

IZH 35M Scrapbook - Compiled by Pete Brunelli in 2004

This is my Scrapbook of information as gleaned from bullseye-I and private postings from bullseye-I members. I have left the names of the authors out intentionally. This is an effort to avoid finger pointing or advertising other peoples private opinions. The categorization is very general and is more for my benefit in future updates than as an aid to the reader. You can go back to my main IZH35M page by clicking [here](#). Please send all comments to me at pete@peteburcelli.com

No warrantee is expressed or implied with this information. Firearms pose a potential danger to the user, and all repairs and modifications should be done by a competent gunsmith, with the owner/modifier bearing responsibility for the safe operation and handling of the gun. I have no association with EAA, IZH, Baikal or any dealer/importer/representative. I am a user of the IZH35M and offer this information as a resource to other users and potential users of it.

I would specifically like to thank Marcus Chang, Michael Dane, Bronze, David H. Daniels, Jack Heisel, and Alex Gybin for their invaluable input.

INTRO:

The IZH35M is a relative newcomer to the stable of .22 target pistols, and at a street price of about \$400 it fills a niche that guns like the Ruger MKII, Browning Buckmark, Connecticut High Standards, and other "field guns" have not filled. It is an innovative design, in a European "ISU" style package. The trigger group is of very high quality and is very adjustable. The finish is spartan, and it comes with a set of spare parts for consumables like extractors, sights, and springs. I have one and have made it my primary gun for bullseye competition.

HISTORY:

(Thanks to Michael Dane Warren Potter, and Jesper Rex Andersen)

In answer to your question, it all happened in this order:

In the 60s the Russians had a very highly thought of pistol called an IJ35. We rarely saw them out here except in the hands of Russian team members. A few Australian team members managed to get them through Taransky, an ex-Russian living out here. I doubt any went to the US. They were roughly made but a brilliant design. Until the Domino 602 came on the scene in the mid 70s they swept all before them, here at least.

As the IJ was a limited run made for mainly the elite shooters they are quite uncommon. Many years later Baikal decided to reinvent the wheel and brought out the IZH35, a less sophisticated version of the IJ, but still a very good target pistol. A little rough around the edges, and the grip is fairly forgettable. Brilliant value for money.

Walther has been looking to bring out a budget beginners standard gun for some time. Their KSP200 is actually an IZH35 with a couple of modifications. The basic pistol is still made by Baikal. New features are a push button slide stop and a fancy blue laminated grip. I don't know about in the States, but here you're paying big bucks for those two upgrades and the Walther logo.

The AW93 is interesting. It was delayed in its release for a couple of years as the designer's widow tried to get more money out of FWB for using the design. It is an IJ35 given the once-over by German designers. Meaning they have made it more complicated of course. It has a much more refined trigger and better grip than either Russian pistol. Beautifully made, which I expect explains the price tag. They have just stopped making the nickel finish, I believe all in the future will be blue.

You don't mention that the AW-93 also has a special Recoil damping mechanism, that is/was unique to that pistol.

I might not want to admit that the AW-93 is based on the IZH35m/Baikal IJ35 (Still sells as the IJ35 when using the Baikal brand in Denmark) design. But when looking at exploded drawings of the IZH35m I can easily see that they look a lot like each other.

btw. I have been told that the Nickel finished version of the IZH35m in most cases has a better quality than the black gun.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

The quality is Russian. Anything not needing finishing is bead blasted and blued (I think). All adjustments are shooter-makable, with screws for trigger pull weight, pre-travel (take up), sear engagement and trigger position. The grips are, well, utilitarian, made large so you can customize to yourself, but include an adjustable palm shelf. Gun came with scope mount and screws. This mounts to the barrel shroud. To do a thorough cleaning, you have to remove the shroud to get to the mechanics. Luckily, the gun does not seem to get dirty too bad and when it does, I'm told the zero holds. The gun also comes with extra firing pin, sear, hammer, rear and front sight blades, complete spring set, a combination tool, cleaning rod and an oil bottle, all in a hard-shell case. My gunsmith, ex-AMU, said this was the gun he'd been shooting against his entire career (Soviet Block teams).

My initial accuracy was disappointing, but after scrubbing the bore vigorously on the same gunsmith's recommendation, after 5 fouling shots, almost everything went into at least 10-ring groups at 50 yds, usually better. The barrel is set down low and recoil is almost straight back. VERY controllable for short line sustained fire. It digests any ammo I put in the clip.

I mounted the scope with both rings on the front half of the scope and the whole thing weighs several ounces less than my 41. Especially noticeable is that the front is lighter than my 41 (7"), which does not test what muscle stamina I have, but seems more prone to wobble (duh). For the money, it's a helluva lot of gun, and wacky to boot. Oh, the bolt does NOT stay open after the last shot, so you have to learn to count to five. And when you drop the slide, you get

this tank-like "clank" that any IZH shooter will recognize from the other end of the line.

IZH is a great shooter. If you want a pretty gun, I think Walther is reselling a polished and gold plated version of the '35 for only about \$400 more.

In my mind, that's a lot of CCI SV!

Cleaned the IZH and adjusted the trigger position this weekend. Fired 200 rounds. Initially, it would only partially chamber the ammo (old military issue Winchester which shoots great in my 41) I was shooting. Changed over to CCI Pistol Match and problem was drastically reduced (1 in 50 rds). Accuracy is good. No loosening of shroud screws but the rear sight blade screw worked loose. The trigger has quite a bit of creep but the weight of pull is O.K. for me (I keep mine at 3.5). The real problem for me is the sharp projection at the rear of the trigger guard. It ate my middle finger. Last night me and Mr. Dremel alleviated that problem. I'm also going to strip, Powder Blast, and lubricate again. Are any Gunsmiths doing work on the IZH yet? I know Don Nygord is working over the ones he sells but will he take one he didn't sell?

I, too, own one of the estimable IZH35M Baikals. It is a very fine target pistol in most important ways, with good range of adjustments, a very smooth, honed bore, and it is generally very reliable. Dollar for dollar, it is hard to beat. I tried every type of ammo and found that it digested any and all -- with the single exception of the old PMC Target stuff packed in the yellow boxes. (Yes, I still have a bunch of that stuff that I am trying to shoot up as a practice round -- it is accurate, but the priming is miserable and you get lotsa alibis in every batch -- new PMC stuff is much, much better.) Only disturbing thing about my IZH35M is that every once in a while I get a burst case. Yes, I DID say burst case. Seems the rim is not fully supported and every once in a blue moon, I get a fizzle-pop-puff. I have never had a bullet lodge in the barrel -- indeed, the fizzle-pop-puff shot carries to the target, but is very, very low. I think a little gunsmithing would cure this, but since I now shoot an MP95E Benelli (which I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE -- sorry, I was getting carried away), I no longer shoot the IZH35M.

