



## STI Rogue 9mm

*A Gun Test by Steve Clark (Rio Vista Slim, [E-mail Steve](#))*



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Go!



On January 14, 2008, STI International announced the introduction of a new single stack 1911 pistol. The STI Rogue joins a growing line-up of guns produced by the Georgetown, Texas based manufacturer. Several of STI's pistols have been reviewed in the M1911.ORG E-zine, but the Rogue represents a departure from those weapons previously featured in these pages.

While a 1911 can be a dependable self-defense pistol, the 5" barrel and frame of a full size gun offers some challenges to those who choose to carry it concealed. The Commander-sized pistols represent only a three quarter inch reduction in barrel size, while retaining the Government model size frame. Some manufacturers utilize a four inch barrel on their "Commander" guns, but the other basic dimensions remain constant. The Officer Size frame alleviates some of the issues involved with the grip area of the 1911, but at a cost of magazine capacity. Finally, the ultra small pistols reduce the barrel to 3 inches, but

sometimes to the detriment of functional reliability.

STI successfully addressed these concerns with the introduction of the Escort and Guardian model pistols. The Rogue takes the innovations of the Escort and Guardian to a different level. This test/review will cover those changes, and as objectively as possible, see whether STI has indeed taken this new concealed carry gun to a higher plane.

## The Pistol

The Rogue was delivered to Downing's Guns and Family Treasures in Cleburne, Texas about a month and a half before I was expecting it. Conversations with Jay Dunlap at STI International had prepared me for an April arrival date, so I was surprised when Todd Downing called to say the pistol had come in.

Todd and his dad had gotten the first look at the new gun, and as Mr. Downing brought the pistol from his safe, his smile told me volumes about his initial impression of the weapon.

As with all STI guns I have reviewed, the Rogue comes packaged in a black, hard plastic clamshell case, lined with egg crate foam. Within the case is the pistol (wrapped in a sealed plastic bag), one 7 round Metalform magazine, the take-down tool for the Recoil Master guide rod/spring assembly, a hex head tool, and the owner's manual.

The STI Rogue is a visually striking pistol. A few distinctive features worth noting are the integral front and rear sights, the Hi-Power like recessed area toward the front of the slide, a lack of garishly large roll marks, the blue carbon steel slide over a DuraCoated aluminum frame, and slim cocobolo wood stocks.

Eight slanted cocking serrations are present at the rear of the hexagonal-shaped slide. The left side flat area of the slide sports a small "STI" logo, and the right side has "Rogue" roll marked below the ejection port. The previously mentioned integral sights provide a very small sight picture, but are more than adequate for the pistol's self-defense role. (See Firing Line)

The barrel is STI's fully supported, 3 inch ramped modified cone barrel. The accompanying photographs show the barrel is lightly beveled at the muzzle, and presents an aesthetically pleasing contrast with the muzzle end of the slide.

STI's corporate web site states the frame is that company's LS frame, with a stippled front strap and under-cut trigger guard. This LS frame is actually 3/8" shorter than an Officer frame. Chris Schirmer (STI Customer Service) stated the Rogue is the same size as the former Detonics pistol. While I am familiar with the Detonics, I have no personal experience with that pistol, so other comparisons had to be made.

Category	STI Rogue	Colt New Agent
Width of slide Front	.83" (21mm)	.83" (21mm)
Width of slide Rear	.88" (22.45mm)	.89" (22.72mm)
Top of slide to Dust Cover	1.47" (37.40mm)	1.53" (39mm)
Trigger Reach	2.77" (70.25mm)	2.85" (72.61mm)
Grip Thickness	1.10" (27.95mm)	1.12" (28.5mm)

*Measured dimensional differences between the STI Rogue and Colt New Agent.*



These two photographs show relative size between the STI Rogue and a Colt Model 07810D New Agent, while being held in my admittedly small hand.



*Comparing the STI Rogue and the Colt New Agent readily shows the difference in size between the two pistols.*

The abbreviated main spring housing is flat, and checkered at 25 lines per inch. The seam where the MSH meets the frame is flawless. Slim-cut cocobolo stock panels grace the grip area of the gun. These stocks feature a double diamond pattern, with the STI logo in the middle of each panel

The high rise beavertail grip safety, trigger, slide stop, magazine release, and pins are all finished in the same blue/black as the slide. This, to me, represents a research and development team that realizes aesthetics are every bit as important as function.

Here are several photographs illustrating the above mentioned features, with commentary added as needed.



