

# CONCEALED CARRY HANDGUNS<sup>TM</sup>

**EXPERT'S GUIDE TO PERSONAL DEFENSE**

**Tactics Proven Under Fire**



**2008**

# C&S KAHR P45 45ACP

***Upgrade  
your conceal  
carry pistol  
to a big bore  
superstar!***

***By Rob Garrett***

It has been almost 14 years since Kahr Arms introduced their first compact 9mm autopistol. At the time, I was skeptical that a new company could survive against the big names of Smith & Wesson, Colt, Walther, and Beretta. However, I was impressed with the quality and size of the original P9. It was an all-stainless, single-stack pistol that was the approximate size of a Walther PP, only in full house 9mm.

The offset feed ramp allowed the Kahr to be slimmer than conventional designs and the internal striker gave the pistol a smooth and snag-free design. As time went on, I came to own both a P9 and the sub-compact MK9. The only complaint about these two pistols was the weight. Even so, I had to ask myself, with a 9mm available in this size package, who would want to



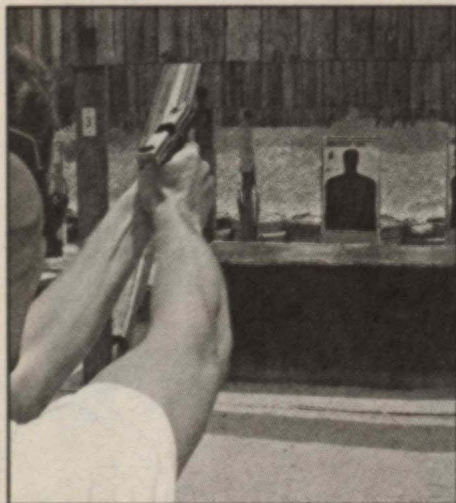




At the range, 10 different loads were put through the little P45. After a break-in period, it ran perfectly. Below, Sergeant Larry Bender gives the pistol a workout.



# C&S KAHR P45 .45ACP



Even with 230gr +P ammo, the P45, was controllable. It is shown here in full recoil with Federal 230gr +P HST.

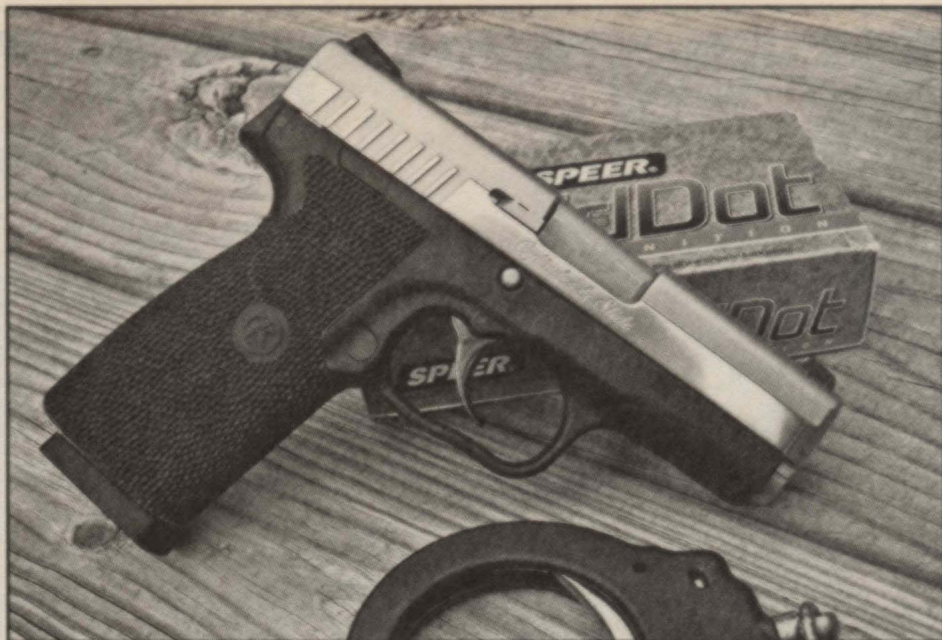
carry a .380?

The little pistols became a favorite of off-duty law enforcement and the P9 was approved by NYPD for carry. All of a sudden, Kahr started getting some respect from the public and their competition. A family of .40 caliber models was developed to complement the 9mm pistols. Then came the polymer models that reduced the weight by an average of 30 percent or so with the P9 and PM9 lightweights becoming an immediate hit. Sales soared and others in the industry started to take note of the new kids on the block. The weight problem was solved, but the shooting public is never satisfied. Soon, the call came for a Kahr in .45ACP.

