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The Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model (bottom) looks like a scaled up version of the famous Colt 1903 Pocket Model. In fact, it is really a concealed-hammer 1911 expertly created by Bill Laughridge of Cylinder & Slide. Although it is not much smaller than the Colt Gold Cup, the rounded contours and concealed hammer of the Pocket Model make it more concealable and easier to draw from an overcoat pocket.



By Dr. Martin D. Topper

A 1911 configured to resemble the classic concealed-hammer Colts

CYLINDER AND SLIDE'S .45 ACP POCKET MODEL

Like most boys who grew up in the 1950s, I owned a quite a few toy guns. One of my favorites was a replica of a Colt 1903 Pocket Model. It had a dark-blue finish with white plastic grips, and its rounded concealed-hammer profile made it slip easily in and out of my jacket pocket where it was invisible to the world. When playing "cops and robbers" I'd suddenly pull it out to the surprise of others who stood wondering how I "got the drop" on them! As I grew up my tastes turned to pistols chambered in more powerful calibers, but I never forgot how



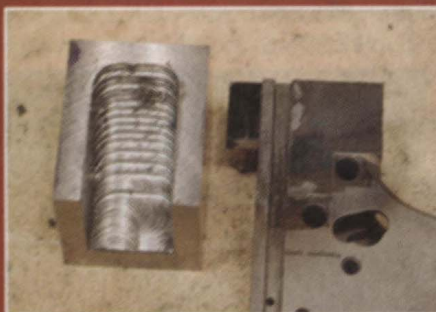
Bill Laughridge, proprietor of Cylinder & Slide, works a milling machine at the C&S workshop. The creation of the Pocket Model prototype required considerable handwork to perfect the contours of the slide and frame.

easily that little toy semi-auto seemed to carry and how well it fit in my hand. Recently, I learned that Bill Laughridge, owner of Cylinder and Slide (C&S), shares my affection for the Model 1903's design

and handling qualities. However, like many of us, Bill believes that the small bore semi-auto cartridges of the early 1900s lack stopping power, and he wished that this fine old pocket gun had been offered in .45 ACP. Well, about five years ago he began working out the mechanics of building a 1903-style pistol chambered for the .45 ACP car-



The Caspian Arms slide and frame used in the C&S Pocket Model Prototype are shown here with the slide and frame extensions silver-soldered in place. From this point the extensions had to be shaped into their final forms and the slide and frame were polished to a high finish.



The slide extension (left) is shown here in the first stages of the process of machining a recess for the internal hammer. Next to it is the frame with the frame extension already silver soldered in place.

tridge, and the end result was the creation of a .45-caliber C&S Pocket Model prototype in 2006. When I saw a write-up of this gun on the C&S website, I was clearly taken by its well-proportioned look, so it didn't take me long to ask Jan Libourel if he'd be interested in an article for *GUN WORLD*. He said yes, and I was very pleased when Bill agreed to ship me the prototype in care of the Florida Gun Exchange in Port Orange.

Something Old, Yet Very New

Both the M2006 prototype and the M2008 limited production version of the C&S Pocket Model represent a very interesting blend of the best in old-fashioned firearms design and workmanship with contemporary advances in defensive pistol design. To begin with, the 50 pistols made up in the first production run of the M2008 are



The completed slide and frame await the milling cuts in the slide for the sights.

not simply up-sized M1903 Pocket Models. That's because Bill wanted to make a gun that had the exact proportions of the M1903 and the strength of the M1911action. Getting the proportions right wasn't too much of a problem. That could be done by mating an Officer's ACP frame with a Commander slide, just like the C&S Carry Commander. But enclosing the hammer, well that was a different story. Bill spent several years thinking about different solutions as he worked on how to do this in his "free" time on evenings and weekends. He considered welding extensions to the frame and slide, but worried that welding would warp the steel and ruin its heat treatment. Eventually, Bill came up with the idea of silver soldering the extensions, but just silver soldering a right-angle joint on the slide might not work because of the very high G-force that's generated when the slide moves back and forth under recoil. He discussed using a stepped joint for the slide and a butt joint for the frame with gunsmith Chris Hageman. Chris is a longtime C&S employee and a truly world-class expert at silver soldering. Chris agreed that the idea would work, and a slightly



The Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model has the identical proportions of Colt's original Model 1903 and Model 1908 pistols. Every reasonable effort has been made to make the Cylinder & Slide gun look and handle like the Third Variation of the Colt Pocket Model.

oversize set of extensions were silver soldered to the frame and slide. From that point the extensions were worked into their final form, and the M2006 prototype featured in this article was born. In addition to working with Chris, Bill also worked with Gary Smith at Caspian Arms. Bill wanted to

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get the price of the gun down by reducing the amount of handwork required to build it. Caspian produced one-piece slides and one-piece frames, neither of which have silver soldered joints, and this saved thousands of dollars worth of hand labor. Bill built 50 guns on these new slides and frames and named them the C&S M2008 .45 ACP Pocket Model. The M2006 prototype is not the first concealed hammer .45 automatic ever produced, but it is the first one that has ever been made into a limited production pistol. Sometime between 1905 and 1910 Colt produced one concealed hammer prototype. That pistol was intended to be a military-style "holster gun" and was based on the full-size dual-link M1905 .45-caliber action. However, the Army evidently was not interested in a



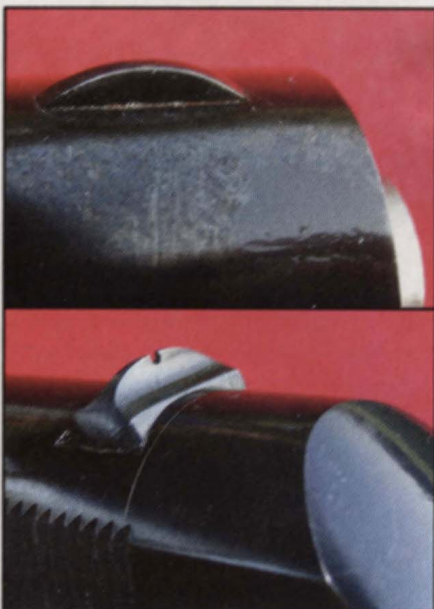
Dr. Topper test-fired the same M2006 prototype pistol featured in the earlier photos, but by the time it reached him it had been fitted with a figured stock with Cylinder & Slide's logo that features Bill Laughridge's famous trademark mustache.



The Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model arrived with two spare magazines and came in a handsome soft carrying case decorated with the distinctive Cylinder & Slide logo.



The Pocket Model has a rather unique recoil spring plug and it also has the distinctly shaped protruding barrel of the original Colt M1903.



The front and rear sights of the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model prototype and the Historical Model have the same small, rounded original sights as the Colt Pocket Model. Dr. Topper found that these sights provided a clear sight picture despite their rather diminutive size.

concealed hammer design, and Colt's prototype now resides in the Colt Museum in Hartford, Connecticut.

The M2006 prototype and M2008 production guns are true pocket pistols intended for concealed carry. Bill produced the M2008 in two models, a Standard Model that has somewhat larger sights than the original M1903



The Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model has a Bar-Sto barrel that provided very good accuracy. This gun is primarily designed for close-range self-defense, but Dr. Topper found that it had no difficulty in delivering good groups out to at least 25 yards.



The nearly invisible silver-soldered joint for the grip extension is just one example of the overall high quality workmanship that went into building the C&S Pocket Model.

design and a Historical Model which is as cosmetically close to the M1903 as possible. The M2006 prototype reviewed in this article is the predecessor of the Historical Model, and both the prototype and Historical Model most closely resemble the Type III variation of the Model 1903 because they have no barrel bushing or magazine safety. Similarities of the C&S Pocket Model to the Model 1903 go far beyond overall proportions. The C&S Pocket Model has the same overall round profile of the Model 1903. There is nothing I could find on this gun that is likely to snag during a presentation from the holster or a pocket. In addition, the shape of the C&S Pocket Model's grip safety is very similar to the Model 1903, and the C&S gun also has a rounded butt, short trigger and vertical cocking serrations like the original Colt. The Model 1903 had an external extractor, and this is

one feature that Bill insisted on for his Pocket Model. Fortunately Caspian Arms builds a .45 auto slide that has a very similar external extractor. One final historical similarity is that Bill was able to give the Bar-Sto barrel on his gun the same reduced-diameter protruding muzzle found on the Model 1903. This contributes significantly to the gun's striking art nouveau appearance.

