

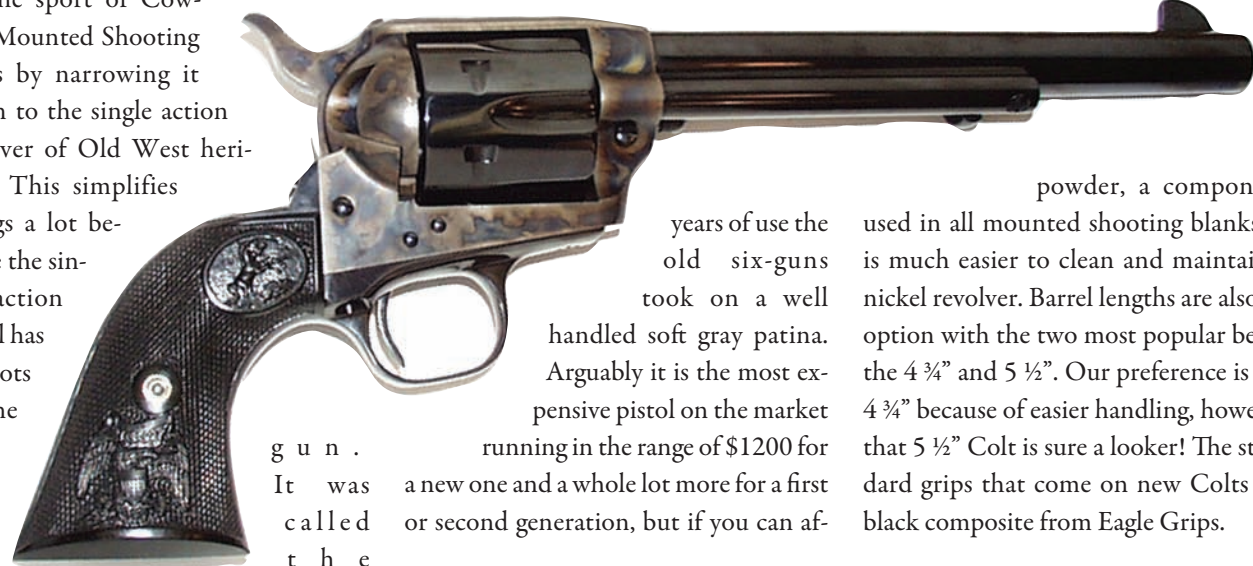
COLT

By Ken Amorosano

THE GUN THAT WON THE WEST Continues Its Winning Streak

Let's face it. Most people discovering the sport of Cowboy Mounted Shooting are also learning about guns for the first time. Thanks to the surge in popularity and the sporting use of old west firearms there is a wide assortment of quality firearms to choose from. The biggest dilemma one faces however is which gun to buy!

The sport of Cowboy Mounted Shooting helps by narrowing it down to the single action revolver of Old West heritage. This simplifies things a lot because the single action pistol has its roots in one



gun. It was called the Peace

Maker and as

was once said, "God made men, but Sam Colt made them equal." The Colt Single Action Army is the basis of most, if not all of the pistols used in Mounted Shooting today. A fine piece of machinery that

was first put into use in 1873, the Colt Single Action is still today one of the finest handguns you can use for Mounted Shooting. While the 1873 Single Action Army was most widely produced with a color case-hardened frame, a nickel-plated version was issued to Indian scouts. A bright "charcoal blue" finish was available from the factory, but with

years of use the old six-guns took on a well handled soft gray patina. Arguably it is the most expensive pistol on the market running in the range of \$1200 for a new one and a whole lot more for a first or second generation, but if you can af-

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ford a Colt, there is no need to look any further. You can buy fine motorcycles that look like a Harley Davidson, but there is only one Hog and like the Harley, the Colt "Hogleg" is the original.

The new Colt comes in two finishes. Blue with a color case-hardened frame or nickel. Experience will show that when shooting with black

powder, a component used in all mounted shooting blanks, it is much easier to clean and maintain a nickel revolver. Barrel lengths are also an option with the two most popular being the 4 3/4" and 5 1/2". Our preference is the 4 3/4" because of easier handling, however that 5 1/2" Colt is sure a looker! The standard grips that come on new Colts are black composite from Eagle Grips.

Out of the box the Colt could benefit from a few modifications to make it more competitive. There are a variety of gunsmiths that know these guns inside and out and it is best to take yours to a reputable smith with a track record for Colts. James & Guns in Arizona, Bob Munden in Montana and the folks at the Cowboy & Indian Store in California are good smiths. A few things recommended include a slickening up of the action. This includes a modification to the main spring to smooth out the action and slightly lighten the trigger pull. One thing to always remember when tuning a pistol for mounted shooting is to make sure the hammer strike and trigger pull are firm. You need to lighten them slightly on the Colt but not so much as to create hair triggers and light strikes. It is also recommended adding a more competitive pair of grips. The gun-fighter style grips are narrower and offer better gun control and handling. These grips are abundant and can be purchased from any of the top grip makers including Ajax, Eagle, or Hogue Grips.

Investing in a pair of Colts is just that, an investment. If properly taken care of and maintained, your Colts will increase in value over the years. No gun safe is complete without a pair of original Colts and no Cowboy should be without a pair of his own. As the Hartford based factory states, Quality makes it a Colt!

For More Information

Colt's Manufacturing Company
www.coltsmfg.com

Eagle Grips
www.eaglegrips.com

Bob Munden
www.bobmunden.com

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