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- ▶ ROBINSON ARMAMENT M96 RECON .223 ▶ DPMS A5LH .223



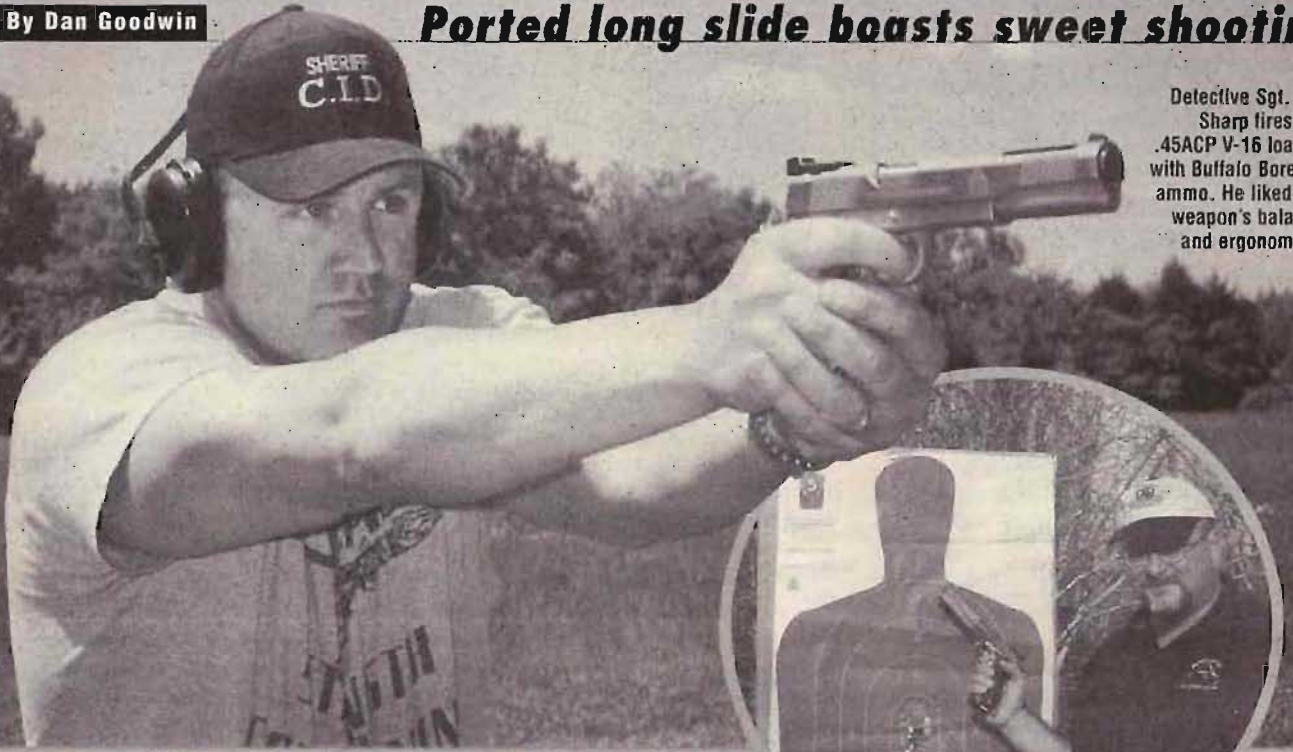


# SPRINGFIELD

By Dan Goodwin

*Ported long slide boasts sweet shootin'*

Detective Sgt. Bill Sharp fires the .45ACP V-16 loaded with Buffalo Bore +P ammo. He liked the weapon's balance and ergonomics.



## SOME PEOPLE THESE DAYS,

notably police administrators, say the use of single-action 1911 pistols for defensive purposes is not only dangerous but outdated.

They are right on one count. A 1911 in the right hands is still extremely dangerous to anyone foolish enough to offer its bearer a deadly threat.

While some regions of the country see officers using personal or even issued 1911 pistols for duty use, for the most part the Browning design is considered too "old school." Indeed, in my neck of the law enforcement woods, personnel packing a 1911 are viewed with alarm.

