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HANDGUNNER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

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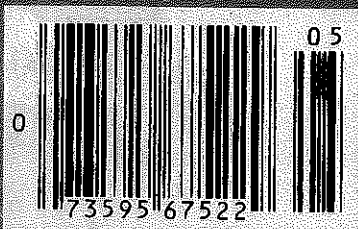
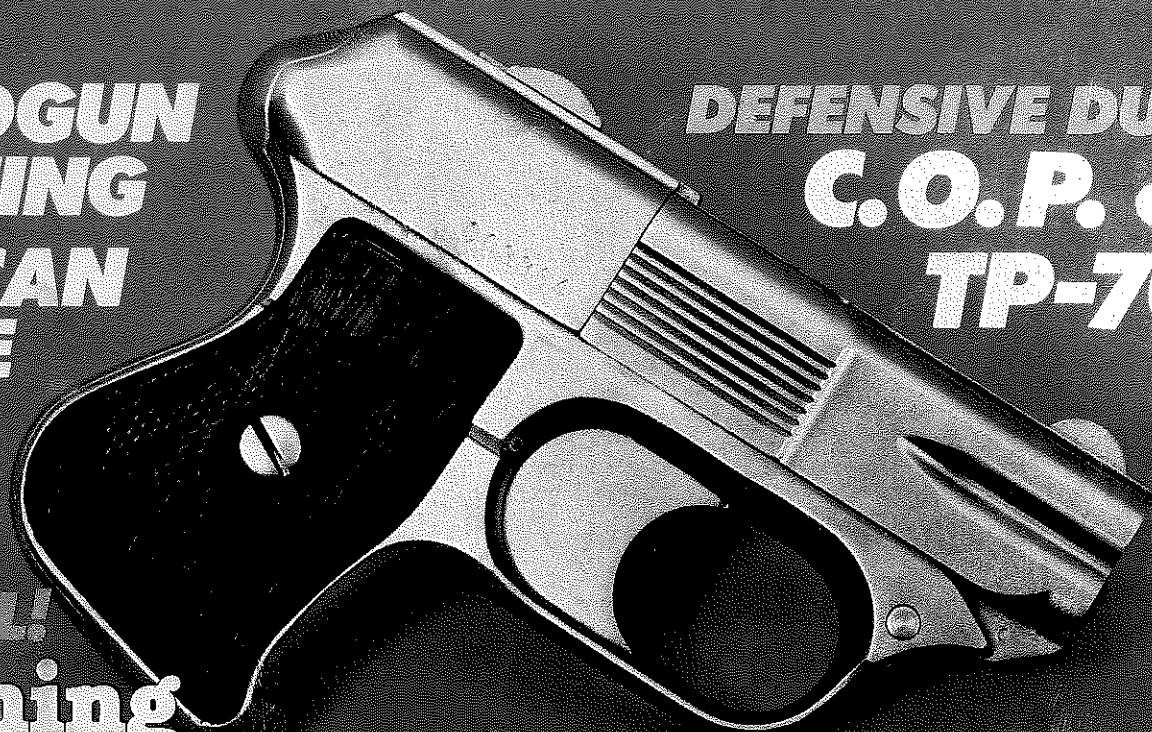
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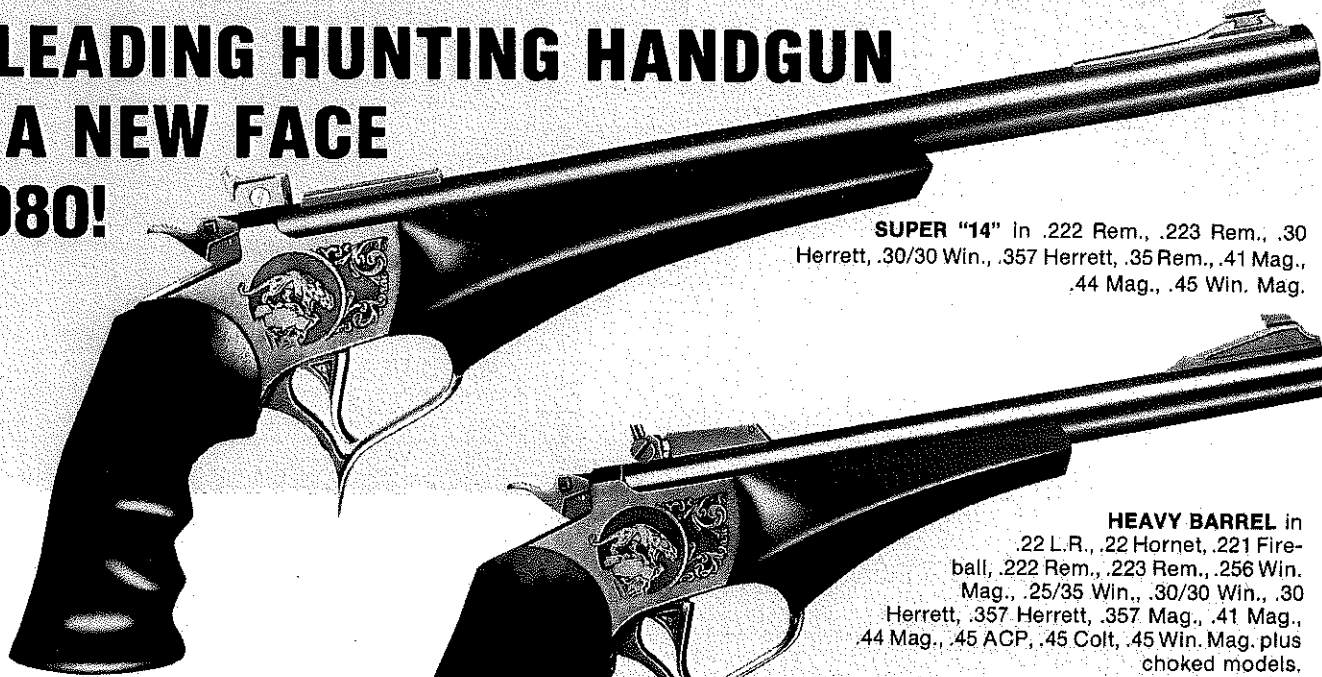
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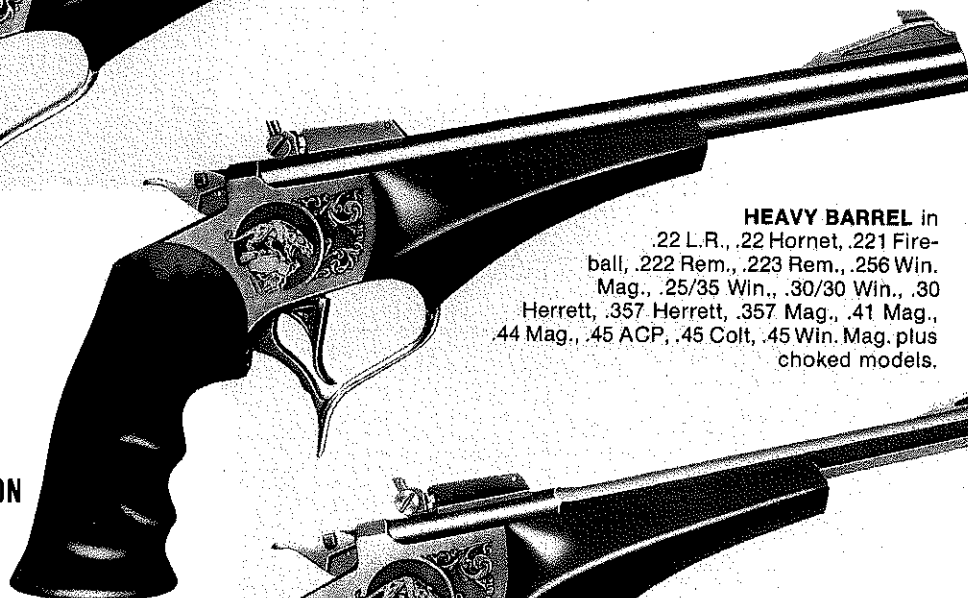


