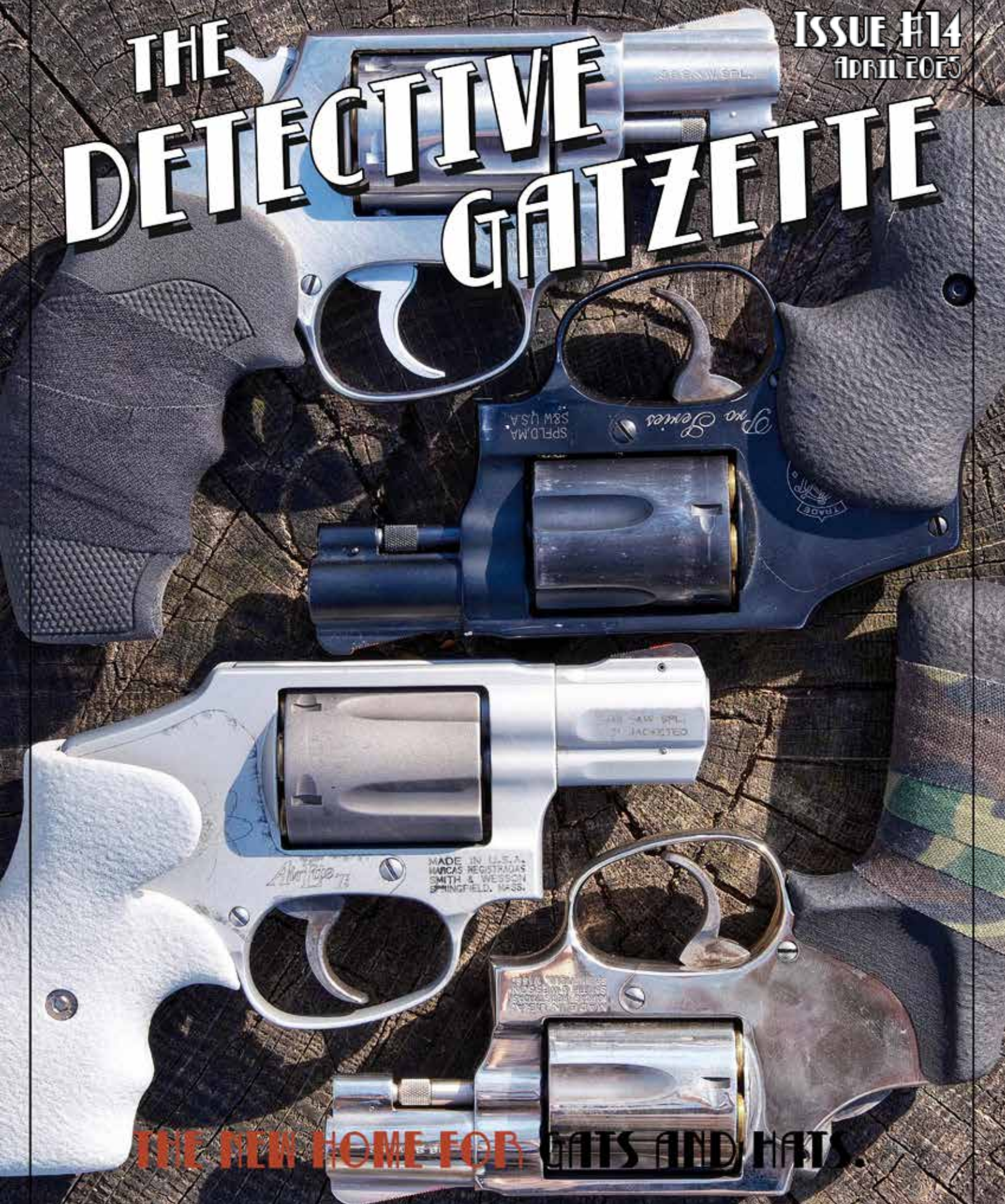


THE DETECTIVE GATZETTE

ISSUE #14
APRIL 2025



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Contents

- 3 **The Amazing Gun Art of James M. Triggs** *By Bob Deis*
- 4 **The Smoke Filled Room - What's in Your Pocket?** *By Doc Hannah*
- 6 **The Bootlegger's Daughter** *By Bob Vine*
- 7 **Miami Vice Era Drug War Guns** *By Nick Jacobellis*
- 8 **Why the S&W Chief's Special** *By Dave Frost*
- 10 **The Quest for the Perfect Big Bore Fighting Revolver** *By Cody White*
- 11 **Rat Pack Gat: Stories of a Snubbie Collector** *By Neal Shera*
- 12 **Murder by Installment, Episode 2** *By Jesse Slater*
- 14 **Pocket Protection** *By Dewey Winstead*
- 15 **The Golden Age of Police Pistolcraft, Spotlight: D.A. "Jelly" Bryce** *By Michael Conti*
- 16 **Guns, Gear and Guidance** *By Bob Walsh*
- 18 **Holsters and Gear of Noir and Lore: The Ken Null SMZ Shoulder Holster** *By Earby Markham*
- 19 **Removing a Stuck Squib from a Snug** *By Claude Werner*
- 20 **Rock Your Revolver with a Ritchie Holster** *By Mike Boyle*
- 22 **Did the Snub Save Smith & Wesson** *By Mark V. Lathem*
- 24 **My S&W Wish List** *By Mike Boyle*
- 27 **Basics Really Are Very Basic** *By Greg Bettis*

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The Amazing Gun Art Of James M. Triggs

By Bob Deis

If you were a reader of GUN DIGEST or AMERICAN RIFLEMAN, or a fan of Ruger firearms, you've probably seen some of the stunningly photorealistic paintings of guns done by artist James Martin Triggs (1924-1992). He did cover art for many issues of those and other firearms periodicals and books from the late '50s to the early '90s and was the top artist for Sturm, Ruger & Co. during those same years.

If you're adept at assembling and disassembling guns, you may also have seen some of the many covers that feature "exploded view" paintings by Triggs, such as those used for the GUN DIGEST "Exploded Firearms" series and the GUN DIGEST "Firearms Assembly/Disassembly" series.

I'm not a gun collector or expert. But I am avid collector of and expert on another genre of publications James Triggs did cover and interior artwork for—men's adventure magazines (aka MAMs, for short)—a genre that was very popular in the '50s, '60s and '70s, then disappeared in the '80s. I also co-edit the Men's Adventure Library book series and the MEN'S ADVENTURE QUARTERLY, both of which reprint and discuss MAM stories and artwork.

James M. Triggs was one of the many great artists who did artwork for the MAM genre. Most of his cover paintings and interior illustrations for MAMs were done for three of the best: ADVENTURE, ARGOSY and TRUE.

A while back, I posted a scan of the cover of TRUE, August 1956 in the SnubNoir Facebook group. It features an amazing exploded view painting of a Colt Python done by Triggs.

Group Admin Michael J. de Bethencourt liked it and invited me to write an article about Triggs for the DETECTIVE GAZETTE. The assignment appealed to me. And, the more research I did about Triggs the more I realized how unique he was.

Triggs' three main interests from childhood were

art, planes and guns. After serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps, he studied art at the Pratt Institute, then began a long career as a professional artist. In addition, he became an expert on aircraft and firearms—and a writer of articles and books about them. I'm pretty sure he is the only professional artist who was also a mechanically inclined, highly knowledgeable plane and gun geek—and a writer of books and articles on both topics.

Aircraft companies were among his early commercial art clients. His detailed drawings of aircraft parts and aircraft construction were forerunners of his exploded view gun art. Triggs did artwork and wrote articles for aviation magazines, such as AIR PROGRESS, and penned two books about aircraft.

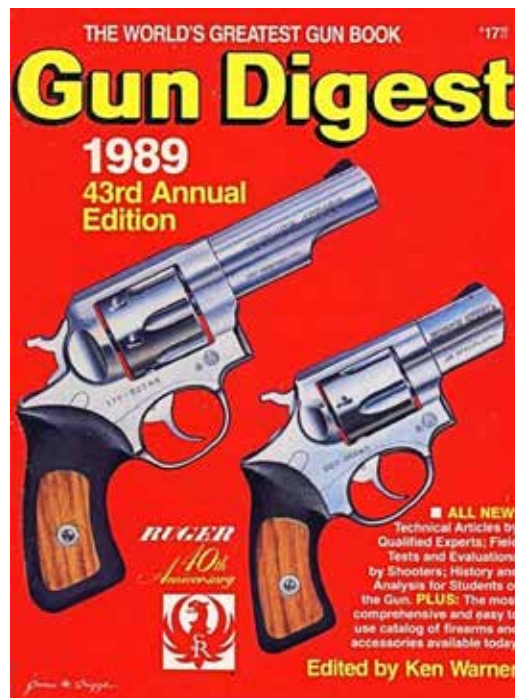
But he is most widely known for doing cover and interior artwork and writing articles for gun-related periodicals such as AMERICAN RIFLEMAN, GUN DIGEST, GUNS, GUNS ANNUAL, GUNS & AMMO and ARMS GAZETTE.

Triggs painted amazingly photorealistic trompe l'oeil images of both modern and historic guns for gun magazines, as well as for MAMs. Five of his covers for ARGOSY issues published between 1956 and 1959 are detailed "portraits" of guns. His MAM cover and interior artwork also includes many historical scenes used to illustrate various types of stories.

Triggs' cover art for TRUE, August 1956 appears to be his first exploded view gun cover. He went on

to do many more exploded view paintings and drawings of guns for GUN DIGEST, AMERICAN RIFLEMAN and other gun magazines and books they published, like the GUN DIGEST "Exploded Firearms" and "Firearms Assembly/Disassembly" series.

Triggs was and remains the grandmaster of that unique illustration niche, which requires both artistic



GUN DIGEST 43rd Annual Edition (1989) - cover art by James Triggs

continued on page 9

The Smoke Filled Room

“What’s In Your Pocket?”

