

THE DETECTIVE GATZETTE

ISSUE #11
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THE NEW HOME FOR GATS AND HATS.

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Sharp Stuff

By Conrad Szymczak

It all started with a 10 penny nail

Growing up in an industrial zone of southeastern Chicago we were lucky enough to have an oasis of greenery & plenty in the hot and humid summers. One of the delights was eating fruit from our plum and apple trees.

Unfortunately there were a lot of rats with pretty tails (RwPTs) (read Squirrel). I like wildlife as much as the other guy, but these RwPTs liked to take one bite and toss the carcass as if it were a game. Skipping the intermediate steps, I found myself coming up with a more permanent solution. The long Poplar tree stick became a spear when topped with a 10 penny nail. My first kill.

Tools and other Objects as Weapons

So began my quest for all things sharp and pointy. Purpose made and improvised weapons, culturally centric, and their history and portrayal in media are all of interest and potential use today.

This article will delve into the topic of improvised weapons in Noir literature and film. As you read, consider if you think these items would fit into your every day carry (EDC) kit and how they might work for you.

I Cut You!

Many law enforcement jurisdictions differentiated between a “cutting” and a “stabbing”, the stabbing indicating an intent to kill.

If you look at the groups that slash instead of stab it becomes more of a dominance act. Take for example West Side Story (1961, 2021). The intent was not murder, but turf. The tool of choice, the ubiquitous stiletto switchblade.

Shave anyone?

Who doesn't like a good slasher movie? The tool of choice is the Straight Razor. Great for that really close shave, and even closer. To my count, there are hundreds of scenes that include straight razors, far fewer which include bloodletting. Notable flicks are Sweeney Todd (2007) and The Godfather (1972, 74, 90) franchise.

The Ice Man Cometh

No slashing here. A puncture weapon. Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB) shows 108 movies that contain ice picks. I'm sure not all get “iced”, but you get my drift. I often wondered how it might be carried without injury to the user. It seems there are sheaths and carry options available. Refer to “Extras” at the end of this article.

Screwdriver Anyone?

Not the drink, the tool. When you positively need a lethal weapon but there are none around, a 3/8 x 6-Inch Slotted Screwdriver, or similar, will do just fine. This is a killer, not a persuader.

Paper, Rock, Scissors

Who hasn't seen a movie where someone “gets it” with granny's sewing scissors. The best bet for a noir that revolves around a pair of garden scissors is Without Warning (1952).

Of course, the choice of scissors as a murder weapon provides a wide variety of options for the Gentleman Murderer. Tailor Scissors being your best bet (don't mess with granny). Nine or ten inchers will do just fine to get the job done.

Pin the What on the Who?

At first I thought this was going to be an underwhelming and lame personal defending weapon, but it seems that historically the topic caused quite a stir.

According to Smithsonian Magazine, the real hotbed for the “hatpin wars” was in Chi-Town. With the liberation of ladies in the early 1900s there came a need for personal protection with the liberty of personal travel. Incidents of “masher” attacks or unwanted attention sent an upsurge of “Hatpin Peril” that terrorized men who couldn't handle the 20th-century woman.

By 1909 various jurisdictions were considering measures to regulate hatpin length. In 1910 Chicago's city council debated an ordinance that would ban hatpins longer than nine inches.

As for the pin's efficacy, it could slash as well as puncture. In one case, a man was killed when his girlfriend was ‘playfully’ poking her hatpin at him, the pin piercing his heart.

My testing of an antique 6 inch pin and a modern 8 inch stainless steel (skewer) pin showed they could easily slash and puncture, but also bend after a plunge.

Need a New Floor?

One tool that I have never seen nor heard of in cinema nor literature is the humble linoleum knife. I had a folding one issued to me in the Army. I found it to be extremely useful. It handles and performs similar to a karambit. Better for slashing a carotid than a straight razor.



Flat Tire?

One of the favorite ways of murder in film has been the tire iron (generic term). A humble tool that comes to our rescue when our sweet crate strands us due to a flat (flats, hats & gats - a future article). It doubles as a tool and a weapon. One end is for bludgeoning, while the other is for stabbing.

Fire Tonight?

Tell me truthfully. Who hasn't seen a guy get clobbered in the movies with a fireplace poker? Did you know that the poker is a bludgeoning as well as stabbing weapon? It just isn't very good as a stabbing weapon. I suppose you could try to convince a jury that you had no intent of murder if you used it as a stabbing implement.

Box Lunch?

There is no lunch involved in this, but any literary piece on sharp stuff needs to include the tool 'box cutter'. What tool can claim the downing of airplanes? Enough said.

Tools as Weapons

In summary, Noir literature and film utilize sharp and pointy things as weapons. The questions one needs to ask is if these improvised weapons are concealable for carry, can they be use in the defense as well as offense, and are they legal to do so.



WHY DO I GRAVITAGE TOWARDS OLDER GUNS?

By Bob Walsh

I find that I do much more shopping at the used-conignment counter than the new gun counter and have done so for several years.

I bought four guns in the last month. (Just doing my part to keep the economy going.) They were a 1920 commercial Luger originally issued to the police in Hanover, a S&W Model 10 snubie that was probably a police gun, a Beretta .25 auto 950 BS and a Ruger 22-45 that is still in production but is not available new in California due to political considerations.

The Luger I bought partly due to its police connections and partly because I think they are cool pieces of machinery. Many years ago a French technology institution did a survey and concluded that the Luger pistol was the most recognizable technological artifact of the 20th century. All of its numbers matched, the bore is excellent and it shoots very well.

The Model 10 is about 42 years old. It is unusual in that it has a target hammer. According to the S&W Standard Catalog, 4th edition, these guns in this configura-

tion were almost always sold to police departments. It has no department markings of any kind, though there is owner ID engraved on the sides of the butt frame under the grips. It was obviously carried more than it was shot.

The Beretta was probably somebody's sock drawer gun. When I took it down it had no rub marks on the frame under the slide. Probably test fired only. Super clean. This particular model has the pop-up barrel so it can be loaded without racking the slide. It is HARD to rack the slide on that sucker, even if you cock the hammer first. Also it does not bite me like many of those mouse guns do. When I shot it, it left a couple of oil track marks on the web of my hand, but no cut and no blood.

The Ruger 22-45 is a nice pistol. I already have one in blue. This one is stainless with a slightly longer barrel. I shoot mine fairly regularly in steel challenge matches. Having a back-up along in case of equipment trouble is worth it to me and I got a decent enough deal that it is unlikely to go down in value even if the hated "roster" goes away in CA. I may even go ahead and set one up for a red dot sight, so I can shoot two in the matches, one iron sights and one optics.

So, why do I gravitate towards older guns? Different

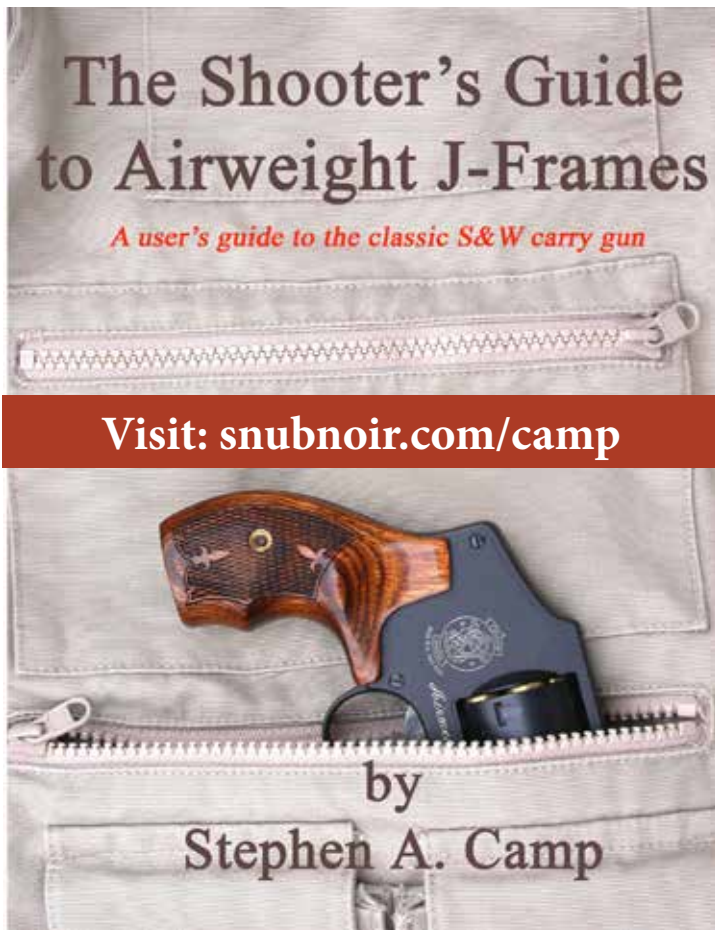
answers I guess. They don't exactly make a lot of new Lugers any more so if you want one you have to buy used. Plus some of them, like this police gun, have an interesting history to them.

