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COMBAT TEST

FNP9-M Compact 9mm

Compact, concealable and accurate with proven reliability!

By Dave Spaulding

Through their American manufacturing arm, FNH USA, Fabrique Nationale has developed a very successful service-size pistol known as the FNP9 (known under the Browning label as the PRO 9). This success has led FN to introduce a new compact version, directed at plainclothes law enforcement and legally armed citizens who carry under a CCW permit.

Gun Details

Aptly named the FNP9-M, it has all of the fine features of the original in a more compact, concealable configuration. It is a well-balanced pistol being a



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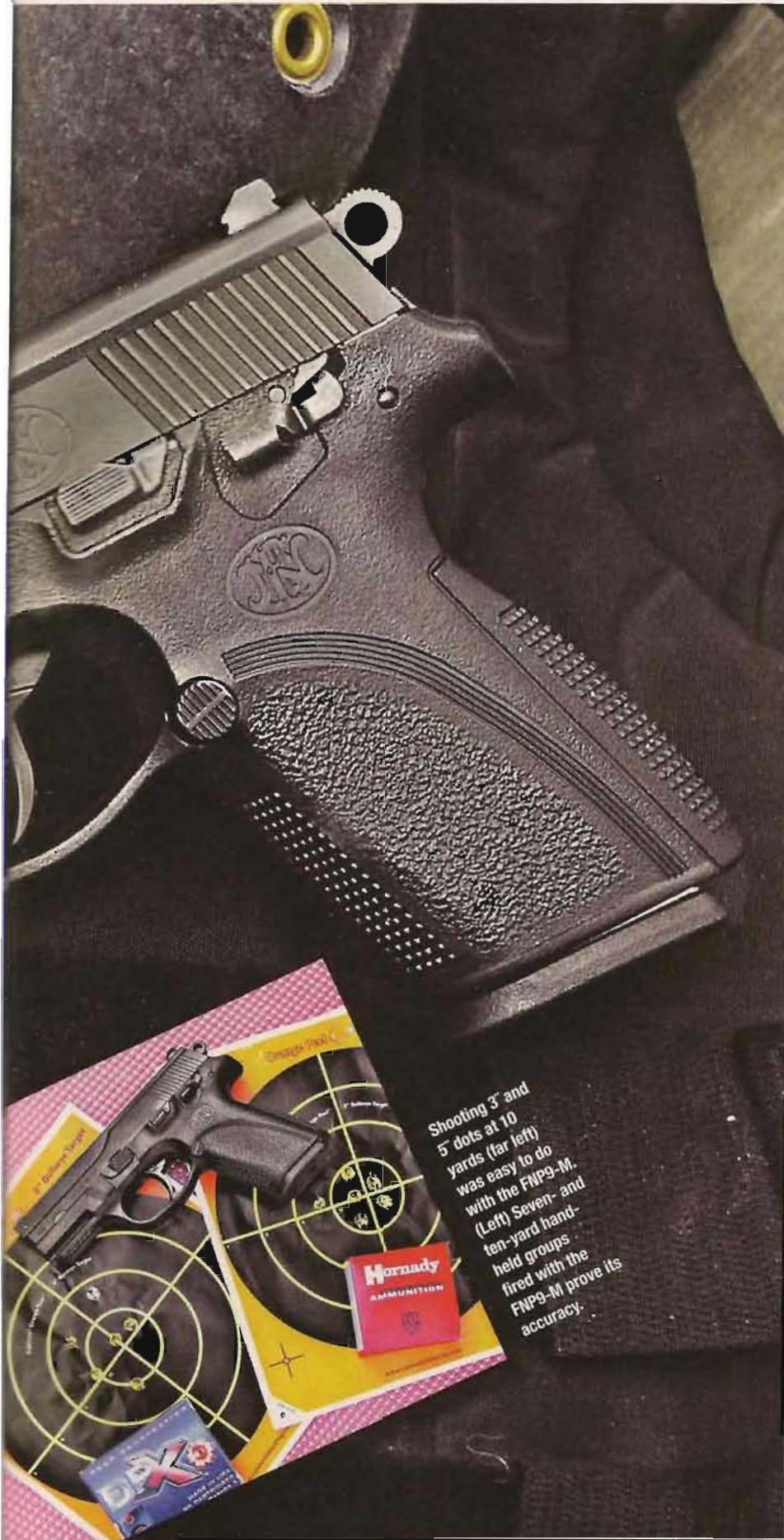


