefer a different reticle for going afield.

For engaging targets at known distances, however, this thing is gold. Any long distance shooter knows that the key to accurate shots is eliminating as many variables as possible. We "accurize" our rifles, we make sure we have the stablest platform available, we focus on our breath and our heart rate, and yes ... we ensure that we have a scope that not only holds its zero but allows us the mechanical integrity necessary to adjust and engage a target with confidence.

After throwing about 20 more rounds down range at different distances, it was getting about time to head over to that buffet. I reset to a 300-yard zero and aimed back at the 100-yard target.

One smooth trigger press, and "ping." Still holding a perfect zero. Nice job Leupold!

The scope provides maximum brightness in all colors and intensified contrast across the entire field of view. Plus, the 30mm maintube is designed to dramatically increases windage and elevation travel while the side focus adjustment makes fine-tuning parallax effortless,

A projectile traveling from a rifle does no fly in a straight line. The barrel is angled upward ever so slightly, so that the projectile travels in an arc toward the target. As the velocity of the projectile degrades the weight of the projectile starts pulling it toward the earth.

Think of a cannonball being shot at the enemy from 100 yards. If the enemy turns out to be at 1,000 yards, you might still be able to hit them, but you will have to elevate the cannon so that the cannonball follows an arc toward them.

Of course, you also have to be worried about projectile travel left and right as well. This can be a result of wind and, or humidity. Oh ... and did I mention that if the target is higher than you, or lower than you, that can effect trajectory, as well as relative altitude?

Now for a measurement concept, we use something called a "minute of angle." Books have been written about the mathematics regarding ballistics and minutes of angle, but for the purposes of this article let's limit it to this: Minute of angle refers to a 1.0472-inch box at 100 yards. Our goal with virtually any precision-shooting instrument is to get a grouping of three shots to sit inside that 1.0472-inch box at 100 yards.

Now, as we engage targets beyond 100 yards, we have two options. One option is to have what are called stadia lines pre-built into the reticle. They are based on a specific projectile size and weight ratio and a known rate of arc. They allow us to simply put a lower stadia line on the target at a known distance and be able to reliably engage that target. This is fast ... and works well up to, say, 400 yards. They problem is, what do you do if the target is not at 100, 200 or 300 yards? What if the target is at 225 yards? Or even 1,300 yards?

For precision shooting, we like to adjust the point of aim manually, by turning the dials on the scope to elevate the reticle precisely to the point necessary to have the projectile engage the target. Who would have though! Math actually works

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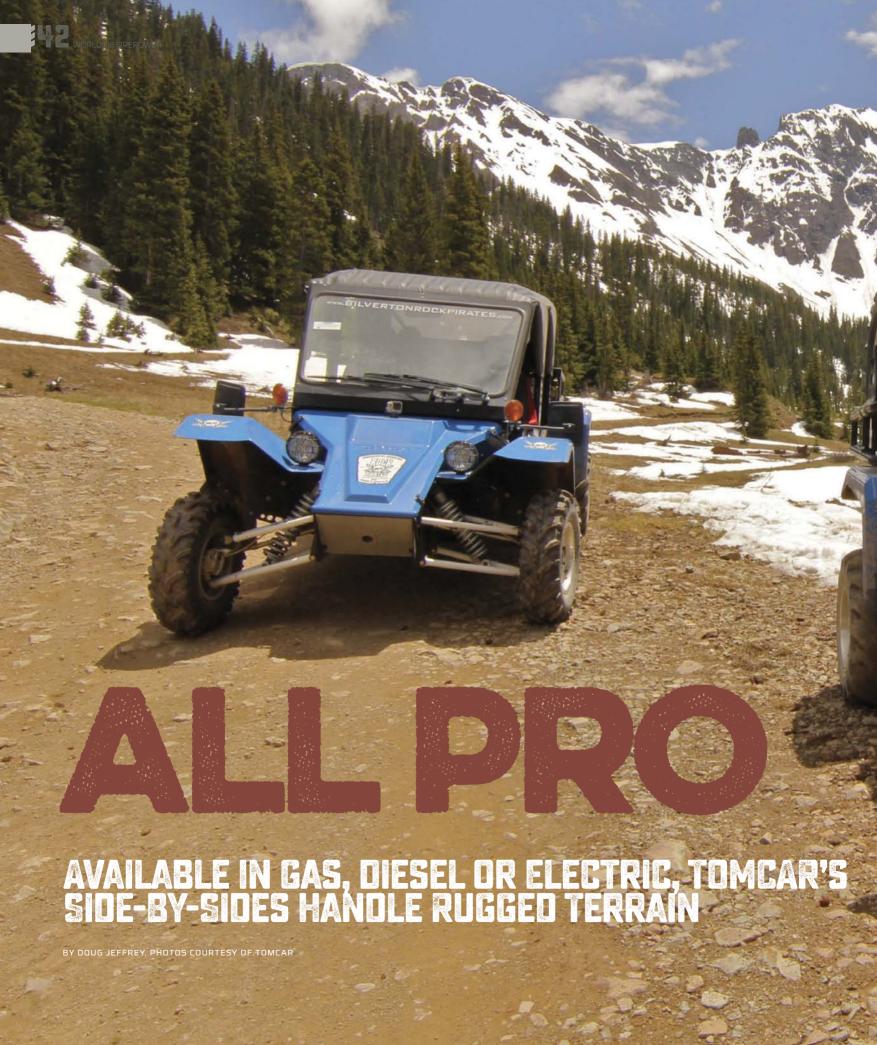
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BUILD SHEET 1

INSIDE & OUTSIDE TOMCAR'S TM5

POWER TRAIN

- Gasoline: 1,100cc, fuel injected, four cylinder, 16 valves, liquid cooled
- Diesel: 1,400cc, naturally aspirated, four cylinder, liquid cooled
- Electric: 72v 3 phase AC electric motor, 72v 28kwh lithium ion battery pack
- ≪ Automatic "V" belt CVT
- Final Drive: Double roller chains encased in an oil bath
- ≪ High-Low-Reverse transfer case
- 《 Differential lock

SUSPENSION

- Front: FOX Podium shocks, heavyduty double wishbone, 13-inch Trave
- Rear: FOX Podium shocks, heavyduty trailing arm, 13.5-inch Travel
- Adjustable dual-coil over gashydraulic shocks
- ≪ 15-inch ground distance

TIRES & WHEELS

- ≪ Front: 25x8-12, 6 Ply, AT tread
- « Rear: 26x12-12, 10 Ply, AT tread
- Aluminum rims

ELECTRICAL

- « 12v 500 CCA battery
- 45A/65A/70 alternator
- **KC** headlights
- **«** LED tail lights

BRAKES

4-wheel power assisted disc brakes You can go electric gas or diesel and you can go anywhere with the vehicles from TOMCAR Top right, the TM² is the tan vehicle and the TM5 is

he towing capacity of the T2 is 1,397 pounds





"TOMCAR'S ELECTRICAL VEHICLE WAS INITIALLY DEVELOPED FOR MILITARY USE TO CREATE A 'STEALTH' PLATFORM ..."



orget women. Cross beer off the list. And don't even mention the NFL. Do you really want to drive a grown man crazy? All you have to do is

show him a new side-by-side. That's all it takes. Seriously. He'll likely do a backflip, even if he's never had a gymnastic lesson in his life.

But who can blame him? To join its massive fleet, TOMCAR rolled out a new vehicle this year. The Arizona-based auto manufacturer—which produces all-terrain vehicles for the military, commercial and personal use—just released its first "high-performance, 100% electrical" vehicle for commercial use. The

ALLESE FAILS

IN TROUBLED TIMES, ONLY THE SELECT FEW WILL FIND SAFETY AT THE RALLY POINT.

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EET 2

- Width: 70 inches
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- ≪ Wheel Base: 101 inches
- Rayload: Diesel 1,650
- Dry Weight: 1,848 pounds
- Cargo Box: 66 inches by 53 inches

- Fully welded roll cage and frame
- Low seating angle for maximum occupant restraint
- Aircraft-grade aluminum skid plate protects the underside of the





"YOU CAN ORDER YOURS IN ELECTRIC, GAS OR DIESEL."





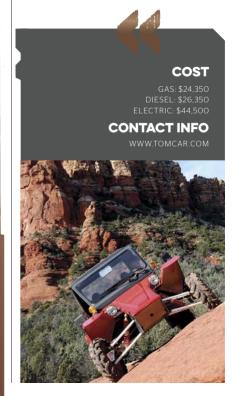
company has received orders from a variety of industries, including the national parks, fire departments and the movie industry.

"TOMCAR's vehicles, both electric and gas-powered, have provided us with an unparalleled stable and durable platform to mount multi-million-dollar camera equipment, all while keeping our operators and the technology safe," said Scott Howell, CEO of Cinemoves. "In addition to reducing noise, TOMCAR's electrical vehicles allow us to continue shooting inside the soundstage, where a gas-powered vehicle is forbidden, saving valuable time during costly productions."

TOMCAR's electrical vehicle was initially developed for military use to create a "stealth" platform with zero thermal footprint. You can order yours in electric, gas or diesel.

"The possibilities are endless, and we're thrilled to start offering our electrical vehicles to the public," said Ram Zarchi, founder and CEO of TOMCAR LLC. "All of our models are simple and extremely safe to drive, even for inexperienced users, which is reinforced by our unprecedented record without a safetyrelated lawsuit."

So if you're looking for a little piece of mind this year, you might want to spring for a new side-by-side. Just be careful where you do that backflip.



















8

eing asked to review a rifle is kind of like having your best friend ask if you think his sister is attractive. There are so many

ways to answer the question that can land you in hot water. Are we just talking about looks? Does personality matter? How well will she perform? (Did I just take that analogy too far)? But joking aside, we're talking about a .300 Blackout from a 5-inch barreled AR. I needed a date!

THE COMPANY

First, meet the parents. Veritas Tactical, LLC is a family/law enforcement/veteranowned-and-operated company out of Central Florida, started by firearms enthusiasts and operators for the purpose of creating purpose-built precision and custom firearms. They specialize in purpose-built AR-platform rifles, parts, accessories and gear. They've chosen the AR platform rifle because it provides ultimate versatility when creating a purpose-built weapon. The VT16 Executive PDW 3B is not only a mouthful to say, but it is also a brand new rifle they're launching this year.

"This weapon system was designed and intended as a compact personal defense weapon that could easily be placed into a carry bag or under a concealment garment for the personal protection environment," said Alex Ferrer, owner/manager of Veritas Tactical. "Working in the personal protection and surveillance field, I've always looked at building a weapon system that accommodates the needs for concealability of a long qun option."

But still, when someone tells you they built a 5-inch 300 Blackout AR, you kind of scratch your head and ask yourself, "Practical or novelty?" Let's get into first impressions.

FIRST UP

I think we can agree it's wild looking. In fact,

"THIS WEAPON SYSTEM WAS DESIGNED AND INTENDED AS A COMPACT PERSONAL DEFENSE WEAPON THAT COULD EASILY BE PLACED INTO A CARRY BAG..."



The authors absolutely fell in love with the burnt bronze color by Darkside Vault.





A close look at the trigger group.

"THE MAXIM DEFENSE COB COLLAPSIBLE STOCK WAS EASY TO DEPLOY AND COLLAPSE ..."



it's one of those rifles that's sexy from pretty much every angle. We instantly fell in love with the burnt bronze and black color combo, made possible by Darkside Vault.

Second, it's concealable, proven when we stashed the VT16 into an EDC Ready pack from Vertx.

And third, it's a practical weight. One of the first things we heard when people first held it was, "Isn't it kind of heavy for such a small rifle?"



After shooting it, we could see its place in the community as a PDW or executive detail protection weapon, as well as your car or truck gun for those overseas checkpoints or your end-of-the-world survival fantasies. But it's definitely a 50-yard and in gun, shooting on average 2-inch groups (basically the same), regardless of what we fed it. But really, that's to be expected for a gun designed to break contact and boogie out.

The Midwest Blast Diverter muzzle break did a great job keeping the rifle flat and on target

"I've always wanted to push the envelope on making rifle systems shorter but still functional and reliable," said Ferrer. "The challenge with short barrels is the gas system and finding the right combination of length and gas port size that is functional and reliable with different grain ammo. As with any weapon system, it has its purpose and limitations."

POINT BLANK OPINIONS

Are there some things we'd change about it? Sure, but keep in mind, these are our personal opinions about a prototype that were relayed to a nimble manufacturer that listens to end-user suggestions. Don't be surprised if you see some changes by the time it's in stores.

Something this small and powerful is a blast to shoot, but be mindful of the short overall length and where you place your support hand on the handguard or you may lose a finger.

listed on the boxes are higher than what we

were getting on our shorter barrel, which is

to be expected.



Possibly update the charging handle to 🍶 an ambi.

This is a low-vis, close-range AR dot gun. There's really no need to throw magnifying optics on there.

We'd remove one side of the ambi safety to prevent your firing hand from interfering with it being disengaged. The nice thing about it coming with the ambis, though, is that you can always remove the side you don't want.

COLOR M16 BCG FROM BLACK NITRIDE TO NICKEL BORON

SIGHTS: WEAPON COMES OPTIC READY BUT SIGHTS CAN BE INSTALLED PRIOR TO SHIPPING. (MAGPUL MOE SIGHTS, MAGPUL PRO, TROY FLIP-UP SIGHTS OR CUSTOM ORDER BY CUSTOMER) TRIGGER: VELOCITY 3 POUND OR 4 POUND, CMC 3.5 STRAIGHT OR CURVED, GEISSELE

\$2,399.95 (OPTIC NOT INCLUDED, ALL NFA

BUT IN PISTOL CONFIGURATION WITH ARM BRACE OR BLADE AS OPTIONS, ALONG WITH LAW TACTICAL OR DEADFOOT ARMS FOLDING STOCK SYSTEMS. ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE VT15 SERIES, WHICH IS THEIR FORGED RECEIVER LINE IN BOTH 300 BLACKOUT AND 5.56.

"IT'S ONE OF THOSE RIFLES THAT'S SEXY FROM PRETTY **MUCH EVERY ANGL**

The weapon cycled without issue and always locked back on empty with all ammo tested.

7 We'd suggest opening up the trigger slot to more easily accommodate the installation of different triggers.

The magwell flare could be a little more user-friendly and deeper throated for easier mag insertion.

The stock, pistol grip and handguard all had great ergonomics for this setup.

The aftermarket mag release button was too tall and exceeded the limitation of the fence, which could lead to an accidental mag release.

We had some flaming with one brand of ammo, but no issues with the others. But, hey, if the guy sees the muzzle flash, vou missed him.

FINAL THOUGHTS

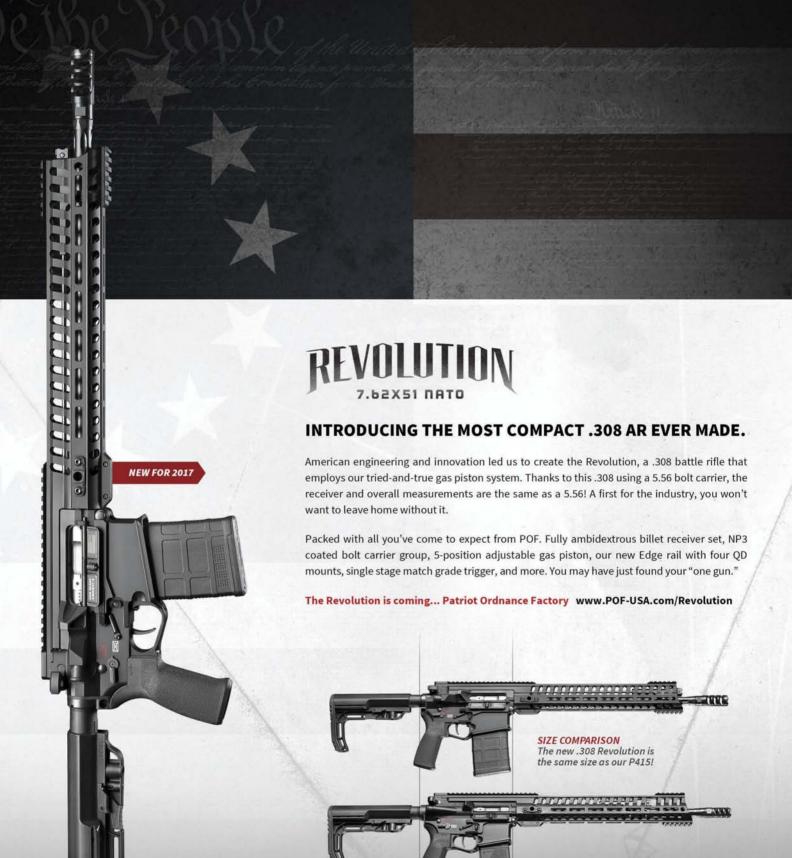
Veritas Tactical can custom-build any configuration an individual, team or group may have for their specific needs. All weapon systems are built to Mil-spec standards and test-fired for function before leaving the shop.

The Veritas R&D team consists of law enforcement, military, private contractors and enthusiasts, and the focus is on quality, precision, purpose and durability. They will not build or sell any firearms, part, accessory or gear they haven't tested or used.

Their custom rifles are all individually handcrafted to their exact tolerances with the utmost quality control. They are tested for proper function and accuracy before shipping and strive to achieve the highest quality and craftsmanship possible to meet their customers' demands. This is why they include and stand behind a lifetime warranty on each of their rifles. Veritas is proud to only use American made parts and materials and guarantees they will never use inferior foreign parts or materials.

