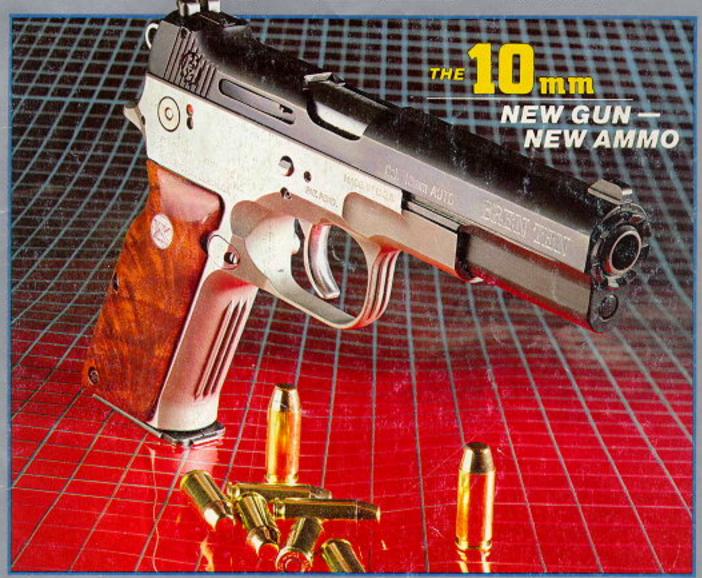
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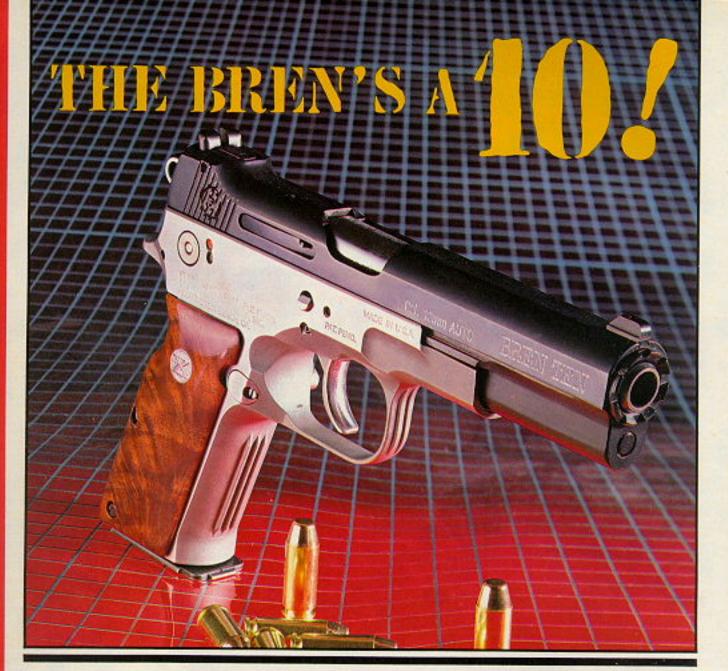
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## BY DEAN A. GRENNELL

# Here's A New Pistol/Cartridge Combo With A Whole Lot Of Good Things Going!

RE YOU SURE I won't be blown away in the fallout or anything?"

Roger Combs stood well off to the side, as far as the three-meter tripper cord of the camera would permit. When pressed, the button would trigger the camera's motor drive on full-auto at six frames per second; 1/2000-second for each frame.

"It should be okay," I assured him, soothingly. The camera's nine feet closer than you are and it's my camera."

Combs' expression remained wary. "If you're about to come up with something about doing a Mickey Spillane number on that bleach jug so I can shoot it with Mike Hammera, please spare me," he gritted.

"Heaven forfend," I protested, "Would I say something like that?"

"I've heard you say worse," Combs stated, levelly.

The occasion was a demonstration of the capability of the new Bren Ten pistol and its equally new cartridge, the 10mm Auto. As supplied, the Norma factory loads pack a 200-grain full metal jacket (FMJ) bullet with a truncated cone tip. Rehearsing our procedure, I counted down and said, "Push!" At that signal, Combs would clamp down on the tripper button, releasing it after the commotion had subsided.

The first one went as planned, but the plastic jug of water merely went, Flook!



The 10mm Auto takes large pistol primers, Boxer-type and reloadable.

and bled H,O from small orifices, both front and back.

"You mean that's all it does?" Combs wanted to know. "You hardly even moved the jug."

