




**WHO SAYS A 1911 CAN'T
BE DIFFERENT?**

QUEST

FOR THE

**ROBERT NOBBS
PHOTOS: ICHIRO NAGATA**

BEST



Some older guys go for a fantasy car or try to date girls younger than the underwear in their dresser. Call me strange, but I was focused on the perfect pistol. I wanted a full house, go-to-hell government-sized custom 1911. Total reliability was an absolute — but it had to look incredible too. I wanted the finest pistol-smiths in the world to build it for me. The problem was, I didn't have a clue how to find them.



“ LEST YOU THINK THIS WAS ALL WINE AND ROSES, NEITHER OF THESE GUYS WAS SHY ABOUT TELLING ME AN IDEA SUCKED. ”

I parked myself at the computer to absorb all I could about pistolsmiths. My quest turned up tons and revealed each had their own style. I needed to find a smith whose work could be applied to my personal vision. The artistry of Chuck Rogers in Arizona was the one for me. Big Problem: A call revealed a huge backlog and he wasn't taking more work — but Chuck tossed me a bone. He agreed to do the necessary machining if I could convince Arkansas pistolsmith, Bob Rodgers, to wrestle with the time-consuming, tedious handwork. A call to Bob sealed the deal. The project was finally getting started.

One Requirement

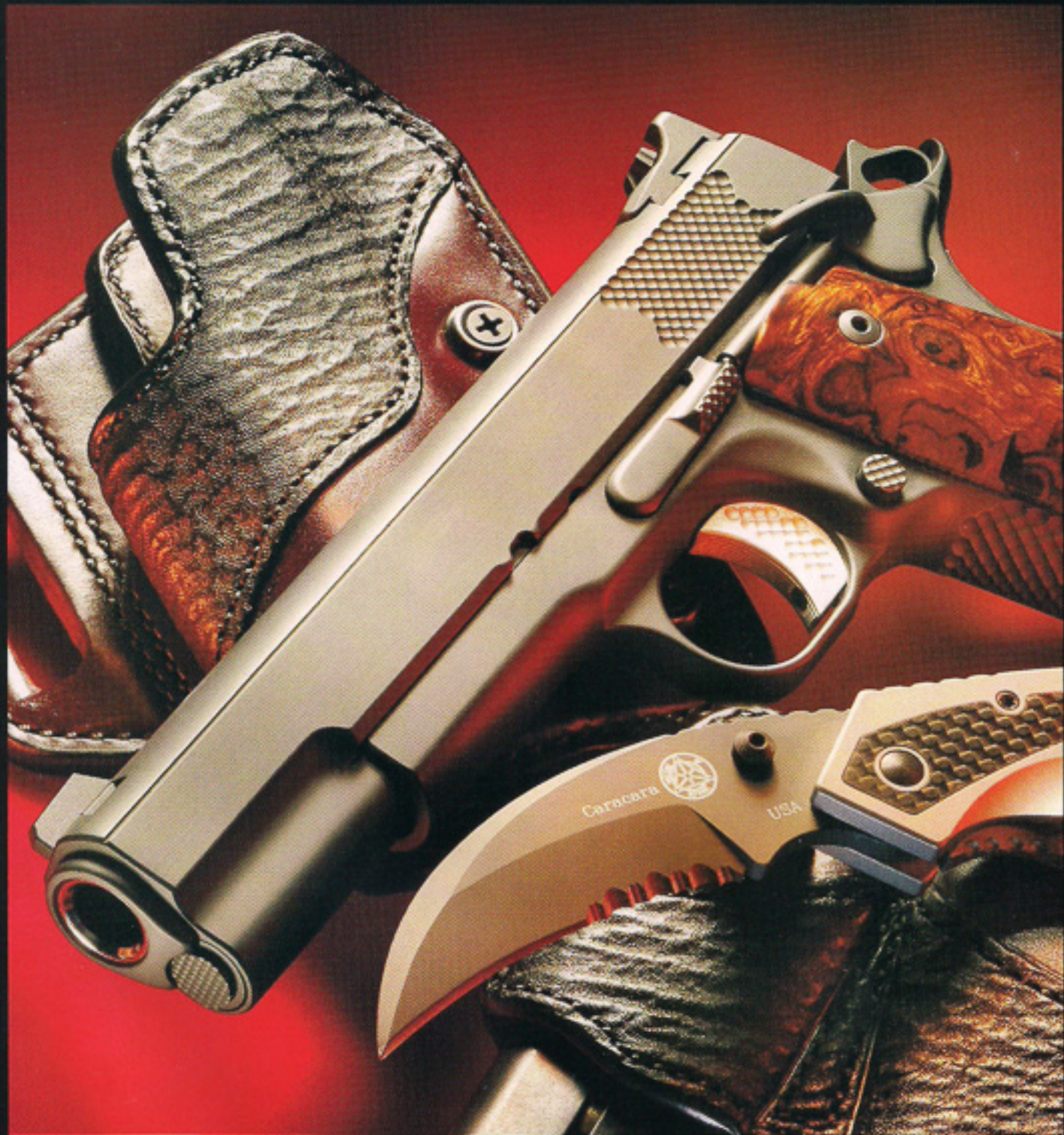
I had only one simple, “little” requirement: I wanted them to build me the finest full sized 1911 ever made, at least according to my rules. After conversations with Bob and Chuck, it became apparent rebuilding a previously manufactured base gun wouldn't work. Since my pistol would incorporate some unique features, we'd need to start with a bare frame and slide. As the planning progressed it became almost a three-way



