

REPORT FROM THE FIELD:

2012 ROUNDUP SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOLS



GunDigest[®]
THE WORLD'S FOREMOST GUN AUTHORITY

REPORT FROM THE FIELD:

SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOLS

BY JOHN MALLOY

As anyone missed the fact that the 1911 pistol design reached its 100-year anniversary in 2011?

With good reason, 2011 has been called the year of the 1911. Now, as we move into the future, we have new companies just beginning to offer 1911s, and “old” companies making many different variants. Just collecting 1911 Centennial commemorative pistols should keep collectors busy for some time. (Collectors, use this report as a guide.) New 22-caliber versions of the 1911 are being offered by a number of companies. Historic versions of the 1911, built to old original specifications, have appeared. The 1911 is coming into Cowboy Action Shooting, and “Wild Bunch” versions are offered by some companies that have never marketed a semiautomatic pistol before. At the time of this writing, the state of Utah is considering making the 1911 the state firearm!

But even during its 100th anniversary, the news was not all 1911. Semiautomatic pistols for personal protection come in many sizes, shapes and calibers. Increase in concealed carry has created

great interest in smaller, easier-to-carry pistols. The recent trend of downsized 380-caliber pistols continues. Related to this trend is the fact that the .32 ACP chambering (considered a dead duck some years ago) still has small .32s appearing on the market. New calibers are being introduced.

If it had not been for the 1911, the year 2011 might well have been called the year of the downsized 9mm pistol. A number of subcompact 9s have been introduced. Here we might pause to ask: What, exactly, is a “subcompact?” Well, there is no standard convention, but I use a system of common rectangles. A pistol that can fit on an 8x10 photograph is a full-size pistol. A 5x7 photo covers a compact. Thus, a pistol that can hide under a 4x6 index card is a subcompact. (Some very small pistols can be covered by a 3x5 index card—I’m not sure what to call them...little, perhaps?) Because this system is arbitrary, we won’t quibble if a little sticks out here or there.

Some unconventional pistols are much larger than an 8x10 picture. These long-range pistols are generally based on

rifle actions, and are specifically made as pistols. Also, pistol-caliber carbines have had a hard time being included in reports on rifles, so we’ll continue to cover them for the time being.

The recent activity in the world of semiautomatic pistols has been nothing short of breathtaking. Let’s take a look at what the companies are doing:

Akdal

The Turkish-made Akdal pistols, mentioned last year, have had two variants (TR 01 and TR 02) approved for importation by American Tactical Importers (ATI). The polymer-frame pistols, designed for the 9mm Parabellum cartridge, had not made it into the United States in quantity by the time of the January 2011 SHOT Show, but were expected later in 2011.

Both variants are tilting-barrel-locking pistols with “Glock-type” trigger mechanisms and have 15-round magazines. The fancier TR 02 has interchangeable grip back straps, a sculptured slide, and front and rear slide grasping grooves.

American Classic

The American Classic line of Philippine-made 1911 pistols now has a downsized variant. The new 45-caliber Amigo has a 3.5-inch barrel. It is 7.25 inches long and 5 inches high, and weighs a bit over 32 ounces. The Amigo has a 4140 steel frame and slide, and can be had in deep blue or hard chrome finishes.

The company also catalogs the American Classic 22, a 33-ounce 1911-style pistol chambered for 22 Long Rifle. The pistol is offered with a matte blue finish, and has a 10-round magazine.

American Classic pistols are imported by Eagle Imports of Wannamassa, NJ.

Armalite

The Armalite pistol line has new adjustable-sight variants. The 15-shot AR-24 and the 13-shot AR-24K now are available with precision adjustable sights. The new variants are cataloged as the AR-24-15C Combat Custom and the AR-24K-13C Combat Custom Compact.

All the AR-24 pistols are chambered for the 9mm cartridge, and are based largely on the CZ 75 design. They are made with close tolerances. Weights are about 35 ounces for the full-size and 33 ounces for the compact. The new adjustable-sight variants also have nicely-checked grip front and back straps. I had the chance to shoot both of the adjustable-sight variants, and was impressed with the triggers while firing single-action.

Armstrong

Armstrong president Martin Tuason points out that according to industry production records, the Philippine manufacturer is the largest maker of 1911 pistols in the entire world. Pretty nice to be able to say that, on the 1911's 100th anniversary. In the United States, Armstrong pistols are generally marketed under the Rock Island Armory name.

Several new Armstrong variants were produced during 2011.

The 1911 – Tactical 2011 features a frame with the forward portion, called by some the dust cover, extended forward to the end of the slide. The extended frame is equipped with a longer Picatinny rail. The new pistol is available with MeproLite night sights.

An interesting new pistol is the 1911–Micromag. The full-size gun comes with two barrels: 9mm and .22 TCM.



A 33-ounce 1911-style 22-caliber pistol was introduced by American Classic.



The full-size Armalite AR-24 is available with a new adjustable rear sight.



Armstrong pistols will be available in .22 TCM chambering. The bottleneck high-velocity 22-caliber cartridges are shown with a prototype pistol.



The Armstrong 22 TCM, left, is the latest high-velocity 22-caliber pistol cartridge offered. Others are the 22 WMR and the FN 5.7x28mm. A 9mm cartridge is on the right for comparison.

The .22 TCM (.22 Tuason Craig Magnum) cartridge is an Armscor development. It uses a 22-caliber jacketed bullet in a shortened .223 Remington case. The overall length of the 22 TCM is a bit longer than that of the 9mm, but is close enough to work in their 9mm magazine. The case base diameters are close, and the pressure levels are similar. Thus, the gun can be switched from one caliber to another with just a barrel change. The double-column magazine holds 18 rounds of either cartridge.

The new XT22 offered this year is the final development of the prototype 1911 .22 LR target pistol pictured on these pages last year. Like the prototype, the final design has an open-top slide. The blowback XT22 weighs 38 ounces and comes with a 15-round magazine. Trigger pull is set at a light 3.5 pounds.

To celebrate the 100th year of the 1911, Armscor has issued a very limited edition, the Centennial Elite. The engraved gun has both frame and slide fully gold-plated.

ATI

American Tactical Imports continues to become a bigger player in the world of semiautomatic pistols. A number of imported and domestic handguns were offered.

The .22 LR pistol, the GSG-1911, made by German Sporting Guns, was introduced last year too late to get into the 2010 catalog. It is now in good production, with shipping well under way by early 2011. It is offered with variations in grips, and with an optional Picatinny rail on the frame. All GSG-1911 pistols have threaded barrels. In keeping with the interest in the centennial of the 1911 design, a commemorative GSG-1911 was introduced. The gloss-blue commemorative guns come with a matching knife. An appropriate legend (wording not available at press time) appears on the slide. Only 1,911 were scheduled for production.

A line of FX 1911 pistols are offered in traditional .45 ACP chambering. Prototypes were displayed last year, and now eight production variants exist. The Military is a full-size basic “wartime” pistol with updated specifications. The Thunderbolt is an enhanced full-size variant with adjustable sights and a rail. The (oddly named) GI model is a 4.25-inch commander-size pistol with burr hammer and beavertail tang. The GI Enhanced has Novak sights. The Titan

is a short gun with a barrel about 3.4 inches long (company literature lists several conflicting lengths and I didn’t get a chance to measure it) and shorter grip frame. The Titan SS is a similar pistol in stainless steel. The Fat Boy is a further shortened double-column pistol with a 3.2-inch barrel. It is offered in two versions—10-round and 12-round. By January 2011, the Fat Boy pistols had been BATF approved, but were not ready for shipping at that time. ATI plans to come out with additional ported and stainless FX variants. The ATI FX 1911 pistols are made in the Philippines by Shooters Arms Manufacturers (SAM).

The US-made FMK 9mm double-action pistol was introduced two years ago by EMF. Now, a new Generation 2-inch version is offered by ATI. Recall that the Bill of Rights was engraved on each pistol. Now, it is also available without the inscriptions, if an owner so desires. The new FMK Model 9C1B has a 4-inch barrel and comes with two 10-round magazines.

