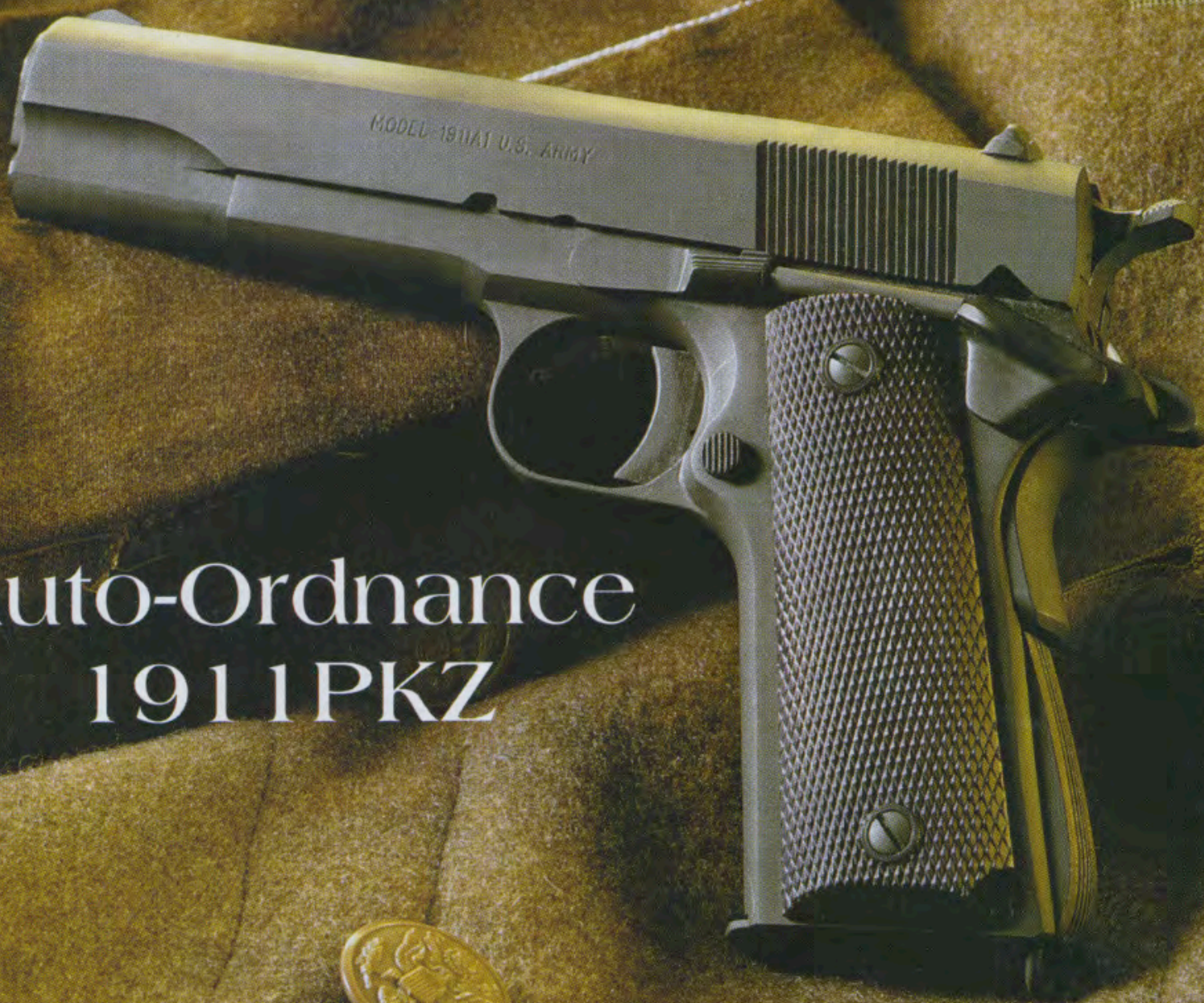


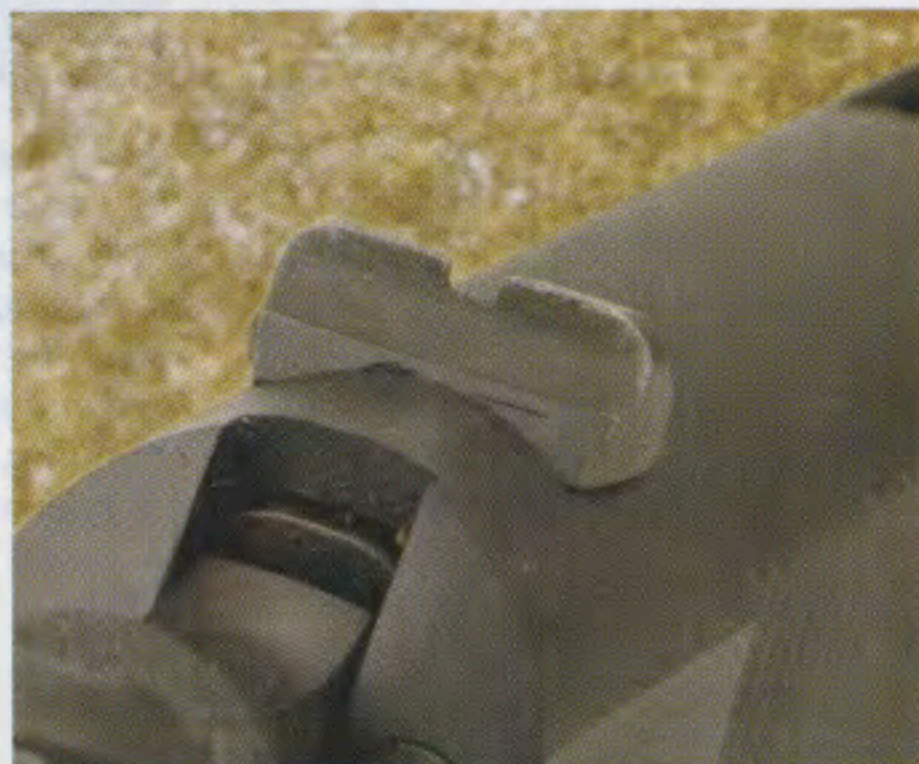
Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ



Over the years, Auto-Ordnance has catalogued a variety of M1911-style pistols in various lengths and calibers. It would be fair to say, however, that neither gunsmiths nor the shooting public ever placed these guns on a par with the very best commercial Government Model pistols. Particularly in recent years, Auto-Ordnance pistols were reputed to be assembled from components produced by numerous manufacturers without benefit of rigorous dimensional controls or proper heat-treating.

All that changed in February 1999 when Auto-Ordnance was acquired by Kahr Arms. Though only four years old at the time, Kahr Arms had already received acclaim for both its all-steel and polymer-frame double-action 9 mm Luger and .40 S&W carry pistols. Kahr's parent company, SAEILO, had been in the business of precision machining since 1981, and that expertise was quickly put to use improving the Auto-Ordnance line.

Kahr Arms instituted a stringent quality control program



Though small by today's standards, the 1911PKZ's G.I.-style sights (l.) allowed accurate shooting and added to the historic style of the pistol. The safety and slide release levers are also pure G.I.-style and non-ambidextrous. The barrel bushing (l.), although by no means a match-quality fitted unit, still allowed for some respectable results.

AO 1911PKZ

MANUFACTURER: Kahr Arms (Dept. AR), P.O. Box 220, Blauvelt, NY 10913; (845) 353-7770; www.kahr.com

CALIBER: .45 ACP
ACTION TYPE: locked breech, short-recoil, semi-automatic pistol

FRAME: Parkerized, investment cast 4140 steel receiver; bar stock 4140 slide

BARREL: 5"
RIFLING: six-groove, 1:16" LH twist

MAGAZINE: detachable box, seven-round capacity
SIGHTS: post front, square notch rear drift-adjustable for windage

TRIGGER: single-action, two-stage, 5-lbs. pull

OVERALL LENGTH: 8½"
WIDTH: 1¼"

HEIGHT: 5½"
WEIGHT EMPTY: 39 ozs.

