**ABOVE**

Very few pistols so far have worked well with .41 AE. One that does is the Jericho 941 (bottom) which can be converted to use 9mm Luger in seconds. The Desert Eagle (top) is chambered for the revolver calibres .44 Magnum and .357 Magnum, and an all-new cartridge .50 AE.

me, heavier slide and much thicker barrel. Tanfoglio in Italy also have purpose-made .41 AE pistols derived from the CZ75, marketed as the 'Ultra' and promoted through the International Practical Shooting Association as a suitable handgun for the combat shooting sport of Practical Shooting. The two factory loadings of .41 AE have either a 170 grain (11 g) bullet travelling at 1225 fps (373 mps) with an energy of 567 ft lbs (768 joules), or a heavier 200 grain (13 g) bullet at a more sedate 1100 fps (335 mps) and an energy of 538 ft lbs (729 mps).

.44 AND .357 AUTOMAG

The original AutoMag pistols were designed by Harry Sanderson of Pasadena, California, USA, and were produced in 1970 and 1971 in two calibres: .44 AutoMag (.44 AMP) and .357 AutoMag (.357 AMP). The pistols were constructed

from titanium and stainless steel with a 6½" (165mm) barrel and weighed over 65 ounces (1.85 kg) when loaded with a 7-round magazine. Using a 6-lug front-locking rotary bolt, and operating on the short recoil system, they would only work when very clean and using full power ammunition. The first AMP cartridges made were the .44 calibre that were initially produced by cutting down and reaming .308 Winchester (7.62 × 51mm) brass to take the .429" (10.9mm)

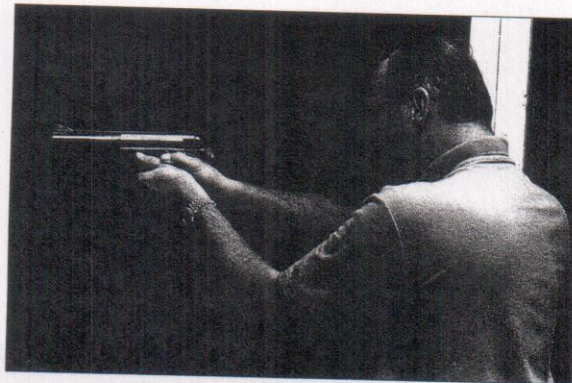


diameter bullets used in .44 Magnum revolvers. New .44 brass was produced for a short while in Mexico by Cartuchos Deportivos Mexico, but ammunition was never commercially loaded. The .357 AutoMag ammunition was made by necking down .44 AMP brass to .357 and making a bottlenecked cartridge. Ammunition guru Frank C Barnes lists handloads for .44 AutoMag with a 200 grain (13 g) bullet giving a velocity of 1510 fps (460 mps) and an energy of 1020 ft lbs (1382 joules), and a 240 grain (15.5 g) load at 1275 fps/870 ft lbs (389 mps/1179 joules). The .357 AutoMag could use a range of bullets from 110 grains (7.1 g) which reached 1935 fps/918 ft lbs (425 mps/1244 joules), up to 158 grains (10.2 g) which reached 1635 fps/942 ft lbs (498 mps/1276 joules). The AutoMag name has been acquired by iAi in California and is used on part of their range of 1911 type pistols.

WILDEY PISTOL

The Wildey pistol was designed by Wildey Moore and first manufactured by him in Cheshire, Connecticut, USA, in 1980. The business was taken over in 1982 by a New York-based investment group but very few pistols were made until 1987 when Wildey Inc bought back the rights to the design and recommenced production of the Wildey Survivor model in Brookfield, Connecticut. Wildey Moore claims to have made the world's first true gas-operated pistol, and he has chambered it for a mixture of production cartridges and wildcats. By using an adjustable ring around the barrel chamber, the amount of gas used to power the slide can be regulated. This means that the pistol can be fine-tuned to cycle with ammunition of varying power; a great help to shooters who reload their own ammunition.

In 1979 Winchester catalogued the first two calibres for



LEFT AND ABOVE
Harry Sanford's AutoMag was short lived, hampered by a lack of factory ammunition. The first cartridges were made from cut down .308 Winchester rifle brass.

the Wildey: 9mm Winchester Magnum, and .45 Winchester Magnum. The 9mm Win Mag cartridge offered comparable ballistics to the .357 Magnum revolver round, and .45 WM was slightly better than .44 Magnum. Both rounds were essentially lengthened versions of old existing cartridges – 9mm Luger and .45 ACP – and they used the same bullets. The 9mm WM propelled a 115 grain (7.45 g) bullet to 1475 fps (449 mps) from a 5" (127mm) barrel to give a muzzle energy of 556 ft lbs (753 joules), similar to the power of 9mm Mauser Export.

After acquiring the rights back to his original pistol, Wildey Moore set about making the pistol work with some even higher powered ammunition. The first step was the introduction of .475 Wildey Magnum, initially a wildcat cartridge made from cut down and reamed .284 Winchester rifle brass. By 1990 Norma in Sweden had agreed to produce virgin .475 Wildey Magnum brass and Wildey Inc started making ammunition with a 250 grain (16.2 g), .475" (12mm) diameter soft point bullet that would reach 1750 fps (533 mps) from a 10" (264mm) barrel, and an energy of 1700 ft lbs (2303 joules). The African big game hunter's TKO factor for this cartridge is 29.7.

