



SMITH & WESSON TRR8 REVOLVER

The term “tactical revolver” sounds almost contrarian these days. Although the double-action revolver has a host of virtues, the explosion of tactical semi-automatic pistols seems to have relegated the revolver to a few select, but important, roles: concealed carry, home defense and hunting. The idea of a cutting-edge, tactical wheelgun that is a preferable tool for anticipated high-intensity encounters seems absurd when so many other choices abound. Well, not so fast.

Innovation in materials and design, coupled with a specific unanticipated problem with the semi-automatic platform, prompted Smith & Wesson's Performance Center to develop the TRR8—a revolver that meets the tactical demands of law enforcement or serves as a home-defense gun for the well-equipped homeowner.

The TRR8 is a double-action .357 Mag. built on the company's large

N-frame. Although that is typical, this particular N-frame features S&W's scandium, an enhanced aluminum alloy that is as light as typical aluminum alloy, yet much stronger. As a result, the big wheelgun weighs in at 35.3 ozs., making it easier to carry and quicker to handle than an all-steel N-frame. The cylinder is of blackened stainless steel, and the barrel is steel, too.

The TRR8 incorporates today's *de rigueur* feature of tactical handguns—a rail. In fact, it features two of them, with one over the topstrap and one under the barrel. The rails attach to the barrel shroud with Allen-head screws and are easily removed. They allow the user to mount various lights, optics and lasers, customizing the gun for various tasks. One can mount a red-dot scope atop the barrel and a high-intensity light beneath it, or even replace the factory rubber stocks with Lasergrips.

Fortunately, the TRR8 retains all of the original virtues that made the wheelgun such a popular design. It is reliable. It is simple to load and operate. It is easy to check, especially in a hurry. It is not ammunition-sensitive as its operation is independent from the proper functioning of the ammunition (squib load notwithstanding). And, it is powerful.

The .357 Mag. cartridge has been around since 1935 and although there are now many more powerful chamberings, there may be nothing more effective for self-defense. After all, of all the semi-automatic loads available, it was the ballistic profile of the 125-gr. .357 Mag. that designers emulated when creating the .357 SIG cartridge.

Of course, there are some liabilities to the wheelgun relative to modern semi-automatics, but S&W addressed these with some success. The first relative weak-

SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YDS.)

.357 MAGNUM CARTRIDGE	VEL. @ 10' (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE IN INCHES		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
BLACK HILLS 158-GR. JHP	1076 AVG. 26 SD	406	2.75	3.37	3.00
PMC No. 367A 158-GR. JSP	1058 AVG. 23 SD	393	2.55	3.91	3.10
WINCHESTER SUPER-X No. X3576P 125-GR. JHP	1309 AVG. 19 SD	476	2.20	3.50	2.70
AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD					2.93

MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY OF 10 ROUNDS FROM A 5" BARREL MEASURED WITH AN OEHLER 35P CHRONOGRAPH. RANGE TEMPERATURE 58° F. HUMIDITY: 30%. ACCURACY FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 25 YDS. FROM A SANDBAG REST. ABBREVIATIONS: JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW-POINT), JSP (JACKETED SOFT-POINT), SD (STANDARD DEVIATION).



S&W TRR8 REVOLVER

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WWW.SMITH-WESSON.COM
CALIBER: .357 MAG. (.38 SPL.)
ACTION TYPE: DOUBLE-ACTION,
CENTER-FIRE REVOLVER
FRAME: SCANDIUM ALLOY
(BLACKENED STAINLESS STEEL CYLINDER)
BARREL: 5"
RIFLING: FIVE-GROOVE, 1:18" RH TWIST
CYLINDER CAPACITY: EIGHT
SIGHTS: INTERCHANGEABLE FRONT POST
WITH BRASS BEAD; SQUARE-NOTCH REAR,
ADJUSTABLE FOR WINDAGE AND ELEVATION
TRIGGER PULL: DOUBLE-ACTION, 10 LBS.,
14 OZS.; SINGLE-ACTION, 4 LBS., 8 OZS.
OVERALL LENGTH: 10½"
WIDTH: 1¾"
HEIGHT: 6"
WEIGHT: 35.3 OZS.
ACCESSORIES: ALUMINUM CASE, THREE
FULL-MOON CLIPS, TWO ACCESSORY RAILS
SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: \$1,414

The TRR8 holds eight rounds of .357 Mag. ammunition and utilizes full-moon clips to speed reloading. The Picatinny rail atop the TRR8 (l.) can hold a variety of aiming devices. Like the bottom rail, it is removable.

ness is ammunition capacity. In the age of the double-stack magazine, a six-shot revolver seems very lacking. The big N-frame, however, holds eight rounds in its cylinder—a 33 percent increase over typical wheelguns.

The other bothersome issue is the lack of speed in reloading; semi-automatics are much faster to refill. Although this is still true, the TRR8 comes with three full-moon clips. One may simply preload the clips and, when needed, drop both cartridges and clip into the gun. It's a big improvement over laboriously loading one round at a time.

Despite exhibiting many tactical-like features in its design, the question remains—why a revolver? The answer lies in the technique of bracing a tactical gun against a vertical surface. Tactical officers leading an entry team often use a ballistic shield. As they have to hold the shield with one hand, they are constrained to carry a handgun rather than a longarm. This handgun is braced against the edge of the shield. If a semi-automatic is fired with the

slide braced against the shield or any other surface, it may slip out of battery, jamming. Such is not the case when bracing the barrel of a revolver.

Although this ability is understandably of critical importance to a SWAT officer, what does it mean to the armed homeowner? Well, it is conceivable that someone in a home-defense scenario might have the need or opportunity to brace a firearm against a doorframe or the corner of a wall. The resistance to jamming would be equally appreciated in such case.

The TRR8 shot well in drills and, as shown in the accompanying accuracy table, from the bench. The pebbled, rubber stocks provided good purchase and dampened felt recoil considerably. Though the lightweight frame increased muzzle rise in the unadorned gun, the installation of a light and optics reduced that problem. The added mass distinctly decreased muzzle rise, and the fully outfitted gun was quite manageable.

The TRR8's trigger pull was typical of a Performance Center gun:

light, smooth and crisp. There were no malfunctions despite the variety of ammunition used, including both .38 Spl. and .357 Mag. Reloading with the full-moon clips was slightly more difficult than imagined. There was some play at the nose of the cartridges and some jiggling was required before the reload slipped into the cylinder. Removing empty cases from the clips was a chore, but a fairly easy one.

We mounted a C-More Sight Systems red-dot scope atop our sample gun. Nevertheless, there was not enough adjustment available to zero the scope at 25 yds. on this revolver. We also mounted a Streamlight M3 Tactical Light on the lower rail. It was well-positioned and easy to manipulate.

Smith & Wesson's TRR8 represents the current state-of-the-art in revolver technology and fills an unforeseen gap in tactical handguns. It keeps the double-action revolver current while also giving both lead SWAT officers and well-prepared homeowners a very good tool for their respective tasks. 