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Gunfighter Moment – Ken Hackathorn

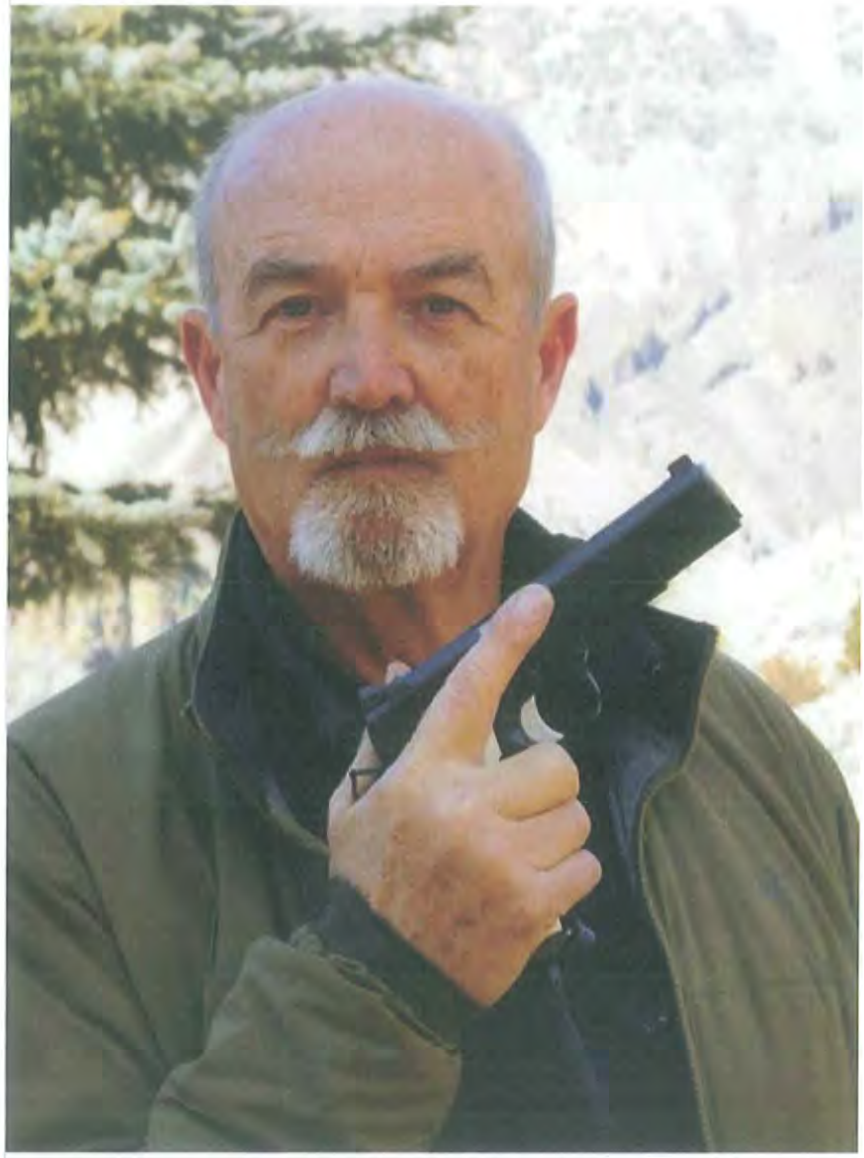
The 1911 pistol, good choice for carry or a piece of history? The answer is a bit of both, but a 1911 pistol is not the ideal gun for everyone. Certainly one of the best if not the top selling handguns in America, the great 1911 does have issues. It is a pistol made by a variety of manufacturers and in various levels of quality. I grew up with the 1911, I carry one most of the time, and I have never felt under-armed with one. My 1911 pistols work and I know how to maintain them and keep them in top form. For the 'non-gun guy', it is a bad choice; they're much better off with a Glock or S&W M&P.

I'm often asked, "is a high capacity pistol better?" YES. Are high cap pistol necessary? If you miss a lot, they are great. If you can shoot, the 1911 will solve most problems. Consider why you want or need a pistol, then pick a gun that fills that need. The 1911 pistol has always 'spoke' to me. The modern polymer pistols make great tools, but they have no soul. In my classes I always ask who does not own a 1911 pistol. Sadly, these days more and more students raise their hands than those who don't. I always bow my head in shame. Every true American Patriot should own a 1911 pistol. That is a fact. You don't have to carry one, but, you should have one.

As of late it has become popular to damn the 1911 pistol. For over a decade I have referred to the 1911 as "The Worlds Finest Close Quarters Sidearm"… and, "King of feedway stoppages." I have seen 1911 shooters that are so good at clearing malfunctions that they can do them subconsciously. When asked what happened to their pistol, they will reply, "What stoppage?". They have to do IADs so often, that they don't even realize that they did one. LAV refers to this as 'Malfunction Amnesia'. Make no mistake, 1911 shooters are the best Immediate action drill shooters in the world. If you want a really reliable 45acp pistol, check out the H&K 45, FNX45, Smith & Wesson M&P 45, or the new Sig Sauer P227.

In many ways the 1911 is like the Harley Davidson motorcycle: it is uniquely American, but requires extra effort to keep it on the road. Like the Japanese Samurai sword, it represents much of the spirit of the warrior class: honored, collected, past from father to son, and likened to with a near spiritual following. I love the 1911, carry one almost daily, but usually train and teach with the gun that most of my students use: one of those polymer pistols without a 'soul'.

-Ken Hackathorn



Ken Hackathorn has served as a US Army Special Forces Small Arms Instructor, Gunsite Instructor, and NRA Police Firearms Instructor. He is currently an FBI Certified Firearms Instructor, Certified Deputy Sheriff with Washington County SO, Ohio, and a SRT member and Special Response Team trainer. Ken has trained US Military Special Operations forces, Marine FAST and SOTG units and is a contract small arms trainer to FBI SWAT and HRT.

Ken has provided training to Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and been active in small arms training for the past 25 years. He has written firearms related material for Guns & Ammo, Combat Handguns, Soldier Of Fortune, and currently American Handgunner and contributed to at least six other gun/shooting journals. Ken was also a founding member of IPSC and IDPA.

To see Ken's Training Class Schedule visit **aliastraining.com**.

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