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by Gene Rogers, Peacemaker
Specialists' Custom Gunslinger
Deluxe Colts are ready for
parade or competition.

PEACEMAKER SPECIALISTS' Gunslinger Deluxe .45 COLT

EQUALLY AT
HOME ON
PARADE OR
IN A SASS
MATCH.

BY GARY PAUL JOHNSTON



Even when I was too young for a real Colt Single Action Army, I was playing with cap guns that looked like this most famous of all revolvers. In 1945, at the age of four, my grandmother took a photograph of me in my first cowboy hat wearing two holsters and holding a couple of ancient cap pistols. After that I started to get serious.

During the summer of 1955 I met Jeff Cooper and Thel Reed up at Big Bear Lake while I was shooting some of my guns at the range there east of Fawnskin. Thel was 12 and I was 14, and I couldn't believe how well this famous little kid could shoot a big Colt SAA. By the time I was 16 years old, I had bought my first Colt SAA from Golden State Firearms, out of Pasadena, California, and was practicing fast draw in my garage using wax bullets out of a holster that was an affordable copy of an Ojala buscadero. Being a fairly adequate gunsmith for a kid, I even did my own action job on that Colt, and I got pretty good with it. Yep, I was hooked.

Now, as I've just turned sixty, I like to reminisce about all the Colt SAAs I've owned and shot over the years. I've handled a bunch of them too, including custom guns with action jobs by some of the best in the business. But I've never handled any better than the guns of Eddie Janis.

The owner of Peacemaker Specialists, Eddie Janis is big medicine when it comes to Colt SAAs, and he's been working these great guns longer than I

have even though, he doesn't have my mileage. That's because fixing Colts isn't a hobby with Eddie. Not only does he fix these wonderful guns, but he rebuilds them where necessary, and also offers a complete line of new and original spare parts for all variations. That's big medicine, to be sure.

Recently, after lamenting over a grand old Colt (with a 19th Century Arizona badge to go with it), I contacted several SAA gunsmiths including Eddie. When I told him what the gun needed, he matched the old nickeled part precisely. Now that old Colt will be able to live the life it deserves, but you'll learn more about this old thumbcocker in a future article when

we talk about "Colts With a Past."

When I asked Eddie to tell GOW more about his work, he informed me that Colts go in and out of his shop so fast that he really doesn't have much to send me, except for one. That is his personal pair of Colt SAAs that he uses for both show and competition. Well, I told Eddie I thought that would be just fine.

Now Eddie had already explained quite a bit about these guns over the phone. He told me about some of the custom work he'd done, both inside and out. The deep

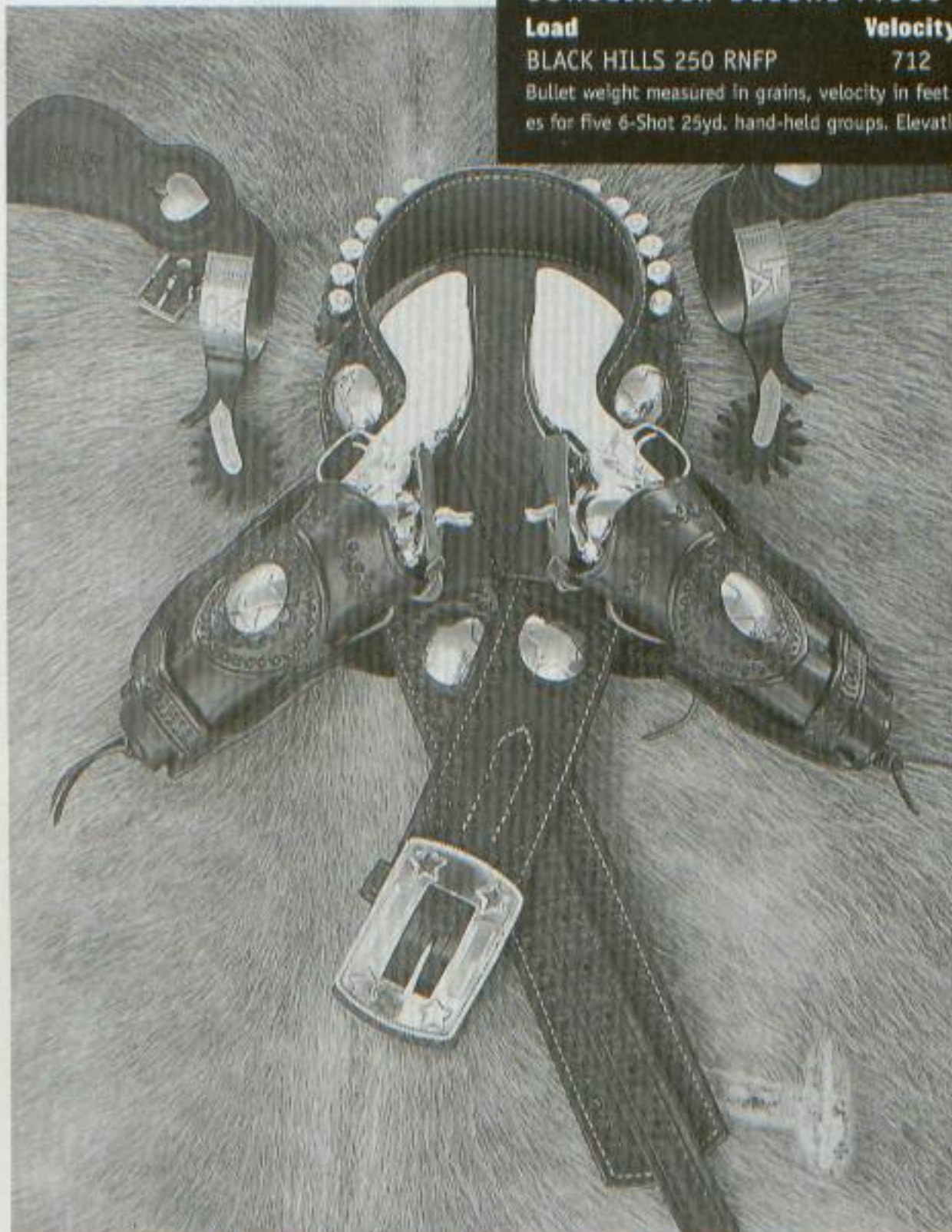
nickel plate finish was described, as well as the one-piece elephant ivory stocks and the guns' custom leather. Well, you can imagine how it is to listen to this kind of detail without seeing it first hand. Anyway, I just plumb forgot any picture Eddie painted in conversing about these two shootin' irons even if it added up to a thousand words. When I had the guns in my hands, though, everything was clear.

