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ULTIMATE



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C&S



Some 15 different loads were run through the C&S Custom Kahr PM9. I got quarter-size groups at 7 yards.

KAHR PM9 9mm

Compact, concealable and reliable mini powerhouse!

By Rob Garrett

The search for the perfect concealed carry pistol has gone on for years. It has to be small enough to hide but not so small that it is difficult to grasp. It should be lightweight but still controllable to allow solid hits at a reasonable distance. Finally, it should be in a caliber that is as large as the chosen platform can accommodate. In my early days in law enforcement, the favorite choices for a back-up and off-duty carry were small frame revolvers such as a Chiefs Special or Colt Cobra, or small autos like the Walther PPK or PPK/S in .380. As with everything else, times have changed and there are more options than ever. One company that has taken the lead in the concealed carry market is Kahr Arms.

Kahr Arms needs no introduction to *Combat Handguns* readers. They have been producing compact pistols for more than a few years. Their first pistol, the K9, set a new standard with their quality, size and great shooting characteristics. Their reputation was further enhanced when the NYPD authorized Kahrs for carry by their officers. While the K9 is considered Kahr's full-size auto, it is about the size of a Walther PP and redefined the definition for a compact 9mm.

Kahr then went one step further when they introduced the MK9 Micro. Being slightly longer than 5 inches with a height of only 4 inches, the MK9 is the right size for ankle or pocket carry. In the minds of many, the K9 and MK9 rendered most, if not all, .380 and .32ACP autos obsolete. The only problem with both of these pistols was they were all stainless and not at all lightweight!

After several years of research, Kahr developed the "P" series of pistols that feature a polymer frame. The P9 is the full-size



The PM9's size (5.3") and weight (14 oz) make it ideal for carry in a pocket or ankle rig.

■ C&S KAHR PM9 9mm

version of the K9, while the PM9 is the polymer frame version of the MK9. The PM9 has an overall length of 5.3 inches, a height of 4 inches, and the slide is just 0.90 inches in width. More importantly, the PM9 weighs in at a mere 14 ounces. It is very close to the perfect 9mm pocket pistol. However, the stock PM9, just as any stock production pistol, can be improved with the right touches.

This is where Bill Laughridge and Cylinder & Slide decided to expand their market presence. This year C&S celebrated their 30th year of business and have built a stellar reputation for their work on 1911s and Browning Hi Powers. However, they do take on other projects from time to time. Several years ago, Laughridge took an MK9 and performed an astounding custom package that garnered a lot of attention at the SHOT (Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade) Show. Since that time, C&S has become known as the place to go for custom Kahrs.

Custom Work

Shortly after the PM9 was introduced, Laughridge decided to offer several custom packages for the little pistol. Three different levels are offered from a basic reliability job (Package 1) to a full-blown custom job (Package 3). The C&S crew has taken the PM9 to an entirely different level that only a custom shop can do. Recently, I received a PM9 with the Package 3 option that included almost every option available and may well represent the ultimate concealable 9mm auto. The craftsmen at C&S have involved every part and surface of the pistol with the customization.

Internally, the muzzle was re-crowned with an 11-degree bevel and all internal parts were polished to include the feed ramp and barrel throat. Micro-size pistols generate high slide velocities and require special tuning. Laughridge radiused and tuned the extractor to



This photo shows the full detail of the hand stippling on the grip and the rounded slide stop pin.



The stock grenade checkering (right) is removed and a precise hand-stippled finish is applied to the C&S PM9. This reduces the overall circumference of the grip and provides a soft, yet aggressive grip.

ensure 100 percent reliability. Finally, sear and trigger bearing surfaces were polished and fitted for an exceptionally smooth trigger pull.

The external modifications were extensive and included a complete carry bevel on all edges, beveling the magazine well and polishing and rounding the face of the trigger. The "grenade checkering" on the grip was removed and a 360-degree stippled finish was applied by hand. I have to say that the stippling is some of the most precise and perfect I have seen from any shop.

The slide stop was beveled to remove the sharp edges and the surface of the stop and pin were polished. The sides of the slide and the cocking serrations were also polished, giving the PM9 a classic appearance. The top of the slide was glass beaded to a fine matte finish and serrated with 30 LPI (lines per

SPECIFICATIONS

C&S KAHR PM9

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	3 inches
OA LENGTH:	5.3 inches
SIGHTS:	XS 24/7 with tritium inserts and standard size front dot
GRIPS:	Tactical textured polymer
ACTION:	DAO
FINISH:	Matte stainless steel or blackened stainless steel slide
CAPACITY:	6-shot mag (7-shot mag w/extended grip)
PRICE:	\$1495 (C&S Custom Kahr Carry Package)



The shop removes the offending edges on the slide stop and then etches the C&S mustache logo on the left side of the slide.



The top of the slide has 30 LPI serrations and a tritium XS front sight. This is an especially fast set-up sight acquisition with the little pistol.



The thin profile of the PM9 makes it ideal for concealed carry. Note the XS sights and 30 LPI serrations.



The face of the trigger has been beveled and highly polished to complement the internal tuning of the fire control surfaces.

inch) that extend from the rear sight to the front sight.

