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Our September cover

Low-light shooting is easy with this outfit though it does its best work in the dark.

NEXT ISSUE



It's here at last! The all-Australian made Lithgow Arms LA105 Woomera is finally on the shelves and Daniel O'Dea was off his mark with the first review for *Australian Shooter*. Read his assessment of this long-awaited and much-anticipated rifle.

The Oryx is a one-piece integrated aluminum chassis and butt-stock built to improve the consistency and accuracy of factory produced bolt-action rifles. Con Kapralos customised a Howa M1500 and Howa Mini Action.

Pete Kincade took to the field with the latest Vortex Fury HD 5000 10x42 Laser Range Finder binoculars and tells us: "I'm sold on their light weight, faster results and greater convenience in an all-in-one solution".



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President's Message

WITH GEOFF JONES

Our numbers only get better as SHOT Expo nears

These are heady days for the SSAA on two exciting fronts. Firstly, a milestone mark edges ever closer for the numbers joining our organisation's ranks and secondly the hugely popular SHOT Expo is about to make a welcome return.

The great news is we are relentlessly surging towards the magical 200,000 membership count and during the past four weeks alone have added 1100 new recruits to our ever-expanding ranks. And those new faces can be certain we'll stand up for their best interests as shooters.

As the largest recreational shooting organisation in Australia, the SSAA will always make our voice heard and refuse to be silenced, despite the efforts of our critics - we as an organisation are here to protect the rights of you, the shooter.

One pleasing aspect in the membership increase is how the percentage of women joining us has gained momentum and we believe our quarterly *Australian Women's Shooter*, inside this month's magazine, has done wonders to promote this aspect of shooting. Like our junior members, women are a valuable part of this organisation and their input and influence is greatly appreciated.

Part of our overall responsibility is to promote the sports aspect to the general firearms community, and next month's SSAA SHOT Expo at the Melbourne Showgrounds from October 19 to 20 is the ideal opportunity to showcase our passion to both the initiated and interested newcomers.

We thank our major sponsorship partners - Winchester Australia, Swarovski Optik, Polaris Off-Road Vehicles and Outdoor Sporting Agencies - for their invaluable backing in making this family-friendly event one of the biggest attractions on the calendar for recreational shooters and outdoor enthusiasts. It's reassuring to know our Expos are back in full swing with the



Sydney showpiece already in the planning stages for next year.

The Melbourne event, which is almost upon us, is proudly hosted by SSAA Victoria and has been coordinated by Michael Allendorf, director of Level Up Events. There will be numerous highlights over an action-packed weekend, among them the popular working gundogs demonstration which always draws a crowd.

There will be something for everyone among a huge array of attractions including the Night-Vision tunnel, air rifle and pistol shooting, an archery range as well as educational and expert talks and demonstrations. There will be thousands of brands on display and, with around 150 exhibitors filling the venue, this is one not to be missed.

In signing off I want to offer my sincere thanks on behalf of the Association to Ian Thompson, our resident ballistics expert of the past three decades. His Basic Ballistics columns for this magazine and in its former guise as *Australian Shooters' Journal* has been one of the most popular inclusions since the late 1980s and Ian's expertise and general knowledge on the subject is unparalleled in Australia. His contributions will be sorely missed. Turn to Page 68 for a profile of the man himself.

G.E. Jones

Geoff Jones
SSAA National President



SSAA - Protecting shooters since 1948

Not all deserts are 'dry'

I ENJOY *AUSTRALIAN Shooter* and John Dunn's 'Jumbunna' in particular. For me the big Eight-0 is a distant memory and I suspect from the tone of some of John's articles he has also accumulated a fair few summers on life's journey, causing him to reflect on the past as in his article in the April magazine.

When I compare "what was" to today I agree with John it "can never be the same again", sadly not for the better I fear when I see how we're trashing our environment. As well as using firearms all my life my other passion has been photography which recalled an experience from many years ago.

While at Poeppel Corner in the Simpson Desert, which on that occasion was a sea of wildflowers after winter rain, I climbed to the top of a large sand dune hundreds of metres off the track and on arriving at the top found an Emu beer can all the way from WA.

The nearest inhabitants I suspect would probably be in Birdsville about 200km away but how many people would climb a sand

dune in the Simpson Desert and discard a beer can?

Unfortunately the film I was using had poor archive qualities resulting in my losing all record of that trip. The offending beer can continued its long-delayed journey in a rubbish bag hanging on the back of our vehicle.

Don McGlusky, Qld

Teamwork wins the day

A WORD OF thanks to Bob Moore in your letters section (*Shooter*, June 2019) for his suggestion on how to get my Norinco JW25 to shoot accurately, and also to John Dunn for all his help (Top Shots, April 2019).

Above all, a big nod in the direction of Geoff at Gunsmoke, Bathurst for his work in putting some of those suggestions into practice with the result the rifle is now grouping as well as anything far more costly. I was on the point of giving it away but a combination of can-do and know-how by Geoff fixed the problem. Thanks to all.

Jim Nash, via email

Victorian hunting maps

I LIVE IN the Victorian High Country where we have a plague of sambar and a few red deer if you know where to look. It's a nice problem if you're a hunter, not so if you've any plants on your property you don't want eaten, trampled or rubbed to death. And driving at night is not recommended.

One problem I've always had is figuring out exactly where I can and cannot legally hunt. The place to look was always the Victorian Game Management Authority website which had PDF maps showing where hunting is allowed.

Then I found a page on their website entitled 'New Hunting Maps'. These scrollable and zoomable maps make figuring out where to hunt in Victoria much easier than it used to be. I thought readers might be interested. The maps cover the whole of Victoria and show where to hunt sambar, hog deer, other deer, duck, quail and pest species.

David Porter, via email



Insurance Q&A with Trevor Jenkin

Send questions to: communications@ssaa.org.au



Back in 2017 Megan Spiniello joined SSAA Insurance Brokers after 10 years in the industry. Her first role was to assist our account executives with management of their client base and to liaise with various underwriters on the placement of insurances quoted.

Eventually Megan was promoted to National Claims Officer and managed all our firearms and general claims, her responsibilities including assisting members in providing information to insurance companies and ensuring claims were settled fairly and within acceptable timeframes.

Now Megan finds herself as our Account Executive, managing all members' and clients' needs for SA, WA, NT, Victoria and

Tasmania. In this role she's in constant contact with members, advising on their insurance needs as well as assisting with all risk management issues. She also helps claims manager Lee Lynch, who also has 10 years' experience in the industry.

If you have any queries on issues surrounding your firearms or business insurances, contact Megan on 08 8332 0281 for expert advice. We're also online at ssaiib.com.au



Old school never hurt me

WITH REGARD TO Jeffrey Graves' Top Shots question (*Shooter*, June 2019) I'm with you mate. My introduction to shooting began at age 12 with a Morris 22 barrell .303. Cleaning inspection was always done by holding our thumbnail at the rear of the chamber and the instructor checking down the barrel.

Now I'm old school - safety is not what you do but how you do it. I'm officially a fossil and despite doing untold things over the years that earned castigation from my younger associates, I still own all my bits. But we have to play the game, I guess at least, when required.

Kerry Wuth, via email

In praise of the Brno

I NOTED WITH interest some comments in the magazine about the Brno CZ584 Model 4 which I hunted with in the '70s. I had three barrels - 12 gauge over 12 gauge, 7x57 over 12 gauge and 22 Savage Hi-Power over 12 gauge. It had double triggers with the safety in front of them and easy to use.

With the 12 over 12 barrels I shot plenty of ducks and rabbits but can't remember what the chokes were, probably half and full. The Hi-Power was a bit devastating on rabbits with a full load so I developed a half load using 22 short cartridge brass as a base.

Back then there were several articles in US shooting magazines about reduced loads creating high pressure due to the powder detonating instead of burning properly, so I'd put a small cylinder of foam on top of the powder to keep it back on the primer. I never had any problems and was then able to pick up edible bunnies.

The 7x57 is pretty much the equivalent of the British .303 and very effective on pigs using Sierra hollow-point projectiles. I found the open sights on the rifle barrel useful but had a Kahles Wien 1.5-4.5 big game riflescope which I'd fit on and sight-in whichever rifle barrel I wanted to use. The 1.5 setting was good for shooting running game and easy to turn up to full power for longer shots.

The only problem I found with the rifle was the front trigger was a bit imprecise, especially compared with the triggers on my Brno Model 2 and ZG47.

Roy Taylor, Qld

Prime after-sales service

I'D LIKE TO highlight an issue I had with my Lee Classic Loader kit (.303 British), the one which uses a hammer of sorts to load. Mine had a defect where it appears the primer has a nipple that imprints on the primer, like a firing pin has hit it and not gone off. I had a couple of them discharge while seating, though luckily I always wear safety goggles when reloading.

I emailed Lee in the US, informing them of the problems I was having and, stone the crows, received an immediate reply saying a replacement primer seating unit would be sent to me. Sure enough, five days later the new unit arrived. In this day and age I felt that was a great effort by Lee, a proud company which stands by its products 100 per cent and I'd have no hesitation in recommending them.

May I also add how much I enjoy *Australian Shooter*. Keep up the great work.

Chris Parris, via email

Enjoyed your new magazine

I RECENTLY HAD the chance to peruse the first of SSAA's latest publications, *Great Australian Outdoors*, and a number of the articles were of immediate interest to me as I've been researching a new 4WD. Consequently the article on tyre pressure caught my eye, and I appreciated the thorough analysis and production of tables that gave the reader a clear indication of the sort of pressures that could be appropriate to various conditions. I wish SSAA success with this magazine and look forward to further issues.

Donald Riddell, Tas

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Veganism. It's not as simple as that

In late June, *The Weekend Australian Magazine* ran an article discussing the number of animals which die to produce vegan food. During the past year we've seen in the media, vegan protestors invading farms and blocking busy city intersections because of their belief that vegan direct-action activities prevent animal suffering. Their philosophy is all about reducing suffering by not eating or using animals. Unfortunately, nothing in life is that simple.

The article provided some good examples where the production of vegan foods resulted in the death of many animals. One example discussed the number of grazing pest species culled to protect peas grown on a mixed farm. The culling of possums, wallabies and ducks meant that more than 1500 animals died to grow just 75ha of peas. This figure did not include rodents which also die as part of collateral damage during production. It was clearly stated it wouldn't be financially viable to grow peas without killing animals.

Another interesting point was that approximately 25 times more sentient beings die to produce a kilo of protein from wheat than it takes to produce a kilo of protein from beef. Monocultures, modern farming systems and mice plagues ensure many small animals die in the process to produce wheat. Surely in the vegan world, all animals matter. What's that RSPCA

saying again...for all creatures great and small? According to a 2005 Senate report, Western Australia kills around 1 billion mice every year to protect wheat production and that's just one of the wheat-producing states.

Rice is another staple in the vegan diet which involves the death of many animals. In NSW, native ducks are culled to protect the rice fields and it was reported that across a five-year period approximately 200,000 native ducks are killed. The flooding of dry fields to create a rice-growing area also indirectly affected animals (more die). It's just the way farming works that to grow something, other things are affected (die).

Veganism is all about stopping the exploitation of animals. I guess they turned a blind eye to the poor old European honeybee, the most exploited insect which bears the brunt of all annual vegetable production. True vegans may not eat honey due to it being the result of domestication where bees die as a result of hive management and honey extraction. In saying that, they certainly eat a whole lot of foods that rely on the exploitation of domesticated honeybees. Bees are expert pollinators and many crops are reliant on them to produce fruit, another staple of the vegan diet.

And vegan wine sounds like an extremely compassionate drop, doesn't it. Although

they don't use any vegan-unfriendly fining agents in the process, harvest time does pose some real issues. In the huge tubs of grapes that have been picked, it seems you'll also find mice, spiders, frogs and snakes that find their way into the crusher. Death to countless animals again. There's no such thing as a true vegan wine. Tell 'em they're dreamin'!

The article went on to say that food production is unfairly singled out for killing animals when the fact is every human activity has an effect on other living things. We kill animals when we drive, fly and transport things, when we farm and build housing developments. In all seriousness there's no way round it. A lot of creatures are collateral damage in the production of food, even so-called vegan food. There's no doubt some level of pain and suffering on animals resulting from all human actions. Looking at this from a holistic viewpoint you could certainly say veganism's so-called ethics regarding reducing suffering by simply being meat-free is a furphy. And a big one at that.



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1350	7.5, 8	28gm

Primers, pressures and such things

I have, from time to time, heard a few heated discussions on whether or not the appearance of the primer in a fired small-arms round can be used to tell the pressure at which that round had been fired. Even the most rabid supporters among those holding forth in favour of the above proposition did not mean (presumably) that it could give us a nice series of precise numbers as do the elaborate, expensive pressure-measuring outfits now available in the better laboratories.

Such things are really expensive to buy and set up but do give a lot of accurate data - in absolute terms of pounds per square inch or whatever else they may have been initially graduated in. In the present instance we're not interested in such precise refinements so we better rephrase our original question to cover our present requirements.

If we change it to: 'Can the condition of the primer, post-firing, give an indication of whether or not that firing had been of an abnormally high (or low) pressure', we can carry on quite happily with this present discussion.

The best way of proceeding is to have a quick look at the area in question. Pre-firing, that area is the chamber end of a barrel containing a loaded cartridge (as shown in section in Fig.1) with the action cocked. All is peaceful and quiet until the trigger is used to release the firing pin, whereupon that pin then travels down until its tip reaches, and first touches, the primer case as shown - taking typically 5 to 10 milliseconds for this travel. Thereafter things

really start to happen as follows:

- The pin firstly pushes the whole case forward until that case takes up an existing longitudinal or radial clearance in the chamber (the headspace). This leaves the base of the case quite unsupported as only the primer cup is held on the tip of the pin, not the whole case.
- The pin then begins to indent the primer cup, thus grinding the internal priming composition against the internal anvil.
- In a very, very short time interval this priming composition ignites and explodes (it does NOT detonate). The pressure in the pocket thus quickly and briefly becomes very much higher than that in the case.
- This pressure in the primer pocket vents this gas - and particles of burning composition - through the flash hole in the base of the case and drives the primer back out of its pocket until that primer cup becomes supported by the face of the bolt.
- The propellant ignites and begins to burn, causing the pressure in the case to rise and, in the primer pocket, to fall somewhat. Subsequently, that pressure (in the whole system) will fall to atmospheric as the bullet moves out of the case and, ultimately, out of the barrel.

So what has this to do with our present problem? The above are the normal actions during normal firing and if the cartridge and rifle are normal with regard to headspace etc, the case will recover its pre-firing dimensions and may then be readily

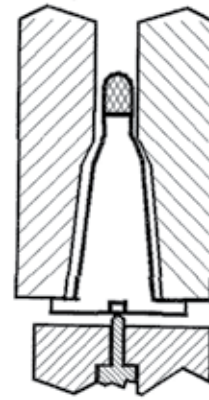


Fig.1: A cross-section of the chamber end of a barrel with loaded case pushed right forward into that chamber by the firing pin at the moment before the primer ignites.

extracted and, with minor resizing, be ready for reloading.

As 'normal' as the firing has been during the above goings-on, very high pressure loads have been generated and placed on the various components. If, however, those pressures have been within their safe, designed, working loads, no damage will have been done, leaving the shooter free to select whatever action is required as the follow-on.

But if those gas pressures have been excessive - greater than the design limits of the components of the system - each and every component, individually and collectively, will have been physically and mechanically overloaded and may have reacted in any number of possible, abnormal ways.

A close inspection of the items around the base of a cartridge case will reveal the flimsiest item is the primer cup and it's this cup that first shows signs of distress. It may therefore seem that the simplest solution to this whole problem is to reinforce the primer cup so it can withstand these higher pressures, but a bit more thought will show the impracticality of this idea.

If the metal of that cup is strengthened by, say, making it much thicker or of a stronger metal, the firing pin and spring etc will need to be made stronger or a whole string of misfires can be expected. It would also give a greater disturbing force to the whole gun system every time this reinforced action is fired - and that would do nothing for the accuracy of the whole system.

• This is Ian's final Basic Ballistics column. His first appeared thirty years ago next month and Ian has now decided to retire. See page 68 for a profile of the man himself.

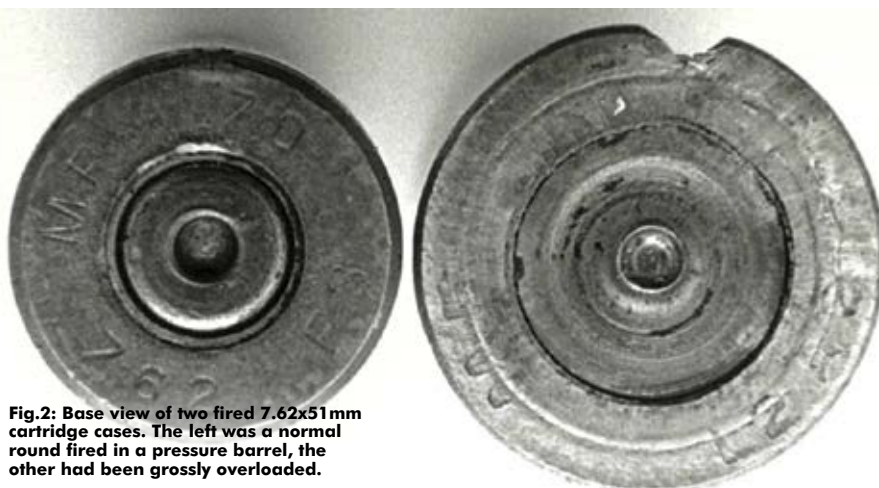


Fig.2: Base view of two fired 7.62x51mm cartridge cases. The left was a normal round fired in a pressure barrel, the other had been grossly overloaded.

SOMETHING BIG...



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TEA

Clay Target Q&A

WITH RUSSELL MARK

Q I visited a club in Melbourne which shoots at night and really enjoyed it but didn't get to shoot the first time. Before I do, are there any tips you can give a new shooter as to what you'd do differently for night-time shooting as opposed to clay shooting during the day?

Peter Coleman, Vic

A There certainly are. Dress warmer as the sun won't be out. Good luck. I could end this here but won't as this is a question I understandably receive quite often. If the floodlights are set correctly and trap houses have the added bonus of extra floodlights in them, then you'll more often than not find the targets are easier to see against the dark of night as opposed to the variable daylight hours that can offer very mixed and at times difficult backgrounds to shoot over.

As far as everything else is concerned, I believe there's no difference between night and day shooting. The shotgun you'll be using is the same, shotshells are the same with shot leaving the barrel at the same speed. The targets will be the same brand and often these days still the same colour as fluoro-orange targets are easy to see under good quality floodlights. These targets will be thrown at the same height, travelling the same distance at the same angles. There's just no logical reason for you to change anything else either physically, technically or mentally to shoot a clay target at night as opposed to day.

Just do what you always do and avoid complicating things. It's that simple.

There are plenty of night-time myths and remedies that have been offered over the years on how to improve your scores under lights. The most common solution was to draw a line of chalk down the length of your barrel so you could see it clearly. If that's not the best way to take your attention away from the clay target and focusing on your shotgun I don't know what is, so don't do it.

If you have to wear shooting glasses, which I'd advise for safety reasons at the very least, you may want to put an anti-reflective coating on the lenses and if possible wear side blinders and a cap to further avoid any chance of floodlights reflecting on your glasses.

In the winter you may be forced to shoot in the cold and wind and will therefore be tempted to wear a thick sweater. This can indirectly change your stock's length and ultimately your point of impact. Invest in some thin thermal underwear and a good quality thin rain jacket to beat the wind. If possible buy one without an obtrusive collar and your gun mount won't feel any different. If you're finding you do need to wear

considerably more, it may be worthwhile fitting a second recoil pad that's a few millimetres shorter to help keep your gun mount consistent.

If you have to wear that many clothes and are even tempted to wear gloves, in my opinion you should be out skiing and not shooting clays. There comes a point where it's just too cold and wearing gloves is that point. Just do what you always do and avoid complicating things. It's that simple.

Q Do you think it's a good idea to shoot Skeet practice with very tight, full chokes and 21 grams of shot so when I shoot in competition it will be much easier? I think that might help me.

Name and address supplied

A No I don't. I haven't enough space here to answer this fully but let's start with this. Smashing your confidence to smithereens in practice is never a great way to prepare for competition. Practise what you'll be preaching and that means copy in training what you'll be required to produce in competition.



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Got a question - ask our TOP SHOTS ?

• John Dunn • Paul Miller • Greg Riemer • Geoff Smith • Barry Wilmot • Rod Pascoe

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Q My nephew has inherited an old shotgun and I wondered if you could give us any history on it from the following. On top of the barrels: The Walker Turner Co Gun, Made in England; under right side of barrel: 17/1 Crown NP, Crown BP, Crown BV Nitro; Proof (16g inside a diamond) 1oz; under left barrel: 17/1 Crown BV, Crown BP, Crown NP; Nitro Proof (16g inside a diamond) Choke 1oz.

Ken Raabe, via email



A I've talked to a number of shotgun collecting friends about The Walker Turner Gun Co and it's a name none of them are familiar with. It doesn't appear in Boothroyd's Directory of British Gun-makers so I suspect it was a small company which produced guns for the lower end of the shotgun market, perhaps specifically for faraway places like Australia. If someone out there knows better than that I'd be happy to hear from them.

According to the proof marks the gun was Birmingham-made and the stampings under the barrels translate as follows. As I understand it the 17/1 stamping indicates the standard bore diameter in thousandths of an inch for the gauge, the 1 indicating the standard size (no, I don't know what the

measurement was!) Guns with a slightly larger bore would have been marked with a 2 or a 3 and so on. The gauge size was measured nine inches from the breech end of the barrel.

Crown over NP: This is the semi-smokeless powder proof for all guns which came into use in 1904; Crown over BV is the Birmingham inspection or view mark that's been in use since 1904; Crown over BP: Final black powder proof for Birmingham-made guns used from 1904-1925; Nitro Proof, 16g inside a diamond, 1 oz indicates the gun was proofed for a standard 16-gauge load firing one ounce of shot. The addition of the word 'Choke' indicates that barrel was choked for a tighter pattern.

This is all new territory for me so if I'm way off the mark I'm more than happy to be corrected.

John Dunn

Q I really enjoy shooting with both shotgun and centrefire rifle and wondered if it's more economical to reload my 12-gauge and .243 Winchester?

Michael, Port Macquarie

A Hi Michael. Factory shotgun shells and rifle cartridges are becoming more expensive every year and some are worth reloading if you shoot enough of them. I say some as it really depends on how many you're shooting and what actual cartridges you're using.

If shooting clay targets it's possible to buy suitable shells in bulk and pay a price for factory loads that's equal or sometimes less than the cost of buying all the components and going to the trouble of reloading. The cost of lead and therefore lead pellets has soared in recent years. If you're shooting a lot of field loads then these are more expensive to buy and therefore worth reloading.

The same can be said of centrefire rifle cartridges. If shooting popular cartridges like the .223R, .243W or .308W then these

can often be bought at very good prices due to the large quantities produced by manufacturers world-wide. More exotic ones like the .17 Remington or any of the powerful Weatherby cartridges are highly expensive to buy as factory products so reloading becomes more of a necessity.

The advantage of reloading centrefire cartridges is you can tailor combinations of primer, powder and projectile to find what's most accurate in your rifle. The disadvantage of only using factory loads is the need to buy several brands to find what best suits your firearm.

