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## The Reed Ergo-Power Ratio

Once you select a defensive carry (CCW) handgun you like, ensuring it fits your hand, has a good trigger and set of sights, and of course is ergonomically (to you) conducive to a proper drawstroke and presentation, see if you can manage it by the test below. You'll quickly see how small caliber, low capacity, bump-sighted guns may conceal well but are not the most practical defensive concealment weapon.

- A. Identify the power factor from the caliber. 357, 45 and up are a 5, 40 is 4, 9/38 Spl. is 3, 380 is a 2, 32 caliber and under are 1. This favors major calibers.
- B. Identify the capacity inc. the chamber. Over 14 is a 5, 9 to 13 is a 4, 6 to 8 is a 3, under 6 rounds is a 2, derringers and single shots are a 1. This favors higher capacity.
- C. Assess the manageable recoil by time and accuracy, 2 shots into a 3X5" index card at 7 yards. Both shots fully in (no cutters). Within 2 seconds is a 5, within 3 is a 4, within 4 is a 3, and within 5 is a 2. Over 5: stop! Go get training. This favors smaller calibers and/or measures your recoil management ability.
- D. Assess the practical accuracy by shot group and time, 5 shots slow aimed fire (about 3 seconds each and not more than 15 seconds altogether) into a 3X5" index card at 7 yards. All 5 shots fully in (no cutters) is a 5, 4 is a 4 and so on. Shots fired over the time limit count as out. (Pro? Divide the card vertically in half with a pen. If you can fire all 5 shots into the remaining 2 1/2" X 3" target: add 2 points!) This factors your sight focus, your trigger control, and thus accuracy.

Scoring: If you score a 16 or higher you may be on to something. 13 is my cutoff for any serious defensive carry. But that's up to you. What is your tolerance given this will be used to save your own life or the life of a loved one? For instance, I scored my 5 shot S&W Model 442 in .38 special like this: A=3, B=2, C=5, D= 5. (C & D are high because I shoot a lot.) My Snubbie scored a 15. Pretty good. You could shoot the same gun and ammo and only get a 12.

So yes, this is subjective. But it has to be because it's YOU assessing a defensive handgun for YOU. Obviously training and familiarization will mean you can move up, but this is a practical test to determine if you've selected a gun that will work for you *now*.