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Our April cover

Ryan Caswell features on page 28

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Daniel O'Dea has ventured into the field with Mauser's new affordable offering, the M18 bolt-action rifle, which at less than \$900 he says is exceptional value for money.

For those fox hunters out there, Daniel Musgrave has spilled the good oil on how to take that pelt, expend a bit of time and effort and turn it into a handsome trophy for the cabinet.

How do you test your handguns and ammo? That's the question posed by John Moore who talks us through his preferred method to achieve the best outcomes.



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President's Message

WITH GEOFF JONES

Rallying round for stoic SSAA couple who deserve support

I recently had the privilege of attending a charity dinner on behalf of two of our eminent members. It dawned on me that while we quite legitimately complain and fight over being treated so unfairly and badly as firearms owners, there are times when we could step up, rise above our negative and nit-picking detractors and prove our individual and collective moral worth.

There are innumerable well-deserving causes and charities out there and SSAA branches and clubs have always been at the forefront of such community support. However, sometimes as individuals, we could be looking much closer to home when there is an opportunity to support our own in times of real hardship.

This dinner was for long-time SSAA members and publications writers Steve and Lynn Bain, who late last year endured a series of tragedies that has challenged them both personally and financially. Their public story is only the tip of the iceberg but the dignity and optimism of both Steve and Lynn is humbling and inspiring. A wonderful support group Wounded Heroes Australia is coordinating backing for this remarkable couple and their story and plight is outlined on its website www.woundedheroes.org.au and Facebook page www.facebook.com/WoundedHeroesAustralia/

This tale, of course, does not cover the whole of Steve, Lynn and their family's lifetime commitment to our sport and the Australian outdoors apart from writing about it and promoting it for more than a quarter of a century. Even currently Steve had a piece published in the March 2019 *Australian Shooter* and look for another couple of Lynn's fabulous game recipes in *Australian Hunter* 68.

Anyone who has enjoyed their writings or simple but fantastic recipes might like to make a contribution to this worthy appeal through the Wounded Heroes Australia website.

As an unfortunate matter of timing came the tragic flooding event that occurred in rural North Queensland. While nature can

be a wonderful provider and sometimes a harsh mother, most natural events can or should be managed and dealt with. This case was quite different. Unforeseen and unmanageable, the scope of this flooding will have lasting effects for years to come.

Many of the property owners affected are those who have shown friendship and made their properties available to SSAA hunters over generations. The opportunity to return the goodwill to these people is here and now and long into the future. Practical support can be directed through groups such as 'Blazeaid' website <http://blazeaid.com.au/> or directly to property owners where a relationship already exists. Like SSAA, 'Blazeaid' is an organisation that actually makes a real, on ground difference through its efforts rather than just talking about issues.

As SSAA members we are rightly proud of our decency, integrity and independent worth. A helping hand to a mate in tough times may be disappearing in the big city environments but we have an opportunity to show what real Aussies and SSAA firearms owners are all about.

On a more sobering note, with a Federal election imminent, I appeal to every member to take the trouble to assess carefully their local and Senate candidates and sort out the fair-weather political friends. On election day, cast your vote towards a candidate who will support you and if there is a risk that they might not be successful, do not let your preferences flow to an anti-gun candidate or party. There is strength in numbers.

In the meantime there are lots of shooting competition events on the calendar, while duck and quail seasons are upon the luckier ones among us and I might even run into a few of you around the deer ranges. So get out there and enjoy.

G. E. Jones

Geoff Jones
SSAA National President



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Paying to hunt? Not likely

AUSTRALIAN SHOOTER RECENTLY printed two articles about paying to hunt so I offer you my view on the subject, the alternative view. Unlike Joe Norris (*Shooter*, October 2018) I don't have a family farm so must rely on public land.

Hunting for me is an inalienable right, not a privilege - our forebears brought these animals to Australia to make hunting readily available to everyone. Paying to hunt is a slippery slope where the size of your bank account determines who goes hunting.

I'm a low income earner so hunting has always allowed me to put meat on the table, have some fun and visit amazing places. I've never paid to hunt and never will. Hunting is about freedom and I'll never sell out my right to hunt nor deny future generations theirs.

I live in Queensland where most areas are beyond Joe Average on low wages. I, as I suspect most of your readers will be, am priced out of the Queensland market. It's cheaper for me to travel to the heart of NSW to find venison. It's a shame many of us have been denied the right to access public lands like other states and territories, as hunting is expensive enough without adding extra fees.

I sympathise with the farmers' plight, especially in a drought, and can see why they strive to make income outside normal farming activities, but if they treated hunters

like any other farm stay visitors (fishers, campers, hikers) we wouldn't have a problem with that. Charge for the amenities supplied, not for animals taken.

Charging \$300 a day to pitch a tent is not on. For \$7 per person you can pitch a tent on Fraser Island and catch as many fish as you like. Be reasonable with what you charge and your occupancy rates will soar.

Maybe even the SSAA could look at doing something similar for landholders and hunters as they do with the Farmer Assist program. Imagine how much it would bolster our membership if you could go online and find a property to stay which also lets you hunt.

Robert Dobie, via email

RSPCA can't have it both ways

FIRSTLY LET ME congratulate you on an excellent magazine and for the work you do in promoting shooting and hunting. My neighbour is a SSAA member and passes your magazines to me when he's finished with them. In the *Australian Shooter's Journal* Vol.15 Issue 1 (November 2018) you quote an RSPCA statement that 'shooting by itself is not an effective way to significantly reduce animal numbers and is of limited use to achieve long-term control'. If this is the RSPCA's belief then why do they have a problem with duck shooting if it's not an

effective way to reduce animal numbers? I think the RSPCA view could be used as an argument to the Game Management Authority in Victoria that there should be a normal season as shooting does not significantly reduce numbers. RSPCA cannot have it both ways - either shooting is an effective way to reduce pest animals and shooters should be encouraged, or it is not effective and there should be a normal duck season in terms of both length and bag limit.

Ray Wilson, NSW

READER M. KENNEDY sent us this picture of his cat reading our December magazine. The look of apprehension is understandable given one Queensland council has placed a bounty on the heads of his feral relatives.



Insurance Q&A

WITH TREVOR JENKIN

Q I run my own business but it doesn't have anything to do with firearms. Can I still take out insurance through SSAA General Insurance Brokers?

Robert

A Robert, SSAA General Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd not only looks after our members' personal needs, we also manage many of our clients' commercial and business insurances. You don't need to be in a business relating to firearms for us to help with your insurances and, because we deal with all the major underwriters, more often than not we can work with any insurance company your existing broker can. Another advantage of insuring

with SSAA General Insurance Brokers is we don't charge a brokerage fee for our members' personal insurances and we pay an annual dividend back to the SSAA.

When it comes to business insurance there are normally half a dozen or more classes of insurance to consider and we can talk you through each. These include fire, business interruption, glass, burglary and money, but depending on your line of work there may be others to consider. We'll rate each section separately and assess your risk management and needs all as a part of our free-quote promise.

Firearm-related businesses are managed the same as business insurances and we will perform professionally throughout, just as you'd expect from any other insurer or

brokerage. As a SSAA member we have your best interests at heart and will assist you in every way possible, should you need to make a claim on any of your insurances.

Contact SSAA General Insurance Brokers on 08 8332 0281 or via ssaaib.com.au for more information on insuring your business or any other insurance matter.

Send questions to:
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*The advice offered in this column is of a general nature and does not allow for individual situations. SSAAIB recommends that you obtain professional advice before proceeding with any insurance investment. SSAAIB accepts no liability for any actions by an individual to change their insurance plans without seeking professional advice.

.303 military surplus

WITH REGARD TO Eric Coleman's question (Top Shots, December 2018) I can remember when it was illegal to own a rifle that fired a cartridge used by the military - any mili-

tary - and surplus .303 military rifles were barrelled to a legal calibre.

Fifty years ago it was much harder to buy a high powered rifle. Most people had a .22 rimfire and a shotgun but centrefires were few and far between. I remember two types of 303/22 (two different case lengths) and the 303/243, 303/25 and 303/270. If memory serves, cartridges were made by the Super Cartridge Company and another firm that produced brass which I think was Bertram Bullets out of Seymour, Victoria.

I've been throwing out old magazines I collected over the years as nobody wants them, but when I read Eric's letter I saved this old reloading guide which mentions the .303/25 and .303/270. If Eric or anyone else wants the guide, they can have it.

Peter Carter, via email

• If you'd like the magazine, email your



name and address to edit@ssaa.org.au and we'll pass it to Peter. First in gets the 'prize'.

Ear's a good idea

I GUESS THOSE who take shooting seriously would love a borescope to inspect the inside of their barrel but can't justify the cost. Well, I think I've found the answer.

I've seen online several tiny cable-mounted cameras that would almost do the job but all had the problem that their focal distance was a minimum of about 30cm and narrow, making them virtually useless. Now there's a gadget on the market that will work. eBay lists it as 'Earpick Otoscope Endoscope Ear Spoon Borescope Ear Cleaning For Android PC' and it's designed for earwax removal.

There are a number of types on sale but the one mentioned has a parallel tube just small enough to enter a .22 barrel (mine anyway), it has a 15mm focal distance, wide lens, excellent magnification and a nice clear picture. A minor drawback is the small finger grip on the rear end which could be ground off, but in my case the requirement is usually for checking the chamber and muzzle so it works as is.

I hope this will be useful to fellow shooters. I bought the 1.3MP version which has proved invaluable and, at only \$11.52 plus \$2.99 freight, dirt cheap.

Bruce Potter, WA

I fear he's missed the point

I WAS INTERESTED to read Denis Dixon's comments on *Australian Women's Shooter* in your February magazine. I can't understand why he would view this as discriminatory and therefore divisive for the shooting community. I see the new magazine as a way to be more inclusive of the genders as, up until now, there hasn't been much information in print on products and the different aspects to women's shooting (body shape, gun fit etc).

It's important to note that percentage-wise not a lot of women shoot compared to men and having women-only pages in *Australian Shooter* would no doubt have been viewed as a 'waste of space' by people like Mr Dixon, so I think it was a great idea to have a quarterly insert for women to help improve our knowledge and skills.