You need to factor in the cost of buying a shotgun reloading press, centrefire reloading press, a powder thrower and accurate scales. Various manufacturers like Hornady and RCBS make kits which incorporate all the necessary items for accurate and safe reloading, including reloading manuals, and these are more economical than buying all the items separately. Another reason to reload is the enjoyment and education you gain by entering this parallel shooting world. You'll need to thoroughly read your reloading manuals for both shotgun and rifle.

I extract a great deal of pleasure from reloading and consider the initial investment along with the time spent in reloading well worthwhile. I'm sure I don't save money at the end of the day but gain a lot of fun and satisfaction along the way.

Paul Miller

Q Can you tell me if there's anyone manufacturing chamber reamers, bore reamers and carbide rifling buttons in Australia. I know of all the big US players but do we have anyone in this country who is producing them in a commercial manner in either HSS or Carbide.

John Perrott, Qld

A I have canvassed this widely and there would appear to be no commercial manufacturer in this country. Several people made chamber-

ing reamers/buttons for their own use on a limited basis, but most said they were capable of manufacturing their own tooling though it wasn't viable, let alone making them for sale.

I spread the net wider and spoke to a couple of projectile, case and mould makers and it was the same story - they either employed toolmakers to make their gear but didn't consider it viable to make them for sale.

Greg Riemer

Q The article on suppressors by Daniel O'Dea (*Shooter*, February 2018) prompts me to ask the question: In South Australia, how can the average hunter buy a suppressor and where/how does one apply? Any information appreciated.

Ray, SA

A Daniel's article covered the subject very well and his assertion the authorities have problems with sound moderation has long been a subject of discussion in this country.

As it happens, the newly-enacted legislation in SA (The Firearms Act 2015 and Firearms Regulations 2017) make some provision for possession and use of what are termed 'sound moderators' (also known as suppressors and, as indicated by Daniel, previously wrongly referred to as silencers) but only under extremely limited circumstances. Interestingly, the Act refers to 'sound moderator' 47 times while the Regulations refer 60 times, which to me is indicative of a level of mistrust.

Sound moderators under SA law attract similar status as firearms in that they must bear a serial number and be registered and stored similarly. The Act defines the sound moderator as follows:

"Sound moderator means a device designed or adapted to be attached to, or comprising part of, a firearm to muffle the report when the firearm is fired and includes baffles, tubes or other parts that when fitted

together would comprise a sound moderator."

Section 39 of the Firearms Act 2015 makes it clear that possession of such a device is illegal unless the person has written approval from the Registrar of Firearms, which will only be approved for the following limited activities:

- Shooting pest species on Crown land where the agency or contractor genuinely needs to reduce sound levels and there are no alternatives;
- Use by a pest controller in a built-up urban environment where there's a genuine need and there are no alternatives;
- Possession by a dealer for supply to the above.

Regulation 67 enables the Registrar to impose further conditions and limitations to this. So Ray, the short answer to your question, for the average hunter or farmer, is that we aren't permitted to own or use sound moderators or suppressors.

Geoff Smith

Q I was setting up a target to do some sighting-in at my local range and the shooter next to me pinned a blank piece of paper to his target frame. I asked politely what he was going to achieve with that and his explanation made perfect sense. Maybe one of the Top Shots panel would like to enlighten your readers on his unusual technique.

Noel, ACT

A Your fellow shooter was trying to achieve the smallest possible group and was probably doing some short-range load development. You didn't mention the distance but I'm guessing it was out to 100m or so.

The technique involves firing a shot at the centre of the piece of paper then using that bullet hole as the aiming mark for subsequent shots. I say short-range load development, however depending on his scope's magnification and calibre of the cartridge under test, he may be able to see

bullet holes beyond 100m under the right atmospheric conditions.

The thinking behind this technique is if you aim at too large an aiming mark, the scope reticle can move around inside that aiming mark, potentially spreading the shots out over the same area. Ideally you'll have a scope powerful enough where you can fit the dot (preferably) in the centre of the reticle over the bullet hole.

Rod Pascoe

Q Regarding reloading for the British 303, I'm thinking of buying a reloading press and have watched quite a few YouTube clips but the choice is daunting to say the least. Most of my shooting is target/military out to 100, 200 and 300yds.

At the moment I'm using a Lee Classic 303 loader (Mexican loader, Manuel LOL, the model where you have to use a mallet). I've had a couple of caps discharge when capping early on (yes, I wear safety eye-wear) and put it down to operator error. Not that I mind this process but I'd like something in a press-style. Can you steer me in the right direction.

Chris Parris, via email

A Chris, if you're happy with the Lee loader you already use then I'd buy their Lee Breech Lock Challenger Press which is a strong 'O'-type design. I would also buy their Lee RGB dies as I have used them myself for many years without any problems. As you say the choice is daunting, but Lee products are well priced and good quality.

Barry Wilmot



Talbot on target! Benchrest

Communications Officer Sam Talbot continues his mission to shoot the SSAA disciplines, turning his attention this month to Benchrest

Coach Brendan Atkinson took me under his wing this month to learn the fine art of Benchrest shooting. Having represented Australia many times, including at this year's Benchrest World Championships in Canada, Brendan is well qualified to teach me a thing or two.

In fact he's a world champion in his own right, having been part of the Australian team which famously toppled the US powerhouse - the only time it has been done in the history of the sport. But enough about Brendan, this is about me, or at least me and Benchrest.

This discipline is performed using a firearm resting on a front and rear sandbag to ensure the rifle remains as still as possible when aiming and firing. Targets are typically placed at 100 and 200 yards and the object is to shoot the smallest five-shot (sometimes 10) group possible, meaning bullseyes don't matter but consistency does.



Sam uses the joystick with Brendan's custom-built rifle.



Sam learns about centrefire.

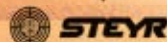
The ultimate Benchrest round would be to place all shots through the very same hole but, according to Brendan, in the 70 years of the sport's existence this has never been done although sometimes they go really close, so close in fact that a back target must be used to ensure all five shots have actually been fired.

But counting shots isn't the biggest challenge in Benchrest, it's mastering the wind. Reading the wind is a true art form and can severely impact what happens to your shot between leaving the rifle and arriving at the target. Learning to shoot can take a few minutes but reading wind and weather conditions can take a lifetime.

Rimfire v centrefire

Benchrest can be separated into rimfire and centrefire and these can be broken down into heavy and lightweight classes.





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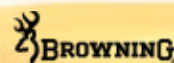
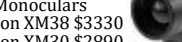


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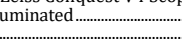
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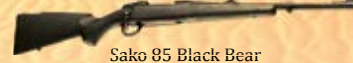
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Talbot on target!

There are other classes but if you're a beginner, rimfire is the place to start. If after shooting rimfire you decide Benchrest is for you, it's probably time to move on to centrefire.

Distances and accuracy increase dramatically with centrefire but so do ammunition requirements. While rimfire is shot with any old box of .22LR, centrefire requires reloading - and buying from the store isn't really an option. Initially this was enough to scare me off as I just want to shoot, not reload, but as Brendan demonstrated, reloading is as much a part of the sport as aiming and shooting and is not quite as tricky as it seems.

Benchrest isn't cheap

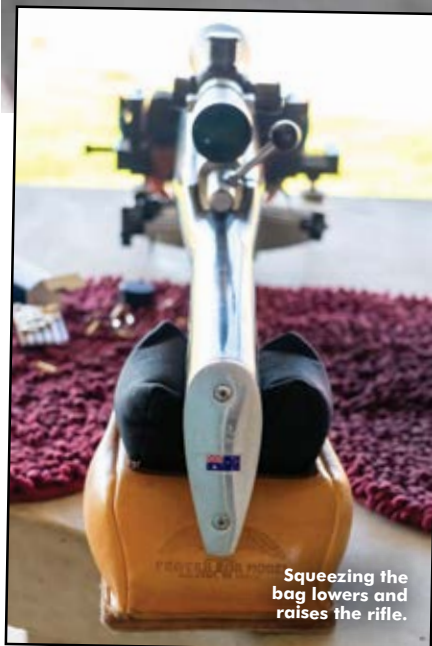
"Rifles used for Benchrest are made with the sort of precision Formula One cars are put together," said Brendan. "Take a bunch of components and marry them up so the synergy produced will win the day . . . if the operator does their job."

He reckons most of the top Benchrest components come from the US and aren't cheap, a serious custom-built rifle likely to set you back about \$5000. Most of these are chambered for the 6mm PPC cartridge, a modified version of an old .220 Russian case.

Luckily for me I didn't need to worry about that as set up in front of me was a rimfire Sako P94S ready to go. Before I did any shooting, Brendan made a point of having me test the trigger as Benchrest shooters like theirs extremely light, and even with the expectation of a super-light trigger I was stunned at how easily it went off. Similar to many Benchrest rifles, the



Most Benchrest competitors use tuners (weights at the end of the barrel) to help minimise vibration.



Squeezing the bag lowers and raises the rifle.

Sako trigger took just 1.5 ounces to activate but after a bit of practice I got used to it.

Shooting groups

I had the front of the rifle on a rest and the butt on a sandbag. My right hand operated the trigger while my left hand squeezed and held the bag which secured the rifle and made it move up and down. The wind wasn't much of a factor so we didn't even put wind flags out. Typically these are positioned down the range so competitors can factor in the all-important element but with no flags all my focus was on being steady, straight and consistent.

The flags wouldn't have made a difference anyway as I shoot with one eye closed, a less than ideal arrangement given one eye is supposed to be on the target and one on the flags, yet despite my improper technique I still managed some decent groups.

The first ammo used for rimfire was Standard Velocity CCI followed by slightly more expensive match grade ammo. The difference between a \$10 box and a \$25 box of ammo was noticeable on the targets but was it \$15 of improvement? Well, in my opinion, you should do as the name suggests and use the more expensive ammo only for matches.

Centrefire groups

For centrefire shooting I used Brendan's custom-made firearm from the US. The striking red rifle was completed with a two-ounce trigger, Kelby stock, Stolle action, 60x power March scope and of course uses the 6PPC cartridge, Brendan explaining this is considered the most



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Talbot on target!

accurate shortrange cartridge in Benchrest shooting. I was relieved to hear that as I figured I'd need all the extra accuracy I could muster, given the targets were being moved from 50 yards out to 100.

The rifle was paired with a new joystick rest which fits both ends, leaving the shooter with just a joystick to control the rest and therefore the aim. I enjoyed using the joystick as I felt I could be even more accurate.

At this point I also tried shooting 'free-recoil', meaning the only part of your body that touches the rifle is your finger on the trigger. In theory this sounds like it should be extremely accurate given no extra friction is being applied from the shooter's body, however I found it a little uncomfortable and performed better when I had my shoulder slightly on the butt of the rifle. For me a little extra friction helped but usually competitors try and limit this as much as possible. Some even put baby powder on their cheeks to try and minimise friction, which is why you might see shooters walking around with white faces at Benchrest competitions.

Competition time

After practice it was time for real competition. I was given two targets to shoot the best grouping I could and after a couple of sighting shots was ready to attempt my first group. I can't stress how good my first four shots were. Unbelievably good. All four almost went through the bullseye and barely broke any excess paper after the first shot. Thinking I'd just about mastered Benchrest I took my fifth shot exactly as I thought I had the first four but to my shock it flew high and wide and the size of my



group was effectively doubled. Oh well, it was still a decent group.

My next target was a bit more erratic over the five shots but ultimately worked out to be slightly smaller than my first

group so we reached for the measuring tape (callipers), used to measure from the edges of the two farthest-apart holes. Since the size of your group is actually measured from the middle of the holes, you then subtract the diameter of the bullet to find the size of your group. In my case this was roughly .420 of an inch. I'll take that.

Reloading

As mentioned earlier, loading ammunition is as much a part of Benchrest as shooting groups, at least for centrefire. Competitors often do their loading just before they shoot as changes in temperature can require slight adjustments to their loads.

"Some powders definitely perform better in certain temperature ranges and bullets are obtained from many custom makers, and right now the factory Berger bullets are very popular," said Brendan. "There are several manufacturers in Australia who produce world-class bullets for Benchrest though."

To give a basic idea, the reloading process starts with taking your used brass



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Talbot on target!

and knocking out the old primer so you can replace it with a new one. You then add powder, the bullet, seat it and you're good to go. Or something like that. There are a few more tools and steps involved, especially when you start to really understand the subtle differences your ammunition can have.

Cleaning

Many of us (me at least) only think to clean our rifles every couple of months or so, but most Benchrest shooters clean theirs after every group. The technical term for this is 'removing the by-products of combustion' but luckily the process is pretty straightforward. After shooting a group we pushed three white patches through the barrel, gave the barrel a quick scrub with a bronze brush before finishing off with some more white patches and kept feeding them through until they started coming out more or less clean. "If you don't clean the barrel it will maintain accuracy for about 35-40 shots and the reason we don't wait that long is because it becomes significantly harder to clean by then," said Brendan.

Silver medal

Like many disciplines, Benchrest has awards and you can win silver, gold, ruby and diamond medals. The medal that caught my eye was the silver award, given for shooting a 'five-shot group at 100 yards which measures less than one-inch centre to centre'. I figured my grouping of .420 should meet the criteria for the award, so the range officer signed my target and I filled out the appropriate form (which



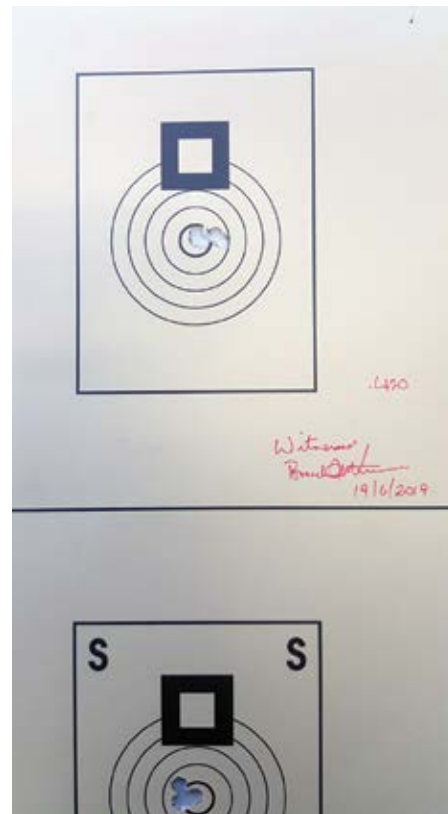
you'll find at ssaa.org.au) and sent it off.

About a week later I received a letter and am happy to report that after more than a year of shooting Talbot on Target I've finally won something - the Silver Medal Award for Benchrest! It's always nice to win something and with shooting there are lots of opportunities to do that or to reach some other milestone. I'd go as far to say it's one of the best things about the sport.

Wrap-up

Despite the silver medal it's unlikely I'll be spending \$5000 on a custom-made Benchrest rifle any time soon, although the discipline now has a special place in my heart. I'm interested in learning more about how to read the wind but first I need to practise shooting with both eyes open.

Benchrest is a lot of fun and challenges competitors on a technical and intuitive level. It tests their ballistics knowledge as well as ability to read the elements and if you're curious at all I recommend you give it a try. And one last 'thank you' to Brendan Atkinson for all his expert assistance at the range and in general. ●



The award-winning group signed by the range officer ready to be sent off.



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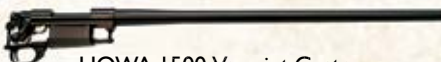
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A large, weathered log lies horizontally across the middle of the frame, resting on sandy, dry ground. The log's surface is deeply textured with concentric growth rings and numerous knots. The background is a vast, flat, arid landscape under a pale sky, with sparse, low-lying vegetation and a single small tree in the distance.

Hats off to the resilient rabbit

Sam Garro

With one of the worst wide-spread droughts on record, you wonder how rabbits could survive Australia's harsh and unforgiving conditions. Yet somehow they do, defying the odds with the occasional one or two or small, widely distributed pockets managing to hang on and bounce back with the first rains and improving circumstances.

Our trip to a property in western NSW was planned with minimal expectation - if we were lucky we might cross the odd rabbit and collect some yabbies from the dams. And while we always welcome the getaway no matter the situation, our aim was more to provide moral support to the

property owner and manager under the worst drought conditions they've ever experienced.

It's nice to go in good times but also appropriate to visit when things aren't so promising. We really couldn't provide any physical assistance as much of the repair and maintenance works on the property had already been attended to but they appreciated our presence and goodwill.

Normally I wouldn't mention a largely uneventful road trip but as we drove from Victoria into NSW, particularly from Deniliquin onwards, we had to travel at a much reduced speed as both sides of the highway were littered with the skeletal

remains of kangaroos and some more recent, as stark testament to the severity of the drought. These were potential hazards.

On the property not a blade of green grass could be seen, just dust, saltbush and dry scrub country, an often too familiar scene in the Australian Outback. Small flocks of sheep sheltered under the shade of gum trees to escape the relentless heat of the sun which continued to bake the ground already cracked and desperate for water.

Except for dams that were periodically fed through underground pipes or a direct excavated channel from the billabong, everywhere else, including creeks and anabranches was dry. Crows, with their





Even myxomatosis could not curb Australia's rabbit problem near Adelaide in 1961.



Sam Garro inspects rabbit warrens looking for signs of activity.

Hats off to the resilient rabbit

lethargic caws, seemed to hang around as if waiting for their next victim. The scene had deteriorated so badly the property owner couldn't even irrigate or flood a few paddocks to promote fodder or grass to nourish his sheep, instead forced to grain feed them with a little hay on the side, a far more expensive exercise. All up, a depressing state of affairs.

Despite all the hardship they remained stoic and made us feel welcome. But the bare dust bowl property holding remnant flocks of sheep and the last few bales of hay was disheartening. They live in hope like many others on the land, encouraged by the forecast of rain by the following weekend and hopefully more to come.

Over the next three days we drove around the property in early morning and late evening, visiting places where rabbits were previously found in good numbers. We found the majority of burrow entrances on the sandy hills were either collapsed from roaming cattle and sheep or partially covered in cobwebs with rabbits tending to retreat to the seclusion of burrows within the tall, dense saltbushes or scrub.

Each day, despite their hiding, we encountered the odd rabbit or two scampering from some growth and momentarily

stopping at a distance, enough for the .22LR or .222 Rem to do its job. For our efforts we ended up with a tally of nine before heading home, figuring if the forecast rain came with more to follow, the rabbits would recover quickly as does most wildlife when things improve.

So how do they stay alive? It's not so much a question of what they'll eat but rather what they won't eat - survival instincts in wildlife can be pretty powerful. Rabbits are known to gnaw the bark of saplings and trees, crawl up dense bushes to reach leaves, dig for roots and ingest other normally unpalatable material. For water or moisture, apart from dampness in leafy matter, they can lick the droplets or dew condensing on grass and plants promoted by the cold night air.

Given the right setting and without human intervention, rabbits can bounce back like an out of control wildfire. Over a hunting period of some 35 years on another property in NSW, on any given trip we'd be lucky to spot more than two or three rabbits. The seasons varied from parched, cracked soil to one year surprising us with a carpet of lush green grass spreading the entire width and breath of the 65,000-acre estate. ➤



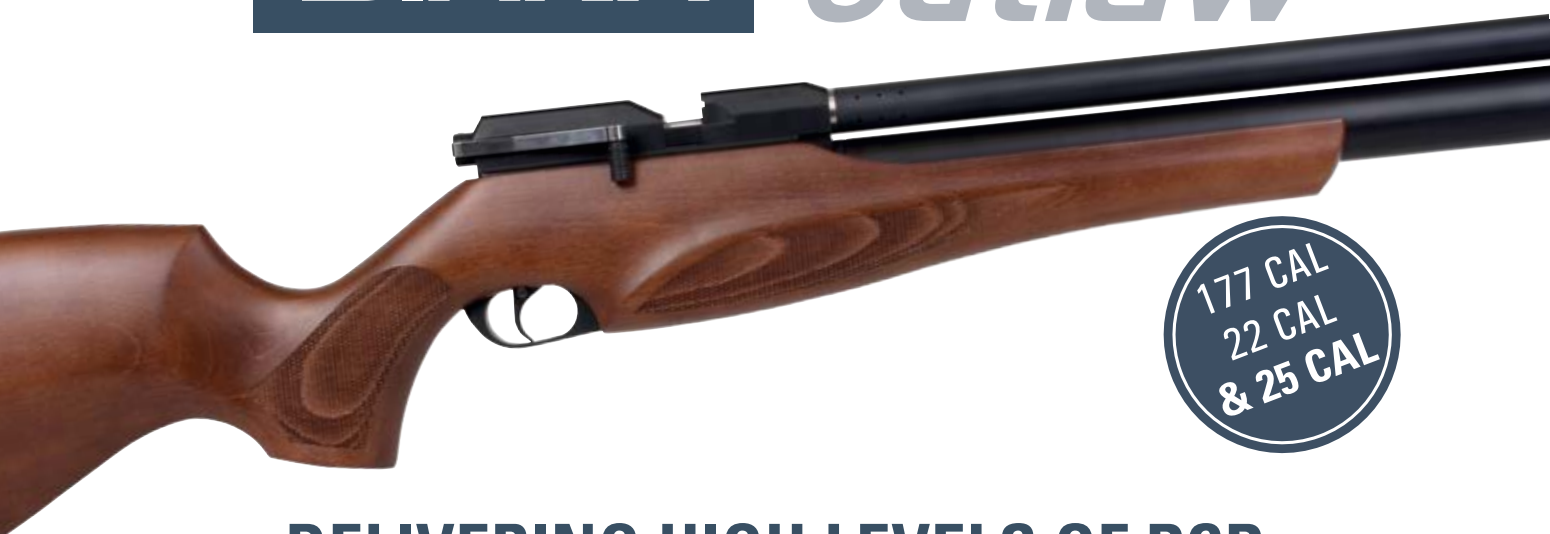
The odd rabbit scrambling between bushes with burrows located nearby.



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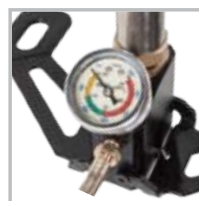
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Hats off to the resilient rabbit

In 1992 we'd been absent from the area for about 18 months and didn't expect anything unusual as far as game was concerned. Our arrival at the campsite left us gobsmacked. Rabbits were everywhere, from fully grown adults to kittens scampering about and darting in and out of warrens. Seemingly unperturbed, they ventured throughout the day on to the plains and open areas and with the cover of surrounding scrub and forest became easy prey.

I can't tell you how many we bagged between five of us, we simply lost count but fortunately carried plenty of ice to recover the meat. Rabbits were a feast for man and animal alike. Bulky goannas, more than ever seen in previous hunts, 2m in length or more from head to tail, strolled along in a swaying snake-like gait. Normally shy and spotted up tall gums, they were out in search of an easy meal, even brazenly snatching one or two shot rabbits we were slow to retrieve. At the entrance to some burrows we were faced with the chilling sight of a coiled up brown snake which we left undisturbed.

One evening as we neared the home-stand, for some 50m in front of us the ground literally moved with rabbits as they weaved among and across each other, something that had to be seen to be believed. My only regret was I didn't have a camera to capture the moment. After that trip I never experienced the phenomenon



Sam Garro with a ginger rabbit bagged outside a salibush.



Sam Garro and his mate Tony kept busy during the 1992 phenomenon.

again, the next year they were all but gone. Forced to take action to preserve feed and protect his livestock from potential broken legs in the deep and collapsing warrens, the property owner employed a heavy machine contractor to deep hoe the burrows. Together with other eradication measures this had the desired effect, although it was an expensive exercise.