Auto-Ordnance

The 100th anniversary of the 1911 was commemorated by Auto-Ordnance. The A-O Anniversary Edition 1911 is a .45 ACP, made in the style of the World War II 1911A1. The 5-inch special pistol is blued and has checkered wood grips. In keeping with its GI heritage, it is made with vertical slide serrations and has a lanyard loop. Engraving on the right slide flat reads, in three lines: *1911 45 ACP / 1911 – 2011 / 100 Years*.

Auto-Ordnance is part of Kahr Arms. (See Kahr)

Beretta

The Beretta Px4 Storm Compact, introduced on these pages last year, filled the gap between the full-size 4-inch-barrel Storm and the 3-inch Sub-compact. As of early 2011, the Compact was in full production.

Beretta has developed a new 17-round 9mm magazine that will fit all the existing Model 92 pistols, giving extra capacity. Still not enough? The company also offers an extended 20-round magazine. It protrudes below the bottom of the grip but works with all the 92-series guns.

The little .32 ACP Tomcat now has an optional new sighting system. A large round-bead front sight and a shallow V rear sight is now available. This is sometimes called the “Express” sighting system. The new Tomcat variant using it is called the Alley Cat.

Bersa

The Argentine Bersa company is finally getting its first polymer-frame pistol into its line. The slim new BP CC 9, a thin 9mm for concealed carry, was announced two years ago and has now made it into the catalog. Availability was scheduled for April 2011. With a tilting-barrel locking system and short-reset DAO trigger mechanism, the new pistol is less than an inch wide. Weight is 21.5 ounces, with a 3.3-inch barrel. Size is 6.3 inches long by 4.8 inches high, so a bit sticks out from under a 4x6 index card. The extra length is put to good use: Capacity of the BP CC 9 is 8+1.

Browning

John M. Browning designed the Colt pistol that was finalized as the 1911 US service pistol. So, the Browning company certainly could have been expected to bring out their own commemorative 1911 during the year of 2011. And so they did – in a way.

Instead of producing a full-size .45, Browning decided to scale the design down 15% and make it into a .22. Looking almost exactly like a tiny 1911A1, the new Browning 1911-22 is an attention-getter because it is a cute little thing.

All the controls work exactly as they do on the full-size 1911. The 15-ounce pistol is a blowback, as would be expected, but Browning avoided the temptation to use an external extractor. The grip safety, manual safety, slide release and magazine release all work as do the original. Although I did not get to disassemble one, I was told that the take-down procedure is the same as the original.

Slide and frame are of aluminum alloy, with a matte blue finish. The slide has the original vertical grasping grooves. Grips are checkered brown composite. The A1 model has a 4.25-inch barrel (about the same scale as a 5-inch original) and a Compact 3.63-inch version was also offered. Each pistol made during the first year of production includes a certificate of authenticity and a special commemorative zippered pistol rug.

The little Browning 1911 feels good in the hand, a bit like the old Llama pocket pistols of decades ago. Those small Llama pistols were popular, in part, because they looked and worked like “little 45s.” The little Browning 1911-22 may well achieve its own popularity.



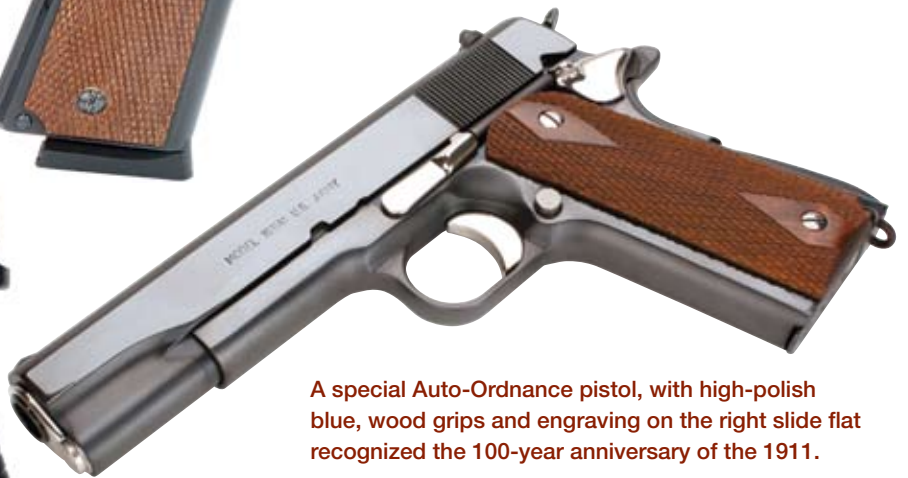
ATI's GSG1911 is a full-size German-made 22-caliber 1911.



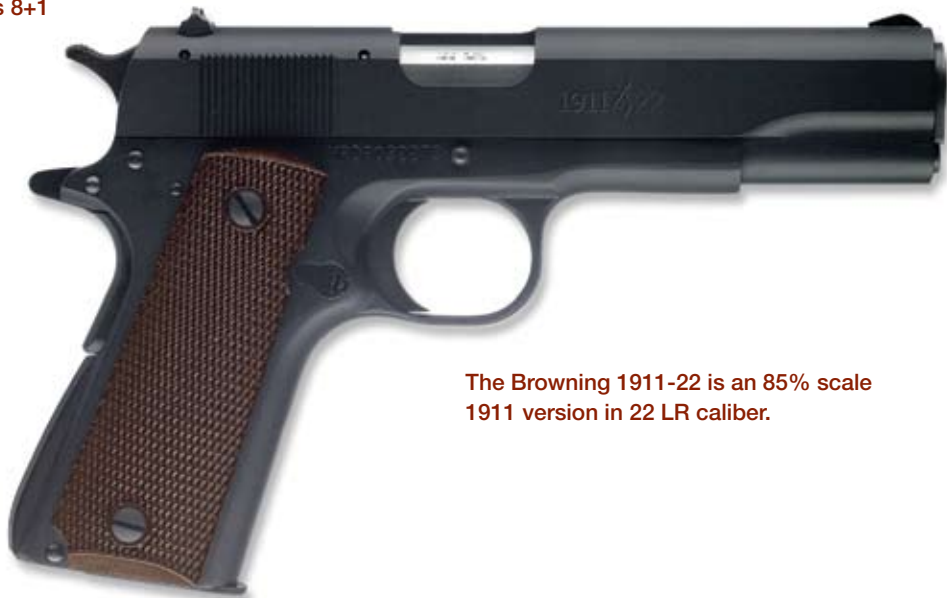
The FX Titan is a short variant of the FX 1911 line that ATI carries.



Bersa's first polymer-frame pistol, the BP9CC, is a bit larger than other subcompact 9mm pistols, but offers 8+1 capacity.



A special Auto-Ordnance pistol, with high-polish blue, wood grips and engraving on the right slide flat recognized the 100-year anniversary of the 1911.



The Browning 1911-22 is an 85% scale 1911 version in 22 LR caliber.



The Century International C93 Sport Pistol is based on the HK33 action, chambered for .223 Rem.

Century International Arms

Century International Arms has celebrated its 50th anniversary! The company's Colefire semiautomatic pistol, based on the Sterling submachinegun, was introduced last year in 7.62x25mm chambering. Now, it is also available in 9mm. Although surplus 7.62x25 is currently the least expensive pistol ammunition on the market, many shooters prefer the 9mm. Now they have a choice.

Century, in January 2011, also introduced two large unconventional pistols. These long-range pistols are chambered for intermediate rifle cartridges.

The Centurian 39 (C39) is based on the AK action, and is chambered for the 7.62x39mm cartridge. It has a polymer stock and magazine and has accessory rails and a flash hider. Although the AK system was developed elsewhere, the C39 is 100% American-made, manufactured in Fridley, MN.

The C93 Sport Pistol is another large pistol based on a rifle action, this time the HK33, but is chambered for the 223 (5.56mm) cartridge. Century feels this is a nice alternative to long-range 223-caliber pistols based on the AR platform. Two 40-round magazines come with each pistol.

These two long-range pistols were added to the line too late to appear in the Century catalog, but were displayed at the January 2011 SHOT Show.



Century International's US-made Centurian 7.62x39 long-range pistol is based on the AK action.

Chiappa

Introduced here two years ago, Chiappa's Model 1911-22 pistols, in several variants, have been well-received.

