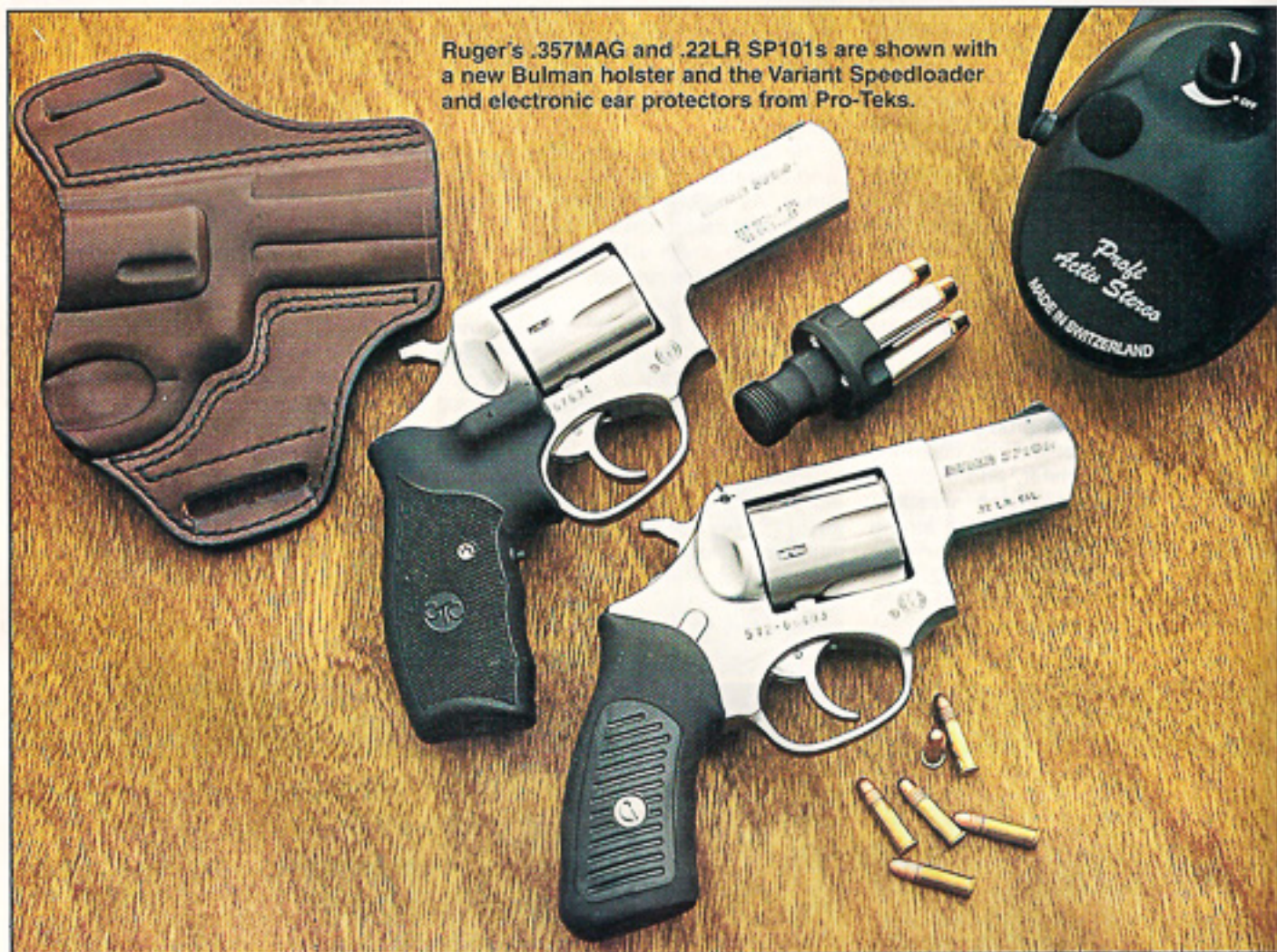


COMBAT TEST

TWO RUGER SP101s



Ruger's .357MAG and .22LR SP101s are shown with a new Bulman holster and the Variant Speedloader and electronic ear protectors from Pro-Teks.

**New .22LR joins
.357MAG as an
ideal practice
companion!**

By Gary Paul Johnston

Back in 1985 when Bill Ruger introduced his compact SP101 along with the full size GP100, the little 5-shot was an instant success. Made of stainless steel and extremely robust, the SP101 is just the size gun for concealed carry and rugged duty.