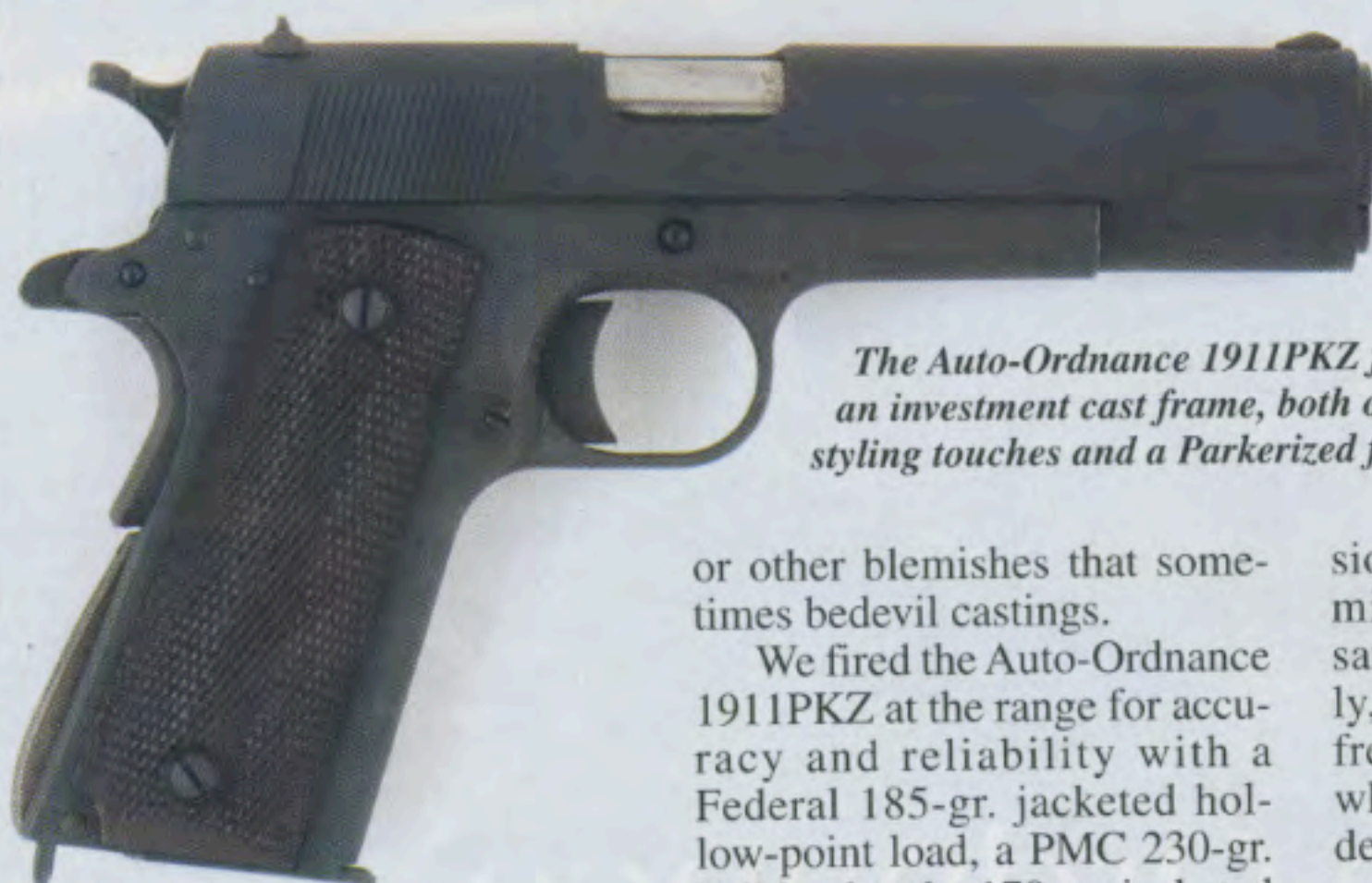
ACCESSORIES: hard plastic case, gun lock, reference fired cartridge case

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$462

that included new parts specifications, comprehensive in-house Rockwell hardness testing and careful checking of all dimensional tolerances. New state-of-the-art CNC equipment was purchased so that major components, such as the slide and frame, could be machined in-house, and certain high-stress parts previously made from castings were machined from bar stock. All Auto-Ordnance M1911 parts are now strictly held to military specifications.

Auto-Ordnance currently produces three Government Model guns, the Model 1911PKZ, Model T1911 and Model 1911WGS (a Commander-length gun may be introduced in 2002). All have 5" barrels, fixed sights, bar stock slides of 4140 steel and 4140 investment-cast frames. The Model T1911 is the standard model and has small G.I.-type iron sights, brown plastic stocks and a matte black oxide finish. The deluxe 1911WGS also has a matte black finish, but sports high-visibility three-dot iron sights and black textured rubber wraparound stocks.

