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**THE MAGAZINE**

FEBRUARY 2021  
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The LS Edge's new slide stop looks identical to the Tactical's, except it's a touch longer.



# TACTICAL AND PRACTICAL

FN's new LS Edge 'tactical' pistol that's still extremely versatile.



Every version of the FN 509 that we've seen so far has been designed with the personal protection and the duty user in mind. The new FN 509 LS Edge takes a very different path, addressing the needs of a competitive shooter as well as the tactically minded.

FN's long-awaited practical/tactical optics-ready gun is the brainchild of Tim Kennedy of Sheepdog Response and 253-time champion shooter Dave Sevigny working with FN America's team of engineers. With Kennedy's focus on defensive tactics and Sevigny's impressive competitive background, the task of melding the two thought processes was undoubtedly an engineering challenge.

Not only did FN's engineers manage to pull it off, the new pistol is *exactly* what I had wished for in last year's article on the FN 509's history.

## EVOLUTION BREEDS PERFECTION

Before diving into what sets the FN 509 LS Edge apart from the rest of FN's pistols, we really should touch on the 509's roots. We covered the development last year (February 2020 issue), and the entire article is on the *Gun Digest* website,

but here's a brief rundown.

The FN 509 platform has a much longer history than you might think given how recent the pistol is to the market. When the 509 hit store shelves in 2016, it was already well tested in the military's XM17 pistol trials, nearly winning the contract when it made it into the final round before selecting the P320 as winner.

The gun's design goes even further back than that; there's over 15 years of research and development packed into the 509 platform. When you look at the new LS Edge, you can still see the designs roots in the FNP, which became the FNX and then the FN5 and FNS-C, the 509's closest relative.

## SEXY SLIDES SELL

Even though FN has produced a long slide before, they haven't done anything quite like the LS Edge to date. It's not just a churched-up 509 with some window dressing like you normally see on premium versions of an existing pistol; it's obvious a lot of research drove every aspect of the new gun.

That isn't to say that the pistol isn't going to make you want to press your face against the gun case glass—this thing is sexy. The new optics-ready long slide is coated in graphite PVD,





The 509 LS Edge's Graphite PVD finish is tough, but it also looks fantastic.

the same type of coating on the 509 Tactical. To give you an idea how tough PVD is, my 509 Tactical has been used hard with somewhere north of 14,000 rounds through it with only very minor finish wear. Not only is it tough, but the graphite finish highlights the lightning cuts and brings the contours of the new slide alive.

Sure, the LS Edge gets an all-new optics-ready long slide with some fancy window cuts and a fiber-optic front sight, but there's more going on inside the pistol that could be overlooked easily. Between the obvious slots in the serrations and the much less obvious milled slots around the striker, the new LS Edge's slide is only one-fifth of an ounce heavier than the Tactical's slide.

That might sound trivial but slide mass plays an important role in how flat shooting a pistol is. Slide mass is one of the biggest contributors to felt recoil and muzzle flip, not bore axis, which is probably the reason why I paused for a second when I pressed the trigger for the first time and felt the pistol cycle in a satisfyingly soft manner while tracking about as flat as my compensated 509s.

#### CRISPY CONTROLS

The improvements to the platform don't stop there; the LS Edge has a brand-new flat-faced trigger that's sure to wow even the most critical of FN's traditional hinge-style trigger. Our

test example's trigger broke cleanly at 4 pounds, 5 ounces. FN says to expect a 4- to 5-pound trigger, thanks to the new trigger shoe and a redesigned striker—a claim that held true when my example measured out to 4 pounds, 5 ounces on a Lyman digital trigger gauge.

It isn't all about a lighter trigger pull;

The new super aggressive grip texture is going to keep your gun planted in your hands during recoil.