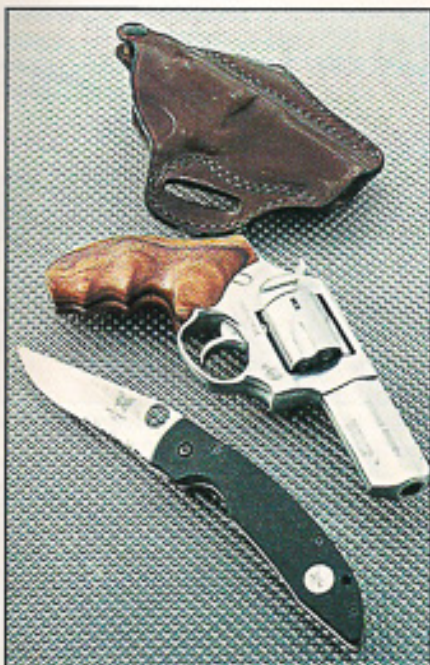
Chambered in .357MAG/.38S&W, 9mm, and .32MAG, the SP101 is smooth in operation, accurate, and comes with



As she has carried a .357MAG SP101 for many years, Nancy found the .22LR ideal for practice.



Even with LaserGrips, the .357MAG SP101 fits the Bulman holster with no interference. The .22LR SP101 wears Uncle Mike's Spegel Boot Grip.



Here the SP101 is shown with Hogue Grips and an Alessi holster as carried by Nancy Johnston on duty.

fixed sights that shoot point of aim. With five rounds of 125-grain .357MAG, .38SPL or 9mm ammunition, the SP101's recoil is not offensive, thanks to its rubber grips.

With the rimless 9mm, the SP101 comes with round 5-shot full-moon clips that hold the rounds in place much like a speedloader, and they accomplish the same thing. When ejected, all five rounds come out together with the clip.

Speaking of speedloaders, I was also able to try the new Pro-Teks Variant Speedloader. Made in a variety of styles, the Variant is also adjustable, so one type can be used with several revolvers. For example, the 5-shot "J" Model that I tested, can be adjusted for use with almost any 5-shot .357MAG/.38SPL.

An interesting feature, the Variant

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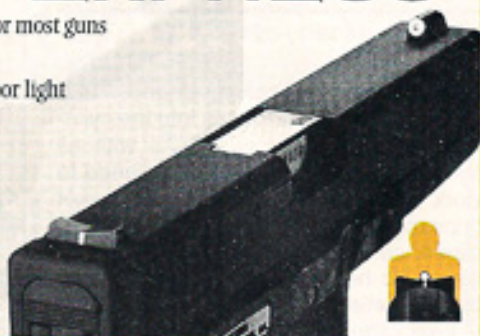
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TWO RUGER SP101s

(Continued from page 11)

Speedloader is spring-loaded, and instantly inserts the rounds into the cylinder when pushed forward. As with all such devices, the Variant is designed to work with factory grips, and aftermarket grips may have to be slightly modified for clearance. I also tested Pro-Teks' new electronic hearing protectors and found them excellent.

Like the .357MAG SP101, the .32MAG version uses no clip to hold the rounds in place, and the ejector acts directly on the rimmed cases. However, unlike the 5-shot .357 and 9mm versions of the gun, the .32MAG SP101 holds 6 rounds. For those who are more recoil sensitive, the .32MAG could be a viable option.

Besides its other attributes, the SP101 is a safe revolver. It's true that just being a gun, a chain saw, a hammer, or an automobile makes such things inherently non-safe, but the SP101 was designed as one of the safest revolvers going. Not only is the gun very strong, but its mechanism can only be worked when the cylinder is closed. What's more, the SP101 was designed from the ground up with a floating firing pin that incorporates Ruger's patented transfer bar firing system, a design that others have done their best to copy.