"We will not build or sell firearms, parts, accessories or gear we haven't tested or used ourselves," said Ferrer.

So, to answer the initial question, no this is no "lady" in the traditional sense. It's more like the tattoo parlor vixen you're hesitant to have your mom meet ... but she does indeed perform pretty darn well.





















PRODUCT 1 THE MICRO RONI

First, let me ask you a question. Have you been paying attention?

Recently, you may have noticed that there are many interesting ideas appearing on the market that allow one to convert semi-automatic handguns into pistol-caliber carbines via the addition of a stock. This is certainly not a new idea, of course, as there are examples of this dating back over a hundred years.

Currently, CAA is leading the way in the handgun chassis department with its Micro RONI. Due to GLOCK's popularity and reputation, most of the recent stock conversions start with GLOCK-adaptable models. CAA indicates that the Micro RONI chassis will be available to accommodate other handgun models in the near future.

Here in the U.S., the Micro RONI converts your pistol into a Short Barreled Rifle (SBR) classification and must be treated as such with an approved BATF Form 1, and this must be done before installing the handgun in the Micro RONI. CAA has a stabilized brace version of the Micro RONI available for those who cannot, due to jurisdiction restrictions or no desire, to convert a GLOCK into an SBR.

The Micro RONI joins the RONI already present in the CAA product stable. Moshe Oz, co-owner of CAA, is the inventor of both the Micro RONI and RONI.

Based on feedback received related to the original RONI, the Micro RONI has been tweaked in various ways. A slide stop release has been added, as well as a folding stock. The folding stock—in lieu of collapsible—is well received, as this lowers the Micro RONI's footprint, easing discrete carry concerns. The Micro RONI's folding stock is quick to deploy and sturdy once unfolded in the shooting position.

Forward thumb rests and a spare magazine carrier that can double as a vertical forward grip further separate the Micro RONI from its predecessor. A tactical light that fits inside the Micro RONI chassis is another enhancement.

An interesting attention to detail is the dual plastic tabs fitted around the trigger guard area. These tabs can be rotated up and serve as a safety by limiting access to the trigger area. This offers peace of mind

"A HANDGUN CONVERTED INTO A PISTOL-CALIBER CARBINE VIA THE CAA MICRO RONI INSTANTLY BECOMES MORE POTENT ..."



The Micro RONI is adaptable to the GLOCK 17 and 19 9mms. It weighs 25 ounces and goes for \$250. During performance testing it recorded 1,170 fps with Black Hills 115-gr JHP EXP ammo. Prices vary for the MH 1 optic, but expect to pay about \$600.

Windage and elevation adjustments are straightforward and secure with MH 1

to a user if the Micro RONI requires being deployed off a sling across the chest or other possible scenarios when having to sling the weapon.

The installation of your handgun into the Micro RONI literally takes seconds. Simply drop and slide it into the chassis and then fold/click/shut the rear of the Micro RONI around the pistol's grip area. No tools are required.

An ambidextrous charging handle is fitted over the rear of the GLOCK before placing it into the Micro RONI, allowing for the slide to be manually manipulated once the pistol is inserted. The charging handle is secure and gives good purchase.

A handgun converted into a pistol-caliber carbine via the CAA Micro RONI instantly becomes more potent via extended lethality range and the ability to mount an optic. Imagine a law enforcement department operating on a tight budget. The ability to convert their issue handguns into carbines may prove an efficient answer as a force multiplier without adversely effecting budgets because they would not have to purchase another weapon platform with the commiserate costs associated with training and ancillary accessories.

The Micro RONI arrives with Picatinny-style rails along the top, sides and bottom, allowing for performance enhancing accessories such as vertical forward grip, optic/red dot sight, flashlight or laser aiming device to be mounted. The advantage derived from the Micro RONI GLOCK combination is that effective range and shootability are increased compared to a typical handgun. This is based on the Micro RONI's multiple points of contact when interfaced with the shooter: shoulder,

cheek, and hands spread further apart for more stability compared to a handgun.

PRODUCT 2 HARTMAN MH 1 RED DOT SIGHT

All of these advantages would be minimized if neglecting to mount a suitable optic to supplant iron sights. An obvious choice for this would be the Hartman MH 1 red dot reflex sight, especially considering the connection between CAA and Hartman optics.

The MH 1 is an advanced tactical red dot reflex sight. Mikey made sure his extensive experience in the IDF was applied in the MH 1. It has the largest field of view of any red dot reflex sight, which greatly improves target acquisition and situational awareness in day or night scenarios.

The MH 1 uses a reticle that helps to maintain the weapon on a vertical plane for more accurate shooting via balancing lines at 3 and 9 o'clock and a centered red dot. Unique functions such as a USB charging port and unheard of infrared user interface control makes the MH 1 one of the most advanced and innovative reflex sights in the world.

The Hartman MH 1 offers the user a very different and efficient approach to battery consumption. The sight uses 2 batteries; a wall socket/lighter USB rechargeable battery and a standard single backup CR123 battery, allowing for extended battery life. This is combined with aggressive sleep mode that is monitored by



dual axis 30° motion sensors. The reticle activates only when a shooting movement takes place; not by random movement.

The ergonomic design of the MH 1 allows for ambidextrous use of the angled rear activation buttons and easy access to the control panel, even when placed directly in front of add-on devices, i.e. magnifier or night vision device. The MH 1 is built to MIL-STD-810F and is waterproof up to 20 feet. It is equipped with MIL-STD 1913 Picatinny/Weaver mounting system.

RESULTS

Many scoff at the idea of a pistol-caliber carbine, claiming a rifle or shotgun is a superior long arm. One must view any stock chassis through the lens of how to best maximize an existing handgun, not just what weapon is preferable from the pantheon of available options. Many will question the utility of employing a pistol cartridge in a shoulder-fired weapon. Most engagements happen within a 100-yard range—especially in a civilian or law enforcement setting—with handling and reliability playing more of a factor in quick, reactive engagements than a specific caliber used.

Shooters will find the lower recoil pulse and muzzle blast of a pistol caliber fired from the shoulder easier to manage, which often will translate into better accuracy. The Micro RONI fitted with 9mm GLOCK offers a flatter trajectory than most would expect; sighted in 1 inch high at 25 yards gives an approximate 50-yard zero and 7 inches low at 100 yards.

Literally thousands of rounds were fired through dozens of Micro RONIs and Stabilized Micro RONIs over the three days of training. No failures were experienced. This is a credit to CAA designing the Micro RONI chassis to properly interface with its handgun partner.

A large portion of the GLOCK slide and ejection portion is not obscured, which assists in preventing reliability issues. The Hartman MH 1 red dot sight assisted in engaging targets at close distances with the reticle easy to pick up rapidly, while at same time enhancing accuracy out to 100 yards, far beyond normal open sight capabilities. Yes, handguns can engage targets at ranges much further than most realize; this is not the norm and often under pristine conditions with plenty of time to set up. The Micro RONI gives the handgun the characteristics of a carbine.

Many would favor discrete off-body carry of the Micro RONI in a backpack or attaché/briefcase

with another 9mm handgun carried concealed, thus offering the advantage of same caliber/magazine interchangeability. The old standard touting the advantage of having both a carbine and handgun chambered in the same caliber should not be casually dismissed, especially if an organized logistics chain cannot be counted on.

The GLOCK 19 handgun resting in the holster on your hip can also utilize the 17-round or 33-round magazines used with the GLOCK in your Micro RONI slung around your neck, nestled in the briefcase or satchel under your arm.

The biggest question with the CAA Micro RONI is what does it bring to the table in terms of real utility? I found the concept intriquing, and I

The Micro RONI, with the Hartman MH 1s installed, shows what it can do during a CQB drill was surprised by how well it performed.

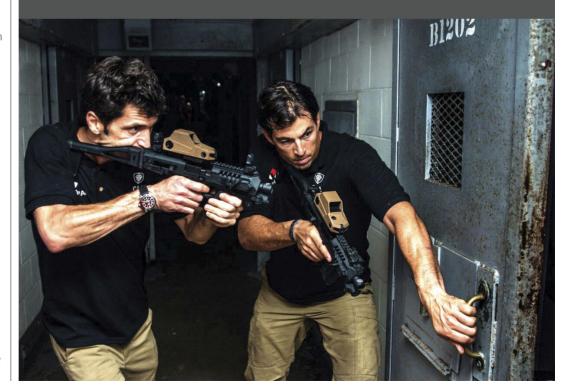
If not confined by legal status, as in the U.S., users can simply upgrade a handgun's potential by mounting in the Micro RONI, and this is a no-brainer really. (CAA helps somewhat with this by offering the Stabilized Micro RONI.)

The Micro RONI chassis seamlessly turns a handgun into a PDW platform. There is no compromise in handling or reliability. A user has just as positive a feel with the Micro RONI conversion as one would with a dedicated PDW or SMG. A survey of the existing market will demonstrate few other weapon system options in terms of size, reliability, flexibility and capability as the Micro RONI with a Hartman MH 1 sight affixed.

TAKEATOUR

Founded in 2012, ALTAIR's main campus consists of the 1,150-acre Regional Training Facility (RTF), located deep in the Southwest Florida Everglades.

The RTF was a high-security prison before being taken over by ALTAIR. The RTF facility includes 60 buildings with more than 360,000 square feet of space that includes a 20,000-square foot headquarters building, a four-bedroom house, six three-bedroom duplexes, two hotels totaling 48 rooms, additional housing for over 375 personnel, a research and development facility, an FAA-certified 3,800-foot private runway, several dining facilities, a gym, a 2-mile long precision range, multiple ranges and shoot houses, and a 700-foot x 3,500-foot



50GI conversion unit for the GLOCK® platform

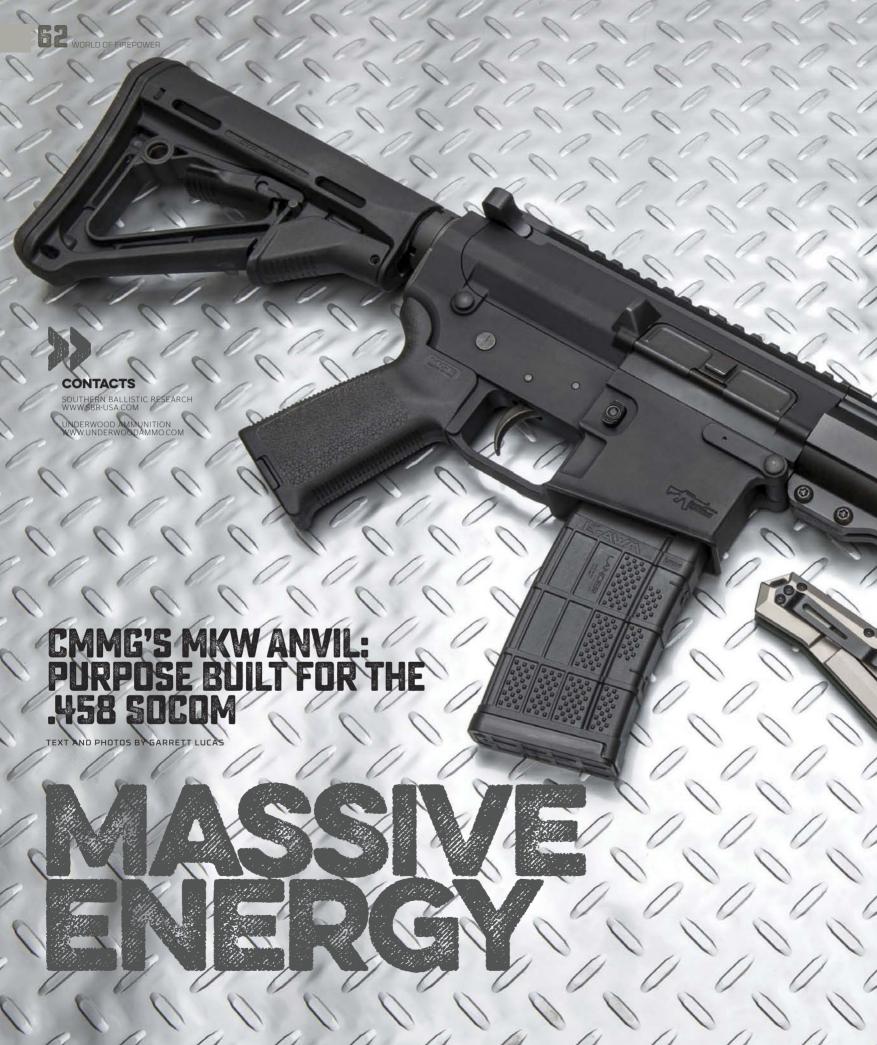
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this period of time that the .45 ACP round was selected for U.S. military use.

A similar conversation took place a century later amongst members of the Special Operations Command. Most were part of Task Force Ranger, which was involved in combating enemy forces in Mogadishu. This elite group

Weeme designing a new round specifically for this purpose. After various ideas were tried and certain caveats were kept, the first .458 SOCOM round was fired in 2001.

There were hard and fast requirements for the .458 SOCOM round—namely that it work in a standard M4 platform (with a different barrel) and with stand AR magazines. This

anticipated—a supersonic hammer that dealt devastating blows to anything in its path.

THE ANVIL

While the .458 SOCOM round was designed to work in a standard M4 platform, the rise of specialty rounds that upped the ante on pressure and power was the impetus for CMMG's new MKW ANVIL rifle.





Though the MKW ANVIL is an AR-style rifle, CMMG took advantage of their mid-size platform designed for 2015's MUTANT, which fires the 7.62 x 39mm round. The mid-size platform has a more robust build of an AR-10 (think .308), including thickness and ability to accept a larger bolt. The receiver, however, has been cut back to minimize size and weight for shorter rounds like the 7.62 x 39mm and 458 SOCOM

The MKW ANVIL's build provides a solid platform to take the beating of the larger rounds especially higher pressure loads from companies like Buffalo Bore—where a standard AR-15/ M4 rifle would probably start to shake loose

after extended shooting. This makes "ANVIL" a perfect name for a rifle of this design.

CMMGINC.COM

The MKW ANVIL line currently consists of three different rifles. The base model has all the goodness of the core rifle, but it comes with a MIL-SPEC grip and stock. The next model up adds Magpul's MOE pistol grip and six-position CTR stock. The top-tier rifle includes the Magpul furniture and a Geissele Automatics SSA trigger.

The rifle utilizes CMMG's proprietary Power-Bolt technology to exploit every ounce of power of the .458 SOCOM round. It includes a 16.1-inch, 416SS barrel with a 1:14 twist,

the barrel is CMMG's SV Brake with a 5/8-32

inches when collapsed, and the rifle has a full-length Picatinny top rail that extends out on the RKM15 (KeyMod) handquard. Little touches like the nicely flared magazine well and a SLR adjustable gas block makes the

.458 SOCOM is an ideal platform for shortrange sniping due to its penetration capabilities and the ability to still deliver massive energy into the target at subsonic speeds when used with a suppressor.

Being unfamiliar to a combat situation, I could not testify whether the .458 SOCOM round is commonly used in that capacity. However, accuracy is always a vital factor with any rifle platform, and it was definitely worth testing the ANVIL's chops in this performance area.

To conduct the accuracy portion of the review, loads were available from several manufacturers, including the 300-grain Xtreme Penetrator from Underwood Ammunition, SBR's 140-grain Polycase ARX load and their 350-grain FMJ offering.

Tested on two separate occasions, the ANVIL turned out satisfying, if not downright titillating, results from the various loads. The first day was more of a get-to-know-you session, and



group sizes hovered around 1 to 1.5 inches for most loads at 100 yards from the bench.

The 140-grain ARX shot a little loose in the 1.80- to 2.5-inch range, but considering the bullet weight was, at most, only 46 percent of any of the other loads, it's possible that the 1:14 twist of the MKW Anvil might not have been optimal for the load.

Having used a Geissele SSA trigger in the past, it was a welcome relief to have it installed in the version of the ANVIL I had for review. It had a crisp and consistent break at 4.25 pounds, and it definitely enhanced my performance.

sessions was Underwood's 300-grain Xtreme Penetrator. It had an average five-shot group size of 1.27 inches and a best group with a spread of just .81 inches—with four of five shots going into one ragged hole.

However, two others followed closely behind with a best group of .91 inches for SBR's 350-grain FMJ and 1.06 inches for Black Butterfly's 350-grain PRS load. These results were more than satisfactory for any purpose I might have, and more-seasoned rifle shooters will probably be able to wring out a bit more accuracy as well.

HANDLING, RELIABILITY

There have been comments made about the recoil of the standard .458 SOCOM load being somewhat severe. My observations did not bear out this finding. There is a bit of a "thump," but when snugged up properly against the shoulder, I didn't experience any pain. In fact, rather quick follow-up shots were fairly easy to obtain. After switching out the scope for the SPARC II red-dot sight, it wasn't an issue keeping quick double-taps in

Some of this can be explained by the heavier weight of CMMG's mid-size chassis and their effective SV muzzle brake, which mitigates the recoil of the larger round. The rest is up to the shooter.

Based on previous experience with CMMG rifles, reliability was as expected. All three loads included with the review fed smoothly and consistently from the supplied, specially-modified Lancer Systems magazines. Standard rifle packages ship with one Lancer Systems magazine, so you may want to order a few more in advance to be ready to hit the ground running.

