



One afternoon in 2015, I found myself at Patriot Ordnance Factory visiting with Frank DeSomma about various projects he was working on. In the middle of the conversation, he stopped, grinned at me and said, "Come here, I want to show you something." For the few on Earth that are not familiar with Frank, he was at his core an innovator. With this as the base, I was curious to see what was in the back of the vault. He turned and handed me a rough but functional prototype for a 9mm subgun. The gun was dubbed the PSG and was a work in progress. Well, many times projects like these get mothballed because of other projects, and that was the case with the PSG. That is until now. POF-USA has now completed work on this compact subgun and brought Frank's vision to life. The result of the effort is the new POF Phoenix.

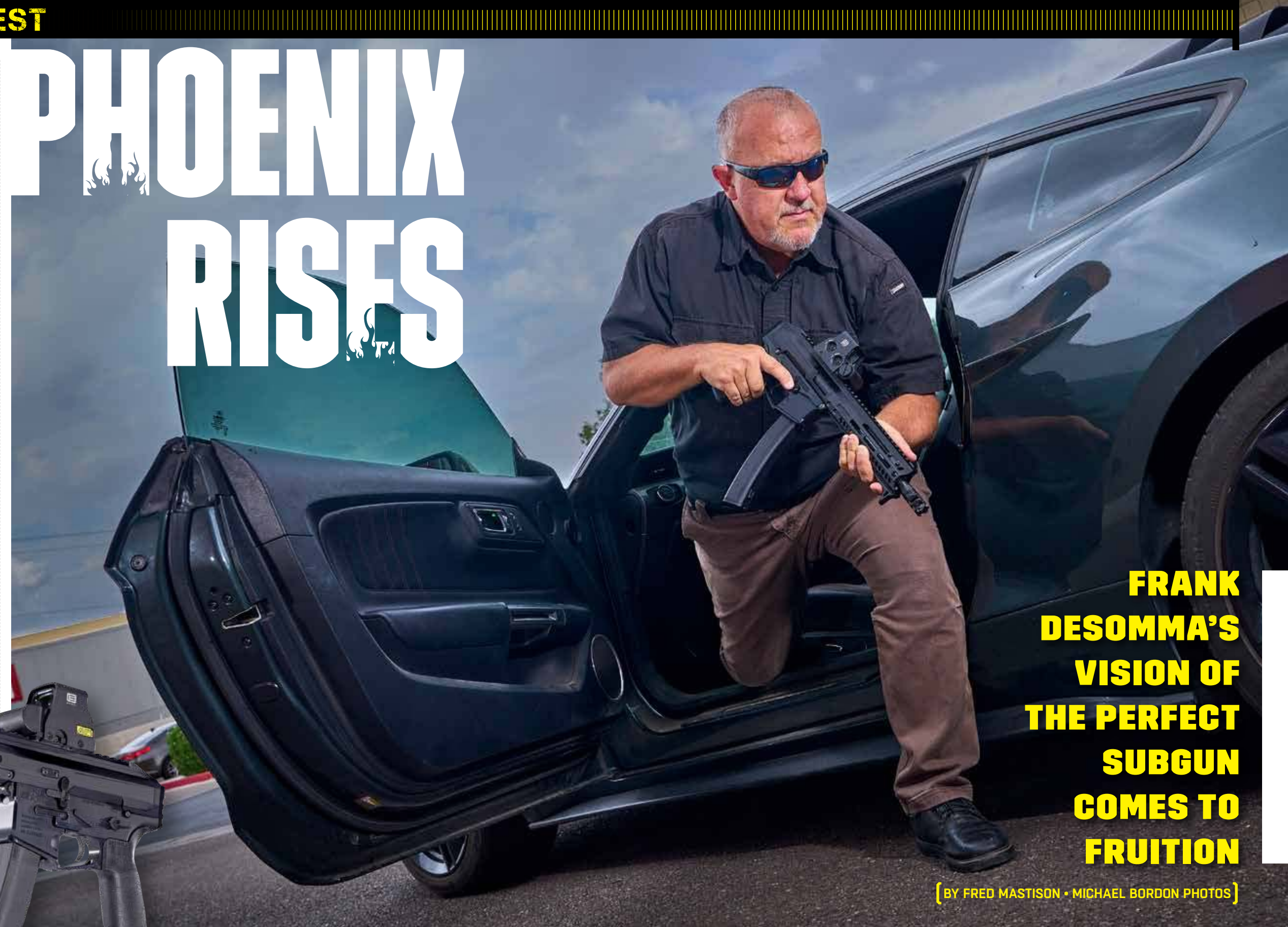
MEET THE PHOENIX

The Phoenix is a 9mm subgun pistol that is pure POF. The Phoenix is a direct blow-back gun, which eliminates the need for any buffer tube system. It has a monolithic upper that makes mounting optics and any other kit much easier. The upper has a forward-mounted side charging handle and a vertical Picatinny rail at the rear to host a brace or stock should you choose. POF looked at fine details and included an adjustable hand stop and integrated QD sling mounts on the upper. Both the upper and lower receiver of the Phoenix

