



COLORADO GUN COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

From the President:

The 4th of July celebration of our country's 250 anniversary is over now but I personally am still celebrating this great country. I will be attending the Winchester Arms Collectors Association show this month in Cody Wyoming. I always love to spend time at the Cody Firearms museum, but this year they also have an exhibit of Revolutionary firearms! The 4th of July celebrations in Colorado were a bit subdued this year on account of all of the forest fires going on and the extreme risk of causing more. I was over on the western slope scouting a new hunting area and one of the fires was on the western edge of my unit. To see all of the aircraft involved in fighting the fire was impressive. Equally impressive was the temporary trailer and tent city at the Fairgrounds near Ouray Colorado where over 500 firefighters are sleeping when they are taking a break from the fire line. Three firefighters have already lost their lives fighting the fire so I don't mind giving up the fireworks displays if it might prevent another fire. We forget people are risking their lives to fight these fires.

Even without the fireworks displays, the 250th anniversary of our country really strikes a chord with me. Perhaps part of the reason it resonates so much with me is the political strife we are seeing in our country. We just went through the primary season to see who will be on the ballot in November. I didn't use to care as much when I was younger, but now that I am older and understand what is in play, I feel like this is happening on my watch, and I need to step up to make a difference. One of the things that concerns me so much is that less than 40% of registered Republicans bothered to vote. And what would have been heresy 25 years ago, is now becoming reality. People are voting for self-avowed "Democratic Socialists" like the mayor of New York. So many people now see the Second Amendment as old-fashioned and useless. The signers of our Declaration, if they were here today would say it is more important than ever, to prevent the tyranny from a political party rather than a king.

It is no longer a secret that the liberal faction of our country is intent on "infringing" on our Second Amendment Rights. In Colorado alone they want us to spend hundreds of dollars and go through a 12-hour course on "gun safety" in order to buy one of the over 900 guns on their list of guns they don't like.

I hate having to write about politics, or gun control but it is directly affecting our hobby and our lives, and we have to get more people involved in the fight in some way. I am looking forward to writing about more interesting topics in the future when I can.

Rick Wilson

Our next meeting will be July 21, 2026, at the American Legion Post 1; 7:00 PM.
Our program will be "Over the top. Rifles of the Great War"
By Tyler Brownell.

New Gun Show chairman.

After ten years of managing our annual gun show, Dave Weddle decided to step down.
The Board of Directors has elected Chris Brownell to fill this position.

Dave has done a great job overcoming many obstacles to continuing our show.
We had our venue, the Denver Merchandise Mart, close so we were faced with finding a new location that would accept a gun show as well as the size of our show. We were in Colorado Springs for two years and most recently three years in Greeley. In addition to location, Dave had to deal with Covid and re-schedule our show which meant additional advertising. And we can't forget the additional burden of our ever-changing gun laws in Colorado. Thank you, Dave, for allowing us to continue to have our annual show.

Beginning July 1, Chris Brownell is our new Gun Show Chairman. Chris has accepted to take on this position. Please offer your support to Chris. He will continue to have the challenge of the ever-changing gun laws.

Shots for Freedom Summer Gala Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Colorado State Shooting Association

Saturday July 25 6PM – 9PM Double Tree by Hilton Colorado Springs.
For more details go to <https://cssa.ticketbud.com/summergala>

Please visit our website at www.CGCA.com for club news and updates.

New pictures are on our website.

If you have questions, please contact:

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Chris Brownell, Show Chairman 720-482-0167 CGCASHow@cgca.com

Colt's Prewar Target Automatic Pistols By Craig Blancett

June's CGCA Program was on Colt's Prewar Target Automatic Pistols. Over the years from 1898 through 1911, John Moses Browning was working with Colt and the War Department to develop and test a "New Technology for firearms" the Automatic Pistol. The War Department adopted Colt's Model 1911 .45 Caliber automatic pistol as the official sidearm of the U.S. Military on March 29, 1911. The M1911 replaced the M1909 revolvers used by the Army, Navy and Marine Corp. The first 40 M1911 pistols were assembled on December 28, 1911, then were shipped to Springfield Armory on January 4, 1912.

The February 26, 1914, edition of the Arms and the Man magazine stated that, "This year for the first time the Colt's .45 Caliber Automatic Pistol will be used by all those who take part in the National Match." Throughout the early 20th Century, the revolver was known as consistently accurate during target matches. In early matches the M1911's accuracy varied from gun to gun. Reports emerged of inconsistent accuracy, with some pistols shooting well, while others exhibited erratic shots.

Colt was aware of the accuracy issues and was actively working on a solution. In 1919 Colt offered tuning for the M1911 for trigger pull at the National Matches. In 1920 Colt's offered Match Barrels for the M1911/Government Model. In the 1920's target shooters started ordering Government Models with both tuned trigger pulls and Match barrels.

In the 1920's and 1930's a "gunsmithing cottage industry" sprang up with several gunsmithing companies providing accurizing to Colt's automatic pistols. Competition (such as King Gunsight Company, out of San Francisco, California) offered accurizing for all Colt models including the M1911/Government Model. These gunsmithing companies offered to upgrade everything from custom grips to adjustable sights.