Not only has it given me some insight into my shooting, it has helped my husband understand what I need from him by way of advice and coaching. Ultimately, if this magazine encourages more women to come on board it's a wonderful thing as there's strength in numbers.

Furthermore, if "a shooter is a shooter" Mr Dixon, why do the Olympic Games, world championships etc separate the sexes in competition?

Julianne Collen, WA

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Cane toads on the menu

WITH REFERENCE TO Jennifer Crocker's letter 'Cane toad a goanna curse' (*Shooter*, November 2018), I can confirm water-rats also know how to consume cane toads effectively since one night I found our last pond goldfish (\$25!) being eaten by a water-rat sitting on top of the pond filter. It seemed to be saying "thanks for the Asian take-away".

The following two nights, however, I found empty cane toad 'suits' in the same place with all internal flesh eaten bar a small, dark-pink liver-looking organ. That process has since been mentioned in an *Australian Geographic* article. The cunning native Aussies may win the day yet!

John Cornelius, Cairns

Give rats credit where it's due

JENNIFER CROCKER'S LETTER in the November *Shooter* regarding the decline of the goanna is so true. I hunt a large property in central Queensland where the owner told me that since the arrival of the cane toad about 18 years ago the goanna population plummeted to the extent it's rare to see

them there today. In hunting the area for the past eight years I've never seen a goanna there.

An effective predator of the cane toad is the white tail water-rat which quickly flips it on its back to disembowel, always avoiding the head. I've seen this twice - at night and just before daylight.

The crow gets credit for the kill but in my experience he's only doing what he does best - cleaning up what's left by the rat. The toad is mainly active at night, the water-rat's prime hunting time, while the crow is active in daylight, scavenging the leftovers around dams and waterways, common habitat of water-rats and toads.

Gavin Adams, Qld

Craftsmen to be proud of

IT WAS GREAT to read Sam Garro's article in November's *Australian Shooter* about Ross Waghorn and Bob De Vries, who have both done a fair bit of work for me. If I were to compare their work with Purdey, Rigby and Holland - who I know well and have their guns - I can say the work Ross and

Bob do is equal to the best. Additionally, they can handle some challenges the British gunmakers wouldn't even consider.

By recognising their skills Sam has identified two craftsmen Australia can be proud of and this article will hopefully spark some interest among young Aussies looking to excel in such crafts. In an increasingly de-skilled Australia it's important to have a benchmark to aim for. And I'm glad Sam noted that Ross originated from Sydney!

Jogesh Dhanda, NSW

Air pistols in Queensland

I WAS WONDERING who services/rebuilds air pistols in SE Queensland as I have a FWB 80 that needs attention but Beeman can't be contacted (was told they shut down). I approached a local gunsmith who advised parts are difficult to obtain and they don't do it any more.

After weeks of trying I found Gunroom at 32 Spine Street, Sumner run by Ian McIntosh and Lewis Reinhold. Only mention it in case it can be of use to someone else.

John, via email

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Animal rights groups cannot be trusted. Full stop!

At the beginning of the year the media turned the spotlight on some appalling activities of animal rights groups in Australia. The reported behaviour should certainly discredit them as groups worthy to be listened to or included in any discussions regarding government policy. The door should now be shut on them and any submissions received should be lobbed straight into the recycling bin.

It started with various newspapers publishing allegations that so-called whistle-blowers on live sheep export ships were paid for footage. The organisation named in these 'Cash for cruelty' reports for making payments for footage was Animals Australia, one of the larger animal rights groups in the country. The organisation had previously stated they don't make such payments but when found out they in fact do, they then denied asking people not to make conditions worse than they are. In emails obtained by the media it was reported that some workers in response to large payment offers from Animals Australia suggested cutting off ventilation or switching off exhaust fans to distress sheep in order to receive payments.

Although Animals Australia was said to strongly discourage such activities, from what was seen in video footage it did look like these suggestions had been implemented. It seemed low-paid foreign workers and people who could be easily corrupted were found

and offered a deal too good to refuse. They then provided Animals Australia with the best footage they could manufacture to ensure payment.

From initially denying providing payment to now denying any involvement in producing fabricated worst-case scenario footage, Animals Australia cannot be trusted. It certainly looks more than possible they created (directly or indirectly) a horrible animal welfare situation to further their ideological crusade. They cannot be taken seriously by anyone ever again.

Within a short time another animal rights group hit the headlines, this time due to the release of a website created to show the location and contact details of farms all across the country.

The website was set up to imply the farmers listed were undertaking activities of animal cruelty. These farmers, who run legitimate family businesses, are only responsible for producing safe and healthy food for the broader community. Now, in addition to the threat of trespass from animal rights activists, there are new fears of an increased biosecurity risk.

The group which operates the website is called Aussie Farms. Calls were made to strip the organisation of its charity status seeing as donations are being used to fund activities to harass and terrorise farmers. Farmers said they didn't feel safe as they see the online

map as an 'attack list' for activists to come on to their properties without permission. The farming community fear they're now more at risk of being invaded by trespassing animal rights activists who would enter their property uninvited day or night.

One thing for certain in 2019 is that animal rights groups are becoming bolder and more desperate to push their ideologies. It makes you wonder if activists are posing as hunters to manufacture footage of hunters doing the wrong thing. An example that this may be possible is the fact activists are obtaining game licences so they can enter wetlands in Victoria before they're legally allowed to harass hunters. Currently, those not hunting cannot enter hunting areas prior to 10am during duck hunting season.

From what we've seen it would not be beyond activists to dress up like hunters and shoot protected species, make a mess in camp grounds or bury piles of dead ducks so they can be found to demonstrate 'waste'. For the sake of creating camera footage they can use against hunters in the same way they've attacked other groups, it looks like anything's possible. I don't trust them, you shouldn't trust them, no-one should trust them or anything they say.

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The right tools to get the job done

Rifle and pistol cartridges can be reloaded using a basic kit consisting of a set of dies and a good reloading press, but let's have a look at some other equipment available nowadays that makes this task a lot more enjoyable, safer and produces better, more accurate cartridges.

Scales: Although many shooters have loaded thousands of good cartridges using only a powder dipper, a good set of scales is a very handy item to quickly measure the weight of not only the powder being used, but the weight of the cartridge cases and projectiles. Mechanical scales have been the norm in the past but good electronic ones are now available at affordable prices, are convenient to use and highly accurate. I use electronic scales myself but keep my old mechanical ones on hand to occasionally check the accuracy of the electronic version and as a safeguard, just in case the battery goes flat halfway through a loading session.

Bullet puller: A projectile bullet puller can be a life saver if you've made a mistake and find you've loaded the wrong weight of powder in your cartridges. Without one it's a laborious and time-consuming task removing the projectile from the case without ruining both. Bullet pullers come in two forms, firstly a hammer-type device that

accommodates most cartridge sizes and removes the projectile from the cartridge case by hitting the head of the 'hammer' on a hard surface until the projectile is forced from the cartridge case by kinetic force. Secondly is the puller device which screws into the reloading press and has adjustable 'jaws' that clamp around the projectile and remove it from the case using the press as a levering device. A separate set of 'jaws' must be used for each calibre as one set won't fit all.

Powder trickler: When precise loads of powder are required, a convenient way to obtain powder weight accuracy to one-tenth of a grain is to dispense the powder from a powder measure, about two or three-tenths of a grain below the required weight, on to the scale. Then using a 'powder trickler', top up the scale pan with the extra powder prior to loading it into the cartridge case. After putting the powder into the case, to ensure there are no empty or under-loaded cases they should be placed into a loading block that usually holds about 50 cases. Then with the aid of a torch, examine each case by looking down the neck to ensure none have been missed (and are empty) and the powder height is the same in all of them. It can happen, when dispensing from a powder measure, that only a partial charge is dispensed into one case and the

next case gets a charge and a bit. This can be a dangerous state of affairs that's best avoided.

Case lubricant: Another useful low-cost item to have on hand is case lubricant. This is available in either solid or sprays and is indispensable if used cartridge cases are to be full length resized after a number of uses, especially if the cases are large. The lubricant is applied to the outside of the cartridge case prior to the sizing process, and through experience I've found only every fourth cartridge or so needs to be lubricated as the die tends to retain some of the lubricant during usage. It's also a good idea to put some on the inside of the cartridge case neck, as it tends to reduce the effort required when pulling the neck-resizing die out of the case neck in the final sizing process.

Log book: Finally, I always advise reloaders to keep a log book and record the date loaded; cartridge type; powder make, type and weight; projectile, make, type and weight as well as any comments regarding accuracy, primer condition etc for future reference.



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Being prepared means thinking ahead

Hunting solo has the potential to be dangerous. While most hunters are probably familiar with the landscape in which they pursue their passion with little danger of becoming disorientated, this is not out of the question and the possibility of a debilitating accident is ever present.

While there have been only a handful of news reports on hunting accidents that threatened life, there are enough to remind us they're not beyond the realms of possibility. The opportunity for successful hunts of most game species in Australia don't really lie in remote regions but, due to the vast nature of this continent, it's possible to be incapacitated well away from any form of help.

In itself, this situation can mean a lengthy wait for assistance to arrive even if it has been possible to contact someone for help. More dangerously, imagine if the wild boar scene from the film *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* was to happen to your party for real, instead of being an award-winning visual effect. Small calibre rifles and shaky aim wouldn't be much help in that situation.

The point is that life-threatening situations can arise - losing your way, being injured, heat exhaustion and others, and when they do a back-up action is called for. How you choose to deal with this possibility depends how long the hunt was

planned for in the first place. Naturally you've told a responsible person where you'll be hunting and the expected time of your return - and you'll stick to this plan no matter what! If you're planning to stay out overnight you'd already be carrying a backpack containing basic camping gear in the form of a shelter and sleeping bag, cooking and eating utensils, a goodly quantity of water and some food.

Hopefully you can set the camp up and wait until help arrives but if by chance you're not in the place where searchers are likely to look, I hope you had the forethought to take a personal locator beacon (PLB) with you as suggested in a recent column, or you have a fully charged mobile phone with reception.

Remember that even when voice contact is not possible, you may be able to send a text message which apparently takes less 'grunt' to get through. Personally, I wouldn't be relying on the phone and would pack a PLB, though my mate who carries two beacons is, I feel, being a bit excessive.