For this year, Chiappa's offering is another 22-caliber pistol. However, this one is an unconventional pistol based on the US M4 Carbine. The Chiappa M four-22 has familiar AR-15 style controls and comes with a 6-inch barrel. Two 28-round magazines are furnished with each pistol, which should keep a shooter plinking for some time. It has a "quad-rail" forearm that allows mounting of a number of accessories.

Displayed at the January 2011 SHOT Show was a prototype M9-22 pistol. The 22-caliber pistol is a visual replica of the M9 9mm US service pistol. When it becomes available, the M9-22 is planned to come with a 5-inch barrel and a 10-round magazine, with either wood or black plastic grips.

Chiappa pistols are marketed by MKS Supply of Dayton, Ohio.

Christensen

A brand-new 1911 maker! Christensen Arms, a rifle maker since the mid-1990s, introduced a line of 1911 pistols during the design's 100th anniversary. Offered in four variants, the Christensen 1911s were displayed for the first time at the January 2011 SHOT Show.

All the Christensen pistols have titanium frames, stainless-steel slides and carbon-fiber grips. They all are equipped with beavertail tangs, ambidextrous thumb safeties and Tjicon/Novak sights.

The Classic pistol has a 5-inch barrel. The Tactical 5-inch also has a rail on the front of the frame. The Commander has a full-size frame and shorter 4.29-inch barrel. The Officer has a shortened frame (and a shorter magazine that holds one round less) and a short slide to match its 3.65-inch barrel. All variants were to be offered in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP.

Cimarron

The Cimarron 1911 did not make it into the company's 2011 catalog, but it is in production! Designed for the "Wild Bunch" competition coming into Cowboy Action Shooting, the Cimarron 1911 features a true 1911 frame (no recess cuts behind the trigger). The pistols come in three variants: high-polish blue, nickel, and parkerized.



The Chiappa Mfour-22, a 22 LR-pistol version of the US M4 carbine, was introduced in prototype at the 2011 SHOT Show.



Cimarron's first semiautomatic pistol is a nice 1911, using a true 1911 frame. It is suitable for cowboy-action "Wild Bunch" competition.



A new entry into the 1911 world is the Christensen 1911. Displayed for the first time at the 2011 SHOT Show, this is serial number 32, a commander version.

Colt

Not only was 2011 the 100th anniversary of the 1911, but it is the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Colt company in 1836. Is it any wonder that Colt put substantial emphasis on guns that would commemorate these anniversaries?

There is the “Anniversary I,” a single special 1911 specimen, a one-of-a-kind commemorative. It is a true 1911 — made to 1918 specifications, with extensively



Of course Colt made 100th Anniversary commemoratives. This is the one-of-a-kind “Anniversary I” that was donated to the National Rifle Association.



Colt is back in the Double-Action business with a lightweight Government Model DAO pistol.

engraved frame and slide, with gold inlays. Ivory grips have scrimshaw pictures, with Samuel Colt on the left grip. John M. Browning appears in gold on the right slide flat. Colt donated the unique gun to the National Rifle Association to be auctioned off at the 2011 NRA annual meetings.



A short New Agent DAO pistol with a “trench sight” aiming system gave acceptable results.

The “Anniversary II” is limited to 750 commemorative 1918-specification pistols, featuring high-polish blue with engraving and gold on the slide flats. These guns have Cocobolo grips with gold-plated medallions.

The “Anniversary III” guns are also of 1918 configuration, with special commemorative rollmarks on the slide flats, and “big diamond” grips. No specific number was set; plans were that orders taken before November 30, 2011 would be filled.

As if that were not enough to commemorate the 1911, Colt planned that, during the year of 2011, all the Series '70, 1991, XSE, New Agent, Rail Gun and Defender pistols – an estimated 75% of the modern 1911 lines – have a special rollmark (“100 Years of Service”) on the right slide flat.

Colt didn't just sit back and make commemoratives. The double-action-only variants quietly announced last year are now production items. Colt's previous foray into double action, the Double Eagle, did not meet great success for several reasons. Among them, they really didn't look like 1911s, and would not fit into most holsters designed for 1911s. The new double-actions proudly display their 1911 heritage. I got a chance to shoot the two variations now offered: the full-size lightweight Government Model 45, and the trench-sight New Agent DAO 45. I was impressed, positively, with the way they handled and shot. Even the 3-inch trench-sight variant (with only a sighting groove on the slide) demonstrated better accuracy than I had expected.

There is a new family of 22-caliber Colt 1911 pistols, provided by Umarex USA. The variants include a 22 Government Model, and adjustable-sight Gold Cup Trophy and a Rail Gun version. They are made under license in Germany.

Before concealed-carry became widespread, Colt was ahead of the times in the small .380 field. Many were sorry to see the nice little Colt Mustang .380 go out of production. They will be glad that one variant is back in the line. The aluminum-frame Mustang Pocketlite 380 has a stainless-steel slide, a 2.75-inch barrel and 6+1 capacity. Too late to get into the 2011 catalog, the little Mustang was scheduled for summer 2011 production.

Oh, yes, there are also 175th Anniversary guns. However, they are revolvers, so you'll have to read about them elsewhere.



The Colt “Anniversary II” is limited to 750 pistols.

Cylinder & Slide

Pistolsmith Bill Laughridge of Cylinder & Slide is building true 1911 pistols representative of the first 500 ever made. In an amazing job of research, the dimensions of verified original parts and old blueprints have been documented. The research extended to the tools and procedures used to make the parts. The final pistol is as close to an “original” 1911 of the 1911-1912 period as can be made. Polishing and bluing

methods match the originals as closely as possible.

Laughridge planned for 115 commemorative reproduction 1911 pistols to be made during 2011. The schedule of production: 100 pistols marked MODEL 1911 US ARMY; 10 marked MODEL 1911 US NAVY; and FIVE marked MODEL 1911 USMC. Laughridge noted with a smile that there never were any original pistols marked for the Marine Corps, but reckoned rightly that some Marines would want one with that legend!



Cylinder & Slide's authentic recreation of an early (1911-1912) production 1911.



The CZ Czechmate upper-level competition pistol can be used for either Limited or Open competition. Here it is in "Limited" form.



Replace the barrel, add the red-dot sights, and the CZ Czechmate is ready for "Open" competition.



The Dan Wesson Guardian is now available in .45 ACP.

CZ

CZ's 9mm pistol line, based largely on the famous Czech CZ 75, has two new additions.

The CZ single-action Czechmate is an upper-level competition pistol. It comes configured for IPSC/USPSA Open division competition, with a compensator and C-More red dot sight installed. However, it also has an extra fitted barrel and metallic sights that allow it to be switched to Limited division configuration. A "big stick" 26-round magazine and three 20-round magazines are included. The undercut trigger guard and high-mounted beavertail allow a high grip.

The CZ 75 SP-01 Shadow Custom is built by the CZ Custom Shop. Similar to the existing Shadow Target, the new SP-01 Shadow Custom has a fixed competition rear sight, slim aluminum grips, and comes with a two-tone (blue slide/nickel frame) finish. 19-round magazines are furnished.

CZ also markets pistols under the Dan Wesson name.

Dan Wesson

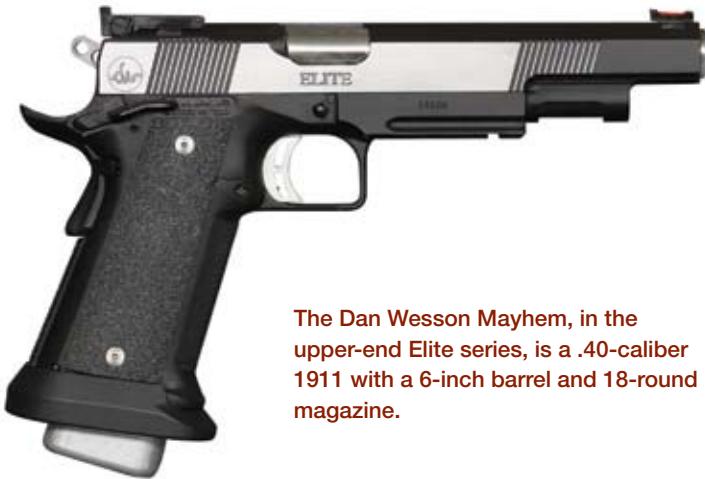
The Dan Wesson Guardian pistol, introduced here last year, is now a production item. A light Commander-size 1911 pistol, it has a bobtail grip frame treatment. Introduced in 2010 as a 9mm, the Guardian is now available in 45 ACP chambering.

