Arredondo’s Extended Magazine Base Pads
For when you REALLY want to get loaded!

By Will Cox

When should you pay a third more for an extended magazine base pad than for the magazine itself? In my opinion, when it’s one made by Arredondo for Glocks, Smith M&Ps and Springfield XDs like the ones offered in The Blue Press (page 59). In the case of the Glock 17, these give you a whopping six extra rounds on tap, while only adding a little over an inch in length. After some careful consideration, I decided to give these a try in the (hopefully, really unlikely) event that I might become engaged in a fight that requires more than the 17 rounds in an unaltered Model 17 magazine.

Hey, it could happen; and if it ever does, then I would have to consider that I was in one hell of a fight and potentially need those extra rounds. I know guys who carry hi-cap pistols with NO EXTRA MAGAZINES, relying on the 15 or so in the gun to see them through. This strikes me as short sighted for at least two reasons. The first is that while “statistics” say that a pistol fight (especially in civilian self-defense scenarios) is likely to only entail three to five rounds total, yours might just be the one exception that disproves the rule. One hypothetical; your car breaks down on a lonely stretch of road late at night and a carload of gang-bangers stop to render “aid” in the form of robbery or worse. In a situation like this, there’s no such thing as having too much ammo in your gun.

Another reason to carry at least one spare mag is in the event of a feedway stoppage; where current doctrine has the shooter stripping out the fouled magazine (i.e. the top round sticks partially out of the lips) and, rather than try to fix it one handed while under fire, the bad mag is simply jettisoned and a fresh one inserted. Since the shooter is now way behind the curve (assuming he or she has survived this long), when this unlucky soul slaps in that fresh magazine it only makes sense that it contains as many rounds as possible. By now the bad guy(s) have probably had time to seek better cover or gain other advantage. Also, in the case of a shooter with large hands and a compact pistol such as the Glock 19, the extra inch or so of length provided by the extension makes seating more positive.

In either of the above scenarios – naturally – I want the best magazine extension available, and I believe that the folks at Arredondo have given us just that. While there are less-expensive extensions available they’re usually made from molded plastic, which is not as tough as the machined, glass-filled nylon from which the Arredondo unit is made. Also, the molded extensions I have seen don’t provide as many extra rounds (only three 9mm). The Arredondo adds six.

Again, after careful consideration, with the way things seem to be going in the world lately, I decided to upgrade the capacity of all of my carry guns (all of which happen to be Glocks except for my five-shot J-Frame revolver). After some research it became clear that the Arredondo extensions were what I wanted, so I procured a couple for my Glock 21, 19, and 17. I placed my order with Arredondo, which arrived in no time. Assembly proved to be easy, although

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However, due to unforeseen circumstances this period turned out to be more like 90 days, which was enough time for the one extra round I had managed to stuff into one of the Model 17 mags to really get stuck to the one next to it and cause a stoppage. The last two rounds were so firmly wedged it took a pair of needle-nosed pliers and some cussing to dislodge them. I emphasize that this was my own fault and I did not experience any problems whatsoever with any of the units in my testing after that.

The only downside I can think of is that they add a bit of length to the magazine (just over an inch on a 9mm) making your gun slightly more likely to print. If this is a concern, simply carry a standard magazine in the gun and one(s) with an Arredondo extension as your spare(s). Also, they make the mag a bit top heavy when carried upside down in a mag pouch, so if yours has an adjustable tension screw (which it should), an extra turn or two may be in order.

Discounting a feedway stoppage as described above, the chances of needing to reload an 18-round pistol in a fight borders on the far side of probability. If that should happen, it’s likely that someone needs a little work on his or her marksmanship skills. But, if you or I ever find ourselves on the wrong side of the probability curve, and are being escorted off of the shoulder of that lonely stretch of road by a bunch of badguys for God knows what, the extra half-dozen rounds or so provided by an Arredondo extension might just be the ones that make all the difference. As Mel Gibson said to Danny Glover in the original “Lethal Weapon” movie, “It’s your ass, Cochise.”