Back in the days when hiking and camping were all the rage, the smallest party a club would let loose in the scrub was four people. It was thought one could stay with an injured hiker while the other two went for help. While a party of four may not always be good for stalking wary animals through the bush, a couple can always stay



back in camp and occupy themselves with a myriad of chores that always seem to arise, taking it in turns to alternate with the active hunters each day or so.

The number of hikers who perished or almost did over the 2018/19 holiday season was very saddening. There's definitely a different weather cycle to what I've been used to, so taking adequate water when hunting away from camp is imperative, both for good health and efficient hunting. While in the past I've found them somewhat cumbersome, I'm more and more in favour of those water containers that come in the form of a wearable backpack. Perhaps my trusty two-bottle belt rig will be replaced if I ask 'The Boss' for a birthday surprise. I'll let you know how I get on.





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Q I'm relatively new to clay target shooting but have been shooting rifles all my life in one form or another. I haven't had any coaching and wondered what you feel are the most important couple of fundamentals I should focus on before I proceed with some professional help. When I shot clays as a schoolboy the techniques we were taught seem odd compared to what I'm seeing at my local range. Any help greatly appreciated.

Jacob Farrugia, Sunshine, Vic

A The fundamentals for any sport are the starting point on the road to success, so well done for trying to sort that out first. I've no idea what level you're trying to reach or what discipline of clay target shooting you're pursuing but start with the right equipment. If shooting trap, buy a trap gun, if it's Sporting Clays or Skeet buy a shotgun that's suitable. Any decent gunshop will be able to set you on the right path. Once you have the necessary firearm, and I'll assume it will be fitted correctly, you can concentrate on the basic technical fundamentals.

Above all else I consider the shotgun mount to your shoulder and into the firing position the most important fundamental. I say that as it will ultimately determine where your eyes are placed when you're pulling the trigger aiming at your target. If you've mounted the gun in such a way that

Above all else I consider the shotgun mount to your shoulder and into the firing position the most important fundamental.

your head is firmly on the stock and you're looking out through the centre of your eyes then you're halfway home.

If you can clearly see what you're aiming at while your head is looking perfectly down the centre of the barrel you're on your way to hitting a lot of clay targets. If you can't clearly see your target you can have the greatest shotgun, most expensive ammunition, best fitting shooting jacket etc, but it's not going to help you one bit. Learn how to mount your gun with your eyes parallel to the horizon and you can make a multitude of other technical errors but still break clays. You can't hit what you can't see.

Stance and balance is next. There are many variances of stance but, as a very basic rule, when mounting the gun pointing at 12 o'clock (assuming you're right handed) have your left foot pointing at 1 o'clock and your right foot at 2 o'clock. If left handed, point the right foot at 11


o'clock and the left at 10 o'clock. Have your heels about 30cms apart. This is a very general guide but a good start.

As a beginner you'll be tempted to transfer all your weight over your front foot to cater for the shotgun's recoil. You may try to do this by simply bending your front knee but this will cause you issues later on. If you're of small stature and really need to cater for recoil, simply lean forward over your front leg with a normal stance. Seventy-five per cent of your body weight on your leading leg is plenty as a beginner. In time you won't feel the need to do this and will find that enough weight will be transferred forward by simply mounting the gun to your shoulder. Balance is a huge part of shooting clay targets successfully and consistently. Over-compensating for recoil is an enemy of high scores in the long term.

Practising your technique at home in front of a mirror (dry mounting) cannot be emphasised enough. A couple of hundred dry mounts a day will soon get you into the instinctual habit of bringing the shotgun to its correct starting position without having to manually feed yourself instructions on the range. Once you can do this without thinking about it there's no substitute for practice. Trust yourself with the fundamentals and good scores will follow. Good luck.





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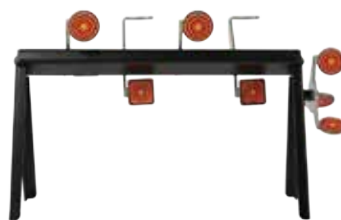
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Got a question - ask our TOP SHOTS ?

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

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Q First of all great magazine, great content and great knowledge base. My .308 rifle is zeroed for 180gr bullets with excellent results on deer, pigs and goats. I want to load lighter bullets, maybe 130gr or less for hunting smaller game (kangaroo under the SSAA Farmer Assist program) as the 180gr load is a bit heavy and expensive for this purpose.

What weight of bullet in .308 would be best suited for kangaroo and is there a formula to give me the same or similar MPI as the zero for my 180gr slugs? I reload my own ammo and the 180gr are zeroed for 100yds. Any advice appreciated.

Richard Mackay, Qld

A Richard, in answering your question I've taken the liberty of assuming your .308 rifle has a telescopic sight and the 180gr projectiles used have a ballistic coefficient of about 0.45 with muzzle velocity of 2300fps. Sighted to have the zero at 100yds the 180gr bullet will be 2.1" low at 150yds, 6.2" low at 200yds, 12.6" low at 250yds and 21.6" low at 300yds.

If you were to use 130gr projectiles having a ballistic coefficient of about 0.29 with a muzzle velocity of 2800fps on kangaroos (which would be ideal) again sighted at 100yds the same as your 180gr projectiles, the 130gr bullets would be 1.3" low at 150yds, 4.1" low at 200yds, 8.8" low at 250yds and 15.4" low at 300yds.

As you'll see from these figures there's only about 6" difference in the bullet drops out to 300yds, so you could adjust very quickly in using the two bullet weights when hunting with your .308 rifle.

Barry Wilmot

Q I've often seen advertised in your magazine pellet traps for air rifle shooting. Just wondering if these can only be used on a rural property or perhaps at a range. I have a large, fully enclosed shed on my property which is zoned residential. Is it permissible to use a pellet trap within the confines of the shed?

Jock McNeill, Vic

A In Victoria, Regulation 8 of your Firearms Act which deals with the "conduct of sport shooting on other than an approved range" is where the answer probably lies. Advice obtained from the Licensing and Regulation Division was as follows: "In order to use a firearm in a residential zone in the manner described, it would need council approval and be an approved range under the Firearms Act 1996."

A request on your behalf to the Divisional Firearms Office in Bendigo resulted in the following response: "Short answer 'no'. He will not get authorisation for a range on residential premises in Bendigo. My opinion is the council would not do it. He could always ask but I think it would need a costly planning permit or some other costly red tape."

The Victoria Police website police.vic.gov.au/dfocontacts contains a list of the Divisional Firearms Officers for each region and these officers are the ones to whom such queries are best directed.

Geoff Smith

Q I've been reloading for a few years and have the following query. I have a 783 Rem 270 using Nosler 130gr boat-tails with 2208 and 2209 powder (haven't found load as yet). Overall cartridge length in the ADI book is listed at 3.230. I have set the seating die for this and some bullets come out at 3.226, 3.227, 3.225 and 3.231. I measured my projectiles and some are different. So my concern is will this affect accuracy or should I seat every projectile at 3.230? I trim cases to 2.530. Any help appreciated.

Troy Wiegold, via email

A Overall cartridge length is an interesting subject and basically the overall length for any rifle is governed by three measurements. Firstly the magazine length, as rounds have to feed and function reliably. Second is chamber length which you find by trial seating a given projectile to the longest length that will fit the magazine and feed into the chamber without any difficulty closing the bolt.

Thirdly, the length you come up with by experimenting whether your rifle shoots that projectile best based on the distance from the lands. Some rifles like a given design of projectile hard seated, while others prove best with a few thou of jump to the lands.

All firearms are individuals. I've seen rifles with long magazines and short-throated chambers, others with short magazines and long-throated chambers which all makes for part of the challenge of handloading and a reason why ammunition loaded for one rifle may not fit another.

Your experiences with the small variations of projectile length affecting your measurements are not unique - usually the variation is in the tip forming process. I use a comparator nut from Sinclair International when measuring OAL and projectiles. Basically it's a hole in a plate that fits on to the calipers and measures to a fixed point on the ogive on the projectile, thus avoiding tip variations. With quality modern projectiles there's usually no variation so I then check the loaded OAL to make sure magazine clearance is maintained.

So the short answer to your question is the small variations in tip length won't affect accuracy for most shooting activities. For the most precise long-range shooting, some companies make tip uniforming tools that will give peace of mind.

One more thing - the OAL published in any loading manual is based on their particular test firearm and you should always establish your own by using the magazine/chamber length method mentioned above.

Greg Riemer

Q I bought a Norinco JW25 a while back and, despite repeated attempts by myself and others, find it impossible to sight in. I've tried open and telescopic sights yet no matter what, rounds literally go all over the place, even at close range. Two gunsmiths checked the barrel for possible curvature or rifling defects but gave it the all clear. Any ideas?

Jim Nash, via email

A Assuming your rifle is new, it's unusual these days to find one that won't shoot, especially a rimfire. Some years ago I had a .223 review rifle that refused to group, spraying bullets all over the target. On checking the barrel with a bore scope I found the rifling hadn't been cut properly, so my first suggestion would be to have the barrel bore scoped to ensure the rifling is intact and cut from breech to muzzle. Just looking down the barrel won't tell you that.

I'd also have the barrel slugged to ensure it's not oversize. This can be done by pulling a projectile from a live round and pushing it down the barrel with a cleaning rod to see if it takes the rifling. If the bore is oversize the projectile will literally fall through the barrel.

Check the crown of the muzzle to make sure there aren't any burrs protruding into the rifling. A gunsmith can re-crown and lap the muzzle quickly and easily. Also try some different ammo as it can make a difference.

Make sure the action sits squarely in its mortise and the action screws are properly tightened. Check the barrel channel for high points and if necessary float the barrel completely. Alternatively you might like to bed the barrel and action to ensure everything goes back into the same place and vibrates the same way every time the rifle is fired.

If none of these make a difference your only other option is to return the rifle and have it replaced.

John Dunn

Q I'm brand spanking new to the world of shooting and hunting. I've asked online and as you can imagine had a thousand different opinions and variety of answers so thought I'd ask the Top Shots for their input.