The Model 10 I bought largely as a companion piece to a much older M&P snubbie. I now have a nice, regularly carried Portland P D snub nose .38 with some character to it and a very clean newer version of the same gun albeit probably without a clear department connection.

I have a modest collection of mouse guns. Most of them I shoot very seldom because they often bite me and now days the .25 auto is hard to get and expensive. I have actually started reloading it to keep them fed. One of them, a much older Beretta, is the first documented James Bond gun, the one M made him get rid of to get a "real" gun, a .32 automatic Walther. (I can't afford an Aston Martin or a Blower Bentley, so I have to settle.)


The Ruger is something I wanted and had to buy used to get one legally in CA. I saw it, the price was reasonable, I bought it.

Not that I would turn down an interesting new gun at a decent price, but somehow the older ones interest me more. Maybe because I am old too.



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Review of Monsieur Spade - A Partners in crime review

By Brian Drake and John A. Curley

Series opening episode 1

The Bman sayeth:

When I first saw the TV ads for Monsieur Spade, I thought, “How dumb. Spade in France? They’re going to make him a woke black Chinese Puerto Rican gay Jew trying to solve the mystery of which bathroom to use. Why, God, why???” and promptly forgot about it.

Then I get a text from my pal John Curley, who said, “You gotta watch this Sam Spade show, it’s great!”

Well, thought I, if a real private investigator likes the TV private eye, it has to have something going for it, right?

Let me start with a caveat. After 30-some books and a few movie / TV adventures of my own, I long ago decided I wasn’t going to engage in any literary or cinematic criticism. I know how hard people work in this racket, and nobody intends to produce bad material. Sometimes, you have a run of bad luck, and things don’t work out despite your best efforts, intentions, and desires. And the audience can be so fickle they’ll even hate a good project, because opinions are like you-know-what and everybody is one. In other words, I was hesitant to write this review, even though I thought the first episode of Monsieur Spade was an absolute home run.

But then, decided I, everybody involved in the show from production to costumes to the interns probably voted for Joe Biden.

So, the hell with ‘em!

Here we go . . .

I didn’t read anything about the show prior to watching it. All I knew was Curley enjoyed it and wanted to do a point / counterpoint review so I’d better have something to say after it was over. With that in mind, I was surprised to find Monsieur Spade is a direct sequel to Dashiell Hammett’s *The Maltese Falcon*, essentially a “thirty years later” catch-up on the events of the book and film. But by the end of the episode, knowing who was who and what it meant for the rest of the series, the charm vanished, because I know who our bad guy is since the apple never falls far from the tree and all

that. Yes, I’m being vague, we’re not doing spoilers here; watch the show yourself. Do you have to have read or watched *The Maltese Falcon* to understand Monsieur Spade? No, not at all. But being a fan of the latter does add to the enjoyment when the Easter eggs pop up.

And please allow me a fanboy aside for a moment. I’m in favor of anything that brings Dashiell Hammett’s name back into the public eye. Hammett has to be my number one literary hero, despite his faults (he was a Communist) and even because of those faults (he told HUAC to kick rocks and went to prison for it; dude wasn’t a rat). He wrote a truckload of excellent short stories and five novels. Not a bad one in the bunch, by the way – although *The Dain Curse* is a little rough in spots. His books and stories are in print and readily available for you to enjoy, and your education as a human being isn’t complete until you’ve read at least *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Thin Man*. Hammett’s work is the final word on anything anybody could ever do or say with detective fiction. There’s nowhere else to go after Hammett. Everything since is only covering the same ground, and never as good. But, as Chandler said, we continue to assault the citadel, because, as Hammett might add, human nature never changes, and each generation has a need to figure out why we behave the way we do. Exploring those mysteries through the lens of crime and detective fiction often points to the answers nobody wants to talk about, but Hammett wasn’t afraid of those answers. He put them front and center.

Monsieur Spade keeps Spade intact, warts and all, from the Falcon mythos. He’s not a hero. He likes to mess with other men’s wives. He’ll do the right thing, but especially when he’s paid to do so. And his connection to the past, which dogs him from the opening scenes of the first episode and beyond, compel him to set aside his usual pattern of behavior, because nobody can escape a past that’s left innumerable scars on one’s psyche. Sam is trying to change what’s already set in stone, and I expect he’ll meet several brick walls while trying to alter that which cannot be changed. In *The Maltese Falcon*, Spade was young; the answers were easy; in *Monsieur Spade*, he’s older; the answers aren’t going to be easy this time.

Monsieur Spade is well worth watching. It’s a slow-

burn. We're not talking fast-paced slam-bang action here; it grows like a tree. But the tree's roots are weak, and as soon as those roots can't take the weight any longer, the tree is falling over. And God help anybody who doesn't get out of the way.

The acting is terrific. I forgot actors could speak real well-written dialogue instead of the pithy catch-phrases used so much in film and television today, words that have zero meaning and don't stay with you. The scenery is amazing – I forgot how pretty France was, all I've seen lately is the cesspool Paris has become. The characters are well-drawn; the good guys have a shade of gray, but the bad guys are all black. I'm not going to say it's perfect, but it's damn near close, and I'm looking forward to the next five weeks as Monsieur Spade airs Sunday nights on AMC.

John A. Curley

I possess a unique view point. I am the product of what you get when you have a kid read crime fiction and then become a private investigator. I am also a writer and I advocate for better child protection. The three careers blend into one for me very frequently. Upon seeing the promos for the series, my interest was raised. Sam Spade. If not the patriarch, who in my eyes (despite an earlier story of a different character by the same author) Carroll John Daly's venerated Race Williams, Spade is perhaps the equally talented younger brother of Race. If not the Pope, a Cardinal in the church of Noir. I had the sinking feeling in my gut though, to remain faithful, not to re-imagine (a phrase that incurs instant distrust on my part) such an icon, could it be done? Then upon seeing that this is the creation of Scott Frank, whom I have considered a master of modern noir, since viewing "A Walk Among The Tombstones," I figured if there was someone to trust Spade's Legacy to, it is that man. Spade in France? If there is someone that could make the post war French Country Side Noir it is Scott Frank. Fiction is important to me; crime fiction has helped set the course of my life. I owe my writing and *much* more to the Andrew Vaches. First by having read his work for years and then by the privilege of his instruction. The Spenser novels were my first foray into Crime Fiction. I watched as Ace Atkins started to keep the character going and then by the time of the last entry made the character a pathetic woke inflection of his own. I wondered for months how well Scott Frank

would deal with the resurrection of Spade.

"We got a shot," I thought.

It hit the mark.

Clive Owen is superb and real to me. Knowing the affect the work and this life has on people first hand, Owen shows Spade world weary and for a brief time happy. Maybe the first time in his life. His armor, rusted but still strong is a museum piece now. The supporting cast is excellent. Denis Menochet as the local law who is, whether they both like or not, going to be a factor in Spade's life, is beyond good. The atmosphere is right. Spade in France works, because change happens to us all. Including fictional characters if they are real to us. The cinematography captures the lives of the characters, the writing is amazing:

"I stopped looking at calendars and mirrors a long time ago."

The episode takes its time and establishes where Spade is now. He has people in his life now and that made me happy because I care about what happens to him.

The end of the first episode leaves a wound that you need patched.

As realism is for me, an important part of any story, I give this a high rating. The short amount of violence portrayed is accurate. The story and how things came to be is plausible. Sam grew but he is still Samuel Spade. And the armor, rusted as it may be is functional and close at hand.