One thing I would have liked to have seen in the package was a short section of rail or two that could be attached to the forend of the RKM15 handguard. This would allow the user to attach an accessory or two to the side or bottom of the handguard quickly.

All of us want to try out our toys immediately without having to place an additional



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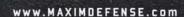


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AVAILABLE IN BLACK AND FOE



SETTING UP A NIGHT-FIGHTING PISTOL

STORY & PHOTOS BY JOHN SCOTT

t's probably a scenario that you've heard or thought about a thousand times.
You're warm and snug in your bed

awakened by a bump in the night. Was it your dog getting into his treat container, or might it be something—or someone else?

A surge of adrenalin pumps through your body, and you're on your feet in no time. What do you do next? Do you grab a bat and head downstairs to find out what or who made that noise?

Depending on how you have prepared for this eventuality, you may grab a handheld flashlight instead. If it were up to us, we'd suggest grabbing a weaponlight-equipped pistol to investigate the mystery below each and every time.

Because not all defensive confrontations happen in broad daylight, getting familiar with how you and your gun react in low-light and no-light situations is key. Have you ever fired your pistol in the dark? If not, you should. Is your defensive pistol set up for low- and no-light actions? If not, it should be.

How should you outfit your pistol for effective low-light and no-light encounters? You've seen them all around and you may even already have them, but are pistol night sights all that you need to successfully survive a nighttime defensive.





the dark? With these questions and others in mind, let's explore night fighting with pistols.

We went straight to the source and asked Charles "Chip" Lasky, director of operations at Tactical Night Vision Company (TNVC), regarding the use of pistols in the dark and what his experiences and preferences are when it comes to setting them up. Because the topic is so wide ranging and our space is limited, we focused on white light set-ups and will tackle infrared light setups in a future article.

FP: What options are there when setting up a pistol for low-light, no-light defense? **CHARLES LASKY:** A disproportionate amount of crime takes place at night and in low-light environments, so it is essential for any armed good guy to make sure he is prepared.

At the very least, a defensive pistol should be equipped with a good set of night sights and a white light. The sights should be well-built, American-made hardware from

a trusted brand that will stand up to daily abuse. My personal and work guns are set up with Trijicon HD Night Sights. The large, photo-luminescent paint outline around the tritium dot on the front sight is extremely fast to acquire in low-light conditions. Its glow-in-the-dark tritium inserts are strong, and Trijicon has become the dominant name in this technology. They are not cheap, but neither is your life.

Night sights are required for effective target acquisition in dark conditions and stressful situations. And I guarantee that any situation that causes you to draw a gun on another human is going to be stressful.

Other accessories for outfitting a low-lightcapable pistol include lights and lasers. All social guns should have a weaponlight. Let me say that again: all social guns should have a weaponlight. If you cannot see and properly identify the threat, then you should not engage.

Whether you're an armed professional or a homeowner responding to a bump in the night, every bullet you launch has a lawyer attached to it. If you do not properly identify the threat, and an innocent is hurt or killed, you are going to jail. A high-quality weaponlight needs to be on every social gun.

Lasers are an often-debated weapon accessory. Personally, I am a proponent and have visible lasers on all of my social pistols. In a stressful, dark situation, it's nice if you are in a position to see your sights. But, that is not always the case. Close-quarters

"WHETHER YOU'RE AN ARMED PROFESSION IN THE NIGHT, EV BULLET YOU LAUNCH HA LAWYER ATTACHED

battle (CQB) with a pistol can often mean kissing distance with your adversary and may include a physical struggle to maintain weapon retention.

Shooting from retention (as soon as the weapon clears the holster and is pointed at the threat) means that you will not have any sight picture. In these conditions, a laser can and will help.

Of course, there is also the intimidation factor. Bad guys are often used to having guns pointed at them, and the simple act of drawing down on them may not elicit the same response if it were you or me on the other end. But, there is something extremely psychological about seeing that red or green dot appear on your person that says, "I'm about a pound of trigger pressure away from a having a hole right there."

While I have seen lasers successfully used to de-escalate situations that may have turned

into shots fired, it's not something I would bet on. You should always be ready to follow it up with force or you should not be carrying a gun.

Another accessory for low-light-ready pistols is a mini red dot sight (MRDS). Like the red dot on rifles, this trend started in the competition world, was identified as having merit in the professional world, met with some rolled eyes, was proven on the battlefield, and began gaining mainstream acceptance. Bottom line: Red dots are faster and easier in all lighting conditions when compared to irons. But, you must invest in quality optics.

Often, this will mean that you pay more for the MRDS than you did for the pistol. But the advantages in target acquisition, speed, accuracy and performance under stress are undeniable. Depending on the type of pistol, you may need to have your slide custom modified to accept a MRDS, or you can purchase aftermarket slides already set up for it.



FP: How effective are pistol night sights when used by themselves, without the benefit of a weaponliaht?

CL: As mentioned, defensive pistols should have night sights and a weaponlight. But, let's say you cannot have both, for whatever reason. A good example would be concealed carry (CCW). If you have a trim waist, you may not have the real estate to effectively conceal a pistol with a weaponlight. Or maybe doing so would require you to dress in a tactical catalog that announces to everyone that you are a "gun guy" and probably carrying. At that point, you use what you have—night sights. While the night sights will be easier to acquire in the dark, if you can't see the target, then what are you aiming at?

Different lighting conditions will have different effects on night sight application. Extreme darkness will mean that your target is not visible, so their effectiveness is moot. But, if you are in a low-light situation and your eyes are already night adapted, your night sights will be extremely effective.

Smaller/more powerful weaponlights are showing up on the market all the time. A really good one to look at is the Surefire XC1. It is designed for CCW guns. While it's not as powerful as full-size pistol weaponlights, it still produces an effective 200 lumens.

FP: How do white lights affect the use of niaht siahts?

CL: White lights will exponentially increase the effectiveness of your night sights. In all actuality, the same thing is true of stock sights. The light will not only illuminate the target but also create a backlight effect on the sights, allowing for a faster and easier alignment. But remember, you always want to find your front sight first.

FP: White light weaponlights are available in a wide variety of lumen ratings and beam patterns. What should one be aware of when outfitting their pistol with one? Can a light be too bright?

CL: This is one of those questions that are very subjective. There is no perfect answer because there are no perfect situations. The market is flush with tactical trainers and experts who have engaged in more gunfights than Wyatt Earp, and killed more bad guys than Audie Murphy. All of them pontificate the benefits of one type of gear or another, one technique or another, one brand or another. And they are all correct, from their



Low lumens work great for my buddy's frame of reference. But who am I to argue with a ninja? I believe that his TTP's, developed by his unit through their experiences are fantastic and work extremely well for guys at the tip of the spear who conduct nightly hits, shooting MF'ers in the face and saving the world. But his mission profile is very unique and may not be applicable to suburban homeowners looking to protect their families from an intruder. Personally, I have never been in a situation where I felt I had too many lumens in my light. But, that doesn't mean I never will.

As a current law enforcement officer, I need to be able to use my weaponlight as a search and use-of-force tool. During a search for an armed suspect, I need to be able to bring to bear as many lumens as possible to effectively scan and assess wide-open areas to include fields, woods, barns, warehouses, etc. A 300-lumen light is relatively anemic in that application. If the situation warrants a search with a drawn weapon, I want all the lumens I can get. The same could be said for a homeowner investigating their property at night. Additionally, I want to use my weaponlight to gain as much control and advantage in a situation, after I've made contact with a suspect or opponent.

That said, a strong weapon light could be used as an effective force tool. Obviously, it is disorienting to your opponent. Shining a bright light in someone's eyes will produce a reaction: looking away, closing eyes, putting a hand up, hesitation, stun.

What's more, you may face a situation where the opposition has a weaponlight, too. Wait, what? Yes, bad guys can be tactical, too. So, what happens when you run into an opponent with a weaponlight? He who has the most lumens wins. In a duel of lights, the guy with the brighter light will not be blinded. His light will cancel out the other, allowing him to see and blind his opponent at the same time.

FP: Should a weaponlight be attached to the pistol or used separately in the off hand? **CL:** I advocate weaponlights attached

CL: I advocate weaponlights attached to pistols. The first reason is that it will always put the light where you need it. A weaponlight is designed for one thing—to illuminate a target that you intend to engage. It should only be deployed during

an active threat. I want to make sure this is clear to readers. Weaponlights are not search tools because they require you to point your weapon at anything you are trying to illuminate.

You wouldn't start waiving your pistol around if you're simply looking for your dog that ran out in the middle of the night. But, if there are intruders on your property or in your home, that's a different story. As for cops and warfighters, you better have a tertiary handheld light. If you need to help change a tire for a stranded motorist, your only option for light had better not be attached to your gun.

Next, attached weaponlights put everything on the gun. While gun control means using two hands, deploying a defensive pistol means you're in a situation that may require you to manipulate the weapon one-handed. You may need to interact with your environment, open doors, climb ladders or hold/move family members and non-combatants out of the way. An attached weaponlight allows you to manipulate the light and keep it on target while multitasking.

Another factor to consider is that one of your arms may be out of the fight. You may have sustained an injury to one of your limbs, limiting your use to one hand. If that's the case, having a weapon-mounted light is the only way to go.

FP: How useful are visible lasers when shooting at night?

CL: Visible lasers are one of the most controversial weapon accessories. You either love them or hate them. And, for every person that makes a viable positive point, there is someone with an equally viable negative.

Personally, I like visible lasers. Gunfights happen suddenly and are extremely violent. My own experiences aside, one of the things that most people who have just experienced their first pistol gunfight say is that they did not remember seeing their sights. Whether this is a mental phenomenon, poor training or a mechanism for coping with a traumatic experience, the fact is that violence is often overwhelming to the uninitiated. A laser can be extremely beneficial under those circumstances.

Another factor to consider is age. As we get

DEBRIEF

There are many ways of setting up a night-fighting pistol. As with most things in life, especially in the gun world, person preference plays an important role. From the looks of it, however, that night sights and a weapon-mounted light are keys to a practical night-pistol setup.

Regardless of how you set one up, it is important to realize that proficiency with said pistol is key. Training and practice in low and no light go a long way. Don't skimp on it.

older, our eyesight degrades. There is only so much that can be done about this. While Lasik surgery can help correct vision, patients have often reported degrading side effects to their natural night vision. The bottom line is, our ability to acquire the front sight of our pistol degrades over time. A good, weaponmounted laser can mean the difference in life/death moments.

It can also help when the pistol is being wielded by someone not as confident in its use. In a perfect world, our loved ones would be just as proficient with guns, tactics and mindset. Let's face it, our wives (and in some women's cases, weeny husbands) are not going to be as sure of themselves behind a gun in a home defense situation. Sight alignment, trigger control, breathing and grip are going to be the last thing on their minds as they are faced with a stranger in the living room at 0200 while you are away on a business trip. Lasers can help instill confidence in novice shooters, giving them fewer fundamentals to think about and allowing more adrenaline to be directed at engaging the threat.

FP: For those who may not have had a chance to fire their pistols in the dark or nearly dark areas, it's worthy to note that light can have some drastic side effects that one may not be aware of. Can you talk about things to be aware about when using a weaponlight?

CL: If you haven't attended low-light training and you carry a gun every day, you are doing yourself and those around you a disservice. As we previously said, a disproportionate amount of violence occurs at night. Simply

CONFIDENCE I SHOOTERS, GIV FEWER FUNDAME

having a fast car doesn't mean you're a driver. Having a tactically sound gun doesn't make you a gunfighter either. Battlefield obscurants have a profound effect on how you perceive your environment and possible threats.

You can see through smoke, fog, rain and snow, but they are limiting factors made worse at night. On top of that, your light may act to further complicate your reach

This is exacerbated in a qunfight where fire is exchanged for any amount of time. Hollywood and video games have done a poor job in preparing people for actual firefights. In my first gunfight, I remember thinking "holy shit; what is all this crap in the air?" Besides the smoke created from repeated qunfire, bullet impacts make the air thick with dust from drywall,

concreate, bricks, etc. It's everywhere and if you're not prepared for it, you can quickly find yourself refracting your light off of obscurants that are as thick as pea soup.

Next, there is the issue of light splash-back. Splash will occur when you have too much light in a confined space or too much light shining on a surface. This can happen indoors or out. The possibility of it occurring indoors is obvious, but people are often surprised to find it outdoors—most notably in dense foliage and tall grasses. You should remove your weaponlight and play with it in different environments to see how it is affected.

Of course, there is also the question of giving up your position. Unlike night vision, white light will compromise your position. That is why it is imperative that you deploy it properly. Don't keep your light on all the time. When you turn it off, move.





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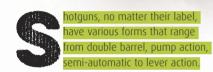




THE HIGH-PERFORMANCE MOSSBERG 500 ATI TACTICAL SHOTGUN

BY TODD BURGREEN, PHOTOS BY STRAIGHT 8





The inherent flexibility of a shotgun, especially the pump action, to digest a variety of cartridge types—like birdshot, slug, buckshot, non-lethal, low recoil and breaching—is its greatest attribute. This same adaptability can also mislead individuals in understanding the necessary setup for a defensive shotgun.

Dating back to the muzzle-loading era, the "combat/tactical" shotgun has been around for centuries. Early shotguns served dual roles as a close-range and sporting weapon for fleeting game. This was later specialized with the Dutch "blunderbuss," which had a short 14-inch barrel and a signature flared muzzle to ease powder loading and shooting, but it didn't enhance the shot spread associated with the flared bulbous muzzle design.

The history of the United States military shows the proclivity of the shotgun and its close range effectiveness with mounted forces from the American Revolution and Civil War. The shotgun's popularity is derived from its ability to hit targets at moderate ranges, better than any other weapons, with its cone of firepower. The multiple projectiles it can send downrange with a single trigger pull, translates into popularity with anyone who may rely on it for bagging game or supplementing the family diet or contesting an armed opponent.

The advent of hulled ammunition—which is made out of paper, brass or plastic-contributed to the rise of the repeating shotgun for civilian, law enforcement and military use.

In a nutshell, pump action shotguns have been around for a relatively long time and are often too casually dismissed, either as smoothbore relics associated with WWI trenches or police cruisers that have been surpassed by the plethora of "black" rifles now on the market. Do not take this as an argument making the claim that the tactical shotgun supplants all other options. There are valid reasons why plenty of AKs, ARs and other assault rifles equip military forces around the world. However, the combat shotgun's utility should not be doubted or held in disdain once its role is understood.

A good example is a new and impressive shotgun that is on the market ... Mossberg's 500 ATI Tactical

MOSSBERG & MIL-SPEC

Enjoying a long-standing relationship with the U.S. armed forces, Mossberg proudly proclaims their stalwart Model 500 series is the only to pass the U.S. Army's Mil-Spec 3443E test. The government's "Mil-Spec 3443" is a test designed to determine a worthy combative shotgun.

To fulfill the requirements, the Mossberg shotgun fired 3,000 consecutive rounds of full-power 12-gauge buckshot with only two

malfunctions and unserviceable parts. It also functioned under the most extreme environmental conditions. Overall, both the Mossberg 500 and 590 fared and exceeded the Mil-Spec 3443F's standards.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS

The Mossberg 500 ATI Tactical is a pumpaction 12-gauge shotgun equipped with ATI T2 TactLite 6-position stock, Scorpion recoil-reductive buttpad and pistol grip. The T2 TactLite is adjustable for length of pull and has a cheek riser that can be raised 1 inch.

Sling mounting options include a single-point sling mount insert above the grip and QD socket on the outer buttstock.

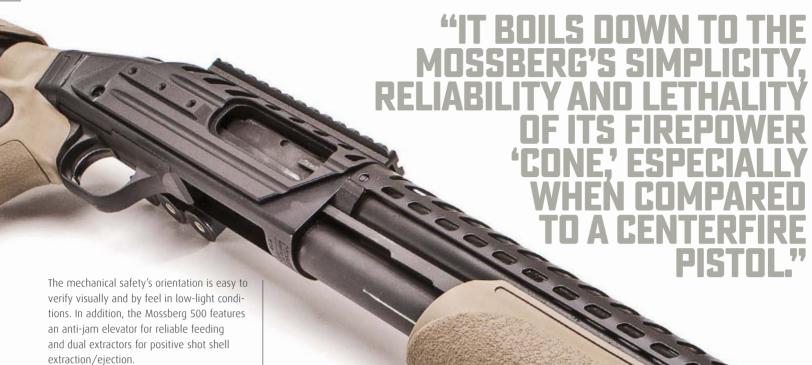
When manipulating the pump action, a widerthan-normal Akita pump forend provides solid purchase. The ATI Halo Heatshield is a free-float design with front/rear blocks and silicone pads that eliminate metal-to-metal contact with the barrel. A front dovetail rail attachment comes with two 2-inch side rails for mounting accessories. The Heatshield has a front sight that matches up with the Halo Side Saddle's sighting channel and matches the length of the Picatinny rail.

The Halo Side Saddle is screwed into the









SHELL ADVANCEMENTS

In terms of combat or personal defense, shotguns fire two primary types of shells—slugs or buckshot. This ability to handle different styles of projectiles is at the root of shotgun effectiveness and popularity with LE, military and civilian users, which is even more accentuated by the Mossberg 500 pump action.

Semi-automatic shotguns can be temperamental with low recoil or specialty 12-gauge rounds. The last several years have revitalized the 12-gauge in ammunition advancements. Winchester, Hornady and Federal are leading the way with innovative slug loads and specialized wadding techniques to increase effective patterning range of buckshot loads.

