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Kimber's Compact Aegis Ultra II 9mm

By Duane Thomas

In every article I've ever read about the gun under review here, Kimber's smallest 9mm 1911, the writer has simply referred to it as the "Kimber Aegis." Like it's the only gun by that name. Untrue. There are actually three different guns within the Kimber Aegis family. The Aegis Custom II is a full-sized 1911 with 5" barrel. (In Kimber-speak, the "II" designation means a gun features Kimber's grip-safety operated firing pin lock.) The Aegis Pro II is a 4" barreled version with full-length grip, the equivalent to a Commander. Finally, the full name of the gun everyone thinks of when they hear "Aegis" is the 3" barreled Kimber Aegis Ultra II.

Whatever the barrel length and overall size of the gun, when Kimber calls a gun an "Aegis" it will have certain features: a de-spurred hammer, smooth magazine release button, little bitty thumb safety, and slimline grips. Most importantly, an Aegis will always have an aluminum-alloy frame and be a 9mm.

The Kimber Aegis Ultra II (henceforth referred to as the Aegis Ultra) is a pretty darn small and lightweight 1911. According to my postal scale, it weighs 25.9 ounces unloaded with empty magazine in place.

Sights are Kimber's fixed Tactical Wedge design, reminiscent in shape of the Novak LoMount with grasping grooves on the sides to provide more purchase when racking the slide. Tritium 3-dots are installed by Meproflight – and a fine job they do; the dots are bright and well defined in low light.

The Aegis Ultra barrel locks directly into the slide (no bushing) and has a one-piece ramp and throat. The frontstrap is checkered 30 lpi; the main-spring housing goes 24 lpi.

With its short barrel and slide, and correspondingly short recoil spring tunnel, the Aegis Ultra must use a fairly complex system of two guide rods, and two springs, articulating within and around each other, *de facto* fitting a much

longer recoil spring into that short space.

The Aegis series in general has several features that, in my opinion, exist to provide what I call "the illusion of greater concealability." Thus, the thumb safety is a tiny nub (that worked amazingly well in draw and fire, by the way). The hammer spur has been lopped off; what remains is vaguely triangular. This puts an Aegis in the somewhat silly position of having a beavertail grip safety protruding considerably further to the rear than the de-spurred hammer. So how does that make the gun "more concealable?" The grip safety is slotted for the non-existent hammer spur.

The mag-release button has been shortened and smoothed and beveled at front. I found the Aegis Ultra's mag button quite stiff in operation. Maybe it's the button's short overall length, or its slick surface, or maybe I've just been spoiled by Wolff aftermarket competition mag catch springs in my own 1911s.

Grips are thin with slots cut into the wood to increase purchase. According to Dwight Van Brunt at Kimber, the technically correct description is "slim rosewood ball-milled grips." Finish is two-tone; the carbon-steel slide sports black KimPro II phenolic-resin coating, which is quite rust resistant; the frame is silver anodized aluminum alloy.

The trigger breaks at 4.25 pounds. The trigger itself is "long." Takeup goes about one-eighth inch, and is fairly stiff. There's absolutely no creep or perceptible overtravel.

The Ultra grip frame is approximately one-half inch shorter than on the Custom and Pro. Magazines are stainless-steel nine-rounders that have been cut down to fit the short grip frame, in the process chopping capacity to eight rounds. Checking these magazines' visual appearance and overall quality, I'd be amazed if they weren't OEM'ed by Metalform. A quick call to Metalform verified that is indeed the case.

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