I just purchased a IZH35 from Champion's Choice for \$425. They include the scope mount in the deal. So far I have enjoyed shooting the pistol at 25 yard targets and find it to be quite accurate. I'm glad to know that it can be dry fired. What type of ammo do you find to be the most accurate? I have thought about buying some Premium Match (Temp) Russian made ammo from J & G Sales.

I have tried various ammo and shot with consistent accuracy (although I have never buy something pricier than \$4.5/100 rounds). I have figured that when aim is right and pull is slow I am always getting "X", this is ammo-insensitive to me, especially on distances 25 yards and shorter (we shoot 50 feet at winter time). True test is ONLY bench-vise-rest, and on 50m, all

others are very subjective, and I have not done it.

What is the situation with the red dot mount that causes the gun to require tools to disassemble?

ANS: To mount red dot Izh35 upper frame has to be attached tighter to the pistol base (upper frame light movement by design does not effect iron sights but, as red dot has to hold to it, the frame -'top cover'- must be secured). This is normally done with two new screw holes made through the top cover and into the base so cover does not move during firing. So during disassemble these screws have to be removed first. As I shoot only iron sights I do not have to

do it.

[as of January 2000 they seem to be coming through with a base that mounts to the top shroud and does not need to be removed for cleaning - PCB]

I do not do that (unscrewing). Remember that all shooting clubs in former Soviet Union were and are state-owned. This means that different shooters were using same gun during practicing: I am, say, on M-W-F, another shooter on T-T-Sat. Therefore leaving clean gun after yourself was 'a must'. Also, there were corrosive components in the ammo (primers?) then in 60-70-th, 80-th? - so cleaning after shooting was always a good practice. Therefore manufacturer put it in the manual: "be stripped for cleaning after every firing session". If you are shooting like I am - about 120-150 rounds for practice - there is no need to strip gun completely, - just remove upper and lower covers and slide with firing pin (about putting it back -later). Stop here. The dirtiest places are opened for cleaning. Most dirty is area around firing pin. It is important to clean it as firing pin - by design - DOES NOT HAVE SPRING that put it into far back position (same as in Makarov). So it does have a greater chance to fire accidental round when dirty (could stuck). I did not experience it but heard of one occasion. After about 500-1000 rounds (depends) I do complete cleaning. Then I do remove three screws that hold grips, and one (I do not remove it - just loosen it up and turn the cover so it hangs on the screw) that covers the hammer-sear mechanism. As long I am shooting the gun I have never have to go any further with disassembly. After cleaning barrel, I simply rinse inside of the hammer-sear mechanism with syringe full of light mineral spirits or solvent alike applying pressure to the spray (goggles!). I do it over ice-cream bucket and always amazed of how much copper-led-so-on material is

collected there from all the parts. (same with any gun I use). After this, I just spray enough Rem-oil inside the hammer/sear mechanism, then hang gun up side down over the bucket and leave there for a little while. Excess of the oil is coming down. Then I wipe outside surfaces and assemble the gun. Sure, bore is wiped dry.

There are holes in the walls to oil the mechanism of the gun as needed, but the way I do it makes additional oiling unnecessary. NEVER USE DICHLOROMETHANE (another name - methylenechloride, gun-strippers contains it) TO CLEAN IZH's MAGAZINES - they have plastic parts that could soften/dissolve and stuck inside.

I like the trigger and sights a lot. I'm a little concerned about its accuracy, because the bore was not oiled and feels a little bit gritty when I pull a wet patch through it. But I'll find out more about this as I shoot it more. Mine came with no instructions about dry firing...what do you do, please, to safely dry fire it?

ANS: As you can see, the design of the firing pin is that that sharp end of it never touches anything but ammo's primer (the flat part of the pin -but not the tooth! -is hitting the barrel when chamber is empty, but the pin has such a big flat area, that pressure created must be low). After I figured this out (I also do not have ANY MANUFACTURING instruction regarding dry firing, so if you have problems with this my suggestion - do not follow), I have stopped using shot cartridge (it is difficult to put it in the chamber without magazine) with wooden-head (sharpened pin inside empty cartridge) and just started dry firing with nothing in the chamber. After a year or more I could see some traces of wear-tear on the backside of the firing pin - but I do not know if this is dry-firing or the actual one - which does not effect shooting. So I do dry-fire. I know some day wear-tear will increase, as with any tool. I will not be surprised, but now - my gun is my slave, not vice versa. By the way, I did not have a single misfire with both of my IZH's (I've shot at least 15,000 rounds with one of them). I did occasionally have shot cartridge (always first in magazine) stuck inside.

I can shed some light on the IZH35 pistol. First, Champion's Choice sells them complete with a scope mount for \$425.

I looked at one and in fact bought one sight unseen and returned it. In my opinion the grips are not good at all and you probably are going to have to get some after market Virtarbo's for it. Also, the finish is typical Baikal which means spartan. Some love it, I didn't. As far as shooting goes; reports I got secondhand from friends is that they are extremely accurate.

The gun must be pretty good because the new Walther KSP is the IZH35. Well, almost. Walther buys the IZH35 in parts from Baikal, refinished and fits and makes a couple of minor modifications including the slide release and the Grips and sells it through Champion's Choice (and probably others as well) for \$725. I really liked the Walther version and will eventually get one.

I've fondled the IZH and am considering one. Here's what I know so far.