partnership with all of us working to map out the design. Many of the features had never been attempted before. I photo-shopped a lot of different images and sent them along and we worked from those concepts

to decide which were best suited. Lest you think this was all wine and roses, neither of these guys was shy about telling me an idea sucked.

I wanted the best quality parts and to hell with the house payment. I



turned to Les Baer Custom for the forged frame and slide. No one makes a higher quality 1911 frame and slide in my opinion. Les was both accommodating and fast; he sent a perfectly bald matched set. The small parts consist of some of the finest 1911 components available today. We decided on a Kart barrel, a Yost-Bonitz hammer, sear and disconnect, EGW oversized bushing, Heinie rear sight and Wolff springs. The rest of the parts came from Les Baer Custom, Wilson

Combat and Ed Brown. Brownells carries all of them. They're a true one-stop shop.

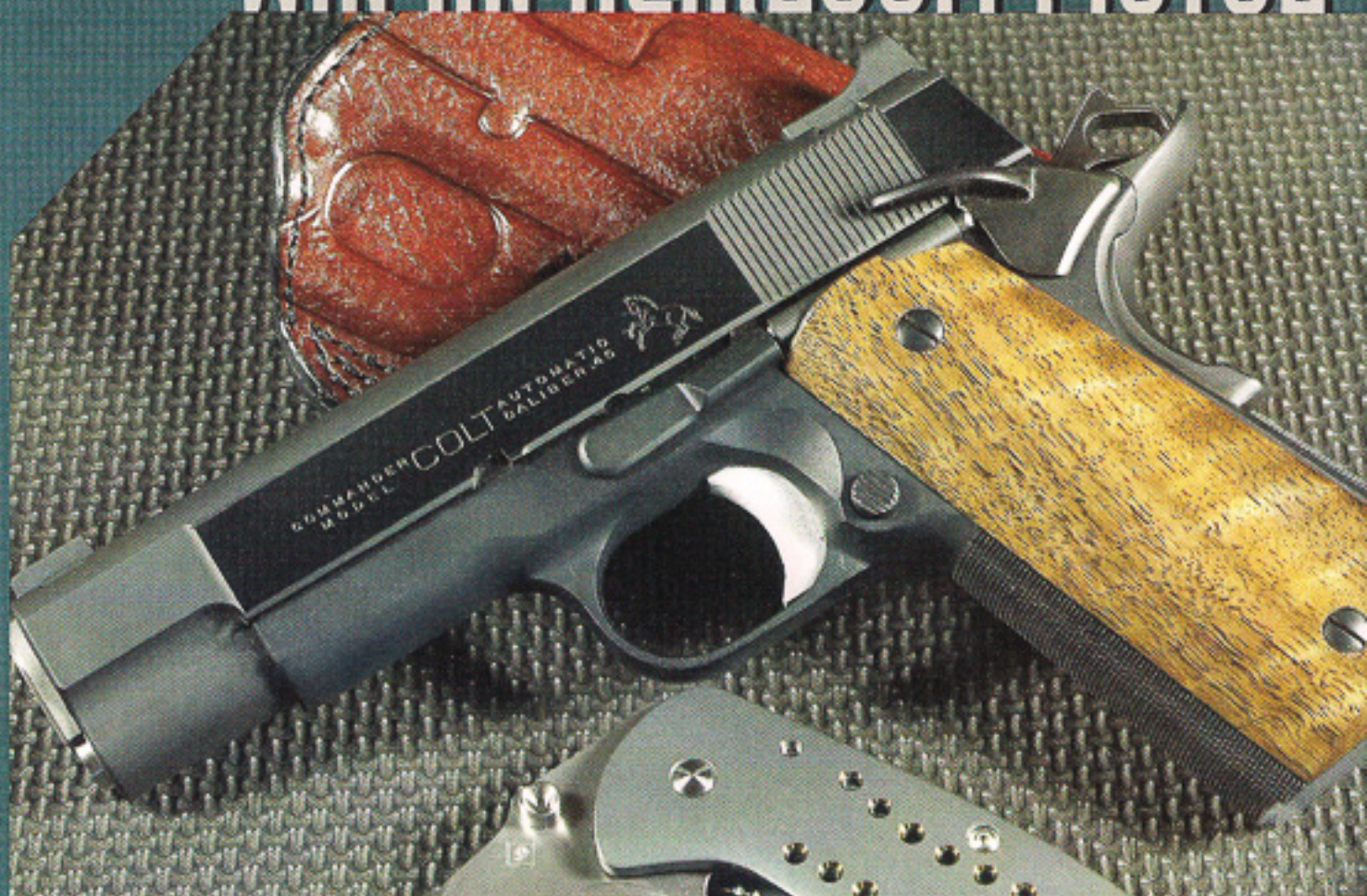
FORE!