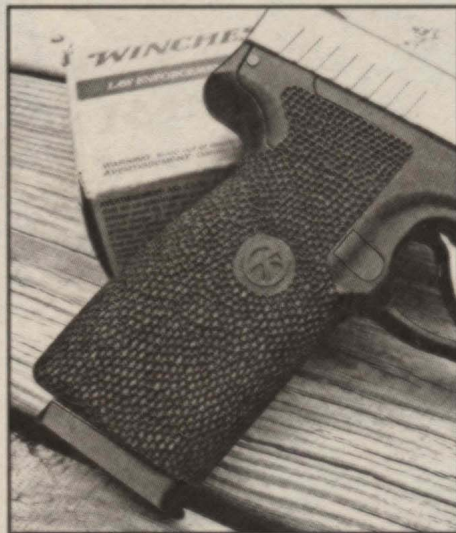
## Gun Details

At the 2006 SHOT Show, Kahr introduced the P45 and all the rules changed. The P45, when it was introduced, was the smallest and lightest compact .45ACP available. From outward appearances, the P45 is an upscaled P9. However, after speaking with a Kahr representative, I learned that a significant amount of engineering had to be completed to ensure that the small pistol would run reliably with the stubby ACP round.

The P45, like its predecessors, is a striker-fired, double-action-only (DAO) action that fires from a Browning locked breech design. The match grade Lothar Walther barrel has the Kahr offset feed ramp, which makes the P45 thinner than any other .45ACP on the market. The polymer frame allows the 6 + 1 rounds of .45ACP, and weighs in at an



The P45 is an ideal concealed carry pistol for civilians and off-duty law enforcement.



The C&S crew removed the grenade checkering on the front and back strap and then hand stippled the grip.



The C&S banner has been etched on the right side of the slide.

amazing 18.5 ounces. Overall length is just over 6 inches while the height is 4.8 inches and slide width is 1.01 inches.

Kahr factory sights are a "Stavenhagen" design that features a front sight dot and a vertical line on the rear sight. The "dot-the-i" alignment is both fast and accurate and I actually find it easier to use than Novaks. To say that the P45 is an amazing piece of



C&S has smoothed out the top of the backstrap, removing the edge leftover by the molding process.



A plain black Novak rear sight is matched with a tritium front sight.

engineering and design is an understatement.

As great as the factory P45 is, there are some areas that some may want improved. The polymer frame features "grenade style" checkering on the front and back strap while the sides have a smooth pebble finish. While pleasing to the eye, some find the blocky checkering to be a problem. There are also a few sharp edges that could stand to be cleaned up with the worst offender being the steel slide stop. The edges on the slide stop are squared and sharp enough to draw blood. The tip of the





*The P45 cycles very quickly and is shown in full recoil with standard velocity loads.*

trigger also has a sharp edge that could become annoying during extended range time.

### Custom Details

Help for these minor problems came from Cylinder & Slide. C&S is well known for their quality work on 1911s, Browning Hi-Powers, and as of the last few years, Kahr autos. The shop also offers a variety of excellent packages for the complete line of Kahr pistols.

During the 2007 SHOT Show, I spent a considerable amount of time visiting with Bill Laughridge at the C&S booth. Bill and I have been friends for over 15 years and I always look forward to seeing his latest creation. Lying in the counter was a super slick P45. After SHOT, a quick call to Laughridge and,



*The front strap has been lined with a 40-lpi pattern that is both attractive and serves to reduce glare. Note the dove-tailed front sight with tritium insert.*



*The match grade Lothar Walther barrel is an octagonal design. The C&S shop has re-crowned the muzzle to 11 degrees*



*The P45 received an internal trigger job while the trigger is polished to a bright finish, removing all sharp edges.*

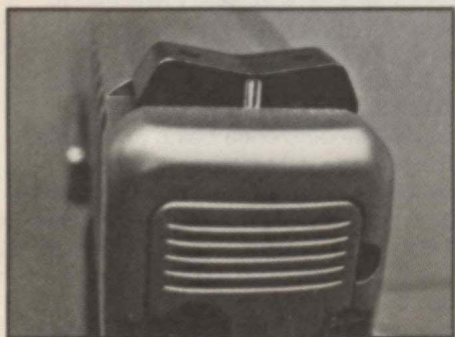
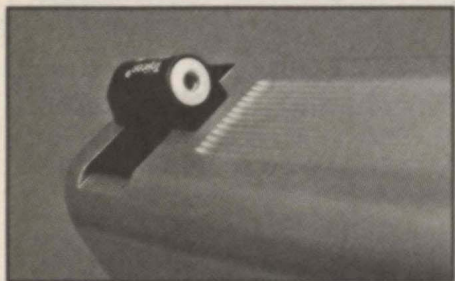
after promising to return it, the pistol was shipped to my local dealer. Bill, in only a way he can, said I was free to keep the Kahr since he has my Visa number on file. Thanks Bill!