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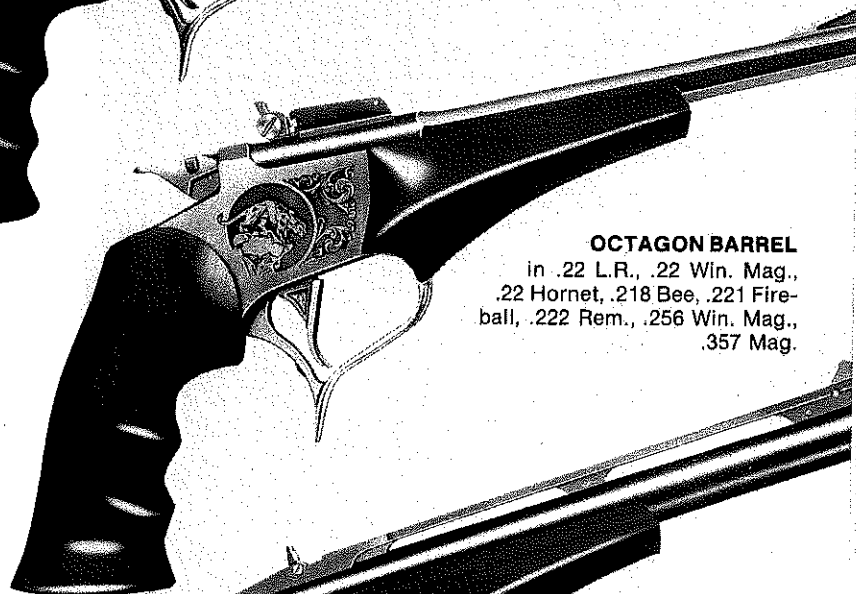
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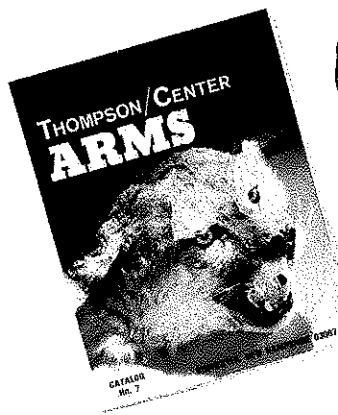
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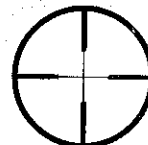


