

up production to meet the demand," Bob Scott, Smith & Wesson Corp.'s chairman, said from the 2003 Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade Show in Orlando, Fla.

"Certainly, in our booth it's the product that has created the most buzz."

The Springfield, Mass.-based company, creator of the .44 Magnum of "Dirty Harry" fame, unveiled its new offering Thursday as the world most powerful commercially produced revolver. Executives for the country's second-largest firearms manufacturer said they hoped the gun would help regain lost market share by generating excitement among an important, albeit niche, market of big-game hunters, collectors and recreational target shooters.

But even before the weapon's wide distribution, scheduled for next month, forces on both sides of the firearms debate are taking aim at its social effects.

Gun control groups condemned the Model 500 as an example of the industry's "deadlier-is-better" mentality, predicting that the new model would soon find its way to the streets.

"A hunting weapon? That's a joke," said Luis Tolley, director of state legislation for the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. "What we have here is a weapon that's designed to appeal to people who just want to make a bigger hole in whatever they're shooting at. And, hopefully, they're not living next door to me."

Said Josh Sugarmann, executive director of the Violence Policy Center: "This gun is not being made for hunters in Africa. It's being made for bored white gun owners in America. Why are they putting so much firepower into people's hands?"

The real question, say some gun experts, is: Why are people demanding it?

Adam Firestone, editor of Cruffler.com, a Web site for gun collectors, said he viewed demand for Smith & Wesson's new product as more of an outgrowth of America's obsession with size and status, rather than an indicator of growing paranoia over crime or homeland security.

"How many people do you know have Lincoln Navigators or Hummer H2s?" he said. "We are phenomenal at buying beyond our needs. And with regard to the firearm industry, if it is bigger, if it is more expensive . . . we will line up around the corner to buy the darned thing, regardless of the fact that there may be six other guns that cost half as much and do the job just as well."

Smith & Wesson executives hope that the new offering, one of nine new models introduced at the Florida gun show Thursday, will put it back in the good graces of a gun-buying constituency that remains sore over the company's decision in 2000 to sign agreements with the federal government that promised to put locks on all firearms it sold.

That backlash served as a double whammy, taking away sales from Smith & Wesson even as the entire industry was in decline.

"We're in the process of winning back market share or business that was lost as a result of negative reaction by consumers to the decisions by the previous ownership," said Scott, the company chairman.

Smith & Wesson has built its reputation by building bigger guns. The .357 Magnum, introduced in 1935, was considered a breakthrough because of its muzzle energy that delivered impact at 535 foot-pounds, said Roy G. Jinks, the company's historian.

The weapon, developed at the behest of hunters, gained favor with police during the mobster era because it could shoot through a car's engine block, he said.

In 1956, Smith & Wesson introduced the even more powerful .44 Magnum, the gun made famous years later by Clint Eastwood in his crime-fighting movies as "Dirty" Harry Callahan, a San Francisco cop.

With Thursday's unveiling the company now leapfrogs ahead of its competitors, which had surpassed the .44 Magnum with more potent weapons.

The Model 500 uses a bigger frame, takes a new .50 caliber Magnum Smith & Wesson bullet and packs a muzzle force of 2,600 foot-pounds.

Though there are single-shot, custom pistols that use larger ammunition, the new gun is the largest production revolver or semiautomatic pistol.

At .50-caliber, the bullet is about half an inch wide but is more powerful than other such ammunition because it is longer and can pack more powder, said Garen Wintemute, a gun expert and director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at UC Davis.

He said the gun's cartridge has about twice the muzzle energy of most rounds for common semiautomatic assault weapons used in America, such as the AR-15, a civilian version of the military's M-16.

Wintemute predicted that it would be a smash with gun enthusiasts who can order one with a barrel as long as 10 inches.

One such enthusiast is Marc Halcon, owner of American Shooting Center in San Diego.

He said the allure of the weapon "has something to do with the artistry of creating a mechanism that will do something that no other will do. It's another step in science and engineering."

On a personal level, Halcon said. "I already own the most powerful handgun on the market, and if they build a more powerful one, then I want to buy it."

Sam Paredes, executive director of the Gun Owners of California feels much the same.

"I can't wait to shoot one of these things," he said.

Paredes acknowledged that the Model 500 could be portrayed as the "boogeyman of all guns."

He said its recoil would pack such a wallop that it would be virtually impossible for criminals to rely on it—a sentiment shared by Lt. Bruce Harris, the firing range master for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

"It's a little tough to have one of those under your shirt," Harris said, adding that he didn't believe it would become the weapon of the street because "gangbangers don't have \$900 to spend on a Smith & Wesson revolver."