The parts went to Bob Rodgers for initial inspection and inventory. Bob sent the necessary pieces to Chuck Rogers to be machined. There may be other pistolsmiths as gifted with a milling machine, but I don't think there's anyone better. He's as much an artist as a perfectionist.

About five years ago Chuck developed a machining technique he named "golf-balling." It's a process applied to front strap as a substitute for checkering. It provides traction without the sharp points and resembles the dimples in a golf ball. But I wanted to golf-ball more of my pistol than previously attempted. He was willing to push the envelope even if it required several new fixtures and new ways of holding parts, as some are

Continued on page 101

WIN AN HEIRLOOM PISTOL



— AND HELP LTW HELP KIDS

FOR
**4 COPS
4 KIDS**

Match
Against
Cancer



This year you have another chance to win an heirloom matching custom pistol, holster and knife for only \$10 — and help a great cause in the bargain. We're talking about you maybe-owning top-of-the-line work by such renowned craftsmen as Ted Yost, John Harrison, C.T. Brian, Jim Burke and Josh Bulman. It's time for the annual Louder Than Words raffle!

Louder Than Words (LTW, www.louderthanwords.us) is an organization composed of a few of America's

finest custom pistolsmiths, knife makers and holster artisans who provide financial benefit to worthwhile causes. They do this by donating a package every year consisting of a custom gun, custom knife and a custom leather holster. This year's package is worth well over \$14,000 and includes a re-worked vintage Colt Commander.

Classic Combo

This is the classic, most-carried Colt from another generation, brought up to

date with the finest 'smithing the 21st Century can offer. Ted Yost straightened the frame lines, hand cut the checkering of the front strap and mainspring housing, rounded the butt on the rear of the mainspring housing, *handmade* the walnut stocks and high-cut the grip. John Harrison fit the beavertail grip safety and fitted and contoured the thumb safety. C.T. Brian did the match barrel and bushing, the oversized ejector and oversized firing pin stop, lowered



PACKAGE FOR \$10!

RALPH MROZ



WORTH OVER \$14,000!



incorporate a handsome hole pattern. This year's knife is a custom frame-locking Mini Urban Warrior from Jim. The ceramic blasted and brushed Tanto blade is not his normal signature pattern, but he does a fantastic job and it really sets the knife off. The 3.75" blade is constructed of 154CPM steel, perfect for a rugged everyday carry knife. The knife is finished off with matching pocket clip.

Josh Bulman crafted the fine leather for this project. The holster is one of his custom holsters reminiscent of the older Seventrees design. It is perfect for all day concealed carry. The leather package comes with a dual mag carrier, and key fob. All of this is made of sharkskin done in a honey color, which perfectly compliments the gun itself.

Kids Win

The beneficiary again this year is the Cops4Kids program (www.posa-cops4kids.com), organized by the Police Officers Safety Association (POSA) (www.posa.org) which will raffle off the package from October 1 through January 22, 2008. The drawing will be held at the

Shot Show on February 4, 2008. All proceeds from the raffle will benefit the Jimmy Fund (www.jimmyfund.org) and its pediatric cancer research cure programs. If you visit the Cops4Kids program website, you will also see how your organization, agency or club can participate in the program by running a match or a stage in a match. You can also adopt the special realistic Cops4Kids match format to add some real spice to your normal event!

The POSA Cops4Kids program is inspired by and dedicated to the memory of Isabella deBethencourt, the infant daughter of Heather and police trainer Michael deBethencourt, who died from cancer at 11 months of age in May of 2003.

To purchase your raffle tickets, go to the raffle Web site located at www.posacops4kids.com/raffle starting October 1. Buy one, or several, chances to win this one-of-a-kind heirloom set. The winner will be notified after the drawing. If you have ever known a child with cancer, you will understand our drive to help!

and flared the ejection port, and flattened and serrated the top of the slide (with mirages). He installed the extreme low mount fixed sights, flat-backed and serrated the rear of the slide, put on an American border, made the Hi-Power cuts, re-profiled the slide stop, installed a stainless recoil spring plug and beveled the slide bottom. Whew.

The knife was built by Jim Burke, one of the finest knife makers working today. The knife's anodized titanium handles