Andrew Vachss once said "Anyone who says "Books don't change anything" or more commonly, that "crime fiction is the wrong genre for promoting social change", should take a closer look." Not far in principle from "the degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering it's prisons." By Dostoevsky. Most people in my family of choice would say a good judge of someone's character is how they treat children and animals." All true. My work I can tell you just like the fiction gives us a window into the real world.

With that in mind anything that brings back Spade and might get people reading Hammett and seeing Bogie, would be a good thing and maybe when that happens more people will understand why it is the place to look to see what's wrong.

Episode one tells us where Spade is, what he has been doing and what it is that is going to bring him back to what he is. I am looking forward to episode two. We'll talk again, my friends.

SKEETER SKELTON'S DREAM COMES TRUE...ALMOST

By Shawn McCarver

I grew up on gun writers including, but not limited to, Elmer Keith, Col. Charles Askins, Bill Jordan, Col. Jeff Cooper, and Skeeter Skelton. There was no internet, and the only way I could read the material put out by these men was to read their columns, articles, and books. Skeeter Skelton not only wrote memorable articles about shooting and about guns he also wrote the “Me and Joe” stories, the Dobe Grant stories, and who could forget the hilarious stories about the intrepid and sometimes hapless gun and ammunition novice, Jug Johnson, whom Elmer might have called a “tyro.”

Although all of Skeeter's writings were entertaining, and many of them were read over and over again, I always got the most enjoyment out of anything law enforcement related. Skeeter had a lifetime of law enforcement experience from which he could draw his stories, and I especially enjoyed a series of back and forth articles he did with Bill Jordan, where one man would poke fun at the other one month, and the other would return the favor the following month.

It is no secret that both men liked the revolver conceptualized by Bill Jordan. Roy Jinks, the now retired Smith & Wesson historian, who at one time was in charge of various departments at Smith & Wesson including the service department, describes how the Combat Magnum, which later became the Model 19, came to be. It seems that Jordan had a brief meeting with Carl Hellstrom, who was the first person outside the Wesson family to be in charge. Initially, at least, Hellstrom's title was Plant Superintendent. Hellstrom inquired of Jordan the characteristics of the ideal revolver for peace officers. Jordan suggested that the 38 Combat Masterpiece be made with a heavier barrel with a lug to encase the ejector rod, and that it be chambered in “.357” Magnum, which prior to that conversation was only available in the N-frame, which was S&W's largest frame at the time. Within a year, Jordan was presented the first Combat Magnum to leave the factory, after which, Jordan showed it on a well-known nationally broadcast television show at the time, describing it as the “answer to a peace officer's dream.”

Skeeter, who was almost single-handedly responsible for the reintroduction of the tapered barrel S&W Model 24 in 44 Special, and who was very fond of the 5-inch Model 27, became very fond of the Combat Magnum. Its

lighter frame, smaller grip, and K-frame “Masterpiece” action made the weapon much easier to use in all-day carry even in the day when the duty belt usually only had revolver, spare shells, and a pair of S&W or Peerless handcuffs.

Skeeter wrote of the time he and a bunch of other law enforcement friends got together for a barbecue, and as men like to do, he and Jordan examined each other's Combat Magnum. Skeeter described how Jordan then swapped his custom stocks onto Skeeter's Model 19, holstered it and left, telling Skelton, in his Louisiana drawl, that when Skelton got the action on Jordan's gun as slick as Skeeter had gotten the action on his own, they would switch back! As it happened, Skeeter apparently got into a scrape with some bandits hauling contraband, and Skeeter was forced to fire at the offending bandit at some distance. All went quiet and in hunting for the body on that moonlit night, Skelton found the bandit's hat, with one neat hole, a through and through, in the hat just a little above where the bridge of his nose would have been. Skelton allowed as how Jordan's “damned old gun shot high,” or words to that effect!

As a senior in charge of weapon procurement while at U.S. Customs, Skelton wrote the specs for a new revolver for agents. For those of you who are about to say, “oh, I know all about that CS-1 version of the 686,” you would be maybe 25 years late. At the time, which



Right side of Model 66 shows side plate screws, along with other small parts are black, contrasting nicely with stainless steel of frame, cylinder, and barrel.



Note new ball-detent lock up which allows for full length ejector rod, giving more reliable ejection.

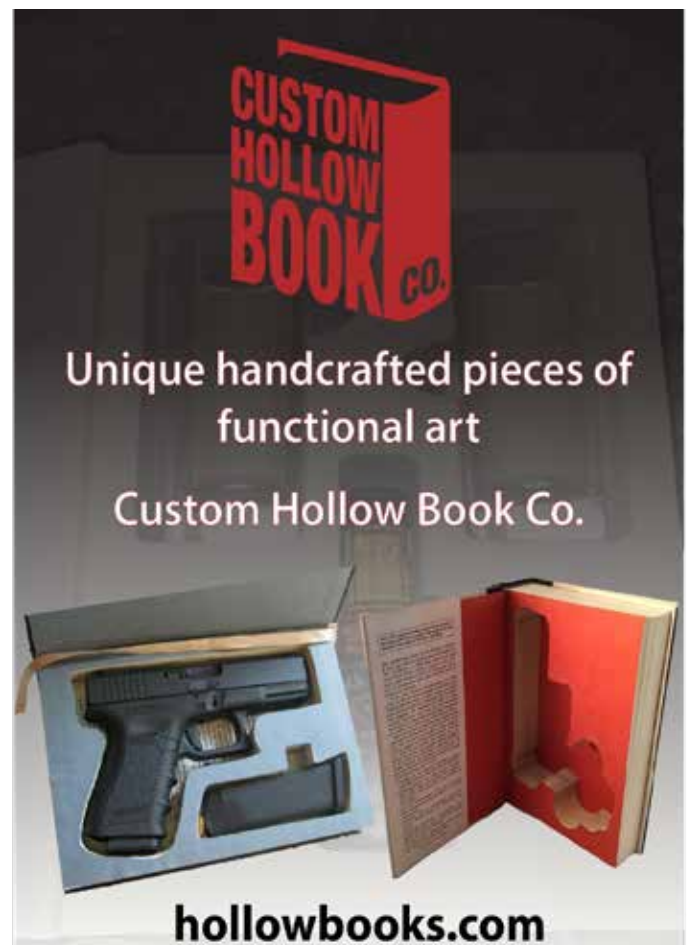
pre-dated the stainless version of the Model 19, called the Model 66, the best finish S&W had for fighting the elements was the nickel finish, but Skeeter wanted full-length ejection. Skeeter wrote the specs in question for the Model 19, with a 3-inch barrel and nickel finish. As is typical with federal purchasing, some idiot in the purchasing department changed the order to the 2 1/2-inch barrel, and the rest is history.

A few years ago, Smith & Wesson re-introduced the Model 66, the stainless steel version of the original Model 19. This time around, the engineering was changed to include a ball-detent lock up in front of the cylinder, thereby leaving a full diameter barrel shank and eliminating the 6 o'clock flat on the original, the weak point of the Models 13, 19, 65, and 66. Most assuredly, that flat cut was not a weak point when the weapons were used as intended, mostly with 38 special ammunition reserving Magnum ammunition for occasional practice and for duty carry, limiting the choice of Magnum loads to 158 grains.

After the re-introduction of the new 4 inch Model 66, the factory introduced a new version with a barrel length of 2 3/4 inches. Because the forward locking lug was no longer needed with the new ball-detent lock up, full length ejection was now possible with this shorter

revolver.

During the 60s and 70s, the Combat Magnum, in either the Model 19 or 66 was the single most desirable and sought after law enforcement revolver during that period, and the snub-nose version with the 2 1/2 inch barrel is the gun that everybody wanted for plain clothes work. Now, many decades later, with this latest version of the Model 66, we can all now have the benefit of the gun Skeeter would have no doubt chosen for the Customs Service had it been available at the time. In both the 2 3/4 inch and the 4 inch versions, this weapon has the round butt which makes concealment so much easier and the shorter version has full length ejection which is desirable in a gunfight. And, should you desire, and should your wallet and your wrist not fight back, you can "wail away" with full power Magnum ammunition all the time. Stainless steel is a better choice than the nickel finish available in Skeeter's day, and the only box this revolver does not check from Skeeter's original list is the 3 inch barrel, but this revolver still gives you full ejection. Smith & Wesson finally got this one right, too late for Skeeter, however, not too late for us.