Dan Wesson's new upper-end 1911 Elite Series comprises four different pistols. They offer an interesting choice for competition and combat shooters. The Titan is a 10mm, holding an 18- or 21-round magazine, and using a 4.25-inch barrel. The Mayhem is a long 6-inch-barrel 40 S&W with an 18-round magazine. The Havoc in 9mm has a 4.25-inch barrel and holds a 21-round magazine. A similar Havoc model is also available as a 38 Super. The two Havoc variants can also use available 24-, 27- or 29-round magazines.

Diamondback

The 8.8-ounce Diamondback 380, introduced on these pages in the last edition, now has been joined by other models. Diamondback, a relatively new Florida company, has joined other makers offering a subcompact 9mm pistol.

The new 9mm, the DB9, is slightly larger than the 380, but only slightly. With its 3-inch barrel, the new 9mm



The Dan Wesson Mayhem, in the upper-end Elite series, is a .40-caliber 1911 with a 6-inch barrel and 18-round magazine.



The Diamondback DB9 weighs 11 ounces and has 6+1 capacity. (right view)



The new DoubleStar Combat Pistol is the company's first 1911 without a frame rail.



New Diamondback pistols are now offered in 9mm (left) and .32 NAA (center). The original 380 is on the right for comparison.

weighs just 11 ounces. Width is just over three-quarters of an inch, at .080". The small locked-breech 9mm DB9 has 6+1 capacity.

The subcompact 9 is not the only new item from Diamondback. Another new model, the DB320 was announced in the rip-snorting .32 NAA caliber, which drives a 32-caliber bullet out of a short barrel at around 1200 feet per second. Regular readers may remember that the 32 NAA cartridge was introduced in the 2003 edition by North American Arms for its Guardian pistol. NAA essentially necked down a .380 case to put a larger powder charge behind a 32-caliber JHP bullet. It is good to have another factory pistol for this interesting cartridge, which is loaded by Cor-Bon. The locked-breech DB320 weighs only 8.8 ounces and has a 2.8-inch barrel. Like the 380 and 9mm pistols, it has 6+1 capacity.

DoubleStar

Recall that DoubleStar began its 1911 program by making rail-equipped frames. Then, three years ago, they introduced a complete 45-caliber pistol built on that frame. They eventually realized that not everyone needs or wants an accessory rail, so in early 2011, the company offered its Combat Pistol either with or without a rail frame. Equipped with Novak sights and a Novak 8-round magazine, the new rail-less DoubleStar pistol has 25 lpi checkering on the frame.

Ed Brown

Two Ed Brown 1911 Centennials were to be made only during 2011. The Classic Custom Centennial is blued, with engraved slide and frame, jeweled barrel and Trulvory grips. The Executive Centennial is a similar gun without the

engraving. On the left slide flat appeared the legend, "Centennial Edition 1911-2011."

Among the new offerings in the regular line is a Lightweight Kobra Carry, an aluminum-frame pistol with thin wood grips.

EMF

Recall that, two years ago, EMF added semiautomatic pistol to their line. The Hartford 1911 pistol line was American-made, in Tennessee. This has changed. The 1911 guns are still made in America, but are now made by JPS Manufacturing in Scottsdale, AZ. As the new guns are phased in, EMF will start with one variation, a simple basic model 1911. It will have a dovetailed front sight.

The JR Carbine, an innovative pistol-caliber carbine, was introduced last year and is in full production. The JR Carbine is available in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. The guns can be adapted to use different pistol magazines.



FNH-USA's new polymer-frame FNP-45 Competition pistol has a fiber-optic front sight and frame rail.



The Turkish Girsan firm is providing their MC1911 for US sales.

FNH USA

The FNP-45 Competition pistol is a new addition to FN's 45-caliber pistol line. The new gun is designed for major-caliber action pistol shooting. It comes with a fiber-optic front sight and an accessory rail. The slide has a removable top plate so that optical sights can be mounted.

The FNP-45 Competition is a conventional-double-action pistol. It is offered with a black finish and weighs 33 ounces. Magazine capacity is 15 rounds. Each pistol comes with three 15-round magazines and a black nylon case.

Girsan

Last year, this report made the first introduction of the Turkish Girsan 1911 pistols. Now, SAMCO has been named as the importer, and plans were for the first guns to be imported into the United States during 2011.

The Girsan MC 1911 is a nicely made full-size 1911. Caliber is, of course, .45 ACP, and specifications are traditional for this gun. Magazine capacity is extended to eight rounds. A variant with an accessory rail will be offered as the Model MC 1911 S.

Glock

Glock pistols have been available in the United States for 25 years. To commemorate this achievement, the company offered a special 25th anniversary Limited Edition Glock 17 pistol. Recall that the Model 17 was the first Glock pistol imported into America, and this special gun is the latest "Gen4" variant. The top of the slide bears the legend, "25 Years of Glock Perfection in USA." Special "25 Years" medallions are inset into the grip frame. Plans were to make only 2500 of this particular variation.



Shooter Karen Curry tries out the full-size Gen4 Glock 34.



The special 25th Anniversary Glock is a Gen4 Model 17 with a special insert in the grip. Gen4 pistols have interchangeable grip straps.



The 9mm Goncz Hi-Tech Pistol, unavailable for some years, may be handled by the new TWA company.



The High Standard Duramatic Plinker, long unavailable, has returned to production, in improved form.

The commemorative Glock 17 is a Generation 4 (Gen4) pistol. Recall that Gen4 treatment was introduced last year, available on the 40-caliber Glock 22. Now, ten Gen4 pistols are available, including 8 variants of 9mm and 40 S&W pistols, and one each of 357 SIG and 45 GAP. The new Generation 4 modifications include three interchangeable backstraps, a reversible magazine release (about 30% larger), a dual recoil spring assembly, and an improved gripping surface, referred to as tactile squares, forming a Rough Textured Frame (RTF). Because of the reversible magazine catch feature, Gen4 magazines have two notches on the opposite sides of the magazine body, so they will work both ways. A small “Gen4” notation follows the model number on the left slide flat of the new pistols.

High Standard

The High Standard Duramatic “Plinker” is back. High Standard is back in the moderately-priced 22-caliber auto-loader field with the renewed production of the innovative little pistol.

The pistol is not a new design. It was produced by High Standard as one of the inexpensive utilitarian .22 semiautos introduced during the years following World War II. (The others were the Ruger and Whitney designs.) The High Standard Duramatic (later called the Plinker) was also sold by Sears (mail-order, in those innocent days) as the J.C. Higgins model 88.

The design was innovative. The barrel was attached to the upper front part of the frame, forward of the trigger guard, by a screw with a large head. The entire grip frame assembly also was attached by a long screw to the lower rear part of the frame. This system was later used by Beretta for its 22-caliber NEOS pistol.

Because the original High Standard pistol had originally gone by two different names, the rejuvenated company decided to cover all bases and use both names. The new gun is referred to as the High Standard Duramatic “Plinker.” A few improvements have been made: the barrel screw, for instance, now tightens with an allen wrench instead of finger pressure.

The Duramatic Plinker has a 4.5-inch barrel and weighs 34 ounces. It is 8.5 inches long and 4.75 inches high. The magazine holds 10 rounds.



The Hi-Point .45 ACP carbine is finally a reality. Here is a shot of one of the first ones, gussied up with front grip, scope and holder for extra magazines.



Glock-styled ISSC 22-caliber pistols are now available with colored frames. This one has a Desert Camo (tan) frame.



This is one of the first 100 new Lthaca 1911 production pistols, displayed at the 2011 SHOT Show.

Hi-Point

The 45-caliber Hi-Point Carbine is finally available! After being promised for some time, the new 45 was displayed at the January 2011 SHOT Show.

