

FIXING LONELY SHOTS

Even though group sizes tightened when we added the Weigand BT Nose Piece to our test Beretta 92FS, we noticed an odd trend in the “after” portion of our testing. Though the Weigand part noticeably shrunk the groups, we saw a pattern in the tests wherein four shots in a group would be very tight—under an inch in some cases—but the fifth shot would be wide of the other four. Usually, the fifth shot fell out of the main group at or around 10 o’clock.

The mystery was compounded when we ran a test suggested by gunsmith Jack Weigand. Weigand said PERFORMANCE SHOOTER should have gotten group-size improvements of around 50 percent, but that using a Ransom Rest removed or dampened problems in the gun. He suggested we shoot a 10-shot group from a sandbag rest without the nose-piece attached and follow it up with a 10-shot group using the nose-piece. This would show the true potential of the nosepiece, he said, because its influence on barrel-alignment accuracy would be greater when other design factors weren’t dialed out.

However, we found the opposite to be true in the sandbag test. Without the nosepiece, the gun shot a 10-round group of 3.5 inches. With the nosepiece, the group size ballooned to 4.5 inches. However, the nosepiece group had eight shots inside of 1.44 inches, with three hits touching. The bullet-to-bullet spread on the non-nosepiece group was wider.

So what caused the two fliers on the nosepiece group? Our best guess was that the loading sequence had something to do with it. We shot the groups five rounds at a time, reloading between quintets so that we could maintain a hard front-sight focus without eye fatigue. The

last rounds out of the magazine were the bad shots, so we guessed that diminished pressure applied to the bottom of slide (with the mag empty) changed how elements of the battery fit together.

When we told AMU gunsmith David Sams about the flier problem, he laughed and said he had worked for months on the problem. “It really bugged me,” Sams said, “because I couldn’t come up with a reason for rounds flying out to the left.” He thought his barrel bushing and slide-to-frame fitting modifications should have removed alignment problems in the most critical areas.

Eventually, he solved the problem by adding two set screws beneath the back of the barrel in the frame. These screws, drilled at an angle into the frame, forced the barrel to align exactly the same way after each shot. “That may have been one of the most subtle, but most important advancements in the gun’s accuracy,” he said.



Above: After installing the Weigand nosepiece, we noticed that fliers ruined some great groups. One possible solution, according to AMU gunsmith David Sams, is to add two set screws beneath the back of the barrel in the frame. These screws force the barrel to align the same way after each shot.