Historically, today's wild rabbit is descended from the introduced domesticated European rabbit brought with the First Fleet as a source of food and later wild rabbits for hunting purposes. As far back as the 1930s in vast farmed but untamed country, rabbit numbers escalated to plague proportions, thriving in favourable surroundings.

The out-of-control critters were corralled by farmers and townsfolk into the corner of paddock fences and clubbed. While considered a destructive and problem pest, on the positive side they were a means of protein and sustained many on the land during the Great Depression.

At other times their numbers were so great they eventually perished through

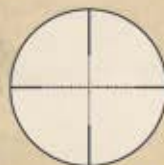
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Hats off to the resilient rabbit

starvation once the feed disappeared and the water dried up, strewn across the bare ground like pancaked remnants of fur. Still, enough always somehow survive to rebound when the climate improves.

They're a resilient creature when you consider everything man has thrown at them from poisoned baits, organised shoots and ferreting, ripping up burrows to the introduction of the Calicivirus virus and myxomatosis. With each generation of young, the rabbit has grown resistant or immune to the viruses, necessitating development of new strains and considering other eradication measures. They've even survived predatory animals and birds of prey such as foxes, cats, dingoes, hawks and eagles.

Like many sporting shooters and hunters who never lose the excitement and look forward to a rabbit hunt, and having proper regard and consideration for the plight of farmers and property owners, I'm glad the humble rabbit remains to provide an enjoyable sport and game meat for the table.

The modest rabbit was the first small game I bagged with a Mossberg single-barrel, bolt-action shotgun when I gained my shooter's licence at age 18 and remains a fond memory. I've since pursued bigger game from foxes to Asiatic water buffaloes

but still enjoy rabbit hunts with my Brno 2 .22LR, Sako .222 Rem or Beretta 686S over-and-under 12-gauge.

For a young shooter under the supervision of a licensed adult it's a wonderful experience and introduction to hunting.

It may be small game but the stalk and sometimes spontaneous reactive shooting at a rapidly departing rabbit can be exciting, rewarding and an everlasting memory. It can also lead to bigger and more challenging hunts in later life as it did with me. ●



Sam Garro hangs rabbits in the net back in 1992.

An advertisement for Vertex H-130 outdoor gear. The background is a misty mountain landscape. In the center, a person is seen from behind, wearing a camouflage jacket and a black hood. The word "VERTEX" is written in large white letters across the top, with "H-130" in smaller white letters to the right. Below the brand name, there are several logos: "OUTPOST", "DWR", "YKK", "HYDROSHIELD", and "REALTREE". On the left side, there is a vertical orange logo for "SPIKA". On the right side, the text "EVERYTHING PROOF." is written in white. At the bottom, there is a line of text: "RRP \$315.00 // FIND INFO + STOCKISTS AT // VERTEX.SPIKA.COM.AU". In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for "HUNTER" with a stylized orange animal head.

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The Vortex Viper PST Gen II 5-25x50 FFP

Pete Kincade

When it comes to optical packages for the broadest array of hunting and shooting applications, it's hard to beat the variety, features and dollar value Vortex brings to the market. I was looking for a cost-effective rifle and scope combination for long-range culling shots in western Queensland and settled on a Howa with GRS Berserk stock in one of my favourite chamberings, the 6.5 Creedmoor.

As luck would have it, at about the same time *Australian Shooter* asked me to review a first focal plane target/tactical scope from Vortex. Shortly after that I had the good fortune to meet Goran Pehar of ExtraVision Australia, importer and distributor of the Vortex Optics brand.

Scope

I shared with Goran my challenge which was predominantly undisturbed, long-range feral pests including foxes, pigs, goats and wild dogs. The scope had to be tough as

I transport my rifles in racks on a Polaris four-wheeler, extreme dust and jarring the norm, not the exception. Goran was a wealth of knowledge, himself a keen long-range hunter at home and abroad and his choice of Vortex optic was the Viper PST Gen II 5-25x50, a first focal plane (FFP) scope aimed squarely at the target and tactical shooting markets.

With FFP, the reticle increases and decreases in size as magnification is varied. The advantage with this characteristic for long-range shots is the reticle subtensions used to counter wind drift and elevation remain the same at any magnification.

Reticle

Now we had the model of scope sorted, it was time to choose the reticle as the Vortex Viper PST Gen II series of tactical/target scopes can be had in either MRAD or MOA. I opted for the MRAD in the EBR-2C reticle, a hash-marked reticle that uses MRAD subtension lines for

ranging, holdover and windage correction. MRAD is an acronym for milliradian, a unit of angular measurement defined as a thousandth of a radian (0.001 radian). If this sounds complicated it's not, it's very simple. Think of MRAD this way - it's metric and if one click of turret adjustment equals 1cm on the target at 100m it will be 10cm at 1000m.

The reticle is glass-etched and illuminated, hash-marks well defined and easy to see in all conditions and the range of illumination suited brilliant sunlight through to night shooting under moonlight. There are 10 illumination settings with off positions between each setting to extend battery life.

Glass

What first stands out about the scope is the clarity of vision. Vortex uses extra-low dispersion (XD) glass in the Viper PST II series to give resolution and colour fidelity that provides crisp and sharp vision downrange. In addition, Vortex has its own



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The Vortex Viper PST Gen II 5-25x50 FFP

proprietary coatings called XR which fully multi-coat the lenses to increase light transmission.

This combined with their multiple anti-reflective coatings on all air-to-glass surfaces results in clarity that exceeds the scope's price-point. What's noticeable about this scope is the sharpness of the image around the edge of the lens. This is not a budget optic nor is it a premium priced one, but the edge clarity and overall image quality is more than you'd expect from scopes priced about \$2000.

In addition, eye relief is generous across the power range. The ample eye relief enables the recoil of more powerful, flat-shooting calibres to be handled comfortably and minimises image loss during recoil. Laser, glass-etched reticle lines are fine cut to lessen obstruction of the target view.

Hash-marks are cut in even finer lines and the main reticle structure is stronger to provide contrast, fast targeting stability and natural focus for shot placement in lowlight conditions.

I found the zero stop process simple and reliable. Parallax adjustment, the important tool to maximise image quality at any distance, was fine and sensitive regardless of magnification.

Turrets

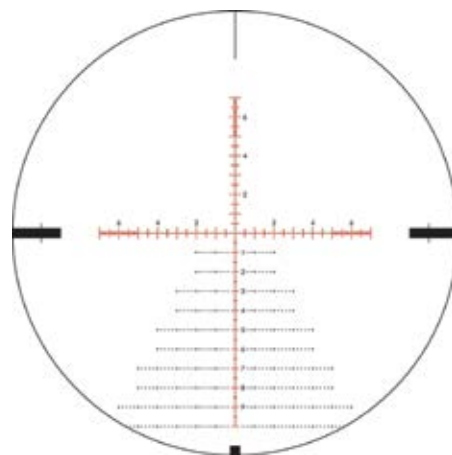
Turrets on an FFP scope used for long-range work generally cop a beating as they're exposed and used more frequently than they might be on a rifle employed predominantly for snap shooting. I couldn't fault the tactical-style turrets on the scope, they were click positive, easy to read and gave just the right amount of resistance when adjusting to ensure helpful changes to windage and elevation.

The turrets have a zero stop mechanism to prevent them from dialling below the sight-in range. Vortex calls its turret springs a 'Precision Force' and use premium components in the erector spring system to ensure maximum repeatability and ease of adjustment. Turret graduations are .1 MRAD which match to the reticle.

Construction

The scope is a one-piece, 30mm tube made from aircraft-grade aluminium which maximises lens alignment for optimal accuracy and visual performance and contributes to its overall strength and waterproofing. It's also Argon purged to prevent internal fogging.

Vortex claims the scope is rugged, shock-proof and can stand the rigours of military applications. I can attest to this as it bounced around on my Polaris for several months of



The EBR-2C MRAD reticle in the Vortex Viper PST II 5-25x50 FFP.

culling duties in western Queensland and not once did the zero alter nor did I experience any malfunction or evidence of wear and tear. External tube, lens housings and turret surfaces are hard-anodized in an attractive matte black. External lens surfaces are Armortek coated to resist scratching, oils, solvents and the inevitable dirt that hard work in dusty conditions attracts to scopes like a magnet. All Vortex products come with a lifetime warranty. ➤



Pete Kincade, left, and Goran Pehar 'shake on the plate' at 850m.



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The Vortex Viper PST Gen II 5-25x50 FFP

Conclusion

The scope market for hunters and target shooters is rich with options and it can sometimes be difficult to know which way to go. After all, what really does make one scope better than another? Points to consider are warranty, value for money, features that match your requirements, lowlight performance, clarity, a ranging reticle that's easy to use and positive turret

adjustments that can stand the test of time. In this respect the Vortex Viper PST Gen II series of tactical/target scopes ticks all the boxes and more.

It has excellent eye relief, broad dioptre adjustment and a generous viewing box for bringing the reticle to the target quickly from prone and seated positions. Another aspect is the toughness of this scope. I used it under varying conditions over several

months and couldn't fault it. For hunters and target shooters looking for a great FFP scope, I don't think you'll go far wrong with the Vortex Viper PST Gen II 5-25x50. ●

Specifications (model as reviewed)

Brand: Vortex
Model: Viper PST Generation II
Magnification: 5-25
Objective lens diameter: 50mm
Eye relief: 3.4"
Field of view: 24.1'-4.8'/100 yards
Tube diameter: 30mm
Turret style: Tactical
Return to zero stop: Yes
Adjustment graduations: .1 MRAD
Travel per rotation: 10 MRAD
Max elevation adjustment: 20 MRAD
Max windage adjustment: 10 MRAD
Parallax range: 25 yards to infinity
Length: 16"
Weight: 884.5 grams
Price: \$1995



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Miroku

ML 11 Sport AC shotgun

Paul Miller

In our November 2018 magazine we reviewed the Miroku ML 11 Grade 1 Sporter which is imported by Outdoor Sporting Agencies of Melbourne. The ML 11 AC (All Clays) is an upgraded version with the same rib but a silver nitride action and adjustable stock. It also has some interesting stock dimensions which complement the concept of this being an all-round shotgun for most clay target disciplines.

I really liked the black blued action ML 11 and this latest All Clay version is a step up again, the gun having been further fine-tuned with the addition of an adjustable comb to make it as versatile as a competition shotgun can be.

Stock and fore-end

This ML 11 Sport AC features an oil-finished walnut stock with very neutral dimensions. The specification sheet shows

cast at heel is roughly 1mm and at toe approximately 3.75mm so there's virtually no cast that I could see and it fitted me well as a left-hander. My right-handed mates felt the same which confirmed its straight proportions.

It's close in size and feel to the legendary Browning B25 206 Sporter of a generation ago but with a medium high rib. We could all mount the gun comfortably and look straight along the rib and enjoy an upright head position and excellent view of the targets.

The well-made adjustable stock worked perfectly and while I didn't need to tweak it for Skeet or Sporting it would certainly be a benefit for anyone wanting to establish a Trap shooting setting to make the gun shoot higher, something like 70/30 rather than its current 50/50. For fine-tuning your head and eye position, the lateral adjustment to the comb would make an ideal fit

for the individual shooter. Stock measurements are a fine example of the lower end of Sporting/Skeet capacity, the stock having a 39.7mm drop at comb and 60.3mm drop at heel with 375mm length of pull. This bucks the modern trend towards a higher stock structure for Sporting and Skeet competition guns (35mm drop at comb and approximately 50mm drop at heel) which centre the patterns a little higher (say 60 per cent of the pellets above and 40 per cent below sight point).

The black ML 11 had slightly higher stock dimensions than this test gun and shot its patterns approximately 60/40. The addition of the adjustable comb increases the ML 11 All Clays' versatility enormously and allows further fine-tuning for perfect gun-fit and definitely allows for crossing between disciplines for those prepared to stick with one gun and do some patterning to see what settings suit best.

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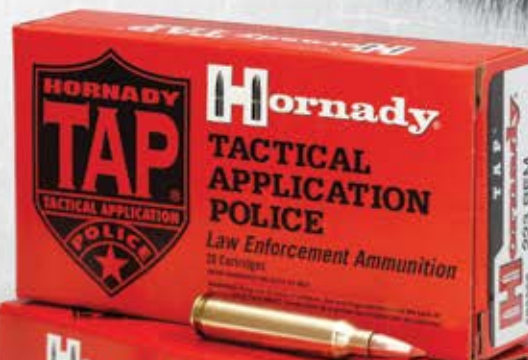
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Miroku ML 11 Sport AC shotgun

The stock has a thin Decelerator pad which is still good at soaking up recoil but we found this one a bit sticky when shooting gun down disciplines like Skeet and Sporting. It's comfortable when mounted in the shoulder pocket but would benefit from a slightly rounded profiling on the top edge of the heel to reduce the chance of catching on your shirt or shooting jacket as the gun is mounted.

Only a minor issue but one worth Miroku thinking about with a gun so cleverly designed as this. Like its black action brother you could easily replace this with a thicker Decelerator pad to extend the stock's length of pull, perhaps encouraging a fine fit for winter or summer shooting. The fore-end is of the beavertail-style compared to the schnabel or tulip-style of the black ML 11 and the jury is out on which is better. Frankly I like them both.

Beavertail fore-ends are usually associated with Trap guns where a precise and repeatable grip is an advantage but with the increasingly competitive nature of sporting clays world-wide, the feeling of precision in gun movement the beavertail provides is an interesting addition to a sporting gun, especially one specifically designed to cross over between disciplines.

Barrels and rib

The rib is 11mm wide over the action and tapers to 8mm at the muzzle, slightly broader than the black action ML 11 but this configuration in combination with the stock dimensions is the secret to this gun's outstanding performance. Once again the rib between the barrels is ventilated and there's one fine white centre bead and an effective green Hi-Viz front-sight at the narrower muzzle end.

Action

The ML 11 Sport AC features a silver



The classic Miroku boxlock action provides excellent ejectors and bank vault-like action lock-up.



High rib and beavertail fore-end make for a steady and precise-pointing gun.



Investor flush screw-in chokes and a Hi-Viz front-sight add to the appeal.



The well-shaped adjustable trigger ensures maximum finger comfort.



A robust and easily adjustable comb increases versatility and ensures a perfect fit.

nitride action with fine decorative full length border on both sides in an almost fluorescent orange accent. The words Miroku ML 11 Sport are engraved on the bottom of the action in the same colour scheme and may not be to everyone's taste but I rather liked it. Older readers may remember a B25 or B125 Browning trap gun called something like the GT with a similar look from about 30 years ago.

As noted before, Miroku shotguns have a full width hinge pin which provides a substantial surface area for smooth opening and closing.

Shooting impressions

Two of my friends and I tested the ML 11



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RIGBY



Rigby Highland Stalker

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Single Square Bridge - **\$13,249**

Double Square Bridge - **\$14,130**



Big Game

These outstanding rifles have classic Rigby design features, plus a robust, ergonomic stock shape with a higher comb for better fit and absorption of recoil. Featuring either 22" stepped barrel or lightweight 24" barrel, plasma nitride metalwork, Grade 5 Turkish walnut. Colour case hardened recoil bar and grip cap. Flame blued extractor, bolt release and magazine follower.

.375 H&H, .416 Rigby, .450 Rigby (SSB only)

Single Square Bridge - **\$16,389**

Double Square Bridge - **\$17,699**

Rigby 'Garhwal' Knife - \$1250

Hunting knife, handmade in England. Maple wood handle with mammoth ivory bolster, 4.75" blade with engraved Rigby logo. Individually serial numbered. Purchaser's name will be entered into the Rigby ledgers the same as those buying rifles. Handmade leather sheath.

Rigby 'Zambezi' Knife - \$985

Handmade in England exclusively for Rigby. Blue maple wood handle, 4.3" blade with engraved Rigby logo. Purchaser's name will be entered into the Rigby ledgers the same as those buying rifles. Handmade leather sheath.

Rigby 'Caprelous' Knife - \$985

Deer processing knife, handmade in England. Maple wood handle, 4" blade with engraved Rigby logo. Individually serial numbered. Purchaser's name will be entered into the Rigby ledgers the same as those buying rifles. Handmade leather sheath.

Rigby 'Limpopo' Knife - \$729

Deer processing knife with a fixed blade crafted from stainless steel. Each of these knives is engraved with the Rigby logo. Available in two colour options, plain bone or aubergine-stained bone. Handmade leather sheath.

Rigby 'Kruger' Knife - \$499

General purpose hunting knife with a fixed blade crafted from Damascus steel. The wide, slightly round blade and thumb rest make this the perfect knife for hunting out in the field. Engraved with the Rigby logo and individually serial numbered. Handmade leather sheath.

Rigby 'Caprivi' Knife - \$499

A hunting knife made from ebony wood with a fixed blade crafted from Damascus steel. The wide, slightly rounded blade and thumb rest make this the perfect knife for hunting in the field. Each of these knives is engraved with the famous Rigby 'double R' logo. This knife comes complete with a handmade leather sheath also embossed with the Rigby 'double R' logo.

Rigby Pocket Knife - \$499

Handy every-day pocket knife. Damascus steel backlock folding blade with engraved Rigby logo and individually serial numbered. Purchaser's name will be entered into the Rigby ledgers the same as those buying rifles. Handmade leather sheath.



Rigby Safari Boots - \$639

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Rigby Classic

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Rigby Baseball Cap - \$45

Classic cotton baseball cap embroidered with the Rigby 'Double R' logo. Available in blue, green and black.



Rigby Canvas Sling - \$285

Canvas rifle sling with leather ends, embossed with the Rigby 'Double R' logo. Hand-made in South Africa.



Rigby Silent Sling - \$199

This hand-sewn leather rifle sling has been made with loop ends to fit on to standard sling swivels. The same style of rifle sling is also available with leather thong ends.



Rigby A Grand

Tradition - \$89

Hardcover 203-page book setting out the history of Rigby, from its origins in 18th century Dublin to 2011.

Written by historians and Rigby enthusiasts Silvio Calabi, Steve Helsey and Roger G Sanger.



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Miroku ML 11 Sport AC shotgun

Sport on Skeet targets shot gun down. The issue of the slightly sticky recoil pad and shape aside, it handled remarkably well and gave that particular feel of being in control of the targets rather than the other way round.

This gun is expected to retail for about \$3100, excellent value for such a well-designed and versatile shotgun. I believe it

can be had with a basic plastic Negrini-style case for about another \$100 or a combination lock case for \$160. A genuinely impressive competition gun that comes highly recommended.

For a comprehensive review of the earlier Miroku ML 11 Sport see *Australian Shooter*, November 2018. ●

Specifications:

Manufacturer: BC Miroku, Japan
Model: ML 11 Sport AC (All Clays) limited to 50 guns
Gauge: 12-gauge, 3" chambers
Action: Box-lock inertia cocking
Trigger: Single selective, tang safety, two spare trigger shoes
Barrel length: 30" with 3" chambers
Rib: Medium height 10mm max height tapering down to 6mm. 11mm wide tapering to 8mm at muzzle. Mid white bead and green Hi-Viz front-sight
Chokes: Four Invector Plus, quarter, half, three-quarter and full
Stock and fore-end: Attractive walnut with oil finish, medium pistol grip and beavertail fore-end.
Stock dimensions: 39.7mm at comb and 60.3mm at heel. Neutral cast with 375mm (14.75") length of pull.
Weight: Approximately 8lb or 3.7kg subject to walnut density
Accessories: Choke wrench, instruction manual.
RRP: Approximately \$3100 but shop around
Distributor: Outdoor Sporting Agencies, Melbourne



Accessories include a choke wrench and two extra trigger shoes. Choke containers are marked for steel shot use.

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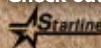
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Lyman's Case Trim Xpress gives rifle reloaders the speed and accuracy that they have been looking for when trimming cases! The unit has its own power source, and a strong variable speed motor, so there is no need to use power drills or purchase separate motors. By using bushings that contact on the shoulder of bottle neck type cases, the Case Trim Xpress will quickly and cleanly trim your brass by simply pushing the case against the long-lasting carbide cutter. Comes with 10 popular calibre bushings.

BRASS SMITH 500 METAL RELOADING SCALE

The Lyman Brass Smith 500 Metal Reloading Scale offers all the features that serious reloaders are looking for. It is magnetically dampened and built upon a sturdy aluminium body which reduces vibrations and ensures accuracy. In addition, the beam features black markings with a white background for easy reading throughout its 505 grain capacity.



BRASS SMITH ALL-AMERICAN 8-STATION TURRET PRESS

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Real Avid offers real value

Daniel O'Dea



The Gun Tool Max comes in a blister pack with features on display.

We recently took a look at some new products from US firm Real Avid who offer an array of practical cleaning and shooting accessories. Here are a few of the highlights.

Gun Tool Max

I guess we all like gadgets and there's none better than a multi-tool. Since my introduction as a boy to the Swiss Army knife I've had a fascination with these tools which are compact and portable but capable of fulfilling multiple roles. There would be no MacGyver without one!

In the Real Avid Gun Tool Max you have a multi-tool specifically designed for shooters and offering 37 functions in one handy package. It incorporates commonly

used items required to service and maintain your rifle, pistol or shotgun.

The main feature is a set of needle-nose pliers the handles fold around. These are 'open sprung' meaning they favour the open position to aid single-handed operation and I was happy to see they held a tight tolerance and the fine jaw teeth meshed together. It's a small detail but something often lost on cheaper multi-tools. The pliers also feature a Carbide Cutter for cutting wire and such.

Recessed between the scales in the handle on one side is a 3/32" pin punch which is removable via 8-32 threads and there's also a bottle opener that incorporates rounded and flat carbon scraping surfaces. Lastly on this side is a wide, almost oval-shaped blade that holds

multiple functions - spanner cuts for 4mm, 5mm, 1/4" and 3/8" nuts, a flat blade head for scope, elevation and windage adjustment and a series of machined notches that act as a universal choke wrench for .410, 28, 20, 16, 12 and 10-gauge shotguns.

Jumping to the other side is a 3.25"-long 440 stainless steel drop point knife blade with a thumb assist stud to aid single-handed operation and it also locks in the open position by a sprung-loaded plate in the frame which again can be used with a single hand for closing.

Moving along, you have a curved pick also made for removal in 8-32 standard thread. I noted the pick is threaded 8-32 female whereas the pin punch on the other side is 8-32 male thread, meaning if you wish to use the tool to hold either standard

Air Rifle Field Target

The challenge of the SSAA Air Rifle Field Target discipline comes from shooting a relatively low powered air rifle at targets over distances that are unknown to the competitor. Success depends on marksmanship skills and the ability to accurately estimate range. The first international events took place in the mid-1980s, involving UK and US shooters followed by Norway and Germany.



Firearms and categories

The rifles used in Lever Action competitions fall into Classic Calibre or Open Calibre categories.

Classic Calibre essentially requires a centre-fire rifle as-issued having a two-piece wooden stock and traditional open-type iron sights and chambered for any factory-produced cartridge by 1938.

Open Calibre is divided into two separate events at the National level, Centrefire and Rimfire, where competitors need two lever-action rifles. The Open Centrefire event allows any calibre for which a centrefire rifle is available, while the Open Rimfire event permits .22LR, .22 Magnum and .17HMR calibres.

Targets

Targets used in the Classic Calibre match are all contour animal profiles, with score zones marked on vital areas from 10 to five. The competition is shot over 100, 50 and 25m distances using the stances of any field shooting positions, including standing unsupported, sitting unsupported, standing post rest and sitting post rest. The course of fire can vary from five minutes to 15 seconds for five shots, and typically consists of 35 rounds.

