

How We Tested

Our test regimen was conducted in several segments. To give the pistols the benefit of “teething in” prior to reliability testing, we shot each pistol for accuracy first with Black Hills’ .45 ACP IPSC competition load (topped with the popular 200-grain Hensley & Gibbs lead semi-wadcutter bullet), and two handloads: a 220-grain hardcast lead roundnose bullet over 4.9 grains of Bullseye, and a 230-grain full-metal-jacket roundnose from BDX Manufacturing with the same powder charge.

Accuracy testing consisted of five-shot groups fired from a sandbagged rest at 25 yards. When starting with a clean barrel or changing loads, a shot was fired to foul the barrel prior to firing the five shots for record. Chronographing was done using 10-shot averages and standard deviations on a PACT Chronograph.

Handling qualities were also tested. The reloading test was conducted with the shooter starting with four loaded magazines on his belt and the pistol loaded and holstered. On the beep of a PACT timer, the shooter drew and fired one shot into the A zone of a standard IPSC silhouette target at 7 yards, reloaded, fired another round, and repeated until four shot-reload-shot sequences were completed. The exercise was done twice to register times for eight sequences and obtain a relevant average time. All shots had to be within the A zone to validate the test and eliminate the variability of rushed shots. We also tested the guns in the Bill Drill to quantitatively measure whether the shooter was put under stress by sticky controls, poor trigger quality or grip geometry, or the inability to control the pistol in rapid fire.

The remainder of shooting was under simulated practice conditions using varying courses of fire with targets 7 to 40 yards distant.