One municipal officer I know carries a lightly customized Colt Delta Elite 10mm when off duty, including court appearances. Though eyes bug out and officers whisper to each other like schoolgirls, my buddy has the mental discipline and training ethos to handle his favorite weapon stoked with full-power 175-grain Winchester-Western Silvertips.

The best safety, as always, is the one between your ears. I've been shooting the 1911 pistol for just under 30 years now and the only negligent discharge I've experienced could have occurred with any action style. If my agency's current policy allowed us to carry single-action autos on duty I would be among the first to strap one on. I can carry anything I want off

duty save a .44 Magnum, so my old MKIV Series '70 Government Model sometimes sees service.

The 1911's slim grip, excellent ergonomics and speed into action have always been attributes I cherish. Though my old Colt only holds half as many rounds as my GLOCK 35, I seldom feel undergunned when carrying the venerable single-action auto.

So when Springfield Armory recently sent me a brace of the company's stainless steel, 6-inch barreled V-16 Long Slides in .45ACP, I had no qualms about carrying them in harm's way.

## GUN DETAILS

Yes, I did say 6-inch barrel. The V-16 is a stainless steel longslide version of Springfield's 1911-A1.

The top of the slide is relieved so that a series of eight ports on each side of the barrel's top can vent gases upon firing. This action keeps recoil, already mild in a heavy all-steel weapon, down to negligible levels. Ports usually do better

The author was able to post a perfect score on standard department 50-round qualification with the .45 ACP version stoked with Buffalo Bore +P 230-grainers. Eight and nine ring hits are from close range speed rocks.



Detective Ron Killings, also a member of the SWAT team, edges up to a corner with the V-16 ready.



# ARMORY

**performance plus!**

# V-16 .45ACP

with rounds developing more pressure than the .45ACP, but I was able to take advantage of them thanks to a specialty round. More about that later.

Both V-16s I was sent are among the handsomest 1911s I have ever seen. The grips are made of dark, well-figured hardwood, every part save the sights and barrel appears to be crafted of stainless steel, and both have nicely grooved or checkered flat mainspring housings.

While some argue the merits of flat vs. arched mainspring housings, I have a simpler view: I like both. Either fits my smallish hand well and I seem to place shots with equal alacrity no matter which type I use.

The V-16s also have Springfield's new Integral Locking System in the mainspring housing. A key-activated safety, "the ILS is designed to lock the pistol when stored or left unattended," the manual states.

Personally, I prefer a pistol I can make go "bang" without first having to use a key on it. I did check the locking system and it works as advertised, which is a bonus in some draconian states.

The pistols were possessed of easily adjustable sights that allowed precise alignment of the bore with the sight picture.

The hammers on the V-16s were a Commander-type that I covet but have never installed on my old warhorse GM.

The adjustable triggers on the V-16s are quite crisp and break at about 4.5 pounds, so I left them be.

Both the front and rear of the slide have cocking serrations, but Springfield's new loaded chamber indicator (on every pistol sold after January 2001) allows you to clearly see if a round is chambered without performing a press check.

Still, those of us who learned the gun in the 20th century do like to perform a press check, so the extra serrations are appreciated!

The guns have speed safeties only on the port side and they are also equipped with a nicely upswept grip safety that has a generous speed bump at the bottom.

## A HIGHER POWER

While Springfield isn't currently marketing the V-16s for .45 Super ammunition (the .45 Super is a registered

trademark of Ace Custom), the ones I got included a heavier recoil spring for those who want that option, and the manual made reference to its use. (Editor's Note: Springfield Armory confirms it has discontinued the .45 Super option.)

I installed the spring in one of the pistols and then started looking for .45 Super rounds. I couldn't find any locally, so I eventually turned to the Internet.

I contacted Tim Sundles at Buffalo Bore Ammo after viewing his website and asked him for a sampling of his company's .45 Super loads. A shooter's shooter, Sundles did me one better: he sent a box of 50 rounds of each variety of .45ACP +P and .45 Super he manufactures.

