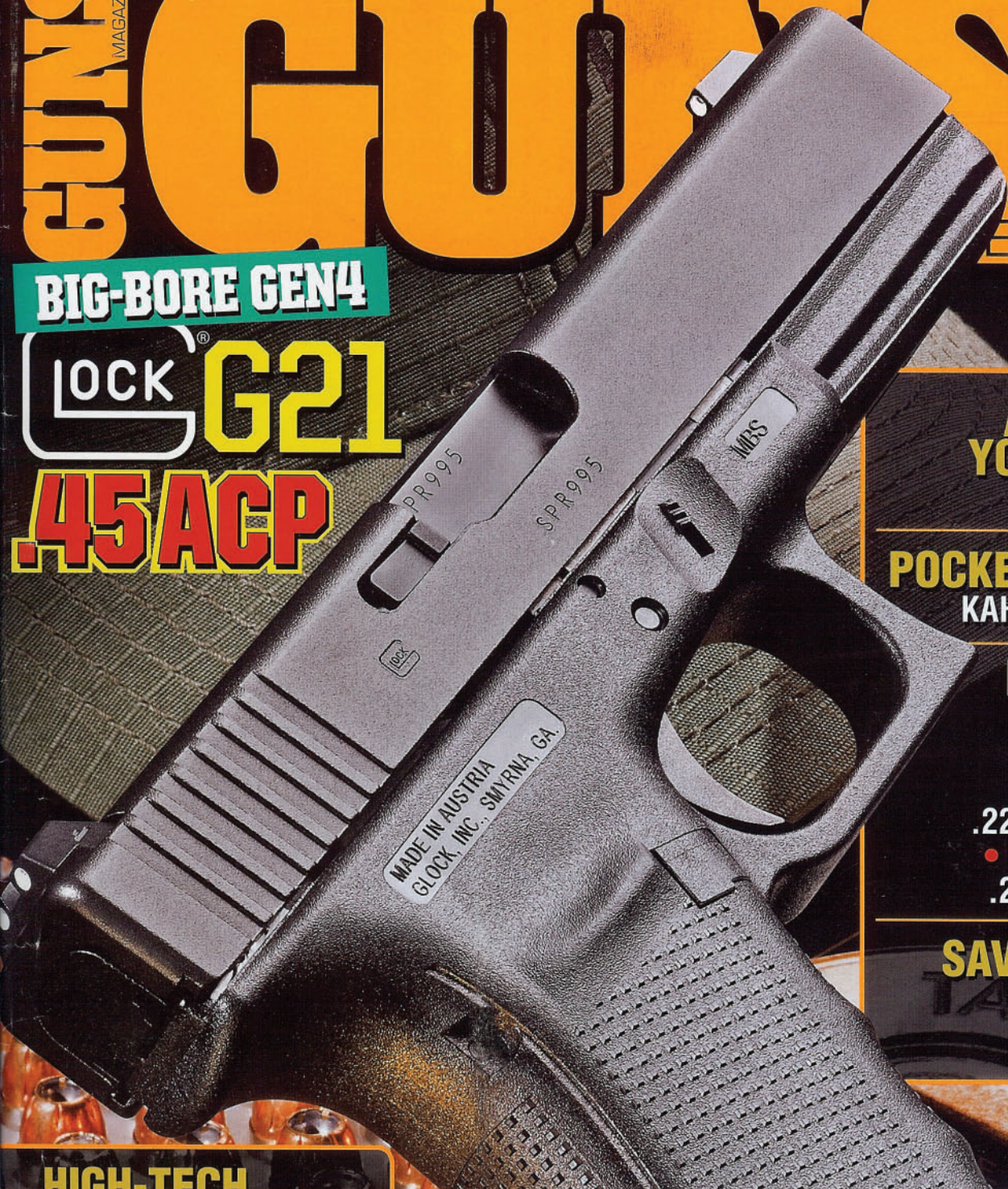


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- LEICA RANGEFINDERS
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**SPARE AMMO?**

IT'S NECESSARY Pg 12





# OUT<sup>TM</sup> of the BOX

MIKE CUMPSTON

## THE KAHR CM9

### A top-quality, deep concealment 9mm in affordable trim.

Going into the second decade of the third millennium, the demand for powerful, concealable handguns has created a seller's market for the companies with the smallest 9x19mm pistols. Kahr's original pocket-sized PM9 has been riding the top of Kahr Arms' sale charts and also occupies the alpha position on a number of lists of the smallest 9mm pistols.

The original version, the PM9, is even marginally smaller in most or all aspects than one pistol claiming the title. Adding the suffix "... est" is a precarious leap, particularly when we are bandying the smallest fractions of an inch. Nevertheless, the PM9093 is small, popular and relatively expensive.



*True Graves (above) is a new shooter but made excellent progress at the Centex R&P women's practicum. She had no problem with 9mm +P recoil from the CM9. Cassandra Hall (below) was able to chamber rounds without difficulty and found the Kahr easy to shoot.*



In recent years, Kahr has been bolstering its product line with economy versions of their mainline pistols and now has extended the process to the 9093. The alterations described below have lopped a solid \$200 off the price without doing even the slightest degree of mischief to the product.

The CM9093 has a pinned plastic front sight instead of the steel dovetailed unit of the original. The rear sight is drift adjustable for windage and the CM sights have the same Patridge profile with the same white dot front/white bar rear accents. It does not stick up above the pistol like a sore thumb and plastication is not likely to put it in the way of getting sheared off. The polygonal-rifled barrel gives way to conventional rifling—a step unlikely to produce any noticeable change in accuracy.