Open Calibre match targets are usually a combination of the 50m Precision Slow Fire Pistol target and a number of animal profile targets, consisting of 50 rounds. A typical course of fire for an Open Calibre event includes the 50m Precision Slow Fire Pistol target, with five shots in five minutes for each target. The same target is used for the rapid-fire events, five shots in 15 seconds at 50m for Centrefire and five shots in 10 seconds at 25m for Rimfire.



Lever Action



SSAA Lever Action aims to improve hunting marksmanship skills and includes animal profile and traditional paper ring targets. Lever Action began in the late 1960s when SSAA members wishing to shoot black powder competition learned that there were a number of lever-action rifles that could be used.





Matches

Air Rifle Field Target is a simulated field-shooting event that lends itself to a bush-type environment, though it may be contested on a more traditional range line. The range has at least 10 'lanes' up to a maximum of 25, with a minimum of two and a maximum of five targets per lane.

Targets must be the 'fall-when-hit' type of various sizes and may be made of wood and/or steel and be of any configuration. The 'hit zone' must be circular and of a contrasting colour to the faceplate. Targets must be resettable from the firing line, and placed at ranges from 9 to 50m.

Scoring is one point for each hit and a zero for a miss. A hit is awarded when a target falls. Any movement of the plate which does not result in the target or hit zone falling is a miss. All targets are shot in numerical order and any shot out of sequence is scored as a miss.

Firearms

Air Rifle Field Target caters for both springer and precharged pneumatic (PCP) air rifles. The five firearm classes include Open Air Rifle, Open PCP Air Rifle, Open Springer, International PCP and International Springer. Springer air rifles generate their power via a large spring/gas ram and piston. Alternatively, PCP air rifles generate their power by means of an onboard chamber of compressed air or gas.





Daniel O'Dea used the Gun Tool Max to install a detachable magazine kit to his Howa 1500.

bore bushes or mops, male or female variants can be accommodated.

The head of the unit holds an oversized flat blade screwdriver and three-position fold out bit driver, the large screwdriver blade folding out to 90 degrees. The main bit driver has a sprung-loaded lock to hold it in place at closed, 90 or 180-degree positions and can hold one of six double-sided (12) bits including T10, T15, T20 Torx, #00, #1, #2 Phillips, 3/16, 3/32 Flat and 1/8", 3/32", 5/32", 9/64" Allen types. The unit comes with a ballistic nylon sheath which holds the spare driver bits

bandolier-style on the face. Note the sheath has a large press studded belt loop and provision for mounting to Molle webbing systems for tactical and military operators.

The hinge pin for the bit driver shaft appears to be shaped as a glass breaker and the scale side hinge pin on the same side acts as a tap hammer for punch pins. With one whole tool side folded out you have an overall length of about 210mm which can act as a handle for hammering or extended length for the bit driver if required.

Real Avid have a range of multi-tools and as well as the Gun Tool Max there's the Gun Tool Pro-X, the Standard Gun Tool and we'll check out the Pistol Tool in the next issue of *Australian and New Zealand Handgun* magazine. Gun Tool Max RRP \$139.95.

Bore Boss

The Real Avid Bore Boss system is clever and unique in design. At its core is a 'pull-through' bore cleaning system which includes a coated stainless-steel cable, phosphor bronze bore brush and braided mop. This concept of a single pass-style cleaning system is nothing new with various bore snakes on the market. What is distinctive is the Flex-Case Handle which acts as a handle and storage case to keep the system clean between use.

Reminiscent in appearance of a fishing hand reel it presents as a rounded hard



Bore Boss comes in all popular calibre size listings for shotgun, rifle and pistol.

plastic disc with rubberised fold-over seal. Folding the seal back finds the cable and mop neatly wound around the main assembly, the core holding a clear hollow shaft in which sits the bore brush itself. To use the system, simply unwind the cable and pull the brush and cable out through the central shaft. A ball stop at the end of the cable feeds into a purpose-built slot at the base of the assembly and the rubberised seal can be folded back to the closed position to give an ergonomic handle to pull the cable through the bore.

When finished you fold the rubberised seal back, pass the cable through the central shaft and pull it through until the bore brush mates into the hollow then simply wrap the cable back around the assembly and fold the seal back over. This provides a practical and clean way of storing your pull through.

Bore Boss comes in most popular calibres for handgun, rifle and shotgun. The handgun and rifle kits have a universally sized disc assembly of about 80mm in diameter, shotgun kits 115mm in diameter. In either case the front face is clearly marked with the bore diameter or calibre the unit is for, providing easy identification if you have multiple calibres. Bore Boss RRP \$29.95.

Bore Light

I guess the name is self-explanatory in that we're looking at a light for inspecting bores. Now I'm sure as shooters a lot of us will have used our thumbnail, a cleaning patch or even a small piece of paper to reflect light into a bore to inspect the rifling. Many more have probably simply held their barrel up to the bright sky or a light bulb to do the same.

At times this might simply not be practical so a purpose-built bore light can be a

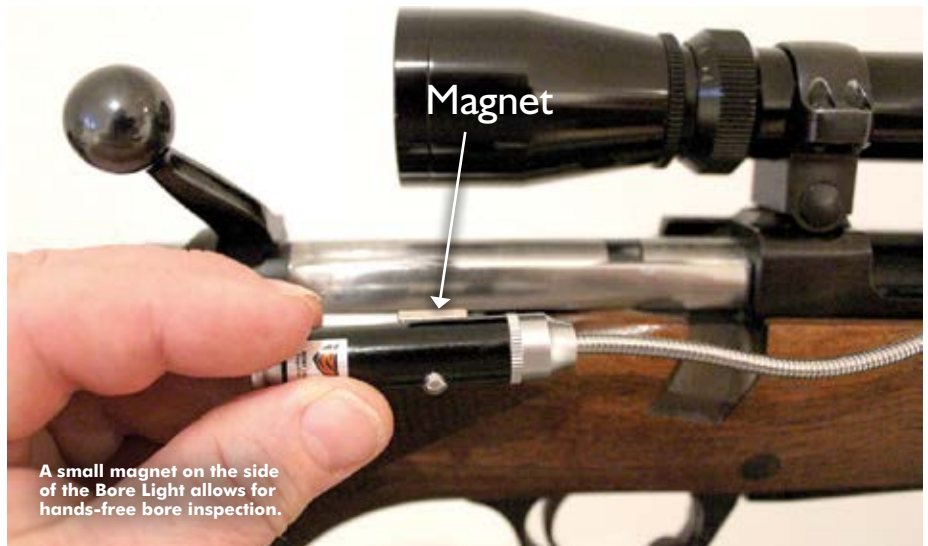


Like a proverbial Swiss Army knife, the Gun Tool Max offers 37 functions.

Real Avid offers real value



The Bore Light may be compact but is incredibly bright.



A small magnet on the side of the Bore Light allows for hands-free bore inspection.

handy piece of kit and the Real Avid version features a 5" (127mm) flex cable that can contort itself into the tightest of nooks and crannies to illuminate your bore or action. It also has a small magnet on the side of the unit to hold it in place on your firearm's chamber, barrel, receiver or any other piece of metal you can hang it off when you need that third hand while working on your favourite shooter.

The Bore Light runs on three LR44 button cell batteries which come installed and the high intensity LED beam is bright while battery life is quoted at eight hours continuous run time. Bore Light RRP \$29.95.

Smart Bench Block

As a firearms dealer I've done my fair share of basic armoury work and have had to remove and install enough pins on firearms to realise the value of a bench block. The Smart Bench Block is made from 'engineering-grade resin' that will not mar or damage the surface of your firearm. It features a hard-rubberised outer ring that keeps the block in place and stops it sliding across the bench while driving pins and there's a central groove for locating your barrel and six universal hole sizes to accommodate most likely pin removal situations you might encounter.

A clever design feature of the Smart Bench Block is an embedded magnet in part of the outer ring to grab and secure the pins that fall through after being punched. Speaking from experience there's nothing more frustrating than having that freshly punched pin roll off the table or disappear into the general bench clutter.

For the 1911 aficionados I found a hidden feature not advertised or shown on the packaging. On the underside of the block I

noticed a familiar recessed shape moulded into the centre of the unit. I checked and it was a standard 1911 Government barrel bush slot. Turn the block over, push your 1911 muzzle down and turn and the bush comes free. So we may just have the multi-tool of bench blocks. Smart Bench Block RRP \$39.95.

Summary

The products featured are a sample of those from Real Avid. In an age where sometimes you feel there's nothing new under the sun it's good to see truly innovative items with clever and unique features. Real Avid products are distributed in Australia by Powa Beam who specialise in spotlights and outdoor gear. More at powabeam.com.au ●



The Smart Bench Block has a 1911 Barrel Bush tool moulded into the base.



It has an imbedded magnet to catch pins as they're punched through the block.



The Smart Bench Block is perfect for removing a barrel link pin on a 1911.

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The Steyr Mannlicher Zephyr II rimfire sporting rifle

Con Kapralos

The longevity of firearms manufacturers is something that can be attributed to the global popularity of shooting sports and hunting. All the major players must keep abreast of developments in materials-science and how to use this information to produce items that are not only superior to their predecessors, but as accurate as ever. In the firearms marketplace, blink and you're left behind.

On the flipside we're lucky to have some excellent firearms of bygone eras which appear now and then and are highly collectable and the popularity of post-war sporting rifles has led to a few manufacturers 're-birthing' the classics of yesteryear. The much-respected Steyr Mannlicher of Austria last year released the Zephyr II rimfire rifle, a reincarnation of the original produced from 1955 to '71. Original Zephyr rimfires would certainly be collectables, standing side-by-side with Steyr

Mannlicher's centrefire rifles available after World War Two.

Importer Winchester Australia supplied *Australian Shooter* with a Zephyr II rimfire in .22LR (.17HMR and .22WMR also available) with a neat Meopta Meopro 3-9x42 riflescope and rings to suit along with a selection of Winchester .22LR rimfire ammunition.

Zephyr II action

This has all the hallmarks of Steyr Mannlicher in that its profile seamlessly flows with no harsh edges or scalloped flats or slabs, the designers having taken their lead from the layouts that encompass the centrefire models and scaled them down accordingly to produce the action honed for rimfire calibres.

The action on the .22LR measures 190mm and is 30mm wide with a generous ejection port which permits unhindered

extraction of chambered rimfire cases - fired or not. The top of the action has an integral dovetail fore and aft of the ejection port, which at 11mm wide lets you mount the scope in a straightforward way. The cylindrical profile of the receiver is engraved on the left-hand facet with the maker's name and country of origin as well as proof marks.

The bolt is highlighted by the trademark 'butter-knife' styled bolt handle which gives the rifle all the class it deserves, the bolt body highly polished. The receiver, bolt handle and shroud are treated with Steyr Mannlicher's patented MannoX finish which also extends to the barrel.

The barrel

This features another Steyr Mannlicher trait - the cold hammer forged unit with the forging 'striations' rotating along the length of the barrel which is just shy of 500mm



The Steyr Mannlicher Zephyr II rifle in .22LR as reviewed.



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The Steyr Mannlicher Zephyr II rimfire sporting rifle

and chambered for the .22 Long Rifle (LR) cartridge. It's of a sporter profile, tapering from 21.4mm at the knob form to 15mm at the muzzle, the crown neatly finished in a recessed target-style fashion which would assist greatly in the accuracy stakes. The barrel is pinned to the receiver in the usual way as with many of today's factory-produced rimfires.

Safety and trigger

The safety is a two-position unit retro-fitted behind the rear tang of the receiver. Its sliding button blocks the trigger sear when pushed rearward ('Safe') and allows the trigger to 'Fire' when in the forward position, a red dot visible to the rear of the button. The bolt can be cycled and the action cleared with the safety engaged.

The trigger unit is one of the best I've seen on a rimfire rifle with about 5mm of travel before breaking cleanly and crisply around the 900g mark, making accurate shooting a formality. A metal triggerguard/magazine housing is just what you'd expect on a fine European sporting rimfire and is Mannox finished to match the barrelled action.

Three screws are positioned through this bottom metal, two either side of the magazine well which anchors the stock to the barrelled action, and one behind the triggerguard which secures the rear of the guard to the stock itself.

The magazine

This is the only negative on what is otherwise a superb rifle. Being five-shot capacity it's made entirely from polymer and plastic with only the follower and spring being metal. It functions without fault and is



Open pistol grip showing 'fish-scale' chequering.

perfectly serviceable but on such a fine rifle that follows in the footsteps of the original Zephyr, a pressed-metal five-shot magazine could have been expected.

The stock

To say the stock on the Zephyr II is the rifle's identity would be spot-on. It's not only well finished in fine European walnut but is aesthetically superb and ergonomically without compromise. From afar it looks like a typical rimfire stock with a schnabel-tipped fore-end and straight combed, American-style profile but on closer look the stock surprises and shines. The oil-finished walnut has some very fine figures, further enhanced by the panels of 'fish-scale' chequering around the pistol grip and either side of the fore-end.

The fore-end has a heavily-scaled recess on either side for a super-comfortable grip with the leading hand, eliminating any bulkiness in feel. Likewise, these scaled segments flow along the underside of the stock all the way to the pistol grip featuring a recess which perfectly nestles the thumb and gives a comfortable grip and reach to the trigger blade.

The left side of the buttstock features a double-flame cheekpiece which looks great and brings the shooter's face to precisely the correct position for scope alignment. The buttstock has a 15mm sorbothane recoil pad and sling-swivel loops fitted. These are a European favourite whereas QD sling-swivel studs would give a neater look and be more practical, as a bipod can't be fitted to the front swivel loop.



Zephyr II in component form.



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The Steyr Mannlicher Zephyr II rimfire sporting rifle

The inletting of the stock is clean, well finished and sealed with oil, the action itself resting on the stock inletting with the barrel free-floating along its entire surface. On a rimfire no special recoil lug is necessary as recoil is almost negligible. The Zephyr II in .22LR measures 100cm and weighs 2.7kg.

At the range

Winchester Australia supplied a quantity of its highly-regarded .22LR rimfire ammunition in the Power Point and Browning BPR and I had some of the Winner, Subsonic and 555 loads for a good mix of high velocity, standard velocity and subsonic loads, Federal Hunter Match loads completing the testing regimen.

Being a .22 Long Rifle the standard testing distance of 50m was used with five 5-shot groups fired through the Zephyr II and a quick barrel clean between changes in ammunition. The rifle shot superbly with all loads easily shooting groups of 30mm or less, all of the averages under 25.4mm (1"). Some tiny 5-shot groups ranging from 11mm (Winchester 555) to 18mm (Winchester Power Point) were indicative that the cold hammer forged barrel and fine trigger unit has resulted in an excellent small game, informal target and plinking rifle. The Zephyr II not only has looks, it has performance too.

Summary

Steyr Mannlicher's marketing strategy to re-introduce the Zephyr rimfire marque with the Zephyr II has been a bold one in

Table 1. Range testing – Steyr Mannlicher Zephyr II rifle in .22 Long Rifle – groups at 50m			
Factory ammunition	Best	Worst	Average*
Federal Hunter Match 40gr Match HP	15mm	25mm	20mm
Winchester Power Point 42gr HP	18mm	27mm	24mm
Winchester 555 36gr HP	11mm	22mm	18mm
Winchester Winner			
Standard Velocity 40gr lead bullet	16mm	22mm	19mm
Winchester Subsonic 40gr HP	15mm	26mm	21mm
Browning BPR 40gr RN Target	10mm	18mm	14mm

**Average calculated from five 5-shot groups at 50m*



a marketplace full of quality rimfire rifles, many from highly esteemed European manufacturers. Muscling into the fray would require a seriously brilliant rifle and one with aesthetics and performance to match.

The Zephyr II was a joy to use, no more than you'd expect from Austria's rifle-making masters, and retails around the \$1395 mark. More at winchesteraustralia.com.au ●

The fore-end has 'fish-scale' chequering panels either side.

The metal grip-cap inletted into the stock is a nice touch.



Specifications

- Make:** Steyr Mannlicher, Austria
- Model:** Zephyr II
- Action:** Bolt-action repeating rifle, steel receiver and bolt, MannoX metal finish
- Calibres:** .22LR (tested), .17 HMR, .22 WMR
- Trigger/safety:** Single-stage trigger, two-position tang-mounted safety
- Barrel:** Cold-hammer forged sporter profile, 500mm in length, treated with patented MannoX finish
- Sights:** None supplied - clean barrel fitted
- Magazine:** Composite polymer/plastic with metal follower and spring. Capacity: Five rounds (in .22LR)
- Stock:** European walnut, oil finished, schnabel fore-end tip, 'fish-scale' chequering pattern, double-flame cheekpiece. Sling swivel loops and recoil pad fitted
- Overall length:** 100cm
- Weight:** 2.7kg
- Distributor:** Winchester Australia
- RRP:** Around \$1395





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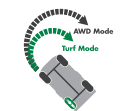
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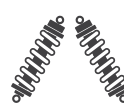
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Nitecore hunting kit the light fantastic

Chris Redlich

It seems a lifetime ago the yellow glow of a halogen spotlight swept the paddocks in search of unsuspecting feral eyes but now it seems you're in the minority if you don't own an LED mechanism of some description. They're much brighter compared to spotlights of yesteryear and anyone who's had the misfortune of being flashed by one from an oncoming four-wheel drive at night would begin to understand how intense they are really.

The new breed of LED (Light-Emitting Diode) technology lighting is far superior to the old halogen spotlights and the new MH40GTR ultra long-range dual-fuel hunting torch by Nitecore is no exception. Some who've been using halogen lights for decades may be reluctant to part with their trusted 'spotty' for economic reasons - old habits take a while to die but it's difficult to argue against the effectiveness of a modern, bright LED spotlight.

Being in the minority of halogen spotlight owners I didn't need my arm twisted to accept an offer to review the new Nitecore

hunting kit. Supplied in its hard-plastic carry case, the kit includes the Nitecore MH40GTR flashlight, instructions, warranty card, remote tactical pressure kit, holster, rifle mounting kit, Australian 240v AC power, 12-volt charger and two Nitecore Li-ion rechargeable batteries - everything you need to prepare your flashlight/spotlight for hunting.

Technicalities

For starters the MH40GTR flashlight is the latest and improved version of the Nitecore LED range of hand-held options and supersedes previous models, boasting a light concentration gain out to a maximum 1004m. The MH40GTR is fitted with the 1200 Lumen XP-L HI (high intensity) V3 Cree LED.

The specs didn't mean a great deal to me and I wanted to understand more and on browsing the Cree website (cree.com) I discovered the XP-L HI LED is the first of their new class optimised to deliver maximum candelas through secondary optics. The XP-L HI LED is the



The Nitecore MH40GTR hunting kit as supplied.



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Nitecore hunting kit - the light fantastic

first single-die LED to deliver more than 100,000 candelas in a four-degree beam with a 60mm diameter optic at 10.5W. Built on Cree's breakthrough SC5 Technology platform, the XP-L HI LED exceeds double the candelas of the industry's previous highest-performing single-die XP-L HI LED through the same optic.

The XP-L HI V3 Cree LED measures a whopping 252,000 candelas but the LED is not solely responsible for its high intensity brightness. As with all good-quality spotlights the 'reflectors' coating contributes heavily to the brightness and the reflector of the MH40GTR uses Nitecore's crystal coating technology combined with the XP-L HI V3 Cree LED to achieve outstanding light intensity.

All this talk of candelas can be confusing but to clarify, candela has replaced the obsolete unit of measurement known as Candle Power (one Candle Power was equivalent to .981 candelas). As you may be aware, the Nitecore MH40GTR is one serious piece of compact equipment, using a high-quality supplier to deliver the best possible lighting available, purely designed for night-time hunting.

Firstly the spotlight is roughly 257mm long, 25.4mm (1") in shaft diameter and is clutched nicely in your hand. Head diameter is 70mm which securely houses the 60mm toughened ultra-clear mineral glass lens with anti-reflective coating. Water resistant to 2m and impact resistant from 1m, its compact design, aerospace grade aluminium construction is sturdy and, weighing 374g, relatively light, an important consideration when you have a product designed to mount on your hunting rifle. Two supplied Nitecore 18650 rechargeable batteries are housed end to end, positive first through the opening on the shaft tail.

The on/off rubber button pressure



switch is easily located within reach on the rear of the tail. Nitecore Li-ion rechargeable batteries are boosted by plugging the charger into the inbuilt port which is protected from water and dust and located just rear of the torch head by unscrewing the hexagonal lock sleeve.

It's important to only use the supplied charger on the Nitecore batteries. The torch is designed to be dual-fuel and will accept aftermarket batteries but if you use any other brand of batteries such as the CR123 or RCR123 as stated clearly in the user manual, do not employ the supplied charger to reset them. There's also an inbuilt reverse polarity protection feature.

The torch has many features which are quite simple to use. By rotating the head you can switch between the turbo and user-defined modes. In the user-defined bracket you can spin to varying brightness levels and the torch will memorise these settings so the next time in use it will quickly switch between turbo mode and your selected brightness level by rotation of the head. ➤



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Nitecore hunting kit - the light fantastic

At full charge the Nitecore batteries have a supposed life of 140 hours on low, 27 hours on mid, six hours and 15 minutes on high and two hours on turbo setting. With most of the technical stuff covered and my brain now on information overload, I was keen to put the MH40GTR to use.

In the field

The torch can be used simply as a stand-alone, hand-held spotlighting tool and I employed it as such to help shoot a few ferals at a friend's property, though I soon discovered prolonged use on turbo mode quickly drains the batteries. The user manual states battery supply is short-lived on turbo mode and the torch is best used on the lower light settings with turbo in shorter bursts.

To road test the hunting kit I mounted it on one of my favourite rifles I use for spotlighting and with the clamps provided attached the torch to the scope of my custom .22PPC calibre rifle. The clamps are made of a high-density polymer and on tightening will not leave any unwanted marks on your scope.

One thing I found useful was the remote tactical pressure switch that came supplied. It enables you to operate the torch by pressing one of three buttons while holding and aiming the rifle, the buttons giving the option of turbo, strobe or low lighting. To attach the remote simply unscrew the standard switch on the base of the torch and screw the remote switch on in its place.

For convenience the remote pressure switch on the left of the .22PPC was easily

operated by my non-master hand and didn't interfere with aiming while rapidly shouldering offhand. I used electrical tape to fasten it to the stock in a position my thumb easily contacts the buttons when shouldering the rifle.

Some may find it a little difficult to familiarise with but once you have the hang of things it's a breeze to use. This was evident on another night shoot where I made use of the tactical pressure kit and had no problem operating the pressure switch with my thumb (I took six hares with six shots).

Despite this success my thumb did press the wrong button a couple of times and while the hares weren't alarmed by the different light bursts, it was a little distracting for me. I felt the tactical pressure switch could benefit from dropping the other light settings and just having a single button operation for turbo mode only.

Conclusion

After 25 years of using a spotlight about three times the size of the Nitecore it left me wondering if I'd ever go back to it. It's mind-blowing how bright the Nitecore MT40 really is for such a compact torch and makes you wonder what the engineers in research and development are working on now in the race for brightness superiority.

The Nitecore would have to be up there as one of the brightest and at \$299.99 as recommended retail price, the hunting kit is great value for money. I'm not advocating ditching your old faithful roof-mounted or hand-held 12v spotlight - a 3.7-volt battery supply does have its limitations as

I discovered with prolonged use on turbo mode. Thankfully the Nitecore hunting kit has you covered with a 12 and 240-volt charger.