The guns began life as two 3rd Generation Colt Single Action Armys with 4-3/4-inch barrels and consecutive serial

Performance:
PEACEMAKER SPECIALISTS'
GUNSLINGER DELUXE .45LC

Load	Velocity	Sm. Group	Lg. Group	Av. of Both Guns
BLACK HILLS 250 RNFP	712	1.51	2.60	2.10

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second (fps) with ProChrono LE, accuracy in inches for five 6-Shot 25yd. hand-held groups. Elevation: 7000', Temperature: 74 degrees, Humidity: 28%



Eddie Janis' full-house Colts are not only pretty as a picture, but are built to perform.

numbers S08666A & S08667A. Originally chambered for .45 Colt, their cylinders had been replaced with a pair in .357 Magnum. How come Eddie Janis would replace the .45 Colt cylinders with .357 Magnum cylinders, you ask? Well, that's a good question, and Eddie has an even better answer.

Three Point Program

You see, it's all part of Peacemaker Specialists' three-point program that includes Accuracy, Action and Cosmetic packages. Eddie takes the .357 Magnum cylinder and re-chambers it to .45 Colt. Thus, he ensures the chamber throats are reamed to exactly .452 of an inch to match the Colt bore of .451 of an inch. The edge of the rear of the chamber is also broken to allow the casings to slide in faster without sharp edges. Next, the barrel's forcing cone is cut to exactly 11 degrees for optimum accuracy with lead bullets. Using the customer's preferred ammunition, the Colt is then test fired at 25 yards with windage adjusted for point-of-aim and point-of-impact.

After the Accuracy Package, Eddie begins his Action Package that also includes the Gunslinger Deluxe Action Job. Details here include stoning and polishing all action components, with care to address only the surfaces, without changing the dimensions of any parts. He then refits and



With custom cylinder flutes and period radiusing, Peacemaker Specialists' matching Colts are tastefully dehorned on their exterior.

modifies the bolt to tighten the cylinder fit and eliminate skipping, after which he refits the hand to adjust out over-travel.

Eddie changes the geometry of moving parts to extend reliability and reduce potential parts breakage. To decrease the load on the action and dramatically extend spring life, Eddie installs his custom-made Gunfighter mainspring and sear/bolt spring, and he adjusts the trigger to the customer's specifications. He can also match the pistol's trigger pull to the customer's rifle and shotgun to optimize speed during weapon changes in a match.

The hammer stop is adjusted to eliminate over-travel and to enhance the endurance of the action job and solidify the feel of the pistol during rapid fire. Bolt blocks are installed to decrease bolt twist and cylinder sideplay. Then Eddie does something else that few have heard of.

On .44 and .45 caliber guns only, Eddie hand cuts an unloading funnel in the frame to allow speed reloading during competition. Being SASS legal, this funneling of the frame beneath the loading gate prevents case rims from catching on the sharp edges of the frame if the cylinder is slightly out of alignment.