The Mossberg 500 ATI Tactical was tested with Hornady Critical Defense #00 buckshot (8-#00 pellets 54-grains each) and Federal Premium FliteControl #00 buckshot (9-#00 54-grain pellets). The Hornady Critical Defense and Federal Premium buckshot loads utilize special wads to produce a tighter and effective longer-range buckshot pattern. Based on prior experiences with numerous shotguns and loads over the years, these specialized buckshot loads are superior. Too much is wasted on increasing effective range buckshot if the specialized wads aren't used to keep patterns tighter. Better patterns translate into a more potent performance at ranges thought unrealistic for buckshot effectiveness.

The Mossberg 500 ATI, combined with Hor-

nady Critical Defense and Federal Premium FliteControl #00 buckshot, averaged spreads of 4 inches at 10 yards with two buckshot loads. Further pattern testing produced spreads measuring 8 inches at 20 yards, 12 inches at 30 yards and 18 inches at 40 yards. For comparison sake, buckshot at 40 yards is absurd with only a few buckshot strikes to be expected on a man-sized target. Roughly, a 1-inch spread for every yard travelled downrange is the rule of thumb with standard buckshot loads.

Winchester PDX1 12 Defender and Defender Segmented Slug loads were tested with the Mossberg 500 ATI. The innovative Winchester PDX1 Defender is a combination of a 1-ounce slug and three #00 pellets. Our forefathers used the Winchester PDX 1 load ("buck-n-ball") against the British in the Revolutionary and Civil War. The Winchester PDX 1 load stretches preconceived 12-gauge lethality notions further with its combination of slug and buckshot.

Range testing of the Winchester PDX 1 raised eyebrows with its performance combining the best of both worlds for the combat shotgun: 100-yard slug single projectile performance and 18-inch buckshot pattern spread to 30 yards with one hole made by a 1-ounce slug.

The Winchester PDX 1 had the same accuracy

The Mossberg 500 ATI Tactical fared well while shooting around EVTC range as dedicated slug-only loads—3-inch groups at 50 yards—with the added benefit of 3-#00 buckshot pellets, allowing for shotgun multi-projectile performance. If only one load is possible for use in a combat shotgun, the Winchester PDX1 is it. The PDX1 has the ability to mitigate transitioning between buckshot and slug loads; this eliminates the need to "switch to slug" employed in many training seminars.

The Winchester PDX1 Segmented Slug leaves the shotgun barrel at 1,600 feet per second as a single 437-grain slug, which upon impact separates into three segments. Winchester has scored the PDX1 slug to control/manage how it separates into three similar-sized fragments upon impact. The three 145-grain segments bore into ballistic gel no more than



SHOTGUN 101

A shotgun can be limited in terms of range, but it is not an issue for civilians, LE and certain missions in the military.

The 1960 Borneo conflict and US Joint Service Combat Shotgun Program show the probability of hitting a man-sized target with a shotgun is superior to that of all other weapons. These studies refer to the buckshot and multiple projectiles capable of inflicting damage as far away as 75 yards. The British study compiled after battle statistics proved that the shotgun was the most effective short-range weapon with a hit probability of 45%, greater than SMG

The smaller individual buckshot pellets are comparable to a small caliber handgun in wounding potential, but multiple projectile increase likelihood of more hits and damage.

HAWK! bandoleer and forearm shell holders, combined with a BLACKHAWK! Omega tactical shotgun vest, do well to keep you reloaded. The extra ammunition on the ATI receiver shell carrier functioned as a last option when other ammunition sources ran dry.

Another drill was a 35-yard multiple-target engagement before engaging a steel popper placed 90 yards out, of which necessitated the switch from buckshot to slug, unless the Winchester PDX 1 load was being used.

The ATI T2 TactLite stock changes the ergonomics from Mossberg's fixed stock arrangement. For example, the Mossberg ambidextrous safety located behind the receiver is no longer thumb-manipulated due to pistol grip configuration. Safety manipulation is too often turned into an on/off flip madness on perceived range rules than tactical soundness.

There was a similar experience when manipulating the slide release in the "switch to sluq" drill described above. The Winchester

T2 TactLite buttstock installed on the Mossberg 500 can be adjusted for length of pull and comb height. The Scorpion pistol grip and recoil pad mitigates the felt

"THE 6-INCH DIAMETER PATTERN TRANSLATES INTO ONE SQUARE FOOT OF LEAD THAT CAN STRIKE A TARGET."

PDX 1 "buck-n-ball" makes the switch to slug drill irrelevant. These items are a price I am willing to pay for the ATI stock's ergonomics and recoil reduction.

ITS APPEAL

What is it about the Mossberg 500 ATI Tactical pump action shotgun that continues to attract users? It boils down to the Mossberg's simplicity, reliability and lethality of its firepower "cone," especially when compared to a centerfire pistol.

No matter how rapidly and how many of its single projectiles are sent downrange against moving targets, rifle/pistol rounds are single projectiles with a minimal spatial cross-section, whereas #00 buckshot pellets disperse into a 6-inch pattern even at close range. The 6-inch diameter pattern translates into one square foot of lead that can strike a target. The Mossberg's firepower "cone" gets larger as the distance from the muzzle increases—a key reason why the Mossberg favors as a utilitarian weapon of choice.

HIT FAST HARD

STAG-10 7.62x51 from Stag Arms









STAG ARMS

STAG ARMS.

TRAINING KEANU REEVES AND HOLLYWOOD'S STARS WITH TARAN BUTLER

BY CORA MAGLAYA, PT. ATC. CSCS



n the midst of Hollywood. That is where Taran Butler has found himself. The world-class competition shooter and owner of Taran Tactical Innovations (TTI) has become a world-renowned firearms instructor for Hollywood's hottest action stars and directors. He has worked with other specialized firearm instructors, such as Harry Humphries and Mick Gould, training celebrities for films such as "The Kingdom," "Transformers," "13 Hours," "Miami Vice" and "Public Enemies."

Taran's relationships with the film industry started back in the late 1990s with James Cameron, director of many major films, including "The Terminator," "Avatar," "Aliens," and "Titanic." Major demand for Taran's firearm instruction for action movies rapidly picked up traction when Taran was granted permission to post a video of one of his students training for a film to come out in early 2017. This student was Keanu Reeves, who was training for "John Wick: Chapter 2." After seeing Keanu exploding from target to target with fast transitions, great accuracy and excellent technique, it was easy to see why Taran would become one of the most sought-after firearm instructors in Hollywood.

Through his relationship with the director and the stunt coordinator for "John Wick," Chad Stahelski and JJ Perry, Taran has expanded his connections through the film industry. He has also worked alongside weapons trainers Rock Galotti, Shawn Vance and Mark Stefanich. He trained Common for his role as an enemy assassin against Keanu Reeves in "John Wick: Chapter 2," Michelle Rodriguez for her role in the "Fast and the Furious," Eric Dane and Bridget Regan for their work on "The Last Ship," and both Katrina Law and Drew Van Acker for their roles in CBS's "Training Day."

He is also training Aaron Taylor Johnson, Max Martini, Garett Dillahunt, Joel Kinnaman and Keith David for their upcoming projects. Taran attributes his success with training the movie industry to his relationships with caring and generous people that have helped him network his way to the top.

- **Q:** How did your relationship with Keanu Reeves begin?
- **A:** A friend of mine, Mike Setting, USPSA Grandmaster, called me up and asked if I would be interested in training an actor for a film. It turned out to be Keanu Reeves for "John Wick: Chapter 2." A friend of Mike's, JJ Perry, is one of the stunt coordinators for the movie and is handling this. From there, we interviewed. JJ and I got along immedi-



Before becoming a celebrity firearms instructor, Taran Butler built a successful competitive career in Multigun, United States Practical Shooting Association (USPSA) and other shooting disciplines. His accomplishments include the USPSA MultiGun Triple Crown Champion, seven-time Fort Benning MultiGun National Champion, three-time International Practical Shooting Confederation (ISPC) World Shoot Standard Gold Medal Team Champion, Steel Challenge World Speed Shooting Champion and two-time IDPA National Champion.

Taran's skill and knowledge in competition shooting inspired him to start his own company, Taran Tactical Innovations, which caters toward the competition shooter's needs, as well as influencing other fields of the shooting industry, including military and law enforcement. His primary goal is to provide the shooter with the most accurate and reliable products on the market.

TTI is a world-class one-stop-shop for some the best competition MultiGun gear on the planet and specializes in building customized Glocks, TTI rifles and Benelli shotguns. Highly popular accessories offered include his magazine extensions for Glocks, AR 15's, and M&Ps, competition and tactical sights, and other innovative products.

TTI also has an elite shooting team of all highly decorated competition shooters, which includes Nils Jonasson, Ashley Rheuark, Corinne Mosher, Tori Nonaka, Keith Garcia, and others that compete in major championships.

THE BUTLER DID IT



ately, and we began training that day.

- **Q:** How were you approached, as an instructor, to train Keanu, and what were they looking for?
- **A:** What they wanted was—everything. They heard about 3-Gun, and they said they've tried the military and law enforcement stuff. They said they wanted to try something new, to see what it will do and where they could take it.

"John Wick: Chapter 2" is guaranteed to have the most unbelievable kickass action sequence you've ever seen from an actor, doing what no one has ever dared to do in a movie before. It has set the bar so high, that the only person who could break it will be is a firearms instructor for Hollywood's hottest action stars and directors.

Photo by Cora Maglava

Keanu if he does a Chapter 3.

- **Q:** Tell us a bit about Chad Stahelski, JJ Perry and Keanu Reeves. How do you like training them?
- **A:** JJ Perry is in the first "John Wick" as a stuntman. Chad brought him out specifically to help choreograph the gun fighting and fighting sequences for the nightclub scene. After the success of the nightclub scene, JJ later became one of the major stunt coordinators of "John Wick: Chapter 2." It was his job to oversee all the training Keanu undergoes before filming.

Chad Stahelski is the director of "John Wick" and "John Wick: Chapter 2." He is also Keanu's former stuntman for "The Matrix." Chad and Keanu have maintained a friendship of over 15

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"WE OBVIOUSLY KNOW WHO KEANU REEVES IS; HE'S JUST AN UNBELIEVABLY COOL DUDE. KEANU IS TO-TALLY INTO IT [SHOOTING]."



years. Chad is also owner of 87Eleven Action Design, a state-of-the art, private stunt training facility where some of Hollywood's most elite actors train.

We obviously know who Keanu Reeves is; he's just an unbelievably cool dude. Keanu is totally into it [shooting]. He's disciplined, serious and dedicated to being his best. He doesn't want to quit until he's got it right, and his work ethic is incredible. As an actor, he embodies the roles he's casted in so well because he lives as if he is the character he's portraying at that moment.

Q: How often did you train Keanu for "John Wick: Chapter 2"?

A: Keanu and I had about nine 3-hour training sessions before he started filming. During the filming, we periodically trained whenever he was available and in the area. In total, we had about 12-15 training sessions over the course of filming "Chapter 2" and many more afterward.

Keanu now comes out, along with JJ Perry and Chad Stahelski, to train on his own time and to decompress. Chad also sent out one of the bad guys from the movie to get some training before filming began. If you watch the trailer, you'll see Academy Award winner Common

draw from the hip. Both Keanu and Common shoot from the hip in "Chapter 2." I've shot from the hip during competition. It's fun and it shaves off half a second. Nothing beats it, and they both can do it. You're always going to be faster if you shoot from the hip ... if the shot isn't too hard, that is.

Q: Do most actors you train have prior firearms experience?

A: It all varies. Every actor has his own story. The majority of actors don't have a lot of experience. One of the actors I've worked with, that most shockingly had no previous firearms experience, was Mel Gibson. He was never taught by anyone, and when he did "Lethal Weapon," he made up his own technique. Not even a cop taught him anything. He just held the gun and shot it like he thought he should. He's a pretty good shooter, considering. All I had to do was change his grip and stance a bit. The guy was in great shape, and he shot really well for his first time under instruction.

Q: How did you meet Gibson?

A: We have a mutual friend who introduced me to him; he brought him out to have some fun and shoot. I did the smiley

Keanu Reeves, Taran Butler, and MMA superstar

Photos courtes of Taran Tactica

Taran Butler poses with Common who portrays an enemy assassin in "John Wick: Chanter 2"

Photos courtesy of Taran Tactical Innovations face for Mel that he did in Lethal Weapon. There's a video on YouTube of me doing that, and he thought it was pretty cool.

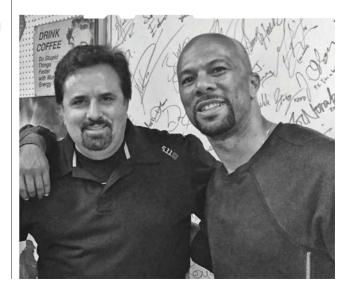
When he came out, Mel shot a Desert Eagle .50 Cal, a Beretta and Glock. He liked the Glock 34 and 17 much better than he liked the Barretta, which is the 9mm he used in "Lethal Weapon." He came to TTI to learn to shoot better for upcoming films and to have fun. Both we accomplished.

Q: When did your career in the film and TV industry take off?

A: I didn't always train celebrities. Lately, it's been non-stop because of the networks I've made through Keanu, JJ Perry, Mike Setting and Chad Stahelski. After the video of Keanu training for "John Wick: Chapter 2" went viral on all platforms, everything just blew up for TTI and I. We're very grateful. 87Eleven Action Design has helped blend our industries together, shooting and action films, and without Chad Stahelski and JJ Perry, we wouldn't have the success we have.

The director and producer of "John Wick" and "John Wick: Chapter 2," Chad Stahelski and David Leitch, own 87Eleven. It is a private stunt-choreography, gym and production company. They are one of the most premier, sought-after stunt coordination groups in the world.

Chad, JJ and their crew handle the best action movies on the planet. Their stunt guys are in everything from "The Hunger Games" to Marvel Comic movies, "Captain America," "The Expendables," "Triple X 2" and other action films. There are big stars there all the time training in jiu-jitsu, judo, other martial



Our new American made billet upper receivers and Air Lite handguards for the AR15 are already a favorite among many shooters, and now we're making them for your .308.

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FDE Cerakote

OD Green

Black Anodized









Left to right,
Jade Struck with
TTI, Jessie Graff
American Ninja
Warrior, Keanu
Reeves, Taran Butler, Maggie Thorne
ANW and Jennifer
Irene.

Photos courtesy of Taran Tactical

Actor Keanu Reeves films new movie "John Wick: Chapter 2" on a rooftop in Dumbo, Brooklyn on Tuesday, December 15, 2015.

Photo by Todd Ma sel/NY Daily News via Getty Images

"KEANU'S TRAINING FOR WICK WAS PRETTY SERIOUS, AND WE DID A LOT OF TRAINING, MORE THAN WE USUALLY WOULD."

arts, tumbling and gymnastics, and more.

The Rock, Jason Statham, Charlize Theron, Vin Diesel, Will Smith, Hugh Jackman and Scarlett Johannsson train there. If you watch their movies and the work they do, it's just levels beyond your generic stunt group.

- **Q:** What were firearms classes like that you taught earlier in your career?
- **A:** Previous training sessions years ago would be like, "Get your grip down, and don't look like a fool." Now, actors are asking for technical shooting sequences with the shotgun, handgun and rifle.
- **Q:** How much ammunition are actors going though during a long day of training?
- **A:** Probably around 1,000 rounds of 9mm, 200-300 rounds of .223 and about 70 rounds of birdshot. It just depends on the class, the actor and the type of training. Each training session is different, catering toward the individual training and what we're trying to accomplish in the session.

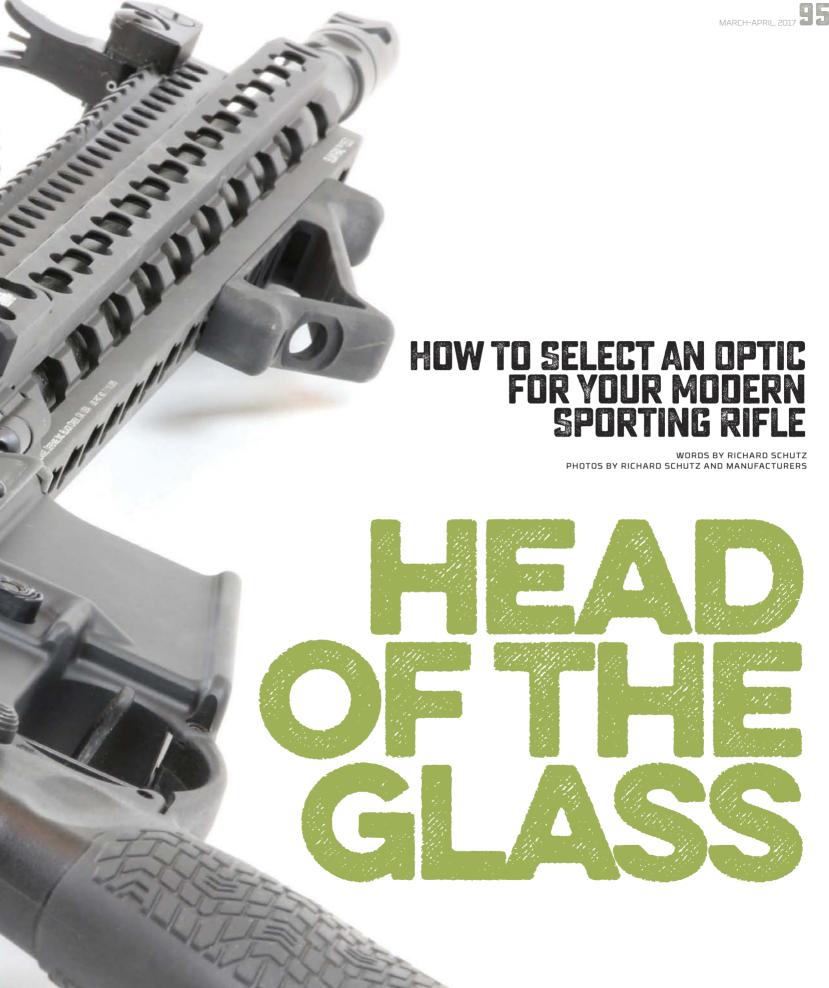
Keanu's training for Wick was pretty serious, and we did a lot of training, more than we usually would. When it comes to Wick, the training Keanu endured was very extreme, both in fighting and shooting. He's a great sport and an amazing student.

