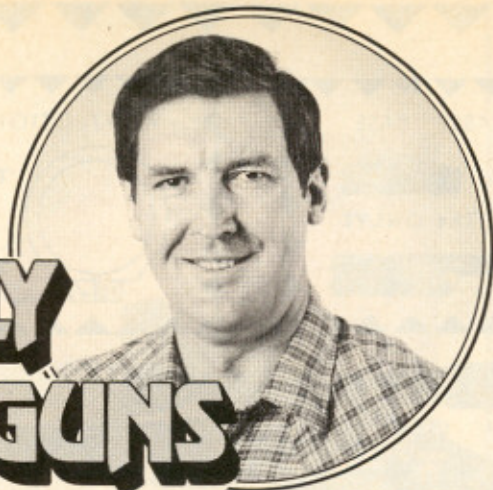


# STRICTLY HANDGUNS



By Dave Arnold

## CONCEALABILITY QUESTION

**Q:** Because of my work and where it takes me, I carry a handgun, which I have a permit to do. However, concealability and reliability seem to be impossible to attain. With a blouse and slacks on, anything other than a small auto seems to be unconcealable. On the other hand, I don't have a lot of faith in an automatic. The tiny revolvers such as the Freedom Arms .22 are too tiny to handle quickly and I about tore my thumb off shooting one. Is there any revolver made that is smaller than say the S&W Model 36/60 but not a toy-size number? If none is currently manufactured, could you recommend any other models that would be reliable (old or antique types)? The Beretta Jetfire, Bauer .25 auto, etc., have all malfunctioned on me at the range and I just don't have confidence in them at all.

Name withheld

**A:** The shapely form of you ladies does present problems when it comes to concealing handguns. If you must carry a gun on your person, I would seriously consider the AMT .380 Back Up. This little single-action semi-



automatic pistol is about the same size as the .25s, yet packs a much more potent punch and has earned a good reputation as a reliable little handgun.

An alternative would be to carry your handgun in a durable purse with a strong shoulder strap. If you carry it under your arm you would be surprised how quickly you can get your gun into action with practice. You also will not be limited to very

small pistols and can consider some of the larger caliber handguns, like the S&W 36/60.

## COLT .38-40

**Q:** I have a Colt .38-40 double-action revolver. It has a round butt, and the serial number is 22XXX, which is engraved on the bottom of the grip. The numbers 232 appear on the face of the cylinder. The revolver has a 7½-inch barrel and grooved rear sight. The markings on the barrel include "COLT'S PT.F.A. MFG. Co HARTFORD CT. U.S.A."

This handgun hasn't been shot for a considerable number of years, at least not after the year 1930. The only damage is that it is holster worn, but other than that it is in excellent condition. One thing that I am worried about is that the cylinder moves a slight 1/16 of an inch in cocked position, probably due to no cylinder lock. Does this arm have much collector's value, and could it be shot with modern ammunition? I would appreciate any information you could give me.

John MacGillivray, Paso Robles, CA

**A:** You have given me very little to work with, John, but if your revolver has an ejector rod on the right side of the barrel it is the Model 1878 Double-Action Frontier Model that was manufactured from 1878 until 1905. The serial number of your revolver puts it in a block that was manufactured around 1889.

Apart from the fact that you will have difficulty in obtaining stocks of .38-40 ammunition, the revolver is almost certainly made for black powder and should not be fired with smokeless cartridges. If it is a Double-Action Frontier, its collector's value would deem it prudent that you retire it rather than shoot it.

## RUGER BIG GRIPS

**Q:** In your November, 1981 issue of *Guns & Ammo*, which I receive monthly, I noticed on the cover of your magazine a .45 Auto and a .357 Mag. Ruger Security-Six. On the Ruger I noticed the grips were not standard, but bigger, somewhat like what

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