

THIS YEAR'S TOP CCW GUNS

# GunDigest

WE KNOW GUNS SO YOU KNOW GUNS

THE MAGAZINE

CONCEALED CARRY

2021

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# CONTENTS

## DEPARTMENTS

- 6 First Shot
- 8 Know Your Cartridge

## COLUMNS

- 10 Defensive Handgunning RICHARD MANN
- 12 Hardware Talk PATRICK SWEENEY
- 14 Modern Gunnery JOSH WAYNER
- 20 Drawing Conclusions MARTY HAYES, J.D.
- 22 Reloading Bench PHIL MASSARO
- 24 Guns & Gear STAFF REPORT
- 98 Testfire DAVE CAMPBELL

## FEATURES

- 28 CCW Any Way You Like It: Sig's Completely Customizable P320 Platform. RICHARD MANN
- 36 Couples Counseling for Concealed Carriers: Tag-Teaming Tactics. PATRICK ROBERTS
- 46 Legal Thoughts on Rimfires for Self-Defense: You Need a Plan. MARTY HAYES, J. D.
- 60 Carry Guns for the Modern Era: Picks for Your First, or Fifth, CCW Gun. PATRICK SWEENEY
- 68 The Secret to Shooting a Handgun Accurately: How to Master Trigger Control. RICHARD MANN
- 74 Never Too Big to Carry: Solutions for Concealing a Full-Framed Handgun. JOSH WAYNER
- 80 Why *You* Should Carry a Concealed Weapon: Your Responsibility, Your Right. TOM GIVENS
- 86 Covert Rifle Carry: Pray for the Best, Prepare for the Worst. PATRICK ROBERTS
- 92 Unsung Heroes: Less Popular but Excellent CCW Guns. DAVE MERRILL & TOM MARSHALL

## THE BEST GUN LIST IN PRINT

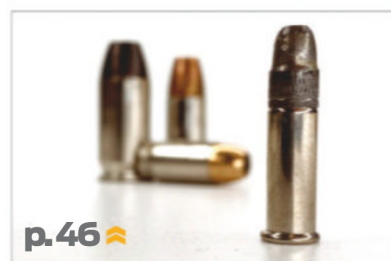
- 51 Show & Auction Listings



p.28 ➤



p.36 ➤



p.46 ➤



p.60 ➤



p.68 ➤



p.74 ➤



p.80 ➤



p.86 ➤



p.92 ➤

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# COVERT RIFLE CARRY



Pray for the best,  
prepare for the worst.

All it takes to be reminded of the rapid cultural changes in America is to flip on a TV. Not long ago, the only place that you'd hear about protests and riots was in a history book; now they've become commonplace with politically driven tensions at an all-time high. Maybe it was time to rethink my approach to defending my family.

It seems the days of a five-shot .38 Special tucked in a pocket holster might be coming to an end; after all, those are at best case a two-bad-guy gun with great shot placement. Many concealed carriers move to a 15-round

polymer pistol like the FN 509 Mid-size MRD or Glock 19; now we've a five- or six-bad-guy gun, if your shot placement is damn near perfect.

But what if you find yourself in the middle of a "peaceful" protest? Even that six-bad-guy gun isn't going to stop dozens, potentially even more than that.

It seems that the concept of a modern "truck gun" has more relevancy than ever before. In years past that might've referred to a beater ranch rifle used to dispatch the odd coyote or other rural pest; but the last decade has seen a shift from those old bolt actions to modern semi-auto rifles.

## OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

Not long ago, it wasn't uncommon to see a rifle rack in the back window of a pickup. Concerns of theft have made that a thing of the past, but that doesn't mean that folks don't have a rifle tucked away in their vehicle. Keeping a rifle hidden from view has a downside, though: You probably can't access it quickly and, if you can, it probably isn't hidden all that well.

That's where a discrete rifle bag comes into play. Clever designs like the Tuff Products Sentinel Concepts Elite Revelation II backpack, Elite Survival Systems Stealth backpack and Vertx's Gamut series of backpacks bring new





options to the table when trying to keep a rifle from prying eyes. While they look like a standard backpack, they've been designed to look like a run-of-the-mill bag and not raise any eyebrows.

If you aren't interested in a backpack design, there are plenty of other bags on the market that no one would suspect carried a long-gun. Your bag choice will ultimately be driven by your rifle and how you wish to conceal that bag in your car.