Hi-Point Carbines began with the 9mm version. Then a .40 S&W carbine was added. Now, the family is complete with the .45 ACP variant. The 45 carbine uses the same magazine as the Hi-Point 45-caliber pistol, so will also have 9+1 capacity. The Model number is 4595TS. The TS stands for "target stock," and the carbine features Hi-Point's new stock with recoil-absorbing buttpad and plenty of rails.

A conversion stock to update previous 9mm and 40-caliber carbines is also available.

HK

Heckler & Koch is offering two new variants of their P30 pistol. The P30S has an external thumb safety. The pistol is fitted with right and left ambidextrous safety levers.

The P30L, which has a barrel and slide that are 1/2-inch longer than those of the standard P30, was previously available only in 9mm chambering. It now is offered in .40 S&W also.

I O, Inc.

The IO Hellcat, a small 380 with a polymer frame and milled slide, was introduced here last year. By early 2011, it had achieved full production and widespread distribution. A few variations have appeared along the way. A stainless-steel slide is an option, and

a finger-rest magazine is now available. Besides basic black, frames are now also offered in olive drab and in pink (a kinder, gentler Hellcat?).

IO also offers large unconventional long-range pistols based on the AK design. One is in 7.62x39mm. Another is in 223, and a clever magazine release allows use of AK- or AR-type magazines.

ISSC

The Austrian ISSC 22-caliber pistol looks quite a bit like a Glock with a hammer. It went into production last year and now has several modifications.

Shallow cuts were made on the slide to reduce reciprocating slide weight. Also, subtle differences were made on the frame. These make the pistol feel a bit more like a Glock. Cosmetic options are now offered. Previously offered only with black frames, now they are available in Blush (pink) and Desert Camo (tan) colors.

ITHACA

Last year, Ithaca displayed prototypes of a 1911 pistol. By January 2011, the pistol was going into production, and Ithaca was taking orders. Some of the first 100 manufactured were on display at the 2011 SHOT Show. Full production was anticipated during the first quarter of the year.

Recall that Ithaca was one of the three major producers of 1911A1 pistols during WWII. Ithaca pistol production was third, only behind Remington-Rand and Colt. My first .45 was an Ithaca 1911A1 purchased through the Director of Civilian Marksmanship, so I must admit I have a soft spot in my heart for Ithaca-made 1911 handguns. It is good to have the company back in the pistol business.

Iver Johnson

Rails are in, and Iver Johnson has introduced a new 45-caliber 1911, the Eagle LR (for "Light Rail"), with a Picatinny rail on the forward part of the frame. Iver Johnson 1911 pistols have forged slides and CNC-machined cast frames. They are assembled in the Philippines by SAM, then sent to the United States for enhancements and finishing by IJ. All guns come with Big Diamond wood grips that also have the old Iver Johnson Owl Head logo in the middle.

An interesting concept from IJ is furnishing completely-assembled upper

assemblies (slide, barrel and all contained parts) and lower assemblies (frame and all contained parts) as separate units for shooters who want to create something special. Iver Johnson also offers .22 LR conversion kits for 1911 pistols, with either fixed or adjustable sights. Complete IJ 22-caliber 1911 pistols were anticipated to be in the line by mid-2011.

Kahr

Kahr Arms now offers 1911-type pistols under the Auto-Ordnance, Thompson and Magnum Research names (See Magnum Research). The 100th anniversary of the 1911 was commemorated by a special Auto-Ordnance pistol. (See Auto-Ordnance),

Under the Kahr name, several new pistols were introduced in early 2011. Laser sights are becoming more popular as more people avail themselves of the option of concealed carry. Now, two Kahr models, the P380 (.380 ACP) and PM45 (.45 ACP) are available with Crimson Trace Laserguard laser devices. The lasers are adjustable for windage and elevation.

The P380 has a 2.5-inch barrel, a black polymer frame and matte stainless-steel slide. The PM45 is a larger gun with a 3-inch barrel, made of similar materials. The lasers mount forward of the trigger guard, and Kahr offers holsters designed to fit the new guns.

The Kahr P380 now has a new California-legal variant. The gun has a loaded-chamber indicator and a magazine disconnect to comply with California regulations.

Kahr also introduced a new line of CM series pistols, designed as value-priced carry guns. They started with the CM9, a true subcompact 9mm. With a polymer frame and stainless slide, the CM9 can be thought of as a less-expensive PM9. The differences found in the CM9 include conventional rifled barrels, fewer machining operations on the slide, simpler markings, a pinned front sight, and only one magazine furnished. These features allow a lower price range. The subcompact CM9 is 6+1, weighs less than 16 ounces, and measures 4x5.3 inches.



The new Kahr PM45 comes with a Crimson Trace Laserguard laser sight.



The Kel-Tec PMR30 (left view), introduced in the last edition, is in full production. The 30-shot .22 Magnum is large but weighs less than 14 ounces.

Kel-Tec

Kel-Tec's light 30-shot .22 Magnum pistol, the PMR-30, was introduced last year. It seems to have been well-received. The 13.6-ounce large-capacity pistol rapidly achieved full production. By the January 2011 SHOT Show, the PMR-30 was joined by a rifle version, the RMR-30. The 3.8-pound carbine uses many of the same internal parts as the pistol and uses the same 30-round magazine. The RMR-30 has a collapsible shoulder stock, and the 16-inch barrel is threaded to accept various muzzle attachments.

Recall that Kel-Tec was an early manufacturer in the true subcompact 9mm niche. Its P-11 (10+1) and PF-9 (7+1)

pistols have remained in continuous production since their introduction.

Kimber

Kimber decided to make only 250 cased sets of special pistols to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1911. The commemoratives sold out so fast that the company turned its attention to the design of a new subcompact 9mm pistol.

That pistol went quickly into production. It was introduced as the “Solo,” an entrant into the new breed of small subcompact pistols for the 9mm cartridge. The Solo, with its 2.7-inch barrel, measures just 3.9x5.5 inches, small enough to hide completely under a 4x6 index card.

The new little pistol doesn't look much like a 1911. However, with Kimber's 1911 experience, it is no surprise that it incorporates a number of 1911 charac-

teristics. The controls – manual safety, slide release and magazine release – are in the same locations as on the 1911. The grip angle is close to the 74-degree angle of the 1911. There are, of course, differences. The safety and magazine release are ambidextrous. The single-action trigger is pivoted in the frame (and actually looks like a double-action trigger). The all-metal pistol weighs 17 ounces. The frame is aluminum, and the slide stainless steel. Two variants were offered—the Solo Carry, with a black frame, and the Solo Carry Stainless, with a silver frame. A neat little pistol.

Kimber also introduced several new variants in its 1911 line. The Ultra + CDP II combines a 3-inch barrel and a full-length grip. The Super Carry pistol line (which features a nicely-rounded rear grip) now has HD (heavy-duty) variants with stainless-steel frames. With all the commemoratives gone, the upgraded Royal II is about as close as one can get. A classic full-size 1911, it has a splendid charcoal blue finish and bone grip panels.

Kriss

Rails are “in” and the Kriss line of carbines, short-barrel rifles and pistols have added accessory rails.

TDI, the parent company of the Kriss guns, will be importing the nicely-made Swiss Sphinx pistols. Availability of the Sphinx in the United States was scheduled for early 2011.

Legacy

New in Legacy Sports International's Citadel line of 1911 pistols is their 22-caliber Target pistol. So new that it did not make it into the 2011 catalog, the new .22 wears Hogue grips and has fiber-optic sights. Previous Legacy 22-caliber 1911s were Chiappa-design pistols marketed under the Puma name. The new pistols will be marketed under the Citadel brand name.

Les Baer

Les Baer Custom did pay homage to 100 years of firearms history. Appropriately named the Centennial, their full-size commemorative gun had “Centennial 1911” engraved on the right slide flat. Charcoal blue finish and real ivory grips made the pistol stand out, and a special presentation box came with each pistol.

To acknowledge the importance of the



The Kimber Solo 9mm (beauty shot)



In the two years since its introduction, the Legacy Citadel has grown into a full line of 1911 variants.

television series, *Shooting USA*, a Baer custom 1911 pistol was made with the “Shooting USA” logo engraved on the right side of the slide.

