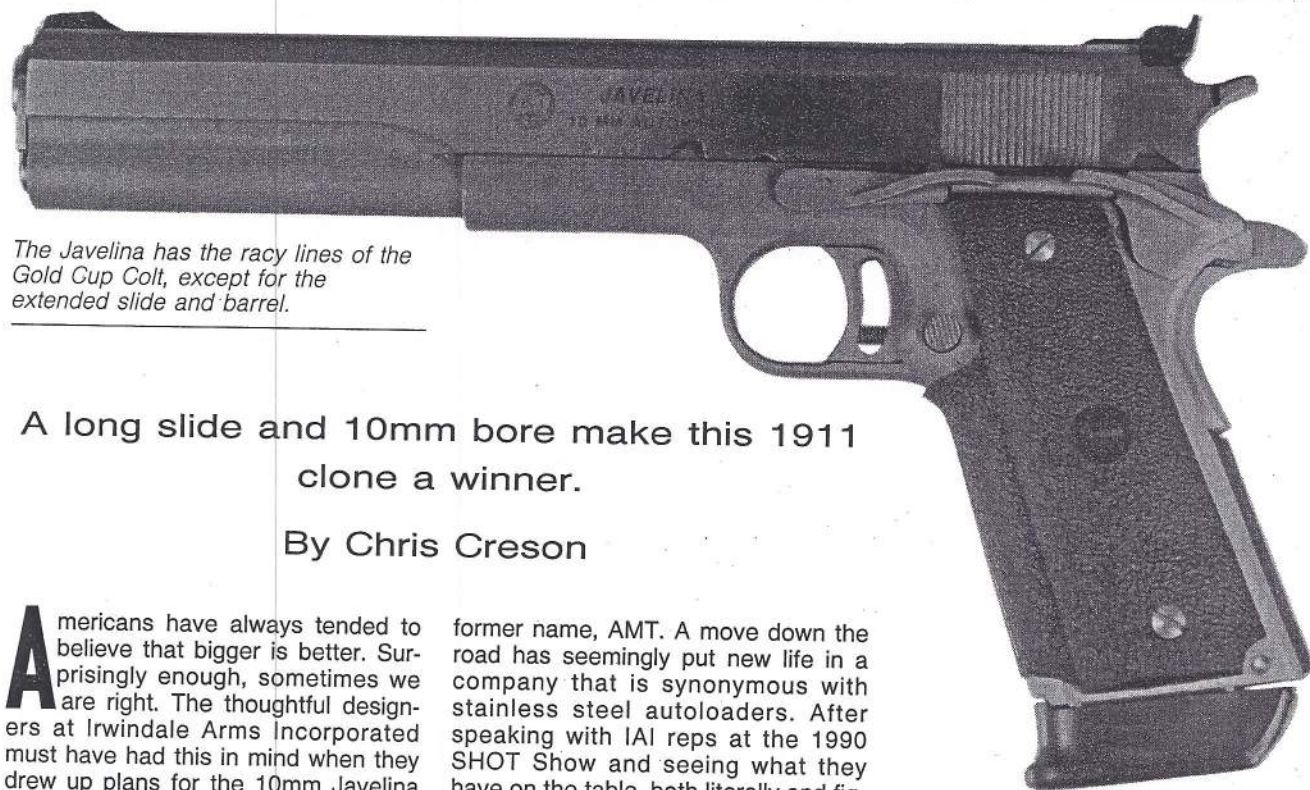


THE I.A.I. JAVELINA



The Javelina has the racy lines of the Gold Cup Colt, except for the extended slide and barrel.

A long slide and 10mm bore make this 1911 clone a winner.

By Chris Creson

Americans have always tended to believe that bigger is better. Surprisingly enough, sometimes we are right. The thoughtful designers at Irwindale Arms Incorporated must have had this in mind when they drew up plans for the 10mm Javelina Hunting Model. Everyone seems to be coming out with new pistol packages for the potent 10mm round. A "Big Ten," however, now that is something special!