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and custom built 1911 style pistols and
Browning HiPowers

defensivecreations.com



Apollo AIWB from Dark Star Gear

By Brandon S. Hizak

When I made the switch from leather to Kydex for my snubbies there weren't many quality options. Dark Star Gear (DSG) was one of those quality options. In 2014 I talked Tom, the owner of DSG, into making me his AIWB holster for a Ruger SP101. Since then, the DSG "casual carry" has undergone several generations of design and production improvements to become what is now the Apollo. The latest generation saw not only the return of the SP101 version but also support for the new Kimber K6.

The Kimber K6S Apollo was designed around the stainless steel 357 Magnum model. Luckily the K6S and new, lightweight aluminum K6XS are dimensionally the same. Perfect fitment was confirmed when Tom sent me out one of the new Apollos for my recently acquired K6XS.

The Kimber K6XS deserves a brief word. The trigger is better than off the shelf J frames, including those from the Performance Center. The sights are bold and much easier to see than any standard J or SP101, more on par with the Pro models or Wiley Clapp SP101. The K6XS shares some parts, grips and holsters with its stainless steel magnum kin. The renowned TK Customs supports the K6XS with spring kits and other parts. The K6XS is absolutely worth looking at if you are shopping for a new aluminum framed snub.

Returning to the Apollo, it is designed to be worn in the appendix position, 1-2:30 or 9:30-11 if you are a lefty. The holster shell itself is ambidextrous so you can set it up as a righty or lefty carry rig, something you might not appreciate until you get injured and have to scramble to find a wrong handed rig for at least one of your carry guns. The latest generation is optimized for the Discreet Carry Concepts spring steel belt clip. DCC clips are well known for the high degree of hold they possess and the "tooth" they have that bites into fabric for a sure grip, no belt required. The latest generation of Apollo has also seen changes to the Kydex shape over the barrel to best blend comfort, concealment and placement/securing of Velcro/muzzle pads. Due to user requests, the latest Apollo is also compatible with several of the various "wings" on the market to further tuck the grip in for more concealment if required.

Having used various generations of this holster since 2014, I have come to expect a lot of it. I have figured a few things out in regards to my preferences. Aluminum al-

loy, Airweight, Air-Lite or scandium guns generally don't need a muzzle pad for comfort. When you step up to an all steel 640, SP101 or 856 I prefer to have a small pad. I find the little 2x2 pad that DSG sells to be ideal. Whether running errands, playing with the kids, or hours in the car, the Apollo has always been minimally intrusive, easily concealed, and quite comfortable.

The legacy wide toothed metal clips DSG uses were always sufficient for me to carry in workout pants, shorts or sweats as long as I tied the drawstring. The DCC clip has a stronger bite and clamps down on even my thin Under Armour shorts like a hungry pit bull. The DCC clip still fits over my assortment of nylon carry belts such as those from EDC Belt Co and V Development Group.

If you are looking for a good AIWB holster for the J frame, LCR, SP101, 856 or K6, the Dark Star Gear Apollo is definitely worth considering. While you're on the DSG website you might want to check out the Immediate Action Carrier. It's a modern take on the old 2x2 cartridge holder.



From the collection of Tim I

An advertisement for High Desert Cartridge Company. At the top left is a logo for HCCC (High Desert Cartridge Company) featuring a bullet. To the right of the logo is the text "HIGH DESERT CARTRIDGE COMPANY" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below this is a stylized American flag. The main text of the ad is "HIGH QUALITY AMMUNITION" in large, bold, yellow letters. Below this, in smaller white text, it says "OUR AMMUNITION IS MADE IN-HOUSE AND HAND INSPECTED TO ENSURE THE QUALITY AND PRECISION THAT DELIVERS RELIABLE ACCURACY ROUND AFTER ROUND." There are three bullet points: "QUALITY START TO FINISH ATTENTION TO QUALITY.", "INTEGRITY PRECISION ROUNDS WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH.", and "RELIABILITY ACCURATE ROUND AFTER ROUND." At the bottom, it says "GIVE US A CALL OR STOP BY TODAY!" followed by the address "915 S. COLUMBUS AVE., GOLDENDALE, WA" and the phone number "509-772-2726" and website "HIGHDESERTCARTRIDGE.COM".

Performance WheelGun Ammunition from Remington

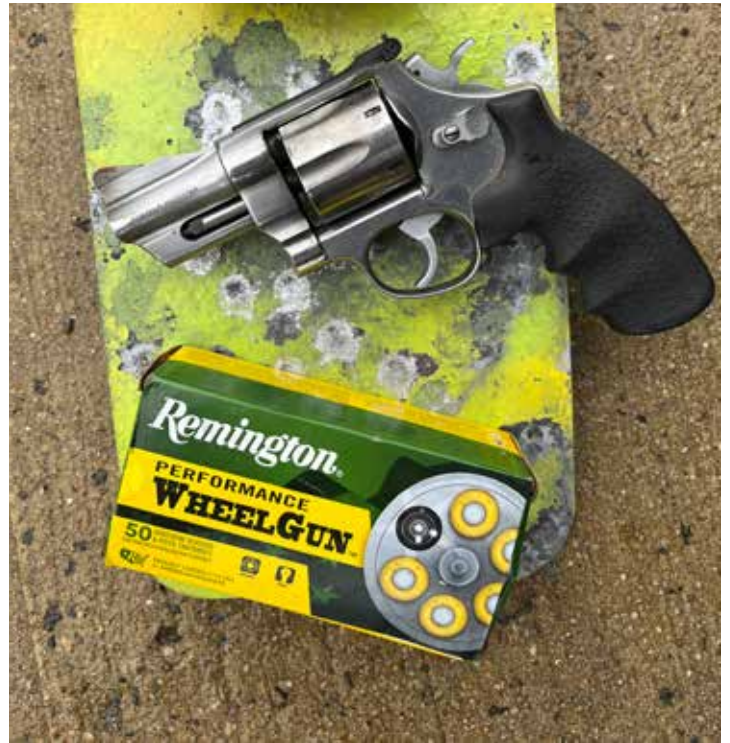
By Mike Boyle

It would appear that the great ammunition drought has run its course and we have weathered the storm. The COVID pandemic played havoc with the available labor force and the supply chain and as a result, ammunition was in very short supply. Unfortunately, things will never be like before and if you haven't bought ammunition recently, be prepared for some serious sticker shock. But the good news is that you can actually find it!

Some time ago, I noted that Remington was introducing a line of ammunition dedicated to revolvers called Performance WheelGun. But as luck would have it, Remington's effort was temporarily derailed by the pandemic. But I am happy to report that Performance WheelGun is back on track.

The trend in handgun ammunition in recent years has been toward rounds optimized for personal defense or the taking of game, but Performance Wheelgun fills a very different niche. Quite simply, offerings for classic revolver cartridges loaded with lead bullets have gotten very little love of late and can be difficult to find. Performance WheelGun addresses that need and is now available in several different configurations for classic revolvers.

Performance WheelGun ammunition was designed for target and competitive shooting. Top quality components are utilized including Kleenbore primers for positive ignition. All lead bullets in traditional weights and styles are used throughout the line making them not only



There was absolutely no doubt when the 246 grain bullet impacted the steel target.

ideal for revolvers, but lever action rifles as well. At the present time 11 different loads are offered including:

- .32 S&W 88 grain
- .32 S&W Long 98 grain
- .38 Short Colt 125 grain
- .38 S&W 146 grain
- .38 Special 148 grain
- .38 Special 158 grain RN
- .38 Special 158 grain SWC
- .357 Magnum 158 grain
- .44 Special 246 grain
- .45 Colt 225 grain
- .45 Colt 250 grain

Remington graciously provided me samples of the .38 Special 158 grain SWC load and the .44 Special 246 RN grain load and they did not disappoint.

The Performance WheelGun .38 Special load sent along for evaluation featured a nickel plated case and a semi-wadcutter bullet. Back in the day when revolvers ruled the earth, at least one big city police department utilized a Remington duty load with a semi-wadcutter bullet as opposed to round nosed as they felt it was a better stopper.



Performance WheelGun in .44 Special delivered the goods.

This is a standard pressure load advertised with a muzzle velocity of 755 feet per second. For informal, non-social use in older guns, this is a far better proposition than hot JHP cartridges. In my Kimber K6 this load proved accurate and mild shooting. I had no qualms at all feeding it to my alloy frame S&W Model 12 Air-weight where felt recoil was more noticeable but hardly abusive.