What is a good rifle that will work for shooting targets at the range and also to go hunting with? I'm going to start off chasing rabbits, foxes and try tracking feral cats and dogs, eventually stepping up to hunting deer. Ideally I'd love to do it all with one rifle but doubt that's possible. I'll be looking for a secondhand rifle to get me going. I've been told

to use a .22LR, .223, .303 or .308 but being a new shooter it's all a bit overwhelming.

Rob Cuthbert, NSW

A Rob, your question is a cracker and causes no end of confusion and good natured argument among newbies and old hands alike. For what you want to do the one-gun solution is almost impossible. For small game the 223 Remington is Australia's biggest seller and the most popular cartridge for pigs and deer is the 308 Winchester. Both of these are perfect for various target disciplines and can be had in excellent secondhand rifles like Tikka or the Australian-made Lithgow.

The Tikka is available in heavy barrel or sporter weight and also the interesting new compact tactical rifle (CTR) configuration which feature a shorter heavy barrel around 20" which makes them more portable even though they have a heavier barrel than the sporter models. The shorter barrel means a little less velocity but this is more than compensated for by their accuracy and portability.

If you're determined to have just one rifle and restricted yourself to fallow deer and didn't need a quieter rifle with less recoil and muzzle blast for smaller game in closer settled country, the 243 Winchester would be a good bet, with lighter varmint projectiles for small game and heavier more stoutly-constructed game bullets for smaller deer.

If larger deer and serious pigs are on your radar in future, the 308 Win with appropriate projectiles will do anything you'd need on the deer and pig hunting scene here in Australia. I recommend you start with a 223 and see where your interests in the shooting world lead you. Get involved with your local SSAA range where the members will be a font of information and you won't look back.

But Rob, who in their right mind wants only one rifle? I think you'll 'need' at least four firearms including a nice bolt-action .22 and 12-gauge sporting shotgun with 30" barrels for clay and game shooting. Don't blame me, you asked the question! Good luck.

Paul Miller

Q I read with interest the Rod Pascoe article on reducing loads for target pistols in *Australian and New Zealand Handgun 17*. He mainly talks about making up loads for revolvers but I have a semi-automatic pistol. What can I do to reduce recoil in my pistol?

Aaron, New Zealand

A Reducing recoil in handguns makes it easier to maintain the sight picture in quick firing matches such as Service Pistol Unrestricted, Steel Challenge, Single (Western) Action and WA1500. In these matches there's no requirement for a minimum power factor so loads can be greatly reduced from normal. Revolvers lend themselves to reduced loads more easily than semi-autos although setting up a good quality target pistol with reduced recoil can be done quite successfully. However, it's a bit more involved and some brands of pistol are better suited to handling lighter loads than others.

If you download your ammunition with a lighter bullet and/or lighter powder charge you must also allow for the fact the reduced power of the recoiling cartridge may not allow the slide to go back far enough to pick up a round from the magazine. You can overcome this by using a proportionally lighter recoil spring and some brands offer light springs for this purpose.

But there is a trade-off. Having too light a spring may not fully return the slide with the new round back into the battery for the next shot. Some finessing of your loading practice may also require experimenting with different brands of brass, bullet weight and shape, seating depth and crimping of cases for example.

Different pistol brands also exhibit different characteristics during the firing cycle with respect to the racking force required to push the slide back and cock the hammer. Some brands offer special hammers with a modified profile to allow the slide to travel more smoothly over the hammer as it's cocked, thereby requiring less force. By way of a warning, you should not use full-house or factory loads with a light recoil spring as it may damage your pistol.

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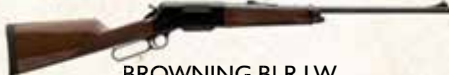
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How Howard fast-tracked the NFA

John Maxwell



At the start of every year the National Archives of Australia (NAA) releases the latest batch of Federal Government cabinet documents, submissions received by the prime minister and his ministers and the decisions they made.

Previously these were withheld from the public for 30 years but under reforms made by the former Labor government, that period was reduced to 20 years with a transition period in which two years' worth of documents are released at once.

This most recent batch of documents was for 1996 and 1997, the first two years of the John Howard coalition government. That included the first big issue for the new government - the 1996 Port Arthur massacre which led to the National Firearms Agreement and banning of self-loading rifles and pump action shotguns and introduction of national firearms registration and licensing.

Firstly the Cabinet documents. These relate to the highest level of government decision making and make for pretty dry reading. Even so, it would be nice to think they reveal startling new details about controversial government decisions, such as the confiscation of some 500,000 guns from

law-abiding gun owners, without consultation, because of the actions of one man.

Generally there are few revelations. Contentious issues are reported in detail at the time and politicians write memoirs covering the big issues of their time in sometimes excruciating detail. Gough Whitlam's *The Whitlam Government 1972-75* a case in point.

Howard wrote about Port Arthur in detail in his *Lazarus Rising* biography. So what do the 1996 cabinet documents tell us about his gun laws - that Port Arthur provided an opportunity to implement his anti-gun agenda? That's certainly not revealed in any of these documents.

Even NAA consultant historian Associate Professor Paul Strangio, who reviewed the documents in detail before release, said they were not as illuminating on guns as he'd hoped. "Given the urgency, a lot of it was done from Mr Howard's private office and the big arguments were in the party room rather than Cabinet. The tensions were particularly around the National Party," he said.

The first document is a Cabinet minute - a decision from a Cabinet meeting - dated April 29, 1996, the day after Martin Bryant's shooting spree which claimed the lives of 35

people. This clearly indicates the direction the government was heading in.

It notes that Social Security Minister Jocelyn Newman, a Senator for Tasmania, made an oral report of her trip to Tasmania "in relation to the Port Arthur tragedy". Most significantly it noted agreement had been reached between the Liberal state government of Premier Tony Rundle, the Labor opposition and the Greens to "support the banning of military style semi-automatic weapons and require registration of all guns".

This was significant as Tasmania, along with Queensland, had previously resisted pressure to tighten their gun laws and now they were on board. Gun laws were then and remain the responsibility of individual states and territories and each had developed laws according to the inclinations of their constituencies. Other than regulating what came into the country through its control of customs, the Commonwealth had no powers to make gun laws. But it could wield the big stick through its control of funding to states and territories.

At the time Tasmania had possibly Australia's most relaxed gun laws. It was possible to own fully automatic firearms and Bryant, who didn't have a licence, was still able to acquire the AR-15 rifle he used at Port Arthur.

Though Howard received the credit, the concept of standardised national gun laws was around long before he was PM. The National Committee on Violence, formed in 1988 following the Queen Street and Hoddle Street shootings in Melbourne, had recommended national gun laws including restricting self-loading firearms, mandatory safekeeping and that all gun owners be licensed.

That process of forging a national approach was under way but had stalled over the objections of states, particularly Tasmania and Queensland. Without Port Arthur it would have proceeded incrementally, likely with substantially more input from shooters.

So with Tasmania on board, Howard had overcome a key obstacle. There was a Plan B which he termed the "nuclear option". "That was to have a referendum and transfer power from states to the Commonwealth, which I think incidentally



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How Howard fast-tracked the NFA

would have been carried. It would have been an unnecessary option," he said at the launch of the Cabinet documents in Canberra in December. "The states in the end were helpful. NSW was very helpful, Victoria was helpful. South Australia as well. There were difficulties with Western Australian and Queensland."

The other notable development outlined in the April 29 Cabinet minute was a meeting of police ministers to be held on May 10, brought forward from July. From this meeting of the Australasian Police Ministers' Council came the National Firearms Agreement (NFA) and from then on it was just a matter of implementation and ironing out fine detail.

Cabinet again considered guns at a meeting on May 20. Readers may recall the guns buyback was funded by an increase in the Medicare levy, paid by just about everyone. But some citizens such as Defence Force members are exempt from the levy. At issue was whether they should have to pay it. Yes they should, the government decided. It also decided that values as at March 1996 would be used to compensate those surrendering their guns.

The meeting on June 11 shows the government was coming under pressure, likely from shooters and some states. The Cabinet minute states "... the Cabinet confirmed its position not to vary the Police Ministers' prohibition on semi-automatic and pump action shotguns."

Other issues were also emerging, likely because the NFA was produced at such speed without consultation with shooters, allowing problem areas to slip through.

The NFA resolutions go into detail on licensing criteria but make no mention of junior shooters and long-standing provisions which allow those younger than the minimum 18 licensing age be permitted to shoot under appropriate supervision.

The government hastily retreated on this, proposing to the states "the position

of under-age shooters under the Police Ministers' resolutions be clarified to indicate that all jurisdictions would allow and continue to allow persons under the age of 18 but above a specified minimum age to use lawful firearms in supervised situations."

Then there was the provision in the Police Ministers' resolutions declaring the genuine reason for sports shooters to obtain a firearms licence would only apply to those "with valid membership of an approved club (defined as participants in shooting sports recognised in the characters of such major sporting events as the Commonwealth Games, Olympic Games or World Championships)".

On that basis only those shooting at elite level or in special disciplines of elite competition would be licensed. There would be no single action, combined services, practical shooting, benchrest and more. Was someone trying it on? Perhaps, but more likely the reason was simple ignorance of the wide range of sports shooting activities conducted at clubs across Australia.

There were other issues. The original agreement says firearms in a collection manufactured after January 1, 1946 must be rendered inoperable. There was no direction on how that was to be achieved, with implication the government may have had permanent deactivation in mind.

Collectors no doubt reacted with horror at the prospect of an official with a welding torch attacking their valuable items. The government agreed to examine a proposal to allow firearms in a collection to be rendered inoperable by removal of part of the firing mechanism which should be stored separately at all times. Again, it's hard not to conclude that consultation may have helped here.

The government published a long list of newly-prohibited firearms and what compensation would be paid, but some gun owners possessed collectible firearms whose value far exceeded their compensation value. The

government gave the go-ahead for owners and collectors to sell prohibited guns overseas, subject to conditions, including that it only apply to non-military firearms valued at more than \$2500.

Then there was the issue of permanent conversion of self-loading and pump action shotguns through replacement magazines (tubes) with new magazines able to hold just two rounds. In theory that would place them on the same footing as legal side-by-side and over-and-under shotguns.

The process of limiting capacity of shotgun tube magazines was known as crimping - essentially embossing a deep cannellure in the steel tube. That offered the prospect of those with prized shotguns being able to retain them, albeit with reduced magazine capacity.

