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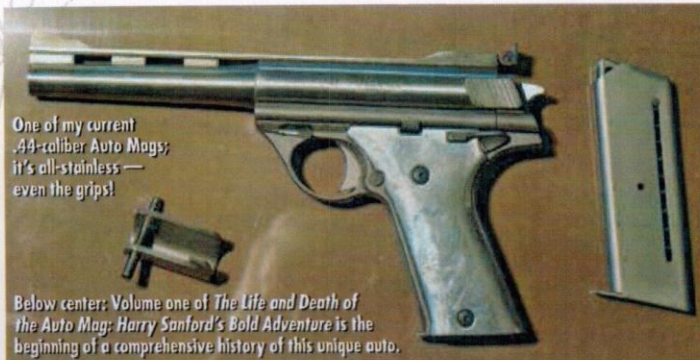
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THE MYSTIQUE OF THE AUTO MAG



One of my current .44-caliber Auto Mags; it's all-stainless—even the grips!

Below center: Volume one of *The Life and Death of the Auto Mag: Harry Sanford's Bold Adventure* is the beginning of a comprehensive history of this unique auto.

Harry Sanford was the man most responsible for the Auto Mag pistols. Although most of the initial design was the work of Max Guera, Sanford is the man who made it happen. Totally new in design, the Auto Mag Pistol was of stainless steel construction using a multi-lugged rotating bolt. A combination of the rotating bolt and clever accelerator (to open the bolt), made it able to handle enormous pressures for a recoil-operated handgun.

Loosely based on the .308/.30-06 case-head size and robust case-head construction, the first offering was in .44 AMP caliber, closely followed by the .357 AMP. The .44 was called the AMP. The standard 6.5" barrel length of the Auto

Mag easily exceeded contemporary .44 Magnum velocities from revolvers, and vastly exceeded them with the 8" and 10" barrel lengths. While doing this, the annoying cylinder-barrel gap blast and frequent "spitting" of the revolvers was eliminated, and accuracy drastically improved. In the mid 1970s, I shot a 6" 10-shot group at 300 yards using a 2X Leupold on a 10" .357 AMP. Nothing else in handguns would come close to that accuracy. You will even have to work hard to match it with any handgun now produced. In the same barrel, a Super Vel 90-gr. 9mm would do 3,000 fps with reasonable accuracy, flawless functioning and the ability to turn a jackrabbit into a hairy mist.

Big Game

The .44 AMP was meant for big game, and handled them well. I killed a large bison with one of Lee Jurras's LEJ custom .44s with a 265-gr. Hornady bullet, as well as many other medium-game animals. The .41 JMP (Jurra Magnum Pistol) was Lee's baby and it was a good one. From a personal standpoint I think I prefer the .41 over the other calibers, and I'm usually .44 guy in revolvers. Kent Lomont, who has pulled the trigger more times and on a wider variety of guns than anyone in history, made up a number of other cartridges for the gun but didn't really sell them. If you should be so lucky to have one, it's worth a lot of bucks — as is practically any Auto Mag.

Often criticized for functioning problems, the cause was generally ammunition load data developed in pressure barrels and never tried in an actual gun prior to it being published. Unfortunately, that still happens. Over the years, I've tried many guns with my ammunition properly loaded to give the correct recoil impulse, and every one of them worked just fine.



The BIG Book

Sanford's saga of production of the gun is legendary. Always underfunded, with a great deal of personal sacrifice he kept it going for many years. Today it is a "cult" gun that won't die, in part due to the extraordinary efforts of Bert Mason, who has recently published the first volume of "*The Life and Death of the Auto Mag: Harry Sanford's Bold Adventure*." This, my friends, is a book! The cover is in 3D, and all the pages and photos are of a quality I haven't seen before.

A this point the first chapter of the saga (this volume, if you will) covers the very early days of design, prototypes, patents, initial drawings and the trials and successes of getting the project underway. This book and what follows is the result of Bert's 10 years of research, and the investment of a huge amount of personal funds and time obtaining information and example firearms. The books are literally custom made to order. Two sizes are in production. The 11x14 is \$475 and the 8.5x11 is \$280.



Generally the AM cartridges may be loaded to higher-pressure levels, and not having a barrel/cylinder gap will give considerably higher velocities than revolver loads. The .357 Magnum, .357 AMP, .44 Magnum, .44 AMP, .41 Magnum and .41 JMP cartridge comparisons.

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