The .44 Special has long had a cult following among old school revolver shooters. Many claimed it was an exceptionally accurate cartridge the exploits of legendary lawmen such as Jelly Bryce also endeared it to the masses. One of my favorite handguns is a S&W Model 624 with a 3 inch which was part of a special run commissioned by Lew Horton back in the 1980s. The WheelGun 246 grain classic load ran like a top in this gun and produced some spectacular groups on target. It would be just the ticket for those large frame Colt and Smith revolvers of old.

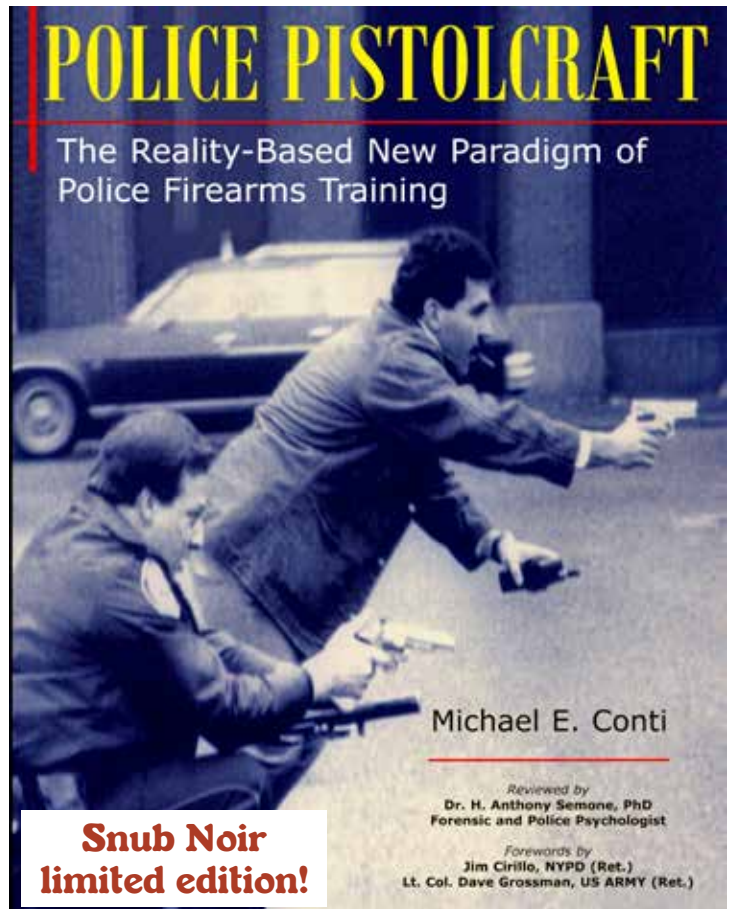
The Remington Performance WheelGun like represents an interesting departure from the current offerings of the contemporary manufacturers and harkens back to an earlier era of time when things were much simpler. If you have a need to feed your pet revolver some quality, classic-style ammunition, you can't do any better than Remington Performance WheelGun.



From the collection of Paul W



From this Kimber K6, the Performance WheelGun load was a top performer.



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Citizens Defense Research Contextual Revolver: Fundamental Revolver Skills

By TJ Parmele

First introduced to the Smith & Wesson catalog in 2009, the Smith & Wesson 310 Night Guard chambered in 10MM was only in production for the better part of a year prior to the entire series being discontinued in 2010 due to the wonder-nine craze really taking control of the market. It took me the better part of 14 years to finally acquire one. You might be asking: "Why?" Well, it scratches the whole "useful, yet weird" vibe that I have come to enjoy. Here's what I like: It's chambered in an auto cartridge (10MM, check!), capable of using moon clips (efficient, check!), and made from Scandium and Steel (a tough and light combination). So, a lightweight revolver chambered in an auto-cartridge with a snub-nosed barrel. I have to say it has exceeded my expectations in performance.

Build and Design:

The Night Guard series is known for its build quality. The revolver is solid, and well-crafted with attention to detail evident in every aspect. The Scandium allow frame not only makes its lightweight nature function, but also ensures that its durability will last without compromising strength. The N-Frame sized 310 Night Guard series weighs in at a staggeringly light 29 ounces unloaded, is a bit longer than 7.6 inches, sports a 2.75-inch barrel, has an XS Big Dot Tritium Sight, and rear Cylinder and Slide Fixed Sights. This results in a nice, light platform that enables the user to gain a fast initial shot.

Performance:

The 10mm chambering for this revolver is a neat idea. 10MM is about the hottest round one can reasonably shoot in a semi-auto pistol but is a middle of the





road cartridge for a revolver. So, felt recoil out of this gun, while stout, is nothing that cannot be handled, especially with the included rubber grips. The 10MM can be loaded with or without the moon clips, but moon clips make loading and unloading the cylinder a lot easier and faster. I'm personally a fan of using moon clips, but they have their weaknesses, like being required to be used when shooting the .40 S&W. This less powerful, shorter round cannot be fired in this gun without the moon clips.

I shot this revolver at distances ranging from 5 yards to 25 yards. First shots were done Double Action and I was able to get 3 inch groups. The closer, the target, the tighter the groups to include a personal best of a half-inch group at 7 yards. The guilty pleasure of "plinking" with .40 S&W is something that will convert people to the cartridge. Recoil is light enough and makes the gun a joy to shoot.

Affordability:

This was not a cheap gun, even in 2009. MSRP for this was \$1153. Current pricing is what one would expect for a limited run, now collectible firearm. The only way to get one of these now is to check auction sites and used

gun store racks as there's nothing else out there that is made like this. The exceptions would be the S&W 327 Model in .357 Magnum, or the S&W 329 in .44 Magnum. However, they aren't an auto cartridge.

Ergonomics:

The firearm's ergonomic design also deserves praise. The rubberized grip that is Pachmayr's "Compac Custom" is comfortable and provides a purchase for secure hold, and assists in minimizing recoil. The Double Action Trigger pull can use some lightening, it's above the 12 pounds my trigger scale stops at, but it is smooth. Single Action was a crisp 4 pounds or so.

I shot 180 Grain FMJ Georgia Arms 10MM rated at 1100 fps and Remington 180 Grain FMJ .40 S&W. I only shot 100 rounds through this gun. It functioned reliably and had no issues.

Magazine Capacity:

6 rounds of 10MM, or 6 rounds of .40S&W. Moon clips are optional on the 10MM, but required for the .40 S&W.

Sights:

The 310 comes with an XS Big Dot Tritium front sight and it comes with the Cylinder and Slide fixed rear sight. These allow for easy target acquisition. It's a nice setup and a combination that I like.

Conclusion:

In summary, the 310 Night Guard is a versatile gun that deserved a longer life, as did all the Night Guard series from Smith and Wesson. Now, it's a somewhat scarce collectible. It's probably one of the more modern revolvers out there, considering the cartridge, the materials, sight configuration, and using moon clips, along with Scandium and steel construction. This gun was ahead of its time that just didn't come.



From the pocket of Kelly T

Equipment Review: the Texas Built Leather .38 Loop Carrier

By Anthony David Carrington

Texas Built Leather has kindly provided a set of their not-yet-released .38 cartridge loop carriers for testing and evaluation. The immediate impression is that this is a quality piece of kit, made of stout leather that is still supple enough to conform to the shape of a human waistband. I did not have to do any of the shrinking or stretching that is occasionally required for leather goods. No amount of upside-down shaking could make AZOOM snap caps or live rounds in either .38 Special or .357 Magnum fall out. It takes two or three firm slaps into the palm of the hand or onto a hard surface to dislodge cartridges. After wearing it all day, snap caps had ridden up in the loops by a tiny fraction of an inch. They were still held securely, but withdrawing them was easier. Unless you are responding to a bounce-house or a trampoline factory, carry with confidence.

Many other loop carriers thread onto the belt through slots, but this one is built as a double-over flap secured with two snaps. This makes for a somewhat thick unit, but taking the carrier on and off without unthreading the belt is very easy. I appreciate this feature when I have to use a public toilet, and I would appreciate it even more if I still regularly used a sallyport gun locker. The snaps seem to allow clearance for a belt up to just under two inches wide - a good bit wider than most trouser belts but not as wide as a typical duty belt.