Finally, the factory sights were replaced with XS 24/7 tritium sights with a standard size front dot and express rear sight. These provide an extremely fast sight picture, especially in low light. Dick Heinie has recently introduced a SlantPro sight for Kahr pistols and C&S will offer them as another sight option on Kahr pistols. When you pick up the C&S PM9 you find a custom pistol with the elegance and precision of a fine watch. The final touch is the shop name and Bill's famous mustache logo that are etched on the slide. The result is a pistol that speaks to the good taste and seriousness of the owner.

Range Time

On the range the PM9 ran as good as it looks. I ran 15 different 9mm loads through the pistol with no pistol-related malfunctions. These ranged from standard 124-grain ball to a variety of self-defense loads to include: Remington 115-grain Silver Tips, Speer Gold Dot 124-grain +P+, and Federal 124-grain +P+ Hydra Shok. While recoil was snappy with the hotter loads, I found the PM9 considerably easier to shoot than a Smith

J-frame with +P ammo and factory stocks.

I was happy to find that several of the standard velocity self-defense loads broke 1000 fps (feet per second), ensuring reliable expansion and penetration. While the XS sights are designed for speed, not precision, with a little attention I had no trouble shooting quarter-size groups at 7 yards!



On the range, even those with small hands easily managed the PM9.

Custom Carry Package

A customer can order a new pistol from C&S or send their own to the shop for work. Laughridge also offers a Custom Carry Package that is a complete system that will enable the owner to transport or carry a complete ensemble for protection. The package includes a Center of Mass (COM) Kydex paddle holster and single magazine pouch for the package. The COM paddle is molded to the rear of the holster, allowing it to ride close to the body and resist shifting, while the magazine pouch uses a belt clip. Both have screws that allow the user to adjust the tension to the desired resistance.

When I was a rookie cop, a wise veteran told me that if I carried a gun, I should carry a light. In the late '70s, there were few pocket lights that were good for more than a few feet. Today, the game has changed and the PM9

package comes with a SureFire E1E Executive flashlight. The E1E is small enough to be carried on a daily basis in the pocket of a jacket or pants.

Powered by a single CL123 lithium battery, the 3-inch-long light puts out 15 lumens of light. This is more than sufficient to identify a threat at 10 to 15 yards and is significantly distracting inside 7 yards. I have carried one on a daily basis for several years and find I use it several times a day for routine tasks. Like a credit card, I don't leave home without it!

The customized Kahr PM9, COM Kydex paddle holster, COM Kydex clip-on magazine pouch, SureFire Executive Elite E1E light and BlackHawk! Kalista SR FX knife with carry system are shipped in a watertight Pelican hard case that's roughly 11 by 10 by 5 inches. A decal with the C&S logo is affixed to the top of the case but can be peeled off if a lower profile is desired. The case is ideal for secure

storage as well as trips to and from the range when the pistol is not being worn. It also meets all FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) regulations for flying with firearms in checked luggage and comes with a padlock. As an added touch, Laughridge includes a lapel pin that features his logo.

PERFORMANCE:

C&S KAHR PM9

LOAD	VELOCITY
Federal 115 JPH (9BP)	1039
Federal 124 Hydra Shok	1007
Federal 124 +P+ Hydra Shok	1069
Federal 147 Hydra Shok	876
Federal 135 Personal Defense	958
Federal 124 FMJ	967
Remington 124 Golden Saber	1017
Remington 124 +P Golden Saber	1078
Remington 125 FMJ	1007
Speer 124 Gold Dot	1011
Speer 124 +P Gold Dot	1101
Winchester 115 Silver Tip Hollow Point	1034
Winchester 115 +P+ JHP	1205
Winchester 147 SXT	913

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second (fps).

Milt Sparks' PCH

I know that there are some who have an aversion to putting a custom pistol into a "plastic" holster. For those or for those whose needs are other than a belt holster, I can recommend the Pocket Concealment Holster from Milt Sparks Holsters. The PCH is to be carried in the

"The pistol is sound and reliable, the work is up to the standards that C&S is known for, and the quality of the accessories matches the pistol."

front, strong side pocket. The shape and rough-out construction ensure that the holster will stay in the pocket when drawing the pistol. The outer side of the holster is enlarged to cover the entire slide, breaking up the outline of the pistol. A thin wire is sewn into the edge of the holster to allow the user to shape the outer edge for maximum concealment and comfort.

Bulman Gunleather TSAC

The other holster I found well suited to the PM9 was TSAC (The Secret Agent—Clip) IWB (inside-the-waist-band) holster from Bulman Gunleather. The TSAC is a well-designed IWB holster that's made from premium cowhide and molded to the specific pistol. The rough-out construction and reinforced mouth make it both attractive and functional. Unlike other belt



The C&S PM9 is shown with an S&W 442 Centennial for size comparison. Both are quality firearms that can be found in the pockets of professionals.

clips, the TSAC uses a patented Talon Clip that attaches to the waistband of the pants, under the belt. Using this system, the PM9 virtually disappears, even under a t-shirt.

Final Notes

So we have a very slick, very small 9mm auto, a convenient and practical holster, and a durable light, all packaged in a James Bond-ish case! It is

really a cool kit that's at home with either a banker or rancher and carries well in a tux or jeans. I tried to find something about the pistol that would give me a little grief, but could not come up with anything.

The pistol is sound and reliable, the work is up to the standards that C&S is known for, and the quality of the accessories matches the pistol. I guess the only issue is what Laughridge will want to charge a working cop with a kid in college for a slightly used PM9! Knowing Laughridge as I do, I am sure the negotiations will be interesting. ●

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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