Proposed legislation regulating the sale of .50 caliber rifles is scheduled for consideration in the state Assembly and the Los Angeles City Council, said Tolley of the Brady Campaign. But government officials said Thursday that they had no plans to include the new revolver in the restrictions.

Still, Tolley said, his group will work to bring the Model 500 under some kind of control because, despite Smith & Wesson's intentions, the weapon is bound to end up in the wrong hands.

"They're marketing this weapon to people who get off on the idea that they have the biggest, baddest gun on the block," Tolley said.

"Unfortunately a number of them are going to juvenile gang members and people who have an unhealthy fascination with fire arms."•

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages

from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

NOTICE STATING THAT THE EMERGENCY DECLARED WITH RESPECT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA ON FEBRUARY 24, 1996, IS TO CONTINUE IN EFFECT BEYOND MARCH 1, 2003—PM 18

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2003, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 27, 2003.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:39 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 254. An act to authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank, and for other purposes.

H.R. 258. An act to ensure continuity of the design of the 5-cent coin, establish the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 657. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to augment the emergency authority of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

H.R. 672. An act to rename the Guam South Elementary/Middle School of the Department of Defense Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools System in honor of Navy Commander William "Willie" McCool, who was the pilot of the Space Shuttle Columbia when it was tragically lost on February 1, 2003.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 36. Concurrent resolution encouraging the people of the United States to honor and celebrate the 140th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and commending Abraham Lincoln's efforts to end slavery.

At 5:53 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 534. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit human cloning.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 254. An act to authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 258. An act to ensure continuity for the design of the 5-cent coin, establish the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 657. An act to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to augment the emergency authority of the Securities and Exchange Commission; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 672. An act to rename the Guam South Elementary Middle School of the Department of Defense Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools System in honor of Navy Commander William "Willie" McCool, who was the pilot of the Space Shuttle Columbia when it was tragically lost on February 1, 2003; to the Committee on Armed Services.

The following concurrent resolution was read, and referred as indicated

H. Con. Res. 36. Concurrent resolution encouraging the people of the United States to honor and celebrate the 140th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and commending Abraham Lincoln's efforts to end slavery; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURE HELD AT THE DESK

The following concurrent resolution was ordered held at the desk by unanimous consent:

S. Con. Res. 12. Concurrent resolution honoring the life and work of Mr. Fred McFeely Rogers.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 534. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit human cloning.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with

accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-1265. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Division of Market Regulations, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Definition of Terms in the Specific Exemptions for Banks, Savings Associations, and Savings Banks Under Sections 3(a)(4) and 3(a)(5) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (RIN3235-A119)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1266. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a nomination confirmed for the position of Assistant Secretary of Financial Institutions, received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1267. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Division of Market Regulations, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulations Analyst Certification (See Release 33-8193; 34-47384(February 20, 2003)) (RIN3235-A160)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1268. A communication from the Deputy Secretary, Division of Market Regulations, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Custody of Investment Company assets with a Securities Depository (3235-AG71)" received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1269. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Authority To Waive the Market-to-Market Regulations (RIN2502-AH94)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1270. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Office of Inspector General Subpoenas and Production in Response to Subpoenas or Demands of Courts of Other Authorities (RIN2508-AA13)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1271. A communication from the Chairman and President, Import-Export Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Italy; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1272. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2002 of the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS); to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1273. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Regulations; Ashley River; Charleston, SC (CGD07-03-018)" received on February 11, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1274. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Trans-

portation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety/Security Zone Regulations; (Including 3 Regulations) [COTP San Diego 03-007] [COTP San Diego 03-008] [COTP San Diego 03-009] (RIN2115-AA97)" received on February 11, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1275. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Drawbridge Regulations; Gulf Intercoastal Waterway, Grand Lake, LA (CGD08-03-003)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1276. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety/Security Zone Regulations; (Including 2 regulations) [CGD01-03-010] [COTP Miami 03-001] 92115-AA97" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1277. A communication from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, United States Coast Guard, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fire Suppression Systems and Voltage Planning for Towing Vessels (USCG 2000-6931)(CGD 97-064) (2115-AF53)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1278. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "16 CFR Parts 801 and 803 (3084-AA23)" received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1279. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Competition, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "10 CFR Part 305—Rule Concerning Disclosures Re Energy Consumption and Water Use of Certain Home Appliances And Other Products Required Under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act ("Appliance Labeling Rule")—Clothes Washer Reporting Date (RIN3084-AA74)" received on February 24, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1280. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska—Closure for Pollock in Statistical Area 630, Gulf of Alaska" received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1281. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Closure; Gulf of Alaska directed fishing for Pacific cod (0679)" received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1282. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska—Closure for CDQ Reserve Amounts of Shortraker/Rougheye Rockfish and Northern Rockfish in the BS Subarea, BSAI" received on February 14, 2003; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.