By Doc Hannah

Sure, you “Carry every day, everywhere.” Your Every Day Carry includes your snub (and maybe a New York Reload), a speed loader, a speed strip, a blade or two, a light, an OC spray canister, and a tourniquet. You’re so weighted down with your EDC that you hope to never fall into deep water, lest your drown.

You give “Gun Free Zone” signs the respect they deserve (wink, wink, nudge, nudge), but what about truly Non-Permissive Environments? What can you carry, and use, to protect yourself on the other side of a metal detector?

In a previous column, we discussed canes and walking sticks as self-defense weapons. So smoke ‘em if you got ‘em, while we look at another last-ditch survival tool for Non-Permissive Environments.

For a covert weapon to be effective, it must meet three criteria:

1. It must be undetectable, or unable to be identified as a weapon, to visual searches, pat-downs, and metal detectors.
2. It must be easily accessible when needed; and
3. It must be sturdy enough to deflect or end an attack.

Enter the humble ink pen. Contrary to the old saying, the pen is really not mightier than the sword. I would never take a pen to a gunfight, nor would I reach for a pen if I heard a bump in the night. But, a pen can give you an advantage in a Non-Permissive Environment, or as an adjunct to your carry gun. We’re not talking about a cheap Bic pen here, but a purpose-built weapon which can withstand the rigors of a fight for your life.

Before we proceed: you must think of your survival pen as a stiletto, for when the fight gets up close and personal, down and dirty. If you use a pen to defend yourself, you are utilizing lethal force, and all of the laws and rules about lethal force apply. You must learn to use the pen as a weapon, and practice regularly, focusing on breaking contact and creating distance as quickly and effectively as possible.



Several companies sell Swiss Army Knife-like “tactical” pens that also serve as weapons, glass breakers, “DNA collectors”, screwdrivers, and even bottle openers- in case you’re in Fallujah and find a bottle of Mexican Coca-Cola, I guess. Most of these “tactical” pens are impractical, uncomfortable to carry and write with, and instantly identifiable as weapons, violating criteria #1. If you try to carry one of these pens through TSA, you’ll find yourself disarmed at best, or at worst arrested.

Speaking for myself, I’m no more worried about the need for a personal glass breaker than I worry about quicksand; and the idea of “collecting DNA” makes no sense. If I ever need to use a pen for self-defense, it will be easy for the police to identify my attacker; he’ll be the guy with a bunch of strategically placed stab wounds. I also suspect that there will be so much of his “DNA” available at the scene for testing, that Ancestors.com could tell him which famous people he’s related to.



Since stealth is criteria #1, you want your pen to look like a pen, and nothing more. I carry the Super-Stealth Tactical Pen (an unfortunate name, but here we are)

from Stealth Tactical (<https://stealthtacticalpen.com/super-stealth-tactical-pen/>). It's a really good pen, and there is nothing about it which says "weapon". Machined from aluminum with an innocuous logo on the side, it checks the blocks for all three criteria.



Another option is the G10 Tactical Sharpie from Turkey Run Knife Co. (<https://www.turkeyrunknifeco.com/product/tactical-sharpie>). The writing portion of the Sharpie is replaced with a stiletto point made of G10 fiberglass. Of course, it no longer works as a marker; but with no metal parts, the Sharpie is undetectable to metal detectors.

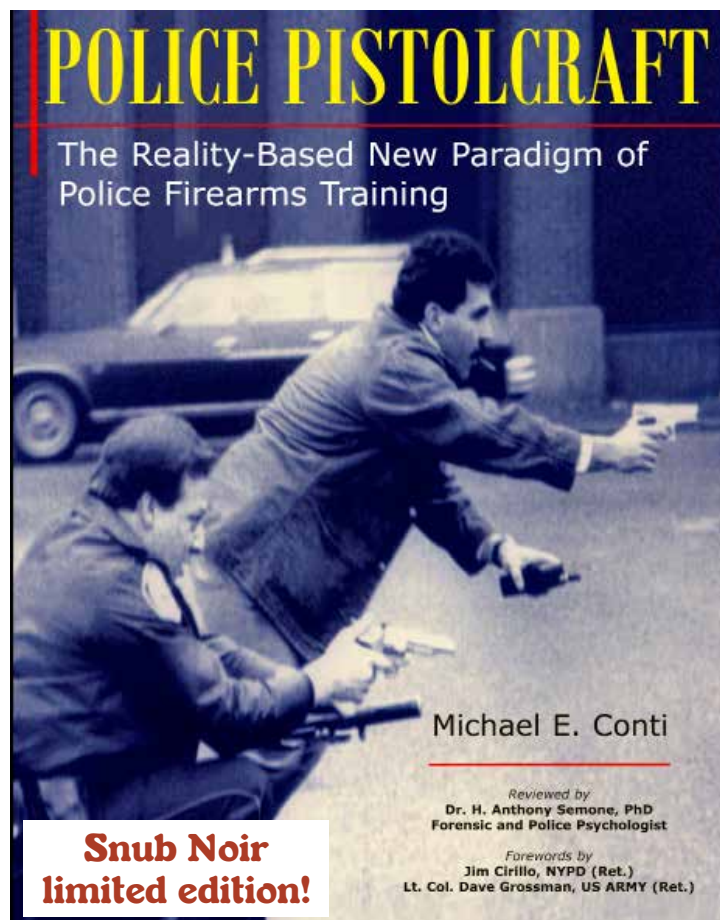


In this photo, the red Tactical Sharpie is in my breast pocket, easily accessible with my non-gun hand. It truly "hides in plain sight". I chose a red pen, so I would not confuse it with a real marker, which would be more than embarrassing if I ever needed it to defend myself. I found it to be sturdy, and the sharpened point works very well for its intended purpose. I also (accidentally) found it to be machine washable, to my wife's great relief.

A pen will never be your best weapon, but it may fill a space in your overall self-defense plan.

A couple of closing points: Remember, you are the real weapon. And whoever said, "It beats a sharp stick in the eye", was never stabbed in the eye with a sharp stick. 'Nuff said.

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.



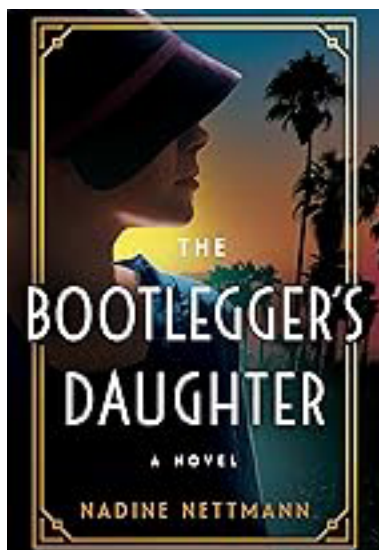
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The Bootlegger's Daughter Review

By Bob Vine

The Bootlegger's Daughter I would give five stars to it. When I received the book I was amazed at how many chapters were in it, but don't worry they are short and very easy reading and once you start reading it you do not want to put it down. I was drawn in by the end of the first chapter and would keep reading waiting to know what would happen next or where the story was going to take us on the next adventure.


This is a fictional story about two females during prohibition who are very strong minded and independent in a time when that was frowned upon. The first lady is the bootlegger who gets into the business by accident just trying to support the family winery and mother during prohibition. The second female is the first female detective for the Los Angeles Police Department. This book has a lot of the classic noir film feel and setting in it from secret rooms and blind meeting of people she does not know. The book is a very simple plot with a lot of twists and turns and new characters coming into play from friends and family to business acquaintances and total strangers. When I lay in bed my mind wanders. I think this book would make a good noir style film. I could picture the bootlegger going to Cole's cocktails or at Musso and Frank, being tailed by the detective, listening and watching her having dinner and conducting business with a 25 baby Colt in her handbag. This book also make me think of some savory characters in my family tree: my grandfather and uncle used to bootleg whiskey from Canada to Chicago for Al Capone and buy some whiskey back to sell in Wisconsin.



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—Ed Lovette Author of *The Snubby Revolver*

snubnoir.com/chiodo

Miami Vice Era Drug War Guns

By Nick Jacobelis

After serving as a uniformed police officer in a high crime neighborhood, I joined the U.S. Customs Service as a Patrol Officer in 1983. Initially, my issued handguns were a S&W Model 66 with a 4 inch barrel and a S&W Model 60.

When I transferred to the front lines of America's Drug War in Miami, body armor was being issued en masse, along with the authority to carry semi automatic handguns. One of the personally owned pistols that I carried was a S/A French MAB PA-15; the first 9mm semi auto that utilized a high capacity 15 round magazine. After making a contact at SIG, I transitioned to a 9mm SIG 226 and a 9mm SIG 228 as my primary personally owned service pistols. It was also at this time, that I traded my S&W Model 60 for a brand new issued S&W Model 49 Bodyguard. U.S. Customs Patrol Officers, Air Officers, Pilots and Special Agents also qualified with and were issued a Parkerized Police Model Remington Model 870 shotgun, a 9mm Heckler & Koch MP5 and/or a Colt CAR15. (Other rifles were also in service.) While wearing relaxed civilian attire and raid jackets, my colleagues and I boarded freighters and other vessels in ports and at sea.

After being promoted and becoming an Air Interdiction Officer, I was issued a brand new blued steel Colt Series 70 Government Model 1911 chambered in .45 ACP. Later on, I was issued a 9mm Browning Hi Power. I eventually transitioned to a personally owned 9mm S&W Model 39 and a stainless 9mm S&W 639. One Customs Pilot that I served with carried a S&W Model 25 with a 4 inch barrel chambered in .45 Long Colt. Another pilot carried a 9mm SIG 225, while another carried a Parkerized Springfield Armory 1911 in .45 ACP.