C&S has taken the stock P45 and made it even better with the most noticeable difference being in the grip. The wizards in Fremont completely removed the grenade checkering on the front and back strap, and then applied a 260-degree hand stippling to the grip. The slight reduction in overall diameter can be felt and the consistent texture just "felt right!" The stippling pattern was perfectly consistent in depth and I could find no overlapping punches.

The edges on the offending slide-stop and trigger have been nicely bev-



# C&S KAHR P45 .45ACP



Pocket pistols, like the PM9, are most often needed in up-close and personal situations. To fulfill this need, this PM9 has been equipped with XS tritium sights.

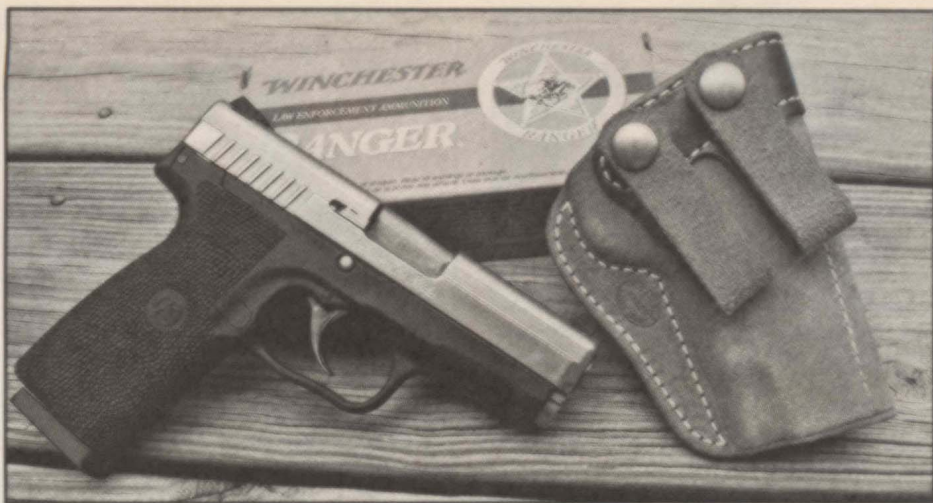
eled, as has the slide. For a cosmetic touch, the top of the slide features 40 lines per inch (lpi) running between the tritium front sight and Novak rear sight. Other external modifications included polishing the sides of the slide to a mirror-like finish and etching the C&S markings. Internally, the P45 received a complete reliability package. This included radiusing and tensioning the extractor, fitting and polishing all contact surfaces, polishing the feed ramp, and recrowning the barrel.

The result may be the best concealed carry .45 on the market. Since this particular pistol is for sale on the C&S website, I did not do any real torture testing. However, in the past, I have found that Kahr pistols perform well, even in dirty, dry, or gritty conditions.