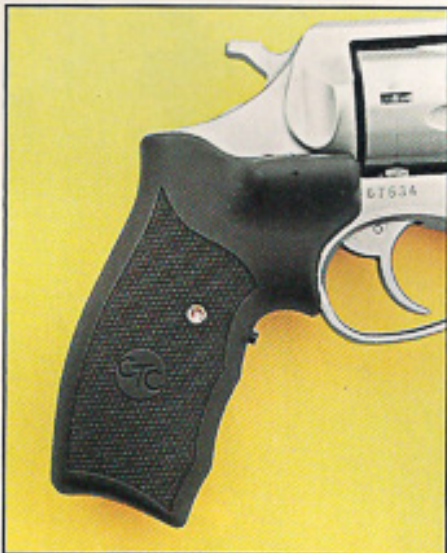
Rimfire SP101

Long a favorite among those who want a reliable stainless steel revolver for concealed carry, the Ruger SP101 is often overlooked in yet another caliber in which it's offered—.22 Long Rifle.

As opposed to its centerfire SP101 cousins except the .32 H&R Magnum the



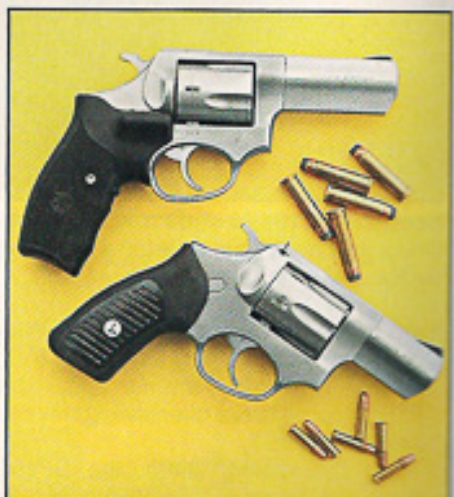
At 25 yards, both the .357MAG and .22LR SP101 turned in respectable groups.



Crimson Trace's new SP101 LaserGrips point very naturally. Note the pressure button behind the trigger guard. The master ON/OFF switch is located in a butt recess.

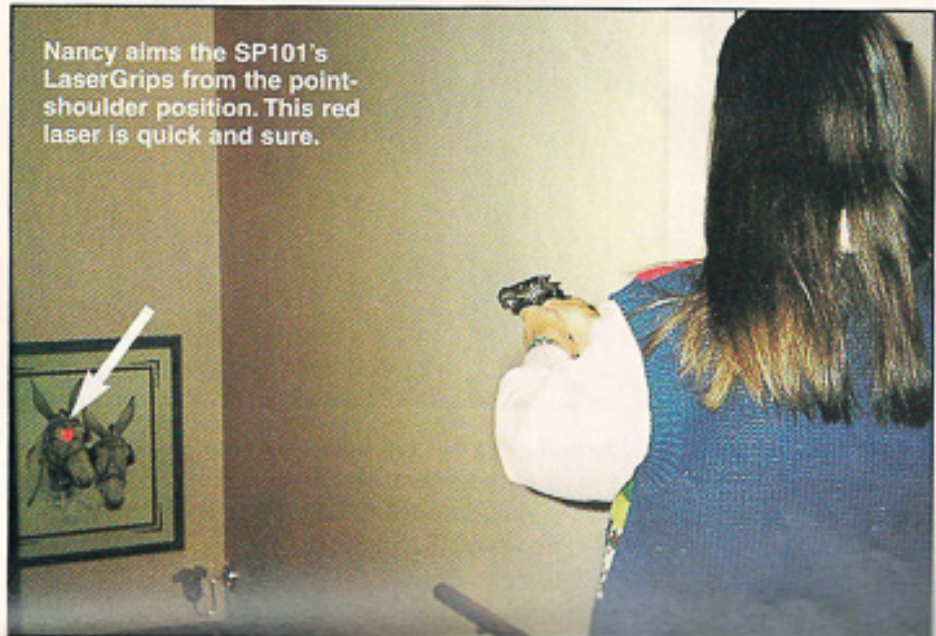


As with other Ruger revolvers, there's no firing pin on the SP101 hammer.



The .357MAG SP101 is a 5-shooter, the .22LR a 6-shot.

Nancy aims the SP101's LaserGrips from the point-shoulder position. This red laser is quick and sure.