When I became a Special Agent assigned to air smuggling investigations, the Customs Service adopted the 9mm S&W 6906 as the issued service pistol. In addition to qualifying with and often carrying my issued 6906, I continued to carry my SIG 228, along with a personally owned 9mm S&W 3913. My personal favorite guns to carry when I worked undercover and I directed 16 high risk covert air and marine operations were my issued Model 49, an issued stainless Walther PPK in .380, or a personally owned brushed stainless Manhurin/Walther PP in .380. My favorite government issued submachine gun was a 9mm Walther MPK. When I transferred to

a southern border state, I qualified with a personally owned Ruger GB Model Mini 14 and a SIG 220 in .45 ACP. Other handguns carried back in the day by sworn Customs personnel were, Colt Detective Specials, a Colt Python with a 2.5 inch barrel, the Astra Constable .380, 9mm Beretta 92 variants and S&W Model 19s/66s with a 2.5 inch barrel.

SIDEBAR: One U.S. Customs Agent who survived the ditching of a Black Hawk helicopter at sea, had his personally owned Gen 1 9mm Glock 17 immediately put back in service, after his pistol was cleaned with fresh water and lubricated. In contrast, another agent who fell in the ocean during a vessel boarding operation had to have his blued steel Colt Python refinished.



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Why the S&W Chief's Special

By Dave Frost

I graduated from the Police Academy in 1977, when nearly all self-respecting street cops carried a .38 or .357 revolver, usually dictated by their agency. We didn't really think we were out-gunned or we'd ever need more than six rounds to take care of a problem. The two reloads on your belt were usually in a dump pouch, but were soon replaced by speed loaders. Once aware of the threats that could surface, most carried a few more reloads in their briefcase on the front seat of the patrol unit and commonly consisted of Bianchi or HKS speed loaders or speed strips. Add the Remington 870 mounted in your patrol car rack or in the trunk, and you were well-equipped and prepared for virtually every conceivable threat.

As a young rookie officer, everyone you came in contact with, from your Sergeant down would spend time explaining the fine art of revolver selection for both on and off-duty. Many smaller departments in my neck of the woods allowed Officers to carry personally-owned revolvers, as long as they met department standards and caliber requirements and were either a Smith and Wesson or Colt. Some departments were less stringent, often allowing whatever an officers could qualify with, within reasonable caliber limits and configuration.

Being a 21-year old kid whose only handgun was the S&W Model 28-2 I carried in the academy, that served as my duty gun and off-duty gun until I had a couple of paychecks under my belt and could afford to buy a more concealable and proper off-duty piece. On one hand, I had all the "old guys", most being between 23 and 40 and many military vets advising me of the merits of the smaller revolvers; either a S&W Chief's Special or Colt Detective Special, with each extolling the virtues of their particular brand. The Smith guys claimed the Chief's Special had a better action than the Dick Special, was a little bit smaller and was more easily concealed. The Colt guys would claim the Dick Special trigger was actually better and that the 6-round capacity could be a life-saver in a shootout.

In addition, I had a career military father who firmly believed that the only caliber and gun combination worthy of carry was the Colt 1911 in .45 ACP. I explained to him the need for concealment of the gun at all times, and how much of a challenge that was for a skinny kid who barely had enough room on his duty belt for a hol-

ster, dump-pouches, one set of handcuffs, a baton ring and MACE cannister. He explained the benefits of the thin and flat auto and the extremely superiority of the .45 ACP. At the time, I went with the revolver, but made my Dad happy when I received a temporary assignment to an undercover narcotics task force in which the 1911 was the standard carry, along with the Walther PPK/PPKs in .380 as our U/C gun.

Then, there were the ammunition discussions. Being relatively uneducated and uninformed, I thought that the latest and greatest semi-jacketed hollow point ammo was what all the gun writers talked about and compared. However, the "old guys" at my department and others continued to point me towards lead wad cutters as what was most dependable in getting the job done. All of this was mind-boggling for a rookie trying to follow the best advice I could find.

I ultimately decided on a Smith and Wesson Model 60 loaded up with 125 grain SJHP ammo. I would get as much department-supplied lead wad cutters for practice on my own time, eventually becoming fairly capable and comfortable with the little beast. I quickly learned that these little revolvers were no less accurate than their full-sized brothers, and that the stories I had been told about them being "belly-guns" was not true. Once I understood that it was "the Indian, not the arrow", I found that mechanical accuracy was going to be similar to the bigger guns. All excuses related to the gun became a provably wrong.

Having become comfortably with the small revolver, it became my backup on my ankle when in uniform, as well as my most usually carried off-duty. I always carried two reloads in speed loaders or strips and never felt out-classed. Little did I know, we were in for a major change. Some might call this progress, but sometimes I'm not so certain.

I had become the Rangemaster/Firearms Instructor for the department and many of the other officers began to push for semiautos for duty use. I represented this to the Chief and he ordered a study. 9mm ammo was not what it is today and was getting a lot of bad press for lack of effectiveness. As a result, my experience led me to believe that .45 ACP was what we should consider. 1911's were out of contention as far as my Chief was concerned and we ended up with the S&W 645. Great gun, but a

large one. In addition, there was concern over how well some might handle the recoil. However, we made the conversion without issue, and range scores improved after some training.

With the switch to the 645, a number of officers felt the need to update their off-duty and back-up to a semi-auto, as well. That lead to a lot of discussion and re-training. However, I was quite content with my Model 60, which I'd been carrying for nearly 10 years at that point. I flirted with a number of pistols, but nothing quite replaced my Model 60 as a BUG. Later, once ammunition technology caught up, small 9mm semi-autos began to appear, and many were tried. None ever took the place of my Model 60 permanently.

For most, nearly all, of my 37 year career, I carried my Model 60. Later, it was replaced with Scandium/Titanium lightweight revolvers, but I still have the little revolver today, although it was in the possession of a retired partner for a few years. Today, I've been retired for 10 years. I still find myself carrying one the latest and greatest S&W J-frame revolvers, either a Model 640-1 or 442 UC. I look back and ask myself, "Why the S&W Chief's Special?" I can only say that I never found anything better.

THE AMAZING GUN ART OF JAMES M. TRIGGS Continued

talent and an in-depth knowledge of firearms.

During his career, a number of firearms manufacturing companies tapped Triggs to do commercial artwork. But his longest association was with Sturm, Ruger & Co.

In 1958, he was hired to do painting of the latest Ruger Bearcat revolver, with a cutaway showing the interior of the cylinder. He went on to do many other illustrations for Ruger. In 1976, he was hired as an in-house advertising and art director for the company, serving in those and other roles for Ruger until his death at age 68

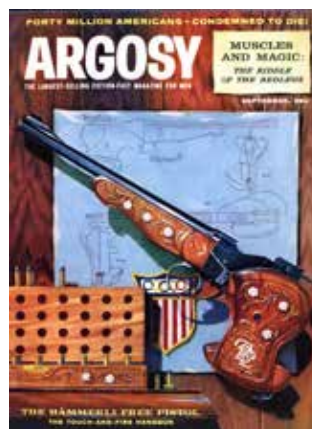
Some examples of Triggs' artwork are shown in this article, but they only scratch the surface. I'll post more examples in the SnubNoir Facebook group every once in a while. See you there.

Bob Deis is Co-Editor of the Men's Adventure Library book series, MEN'S ADVENTURE QUARTERLY and MensPulpMags.com

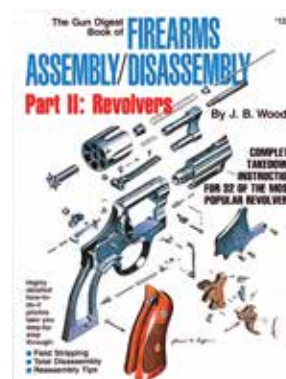
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ARGOSY, Sept 1957 09 - James Triggs
Mammerli Free Pistol cover



GUN DIGEST BOOK OF FIREARMS ASSEMBLY DISASSEMBLY PART II REVOLVERS by J B Wood (1979) REV2

The Quest for the Perfect Big Bore Fighting Revolver

By Cody White

My quest for the perfect big bore snub began with outlining some requirements:

1. Caliber had to begin with a .4.
2. Fixed sights.
3. Barrel around 3" in length.
4. N frame or similar frame size.
5. Dual ball detents to aid in cylinder lock up.
6. Bobbed hammer.

After looking around at some various options, I decided to start with a Smith and Wesson .38/44 heavy duty. It fit almost all my requirements and the ones that it didn't fit could easily be rectified. I began by finding a cheap .38/44 heavy duty with no collector value as I didn't want to ruin a safe queen. I packed it up and sent it off after some conversation with Bret Mills of JB Gun Works. Mr. Mills began by disassembling the gun and sending the barrel off to Al Siegrist for a rebores. I like .45 ACP and after some consideration, I decided to replace the cylinder with one that Bret had on hand for an article he had done previously for Snub Noir. One of the first things Bret did was remove the original .38 special cylinder and fit the .45 ACP cylinder from a Brazilian contract Smith and Wesson m1917. He then cut the barrel to around 3 and ¼ inches to retain the full length of the ejector rod to ensure positive ejection.



After that, he bobbed the hammer to remove any issues I may run into with snagging. I went ahead and had the hammer checkered so that I can retain single action capabilities by depressing the trigger some and slowly riding the hammer back using the checkering on top of the hammer.



With that done, Bret went ahead and added the dual ball detents like the Mag-Na-Port combat mini modifications that used to be popular back in the day.



With that done, all that was left was to do a trigger job and clean the gun up. Time had not been kind to this gun and it needed some TLC. A bit of Renaissance Wax and it was shining well.

