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COBRA PATRIOT .45ACP > GLOCK 21SF .45ACP > RUGER BEARCAT .22LR



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STUDY OF VIOLENT ENCOUNTERS



Be advised there are smart and talented bad guys out there!

By Walt Rauch

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Criminal Justice Information Services Division recently published *Violent Encounters: A Study of Felonious Assaults on Our Nation's Law Enforcement Officers* (2006). It is the third work in a trilogy that began with *Killed in the Line of Duty* (1992), followed by *In the Line of Fire* (1997) and finally, *Violent*



Up-close-and-in-a-hurry shooting does not require much sighting effort. (Roger Burris firing.)

Encounters. The authors of this last work, Anthony J. Pinizzotto, Ph.D.; Edward F. Davis, M.S.; and Charles E. Miller III, collected data on "approximately 800 instances of felonious assaults against officers; 40 of the incidents are examined here, involving 43 offenders and 50 officers."

Suffice to say there's a wealth of data to both confirm and deny many long-held beliefs and observations regarding such interactions. One wishes for such a clinical study to be done of the armed citizen. Massad Ayoob is the only writer that comes to mind who continues providing sufficient details of the dynamic to make the article readable as well as informative, but he does so, in my opinion, with an ear for the intended readership. This, com-

GUN

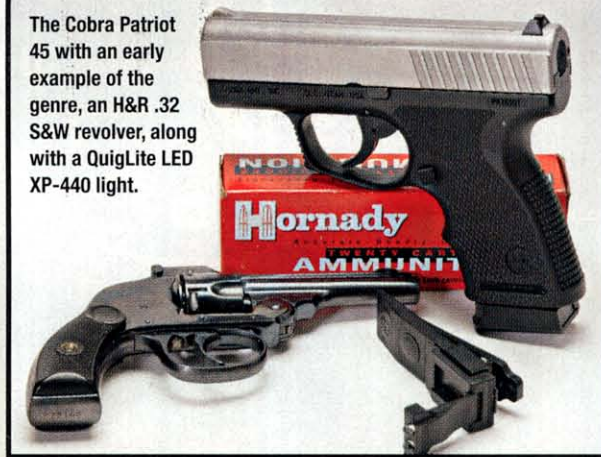
Cobra Patriot 45

In talking with a friend of mine about the current crop of fine 1911s, he restated an opinion that's quite correct. He sees many gun owners as having become, or already are, "gun snobs." They think only expensive guns are worth owning and using for self-defense. That somehow the inexpensive handguns are inferior for defense, as they lack the "bells and whistles" of tritium sights, tactical lights and rails, funneled magazine wells and other assorted "neat stuff" to have, along with finishes sturdy enough to protect the gun from wear.

He's right, of course. The bottom line of a handgun: Does it work reliably and can it be easily operated such that someone can use it successfully for defense against personal attack? If a handgun is viewed in the same light as a household fire extinguisher and smoke detector, it doesn't have to look good; it only has to work on demand. This same pragmatic thinking is held by many law-abiding gun owners as well. They're not "into" guns; they just want and buy a tool that will do the job on demand.

The subject gun reviewed here is the Cobra Patriot 45, which I see to be but a continuation of the manufacture

The Cobra Patriot 45 with an early example of the genre, an H&R .32 S&W revolver, along with a QuigLite LED XP-440 light.



At 15 yards, note this minute-of-bad-guy group with the Cobra Patriot 45.

and sale of utilitarian handguns that are inexpensive, reliable, easy to use and in calibers to suit a user's ability or need. This double-action-only semi-automatic is in .45ACP.

The Patriot 45 is striker fired with a firing pin drop safety and features a stainless steel slide and polymer frame. The slide moves on the frame's integral polymer rails. The smooth-faced front

sight is part of the slide and, unfortunately, is the same light gray color, thus making it a bit hard to see clearly. The rear sight rides in a dovetail cut, held by a setscrew and, as such, is adjustable for windage. Longitudinal lines run between front and rear sights.

The 1911-based magazine holds 6 rounds and has a large baseplate/finger rest that is removable for cleaning. Diagonal grasping grooves cover the rear of the slide from just behind the flared ejection port and external extractor. This latter part is pinned into

bined with limited space, gives him no opportunity to provide extensive supporting information, as is found in the FBI studies.

A few of the many observations that had me take particular note were offenders' shooting techniques and their practice, if any, with firearms. The authors state, "The majority of offenders were instinctive shooters." They provide comments from the offenders supporting this: "You point and you shoot; that's all you do." (The authors amplified this by opining,) "In street confrontations with other armed individuals they simply had no time to aim the gun's sights." One offender is quoted as saying, "There's no time to sight up the gun. If you hesitate you're dead. You have the instinct or you don't. If you don't you're in trouble, on the street anyway."

Next, the authors report that 68% of the criminals hit their targets (police officers) at an average distance of 15 feet and they fired first. The officers' responses with their firearms were 29% effective, as they shot from average distances of 21 to 25 feet.