Since C&S Pocket Model is built on the M1911 action, there are also obvious differences between it and the Model 1903. The first is that the C&S gun has a slide stop lever. The 1903 does not. In addition, the C&S Pocket Model has an original-design M1911 external safety. The external safety on the M1903 was very small and did not offer a lot of purchase for the thumb during a fast presentation. As a result, I imagine that many people who carried the original Colt Pocket Model kept the chamber empty and racked the slide when they presented it from the pocket or holster, even though it does have a grip safety. The larger slide safety on the C&S Pocket Model makes it better suited to be carried cocked and locked with a loaded cartridge in the chamber. However, the C&S Pocket Model does not have an internal firing pin block and even though the C&S gun also has a grip safety, I don't think I would carry it cocked and locked in my pocket unless I was expecting an immediate confrontation. If carried cocked and locked in an IWB holster, the holster used should be designed to fully cover the trigger, and it should also protect the external safety from being disengaged by body motion.

Workbench Evaluation

Once I got the M2006 prototype home, I took it over to my workbench for a close examination of its fit and finish. I was particularly interested in the silver soldering of the rear slide and frame extensions. All I can say is that the mating of the extensions was flawless. The joints are perfectly straight and smooth. I ran my finger over the joints multiple times and could feel no discern-

AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

Load	Muzzle Velocity (fps)	Extreme Spread (fps)	Muzzle Energy Ft.-Lbs.	Expansion (inches)
Black Hills 185 JHP	879	18	317	.505
Speer 185 Gold Dot	896	37	330	.675
Black Hills 230 JHP	803	21	329	.707
Winchester 230 SXT	803	22	329	.635
Remington 230 Golden Saber	777	43	308	.705
Black Hills 230 FMJ	793	37	321	N.A.



Unlike the original M1903 and M1908 Colt Pocket Models, the Cylinder & Slide pistol is built on the Colt 1911 action. Therefore, it has a 1911-style slide release, external safety and magazine release. It is interesting that Cylinder & Slide uses the old small-shelf (World War II and earlier) type of manual safety.



The fit and finish of the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model are outstanding. Notice the sweeping contours, excellent knurling, flat surfaces, high polish and precise, even markings in this close-up.

able transition between the extensions and the main body of either the slide or frame. All that could be seen was a fine white line where the silver solder did not take the bluing. I examined the rest of the gun for fit and signs of tool marks or poor fit, and could find none. The trigger face, slide release lever, external safety and magazine release all have excellent fine checkering that is not overly sharp and does not dig into



The beveled magazine well on the C&S Pocket Model indicates that this gun is a modern defensive pistol that has up-to-date tactical refinements.



Another modern tactical feature of the C&S Pocket Model is its throated and polished feed ramp that provides consistent and reliable feeding.

your thumb or trigger finger. The magazine well is cleanly beveled for rapid reloading, and the fitting of the grip safety is even and very comfortable. This safety releases smoothly when the pistol is gripped in the shooting hand. I checked the functioning of the grip, external and disconnector safeties, and all worked normally. The slide cycled smoothly without excessive play or wobble. The feed ramp was throated and evenly polished, and the trigger pull was just a little over 4 pounds.



The C&S Pocket Model and an Insight Tech-Gear Typhoon flashlight are invisible when carried in the pockets of an overcoat but they are instantly accessible should the need arise.

With respect to finish, bluing on the C&S Pocket Model was dark in color and very even. The trigger, slide stop, magazine release, safety and extractor are finished in a lighter blue that resembles the old "Peacock Blue" found on some early Colt revolvers. Unfortunately, the photographs in this article don't quite capture this lighter blue, so you'll just have to take my word that it truly is beautiful. Bill also spent a lot of time hand polishing the prototype. The M2008 production models are not hand-polished, but C&S will do the work for an extra charge, and he also can install a variety of different grips or do other decorative work to make each Pocket Model a unique piece. Finally, all of the markings on the gun were sharp and of even depth. The overall impression was striking, and everyone who saw the gun remarked about how good it looked.