I opted to retain the half-moon front sight to keep the original lines of the .38/44 true to form. Once complete, Bret packed it up and shipped it back to me. I could hardly wait! I picked it up, got it home, fired some snap caps in the moon clips that Bret was kind enough to



send me and the hammer nose broke off the firing pin. Shoot. I ordered a Power Custom hammer nose for an N frame, took it to my gunsmith and once he had it apart, we realized the hammer flat spring had also broken.

I finally had that fixed with a new Wilson Combat reduced power custom tune spring kit and we were back in action. The weather and the limited time I'm able

to shoot hasn't cooperated so I have yet to finally shoot this gun, but with warmer weather on the horizon, that should soon change. Join me next time for my first range trip with my idea of the perfect big bore fighting revolver!

Rat Pack Gat

Stories of a Snubbie Collector

By Neal Shera

So, as a lover of both noir films and Roscoes, I have a regular ritual. A group of friends and I make the rounds to various local gun shops, both big and small. We hunt for deals on ammo, get our faces recognized as connoisseurs, rescue abused and neglected firearms. It can take the better part of a Saturday for our campaign starting with a good breakfast and then off to 6 or 8 locations.

The story I have for you is a colorful tale on a gloomy fall day at a seedy shop. Its an odd location to see older firearms in the used case. Our large metro area has a pair of shops known for being dumping grounds for older guns, not this one. Which turned out to be in my favor that day. For in a lonely corner like a rejected litter mate was this old gat.

The tag read S&W 2 inch Model 10, with a couple of Benjamins for the price. The hideous red acrylic paint on the front sight was a turn off but I saw just enough of the right side of the frame to know what they really had. A friend realized I had interest in the piece and asked to look at it. The snub nose wasn't even in his hand before

continued on page 13



Murder by Installment, Episode 2

By Jesse Slater

I staggered up the drive to the Brazelton mansion, on tycoon's row, just off North Broad. I was late for tea. I'd had Tullamore Dew. For lunch, too. I leaned on the bell, and a black and white clad butler opened the door to sneer at me.

I handed over Brazelton's note, asking his people to talk to me. The sneer didn't change, but he brought me inside. Didn't offer to take my coat or hat, but led me to a small office.

Smoky saxophones would've split my head, but even in my state I could appreciate the dame inside. She was crouched at a filing cabinet in the corner, her back to me. When the door opened, she stood up. And up. Long and lean, with gently curling hair that matched the mahogany filling the rich house, her slim skirt clung to hips and thighs, but a loose silky blouse left just enough doubt to make things interesting.

"Miss Woodridge? Bianca Woodridge? You're Brazelton's secretary?"

"I'm Mister Brazelton's executive secretary. And you are?"

"Matt Slade. I'm an investigator. Mr. Brazelton hired me to look into a few things for him."

"What things?"

That's what I was afraid of. How was I supposed to tell her he wanted me to find out who murdered him, when the old boy was having a drink right up the hall?

"He believes he is dying, and he wants to know who, if anyone, had anything to do with it. He told me you could help, that you probably know who might wanna do him in."

Her face colored and she looked down. Her eyes lost some of their combative gleam.

"I don't think anyone could really wish Mr. Brazelton harm. Not like that, I mean."

"Really? The way he talked, half of Philly might want him out of the way."

"Oh no. Nothing like that. Mr. Brazelton is a wealthy philanthropist. People love him for the good—"

I cut in. "Wealthy I got, sister. But philanthropist? Brazelton?" Not the tycoon I remembered.

"Phil-anthro-pist," she said, speaking very slowly. Her eyes swept my rough clothes. "You wouldn't know, but a philanthropist is someone with the good of mankind at heart. He gives of his wealth to move society forward,

and lift up those in need."

"I can't argue with that," I said. "I suppose Mr. B lifted me up this morning."

"You look like you could use some more lifting, Mr. Slade."

"You ain't—excuse me—aren't wrong." I brushed one of the stains on my suit coat. It didn't help. Oh well. Audacity. Always audacity. "You offering, Miss? You a philanthropist, too? Or are you the kind who only lifts up one man?" When she sputtered, I asked, "How do you feel about Mr. Brazelton? You said everyone loves him... Does that include you?"

"Mr. Brazelton is a very fine man," she said, back to glaring at me. "I admire him greatly, but I wouldn't say I love him."

Too quick. That sounded like a stock answer.

"You wouldn't? Your rosy cheeks might—"

She blushed harder. "I..."

"Listen, doll. I don't care who gets up to what. All I gotta know about is who doesn't like him. Since you obviously do, that lets you off the hook, don't it?"

"Well, to be honest Mr..."

"Slade."

"Mr. Slade, I do like him. Very much."

I put on my best encouraging smile. "There, was that so hard?"

She relaxed, just a little. "No, I suppose not."

"So what can you tell me about who doesn't? Is there a Mrs B with her nose out of joint, maybe?"

"They... have an understanding."

"That's very modern of them. What kind of understanding is it? He does what he wants and she buttons her lip or gets tossed on her ear?" That's the kind of understanding I knew.

"That's..."

"Not far off, huh?"

She sat silently a few moments. "Oh, I know she doesn't approve of me, not really. She's always trying to win him back. But I can't imagine she'd want to hurt him."

"I won't tell you not to hire a taste tester yourself, Miss, but you might be wrong about that. You never made any vows to her, did you?"

"No, of—oh. I see."

"Doll, I think I need to talk to Mrs B. Can you arrange that?"

"I doubt she'd see you; she's most particular."

I rasped my hand across my chin, and glanced at my sorry suit. "Well, we can ask, right?"

"If you wish." She raised her voice. "Amelia?" A plump young girl in one of those black and white uniforms, like you or I'd only see at the pictures popped into the room like a cork from a bottle. So fast I had certain doubts about the privacy of our conversation.

"Yes, Miss Woodridge?"

"Ask Mrs Brazelton if she will see this gent—"

"Eh, never mind that. Just take me to her, Amelia," I broke in.

"But why?"

"Her husband hired me to look into a few things. It won't take long, I promise. Just a few questions."

It worked. In a few minutes, I followed the plump little thing through what seemed like a mile of twisting hallway. I couldn't begin to guess how many acres of forest someone had slaughtered to panel this joint. I'd have gotten worn out wading through all that carpet all the time.

"So, Amelia, what's it like to work in a place like this? I ain't never been in a joint this fancy." That made my third or fourth crack at getting her to open up. It didn't work any better than the first three. At least not at first.

"If a girl can stay out of the line of fire, it's a good place to work." She sniffed, but that's all she would say. A few minutes later, she opened a set of heavy double doors. "Mrs Brazelton is in the library."

Rat Pack Gat Continued

I made the call and was producing the needed bills and ID for the paperwork. My smile was too big to hide from anyone in the shop at the time. This was no Model 10, as it had not only the extra screw on the top of the frame but also its underside. This was a Hand Ejector! The makers roll mark on the left side of the barrel was laid out to fit the 2" barrel. So this was not a later chopped and converted barrel of an old service square butt revolver.

The salesperson on the other other side of the counter wouldn't let me take off the hideous early generation Hogue rubber grip on the piece so I could see the production information I was after. Once the sale was complete I went to town right there. Sadly the gun was not the most well maintained in the finish department as there was obvious wear on the muzzle, bottom corners of the frame, cylinder and only the edge where the grip ended on the frame. Mechanically the trigger was very smooth and consistent. The cylinder chambers were still nicely polished and the timing was perfect. Sadly no box or papers with it. So this was a very good deal, just not perfect. One that makes all the pervious empty runs worth it.

Now on to the educational aspect of this story. I will start it by saying that if anyone wants to do anything with firearms that aren't part Tupperware you'll need to acquire a gunsmith's screwdriver set. Not all screws are made the same and its the cheapest insurance you can have to take care of your investment. Sadly this was a hard earned lesson for the previous owner as 3 of the 5 screws are damaged because of the previous statement. Several big box sporting goods stores, not to mention the

pile of online dealers sell reputable sets for a good price. I will have to order a set of replacement screws to clean up that mess.

Upon returning to my place I immediately consulted the latest edition of Supica & Nahas' tome for all the best details. The serial number on both the frame and the cylinder face matched. Another victory! It was marked S 956XXX dating it in some of the last production runs during WW2. Making this one of the last Hand Ejector, 4th Change models to be produced and a snub nosed one to boot. I will do further research on the information to see if it was a department purchase or a wannabe gumshoe.

I hunted local gun shows to find some period accurate shoes for this old girl. This can be a heft investment as its a cottage commodity business to find replacement boxes, papers and grips for the old Smith wheel guns. Don't bite on the first set you see and be careful. Someone tried to sell me a set of Colt frame grips that had S&W medallions on them. Oh the hoodlums out there. I was eventually successful.

I haven't taken it to the range yet as I will give it a thorough cleaning and parts replacement before I even attempt to shoot it. I'm seriously contemplating sending it to a reservationist to return its full luster for me. For now it looks good sitting next to a much younger, actual Model 10 5" in my safe. I hope another run will produce the same success but their rarity adds to the thrill when you do find them.

Pocket Protection

By Dewey Winstead

In the beginning.....

Automatic pistols were first developed around the end of the 19th century with the Mauser C96 being one of the first successful models. But it didn't take long before inventors began to downsize these rather large pistols into something that could be carried comfortably in a coat or suit pocket. Instrumental in the development of these new weapons was the American firearms genius John Moses Browning.

Not only did Browning design many of these first "pocket pistols" he also designed the cartridges they fired. The .25 ACP (Automatic Colt Pistol), .32 ACP and the .380 ACP were all designed for his guns. The first, and the smallest, was the .25 ACP. Touted as a self defense round when it came out back in 1905, it has been chambered in millions of guns since. The vast majority of these are small "pocket pistols" suitable for concealed carry by civilized and gentle folk. While we may question its effectiveness today, back in the early 20th Century, with no antibiotics and primitive surgery, it was an effective deterrent.