#### **YOUR CAR ISN'T A GUN SAFE**

Do you need a high-speed bag to hide





**“While many ‘truck guns’ only leave the truck when the rifle is being used or cleaned, that’s a terrible idea—your door locks don’t make your vehicle a gun safe.”**

a rifle in your vehicle? No, but it isn’t until you get out of the car that the covert bag really shines. While many “truck guns” only leave the truck when the rifle is being used or cleaned, the reality is that’s a terrible idea—your door locks don’t make your vehicle a gun safe.

The ability to discretely take my rifle inside at night without the thought of “gun” entering an onlooker’s mind has been the single biggest benefit to the covert bags I own. It wasn’t until I went on a nine-day road trip with my 14.5-inch do-all AR-15 that I truly appreciated the ability to take my overnight bag and the Tuff Products Sentinel Concepts CARB bag into a hotel without anyone even raising an eyebrow. In fact, on more than one occasion I was asked if I played keyboard due to the CARB bag’s resemblance to a nylon keyboard case.

#### IT ISN’T JUST FOR ‘TRUCK GUNS’

A discrete rifle bag isn’t just limited for transport to and from your vehicle: It also makes a ton of sense if you’re at a training class or live in an area that isn’t overly fond of guns. The last thing you want to happen while armed with something that a news reporter would undoubtedly label as “fully semi-automatic assault clipazine-fed soul snatcher” is an uncomfortable conversation with someone who realizes you have a rifle.

It’s far better to play it cool as though you tickle the ivories in the church band, are headed off for a hike or any number of other things that don’t include the .308 Winchester bolt-action that’s actually in your bag.

(Far right) Open the CARB Bag and you find a 14.5-inch AR-15 fitted with a LAW Tactical Folder, electronic muffs and eye protection.

The new Sentinel Concepts Elite Board Bag from Tuff Products is large enough to hide just about any long-gun ... in plain sight. The Alamo Precision Rifles .308 Win precision rifle tucks neatly into the bag while the other pocket holds needed to take a long-range training course.

#### NOT ALL COVERT BAGS ARE EQUAL

Be prepared to spend a few dollars on a high-quality bag; you don’t want to deal with a torn bag when you’re checking out of that swanky hotel. When it comes to backpacks and bags, quality costs a few bucks.

Sure, you could *maybe* get away with any number of bags and cases designed for other things but those might not protect your firearm like you hope. Depending on your rifle, you might want to take care when putting a magnified optic-equipped rifle into a bag.

It wouldn’t be the first time that a quality optic met its demise in a bag that someone thought would protect their several-thousand-dollar scope.

Your bag choice needs to be centered around the rifle or AR pistol you intend on carrying. You aren’t going to be able to shoehorn that 16-inch Smith







& Wesson M&P15 that you've had for years into a backpack that looks like a regular backpack.

My personal go-to bags are all from Tuff Products because they're well thought out, built well and blend in extraordinarily well. The fact that the brains behind all three of my Tuff Products bags happens to be a great friend, who spends more time behind a windshield than anyone else I know, is a side benefit.

#### **SETTING A RIFLE UP FOR COVERT BAGS**

Once you've identified your base rifle and made the decision as to what bag





This 8-inch .300 Blackout SBR with a LAW folder is compact to stow in just about any discrete rifle bag on the market.

you want to use, get your rifle setup for stowing in the bag. That means figuring out how to hold mags, mag pouches and slings in the bag—without making the rifle impossible to get out of the bag quickly. Figuring out a place to stow some eye and ear protection is also a great idea.

As far as the rifle itself is concerned, the first thing I recommend looking at is a LAW Tactical folder ... if your chosen rifle is an AR-15. Bolt-actions can use any number of folding stock chassis, and if you have something like an under-folder AK, your work is pretty much already done for you. Double-check that your optic and lights are securely mounted to the rifle or AR pistol, and strap that bad boy into your bag. Tuck the rest of your kit (mags, pouches, etc.) in the bag as you can, but don't over stuff the thing. The goal is to blend in while carrying enough gun to get you out of nearly every situation, not invade a small country.

### PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

Now that you have the bag and it's all setup, practice with it. Spend some time doing dry runs getting the gun out of the bag to have an idea of how long it'll take you to go from identifying a threat to getting that long-gun into the fight. While a rifle is a superior defensive tool, you might not have the time to get to it—and your concealed-carry pistol might be a far better option.