The Nitecore torch and hunting kit is intended to give the hunter a more versatile and portable form of lighting in the bush and they've achieved that in a compact light source punching well above its weight in brightness. The Nitecore MH40GTR hunting kit is covered by a five-year warranty. More at tasco.com.au ●



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Our ballistics guru lays down his pen

Dave Rose

Little did Ian Thompson know that in 1988 when he entered the offices of the *Australian Shooters' Journal* with the idea of submitting a few articles on ballistics, he'd still be writing on the subject 31 years later. But now at the age of 86, Ian, a former munitions specialist, has decided it's time to put down the pen with his sign-off column on Page 12 of this edition.

Such is Ian's expert knowledge of the subject it's safe to say his bi-monthly observations are irreplaceable, hardly surprising given his impeccable background and involvement with a job that turned into a passion. Ian, who lives in Adelaide with April, his wife of 59 years, spent the bulk of his working life as a senior consultant with the small arms testing division at the Defence Research establishment at Salisbury. It was a job Ian loved amidst a busy lifestyle as he and April raised their children Ann, Peter and Wendy.

The research vocation followed on from Ian obtaining a degree in Industrial Chemistry after three years of study. He also spent time at the Port Pirie mines department uranium plant and sandwiched in between those was a three-year stint in Thailand with the Military Research and Defence Centre in Bangkok.

With such a pedigree, it was fitting he was able to translate his expertise into regular missives for the SSAA community over the past three decades and Ian's retirement at age 57 fitted seamlessly with his extra-curricular activities for *Shooters' Journal*.

When asked at what age he became



interested in shooting, Ian said it was as a nine-year-old using a .177 Daisy air rifle and from there he progressed to a Model 92 Winchester .44-40. Ian was instrumental in the formation of the Weapons Research Establishment Institute Pistol Club which has continued under various monikers since those faraway days. He was also involved with the Port Pirie Pistol Club around the mid to late 1950s.

Ian recounted how writing his pieces turned into a labour of love that spanned the decades.

"Initially I wrote four articles and took them to the (*Australian Shooter's Journal*) editor, who at that time was Rod Marvell,"

said Ian. "Rod said he'd look at them and if he liked them I could possibly write two or three more - and I've been doing a ballistics column ever since."

Such was Ian's interest in his new craft that his priorities switched from going to the range to delving into the tangible technicalities of the ballistics art. "I became fascinated by the mechanics and design of guns to the point where theory and knowledge gradually became more important to me than the actual shooting," he said. "Knowledge means reading, writing and chasing. It means neglecting what was impossible."

Ian's research took him into areas he

I became fascinated by the mechanics and design of guns to the point where theory and knowledge gradually became more important to me than the actual shooting



Aboard an Australian destroyer in his Bangkok days with children Peter and Ann.

found fascinating. "Once you delve deeper it's amazing to find there was no set process for mass producing guns until around the 1850s - they were basically made by blacksmiths. It wasn't until the British got a couple of engineers, Sir Joseph Whitworth and Sir William Armstrong involved, they conceived the idea of mass production."

April was wholly supportive and is glad Ian pursued his writing outlet to pass on his unique grasp of the subject. "He's a walking encyclopaedia and is happy to share what he knows," she said.

Looking back, Ian is able to reflect on the wealth of his contributions. "I reckon I must have written about 300 columns for the SSAA and I did some work for a British gun

review magazine too. At one time the editor of *Australian Shooter* needed something extra to fill space so I wrote a few articles under the pen name Tom Lister, which is my middle name," he said.

Ian retains a typically modest outlook on his achievements but as well as his writing vent he spent more than 25 years as a lecturer, outlining the ins and outs of fire-arms licences and gun safety to upcoming generations at TAFE campuses, youth clubs and Scout groups.

His selfless contributions were formally acknowledged in 2013 when he received a framed memento, the Premier's Certificate of recognition for outstanding volunteer service, signed by South Australian Premier

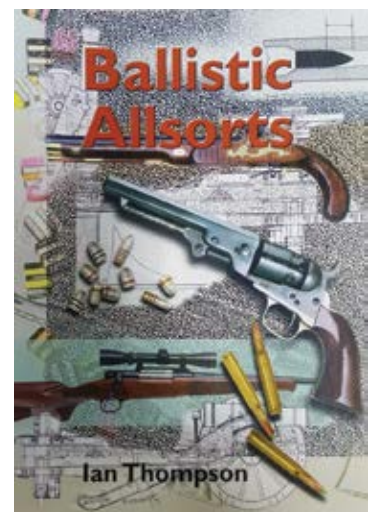
of the time, Jay Weatherill, and Minister for Volunteers, Tony Piccolo.

So this really is the end of an era with the doyen of ballistic intricacies having penned his final piece. Ian Thompson is a rare phenomenon, a standout in his field whose Basic Ballistics contributions have been gratefully received and will be sorely missed. *Australian Shooter* thanks him for 31 years of unwavering service. ●



Ian, right, at a military site near Bangkok with Thai, US and British representatives.

IAN THOMPSON'S POPULAR and now out-of-print *Ballistic Allsorts* is the definitive printed work on the subject. Ian has kindly given us 10 spare copies of the book to give away to the first respondents. Email edit@ssaa.org.au if you'd like a copy. First in, best dressed.



C.R. Kennedy brothers in arms

Dave Rose



Family affair:
Douglas, Clem,
Stuart and Robert.



The C.R. Kennedy stand
at a Melbourne trade
show in the 1950s.

C.R. Kennedy enjoys a glowing reputation as a leading player in the importation and distribution of outdoor/hunting, surveying, photographic and optical equipment across Australia. But this is no overnight sensation - the company is celebrating its 85th birthday this year, looking back on a bountiful journey since it came into existence in 1934.

C.R. Kennedy was created by the entity's namesake, Clement Robertson Kennedy, and to this day remains proudly 100 per cent family-owned. Founding father Clement began importing photographic and optical products into Australia and things took off from there. He remained at the helm until his death in 1975 when his son Malcolm, then 23, stepped up as chairman and managing director. After 44 years Malcolm is still on the scene and the current marketing manager is his son, Douglas, who receives ample back-up from his siblings. Twin brother Stuart holds an executive role while Clem, in addition to his director duties at CRK, is joint managing director of Ilford Imaging Europe. Eldest son Robert Kennedy is director in charge of the Survey business.

The firm's base is in Port Melbourne with branches in Sydney, Brisbane, Cairns, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland as well as a sub-branch in Mackay. With virtually every state having a C.R. Kennedy office, a high level of service interaction is guaranteed which in turn has cemented relationships with dealers and customers.

The company has built a surveyor-based service business with a full spectrum of the best products in the world linked with top support staff nationwide, something the hunting fraternity and outdoor trekkers take full advantage of.

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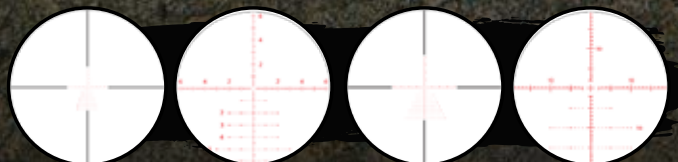


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C.R. Kennedy - brothers in arms

There's no secret
- we rely on family
values and have a
long-term bank of
employees, many
of whom have
been here for 30
years or more

days, C.R. Kennedy expanded though initial dealings were solely photographic and optical as the backroom team brought an array of items into Australia from Germany and Italy. In the years after WWII they were sole Australian agents for the Rectaflex camera which was superseded by the Exakta agency from Zeiss Jena.

The list of clients entrusting C.R. Kennedy to oversee Australian networking continued to mushroom



Founder Clement Robertson Kennedy, centre, at the opening of the first premises.



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CARTRIDGES

C.R. Kennedy - brothers in arms

in the post-war era. In 1954 they became distributor for Asahi Pentax, one of the pioneers of modern photography, and today remain the world's first and longest established Pentax partner. The Japanese connection was further bolstered when Elmo, of Nagoya, and LPL joined. With certain Japanese suppliers the bonds can be traced back more than 60 years.

Other landmarks were posted along the way when the company introduced its medical division in 1981 and wasted no time in doing likewise with the surveillance sector three years later. Expansion across the Tasman in 1986 was another landmark.

In 2014 C.R. Kennedy spread its wings even further when it ramped up its importation of firearms and related accessories, something it had done on a far lesser scale in its early days, and they now offer an extensive range of firearms, riflescopes, binoculars, laser range-finders, drones and other hunting staples with ammunition likely to be added this year. Outdoor brands offered include Athlon, Bear & Son Cutlery, Black Rapid, GrovTec, Kowa, Minox, Pentax, Shooter's Choice, Ultradot, Vanguard and Vixen.

Impala Plus (from Turkey), Sabatti (Italy) and US make Airforce round

off an impressive list of partners. The Impala shotgun has a unique straight pull design and allows for up to five shells to be loaded into one tubular magazine. The Sabatti line has been distributed in Australia for three years and has always been known as an excellent shotgun maker which in recent years has turned its attention to the rifle market.

Marketing Manager Douglas Kennedy attributes the company's ability to attract and retain highly-skilled and dedicated staff as the company's key to success. "There's no secret - we rely on family values and have a long-term bank of employees, many of whom have been here for 30 years or more," he said. "We're not bureaucratic and encourage free thinking which means someone who starts in the warehouse can easily end up in the managerial ranks."

Down the years it hasn't always been plain sailing but the C.R. Kennedy fortitude has always prevailed. "The work my father has done has a lot to do with things," said Douglas. "He steadied the firm through a couple of mini-depressions so here we are now."

When asked what made C.R. Kennedy so special, Malcolm's response was refreshingly honest and succinct:



Malcolm Kennedy, who took the reins in 1975.

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Gun Control Australia in bed with the Greens

John Maxwell



Gun enthusiasts accumulate a number of different firearms based on their choice of clothing and reason for leaving the house and would pick a different gun for going to the beach versus going to a formal event. Really? This rubbish is one of a number of reasons explaining why people accumulate guns cited in a discussion paper commissioned by Gun Control Australia and published by The Australia Institute (TAI), a Canberra-based left-leaning think-tank which boasts that its excellent research drives the public debate and secures policy outcomes.

"Socially just, environmentally responsible and economically viable solutions are possible, but only if insightful questions are combined with excellent research," it says on its website. But there's more. As well as to make a fashion statement, it says people accumulate guns because they want one in each room in event of a home invasion, are stocking up before anticipated bans or restrictions or are preparing for the breakdown of civilisation.

All this appears near the end of a paper entitled *Hunters and Collectors - Gun use and ownership in Australia* but really relates to the US, though that's not clear without looking at the footnotes. These gems were actually lifted from a September 2016 *Guardian* newspaper report of an unpublished academic survey of US gun ownership conducted in 2015. The *Guardian* report noted a substantial proportion of America's guns are in the hands of just three per cent of adults who it termed 'super owners' with an average of 17 firearms each.

Unlike GCA, the authors of the US study made no claims as to whether owning a large number of guns poses a greater risk factor than owning a few guns. They said they just didn't know as there had been no research on the topic.

As to why Americans own guns, *Guardian* reporters talked to some gun owners, one of whom told them: "Walking around the beach with shirt off and shorts...I'm probably going to use a different gun than putting on a sport coat and going out to dinner."

This particular respondent would appear to be an outlier even in the broad church of US gun owners. The *Guardian* said he headed a gun rights group which saw itself as further to the political right than the National Rifle Association. So what relevance could his views have to Australia's very different gun culture - you'd think not much at all but this is GCA-commissioned research.

The *Guardian* report and TAI paper do cite some reasons for owning firearms which seem more in tune with the Australian situation. Gun owners have multiple guns because they're serious hunters, participate in sports shooting, collect historic guns or have inherited several guns.

This was one of two discussion papers, both commissioned by GCA and written by researcher Bill Browne, who also penned a separate opinion piece following the revelation that One Nation representatives had been in the US, encouraged by a fake lobbyist employed by an overseas government-owned media outlet to meet with the NRA. All appeared in late March and can be found in the research section of the Australian Institute website.

Hunters and Collectors attracted some media attention, detailing the rising number of guns in Australia following the 1996 National Firearms Agreement (NFA). It recommends states and territories consider a cap of two guns per licensee. This paper drew much of its data from the website gunpolicy.org run by anti-gun advocate Philip Alpers and would appear to involve some degree of omniscience. Since most guns in Australia weren't registered pre-NFA, the claim of more than three million privately owned guns in Australia in 1996 would appear to be at best a guess.

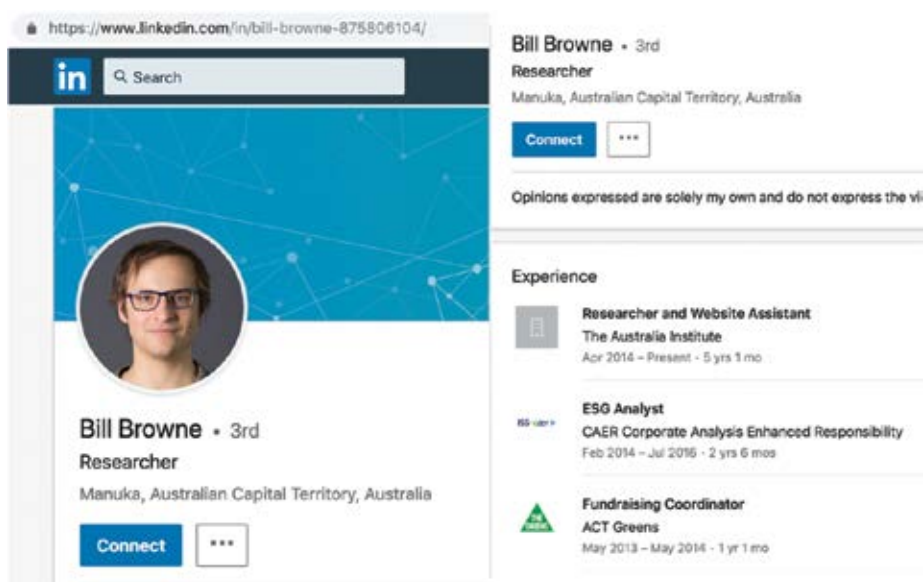
The second discussion paper is entitled *Point Blank - Political Strategies of Australia's Gun Lobby* and acknowledges contributions from members of the left-leaning activist group GetUp! This paper claims the public desire for stronger gun control is being circumvented by pressure from the gun lobby and recommends political parties should refuse gun lobby donations.

Alas for this argument there's scant evidence Australia is back-sliding on the 1996 National Firearms Agreement or that any pro-gun MP or MPs, even if holding the balance of power in a hung parliament, could demand the NFA be dismantled as their price for supporting the government.

Curiously, TAI sees the "large, well-resourced and tightly knit" gun lobby not so much as the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia with its near 200,000 fee-paying and voting members but more the Shooting Industry Foundation of Australia (SIFA), the peak organisation representing firearms importers and distributors.

SIFA certainly provided substantial funding to support campaigns by minor parties in the 2017 Queensland and 2018 Victorian elections but announced in September 2018 it was ending political donations and wasn't contributing to anyone for the 2019 federal election campaign.

"SIFA has never advocated for the watering down of firearms laws. We are committed to working within the existing regulatory environment and believe that environment should include the voices of firearms experts, because community safety depends upon it," said the SIFA spokeswoman.



TAI doesn't seem to have realised that. It says SIFA spending closely followed the pattern established by the US NRA and on a population basis SIFA contributions were roughly equivalent to or higher than the NRA. Their maths is found to be wanting. The biggest beneficiary of gun lobby largesse appears to have been North Queensland MP Bob Katter who, according to TAI figures, received more than \$800,000 between 2011 and 2019, the biggest donor being firearms importer and distributor Nioa. Would all this cash have swayed him to vote any differently to how he would otherwise? Hardly. Mr Katter has always been openly pro-gun and Nioa is a large Queensland business run by his son-in-law.

TAI also has a problem with the

Parliamentary Friends of Shooting Group and says their occasional shooting events have been sponsored by the gun lobby and recommends its member names be disclosed. On that basis, surely the same should apply to the rival Parliamentary Friends of Gun Control, established by ACT Labor MP Andrew Leigh. And what would be the reaction if some lobby group called for the publication of names of members of the Parliamentary Christian Fellowship or those MPs of Muslim or Catholic religion?

TAI identifies what it says are four main strategies of the gun lobby - encouraging election of pro-gun crossbenchers, ratcheting pressure to push the boundaries of gun control, direct donations to favourable parties and MPs and lobbying sympathetic politicians.

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Gun Control Australia in bed with the Greens

But for a democratic country that doesn't seem too sinister or even all that exceptional, considering gun ownership is legal, albeit heavily regulated. Substitute climate action for guns and this applies just as equally to well-financed environment and activist groups.

But this is GCA-commissioned research which reflects the GCA anti-gun agenda and of which TAI takes full ownership. "New research from The Australia Institute finds there are more guns in Australia now than there were before the Port Arthur massacre and introduction of strict gun controls," it says in its media statement accompanying the *Hunters and Collectors* paper. "The Australia Institute identifies \$1.7 million donated to Australian political parties from the gun lobby since 2011, just from publicly disclosed donations," it says in the media statement accompanying the Point Blank discussion paper.

So what is The Australia Institute and how does it come to express views on firearms which would appear to align with those of the explicitly anti-guns Greens? Firstly, for those unfamiliar with think-tanks, there are quite a number of them, some independent and some aligned to one side of politics or another. For example, the Institute of Public Affairs and Menzies

Research Centre are linked to the Liberal Party while the Evatt Foundation and Chifley Research Centre are both Labor.

TAI says it's independent and independently funded by donations from philanthropic trusts and individuals, has no political or commercial ties and won't accept donations or commissioned work from political parties. It will accept grants and commissioned research from business, unions and NGOs. Its affinity to the Greens is indisputable.

Current executive director Ben Oquist was a long-time Greens staff member, working for Greens leaders Bob Brown and Christine Milne. TAI deputy director Ebony Bennett was media adviser to Senator Brown and also national campaign director for the Greens' 2010 federal election campaign.

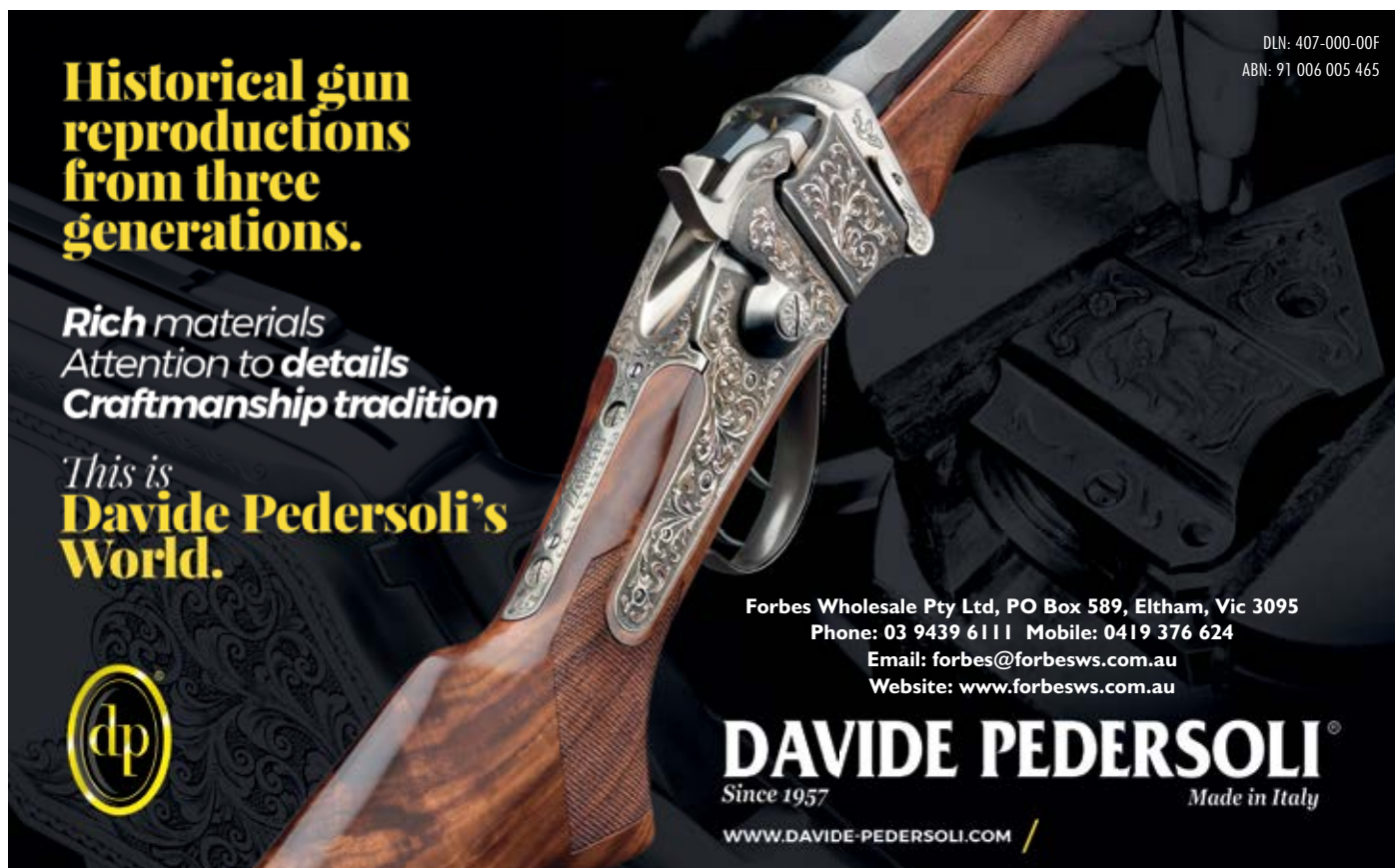
Former executive director Richard Denniss, now TAI's chief economist, was senior strategic advisor to Bob Brown and board deputy chair Professor Barbara Pocock was a Greens candidate in South Australia in the recent federal election.

Former board member Lin Hatfield Dodds was a Greens candidate for the Senate in the ACT and discussion paper author Bill Browne served as fundraising coordinator for the ACT Greens in

2013-14. But when it comes to political affiliation of current and former TAI staff and board, Greens don't completely dominate as former board members Sharan Burrow and Ged Kearney both once headed the ACTU. Ms Kearney is now a federal Labor MP.

As a 'progressive' think-tank TAI has done plenty of work on climate change and economic and social justice issues and its venture into gun policy is quite recent. For GCA the benefit seems to be that its commissioned research might gain a little more credibility and media attention when published under The Australia Institute banner than it would otherwise.

One truth to come out of the attempts by TAI to tarnish the reputation of law-abiding firearms owners is now crystal clear: TAI is made up of Green-leaning staffers and contributors, the Greens support Gun Control Australia and, surprise surprise, they in turn support the Greens. Both its President Samantha Lee and Vice-President Roland Browne have held numerous joint press launches with the Greens and Browne is even President of the Bob Brown Foundation. The truth is Gun Control Australia has been outed as merely a mouthpiece for the radical Greens. ●



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The TCR 87 Hunter

A different single-shot rifle

John Dunn



Set up with a 6x42 Meopta Meopro scope.

For most of my life I've been fascinated by single-shot rifles and though I no longer want to own them all, I do like to look for them.

At a Penrith gun show I was doing the rounds of the tables when I came across a break-action rifle I hadn't seen before. It was obviously of fairly recent manufacture and my initial thoughts were it was some sort of rook rifle, possibly European-made. The stock was showing signs of wear and the blueing was thin in places but apart from that it looked in reasonable shape.