They're made by Baikal (Bakahl? Bahkal?) in Russia. As with most things Russian, they are outwardly a tad rough, but built to take a lot of use. They have a barrel under a larger shroud. The grips are very rough, although the right general shape and adjustable. They have an interesting hammer that pivots DOWN from above. The triggers are adjustable in more ways than

my finger bends (sear engagement, pull weight, angles, distance, overtravel, etc.). Out of the box the triggers are not adjusted so they need quite a bit of tinkering to get to a shootable starting point. Instruction brochure is included, but a little, how you say in your country, transliterated (not originally in English). They come with 2 mags and a bunch of extra parts like an extra sear (!), hammer (!) springs and things. The open sights are very serviceable, and I don't notice any difference between them and expensive open sights at arm's length(w/43-year-old-eyes). I forgot to see if they are click adjustments, but I believe they are. A weaver scope rail is included and the shroud is drilled and tapped. A previous Lister with Russian living experience said that this is THE target pistol in Russia. The one I fondled was at Larry Leutenegger's shop, and he said when he was in the AMU, this was the gun the Russian teams all shot. He was setting up the trigger before delivering it to a customer, who later benched it and shot a one-hole group at 25 yds, I believe, with Eley Tenex AND Winchester T22. It doesn't seem to care if it's fed expensive stuff or Walmart stuff. Walther admits they buy parts from Baikal, finishes them nicely and sells them as their own. I saw theirs at Perry and it IS a lot purtier. Course, I'm not purty, so I'll probably go with the ugly duckling.

Most places are selling them for a tad over \$400. One problem is I believe you have to remove the shroud to clean the barrel from the breech, but that the shroud goes back in the same spot. I also heard a custom grip maker (forget who) needs the grip frame to match the grip holes - seems they aren't standardized on that kind of stuff. Another potential problem might be the lack of any factory support, but if the Bullseye smiths fiddle with it enough, they'll probably be able to cover us. This might be the poor man's Hammerli!

To clean the IZH you take off the lower, and upper covers. Then the slide and spring. There is a hole in the back of the grip frame so you can get the rod in to clean from the breach. The barrel is firmly attached to the frame. I don't think that a scope mounted on the top cover would work well as it is not firmly attached. Better to have a mount attached to the rather large solid rear sight assembly.

One shooter from Sweden mentioned that safety lever of the IZH irritates him (it is under the grip on the upper right side of the gun, - the trigger could not be released until this lever is pushed in when gun is taken into a hand and handle is squeezed). Two things I could say regarding the safety lever:

1. Don Nygord disables it in IZH's he sells. He is drilling a hole in the plate and in the frame and securing it in off position with a small screw. Whole thing is then hidden under the grips. I have not altered my guns and did not have any problems with range officers having my "cylinder closed" during competition. There is newer picture of the IZH35 at <http://www.eaacorp.com/target/izh35m.html> with part I do not have on mine - may be it is the cylinder open lever, as on the picture gun has its slide back?

2. I have found that right before the shot breaks, safety levers on both of my IZH's makes very light, but noticeable, movement. I use this - it helps me concentrate in slow fire, pulling the trigger until I feel this movement and hold it right there, while focusing on sights. Then just pull little more. The problem - some time I feel it, sometime - not. I told about this to my friend - he did not feel a thing with my guns. Try, may be it will work for you.

More about gun design: "Hammer ... pivots DOWN from above"

Many sport-guns manufacturers overtime tried to lower the barrel in their guns as it increases accuracy and reduces recoil. As they still have to fit UIT standards, they all went almost the same way: sacrifice barrel length for other parts and/or by moving magazine in front of the trigger guard. The last you can see in Hammerli 280 and Morini-CM, for instance. Result: H280 has 110mm (I believe, I remember correctly) and Morini-CM 22LR- 130mm of the barrel length (http://www.gehmann.com/morini_e.htm). I think few would argue with a statement: "with all other variables equal, shorter barrel result in less accuracy, especially on larger distances".

Shortening the barrel length puts much higher requirements on the barrel itself, as it should be much tighter by all means (to develop higher pressure, to insure more complete gunpowder incineration, i.e. to get high accuracy & consistency). This also inevitably makes models with shortened barrel to be more ammo sensitive, while its tighter specifications substantially increase cost of a gun. And no wonder that old Hammerly208s is more liked by shooters than new one ?H280s.

Until late 60th-mid 70th Russians shoot Margolin 0.22LR pistol in various modifications (grips, barrel length, compensators, weights, fire transferors for five silhouettes so on) almost exclusively. It was good but as well as SW41 and HighSt also 'aging' gun. So same guys who come-up with by that time already famous free pistol TOZ-35, I believe, were assigned to

make a replacement for the Margolin. Instead of doing of what most of gun manufacturers were and are doing - taking old straight forward design known from past century and improving (including models with magazine in front of the trigger) - they started from ground-up with same as others objectives:

1. To bring barrel down as much as it permitted by UIT (now ISSF) rules (rules are at <http://www.issf-shooting.com/homee.html>) As a result, the gun has minimized recoil which is very helpful in rapid/timed fire. Sure, recoil become even less when they made it for .22Short (IZH-34).
2. Maximize the sight-line-length to the limit of same rules. This is obvious. IZH35M has 220mm as much as it is permitted by UIT.
3. With barrel down to allowed minimum, maximize its length to the limit of the rules. Max allowed by UIT rules is 153mm. That is exactly the length of the IZh-35s barrel.
4. to make the gun 'universal' for all sport shooters, that must be easily INDIVIDUALLY adjusted (by the shooter him/herself). Therefore you have FIVE regulations of the IZH35 trigger instead of TWO on SW41. As

one shooter on the list said "The triggers are adjustable in more ways than my finger bends". To set it at factory?-than we have to standardize our hands

first! But sear itself is always set at factory at ~1.5mm (it is visible through small hole in the frame) and they do not recommend to go with less than that. I changed it once to about 1-0.7mm, then adjusted it back as gun become too sensitive for me.

5. Keep cost down but not for cost of mechanism/ barrel/ important parts.

To deal with ###1.2.3. - designers came up with moving all hammer-sear-trigger mechanism up and placing it horizontally. Even hammer itself was placed on top and falls down. This was truly revolutionary design and I do not see similarities with any other old or modern guns (one could say - nothing is new!) Most importantly, it let designers NOT TO SACRIFICE BARREL LENGTH FOR OTHER PARTS of the mechanism. I bet you will see more of this type of design coming from different manufacturers in a future, as IZH is really milestone in gun design.

Two years ago when I first found IZH35M here, in US, dealer asked \$1150 for it. About year ago it was ~\$675 at Nygord. Now more people import it and it is sold for ~\$400.

Just think of this: If absolutely clumsy Buck Mark.22 (primitive construction, aluminum frame and slide, chipping paint, soft, not dry-fire permitting, wiggling rear sight, grips - I would not even call them grips, you will spend ~\$160 for somehow acceptable...) today would be sold with all the parts that accompanied IZH35, how much it would be on shelves - \$600-700?