There are fewer machining operations on the slide. The engraving and finish are simplified though remain as attractive as need be and the pistol is sold with a single flatbased, 6-round magazine (obliging the savvy buyer to order a spare). The 7-round thumb extension unit would certainly make sense for a backup. The slide stop is a product of metal injection molding rather than machining, a process deplored by purists. It is a cost saving expedient with proponents as well as detractors.



*The Kahr CM 9 is a high quality, American-made product that combines power, reliability and shooter comfort with maximum concealability.*

Kahr representatives report the polymer-framed models currently outsell their all-steel models by a significant margin. The CM9 has a machined stainless slide and polymer grip frame with steel elements molded into the frame at all points in contact with the slide. The trigger system is cam-assisted, full-time double action with the striker partially loaded to accommodate the passive striker safety block. It is a widely used principle, making the pistols totally drop safe. Some shooters dislike it because there is no "double-strike" capability. If a round fails to fire, it is necessary to work the slide to reactivate the trigger. The trigger on our sample pulls through at a stack-free 7 pounds—in exact accord with factory specifications.

Small pistols such as this give rise to the temptation to report groups fired at rock-throwing distances. The Kahr tech guy who presented the CM at a media event at Gander Mountain, St. Mary, Fla., had bragged about the accuracy of the pistols so, I benched it from 25 yards. It turned out to be the right thing to do. The sharp sight picture and the long but smooth trigger came through with a 3.5" average for seven single-effort, 5-round groups with as many premium 9mm loads. Two of the groups pretty much tied at 2.7" and 2.8". I walked the Kahr through the Texas Concealed Handgun Proficiency course and had no problem keeping all shots centered through the various

### CM9

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**CALIBER:** 9mm, **CAPACITY:** 6+1, **OPERATION:** Locked breech DAO, **BARREL:** 3.0", **SAFETY:** Passive striker block, **OVERALL LENGTH:** 5.42", **HEIGHT:** 4.0", **SLIDE WIDTH:** .90", **WEIGHT:** Pistol 15.9 ounces, **GRIPS:** Textured polymer, **SIGHTS:** Drift adjustable, white-bar-dot combat, **FINISH:** Black polymer frame, matte stainless steel slide, **PRICE:** \$565



## 9MM FACTORY AMMO PERFORMANCE

LOAD (BRAND, BULLET WEIGHT, TYPE)	VELOCITY (FPS)	ENERGY (FT-LBS)	GROUP SIZE (INCHES)
BUFFALO BORE 124 JHP +P	1,084	323	2.7
BUFFALO BORE 115 +P	1,116	318	4.0
BUFFALO BORE 124 PENETRATOR +P+	1,149	364	5.0
BLACK HILLS 124 JHP	1,039	297	2.8
BLACK HILLS 115 +P	1,138	331	3.2
HORNADY 135 CRITICAL DUTY	965	279	3.8
HORNADY 135 CRITICAL DUTY +P	1,023	314	3.2

Notes: Groups the product of five shots at 25 yards from a rest.

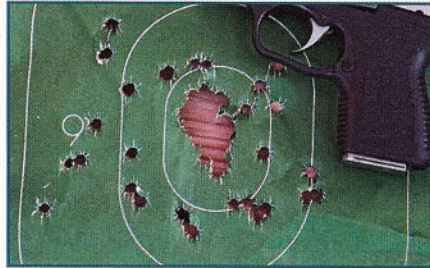
drills at 3, 7 and 15 yards.

The common wisdom says today's gun buyers want the most compact pistol available right up until they fire their first shot with pain and neural overload being the inevitable side effect of adequate power and concealability. During my range sessions, I found the CM9 quite comfortable to shoot. Kahr credits geometric features of the pistol and particularly the offset barrel lugs and resulting low barrel axis for the reduction in perceived recoil.

The recoil system is a 2-spring arrangement partially captured on a steel guide rod. It takes considerable effort to retract the slide. I wondered if this would be problematic for other shooters and if the noted gentle shooting properties would extend to the population at large. Centex Rifle and Pistol Club located north of Waco, Texas, regularly hosts familiarization events for area women. These have been going on for a couple of years now and continue to draw considerable numbers, mostly comprised of beginning shooters. Several participants tried out the CM9 reporting little difficulty working the slide.

They shot the Kahr with some very mild lead bullet reloads and some Black Hills +P jacketed hollowpoints. None reported any discomfort from the recoil though a couple noticed the high-end factory loads were more vociferous than those of standard pressure. Range Safety Officer Brian Harnden, said that it recoiled less than his full-sized carry pistols and Range Officer Jerry Smith rapid fired a magazine full into a well centered 1.5" group in the head of a B-27 target at 7 yards pronouncing the CM9 suitably accurate. The pistol functioned perfectly with one minor exception that would not be deemed a malfunction. After cycling a full magazine, it failed to lock open on empty—almost certainly because the shooter didn't have a rigid stance or firm grip. It did not jam, it merely obeyed the laws of physics.

Kahr pistols are all based on the design of CEO Justin Moon. His innovation resulted from a personal desire for a high quality CCW firearm and his dissatisfaction with the pistols



*The Kahr CM9 breezed through the Texas Concealed Handgun Proficiency demonstration (above). Black Hills and Buffalo Bore 124-grain JHP loads produced 25-yard groups (below) of less than 3".*



on the market in the 1980s. In other words, he made the guns first to shoot and secondarily to sell—both of which venues they serve quite well. Kahr pistols are all made in America using the CNC equipment developed and distributed by the parent company. Kahr owners tell me they have gotten prompt and professional assistance with Kahr customer service. The firm offers a comprehensive line of parts and accessories.

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