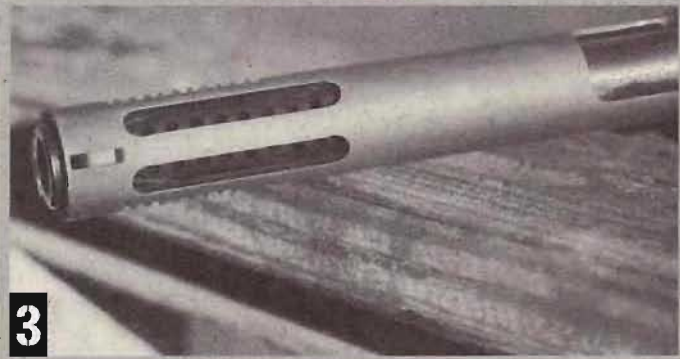
1) Author carried the ILS key on the ring of his Leatherman Micra for awhile, but found it is hardly an operational plus. The ILS is a good idea for folks who store their pistols for long periods or in unsecure environments. 2) The V-16s sported full-length guide rods and bull barrels that didn't require use of the familiar barrel bushing found on most traditional 1911 iterations. 3) The 16 ports machined into the top side of the V-16 do a good job in taming muzzle flip, particularly with hot, .45 Super loads.



2



1



3



## SPRINGFIELD ARMORY V-16 .45ACP

That means I got four varieties of +P:

- 185 JHP (1150 feet per second (fps) @ 543 foot pounds energy (fpe)
- 200 JHP (1050 fps @ 490 fpe)
- 230 JHP (950 fps @ 461 fpe)
- 230 FMJFN (950 fps @ 461 fpe)

I also received four varieties of Buffalo Bore .45 Super:

- 185 JHP (1300 fps @ 694 fpe)
- 200 JHP (1200 fps @ 640 fpe)
- 230 JHP (1100 fps @ 618 fpe)
- 230 FMJFN (1100 fps @ 618 fpe)

Life is good when you can shoot the equivalent of a mild .44 Magnum load in a 1911 pistol. Sundles' velocity and energy figures are generated in a 5-inch barrel, so I expect I may have gotten slightly higher numbers, though the ports took their toll I'm sure.

### SHOOTING IMPRESSIONS

The ports definitely took a toll on recoil. For comparison's sake I fired a few of the -P loads in my old Colt with a 22-pound recoil spring in it, and the recoil was considerably fiercer than that generated by the V-16s.

I didn't want to chance a .45 Super in my old gun, but my "calibrated hand and wrist" told me the ports were doing a good job calming the hot ammo down. The Super V-16 recoils no worse with Super loads than my old GM does with standard velocity .45ACP.

As for accuracy, the day I attempted benched groups was about 102 degrees with a higher humidity figure. The best I was able to do with either V-16 and the hot varieties of ammo was 1.75 inches (230-grain versions at both velocity levels). That was about the same accuracy as achieved with my favorite .45 ball load: Federal Match.

Those groups were shot early on and I never tried shooting groups again. If 1.75 inches at 25 yards ain't tight enough for you, you are playing games rather than shooting for keeps.

I carried the .45 Superized V-16 stoked with the 200 JHP loads several times into



1) The problem with any longslide weapon is finding a holster to pack it in. The good news is any open bottom holster will work with the V-16s. Author packed them in a Fobus paddle, top, and a Safariland paddle. 2) The .45 Super V-16 surrounded by 200 rounds of Buffalo Bore ammo prior to testing. The holdest of these loads approaches the low end of .44 Magnum muzzle energy figures and far exceeds standard .45 loads. 3) The V-16s came in a blue, lockable case with two magazines, and a gun safety lock to augment the Integral Locking System.



the whitetail woods, but never got a shot. I strongly suspect it would have folded one of our medium-sized Tennessee bucks. I did, however, burn several hundred rounds of standard velocity and +P ammo through both pistols, and most of the .45 Super through the Super V-16. Accuracy, controllability and power all deemed them both more than adequate for defensive purposes.

As a department firearms instructor I have the power to qualify myself with a variety of small arms and did so with these weapons. Firing our standard 50-round qualification, with the added wrinkle of making each shot timed from the hol-

ster, I had no problem posting an ace.

After blasting the center out of the B-27 in the qual, I then dumped a magazine full of Hornady 230-grain Match loads into the target's head area at 25 yards. The offhand group was actually tighter than some I'd earlier performed from a bench.

