

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY RANGE OFFICER 1911

It's THE CENTENNIAL of the 1911 pistol, and practically everyone who's ever made one has come up with at least one new model for the celebration. Heck, some companies that never made one before—Ruger and Browning, to name two—have chosen 2011 as the time to debut their first 1911.

There are lots of fine pistols in that particular crop, but for pure value vis-à-vis performance, my Editors' Choice Award in the new 1911 Category has to go to Springfield Armory's Range Officer.

I've tested two of them now. Took one to an IDPA match, and won the .45 Auto division (Custom Defense Pistol) with it. One of those pistols never jammed; the other choked once on a load I never should have fed it (a 185-grain softball target load, which normally needs a light 14-pound recoil spring to run reliably in a 1911), and one hammer-follow and failure to lock back on an empty magazine, which never recurred. The other ran 100% in every respect, in a good bit of shooting.

The Springfield Range Officer is a classic example of "everything you need, and nothing you don't." No forward slide serrations, no full length recoil spring guide rod. No ambi thumb safety (which I

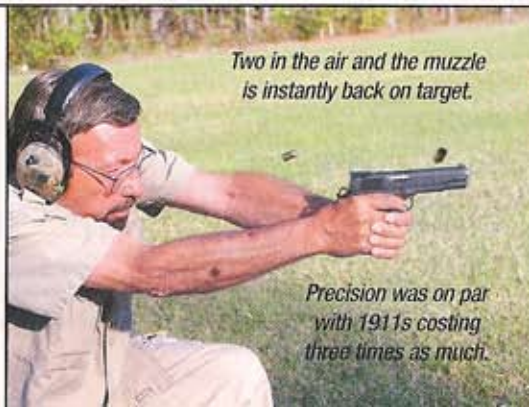
personally like, and which *does* get in the way of that "nothing you don't need" description if you're a southpaw.) It comes with adjustable sights that pay homage to BoMar: great for shooting and sighting in with your preferred .45 ACP load, but too sharp on the rear edges for tight-to-the-body concealed carry. A holster with a side shield (the High Noon scabbard is a good example) solves that, and so does a judiciously applied Dremel Moto-Tool.

For a sub-\$1,000 MSRP 1911, accuracy was *awesome*. These guns are made to the build quality of the pricier TRP, which has earned an excellent reputation. From the 25 yard bench, I got a 5-shot group that measured 1.05" center to center from *On Target's* sample Range Officer, and four of those five inexpensive Mag-Tech 230-grain .45 hardballs went into a single ragged hole. That, and winning an action pistol match, tells me everything I need to know about the Range Officer's shootability... and it's all good.

For the person getting their first 1911 to commemorate the Centennial—or for any of the many other good reasons to do so—I can't see a better, more cost-effective choice right now than the Springfield Armory Range Officer .45. See it your gun shop, or for more information contact **SPRINGFIELD ARMORY**, Dept. OT; Tel.: (800) 680-6866; Web: www.springfield-armory.com—*Massad Ayoob*



All controls operated smoothly and grip-safety engagement was spot-on. Hinting at its competitive nature, a fully-adjustable rear sight is inset into the slide.



Two in the air and the muzzle is instantly back on target.

Precision was on par with 1911s costing three times as much.

