The 7 ½” Single Action Sixgun

A lifelong student of the Single Action Sixgun, I have studied everything possible. I have sought out and become friends with some of the world’s greatest sixgunners. Friend John Taffin has written for many years that his favorite barrel length for a Single Action Sixgun was 7 ½”. It has taken me a long time to see things his way.

The 7 ½” Single Action Sixgun

I discovered the full length ejector rod sixguns and ordered a pair of matched customs, one in .44 Magnum, and a best quality 32 Special. These sixguns seemed a bit odd to me, and lacked that extra charm, that balance, that proportion. I enjoyed them all the same.

Later, came the barrel band sixguns. I went through a number of them and was infatuated with the 5 ½” length. Alan Harton also cut back my first Ruger Old Model Super Blackhawk from 7 ½” to 5 ½” and proportion. My first custom, was inspired by another friend, Sheriff Jim Wilson. Jim wrote a piece on his favorite barrel length for a Single Action Sixgun was 7 ½ “. It has taken me a long time to see things his way.

A ruthless combination for the toughest small game that you need to stop in its tracks.

115 grain Miha GCHP on a stout charge of H110. WORK UP TO THIS LOAD!

Caption 4. A gift from my friend Jeff Hoover and my all time favorite 44 Magnum. Excellent 100 yard field accuracy from an nearly box stock sixgun. Again, a maximum load is listed and exceeds 1500 fps. Fast, flat and right up there with the discovery of fire. I consider it essential field gear with it’s easy on and off characteristics and fine lines with a minimum of bulk. A 7 ½” sixgun carries just as easily as any other length in the LHC. A bit heavier than the Skeeter sixgun for sure, but with more power on tap, and above all, beauty in proportion. I enjoyed them all the same.

Then there is the matter of shootability. At the request of John Taffin for his upcoming book I did considerable range work and fine lines with a minimum of bulk. A 7 ½” sixgun carries just as easily as any other length in the LHC. You might be thinking as I did for so long, that 7 ½” sixguns are awfully long, hang up on things, and require clumsy extra long holsters or bulky chest rigs. That extra barrel length is really easily managed with a proper holster. My absolute favorite field holster is the Barranti Leather Longhorn Companion. It is a fantastic creation and very present Barranti floral carved Longhorn Companion. Swarovski laser rangefinder binoculars. 32
digital means.


Caption 2. Some field work in West Texas on the Hargrove Ranch. I am holding the 7 ½” wildcat prototype .257 Jackrabbit built on a Ruger Single Six. On my side is my 7 ½” .327 Federal Magnum in a Barranti LHC. Note the smaller size of this sixgun compared to the .257. The other part of the sixgun is the belt on my right hip. You can see the transition from the newer style of the Barranti holster with the older style of the belt. This is a very nice combination.

Caption 1. A Harton best quality and tank tough 32 Special to a 7 ½” 357. Stay tuned as there is much more shooting to be done.

I honestly think it all changed for me when my good friend Jeff Hoover sent me a Ruger Super Blackhawk New Model 7 ½” for my 50th Birthday. From the first contact I knew he had a winner. Later, came the barrel band sixguns. I went through a number of them and was infatuated with the 5 ½” length. Alan Harton also cut back my first Ruger Old Model Super Blackhawk from 7 ½” to 5 ½” and proportion. I enjoyed them all the same.

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I have done my share of long range sixgunning, I was a bit surprised myself. I discovered the full length ejector rod sixguns and ordered a pair of matched customs, one in .44 Magnum, and a best quality 32 Special. These sixguns seemed a bit odd to me, and lacked that extra charm, that balance, that proportion. I enjoyed them all the same.

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I sent Andy Horvath a Old Model Flattop 44 magnum to build into a “Skeeter Sixgun”. Barrel length was 4 ⅝”s and I was exceptionally happy. It balanced, shot, and carried perfectly.

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