



## ORDER IN THE COURT, INDEED!

By Peter Caroline

There are a number of good reasons for buying a particular gun: self-defense, fun, competition, hunting or – most important – just because you don't have that particular one.

Recently, a new handgun that fulfills several of the abovementioned purposes found its way into the Caroline household. I was planning a 10-day excursion back to the east coast and my wife, Sally, would be home alone. We live about 40 miles north of the Mexican border, and not infrequently have uninvited visitors wandering up from the south and tramping through our yard. Sally wanted to have something convenient, and potent but manageable, in the way of defensive hardware.

Now, I do already have a few guns around the house. But this seemed like an excellent opportunity to try something new and totally different. While at the SHOT Show, I'd checked out a new Taurus revolver called "The Judge." It received this unusual name because a number of judges have chosen it for their protection in the courtroom. And this was indeed one very stern arbiter of justice! Imagine a large-frame double-action revolver with a long cylinder; capable of firing your choice of .45 Colt cartridges or 2-1/2" .410 bore shotshells. Since 1873, the .45 Colt has been known as an effective man-stopper; the .410, at short range, can accomplish a serious attitude adjustment without penetrating into adjoining rooms. Sally seemed enthusiastic about the concept, so I contacted Bob Morrison at Taurus and requested the Judge.

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Upon arrival, the Judge got a very close examination. You can't miss the extra-long cylinder, which easily accommodates 2-1/2" .410 shotshells. My gun featured a stainless steel finish, but blue is also available. The red fiber-optic front sight is quite visible, even in poor light and without glasses. The barrel is 3" long and is rifled. I was curious to see how this affected shot patterning. One of the neatest features of the Judge is Taurus' exclusive one-piece Ribber Grip®, which I had tried some time before on a friend's .45 Colt Taurus Tracker. It's one of those "why didn't I

think of that before?" ideas, and an extremely effective means of softening what could be a stout recoil.

Initially, the only 2-1/2" .410s I could find were loaded with #6 shot, a bit light for the purpose, but worth a try. A trip to a gunshop further afield produced some 2-1/2" #4s, and a shooting buddy supplied me with a few .410 shells

loaded with triple-0 buck. I had a large quantity of 255-gr. lead semi-wadcutters backed with 7.4 gr. of Universal Clays. Thus equipped, we were off to the range.

Now, I had been advised that the .410 loads were designed for close quarters...conversational distance, as it were. But being curious about other possibilities, I also set up several targets at about five-to-seven yards, that being as close as you might want to let an adversary approach. I realized that I'd get more spread at that distance than might be practical. The results were quite

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