Technically, the weapon he designed for Fabrique Nationale in Belgium was the FN Model 1906, but it was marketed as the Colt 1908 Vest Pocket for sale in the United States. Utilizing his new .25 ACP cartridge, it truly was the first diminutive "pocket protector." Sales were brisk, as now one could be armed unobtrusively in all situations. Gone were the days of the Wild West, with men strapping on large revolvers to face the day. Sure, there were still some rough areas out in Arizona, New Mexico and Alaska but by and large the population was now "civilized" and living in urban areas where open carry of weapons was discouraged, if not outlawed.

Even the name suggests how it was to be toted by civilized folk, the "Vest Pocket". Suits and coats back in those early days of the 20th Century had large pockets and smaller pockets for watches in the vest. This provided a perfect place to carry a bit of insurance against possible aggression.

In production from 1908 to 1948, approximately 420,705 of these were produced. Six shot, striker fired (you thought Glock was first?) 2 inch barrel and weighing 13 ounces, it was a handy little defense piece. Fit and finish were top notch, with color case hardening evident on triggers and the grip safety. Earlier guns had hard rub-

ber grips, but later examples utilized wood. For a little extra, you could have engraved, nicked and pearl grips.

My example dates from 1920 and still exhibits the color case hardening, though the blueing on the slide is worn in a few spots. The bore is bright, with strong rifling and no pits, bulges or "rings" present. Recoil is non-existent in these guns, but you have little purchase on the grips; my pinky doesn't fit. Below is a typical 5 shot group at 5 yds, one round a second from low ready. Sights are



a simple groove and post milled into the top of the slide. The workmanship on these small pistols is exemplary.

These pistols are frequently encountered at gun shows and are still serviceable. I would recommend changing out the recoil and firing pin springs if you are going to carry them. They can be carried with one in the chamber due to having both a grip and thumb safety. Prices for a decent example will normally run between \$400-\$600 depending on condition.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF POLICE PISTOLCRAFT

SPOTLIGHT: D.A. “JELLY” BRYCE

By Michael Conti

At the request of my good friend, Michael “Senior El Bobo” De Bethencourt, I will be contributing to his Snub Noir conglomerate enterprise starting with this maiden column. I only hope you find it of some interest and worthy of the time spent reading it. As the title suggests, we’ll be putting the spotlight on a number of individual lawmen who represent, in my humble opinion, the “golden age” of police pistolcraft.

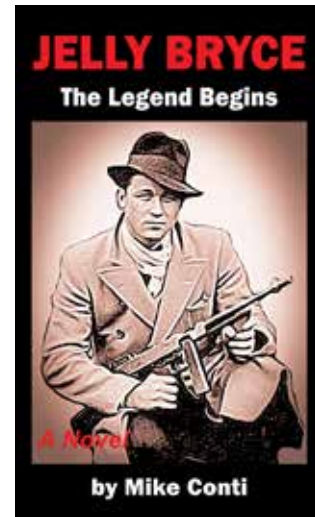
Jumping right into the deep end of the pool, who better to start with than one of the most famous lawmen that most people have never heard of: Delf “Jelly” Bryce (1906-1974).

Jelly is a fascinating character. I first became aware of him while researching the history and development of police firearms training many years ago. I found his story so fascinating, in fact, that I would devote several years researching him, and eventually produce a three-volume historical fiction series based on his life. (The Jelly Bryce Trilogy published by Saber Press). Yeah, I can be a little obsessive. Back to the story—

Born in 1906 in Mountain View, Oklahoma, Delf Albert Bryce was raised with firearms and displayed an unusually high level of skill with rifles, pistols and shotguns from an early age. He was, in fact, known by the Mountain View community as “a perfect shot.”

Jelly began his professional law enforcement career as a game warden. He was drawn to this branch as he loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman his whole life. At some point, though, he decided he wanted something more, and enrolled in college to pursue a degree and advance his career. Ah, but fate intervened. While driving to school, young Delf spotted a wooden sign staked into the ground next to the road that indicated there was a police shooting competition at a range up ahead. Delf had an old shot-out .38 Smith & Wesson revolver with him, and decided to try his luck. Based on all reports from that day, Delf not only won the competition, but also a position on the Oklahoma City Police Department.

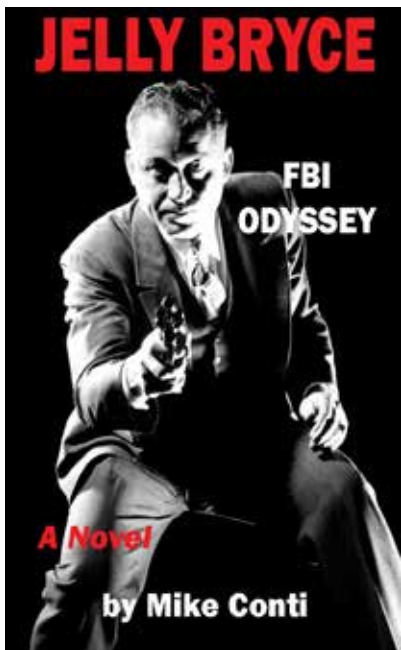
Legend would have it that on Delf’s first day—before



even officially reporting to work—he would be involved in his first shooting. It was a spring day in 1928 in the bustling city. Delf, walking down the street, happened to notice two men acting suspiciously. One stood outside a parked car, nervously looking around, while the second was ducking down in the driver’s seat. The man in the car reportedly resembled the picture of a man in a wanted poster Delf had just happened to have seen in the local post office. With his old .38 concealed in his belt, Delf opened the car’s door and asked the man what he was doing, identifying himself as a police officer. The man, indeed the gangster from the poster, went for his gun. Bryce, reacting quickly and spontaneously, drew his own pistol and fired, instantly killing the gangster. The second man fled from the scene as people in the area reacted to what appeared to be a murder in broad daylight. For his troubles, Delf was arrested at the scene by responding officers, who didn’t initially believe his story of being the newest member of their department.

This would only be the first of a number of close quarter gunfights that Bryce would be involved in throughout his years of service. In fact, his nickname, “Jelly”, was given to him by another dying gangster shortly after Bryce shot it out with him. In front of a crowd of witnesses, the criminal incredulously exclaimed, “I can’t believe I was killed by a jelly bean like you.” The term jelly bean was used at the time to describe a fancy dresser, which

THE GOLDEN AGE OF POLICE PISTOLCRAFT Continued



Bryce usually was. The nickname stuck, and soon Delf was known as D.A. “Jelly” Bryce.

In the 1930s, Jelly would be recruited into the fledgling FBI by J. Edgar Hoover himself.

Hoover was actively hiring on seasoned gunmen to help battle the vicious gangsters at the time. The lawyers and accountants he'd staffed his agency with weren't prepared for the gunplay.

Jelly would spend 24 storied years with the FBI, rising through the ranks to become Special Agent in Charge (SAC) of several offices.

He is believed to have been involved in at least 19 shootings during his career. As noted, he never missed his mark. His opponents were invariably hardened gangsters and desperados, and Jelly always made sure that he was the first through the door when confronting them.

Unbelievably, this man who had such a high profile, stellar, almost mythical career is relatively unknown to most people, especially in comparison to the criminal gunslingers of his day. Yet Jelly Bryce was undoubtedly braver, faster, and a better pistolero than any of them. And best of all, he was one of the good guys.

Guns, Gear and Guidance

By Bob Walsh

I spend more than a little cruising various firearms blogs. One of the things that crops up pretty regular, especially from noobs, are questions about maintenance, especially about cleaning supplies. So this time around will be cleaning and maintenance chemicals.

When I post on this issue I like to include my bona fides. I am pushing 70 from the far side. I have been a more-or-less serious shooter for half a century. For half of that I was a cop. For much of that time I was a firearms instructor, range master and armorer. I also shot pistol for the department and was, and for that matter still am, a competition shooter. (When I was much younger I was pretty good. Now I am merely competent.)

What I recommend works ... for me, in the environment I work in. THERE IS NO ONE TRUE WAY. Many things work. If you live in a very hot, very cold or very dry and dusty environment or around salt water a lot you might need to tweak things a bit. I don't.

I have some comfort level issues, or maybe prejudices, about chemicals. I like using gun products on guns and car products on cars. It is completely possible that non-chlorinated brake cleaner is EXACTLY the same thing as aerosol gun scrubber. It's certainly cheaper. It is completely possible that Ed's Red and Royal Purple are outstanding gun maintenance products. I am not knocking them for people who know them and like them. I am uncomfortable with using them “off label.”

I do about 90% of my handgun cleaning with Hoppe's #9. It works well for me and I find the smell to be OK,



maybe even pleasant. I am not knocking the people who use Breakfree or Ballistol or similar products. Hoppe's works. For heavy handgun cleaning I use J & B bore cleaning paste or a Lewis' Lead Remover.

For lubrication I often use RemOil though I have no problem with G-96, Hoppe's Gun Oil or Breakfree. Any good quality light oil is good. Even watch and clock oil (no tendency to gum up) or sewing machine oil works well. Make sure to read the label. Many lubes, like Break-free, must be shaken up before dispensing to work properly.

For areas that need a heavier lube, like frame rails or locking lugs, I like Tetra Gun Grease. I have recently heard (on one of those firearms forums) that you need to be careful to get all of the Hoppe's off a weapon that you lube with Tetra as the two do not mix well and can harden into gunk over time. I confess I have not noticed this to be true, but I usually dry my guns out with compressed air before applying lube.

I also use a grease made by RIG for all-stainless steel semi-auto firearms. Way back in the day it was noticed that all stainless semi-autos had a tendency towards galling. This grease was developed just to alleviate this problem. I have heard that manufacturers have over time developed enough differential in the alloys used in frames versus slides that galling is no longer an issue. I still have a tube of the grease and still use it. I know it works.

