

ment. Sporting the shortest sight radius of "only" 7 inches, we could accurately confirm an index and properly adjust our hold to compensate for increased distance.

Firing double action at our rapid-fire distance of 10 yards left only two shots outside of the bull (92 percent), but the shots were spread out over the target. We attribute this to a heavy DA trigger that locks momentarily into a staged position just before let-off. This is different from, but feels the same, as a stacking trigger. We also noted some binding during the rapid fire segment. We feel that debris discouraged the spent shells from re-entering their chambers after recoil. This malfunction was minimized by keeping the cylinders clean.

In terms of the gun's feel, we noted the edge of the trigger's face is squared off and uncomfortable to use. The wooden grip is rounded like a cowboy single-action gun, and the shape allows the gun to ride up and return to the natural grip, partially dissipating recoil. We'd like to see the grip fill more of the area between the front strap and the rear of the trigger guard. This would make the position of the weak hand more comfortable underneath the trigger guard.

All three guns have sight enhancements that are generally recognized as devices to speed sight acquisition. In each case the inclusion of an orange insert and a white outline on the rear blade detracts from the type of fine sight picture necessary for accurate long distance shooting. Certainly there are better choices of front/rear sight combinations for a silhouette gun, but we feel Ruger has reached a best possible compromise between a target sight and a combat sight.

GUN TESTS Recommends

● **Taurus Model 44, \$530.** Conditional buy. Although slightly more expensive here than the Ruger, Taurus revolvers can often be found selling for less than their competitors, and this model offers enough power to be a very good home defense weapon as formidable as any firearm

RUGER REDHAWK
Price....\$515

Our recommendation: Superb accuracy and function. Buy it.

The Ruger's trigger had square edges, which made shooting it uncomfortable.

SPECIFICATIONS

WARRANTY	Ltd. Lifetime
METAL FINISH	Brushed Stainless Steel
FRAME MATERIAL	Stainless Steel
WEIGHT	49 oz.
CAPACITY	6
GRIP MATERIAL	Wood
ACTION TYPE	DA/SA
TRIGGER PULL DA	12.5 lbs.
TRIGGER PULL SA	6.25 lbs.
CYLINDER GAP	0.005 in.
CHAMBER SIZE MAX.	0.429 in.
CHAMBER SIZE MIN.	0.428 in.

short of a 12 gauge shotgun. While not quite a competition grade gun, it has every other advantage the .44 Magnum caliber can offer. That is, enough ballistic versatility for pleasant target shooting and the capacity to deliver a decisive blow with a slightly higher level of comfort than the uncompensated models. If Taurus fixed the sights on this one, we would move it into the unqualified "Buy" category.

✓ **Ruger Redhawk, \$515.** Buy it. We were surprised by the low MSRP. The construction and workmanship were excellent. The sights allow you to take rapid aim for defense and plink out to 100 yards. It could stand

a little trigger work and the rounding of some edges, but this could be your best all-round Y2K weapon. If the world doesn't end and you don't need it for subsistence hunting or home defense, you can always use it to enjoy a good, civilized Bullseye or Steel Silhouette match.

✓ **Smith & Wesson 629 Classic, \$630.** Buy it. Other than a change of grip and possible front-sight blade change, we can't fault a revolver that shoots small groups of volcanic ammunition out of the box. Any gap in price between the Redhawk and the 629 Classic would certainly be narrowed after the Ruger was charged with refinements.