I busied myself in setting out a fresh jug of water and in putting a fresh round in the



big pistol's chamber, "We'll try it again," I informed my photographic bombardier.

That time, it was something else entirely. The jug erupted into a huge gout of coarse spray, a quart or so of which came back to douse the intrepid experimental ballistician. Combs, I was relieved to note, went unspattered, as did my trusty Nikon camera.

"What did you do, pull the trigger harder that time?" Combs seemed quite impressed.

"No, but I performed a bit of gifted skulduggery upon the front end of the bullet." I showed him one of the modified numbers. "What I did was chuck it into the lathe and open up its stubborn little nose with a #3 countersink bit. I have others where I went on to cut the nose into quarters with a jeweler's saw."

I explained that the Bren Ten folks have some jacketed hollow point (JHP) loads for the 10mm developing on the back burner, but they weren't available in this early phase of its career. All we'd done was take time by the throat to find out how the JHPs might perform when they finally appeared.

The present FMJ load, as it comes from the box, is great on penetration. In a test of that, we'd clamped six short pieces of 2x4 lumber together and a round of 10mm had blasted through all six layers — about nine inches of wood — bouncing gently to rest on the ground beneath the wood. Apart from the rifling marks, the bullet looked good as new and probably could have been reloaded and used again. The jacket is exceptionally thick, but unlike most of the Norma bullet jackets, it's not copperclad steel, as a check with a magnet indicated.

Wanting to compare the 10mm from the Bren Ten's five-inch barrel with a few other contenders, we'd fired a 230-grain



Top, milliseconds earlier, jug was on the sidewalk. Bullet was hollow-pointed, not quartersawn as at right. Above, the unmodified FMJ bullet of the factory load produced this considerably less spectacular effect upon impact

FMJ round of .45 ACP into the same bundle of timber and it had stopped midway through the fourth layer down. A 130grain FMJ from a .38 Colt Super had almost made it through the sixth layer. Both of those were from Colt auto pistols with five-inch barrels.

A round of Federal's #44C in .44 magnum, with a 240-grain silhouette bullet, out of Thompson/Center Contender with a fourteen-inch barrel screamed through all six layers of wood and buried itself deeply in the hard-packed soil of the skeet range at the South Coast Gun Club, closed that day and thus available for GUN WORLD's research program. We excavated for the .44 slug, but all in vain.

Checking the big pistol for accuracy on paper targets proved it at least capable of holding eight out of ten hits on an area the size of a playing card at a distance of thirty yards. Fresh from the box, it printed a bit low and left, but it would be a simple matter to take care of that by adjusting the rear sight.

I don't recall exactly how long ago we



commenced hearing about the new auto for the new cartridge, but it was quite some while back. Its manufacturer. Dornaus & Dixon Enterprises, was displaying a few samples at the SHOT Show in Dallas in early 1983 and fellow GUN WORLD staffer Tom Ferguson and I gave them a thoughtful once-over at that time.

Slightly larger than the familiar Model 1911 Colt Government Model, it's a goodly handful, even if you're blessed with big hands, as Ferg and I are. That refers to the Standard Model — the one reviewed here and appearing on our cover — as well as the Special Forces Model, with its shorter barrel but with the staggered-column, tenround magazine of the SM. There is also a Pocket Model, with a shorter barrel and an eight-round magazine similar to that of the M1911 Colt. Having now fired the SM.

I've a strong suspicion firing the 10mm Auto cartridge out of the Pocket Model would be a memorable experience.

Initially, the Bren Ten is being chambered for the 10mm Auto cartridge, which is made by FFV Norma AB in Amotfors. Sweden, and distributed in this country by Outdoor Sports Headquarters, Inc. As production gradually catches up with demand, there will be conversion kits available for the Bren Ten to handle the .45 Automatic Colt Pistol (ACP) cartridge and, later, the .22 long rifle cartridge, as well. The Norma round carries an FMJ bullet of truncated cone design weighing 200 grains. According to the labeling on the carton, its muzzle velocity is 1200 feet per seond (fps) and they rate that at 635 foot-pounds of energy (fpe). Actually, by the customary method of working such things out, I get 639.6 fpe, or 640, rounding it off in the usual manner.

Michael Dixon says they find typical chronographed velocities of the Norma load from the Standard Model run about 1150 fps still good for 587 fpe and eminently impressive in comparison to anything short of a .44 Auto Mag. The bullet is a true caliber .40 measuring .400-inch in diameter for jacketed bullets or .401-inch for cast bullets. Designated as a 10mm, that dimension actually works out to



.3937-inch and .400-inch is about 10.16mm, but a bit of rounding-off is quite customary in cartridge nomenclature and surely can be condoned in this example.