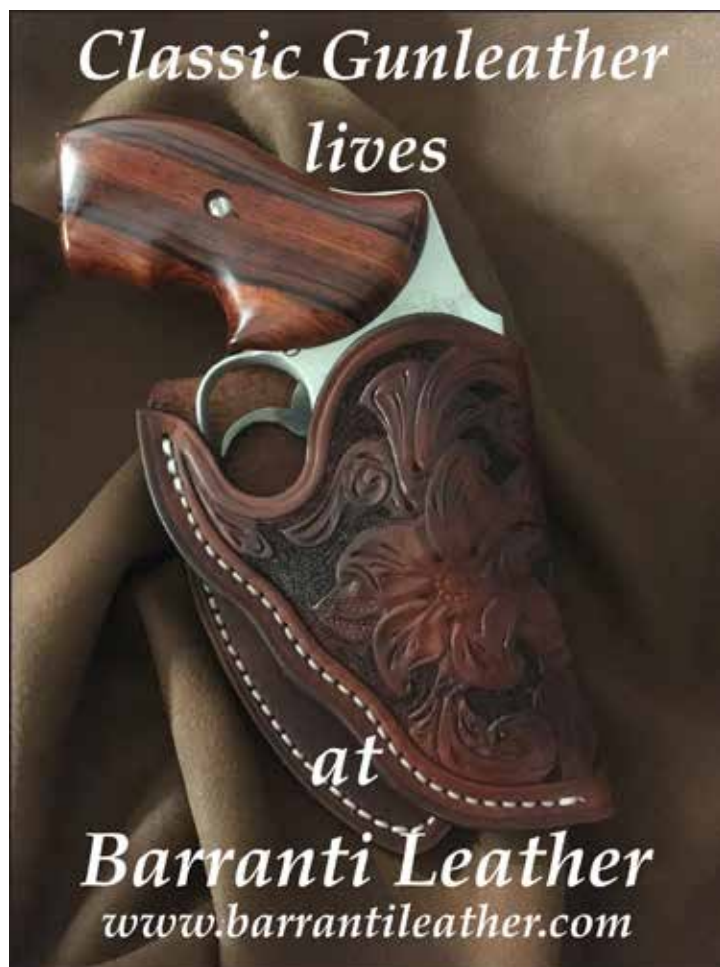
Avoid paying too much attention to people who tell you that their way is the ONLY right way and if you do not do it their way you are an idiot. I grant you that you might be an idiot (but probably are not if you are smart enough to be hanging out here) but I have found in my 70+ years that there is usually more than one workable route to the desired goal.



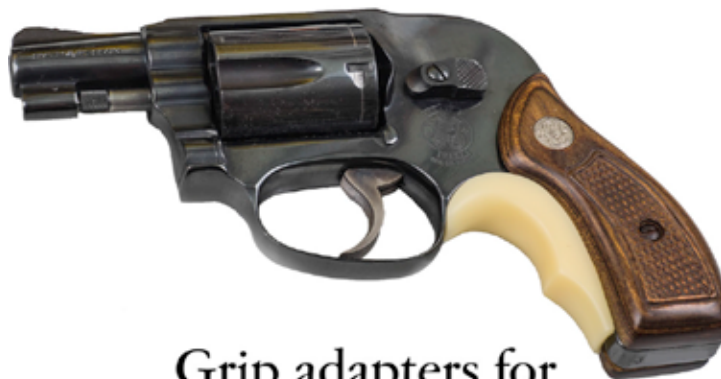
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Holsters and Gear of Noir and Lore

The Ken Null SMZ Shoulder Holster

By Earby Markham

The United States, and even the world, was a very different place in 1968. The National Archives call 1968 a turning point in U.S. history that forever changed our country". It was a year that saw multiple significant events that included things such as the Tet Offensive, riots in Washington D.C., the capture of the naval intelligence vessel (USS Pueblo), the assassinations of King and Kennedy, the Civil Rights Act and social unrest. It was during the events of 1968 that Paris Theodore, a NYC based holster maker and weapons designer (Seventrees, LTD and Armament Systems and Procedures) applied for the patent for the first version of the SMZ shoulder holster.

Seventrees and ASP were divested by Paris Theodore circa 1975 (the year of the Church Committee).

Ken Null, (knullholsters.com) obtained much of Seventrees, LTD from Theodore including designs, materials, usage rights, equipment and more. He has been building the SMZ shoulder holster for over 50 years. Reviewing some of the SMZ materials, it was reportedly "initially designed for the CIA and other covert government agencies; utilizes the very latest spaceage synthetics, offers to end users totally reliable concealed carry with unparalleled comfort, speed of draw and weapon retention." They were once restricted, numbered items and had to be fitted at the NYC location of Seventrees. Ken Null wisely got rid of the fitting requirements. The holster has seen some changes over its history, primarily in materials. It is a stitchless design, currently constructed



Seventrees, LTD prototype

with high density polymer sheeting and clear synthetic straps. It was designed to be capable of safely carrying weapons with suppressors and other muzzle devices installed. This is apparent when noticing that a suppressed pistol carried in a SMZ sits somewhat forward of your shoulder, it doesn't point directly into your armpit like



My current production Ken Null SMZ holster with suppressed Walther PPK/S .22



1969 Catalog page showing design details removed as well as garter clip deep concealment version

many upside down shoulder rigs. Like many other Seventies holsters and other gear it was designed and marketed with a covert flavor. The original 1969 advertising catalog photos exhibit a circular cutout that prevents the displaying of the details of the holster, (however it is clearly drawn in the patent application drawings). Referring to the patent, there was an envisioned version that would have been able to do double duty as a belt holster, as well as a shoulder holster by the addition of a loop to the rear of the holster body. Ken Null told me never once saw a belt carry capable version. The SMZ requires training and practice to become adept at the draw stroke, but, in my opinion and limited experience, once the draw stroke is practiced enough to present on demand, it offers a fast presentation.

The SMZ that I own is built for the Walther PP family of firearms. It fits the USA, French and German manufactured versions that I have on hand.

This article just very briefly touches on a true cold war era holster. The history surrounding Ken Null, and his holsters as well as the history of Paris Theodore and his designs are a fascinating look at a different time and the evolving understanding of the needs of the concealed carrier.

MODEL FALCON
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Model Falcon Harness 17.95

TO DRAW
1. Position gun through upper portion of trigger guard and snap closed. 2. Push gun up. 3. Twist gun out.

There were even unauthorized copies

Removing a Stuck Squib from a Snub

By Claude Werner

“Sounded like a cap pistol when it went off. Old ‘R-P’ (Remington) nickel cased, factory ball round. I immediately recalled the Range Command speaker crackling from some forty years ago with the ‘Pop and no kick’ warning [and so I didn’t fire another round].”

A member on the Snub Noir FB group gave this recounting of his experience of a squib round that only sent the bullet part way down the barrel. This is a problem. I had something similar happen years ago and came up with a solution.



The most important aspect of having a squib is to not fire again. Although doing so is not guaranteed to blow the gun up, the possibility of damaging it beyond repair is high. If the bullet is lodged in the barrel but the gun is not damaged, there is a way of getting the bullet out. Fortunately, in a snub revolver the bullet will probably be near the muzzle although not all the time.

To avoid damaging the snub, it’s best to get the bullet out from the muzzle end rather than trying to force it all the way back through the bore. Unlike an autoloader, there is very little access to the rear of the barrel, which complicates matters. One solution is to feed short pieces of brass rod into the barrel from the forcing cone end and push them forward. This will eject the bullet from the muzzle.

You will need:

continued on page 23

Rock Your Revolver with a Ritchie Holster

By Mike Boyle

Nothing compliments a fine revolver more than a high quality, leather holster. A premium grade holster not only looks sharp, but is comfortable, allows you to get into action quickly, and keeps your gun under the radar when going about in polite society. My modest collection of holsters includes multiple examples of fine leather holsters, including a few crafted by the Ritchie Leather Company Inc. of Amherst, NY.

The Ritchie Leather Company was founded in 2010 but the story goes back some years before that. Skip Ritchie was a former partner of Lou Alessi, a name no doubt familiar to many readers. I first became acquainted with Alessi Custom Concealment Holsters back in the 1980s and the product that Lou turned out was head and shoulders above the crude, mass produced scabbards which were popular back in the day. Sadly, Lou passed away in 2009 but his legacy lives on. Shortly after his passing, Skip Ritchie, along with his brother Bob, launched the Ritchie Leather Company and began turning out high quality holsters and belts from the same physical facility that once housed Alessi Holsters.

In addition to some classic Alessi designs, Skip and Bob have continued to raise the bar and also offer some well thought out originals. A common quality of Ritchie holsters is the use of 8-9 ounce vegetable tanned leather, impeccable stitching and a perfect fit. Holsters are available in both right and left hand draw and color options include black, brown, and mahogany.

A few years back, I was in need of a holster for my Ruger LCR and the Ritchie Leather Company had the perfect solution. I had some significant experience with their Vertical Speed Scabbard (VSS) with an autopistol and thought the same rig might work out very well with my snub as well. My perpetually sore hip contraindicates the use of an inside-the-waistband holster and I felt a VSS worn just forward of the strong side hip would be

just the ticket. The VSS turned out to be the perfect mate for my Ruger snub.

Wearing a handgun just forward of the hip requires a little more attention to my everyday apparel but the combination of the Ruger snub and the VSS is a match made in heaven. With the VSS, my revolver is in perfect position for a fast draw and comfort is so good you can forget you're carrying a gun.

A great many users prefer to carry their concealed handgun in a holster with a butt forward FBI cant and



Belt Speed Scabbard

the Ritchie Belt Speed Scabbard (BSS) should suit their needs. This holster tilts the butt forward 15 degrees which does in fact, contribute to concealment. Belt loops are 1.5 inches and the Belt Speed Scabbard is wet molded and hand boned to precisely fit a specific handgun.

