

Cap & Ball



REVOLVERS & CONVERSIONS PUT TO THE TEST

Conversions, Open Tops, and some Conclusions

Part 3b

By Long Johns Wolf, SASS #81095, Panhandle Paden, SASS #68806, Bumble Bee, BDS #2589, Socks, SASS #69087, and Magic Joe, SASS #92431

Custom Conversions Colt 1860 Army – base pistols from Fabriques d’Armes Unies de Liège or Centaure:

Conversion artists like the harder steel of the Belgian Centaures for Colt 1860 type conversions.

Comments on the Centaure Mumme Colt Long Cylinder conversions #120X7 and #120X9: Both conversions are reliable and highly accurate shooting irons with smokeless loads despite the short barrels. One of the authors won the bullet splitting side match at the annual match of the Canadian River Regulators (Amarillo, Texas) in 2011 with #120X9.

During the 4th string of the blackpowder series the tip of the firing pin of #120X7 broke after a total mileage of around 800 rounds. Cartridges were no longer ignited.

During the initial trials with blackpowder loads we had trouble cocking and turning the cylinder of #120X9 because MoS2 was used to lube the arbor. After switching to a Vaseline based lube we managed four strings easily. Match readiness for the final two strings was re-established by wiping the foreside of the cylinder with a wet cloth.

This sensitivity to blackpowder fouling is due to the PC conversion cylinder installed without gasing to protect the arbor. Therefore, cleaning the front side of the cylinder

and possibly applying a drop of Ballistol or a spray shot of WD-40 to this area is indicated!

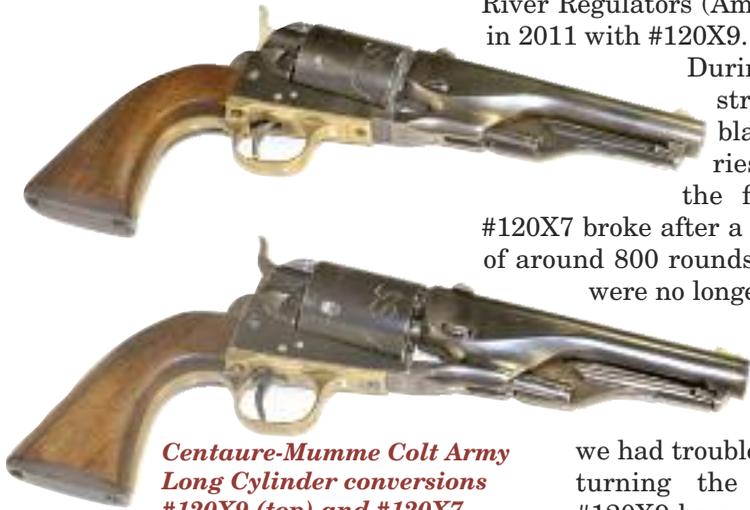
After shooting smokeless rounds, the empties usually drop from the chambers from gravity only, but use of a rod is needed to remove the cases after blackpowder loads. The rear sight on top of the barrel is easily aligned with the front sight, even if you have older eyes.

Comments on these two Centaure Nedbal Colt 1860 Army Richards (R1) #40X9 and Richards Transitional (R2) #69X1 conversions:



Centaure Nedbal Colt 1860 Army Richards (R1) #40X9 (top) and Richards Transitional (R2) #69X1 (bottom) conversions

They are reliable, accurate shooting irons with smokeless loads. For Cowboy Action Shooting™ the factory issued high ten-

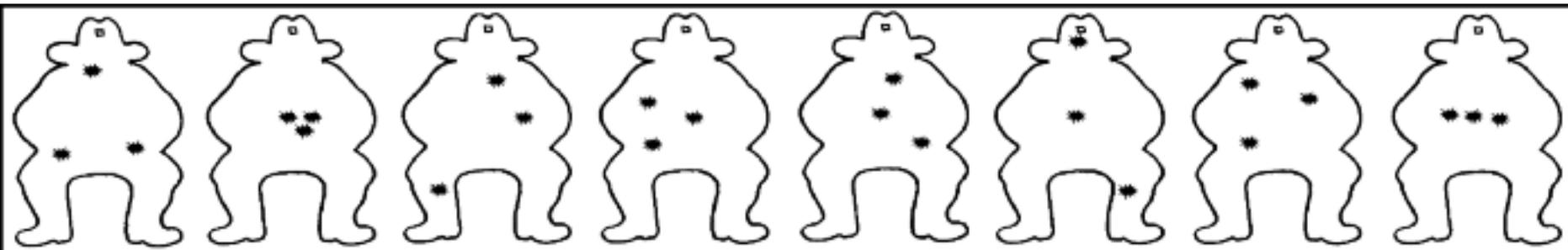


Centaure-Mumme Colt Army Long Cylinder conversions #120X9 (top) and #120X7 (bottom): no loading gate like the originals

