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# Rifleman

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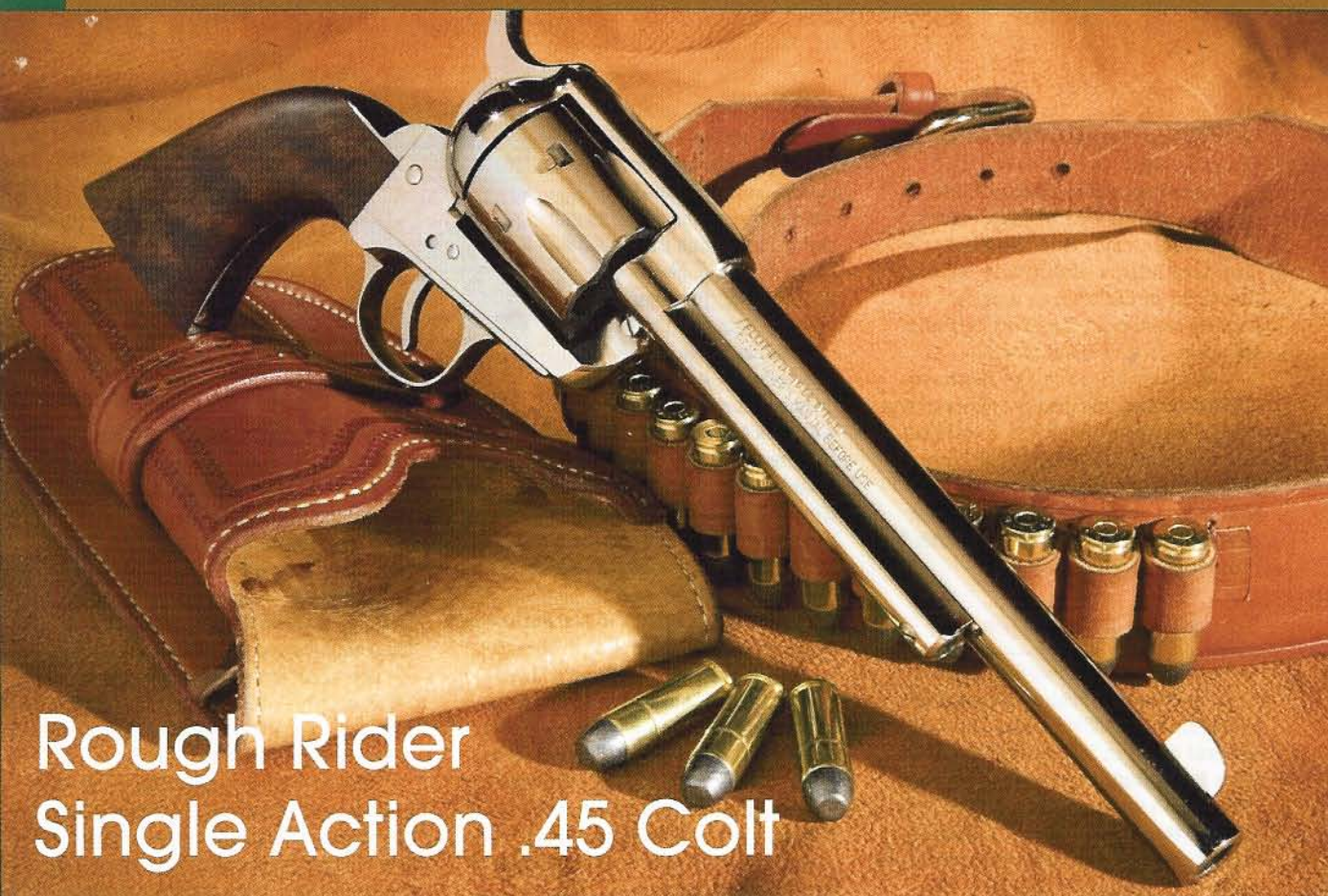
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## Rough Rider Single Action .45 Colt

Perhaps best known for its expanding line of American-made single-action rimfire revolvers, Heritage Manufacturing also offers a variety of replica center-fire wheelguns as well. Spurred by a heady mix of frontier nostalgia and shooting fun, Cowboy Action Shooting has grown by leaps and bounds over the past decade. Its popularity is particularly strong in rural areas where money is tight even in the best of times, and since most matches require four guns—two revolvers,

a lever-action rifle and a shotgun—economically-priced replica guns of the Old West, like Heritage's center-fire Rough Riders, have a great deal of appeal.

Components for the Rough Rider are made in Italy by Pietta, which are then fitted and assembled at Heritage Mfg.'s facility in Opa Locka, Fla. Currently Heritage only catalogs the .45 Colt chambering, the most popular caliber among CAS shooters, but .357 Mag. and .44-40 models are in the works. Rough Riders are available in 4¾" 5½" and 7½" barrel

lengths and a choice of blued or stainless finish. Our test sample came with a bright stainless steel finish and a 7½" barrel.

In keeping with the appearance of the original SAAs, the Rough Rider's frame sports three slotted screws. Just like the original guns, you will hear four distinct clicks as you pull back the hammer. However, the Rough Rider's hammer lacks the fixed firing pin found on the original Peacemakers. The firing pin is instead mounted on the frame and a transfer-bar safety

mechanism has been added to the lockwork. Pressing the trigger pushes the transfer bar up so the falling hammer can transfer its energy to the firing pin in the frame. If the hammer were to fall without the trigger being pressed, the transfer bar would stop its fall short of the firing pin. So, unlike the original SAAs, the Rough Rider can be safely carried with all six chambers loaded.