I like my IZH35. It is ugly and the finish is rough and the grip needed to be puttied to suit my hand. But, like the other Russian target guns I have shot, it is excellent in the factors that affect accuracy and reliability.

It is also extremely adjustable...you can set up the length of trigger, all the trigger stage factors, the sight picture front and rear, etc. None of the other guns you mention is adjustable...you shoot them as they come from the factory except for grips.

Mine is a really nice gun. It is absolutely flawless feeding, and it has a great trigger. Mine is a Nygord modified one with out the scope mount (I wanted it for an ISU gun). I have the factory grips, and they are pretty awful. I reeeeeeeeeeeally want the Morini grips as they are beautiful, and they fit my hand like a glove. (is this mixing metaphors??)

Hi, there have be a lot of posts on the russian gun. I have a few comments.

I have a question about the ones with a disabled grip safety. On checking the rule book it seems that makes the gun not legal for shooting at matches. It more or less states that you can not modify a guns safety to not work. I would say that by locking the grip safety in the pushed in position is modified. You would not do this on any 1911 like gun.

After shooting 2 different IZH's for a while I notice it does not have any problems I have had with other guns, not picky about ammo, very adjustable, shoots accurately. While people may like nice shiny and close fitting parts this gun does not need to be shiny. It needs a few areas to be cleaned, these are easy to see after a few sessions at the range. The bolt is fairly loose by design I think. It locks very tight but is loose in fit while cycling. Dirt won't jam it this way. Grips are a users choice. I think the grips that come with it are better than almost all stock grips most guns come with and these are easy to modify to your hand.

All in all I hope that not every body buys one of these as I feel I have an edge on you all by using this gun.

Just had a chance to shoot one of these little puppies and I was impressed. The group size was not as small as I would have liked but the recoil is almost straight back. With open sights I did not even notice it leaving the black. The other posts were right on when they said it felt a little rough. After a few hundred rounds a person should be able to go in and hone the rough spots out and make a really sweet gun.

Had a chance to try a IZH-35 at the range today. After reading some of the glowing reports on the list, I was excited to see and shoot this new model. My overall impression is that it needs a lot of handwork in finishing to come up to S&W 41 or HS smoothness and function. The Parkerized finish bleeds over on the rails and action parts, and it was a dry, un-oiled action. Felt like sandpaper, moving the slide. I suppose that you could polish and smooth this but, but I think it would take a lot of shooting to wear it smooth. Shooting was comfortable, and the impressive grips could be fitted to my hand with minimal alteration. While we didn't take the gun through extensive accuracy testing, I am confident that it will perform well. Held the 10 ring at 50 yards off a bag, once the ultradot was adjusted. Used CCI SV Blue label. Trigger was very heavy, two-stage, and I was not accustomed to it. Tried to adjust take-up and overtravel. Both screws are easy access from underneath. Screws were very tight fit, and I advise not using any screwdriver but the exact size, for the screw heads appear to be quite soft. Both functions were adjusted OK, and it seemed better. (Original take-up exceeded my old Ruger, seemed like 1/8-1/4 inch). We got that down to acceptable limit. Although I did not measure it, trigger weight was probably around 5 lbs. Could not adjust that, due to the scope mount rail, mentioned today on this list. (I don't remember seeing that weight adjustment in the instruction manual.) Overall, possibly a diamond in the rough. I was going to buy one, but will wait a while, hoping for an improved, more finished model.

The improved, finished model is the Walther KSP at several hundred dollars more. :) I see this gun as "you get what you pay for", knowing that it will take a little refining to make it just right. I've already lightened the trigger, adjusted the sear engagement, and done the take up adjustment as you described. Didn't cost me several hundred dollars to do it, and I'm no rocket scientist when it comes to things mechanical. If it has

more moving parts than a bowling ball, keep it the heck away from me! All kidding aside, I think it would make a great entry level gun for someone who has a little more to spend and isn't stuck like I was with buying a Ruger, which took a WHOLE lot more money to make shootable. Your comments on the finish are spot on. I'm too lazy to polish, so I'll just shoot it smooth! What are you shooting now? Just curious what you are comparing the gun to. I haven't shot any of the top flight guns, like the Hammerlis and Pardini's, so my comparisons aren't as valid as someone who has.

Just want to chime in one more time on the IZH-35.

After reading the recent post, I think I am very glad that I got a Nygord modified one. Some would look at the price of a Baikal one (I've heard between \$375 and \$415) and wonder why they should pay Nygord \$675 or Walther \$725 for the same gun.

Well here is why. This is a world class gun (engineering wise) and is well manufactured but is lacking the final fine tuning as it comes from the factory (this was expected to be done by the Russian shooting teams upon delivery). There were many postings months ago on this list about this gun and I distinctly remember that someone who shot a lot of Olympic competition said he spent most his career shooting against this gun which was aptly manned by Russian shooters. Now last I heard, the Russians have beat us up pretty bad in UIT competition the last 20 years or so.

My gun is spartan but shoots superb. I let Joe Chang, the Air Force national team captain, dry fire it once and he said the trigger was too light. Well I have official NRA weights and it will definitely lift 2 pounds (if you don't do it too fast). Thank Don Nygord for that. IMHO the trigger is better than my 1972 S&W 41.

The Morini grips make this gun. If you are looking at any UIT competition guns, you will soon realize that Morini grips make any gun Steyr, SAM, MORINI, etc. etc.. Well the Morini grips will add at least \$150 to \$170 to the cost of any gun. Russian shooters were expected to modify the factory grips on the IZH-35 to their own personal specifications.

Some one said the Walther KSP200 was not in the same class with such and such. Well I don't really know if that's true but I suspect it is not. This gun is an impressive piece of engineering and strong as a Russian tank. And it does shoot.

Seems to me that the Nygord or Walther guns are \$1000+ plus guns that you can steal in the \$700 dollar range or you can buy an unfinished one for cheap and finish it up yourself. You get what you pay for. In this case maybe more.