I have a pair of Belt Speed Scabbards, one to fit a Kimber K6s and another for a Taurus 856 with a 3 inch barrel. With both re-

volvers, this holster rides tight to the body and concealment qualities are very good. Unlike inferior holsters, a one hand, fumble free return is easily accomplished. The BSS is also available with a traditional thumb break for those who require that feature.

Truth be told, I was never especially keen carrying my primary handgun in an ankle holster but on occasion, that might have been the only viable option. But for me, ankle rigs have long filled a very useful niche. Throughout my law enforcement career, I typically carried my backup gun in an Alessi ankle holster. Today, the Ritchie Leather Company continues to turn out the best ankle holster of all time.

The Ritchie ankle holster is made of 8 ounce premium leather and features a one half inch thick felt pad for comfort, which makes a huge difference over a long day. The holster is secured with a 2 inch leather reinforced Velcro band and is fully adjustable. Like other Ritchie

holsters, it is wet molded and hand boned for a precise fit to your handgun.

At this stage of my life, I limit ankle carry to long drives where I can readily access my handgun from a seated position. If a belt holster doesn't make the cut because of the social setting or clothing worn, I sometimes rely on a pocket holster where I can discreetly carry a small handgun while remaining inconspicuous. Pocket carry remains my favorite option when going about in non-permissive environments where I can legally carry a firearm but don't want anyone to know. The Ritchie Pocket Scabbard is yet another ideal solution.

Rendered from 7 ounce premium vegetable tanned leather, the Pocket Scabbard is made rough side out with a removable pant shield that breaks up the outline of the gun. A J-frame in the pocket may not be the Hammer of Thor but the fact that you are armed and can immediately respond to a problem certainly beats the pants off running back to your car and retrieving your mega-blast-er. The Pocket Scabbard is made to fit a specific handgun and variants are available for right or left pocket carry.

With holsters, you typically get exactly what you paid for. Like many people, I found out a long time ago if you buy cheap, you will probably buy twice. My advice will always be to avoid the false economy and get a holster that will afford you years of service. We may in fact be in the golden era of high quality leathers as there are a few shops turning out some very high end products. Right at the top of that list you will find Ritchie Leather Company. Their holsters are indeed top shelf and are among the best that money can buy. They look sharp, are very discreet, and as long as you keep your head in the game, can go a long way in keeping you safe.



Vertical Speed Scabbard

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Did the Snub Save Smith & Wesson?

By Mark V. Latham

At the conclusion of WWII Smith & Wesson was in dire straits. The company was on the verge of bankruptcy before the conflict began, and while the firm had grossed millions from the sale of some 850,000 “Victory Revolvers” during the war, they had not benefitted financially. The 80% excess profits tax that had been enacted to prevent wartime profiteering was, to quote company president Carl Hellstrom, “almost confiscatory...wartime earnings were restricted in relation to invested capital, and practically all of the S&W facilities had been written off under standard amortization years before.” Furthermore, well-worn machines and tooling had to be rebuilt or replaced, and production had to be moved from the aging, century-old Stockbridge Street factory into a yet-to-be-built facility.

Hellstrom, the first non-family member to serve as S&W’s president, had reluctantly assumed the helm after the death of his friend Harold Wesson in 1946. A skilled engineer and shrewd businessman, Carl immediately set to work to put the company on firmer financial footing. Unwilling to take on more debt and without any government contracts, he quickly got production of well-established models back underway, prioritizing police orders, and used the funds from these sales to gradually build a new factory on Roosevelt Avenue, completing it in 1950. This new facility allowed S&W to expand its product line to meet the emerging wants and needs of the commercial market.

While S&W had produced some of its top-break “New Departure” models with 2” barrels as early as the 1890s, the company offered only two modern, side-opening hand ejector snub models prior to WWII. The first 2” K-frame .38 M&Ps were produced in 1933, and the I-frame .38 S&W Terrier was introduced in 1936. Only the latter was a featured catalog item, and neither were

produced in significant numbers. As a result, anyone seeking a short-barreled revolver in the 1930s would probably opt for Colt’s Detective Special or Banker’s Special. Nevertheless, snub production at S&W virtually exploded in the decade following the war. In 1949 the company offered a 2” barrel option for its .32 Hand Ejector, and the following year saw the introduction of the first

of the now-iconic J-frames, the Chiefs Special. The 1952 “Centennial Catalog” featured no fewer than six snub revolvers: the new “short action” Military & Police in square and round butt configurations, the .32 Hand Ejector, the Terrier, the Chiefs Special, and the brand-new hammerless Centennial. Additionally, the catalog mentioned that production had begun on more new models: “Airweight” aluminum versions of the M&P, the Chiefs Special, and the Centennial; all three were shipping by 1953. In 1955 the Airweight Bodyguard was added, and the foundation of S&W’s new product line was complete.

The marketing literature of the time not only advocated adoption of these compact revolvers by undercover and plainclothes officers (one particularly chauvinistic advertisement

described the Centennial as a “good purse gun for [the] lady detective”), but the virtues of the guns for off-duty use were extolled as well. The benefits of selling an officer two guns—a full-size duty revolver and a snub for off-duty carry or as a backup gun in a pocket or on an ankle—instead of only one were clear, and the potential for additional profit was not lost on S&W’s management, marketing, and sales teams.

Hellstrom’s innovations turned the company around, and by the 1960s S&W had been transformed from a failing concern into a vibrant and highly profitable enter-



Advertisement from the 7/23/1898 issue of *Forest and Stream* magazine

prise with large cash reserves. In fact, the firm's success was so noteworthy that it attract the attention of corporations eager to expand their operations. In 1965 Bangor Punta, Incorporated tendered a successful purchase offer, and after more than a century of family ownership the quintessentially American company passed into private hands. But that's a story for another time.

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A photo of my own very early Centennial (serial number 117, one of the first 20 produced, and shipped in early 1953), with its original box and pamphlet.

Removing a Stuck Squib from a Snub continued

- A brass rod that fits the bore of your snub snugly. For a .38, this will be 5/16, for a .32 it will be 1/4, and for a .45 it will be 7/16.

- A C Clamp with a throat one inch larger than the length of the barrel.

- A hacksaw to cut the brass rod.
- A vise is handy to hold the brass rod while cutting it.

- A small piece of wood with a hole drilled in it slightly larger than the bore of your revolver.

- A paper clip.

Remove the cylinder and yoke/crane by unscrewing the forward sideplate screw. Be cautious with Taurus revolvers because this screw may consist of three parts; a screw, a tiny spring, and a tiny plunger. If you lose any of them, the revolver will be out of service until they are replaced. The S&W part is an integrated assembly so it's harder to lose. The yoke of a Taurus may also contain a small spring and plunger. Be careful to retain those, also.

Measure the distance from the rear of the bullet to the forcing cone by unfolding the paper clip and inserting it down the bore from the forcing cone end. Cut a piece of brass rod 1/4 inch longer than this distance but no longer than the cylinder opening in the frame.

Insert the cut rod into the bore from the forcing cone

end. Because it's shorter than the opening in the frame, it should go in easily. Next, place the piece of wood over the muzzle with the hole aligned with the bore. If the bullet is sticking out of the muzzle, Bonus!, it will align the hole. Open the C Clamp and place the handle end on the piece of wood and the other end through the frame hole and behind the brass rod. Now tighten the C Clamp so it exerts pressure on the brass rod. Keep tightening it until it almost reaches the forcing cone. At some point, the bullet may pop out of the muzzle. If so, you're done. If not, the process must continue.

Back the C Clamp off and remove the rod from the bore. Cut another piece of brass rod 1/4 inch long. Place it in the bore from the forcing cone end and then put the original piece of rod behind it. Reapply the C Clamp as before and tighten it again. If the bullet pops out, you're done. If not, continue putting short pieces of rod in front of the original until the bullet ejects from the muzzle.

Although troublesome, a bullet stuck in the bore is not necessarily a disaster. If you're aware while shooting, recognize the 'pop with no kick,' most likely the gun won't be damaged. You can probably fix it with tools and know-how.

My S&W Wish List

By Mike Boyle

As I pen these words, I am about a week removed from the 2025 SHOT Show and still mentally processing all the products I saw there. Clearly, there has been an upswing in interest in revolvers for personal defense and new guns and associated products are now finding their way to the market. I recently saw some figures for handguns made here in the U.S. during 2024 and while aut-pistols production outpaces revolvers tenfold, 800,000 revolver units is still quite significant

I own or have owned revolvers from Colt, Kimber, Ruger and Taurus and while they are indeed very solid and reliable handguns, my sentimental favorite has always been those turned out by Smith & Wesson. The reason is really quite simple as my immersion into handgun shooting was with a S&W revolver and I carried one throughout the first part of my law enforcement career. Even after we switched off to pistols for duty carry, I relied on a J-frame revolver as a backup gun and a discreet carry piece. There is something to be said about familiarity and staying in your comfort zone.

Last year, S&W introduced their series of Ultimate Carry revolvers which are available exclusively through Lipsey's. The 442/642 UC in .38 Special and 432/632 UC in .32 H&R Magnum are highly refined J-frames with far superior trigger actions, sights and stocks than the standard offerings and have played to rave reviews. This year Lipsey's and S&W have introduced an Ultimate Carry Ti in .32 H&R Magnum to create a truly flyweight carry package as well as a couple of all steel Mountain Guns in .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum.

In the regular Smith & Wesson line we now have a series of reintroduced Classics in M10, 19 and 36 revolvers with blue steel finishes and wood stocks. Best of all these revolvers, are made without the hated internal lock. While these new introductions are all positive trends, I am holding for my own version of a grail revolver.

A Mid-Size Lightweight?

One of my pet revolvers is my M12 Airweight which was produced in 1982. The Airweight features an aluminum alloy frame along with a steel barrel and cylinder which brings the weight down to a user friendly 17 ounces. I still carry the M12 every now and again but considering its collectable status, I would rather go afield with a more modern mid-size revolver of similar weight.