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547 yard RAMS

If You Think It Was Fun And Challenging Before, When You Shot At Long Pistol Ranges...What About Shooting Your Pistol At Rifle Ranges?

By J. D. Jones

I'm excited about Handgun Metallic Silhouette shooting. After the first one in Tucson in '75, I wrote in "GUNS" that history had been made.

Today the IHMSA (Box 1609, Idaho Falls, ID 83401) has issued over 10,000 membership cards and is growing at a rate of 500 members a month.

Paul John Solomon and Leo McCartney have held a shoot that I'm excited about. Both are NRA rifle silhouette shooters and IHMSA handgun competitors. On September 22, 1979 they held a handgun shoot on the Ridgeway, PA rifle range. Rifle targets, rifle distances! Full footed rams. The crowd wasn't large. There was a nota-

ble lack of "Hotshots" from the local IHMSA circuit. Maybe they were worn out from the previous IHMSA Regional Shoot and NRA Nationals and not just afraid of dropping a target or letting anyone get a look at them shooting something they don't have down pat! Anyhow, none of the guys with 39.999 averages with the Unlimiteds in conventional handgun silhouette showed up.

A helluva good group of guys and gals did show, though. They missed a lot of targets, learned a lot and had a fantastic time. They earned my respect and friendship by being there and trying it.

John Korte, who I had met silhouette shooting, convinced me I should attend. I had some concern about my Unlimited guns ability to reach 500 meters with the adjustment available in a Micro rear that I use on all my unlimited guns. While IHMSA gun rules were to be loosely followed, P.J. OK'd shooting two guns in Unlimited.

I figured a 10" T/C .30-30 had to be the gun for winning production competition.

Here J. D. shows that he's catching on. Not perfect, but "them babies is tough."



As I didn't have an unmodified .30-30 T/C barrel, I selected a new 10.5 inch Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum for the match and of course Dave Edney, with a T/C .30-30 blew everyone's doors off to win production.

I had only 50 rounds through the Ruger but had a good idea where it was shooting at 200.

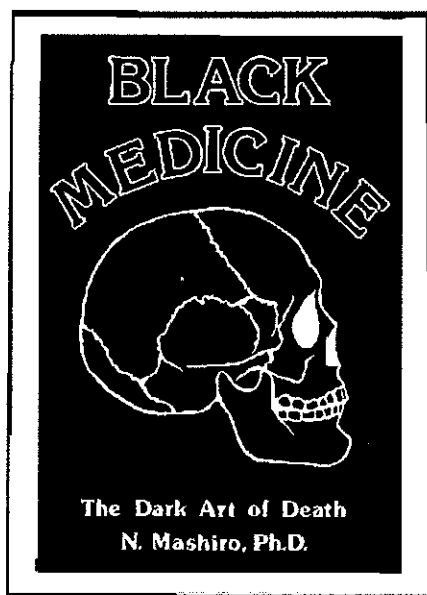
Match day dawned bright and clear. Targets were beautiful. Everyone was given time to sight in. The match started under bright skies. It soon was apparent that no one was prepared for this little outing. Once past the 200 meter chickens and 300 meter pigs, hits generally became few and far between. At 385 meters turkeys sure do look tough! In the right light conditions, the 500 meter rams don't look any worse than 300 meter pigs.

By the time I got around to shooting the conditions of light and wind had changed drastically. Compensating a bit, I squeezed off on the #1 200 meter chicken and missed. Correcting in accord with my spotters advice, the 240 grain Super Vels smacked down #2, then #3, then #4 and I missed #5. (Continued on page 68)

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547 YARD RAMS

(Continued from page 66)

Between relays I thought to myself, "This is my day. I'm hot! 3 out of 5 chickens at 200 with a wheel gun! Look out; I'm gonna clean up!" I then proceeded to miss the next 34 out of 35 targets. According to my spotter, most of the misses were close with a few notable exceptions! Holding front sight up over the rear blade was the only way to elevate high enough to drop bullets in the vicinity of any of the targets beyond 200 meters. I shot all kinds of holes in the air 3-5 inches from a lot of targets. For the rams, I taped the barrel and used the tape as a reference to attain the required elevation. As far as I know I didn't lose a target that was hit and didn't go down. I just missed them.