I picked up my 35M and I have some pretty strong first impressions. After shooting it for a week or so I will report back on the practical side of it. This is one rough finish. It is the "Evil Jim Kirk" to the S&W Model 41. It makes my Buckmark look like a showpiece. The exterior "finish" tore the cotton off the Q-tip, leading to a de-fuzzing session. Perhaps Outers will make an electronic de-fuzzing setup that we can homebrew.... It needs much cleaning, including finding and removing flashing debris from tapping operations. The trigger bar looks like it got whacked with a hammer at some point. As Don Nygord told me, the grips are designed for someone's hand, but nobody that I ever met. The rear knuckle of my thumb jams up into the top of the "anatomical" grip pretty hard. They did not specify which species' anatomy was used as a template, to be honest.

Overall I think that a working over by a good smith, especially someone like Don, who has experience with them, would make a huge difference. There is much friction between the trigger parts and the frame, and the slide and frame. These are not mirror smooth mating parts. Whoooooooo! My wife thought that I had been hitting the nitrous because I was giggling so hard!

Also, mine was shipped with a top-mounting scope base and the top shroud is drilled and tapped for it like a weaver base, not the curved one that mounts by the trigger guard. I guess someone is listening! I'll be using iron sights, but it is nice to know that it is there.

All told, I think that I love this gun! The trigger is nice as is and after some shooting I'll bet that it will be even better. Maybe I'm just a sucker for "potential"

GRIPS:

About grips ? some like them, some don't - it is really a matter of preference. Personally I like factory grips better than Morini (for this gun) from Don Nygord. Second thing to consider - it was always (there, in my Russian sport-club) believed that "one have to work with a gun in order to shoot well". I do not remember any good shooter back there that did not make himself pair of grips for his own gun. ("Good shooters" in this contest are, say, equivalent to Masters here, in US, all had individual guns, and even took them home). At some point sport gun-makers even started to supply some brand new guns with unfinished grips. You may know this seeing later days TOZ-35 - its grips were inleted blocks of walnut that's all. Take your time and curve to your fit. And I do think this is very important part of learning = shooting experience. Doing so, one could better understand how this or that position of the hand on a grip, and muscle tension here and there, does or does not work the way he/she want. I curved 3-4 pairs for my IZH35 too, after which I switched back to the original factory grips. Those I made were better fitted but all of them were more sensitive to hand swelling on hot and humid days. As I do not consider myself a natural shooter, I really have to learn it in a hard way, but my scores went up substantially since I started curving (got a trophy for 'best

improved of the year" in my club past spring, at winter league my average was ~275/300, this summer rose to ~285/300, with best score past week at 296/300 nmc) And if one think grips are bad, there is a good reason to still keep them: you will always have excuse for poor shooting (damn grips)!

I finally got up the nerve to modify the grips on the IZH today. They are too big even for my hands, and I had done some minor relieving of the thumb area, but not much else. I got out the dremel and made some finger grooves like in the pretty pictures I've seen. :) It came out better than I expected, which is to say I didn't screw them up too horribly. They look okay, and I really like the feel. I still need to take some off the left side of grip, which is pushing the gun off to the right. I took some off there, and it seems better, but I need to take even more. Take time to clean up the grip to frame areas. I'm still fighting with the trigger pull length screw. How Ivan managed to get that screw in there so damned tight with a scratch for a notch confounds me. Anyone have any solutions for getting the infernal thing out? Shot a 876 with it the first relay last night, and a 869 the second relay. I was dealing with some timing "issues" during rapid fire. Hopefully the grip mods will help in that respect. I later talked to another IZH shooter who had the same problem of the gun shifting after the first round, then having to deal with the distraction of adapting to that change. I still need to work on getting the first shot off, and not trying to dress up the last one. grumblegrumble.

The IZH air pistols have a properly fitted area where the palm rest mounts, i.e. the part that is difficult for the user to modify. However the front of the grip, where the fingers should wrap around, is just a square block that needs to be cut back to match the shooter's hand. The front left part is a square corner, no rounding at all. Per the usual Russian gun philosophy, this apparently was left for user modification on purpose, since the factory cannot possibly match the individual shooter. Is the IZH-35 grip similar? The unmodified air pistol grip is quite uncomfortable.

I understand that the ideal grip will have three flats in the front, one straight across and the others at 45 degrees on each side. The middle, frontmost flat should be a keystone shape, matching the insides of the middle segments of the shooter's fingers when held in gun-grip position. The corners that define the keystone should fit neatly into the creases of the shooter's fingers. Although you can make a similar shape with finger grooves, flat surfaces are easier to make and work just as well. I have never had a block IZH grip to start from, but my air pistol grip is similar to this and works well.

Your comments about the IZH-35M's grip are right on target. I just borrowed one to shoot in a match last night and getting a good grip on it was a real struggle (which my thumb lost). If it were my pistol, I'd definitely do some Dremel work on the grip.

I had some trouble with the magazines, too. They don't seat with a nice, firm "click", nor do they drop free when the magazine release button is pushed. Of course, I'm not planning to do a two second speed reload during a bullseye match, but having to jiggle the empty mag to get it out of the pistol each time gets annoying.

I still like the pistol, though. The one I tried had a better trigger than my S&W M41, even at a bit over 3 pounds versus 2.5 for the Smith, and I loved being able to adjust the trigger reach. Reliability was excellent, too; it functioned perfectly with CCI Standard Velocity, PMC Scoremaster, Winchester T22 and Russian Junior. My only failure to fire came on a rapid fire string when I didn't have the magazine fully seated.

I started the Dremel work last night. I may be adding some Bondo later, but the thumb rest area needed some heavy carving. The problem that I am having is that I use a hard grip and the gun was turning in my hand. Not what I had in mind. If I can't get it straightened out with the factory grips, I will start saving my pennies for the Morini grips.

The Magazines need some work as delivered. Mine had burrs on the rear lips, and one of them wouldn't feed at all. A few minutes with a jewelers' file and some break free helped. Now they both feed, but both mags leave two tiny burrs on the rim of the case. Champions' Choice lists them at \$25. They are made of some very heavy gauge metal, and the design doesn't seem to need much adjustment.

Look at the mag release and you will see that it is a spring-loaded catch, but doesn't really press the mag into the mag-well. Gravity assist is about all it uses for release. Try swabbing the mag-well and giving it a very light lube.

To confirm a few comments, the gun should ship with a tube of purple LockTite. The shroud screws and rear-blade screw are prone to loosening. And the screw slots are shallow and soft. When I get a chance (soon) I am going to mic them and verify the pitch and see if a hex replacement is available from a stock source.