Right now my comfort threshold for an all day carry gun is somewhere south of 30 ounces. While I can deal with my pants sagging a bit, my perpetually sore back begins to send me signals of I'm sporting the heavy metal. The pistol I carry relative to my job slips under the wire with room to spare however finding a mid-size revolver that makes weight remains a bit of a challenge. While the refined Ultimate Carry J-frames are indeed first class, I

have always been able to shoot to a significantly higher standard with a K-frame. I am pretty confident there are other discriminating users who would also embrace a lightweight mid-size revolver.

In 2007, S&W introduced their Night Guard series of short barrel lightweight revolvers built on a scandium alloy frame with a stainless steel cylinder.

These revolvers featured an excellent set of fast-to-read sights, 2 ½ inch barrel, rubber grips, black PVD finish and various models were available in N, L and K frame sizes. Shortly after their introduction, I received a M325NG in .45 ACP and a M386 in .357 Magnum to review for an article. Unlike the small J-frames with scandium frames, the Night Guards were quite manageable in fast paced combat shooting and the rubber grips mitigated the effects of felt recoil.

Of the two, I preferred the M386NG to its big bore cousin and I regret sending it back at the conclusion of my evaluation. One could top off with the provided 7 shot moon clips or an HKS speedloader and it was easily concealed in my Bulman TJ Special holster. The



Smith & Wesson M386NG

M325NG was a fine shooter but there were some point of aim/point of impact issues with most of the ammunition I ran through it. Federal HST +P 230 grain JHPs center punched the target every time but upping the ante to the high pressure load compromised the comfort factor. The issue could have been corrected by retrofitting a rear adjustable sight.

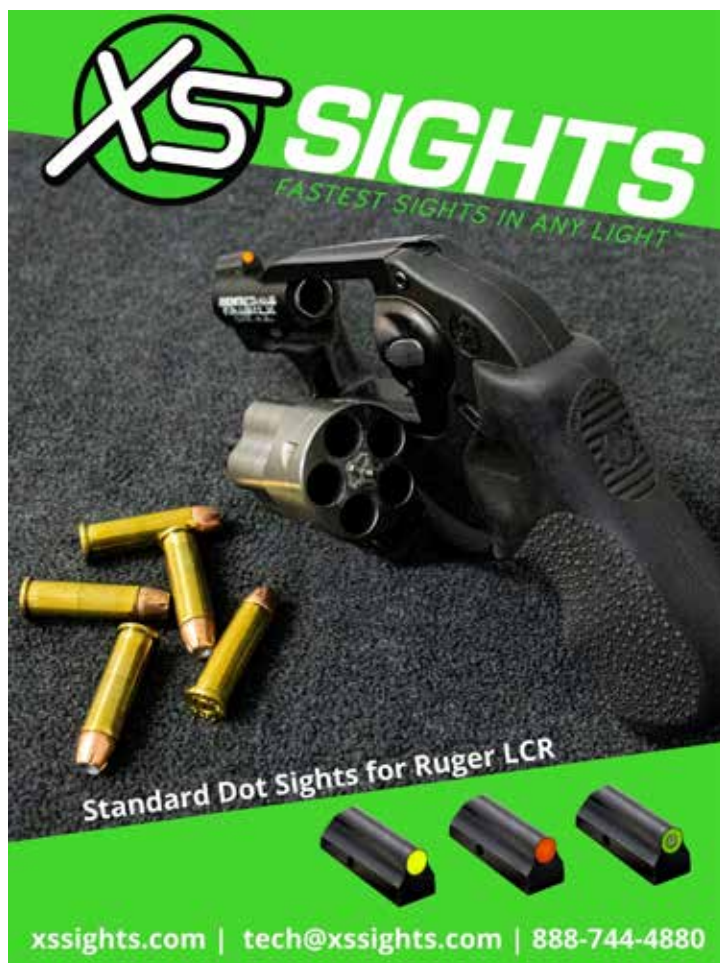
Sadly, the Night Guard line passed from the scene all too soon. Sales didn't quite meet expectations and the bottom line is that S&W chose to devote their efforts to products that were more in demand. But in the last 18 years, has the tide changed? I think so and with the liberalization of concealed carry laws, the demand for serious fighting revolvers has increased. Would a mid-size, concealable revolver go over today? I bet it would!

Where is the Love?

Small J frame revolvers are indeed handy to carry and a snap to conceal. As I mentioned earlier, I can shoot a mid-size revolver to a higher standard and I'm sure I'm not alone in that assessment. Yes, upping the frame size from J to K makes it a tad harder to conceal but with right holster you can render a mid-size, short barrel revolver just about invisible. To my thinking, this is a gun worn on the belt rather than in the pocket or on the ankle.

I don't suppose Smith & Wesson will be reviving the Night Guard concept any time soon but a modern mid-size revolver built on an aluminum alloy frame would certainly fill a useful niche. Back in the day, S&W counseled against the use of +P ammunition in their aluminum frame revolvers but improvements in metallurgy have made this possible. If a modern J-frame can handle +P loads, certainly a slightly larger K or L frame can do the same. By going with aluminum alloy instead of scandium, a quality revolver could be produced at a more affordable price. I would prefer a 3 inch barrel with the longer ejector rod but I wouldn't reject such an offering with a 2 1/2 inch tube. Good sights, a durable finish and no internal lock would be the icing on the cake.

Some years ago, S&W produced the M242Ti, a 7 shot L-frame DAO snub with a Bodyguard profile. Unfortunately it was the right gun but the wrong time and it too quickly passed from the scene. This is yet another concept they could build on. I continue to feel that a well designed, lightweight revolver would attract quite a bit of attention. For new shooters, a mid-size gun is a far better choice than a J-frame as the learning curve isn't nearly as steep and hit potential is far better. Of course, those who have been at the game for the long haul have known this all along.



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Basics Are Really Very Basic

(excerpted from *Beyond the Muzzle*)

By Greg Bettis

Regardless of our individual firearms interest, most everyone reading *The Detective Gazette* owns or carries a firearm for personal defense. And most of us have developed a mental picture of what a deadly attack will look like. As a career police instructor of deadly fights, most of those ideas are usually not accurate. My impression of attempted murder has developed and re-developed many times as I matured in this arena. Do you have a personal training plan to address such a terrible moment to include firearm-type and holster, ammunition, support gear, how we speak, communication with police, etc.? Will you allow me to narrow the components of such an event to the natural use of a firearm under duress?

My teaching order of priority is: Grip, Trigger, Sighting. Grip is the foundation for the shot. If the grip is insufficient then trigger and sighting become less efficient and must be performed more perfectly to get a hit on target. A strong grip is forgiving to a mediocre trigger press and reduces disruption to the gun when in a fight. Trigger is next. I used to think that sights were more important than trigger but applying the lessons of experienced gunfighters to my teaching/learning, I realized that a good trigger trumps a good sight picture. A perfect sight picture can be ruined by a terrible trigger press. Sights, if you can use them at all, only have to be good enough, not perfect.

Grip

In a gunfight you'll use whatever grip you have when it's time to pull the trigger. The strong hand is the dominant hand for holding and doing. Grip as high on the backstrap as possible. How tight? In a fight, try to crush the pistol grip. Remember, a strong grip that manages

recoil is more important than the trigger press. Get as much of the other hand on the gripping area as possible. The more skin touching the grip area limits gun movement during stressful firing. Grip hard and strong.

Trigger

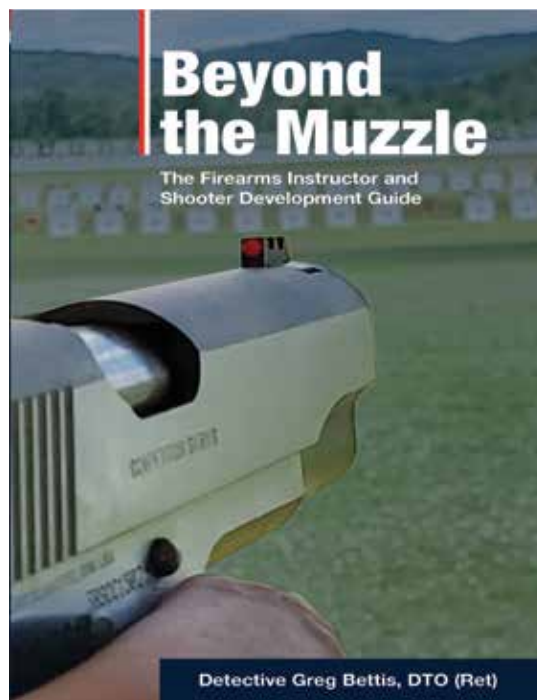
The trigger press gets blamed for many misses when the real problem is the grip. After you have your fight-grip, the trigger is next. Don't get crazy about this. The trigger moves straight to the rear because it can't physically bend sideways. But sideways pressure can move the gun to one side or the other, causing off-center hits or complete misses. Removing as much of this sideways pressure as possible is the goal.

Try this - Extend your trigger finger. You have three knuckles. The one closest to your palm will be the first with the middle and last following. The two knuckles that should work are the last two knuckles, never the one closest to your palm. My middle knuckle is the "worker bee" while the last knuckle has a simple task: keep my finger pad on the trigger. The knuckle closest to your palm stays still. Press the trigger straight back hard, no stopping.

Sighting

In a close-quarters fight for life, sights may not be optional. Focusing on a front sight is easy when shooting but almost impossible in an active gunfight. My need for accuracy is trumped by the need for getting fast hits. Lift the gun to eye-level, focus on the deadly threat and let the back of the gun become a large, fuzzy sight. If the threat is larger than the sights, press the trigger hard and fast. Not perfect, only good enough to make hits.

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