Colt Army Conversion	Long Cylinder	Long Cylinder
Model/Germany	Mumme Germany	Mumme Germany
Serial number	10007	10009
Base pistol/Vandal	Centaure Munich	Centaure Munich
Caliber in.	.44 Colt	.44 Colt
Manufacture proof	1873	1873
Test	2007 conversion	2007 conversion
Modifications/Notes	PC conversion	PC conversion
Class	Class	Class
Barrel in.	6.5	6.5
Cylinder amp mm	6.5	6.5
Firing groove dia in.	4.25	4.25
Chamber ready dia in.	4.25, 4.25, 4.25, 4.25, 4.25	4.25, 4.25, 4.25, 4.25, 4.25
CP Marksmen's club	284.8 (7.3)	283.9 (7.3), 283.0 (7.3)
CP	287.5 (7.3)	285.2 (7.3), 282.4 (7.2)
CP Marksmen's club	286.2 (7.3)	283.6 (7.3)
CP	283.4 (7.2)	282.8 (7.2)
CP Marksmen's club	185.0 (7.3)	185.0 (7.3), 184.5 (7.3)
CP	186.7 (7.2)	186.4 (7.2)
Modifications/Notes	Conversion cylinder, laser, S&W made springs, Super lube coil spring for hand, CAS serial number	Conversion cylinder, laser, S&W made springs, Super lube coil spring for hand, CAS serial number
Conditions		



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Colt Army Conversions	Richards	Richards Transitional
Modifications	Nedbal Austria	Nedbal Austria
Serial number	40X9	64X1
Base pistol/model	Centaure RNMA	Centaure RNMA
Caliber in	.44 Colt	.44 Colt
Manufactured/proof test	1965	1967
Modifications	2008 conversion	2011 conversion
"Mileage"	250 since conversion	<50 since conversion
Grip	properly fitted oiled walnut, good grip	properly fitted oiled walnut, good grip
Barrel in	8	8
Cylinder gap mm in	0,05	0,05
Rifling groove dia in	.002	.002
Chamber mouth dia in	.428	.427
V5 blackpowder m/s fps	.429, .430, .430, .430, .430, .430	.431, .431, .431, .431, .431, .431
V5 smokeless m/s fps	192,0 (L2)	200,2 (L2)
MIP blackpowder	630,0 (L2)	666,9 (L2)
MIP smokeless	233,0 (L2)	238,5 (L2)
Modifications	764,4 (L2)	782,5 (L2)
	126,0 (L2)	131,4 (L2)
	152,9 (L2)	156,5 (L2)
Modifications	conversion cylinder, liner, new arbor, original leaf springs	conversion cylinder, liner, original leaf springs
Condition	collector's gun	collector's gun



Uberti Nedbal Remington New Model Army field conversion #563X1: copied from an original in the gunsmith's collection, it features a wide conversion ring, loading gate, and dovetailed front sight on barrel

gate would drop open during recoil from the hotter blackpowder cartridges. This did not affect the overall function in any way, though.

sion main spring should be exchanged for an aftermarket lighter one. During recoil the loading gate would drop open from time to time. This did not affect function, however. Both conversions have a nice, crisp trigger, which helps in side matches where maximum accuracy is required over longer distances. From the 4th string blackpowder fouling started to take its toll. That was quickly cured with Teflon paste applied to the barrel sides of the cylinders.

Target acquisition is easy thanks to the highly visible rear sight on top of the Richards's (R1) conversion ring. The Richards model would be an ideal conversion for Cowboy Action, but is currently

available as custom conversions only. More than 10 years ago a relatively cheaply made variant was manufactured by now defunct Italian maker Armi San Marco. They are out of business after quality issues. We did not have an Uberti Richards Transitional (R2) marketed since 2007 with the rear sight as a notch on the hammer available for comparison to the Centaure custom conversion in the test.

Remington New Model 1863 Army - base pistols from Uberti: These two Remington custom conversions with close dimensions of their originals remind today's shooters that our forefathers in the 19th century were so much shorter - by the smack of the trigger-guard on the middle finger of the shooting hand during recoil - because Remingtons were designed for the smaller hands back then.