I put about 150 rounds through it last night and it functioned well. I had the slide fail to return to battery twice. It seems like this will ease up with some mag tweaking, break-in, and consistent lube jobs. I stripped, cleaned and lubed it afterwards and will put another session in on it tonight. This is one gun where break-in appears to be a real issue. Thanks to the makers of Break Free it should be painless.

More as it happens, but right now my feeling is that I wish it came with a set of slab-sided mil style grips as a reference. This might be a nice winter project. The trigger is only as good as the stability of the grip.

Be careful around the top of the thumb area, you can get it pretty thin fairly quickly. Take a bunch off the bottom area, that will help relieve the pressure on the top of your thumb a bit. Try doing some finger grooves in the front strap area. I did, wow what a difference! Be careful there too. You can take a bunch off, but watch what you are doing. I just put the gun in my hand, ran a pencil between my fingers, and ground away. It came out pretty good. I also took a bunch off of the part that the heel of your hand pushes against on the left side of the grip. It was pushing the gun off to the right for me, now it is more in line. I may attack

this area more in the future. I think this is why it was twisting a little in my hand also. Let us know how you progress and what works for you. This is the first time I've done this, so I don't know if I'm doing it right or not. What kind of ammo are you using? I'm using CCI SV. Anyone have success with anything else? Thanks.

I played around with the trigger set at a little over two pounds. I upped it back to 3+pounds, for some reason it feels like I get more control. Anyway, I get home tonight and start in again with the Dremel on my grips again. All I can say is, don't be afraid. Get aggressive. Use a rough grit sanding drum. I can't believe the difference. I've got the gun actually pointing in the right direction now after attacking the left/back of the grip, and the "thumb pinch" is pretty much gone. Also, really grind yourself a channel along the top of the palm rest, where your pinky runs through to your wrist. It gives all that meat a place to go, and relieves side pressure. Play with extending the finger grooves a bit, it feels good. The gun just sits there, very steady. I'm probably running off at the mouth, but I've never had custom grips like this before. Anybody have experience doing stippling(sp)? What do you use? I like that look and want to try it. Thanks. Hope this info helps.

Same experience here with the grips. I shaved off much material on the thumb side, but kept close to the original shape. The only thin that I would change is to let the rear of the thumb shelf stay high, making it more U shaped. A dremel with carbide burrs worked best for me. I used the straight burr for trimming flat and convex areas, and a short rounded (egg-shaped) one

for the thumb area. Still a bit unsure how to get a tighter feel between the base of my palm and the backstrap area. Maybe a bit of removal along base of the right grip by the palm rest...

TRIGGER/ADJUSTMENTS:

Regarding dry firing again. I do a lot of it without any precautions. As I did not see any instructions, my confidence on permissibility of it comes from examining design of IZHs firing mechanism. Sharp end of the firing pin never touches the rim - anything but ammo's primer - in dry-firing it is hitting the barrel above the chamber with its big flat area and pressure

created there must be low (at least 10 times less than in any other rimfire judged by area of contact). After two years I could see some traces of wear-tear on the backside of the firing pin - but I do not know if this is dry firing or the actual one - which does not effect shooting so far. I still do not have a single misfire with both of my IZH's no matter what ammo I am using. One of them was shot by now with at least 30,000 rounds.

Before I go any further, a few cautions: Adjusting sear engagement incorrectly can make the pistol unsafe, and capable of firing unpredictably. After each adjustment, carefully test by dry firing, then with a single round under closely controlled range conditions to be certain the sear is still reliably catching the hammer.

How much creep you can take out of your second stage without making the gun unsafe depends on how square and true the parts are on your individual pistol.

Okay, now to the point. Remove the left grip panel. On the front of the rear sight housing, you will see a small setscrew. The screw is threaded into a black plastic cylinder to prevent the setting from changing during firing, and takes some force to turn. Be sure you have a properly fitting screw driver, or you will strip the slot quickly. Turning the screw in (tighten) reduces sear engagement. You will notice that a small, round window in the frame, just below the manual safety, gives you a view of the tip of this screw and shows how you are changing the resting position of the sear.

As you reduce sear engagement, you will notice the second stage getting shorter. It is a good idea to also hold the grip safety in while making this adjustment, so the sear does not bind against it. On one of the three pistols I've adjusted, the grip safety still functioned after the adjustment. On the other two, it no longer reached the sear.

I think you'll be impressed with the results.

For all those proud owners of the Russian clanker out there, here's something you can do to make the trigger a little smoother.

The secondary sear is not as smooth as we might like on some examples of this gun. Removing it for polishing has me stymied, so I thought a dab of grease might help the situation, but how to get it where it's needed?

It turns out that removing the rear sight provides a large window from above on the secondary sear, making lubrication easy.

To remove the rear sight:

This is easily done by first backing out the elevation screw until the sight lies flush with the top of the frame. Use the pin punch that came with the pistol to push out the pivot pin. Push from the end opposite the manual safety.

Remove the rear sight by sliding it to the rear, being sure to capture the spring and plunger on the left side with your thumb. This spring appears to be for the elevation screw detent, and is not a real "leaper," but might escape if you just yanked the sight off.

With the sear disengaged, a dab of grease on the working surface of the secondary sear (the one you can see in the small, round sear engagement window just below the manual safety) did a lot for my trigger action.

As with most pistols, I'd be careful not to trip the hammer without the slide in place, as it may overtravel and damage the pistol.

Have fun!

I followed the sear adjustment procedures and they worked great. I now have a trigger that rivals that of a HS Victor that I shoot. One thing I did not do was take it past the grip-safety deactivation point. I had a few doubles with it like this and all it took was a quarter turn back out and I had a working grip safety and a reliable and safe sear lockup. The effect on the trigger pull was negligible.

Combined with the pre- and post-travel adjustments and the trigger reach adjustment it should be a piece of cake to suit just about anyone's preferences. The grips are an other matter, but such is life...

Don Nygord does a work over on them that includes a trigger job, squaring the sights, adding a last-shot slide hold back, installing a set screw to hold the grip safety in so it doesn't pinch the web on your thumb, and installs the Morini grips. It may involve more but I don't think so. This is \$675 compared to \$400 for the bare gun. I talked with him about this before I

ordered mine. I decided to hold off until I had some experience with it as it comes from the factory. I should have it this week. I will try to work out something with Don if it turns out that I can't live without the upgrade.