PHOENIX RISES



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FRANK DESOMMA'S VISION OF THE PERFECT SUBGUN COMES TO FRUITION

[BY FRED MASTISON • MICHAEL BORDON PHOTOS]



SPEC BOX

POF PHOENIX 9MM SUBGUN

CALIBER:	9mm
BARREL:	8.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	17.5 inches
WEIGHT:	4.6 pounds (empty)
GRIPS:	Mission First Tactical
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Blowback semi-auto
FINISH:	Black anodized
CAPACITY:	35 rounds
MSRP:	\$1,700

are constructed of aerospace-grade aluminum. The charging handle can be moved to the left or right side and folds down flat against the upper. It also hosts a new 9mm 1/2x28-threaded, dual-port compensator. Its billet lower receiver features fully ambidextrous controls including safety, bolt release and mag release.

The gun is small at only 17.5 inches in length and weighs a paltry 4.6 pounds. The magazine for the Phoenix is a proprietary 35-round magazine. This decision was made to accommodate the AR-style mag release. Because of that, POF went to the drawing board and made their own mag. POF tells me that 10- and 20-round mags will be available for the gun as well. While the gun has been in the works for some time, POF really turned their attention to it over the last year or so and it is a winner. "We're extremely pleased with the final result and couldn't be happier to bring another one of Frank DeSomma's visions to the market. He worked tirelessly on this design over the years, and the team couldn't be prouder to finish it,"

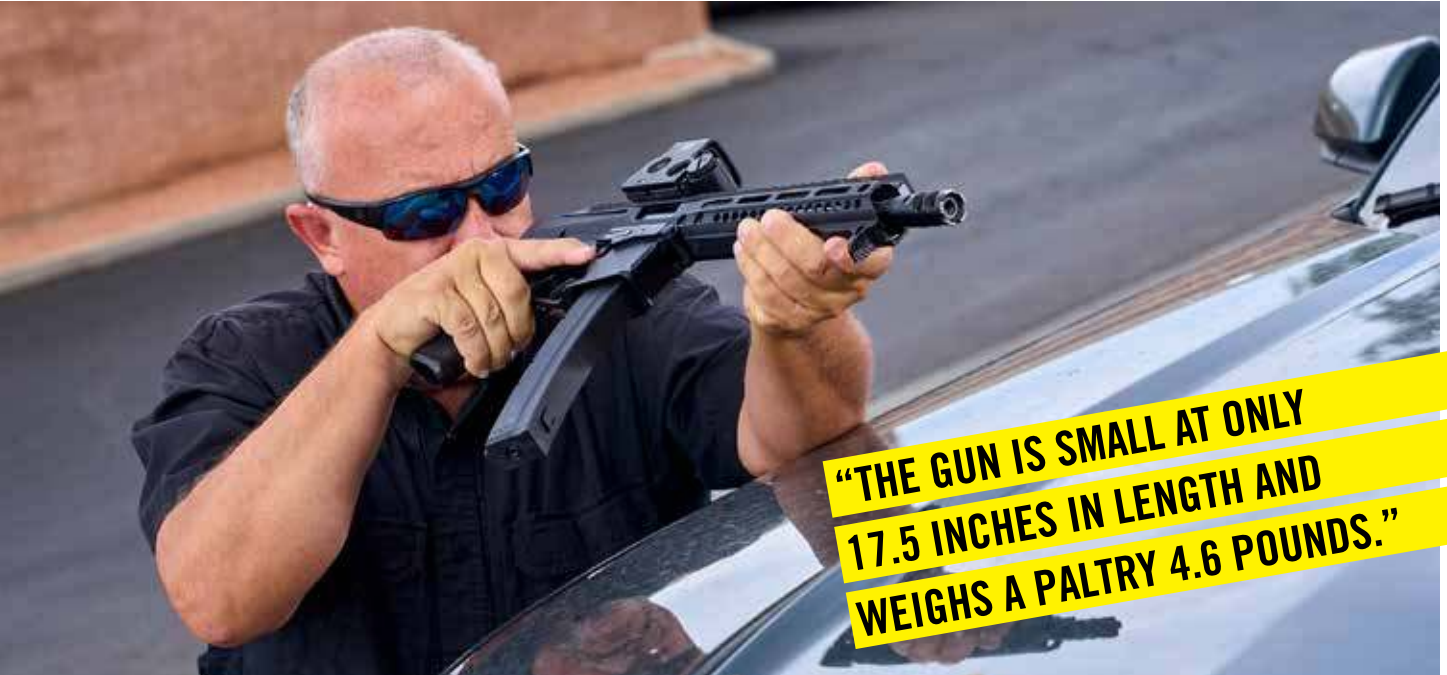
said Jeremy Selting, VP of sales and marketing.