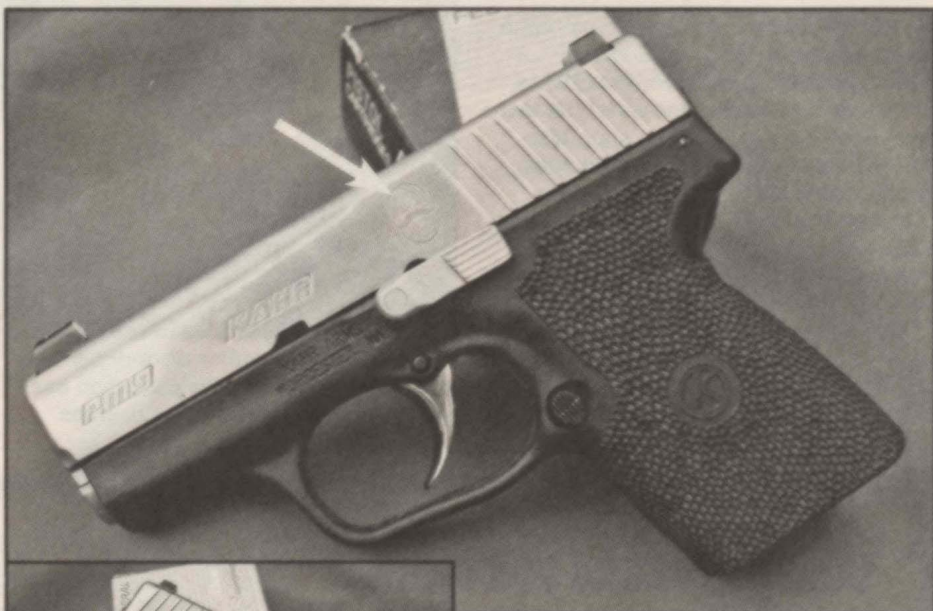
## Range Time

Range day with the P45 drew a small crowd that was interested in how a small, polymer frame .45 would shoot. During the first range trip, I experienced two light primer hits using Remington Golden Saber and two failures to extract, also with Golden Saber. Kahr recommends a 200-round break in period for all of their pistols.

Recoil on the P45 was snappy, but well within controllable limits when the proper grip was used. Except for



The perfect combination of Winchester's ammo and Milt Sparks' Summer Special.



C&S also has several packages for the micro PM9. This example includes the same frame treatment as the P45. C&S' famous logo is etched on the slide, just above the slide stop.

the two above mentioned problems, the pistol ate everything that we fed it, to include Winchester's 230-grain +P Ranger, Federal's hot 230-grain +P HST, and Speer's 200-grain +P Gold Dot.

The next day I contacted Bill, who asked me to run another hundred or so rounds through the pistol and let him know if I had any other problems. During a second range trip, two shooters shot another 150 rounds with no problems.

## Final Notes

Cylinder & Slide also offers several packages for the P9 and PM9 autos. One of the most popular is the PM9 Custom Carry Package. Laughridge

and company take a stock PM9 subcompact and do a complete reliability job on all internal parts. The barrel is recrowned to 11 degrees, while the edges of the frame and slide receive a slight bevel. The slides of the grip are retextured and XS Express sights are installed. The pistol is then packed in a hard case with a Center of Mass (COM) paddle holster and magazine pouch, a SureFire E1E flashlight, and a BlackHawk Kalista knife. It just doesn't get any better than that!

Just as the P45s started to really flow into the stores, Kahr introduced the PM45 compact during the 2007 SHOT Show. Once again, they have done what many thought was impossible and created one of the smallest and lightest .45ACP autos on the market. Without a doubt, these two pistols will become the standard by which many other concealable pistols will be judged. According to a Kahr spokes-



## SPECIFICATIONS:

### KAHR P45 (stock)

**Caliber:** .45ACP

**Barrel:** 3.54 inches

**OA Length:** 6.07 inches

**Width:** 1.01 inches

**Height:** 4.8 inches

**Weight:** 18.5 ounces (empty)

**Grips:** Textured polymer

**Sights:** Drift adjustable, white bar-dot combat sights, optional tritium night sights

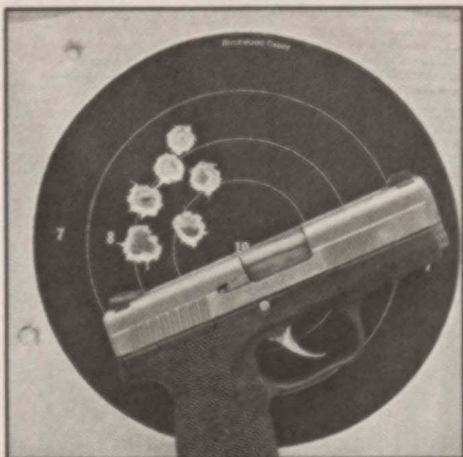
**Action:** DAO

**Construction:** Polymer frame, stainless steel slide

**Finish:** Black frame, matte stainless or matte blackened slide

**Capacity:** Two 6-shot mags

**Price:** \$783-927 (Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price)



*As with all Kahr pistols, the P45 has the capability to out-shoot most of us. This is a rapid fire group fired from 15 yards.*

man, the PM45 should be at your dealer by the time you read this article.

Kahr is a company that refuses to follow the traditional model. The company has pushed the limits on the package for the 9mm, the .40, and now the .45ACP. The result is a family of highly reliable pistols that are really in a class by themselves. When you combine an already excellent pistol with the finesse of Cylinder & Slide's master gunsmiths, you have the pistol equivalent of a Rolex watch.

**For more information, contact:**

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