FMJ ACCURACY TESTING

AMMUNITION TYPE	10-YARD 5-SHOT GROUP	25-YARD 5-SHOT GROUP
SELLIER & BELLOT 115-GRAIN FMJ	1.149-INCH	2.614-INCH
SELLIER & BELLOT 124-GRAIN FMJ	0.834-INCH	2.817-INCH
MAGTECH 115-GRAIN FMJ	1.022-INCH	2.892-INCH
MAGTECH 124-GRAIN FMJ	1.260-INCH	3.274-INCH
FEDERAL SYNTech 147-GRAIN TSJ	0.741-INCH	2.644-INCH
AMERICAN EAGLE 147-GRAIN FMJ	0.406-INCH	1.912-INCH

\*FN 509 LS Edge fitted with a Leupold DeltaPoint Pro & Streamlight TLR-1 HL

JHP ACCURACY TESTING

AMMUNITION TYPE	25-YARD 5-SHOT GROUP
FEDERAL HST 124-GRAIN	1.976-INCH
FEDERAL HST 147-GRAIN	1.632-INCH
FEDERAL PUNCH 124-GRAIN	2.332-INCH
FEDERAL HYDRA-SHOK DEEP 135-GRAIN	3.121-INCH
SPEER GOLD DOT 147-GRAIN	2.028-INCH

\*FN 509 LS Edge fitted with a Leupold DeltaPoint Pro & Streamlight TLR-1 HL

FN 509 LS EDGE SPECS

CALIBER:	9MM LUGER
ACTION TYPE	DOUBLE ACTION ONLY (STRIKER FIRED)
CONTROLS	AMBIDEXTROUS SLIDE STOP; REVERSIBLE MAGAZINE RELEASE
FRAME	POLYMER AND ALUMINUM WITH REPLACEABLE STEEL SLIDE RAILS
MAGAZINE CAPACITY	10 AND 17-ROUND FLUSH FIT OR 24-ROUND WITH SPACER
WEIGHT UNLOADED	31 OUNCES
BARREL	5-INCH COLD HAMMER-FORGED STAINLESS STEEL WITH 1:10 RH TWIST
LENGTH, WIDTH AND HEIGHT	8.2 INCHES LENGTH, 1.35 INCHES WIDTH, 5.75 INCHES HEIGHT
TRIGGER WEIGHT AS TESTED	6 POUNDS, 3 OUNCES
SIGHTS AND MRDS MOUNTING	GREEN FIBER-OPTIC FRONT, BLACK REAR SUPPRESSOR HEIGHT AND FN LOW-PROFILE OPTICS MOUNTING SYSTEM
INCLUDED ACCESSORIES	2 BACKSTRAPS, 3 MAGAZINES, MRDS COVER PLATE, ZIPPERED CASE AND MRDS MOUNTING KIT

the new trigger shoe was carefully designed to break at 90 degrees and has very minimal over-travel, which makes it feel like the trigger is moving straight back similar to a 1911. Additionally, the striker's new shape should perform better in water submersion tests than the original striker, thanks to cutouts in the striker's bearing surface that'll prevent the striker from hydro locking.

The LS Edge also gets an extended magazine release and all-new slide release that's easier to reach without breaking your grip, but that also means it's easier to pin under your grip and prevent a slide to lock open. The slide stop on my own example will likely get swapped out for the smaller one on the

Tactical to prevent that. To be clear: This is a problem with my grip and not the gun.

GET A GRIP

As you might expect at this point, FN turned the frame to 11 as well. I can't think of another pistol on the market that uses a grip quite like the LS Edge. FN started with the midsize frame and designed a metal magwell that transforms it into a full-size frame. Since the end result is a magwell that reminds me of the one Glock used on the Gen 5, I suspect that practical shooting associations will allow shooters to use the 509 LS Edge in Production and Carry Optics divisions.

While unconventional, really all FN did was use a more robust material to improve the pistol's longevity. I wouldn't recommend removing yours though; the pistol really isn't intended to be shot without it.

You also might notice that the frame no longer has the pyramid-style texture that has become synonymous with FN, now we get an ultra aggressive skateboard grip tape-style texture that's a significant improvement over the older texture. Some shooters might find it too aggressive, but that goes away once you grip the gun harder. Personally, I'm a fan of aggressive



Shooting on the move at a high rate of speed isn't as hard with a soft recoiling gun.