Blade: 6.4" Overall: 11"
Black TINI coated blade/crossguard & pommel • Includes Kydex sheath

Based on the classic SOG Bowie that founded our company, but morphed into a top-notch work knife with the use of technology, modern materials, and a little class thrown in for good measure. The metal parts are satin finished stainless steel and coated in SOG's proprietary Hardcoated™ TAIN deep black coating. The tactile Kraton rubber handle nods to tradition with the use of interspaced white washers and provides an unmistakable SOG look.

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Main photo by Stan Tizomic



Shooting 3" and 5" dots at 10 yards (far left) was easy to do with the FNP9-M. (Left) Seven- and ten-yard hand-held groups fired with the FNP9-M prove its accuracy.



FNP9-M COMPACT 9mm



Field stripping the FNP9-M is easy. Just lock the slide to the rear and rotate the frame lever downward.



Each FNP9-M comes in a lockable box with a lock, three magazines and back strap insert.

combination of steel on polymer, which keeps its weight to 31 ounces. The slide is all steel with a grey/black rust-resistant coating that will stand up to the rigors of police and military service, making it a good choice for CCW permit

holders. The slide has traditional rear cocking serrations with a material-relieving cut along each side that helps reduce weight while giving the gun a very space-age, no nonsense look. The polymer frame has a rail built into the

dust cover that accepts either a white light or laser, a feature that has become standard on any pistol that will be used for serious social purposes. Anyone who has ever shot a pistol while also trying to hold onto and direct a flashlight

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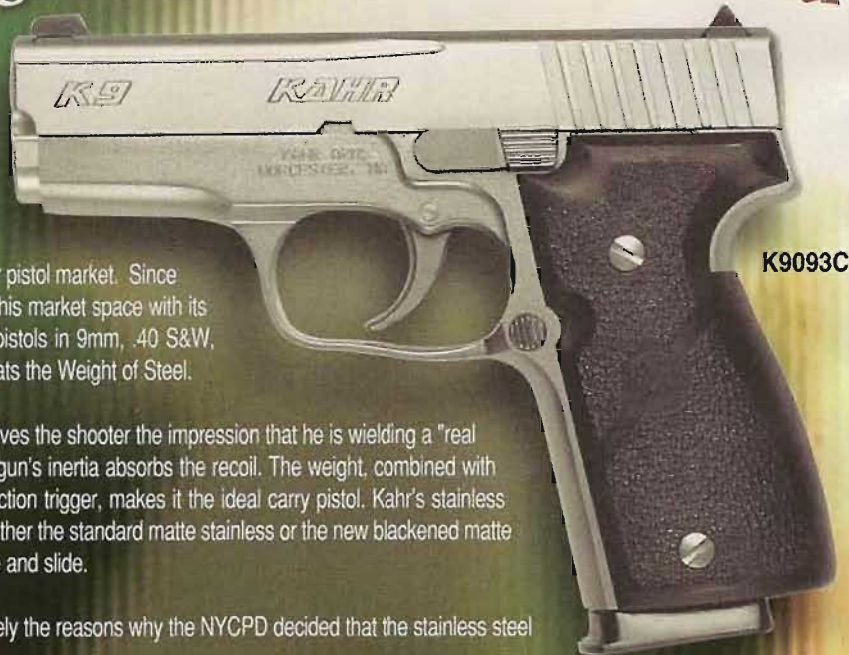


K9 NYCPD SPECS

With the introduction of the K9 pistol in 1995, Kahr Arms created the ultra compact major caliber pistol market. Since then Kahr has continued to lead and innovate in this market space with its development of ultra thin and compact polymer pistols in 9mm, .40 S&W, and now .45ACP. However, for many, nothing beats the Weight of Steel.