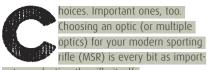
- **Q:** Who is on your bucket list of actors you would like to work with?
- **A:** Clint Eastwood, Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger.











ant as selecting the rifle itself.

After you've spent months researching the ultimate MSR, don't shortchange yourself by running out and buying the "ultimate" riflescope that you saw advertised in the latest flyer from your favorite gun store or online supplier.

Before you purchase either the rifle or the optic(s), think the whole project through. What is the purpose of the weapon system? Is it strictly for home defense? Are you going to use it for 3-gun competition? Are you just going to take it to the range and fire from the bench, prone, sitting, kneeling or offhand positions? Are you going to shoot varmints at 300-400 yards? Or, most likely, is this going to be a combination of two or more of these purposes? Match the performance of your optic with the performance of your MSR.

Once you have determined the primary purpose of the weapon system, then you can research the options in each area. There are many types of optics available, and new versions are introduced nearly every day. Let's look at some details.

CONSIDERATIONS

For close-quarter-battle (CQB) use and out to 50 yards, a "red dot" sight is normally the best option because it is quicker on target than open sights and has a greater field of view than a traditional riflescope. This is also true for home defense and certain competition stages. A red dot optic has a single aiming point that you can use with both eyes open and offers a wide field of view. It will have no magnification. The two types of red dot optics are reflex and holographic.

A reflex or holographic optic with a tip-off low power magnifier or a low power integrally magnified reflex optic should be considered from 50 to 150 yards. Magnification may not be required if conditions are optimal, but they seldom are; magnification requirements depend upon the size of the target and shooting position.

Small targets are best engaged with an optic with magnification. An unmagnified 1 MOA center dot in an EOTech holographic sight can wipe out a 5-inch bullseye at 100 yards, due to flare and environmental conditions. Mag-

"BE REALISTIC WITH COST ESTIMATES. IT IS NOT UNUSUAL TO SPEND AS MUCH OR MORE ON THE OPTICS AS ON THE MSR."

nification requirements depend upon the size of the target and shooting position. Too much magnification can be just as bad as too little, if you don't have a steady rest or require a wide field view.

From 150 or 200 yards on out, a traditional riflescope is a necessity for most of us. Up to about 300 yards, 4x to 6x magnification will do the job unless you're shooting groundhogs. If you need to hit objects smaller than man-size at 200 yards or more, consider a variable power scope. Once again, this should be part of your decision process when you define the purpose of the weapon system. The smaller the target, the longer the distance and the more secure the shooting position, the more magnification you can use. Be careful not to over-magnify; you sacrifice target acquisition speed and it is expensive.

Another consideration is the caliber of the MSR that you are using. What is its performance window? AR-10 type platforms in .308 Win./7.62x51 caliber or similar can reach out and touch things accurately at a greater distance than an AR-15 platform in .223 Rem./5.56x45 or .300 Blackout and retain more energy doing so. Therefore, if you need that type of distance, a riflescope with a higher magnification is necessary.

Finally, everyone except your Uncle Sam has a cost consideration. Many gun owners complain when they find out that they have to pay as much or more for optics as they did for the gun. This selection should have been part of the planning phase of your purchase to minimize sticker shock. Remember that



Holosun HS503GU battery operated reflex red dot optic with circle dot reticle and 1/3 co-witness mount.





optics can be moved from one gun to another. If you spend a little more money (sometimes a lot more) and purchase high-quality optics for your low-end MSR, they can easily be transferred to a new or upgraded MSR in the future.

Try to maintain flexibility while remaining within budget. A good, high-quality reflex or holographic optic will cover most of the scenarios that the majority of us will ever need. Many of us don't even have access to a range longer than 200 yards.

DISCUSSION OF OPTICS

A reflex optic projects the dot or other style of aiming reticle on a single lens where it is reflected back to the shooter's eye. In the case of a single, open lens, such as in a Trijicon RMR, the aiming reticle is projected up onto the lens from a point below the lens and closer to the shooter.

In the case of a classic, tube-type optic, the aiming reticle is usually projected from the side onto a lens with additional lenses on each end of the tube. A coating on the lens allows most light from the target to pass through while reflecting the reticle back to the shooter's eye.

A holographic optic uses a laser diode to illuminate a hologram, which appears to float in the lens of the optic. The glass does not need to reflect the aiming reticle back

IMPORTANT FACTS

44 1

When selecting your MSR, make sure that there is enough room on the top rail to accommodate the optics and any iron sights that you want to mount there. It can be difficult and expensive to add rail real estate after the fact.

44 2

Be realistic with cost estimates. It is not unusual to spend as much or more on the optics as on the MSR.



to the shooter's eye so it allows for a clearer field of view than a reflex optic. Due to the power draw of the laser diode, battery life in a holographic optic may be shorter than that of a reflex sight. This is offset by the use of a battery with greater capacity, which is larger and heavier that that in a reflex optic (think CR2032 in a reflex versus a 123A or 2 AA batteries in a holographic optic).

Both reflex and holographic optics are very flexible. They give the shooter the ability to shoot with both eyes open, thus providing better situational awareness. Also, eye relief is unlimited, and the shooter's eye need

not be centered with the reticle. They are well-suited for close-in, quick target acquisition and engaging moving targets.

A traditional riflescope simply magnifies the object at which you are aiming. It may be a fixed power or a variable power up to 32x or more. Riflescopes are an excellent choice for stationary, distant targets, but they limit your flexibility. Your eye must be centered with the reticle and eye relief is limited, as is your field of view and peripheral vision.

Riflescopes can be simple with a single, unlighted reticle or complex with an illuminated,

"GENERALLY, YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR. I DON'T KNOW ANY-ONE WHO LAMENTS SPENDING MORE FOR GOOD OPTICS, AS LONG AS THEY CHOSE THE RIGHT ONE FOR THEIR APPLICATION."

bullet drop compensating reticle, bullet drop elevation turret, side focus, quick-adjust power ring and even a laser rangefinder.

OPTIC CHOICES

The first option is the miniature reflex sight. Examples of this class of red dot optics are the Trijicon RMR, Bushnell First Strike, Leupold DeltaPoint, SIG Sauer Romeo3 and Vortex Razor & Venom models. These are small and versatile. They are usually used on pistols due to their small size and light weight, but they can also be used very successfully on an MSR or a shotgun. In most cases, they should be mounted using a high rise mount for proper cheek weld.

Next is the traditional red dot or micro red dot (also a reflex sight), in which a single dot or other style reticle is projected onto a partially reflective lens in a riflescope style straight tube. These have no magnification and allow for shooting with both eyes open. Examples of this style are the Aimpoint COMPM4, MICRO T2 or PRO; Bushnell TRS-25 HiRise, TRS-32 or CQTS 1x32; Leupold LCO; Sightron S30 & S33; SIG Sauer ROMEO4A, 5 & 7 and Vortex SPARC, STRIKEFIRE and SPITFIRE models.

The third option is the large reflex or holographic optic. The large reflex optics are similar to the miniature reflex sight but larger and more rugged. They either have no tube or a very short one. Both of these optics have no magnification and allow for shooting with both eyes open. Examples of these optics are the EOTech 500 series & XPS/EXPS models, Trijicon Reflex & SRS and the Vortex Razor AMG UH-1.

The Trijicon
ACOG TA31F-A
(top) is an example of a fixed
magnification
(4x) red dol
(reflex) sight.
This model has a
dual illuminated
ballistic reticle
with flattop

Reflex Sight lower left) is a uniquely designed MIL spec rugged parallax free parallax free aperture fo maximum situationa awareness in a shorter body The illuminated 1.75 MOA red do brightness settings (3 NVC compatible) is powered by a solar cell assisted by a single A4 battery

The micro reflex red dot is represented by this Trijicon RMO1-34 (lower right). This Ruggedized by a single CR2032 battery and automatically adjusts the brightness of the dot based upon the available ambient light. It features a 3.25 MOA dot and an RM34 Picatinny

Finally, there is the traditional riflescope.
There are many to choose from, but for tactical use, I recommend a variable power model with no more that 14x maximum magnification. In most cases 10x is sufficient.

A bullet-drop compensating reticle may also be a good option. Again, it depends upon distance, the size of the target and the shooting position. Some examples of these riflescopes are the Bushnell AR series optics w/BDC reticle or the Elite Tactical SMRS series w/BTR-1 reticle, EOTech Vudu 1-6x Precision Riflescope w/SR-2 or SR-3 reticle, Leupold Mark 6 or VX-R Patrol w/BDC reticle, Nightforce NXS 1-4x24 Compact Riflescope w/FC-3G reticle or NXS 2.5-10x42 Compact Riflescope w/Velocity 600 reticle, Nikon M-223 series w/BDC reticle, SIG Sauer TANGO4 1-4x22 or TANGO6 1-6x24 w/horseshoe dot reticle, or the Vortex Strike Eagle 1-6x24 w/AR-BDC reticle.

Another excellent option is the Trijicon ACOG fixed power, compact riflescope with an illuminated reticle pattern. This design combines traditional, precise distance marksmanship with CQB speed. The ACOG is available in many configurations from 1.5x to 6x magnification. One appropriate version would be the ACOG 3x24 with the Dual Illuminated Horse-

shoe/Dot .223 cal., 55gr. Ballistic Reticle and a quick-release mount.

I recommend a high quality quick-release mount such as one of LaRue Tactical's QD models for mounting a riflescope on an MSR. This allows a quick removal for access to BUIS if the scope fails. Inexpensive versions can be problematic but mounts like the LaRue are as solid as a rock. A big rock. This also allows the shooter to easily move the scope from one rifle to another.



Planning is the most important part of the optic selection process. Your optic and MSR must work together. Without a quality optic, the best MSR in the world cannot hit distant targets consistently under changing conditions. Start with the optic that meets your primary need. You may also find out that you like the MSR so much that you are going to use it for a lot more than you originally thought.

I recommend adding BUIS as-soon-as-possible after the purchase of the primary optic. That way, if your optic goes down (the battery dies) just pop-up the BUIS. The worst-case



scenario is that the optic covers the rear sight and must be removed before flipping up the rear sight. It is also possible to add offset the BUIS so that they can be flipped up without removing the scope.

If a reflex or holographic sight is selected for a primary optic, it is usually possible to install them on the top rail so that BUIS can be flipped-up and used through the optic. Proper planning makes sure that you have enough space to do this. If you plan to use a tip-off magnifier, make sure that there is enough room for it on the rail and that it will rotate over the rear BUIS.

I have two MSRs, each with different optics. The one that I have used for years has an EOTech holographic sight with an EOTech 3x magnifier as the primary optic. The fixed A2 front sight that came with the MSR isn't visible when looking through the EOTech because it is so close to the optic.

My second MSR has a 2.5-10x42 Nightforce NXS Compact Riflescope in a LaRue Tactical QD scope mount as the primary optic. A Trijicon RMR is mounted in offset mounts for close-in work. It is simple to rotate the rifle about the bore axis to switch from the riflescope to the reflex sight. Troy Battle Sights with tritium inserts reside on the top rail as backup sights. That is an expensive setup and cost more that the MSR, but it works extremely well for my 3-qun tactical matches.

Generally, you get what you pay for. I don't know anyone who laments spending a little more for good optics, as long as they chose the right one for their application.

Make an informed choice.

IRON SIGHTS

PROS & CONS

As with anything that your life may depend upon, remember the KISS principle: Keep It Simple Stupid.

Any mechanical, electrical or optical device can fail. And you can bet that it will fail at the most inopportune time ... either in the middle of a match or during a gunfight. The simpler the device, the less likely that it will break and the easier it is to fix, thus the need for BUIS.

The drawback to iron sights is that they aren't quick to use. You must align the front and rear sights, focus on the front sight and center it on the target. This can be especially problematic for those with aging eyes.

A BUIS setup needs to be low profile and rugged. It must stay out of the way of other optics when stowed but it must be there when you need it, not laying on the ground somewhere because it got knocked off.

At the low end of the scale are the polymer BUIS like the Magpul MBUS. They aren't as rugged as steel BUIS, but they are much less expensive and they have a low profile. At the other end of the spectrum are the flip-up Troy Battle Sights and Magpul MBUS Pro Sight. They are made of steel and are low profile, but they aren't cheap. Some models can also be had with tritium inserts. Don't forget, simple is better.

"PLANNING
IS THE MOST
IMPORTANT
PART OF THE
OPTIC SELECTION
PROCESS."





BUSHNELL AR OPTICS INCINERATE

The circle dot reticle on the Incinerate features a 25 MOA circle around a 2 MOA center dot. There are eight brightness settings with an off position between each. Lenses are multi-coated. Front and rear open sights are provided on the top of the housing and the rear sight dovetail is compatible with Glock dovetail sights. A hi-rise mount is included.

MSRP \$240

HOLOSUN HS507C

New for 2017, the HS507C is an open reflex style, pistol-sized red dot optic with Solar Fail Safe technology. The optic is CNC milled from 6061 aluminum and has a titanium hood. The window size is .63x.91 inches and reticle illumination includes 10 daylight and two night vision compatible reticle illumination settings with a battery life of up to 50,000 hours. Three reticle options include a 32 MOA circle with dot, 2 MOA dot only and a 32 MOA circle only. Windage and elevation adjustments are .5 MOA per click.

MSRP: \$353

SIG SAUER OPTICS ROMEO6

SIG Sauer has added the ROMEO6 to their already robust line of red dot optics. It is offered in two configurations, ROMEO6T and ROMEO6H. Both are available with either the Ballistic Circle-Dot or Circle-Plex reticles. These reticles both offer four user-selectable options (ie. the Ballistic Circle-Dot reticle has a 2 MOA dot, 2 MOA dot with ballistic holds, 2 MOA/65 MOA circle-dot or 2 MOA/65 MOA circle-dot with ballistic holds). The ballistic hold-over aiming points subtend for 5.56 NATO and 7.62x51mm NATO rounds. Both models use red LED lighting. The ROMEO6T adds a solar panel with two super capacitors for up to 9 hours of battery-free use. It also has battery backup and has a 7075 aluminum housing.

MSRP: ROMEO6H - \$539; ROMEO6T - \$720



HOLOSUN HS510C

Introduced in late 2016 with 2017 availability, the HS510C Open Reflex Circle Dot Sight has an open frame for a wide sight picture. Always on, it is powered by a solar cell under normal usage and a back-up battery to supplement power requirements in low light conditions.

ments in low light conditions.

The reticle can be switched between a 65 MOA circle with 2 MOA dot, a 2 MOA dot only or a 65 MOA circle only at the push of a button. The same LED projects both reticles; therefore, no re-zeroing is necessary.

push of a button. The same LED projects both reticles; therefore, no re-zeroing is necessary. Illumination includes 10 daylight and 2 night vision compatible reticle illumination settings and the battery lasts up to 50,000 hours. The window size is .91x1.2 inches and a QD mount for rail mounting is included.

MSRP: \$1,699

EOTECH VUDU 8-32X50SFP

The Vudu 8-32x50SFP is a second focal plane scope, but it is designed for competitive and recreational long range shooting. It features covered competition turrets which provide.125 MOA adjustments. It too features EOTech's XC High-Density glass and a 34mm tube.

HOLOSUN HS515CM

The HS515CM for 2017 is the classic solar powered micro red dot HS515CU upgraded with military grade rugged materials, clear, flip-up lens caps, kill-flash filter and improved water resistance. This unit is CNC milled from 7075 aluminum and comes with both high and low QD mounts for standard Weaver or 1913 MIL-STD rails.

Reticle illumination includes 10 daylight and two night-vision compatible reticle illumination settings with a battery life of up to 50,000 hours and Solar Fail Safe technology.

Three reticle options include a 65 MOA circle with dot, 2 MOA

Three reticle options include a 65 MOA circle with dot, 2 MOA dot only and a 65 MOA circle only. Windage and elevation adjustments are .5 MOA per click.

MSRP: \$471

MSRP: \$320





GLASS 2017

SIG SAUER OPTICS WHISKEY5

SIG Sauer's all-new WHISKEY5 Superzoom riflescope adds LevelPlex and TH100 Turret to an already popular long-range hunting scope. LevelPlex allows the shooter to remove unwanted cant from the shooting system. The TH100 elevation turret offers a resettable zero stop and lock at zero. This allows the shooter to dial-in elevation and then return to a known zero. The WHISKEY5 also retains the following features of original series: multiple reticle availability, extra-low dispersion/high-transmission glass, MOTAC motion-activated illumination and waterproof to 1 meter.