The new Ultimate Tactical Carry is considered a serious self-defense pistol. Carefully fitted with rounded edges, the gun has slim grips, tritium sights, extended controls and a 4-pound trigger. It is a full-size 5-inch pistol.

Magnum Research

Recall that last year, Magnum Research made news by entering the 1911 field, and by introducing an innovative small .380.

Since last year, the company has been acquired by Kahr Arms. (See Kahr.)

The Magnum Research line of handguns, including the big Desert Eagle .357, .44 and .50 AE pistols, continues under Kahr ownership.

And – a new addition (well, actually a reintroduction) – the “Baby” Desert Eagle is back in the Magnum Research line. The present catalog description is “Baby” Desert Eagle II. These highly-regarded Israeli-designed pistols, based in part on the CZ 75 design, were introduced several decades ago as the Jericho. Imported by different companies at different times, it is the “baby” of the Desert Eagle line. This accounts for the unusual designation for pistols that can weigh up to 40 ounces.

They are offered with either polymer or steel frames, and in full-size (4.5-inch barrel), “semi-compact” (3.9-inch) and compact (3.6-inch) variants. Full-size and semi-compact pistols come standard with accessory rails. Calibers are 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. The .45 chambering is only available in a steel-frame 3.9-inch version.

Dedicated readers may remember that last year the “Baby Desert Eagle” name was used to introduce a new polymer-frame “fast-action” pistol. The pistol is now in production as the MR Eagle. It is available in 9mm and 40 calibers. With 4-inch barrels, the guns weigh about 25 to 26 ounces. The innovative pistols are made with German and American parts, assembled in Minnesota.

Masterpiece Arms

Masterpiece Arms, maker of “MAC-10” type pistols and carbines, now offers very small personal protection pistols.

The new little pistols are offered in .32 Auto and .380 calibers. With a 2-1/4-

inch barrel, the MPA Protector measures just 3.2x4.3 inches. Thus, the little pistol can just about hide completely under a 3x5 index card. Weight for the all-steel, machined pistol is about 11.8 ounces. For such a small pistol, the grip is especially good. On a small scale, it reminds me a bit of the WWII Polish Radom 9mm pistol—the straight front strap and slanty rear strap give a grip that allows good control of the pistol.

Sharp-eyed regular readers of this publication may see something familiar about the MPA Protector. In the 1997 edition, a pistol of similar appearance was introduced by Autauga Arms as the Welsch 32 (named for designer Manfred Welsch). In the following 1998 edition, the pistol was reported in production as the Autauga .32. MPA, then a young company, did the CNC production for Autauga. About 5000 32-caliber pistols were made under the Autauga name before the gun was discontinued.

In 2008, MPA changed ownership. The new owners considered the growing interest in personal protection arms and reevaluated the pistol. The old guns were made from castings; the new MPA pistols are machined from steel billets. Thus, the design is strong enough to handle .380 as well as .32 ammunition.

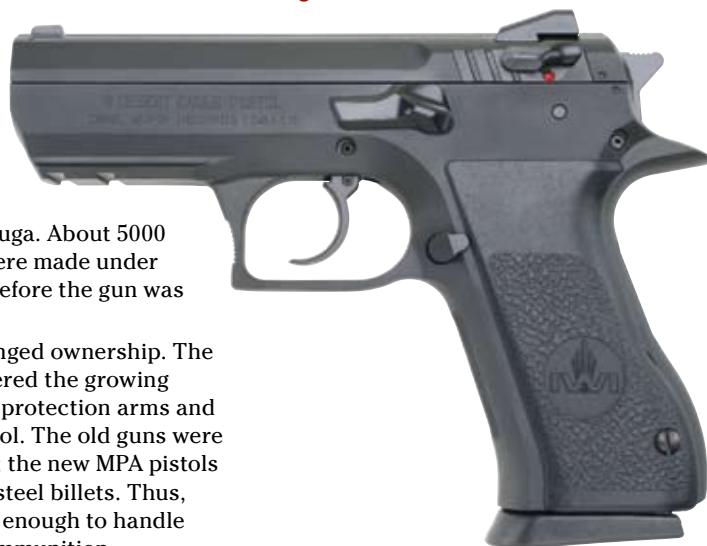
Updated Masterpiece Arms Protector pistols, since February 2011, come with mechanical improvements and a magazine grip extension as well as the flat floorplate. The pistols have a lifetime warranty.

Nighthawk

Nighthawk Custom has offered two 100-Year Anniversary 1911 commemoratives. The Standard Grade was built to resemble the original issue, but with custom fitting. Engraved on both sides of the slide, it has a black Melonite finish. On the right is the Seal of the United States. On the left is engraved, “We the People.” On the right frame appears “100 Years Serving America.”



Magnum Research offers a polymer-frame “fast-action” pistol as the MR Eagle.



The “Baby” Desert Eagle is back. The Israeli pistol is once again offered by Magnum Research.



The new little MPA Protector pistol is offered in both .32 and .380 ACP.



The Nighthawk 1911 Centennial High Grade pistol has a stainless-steel slide with engraving and gold inlays.

Grips are traditional “big diamond” walnut panels, but Nighthawk’s special G10 Centennial grips are optional. Plans were to offer these guns until December 31st, 2011.

The High Grade guns were made to the same specifications, but were built with stainless-steel frames and slides. The engraving is cut after the Melonite finish is applied, so that the stainless steel shows through. Gold inlays include the seal on the right slide, and “We the People” on the left. High Grade guns were limited to a total production of 100.

Will anyone actually shoot such commemoratives? If so, Nighthawk has fitted them with subtly-modified hammers to prevent “hammer bite.”

Olympic Arms

Olympic Arms realized that a polymer frame can be made in just about any color. New variants of the company’s polymer-frame Whitney Wolverine pistol are now available in three different colors. The full-size but lightweight 22-caliber pistols can be had in Coyote Brown, Desert Tan and, to appeal to the ladies, in pink.

PARA USA

Yes, PARA offered a 100th year 1911 commemorative in 2011. In fact, two separate guns were offered. The first is the 1911 100th Anniversary pistol, a fairly traditional pistol with a few modern touches and Cocobolo grips. The second is the 14-45 100th Anniversary gun, more or less commemorating PARA’s first 1911 brought up to 2011 with modern embellishments. It has a double-column light-rail frame, and is gussied up with

beavertail tang, fiber-optic sights and extended controls. Both the 1911 and 2011 pistols are engraved “100th Anniversary” on the right slide flat. Cased sets containing both of the two pistols were in limited production, with only 100 sets being made.

As part of a perhaps unintentional tribute to its first 14-shot pistol, the two PARA Anniversary pistols were just the first two of 14 new 1911 variations offered in 2011. Here are the other 12:

- *G1 LTC, a commander-size 4.25-inch compact version of the G1 Expert.*
- *1911 Wild Bunch pistol, a retro side-arm for SASS “Wild Bunch” competition.*
- *P14-45, a recreation of PARA’s first large-capacity .45 pistol, back in the line.*
- *All-black Warthog, a stubby 10-shot with fiber-optic front sight.*
- *Hawg 7, a slim 3.5-inch variant with a 7-round magazine.*
- *Companion, a 3.5-inch LDA (Light Double Action) .45.*
- *Companion II, a 4.25-inch LDA .45.*
- *1911 Limited, full-size 5-inch .45 with modern enhancements.*
- *14-45 Limited, double-column version of the Limited.*
- *18-9 Limited, a 9mm Limited with 18-round magazine capacity.*
- *LTC Tactical, a 4.25-inch .45 variant with a rail.*
- *14-45 Tactical, a 5-inch double-column .45 with a rail.*



For the growing “Wild Bunch” segment of Cowboy Action Shooting, PARA has introduced – what else? – its Wild Bunch pistol.



Ruger’s new LC9 pistol is a 17-ounce subcompact 9mm with a polymer frame.

Remington

Remington is back in the pistol business!