The extra heft of the Kahr stainless steel pistols gives the shooter the impression that he is wielding a "real man's" gun and adds to shooting comfort as the gun's inertia absorbs the recoil. The weight, combined with Kahr's diminutive size and ultra smooth double action trigger, makes it the ideal carry pistol. Kahr's stainless steel models are available in two configurations, either the standard matte stainless or the new blackened matte stainless version with Tungsten DLC on the frame and slide.

Ask around and you will find that these are precisely the reasons why the NYCPD decided that the stainless steel Kahr K9 was a gun their officers can carry.



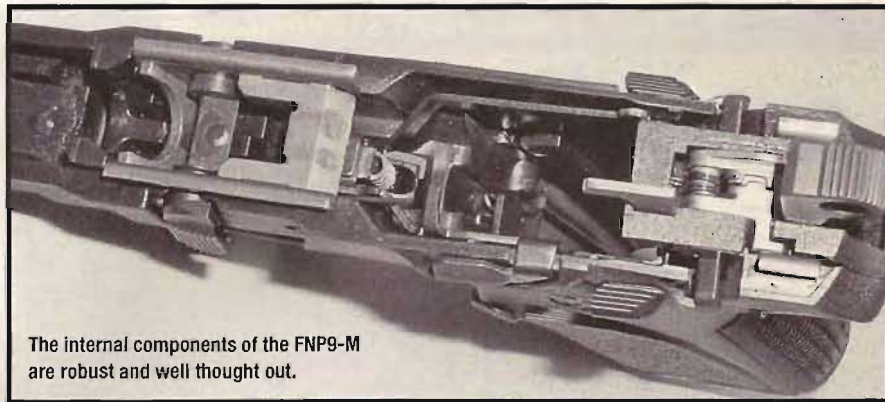
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The internal components of the FNP9-M are robust and well thought out.



The magazine well is generous and easy to use.



Note accessory rail molded into the dust cover.



The control levers keep the slide lock lever out of the way of the right hand thumb.



Interchangeable back straps are user friendly.

beam towards a target will tell you that such a task becomes much easier if the light is attached to the gun. Thus, dust cover rails are a good thing.

The FNP9-M grip is lightly stippled on the side panels, and checkered front and back to offer a more solid gripping



The pistol sits reasonably low in the hand.

surface. While this stippling is certainly functional, I would want something a bit more substantial. Adding a few pieces of skateboard tape is an easy solution, but having David Bowie of Bowie Tactical Concepts perform his hand stippling process would be a much more pleasing and permanent solution. David is doing some fantastic work on a wide variety of polymer pistols and a trip to his website is certainly advisable. Like the full-size model, the compact also has interchangeable backstraps to make it more user friendly for the

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Note trigger has a small over-travel stop.



The grips are lightly stippled on the side with more aggressive checkering front and back.



An Insight Technology M3 weapon light mounts easily to the dust cover rails.

shooter, fitting a wider range of hand sizes.

The gun is symmetrically pleasing to the eye with control levers that are accessible to either hand. The DA/SA trigger system can be manually decocked using a lever that sits just below the shooting hand thumb of either hand as the levers are located on both sides of the frame. It should also be noted that the magazine release button is reversible. The FNP9-M has

BUFFALO BORE'S FIGHT STOPPING 9MM

A bigger bullet is a better bullet; of that I'm convinced. At the same time, a bigger, heavier bullet creates more felt recoil, which is not a good idea for many people. Over the last three decades, I have seen a few people, both in the hospital and morgue, who have been shot with 9mm bullets and I am convinced that the 9mm can be a good defense cartridge, but it's load dependent to achieve best performance. A great deal of controversy has surrounded the 9mm ever since the famed FBI/Miami shootout of April 1986. This debate did not involve whether or not the 9mm should use a hollow point projectile; it was over whether or not the bullet should be slow and heavy, or light and fast. I have no intention of re-opening this debate here. As a matter of fact, it has been my experience that the best 9mm loads are moderate in weight and fast in speed, kind of the best of both worlds, so to speak.