As so often happens with high-powered cartridges, the next stage was to neck down the .475 Wildey Magnum brass to take smaller diameter bullets which would achieve even higher velocities and muzzle energies. A whole family of calibres was designed with a mixture of metric and imperial designations, although they all use imperial calibre bullets. .357 Peterbuilt used 125 grain (8.1 g) and 158 grain (10.2 g) .357 Magnum bullets; 10mm Wildey Magnum used .41 Magnum bullets, and 11mm Wildey Magnum projectiles came from .44 Magnum. The velocities and energies from a 10" (264mm) barrel of all the calibres chambered in the Wildey is as follows:

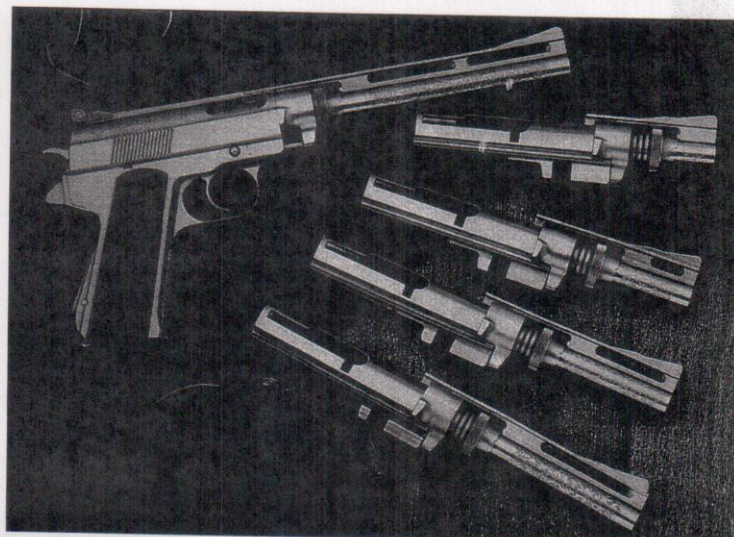
CALIBRE	BULLET WT		VELOCITY		ENERGY	
	GRAINS	(GRAMS)	FPS	(M/S)	FT LBS	(JOULES)
9mm Winchester Magnum	115	7.45	1475	450	556	753
.357 Peterbuilt	125	8.1	2300	701	1468	1989
.357 Peterbuilt	158	10.2	2060	638	1489	2018
10mm Wildey Magnum	200	13	1842	561	1507	2042
10mm Wildey Magnum	220	14.25	1733	528	1467	1988
11mm Wildey Magnum	200	13	1980	603	1741	2359
11mm Wildey Magnum	240	15.5	1747	532	1626	2203
.45 Winchester Magnum	230	14.9	1540	469	1212	1642
.475 Wildey Magnum	250	16.2	1750	533	1700	2303

Hollywood seems to love featuring the exotic or powerful pistol and in the film 'Death Wish 3', the vigilante character played by the actor Charles Bronson used a Wildey Survivor in .45 Win Mag.

THE DESERT EAGLE AND .50 AE

Israel Military Industries also make a large gas-operated self-loading pistol, the Desert Eagle. This was produced for Magnum Research in the USA and was initially available in two versions which fired the popular revolver cartridges, .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum. The standard barrel on the Desert Eagle could be easily removed and changed for one produced by the factory up to 14" (356mm) long. In .44 Magnum this increased significantly the power that could be generated from the cartridge with the combination of immensely strong rotary locking breech and long barrel with no gas leakage apart from through the gas slide operating mechanism. The author has personally loaded .44 Magnum cartridges with 200 grain (13 g) bullets which reached 1950 fps (594 mps) from the 14" Desert Eagle barrel to give a muzzle energy of 1690 ft lbs (2290 joules); nearly twice that of standard factory ammunition. In 1989 IMI produced the Desert Eagle in .41 Magnum and also chambered some barrels for .357/44 Bain & Davis, a wildcat cartridge.

In 1990 IMI announced an all-new rimless cartridge to be chambered in the Desert Eagle. .50 AE had anticipated ballistics of a 300 grain (19.4 g) bullet travelling at 1632 fps (497 mps) and a muzzle energy of 1792 ft lbs (546 joules). The cartridge and chamber dimensions had to be changed later in 1990 when the American Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) declared that the bore of .50 AE was greater than .50" (12.7mm) and that all .50 Desert Eagles would be declared as 'destructive devices' requiring special licensing. The result was a new .50 AE round with a smaller bore and bullet dimension but the same ballistic potential. It will come as no surprise if a necked down version of .50 AE becomes available in something like .44/50 to use heavy .44 Magnum bullets at very high velocities and energies.



ABOVE

The Wildey pistol could be chambered for additional calibres including .475 Wildey Magnum.

BELOW

.475 Wildey Magnum was then necked down to produce .375 Peterbuilt cartridge (2nd left) and the 10mm Wildey Magnum (2nd right) and the cartridge on the left is .357 Magnum; the one on the right .44 Magnum.