Dixon also notes that the Norma cartridge employs a special Norma powder not available to reloaders and owes its remarkable performance to that factor, Recalling the 110-grain JHP Norma load for the .38 Special and its near-incredible energy output, that's hardly surprising.

A notice on the Norma cartridge carton specifies it for sole use in firearms that have been proof load-tested at pressures in excess of 53,300 pounds per square inch (psi) and having a valid proof mark on the firearm: "The ammunition contained herein is factory loaded to develop a mean pressure of 37,000 psi with a maximum



The fired 10mm bullet penetrated 9 inches of wood without distorting. Shown with .45 slug and 10mm load.

**BREN TEN SPECIFICATIONS** SPECIAL STANDARD POCKET FORCES MODEL MODEL MODEL Type Autoloading pistol Operation Double-/single-action Function Browning short recoil Caliber 10mm Auto Barrel length 5.00 inches 4.00 inches 4.00 inches Overall length 8.37 inches 7.37 inches 7.37 inches Height 5.50 inches 5.00 inches 5.50 inches Width 1.25 inches 1.00 inches 1.25 inches Weight (empty). 39 ounces 28 ounces 33 ounces Safeties Thumb (reversible) and firing pin block Sight radius 7.00 inches 6.00 inches 6.00 inches Sights Adjustable/replaceable three-dot combat Riffling Power-Seal, 5-groove, 1:15, RH twist Stocks Textured black nylon Total cartridge 11 rounds 9 rounds 11 rounds capacity Finish\* Blued slide/stainless Hard chrome slide/ Parkerized black stainless frame slide/black oxide stainless frame

\*The Military/Police Model identical to the Standard Model except for finish. It has a deepblued slide and black oxide finished stainless frame.

pressure of 44,400 psi plus or minus industry tolerances."

To put that into proper perspective, the #10 Speer Manual notes the maximum industry working pressures of both the 9x19mm Luger and .38 Colt Super are 35,700 copper units of pressure (c.u.p.): more or less comparable to the psi units mentioned on the Norma carton. Thus, we could say the mean pressure of 37,000 is just that: a respectably mean pressure in either statistical or colloquial context! In point of fact, the 9mm and .38 Super are customarily loaded to pressures well below the quoted maximum industry working pressures.

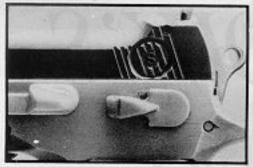
As the suggested retail price of the Norma factory loads is reported to be about \$14 for a box of twenty - right around seventy cents per pull of the trigger it provides powerful motivation to reload the fired cases, as that would bring the cost of firing down to a nickel a shot or so. The exceptionally well-produced owner's manual that comes with the Bren Ten is adamant on that score: "WARN-ING: The use of anything other than factory-loaded commercial ammunition is expressly forbidden. Do not jeopardize your safety, or the safety of others. Also, the use of anything other than factoryloaded commercial ammunition will void your Bren Ten Warranty."

Mindful that these are the days when certain lawyers make a full-time practice of suing firearms manufacturers for sevendigit sums on behalf of any plaintiff they can line up, such extremes of caution are quite understandable. If you or I were engaged in producing an auto pistol for an energetic cartridge that took up where the hot rod champs of the field had left off to the present, it's pretty likely we'd say much the same, particularly after a serious conference with our own attorney, wouldn't you agree?

The 10mm Auto cartridge, as manufactured by Norma, is a true rimless round and its diameter is .422-inch at the rim. just ahead of the rim and clear on up to the neck. Case length appears to be .989-inch and overall cartridge length 1.257 inches. It uses the large pistol (.210-inch diameter) primer. The Norma cases are Boxerprimed, suggesting there may be a Santa Claus, after all! So much, then, for the lusty new cartridge. Let's turn our attention to the Standard Model Bren Ten that

As it comes from the box, the Bren Ten is of double-action (DA) design for the first shot, shifting to single-action (SA) for subsequent shots until such time as the hammer is lowered, shifting then back to DA

It has a positive cross-bolt firing pin block that's completely independent and does not interfere with other mechanisms. It is a circular insert, visible in the slide serrations and marked with an S for safe on the LH side, with an F for fire on the RH side. When the hammer is down, it



Firing pin block is the S-marked circle in the slide serrations, as discussed here in the text.