MSRP: \$1,080 TO \$2,160

BUSHNELL AR OPTICS ENGULF MICRO

Small enough for a pistol yet tough enough for an MSR, the 1x magnification Engulf is designed for close-quarter scenarios. The Engulf projects a 5-MOA dot through waterproof, fog proof and shockproof optics. The unit mounts on a 1913 Mil-Std rail and features extended battery life.

MSRP \$255

HOLOSUN HS515GM

The HS515GM for 2017 is the classic micro red dot HS503GU upgraded with military-grade rugged materials, clear, flip-up lens caps, kill-flash filter and improved water resistance. This unit is CNC milled from 7075 aluminum and comes with both high and low QD mounts for standard Weaver or 1913 MIL-STD rails. Reticle illumination includes 10 daylight and 2 night vision compatible reticle illumination settings with a battery life of up to 50,000 hours. Three reticle options include a 65 MOA circle and dot, 2 MOA dot only and a 65 MOA circle only. Windage and elevation adjustments are .5 MOA per click.

MSRP: \$320





SPRINGFIELD ARMORY FINALLY JUMPS INTO THE AR GAME WITH AN AFFORDABLE, IMPRESSIVE OFFERING FOR TODAY'S SHOOTER

BY TIM STETZER, LEAD PHOTO BY JIM HOLMAN INTERIOR SHOTS BY RICHARD SCHUTZ



the Saint, Springfield Armory put out a mysterious "Defend Your Legacy" media blitz through social media and print. They showed a lot of fit and active young guys and gals, but they never showed us a glimpse of what the Saint might be. This created some suspense and had everyone wondering what was coming.

Personally, I was guessing a new carry gun, especially in conjunction with the "defend your legacy theme," although I did cynically say to a fellow gun writer at one point that it was probably another 1911 or an AR. Well, as it turned out the Saint was indeed an AR-15, but is it really "just another" AR?

MEET THE SAINT

Springfield Armory certainly isn't breaking any new ground by coming out with an AR-15, considering that it's a 60-year-old design made by umpteen makers these days. But sometimes being late to the party doesn't mean that you still don't have something worthwhile to bring to the table.

The nice thing about joining the market at this point is that the AR-15 is a mature design with decades of real-world combat, competition, and field service to shake down the platform and figure out what works and what doesn't. Springfield had the luxury of building a gun with that knowledge firmly in hand and put together a rifle they knew was going to perform.

Now, that's still not an unusual thing these days, as other companies also have access to that information, and there are a lot of great AR's available. Put together good components,

and you can get a great rifle; however, often you pay a premium for that. That's where I think the Saint gets really interesting.

Springfield Armory put together an impressivelooking package, backed by their years of manufacturing experience and quality reputation, and they did it at a price that competes with most companies' entry-level quns.

As soon as you pull the Saint out of its shipping box, you realize you're starting a notch above average when you see the rather nice hard case that Springfield provides. The case is hard plastic and lockable, with sturdy metal latches and an egg crate foam lining. Under the foam is a packet with the Saint's user's manual and a sample of Lucas Extreme Duty Gun Oil. They also provide a sturdy cable lock, an orange chamber flag and a 30-round Magpul Gen3 PMAG.

At a glance, the Saint is your typical 16-inch AR carbine, but the devil is in the details. Springfield starts with a Chrome Moly Vanadium barrel—with a 1:8 twist rate to accommodate a wider range of bullets—that's Melonite coated inside and out for durability and corrosion resistance and capped off by a traditional A2-style flash hider. The Melonite finish is a big step up from your typical phosphate finish and chrome lining that you see even on higher end AR's. I've had extremely good luck with Melonite-coated barrels on some of my builds that I've run hard and left dirty for months at a time.

Springfield went with a mid-length gas

Springfield Armory may be late into the AR game, but they came offering an impressive package that competes with many high-end AR's, at a price that rivals other companies'

> system and a standard A2-style front sight/ gas block, complete with bayonet lug and front sling swivel. The barrel is fitted to a flat top upper of aircraft-grade 7075 T6 aluminum complete with forward assist, ejection port cover and M4 feed ramps.

The T marked upper is finished with Type III hard-coat anodizing and houses a GI-style charging handle and an M16 bolt carrier



group with a shot peened and Magnetic Particle Inspected Carpenter 158 Steel Bolt.

Springfield Armory ships the Saint with a sturdy low profile rear flip sight of their own design that is 2 MOA windage adjustable and has two apertures, a larger ghost ring and a tighter peep sight.

The lower is also Type III hard-coat anodized aircraft-grade 7075 T6 aluminum and is pretty standard AR fair on the outside; however, when you pop the receiver open, you see Springfield's Accu-Tite Tension System screw located just behind the fire control group. The Accu-Tite system allows you to adjust the fit of your upper and lower, ensuring you always

"IT'S HONESTLY NOT HARD TO GET A GOOD AR THESE DAYS, BUT GETTING ONE WITH THE FEATURES THAT SPRINGFIELD IS OFFERING AT THAT PRICE IS IMPRESSIVE ..."

have a snug fit between the two.

Carrying on with the material theme, the Saint uses a Mil-Spec 6-position carbine receiver extension that's again 7075 T6 Type III hard-anodized aluminum and equipped with a heavy tungsten buffer. The trigger and fire control group are standard GI, but they've been micro-polished and nickel-boron treated for smoother operation.

The selector switch is also standard GI, and Springfield uses both bullet pictograms and "fire" and "safe" stampings, indicating the rifles ready status.

The right side mag well flat features a large Springfield Armory Saint engraving whereas the left side has the Springfield Armory logo and the multi-caliber marking, which may foreshadow some other caliber offerings to come later. I'm not usually a fan of large markings on guns, but the Saint logo is tasteful and hard anodized like the rest of the receiver so it doesn't jump out at you.

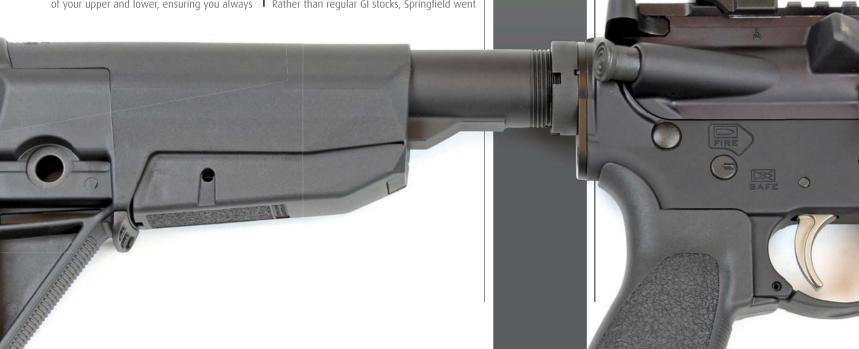
Rather than regular GI stocks, Springfield went

with Bravo Company to provide the trigger quard, buttstock and an exclusive PKMT KeyMod handquard. The new mid-length handguard features heat shields and integral KeyMod attachment points and is very trim in profile compared to many other handguards on the market.

PERSONAL THOUGHTS

I'm fairly picky when it comes to AR's, and I have built a couple to suit my needs with a focus on trim design, light weight and smooth shooting. I have to say that I was extremely pleased to see that the Saint looks like it could have been built from my personal spec sheet.

At under 7 pounds, it's light and very well balanced, and the Bravo Company stocks are



SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

CHAMBERING: **5.56X45MM NATO (.223REM)** MAGAZINE: **1 30-ROUND MAGPUL PMAG**

LENGTH: 35.5 INCHES FULLY
EXTENDED/32.25 INCHES COLLAPSED

WEIGHT: 6 POUNDS, 11 OUNCES

UPPER RECEIVER: TYPE III HARD-COAT ANODIZED AIRCRAFT-GRADE 7075 TG ALUMINUM FLAT TOP, FORWARD ASSIST AND M4 FEED RAMPS

LOWER RECEIVER: TYPE III HARD-COAT ANODIZED AIRCRAFT-GRADE 7075 T6 ALUMINUM, ACCU-TITE TENSION SYSTEM BARREL: 16-INCH CHROME MOLY VANADIUM, 1:8 RH TWIST, MELONITE

GAS SYSTEM: DIRECT IMPINGEMENT MID-LENGTH GAS SYSTEM, .750 DIAMETER GAS RI OCK

TRIGGER: SPRINGFIELD ARMORY PROPRIETARY, NICKEL-BORON COATED GI SIGHTS: SPRINGFIELD ARMORY LOW PROFILE FLIP-UP, DUAL APERTURE REAR, 1/2 MOA WINDAGE ADJUSTABLE

TRIGGER GUARD: BRAVO COMPANY

PISTOL GRIP: BRAVO COMPANY MOD 3
HANDGUARD: EXCLUSIVE BRAVO COMPANY,
KEYMOD. PKMR

BUTTSTOCK: **BRAVO COMPANY 6 POSITION**BUFFER ASSEMBLY: **CARBINE "H" HEAVY**

TUNGSTEN BUFFER

RECEIVER EXTENSION: MIL-SPEC CARBINE RECEIVER EXTENSION, 7075 T6 TYPE III HARD-ANODIZED ALUMINUM

CHARGING HANDLE: GI STYLE

BOLT CARRIER GROUP: M16 BCG WITH CARPENTER 158 STEEL BOLT, SHOT PEENED & MAGNETIC PARTICLE INSPECTED

MSRP: \$899 SPRINGFIELD-ARMORY.COM The Saint's upper receiver is T marked and comes with a low profile, all steel flip up back up

ACCURACY TESTING RESULTS

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
AGUILA 5.56 NATO 62GR FMJ BT	2,934 FPS	1.75 INCHES
LIBERTY SILVERADO .223 REM 55-GR HP	2,927 FPS	1.75 INCHES
WINCHESTER MATCH 5.56 NATO 77-GR BTHP	2,577 FPS	1.5 INCHES
ZQI AMMUNITION 5.56 NATO 62-GR FMJ SS109	2,923 FPS	1.25 INCHES

*All shots fired at 100 yards from a sandbag rest using a Vortex 4-12x scope. Ambient temperature 32 degrees. Group size is the best of five-shot groups fired.

· Canada

comfortable and trim, adding a minimal amount of bulk while being comfortable to use.

The trigger is smooth and weighed in at an average of 6 pounds, 4 ounces on my Lyman trigger scale. Honestly, I thought it was lighter when I was shooting because it's crisp with no noticeable take up and breaks cleanly. I was guessing the numbers would be in the 5-pound range or less, but as clean as it is, I'll take that 6 and a touch all day long, especially on a duty/defense rifle.

I like the mid-length gas system mated to the heavy buffer as well; again, that's my preference on my personal guns when I'm building. The mid-length system gives you a slightly longer sight radius, a smoother cycling action and puts the front sight post at the proper position to accept a bayonet, unlike a 16-inch barrel with a carbine length gas system. Do I need to mount a bayonet on my Saint? Probably not, but I still like knowing I can. Plus, if you're going to have a bayonet lug on a rifle, it should be usable, just out of principle.

The Bravo Company stocks are a nice touch on the Saint. Magpul has become nearly ubiquitous on premium AR's these days and for good reason ... they make a great stock. But it is nice to see some variety, and the Bravo Company design has a lot going for it. I recently added a Bravo Company buttstock, grip and vertical foregrip to my personal SBR so I've had some time working with them, even before getting the Saint in hand. I like the compact size of the buttstock and the fact that it has a snug, rattle-free fit. It gives you ambidextrous QD sling swivel mounts, as well as a conventional sling slot, which

should let you set up your Saint in a variety of configurations.

I really liked the exclusive KeyMod PKMR handguard fitted to the rifle. It's very low profile and low weight and has enough texture to the side panels to offer a positive grip. The integrated KeyMod slots located at the 2-, 6- and 10-o'clock positions allow for mounting any reasonable accessories, such as lights or lasers, grips or bipods without the weight or bulk of an aluminum quad rail or addition of rail sections like on some handguards.

I saw some discussion online about folks being concerned over the durability of a polymer KeyMod mounting point, but my initial impression is that the handguards are solidly made, and I'd expect them to hold up well. I certainly didn't have any issues during testing, although long-term field use will tell the full tale there. I'm willing to bet that Springfield has already tested that out though before deciding to go this route.

RANGE WORK

All of the features and feel are great, but a rifle needs to shoot to be worthwhile. Let me cut to the chase and say that the Saint runs extremely well ... to the point that I'm thinking about replacing my duty AR, if I can get my department's rangemasters to add Springfield to our list of approved duty rifles.

I outfitted my sample Saint with a Vortex 4-12x scope for accuracy testing and was pleased how quickly I had the rifle sighted in. Within 5 rounds I was zeroed and dropping my rounds right on top of each other, so I pulled out my sandbags and Caldwell rest and ran my targets out to 100 yards to see what the Saint could do.

I wondered if the A2 front sight post would interfere with the optics I'd mounted, but I didn't have any issues. I had a mix of 62-grain ball ammunition from ZQI Ammunition and Aguila, 55-grain hollow points from Liberty Ammunition and 77-grain hollow points from Winchester.

As mentioned earlier, the Saint has a great trigger with a short reset and it helped make shooting groups a breeze. I was impressed with how consistently the rifle shot even with

ew! MI Gen3 Handguards

New! MI AR-15/M16 Gen3 M-Series One Piece Free Float Handquards M-LOKTM COMPATIBLE!

New Gen3 Models featuring four additional sides of Magpul® M-LOK™ compatible slots, and MI's proprietary new torque plate attachment system.

- Professional grade, one piece free float design and construction
- Super lightweight, with super slim 1.5 inch outside diameter
- Featuring seven sides of Magpul® M-LOK™ compatible slots
- One five slot Magpul® M-LOKTM compatible polymer rail included
- Featuring a high quality MIL-STD 1913 top rail
- With five anti-rotation QD sling swivel sockets
- Rugged construction from 6061 aluminum, hard coat anodized for a lifetime of service, and fully dehorned for non-abrasive, comfortable feel
- Simple install, proprietary barrel nut, torque plate and barrel nut wrench included
- ♦ 100% Made in America with Midwest Industries Lifetime Warranty



MI AR-15/M16 Gen3 ML-Series Lightweight **One Piece Free Float Handquards**

All the features of our M-Series, with incredibly lightweight design and construction, and eight sides of Magpul® M-LOK™ compatible slots.

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9.25 Inch Mid-Length - 7.3 ozs w/ barrel nut	.#MI-G3ML9	\$159.95
10.5 Inch Carbine - 7.9 ozs with barrel nut	#MI-G3ML10	\$169.95
12.625 Inch Rifle - 8.8 ozs with barrel nut	#MI-G3ML12	\$189.95
15 Inch Rifle - 10.3 ozs with barrel nut	#MI-G3ML15	\$199.95
18 Inch Extended - 11 9 ozs with barrel nut	#MI-G3MI 18	\$239.95

MI AR-15/M16 Gen3 M-Series **One Piece Free Float Handquards**

Special Introductory Prices!

7.25 Inch Carbine - 6.7 ozs with barrel nut#MI-G3M7	\$139.95
9.25 Inch Mid-Length - 7.2 ozs w/ barrel nut #MI-G3M9	\$149.95
10.5 Inch Carbine - 8.4 ozs with barrel nut#MI-G3M10	\$159.95
12.625 Inch Rifle - 9.4 ozs with barrel nut #MI-G3M12	\$179.95
15 Inch Rifle - 10.8 ozs with barrel nut#MI-G3M15	\$189.95
18 Inch Extended - 12.9 ozs with barrel nut#MI-G3M18	\$229.95

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- Made for use with the MI-MB4 Muzzle Brake
- Professional grade, one piece free float design and construction
- Incredibly lightweight design, weighs only 12.4 ounces with barrel nut, with super slim 1.5 inch outside diameter
- One five slot M-LOKTM compatible rail section included
- 6061 aluminum, hard coat anodized for a lifetime of service



- with five anti-rotation QD swivel sockets
- MI's proprietary new patents pending torque plate system
- Fully dehorned, simple install, with barrel nut and wrench
- 100% Made in America with MI Lifetime Warranty

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After doing my bench shoot, I pulled the optics and did some open sight shooting. I really like how the Saint handles. It's fast to shoulder and points naturally, and I appreciated the light weight and mid-length handguards. The Bravo Company grip has a straighter angle than a GI grip, but I found that it worked well, especially when I had the stock shortened up for shooting with body armor on. The texture was excellent, as well. It provided a secure grip even with gloves on, but it wasn't too rough with bare hands. The quick detach points on the buttstock made it easy to install a Blue Force Gear Vickers Sling as well.

I don't shoot with iron sights much these days, as my old 40-something eyes find a red dot a lot easier to use. With that said, Springfield did a nice job with their flip-up rear. The larger aperture allowed good peripheral vision and allowed me to get on target fast at closer ranges, say 25 yards and in. When I crept out further, I switched to the smaller peep but still found that to be very usable. If I were outfitting the Saint for long-term use though, I think I'd add a compact optic to keep things light and trim like an Aimpoint T1 or maybe

a Trijicon MRO. That, the Vickers sling, and a light would be all I'd need to consider the Saint duty-ready and that would keep the weight and bulk down nicely.

From a reliability aspect, my time with the Saint was pleasantly boring. I hit it with a couple of squirts of Ballistol before shooting, and I used the factory supplied 30-round PMAG, as well as a Magpul Gen3 10-round PMAG, and a Brownell's aluminum 20-round magazine during my testing. Both aluminum and polymer mags locked in and ejected without issues, and I had zero feed or function issues of any kind.