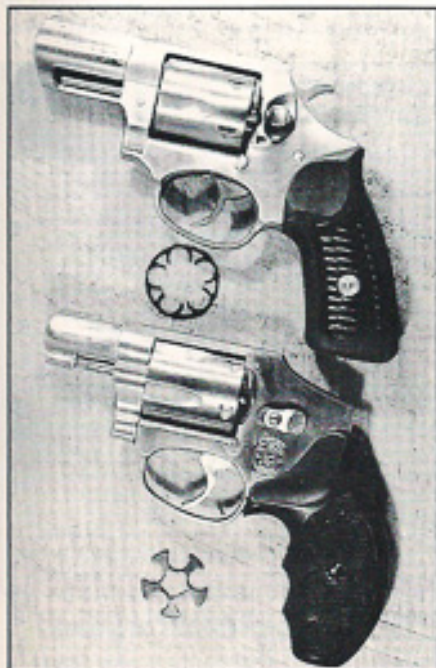


.22LR SP101 has a rear sight that's adjustable for windage. Consisting of a blued leaf, this sight is housed in the frame and is adjusted right or left via a screw that pushes the sight against a spring in conventional yet simple style.

The .22LR SP101 also differs from the .38/.357 and 9mm versions in another respect. Like the .32MAG SP101, the .22LR holds six shots. Otherwise, all



Here's an excellent 6-shot 25 yard group shot bench rest with the .32MAG Ruger SP101.



Note the Ruger's 9mm full-moon clip compared with the S&W 9mm.

SP101 revolvers operate exactly the same.

Differing from other double action swing-out cylinder revolvers, the SP101's cylinder latch does not operate by pushing forward or pulling back, but is pushed in to unlock the cylinder. When the latch is depressed, it pivots internally to perform essentially the same function as pushing it forward. However, the Ruger pivoting latch is more secure, as on all Ruger double action revolvers.

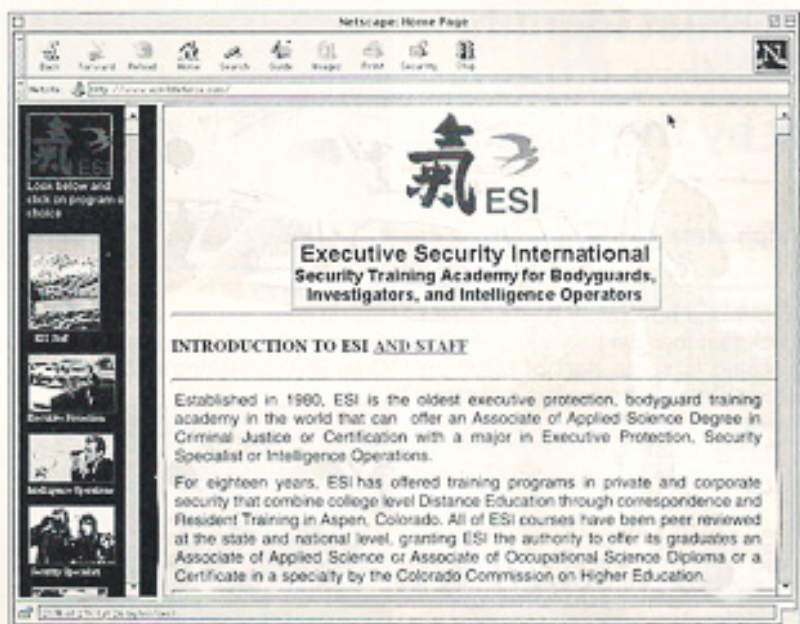
Another design feature that sets the SP101 (and all Ruger double action

Continued on page 88

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TWO RUGER SP101s

(Continued from page 13)

revolvers) apart is the revolver's disassembly. Only a screwdriver is needed to remove the grips, which exposes a small crosspin housed therein. Hereafter, the SP101 can be almost completely disassembled. Even more impressive, the little gun's innards go right back together just as easily. Although disassembly is seldom necessary, and should not be attempted by one not mechanically inclined, it's a outstanding feature.

Carrying The SP101

In addition to excellent concealed carry holsters from Alessi Holsters, Mill Sparks, DeSantis, Bianchi, Galco, and many others, the relatively new company of Bulman Gunleather offers excellent holsters for personal protection and plainclothes duty. In testing a Bulman Belt Slide with the SP101, I found its molding held the gun securely.

LaserGrips

A variety of excellent aftermarket grips are offered for the SP101 from such companies as Michaels of Oregon (Uncle Mike's), Hogue and others. I've used both Hogue wooden grips and Uncle Mike's new Spiegel Boot Grip on the SP101, and have found them excellent. Now, a brand new version of LaserGrips is available for the SP101 from Crimson Trace. Not only are these LaserGrips new, they are a departure for Crimson Trace, as they have a different contour from the LaserGrips for other revolvers.