I was fortunate to get a Phoenix in for testing. First impressions were good. Having had the chance to see and shoot the first version of this gun all those years ago, I appreciated the advancements. Everything fits well with no play or slop. This is typical of POF guns and was what I expected. It has a blank anodized finish, and overall, it is a good-looking gun. This is obviously not a beauty contest, so the real test would be on the range.

The only modification I would make to the gun was the addition of an optic. I would be using the EOTech HWS XPS3. The HWS XPS3 is the shortest and lightest night-vision-compatible HWS in the EOTech lineup. Powered by a single transverse-mounted CR123 lithium battery, the XPS3 provides additional rail space, leaving more room for rear iron sights, magnifiers or night-vision mount. In all honesty, I was tempted to put a suppressor on the gun but chose to run



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the POF dual chamber muzzle brake originally included on the gun. Ammo for the day was Federal 147-grain American Eagle, Hornady 115-grain FTX Critical Defense and Blazed brass 115-grain FMJ. I wanted to run a variety to see how the gun performed with different loads.

RANGE WORKOUT

The first rounds showed the trigger to be acceptable but still a little firm. It is my opinion that POF knows most people will change the trigger on their guns. The mil-spec trigger included will serve those that stick with what the gun comes with. At the eighth round, I had a failure to feed, which prompted a magazine inspection. The rounds had nosed down

a bit but a quick shake and tap and they were back in line. As the magazine had more rounds run through it, the hiccup disappeared. My guess is that the mag had burs inside and the in and out of rounds rubbed them away.

I have always had a challenge running guns that identify as a pistol but are really a rifle without a stock. That being said, the gun was extremely easy to run, and there was only minimal recoil. POF has done a good job at balancing the mass of the bolt so that it cycles but doesn't slam the gun all over. The brake did a good job at managing the muzzle, and even with the two-hands extended shooting position, I found it to be accurate. The dual chamber design had a good balance

between control and sound. Most brakes are punishing to those shooting beside you, but the design mixed with it being 9mm was a non-issue. At pace, I could easily shoot a 2-inch group at 15 yards. With a stock or brace on this gun, it would obviously perform better.

When I shared with a couple of friends the fact that I had this gun coming in, they asked, “What role does it fill?” That's a good question because it sits a bit in the middle between handgun and rifle. This, however, is not a barren area. In fact, this zone is populated with most of the subguns of the world. The one that sticks out the most is the H&K MP5K. In my mind, the compact nature of this 9mm gun makes it perfect for covert carry or

close-quarter applications. Along with the standard fare of “stand and shoot” testing, I ran close contact drills and immediately included movement. This is a solid personal-defense weapon and was effective on the move. The light weight of the gun and very minimal recoil made it fast. I was able to quickly engage two, three and four targets at pace. While it is obviously a semi-auto gun, it once again reminded me of H&K’s little briefcase gun.

HOW’S SHE RIDE?

With this application in mind, I ran the Phoenix as I would a PDW inside a vehicle. I have taken many a ride with everything from carbines to belt-fed weapons and each of them occupied noticeable

space. This is where this compact fighter shined. First off, it is easy to store in a vehicle. I can store it next to my legs or in most interior compartments. Once deployed, it was very easy to maneuver, and its minimal recoil allowed me to shoot from a variety of awkward positions. I also rolled out of my vehicle with the gun to move on targets I had staged on the range. Having spent time running carbines in this application, I can tell you the Phoenix is much easier to get into the fight. I continued this theme once I was home. With everyone gone and weapon cleared and safe, I began a walk-through. The small lightweight gun was a breeze to maneuver in my less-than-mansion-sized house. This is beyond critical for

any weapon you choose to use for home defense. It must be big enough to be easy to shoot, yet not so big that you bump into everything as you move.

The POF Phoenix is a fitting tribute to Frank’s original design. I enjoyed running it and found it a solid fighting gun. If pushed to offer my mods for the gun, they would be few. As a person fanatical about close-quarter shooting, I would add a brace or stock and suppress it. Yes, the can would add to the overall length, but it would still be small enough to be agile in close quarters. I would also add a light because you must know what you are shooting at before you press the trigger. In the end, I give the gun high marks and am glad to see the project completed. If you are looking for an enjoyable subgun that is an effective personal-defense weapon, take a close look at the POF Phoenix. For more infor-

“THE SMALL LIGHTWEIGHT GUN WAS A BREEZE TO MANEUVER IN MY LESS-THAN-MANSION-SIZED HOUSE.”



Editor’s Note: It has been a little over two years since Frank DeSomma died in an auto accident. In TL’s humble opinion, Frank was one of the greatest—and most entertaining—advocates for freedom and our Second Amendment rights. His intellect, experience and passion for guns, politics and freedom will forever be remembered by all who were fortunate enough to be able to call him a friend. We miss you, brother.



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