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A CARRY GUN WITH A DOT

SIG SAUER P365 XL

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SIG Sauer came out with the P365 a few years back to provide a quality small pistol for carry purposes, and it has been a popular gun for that market; many people I know swear how much they love their P365. The P365 XL has a longer barrel and slide, and the model we received to review came with a Romeo Zero optic on the gun, so the 365 XL has all of the features that are the new hotness for a carry gun. The 365 XL is very concealable, has an optic for accurate and fast shooting, and a 12-round magazine which is more than acceptable for capacity. The 365 XL checks many of the boxes that folks are looking for in a carry gun. Many folks I know sing the praises of the gun, although a few grumble about it.

So let's explore this gun fully and see who has it right.

The grip of this pistol is textured similar to a fine-grained sand paper, which aids in holding onto the pistol. The grip is small, which many people expect for a carry gun; however, a large hand can still fit three fingers onto the grip of the gun. It is slightly flared outward at the base to function as a magazine well. Above the texture on the grip there is one large dimple on each side that allows for a high hold on the pistol with the gun hand. This is a very well-designed grip, and the gun-to-hand fit is very nice for either right-handed or left-handed user. The metal trigger guard is thin, which helps the gun remain light, and the trigger guard is beveled where it meets the grip to help achieve a high

grip on the gun. The frame also includes a rail for mounting lights or other accessories. Many pistols of this size are lacking rails. I'm liking what I see at this point.

The slide of the 365 XL is as well designed and well built as the grip; it contains both front and rear cocking serrations for easy slide racking, and the ejection port is generous in order to increase reliability. The triangular magazine release is located at the junction of the trigger guard and the grip. The magazine release is the right size for pressing when you want to press it but small enough to not press it accidentally. During live fire I was able to press the magazine release without breaking or changing my grip on the gun. The slide release is also located so that it can be used without breaking the grip on the gun. The sides of the optic have the same texture as the grip of the gun, should the shooter want to use the optic to rack the slide and not get the lens of the optic dirty.

Jake and I were able to get the 365 XL out to the range at Riley and put it through

its paces. We were using steel targets for these drills. The holster was not designed for this pistol but it fit well enough to get by for testing purposes. We ran a number of loads through the pistol and over the chronograph. Most of the ammo used for the live fire test was the 365 Elite ammo that SIG developed for this pistol; the box advertises a muzzle velocity of 1050 feet per second. The ammo was comfortable to shoot through this gun but was a little faster than the box listed. (Who doesn't like an overachiever?) The gun performed with a total of one malfunction with all of the different ammo we put through it on the range in this session. I have also shot the gun a little on different occasions. Jake owns a SIG 365 and therefore is familiar with the gun.

We started out with a four-target Near to Far array. The ranges of the targets were at distances of 10, 13, 20 and 26 yards, a good test for such a small pistol. Jake ripped off runs of 4.02, 3.34 and 3.57 seconds, and then commented that this gun is easy to shoot. My runs were 5.03, 3.78 and 3.74 seconds. There were no missed shots by either of us. We decided to shoot the same drill with Jake's Walther Q5 Steel Frame to have something to compare – and I was beginning to feel like I was being hustled. With the Walther, Jake had times of 3.21, 3.15, 2.69 and 2.58 seconds; my times were 3.38, 3.69, 3.53 and 3.59 seconds. The smaller, lighter 365 XL was more than holding its own against a large full-sized pistol. It is a shooter.

We ran a Front Sight Forward drill comprised of three targets at 10 yards. Jake had times of 2.87, 2.50, and 2.26 seconds and my times were 3.05, 2.75 and 2.79 seconds. Once again we connected on all shots. When the task was simply shooting fast and accurately, the 365 XL was more than up to the task on these drills.

The next drill was El Presidente. Jake's times were 6.40, 7.18 and 6.39 seconds; my times were 13.50, 8.56 and 7.88 seconds. The really awful time was due to a malfunction and some difficulty changing magazines. This malfunction was the only one witnessed with the pistol. The times on



this drill were slow, and it was not because of the shooting but because we struggled getting the magazine out of the gun. The small grip of the pistol did not make it easy to drop magazines free from the gun. The magazine would catch on the heel of the hand and it took some shaking to get it out. Someone with smaller hands might not suffer this plague at all.

