



THE CASE FOR THE RUGER COMPACT MAGNUMS



September 2008

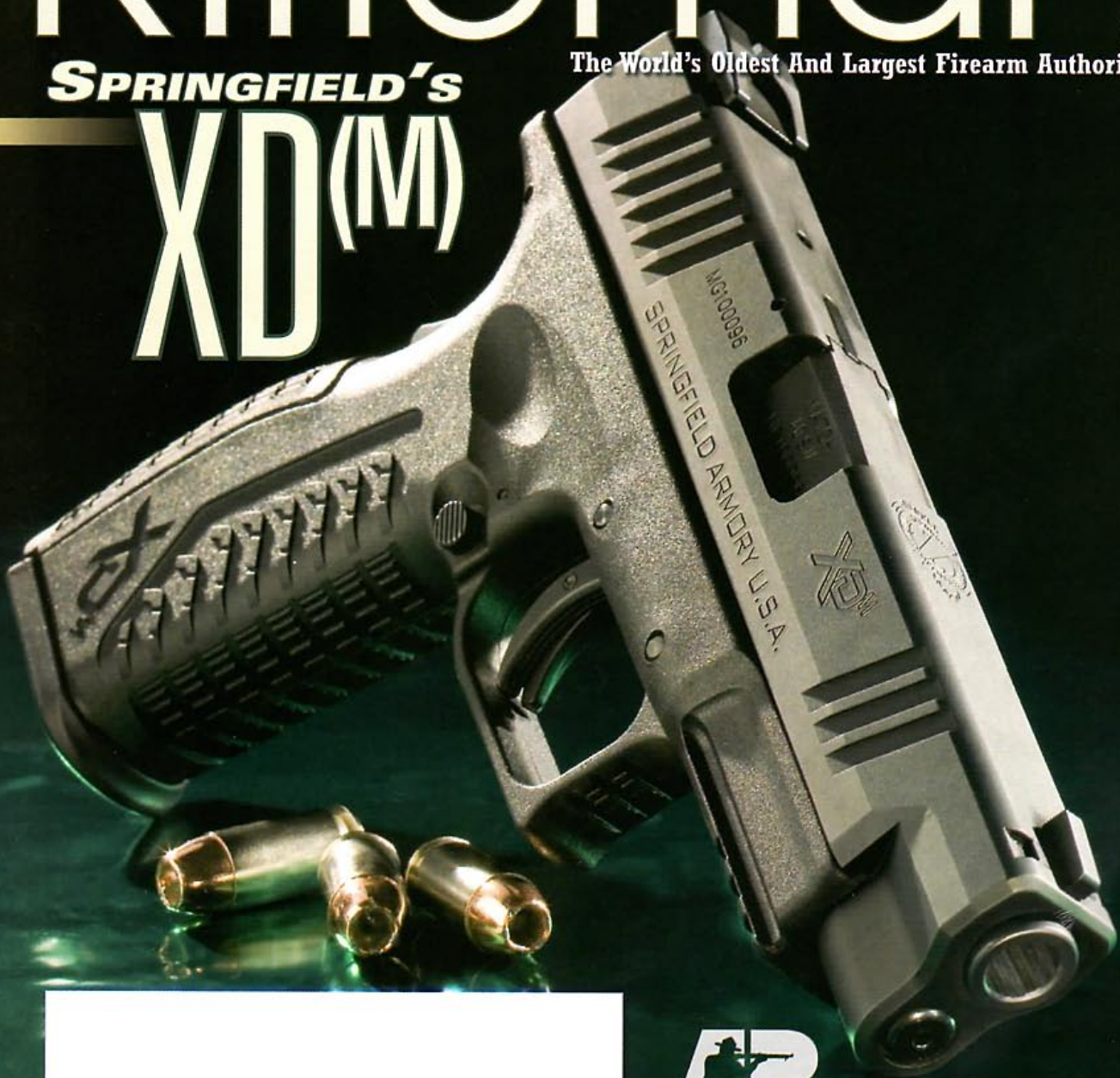
A M E R I C A N

# Riflemans

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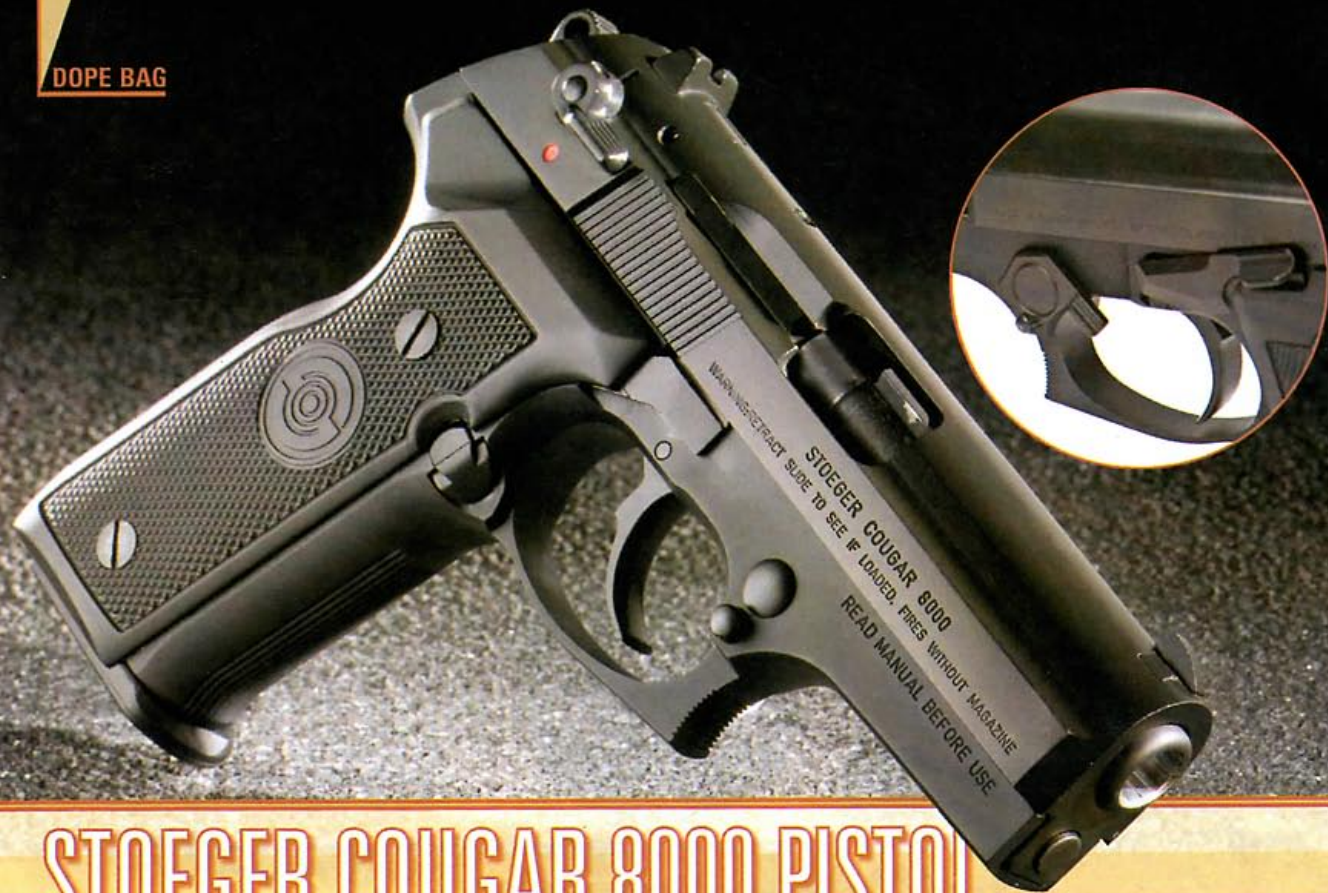
**SPRINGFIELD'S**

# XD(M)



**INFANTRY  
AND  
HUNTING  
RIFLES**

**NRA** Official Journal of the National Rifle Association



## STOEGER COUGAR 8000 PISTOL

**M**anufactured by Stoeger Silah Sanayi AS in Turkey, and imported by Stoeger Industries, a member of the Beretta family of companies, the Cougar 8000—available in 9 mm Luger and .40 S&W—is a relatively lightweight, compact, double-action/single-action, semi-automatic handgun. Made on the same tooling as the Beretta Cougar Model 8000 (Dec. 1995, p. 46), the Stoeger version has a suggested retail price of several hundred dollars less.