In the Civil War era, Remington percussion revolvers challenged Colt revolvers. The Old West saw Remington revolvers and derringers. In the 1900s, Remington pocket pistols were highly regarded. Remington (Remington-UMC after 1912) even submitted a prototype 45-caliber pistol for government tests in 1917. After America entered WWI, Remington-UMC manufactured 1911 pistols in 1918, delivering 21,677 before the Armistice cancelled the contract. (Note that a name-related business-machine company, Remington-Rand, also made 1911A1 pistols during WWII). However, Remington-UMC dropped pocket pistol production in 1934, and never made another pistol—until now.

Now, 1911 pistols with the Remington name are in production again. Named the 1911R1, the new Remington was a mixture of 1911 and 1911A1 and modern features. The standard 1911R1 came with flat mainspring housing and big-diamond grips (1911), a narrow hammer and short trigger (1911A1) and flared, lowered ejection port and high 3-dot sights (modern). The company also offered an Enhanced version with beavertail tang, adjustable fiber-optic sights and other niceties.

And, of course, there were not one, but two, commemorative versions. The 1911R1 Centennial was scheduled to be offered only during 2011. It featured special engraving on the slide and special grips with a Remington medallion. The 1911R1 Centennial Limited Edition (only 300 of these to be made) was highly polished, charcoal blued, and with an engraved and gold-inlaid slide. The Limited Edition had smooth walnut grips, and was offered in a walnut presentation case.

Remington has been a major supplier of rifles and shotguns. It is good to have them back in the pistol business.

Rohrbaugh

Rohrbaugh's line of light subcompact 9mm and 380-caliber pistols continues to be popular. However, the company has something else in the works: a .45 ACP of entirely new design. I don't have any details now. Watch this space.

Ruger

The downsized 380-caliber Ruger LCP proved to be popular, so why not a

downsized 9mm? The LC9 (Light Compact 9) was thus formally introduced in January 2011. Ruger's new subcompact 9 has a 3.12-inch barrel and weighs 17 ounces. Height and length are 4.5x6 inches. Thus, the LC9 can almost hide under a 4x6 index card. (All right, the grip sticks out a little.) Flat and extended floorplates are furnished for the LC9 magazine, which holds 7 rounds.

The little .380 LCP, by the way, is now also available with a Crimson Trace Laserguard. Weight goes up from 9.4 ounces to only 10 ounces.

The full-size 9mm polymer pistol, the SR9, has been joined by a .40 S&W, variant, logically called the SR40. Barrel length is 4.14 inches, and the pistol measures about 5.5x7.5 inches. The SR40 comes with either 15+1 or 10+1 capacity. The original SR9 is now available in an all-black version.

In the 22-caliber pistol line, the polymer-frame 22/45 pistols were available with nice-looking thin checkered Cocobolo grips. Threaded barrels (1/2x28 thread) are available on some models, with the threads protected with a removable cap. These threaded barrels can accept a number of muzzle accessories.

SIG-Sauer

SIG-Sauer introduced a number of new models and variants of existing models at the 2011 SHOT Show.

Let's start with their brand-new subcompact 9mm, the P290. Weighing in at about 20 ounces with its 2.9-inch barrel, the P290 measures 3.9x5.5 inches, easily hiding under a 4x6 index card. Capacity

is 6+1. The new subcompact is a polymer-frame, double-action-only, hammer-fired pistol with a tilting-barrel locking system. Siglite night sights are standard. A number of options are also available. An integrated laser module fits right in front of the trigger guard. Replacement grip inserts of wood, aluminum or polymer can slide right into frame slots. An extended 8-round magazine is also offered. The P290 is available in black Nitron or two-tone finishes.

SIG-Sauer recognized the 100th anniversary of the 1911 by introducing new "Traditional" 1911 models. Recall that when the company introduced its 1911 line in 2004, the pistols were basic modern 1911s. The slides, however, were modified to give the 1911 a more Teutonic look, resembling the slides of other SIG-Sauer pistols. Now, the Traditional series looks more, well... traditional, with round-top, flat-sided slides. "SIG SAUER 1911" appears on the left forward portion of the slide.

A new 1911-22 was also introduced. The new 22 LR pistol uses the "Traditional" slide form.

A number of modifications were offered in the popular, long-running P226 / P229 series pistols. Introduced as Extreme and Enhanced Elite guns, they offer new niceties. Some have strangely added an unneeded, but trendy, beavertail tang.

Old-timers may rejoice! The beautiful single-action Model P210 has quietly returned to the SIG-Sauer lineup. It has been slightly modified with some modern features. The big 37-ounce 9mm carries 8 rounds in its single-column magazine.



The SIG-Sauer 1911-22 is built with the new "traditional" slide.

SIG-Sauer recognized the 100th Anniversary of the 1911 with its "traditional" pistols.

Smith & Wesson

Introduced last year, several of S&W's semiauto pistol offerings are in full production now. Among these are the little Bodyguard 380 and the M&P Pro Series guns. Smith & Wesson considered the Pro Series to be intermediate between the regular line and the Custom Shop pistols.

Newly-introduced at the 2011 SHOT Show were several new items:

The M&P 22, a polymer-frame .22 LR lookalike for the centerfire M&P pistols. Made by Walther in Germany for S&W, the M&P 22 comes with either a 10-round or 12-round magazine.

The S&W M&P 22 allows 22 LR practice with an M&P-frame pistol.



S&W offers a Carry and Range Kit, which has an M&P pistol, extra magazines, pouch, loader, holster and carry case.



For the S&W SD pistols, a Home Defense Kit is available, with a pistol, two magazines, a pistol light and a nano-vault.



Some shooters want a light attached to their pistols, and Smith & Wesson now offers an S&W-brand pistol light.



The S&W M&P Pro Series pistols are in production, featuring improved sights and triggers

The SD (Self Defense) polymer-frame pistols.

Available in 9mm or .40 S&W, they have Tritium front sights and Picatinny rails. The guns are also available in a special SD Home Defense Kit. The kit includes a 9mm or 40-caliber pistol with two magazines, a small Nano-Vault with cable and keys, and an S&W pistol light to fit the rail.

The M&P pistol is also available in a Carry & Range Kit. This kit has a carry case, a 9 or .40 M&P pistol, three magazines, a holster, magazine pouch, magazine loader and ear plugs.

The SW1911 pistols are available now in a new Enhanced "E" Series. They have "fish-scale" front and rear slide grasping areas, frame checkering and titanium firing pins. A number of "E" variants are offered. Depending on model, the enhanced pistols may have Tritium sights, square or round butt, or an accessory rail. Barrel lengths available are 5 or 4.25 inches.

Springfield

Springfield Armory has two new pistols, a new 1911 variant and a new polymer-frame XD variant.

The 1911 is the Range Officer 45. The concept seems to have been to provide a basic gun, without a lot of frills, built to the same standards as Springfield's top competition pistols. A shooter could

leave it as is, or modify it to his liking as his skill improved. The Range Officer is a full-size 5-inch 45, with a forged steel frame and slide. The 40-ounce pistol has an adjustable long trigger, with a 5- to 6-pound pull. A very nice adjustable rear sight, a beavertail tang, match barrel and a beveled magazine well complete the package. Finish is parkerized, and there are no ambidextrous controls. The Range Officer comes with gear: a plastic carry box, holster and magazine pouch, a cleaning rod and two 7-round magazines.

The XD(M) Compact was added to the polymer-frame XD line. Recall that the XD(M)3.8 was added to Springfield's polymer lineup last year. The new Compact is essentially the 3.8 with a shorter grip to make it a smaller package for concealed carry. But wouldn't it be nice to have the magazine capacity of the larger grip? Ah, Springfield has solved that problem. The 9mm XD(M) Compact comes with a 13-round magazine that fills the grip. It also comes with a 19-round magazine that has a grip extension attached. The gun weighs an ounce more (from 26 to 27 ounces) with the "MagX-Tension." It is also offered in .40 S&W.



The S&W SW1911 E-series guns (think "enhanced") have a number of embellishments. Look for the "E" on the grips.



Firearms writer Magali Compagnon shoots the Springfield XD(M) Compact. The "MagX-Tension" offers a full-size grip.



Malloy liked the rear sight on Springfield's Range Officer 45, and the gun performed well on the firing line.



The Steyr “S” series pistols feature shorter barrels and grip frames.



The Taurus 1911 Anniversary pistol is a basic .45 with an engraved slide.