Otherwise, Larry Leutenegger has been mentioned, and Ed Masaki seem to know his way around about anything. Are you thinking about basic work or something more exotic?

The deal on the price is that if you know a FFL holder who won't mark it up, the wholesale is around \$330, so figure in shipping and that is what you could get it for.

Spent some of the day tuning the trigger. No polishing or anything exotic, just adjusting the sear screw, the take up and trigger stop. Wow. A couple of hours (I was doing other things too) work makes a huge

difference in what I thought was a pretty good trigger to begin with. Make sure you get the right sized screw drivers so you don't damage the screw heads, and do things a little at a time. The screws are "painted" in, so be patient until it breaks loose. Don't force things. You will be rewarded with a great trigger pull. I have mine down to a hair over 2.5 pounds, may make it a little heavier depending on how the next match goes. All the adjustments except for the trigger weight are pretty easy to get to. I will be drilling a hole in the scope rail, but this one will benefit from the hex head screw so you can actually get to it without the scope being in the way. I think one person commented on how the pistol was left to be adjusted by the individual shooter, they were spot on in their assessment. Worth the time and effort. Now I just need to work on the grips. Does anyone have the Morini's and how do you like them? I will break out the dremel and see what I can do. The grips are ample enough that I don't think I have to worry about taking too much material off.

One discovery may merit inclusion on your IZH page, with the obligatory "I don't recommend anyone do anything, and if you do, it's at your own risk" disclaimer.

I've made the trigger on my IZH very nice by adjusting the sear engagement screw until there's virtually no creep. I've fired about 100 rounds with it this way with no difficulties. However, this does have the unintended side effect of disabling the grip safety. The grip safety has a finger which, at rest, captures the sear and prevents it from rotating out of engagement with the hammer. Adjusting the sear engagement screw alters the resting position of the sear. Sufficient adjustment will change the resting position of the sear so that it is beyond the reach of the grip safety finger intended to capture it.

The result is that you can have a creepless trigger, or a functioning grip safety. Pick one. It may be possible to modify the parts for the new sear position, but it would mean fearlessly whacking pins out and really getting into the works.

In reference to your question on the adjustment screws. OK First mine is a stock model not a modified one. Just got done putting a few hundred rounds through it. Did my adjustments Wednesday night after the match. Didn't have a big problem getting them loose here's what I did. Gun apart. Bottle of break free in one hand green tooth brush in other. Oh didn't use and don't recommend using those little tiny electronic screwdrivers used good solid b-square gunsmith screwdriver bits. Apply break free top and bottom of screw. Scrub with brush. Work screw with (correct size) screwdriver (carefully) these screws are super soft. Work it back and forth a little, back it out some Oil and brush again you'll see the locktite coming off, back it out some more Oil on top and bottom again. top to get it into the threads. A little movement at a time Backing it out to get some oil into the threads and some of that locktite out of the screw threads. Then work it back in. Screws are super soft work slowly.

Bad news on the length pull. At least on my gun. Couldn't get all the length out of it that I wanted to. If you screw it in too far trigger doesn't want to reset. You'll see what I mean when you adjust yours. Over pull just keep cranking that one in when you get it free there's a lot of adjustment to take out, took quite a few turns. Got the trigger pull down to 2 pounds plus a few ounces just to make sure I was over feels pretty

good. Seems like the more you play with the screws the better it feels. Took about an hour counting freeing the screws take your time.

SHROUD SCREWS:

I have been having trouble keeping my shroud tight. The screws vibrate loose with shooting. Since my dot is mounted on a rail mounted on the shroud... loose shroud is really (really) bad!

I'm going to use the removable loktite when I have time to clean the gun (one last time for a long while), loktite the screws in, and resight the gun before .22 league night. Those screws are soft, too. I'm going to eventually replace them with socket head flared screws.

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I was so frustrated, I almost decided to shoot iron sights! However, I really like the dot. But the IZH is a good shooter with iron sights, no doubt.

If you contact MSC at 1-800-645-7270 with the correct size you should be able to get them for about 13.00 a 100.

The correct size for the shroud screws is 4mm-0.7 thread x 8mm long.

I found a good way to tighten up that loose bottom shroud on the izh 35m .

Remove the two pins that hold the pushbutton.

Drill a #7 hole thru the button and tap to 1/4 -20

Put it back together and screw a 1/4-20 set screw 3/8 long screw in and jack the button to tighten the shroud. It takes about 5 Min to complete the job.

I think any loose parts on a gun causes harmonic vibrations and causes inaccuracy

I have found a source for hex (allen) head screws to replace the soft straight-blade original screws that secure the IZH upper shroud. It is possible to tighten them much more securely than the straight-blade screws, and not use Loctite.

DJ Precision sells a screw set for the IZH shroud that includes 3 hex head screws, wrench, and shipping for \$4.25.

The address is: DJ Precision

306 S. Prindle

Arlington Heights IL 60004

E-Mail: djprecision@mail.com

[2.28.99]

I am one of those IZH users that can't believe that the darn upper shroud screws keep coming loose. The good news is that the sights are independent of the shroud. Bad news is that a red dot wouldn't be. I use iron sights right now, so the only problem is that during a match I will get distracted by having a screw loose. yeah, you know what I mean.

The screws are 4mm - 0.7 pitch x 8mm long. see:

http://www.me.mtu.edu/classhandouts/proe/libs/basic/39_machi.htm

for dimensions.

I picked up a three pack of phillips flat head screws at BigOrangeMoneyPit home improvement store. 39 cents. They are zinc screws, but worth keeping a set around in case you lose one at a bad time. I am looking for a source for them in black steel with allen-key slots. I found a source for them (<http://www.barnhillbolt.com>) in stainless at 21.28 per 100 (2.5mm hex key).

Just a quick "heads up" to IZH35 users. I had a few doubles while practicing the other day. I am sure that it was the firing pin, which is not spring loaded and was full of grit. It would barely move at all when I checked it. After I flushed the firing pin assy thouroughly and gave it a light lube it moves freely in its hole. I'm pretty sure that a few more cleanings like

that and it will be much better. Just another example of how they come out of the box. Conversely, the trigger group arrived clean and seems to stay clean.

If it is very gritty you can use the factory supplied drift pin to drive out the firing pin retainer pin (bottom to top). The firing pin will drop right out and you can get all of the crud out. Observe the proper orientation of the pin and be sure to drive the retainer slightly below the top of the bolt.