In 1931 Colt introduced their first large frame target automatic pistol, the "Ace". It was chambered in .22LR Caliber. The Ace also had the first Colt factory adjustable sight fitted to a large frame automatic pistol. The Ace was finished with hand polished and fitted internal parts to reduce friction and increase accuracy. With the country entering the 3rd year of the Great Depression, the .22LR cartridge was considerably cheaper to shoot than the .45 acp cartridge.

Colt responded to the "gunsmithing cottage industry" challenge, like they had with their early target revolvers, by developing a "Factory" Target Model pistol. In 1932 Colt combined all the target features, into a "Match" grade Government Model that cost a few dollars more than the standard Government Model and came out as the "Government Model National Match". The slide was roll-marked "NATIONAL MATCH" to designate that it was a Colt Factory Match grade pistol. The upgrades to the "Standard" Government Model to make it a National Match, where a hand tuned action, polished internal parts, a "Match" grade barrel, and Patridge (fixed) sights that could be special ordered with various sight apertures.



Three of Colts Prewar Target Model automatic pistols, introduced in the 1930's, L-R, National Match .45, Super Match in Super .38 and Ace in .22LR.

After the National Match was introduced the demand for the standard Super .38 pistol introduced in 1929 with "Match" upgrades increased and two years later, in 1934, Colt introduced the "Match" version of the Super .38. It was roll-marked "MATCH" on the slide to indicate that it was a Colt factory Super .38 "Match" pistol. This new target Super .38 pistol incorporated all the "Match" grade improvements of the Government Model National Match pistol, including a match barrel, hand tuned action with factory targeting that could be purchased as a "factory - made to order" target pistol.

Soon after the Super .38 "Match" model was launched in 1934 as a fixed sight target pistol, Colt introduced, for an additional cost, the Stevens Adjustable Rear Sight version with a ramp front sight. The adjustable rear sight as its name suggests was developed by Colt employee Harry Stevens. He was employed by Colt as the General Works Manager, when he developed the Adjustable Rear Sight. The adjustable rear sight version could be ordered or retrofitted for both the National Match Government Model in .45 acp and the Super .38 Match Model.

Early Adjustable Rear Sight versions started being shipped out in February 1935. This coincided with Colt's name change from Super .38 "Match" Model to the designation of "Super Match". At this time Colt started roll marking the slides of the newly made "Super Match" autos with the new "SUPER MATCH" roll-mark.

The Colt Service Model Ace was introduced in 1937. It was developed as an improved version of the Colt Ace and to provide soldiers and civilians with an inexpensive training pistol that mirrored the weight and feel of the standard .45 ACP Government 1911. It was designed by David Marshall "Carbine" Williams and gave the .22 caliber round the "kick" of a .45 and ensured reliable cycling. It was purchased primarily by the military with approximately 13,800 units produced through 1945. It was discontinued after the war. Colt brought the Service Model Ace back in 1978 – 1982.

The Colt Match Target .22 Woodsman was introduced in 1938 as a premier, target focused Woodsman. It consisted of a heavy barrel to reduce muzzle “flip” and improve accuracy. It also had distinctive wrap-around longer checkered (Elephant Ear) grips for more accurate placement of shots. The serial range is from MT 1 in 1938 to MT 16000 in 1944. The military, especially the Navy, purchased quantities of these Match Target Woodsman’s for use in WWII.

Colt’s Prewar .45 to .22 caliber Conversion Units, introduced in 1938 allowed owners of the Colt Government Model .45 to shoot .22 caliber ammunition with their current pistol. These Conversion Units featured the Floating Chamber developed by “Carbine” Williams in the Service Model Ace, introduced a year earlier in 1937. Prewar Conversion Units were numbered UI through U2000. The vast majority of these Conversion Units were purchased by the military for training purposes. The later Conversion Units produced from 1942 – 1946 were mostly parkerized.

After World War II Colt ceased production of several prewar models, including their National Match .45 pistols. They would not produce the National Match .45acp again until the late 1950’s. In the two years following World War II, Colt shipped out the remaining 199 Adjustable Sight Super Match .38 pistols. These were prewar Super Match frames and slides that were fitted, numbered, and blued, prior to the war and assembled after the war using WWII M1911-A1 plastic grips and small parts. Colt Re-issued the Super Match in the postwar Pre-70 Series period for one year, in 1961. Colt ceased production of the “original” Match Target Woodsman after the war. Colt would re-issued a Second Generation and later a Third-Generation Match Target Woodsman in two-barrel sizes after the war. Another 1930’s Colt innovation, the Conversion Unit was issued after the war, but they were un-numbered and also were eventually adapted to convert the Super .38/Super Match to .22 caliber. The prewar period from the early 1920’s through the early 1940’s saw some of the most innovative development of target shooting for Colt’s automatic pistols.

As I finish up this article about last month’s presentation, I can’t help but think about this special year for our country, with the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, officially on July 4, 1776. That document started the framework for our country. Then the United States Constitution came in 1787 and was ratified by the states in 1788 and was effective in 1789. The U.S. Constitution was later amended with the 2nd Amendment (the Constitutional Right to Keep and Bear Arms) which was ratified in 1791, but it all started when the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. That is how we, as members of the Colorado Gun Collectors Association, are still able to enjoy, own, shoot, research and collect firearms. I hope you all had a great July 4th and continue to enjoy your freedom!



STORY TIME AT OUR SHOW



JEEP DISPLAY AT OUR SHOW