Comments on Uberti Mumme Remington New Model Army

factory conversion #242X9: Reliable, accurate shooting iron with smokeless loads. She was lubed with MoS2 during the first blackpowder trial and failed miserably. When she had the 2nd go with blackpowder cartridges lubed with HP .357, we could not register the same functional improvements that were noted on the Colt conversion clones. The contact area or rubbing surface of cylinder, barrel, and frame is just too much compared to the lubing surface of the tiny cylinder pin. Too little lube can be applied for long-lasting function. Therefore, on this conversion it is mandatory to clean and lube the contact areas between every string, possibly enhanced by a few drops of Ballistol between barrel end and

forefront of the cylinder on the cylinder pin. If you are a Colt fan used to spring loaded ejectors, you will have your learning curve with the attached PC but not the spring-loaded ejector. The trigger breaks pleasantly crisp.

Comments on this Uberti Nedbal Remington New Model Army field conversion #563X1: An accurate shooter with no difference in the POI from smokeless or blackpowder loads! As was to be expected, no issues with smokeless rounds. Now and then the loading

No effect of blackpowder fouling was notable until the 3rd string. Application of a little WD-40 to the forefront of the cylinder took care of this. However, an increasing number of failures to ignite the blackpowder rounds was noted from the 4th string. Mushrooming of the tip of the hammer mounted firing pin was diagnosed. The firing pin did not reach the primers any more. We had to withdraw this conversion from further shooting during the 5th string.

(Continued on page 36)



Uberti Mumme Remington New Model Army factory conversion #242X9: no conversion ring, ungated like the originals

Remington Conversions	Factory	Field
Modifications	Armsport USA	Nedbal Austria
Serial number	Mumme Germany	64X1
Caliber in	242X9	.44 Special
Manufactured/proof test	ca. 1971	ca. 1971
Modifications	2006 conversion	2011 conversion
"Mileage"	250 since conversion	150 since conversion
Grip	without grips stripped of varnish and oiled, good fit, positive grip	nicely fitted varnished walnut grip, fine grip
Barrel in	8	8
Cylinder gap mm in	0,1	0,2
Rifling groove dia in	.006	.008
Chamber mouth dia in	.428	.427
V5 blackpowder m/s fps	428, 428, 428, 428, 428, 428	401, 420, 420, 411, 410, 420
V5 smokeless m/s fps	257,9 (L2)	250,2 (L2)
MIP blackpowder	840,1 (L2)	820,9 (L2)
MIP smokeless	216,0 (L2)	207,2 (L2)
Modifications	226,2 (L2)	229,8 (L2)
	149,2 (L2)	154,5 (L2)
	141,7 (L2)	138,0 (L2)
Modifications	conversion cylinder from Armsport, new barrel PC with square, no conversion ring but lock plate, angled, dovetailed front sight	conversion cylinder, liner, PC conversion ring with loading gate, ejector, dovetailed front sight
Condition	collector's gun	collector's gun

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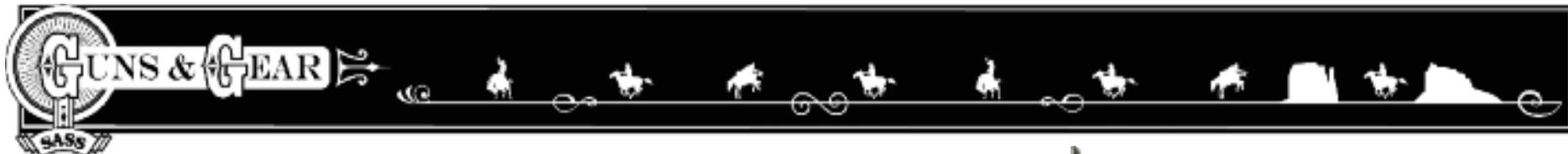
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Cap & Ball Revolvers & Conversions - 3b . . .

(Continued from page 35)

Conversions of the Replica Industry

Pistols discussed here are not converted C&B revolvers, but breechloaders designed to shoot cartridges within SAAMI or CIP specifications. Major parts like frame, cylinder, or barrels are beefed-up. They cannot be exchanged for corresponding parts of their brethren from the front stuffer production line!