Closer inspection identified it as having been made by Thompson Centre at Rochester, New Hampshire. The calibre was .222 Remington. Though I owned a Thompson Centre .36 calibre muzzle-loading rifle at one stage I've never had anything to do with their pistols or breech-loading rifles. That made the rifle on the table all the more intriguing and I decided if I wanted to know any more about it, I'd probably have to buy it. On that basis it came home with me.

Initially I had trouble identifying what model it was, simply because it didn't have a number anywhere. A phone call to Frontier Arms in Adelaide solved that problem with a helpful sales person identifying it as either a TCR 83 or a TCR 87 - and that was all I needed to start my research ball rolling.

It turns out my rifle is a TCR 87 (Thompson Centre Rifle) Hunter model. As the number 87 would imply it was introduced in 1987 and remained in production until 1993 or 1995 depending on who's telling the story. Like the TCR 83 it replaced, the TCR 87 was designed to offer hunters and shooters a platform that provided the versatility of interchangeable barrels to cover a wide range of hunting and shooting needs. It was offered in 11 different rifle calibres including two magnums as well as 12-gauge (see panel).

The magnum barrels required a magnum receiver as both were different to the rifles chambered for standard rounds. Magnum barrels had an extra pin in the face of the breech that fitted into a groove in the locking bolt for additional strength. Magnum receivers were stamped T/C MAG on the bottom of the receiver behind the barrel pivot pin. Standard barrels for both the M83 and M87 would fit the magnum receivers but not vice versa.

With an overall length of 99cm the TCR 87 is a relatively compact firearm, due in no small part to its break action. That said, it's also quite a hefty unit with a bare weight of 3.1kg. Appearance-wise it looks like any number of other break-action rifles which have been around at different times, the main difference being it's obviously solidly built with a comfortable feel

and good balance, much like you'd expect in a shotgun.

The cast steel receiver is beautifully polished and blued with a thicker reinforce on either side along the top edge where the barrel sits when it's locked into place. The blued barrel is 58.5cm long with a diameter of 23.3mm at the knox form and 15.3mm at the muzzle, which has a radius crown.

The barrel locks into the receiver via a block at the breech end that's close fitted and appears to be pinned for security. The front underside of the block has a semi-circular cut-out to match the diameter of the receiver's pivot pin and the rear has an angular cut-out that engages the breech bolt when the receiver is closed. Top of the barrel block is drilled and tapped to accept a cantilevered scope base and rings which fortunately was still attached. Although they were mismatched, the rings held an old 6x Tasco scope.

According to an owners' manual I found on the internet, the barrel is a lightweight version, identifiable as such by the fact it's drilled and tapped to allow the fitting of open sights which were originally offered as an extra, an option unavailable on the heavier medium-weight barrel.

To open the rifle the top lever is pushed to one side or the other, the latter part of the manipulation requiring considerable

The TCR 87 Hunter

effort to completely disengage the breech bolt from the barrel locking lug. When the bolt is fully withdrawn the barrel tips down to reveal the breech, an extractor sliding back from the breech face to allow a cartridge to be inserted into the chamber. At the same time a striker moves back into the cocked position inside the receiver where it's held by a sear to prepare the rifle for firing.

At this point in the process the manual recommends the cross bolt safety be engaged to guard against accidental discharge of the rifle. The safety is located in the top front section of the trigger bow and to engage it the cross bolt must be pushed to the right until a locking plunger snaps into place. Only then should a cartridge be placed in the chamber and the action closed.

To disengage the cross bolt safety requires the locking plunger - effectively a safety catch for the cross bolt - be pushed down with a finger while the cross bolt



Component parts of the TCR 87.

itself must be pushed to the left with the thumb, only then can the rifle be fired. The cross bolt safety must also be disengaged to allow the rifle to be opened.

My TCR 87 has a single, adjustable trigger, originally factory pre-set to what Thompson considered a safe and manageable pull weight. It's adjustable via a small

The cantilever mount that came with the rifle. The rings are mismatched but work.



The forearm is retained on the barrel by a spring-loaded plunger and locking screw.

hexagonal grub drive at the rear of the triggerguard with adjustment instructions provided in the owners' manual.

The stock is shaped from dense, straight-grained walnut with a nice semi-gloss finish. The buttstock is attached to the receiver by a through bolt from the butt end which is fitted with a black spacer and red rubber buttpad emblazoned

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with the T/C initials. The pistol grip has a chequered panel on either side, stock to receiver fit being quite tight with the front edge of the buttstock raised slightly above the surface of the receiver on either side.

The forearm is also made from a decent piece of walnut. More or less square in cross-section it has a rounded nose and grooves along either side for grip and clips on to a lug under the barrel where it's secured by an internal spring-loaded plunger. To ensure the forearm stays in place under recoil, a screw through the underside of the forearm locks the plunger once the forearm is in place. Both buttstock and forearm are fitted with QD swivel bases.

To take the rifle down the forearm is first removed, the top lever pushed to one side or the other until the barrel tilts down and at that point it can be removed from the receiver for replacement, transport or cleaning.

There doesn't appear to be a lot of these rifles around any more and I suspect there weren't a lot to start with. The one I have is the only one I've ever seen but that could mean nothing more than I wasn't looking in the right places.



Both buttstock and forearm are made from good quality walnut, QD swivel studs fitted to both.

Having bought the rifle I had to find out how it shot and accordingly removed the old Tasco scope and replaced it with a 6x42 Meopta Meopro which I consider ideal for a walkabout hunting rifle like this. Off the bench I shot it with Winchester, Federal and Sellier & Bellot 50gr factory loads and found that at 100m all of them performed pretty much the same in terms of accuracy, even if their points of impact varied a little.

Light barrels don't like to become warm and the TCR 87 was no exception. With all three ammunition types the first and

second shots lobbed inside the 20mm 10 ring on a standard SSAA 25/50m target at 100m, the third shot invariably blowing group sizes out to between 30 and 45mm thanks to flyers.

While that would probably drive some folks to distraction it's not that surprising given the rifle was designed for hunting, not target shooting. None of the small game like rabbits, hares, foxes or feral cats the .222 does its best work on should ever require more than one shot anyway. The trigger pull was crisp and light, the rifle itself well balanced, easy to carry and a pleasure to use. Overall I'm rather impressed with the TCR 87, a welcome addition to my growing collection of single-shot rifles. ●



Cross bolt safety in the triggerguard. The small button on the front is a locking plunger.

Rifle barrels for the TCR 87

.22 Hornet, .222, .22-250, 5.56 NATO (.223), .243, 32-40, 7mm-08, 7.62 NATO (.308), .30-06, .375 H&H Magnum, .416 Remington Magnum



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When you buy a new British gun you actually buy an old British gun, made recently. Every major maker still in business is selling products developed from patents dating back to the reign of Queen Victoria, so good were the designs of Victorian-era inventors. Match that inventive genius with the skills of today's time-served, apprenticed gunmakers and the result is sporting gun perfection.

The best British designs have never been bettered, only manufacturing cost

and time-saving developments have been influential in the success of later types of shotgun. To date, the typical choice for the buyer of a top British shotgun has been Holland & Holland's 'Royal' (the current model is the self-opener produced from 1922 but the basic 'Royal' has been in production since 1893), a Purdey (built on Frederick Beesley's 1880 design) or a Westley Richards hand-detachable lock (another Victorian original, patented by Leslie Taylor in 1897).

Then there's Rigby. Relocated to London

six years ago after a buyout by the German L&O Group which owns Blaser, Mauser and Sauer, Rigby now makes more sporting rifles than any other London gunmaker.

The Rigby policy has focused on reimagining classic models from the firm's back catalogue. The Big Game and Highland Stalker models revisited the hugely successful Rigby-Mausser rifles of the first quarter of the 20th century for inspiration and became the gentleman's rifle of the modern era - classic, functional and aspirational.

Building on the success of their bolt-action rifles, the Rigby team then embarked on a more ambitious project to resurrect the double rifle for dangerous game with the iconic vertical-bolt side-lock action patented by John Rigby and Thomas Bissell in 1879 - the year Thomas Edison was preparing to demonstrate the world's first workable light bulb. That gun patents dating back that far are still being launched as new models is a mark of their genius and utility.

Given the success of their rifle projects it was only a matter of time before the shooting public expected a new Rigby shotgun and that day has come - the shotgun mirroring their double rifle in being built around the Rigby & Bissell action.

Thomas Bissell was a gunmaker with whom John Rigby had a close relationship and some Rigby guns made in the late 1800s bear his stylised TB initials on the face of the action, Patent 1140 of 1879 his best-known work. Rigby made it as a signature action from September 1879 until 1932 as a shotgun, a black powder express double rifle and as a nitro express double rifle, its demise due to the high cost of manufacture rather than mechanical obsolescence.

The action is inherently strong with a traditional Purdey patent double under-bolt holding the barrels on the face from below, by way of bites in the two lumps. Additionally, the vertical bolt rises from the top of the action and locks into a bite in a top rib extension, providing a third anchor point. Aesthetically, Rigby has stuck to the original bar action lock-plate with dipped edges, so distinctive it's immediately recognisable as a Rigby.

It would arguably have been safer for Rigby to take the easy option and build a



All the intricate engraving on the Rigby shotgun is done by hand.



copy of the Holland & Holland 'Royal'. A London-pattern stocked to the fences side-lock of conventional appearance would be the sensible choice but would not reflect Rigby's ethos of being true to their history.

Rigby managing director Marc Newton told me recently: "The gun looks old-fashioned." And it really does have the look of the era in which it emerged. The early 1880s was a period of variance, every maker building a style of gun they hoped would catch the public's imagination and be blessed with general approval.

In the two decades that followed the introduction of the Rising Bite action, a number of things happened that streamlined the look and mechanics of what became known as the London Pattern side-lock. Firstly, most makers dispensed with

\$200,000 to spare?



third grips for best shotguns. Rib extensions and machined recesses in the action are expensive to fit properly and it became apparent that for normal usage, a Purdey bolt alone was sufficient. Some argued third grips were unsightly and the protruding rib extension was an impediment to rapid loading but for many the crucial factor was cost.

The other stylistic feature which became the norm as the 19th century waned was the stocked to the fences look of the

Purdey and the second pattern Holland & Holland 'Royal'. This means the wood from the horns extends right up to the fences, without the shoulders that feature actions like the earlier Boss, Grant and Rigby guns. When Marc Newton says his gun looks old-fashioned, it's the differences here to which he primarily refers.

There's also the matter of the dipped-edge lock plate, a distinctive feature that dates back to early models like the Gibbs & Pitt and the first model Holland & Holland

'Royal'. The dipped-edge plates of the Rigby serve no particular purpose but are a recognisable house style which Rigby chose to resurrect for this gun.

Self-confidence lies at the heart of Rigby's decision not to build a copy of the 'Royal' - which has become the generic style for most British makers of the past 50 years - but to make a very distinctive and different shotgun and the reasoning sits with Rigby's 21st-century success.

Marc Newton says feedback from buyers of Rigby rifles was they wanted classic designs, as close to the originals as possible in feel, look and style. Modern innovations were not seen as desirable unless incorporated almost invisibly into the design.

But the stylistic quirks only succeed if the product is flawless. Hand-built in London to the finest traditions of that city's gun trade, with chopper-lump steel barrels, the best Turkish walnut stocks and engraved with the house style of Rigby scrolls, the standard gun is a bespoke product with everything made expressly for the customer.

Modern production methods are used to make the machined components, the way all shotgun production is going. Spark erosion and CNC machinery improves every year and we have now reached a level of sophistication that means for practical purposes, a working gun can be made entirely by machine.

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of mechanical interaction. Engraving, stocking and barrel-making are unchanged, carried out entirely at the bench in the traditional manner with finishing to the highest London standards.

Even using modern machinery, the creation of a best quality shotgun is a time-consuming process and therefore expensive - this new gun is, to say the least, not cheap. Yet those who doubted the ability of a young team to take on the trade's top names and compete successfully in a small and difficult market are now eating their words.

Available to order now, the Rigby Rising Bite shotgun starts from around \$150,000 and rises from there. More at johnrigby-andco.com

- More than two decades after the development of their last cartridge, Rigby has released a new calibre, the .416 Rigby No.2, which will be chambered in their Rising Bite double rifles. German developer Eckhard Stief is behind the design of the new cartridge and, using the .416 Rigby's original design, he simply added a rim to the cartridge to improve extraction in double rifles, maintaining the same cartridge pressures and velocities.

"By not changing the mother cartridge, reloaders can use their normal reloading full die set, simply needing a new case holder and original published reloading data can be used, so long as their rifle is chambered for the calibre," said Dr Stief. "I selected today's best calibre from the big game calibre group and added a rim, aiding cartridge extraction." ●



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Federal Premium's Gold Medal Berger target ammo

Con Kapralos



The burgeoning popularity of long-range shooting, using both conventional-style and tactical rifle platforms, has really taken off in the past few years. Hitting targets consistently out to 1000m and more and challenging both shooter and equipment to shoot groups under Minute of Angle has become possible with state-of-the-art barrelled actions, stocks and optics.

While we can agree that tailored handloads are instrumental in striving for best accuracy and precision, there are more than a few of us who don't handload. Fortunately, Federal Premium has a solution with an array of match-quality ammunition specifically geared towards long-range shooting - the Gold Medal Berger target series.

Berger are synonymous with the best target bullets you can buy - they've 'been there, done that' in countless victories by benchrest and target shooters worldwide. While target shooters worth their salt religiously handload, Federal realised a market exists for assorted factory loads in its Gold Medal series with premium Berger bullets for those either new to long-range target shooting or seasoned campaigners looking for something different.

Gold Medal Berger target loads include the following calibres and bullet options:

.223 Remington 73gr Boat-Tail Hollow-Point (BTHP), .308 Winchester 185gr Juggernaut Open Tip Match (OTM), 6.5 Grendel and 6.5 Creedmoor both with 130gr AR Hybrid OTM bullet. Australian importer and distributor Nioa supplied review samples in .308 Winchester and 6.5 Creedmoor.

At a glance

Each carton contains 20 rounds along with all relevant load information and a detailed ballistics table for the load, listing calibre and bullet-type as well as velocity, energy and both average and long-range trajectories from the muzzle out to 500 yards in 100-yard increments. Ballistic coefficients for the loaded Berger bullet in G1 and G7 specifications are also included. All loads in the series feature Federal Premium Gold Medal match primers, specifically formulated propellants and quality Federal Premium brass cases for unparalleled precision and performance.

.308 Winchester 185gr Juggernaut Open Tip Match

This is an excellent load for high-performing target or long-range shooting. The Berger Juggernaut is a tactical, high BC (Ballistic Coefficient) bullet designed

with the Open Tip Match profile and Boat-Tailed base. Its design employs an extra-long tangent ogive which gives a high BC and makes the bullet easier to shoot, ballistically speaking.

The OTM name is a requirement of the military in that any bullet used for training must carry this designation. The ballistic table specifies a muzzle velocity of 2600fps but firing 10 loads through a chronograph gives a better indication of its quality, with an average velocity of 2613fps and standard deviation of 9fps, that single figure ensuring remarkable consistency.

This load was shot through two hunting rifles with sporter weight barrels and at 100m achieved groups around the 25mm (1MOA) mark or less, one in single figures at 8mm. A target or long-range barrel with twist rate optimised for heavier bullet weight (ideally 1:11) could really show what this load's capable of. Table 1 shows the ballistic information on the carton.

6.5 Creedmoor 130gr Hybrid Open Tip Match

Development of the 6.5 Creedmoor in the late 2000s was dependent largely on the use of high BC bullets for maximum long-range performance and Federal opted for the 130gr Hybrid Open Tip Match bullet for



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Federal Premium's Gold Medal Berger target ammo

this load. The 130gr Hybrid bullet still has the Boat-Tail base but as its name suggests, has markedly different properties, in particular with bullet design.

The nose of the Hybrid has two distinct shapes, as the bearing surface ends, a tangent ogive begins which results in the bullet being less sensitive to seating depth. As you move forward along the tangent portion, the profile changes to a secant ogive, a hallmark of Berger's VLD (Very Low Drag) design. These two properties combined with the tailored ballistics designed into the load make this bullet highly efficient into the wind, just what's required in the 6.5 Creedmoor.

Federal quotes muzzle velocity of 2875fps and energy of 2386ft/lb and testing through my chronograph, 10 rounds gave average muzzle velocity of 2903fps with standard deviation of 11fps. Accuracy testing at 100m

Table 1 - .308 Winchester 185gr Juggernaut Open Tip Match

	Muzzle	100 yards	200 yards	300 yards	400 yards	500 yards
Velocity (fps)	2600	2442	2289	2143	2001	1864
Energy (ft-lb)	2777	2449	2153	1886	1644	1428
**Average Range		0	-4.3	-15.4	-33.9	-61.2
**Long Range		2.2	0	-8.9	-25.2	-50.0
**Height of bullet trajectory in inches above or below line of sight if zeroed at 0 yards. Sights 1.5" above bore line.						
G1 BC: 0.552	G7 BC: 0.283					
G1 v G7 BC. G1 and G7 refers to aerodynamic drag models on 'standard' projectile shapes. G1 looks like a flat-based bullet, G7 better approximates the geometry of a long-range bullet. When choosing a drag model for a ballistic software program, G1 is preferred for flat-based bullets, G7 better for long-range Boat-tailed.						

Table 2 - 6.5 Creedmoor 130gr Hybrid Open Tip Match

	Muzzle	100 yards	200 yards	300 yards	400 yards	500 yards
Velocity (fps)	2875	2709	2560	2396	2247	2104
Energy (ft-lb)	2386	2119	1877	1657	1457	1277
**Average Range		0	-3.2	-11.8	-26.5	-48.1
**Long Range		1.6	0	-6.9	-20.0	-40.0
**Height of bullet trajectory in inches above or below line of sight if zeroed at 0 yards. Sights 1.5" above bore line						
G1 BC: 0.560	G7 BC: 0.287					

was done using a Kimber Open Country and 6.5 Creedmoor, both excellent hunting rifles which can also be used at long-range. The 130gr Hybrid OTM load performed well - through the Kimber it gave a three-shot, five-group average of 18mm and with the 6.5 Creedmoor an average of 21mm, the smallest at 9mm and 13mm. Ballistic information for the 6.5 Creedmoor is shown in Table 2.

Long-range shooting

Velocity and group testing had used up most of the ammunition but I still had a few rounds to shoot at 300m, the maximum allowed at the range. Having dialled the Kimber Open Country in 6.5 Creedmoor for a 200m zero and .308 sporter for the same

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Federal Premium's Gold Medal Berger target ammo

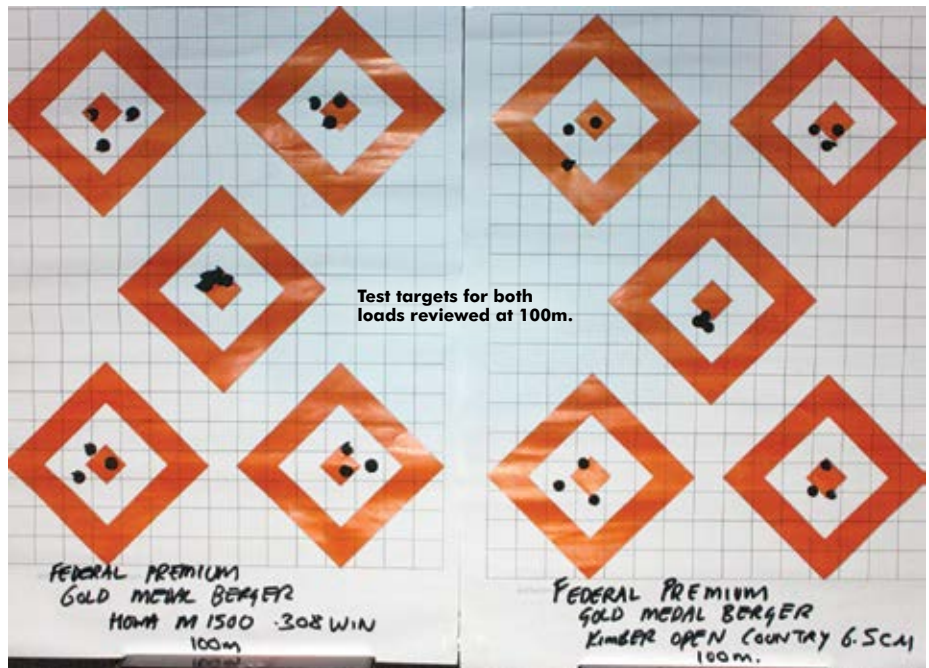
Point of Impact, it would be interesting to see if the ballistics on the carton would match the range test.

I'd have liked to test at more than 300m but a hot, dry summer meant venturing into the field was a no-go, but tests at 300m agreed with Federal's ballistics. The .308 Winchester loads shot several three-shot groups approximately 9" below the zero and the 6.5 Creedmoor grouped 7" below the zero point. All three-shot groups at 300m were less than 75mm, or MOA at that distance, which was pleasing.

The use of quality bullets tailored to premium propellants and match-quality primers and brass cases make Gold Medal Berger target ammunition a winner for fans of punching paper or hitting metal gongs at long-range.



The Berger 130gr Hybrid OTM bullet and cross-section of its construction.



Accuracy testing of Gold Medal Berger - 100m

Load and test platform	Best group	Worst group	Average*
.308 Winchester 185gr Juggernaut OTM - Howa M1500 sporter	12mm	25mm	19mm
.308 Winchester 185gr Juggernaut OTM - Ruger M77 sporter	8mm	19mm	15mm
6.5 Creedmoor 130gr Hybrid OTM - Kimber Open Country	9mm	30mm	18mm
6.5 Creedmoor 130gr Hybrid OTM - Sako A7	13mm	24mm	21mm

*Average taken from five three-shot groups.