The Cougar 8000 employs double-action/single-action operation. Working the Cougar's slide cocks the hammer and enables a smooth, 5-lb., 1-oz.-trigger pull, while decocking, and therefore reverting to the double-action mode, requires a lengthy, heavy

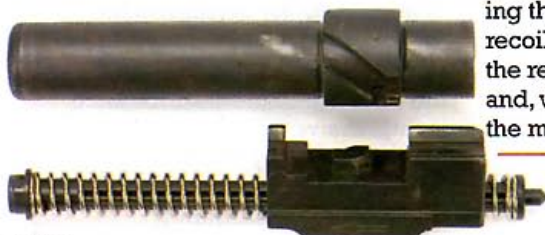
12-lb., 5-oz. pull to discharge. One benefit of the Cougar 8000's firing mechanism is double-strike capability—allowing a non-firing primer to be re-struck by pulling the trigger a second time.

Like the Beretta Cougar Model 8000, Stoeger's version employs a short-recoil, locked-breech system with a rotating barrel. When fired, recoil energy forces the slide/barrel assembly rearward and, after a short distance, camming action—imposed by a hexagonal-shaped tooth located on the steel central block working in a track on one of the barrel's locking lugs—rotates them out of their recesses in the slide. After approximately 1/4" of movement, the barrel is stopped by the central block, whereas the slide continues rearward, extracting and ejecting the fired case, cocking the hammer and activating the recoil spring. The slide, pushed by the recoil spring, moves forward and, while feeding a round from the magazine into the chamber,

engages the barrel, which is rotated into lockup by the central block.

As opposed to a tilt-locking pistol, the Cougar 8000's rotary barrel locking system maintains the barrel in one plane during cycling, theoretically increasing accuracy. Additional benefits include reduction in felt recoil and muzzle flip. The chrome-lined barrel measures 3 3/8" and features a bead-blasted, blued finish.

The aluminum alloy frame is absent of an accessory rail on the dust cover—a feature remarkably common on most modern, semi-automatic handguns. The frontstrap, backstrap and front surface of trigger guard each have 10 grooves, with the latter employing a horizontal configuration, to enhance purchase. The frame's edges are rounded for snag-free drawing, and its strategic contours make for better controllability. Checkered plastic grips—with the Stoeger logo centered—extend below the magazine well and, in



*The Cougar 8000 uses a rotary barrel locking mechanism. The central block's "tooth" travels in a cam track in the barrel's bottom lug.*

## SHOOTING RESULTS (25 YDS.)

.40 S&W CARTRIDGE	VEL. @ 15' (F.P.S.)	ENERGY (FT.-LBS.)	GROUP SIZE IN INCHES		
			SMALLEST	LARGEST	AVERAGE
<b>BLACK HILLS REMANUFACTURED 180-GR. JHP</b>	913 Avg. 14 Sd	333	1.63	3.93	2.57
<b>COR-BON 140-GR. DPX</b>	1134 Avg. 15 Sd	515	2.94	4.19	3.43
<b>WINCHESTER 165-GR. SXT</b>	1068 Avg. 12 Sd	456	3.00	4.25	3.51
<b>AVERAGE EXTREME SPREAD</b>					3.17

MEASURED AVERAGE VELOCITY FOR 10 ROUNDS FIRED FROM A 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ "-BARREL. RANGE TEMPERATURE: 73° F. HUMIDITY: 57%. ACCURACY FOR FIVE CONSECUTIVE, FIVE-SHOT GROUPS AT 25 YDS. FROM A SANDBAG REST. ABBREVIATIONS: DPX (DEEP PENETRATING X-BULLET), JHP (JACKETED HOLLOW POINT), Sd (STANDARD DEVIATION).