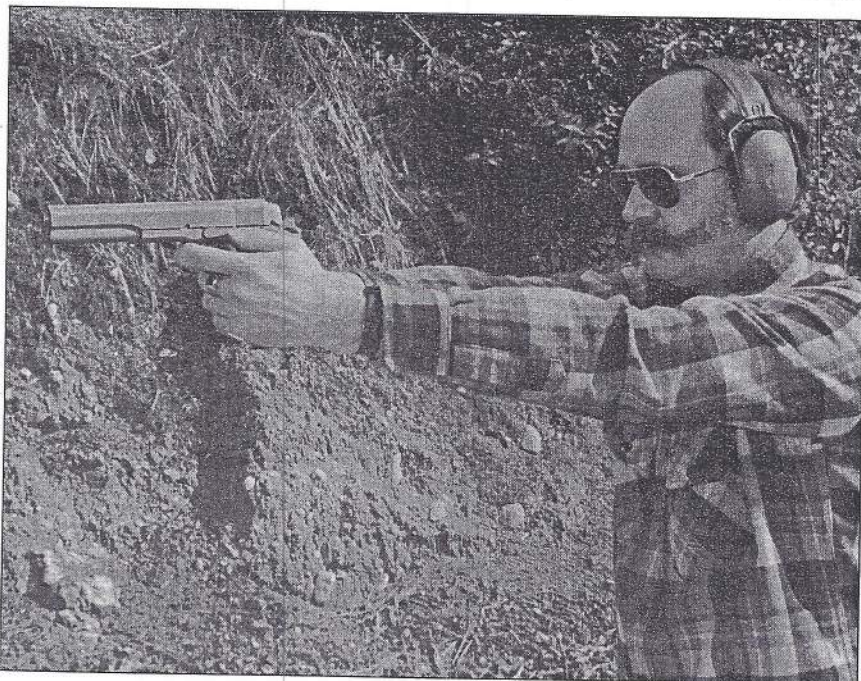
If you aren't familiar with the folks at IAI, you probably will recognize their

former name, AMT. A move down the road has seemingly put new life in a company that is synonymous with stainless steel autoloaders. After speaking with IAI reps at the 1990 SHOT Show and seeing what they have on the table, both literally and figuratively, I'm inclined to think that this is a firm to watch carefully. They seem to have their fingers on the pulse of the future.

During the past year, I have had my hand on a representative sample of virtually every 10mm that has been pro-

duced to date, from the moribund Bren Ten and the Phoenix-like Delta Elite to the sophisticated Omega. Some are a lot more fun than others when it comes to actually shooting them. IAI's latest was a standout. Once picked up, the Javelina was hard to put down.

Starting off with the omnipresent 1911-style configuration, the Javelina has a lot going for it right from the start. The J.M. Browning design has proven to be reliable in the extreme over the better part of this century. The controls are simple, familiar and easy to use. And the width and depth of the grip frame, originally designed around the stubby 45 ACP cartridge, has long been established as the "one size fits all" of self-loading pistols. This last consideration is not to be taken lightly. The Javelina is a gun that all members of the family will find ergonomically to their liking and easy to handle. The 10mm Grizzly is similar in design, but the grip was stretched to accommodate the .45 Winchester Magnum



The author's shooting partner fired the Javelina quite extensively. That long slide and barrel are heavier than most autos, but the added weight means reduced recoil.

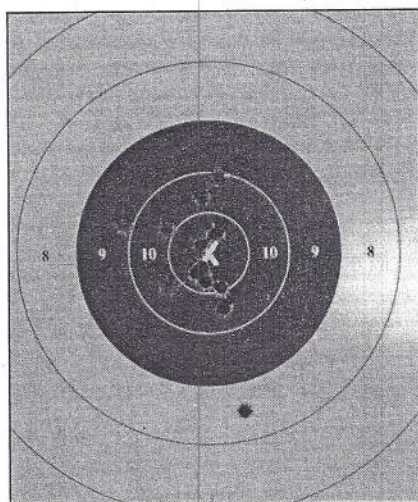
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In addition to the recoil-taming weight of that long slide, the extra length means more sight radius. A longer sight radius allows the shooter a better chance of getting the inherent accuracy out of the gun and 10mm ammo.