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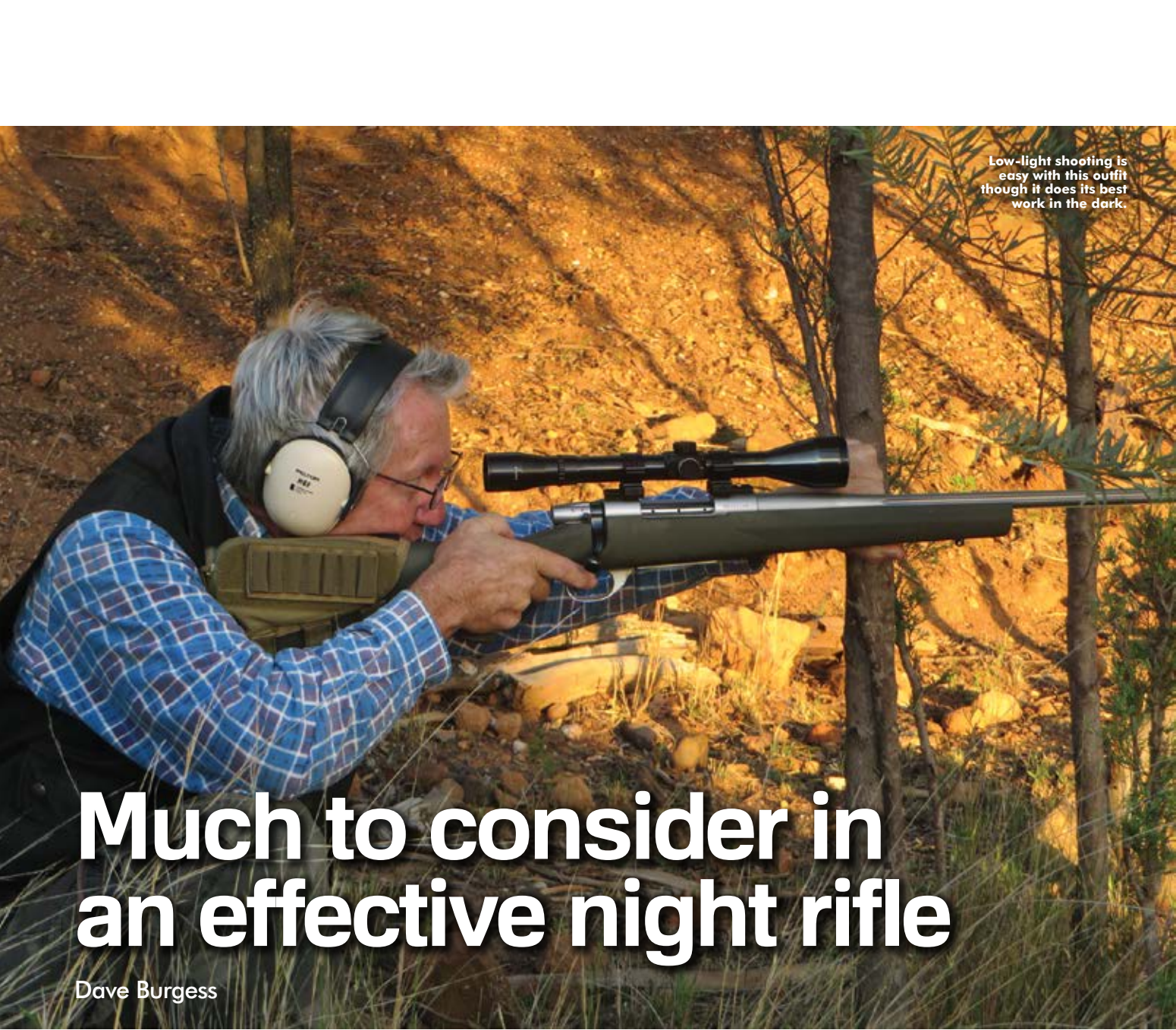
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Low-light shooting is easy with this outfit though it does its best work in the dark.

Much to consider in an effective night rifle

Dave Burgess

Spotlight shooting seems to divide hunters like few other topics. Some see it as unsporting - indeed it's illegal in some parts of the world - others, like farmers who work all day, say it's a necessary tool in the control of feral and pest animals. Love it or loathe it you have to admit it's a specialised type of shooting.

Like most of my mates I started night shooting with my favourite rifle and simply tried to make it do everything with only moderate success. I didn't realise how much of a handicap I was working under until I did a couple of nights' work with a professional kangaroo harvester.

For the task at hand our two rifles were chalk and cheese to the point where I left mine at home and let him do the shooting.

With this new insight I started the long process of putting together a firearm that would give me some of the advantages my professional friend enjoyed and during this time read everything I could find on the topic and picked the brains of anyone who 'did a bit of spotlighting'.

My equipment selection started with, not surprisingly, the light. I chose one of metal construction which throws a beam just over 200m and I mention this because if you can only see 200m, you don't need a cannon that shoots to the moon. So calibre selection should be linked to light performance and the ability to take the target animal cleanly with one shot.

My choice was the .223 Remington, predictable I know but they're everywhere and the main reason for that is they work

very well and as you sometimes fire a lot of shots in a night's work, recoil can be a factor but not with this gentle little calibre. Another reason is most of my night shooting is done in smaller paddocks so .223 range is ideal and performance exceptional. Some of my mates suggested I buy a bigger light so I can take longer shots but I explained that this is not a competition, it's a job.

Next was to pick the all-important rifle. My decision may cause some argument but was influenced for the most part by country of origin and price. The reason for this is simple: US manufacturers seem to have any aftermarket parts you can think of and I planned to modify this rifle into something quite different to the stock-standard version.

I settled on a Weatherby Vanguard as it was a US manufacturer (although Japanese made), was on special offer and came with a short (490mm) thick fluted barrel. Shorter barrels are easier to manage in and around a vehicle and fluting helps with cooling while increasing the barrel stiffness without making the gun too heavy or unwieldy. Another aspect that pleased was the top-loading magazine as I can reload in the dark without looking while removable magazines demand your attention and can be fiddly to use. Spare mags can also be easily lost in the dark.

Reloading was next and proved quite easy as I'd owned a .222 in the past and, given the size and performance similarities, I found I could use the same powder, primers and projectiles all of which were benchrest capable components.

So after mounting a high magnification scope and a bit of messing around I settled on a load which shot well inside the one-inch mark. The load used ADI Bench Mark 1, CCI BR4 primers and Nosler



Shooting from a vehicle offers a very stable rest.



Heavy crosshairs and sidebars are a great aid to shot placement in low light.

52gr hollow-points and was well below maximum pressure. Since consolidating this load I've never group tested the rifle at the range again, the reason being I know it works and the way the rifle's set up it's not much good for target shooting, so why put some unfounded doubt in my mind. Let's face it, if your rifle shoots 1" at

100m it should shoot 2" at 200m and that's minute of head all night long.

Scope selection had me thinking back to my time with the professional shooter who used a Kahles 8x56, not uncommon among pro shooters. I tried a couple of mainstream scopes but ran into problems with light gathering and cross-hair clarity



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The full GO Range will be on display at the SSAA Shot Expo or find out more by visiting spika.com.au

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Much to consider in an effective night rifle

so after these early 'fails' I picked up a secondhand Pecar 8x45 and sighted it in.

The scope has very heavy side bars and quite heavy cross-hairs, typical of European scopes which are mostly used at dusk and dawn. At first look you'd think this is no good for accurate shot placement but when used almost exclusively at night the advantages soon become apparent.

Light gathering is superb to the extent I can often see game on the very fringes of the spotlight beam. Seeing game in the gloom is one thing but being able to place your shot is another and here the heavy side bars and cross-hairs come into play, making shot placement possible. I did mount the scope in aluminium rings and bases and have since bought steel replacements but the rifle has never lost its zero and I'm loathed to fix something that's not broken, so the steel upgrade remains in its packet until needed.

The stock that came with my Vanguard was a blow-moulded plastic which is no doubt cost-effective and fine to carry in the



Reloading components were adapted from 222R loads and are very accurate in the 223.



The ute stands ready at sunset to tackle some feral pests.



A stock-mounted ammo holder is an important part of the author's reloading system.



The Pecar scope was initially mounted in alloy rings which never failed so remain in place.

field, but I found it unsuitable for shooting off a rest and quite 'drummy' when bumped against door sills etc. So again I looked at what would work and decided on a Hogue rubber over-moulded stock. It has a flatter base so sits well on a rest and also has a non-slip rubber feel that's 'grippy' even when your hands get wet. I left the sling studs on as I sometimes I use a bipod.

Factory triggers are improving all the time and for a reasonably priced rifle the Vanguard's was pretty good. I had a gunsmith smooth and lighten it for me

and this was adequate for a few years until I had the chance to buy a Timney replacement. I started with the Timney factory setting and was impressed by how crisp and light it felt, then over about a 12-month period I gradually lightened it off until it now breaks at around 500g.

On a normal hunting rifle I consider this weight of pull a bit too low, but on my night rifle it has been a great aid to accurate shooting. Given the rifle is only ever loaded and cocked just before I fire, and even then is always pointed out the window, this trigger weight is very safe and has never caused a problem.

The final alteration I made to the rifle was more about convenience. I installed an ammunition holder on the stock which holds seven rounds as sometimes when night shooting you may only fire a shot

every half hour, but occasionally things can get very busy - if a large mob of pigs pops up in the light you don't want only a few shots at your disposal.

With this in mind I practise my reloading routine every time I fire a shot so I'm always fully loaded and ready to deliver the maximum number of shots. My system is this: fire a shot or shots, retrieve the cases to pocket, restock the magazine from the stock holder then when we start moving again I restock the holder from my ammo box, giving me 12 shots at my fingertips at all times. Since using this system I've never been caught with an empty gun while the ferals take to their heels.

So that's my night shooting set-up, not perfect I'm sure but my rate of success has gone through the roof with it, something which pleases my farmer friends no end. ●



European scopes are often made for use in lowlight conditions.

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Target rails will also support metallic silhouette targets.

NSW shooting complex opens for competition

Rod Pascoe

The Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex may not be well known to a lot of shooters but now, with the addition of two new world-class ranges, the complex is sure to attract many local, national and international competitions. The new 50m and 500m pistol and rifle ranges are located in a bushy setting a little over 90 minutes drive south-west of Sydney.

The new ranges sit alongside the existing 800m target rifle range that was built near the village of Hill Top in 1983 when construction of the Hume Highway, by-passing many Southern Highlands villages, forced closure of the Bowral-Mittagong Rifle Club range at Welby. Development of the new ranges and substantial upgrading of the 800m one was an undertaking made by the NSW state government.



The 500m range at Hill Top has 60 firing positions and will eventually have a mix of benches along with prone and standing positions for different disciplines including Fly and Rifle Metallic Silhouette out to

500m. Currently, paper targets can be set on numbered frames at 50, 100, 150, 200, 300, 385 and 500m.

Handgun Metallic Silhouette will be accommodated in future on the 500m range but it's the 50m pistol range that uses the latest innovations. It has 55 firing positions on 11 banks of turning targets across four bays and there's also a bay for IPSC, Steel Challenge and other matches not requiring turning targets. The shooting bays can double up for other disciplines with an Action Match 'mover' permanently installed on the widest. Each bank of turning target frames is on rails and can be moved up and down the range and set to different distances so the shooter stays in one spot on the firing line, handy on rainy days.

Apart from the ISSF disciplines at 25 and 50m the targets can also be set to distances of 3, 7, 10, 15, 25, 35 and 50 yards for Action Match, Service Pistol, 25-Yard Service and the seven WA1500 matches. Compressed



air and electrical connections are available for each of the 11 frames at each distance.

When fully operational the complex will be able to host major competitions. The NSW WA1500 Championships have recently concluded and the Action Match state titles were held in April. The WA1500 competition was also used as a test event for the upcoming World Shoot that will be held this month, a great achievement considering the range hadn't been completed when this prestigious international competition was awarded to the Hill Top venue.

The NSW Office of Sport, which operates the Sydney International Shooting Centre, home to the 2000 Olympic shooting events, also manages the complex at Hill Top and together the SISC and Hill Top venues will cater to almost every rifle, pistol and shotgun discipline.

The range is open to those clubs which have registered interest in using the venue for activities, including clubs currently using the 800m range and others who, for one reason or another, don't have a home range of their own. In recent years three major shooting ranges have closed down in the Illawarra region south of Sydney.

As well as club events, the new ranges are open to licensed shooters for practice on weekends when there's availability around competitions. For all enquiries contact the Office of Sport on (02) 8782 0100. As ranges continue to be threatened by encroaching populations, a large regional facility such as the SHRSC is most welcome for an ever-growing number of shooters. ●

Clarification

In our review of the Franchi Horizon 150th Anniversary rifle last month, the price quoted was \$1200 as supplied to us. The correct price of this rifle is \$1500.

FIREARMS LAWYER

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Having spent a lifetime around the sport, I have an intimate knowledge of the workings of all the bodies affecting the decision-making process, whether it is police or courts, local councils or governments, clubs or associations.

For a no-obligation assessment, phone 0407 962 200 or email glennkable@yahoo.com mail@hartmann.webcentral.com.au

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Gun & Knife Show List

2019

September 7-8	Toowoomba Showgrounds, Glenvale Rd, Toowoomba	330+ tables firearms, ammo, militaria & collectibles & more	Dan Watson 0407 643 776
September 14-15	Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds, Cannington	WA Arms & Armour Annual Militaria Fair	Geoff Smith 0419 955 284
September 21-22	Maitland Federation Centre, Maitland	Hunter Valley Arms Fair	huntervalleyarmsfair.com.au
October 5-6	Westgate Indoor Sports and Leisure Centre, Altona North	Melbourne CANCELLED Militaria Fair	Jeff Pannan 0412 561 243
October 7		NSW South Coast Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
October 19-20	Melbourne Showgrounds	SSAA Shot Expo	ssaashotexpo.org.au
October 19-20	Belmont Shooting Complex, Belmont	Brisbane Show of modern, sporting, military guns, militaria, edged weapons, collectables	Paul Brush 0412 562 252
October 26	Illawarra Sports Stadium, Berkeley	Illawarra Outdoor & Adventure Expo	Chris Sainsbury 0448 129 932 or ssaexpo@gmail.com
November 3-4		Adelaide Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
November 9-10	Penrith Panthers Pavilion, Penrith	Sydney Antique & Modern Arms Expo	Lachlan Matthews 0414 928 018 or events\$razorbckguns.com
December 2		Canberra Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com

2020

Feb 29-March 1	Eastbank Centre, Welford St, Shepparton	200 tables antique & modern firearms, militaria and collectables Expo	Ricky Seiter 0400 567 353
May 23-24	Toowoomba Showgrounds, Glenvale Rd, Toowoomba	350+ tables firearms, ammo, militaria & collectibles	Dan Watson 0407 643 776
September 12-13	Toowoomba Showgrounds, Glenvale Rd, Toowoomba	350+ tables firearms, ammo, militaria & collectibles	Dan Watson 0407 643 776
September 12-13	Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds, Cannington	WA Arms & Armour Annual Militaria Fair	Geoff Smith 0419 955 284

Persons wishing to purchase any firearm that requires a licence from any arms fair in NSW should apply for a Permit to Acquire at least six weeks before the fair. For reasons beyond the control of show organisers, some of the above dates may be changed. It is advisable to check the show dates before travelling.



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ABN 95 050 209 688

SSAA Membership Office, PO Box 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761

Phone 02 8805 3900 Fax 02 9832 9377 Email mem@ssaa.org.au

Membership No.

NEW ☐ RENEWAL ☐ Have you been a member before? Yes/No

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Title (PLEASE CIRCLE) Mr Miss Ms Mrs or Preferred SSAA Branch

First name

Middle name

Last name

Residential address

Town/suburb State Postcode

Postal address

Town/suburb State Postcode

(IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)

Phone (Mobile) (Home)

Email

Date of birth Male ☐ Female ☐ Member referral number if applicable

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☐ \$128 ☐ \$158

☐ \$70 ☐ \$100

☐ \$105 ☐ \$135

☐ \$70 ☐ \$100

☐ \$105 ☐ \$135

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5-year Adult Contact SSAA for firearms insurance information.

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Parent's or guardian's signature

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Supporting Adult member No.

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- ☐ HUNTING (club membership)
- ☐ COLLECTING
- ☐ HUNTING OTHER (R licence, property owner/permission)

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September 2019

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Expiry date Signature.....

Cheques payable to the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Inc.

I also wish to donate the following amount to the SSAA \$.....

Patrick Simpson

Communications Officer Sam Talbot

In a single competition Patrick Simpson has won more than twice as many medals as the number of years he's been shooting competitively. His haul of five, as well as a Screamer and Top Ten patch, came at the recent NSW Grouping and International Rimfire Benchrest Championships hosted by SSAA Newcastle.

Patrick said the event was an intense four days which began with the Light class where competitors can only use a 6x scope. "It was very challenging," he said. "Day two followed the same format as day one, with five cards at 50m and five at 100m but in the Heavy class.

"Days three and four were the IRB Championships where you shoot three cards with 25 targets on each card each day. These events required continuous focus, concentration and a bit of luck to achieve the results you hope for. Oh, and a fair bit of ammunition!"

By the end of competition one of Patrick's targets tallied up to an impressive 250.14 and with a score like that you might think there isn't much more for him to learn. But Patrick knows better. "It was a great opportunity to mix with world-class shooters, listen to their advice and gain knowledge," he said.

"I managed to come away with five medals: gold in the 50m Light Class grouping, bronze in 50/100m combined Light Class, silver in 50m Heavy Class and eighth in the combined 50/100m Heavy Class. I also won a Top Ten medal, Screamer patch for a group of .169 and the top junior medal, so all in all I was stoked with my efforts."

While Patrick has been busy winning medals, his mum Suellen has also been doing her part for shooting, taking groups from Patrick's school to the range every week, alternating between a pistol club and a range in the bush.

Clearly Patrick has gained a lot from mum's ongoing efforts and passion but it was his dad Peter who introduced him to shoot-

ing. "My dad has always enjoyed shooting and did a lot of rabbit and fox hunting for pocket money when he was younger. It was dad who introduced me to shooting and along with my brother we've been on many hunting trips which are great fun," said Patrick.

Another key part of the equation is Patrick's main coach Tom Keys. "He's always available to give advice and steer me in the right direction. Tom's very generous with his time and equipment which he encourages me to use along with my own."

Tom also helps Suellen on the school trips and between them have introduced countless students and juniors to the shooting sports. In fact a normal weekend for Patrick involves himself, several other juniors, Suellen, Peter and Tom loading up their vehicles and heading off to a competition.

"I like everything shooting entails, I love hunting and reloading and enjoy silhouettes and clay targets," said Patrick. "Competitions are a great challenge and Benchrest rimfire requires huge focus and concentration. Each time I try to improve my wind-reading skills. My routine and approach to the whole scene is to make sure I'm in a good head space and hopefully perform at my optimum level. It all takes practice and patience."

Like many junior shooters, Patrick is wise beyond his years and we wish him all the best for the future, whether that be with hunting, landing a career in Defence or National Parks or winning more medals and patches. ●



An impressive score of 250.14.



Another one 'for the pool room' from the SSAA Newcastle president.

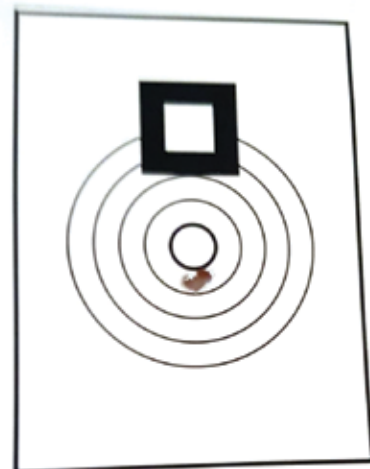


Patrick shooting Benchrest at Coffs Harbour.



A fine effort at the NSW Grouping and International Rimfire Benchrest Championships

This is what a .169 grouping looks like.





Sponsor a JUNIOR

SSAA National's 'Sign up a Junior' campaign was launched to help introduce youngsters to recreational shooting. Juniors are essential to the ongoing strength and vitality of the SSAA and **we are seeking your support to protect and ensure the future of the shooting sports in Australia.**

Sean Tiver holding a .410 shotgun

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National

Big Game Rifle National Postal Championships

February 1-November 30, 2019
Program: February 1-May 31: Special Snap. June 1-August 31: Group Three. September 1-November 30: Stopping Double Rifle. Rules: Championships shot as per current National Big Game Rifle rule book. Scoresheets showing competitor's name, club, rifle, scope power and result of each shot to be sent to Graeme Wright, PO Box 5085, Kenmore East, Qld 4069. Awards to 3rd place and juniors. Entries in junior class to include date of birth. Contact: Graeme Wright thepilotgw@hotmail.com

National Junior Rimfire Field Rifle Postal Championships

June 1-November 30, 2019
All clubs/branches
Program: To be shot between June 1 and November 30, 2019. Scores showing competitor's name, branch, age and score for each position (with 10s, 9s etc in case of countback), to Kaye McIntyre at juniorsports@ssaa.org.au by December 31. Prizes to third place in U-15, O-15 and U-18. Contact: Kaye McIntyre.

SSAA Combined Services National Postal Competition

July 1-September 23, 2019
Program: Open to all current SSAA members. Rifle event 1: 3P Core Event Match 1 - Standard Rifles. Pistol event 1: 3P Core Event Class 1 Handguns (Graded), Class 2 Handguns (Graded) and Class 3 Handguns (Open) as specified in Combined Services rule book No. 4. Only two classes may be entered. Contact Steve Knight 0428 876 991 or combinedservices@ssaa.org.au. See website for full details.

SSAA National Muzzleloading Postal Shoot

August 1-December 4, 2019
Various locations
Program: See website for event details. Contact 27honeysuckle@msn.com.au

Target Pistol National Championships

September 21-22, 2019
SSAA Madden Range, 292 Mt Petrie Rd, Belmont, Qld 4153
Program: Friday, September 20: Practice; Saturday: Any Rimfire Pistol - 900 match, any Revolver match, Distinguished Revolver. Sunday: Rimfire Mayleigh match, any Centrefire Pistol - 900 match, M9 match (Beretta 92). Nominations: Adults \$10 per event, juniors \$5 (close September 13). Rules: SSAA Guide to the NRA Pistol Rules and

NRA Pistol rule book. Prizes: Medals to third place in all grades and juniors. Facilities: Camping \$8 per person per night, showers and toilets. Dormitory rooms \$12 per person per night. Contact: SSAA Brisbane Office 07 3395 0911. Full details on website.

SSAA/IHMSA National Championships

Sept 27-Oct 4, 2019
Eagle Park Shooting Complex, Little River, Vic
Program: Friday, September 27: Practice for Small Bore and Field Pistol. Sept 28-30: Small Bore and Field Pistol matches. Tuesday, October 1: Practice for Big Bore. Oct 2-4: Big Bore matches. Rules: IHMSA official rule book. Contact: Russell Mowles 0418 819 945 or Michael Arden 0419 429 485. Full details on website.

National Benchrest Rimfire Group and IRB Championships

October 4-7, 2019
SSAA Newcastle Range, Seaham, NSW
Program: Friday, October 4: 8am Light Rimfire 50m and 100yds. Saturday, 8am: Heavy Rimfire 50m and 100yds. Sunday/Monday: 8am IRB 50m. Nominations: \$50 a day, juniors half price (pre-registration required by September 25). Rules: SSAA rule book No.9 and IRB rule book. Prizes: National medals as per rule books. Facilities: Clubhouse, toilets, showers, barbecue. Camping on range (advise beforehand). Free breakfast, lunch, tea, coffee. Dinner for small fee. Contact: Kim Cosstick 0429 335 389 or David Billingham 0418 478 160.

SSAA Rifle Metallic Silhouette National Championships

October 4-9, 2019
Madden Range, Mt Petrie Rd, Belmont, Qld
Program: Please see website for full event details. Contact: SSAA Brisbane 07 3395 0911 or Tim Barry 0419 405 696.

SSAA Lever Action National Championships

October 5-7, 2019
SSAA Blue Hills, Copping, Tasmania
Program: Saturday, October 5 practice, Sunday rimfire, Monday centrefire. Classic Teams event will follow Classic Calibre shoot. Nominations: \$35 per event, \$95 all three, juniors half price. Please enter early and bring grading cards, SSAA membership card and firearms licence. Rules: Current Lever Action rule book. Facilities: Food and drinks on competition days, range facilities limited (no showers), accommodation at several nearby towns. Contact: secretary@ssaatas.com.au or leveraction@ssaa.org.au

SSAA Long Range Precision National Championships

October 12-13, 2019
Port Lincoln Rifle Club, SA
Program: Saturday 500yd and 600yd, Sunday 800yd and 900yd. Nominations: One day \$40, both days \$70 (limited targets available). Rules: Saturday Long Range Precision official rules 2015 No.1; Sunday proposed modified rules. Prizes: National medals and prize table. Facilities: On-site camping (no power), food and drink to buy. Contact: Trenton_Hardie@bigpond.com

SSAA Combined Services National Championships

October 17-20, 2019
Micket Creek Shooting Complex, Brandt Rd, Berrimah, NT
Program: Thursday, October 19: Practice. Friday: Pistols and rifles. Saturday: Rifles. Sunday: Rifles. Nominations: All pistol events \$50, all rifle \$60, individual \$15, all \$100. Rules: SSAA Combined Services rule book No.4. Prizes: As per program. Contact: treasurersaant@bigpond.com or glenning@cdu.edu.au. Full details on website.