From left, 9mm Luger, .38 Colt Super, 10mm Auto, .41 magnum and .45 ACP for size comparison.

takes but little effort to press it in from the left to lock up the firing pin; a little more push is required if the hammer is on half-cock or full-cock. When engaged, the rear tip of the firing pin is retracted slightly below the surrounding surface so the falling hammer cannot impart inertia to the firing pin.

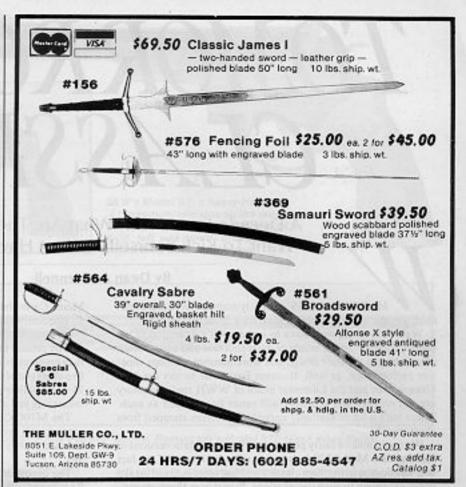
There is no magazine disconnect. With the magazine removed and thumb safety in the off position — exposing the red dot — a chambered live round can be fired in either DA or SA mode.

There is a loaded chamber indicator on the RH side of the slide, just to the rear of the chamber, detectable visually or by touch. When the chamber is empty, the small pointed stud is flush with the slide wall.

The thumb safety is reversible, left to right and the conversion from one to the other is done without special tools, as outlined in the owner's manual. The slide stop, however, is not reversible. When the thumb safety is engaged, covering the dot of red enamel, the hammer cannot be actuated, regardless if it's in the fully down, half-cocked or fully cocked position.

The selective magazine catch is a really thoughtful feature. It's a small, slotted-head screw located on the RH side at the lower rear corner of the stock slab. As received, pressure on the magazine release on the LH side behind the trigger will drop the magazine free. By turning the catch screw on the RH lower rear corner, pressure on the magazine catch drops it about half an inch, permitting manual removal.

Continued on page 32





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# THE BREN'S A 102

Continued from page 27

That can be handy if you're working over deep, soft, mud or, for example, rice paddies.

It says in the brochure that, "Two magazines come with each Bren Ten model." In point of fact, the test gun came with but a single magazine. It holds ten rounds of 10mm Auto ammo, with the option of carrying an eleventh in the chamber, utilizing suitable safety precautions such as keeping the cross-bolt firing pin block in the safe mode. When converted to .45 ACP. the magazine holds nine rounds and you can keep a tenth in the chamber. The magazine for .22 LR holds thirteen and one in the chamber makes fourteen, in case you're superstitious. The magazine of the Pocket Model holds eight rounds of 10mm or seven of .45 ACP.

The bore of the Bren Ten features what they call Power-Seal rifling, a design originally developed by barrelmaker Barret "Boots" Obermeyer. Previously used only on rifles, it has proved superbly accurate and functional. The basic difference between the Power-Seal and conventional rifling is in the connecting surfaces between the lands and grooves. In conventional rifling, the juncture between the groove and adjoining land is nearly perpendicular. In the Power-Seal rifling system, the angle is much broader, more obtuse. The net effect is to render the bullet engraving less abrupt and that in turn, reduces both peak pressure and eas leakage around the bullet. A further benefit is an increase in net bullet velocity at a peak pressure lower than would be required to deliver the same velocity from conventional rifling.

Norma reports their five-inch Power-Seal test barrel, firing from a machine rest. delivers groups at one hundred feet spanning from .45- to .72-inch between centers for ten shots. Bren Ten literature reports that each pistol consistently groups under one inch at twenty-five yards, out of the box. Again, we must assume that to have been fired from a machine rest. It is not always readily possible to equal machine rest groups when firing a pistol handheld.

even when firing from a solid sandbag

Dixon reports Norma to be developing an additional factory load with a jacketed hollow point (JHP) bullet weighing somewhere between 165 and 185 grains at a velocity in the area of 1280 to 1350 fps. Muzzle energy of such a load would be in the span of about 668 to 673 fpc.