## STOEGER COUGAR 8000

**MANUFACTURER:** STOEGER SILAH SANAYI AS, TURKEY  
**IMPORTER:** STOEGER (DEPT. AR), 17603 INDIAN HEAD HIGHWAY, ACCOKEEK, MD 20607; (301) 283-6300; WWW.STOEGERINDUSTRIES.COM  
**CALIBER:** .40 S&W (TESTED), 9 MM LUGER  
**ACTION TYPE:** RECOIL-OPERATED, LOCKED-BREECH, SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOL  
**FRAME:** ALUMINUM ALLOY  
**SLIDE:** CARBON STEEL  
**BARREL:** 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ " CHROME-MOLY, CHROME-LINED STEEL  
**RIFLING:** 1:15.7" (.40 S&W), 1:9.8" (9 MM LUGER), RH, SIX-GROOVE  
**MAGAZINE:** DOUBLE-STACK, 11-ROUND (.40 S&W), 15-ROUND (9 MM LUGER) DETACHABLE BOX  
**SIGHTS:** WINDAGE-ADJUSTABLE THREE-DOT  
**TRIGGER:** DOUBLE-ACTION, 12 LBS., 5 OZS.; SINGLE-ACTION, 5 LBS., 1 OZ.  
**OVERALL LENGTH:** 7"  
**WIDTH:** 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "  
**HEIGHT:** 5 $\frac{9}{16}$ "  
**WEIGHT:** 32.4 OZS. (.40 S&W), 32.6 OZS. (9 MM LUGER)  
**ACCESSORIES:** SPARE MAGAZINE, CABLE LOCK, HARD CASE, MANUAL  
**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** \$449



The 8000's controls include (far upper l.) a slide lock and a disassembly lever. The ambidextrous safety/decocking lever (l.) is on the rear of the slide.

conjunction with the lengthened backstrap, guide the double-stack magazines home.

The plastic magazine release button is located on the left side of the frame, just to the rear of the trigger guard, though it's reversible for left-handed shooters. Directly above the magazine release resides the slide catch, and forward of it resides the disassembly lever. The latter requires manipulation of the spring-loaded button on the front, right side of the trigger guard to work.

The Cougar 8000's phosphated and Brunton-coated carbon steel slide has two—one per side—shallow panels of rearward angling serrations. Directly behind the serrations resides the ambidextrous safety/decocking lever. Pushing the switch downward


allows safe hammer lowering over a chambered round, and the safety rotation interrupts and shields the firing pin from a hammer strike. With the safety "ON" the linkage between the trigger and sear is disconnected, rendering the trigger inoperable. The safety/decocker must be manually returned to the upward position in order to fire the pistol.

Topping the 8000's slide are the windage-adjustable front and rear sights, dovetailed into place, that provide the familiar three-dot sight picture. The rear sight has a 0.145"-wide square notch. The Cougar 8000's hammer has

grooves to enhance purchase.

At the range, the sample Stoeger Cougar 8000 pistol, chambered in .40 S&W, performed admirably, cycling all loads without incident, and grouping most loads under 4" at 25 yds. Of the brands tested, the most accurate was the Black Hills 180-gr. JHP, which averaged 2.57" for five consecutive, five-shot groups at 25 yds. Much of the Cougar 8000's aforementioned accuracy was achieved by virtue of its relatively light, crisp single-action trigger pull, but even the overly heavy double-action pull produced groups more than sufficient at practical self-defense ranges.

Although no mechanical issues surfaced during testing, the slide's slick finish, combined with the shallow serrations and stiff recoil spring, made it difficult to acquire and maintain a solid purchase. Although not its function, the safety/decocker lever helped anchor the fingers during slide manipulation.

Given what you get for the money, Stoeger's Cougar 8000 represents a tremendous value. 

The *American Rifleman* has used the phrase "Dope Bag" since at least 1921, when Col. Townsend Whelen first titled his column with it. Even then, it had been in use for years, referring to a sack used by target shooters to hold ammunition and accessories on the firing line. "Sight dope" also was a traditional marksman's term for sight-adjustment information, while judging wind speed and direction was called "doping the wind."

**WARNING:** Technical data and information contained herein are intended to provide information based on the limited experience of individuals under specific conditions and circumstances. They do not detail the comprehensive training procedures, techniques and safety precautions absolutely necessary to properly carry on similar activity. Read the notice and disclaimer on the contents page. Always consult comprehensive reference manuals and bulletins for details of proper training requirements, procedures, techniques and safety precautions before attempting any similar activity.