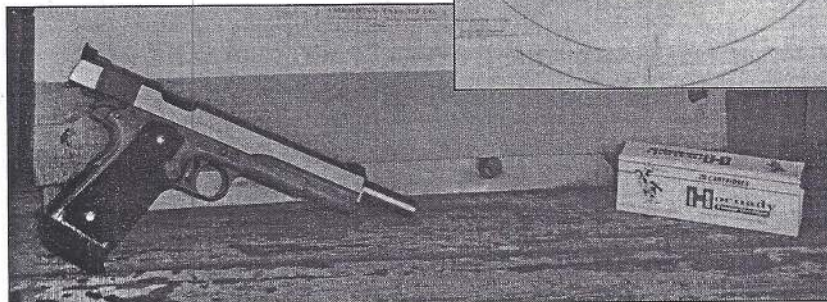
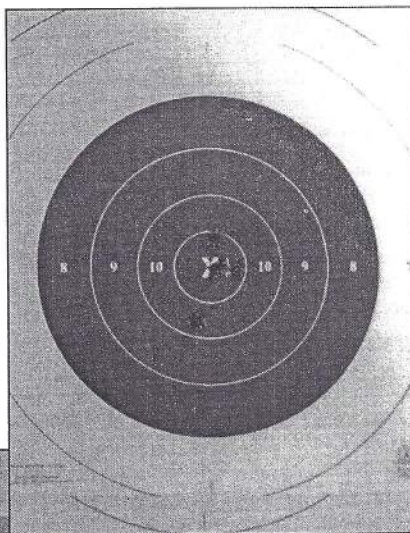
This 18-shot group was fired by the author; it's 9 pairs and illustrates the controllability of the pistol with 200-grain ammunition.

There's plenty of accuracy in the Javelina and the most accurate load seems to be Hornady 170-grain JHPs: 1.89 inches at 25 yards for 5 rounds fired standing, two-handed.

round. It's an excellent gun, but those who gravitate toward it tend to have hands the size of a big-league catcher's mitt.

The Javelina is constructed of investment-cast stainless steel. It is rugged, serviceable and many consider it to be pretty. My personal taste tends to run to blue steel, but I seem to be in the minority as of late. The public has spoken. They don't just want stainless guns, they are demanding them.

During the two-week period I lived with the "Peccary Pistol," however, I came to appreciate the mess-kit char-



acteristics of the stainless Javelina. Sunny Southern California was experiencing one of those rare and needed periods of moisture replacement. It rained like hell! Not to be daunted, I proceeded to the range with my pal of some 30 years, Carl Feichtinger.

Taking the Javelina out of the box, I locked the slide back and laid it on the shooting bench. It was sopping wet. I picked it up, wiped it off and considered what had just happened. Nothing. If this had been one of my favorite blue steel guns, I would have been field stripping, wiping everything dry and re-oiling quickly. Then it dawned on me that the Javelina Hunting Model is stainless for a very good reason—it's going to get wet. Often. Maybe they do have something there!

While the list of guns based on the venerable 1911 is a long one and growing rapidly, most are based on the Government Model. The Javelina, however, kicks it up a bit, as IAI bases their version on the prestigious Gold Cup. Most notable in this regard is the wide skeletonized trigger that features an Allen-head screw to adjust for over-travel. Lack of appreciable over-travel is highly significant when the desire is to place all shots in the smallest possible group at the longest reasonable distance.

Another Gold Cup-style feature is the fully adjustable rear sight. On the Javelina it features the popular Millett with a wide target-style blade. Both the rear sight and the semi-ramped front sight are serrated to break up any glare and they are both black. No bells, whistles or gewgaws. We're talking serious sights for serious shooters. The adjustment seemed more than adequate and the gun was easily zeroed.

