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cc: E.G. Larson  
E.S. McCawley

*(A)*

April 22, 1963

Mr. Elmer Keith  
Shooting Editor  
GUNS & AMMO Magazine  
Salmon, Idaho

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XP-100  
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Dear Elmer:

Thank you for your fine letter concerning the Model XP-100 Pistol. I agree with you that it will shoot a tighter group than any living man can hold it without a shoulder stock, and certainly was in hope that some of the finer pistol shots in the country would test their abilities and this pistol to see what could be accomplished. We have seen 5-shot groups at 100 yds. that would not cover a half inch. These of course were machine rest groups, and those fired by hand with a scope and bench support were in the neighborhood of about 5/8". I believe that Les Bowman had a little better luck than that and is getting around 1/2".

In some respects I guess you could call this a "hoss pistol". I noticed in one of the articles of Charles Askins that he calls it a hoss pistol, so perhaps I will be branded from now on as being "Hoss Leek"; however, I don't mind as long as the pistol sells well and everyone likes it. We are getting orders by the thousands, surprising as it may seem. Of course, people like yourself from out in the western section of the country I don't believe would be surprised in hearing such a magnitude of orders. For example, I had a call from a fellow in one of the Finger Lake areas the other day who had to travel all the way to Vermont in order to purchase one of these pistols.

I am glad that Bushnell's combination scope and mount worked successfully for you and that you did not have to alter the mount to get good groups. I was trying out the pistol not too long ago with some of the Remington factory ammunition and had a lucky shot at an army steel helmet at 300 yds. Believe it or not, the helmet was penetrated with a varmint bullet although the bullet opened up after making its first entry and then splattered around inside the helmet on the second contact. These helmets are so hard that it is impossible to file them or cut them with a hacksaw so you can imagine the effect of the impact load at that range.

Elmer Keith

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Tom Frye's address is 2001 Plaza Drive, Billings, Montana. This will probably eliminate any letters being returned that have been sent to him.

I hadn't realized that Charlie Askins was hunting polar bear and that is probably why I have not heard from him. I expect that his hunt in Africa was quite successful. I hope by this time he has had the opportunity to try the XP-100 offhand. I have a lot of respect for his offhand shooting ability and hope that he won't let me down in this area.

I still haven't had any luck at bettering my scores at 50 yds. over the couple 98s I had but probably this summer when it gets a little warmer I might break a possible. I'll send a copy of this letter to Earl Larson concerning the proposed new 41 Magnum that you discussed with him at the NRA show and he can carry on the investigation from his end. Sorry that I missed seeing you at the show, Elmer, but work was a little too pressing here and I sent one of my designers, Charles Morse, to cover the show for me. The information that we got back concerning this show, from several sources, indicated the XP-100 pistol to be the most outstanding item of interest.

Thanks again for your fine letter and your excellent work in shooting our guns for us. Am looking forward to seeing you next summer and hope that you and Mrs. Keith are in the best of health.

Regards,

W. E. Leek  
Manager- Firearms Design & Development  
Ilion Research Division

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