Performance

I took the C&S Pocket Model to the Flagler Gun Club to run a series of live-fire tests to evaluate its performance. I designed tests that were appropriate to the intended use of the pistol, which is close- to medium-

range personal defense. I also chronographed six different loads that were kindly provided by their manufacturers. These included: Black Hills' 230-grain JHP, 185-grain JHP and 230-grain JRN ammo; Winchester's 230-grain Supreme SXT JHP; Speer's 185-grain JHP, and Remington's 230-grain Golden Saber HP.



Six different loads from four manufacturers were tested in the Cylinder & Slide pistol. Five of these were hollowpoints, all of which fed and functioned well.



Dr. Topper chronographed six loads using his Shooting Chrony chronograph. All loads delivered velocities and energy levels similar to other .45 autos with Commander-length barrels.

The five hollowpoint loads were also fired into water jugs to test for bullet expansion and penetration. No +P loads were used in these tests. Those of you who own M2008's should contact C&S to see if +P ammo is recommended for your particular gun and, if so, what weight recoil spring should be used with this hotter ammo.

The results of the velocity, bullet expansion and penetration tests are listed in the accompanying chart. With respect to velocity and energy, all loads produced results that were well within what one would expect from a Commander-length barrel. The slowest load was the Remington 230-grain Golden Saber at 777 fps, and the fastest was the Speer 185-grain Gold Dot at 896 fps. Energy levels ranged from 308 foot-pounds for the 230-grain Golden Saber to 330 foot pounds for the 185-grain Gold Dot. Expansion ranged from .505-inch for the 185-grain Black Hills JHP to .707-inch for the 230-grain Black Hills JHP. In spite of its greater expansion, the 230-grain Black Hills bullet penetrated about 2 inches deeper than the Black Hills 185-grain JHP bullet into the packed paper bullet-stop box behind the water jug. This reinforces what my friend Tom Givens from Rangemaster in Memphis told me a few months back when he discussed his experiences hunting with the .45 ACP. He found that the 230-grain loads frequently penetrate deeper than the 185s.



The five hollowpoints tested were (left to right) Remington's 230-grain Golden Saber, Winchester's 230-grain SXT, Black Hills' 230-grain JHP, Black Hills' 185-grain JHP and Speer's 185-grain Gold Dot. All of these loads fed flawlessly in the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model and expanded when fired into a plastic water jug.

When shooting the C&S Pocket Model prototype at the Flagler Gun Club's Action Range, I initially experienced some problems related to one of the magazines. Upon switching magazines these problems disappeared, and I was very impressed with how comfortable this pistol felt and how well it pointed. The original Colt Pocket Model was known to point quickly and easily, and the scaled-up C&S version has all of the good handling characteristics that sold more than a half-million M1903s and its .380 version, which is called the M1908. When shooting from 7 yards, a one-hand shoulder point kept all rounds well centered in the target. At 10 yards, the one-hand group opened up a bit, so I switched to a two-hand isosceles stance and the group tightened. In fact, it was so tight that I moved back to 15 yards and fired another seven shots two-handed. The results were very good, as you can see from the photo that accompanies this article. I had thought that the gun's small sights would be hard to see, but the rounded top of the front sight reflected sufficient light that it stood out quite well in daylight, making aimed fire no problem. Given this, I couldn't resist the temptation to take the gun to the Flagler Club's Pistol Range to see how it would do from sandbags. The Pistol Range is covered, so in addition to testing for accuracy I'd get a good idea of how well I could see the diminutive sights on the prototype when the gun was shot in the shade. I've included a photo of a target fired at 25 yards with Black Hills 230-grain ball ammunition. It measures about 4x2 inches and clearly indicates that this little gun has all the inherent accuracy one could ask for in a pistol that's designed for close-range personal defense. With respect to functioning, the Pocket Model's throated feed ramp and an ample ejection port made it highly reliable. The external extractor worked fine, and I could not tell the difference between the performance of the external extractor and the tuned internal

