By John Marshall

The Model 10B Police Shotgun, once made by the High Standard Manufacturing Corporation in Hamden, Connecticut, was an arm that was ahead of its time. Imperfect in its execution, it still could be the model for a similar but improved gun. It was a milestone in combat/police shotguns, and it’s acknowledged as being unique. Once sold only to police departments, an example in good condition is still a compact and fearsome weapon that can be found now and then as a used gun. The story of this classic is an interesting one.

Sometime around 1957, a Santa Monica, California police sergeant conceived the idea of a “bull pup” entry shotgun that would be ideal for SWAT and other tactical units. Sergeant Alfred Crouch’s design would be short and could be fired one-handed if necessary. Bull pup firearms locate the receiver of the gun back where the stock would normally be, making a standard-length barrel combined with a much shorter overall length feasible. Crouch crafted a prototype using a highly modified Remington 11-48 semiautomatic shotgun. A handmade aluminum stock was used, and the trigger in the pistol grip was linked to the firing mechanism of the original shotgun by a long sliding bar.

Around 1965, Crouch was successful in selling his idea to High Standard. The company went to work to adopt his concept and built it around their 12-gauge Flite King shotgun, an already proven and generally reliable semiauto sporting arm.

High Standard’s first effort was the Model 10A. To make it, the Flite King’s stock was eliminated and a patented three-piece plastic shell was fitted around the receiver and about half of the barrel. The trigger assembly was relocated forward, incorporated into a pistol grip. A rod connected the trigger to the firing mechanism. There was but one cocking handle, located on the reciprocating bolt at the rear on the right side. A rotating buttplate was fitted on the backside of the encased receiver. The overall length was just 26 inches. The plastic shell incorporated an integral flashlight in the fixed carrying handle, with crude front and rear sights on top. The barrel was 18.1” in length and had an open cylinder bore. The gun could be fired one-handed, with the buttplate rotated horizontally and placed in the crook of the arm. The magazine held four rounds, making it a five-shot weapon with one in the chamber. Instructions molded into the side of the plastic stock warned that firing should not be attempted from the left shoulder (otherwise the ejected shell would hit the firer in the face). Another important warning on the gun indicated that only 2-3/4” magnum or high-base loads should be used. This first effort was offered to police departments around 1967.

Feedback from police departments that purchased the new shotgun showed that some improvements would be necessary to make it more acceptable. First, the fixed carrying handle located high above the plane of the barrel made the arm more bulky than desired. The sighting radius was short, and the fixed flashlight was difficult to replace if it malfunctioned. Also, the cocking handle was in an awkward location to be manipulated by the left hand when the right hand was holding the gun by the pistol grip. Accordingly, High Standard went to work to improve on the arm. The result was the Model 10B, introduced in 1970.

The improved Model 10B had a folding carrying handle, similar in concept to that used on the FN-FAL battle rifle. A separate Kel-Lite flashlight incorporating a mounting bar could be affixed to left of the rear sight base. This gave a lower sight-