*This photograph shows the left side of the Rogue slide, with the STI logo roll mark.*



*This is the right side slide photograph, featuring the "Rogue" roll mark.*



*This view, from the rear of the slide, shows the integral rear sight, the back of the ejector, and the fine fitting present on this end of the pistol.*



*Taken from the pistol's right side, this photograph depicts the Rogue integral front sight.*



*The extended single-side thumb safety is perfectly matched to the plunger pin and housing.*



*Several of the pistol's features are highlighted in this photograph of the right side of the weapon. Note the slanted cocking serrations, the double diamond cocobolo stocks, and black hammer, sear, and thumb safety pins.*



*The recessed area of the slide is highlighted in this photograph. Reminiscent of the Browning Hi-Power, this feature adds an air of authority to the pistol's profile.*



*Photograph taken from the muzzle end of the pistol, showing the beveled modified cone barrel and end of the Recoil Master Guide Rod assembly.*



*The STI Long Curved Trigger and smooth magazine release are featured in this photograph. The trigger face is a glass filled nylon polymer with over travel adjustment screw. Twenty repetitions with a Lyman Digital Trigger Pull Gauge yielded an average sear release at 4 lbs. 15 ounces (260gms.). Approximately 3mm of take-up led to a crisp release.*



*The flat checkered polymer mainspring housing is matched perfectly with the rear of the Dura Coated frame.*



*The stippling on the front strap of the Rogue is identified by the company as STippling. Cute names aside, this feature has been present on the last three STI test pistols, and affords a solid, no-slip grasp when firing the handgun.*



*Macro-photograph shows the detail on the thin STI cocobolo stocks.*



*The Metalform magazine locked in place. Notice the slight beveled magazine opening at the bottom of the gun.*

## Disassembly

The STI Rogue is field stripped in the exact way as the previously tested STI Escort and STI Guardian. Make absolutely certain the pistol is **TOTALLY** unloaded, with the magazine removed. Align the slide stop with the corresponding take-down notch in the slide, and remove the slide stop. Being careful to

secure the Recoil Master spring and guide rod assembly, remove the slide from the frame. Push on the back of the Recoil Master guide rod, toward the muzzle, exposing the front of the guide rod through the muzzle area of the slide. Affix the take-down tool over the guide rod, capturing the springs. The Recoil Master guide rod assembly is then removed toward the rear of the slide. The link pin on the barrel will have to be moved toward the breech end of the barrel to remove the guide rod assembly. Push the link pin forward, and remove the barrel from the slide by pushing the barrel toward the muzzle end of the slide. Further disassembly is not required for periodic maintenance, but the rest of the gun can be detail stripped in the manner of all 1911 type pistols. The STI Rogue does not have any type of firing pin safety, which is a good thing, in my humble opinion.



*The STI Rogue in slide lock.*



*The STI Rogue field stripped.*

Reassembly is in reverse order, being mindful to secure the Recoil Master guide rod assembly while it is in the slide. Allow the link pin to move to the "down" position (as viewed from the top of the slide) to help secure the guide rod, and place the link pin hole in the proper position for insertion of the slide stop. Photographs of the take-down tool, Recoil Master guide rod, and their relative positions during field stripping and reassembly can be seen in the STI Escort review [here](#).

## The Firing Line

Let's get one issue out of the way first!

The 9mm Luger is the most popular handgun cartridge in the world. As such, this cartridge has seen remarkable developments in bullet design and ballistics through the end of the 20th century and into the 21st. Ammunition manufacturers typically employ the use of "proof" barrels in the R&D of any new cartridge. They utilize controlled conditions for the accuracy, chronograph, and expansion characteristics of any round in development. While their published data about any particular cartridge will be approximated in any barrel length of 4 inches or greater, it is a known fact that self defense guns of 3" or less do not approach those statistics.

One hundred rounds of my favorite stand-by ammo (Wally World Winchester White Box 115gr. full metal jacket) proved the Rogue's ability to reliably digest that particular round. No malfunctions were experienced, and recoil was surprisingly mild. Target acquisition between shots was quick, and the gun didn't move in my hand, even during rapid fire. Moving to Remington UMC 124gr. FMJ ammunition, fifty rounds delivered similar results to the WWB cartridges. If the extra bullet weight had any effect on accuracy, I was unable to distinguish it. The most surprising aspect of this initial range session was the pistol's remarkable accuracy. I had expected the diminutive sights to be a hindrance. Quite the contrary, the gun placed the shots exactly where aimed, and clustered multiple bullet holes together in pleasingly tight patterns. In addition, the integral sights were quick on target, and while firing in adequate light, were quite easy to see.



*This photograph depicts the results of eight shots fired from a distance of 25 feet using a standing two-handed hold on the STI Rogue. Ammunition is Remington UMC 124 gr. Full Metal Jacket.*

A quick field stripping and wipe down of the pistol followed that session. Now it was time to really get to work.