In reading the above twice, the offenders' statements, obtained by seasoned law enforcement investigators with well-developed "BS" sensors

the slide and, to help keep this part free of debris, relieved slightly on its lower forward portion.

The polymer frame is cross-hatched on the backstrap with impressed checkering on the sides of the grip, while the frontstrap is smooth with two finger grooves. The ample, recurved triggerguard wears horizontal ridges on the recurved portion and the pivoting, curved trigger is vertically grooved on its face.

The square-shaped magazine catch is lightly cross-hatched as well and is, in effect, countersunk, as it is centered in a dished-out area of the frame, behind the triggerguard, making it well protected from accidental release. The magazine holds 6 rounds in its quarter-inch shorter-than-standard 1911 body. (A standard 1911 magazine also works.) The follower is rounded and the removable baseplate encircles the magazine at the bottom, creating an ample finger rest. This part is retained with an inner locking plate. Note: The accompanying instruction book cautions against using Plus P, Hollow Point or reloaded ammunition. In effect,

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GUNFIGHTING, GUNS, GEAR

and without promise of any reward, must be evaluated and considered in any training program for the legally-armed citizen as well as for lawmen. Putting aside the life-long and meaningless debate of point versus sighted shooting, the low hit ratio, to me, indicates force-on-force exercises must be an integral part of any self-defense training regime to acclimate the student

to the stress of real-world encounters so that he is able to use his learned skills to stay alive.

Next, and contrary to so-called "common wisdom," criminals do practice with their guns. Of the offenders who practiced, "only two" shot at firearms ranges. The Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, local paper reported how gang members had done so at a commercial

range.

Most, however, practiced in "rural areas, wooded terrain, trash dumps and on street corners in known drug trafficking areas where gunfire was commonplace". This non-standard practicing I found to hold true for a few of the fugitives whom I sought and located. I was told how they practiced at the "chicken farm." This was determined to be just

GUN

Cobra Patriot 45

(Continued from page 75)

this is a "hardball" .45.

There are no external controls. The slide is held to the frame via a flush-mounted cross-pin, which removes to the left with the gun pointed away from you. The slide moves on the molded-into-the-frame rails.

Shooting the Patriot gave me what I'd hoped for, the ability to hit a man-sized target in its vital areas at the indoor range's maximum distance of 15 yards and to do so one-handed. Shooting for group from a seated rest, I plunked 4 rounds into 4 inches with one flyer, also about what I expected given the long 12.5-pound double-action trigger pull (which has second-strike capability). The trigger arrangement has one disconcerting action, though. When pulled, the slide moves rearward a short distance until the striker is released. At this point, the slide then moves forward and is locked when the round fires.

The Patriot is not designed to be, nor would it be effective as a bull's-eye target pistol, nor is it a handgun that might be used for game hunting. It does, however, adequately fulfill, as it strikes me, its single purpose of being an inexpensive, reliable personal-defense handgun. After firing a few magazines of .45s at an IDPA target from 5 to 15 yards and seeing his results, my son who helped with the shooting commented that the gun was a "minute-of-bad-guy" pistol.

Disassembly for cleaning is simple and supported by the instruction book. Clear the gun and, while holding the slide back to align the take-down cut in the slide over the retaining pin, push the pin from the right (muzzle away from you) such that you can get a fingernail or small screwdriver under the larger but flat head of the cross-pin on the gun's left side to remove it. After this, pull and hold the trigger to the rear. While holding the trigger back, gently pull the slide forward about 0.75 of an inch, until it stops.



The Patriot 45, disassembled.



An ample base pad, along with the frontstrap extended up and behind the triggerguard allows a full grip on the gun.



The triggerguard of the Patriot 45 is ample, with grooving on it and the trigger. The finger grooves aid in controlling recoil.



The metal magazine catch on the Patriot 45 is well protected.

Next, continue with easy pressure forward on the slide while at the same time releasing the trigger. In effect, do both actions at the same time, which is actually easier to do than it sounds. The captive recoil spring lifts off the

SPECIFICATIONS:

COBRA PATRIOT 45

Caliber: .45ACP
Barrel: 3.3 inches
OA Length: 6.0 inches
Width: 1.0 inches
Height: 4.74 inches
Weight: 20 ounces (empty)
Grips: Black polymer
Sights: Integral front, adjustable rear
Action: DAO; locked breech
Finish: Stainless steel or optional Black Melonite slide, black polymer frame
Capacity: 6 + 1
Price: \$380 (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price)

The Patriot 45 feeds ball ammo well.



barrel and it and the barrel can be removed rearward from the slide body. No further disassembly is necessary.

The essence of this pistol is to fulfill a need, not a want, not appeal to the notion of "nice to have." With 6-plus-1 rounds in .45ACP, the Patriot 45 pistol does no more, but no less than its intended purpose, which it adequately does perform. With a manufacturer's suggested retail of \$380, it is affordable for many who otherwise could not and would not be able to arm themselves for personal defense.

For more information, contact Cobra Enterprise of Utah, Inc., 1960 S Milestone Dr., Ste. F, Dept CH, Salt Lake City, UT 84104; 801-908-8300; or visit the website at www.cobrapistols.com