Specifications: Ruger SP101

CALIBER: .22LR, .32MAG, 9mm, .38S&W, .357MAG.
BARREL: 2-1/4, 3-1/16 (centerfire); 2-1/4, 4 inches (.22LR).
OA LENGTH: 7-9/16 inches (3-1/16-inch bbl.).
WEIGHT: 27 oz. (3-1/16 .357MAG.).
SIGHTS: Fixed (rear windage adjust in .22LR, .32MAG.).
GRIPS: Black rubber with plastic side panels.
OPERATION: Double and single action.
SAFETY: Ruger transfer bar firing system.
FINISH: Brushed stainless steel.
CAPACITY: 5 in 9mm/.38/.357MAG., and 6 in .32/.22.

As my wife Nancy had carried a .357MAG Ruger SP101 for many years, both on and off duty, she found the new LaserGrips much to her liking. Bringing her gun up to point-shoulder position, Nancy activated the laser diode as soon as she held the gun and merely brought the bright red dot up to stop it on her target, all in less than a second. As with all SP101 grips, the new LaserGrips will work on any variation, and have a master switch recessed in the butt.

Shots Fired

In testing a 2-1/4-inch barreled .22LR Ruger SP101 alongside Nancy's 3-1/16-inch .357 Magnum, I found the rimfire almost the equal of its longer barreled sibling. At 25 yards hand-held, the .22 SP101 averaged 6-shot groups of 3 inches or less while 5-shot groups from

Performance: 4 Ruger SP101s

Cartridge	Velocity	Small Group	Large Group	Average
.38S&W/.357MAG				
Black Hills 125 .357MAG	1366	2.26	2.72	2.55
Cor-Bon 125 .38S&W +P	1221	1.94	2.51	2.26
Federal 125 .357 HiShok JHP	1377	2.19	2.43	2.28
.32MAG				
Federal 85 HiShok	982	1.81	2.79	2.44
9mm				
Black Hills 124 JHP	1023	2.54	3.02	2.77
Federal 135 Pers Def JHP	908	2.31	2.84	2.59
.22LR				
Federal 38 HP	1119	2.54	2.97	2.72
Remington 40	1087	2.68	3.31	2.94
Winchester 40	1112	2.76	3.22	2.91
Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in feet per second (fps) on Cehler P35, accuracy in inches for average of five 5-shot hand-held groups at 25 yards. Elev: 6900 ft., Temp: 52°				

Nancy's .357 usually beat it by no more than one half inch. Also included are general accuracy results from former tests I did on SP101s in .32 H&R Magnum and 9mm. Both guns performed flawlessly during all shooting, and Nancy's gun has never blinked in the twelve years she's had it.

Druthers

There's not much room for improvement on the SP101 centerfire models, and the .22LR version reflects a well thought out design. However, in light of the new so-called "high capacity" revolvers, an 8-shot .22 Long Rifle SP101 would seem viable.

If you already have a centerfire Ruger SP101, the .22LR version makes a perfect companion piece, especially for low cost practice. However, if you don't already own an SP101, the .22 rimfire version makes an excellent place to begin. Look for the Ruger SP101 at your dealer's. In the meantime, to keep your Ruger and the rest of your guns, JOIN THE NRA and VOTE!

For more information contact:

Sturm, Ruger, 200 Ruger Road, Dept CH, Prescott, AZ 86301; 520-778-6555

Pro-Teks, 852 FM 980, Dept CH, Huntsville, TX 77320; (409) 435-0011

Alessi Holsters, Inc., 2465 Niagara Falls Blvd., Dept CH, Amherst, NY 14228; (716) 691-5615

Bulman Gunleather, P.O. Box 361, Dept CH, Newry, PA 16665; (814) 696-8615

Milt Sparks Holsters, 605 East 44th, #2E, Dept CH, Boise, ID 83714; (208) 377-5577

Blanchi International, 100 Calle Cortez, Dept CH, Temecula, CA 92590; (909) 676-5621

DeSantis Holsters, P.O. Box 2039, Dept CH, New Hyde Park, NY 11040; (516) 354-8000

Galco International, 2019 West Quail Ave., Dept CH, Phoenix, AZ 85027; (602) 258-8295

Crimson Trace Lasers, 8089 SW Cirrus Dr., Dept CH, Beaverton, OR 97008; 503-627-9992

Hogue Grips, P.O. Box 1138, Dept CH, Paso Robles, CA 93447, (805) 239-1440

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