

Colt CCO. Hence the invention of the integral all-steel ramp. However, we have seen CCOs that have been fired with many rounds of JHP ammo and had no visible wear on their aluminum-alloy ramps. We conclude that if this is a problem with aluminum-frame guns, it would take many more rounds than we fired to prove it.

Kimber Compact Custom

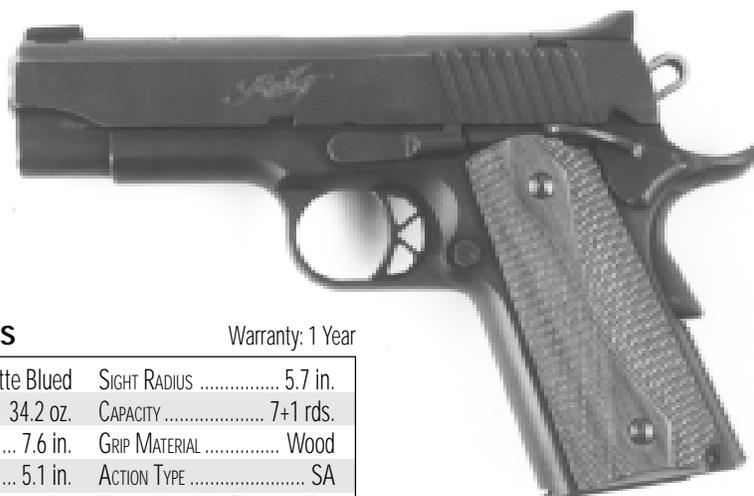
Our recommendation: At a cost of \$677 the Kimber offered the most value of all guns in this test. It shot extremely well, had perfect reliability, looked great, and didn't need anything at all done to it. The trigger pull did have some creep, but we could live with it. The folks at Kimber know how to put together a fighting .45. This one's a clear-cut winner.

Our test gun had a steel frame the same height as that on the CCO Colt, and a slide the same length as the Springfield Champion. The Kimber and Springfield slides were a quarter-inch shorter than that of the CCO. The Kimber came in a decent case with only one magazine. It had a very slight amount of creep in an otherwise excellent pull of 4.4 pounds. The Kimber had checkered wood grip panels, their standard plastic "designer" trigger, plastic mainspring housing, beavertail grip safety, extended thumb safety, opened magazine well, outstanding sights that included a dovetailed front blade and wonder of wonders, no sharp edges on the front of the slide or on the ejection port.

We have no idea why the Colt and Springfield, and many other guns, for that matter, are made with edges that would destroy an expensive leather holster in very short order. We assume those in charge of design have never put one of their handguns into a holster. We tried getting the Springfield into a fine Milt Sparks "Bruce Nelson Summer Special" holster, and it would not go. The slide cut into the

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Retail Price...\$677



SPECIFICATIONS

Warranty: 1 Year

FINISH	Matte Blued	SIGHT RADIUS	5.7 in.
WEIGHT (EMPTY)	34.2 oz.	CAPACITY	7+1 rds.
OVERALL LENGTH	7.6 in.	GRIP MATERIAL	Wood
OVERALL HEIGHT	5.1 in.	ACTION TYPE	SA
MAX. WIDTH	1.4 in.	TRIGGER PULL Wt. SA ...	4.4lbs.
BARREL LENGTH	4.0 in.	TRIGGER REACH	3.4 in.

Our recommendation: Buy it. This self-protection carry gun is ready to roll right out of the box

The Kimber and Springfield guns were essentially identical inside, though we felt the Kimber was easier to take apart. That's a paper clip stuck into a hole in the recoil spring retainer (see detail below), which lies between the barrel and frame.



leather. If we had forced it we would have destroyed the holster. There is no excuse for this, and these sharp edges make us downgrade otherwise excellent handguns.

Takedown of the Kimber is tricky, but intuitive. Remove the magazine and lock the slide in the fully rearward position. Then insert a pin, easily made from a paper clip, into a hole in the recoil spring pin, under the barrel, and release the slide gently forward. This removes all spring tension and the slide lock pin may be easily removed and the slide taken off the frame. The recoil spring and pin, locked together with your homemade pin, may then be drawn out of the slide and then the barrel comes

out the front, and that's as much disassembly as is usually needed. Reassembly is very easy.

The Kimber's accuracy was about as good as the Glock's, actually slightly better with Winchester 230-grain ball. However, whoever buys this one will have to file on the front sight to get the gun to center its shots. All loads shot about 2 inches low at 15 yards. We had no malfunctions with this fine little pistol.

The only problem with the Kimber is that it is heavier than the Colt CCO, hence, it's harder to carry all day. However, the Kimber is available with a lightweight frame if you want it. (Kimber also offers this gun with a full-size grip, and of course