When speaking of the sights, we must remember that we are talking about an extended slide shrouding a seven-inch barrel. That means two more inches of sight radius as compared to a conventional 1911. This extra distance between the sights makes any imperfection in the sight picture immediately obvious, and it is quickly corrected before the shot breaks. IAI also makes a standard five-inch version of the Javelina but, after shooting the longslide, I can't imagine why anyone would opt for it unless they were required to carry it concealed.

Other extras supplied with the base gun include a flat-topped ribbed-style grooved slide, an extended wide thumb safety and slide stop, wraparound non-slip neoprene grips, a grooved flat mainspring housing, and a beveled magazine well. About the only thing not included with the Javelina was a beavertail-style grip safety. This would be a welcome addition, as wide up-

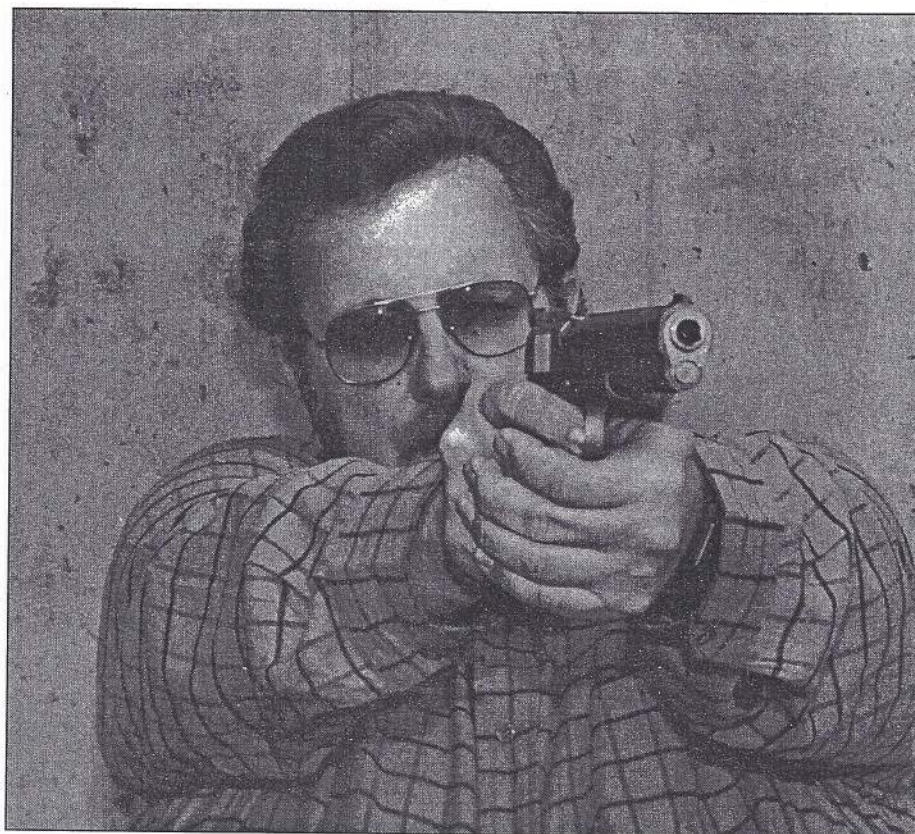
THE JAVELINA

swept grip safeties have proven invaluable in ameliorating muzzle flip and perceived recoil.

For all of its convenience and ease of handling, the Javelina is still a big gun. The overall length runs 10.5 inches, while the width remains a slim 1.25 inches. More significantly, this little porker runs 48 ounces, a good ten ounces more than an equivalent Government-sized model.