The Rough Rider's one-piece hardwood stocks are held in place by a two-piece grip frame of investment cast steel.

The American Rifleman has used the phrase "Dope Bag" at least since 1921, when Col. Townsend Whelen first titled his column with it. Even then, it had been in use for years, referring to a sack used by target shooters to hold ammunition and accessories on the firing line. "Sight dope" also was a traditional marksman's term for sight adjustment information, while judging wind speed and direction was called "doping the wind."

**WARNING:** Technical data and information contained herein are intended to provide information based on the limited experience of individuals under specific conditions and circumstances. They do not detail the comprehensive training procedures, techniques and safety precautions absolutely necessary to properly carry on similar activity. Read the notice and disclaimer on the contents page. Always consult comprehensive reference manuals and bulletins for details of proper training requirements, procedures, techniques and safety precautions before attempting any similar activity.

Like the rest of the gun's exterior metal components, the grip features a brightly polished stainless finish.

The cylinder notches were sharply defined and evenly cut for positive engagement with the hand/bolt. Sights are in keeping with those of the original SAAs, they include a fixed rear notch in the topstrap and a fixed post front. The sights of our test gun were well-regulated, printing well-centered groups about 2" below point-of-aim at 25 yds.

Unlike some bargain-priced SAA replicas we've tested in the past, the Rough Rider's ejector rod lined up well with all six chambers when the cylinder notches engaged the bolt/hand. Additionally, the cylinder did not drag or overrun its stops when the hammer was cocked. About the only performance complaint we had was that we sometimes had to nurse the hammer into the proper position for reloading, otherwise

the cylinder would bind. That said, this is a problem frequently exhibited by economically-priced SAA replicas. The major exterior components such as the frame, cylinder and barrel displayed a nicely executed and brightly polished stainless finish, but some of the smaller working parts showed traces of buffing and shaping that diminished the luster of the final finish.

The trigger of our test gun was commendably light and crisp, breaking at just over 4 lbs. with minimal take-up and little discernible overtravel. Given the gun's obvious competitive and recreational purposes, we selected a variety of factory cowboy-style loads with 250-gr., lead, flat-point bullets from PMC, MagTech and Remington for our testing. Accuracy results shown

## SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YDS.)

.45 Colt Cartridge	Vel. @ 15' (f.p.s.)	Energy (ft.-lbs.)	Group Size In Inches		
			Smallest	Largest	Average
Rem. No. R45C 250-gr. LRN	823 Avg. 13 Sd	376	1.45	2.68	2.17
PMC 250-gr. LFP	702 Avg. 28 Sd	271	2.31	3.39	2.79
MagTech No. 45D 250-gr. LFP	672 Avg. 29 Sd	251	2.08	2.43	2.28

Average Extreme Spread: 2.41

Measured average velocity for 10 rounds from a 7 1/2" barrel. Range temperature: 78° F. Humidity: 59%. Accuracy for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. from a Ransom Rest. Abbreviations: LFP (lead flat point), LRN (lead round nose), Sd (Standard Deviation).

in the accompanying table are comparable with other SAA replicas we've tested in the past, even those costing considerably more. Velocity results, on the other hand, were a little on the low side. This may be the result of the large amount of flash that escaped from the cylinder gap during our test shooting.

Blued Rough Riders revolvers are currently

offered at a suggested retail price of \$369, while the stainless guns are listed at \$399. Although the Rough Rider was less than flawless, its faults are minor and commonplace among SAA replicas in its price range. In sum, the center-fire Rough Riders from Heritage Mfg. represent a solid choice for CAS enthusiasts in search of a serviceable, economically priced SAA replica. 

## ROUGH RIDER

**MANUFACTURER:** Heritage Manufacturing, Inc. (Dept. AR), 4600 N.W. 135 Street, Opa Locka, FL 33054; 305 685 5966; www.heritagemfg.com.

**CALIBER:** .45 Colt

**ACTION TYPE:** single-action, center-fire revolver

**FRAME:** brushed stainless steel

**BARREL:** 4 1/4", 5 1/2", 7 1/2" (tested) stainless steel

**RIFLING:** 1:12", LH twist

**CYLINDER:** stainless, six-shot capacity

**SIGHTS:** fixed rear notch and fixed front post

**TRIGGER PULL:** single-action; 4 lbs.

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 13 1/2"

**WIDTH:** 1 1/8"

**HEIGHT:** 5 1/8"

**WEIGHT:** 38 ozs.

**ACCESSORIES:** trigger lock

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:**

\$399 stainless, \$369 blued



The cylinder (above, l.) of our stainless Rough Rider displayed a nicely polished and executed finish. More importantly, the cylinder notches were sharply defined and evenly cut for both hand and locking-bolt engagement.

A frame-mounted, transfer-bar safety (above) prevents the hammer from striking the firing pin unless the trigger is pulled.

Just like an original SAA, the loading gate is on the frame's right side (l.), and we found the ejector rod lined up with all six cylinders.