The STI International Rogue 9mm 1911 is most assuredly a handgun designed for the concealed carry/self defense market. Small and light, with fixed combat sights designed for practicality rather than accuracy, the pistol is the epitome of a handgun to be used when a dangerous situation turns deadly. Therefore, the necessity to test defensive rounds for functional reliability, combat accuracy, velocity, and expansion moved to the forefront of my protocol for this test.



*Jacketed Hollow Points and Truncated Cone Hollow Points used in the testing of the STI Rogue.*

From left to right: Speer Gold Dot 115gr. Gold Dot Hollow Point, Federal 124gr. Hydra-Shok JHP, Remington UMC 115gr. JHP, Winchester Ranger 115gr. JHP, Hornady 124gr. TAP FPD, and Winchester Supreme 147gr. SXT.

As can be seen in the photographs, some of these rounds are tried and true defensive cartridges, while one (notably the Winchester SXT) is a radical departure from the norm.

What the photographs don't reveal is what happened when I tried to load those hollow points in the Rogue. The Metalform magazine's follower caused each

one of the aforementioned rounds to dive into the bottom of the feed ramp, jamming the action.



A call to Chris Schirmer at STI International confirmed my fears. While testing at STI had successfully taken place with FMJ ammunition, the annual SHOT Show depleted the facility of their usual group of evaluators, and my test pistol had been shipped before a complete test with JHP ammo could be conducted.

No worries mate! Another phone call to our friend Larry Weeks at Brownells insured that two tried and proven Metalform "Springfield" 9mm Officer Magazines would quickly be shipped overnight to me. True to his word, the magazines arrived 48 hours after my order was processed. Problem solved?



*This photograph illustrates the difference in the size between the STI Rogue and standard Officer sized pistols. The Metalform "Springfield" 9mm magazine hangs 3/8" from the bottom of the pistol when locked in place. The issued Metalform magazine is pictured on the left, with the "Springfield" magazine from Brownells on the right.*





*These two photographs show the differences between the issued Metalform magazine's follower and the follower of the Metalform "Springfield" magazine.*

The Metalform "Springfield" magazines instantly solved all the feeding problems I had encountered. I was able to load all the specialty rounds and fire them through the Rogue without mishap. In addition, I mixed up several different brands and bullet configurations in the two "Springfield" magazines. The pistol again functioned without any malfunctions whatsoever.

With that dilemma out of the way, I proceeded with my accuracy and chronograph testing of the STI Rogue. My Competitive Edge Dynamics Millennium Chronograph was set up ten feet from my firing position. The temperature was 74 degrees Fahrenheit (23.33 Celsius) with a light northerly breeze. The sky was clear and sunny, with a humidity of 38%. Accuracy testing for this pistol was done from a seated position, utilizing a two-handed padded rest. Distance to the target was ten yards (9.14 meters).

Ammunition	Muzzle Velocity (feet-per-second/meters-per-second)					Best 5 shot group
	Min.	Max.	Avg.	Extreme Spread	Standard Deviation	
Winchester USA 115-gr FMJ	1023	1089	1065	66	25	1.00"
	311.8	331.9	324.6	20.1	7.6	(25.4 mm)
Remington UMC 124-gr FMJ	951	981	964	29	11	0.75"
	289.9	299	293.8	8.8	3.4	(19.05 mm)
Winchester Ranger 115-gr JHP	984	1021	1008	36	11	1.50"
	299.9	311.2	307.2	10.9	3.4	(38.1 mm)
Hornady 124-gr TAP	988	1045	1015	56	22	1.00"
	301.1	318.5	309.3	17.1	6.7	(25.4 mm)
Remington UMC 115-gr JHP	932	1018	992	85	29	1.25"
	284.1	310.3	302.4	25.9	8.8	(31.75 mm)
Speer 115-gr GDHP	1031	1114	1076	83	27	1.25"
	314.3	339.5	328.0	25.3	8.2	(31.75 mm)
Winchester 147-gr SXT	845	894	874	48	16	0.75"
	257.6	272.5	266.4	14.6	4.9	(19.05 mm)
Federal Hydra-Shok 124-gr JHP	923	952	935	29	11	1.25"
	281.3	290.1	285.0	8.8	3.4	(31.75 mm)

Accuracy was consistent between the various loads and bullet weights, as shown in the chart. Firing pin indentations on the primers was uniform, and ejected cartridge casings landed within six feet, behind and to the right of my firing position. As stated earlier, this is an amazingly accurate little gun. The best expansion was obtained with the Hornady 124 gr. TAP and Winchester 147 gr. SXT loads.

## Evaluation

The STI International Rogue 9mm 1911 is a unique handgun. Built on STI's smallest frame, the Rogue represents a task-specific pistol. That task, pure and simple, is concealed carry/personal defense. Of the many 3" barreled 1911 type pistols I have owned, tested, or fired, the Rogue was far and away the most accurate. Due in part to its chambering in 9mm, it was also the lightest in recoil. But I also suspect the STI Recoil Master guide rod and spring arrangement has a lot to do with that perception. The way a handgun shoots goes a long way in determining whether that weapon gets a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down", and the Rogue's performance on the range earns it an enthusiastic "thumbs up".