Cabinet at its meeting on June 16 noted a demonstration by Australian Federal Police (AFP) of a particular process of shotgun magazine crimping. So such a process was entirely possible but could it be undone? Cabinet deferred consideration until it received a paper from the AFP describing the process and giving a considered assessment as to whether it was reversible.

Cabinet considered the AFP response at its meeting on July 2. Presumably the AFP thought the process might be undone but the government wasn't about to give in. It agreed it would only consider supporting general retention of shotguns crimped in this manner if ballistic experts in the Australian Army and all premiers and police ministers, on the advice of their police commissioners, "concurred with the assessment that the process is irreversible".

This one was passed to the expert armourers at the Special Air Services Regiment who concluded this was reversible, though not easily and would require a specially-made tool, an expanding mandrel, to force out the crimp. That was enough for the government which promptly vetoed the idea of crimping. ●



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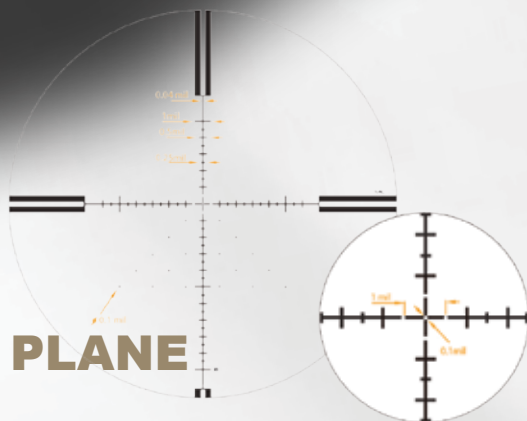
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The demise of the bramble bush boar

Don Caswell



Jan with his boar that slid down the hill and into the bramble-filled creek bed.

One of my hunting buddy Mike's many rural contacts called him. The grazier concerned was an ageing chap who didn't enjoy the best of health and in the preceding few days had experienced a number of close encounters with a large boar while doing his rounds on a motor-cycle. Apart from not wanting his pastures ripped up, he was concerned that in an even closer encounter he may come off second best.

Mike, my son Ryan and I had hunted his properties before, chasing wild dogs. That particular block was about 1000 acres, the terrain one of rolling hills and deep gullies clothed in thick grass. It's up against an enormous tract of virgin north Queensland rainforest and on a clear day the views across the great carpet of jungle to Mount Bellenden Ker are spectacular.

Our mutual friend, visiting wildlife photographer and hunter Jan, was due to return to Europe within the week so

there was a great opportunity for one last hunt before he left. We decided on a late afternoon stake-out, camp the night on the block then stalk at first light. After driving around and determining our shooting locations, we returned and set up a basic camp then went to sit in our various stake-outs.

We positioned Jan with a .223 Remington in one of the tighter, more forested gullies where any shots at pigs or dogs would be within the 200m effective range of that calibre. Mike with his Sako .308 Winchester and me with my .257 Weatherby Magnum took up positions overlooking more open, longer range country. We established a strict protocol for the directions we'd shoot and our selected locations had ridge lines that blocked us from the other shooters anyway. As often happens we drew a blank and headed back to camp for the night.

I woke up a bit before first light and had the gas burner going and a billy of water on to boil before taking my binoculars and

checking out the ridge sides and valleys for pigs. By the time the water was boiling my companions were up and about.

Mike had kitted up and passed on a cuppa in favour for a quick stalk. Before long a whistle caught Jan and mine's attention as Mike, who hadn't walked 30m from camp, was beckoning us. A quick look confirmed a large boar was rooting about near the cattle lick station, silhouetted against the sky, about 400m away. He looked a whopper and a quick battle plan was drawn up.

We were obliged to follow the vehicle track contoured into the hillside, steep gullies choked with brambles and hosting flowing creeks effectively blocking any other route. The breeze, which hadn't dropped overnight, was already intensifying and blowing almost directly towards the boar on the ridge.

The road cut to the right of the pig and there was a decent chance of closing the distance and moving into position



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The demise of the bramble bush boar

for a shot, obvious safety considerations preventing a shot at the animal on a ridge line. We'd gone a couple of hundred metres, angling to the side of the boar and watching him intently. Suddenly his head flicked up and he broke into a gallop, charging down the steep slope and crashing into the jungle of the creek bed. No doubt the breeze had eddied and given the old boar a whiff of us.

We returned to camp and resorted to Plan A, to each do the stalk we'd planned the day before. Sunrise wasn't far off. Jan's route was down the track Mike and I had just been on, the reason being the terrain was a bit more vegetated and any game stumbled upon would be at closer range and better suited to his .223 Remington. Jan reckoned it would be a waste of time going back down that track given Mike and I had just been there. We assured him that wasn't so and at the early hour there was every chance he'd meet a wild dog or even some pigs.

We agreed on a 40-minute stalk then back to camp. I hadn't gone 100m when I heard the pop of the .223 Remington followed immediately by the whop of a solid hit and a brief pig squeal. I reckoned Jan would be glad we'd sent him back that way. After a 40-minute stalk I'd found



Mike and detector dog Max examine boar diggings.



Don Caswell and Jan stumbled upon a mob of feral pigs while out hunting wild dogs.

plenty of fresh pig rootings but seen no game so returned to camp where Jan and Mike were waiting.

As Jan had turned the first corner he glanced towards the patch of jungle that blanketed the ridge and valley to his left, about 100m of open pasture between him and the dense jungle. On the steep slope of the ridge, a bit over halfway between Jan and the cover, a good-sized boar was walking straight towards him. As Jan loaded the rifle and brought it to shoulder, the boar spotted him and turned, Jan shooting it through the heart with a 60gr Nosler Partition. With the smack of the bullet the boar collapsed then, sliding and rolling, its limp carcass skidded down the grassy slope, disappearing over a sheer 5m drop into the bramble-filled creek bed.

We were keen to see it for ourselves so, armed with a machete, Mike and Jan began chopping a corridor through 15m of packed, thorny brambles. The lads worked up a sweat and chopped up their share of prickles, all character-building experiences and well worth the effort. The boar was an ample specimen with reasonable tusks and Max was keen to be in on the act and have a sniff of the pig, useful experience in his training as a detector dog.

As it turned out, Jan was able to shoot

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a few more feral pigs. He and I had performed an early morning stake-out on a large cattle property that had experienced wild dog attacks on their livestock. The morning had been a success and we'd shot one of the dogs and, as it was still quite early, there was a reasonable chance of finding more a bit further on at a small spring-fed dam in the foothills.

As we approached Jan spotted pigs on the dam wall, the fine dust on the cattle pad showing plenty of fresh pig and dog tracks. Some of the tracks were of big boars and sure enough there was a hefty sow and a few piglets munching on the grisly relics of a dead beast. I told Jan to take the shot. It was about 70m and again he was using the .223 Remington with 60gr Nosler Partitions.

With the shot the sow keeled over and rolled down the dam wall into the dry gully. From out of sight on the dam side of the wall there was a spectacular eruption of wild pigs, presumably having heard the echo of Jan's shot and assuming the danger lay uphill from them. A conga line of feral pigs was charging down the dry gully beside us, only 30m or so away.

Standing beside Jan I loaded the .257 Weatherby Magnum and joined the action. We had only a few rounds each in our magazines and they were quickly



Boar hunting with heavy calibres is a blast.

exhausted but we'd shot well. Four bulky sows lay dead as the survivors streamed off into the bush. A couple of the pigs we'd both shot at the same instant as there's no time for precise coordination in a situation like that and we'd made every shot count, even if we had doubled-up!

Over the years I've enjoyed some great

ad-hoc pig shooting like that, when you unexpectedly encounter a bunch of wild pigs while pursuing other game. These days I'm using flat-shooting, smaller calibres but have to admit I particularly enjoy whacking boars with big-game calibres. While living in the Northern Territory and spending a lot of time chasing buffalo,



Don holds a large, deeply buried yam that are sought by wild boar.



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The demise of the bramble bush boar

many a boar ran into the wrong end of whatever buffalo gun I was carrying at the time, those calibres having included .458 Winchester Magnum, .375 Holland & Holland and 9.3x74mmR.

My hunting buddies on those hunts have also used the .470 Nitro Express and .400-450 Nitro Express to great effect on wild boars and, let it be said, the .223 Remington with appropriate projectiles like the amazing 60gr Nosler Partition can be a highly effective pig calibre, just as the bramble bush boar found out. ●

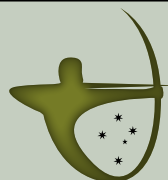


Pig calibres .223 Rem, .375 H&H, 9.3x74mmR and .458 Win Mag.



Mike and Max on an afternoon valley stake-out.

A boar track with .223 Rem for size comparison.