The loops are also spaced out a bit farther than many cartridge carriers. Whereas many others have the rims nearly touching, this one holds them so far apart that I can just slip the rim of a third cartridge in between any two cartridges in the carrier. This makes for a somewhat long unit, and it measures just a hair over five inches. The flap doesn't let you straddle belt loops, so measure the spacing of your belt loops before you buy. It conceals perfectly well under a loose t-shirt, flannel shirt, or slightly roomy sweatshirt, but it prints noticeably under a fitted sweater. Much of the bulk comes from that doubled-over

construction, which tilts the top of the cartridges away from the body slightly. This helps with the draw stroke. In all of my testing, I never had trouble with cartridges or snap caps getting tangled up in whatever kind of shirt I had tucked into my trousers or draped over the carrier.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the wide spacing of the loops. On one hand, it probably could not hold cartridges loaded into a speed strip. On the other hand, the spacing allows for a very positive grip on the cartridges. I can easily grab one at a time, or

two at a time and run it more like a 2x2x2 carrier. I had a Range Safety Officer breathing down my neck about rapid fire when I took this unit for a spin, so I was not able to do any timed tests. But, it certainly feels solid and quick.

In short, this is a serviceable loop carrier if maximum concealment is not your priority. Besides satisfying the need for cartridge loops

as a reload method in Snub Noir matches, I could see this playing a role in IDPA as well - many competitors who shoot the stock service revolver sub-division carry speedloaders for mid-stage reloads, but they make their initial load from loose rounds or speed strips. I could also see it being useful for summertime carry, when pockets get full and shirts get loose.



From the pociet of Rob G

Bill Jordan's Revolver Modifications Improvements That Make Sense

By Shawn McCarver

A few days ago, as of the time this is written in mid-January 2024, one person posted a picture of a Smith & Wesson J-frame revolver with smooth target stocks and a bobbed hammer. The person who posted the thread said words to the effect that, "if you recognize this revolver, we can be friends." A bunch of us are apparently looking for more friends as it got plenty of responses! Some responded correctly with the name of the owner of the pictured revolver correctly identified. Some knew the name of the owner but mis-identified the model of the revolver, and others did not know the name of the owner or the model of the revolver.

There are certain revolver people that everyone who frequents a group such as Snub Noir should know, and it seemed like a good idea to review a few facts about the owner of the revolver pictured in the thread. Bill Jordan was born in 1911, and he came from an era when a man did not discuss his own gun fights. In his era, some things were simply not discussed except perhaps sparingly and among professional colleagues. Suffice it to say that his long career as a border patrol officer, interrupted only by his service as a United States Marine in both World War II and the Korean War, was served along a particular stretch of the border between the United States and Mexico where, in one particular 10-year period that sector averaged a gunfight every 17 days.

When one experiences, either firsthand, or through colleagues, a considerable amount of action, one tends to develop ideas that will help him to survive violent encounters. We are fortunate that Bill Jordan took time to write down his ideas on how best to win a gunfight. His book "No Second Place Winner" has been one of two or three text books that are "required reading" on this subject because, as the quote from which the title of his book is taken, there are "no second place winners" in a gunfight.

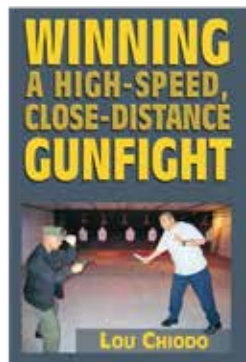
One part of Jordan's text deals with improvements in the revolver that Jordan felt useful for an officer carrying a gun in his daily work in order to increase the chances of him returning home at night, and that is the focus of this article. In his book, Jordan discusses improving the double action revolver, and when compared to the idea

of "customizing" a gun today, Jordan's ideas are few. It is no surprise as the further one gets from the range, the less "improvements" one needs as the need for reliable ignition vastly outweigh the need for impressing one's friends.

Jordan first addressed smoothing the action on the revolver. He warned that the main spring should never be lightened because positive ignition is more important than weight of pull. This is useful advice today. No matter how many years I have been reading postings on various discussion groups, there are still those who do not understand that the strain screw on the Smith & Wesson revolver must always be tightened completely down. Truthfully, a "spring kit" that involves lightening the mainspring is a bad idea for a duty revolver. While the trigger return spring may be lightened by cutting off no more than 1 1/2 coils, a better idea is simply to buy the duty action return spring directly from Smith & Wesson. A misfire on the range is not a big deal unless it costs you the title to a match. A misfire on the street, so to speak, can cost you a lot more than that.

In the 1970s, I experimented with both cutting coils and by obtaining the lighter trigger return spring from S&W. I could never tell a sufficient difference and always preferred a full power strike to a primer. So, after much trial and error, everything went back to stock, and I stopped modifying a "serious" revolver.

In the early 1980s, a friend of mine had his six-inch Colt Python done by one of the two nationally known gunsmiths specialized in the Colt Python at the time (either Sadowski or Jungkind, and I think it was Sadowski). I could not believe how light it felt. Back then, it



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was always stated in gun articles that you could reliably get the Python's double action down to a ridiculously low pull weight, as low as 6 pounds if you only used certain primers, etc. My friend, after waiting months on his revolver, experienced repeated failures to fire due to light primer strikes. Fortunately, that revolver was used only in PPC matches and there is no way I would have felt comfortable carrying it for serious purposes. He did not either, as he carried an S&W on his hip at work.

As to other revolver modifications, Jordan was not a fan of the so-called "Fitz" Special, in which the front of the trigger guard was completely removed. Jordan felt that the remainder of the trigger guard could become bent thereby jamming the trigger, and that the finger could catch the tip of the cutaway guard making a shift of finger position necessary before the trigger could be pulled. Jordan stated it was a dangerous alteration. Jordan did acknowledge, however, that the alteration might be justified in extreme cold where the user is wearing bulky gloves. Jordan did not discuss in his book what is likely the most important advantage of the cutaway trigger guard, and that is weapon retention. Bending the weapon against the finger will result in a broken finger when the finger encounters the trigger guard. It has been theorized that the Texas Ranger Manuel T. "Lone Wolf" Gonzallus understood this advantage which prompted him to have this modification on his defense weapons, including on his 1911 pistol.

Jordan also advised dehorning the revolver, which is a term that did not come into wide usage until people started modifying the 1911 for defense use. For Jordan, dehorning the revolver consisted of rounding off the corners of the rear sight and removing the spur from the hammer. Smith & Wesson began supplying rear side blades with rounded corners, although the factory compromised in the sense that while the corners were rounded, the top of the blade remained mostly flat. The Jordan modification was smoothly rounded in a longer arc that actually began at the sight notch and extended downward to both edges thereby leaving nothing flat except the corners of the notch. Some critics thought that this much rounding made vertical alignment more difficult.

Of all the Jordan modifications, the last two are still used extensively. The first of those is removal of the hammer spur, and it is a relatively common modification these days although it is almost almost always accompanied by conversion of the action of the revolver to double action only. Jordan did not convert his revolvers to double action only and he describes in his book about his procedure to cock the revolver by starting the hammer

back using the trigger and then using the offhand thumb to complete the cocking action. This allowed for single action shots at longer distance.

As most people will know, Bill Jordan was at least 6'6" tall, and even for a man of that size, he had huge hands. Jordan's hands were so big that he had to have a filler at the back of the grip frame to actually increase the distance between the face of the trigger and the back of the revolver grip frame. While most of us are concerned with taking some of the reach out whether it be revolver or semi automatic pistol, Jordan was concerned with adding additional reach so his trigger finger would intersect with the trigger at the right place. Jordan's signature stocks are called the Jordan Trooper stock and they are still made by Herrett's stocks, although us mere mortals will no doubt prefer to have the stock made by Herrett's with the back-strap of the revolver exposed to reduce the trigger reach required to properly grip the revolver. Jordan had his stocks made smooth without checkering because he felt any last minute adjustments to the grip were easier made during the draw stroke with smooth stocks. It is interesting that two out of the three men who are known for high-speed double action shooting prefer their custom stocks to be made smooth without checkering. I refer, of course, to Jordan and to Jerry Miculek. Ed McGivern, for the most part, used factory stocks. Apparently, neither Jordan nor Miculek felt a smooth stock was a disadvantage when shooting accurately and at very high speed.