In my opinion, the Rogue is an aesthetically handsome looking gun. Attention to fit and finish is apparent where ever you look. When I received the STI Escort for testing, I questioned the use of a trigger with a glass filled nylon/polymer trigger face. My opinion softened while evaluating the STI Guardian. With the testing of the STI Rogue, I've become an enthusiastic fan. You have to experience the consistently good qualities of these triggers in order to appreciate them.

It is the nature of 3" barreled 1911s to have a somewhat complex recoil spring system. Otherwise, the guns would not function correctly. The older I get, the less likely I am to be tolerant of "gizmos" that must be applied against spring pressure in order to disassemble a pistol. The STI Recoil Master is an engineering break-through, and after several hundred rounds of various types of ammunition I believe the company's claim of reduced felt recoil. Unfortunately, though, I am in my late fifties, and certain tasks cause pain in my fingers. Field stripping and reassembling the STI Rogue is one of those tasks. That said, this recoil system is easier than some, and more effective than most, in providing the necessary timing to allow the pistol to function flawlessly.

Flawless, that is, if you intend to shoot only full metal jacketed rounds. The supplied Metalform magazine performed abysmally with jacketed hollow points, and I was fortunate to have quick access to Larry Weeks at Brownells to save the day. A self defense pistol that will only fire over-penetrating FMJ ammunition is an oxymoron.

That said, my conversations and correspondence with Jay Dunlap and Chris Schirmer leaves me confident that this issue will be quickly addressed and corrected. Magazines, as we all know, have been the cause of many otherwise good pistols getting a bad reputation. This is not the case with the STI Rogue, and one of my magazines from Brownells will accompany the gun on its return trip to Georgetown, for testing and evaluation.

STI International has always been one of those rare companies that respond positively to customer feed-back. By the time you read this test/review, the necessary changes will already be in the works. My exposure to this company and their firearms has been a positive experience. I can heartily recommend the STI Rogue for anyone looking for a small, light, extremely accurate self defense/concealed carry handgun. It is, simply put, a great pistol!

## Acknowledgments

Jay Dunlap at STI International has been my contact at that fine company for each one of my tests of STI pistols. He goes above and beyond in answering questions and providing invaluable information on the products STI manufactures. This year's SHOT Show, as well as the IWA Show in Germany, caused a

lull in our usual active conversations in this case. However, Chris Schirmer took the ball and ran with it when the magazine problem surfaced, and I am indebted to him for his honesty and candor. My thanks go out to both of you for your help and council both before, and during, this test. Gentlemen such as yourselves are a credit to your respective professions.

Larry Weeks, of Brownells, has become my "go to guy" whenever I need anything firearms related. I have extensively used Brownells parts, accessories, and after-market items for some time now, and I have never had a reason to complain. Larry was there for me when the magazine situation developed, and understood the necessity of getting those mags to me quickly. This has been the case with all my orders to Brownells, and I remain a very satisfied customer. A hearty thank you goes to Larry and everyone else associated with Brownells.

Todd Downing and his father run Downing's Guns and Family Treasures in Cleburne, Texas. Their store represents what gun shops use to be. Good advice, friendly down-home atmosphere, with no one trying to sell you something you don't need. I'm fortunate to call them my friends. Ever helpful, Todd put up with me for the better part of a business day, as we established the FFL contacts needed to conduct this test. I have bought several guns, a lot of ammunition, and a variety of shooting supplies from the Downings. Thank you for all your help gentlemen. I highly recommend this store to anyone in the D/FW metroplex.

## Specifications

### STI Rogue

Caliber: 9x19 (9mm Para)

Frame: Anodized DuraCoated Aluminum

Slide: Carbon steel blue with integral sights

Barrel: 3" fully supported ramped Bull barrel

Stocks: Checkered Cocobolo thin grip panels with STI logo

Trigger: STI Long Curved Trigger

Safeties: Single sided, extended shelf thumb safety; STI high-ride Beavertail grip safety W/memory bump

Guide Rod: STI Recoil Master

Overall length: 6" (152.40mm)

Height: 4.55" (115.76mm)

Weight (empty): 21 ounces (653.17 grams)

Suggested Retail Price: \$1,024.00 U.S. Dollars

You may discuss about this pistol, ask questions or in general discuss about this review, in this [thread in our Forums Site](#):

## SOURCES

### Pistol:



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### Magazines



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### Chronograph



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Home - Volume 3 (2008) - Issue 2 (Spring '08) - Pistol Review: STI Rogue 9mm