There are pluses and minuses to this added heft. The major advantage is that all of that extra weight is in the slide, which significantly dampens the heavy-recoiling 10mm round. There are two schools of thought here. One uses the standard slide, damped by extremely heavy springs (or multiple heavy springs). It works, however; a lot of what is felt as recoil and is viewed as muzzle flip is the compression of these heavy springs and the resultant dip when the slide slams home. The second group, which the Javelina represents admirably, decides to use strong but not excessive springs and places extra weight in the slide. What you wind up with is a gun that feels like your bullseye hardball gun, even when using the stoutest of ammo. If you use a spring that is too light in conjunction with a heavy slide, you get a "cachunk-clunk" feel. The Javelina, however, is right on the money.

The downside of this extra weight is noticed when packing it around all day. I suggest a good shoulder holster bal-



The author fired the Javelina extensively and with generally good results. Part of the reason that he was able to shoot it so well was the really first-rate trigger pull. It broke clean at 3½ pounds.

anced with loaded magazines on the opposite side. If you holster the long-slide Javelina on your belt I strongly advise you to also wear suspenders!

Because of the weather, it took several trips to the range to do anything like serious shooting. Or perhaps the Javelina is just so much fun to trigger that I managed to head for the hills every chance I got.

Feichtinger is a recreational shooter who had never fired a 10mm before and approached the Javelina with respect. "It feels just like my forty-five," he grinned, after popping off a string of PMC 200-grain FMJ rounds.

What he didn't realize at the time, and soon came to appreciate, was this: the light-recoiling PMC rounds had a power factor (bullet weight times velocity) of over 212,000! He always thought IPSC major .45 ACP loads at 175,000-plus were heavy kickers. The Javelina has a way of putting everything into perspective.

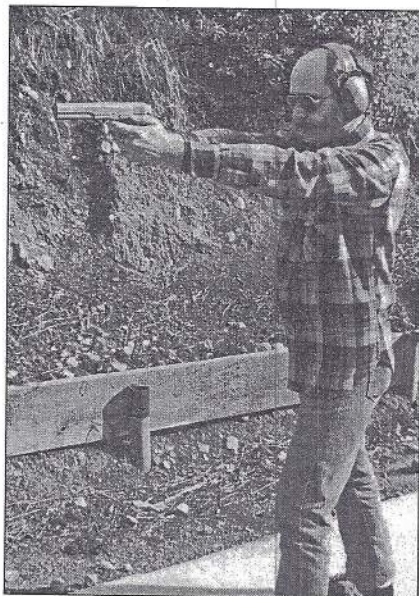
For speed shooting, I also prefer the 200-grain PMCs. I did a series of double taps at seven yards on a bullseye target with these rounds. Timing was done with a Competition Electronics Pro-Timer III. I fired 18 rounds (nine doubles) averaging .23 seconds between shots. All but one of the shots wound up in the black. I wanted the second of one pair a little low.

For accuracy, I seemed to get quite good results from the Hornady 170-grain JHP. My best offhand five-shot

group (held with both hands) measured 1.89 inches at 25 yards. Before I left the range, I set up a man-sized silhouette at 100 yards. From the prone position I triggered off a string of six shots at two seconds per shot. I wound up with six good hits.

The Javelina in this test had a very nice crisp trigger weighing 3.5 pounds. This made it a pleasure to shoot. The only problem I had with the gun was related to the Eagle magazine supplied. IAI uses 8-shot magazines and they work just fine. The Eagle is a 9-shot but consistently failed to feed the last round. It popped up at too steep an angle to enter the chamber. I even loaded a couple of .45 ACP magazines with 10mm and the Javelina functioned without hesitation.

All in all, the Javelina was everything a potent 10mm should be and it was a sad day when I had to return it. Suggested retail at the moment is \$600 and worth every penny. Those wishing more information can obtain it by writing to IAI, Dept. HGA, 6226 Santos Diaz St., Irwindale, CA 91702. When it comes to the "Big Ten," the Javelina seems to be in a league all its own. •



Recreational shooter Carl Feichtinger's first 10mm experience came with this pistol. He likened the recoil of the heavy, long-slide Javelina to that of a .45 auto.