I suspect the weapons are finally broken in well and the "groupability" has improved somewhat.

### A PACKING PISTOL?

The very features that make the V-16 a delight to shoot: its weight and size, also make it a bit onerous to use as a concealed carry gun.

I packed one or the other V-16 for several weeks in a Safariland paddle holster, a Fobus belt holster and my old Bianchi Pistol Pocket IWB.

While it was doable, it was less than delightful.

The weight issue must be addressed. The V-16, loaded with eight rounds of 230-grain Buffalo Bore +P, showed a weight of just under 49 ounces!

Before you shriek in fear and point out my G35 loaded with 16 rounds of 180-grain W-W Rangers weighs 13 ounces less, let me add that the (Please turn to page 76)

## SPECIFICATIONS

### SPRINGFIELD ARMORY'S V-16

**Caliber:** .45ACP (the .45 Super option has been discontinued) • **Barrel:** 6", 1:16 LH

**OA Length:** 9.5" • **Sight Radius:** 7.9" • **Weight:** 41 ounces. • **Stocks:** Cocobolo

**Sights:** Fully adjustable target • **Features:** Single-action, 16 venting ports, specially tuned trigger

**Safety:** Ambi thumb and Springfield's ILS • **Finish:** Stainless steel

**Capacity:** Two 7-shot magazines • **Price:** \$1121



## SPRINGFIELD ARMORY V-16 .45ACP

Continued from page 52

V-16's slim profile and excellent ergonomics cancel the weight out. It points and handles very well.

The weapon's bonus size and weight isn't the biggest problem; it is all the sharp edges. The mainspring housing snagged every jacket or shirt I draped over it, and the hammer and sharp muzzle profile dug into my ample midsection, particularly when using the IWB.

I think manufacturers should make all defensive pistols with a carry bevel package these days; it would surely make the V-16 more user friendly.



(Above) The V-16 is noticeably longer than author's personal favorite GLOCK 35. Both weapons handle well and shoot accurately and dependably. (Left) Author, and later his father, spent considerable time packing the ACP V-16 in the Safariland paddle for concealed weapon purposes. While the length makes it a bit hard on car seats, the only real problem with packing it was the many sharp edges.

pickup for the ultimate truck gun.

Aside from the sharp edges, about the only fault I could find with the V-16s was that they weren't rust blued carbon steel instead of stainless.

I guess you can count me as "old school" too.

That said, I would have loved to carry one or both of the V-16s in either a thigh rig or vest-mounted holster back in my narcotics days.

When doing "jumpouts" from a pickup truck in the heart of my town's economically depressed and drug-infested neighborhoods I often longed for a more visually intimidating pistol than my GLOCK 23 or SIG 226.

My sergeant at the time delighted in leveling his 8-3/8-inch S&W 686 on crack dealers, and it really seemed to have a calming effect on the street.

The lengthy V-16s, with their cavernous looking bull barrels, would have given the revolver a run for its money in the fear factor category.

While the longslide would likely prove rough on patrol car seats, a 1911 lover assigned to a horse, bike or motorcycle unit could use a V-16 as a duty pistol as well. Plainclothes personnel fond of shoulder rigs could find it easy to love the big 1911s, too.

My dad, a cantankerous 73-year-old Korean War vet and possessor of a CCW

license, packed one of the V-16s around his rural property and in town for several months and his findings were similar to mine.

"It's just a tad big for comfortable concealed carry, but I like the way that muzzle hangs on target when shooting offhand at long range," he said. "It's a good truck gun."

His usual carry gun is a feathery old Star PD .45, so that may have colored his assessment somewhat.

### FINAL ANALYSIS?

Like every other Springfield Armory product I've used, the V-16s perform as intended.

While the accuracy may not be world class (and remember I benched it before an adequate break-in) it is certainly match grade.

The downside of this gun writing game is the urge to buy every one you test and evaluate, and I am currently arguing myself blue in the face over the V-16s.

A carry bevel would be in the works if I did opt to buy one, but then again I could just mount the big hawglaig in the Fobus vehicle mount holster inside our Chevy

### For more information:

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[www.acecustom45.com](http://www.acecustom45.com)

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[www.buffalobore.com](http://www.buffalobore.com)

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