In summary, although Jordan knew about, and participated in NRA competition, for defense he kept the revolver modifications to a minimum. I think it is a better practice for several reasons, most notably, reliability.



From the collection of Robert F

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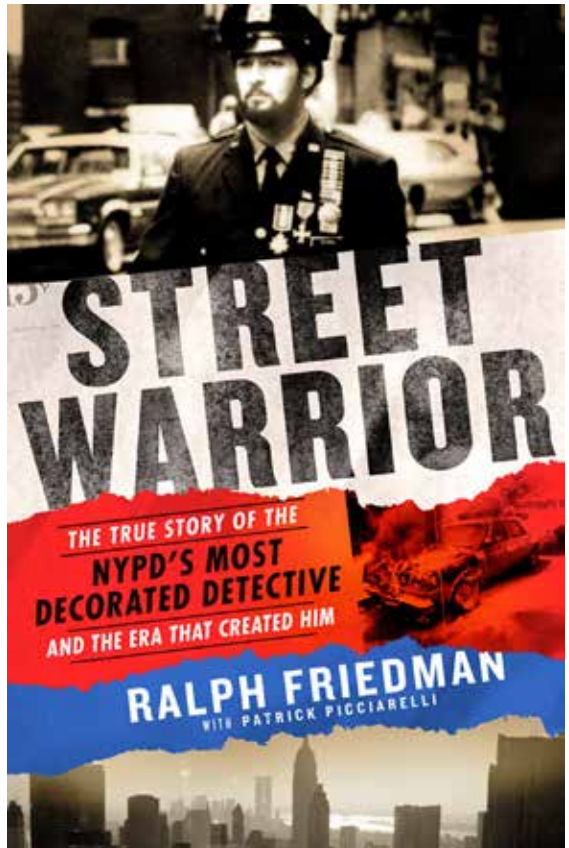
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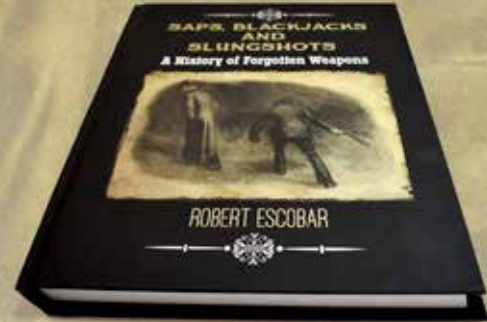


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THE SMOKE FILLED ROOM

By Doc Hannah

Ruminating with a cigar and a cup of black coffee...

Within my professional and social circles, I am fairly well-known as an armed citizen and former lawman. Younger men who engage me in discussion of arms and tactics, particularly those without military or law enforcement experience, are sometimes surprised by my choice of everyday carry: a Ruger GP100 .357 Magnum snub. Invariably, my trips to the shooting range attract the attention of tyros, surprised by the meaty roar of the trusty Manstopper. My friend Adam, the range safety officer, gets a kick out of watching the other shooters sneak glances at my lane and the generally well-placed holes in the silhouette downrange.

I am confident that some of those younger would-be pistoleros dismiss me as an Old Dog who has failed to learn new tricks, and they think I am ill-prepared to face the Mongol hordes of terrorists and hopped-up junkies whom they imagine roam the streets and shopping malls of our fair city. To them, anything less than an appendix-carried Glock with three magazines is no better than a dull butter knife for personal protection.

My position on the subject is simple: I AM an Old Dog, with the knowledge, experience, scars, ches, pains, and reconstructed joints that come with the title. I no longer chase bad guys for a living. I don't go looking for trouble, but I am prepared if trouble comes looking for me.

Why do I carry a service-sized .357, instead of a micro-nine, a mouse gun, or a pocket Roscoe? Because it works best- for me. Old Faithful has the holy trinity of accuracy, power, and reliability. By dressing around the gun, I don't have to compromise.

As I said before, I don't go looking for trouble. If my "threat assessment" (to use a Tactical Timmy buzzphrase) said I should expect a running gun battle with multiple reloads, I'd avoid the location and circumstances which necessitated such armament. The circle of people I would need to protect from attack is small: myself, and my family; if I found myself in trouble in a public place, my immediate, and only, mission would be to extricate myself and my family safely. And while my "semi-retirement" job exposes me to the same risk as any retail businessman, I'm confident that my "six for sure" will serve me well.

In "The Art of War", Sun Tzu said, "Know your enemy and yourself, and you will never be defeated in a hun-

dred battles." Real-life bad guys don't want to be shot, any more than you or I do. They expect their victims to be unarmed, weak, and passive; so any plan they may have to do me harm, as a target or an obstacle to their goal, will immediately be disrupted by my response.

Just as with getting to Carnegie Hall, the key to effective self-defense is practice, practice, practice. Shot placement is king, and penetration is its queen. The First Rule of Gunfighting always applies: "Have a gun". And a cool head and steady hand will always prevail.

The Ruger GP100 snub is my American Express Gun: I don't leave home without it.

Doc Hannah earned his name the old-fashioned way- as an Army flight medic and medical NCO. Following his military service, Doc had a career as a law enforcement officer and paramedic in the wide open spaces of Nebraska and Missouri. Now semi-retired, he smokes cigars professionally, and writes for fun. His podcast, "I Smoke Cigars and I Know Things", is available on YouTube, Facebook, Stitcher, and Amazon.



Lobo Gun Leather

By “Pepe” Castillo

While I had been using a “sticky” type holster tucked behind my belt without any issues, I wanted more security. I needed a good holster for my Smith & Wesson Model 442. And, let’s face it, I’m a leather guy. Blue steel, walnut, and leather is pretty much how God intended things to be, in my admittedly not so humble opinion.

Not sure where, but I had heard of Lobo Gun Leather. The name was a good start as it evokes the right feelings and emotions. But everything isn’t in the name. (Here I must confess that I wouldn’t try a Rocky Patel cigar for many years because it just didn’t sound right for a cigar. My mistake, and my loss. It’s one of THE BEST cigars extant. Sigh, I let a name get in the way of trying a great product. I’ve since learned better — but don’t expect me to try an ACID cigar, that is far too much to expect!)

Calling Lobo, I ordered an IWB. It’s made with a neutral cant (vertical) and an offset belt clip to avoid adding bulk to the widest area of the revolver — the cylinder. There are plenty of options and exotic leathers if you want. They are easy to talk to, and are willing to try new things if you have an idea and can explain it to them. I went basic — a single thickness of leather without a hammer shield. It came pretty quickly and was a snug fit for my 442. The clip was immensely strong and held it securely in place. I started out as a satisfied customer, which is not always the case when ordering a leather product online.

Five years or so down the road, I’m still a satisfied customer and use it for appendix carry often (exclusively for about 2 years). Lately I’ve been carrying my S&W 640 in it, with the barrel peaking out the bottom since it was made for a 1 7/8” barrel, while my 640’s is 2 1/4”. The leather has held up well, and the holster makes my wheel-gun disappear under a t-shirt like soldiers being asked for volunteers to clean the latrine.

Downsides? The clip will mess up a leather belt. But any metal clip will scar a leather belt; there’s no way around it. Also, since the clip offset is on the side of the grip, bulky grips can make it hard to get a good secure grasp. But this is not a holster for fast draw, so it doesn’t bother me. I’m more concerned with concealment and retention. And it does that quite well. Well enough that I called them up to order more leather.