Honestly, range sessions rarely go this smoothly, and the Saint was a joy to work with. Fast setup and sight in, smooth shooting with a good trigger, great groups and excellent handling characteristics. Subsequent range sessions just reinforced those first impressions, and I'm walking away from this review trying to tell myself I really don't need another AR carbine, but I find myself checking my bank account all the same.

WRAP UP

The overall package that Springfield presents is fairly impressive. It has a well-thought-out array of quality components and nice bonus features like the Bravo Company stocks and imminently usable hard case. That they manage to do it for an MSRP of only \$899 is the story. It's honestly not hard to get a good AR these days, but getting one with the features that Springfield is offering at that price is impressive, especially knowing that it's backed by a company with Springfield's reputation and longevity in the industry.

I walked into this review expecting the Saint to be "just another AR" but I have to say Springfield did a great job with this one. If you're looking to defend your own legacy, you'd be hard pressed to find a better rifle to do it with for the money than the Saint.



The **NEW** EMP* Concealed Carry Contour adds a gentle curve to the mainspring housing. The result is a 1911 that conceals more effectively by reducing the telltale cover garment bulge from the pistol grip. The new grip profile also follows the natural contour of the shooting hand, making the pistol more comfortable to shoot. The EMP* Concealed Carry Contour model brings custom features and performance to the production market.

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A 10th Mountain Division soldier hurls a live hand grenade as his supervisor looks on during a training exercise at Fort Drum. This photo is for illustrative

Photo by John Moore/Getty

he future is upon us. When it comes to technology and warfare, there is one question that always comes first: "Is there a need for a weapon system upgrade, modification or design?" If so, the research, development, and engineering process begins.

In the war against terrorism, robots and directed-energy weapons are becoming the new way. Defeat the target from a distance while saving troop's lives. This does not mean hand-to-hand combat is a thing of the past; however, it will become a last resort with the emergence of this technology.

Equipping the United States military with technology that will enable our warfighters to effectively carry out their mission on the battlefield is a long and cumbersome process. Both long- and short-term strategies are

mapped out based on feasibility, funding, practicality, mobility, and of course, demand. Some products or technologies can take anywhere from a year to 10 or more years to be fielded to the troops. By then, the enemy may have changed.

So, what does the future hold for our military? Let's look at three changes that are on the horizon.

1. ET-MP GRENADE

Among other items, the current warfighter has guns, ammo and grenades in his tool kit, and grenades are just one area that will receive significant improvements.

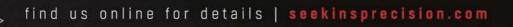
The Enhanced Tactical Multi-Purpose (ET-MP) hand grenade is what is currently on the horizon. The grenade will be designed to meet performance requirements required

"WITH THE NEW MULTI-PURPOSE GRENADE, THEY ... HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE EITHER FRAGMENTATION OR CONCUSSIVE EFFECTS DESIRED FOR THE SITUATION ..."

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"THE NGSAR WILL COMBINE THE FIREPOWER AND RANGE OF A MACHINE GUN WITH THE PRECISION OF A CARBINE WHILE REDUCING OVERALL WEIGHT."



for close-combat engagements in which the effects must be lethal.

Engineers at Picatinny Arsenal (Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center or ARDEC) are working on the first new lethal hand grenade in more than 40 years. The multi-purpose hand grenade design will provide both fragmentation and blast overpressure more effectively and safely than its legacy counterparts. Once fielded,

For illustrative purposes, the 10th Mountain Division soldiers run after hooking their 105mm Howitzers to Blackhawk helicopters on a training mission for future conflicts on May 18, 2016 at Fort Drum, New York.

Photo by John Moore/Getty mages) soldiers will be able to select and use a hand grenade with different effects simply by flipping a switch.

Over the past five years, Picatinny engineers have been collaborating with infantry school representatives and hand grenade cadre—as well as active duty soldiers and Marines—to determine warfighter needs regarding hand grenades. ARDEC is also working in cooperation with the Maneuver Center of Excellence

at Fort Benning, and the Program Manager for Close Combat Systems, to insert critical technologies with soldier-centric designs to improve safety and ease of use.

According to Jessica Perciballi, ARDEC project officer for ET-MP, Army, Grenades & Demolitions Division, the ET-MP represents the first hand grenade that can be tailored to the mission. Soldiers will not need to carry as many types of hand grenades.

"They are currently carrying one M67 grenade that provides lethal fragmentation effects," she said. "With the new multipurpose grenade, they can carry one ET-MP grenade and have the ability to choose either fragmentation or concussive effects desired for the situation."

Another feature is that the grenades are designed for ambidextrous use, meaning that they can be thrown with either hand. Current grenades require a different arming procedure for left-handed users.

2. FIREARMS FUTURE

The Next Generation Squad Automatic Rifle (NGSAR) is set to replace the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW), which has been in our military's inventory for more than 30 years. The NGSAR will combine the firepower and range of a machine gun with the precision of a carbine while reducing overall weight.

The design for the NGSAR is still underway but should move forward from the research and development phase and into the hands of a product manager by 2020 and eventually fielded to the troops by 2025.

The goal in mind is lighter everything ... lighter weapon and lighter ammo. Decrease weight and increase mobility.

3. UAVS DESTROY IEDS

IEDs are the number one threat to our warfighters on today's battlefield and in urban environments. Therefore, every time a robot can help disarm or defeat an improvised explosive device (IED), that is a good thing.

Robots such as the TALON have been in use for a number of years now, but what if one step further is taken and the U.S. eliminates the threat with unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV)s?

"By using a small Remote Armament System



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2 TURN ONCE



3 IT LEARNS YOUR KEY





(RAS) camera and sensors capable of delivering warheads, we can neutralize the IED and urban warfare targets," said Lloyd Khuc, one of the "smart fuze for UAV" patent design holders. "There currently are very few man-portable UAVs that can effectively identify and neutralize light-armored targets through the utilization of energetic warheads while minimizing collateral damage."

In current combat methods, Remote Robot Systems (RRS) may be fielded to various degrees to replace humans for surveillance, reconnaissance or patrol operations in hostile areas. Troops utilize many RRS types with cameras that, individually or together, can identify hostile targets. However, such RSS systems are not currently equipped to also eliminate such dangerous targets. Therefore,

soldiers must often still place their lives at risk to destroy these targets after they have been identified by RRS or by drones. This remains a great risk to human life. Therefore, there is a strong demand for a lethal drone that, during the same mission, can both identify a hostile target, then initiate an attack to defeat that target.

There is also a need to decrease total response time for attempting to destroy such targets through RSS systems and also to meet safety requirements.

"Using the robot or Unmanned Aircraft Vehicle (UAV)—which has the camera, fuze and warhead—provides the ability to remotely detonate a low-cost explosive charge to defeat the IED from a safe location

<u>TECHNOLOGICAL</u> ADVANCES

Dedicated engineers are consistently conducting research with two goals in mind: protecting our troops, while giving them the upper hand in battle.

Whether the focus is on IED defeat, aircraft, tanks, ships, guns, ammo, to ensure that the United States has the best military it can. The focus seems to be changing toward robotics, as well as unmanned vehicles and payloads, that will operate in conjunction with one another. in harm's way when the mission can be carried out remotely?

there needs to be a certainty that our nation can be defended at all times, no matter the threat.

without putting any soldiers in danger," he said. "The lack of such tactical capabilities constrains the warfighter's ability to function in an urban environment where the targets might be in areas where the potential for civilian casualties is relatively high."

The Lethal Unmanned Aerial Systems (L-UAS) program is the first step toward generating a solution.

"The members of this team added the reguisite level of lethality to a pre-existing UAV platform by designing as well as integrating a programmable fuze and warhead assembly into such a platform," Khuc said.

EFFECTIVENESS. SAFETY

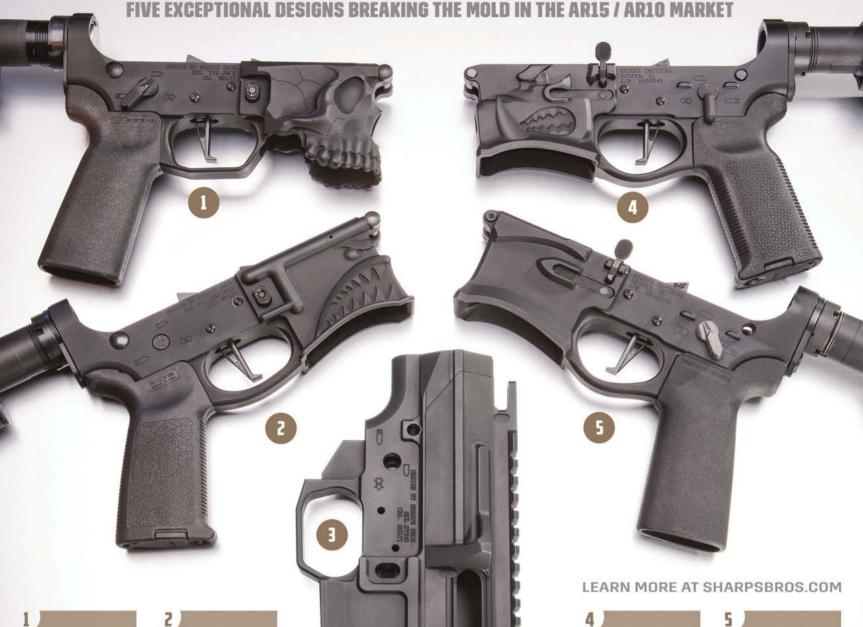
Not only are these advances designed to be more effective, they are designed to keep our troops safer.

The future is definitely now.



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FEATURED PRODUCTS



THE JACK

Meet The Jack, the most detailed billet lower ever created and an extraordinary example of state-of-the-art machining. Robust, efficient, and undeniably cool, The Jack's head-turning look is where old world quality meets modern innovation.

HELLBREAKER

Hellbreaker's distinctive appearance is inspired by the P-40 Warhawk. The "nose art" that became a popular military tradition was born from the practical need to identify friendly units, but eventually evolved to express a squadron's individuality.

LIVEWIRE AR10

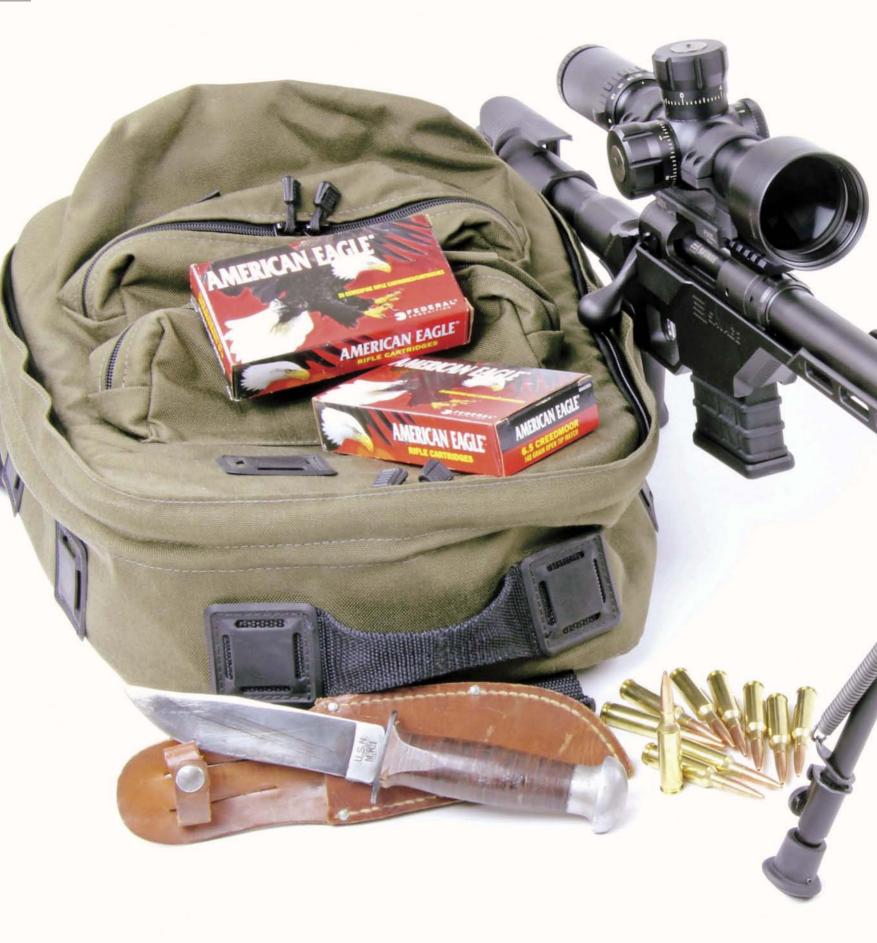
Livewire's smooth lines, unique shape and flared magwell are a remarkable combination of form and function. Solid and stately, Livewire is an excellent choice for those building a clean, classic AR10. Drawing from American military might, Warthog's aggressive design is inspired by the tank-busting A-10 Warthog aircraft. Warthog's tough-as-nails precise design gives you platform reliability and a unique look all its own.

WARTHOG

MEANSTREAK

Don't be fooled by Meanstreak's subtle design, compared to mass-produced lowers, Meanstreak's smooth lines and fluid curves offer power and performance in the same streamlined package.





ASLEK TACKORVER

THE SAVAGE 10 BA STEALTH IS A LIGHT, MODERN COMPACT RIFLE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RICHARD SCHUTZ



Now, the 10/110 BA Stealth, an addition to their Law Enforcement line, takes the barrel and action used in the rest of the L.E. line and put them on an aluminum chassis with an adjustable buttstock and a pistol grip instead of using a standard fiberglass/synthetic stock. This makes for a very rigid and lightweight rifle.

According to Savage representative Amy Plasse, "The original 10/110 BA was heavy and bulky. We wanted to bring that into a more modern and compact rifle, which is where the BA Stealth comes in. It is lighter and not so bulky."

Let's take a look.

SPECIFICATIONS

The 24-inch (20 inches in .308 cal.) carbonsteel barrel is of medium weight and has straight flutes cut into it to save weight while maintaining rigidity. Each barrel is checked for straightness, then hand-straightened if necessary. The rifling has a twist rate of 1:8 inches for the 6.5 Creedmoor and 1:11 inches for the .308 Win caliber.

The end of the barrel is threaded (5/8-24) for the attachment of accessories such as a suppressor or a muzzle brake. A protective cap is provided to protect the threads when no accessory is installed. The bolt features an oversize knob for a sure grip and a floating bolt head, which allows for a fewthousandths-of-an-inch of movement so that it can adjust for a perfect fit without



These three components are hand-fitted, then locked into place with a barrel locknut, thus giving the rifle a factory blueprinted action.

An Evolution Gun Works, Inc. (EGW) 1913

Mil-Std rail is attached to the action. A cocking indicator/bolt release lever is mounted at the

right rear of the action.

As one would expect, the AccuTrigger is a gem. It broke crisply at 2 pounds, 15.4 ounces from the factory (10 consecutive pulls measured by a digital Lyman Trigger Pull Gauge). Trigger pull is easy to adjust using the supplied wrench, but for me it was perfect as it came from the factory. There was no creep and no overtravel.

The three-position tang safety feels a little rough but has a slight detent at each of the three positions. All the way to the rear covers the red dot, and both the trigger and the bolt are locked. The middle position covers part of the red dot and allows the bolt to be operated, but the trigger remains locked. Pushing the tang safety all of the way forward and fully exposing the red dot takes the rifle fully off of safe and allows operation of both the bolt and the trigger, making the rifle ready to fire.

The monolithic chassis (by Drake Associates) is machined from billet aluminum. It is equipped with the Magpul M-Lok attachment system for the full length of all five sides of the forend. A swivel stud is mounted on the forend to facilitate the installation of a bipod. A 10-round polymer MDT (mdttac.com) magazine is provided. The same magazine is used for both the 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 Win calibers (AICS compatible). A robust magazine release lever resides in front of the trigger guard. Pushing it forward releases the magazine. Spring pressure on the lever is perfect; it is not as stiff as an AK and not so light that you will release the magazine unintentionally.

The six-position buttstock is like one that you would find on an AR-10/AR-15 Designated Marksman style rifle. It is a Fab Defense GLR-16 S stock and features a cheekpiece that is infinitely adjustable using knobs on either side of the stock. It also has a thick "tire-track" rubber butt pad with a compartment underneath, which conveniently holds two 123A batteries.

The MSRP of the 10 BA Stealth is \$1,207. These rifles have been available since summer, but don't expect to find them sitting on the rack at your local gun shop. The initial run was in 6.5 Creedmoor only. The .308 Win. version is now also available.

MODELS/ACCESSORIES

The 10 BA Stealth is available in both 6.5 Creedmoor and .308 Win. The 110 BA Stealth is available in .300 Win. Mag. and .338 Lapua. No other calibers are planned at this time. Various other versions of the 10/110 action are available in other Savage models but without the factory blueprinted action.

Other than optics and a bipod, any accessories that you desire will mount on the M-Lok forend.

AMMUNITION

The Savage 10 BA Stealth tested was chambered for the 6.5 Creedmoor cartridge. Factory loads range in bullet weight from 120

grains to 143 grains. I tested loads with 120-, 129-, 140- and 143-grain bullets. I didn't find a wide variety of factory ammunition available for the 6.5 Creedmoor at this time.

During range testing, I used ammunition produced by three manufacturers in Open Tip Match, polymer tip, ELD and HPBT configurations. Bullet weights ranged from 120-grain to 143-grain. All of the ammunition that I tested functioned flawlessly.