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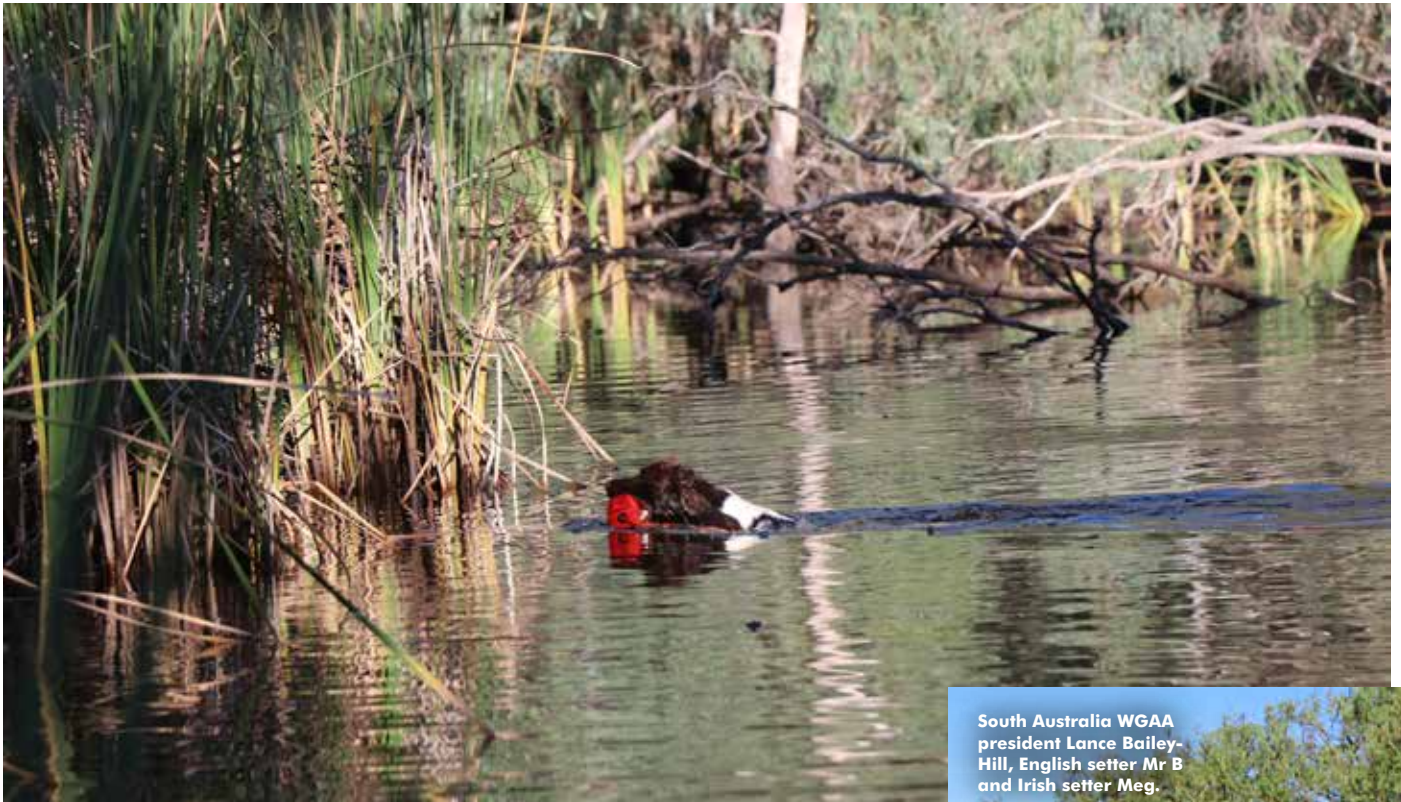
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Talbot on target! Working Gundogs

Communications Officer Sam Talbot



South Australia WGAA president Lance Bailey-Hill, English setter Mr B and Irish setter Meg.

With duck seasons underway in the southern states, it seems fitting this month that we turn the spotlight on man's best friend. After all, dogs are an important part of hunting, having worked side-by-side with shooters for centuries. This great relationship has led to a highly refined ability to quickly retrieve over land or water and from this tradition comes the modern SSAA discipline of Working Gundogs.

Even those with little interest in other shooting sports are quick to appreciate the skills of the dogs, and if you've visited a SSAA SHOT Expo you'll know the Working Gundog demonstrations are one of the most popular attractions. But with the good comes the bad. The discipline requires arguably the most expensive, unique, frustrating and temperamental piece of equipment in all the shooting sports - a dog - but

ask anyone involved in the discipline and they'll tell you they wouldn't have it any other way.

Owning a well-trained gundog doesn't happen by chance, an intensive training program is normally undertaken from the puppy stage, often with the help of a club. While there's no hunting in the discipline itself, there are obvious crossover applications which can be applied to the field and many competitors do this. Clubs and competitions are structured to facilitate all levels of dogs from beginners to mature champions, and some of Australia's leading trainers and handlers are SSAA instructors.

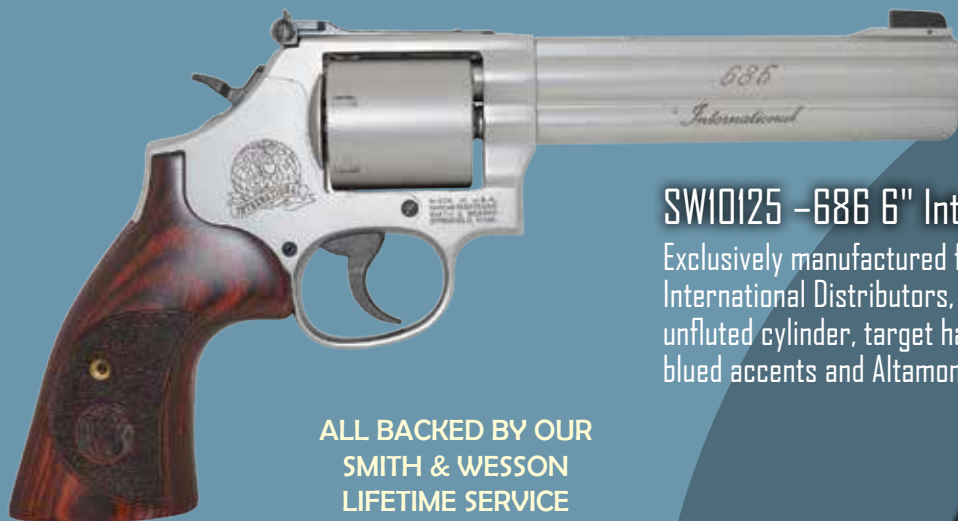
One of those is national discipline chairman Jim Jeffrey who told me gundog work is probably the closest thing to an even partnership between an animal and a human. "For example with pointers and setters, the dog can't get the





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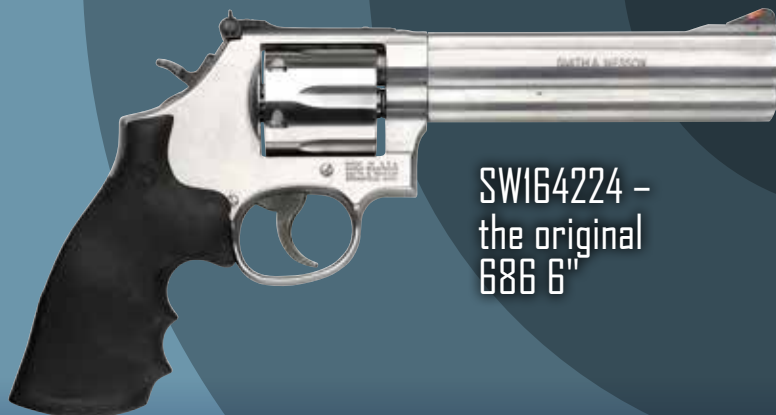
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Talbot on target! Working Gundogs

game without the gunner and often the gunner can't get the game without the dog," he said.

Sub-disciplines

While all the dogs are winners in my eyes, this is a competition after all which takes place across four sub-disciplines - Retrieving; Hunt, Point and Retrieve; Spaniel; and Pointer and Setter - with various breeds of Labradors, Brittany's, retrievers, pointers, setters, spaniels, Munsterlanders, Weimaraners and more all having their own skills and specialities while also falling into one of the sub-disciplines.

During competitions the dogs are assessed on a variety of skills and score points for factors like obedience, steadiness, ability to locate and quietness, while they can lose points for missing game, failing to obey commands, dropping game or blinking (deliberately leaving their pointing position).

Not having my own dog makes it all but impossible to properly participate in the discipline but as Jim explained: "Some of our members don't have dogs, they just like to spectate and come camping with us."

Retrieving

I arranged to meet SSAA (SA) WGAA (Working Gundog Association Australia) secretary Patrick Torrens for a training



Dogs and trainers patiently wait their turn.

day at a dam in Mount Barker. The SA branch doesn't have the depth to stage fully-fledged competitions but are enjoying a resurgence at the moment and there's never been a better time to get involved.

Our training ground for the day not only served as the local swimming pool and a way to practise water retrieves, it was also useful for keeping dogs cool in 38C. One after another Patrick launched a red plastic dummy into the water for the dogs to dutifully return. Patrick was there with Logan, his English spring spaniel imported from the UK, who displayed textbook obedience

and eagerness both in and out of the water.

One thing that caught my eye were the different swimming styles, Labradors making the transition from land to water with complete ease, while others splashed and slapped the water the whole time. Patrick explained that swimming ability comes with age and experience. "Most younger dogs won't be comfortable in the water right away but you see older dogs, who are a lot calmer, let themselves sink a bit which allows them to cruise and use less energy," he said.

There were a few mishaps with some of

Huge crowds watch Working Gundogs at the Melbourne SSAA SHOT Expo.



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the younger dogs failing to complete the retrieves but the more experienced ones ensured no-one had to swim into the dam to retrieve the dummy. The dummy is made of high-density foam, ensuring it floats, and the colour makes it easy for dogs to see. The dummy itself isn't overly important and using a variety of them is a good way to keep dogs interested and stimulated.

Beyond the simple retrieves we did on the day the Retrieving sub-discipline features no less than 12 variations. These include single mark retrieve where a well-sighted dummy is cast for the dog to see; blind retrieve where the dog isn't allowed to see where the dummy is cast; double or triple mark retrieve where multiple dummies are cast; two-bird retrieve where while retrieving one dummy another is cast; as well as countless combinations and variations of these, sometimes using multiple dummies.

Pointer and Setter

With the water retrieves complete it was time for pointers and setters to shine. Patrick set up a bird-scented dummy for SSAA (SA) WGAA president Lance Bailey-Hill, English setter Mr B and Irish setter Meg to find. With the dummy at one end of a paddock and Lance and the dogs at the other, Meg sprang into action sweeping back and forth across the paddock. Lance encouraged her to continue the methodical approach which led to Meg eventually zeroing in on the dummy and snapping to attention.

With the dummy detected Meg stood frozen, pointing at the game, while Mr B showed his class and experience, backing away rather than disturbing the dog already pointing. Backing is an important and



recognised part of the sub-discipline and is used for scoring.

After some time with Meg motionless and maintaining her point, Lance gave the signal and she knocked over the piece of pipe concealing the dummy. On another day this would trigger a quail to take flight but this time it simply meant the end of training.

The key in this scenario was that unlike spaniels who work much closer to hunters and instantly flush game out, pointers and setters can work up to 100m away. Being so far away means their distinctive poses and pointing give the hunter time to catch up and have a decent shot, the premise the Pointer and Setter discipline is based on.

Puppy problems

As an experienced trainer Patrick explained some of the pitfalls he encounters when owners are trying to transition pups to fully grown working gundogs. "When training a puppy to go into water, the worst thing you can do is force it," he said. "Trainers need to introduce the dog to water and let it build



confidence before attempting long retrieve.