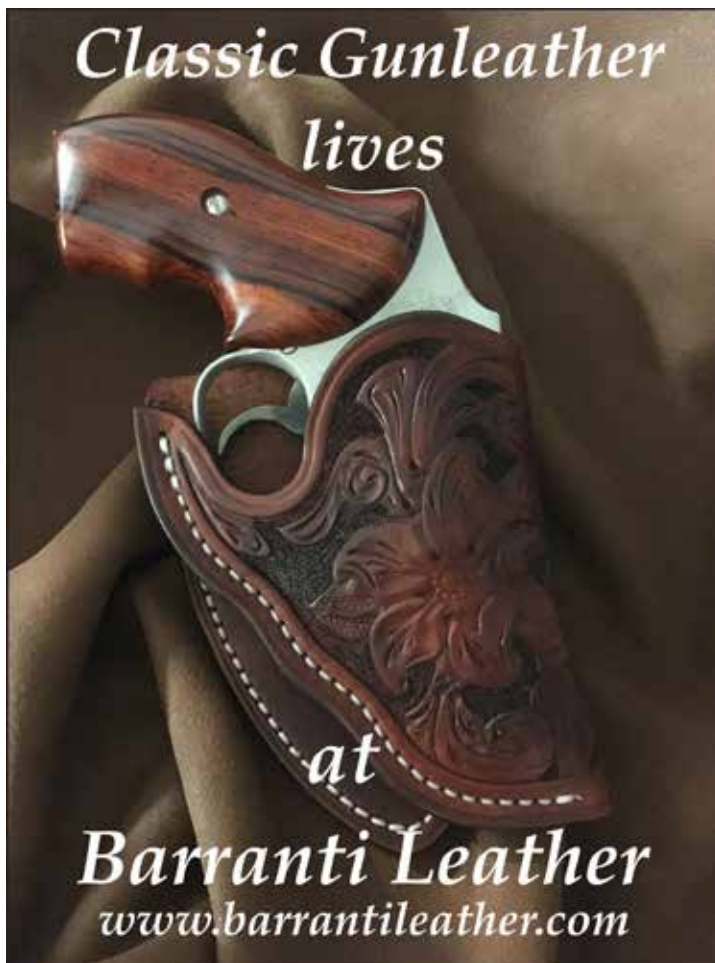


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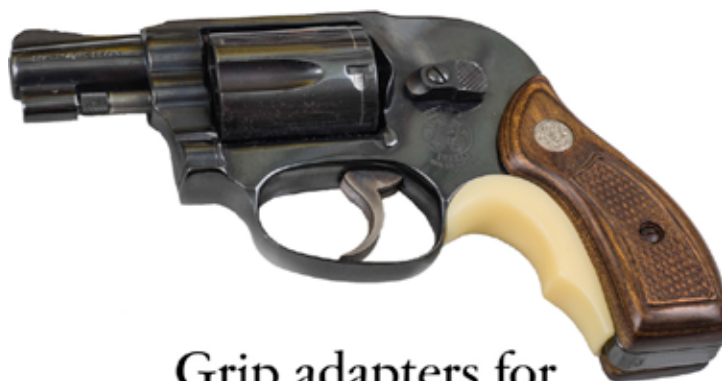
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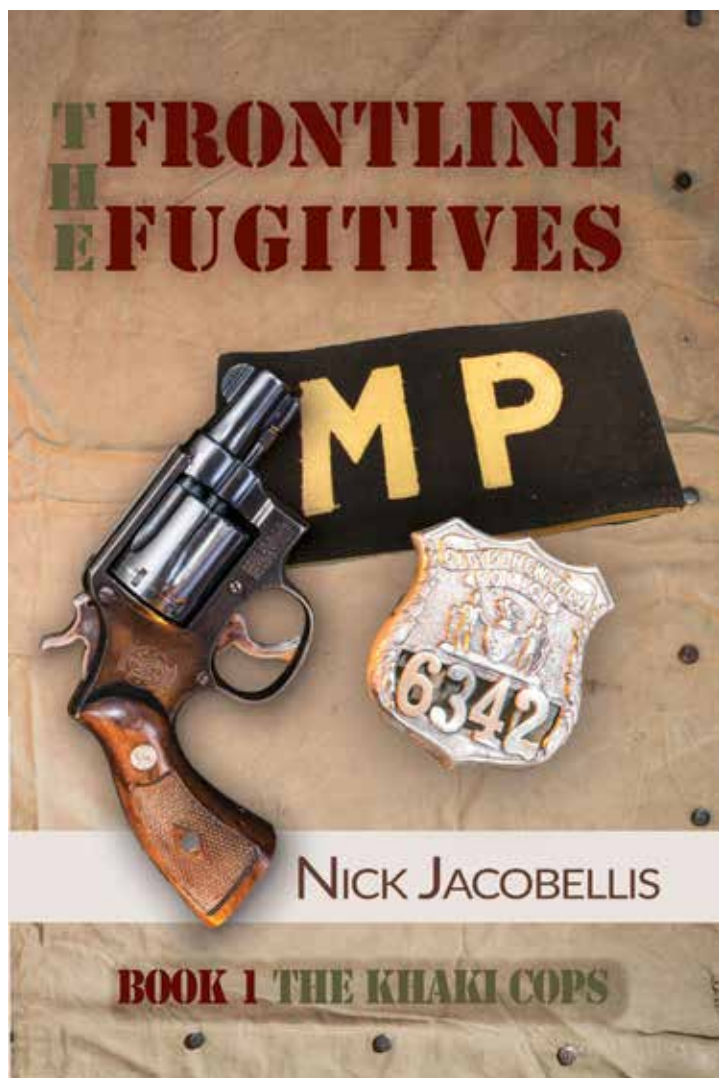
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Excerpts from *The Frontline Fugitives*

By Nick Jacobellis



CHAPTER 1

Patrick Murphy Jr.
New York City Cop Turned
Jungle Fighter

To the average American who lived and served during World War II, the Japanese were sneaky bastards who did not believe in the Marcus of Queens Berry rules when it came to fighting a war. In fact, the Japanese waged war under a code known as Bushido, a code that made it an honor to die for the Emperor of Japan and a disgrace to submit to capture. In contrast, most American soldiers would only fall on a live grenade to save a buddy and no one in his right mind ever rushed a Japanese machine gun nest for Franklin Delano Roosevelt. As far as most Americans were concerned, they fought because they were there and someone had to do it.

Despite the Hollywood image of American soldiers hitting the beach while patriotic music played in the background, the average American serviceman dreamed of the day when they could go home in one piece. Those who had no stomach for desertion, and preferred civilian life over being in the service, prayed for a “million dollar wound” that was serious enough to take them off the line but not disable them for life. The servicemen who were less fortunate were seriously disfigured, made blind, crippled and scarred for life in some way by their involvement in the war. The men who paid the ultimate sacrifice were laid to rest with other servicemen in a military cemetery on foreign soil. Sailors and some marines who were killed in action were buried at sea.

Unlike many young men of his day, Patrick Murphy Jr. was not obligated to serve in time of war. As a Patrolman with the New York City Police Department, Pat was exempt from military service because he was considered a member of an essential service at home. Regardless of how much his police career meant to him, enlisting in the U.S. Army on December 8, 1941 was above and beyond the call of duty and something that young Patrick did without hesitation.

Like many Americans, Patrick Murphy Jr. saw the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor as a violent assault on his virtuous nation. Pat also saw the German occupation of Europe as a sign of trying times to come. As a result, the youngest member of the Murphy clan decided to do more than sit out the war in the relative safety of his blue police uniform. Even though cops occasionally died in the line of duty back home, Patrick Murphy Jr. was a lot safer in the worst neighborhood in New York City than in any jungle in the Solomon Islands.

After serving as a patrolman for two years, Patrick enlisted in the Army with the hope of being sent into combat as soon as possible. Many of the men he left behind were older and had families. Others like his father served in World War I and already knew the horrors of war. The rest accepted their deferments and decided to remain behind to protect the city until he returned.

Despite his desire to fight the enemy, it took some doing for Pat to avoid the Army’s plans to assign him to

a military police unit. No matter how close some MPs could get to combat, Pat Murphy Jr. had no intention of giving up his police career so he could become a cop in the Army.

Once he made his way into a rifle squad, Pat was only a boat ride away from being deposited on a Japanese infested island in the Pacific. Although saving Australia from invasion was clearly a worthwhile cause, the ultimate objective was to turn the tide of the Japanese advance and achieve victory over the enemy.

As far as Pat and his fellow servicemen were concerned, the Allies had to turn the tide of the Japanese advance or risk losing the war in the Pacific. To prevent this from happening, the United States took the fight to the enemy in the Solomon Islands. This offensive began with the landing of U.S. Marines on Guadalcanal and Tulagi in August of 1942. In October of 1942, U.S. Army troops landed on Guadalcanal to help the U.S. Marines defeat the Japanese. As a result, Guadalcanal became the hell hole where Patrick Murphy Jr. would be tested in battle.

Making corporal happened back in the states after basic training. Due to his police background, Pat was light years ahead of many of the other recruits, including others like him who attended college for a period of time. This was the case because Patrolman Patrick Murphy Jr. knew how to follow orders and defend himself while using his hands and a firearm.

To be continued...



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