From what I know about laboratory testing and street results, it's my opinion that the best 9mm bullets weigh 124 to 127 grains and travel at a velocity of at least 1250 feet per second (fps). This weight is



Buffalo Bore offers three high performance 9mm loads in 115gr, 124gr and 147gr with +P+ velocities.



Speer Unicore bullets have cavities that are designed for the weight and speed of each bullet.

heavy enough to penetrate deep into the body while the high velocity all but ensures dynamic expansion, provided the bullet cavity does not plug, something that can happen to any hollow point regardless of what advertisements might say. It has been my experience (and the experience of others who keep track of such things) that the best of the 9mm loads is the Winchester 127-grain SXT +P+ hollow point traveling in excess of 1300 fps from a 4-inch barrel. Unfortunately, this is a "police only"

loading and is not available to the public. CorBon makes a 124-grain load that leaves the barrel at 1250 fps-plus and is an excellent choice for those who cannot get the Winchester load, but it is a bit slower than the Winchester.

Recently, Buffalo Bore Ammunition has introduced what are potentially the best 9mm defensive loads currently available, and they are available to anyone who can legally purchase

Continued on page 88

Performance: GLOCK 19 & BUFFALO BORE 9mm

Load	Velocity			Expansion	Penetration
	High	Low	Average		
115 +P+	1399	1381	1390	0.70	9.5
124 +P+	1310	1291	1299	0.68	12.5
147 +P+	1189	1171	1181	0.67	15.0

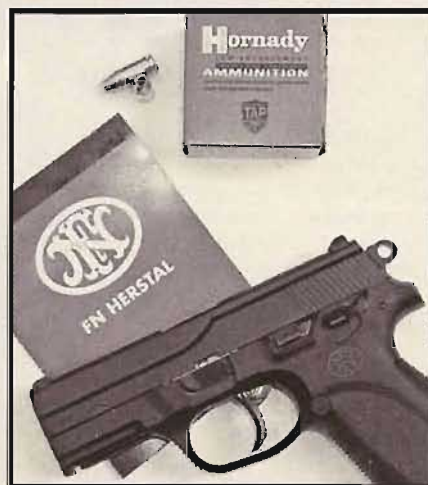
Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second (fps) and expansion and penetration in inches.



The FNP9-M functioned flawlessly with a wide variety of ammo styles.

a user-friendly manual of arms for both right- and left-handed shooters. The control levers are the exact opposite of the SIG SAUER system, placing the slide release lever forward of the decocking lever, keeping it away from the right hand thumb so that it will not rest on it while shooting. This can often-times keep the slide from locking open after the last round.

The test gun came with three 15-round magazines, a capacity one less than the full-size gun. The magazines fall free from the grip with no drag, though they did stick the first few times, I believe, due to the polymer frame. Once the magazines are inserted and released a few times, they fall free just fine. I had difficulty pushing the magazine release button due to a slight



The FNP9-M becomes a potent defense gun when loaded with ammo like this Hornady XTP load.

thumb rest on the grip that acts as a protection against inadvertent engagement of said button. I have small hands, so this will likely not be a problem for most people. Were I to carry this gun regularly, I would have to remove a small amount of material so I could reach the button without "flipping" the

Continued on page 88



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FNP9-M COMPACT

9mm

(Continued from page 31)

gun in my hand, something that's fine in competition but not recommended for fighting with a gun.