Steyr

The modern Steyr pistols are back. The Steyr guns have received acclaim for their natural pointing characteristics. Now, the trigger systems have been improved to a new reset action system. A roller mechanism makes for a better pull and a shorter reset. The loaded chamber indicator is now on the extractor.

Offered in 9mm and .40 S&W, the pistols were offered as the M-A1 (think M for “medium”) with a 4-inch barrel, and S-A1 (think “smaller”) with a 3.6-inch barrel. Weight runs about 26-27 ounces, depending on model.

STI

STI International went into the 1911-2011 Commemorative project in a big way. The theme was “The Continuing Evolution of the 1911.” Two types of guns were made. A basic “Government” version was made to represent 1911. An “Enhanced” modern variant, to represent 2011, was made with wide double-column frame, fiber-optic and adjustable sights, beavertail tang, ventilated hammer and trigger and other modern niceties.

Slides are engraved and inlaid with three banners reading “1911–100th Anniversary–2011.” The two guns will be made in 500 cased sets, offered in

special wood boxes. Serial numbers will be the same for both models of guns in a set. Pistols with serial numbers 001 of both types were on display at the 2011 SHOT Show.

Stoeger

With the growing interest in concealed carry, Stoeger has downsized its rotating-barrel Cougar pistol. The new 9mm pistol, the Cougar Compact, is now available. With a 3.7-inch barrel, the new Compact weighs 30 ounces. The shorter grip frame still holds a double-column magazine, offering 13+1 capacity. In matte black finish, the pistol carries black synthetic grips.

An accessory rail is now offered on the .45 ACP full-size Cougar, which was introduced last year.

Taurus

Taurus, billing itself as the “World’s Foremost Pistol Maker,” introduced its first 1911 back in 2005. In the intervening years, the Taurus 1911 line grew to well over a dozen variants. To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1911, the company introduced several different limited-edition models. All these pistols had special engraving on the slide. The Model 1911 Anniversary is a “basic” 1911, the 1911 Anniversary Match is a modernized handgun with “match” features such as beavertail tang and Novak adjustable sights. The Anniversary Duo-Tone has a two-tone finish. A 1911-22 conversion kit with adjustable sights was also offered.

There were other offerings. The DT Hybrid pistols have a steel frame with



500 cased sets of STI’s 100th Anniversary pistols were offered.



Taurus' G2 Slim offers an optional extended magazine that carries two more rounds.



The Umarex/Colt Government Model 22 is made in Germany.

polymer covering. The 24-ounce pistols were offered in 9mm and .40 S&W. The DT Integral pistols have an aluminum frame and polymer grip panels. Calibers are .380, 9mm and .40, all weighing in at 21 ounces. As an aside, it is always interesting to speculate about Taurus abbreviations. My guess is that DT stands for "duo-tone," as the materials used form color contrasts.

The G2 Slim is a thin 19-ounce carry pistol offered in 9 and .40. Capacity is 7+1 for the 9mm, and 6+1 for the .40. However, an available extended magazine boosts capacity by two extra rounds for each caliber.

With all the recent emphasis on downsized .380s, we must remember that moderately-large, higher-capacity .380 pistols are still in demand. Taurus' new 638 ProCompact weighs 28 ounces and boasts 15+1 capacity.

Taylor's

Taylor's & Co., importers and distributors of replicas of historic firearms, has moved into the 20th Century for its latest offerings. The Taylor's 1911 is a close reproduction of the 1911 as made in years past. The pistol can be had with straight or arched mainspring housings, or a straight housing with a lanyard loop. A competitor can thus order his pistol

suitable for the time period in which he is shooting. A modern shooter can opt for Taylor's Combat Model, with fiber-optic adjustable sights, beavertail tang and skeletonized hammer and trigger. The 1911 pistols are made for Taylor's by Armscor.

Well into the modern age, Taylor's also offers the Chiappa Model 1911-22, and the M4 22 pistol, a .22 LR handgun version of an M4 carbine.

Turnbull

Turnbull Manufacturing Co. of Bloomfield, NY, is a major restorer of 1911 pistols. To celebrate the 1911 centennial, Turnbull decided to make exactly 100 true 1911 pistols. The guns were made to approximately 1913 specifications, with a true 1911 frame, hammer, and the appropriate rounded rear sight. The magazines are the old-style two-tone

type, with a lanyard loop at the bottom and the "keyhole" at the upper rear portion. Correct polishing and bluing methods were used.

Markings are correct for an early 1913 gun. Some guns were planned to be marked U. S. Army or U. S. Navy. Like Cylinder & Slide (*q.v.*) Turnbull planned to mark, at a customer's request, some guns "U. S. Marine Corps" although no originals were ever made that way.

TWA

Trans World Arms is a new company in the pistol field, but it has a familiar name involved. Recall that the KBI company, which marketed handguns bearing the names Charles Daly and Jericho (among others) went out of business in January 2010.

No one in the industry expected KBI president Michael Kassnar to just sit around twiddling his thumbs. Kassnar has started TWA to import and distribute a single product: a traditional 9mm Hi-Power pistol as made by FEG in Hungary. Importation was scheduled to begin by Spring 2011.

TWA might be the vehicle of the return for another pistol. At Kassnar's booth at the 2011 SHOT Show, a specimen of a Goncz 9mm pistol was displayed. Long-time readers of this publication may remember the Goncz Hi-Tech handgun from the 1980s. It is just possible it may come back as a TWA item.

Umarex

Umarex USA describes itself as "one of the fastest-growing sporting gun companies in the United States." Starting a while back with tear-gas and signal pistols, then moving into airguns, then "replica" firearms, the company offers new pistols based on the 1911 design.

The dedicated .22 LR pistols made for Colt are manufactured under license by Carl Walther in Germany. About the same size and weight as the original 1911, the new Umarex/Colt .22 pistols are made in three versions. The Government Model is visually similar to 1911A1/pre-'70 big-caliber Colts. The Gold Cup Trophy has adjustable sights and other embellishments. The Rail Gun has a frame-mounted accessory rail. Controls work in the same manner as those on the original 1911, and field-stripping is the same. The .22 can use 12-round or 10-round magazines. All variants have 5-inch barrels.



Umarex makes the 22-caliber Colt Rail Gun.



The Walther PPQ features a quick-reset trigger.

Umarex is now the marketer of the Turkish-made 45-caliber Regent pistol. Recall that the nicely-made Regent was introduced last year by Interstate Arms Corp. (IAC). Made by Tisas in Turkey, the Regent is a full-size 1911A1-style 40-ounce pistol with a 5-inch barrel. The Regent R100 is offered by Umarex as an affordable 1911 “with the quality to customize.” Hogue grips are installed.

Uselton

Uselton’s 100-year 1911 commemorative was made in matched pairs of “government” and “officers” pistols. The guns had casehardened frames, stainless-steel slides with Gold inlays, and straw-blue parts.

Something new is an aluminum frame with 330 stainless steel bonded to the

frame to provide the slide rails. Uselton believes this will provide an aluminum-frame gun “that will last.”

A new specialty of the company is grips made of mammoth ivory. How much of that is still around?

Volquartsen

Volquartsen made its reputation building excellent 22-caliber pistols and rifles, most based on Ruger designs. Now, for the first time, they are working on a centerfire pistol. No details were available. Watch this space.

Walther

Walther’s latest offering is the Model PPQ, with a redesigned “quick defense trigger.” The trigger travel is a modest

4/10 of an inch, and the pull weight is about 5.5 pounds. What is most noticeable, though, is the reset distance of only 1/10 of an inch. Reset is audible.

Similar in size and construction to the P99 (Walther’s first polymer pistol), the new PPQ has a 4-inch barrel and measures 5.3x7.1 inches, putting the pistol almost into the “compact” category. Weight is in the 24/25 ounce range. Available in 9mm or .40S&W, the magazine capacity is 15 rounds in 9mm, 12 in 40. An extended 17-round magazine is also available for the 9mm. 10-round magazines in both calibers are also available for jurisdictions that don’t trust their citizens. Three backstraps are furnished to fit the pistol to the shooter’s hand, and an accessory rail is moulded into the front of the polymer frame.