It is important to consider how the 365 XL is meant to be used. This is a carry gun, not a competition gun. SIG makes a number of quality competition guns, so get one of those for competition. This gun is designed

to be drawn and to shoot accurately and quickly on high-center chest-sized targets at distances ranging from across the room or the length of the car. The 365 XL does that very well, and it has a twelve-plus-one capacity, which means that it is unlikely to require a reload in the typical self-defense situation. Really, with that type of capacity the gun is not likely to require a reload in many non-typical scenarios. In the interest of full disclosure, we did have trouble with changing the magazines. Considering the issue in context, it does not bother me at all since the gun is more than suitable for

SIG SAUER P365 XL / CHRONO RESULTS

Federal 150 Grain Syntech

874 | 878 | 876 | 860 | 869 | PF=130.7

SIG Sauer Match Elite 147 grain hollow

899 | 901 | 896 | 907 | 910 | PF=132.6

Federal 130 grain Syntech

984 | 1001 | 998 | 988 | 1005 | PF=129.3

Precision Delta 147 grain FMJ

884 | 891 | 896 | 877 | 874 | PF=130.0

SIG 365 Elite 115 grain

1053 | 1071 | 1071 | 1068 | 1081 | PF=122.9

carry. We are going to win or lose a self-defense situation with the ammo in the gun. Good capacity means we can shoot longer without the need to reload. The 365 XL has good capacity and great shootability. Changing magazines under pressure is not likely to be needed.

I wanted to have a little more data on the shooting that the 365 XL was capable of achieving, so I went back to my neighbor's pasture and did a little more shooting in late June. My favorite daughter was nice enough to help me out by running the timer and recording the results on paper. The first drill was simply a set of one-shot draws at three yards, done from open carry. The times were 0.89, 0.85, 0.82, 0.78 and 0.73 seconds. (The 0.73 is the fastest draw I have managed to pull off in my life; the previous best was 0.76 in 2013 as a part of regular practice that I was doing at that time.) The grip of the 365 XL is noticeably smaller than the grip of any gun that I carry on a daily basis or any gun with which I

compete. However, the timer says there is enough grip there to get hold of and deliver shots on target.

Next I did five draws at five yards and five draws at seven yards. At five yards the times were 0.84, 0.87, 0.90, 0.88, and 0.85 seconds. The times at seven yards were 0.89, 0.93, 0.92, 0.87, and 0.91 seconds. At distances most gun fights would occur against criminals, the gun is able to stand and deliver. With a total of 15 shots, there were 13 alpha, one charlie and one delta on the target. The delta was the very first shot at three yards; I warmed up nicely after that. This gun is easy to shoot.

The next drill was from Scott Jedlinski of the Modern Samurai Project, a 3x2 drill shot from concealment at a distance of three yards. The first three shots are to the body and the last two shots are to a 3"x5" card on the head of the target. This was a pass/no pass drill; you must have all of the hits, and the time has to be 2.00 seconds or faster. It is tough to accomplish, but I can shoot it



successfully sometimes. I ran the drill five times and five times only, and the hits were good on four of five runs. The times were 2.09, 2.12, 1.94, 2.09, and 1.97 seconds. The fourth run of 2.09 seconds lacked good hits on the head, as one was low and one high. (Try this drill out on your own and you will have an appreciation of how tough it is.) On a very tough drill, the 365 XL performed pretty well.

In summation, the 365 XL is a quality gun and would give many people what they are looking for in a carry gun. It is small and concealable. It is not heavy to carry around. There would be no excuse for not carrying this gun on a daily basis. It comes with both iron sights and optics as options. This gun is a shooter, based on the time spent with it on the range. I remember when Guns and Ammo wrote a review of the Springfield Hellcat and made a huge deal that the Hellcat had one more round of capacity than the SIG 365. Having shot and reviewed both the Hellcat and the 365 XL, if I were heading out to the nearest gun fight I will gladly give up the one round. The 365 XL shoots much better; I won't need that one round, and neither will you. ■

