

Para USA's Carry 9 Pistol

When Less is More

Text and Photos by John Higgs

If there are two things that SOF publisher Robert K. Brown is fond of, they are full-size 1911 pistols and .45ACP ammunition. So it was with great interest that I watched him shoot Para USA's little 1911 carry pistol. "Hey, this is alright! I like this," Brown announced after he'd launched four or five magazines of Black Hills once-reloaded blue box 9mm hardball ammo down range. The fact is that John Browning's classic single-action fighting pistol, originally designed around the .45ACP cartridge, lends itself nicely to being scaled down for general self defense, and concealed carry in particular. Chambered in 9mm Luger, the pistol soaks up the moderate recoil with ease.

Aside from the cartridge, the other big departure from the standard 1911

is Para USA's Light Double Action (LDA) trigger. This is significantly different from Browning's conventional single-action trigger design where, once the trigger is depressed and the piece fires, the trigger is then allowed to travel forward until the shooter feels and hears a slight click as the trigger resets. There is no need to allow the trigger to move any farther forward. The pistol may be fired again from this trigger position.

With the LDA trigger, there are two clicks, and the trigger must travel farther forward until the second click before it resets and the pistol is ready to fire again. Unlike a traditional single-action 1911, the hammer on the LDA does not stay cocked when the slide moves forward into battery; it follows the slide down. Pressing the trigger on the Carry 9 is like pressing the trigger on a double-action revolver. The hammer moves backward to the cocked position and then drops.

However, the LDA trigger is much lighter than a standard double-action revolver trigger.

Para's Power Extractor is also included in the package. Compared to the original John Browning design, this extractor is 50 percent larger. And here's a point that is important to a lot of people: it's an internal extractor. Some companies have built 1911s with new-fangled


Left: SOF Publisher Brown liked the Carry 9, "even though it isn't a .45!"

external extractors, and some are better than others. But the fact is that John Browning's design works!

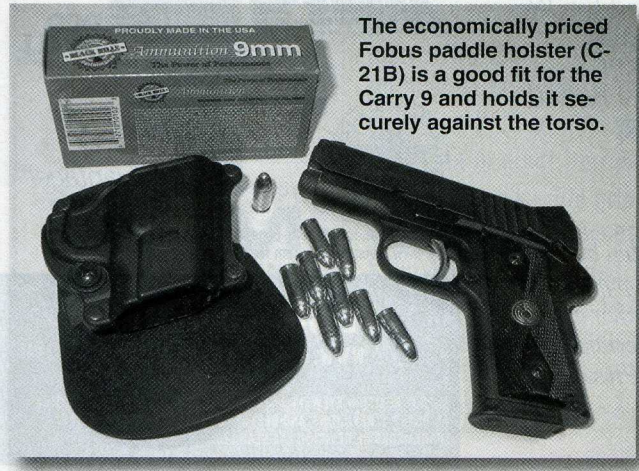
Another benefit of this 9mm 1911 is the reduced circumference of the grip; not too much smaller than one of Para's standard, full-size, single-stack 1911s, but it is good news for people with smaller hands who like the general design of a 1911 pistol.

We tested the Carry 9 in a Fobus Tactical Elite injection-molded, high-density plastic paddle holster, Model C-21B. We found the holster easy to secure on the belt, and the forward cant coupled with the correct amount of tension to hold the pistol ensures a smooth drawstroke. The Fobus holster allows for one-handed reholstering—a definite requirement for both tactical and safety reasons.

Para has done a great job of dehorn-ing the pistol, which feels remarkably smooth.

This is a well-executed design. With less weight (24 oz.), smaller size (three-inch barrel and reduced-size grip) than a standard .45 cal. 1911, this 9mm pistol is designed to replace the .38 special, five-shot snubby revolver. In terms of better, more visible sights (matte black with three white dots), eight-round magazine, and the potential for comfortable carry and easy concealment, the Carry 9 is less than a .45 and more than a .38. 

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The economically priced Fobus paddle holster (C-21B) is a good fit for the Carry 9 and holds it securely against the torso.

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