To get the most out of the LS Edge, choose a large windowed MRDS like the Leupold DeltaPoint Pro or Trijicon's SRO.



grips, and the LS Edge is just about perfect for a factory pistol.

Once you grip the gun with purpose, the aggressive texture assures the pistol isn't going to wiggle around in your hands. Less wiggle in recoil means faster follow-up shots; faster follow-up shots means more wins against paper or flesh advisories.

Even though the LS Edge's slide has lightning slots milled into it, the serrations are still among the best on a factory pistol.

#### RANGE TIME

Currently, I have about 1,300 failure-free rounds through my 509 LS Edge and counting with roughly 750 of those in an eight-hour period during the launch event. In fact, the pistol got so hot that one of the FN engineers noticed heat mirage coming off the slide of my gun and liberally applied some oil to the barrel and slide to help cool it down before we cased the guns for the day.

With the impressive accuracy that we saw out of the 509 Compact MRD last year, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the LS Edge performed well during accuracy testing. With ammo a bit scarce, I was sad when I saw the best results out of my preferred practice load, American Eagle 147-grain FMJ, with a 0.406-inch five-shot group at 10 yards and a 1.912-inch five-shot group at 25 yards. For defensive ammo, the 147-grain Federal HST did extremely well with a 1.632-inch five-shot group at 25 yards.

Not once in over a thousand rounds did I find the LS Edge to be lacking in any way. Recoil was pleasant, the pistol

shot flat, and even when heat-soaked, it still was every bit as reliable as I've come to expect of the 509 platform.

#### HOLSTERS

One of the largest challenges with a non-Glock pistol is finding a holster that'll fill the role you have for the gun. Thankfully, that isn't so much an issue with the 509 LS Edge. For concealment with a weapon light, the PHLster Floodlight has allowed me to comfortably conceal the pistol with a Leupold DeltaPoint Pro and Streamlight TLR-1 HL mounted to the gun. On the rare occasion that I decide to take the light off the pistol, a JM Custom Kydex AIWB holster does the trick.

As for the range holster that we used during the event, the ANR Design race holster was fast and retained the gun well enough. Since then, I've modified a Safariland ALS retention holster for a P320 to fit the LS Edge, and it has become my go-to range holster. Eventually, Safariland will release a purpose-built fitment for the LS Edge, which I'll likely replace my rigged holster with as soon as I can.

#### NOTHING IS PERFECT

Even though the LS Edge is as close to perfect for an out-of-the-box pistol





(Clockwise From Top Right) PHLster Floodlight, ANR Designs Race Holster, JM Custom Kydex IWB and Safariland 6390 RDS.

under \$1,500 that I've seen, it isn't perfect. The gun is priced a bit higher than I'd like to see, with competing pistols like the Glock 34 and Walther Q5 Match coming in at roughly \$600 less (but that may be less of a concern when dealers start getting them on the shelf and we see if the real-world street price is remotely close to my predicted street price of roughly \$1,200). Should street pricing be close to that figure, the superior optics mounting, more robust metal magwell and flat-face trigger add enough value for me to justify the extra spend.

My real gripe lies with the magazines. I'm a bit disappointed that FN launched a pistol competition shooters should love without 140mm magazines with baseplates designed for the new pistol. Yes, the 17 rounds that ship with the gun are nice, but if you intend on shooting a stage with it, more bullets in a reload are always welcome.

#### NOT COMMON, BUT A KEEPER

While the 509 isn't as common as I feel it should be, you shouldn't look over

the 509 LS Edge when shopping for an optics-ready pistol. Simply put, I feel the new pistol is nearly perfect right out of the box. That's a heck of a statement from someone who modifies just about every firearm in his safe.

I have to give kudos to Kennedy, Seigny and the FN America team: just when I thought the FN 509 was about as good as it was going to get, they raised the bar yet again. **GDTM**