OPTICS

No sights are provided with the rifle, so I mounted a Bushnell DMR 3.5-21x50 Elite Tactical scope using a LaRue Tactical 20 MOA PSR QD Scope Mount, model LT112. This is an excellent combination, and it worked well.

BOLT REMOVAL & CLEANING

Prior to field stripping and/or cleaning the 10 BA Stealth, make sure that it is unloaded and you have removed all ammunition from the

SAVAGE ARMS 10 BA STEALTH

CHAMBERING: 6.5 CREEDMOOR

MAGAZINE: 10-ROUND POLYMER BY MDT

OVERALL LENGTH: 45.25 INCHES

WEIGHT: 9.24 POUNDS WITH MAGAZINE

BUTTSTOCK: FAB DEFENSE GLR-16 S,

POSITION

MUZZLE DEVICE: THREADED 5/8-24 WITH

THREAD PROTECTOR

BARREL: **24 INCHES IN 6.5 CREEDMOOR**; **20 INCHES IN .308 WIN**

TRIGGER: ACCUTRIGGER

RAIL SYSTEM: EGW ON ACTION ONLY

SIGHTS: NONE

PISTOL GRIP: AR-15 COMPATIBLE

MSRP: \$1,207

WWW.SAVAGEARMS.COM

NOTE: Avg: Average group size for three, five shot groups.

/elocity recorded at the muzzle. Distance to arget was 100 yards. Average velocity is for 10 consecutive shots in feet per second. Velocity and group sizes for 6 loads fired at 100 yards

ACCURACY TESTING RESULTS

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
AMERICAN EAGLE 1.229 AE65CRD1, 140 GR. OTM	2,630 FPS	0.905 INCHES
HORNADY #81492, 0,797 120 GR. A-MAX	2,845 FPS	0.567 INCHES
HORNADY #81496 1.529 SUPER PERFORMANCE, 129 GR. SST	2,927 FPS	1.093 INCHES
HORNADY #81499,1.00 143 GR. ELD-X PRECISION HUNTER	2,653 FPS	0.907 INCHES
HORNADY #81500, 0.973 140 GR. ELD MATCH	2,724 FPS	0.788 INCHES
NOSLER MATCH GRADE, 1.137 #43455, 140 GR. HPBT	2,663 FPS	0.664 INCHES

Fluted barrel with 5/8-24 threads and threads

"THE ORIGINAL 10/110
BA WAS HEAVY AND BULKY.
WE WANTED TO BRING THAT
INTO A MORE MODERN AND
COMPACT RIFLE ..."



area. Proceed with field stripping and cleaning according to the directions provided in the instruction manual.

The main catch here is figuring out how to operate the bolt release/cocking indicator, trigger and bolt at the same time. You must





pull and hold the trigger back, push down on the bolt release (mounted on the action forward and to the right of the safety), open the bolt and pull it to the rear, all at the same time. Re-installing the bolt is done by first making sure that the front baffle is rotated properly to line-up the bolt guide with the extractor on the bolt. Next pull and hold the trigger, push down on the bolt release and then reinsert the bolt.

For the first 20 rounds, I cleaned the bore after every five rounds. During accuracy/velocity testing I cleaned the bore after every 15 rounds and then fired one fouling round before firing the next type of ammunition.

RANGE TIME

I sighted-in the 10 BA Stealth first at 100 yards, breaking it in with 21 rounds of American Eagle 140 gr. OTM ammunition. The rifle shot extremely well during this "break-in" period.

Next, I fired three five-shot groups using six different factory loads to check the accuracy and velocity of each load. All groups were fired from a Caldwell Rock BR Front Shooting Rest and a rear sandbag at 100 yards. Velocity was calculated based upon 10 consecutive shots using a LabRadar unit to measure the velocity at the rifle's muzzle. The largest five-

The Fab Defense six-position GLR-16-S buttstock features an adjust-

"AS ONE WOULD EXPECT, THE ACCUTRIGGER IS A GEM."

shot group was Hornady Super Performance #81496 at 2.124 inches and the smallest group was Hornady #81492 120 gr. A-Max at .597 inches, with American Eagle #AE-65CRD1 140 gr. OTM right on its heels at .600 inches. The average for all 18 groups fired was 1.111 inches. Velocity and accuracy details are shown in the sidebar.

Several factory loads tested produced subone-inch five-shot groups (.905, .600, .788, .567, .796, .998, .664 and .907 inches). Hornady #81492 120-grain A-Max produced consistent sub-one-inch groups for all three five-shot groups.

I also measured the best three-shot groups for each five-shot group fired. I do this as an indication of potential for the gun and ammunition combination. These groups were consistently less than one-half the size of the five-shot groups. In 17 of 18 five-shot groups fired, there were three-shot "clusters" that were much tighter than the overall five-shot groups.

FINAL WORD

The Savage 10 BA Stealth is an extremely well-designed and built bolt-action tactical rifle. In the right hands, I believe it to be a .750 MOA or better shooter as seen by the 0.689-inch average for the five smallest five-shot groups.

The only two things that I would think about changing are the pistol grip and the buttstock. The pistol grip is an AR-15 design so there are many to choose from for right around \$20. I would definitely change the buttstock. The Fab Defense GL Shock buttstock is a great idea, but it wiggles too much and the left side of the cheekpiece wouldn't stay in place when the nut was tightened by hand. I would probably replace it with a Magpul PRS-style buttstock or something similar but less expensive.

Overall, this is another job well-done by Savage. This is a light, accurate bolt-action rifle at a moderate price. If I could have only tested the Savage 110 BA Stealth in .338 Lapua magnum along side of it ...



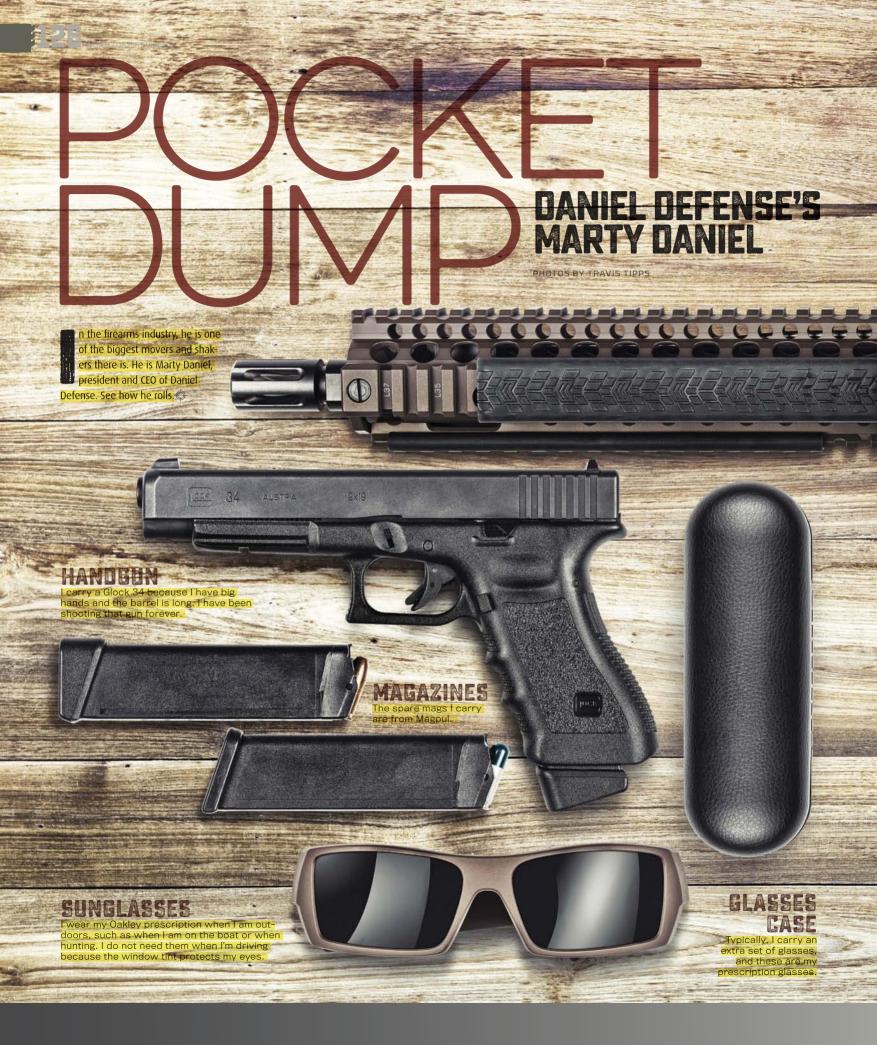
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KEY ITEMS TO KINOWABOUT KEEPING YOUR LEAN CLEAN

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE

Don't clean your pistol the same way you clean your rifle. When you clean your rifle, you are making sure the bore is devoid of all debris that could affect the projectile's flight. When you clean your handgun, you are ensuring that you don't let gunk influence the operations cycle. You are not looking to hit the wings on a gnat at 100 meters with your pistol ... a slight amount of smudge in the barrel won't make a difference. What you are concerned about is getting a class-three malfunction while a threat is bearing down on you

FREQUENCY FACTOR

You need to clean your pistol often. How often? That depends. Because of my job as a firearms instructor, it is unrealistic for me to do a full armorer's breakdown every time I shoot. However, I do a "quick clean" once a week and a full armorer's breakdown once a month, unless the build-up on my gun necessitates it sooner. My recommendation is to clean your handgun—at the minimum—once a month. If you haven't shot it during the month, clean it anyway, and feel quilty for not practicing

STAY STANDARD

Rifle shooters make all sorts of homemade concoctions to remove brass, lubricate and generally make their long guns the equivalent to a modern Excalibur. Pistols don't require that level of obsessive compulsive disorder. Dedicated gun cleaners that are sold at the gun or sporting goods store are more than adequate. And here's a pro tip: Never use WD-40.

KEEP YOUR

All too often, shooters work in fairly close quarters in the garage or the basement, but this is potentially a recipe for disaster. A lot of us also use snap caps to "function test" our recently cleaned pistols. Snap caps and live ammo don't mix. The last thing in the world you want is a negligent discharge under your belt because you didn't store your ammo away from your cleaning station.

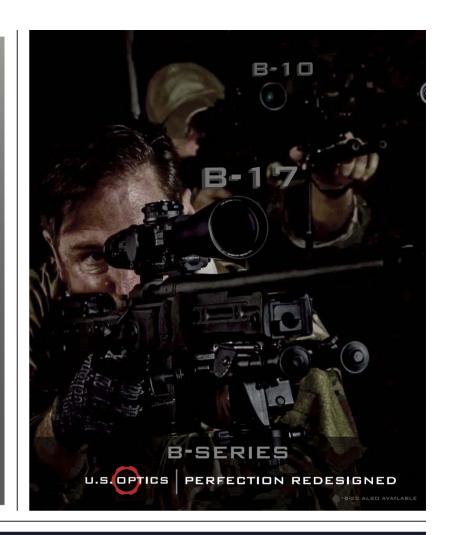
DON'T GET LAZY

There is a difference between a standard breakdown and an armorer's breakdown. To get the gunk out, watch YouTube videos, read the owner's manual, get the necessary tools and do a full armorer's breakdown on your pistol. Not knowing how is not an excuse. There are great videos out there that show how to break down just about anything that goes bang.

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cott Rei is he a LAPD, h an opei

cott Reitz is the real deal. Not only is he a 30-year veteran of the LAPD, he spent 10 years in SWAT as an operator and instructor and 15

years as the primary firearms instructor for the Metropolitan Division.

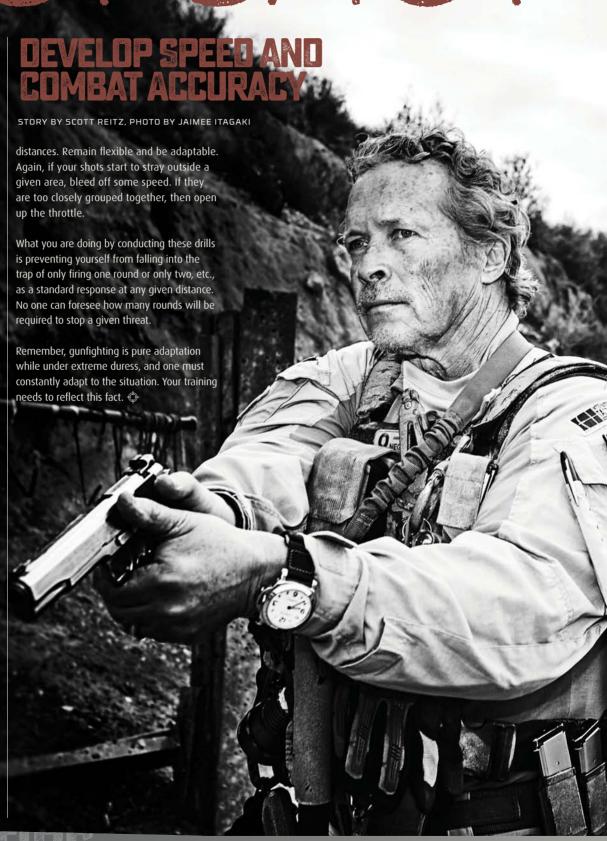
As an expert in the use of deadly force, training and tactics, he consults and testifies in Federal and Superior Court as an expert witness. He also teaches police, military units and civilians throughout the world and is a grad of the University of New Mexico. — **Editor**

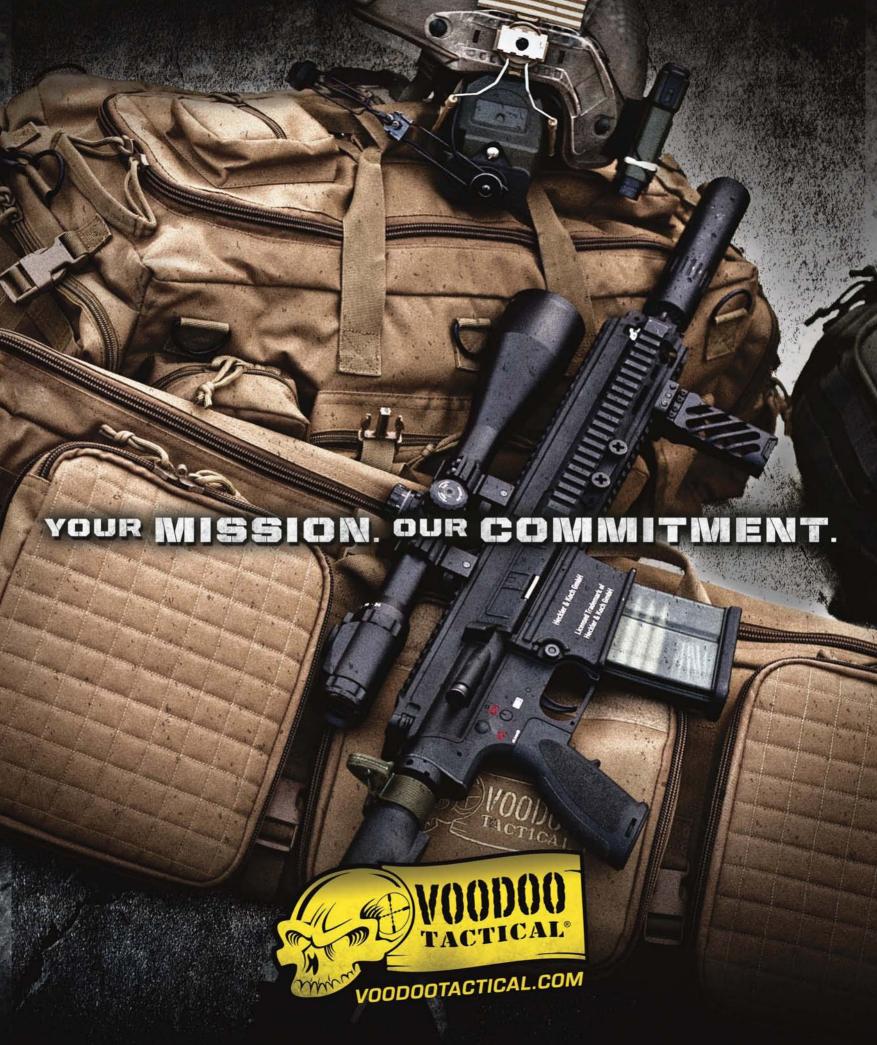
Work from the three-yard line and start pushing your times from both the low ready position and from the holstered position. Step back at varied distances and strive to balance your speed with combat accuracy. This is where it is not only challenging but practical as well.

While it may be true that many gunfights occur inside the closer distances, you might find yourself as the exception to the rule. In our advanced classes, we even have students hitting standard targets out to 250 yards with the pistol. While this is well beyond the range of the average gunfight, it is a good skill to possess, and it certainly instills confidence in what you can accomplish at normal ranges.

What you are striving for in all cases is to break the shots before an opponent can react to your actions. Many times when I am "racing" the pistol, going as fast as I can without making mistakes, I will freeze the instant a shot is fired. From here, I check to ensure that the lines I used were clean and my focus was where it should be. This is a very good way to develop a feel for the entire process. If you suspect sloppiness or the shots start to stray, then back off on your speed until both are brought back under control, and continue on from there.

Start next with firing singles, then triples, then pairs and perhaps singles again, ensuring all the while that your accuracy stays balanced with your speed. Vary the number of shots at any and all distances. Don't assume a defined pattern or number of shots at any and all





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