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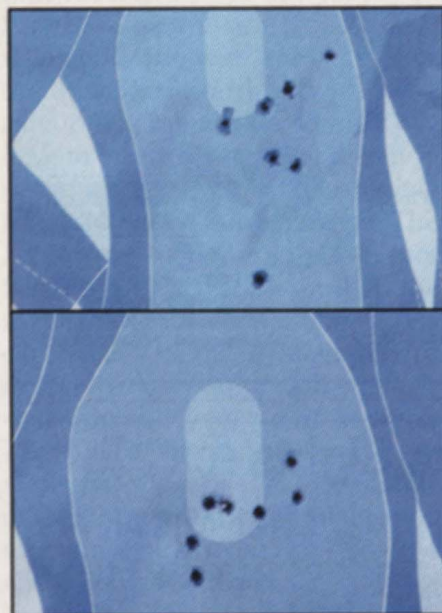
extractors on other .45 autos that I've owned over the years. All of this indicates that the design of the C&S Pocket Model was well thought-out.

The Future

When I submitted this article there were nine of the original 50 M2008s left for sale. The price of a Standard Model has been \$2595 and the Historical Model has been offered at \$2995. However there may have been a slight price increase since I last spoke with Bill,



The Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model proved to be a natural for one-handed point shooting from 7 yards. In this photo Dr. Topper quickly empties the pistol into the center of the target.



The target with the more dispersed shots was fired one-handed, the one with the tighter group two-handed, both at 10 yards. With either technique the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model demonstrated that it was highly suitable for personal defense at that distance.



This center-of-mass group was fired at 15 yards from the Cylinder & Slide Pocket Model with 230-grain Black Hills hardball and a two-hand hold. It clearly indicates that the Pocket Model is not just for arm's-length engagements.



Dr. Topper fired this 4x2-inch 25-yard group from a sandbag rest using Federal 230-grain FMJ ammunition. With respect to self-defense, this level of accuracy offers a very reasonable amount of standoff capability from a gun that's essentially designed to be carried in a coat pocket.

so anyone interested in an all-steel Pocket Model should call C&S for current prices. When the steel-frame guns are gone, Bill is considering the production of 50 lightweight Pocket Models with aluminum alloy frames. For those who want to carry a .45 Pocket Model on a regular basis, the approximately half-pound weight reduction that can be achieved with an aluminum alloy frame would make this big bore concealment gun carry lighter in an overcoat pocket. Having shot other lightweight Commander-sized guns, I doubt that this decrease in weight would unduly increase recoil. But regardless of whether it has a lightweight or all-steel frame, the C&S M2008 combines the shootability of a time-proven pocket pistol design with the effectiveness

WHERE TO FIND

Black Hills Ammunition

www.black-hills.com
(605) 348-5150

Caspian Arms

www.caspianarms.com
(802) 472-6454

Cylinder and Slide

www.cylinder-slide.com
(402) 721-4277

Flagler Gun Club

www.flaglertgunclub.com

Florida Gun Exchange

www.floridagunexchange.com
(386) 304-9499

Insight Tech-Gear

www.insightlights.com
(877) 744-4802

Rangemaster

www.rangemaster.com
(901) 370-5600

Remington Ammunition

www.remington.com
(800) 243-9700

Shooting Chrony:

www.shootingchrony.com
(905) 276-6292

Speer Ammunition

www.speer-ammo.com
(800) 627-3640

Winchester Ammunition

www.winchester.com

of the latest .45 ACP ammunition. In this way it truly is something old that has been reborn into something very new and relevant to today's defensive needs.

Thanks to Bill Laughridge and the staff at Cylinder and Slide lending me the Pocket Model and for their time, information and photographs. Thanks also to Peggy Topper, the Flagler Gun and Archery Club and the Florida Gun Exchange for help in the development of this article, and thanks to Remington, Winchester, Black Hills, and Speer for providing ammunition for testing. **GW**