New South Wales

SSAA NSW Combined Services State Championships

September 13-15, 2019
Windamere Regional Shooting Complex, NSW
Program: Please refer to website for full event details.

SSAA NSW Big Game Rifle State Championships October 5-6, 2019

Rankins Springs Complex, Rankins Springs, NSW
Program: Please refer to website for full event details. Contact: 0409 831 258.

NSW Benchrest State Championships

October 24-27, 2019
SSAA Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW
Program: Wednesday, October 23: Practice; Thursday: Unlimited; Friday: 100yds and 200yds Sporter; Saturday: 100yds and 200yds Light Benchrest; Sunday: 100yds and 200yds Heavy Benchrest. Nominations: \$50 per class, juniors half-price. Rules: As per SSAA rule book. Facilities: Clubhouse, toilets, showers and barbecue. Camping on range (please advise beforehand). Catered breakfast (6am), lunch, tea and coffee included in entry fee. Contact: David Billingham 0418 478 160 or Ray Munro 0408 649 126.

Queensland

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.4

August 1-November 30, 2019
Program: Long Range Conventional

Pistol, Long Range Conventional Revolver, Long Range Unlimited Standing, Long Range Unlimited Pistol. Location: All SSAA (Qld) branches with approval to shoot Pistol Metallic Silhouette. Nominations: Results to state NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette chairman by December 12, 2019. Rules: As per SSAA (Qld) NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Guide Book. Prizes: Certificates to 1st, 2nd, 3rd in each grade. Each entry goes into draw for \$60 open order at Queensland Shooters Supplies, Ipswich. Contact: Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au

Police Service Match - Law Enforcement Activities

October 5-6, 2019
QPPC Range, Old Cleveland Rd, Belmont, Qld
Program: This is an individual event, no teams. Shooters may choose revolver or self-loading in one of the NRA PPC divisions of Open, Distinguished or Duty. Shooters are not compelled to compete against a higher level of equipment. Nominations: Belmont site user levy applies, nomination fee \$5. Rules: SSAA Standard Rules, SSAA LEAD Police Service Match Rules. Facilities: QPPC has basic facilities, others at QRA compound. QRA accepts bookings for motel or barrack-style accommodation, several accommodation options nearby. Contact: Bob Pierce 0427 172 277. See website for full details.

Qld Muzzleloading State Championships

October 12-13, 2019
SSAA Mackay branch
Program: Friday, October 11: Practice. Saturday and Sunday: Competition. Rules: National rule book No.8. Nominations: \$5 per event, \$10 shotgun to maximum \$80. Facilities: Camping at range, showers, toilets, power, canteen, coffee and drinks available. Contact: Ben Bruggeman 0455 853 533 ben458bgrmackay@yahoo.com or Des Prowse 0427 204 906 prowsedj@bigpond.com. Full details on website.

Qld Big Game and Hunting Rifle State Championships

October 18-20, 2019
SSAA Bundaberg Rifle Range, 2993 Isis Highway via Bundaberg
Program: Friday, October 18: Practice. Saturday: African Plains, Classic Cartridge, Rook and Rabbit Rifle, Group 1 Nitro, Light Black Powder, Black Powder Express, Group 2 Nitro. Sunday: Special Snap, Stalker Double Rifle, Pot Rifle, Stopper Double Rifle, Bore Gun, Group 3 Nitro. Nominations: \$6 per event to maximum \$50, juniors half price (pay on the day). Rules: As per 2015 SSAA (Qld) Big Game and Hunting Rifle rules. Prizes: State medals 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Facilities: Camping at range, accommodation in Bundaberg or Childers. Contact: Barry

Smith 0419 621 226 or Ted Rogers
5486 4135. Full details on website.

South Australia

SSAA SA Gallery Rifle State Championships

September 14-15, 2019

SSAA Para Range

Program: Friday, September 13: noon-4pm range open for practice. Saturday: 10am - Imperial Silhouettes (30 shots + 5 sighters); 1020 Match (102 shots); Multi-Target 'Classic Rifle' (24 shots) time permitting; 50m Precision 'Classic Rifle' (30 shots plus sighters) time permitting.

Sunday: 10am - America Match (30 shots + unlimited sighters); 1500 Match (150 shots). All events will be graded. Nominations \$5 each for America Match and Imperial Silhouettes, \$10 for the 1020 and 1500 to maximum of \$25 for four main events. Each Classic event \$5. Prize draw for competitors on Saturday evening. Facilities: Camping available, canteen Saturday and Sunday, barbecue Saturday night (\$5). There will be the annual Sub-Committee meeting, advise Dave McCarthy if you wish to attend, email atm3855@yahoo.com.au Contact: Dave McCarthy.

Tasmania

SSAA Tas Single Action State Championships

September 14-15, 2019

SSAA Glenorchy, Upper Tolosa St, Glenorchy, Tas

Program: Shoot consists of nine main

stages plus shoot-off between all competitors. Ammunition required: 96+ pistol, 97+ rifle and 34+ shotgun. Compulsory shooters briefing 8.30am daily. Nominations: Shooters must be SSAA members (bring membership card). Match fee \$80, forms/info at www.ssaat03.com Facilities: Lunch provided. Contact: Ray 0487 334 714 or 03 6229 1935 or sec@ssaat03.com

SSAA/IHMSA Tas Smallbore Handgun Metallic Silhouette State Championships

September 21-22, 2019

Oakdale Pistol Range, Flagstaff Gully Rd, Clarence, Tas

Program: Gun check 9am daily, match starts 10am. Entries must be received by September 4, 2019. Contact: Cody Abel codyabel@spin.net.au. See website for full details.

SSAA Tas Lever Action State Championships

September 29, 2019

Blue Hills Range, Copping, Tas
Program: See website for full details. Nominations: \$35, juniors half price. Prizes: State medals. Facilities: Limited camping and kitchen, lunch and drinks available. Contact: David Moulton 0488 441 499 or secretary@ssaabluehills.org.au. See website for full details.

SSAA/IHMSA Tasmania Big Bore Handgun Metallic Silhouette State Championships

November 16-17, 2019

Oakdale Pistol Range, Flagstaff Gully Rd, Clarence, Tas
Program: Gun checks 9am daily, match starts 10am. Entries must be received by November 4, 2019. Contact: Cody Abel codyabel@spin.net.au. See website for full details.

SSAA Tas Rimfire Field Rifle and 3-Positional State Championships

November 23, 2019

T03 Glenorchy, Tolosa St, Glenorchy, Tas 7010

Program: 9am practice/weigh-in, 10am start Field Rifle. 3-P starts 45mins after conclusion of Field Rifle. Nominations: Adults \$15 per event or \$25 for both, juniors \$7 or \$12 for both. Current SSAA membership/grading cards must be shown. Rules: Current SSAA rule book. Prizes: State medals for all grades incl. juniors; 1st, 2nd, 3rd for 2-Gun. Contact: Tom Banks 0403 127 732.

SSAA Tas Centrefire Field Rifle and 3-Positional State Championships

November 24, 2019

T13 Blue Hills Range, Copping, Tas
Program: 9am practice/weigh-in. 10am start Field Rifle. 3-P starts 45mins after conclusion of Field Rifle. Nominations: Adults \$15 per event or \$25 for both, juniors \$7 or \$12 for both. Current SSAA membership/grading cards must be shown. Rules: As per current SSAA rule book. Prizes: State medals for all grades incl. juniors; 1st, 2nd, 3rd for 2-Gun. Contact: Shane Bowden 0400 158 659.

ACT

SSAA ACT Single Action State Championships

October 18-20, 2019

SSAA Majura Range,

Hector McIntosh Grove, ACT
Program: Friday, October 18: Side Matches, Long Range Precision, Pistol Speed Events, Cowboy Clays. Saturday: Opening and Main Match. Sunday: Main Match and presentation. Nominations: \$85 for Main Match and one entry to all Side Matches plus Saturday shindig. Rules: Current SSAA rule book and local range rules. Contact: majurarangers.matchdirector@gmail.com

Victoria

SSAA Vic Single Action State Championships

November 1-3, 2019

Eagle Park Range, Little River, Vic
Program: Friday, Nov 1: Long Range Rifle, side events, warm-up stages, derringery match. Saturday: Opening and six main stages. Sunday: Six main stages, Top Gun shoot-off. Nominations: \$95 main match, shooting partner \$75, juniors \$35. Rules: Single Action Shooting Society and local range rules. Prizes: State medals and trophies. Facilities: Free camping, limited powered, toilets and showers. Contact: Tony Diablo diablot6@bigpond.com See website for full event details

SSAA Official Calendar

NATIONAL

Feb 1-Nov 30, 2019
June 1-Nov 30, 2019
July 1-Sept. 23, 2019
August 1-Dec 4, 2019
September 21-22, 2019
Sept 27-October 4, 2019
October 4-7, 2019
October 5-7, 2019
October 17-20, 2019

Big Game Rifle National Postal Championships
National Junior Rimfire Field Rifle Postal Championships
Combined Services National Postal Competition
SSAA National Muzzleloading Postal Shoot
Target Pistol National Championships
SSAA/IHMSA National Championships
National Benchrest Rimfire Group and IRB Championships
SSAA Lever Action National Championships
SSAA Combined Services National Championships

All clubs/branches
Postal shoot
Various locations
Madden Range, Belmont, Qld
Eagle Park, Vic
Newcastle Range, Seaham, NSW
SSAA Blue Hills, Copping, Tas
Micket Creek Shooting Complex, NT

Graeme Wright thepilotgw@hotmail.com
juniorsports@ssaa.org.au
0428 876 991 or combinedservices@ssaa.org.au
27honeyusuckle@msn.com.au
07 3395 0911
0418 819 945 or 0419 429 485
0429 335 389 or 0418 478 160
secretary@ssaatas.com.au
treasurerssaat@bigpond.com
or sean.glendenning@cdu.edu.au

STATE

August 1-Nov 30, 2019
September 13-15, 2019
September 14-15, 2019
September 14-15, 2019
September 21-22, 2019
September 29, 2019
October 18-20, 2019
October 4-9, 2019
October 5-6, 2019
October 5-6, 2019
October 12-13, 2019
October 12-13, 2019
October 18-20, 2019
October 18-20, 2019
October 19-20, 2019
October 24-27, 2019
November 1-3, 2019
November 16-17, 2019

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.4
SSAA NSW Combined Services State Championships
SSAA SA Gallery Rifle State Championships
SSAA Tas Single Action State Championships
SSAA/IHMSA Tas Smallbore Handgun Silhouette State Championships
SSAA Tas Lever Action State Championships
SSAA Rifle Metallic Silhouette National Championships
Police Service Match Qld State Championships
SSAA NSW Big Game Rifle state championships
Qld Muzzleloading State Championships
SSAA Long Range Precision National Championships
SSAA ACT Single Action State Championships
Qld Big Game and Hunting Rifle State Championships
SSAA NSW Muzzleloading Shotgun Cannon State Championships
NSW Benchrest State Championships
SSAA Vic Single Action State Championships
SSAA/IHMSA Tasmania Big Bore Handgun Metallic Silhouette State Championships
SSAA Tas Rimfire Field Rifle and 3-P State Championships
SSAA (Tas) Centrefire Field Rifle and 3-P State Championships

Windamere Regional Shooting Complex, NSW
SSAA Para Range, SA
SSAA Glenorchy, Tas
Oakdale Pistol Club
Blue Hills Range, Copping, Tas
Madden Range, Mt Petrie Rd, Belmont, Qld
QPPC Range, Belmont, Qld
Rankins Springs Complex, NSW
SSAA Mackay
Port Lincoln Rifle Club, SA
Majura Range, ACT
Bundaberg Rifle Range
SSAA Bathurst, NSW
SSAA Dairyville, Coffs Harbour
Eagle Park Range, Vic

Oakdale Pistol Range, Clarence, Tas
T03 Glenorchy, Tas
T13 Blue Hills Range, Copping, Tas

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CLOTHING

SSAA Shotgun Vest

The new SSAA Shotgun Vest is made to our usual high standards and now comes with upgraded features such as the ability to insert additional padding in the shoulders to absorb recoil.

The vest comes with lots of pockets, has front and rear leather trim and Velcro adjuster, while the back sections are mesh for added breathability.

Comes in blue and green.

Green

SVG001 - Small
SVG002 - Medium
SVG003 - Large
SVG004 - XL
SVG005 - 2XL
SVG006 - 3XL

Blue

SVB001 - Small
SVB002 - Medium
SVB003 - Large
SVB004 - XL
SVB005 - 2XL
SVB006 - 3XL

\$74.95



SSAA beanies



Black
C0024

Navy
C0017



Pink
C0019

Black
C0021

\$14.95

SSAA Softshell Vest

Our SSAA Softshell Vest is water resistant and made from 100 per cent polyester mechanic stretch fabric and comes with comfy microfleece on the inside to keep you warm.

CSV001 - small
CSV002 - medium
CSV003 - large
CSV004 - XL
CSV005 - 2XL

\$64.95



Front

Back

SSAA mens t-shirt

Get noticed with the Gildan Soft-styled SSAA men's shirts and wear the SSAA logo with pride.

- Pre-shrunk jersey knit
- Seamless double-needled 1.9cm collar
- Taped neck and shoulders
- Rolled forward shoulders
- Double needle sleeve and bottom hems
- Quarter-turned to eliminate centre crease.

MSN001 - small
MSN002 - medium
MSN003 - large
MSN004 - XL
MSN005 - 2XL
MSN006 - 3XL

\$29.49

See complete size details online

NEW

SSAA outdoors bag - black



- * Material made from waterproof 430gs, Ripstop Polyester canvas
- * Hard base sewn between bottom layers of canvas
- * 50mm adjustable shoulder strap
- * Front, rear and side pockets for essential items
- * High visibility reflective strip on front flap
- * Side footwear storage pocket

\$74

OBB001

CLOTHING

SSAA Buffwear



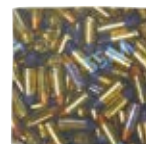
These SSAA Buffs offer a multitude of uses and can be worn to keep dust and dirt out of your face when riding the quad or as a basic headscarf.

They also offer sun protection and are great for fishing as well as hunting and come in a range of colours that can match your favourite outdoor gear.

\$17.95



CBW001
Iron Bark



CBW002
Bullet



CBW003
Coloured Leaf



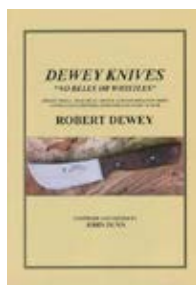
CBW004
Distressed Leaf



CBW005
Oz Flag

Student discount of \$20 on phone orders of this book only.

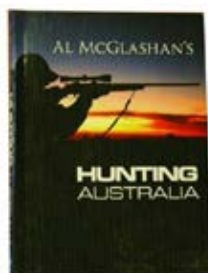
BOOKS



No Bells or Whistles

The story of Rob Dewey's journey as a knifemaker, giving an insight into his philosophy on knife-making and design and a wealth of technical detail about materials and construction.

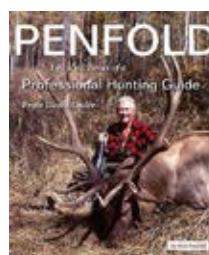
P0058
\$34.95



Hunting Australia

Al is one of Australia's favourite outdoors men. A must read for all hunters.

\$29.95 PHA28



Penfold: Life and Times of a Professional Hunting Guide From Down Under

P0050
\$99.95 See online for special offer for Hunter subscribers



This book contains the edited proceedings of papers presented at the Conservation through the Sustainable Use of Wildlife conference in Brisbane in September 2016.

P0055
\$94.95

PATCHES AND PINS



Hat badge antique gold

Our SSAA hat badge is finished in fine antique gold (not real gold), attach on your favourite hat or shirt.

A0068
\$12.95



Hat badge SSAA logo (brooch)

Traditional logo SSAA metal badge for you to proudly wear.
Measuring 22mm x 24mm

B0006
\$8.20

SSAA bullet-case pen

The SSAA bullet-case pen has been crafted from a part form bullet case, they take a standard pen refill and is comfortable to hold for smooth writing. The pen comes with black ink and is beautifully presented in a velvet pouch. It measures approximately 14½cm long with a 13mm diameter.



A0020
\$35.95

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KNIVES

SSAA Ka-Bar folder

The SSAA Ka-Bar folder comes beautifully presented in a box to make gift giving a pleasure.

Measurements
Blade length: 10cm
Blade width: 3.5cm (at its widest part)
Handle length: 12.5cm
Handle width: 3cm
Weight: 187grams

\$48.95 KBF001



JKR camo folding knife



The SSAA JKR Camo Folding Knife comes with a handy belt clip so no pouch is required.

JKR203
\$34.95

Leatherman-style his/hers



A his and hers pack that comes with a smart presentation case. Great gift for your favourite couple.

CAMPING AND HUNTING



SSAA bush kettle

These custom-made bush kettles run on a few twigs and leaves and will boil water in less than 10 minutes. Simply get a handful of twigs/leaves and kindling then place under the kettle and light it - the clever design directs heat into the kettle to boil the water.

The kettle can be used with gas stoves and has a stainless construction.

\$69.95 1L Kettle BK001

Pocket-size knife sharpener

This carbide and ceramic hand-held knife sharpener features:

- Non-skid base for stable sharpening
- Crossed carbide blades providing quick edge setting
- Crossed ceramic rods providing a razor-sharp edge
- Pre-set sharpening angles providing guaranteed results

KNS001
\$14.95



MPK00
\$64.95



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PHONE

EMAIL.....

MEMBER NUMBER

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or charge my MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐

Card No.

Expiry date/..... Signature.....

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The color of some of the photos may vary from the actual product due to dye batch lots or current availability.

Members-only competitions

WIN

For your chance to win one of these competitions, write your name, address, phone number and membership number on a piece of paper and place it inside an envelope, along with the name of the competition on the front of the envelope, as shown in the example. Alternatively, you can enter online. Competitions close September 30, 2019.

(Name of competition)
SSAA National
PO Box 2520
Unley SA 5061

Enter online at
ssaa.org.au/win

1 of 4 .30 cal pens sets + deer antler stand Valued at \$282

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be as per name entered

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Juniors

Browning hoodie (size L only) & two deals Valued at \$49.85

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winchesteraustralia.com.au



Competition winners!

Australian Shooter July 2019

1 of 4 .30-calibre pen sets

Peter Cseh, NSW
Thomas Carr, Qld
Vick Palmiotto, NSW
James Bartlett, Vic

July Junior - GlowShot Sighting-in Adhesive Splatter Targets 50 pack

Callum Graham, WA

July Best Shots Mug

Sean Ainsworth, ACT

Door Pro II

Karl Pydde, Vic

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Fond memories of damp days at the hut

According to my watch it had just gone midnight, the exactitudes of the minute unreadable in the guttering light thrown by the wood heater in the corner of the hut. My sleep-fuddled brain struggled to identify the sound that had woken me and when it came again it was pretty much what I'd expected.

At first it was a gentle patter. That moved on to heavier splats and in a minute or so had become a wind-driven downpour rattling on the iron roof. Denise rolled over, sleepily observed it was raining and fell silent again. The dog scratched and groaned softly on her blanket in front of the fire. I closed my eyes and quietly lamented the weather change had arrived a day early and that would affect my plans for the morrow.

As it sometimes does in the mountains during winter, daylight rolled in as a grey and miserable morning, the dog making no effort to follow when I stepped outside for a few minutes and reluctant to move from the fire when I returned. I made a brew of tea, sat at the table and pondered other wet days I'd spent at the hut over the years.

There was a time I used to pull on my wet weather gear and head off regardless. Back then I reckoned any day not spent hunting was a day wasted, sambar deer something of an obsession at the time and it took a lot of years for that attraction to mellow.

I came to understand that apart from

being uncomfortable, hunting in the rain was almost always a wasted effort. There were rare flashes of good fortune but usually all I had to show for the day was what my old man used to call "a wet bum and no fish". It took me a long time to realise he was speaking from experience.

Eventually I learned to kick back and relax when the weather soured - read a book, catch up on some sleep I'd missed,

were researched and written - or columns like this hammered into shape in front of the fire on a wet day - with pen and paper then, now on laptop.

These days we don't have to be anything in particular to enjoy our time at the hut. It's where life slows down. There's no intruding telephone, television or internet connection and if the way you fill the day is dictated by the whim of the weather, that's

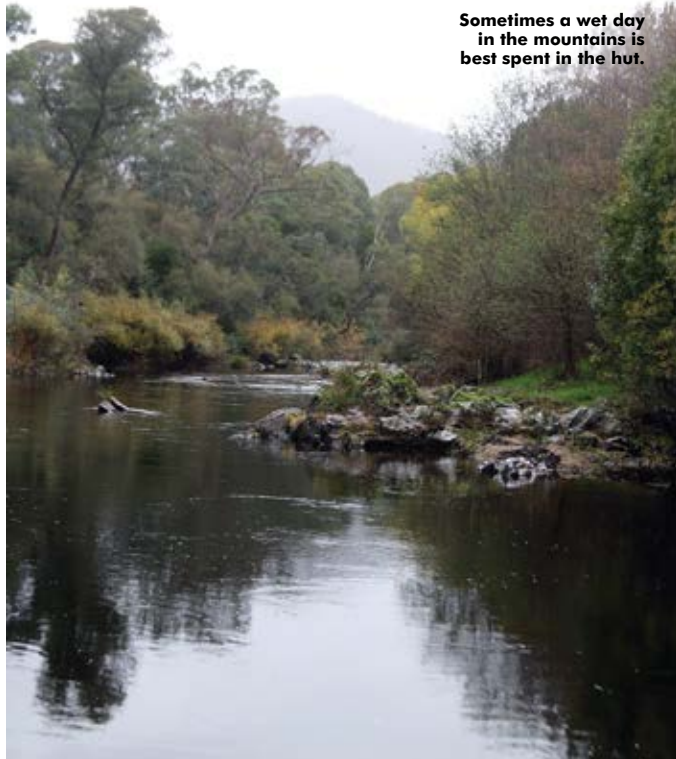
how it is. There's always something to keep us occupied and we invariably go home in a better frame of mind.

This morning Denise slept late. After breakfast we made the most of a break in the rain and went for a walk, the dog chasing magpies and following whatever scents she could find. We all enjoyed the exercise and the cold fresh air. I had a desultory look for some deer sign and we made it back to the hut only minutes before another rain front swept through and settled on the tops for the day.

It's almost evening as I finish this, the dog stretched out in front of the fire, flat on her back with belly to the flames. It's still raining out there and the river breeze feels Arctic. The generator is running so Denise has light to read by and I've fired up the donkey heater so there'll be hot water for a shower before we

turn in. With any luck it'll clear by morning and the dog and I will be able to go for a hunt. If we can't it doesn't really matter. We all know how to handle damp days at the hut.

Sometimes a wet day in the mountains is best spent in the hut.



make a mission out of keeping the fire chugging and the hut warm all day while the wind or rain or hail made a misery of life outside. Sometimes we'd play Scrabble or I'd sit and write, if only to record whatever was happening outside or going on in my head at the time. Quite a few stories



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