OTHER MAINTENANCE CONCERNS:

Wow. I have no idea what Leutenegger did to my IZH... he didn't charge me anything much for the set-up- but the grip seems to fit me OK, and I have medium sized hands. I get a nice natural point. I expect variation in the grips is very extreme, and mine just happen to be real good. My clips are real nice, too. I wonder if they came that way, or Larry just fixed them

real quick.

My front shroud keeps vibrating loose-- I'm going to loktite it. I'm going to try to find the right metric hex-head tapered screws for the shroud. Maybe they are so weird I'll just be careful with the soft screws supplied.

As for ammo, I'm going to just keep buying CCI SV, as my Chinese Olympia prefers it, and I like the yellow plastic box. But I got a wide range of stuff to feed the IZH, including some Peters brand, and Remington, Remington Subsonic, CCI pistol match, that expensive Gold stuff... without a ransom rest, they all seemed to shoot about the same size ragged holes.

I just saw a long barrel Trailside at the local shop for \$385, and after my shroud working loose for the second time, that dovetail on the barrel looks better and better. Nah. For all it's rough edges, I'd rather have Russian steel than Swiss plastic.

I don't think that there really is a break in procedure for .22s. I would just make sure it's lubed (play with the slide, look for contact points), make sure the firing pin moves freely, and lock tite the shroud screws. Congrats, you'll be happy. I have heard of people having doubling with PMC Scoremaster ammo, so if you don't have a huge supply of it, don't worry. I

use CCI Standard and it works great. If you have any specific questions, ask away. I think we have a fairly decent info base built up now.

A couple of other things. (A)The screw size on the trigger pull length is 3mm, not sure on the length of the screw. I replaced mine with a stainless phillips head, works great. (B)If you are not planning on using the iron sights, you can jack up the rear base, then turn the rear sight blade upside down. This protects the edges and notches from contact damage. (C) Don't hesitate to drill a hole through the scope base so you

can get to the trigger weight screw. You still have to remove the scope, but you can lock tite the base so it won't come loose.

Take it down and thoroughly clean it. Blow it out and lightly lube it. Then shoot hell out of it with a decent ammo (ScoreMaster is good in my mind) and it will smooth out nicely. Some mechanics will never be good - the hold-open latch, for example. But they are inconvenience, not wreckers. DO NOT Loctite the shroud screws, however; you will need to remove the shroud periodically and I recommend that you get in the habit of checking the screws and tightening them as necessary. Some work loose very quickly; others seem to stay tight longer. Apparently, each individual pistol has its own quirks (why not? Don't BE shooters each have THEIR individual quirks?).

IMHO, you will be breaking it in for a while. I recommend that you field strip it right away and give it a good flushing with something like gun scrubber. Even WD40 is fine because you are looking to get the black oxide coating out of it, along with a surprisingly large quantity of small metal chips. Keep it well lubed for shooting and do the strip-flush-lube dance often. I found a few places where metal burrs and chips needed to be nudged out with a toothpick. Use a magnifier and a good light.

The firing pin is in the block at the rear of the slide. flush and lube it every time you strip it. There is no return spring and if the firing pin binds up it can cause double-fires.

Lube the top of the slide where it hits the hammer to recock, and learn where the friction points for the slide are. It can be confusing since there is a top and bottom shroud with flat bearing surfaces.

After a few hundred rounds and a few cleanings you should be home free. Best wishes to you and your new IZH35M.

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- > checking the screws and tightening them as necessary. Some work
- > loose very quickly; others seem to stay tight longer.

I have not used Loktite on them yet, but they do work loose very quickly. If you do use a thread locker, use one that is for easy disassembly, like Loktite 222. Don't use the red stuff or you will be making a trip to the smithy for some expensive replacement work, or you won't be cleaning it for a while. Those screw slots won't take the torque. If you use a good

driver, and plenty of down pressure, you can get some good torque on them.

I have heard that you could use clear fingernail polish as a lightweight locking alternative. Any truth to this?

There is some stuff called VIBRATITE that works good for a lot of things that you don't want to lock up. It is at industrial fastener places. The label has Removable and reusable on it. I think Loctite, Permatex, those guys have a color variety that is removable-adjustable too. I use Vibratite on Remington trigger adjuster screws all the time.

Nail Polish works, but the ability to disassemble the parts varies depending on the thread fit and tapping quality. It is a cheap substitute for Loctite in a pinch, and I know that my dad uses it to lock threads on some of his stuff. It should come out with acetone, so you can reverse the process.

Yes, I've used clear nail polish on threads and it works fairly well. You need to slop it on pretty good as it is not quite as effective as Blue Loctite. Also, unlike Blue Loctite, nail polish can be broken down with oils and cleaning solvents.

I use clear nail polish on the threads of my scope rings and other light-duty fastening needs.

Be warned, I've taken a lot of good-hearted ribbing for carrying around a bottle of clear nail polish in my gun box...

SCOPE MOUNTING:

It appears that someone at EAA or Russia have been listening. Check out the new IZH-35 scope mount.

<http://www.eaacorp.com/target/izh35m.html>

Mine came through with the top-mount rail, about 2 weeks ago. I said the same thing here - Someone must be listening!

I'm using the fine iron sights so it isn't an issue, but the rail is plenty beefy and the top shroud is drilled and tapped nicely. BTW, I like the new picture better, you can see the funky topside hammer and cocking indicator!

Q: I am a little fuzzy on how the scope mount screwed to the top shroud works well. My IZH, which I bought to use with irons dose not have a scope mount. The top shroud on mine has quite a bit of side to side play. I would not think it would make a good place to mount a scope. I may want to scope mine later so I am interested in how it works.

You shouldn't have the side to side play. Tighten up those shroud screws, the two front and one rear on the right (ejection port) side of the pistol. Are you sure you didn't get a scope mount? Check inside your case.

MISC:

Several months ago there was a thread on EAA customer service (or lack thereof). I had to tell you all of my experience; I had to send a Witness to them with sight problems. (Not enough elevation adjustment). I sent the gun and the 40 S&W conversion kit to EAA, and a week later had the gun back with both slides fitted with their copy of the Bomar rear sight. All for the cost of a phone call, and UPS shipping one way. Maybe their outlook on customer has improved.