In his work on the action, the priority isn't to make the gun feel smooth and light, but to be totally reliable by eliminating wear and parts breakage. After such an

action job, the revolver feels like it's running on ball bearings, and locks up solid like a bank vault.

Next, the Cosmetic Package. First, the flutes of the cylinder are recut to give it

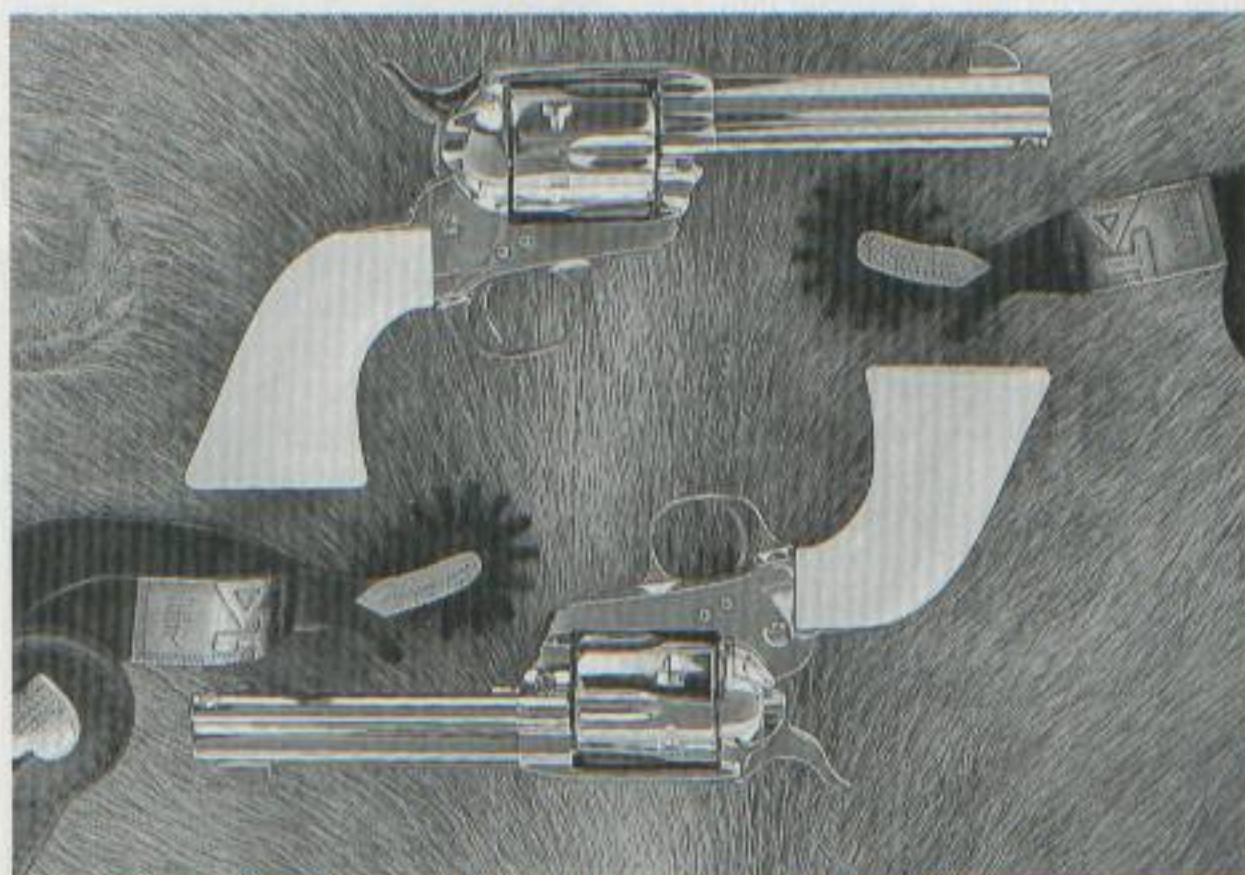
that early 1st Generation look, and the front of the cylinder is beveled for the same reason. He then dehornes all sharp edges. This cuts down holster wear, especially on the front edge of the ejector tube. Next, he slightly dehornes the top edges of the hammer for comfort, and slightly bevels the toe and heel of the grip. Lastly, Janis installs custom one-piece elephant ivory stocks.

With all the above features rounded up into one gun the result is as pretty as a Western sunset in June, especially with Eddie Janis' personal pair of Colts that are finished in nickel. Blue and color case and other finishes are also available along with custom engraving.

Did I forget to mention the action jobs on these two Colts? Well, let me tell you again. They're so smooth it's plain scary, yet the triggers on each gun let off crisply at about three pounds. Plenty safe for competition and even for serious work. I was curious about the innards of one of Eddie's Colts, and so I carefully removed the back-strap and triggerguard.