I had been shooting my wife's .250-3000 Crowley XP conversion and it was the only one I had enough brass ready to load for. It's normally loaded with 28.0 grains of IMR 4895 under the 120 grain hot core Speer for all targets. As usual, I was out of powder and bullets. Couldn't find the Speers so dropped 32.0 grains of IMR 4895 under the 117 Sierra SPBT. With my usual load I'm one click off dead bottom for 200 meter chickens with a 6 o'clock hold. The heavier load shot to just about the same impact point in bright sunlight coming from directly behind. Under those conditions, my notes show as sight settings: chickens—0, pigs +6, turkeys +7 and rams +14. The .250 wouldn't knock over rams though, and I didn't use it on them.

No sun was visible when I shot in the afternoon. The .250 was impacting way high and left. Quite drastic point of impact changes are apparent due to light changes on a 200 meter IHMSA course but fantastic on the rifle range. I ended up holding a foot or so low on the chickens and used a +2 sight setting for pigs and a +3 for turkeys. The Micro is not a very precise sight and its adjustments are quite coarse compared to many other sights. One click equals about 3 inches at 200 meters. A four click difference all the way through the course is considerable.

On chickens, I only got four. That should have been six to eight. I just plain screwed up. Took a little while to find the pigs and a 2x5 and 4x5 for a 6x10 on pigs certainly wasn't outstanding.

Wow—nailed the first turkey! And shot all around most of them for a 4x10. Visibility wasn't the greatest and the wind was kicking up a little.

My all-time XP fun gun is a .338 CJMK. That translates to Crowley—the gunsmith who built it (910 Cadiz Rd., Wintersville, OH 43952). Jones—I dreamed it up. Mastadon. Killer. I don't believe there is such a thing as overkill. In actuality, the cartridge is nothing more than a .35 Remington necked to .338. In an XP it does perform. My normal silhouette load uti-

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lizes 34.0 grains of IMR 4198 under the 200 grain Hornady spire point for 2150 FPS. It's capable of 2400 FPS with a 200 grainer. Since most of my stuff is experimental, it had never had the sights properly adjusted. The Micro rear when adjusted for 200 meter rams was as high as I wanted to unscrew the elevation screw. I took a narrow post for the Lyman 17A and filed it to a barely discernible nub.

The Sierra .338 diameter 250 grain spitzer boat tail has a very high ballistic coefficient exceeded by only a few match bullets. After necking 25 or so Federal .35 Remington cases to accept the .338 bullets, I seated the Sierras over a fire formed load of 42.0 grains of H-335. In the rain on the previous day a six o'clock hold on the ram's belly seemed to work OK. Since it was lighter and I couldn't see the legs for a "foot" reference, I just simply guessed at holding a couple feet low and tried to center the narrow nub of a front sight in the notch. #1 went over like he was hit with a sledgehammer. Knocking off #1 always helps the old confidence. Full footed rams don't hesitate at 500 when hit by the .338 CJMK—they go right on over! The wind, light or whatever was drifting the point of impact left. I missed three off of the left end and one a few inches high for a 6x10 on the rams. John Korte, my spotter, logged every shot on my score card. Few targets were missed by more than scant inches. Total was a 20, good enough to win Unlimited, but not much better than the other guys' scores. It was a very competitive shoot, and the ram string with the .338 CJMK is what won the match.

It's totally unimportant that I won unlimited or Dave won production. The important thing is that P.J. held the shoot and everyone agreed they had more fun missing at this game than they did knocking over targets at short range. I haven't seen any happier group at a shoot since #1 in Tucson, 1975 that made history; this one will, too! As far as I know, it was the first actual silhouette match for pistols on a rifle range. The guys that attended won't let it die. I predict it will catch on and have a fantastic future. I doubt if it will ever equal IHMSA 200 meter shooting in numbers for a variety of reasons—range limitations being a major factor—but will provide a healthy sport for unlimited class guns.

Right now, handgun metallic silhouette is still in its infancy. It's already too easy for a large segment of unlimited shooters whose skills and guns leave no excuse for a missed target. The guns are capable of one-half minute accuracy. Almost anything will knock the rams down and at the same time almost anything will, on occasion, fail.

In retrospect, few production guns are capable of scoring well. I figure a 10" .30-30 T/C will get up to around 20 or a little over with an experienced man shooting the long range targets.



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