

Guns and Gear of the Cowboy Era

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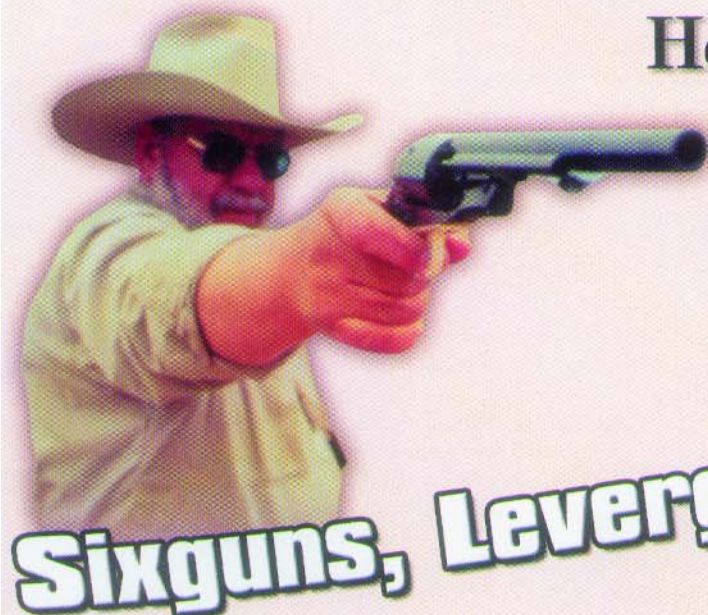
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Heritage Manufacturing Quality Sixguns for The Budget Minded



Sixguns, Leverguns, and Leather

By: Sixgunner

In 1956, Colt introduced, actually reintroduced, the Single Action Army, which had been out of production since 1941. The price was a staggering \$125 at a time when I was making 90 cents an hour. That \$125 seemed awfully large, but I managed to get the money together to buy a Colt. Fast forward 50 years later and that \$125 would be a tremendous bargain for any Colt or Colt replica. The dollar just isn't what it used to be!

Getting into cowboy action shooting can be quite expensive, especially for younger shooters, with new replicas often running \$500 or more apiece. Now Heritage Manufacturing is offering that Rough Rider .45 Colt in blue or nickel-plating, with the three standard barrel lengths of 4-3/4", 5-1/2", and 7-1/2" and it can be considered an entry-level sixgun or for that matter one that can be used continuously in competition with satisfaction. The Rough Rider is made by Pietta who also manufactures the Great Western II. Unlike the Great Western, the Rough Rider .45 Colt has a transfer bar much like the Beretta Stampede. Theoretically, this makes it safe to carry with six rounds, however, CAS rules demand only five rounds, both Heritage

Manufacturing and I recommend carrying five rounds with the hammer down on an empty chamber no matter what the activity; it's the Cowboy Way! Even though the Rough Rider has a transfer bar safety, it works in the traditional manner of placing the hammer on half cock and opening the loading gate for loading or unloading.

The Rough Rider .45 comes with well-fitted, dark one-piece wood grips that appear to be Rosewood but they are Cocobolo, and the quality is way above most of the "walnut" grips found on many imported replicas. The action is quite smooth, the cylinder locks up tight, the trigger pull is more than satisfactory, and the traditional, fixed Single Action Army sights are dead-on for windage while shooting approximately 2" low. A little filing on the front sight can take care of this easily. Several cautions here: 1) Tape the barrel area around the front sight before filing; not taping is a guarantee of the file slipping. 2) Decide on one load before filing the front sight. 3) File a few strokes and check, file again and check. 4) Shoot the way you would normally; shooting off sandbags can result in groups being quite different in elevation than shooting off-hand.



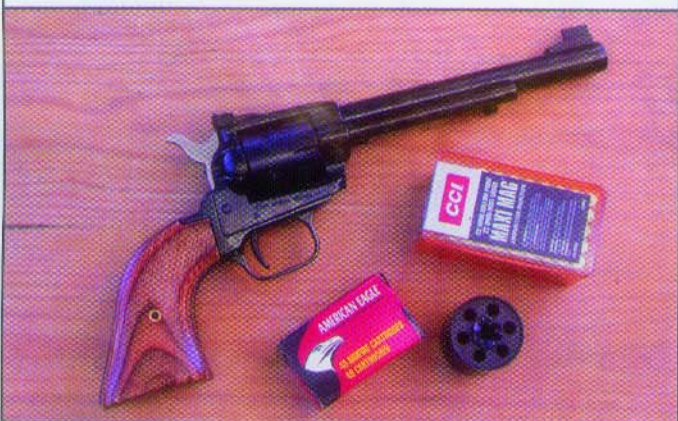
Although the Heritage Rough Rider .45 has a transfer bar safety, both Heritage and I recommend five rounds with the hammer down on an empty chamber; it's the Cowboy Way.