The DA trigger of my test gun was a bit heavy, breaking my trigger scale at 11 pounds. According to the owner's manual, the DA trigger should be between 8 to 12 pounds, so this heavy trigger was within factory specifications. After looking at the robust internal parts of the FNP9-M, it appeared to me that the trigger can be smoothed by a gunsmith and made to be much more user friendly. The SA was very pleasant at 4 pounds, with a reset length of travel of half an inch. Trigger reset is one of the new "gun controversies," as a number of competition shooters are now advocating a total release of the trigger on each and every shot. If this works for you...great! It does not for me and I will continue to reset when I shoot, as the least amount of leverage applied rearward on the gun makes me less likely to take the muzzle off target. A small over-travel stop is molded into the rear of the trigger to eliminate any

BUFFALO BORE'S 9mm

(Continued from page 30)

handgun ammunition. Tim Sundles, who spearheads Buffalo Bore, admits to being a large caliber aficionado and with a company motto of "Strictly Big Bore, Strictly Business." For someone like Tim to develop a 9mm loading, he must believe in its utility.

Tim has started with a Speer Unicore hollow point bullet (what is known as the Gold Dot when factory loaded) and loaded it into top quality brass cases with flash suppressed powder. For those who are not familiar with the Gold Dot/Unicore hollow point, it is essentially a soft lead bullet with a hollow point cavity that's designed for each weight and caliber of bullet. The thin jacket is a brass plating that is applied to the bullet to hold the lead core together while ensuring dynamic expansion. It is probably one of the most proven designs ever developed.

I tested the three Buffalo Bore 9mm loads by shooting 15 rounds across the screens of my PACT chronograph at 15 feet using a GLOCK 19 with a 4-inch barrel. Expansion and penetration was tested by shooting five rounds of each into denim-covered 10% ballistic gelatin at ten feet with the same gun.

While I do not know of any actual

Performance: FNH USA FNP9-M 9mm

Load	Accuracy	
	7 Yards	10 yards
CorBon 115 +P DPX	1.88	3.50
Hornady 124 TAP CQ	2.25	3.00
Federal 124 HST	2.75	3.75
Buffalo Bore 124 +P+ Unicore	2.63	3.25
Winchester 147 SXT	2.88	4.00
Hornady 147 TAP CQ	2.25	3.50

Bullet weight measured in grains and accuracy in inches

SPECIFICATIONS:

FNH USA FNP9-M

Caliber: 9mm
Barrel: 3.79 inches
OA Length: 7.09 inches
Height: 5 inches
Width: 1.55 inches
Weight: 31 ounces
Grips: Polymer
Sights: 3-dot, optional night sights
Action: DA/SA
Finish: Black or stainless
Capacity: 10/15-shot mags



Author's favorite load is 124gr +P+, which expands to 68 caliber and penetrates 12.5".

shootings with this load, I have no doubt that it will prove to be very effective. While I have never been a fan of the 147-grain 9mm loads, I am intrigued with this one. The cavity of the 147-grain Unicore bullet is wide and deep, and expands very well. This bullet travels as fast as many other companies' 115-grain loads. Think about what you are getting when you load your 9mm with a Buffalo Bore loading; a proven bullet, high speed, accuracy and rapid expansion. What more could you want?

For more information contact:

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Buffalo Bore Ammunition Company, P.O. Box 40, Dept CH, Carmen, ID 83462; 208-756-8085; www.buffalobore.com

excessive trigger movement. I thought that the trigger on my test gun felt a bit "spongy," but in all fairness, I had the opportunity to handle another version of this pistol and the trigger felt very crisp. The sights used on the FNP9-M are of a simple, three-dot variety and are made from metal. The slide of the new compact is not very tall, so the sights aren't high above the web of the hand, making them quick to acquire. Currently, AmeriGlo is offering night sights for this gun, which are some of the best sights in the industry.

Range Time

The new compact proved to be very accurate and reliable, which is what is expected when the weapon is made by FN. Since this gun is intended for personal defense, I tested it for accuracy at both 7 and 10 yards from a two-handed, unsupported stance, which would likely be the case if the gun were to be used in a fight.

Some 500 rounds of various ammo styles and weights were fired through the gun without a single malfunction. A number of shooters happened to drift by as I shot the gun and asked if they could "wring it out," which I was more than happy to oblige. Everyone who fired the gun had positive comments, but most would have preferred a smoother first trigger. This being said, the FNP9-M is a fine gun and would be an excellent choice for military, law enforcement or personal defense. ●

For more information contact:

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