Uberti Colt 1851 Navy Richards-Mason conversion #X053X8: heavy from all brass Tiffany grip

Comments on Uberti Colt 1851 Navy Richards-Mason conversion #053X8: There sure are conversion aficionados out there who prefer Navy over Army size pistols, including the smaller bore size! That's why Uberti is marketing these stylish belt pistols converted by the Richards-Mason method since the turn of the century in .38 Special

caliber. Since we happened to have one such Italian conversion in the armament, and because one Southwestern cowboy asked for it, and she needed some exercise anyhow, she was run through the torture test like the Armies.

Her solid Tiffany grip moves the gravity center of this pistol to the front of the trigger-guard, whereas the other revolvers in the test with "regular" grips and comparable barrel lengths are much more barrel heavy. Some

biting during recoil from the sharply structured surface of the Tiffany grip was mentioned by one tester.

Again reliability was to be tested, but we also wished to find out if the factor of 112,5 can be reached with smokeless and blackpowder loads in this minor caliber without approaching critical pressure levels. We found we would hit POA with both loads. This is a cool and reliable shooter. Blackpowder fouling was notable from the 3rd string and was successfully cured



Uberti Colt 1860 Army Richards-Mason conversion #X027X1

by Teflon paste applied to the front side of the cylinder.

Comments on Uberti Colt 1860 Army Richards-Mason conversion #027X1: This is another both reliable and accurate shooter with smokeless and blackpowder cartridges. Thanks to the bottomed arbour, the POI is readily reproducible. We were not amused by this creeping, grainy trigger that required a lot of pull, but broke without smack.

This is another conversion that just did not work with MoS2 lubing and blackpowder loads during the first round of trials. After generous lubing with Vaseline, this pistol functioned during the 6th string as easily and reliably as during the 1st one. Thanks to the gas ring no cleaning or extra lubing between strings was needed.

Comments on Uberti Colt Army

Colt Open Top	New Model	New Model	New Model
Serial number	2007X4	2007X5	2007X6
Serial number	2007X4	2007X5	2007X6
Caliber	.44 Colt	.44 Colt	.44 Colt
Manufactured/proof	2007 (HT)	2007 (HT)	2007 (HT)
Grp	200	200	1800
Grp	properly fitted steel walnut, positive grip	properly fitted steel walnut, positive grip	properly fitted steel walnut, positive grip
Barrel in	7.5	7.5	7.5
Cylinder gap mm	0.25	0.25	0.25
in	.012	.012	.012
Rolling groove dia in	.417	.417	.417
Chamber mouth dia in	.434, .437, .439, .441, .443, .445	.434, .437, .439, .441, .443, .445	.437, .439, .441, .443, .445
W blackpowder m/s	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)
HP	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)
W smokeless m/s	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)
HP	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)
W blackpowder	104.3 (1.1)	104.3 (1.1)	104.3 (1.1)
W smokeless	116.9 (1.1)	116.9 (1.1)	116.9 (1.1)
Modifications	bottomed out arbor, higher front sight	bottomed out arbor	bottomed out arbor, new front sight, new front sight
Condition	Well maintained shooter	Well maintained shooter	NIB from HEGE



Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 #X029X4 (top) and #X122X2 (bottom)

mous Colt Single Action Army! Back during the days and today they are available as "New Model" with the big Army grip, or "Old Model" with the smaller Navy grip. Our testers were tall cowboys with big hands. They were not comfortable with the latter model.

Comments on Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 # X029X4 and X122X2: two sweet, reliable, and accurate match pistols with smokeless and blackpowder rounds thanks to their complete overhaul and HP .357 between gas ring and arbor. Even 10 weeks after their last workout with blackpowder cartridges, but without any cleaning since then, they still function 100% without any evidence of rust! The bottomed out arbour makes sure the POI will always be the same.



Uberti Colt 1860 Army Richards-Mason Conversion #X192X5

1860 Richards-Mason conversion #192X5: This NIB conversion on loan from HEGE had a similar unpleasant trigger pull like before mentioned #X027X1. The target pattern with smokeless loads was very tight and only marginally above the POA due to the PC front sight. POI moved up significantly with blackpowder rounds, but was manageable at 12 o'clock. As expected, function was very satisfactory with smokeless cartridges, but this pistol just had its particular adverse reactions to blackpowder fouling. The application of Teflon paste only marginally improved the handling. From the 3rd string on, the left hand of the shooter had to help turning the cylinder during cocking.

Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72: They look like conversions, but were developed during the early 1870s as breechloaders. They are actually the predecessors of the fa-



Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 #X099X6: reliable without tuning, but a bottomed out arbour would serve her well

Comments on Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 # X099X6: When the wedge was pushed in to the proper

Colt Richards-Mason Conversions	1851 Navy	1860 Army	1860 Army
Serial number	X05308	X053X1	X192X5
Caliber in	.38 Special	.44 Colt	.45 Colt
Manufactured/proof	2007 (HT)	2007 (HT)	2007 (HT)
Grp	200	200	1800
Grp	properly fitted Uberti brass made Tiffany grip, very positive grip	properly fitted Uberti brass made Tiffany grip, positive grip from sculpted right panel	properly fitted, thick layer of varnished, slippery walnut
Barrel in	7.3	8	8
Cylinder gap mm	0.25	0.25	0.25
in	.012	.012	.012
Rolling groove dia in	.417	.417	.417
Chamber mouth dia in	.434, .437, .439, .441, .443, .445	.434, .437, .439, .441, .443, .445	.437, .439, .441, .443, .445
W blackpowder m/s	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)
HP	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)	201.2 (1.1)
W smokeless m/s	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)
HP	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)	286.5 (1.1)
W blackpowder	104.3 (1.1)	104.3 (1.1)	104.3 (1.1)
W smokeless	116.9 (1.1)	116.9 (1.1)	116.9 (1.1)
Modifications	bottomed out arbor, higher front sight	bottomed out arbor	bottomed out arbor
Condition	Well maintained shooter	Well maintained shooter	NIB from HEGE



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Colt Open Top	Old Model	Old Model
Serial number	X041X0	X164X6
Caliber in	.44 Colt	.45 Colt
Manufactured/proof test	2003 (BT)	2008 (CC)
"Mileage"	none	none
Grip	fairly fitted, thick layer of varnished, slippery walnut	fairly fitted, thick layer of varnished, slippery walnut
Barrel in	5,5	7,5
Cylinder gap mm in	0,1 .004	0,1 .004
Rifling groove dia in	.430	.450
Chamber mouth dia in	.428, .431, .429, .427, .429, .433	.453, .453, .451, .453, .450, .453
V5 black powder m/s (ps)	209,6 (L2) 687,7 (L2)	244,8 (L4) 803,1 (L4)
V5 smokeless m/s (ps)	184,2 (L2) 604,3 (L2)	224,4 (L4) 736,1 (L4)
MIP SP	137,5 (L2)	200,8 (L4)
MIP Nitro	120,9 (L2)	147,2 (L4)
Modifications	none	none
Condition	NIB from HEGE	NIB from HEGE



Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 #X164X6

wise the forged frame is higher, the distance between trigger guard and grip was increased, which makes for an overall higher

weight of these massive pistols. While their dimensions are no longer PC, they are comfortable shooters even with hot loads. In contrast to clones of the Remington percussion revolvers, the trigger guard of these revolvers no longer smack the middle fingers of the shooting hands even with heavy handed shooters. The front sight is dove tailed on the barrel, the wide conversion ring of the Army version was mostly found on Navy conversions of the 19th century.

After 60 rounds through each of the two revolvers, they were completely disassembled for the final cleaning before being shipped back to HEGE. We are pleased to report we did not find any blackpowder crud or fouling within the action. We also discovered no traces of lead

(Continued on page 38)

Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 #X041X0: comfortable little shorty



worked well as lube. Comments on Uberti Colt Open Top 1871-72 #X041X0: We noted POI slightly to the

right with both smokeless and blackpowder rounds. The creepy and rough trigger pull would benefit from a little stoning. None of the testers took issue with the short sight line. The firing pin was a mite too long and pierced a few primers. This Open Top performed reliably with smokeless and blackpowder rounds and comfortably as well ... if you have smaller hands.

depth, this piece functioned reliably, and we found a reproducible POI with smokeless and blackpowder rounds. But we were not always lucky with the wedge. The POI turned out to be "variable." WD-40



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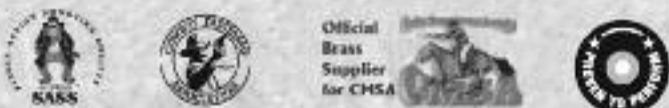
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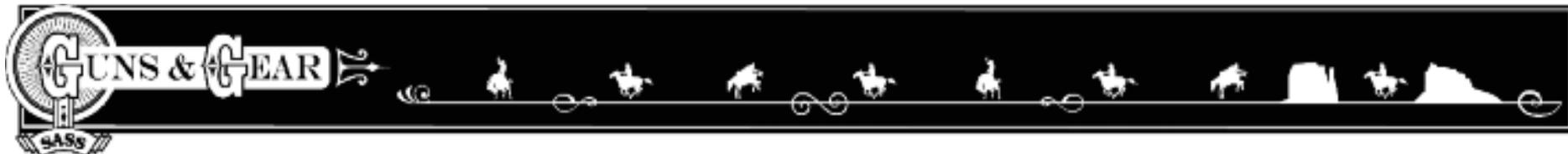


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Cap & Ball Revolvers & Conversions - 3b . .