The Heritage Rough Rider .45 Colt is right on for windage and can be brought to point of aim with a little judicious file work on the front sight; the .22 Rough Rider shoots superbly well and can be brought to point of aim using the adjustable rear sight.



The Rough Rider .45 Colt handles both Black Hills .45 Colt and .45 Schofield.



The Heritage Rough Rider .22 is a convertible with an extra cylinder for .22 Magnum.



The easy-to-see front sight on the Heritage .22 has a red fiber-optic insert.

The second test gun from Heritage is the Rough Rider .22-22 Magnum Convertible with two cylinders, a fluted cylinder in .22 Long Rifle and an un-fluted cylinder for the .22 Rimfire Magnum. It is also available in .17 HMR/.17 Mach 2 and .32 Magnum in blue or satin nickel finish, and barrel lengths of 3-1/2", 4-3/4", 6-1/2", and 9"; our test gun has a 6-1/2" barrel. The grips, a laminated hardwood with imitation Mother of Pearl also available, are well-fitted to the grip frame and are quite comfortable.

Sights are a fully adjustable white outline rear sight made up with a post front sight with a bright red fiber optic insert. I am not normally very fond of colored sights, as for me, they often wash out in bright sunlight. However, this front sight does just the opposite and seems to glow brighter in maximum light conditions.

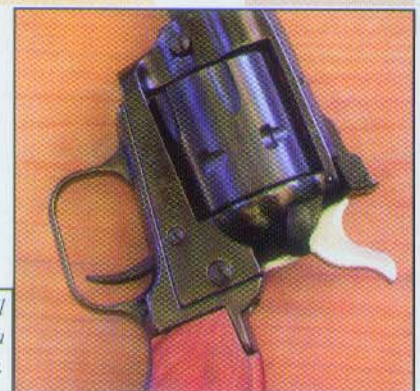
The action is quite smooth with the traditional three notches on the hammer and is placed on half-cock for loading and unloading. There is a safety provided in the form of a manually-operated lever on the left side of the recoil shield, which in the up position blocks the hammer and is placed down for shooting. This Rough Rider .22 was test-fired with both the Long Rifle and Magnum cylinders in place, and as with most .22 Convertibles, the best accuracy was with the .22 Long Rifle cylinder. With both CCI Subsonic and Mini-Mag Hollow Point loads, this is a 1" sixgun while Green Tag Target Ammunition from the same manufacturer places five rounds in well under an inch. This may be a .22 for the budget minded, but with the right loads it shoots like a target pistol. There's nothing fancy about it, so it should find its way into many backpacks and pickup trucks all over the red states and in quite a few areas in the blue states; it is also a .22 sixgun for the use of the kids and grandkids without them worrying about scratching or hurting it. It definitely provides more value than the price tag would indicate.

Heritage Manufacturing products can be found at www.heritagemfg.com.

TEST-FIRING THE .45 COLT X 4-3/4" ROUGH RIDER (NICKEL-PLATED)		
Load	MV	5 Shots/20 Yards
Black Hills .45 Schofield 230	709	1-3/4"
Black Hills .45 Colt 250	763	2-1/4"
Hornady 255/7.0-gr. WW231	644	1-5/8"
Oregon Trail 250RNFP/6.0-gr. AA N-100	732	2"
Oregon Trail 250RNFP/7.0-gr. WW231	776	2-1/4"
Oregon Trail 255SWC/8.0-gr. Unique	704	2"
Oregon Trail 255 SWC/20.0-gr. IMR4227	833	2-1/4"

TEST-FIRING THE .22-22 MAG ROUGH RIDER CONVERTIBLE 6-1/2" .22 WINCHESTER MAGNUM RIMFIRE:		
Load	MV	5 Shots/20 Yards
CCI Maxi-Mag	1,212	2-1/2"
CCI Maxi-Mag TNT	1,509	2"

.22 LONG RIFLE:		
Load	MV	5 Shots/20 Yards
American Eagle	1,022	1-1/2"
CCI Green Tag	877	7/8"
CCI Subsonic	883	1"
CCI Standard Velocity	884	1-1/2"
CCI Mini-Mag HP	1,021	1"
CCI Mini-Mag +V	1,162	1-1/2"



On the left side of the recoil shield of the Heritage .22 is a thumb activated external safety.