Practicing how to efficiently employ the gun will not only give you

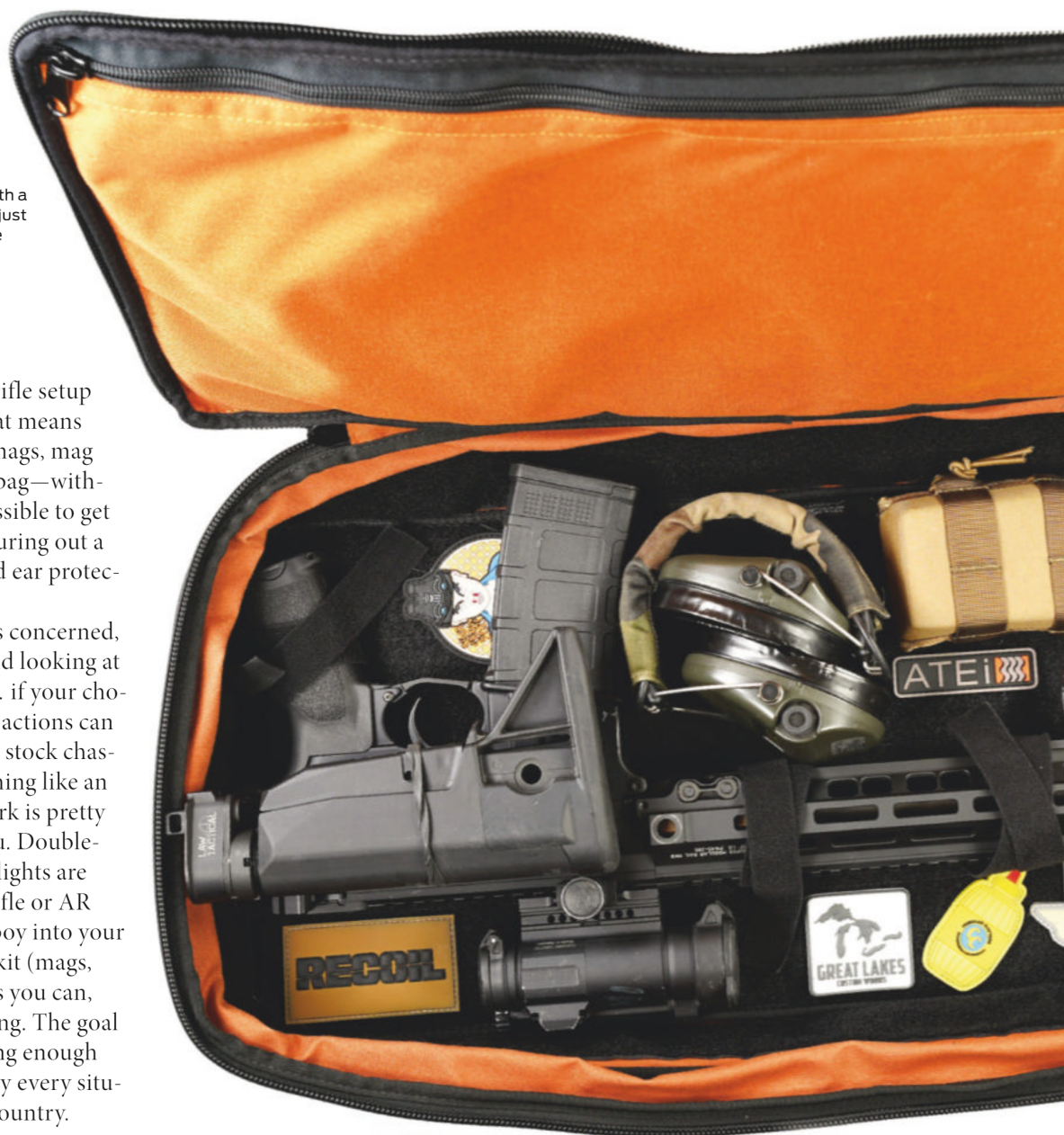
a realistic expectation of how long it takes, but you'll also likely find different ways to stage your kit in the bag to make it a touch easier to get the rifle out of the bag and on target.

### IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE

Don't think that I'm saying everyone should carry a long-gun everywhere they go. The truth is, 99 percent of Americans will never need a setup like this and would be best served with a concealed-carry pistol.

That said, no one should chastise someone for deciding to keep a long-gun close at hand. The Second Amendment gives me the freedom to toss a rifle on my back, should I feel a justification to do so. I just prefer to do it in a way that doesn't result in a photo of me, holding the world's cringiest SKS in a Chipotle, going viral.

Chastising gun owners with poor taste, like Chipotle SKS guy Flakoo Decampo, is perfectly acceptable though. **GDTM**







Checking into a hotel with Tuff's Revelation II has never once raised an eyebrow. Open the Sentinel Concepts Elite Revelation II and pull the concealment panel away for easy access to an AR with up to a 10.5-inch barrel and a LAW folder.