"You also have to be careful about shooting over your dog too early and risk making them gun shy. And remember, pups' ears are still developing so firing a gun near them can cause damage and deafness later in life. There's no rush when training a pup - one extra year of training can buy you an extra 10 years of work down the track."

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gundog, Patrick recommends visiting a working gundog kennel and not a show dog kennel as this will ensure the dog has the right instincts and a keenness to hunt. "You'd also want to see both parents and make sure they're in good health and are working dogs," said Patrick. "Any parents that are Field Champions or have Field Champions in any part of their lineage is beneficial too."

While no-one can be an expert in all breeds, heading to your local SSAA WGAA club will give you general knowledge and advice on training your dog regardless of its level. "Having lots of people with different breeds in a club is useful and makes everything a bit more interesting, so we're always welcoming new people to the club," said Patrick.

Conclusion

While not the easiest discipline to get started in, based on the reactions and enjoyment of its competitors, Working Gundogs might just be the most rewarding. Unlike a firearm which will gather dust in safe, a dog requires much more and is a big commitment whether you end up becoming involved in Working Gundogs or not. While some people use the Working Gundog discipline as a training ground for hunting,



Some of the dogs splashed and slapped the water the whole time.

Jim says there are plenty who only do the discipline. "In the same way many shotgunners only shoot clay targets, many of the retrievers are not interested in hunting," he said.

There's much more to the wide world of Working Gundogs than I've been able to go into and like most disciplines, the best place to start is at your local club. The discipline is certainly one I want to be involved in eventually and I look forward to the day I continue my family tradition and have my own chocolate curly-coated retriever. ●

Dog categories

Four sub-disciplines of Working Gundogs are made up of specific breeds, including but not limited to:

Retrieving: Labrador, golden retriever, flat coats and curly coats.

Spaniel: English springer spaniel and cocker spaniel.


Pointer and Setter: Pointer, Irish setter, English setter, Gordon setter and Irish red and white setter.

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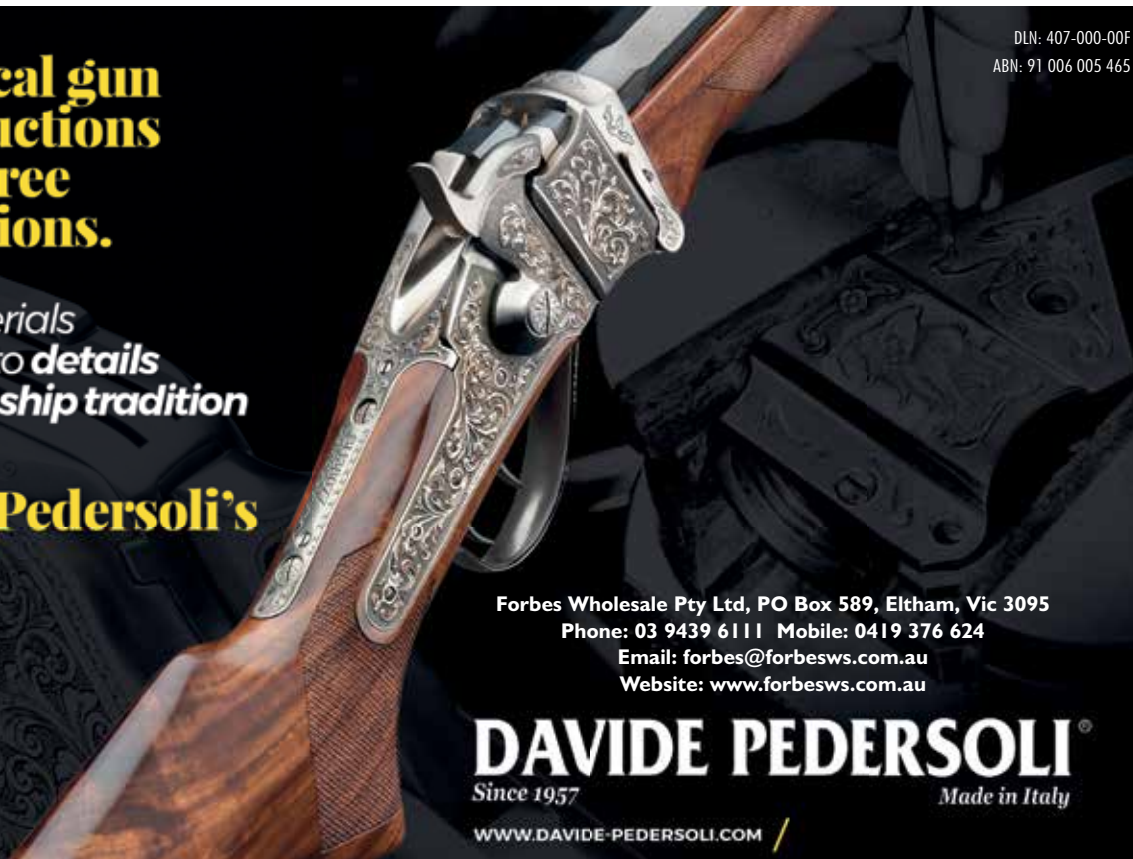


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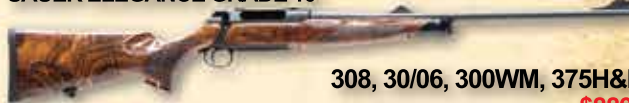
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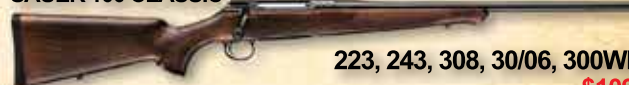
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'Secret weapon' in the hands of thousands

Dave Rose



Back in February 2016 we published the intriguing tale of the Foxbusters, a band of hardy hunters in Western Australia who launched a campaign against the pest in the west. At the helm of the crusade to tackle the introduced marauders remains Graham Lawrence, who organises regular spot-lighting outings aboard his modified 1985 Range Rover. Graham's initiative continues to cater for guest hunters from around WA and interstate who want to assist in trying to curb the damage inflicted by foxes on native species and livestock.

Back then Graham also started using a 'secret weapon' to lure foxes after dark on the various farmland properties where they operated - a taped recording of a distressed animal. The sound of a parrot, to be exact.

Initially there was a smattering of interest as Graham, a SSAA member since 1996, made the fox caller available to fellow hunters. It was after the *Australian Shooter* link-up that demand took off. Fast forward to December 2018 and the amount of fox callers sent out hit the landmark 1000.

"The response has been staggering," said Graham. "I don't know where all these shooters came from but things really took off. We had about 70 requests before the article but then it became a flood. It calmed down after a while but maybe we should expect another saturation after this story appears.

"A lot of the information is spread by word of mouth among mates so who knows how many have just forwarded on tapes of the callers. For all I know there could be

2000 people out there using the caller from such recordings."

Graham described the earliest callers as a work in progress but explained how things evolved. "The sound on the caller is that of a wounded parrot," he said. "It's a parrot found locally in WA but the sound seems to work all around Australia. We recorded a few different parrots but found this is the one that works best. The caller is very much like a fishing lure. Whereas it's the sight and shine that attracts the fish, it's the sound that appeals to the predator and the prospect of an easy meal."

To obtain a secret weapon you simply fill in a request form on the Foxbusters' website (foxbusters.com.au) and an MP3 copy attached to a reply email will be sent by Graham. All you need then is a portable





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When the sound is played it routinely attracts foxes which have previously attacked stricken birds. Even when spot-lighting with its eyes fixed in the beam, foxes have been known to rush towards the sound, throwing their normal inbred caution and wariness aside and the caller has also been successful in enticing feral cats.

The website carries multiple testimonials to the pulling power of the secret weapon, one remarking: "It's unbelievable really and quite humorous at times. Has to be seen to be believed." Many describe themselves as experienced fox hunters always willing to try something different and only too happy to add Graham's secret weapon to their armoury.

One tip is directed at hunters operating on foot or using a hide. In such situations Graham recommends the hunter places the speaker 15-20m from the hide so the fox's focus is on the source of the sound and not the shooter's position.

And he's never too busy to speak to new customers. "I've made a lot of good friends through the secret weapon," said Graham. "Most of the requests are from within WA and the next biggest would be Victoria."

Graham's vehicle, aptly dubbed 'Rover', features all mod cons including three MP3 speakers for calling in foxes, seven firearm racks, a retractable rest for the driver as well as liquid soap and hand-washing water. It also has a fox autopsy table with knife, scissors, gloves and sample jars and there's a retractable backrest for shooters in the rear. The kit is rounded off with scales for weighing and a 'mood adjuster' for wounded foxes.

Graham has become something of an expert on fox behaviour, compiling a database which he shares with others via the Foxbusters' website. "I respect foxes, they're very intelligent and crafty so when things work out well it feels like an achievement to have outfoxed the fox," he said.

"Their athleticism and the way they've been created is amazing but they don't belong in the Australian environment. It's hard to blame the English for introducing them for whatever reason - we've all made environmental mistakes. They simply didn't know what they were doing."

Graham's research into foxes' habits and feeding patterns has made him a doyen of the subject and he regularly delivers speaking presentations, one of his latest outings to address Year 11 students at WA

Even Mel Gibson was there!

WHEN PEOPLE COME across Graham Lawrence's souped-up buggy 'Rover' for the first time, many reckon it looks like a crazy cart from the *Mad Max* movie. Graham's stock reply is: "I'm not mad and I'm not Max but I have had Mel Gibson shoot foxes from this vehicle."

The explanation behind Graham's quip involves Melinda Gibson, the young lady in the photo. Mel was recently among a party of hunters aboard the rig and shot her first fox. In fact Mel, who hails from just north of Albany, finished up with three foxes to round off an eventful night-time outing.



Checking a fox's teeth can determine the animal's age.



Weighing fox

College of Agriculture in Narrogin.

He has compiled records of what he has found in the stomachs of dead foxes on which he has carried out dissections, an almost endless list including beetles, mice, fruit, grain and lots of rotting fodder. "I reckon I'd have cut open more than 600 foxes and surprisingly we only found rabbits which many would consider their main meal in about 10 of them. Then again, rabbits are harder to catch than beetles."