Now, I've seen some interesting custom mainsprings in Colt SAAs over the years, but I'd never seen one quite like that of Eddie Janis. Not merely a modified Colt

"WITH ALL THE ABOVE FEATURES ROUNDED UP INTO ONE GUN THE RESULT IS AS PRETTY AS A WESTERN SUNSET IN JUNE."



Looking as if they stepped right out of the Old West, Eddie Janis' custom Colt .45 SAAs show what Peacemaker Specialists can do.



Eighty-year-old cowboy, "Jinglebob" Fred Harsant, SASS #40708, of Australia, thought Eddie Janis' sixshooters were the best he'd ever seen.

"I'VE SEEN AND SHOT A HERD OF SIXSHOOTERS IN MY TIME, BUT NOTHIN'S EVER FILLED MY HAND QUITE LIKE PEACEMAKER SPECIALISTS' GUNSLINGER DELUXE COLTS."

dummy .45 Colt rounds that he uses for show. The custom handmade buckle is rectangular with stars and bars of jewelers bronze on a silver backing. A bronze wire rope also borders the buckle. Who made this beautiful holster set? It was made a decade ago by Salt River Trading Company, out of Arizona. The bad news is that this company is no longer in business. However, there are plenty of other leathersmiths who are capable of equally fine work.

Gunsmoke

Now, Eddie Janis told me that this personal pair of Peacemakers has fired thousands of rounds in many CAS matches, as well as a couple of trips to Thunder Ranch. Although they look almost new, they've been fed a lot of ammo through the years, and Eddie told me to be sure to shoot them. Well, you don't have to tell me twice. Since

Eddie sighted in his Colts for Black Hills 250-grain RNFP .45 Colt Cowboy Action Shooting ammunition, and uses nothing but this load, by golly, that's what I used.

Upon shootin' Eddie's Colts, it didn't take long for me to get even sweeter on them. I found that I could stroke the hammers extremely fast and press the trigger to hit the plates very quickly. Well, I hit them about 90% of the time. Really, and I was shooting pretty fast, just ask my Pocket Pro timer from Competition Electronics. Heck, if I'd been four inches taller, I'd have

felt like Evil Roy (except he never misses).

I liked Eddie's Colts so much I wore 'em around during our big Western Collectible Show for three days here in Montrose and let our local CAS people try out the actions. Even though all these folks have had custom action work done on their guns, none of them could believe Eddie's work. This was especially true of my good friend, "Jinglebob" Fred Harsant, SASS #40708. At eighty years old, this lifelong cowboy and world class saddlemaker is proving that it's never too late by taking up Cowboy Action Shooting, though he just recently moved to Australia from Ridgway, Colorado. Before he left, Fred confessed he sure would have liked to take Eddie's Colts along for the ride.

Well, I finally settled down to do some serious shootin' with Eddie's irons. Not only did they perform flawlessly, but they also hit right where I was aiming at High Noon gunfight distance (that's about 25 yards). Although both triggers let off at a hair under three pounds, they were crisp, deliberate and safe. Yes sir-ree, I've seen and shot a herd of sixshooters in my time, but nothin's ever filled my hand quite like Peacemaker Specialists' Gunslinger Deluxe Colts. Dang, I hated to send 'em back! Boy, how I wish I'd had a pair of custom Colts like these forty years ago.

Oh well, since I'm kinda spoiled now, I might just send a couple of guns off to Eddie Janis for a little bit of a tune-up. Besides its extensive custom work and restoration, Peacemaker Specialists also offers a total line of new and used 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Generation Colt parts. These are also now handled by Brownell's, 200 S. Front St, Dept CAS, Montezuma, Iowa 50171, (641) 623-5401, or visit website at www.brownells.com

For information on its custom work or a catalog (\$4.00), contact Peacemaker Specialists, PO Box 157, Dept CAS, Whitmore, CA 96096, (530) 472-3438. To keep your guns, join the NRA and vote, and join SASS too!

mainspring, Eddie's is made one at a time from special flat spring stock. It's thin, but tough, and designed to generate extra thrust as it approaches battery for total reliability. The cylinder bolt is especially designed and tuned for precise lockup, so it doesn't leave a drag ring on the cylinder.

Eddie's Old West Rig

With his prize Colts, Eddie Janis sent his double holster rig that's also quite special. Made of the finest cowhide, this set is beautifully carved with silver and brass conchos and a pair of somewhat different Mexican loop strong side holsters. Not buscadero holsters, these are over the belt in traditional style and are attached with Chicago screws. Both have a forward cant of about 11 degrees and feature a full round loop above a strap loop integral with the skirt.

On the fully lined belt are twelve divided loops, each with a window, and for the article, Eddie filled them with nickel plated

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