*Growing in size:
Uberti Remington New Model 1863 Army
#X237X4 .45 Colt (top),
custom conversion in .44 Colt of
Uberti-percussion revolver #232X9 (bottom)*

(Continued from page 37)
in the forcing cone. Whether the small parts of their action are compatible with the C&B brethren was not investigated.

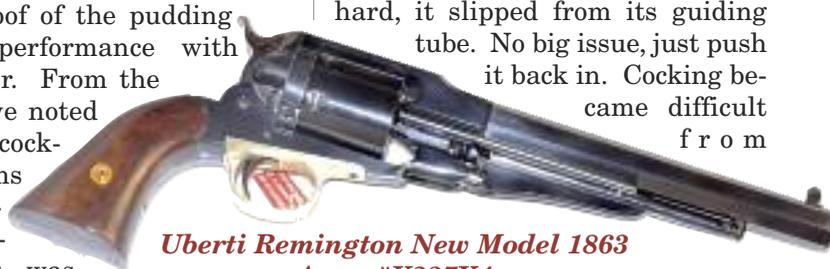


Uberti Remington New Model 1863 Navy #X236X1

5,5" tube installed, this model should have potential with the gamers in the 1890 class.

Comments on Uberti Remington New

Comments on Uberti Remington New Model 1863 Navy #X236X1: Accuracy was satisfactory with both smokeless and blackpowder rounds. We were pleased with POIs almost in the targets' center. Of course, this revolver digests smokeless rounds without a hitch, but the proof of the pudding was her performance with blackpowder. From the 3rd string we noted increasing cocking problems from blackpowder fouling. This was fixed with Teflon paste.



Uberti Remington New Model 1863 Army #X237X4

Model 1863 Army #X237X4: We found excellent accuracy and an identical POI with light smokeless and hotter blackpowder rounds, despite the heavy duty trigger pull. When the ejector rod was pulled hard, it slipped from its guiding tube. No big issue, just push it back in. Cocking became difficult from

After shooting smokeless rounds, the empties dropped from the chambers without help of the ejector. This one has a reasonable trigger pull, but the geometry of grip, trigger, and hammer requires a learning curve. Among Remington aficionados, and with a shorter

the 3rd string with blackpowder. This was reduced to a tolerable level with spray shots of WD-40 to the fore-side of the cylinder.

Conclusions to be presented next month ...

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April 1, 2012

Remington Conversions	New Model Navy	New Model Army
Serial number	X236X1	X237X4
Caliber in	.38 Spezial	.45 Colt
Manufactured/proof test	2011 (CH)	2011 (CH)
"Mileage"	none	none
Grip	nicely fitted, thick layer of varnished, slippery walnut	nicely fitted, thick layer of varnished, slippery walnut
Barrel in	7 3/8	8
Cylinder gap mm in	0,2 .008	0,15 .006
Rifling groove dia in	.354	.450
Chamber mouth dia in	.356, .358, .356, .354, .357, .357	.447, .451, .447, .445, .449, .446
V5 blackpowder m/s fps	225,1 (L1) 738,5 (L1)	256,4 (L4) 841,2 (L4)
V5 smokeless m/s fps	268,7 (L1) 881,6 (L1)	200,8 (L4) 658,8 (L4)
MIP blackpowder	116,7 (L1)	210,3 (L4)
MIP smokeless	139,3 (L1)	131,8 (L4)
Modifications/tuning	none	none
Condition	NIB from HEGE	NIB from HEGE

Little Known Fact

When a woman mourned for her husband in the 1860s, she spent a minimum of two-and-a-half years in mourning. That meant little or no social activities: no parties, no outings, no visitors, and a wardrobe that consisted of nothing but black. (Shame on Scarlet O'Hara!) The husband, when mourning for his wife, however, spent three months in a black suit.

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