The third model, the 1911PKZ model reviewed here, is intended as a facsimile of a World War II-era M1911A1 service pistol, and sports that gun's lanyard loop, minuscule G.I. iron sights, checkered wide spur hammer, short steel trigger, arched mainspring housing, checkered brown plastic stocks and Parkerized finish. A left-side slide stamping, "MODEL 1911A1 U.S. ARMY," though historically inaccurate, adds to the gun's military appearance.



The Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ features a bar stock slide and an investment cast frame, both of 4140 steel, as well as military styling touches and a Parkerized finish.

The 1911PKZ differs from the military model in some details, however, such as its angled slide serrations, beveled magazine well, throated barrel and lowered ejection port (these last three being justifiable as enhancing reliability).

The 1911PKZ also differs from the military model in its magazine, a steel seven-round Metalform unit whose parallel feed lips better control the cartridge's path into the chamber. The Parkerized magazine can be disassembled for cleaning or spring replacement.

The .45 ACP Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ faithfully adheres to standard M1911 design principles, operating procedures and disassembly steps previously detailed in these pages. Note that the pistol lacks the passive firing pin block featured on the Series 80 Colts and Para-Ordnance M1911-type clones.

Compared to previous Auto-Ordnance samples, we were pleasantly surprised at the fit and finish of the 1911PKZ we received. Tool marks were absent, all machining was crisp and precise, and the investment-cast frame showed no pits, voids

or other blemishes that sometimes bedevil castings.

We fired the Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ at the range for accuracy and reliability with a Federal 185-gr. jacketed hollow-point load, a PMC 230-gr. ball load and a 170-gr. jacketed soft-point, lead-free non-toxic load from Winchester. The results are summarized in the accompanying table.

Accuracy of the 1911PKZ was good for a basic, stock M1911. Best accuracy was with the Federal and PMC loads, which grouped into 2.70" and 2.74", respectively, for five, five-shot groups fired at 25 yds. The Winchester NT 170-gr. load produced a still-respectable average of 3.98".

Out of 150 test-fire rounds, there were two early malfunctions, both with the Federal 185-gr. hollow-point load, largely attributable to the matte texture of the Parkerized frame's feed ramp, which inhibited smooth feeding. As the ramp became smoother during the session, feeding improved. Feeding might also have been enhanced with the replacement of the stock magazine follower with a unit that kept the bullet nose elevated.

Kahr representatives stated that a such a follower will be incorporated in future magazines. Note that the 1911PKZ's owner's manual recommends using only 230-gr. ball ammunition.

There were no failures to extract or eject, though ejected brass occa-

sionally hit the shooter in the middle of the forehead. All safety features worked perfectly, and the magazine dropped freely from the magazine well when the magazine catch was depressed.

The 1911PKZ's trigger broke at 5 lbs., with some initial creep—about par for current-production, basic



One of the few modern changes that Auto-Ordnance updates from the original classic M1911 formula, the 1911PKZ's throated barrel (above) is intended to improve feeding reliability. Despite a few modernized touches here and there intended to simply improve reliability, the 1911PKZ is at its heart an old-fashioned M1911 pistol.

M1911s. A sharp edge on the serrated trigger face abraded the trigger finger after only about 10 rounds were fired and required wrapping the finger with tape. A more permanent solution would be to soften the trigger edge with abrasive paper.

The Auto-Ordnance 1911PKZ is sufficiently authentic-looking to gain the favor of World War II reenactors and military buffs, yet can be shot extensively without reservation—unlike a collectible U.S. M1911A1. Reliable, accurate and well-made, and with a list price of \$462, the 1911PKZ represents a good value in a new American-made basic M1911 pistol.

NRA

SHOOTING RESULTS

.45 ACP Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Recoil (ft.-lbs.)	Group Size In Inches		
				Smallest	Largest	Average
Federal No. 45C 185-gr. JHP	835 Avg. 22 Sd	286	3.9	2.50	2.92	2.70
PMC No. 45A 230-gr. FMJ	667 Avg. 11 Sd	227	3.6	2.02	3.32	2.74
Winchester No. SC45NT 170-gr. JSP	791 Avg. 20 Sd	236	3.1	2.88	5.26	3.98
Average Extreme Spread:						3.14
Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 5" barrel. Range temperature: 85°F. Humidity: 55%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. from a sandbag. Abbreviations: FMJ (full metal-jacketed), JHP (jacketed hollow-point), JSP (jacketed soft-point), Sd (standard deviation).						