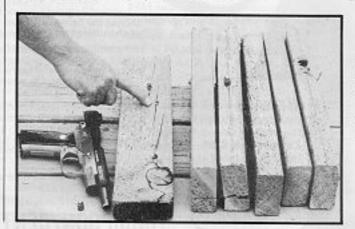
The adjustable rear sight is of novel design, operating by four hex-socket set screws; two each for elevation and windage. Both pairs of screws are in opposition to each other and are loosened, positioned and retightened to accomplish sight adjustment. Windage adjustment should be performed first and one of the elevation screws - the rearmost - is loosened slightly to permit easy side-to-side sight movement and retightened after windage adjustment.

The rear sight design assures that the sight will be maintained in rigid alignment. even if subjected to rough usage and handling. Only the two wings of the rear sight project above the sight base at the rear of the slide. The front sight blade is held in place atop the front of the slide by a small hex-socket set screw and can be replaced. if desired. There is a single white dot on the rear ramp face of the front sight and dots on either side of the rear sight notch. offering a highly visible three-dot sighting picture under unfavorable light conditions. The black areas surrounding the dots permit an excellent sight picture when the light is bright for optimum capability under all light conditions. Although the sight inserts look as if they might be photoluminous, a check in a dark room shows they are not.

Jeff Cooper served as conceptual designer and consultant on the Bren Ten project and the resulting design represents the end-product of his opinions and convictions as to what an auto pistol should be. It is noted that he found it capable of firing at least 999 stoppage-free rounds out of 1000 shots as well as extensive wring-outs under all possible practical combat conditions including drop tests. mud and sand function tests and evaluations for combat accuracy.

The stainless steel receiver has grooved serrations at the rear and raised serrations at the front of both grip and trigger guard.

Continued on page 80



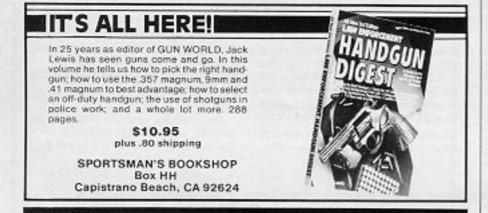
The 10mm zipped through all six pieces of wood, .45 through 31/2, .38 Super is in sixth board. as pointed out.





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# THE BREN'S A 10?

Continued from page 32

The trigger guard is generously proportioned to permit firing of the pistol while wearing gloves.

The 10mm Auto cartridge is said to pack more energy at a distance of one hundred yards than the standard 230-grain hardball .45 ACP round has at the muzzle. Despite being one ounce lighter in weight than the M1911 Colt, felt recoil when firing the Bren Ten is much the same as firing hardball loads in the Government Model pistol.

The stocks routinely supplied with the Bren Ten are of textured black nylon, made for them by Guy Hogue of Monogrip fame. Also available at added cost are uncheckered walnut stocks by Steve Herrett. The silver-colored medallions carry a letter X. representing Roman numeral ten for the caliber designation. During WWII the British produced the highly regarded ZB-26 light machine gun in their Enfield arms plant from a design originated by the Czechoslovakian BRNO plant. The first two letters of BRNO and Enfield were combined to create the Bren designation of the ZB-26 and Cooper chose the name for the new pistol.

The ejection pattern of fired cases from the Bren Ten appears to be upward and straight to the rear, rather than to the shooter's right. When fired from shoulder height, the spent brass clears the shooter's head nicely and comes to rest on the ground some twenty to thirty feet straight to the rear. The would-be reloader, bent upon recovering the empty cases, will do well to select the firing site with thoughtful care. mindful of that. Whether or not the cases might hit the shooter's face if fired from a hold around hip level is a moot point at this time, but the importance of wearing shooting glasses when firing it can hardly be overemphasized.

A twenty-page catalog illustrating and describing the various models of the Bren Ten and these among other features is free upon request from Dornaus & Dixon Enterprises, Inc., Dept. GW9, 15896 Manufacture Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92649. The catalog also includes a complete listing of more than two hundred authorized Bren Ten dealers in forty-three states.

1-800-521-5951

Suggested retail price for the Standard Model Bren Ten is quoted at \$500.

A report on reloading the 10mm Auto cartridge for the Bren Ten is scheduled for the November 1984 issue of GUN WORLD. On hand are reloading dies and shell holder from RCBS, one set of bullet moulds from Hensley & Gibbs, plus two more moulds from Saeco, as well as lube/ sizing dies from Saeco. The key question is how the Power-Seal rifling will perform with cast bullets rather than the tacketed varieties. Look for the answer to that and other questions in the November GUN WORLD! BY

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