

HANDGUNNER

AMERICAN

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2011

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**35**  
10th YEARS POST

# FNP-45



FNH'S DO-ANYTHING  
AUTO .45 ACP

**Defensive  
Ammo  
Myths**

**UMAREX  
.22 & .45  
1911s**

**RUGER'S  
LC9 COMPACT**

**FOCUS:**

High-Tech Gizmos  
Pistolsmithing: Fakes  
Better Shooting: CZ P-07  
Carry Options: Carrying Junk?



**THUNDER RANCH  
HANDGUN CLASS**

**Sixgunner:  
COONAN .357 AUTO**

**APG  
RAFFLE  
GUNS!**







# REALITY CHECK™

Clint Smith

FIRST-PERSON  
THOUGHTS ON  
SURVIVING IN  
THE REAL WORLD

## BOUTIQUES VS. GODZILLAS

For years, the big ammunition companies (Godzillas) have pretty much had their way, filling the majority of the ammunition needs for the public and law enforcement. In times of war, the Godzillas also step up and provide large amounts of their products when we need it most. They make a lot of ammo, even in peace-time, and it's good ammo.

The "midsized" ammunition companies have filled a vacuum and made significant improvements in ammunition, while making inroads into the

marketplace. They are not burdened with monster-company "expert committees" to get anything new or innovative accomplished — they simply do it! They design and test new products, and they often press the limits of performance in both velocity and construction. While not always the cheapest, you nonetheless definitely get what you pay for. Good ammunition can be pricey at times.

A great example of this middle-ground ammunition group is Black Hills, with Jeff and Kristi Hoffman at the helm.

Black Hills produces many millions of rounds of ammunition for all applications. Some of my favorite stuff is the Black Hills .308 ammunition for my bolt gun, as well as the 77-gr. .223 load I use for precision work out of a Noveske N4 rifle. These middle companies are some of my favorite ammo people because of just that — they are people, not a committee. These people have grown well in the last decade because of their hard work and good products. I'd rank Cor-Bon in the same category.

### THE BOUTIQUES

Stan Chen's ASYM, Buffalo Bore, Garrett, Wilson Combat, DoubleTap and a few other, sometimes even smaller, 1-man operations, are in some cases new to the market place. Their concept of limited production ammo is not a totally new idea. In my youth we had companies like Super-Vel and KTW. Today's new age makers often fill very special niches, with very special, high-quality ammunition. In many cases they have been around for some time, but are just now receiving the recognition they deserve. Real handgun enthusiasts have known of many of them from their inception. Buffalo and Garrett are leaders in the field of big bore handgun loads, often with revolver loads that will in fact drop a moose. Maybe a Godzilla too?



Today, there is a new breed of smaller ammo maker working hard to offer high quality loads not always available from the big makers.

### For Example

Stan Chen's ASYM: Ammo from makers like Stan Chen, who create ammunition built to exacting standards of perfection — almost approaching meticulous insanity — might be labeled "as good as it gets." The flagship of Chen's Asym line of defense and performance ammunition is the .45-caliber Solid Defense X SDX featuring the well-proven Barnes TAC-XP bullet. The 185-gr. bullet is loaded to a +P loading of 1,020 when fired from a 5" 1911. Chen's product line includes superior quality ammunition for defensive calibers like 9mm, .45 ACP and .223. Chen started building ammunition to measure up the accuracy of the guns he builds, feeling the available factory loads left something to be desired. Known for his high-end 1911 pistols he now has a several loads for his pistol's and he believes the ammo is now as good as his guns.

Wilson Combat's Peerless Performance: Wilson Combat, a long time industry icon, produces Bill Wilson Signature Match loads.

Having tested the .45 230-gr. HP and as well the 9mm 125-gr. HP, I can attest to their high quality, low muzzle flash and capability to outshoot me on a regular basis. I like the .45 200-gr. XTP+P, as it's a stout round for defense. Wilson has lots of products you should check out if you're interested in high-quality shooting.



Among the classic small "boutique" ammo makers are Garrett, Buffalo Bore and DoubleTap.

### Ammo All Around

There are many imported types of ammunition I have seen — with my own eyes — destroy guns with over-pressure issues. There is a reason it's cheap. Last year a guy wanted me to endorse his special ammo having "lots of power" and "low penetration" — its selling point for home defense. When I tested it, that stuff went through heavy mediums, like poop goes through a goose. The only thing I've seen be better at penetration are armor piercing rounds.

In reality I have seen more "my own special loads" loaded by individuals, blow up more guns than all the factory loads combined. So if you load, load good ammunition, to reasonable pressures and anticipate reasonable results.

With modern, good quality ammo, few people can shoot to the potential of the firearm they have, or the ammunition they buy. Train hard and appropriately to your needs, and make sure each piece of equipment you select is the best it can be. Chances are the cumulative results will increase your survival potential.

Is ammunition expensive? Sure. Are good guns and good holsters expensive? Absolutely. But just maybe, at one time, for a split second in your life — it all may be well worth the effort, and the cost.



For more info: [www.americanhandgunner.com/productindex](http://www.americanhandgunner.com/productindex) and click on the company name.