The chance to hunt with Graham using his customised 'Rover' is still attracting customers. During the past decade Graham has logged 290 excursions on the buggy, those outings equating to 1610 foxes killed which averages out at 5.5 'redcoats' per assignment.

"There are lots of local guys who come for the fox hunts as well as several women from throughout the state," said Graham. "One lady catches foxes in a trap and also snares a lot of feral cats. Foxes may look cuddly creatures like dogs but it's out in the bush at night you see the damage they cause and what's really going on."

With Graham's secret weapon in the hands of at least 1000 users, hopefully more hunters will give it a go in the never-ending quest to curtail the unwelcome effect of foxes. ●

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Winchester winds up ammo assembly in Australia

By the time you're reading this, Winchester Australia's Geelong factory will be in its last few days of ammunition assembly operations, with all assembly expected to cease by the end of April. The company says they will instead focus on importing and distributing ammunition, firearms and associated accessories.

Winchester Australia general manager Clive Pugh said the ammunition operations currently conducted at Geelong will be moved to Winchester sites in the US. "As we shift out of local manufacturing we will increase the import and distribution side of our business, expanding the use of our warehousing facilities in Geelong," said Mr Pugh.

"The decision to cease local manufacture is no reflection on the talents of our manufacturing employees, who have served our customers and the company well. This was a difficult business decision driven by the need to provide our customers and end users with the best products from the global Winchester operations while reducing costs within the overall Winchester business.

"All employees involved in product

assembly will be made redundant or reassigned to distribution while some employees have taken voluntary retirement. All affected employees will receive their full entitlement and are being given career transition support between now and when they leave. Employees have already been active in finding new opportunities and some will take the opportunity to retire."

Ultimately, Mr Pugh says the decision was based on providing Winchester customers with the best products while also saving costs. The company will now source all loaded products from the US and continue to offer products for other people to load within Australia.



WINCHESTER
AUSTRALIA

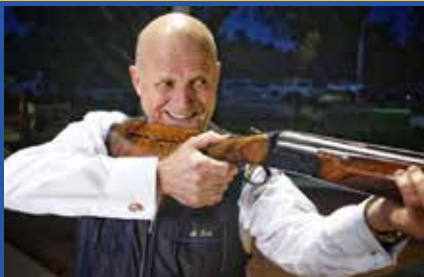
"There is limited small arms loading by other suppliers in Australia which means already the majority of loaded rounds are imported from Europe and the US," said Mr Pugh.

While Winchester has never manufactured firearms in Australia, they will continue to distribute the Winchester, Browning, CZ, Steyr, Daisy and Huglu brands. Additionally, the gunsmith and testing capabilities at the Geelong factory will remain along with repair and support services.

"Winchester Australia wants to be known as a reliable and supportive wholesaler of ammunition, firearms and shooting accessories," said Mr Pugh. "This change allows us to focus on sourcing products that end users want and make them available through our extensive distribution network of shops and clubs.

"Winchester's new website reflects this focus, showcasing up-to-date information on all its products, what's in stock and even allowing consumers to shop for products and nominate which dealer they want to receive delivery from." ●

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ssaa.org.au/benchrest

SSAA disciplines

Benchrest

SSAA Benchrest is a precision rifle shooting discipline to put five or 10 shots into the smallest possible group. Rifles are fired from a bench with a front rest and rear sandbag to support the firearm. Originating in the US around 1947, it came to Australia in the 1950s.

Targets and scoring

Groups are measured from the centre of the two widest shots in a group. Benchrest Score class is out of 250 points, with five scoring rounds on each of the five paper targets.

Shotgun

As the name suggests, the SSAA Shotgun discipline involves shooting a shotgun to break clay targets. The sport has origins from 1866, when a glass ball filled with feathers was developed. Once clay targets were invented and a machine from which they could be thrown was perfected, consistently breakable targets could be pitched for each competitor.

There are four main competitions, which vary in the type of targets thrown, the angle, height and speed, and the field layouts. Low Field and High Field competitions are shot from pads level with or close to the trap house and the traps being above or below ground level.

Sporting Clays

This is usually set up in natural bushland, with the traps presenting clay targets that simulate hunting game such as ducks, rabbits and pheasants. Traps can be concealed, with targets only visible in cleared areas.

s-stand

SSAA 5-stand has five shooting stations in a straight line close to each other, surrounded by six to eight traps, with all targets converging in front of the stands. This tests a shooter's ability to read targets quickly and shoot them before they go beyond the effective range of a shotgun.

Targets and firearms

Targets are thrown at various speeds, in singles, doubles or in pairs, from in front, behind, low, high or above, straight away, crossing, quartering, incoming from either side, in the open or partly hidden by trees, bushes or other obstacles.

Shotguns suitable for Sporting Clays and 5-stand generally have sporting-style stocks and variable chokes, most commonly 12-gauge. With the advent of shotguns designed for Sporting Clays, shooters can handle the infinite variety of rising, falling, incoming and outgoing targets.

Getting started

Experienced shooters or coaches are willing to give advice on gun-fit, style and techniques to help new shooters choose a suitable shotgun. Most SSAA branches have 'club shotguns' available.





Courses of fire

Most Benchrest group matches cover five targets shot at each range. The majority of centrefire matches are shot at 100 and 200 yards. Rimfire group and Benchrest Score matches are shot at 50m and 100 yards. Time limits are generally between seven and 12 minutes.

Firearms and classes

There are 11 main classes within Benchrest, based on rifle weight and calibre.

Experimental/Unlimited Benchrest is a centrefire class with no weight restrictions, which requires 10-shot groups, while all other classes fire five-shot groups. Sporter, Light Benchrest and Heavy Benchrest are centrefire classes with total weight limits of 4.082kg, 4.763kg and 6.123kg respectively. Centrefire classes have no scope restrictions.

There are two .22 Rimfire Benchrest Rifle 'group' classes allowing the use of any rimfire rifle chambered for the .22 Long Rifle cartridge. Light and Heavy classes have total weight limits of 3.855kg and 6.350kg respectively, the Light scope power is restricted to 6.5x magnification.

There are four Benchrest for Score classes. Light and Heavy Centrefire have total weight limits of 4.763kg and 6.350kg respectively. Light Rimfire and Heavy Rimfire classes include .22 LR rifles with the same weight and scope limits as Rimfire group classes.

International Rimfire Benchrest

International Rimfire Benchrest (IRB) allows .22 LR rimfire rifles with unlimited scope power and a 6.350kg limit. The match is shot at 50m for score, with a 25-bullseye target over 20 minutes.





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RUGER'S 77/17

a .17WSM that shoots!

Senior Correspondent John Dunn

The rotary magazine Ruger 77 series of rifles began in 1983 with the 77/22, an adult-sized .22 rimfire designed to have the same heft and feel as a centrefire. It gained widespread acceptance and the current catalogue offers nine models of the 77 marque in five calibres - .17WSM, .17 Hornet, .22 Hornet, .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum.

The rifle received from Nioa for review is the current iteration of the 77/17 chambered for the .17WSM rimfire which can also be purchased in .17 Hornet, an old wildcat cartridge legitimised by Hornady in 2012.

As it came from the box the rifle looked good. Perhaps more importantly it had a

very good feel about it, a nice combination of balance and weight that contributes so much to the way a rifle handles.

The receiver

This is machined from an alloy steel investment casting, a production technique Ruger mastered long ago. A slab side offering, it has the usual ports for magazine insertion and cartridge extraction with scope mount bases machined integrally into the top flat. As always, Ruger mounts come with the rifle.

At the rear of the receiver behind the bolt handle slot on the right is a 3-position safety lever that works in conjunction with the single stage trigger fitted and pinned

into an integral housing on the underside of the receiver. When the safety is locked on it blocks the trigger and prevents the bolt from being opened by engaging a vertical slot in the side of the cocking piece. In the mid position it blocks the trigger but allows the bolt to be cycled and in the forward position the rifle can be fired.

On the left rear side of the receiver is a simple, spring-actuated bolt stop that has to be pushed down with a thumb nail to remove the bolt from the receiver. At the back of the magazine well on the bottom of the receiver a pair of integral hooks serve as hangers for the triggerguard assembly. With the assembly in place and rear action screw tightened, the receiver and stock are



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NM/D269

Ruger's 77/17 - a .17WSM that shoots!



The 77/17 .17WSM as it comes from the box.

effectively secured to each other, the hooks and hangers combining to provide a de facto bedding pillar. A plate at the front of the magazine well in the receiver juts down to mate with the edge of the magazine liner to provide a similar effect.

The front of the triggerguard assembly also incorporates a magazine latch and a simple hook ejector that kicks a spent case clear of the action when the bolt is pulled back. The receiver is secured in the stock by two screws, one into the bottom of the receiver ring at the front, the other into the bottom of the tang at the rear of the trigger guard.

Barrel

The rifle has a cold hammer forged barrel just under 47cm - 13cm shorter than the last 77/17 I looked at - with a diameter of 23.34mm at the receiver and 18.95mm at the muzzle. The end of the barrel is recessed with a bevelled crown on the rifling which has six grooves with a 1:9 right-hand twist. Like the receiver, the barrel has a matte stainless finish. No sights are fitted.



Top view of receiver showing 3-positional safety at rear of the bolt and integral rear scope mount base. Notice bolt lug forward of the scope base at rear of breech block.

Bolt

The bolt is two piece made from stainless steel. The front section or breech block is non-rotating with rails on either side that ride in internal raceways in the receiver. The face of the bolt is recessed with a hook extractor incorporated into the right rail.

The body of the bolt has the same ribbed cross section as the breech block. When the bolt handle is turned down a pair of locking lugs at the front of the body rotate 90 degrees to lock between the rear end of the

breech block and vertical faces at the back of the ejection port in the receiver.

The bolt cocks on opening, its condition indicated by a cocking piece that protrudes from the back of the bolt sleeve where it can be both seen and felt. According to the advertising, the bolt has an ultra-fast lock time that contributes to accuracy. Feeding from the magazine is controlled.

Magazine

The rotary magazine is made from high impact black plastic and sits flush with the belly of the stock to maintain the clean lines of the rifle, secured at the rear by a latch that's integral with the triggerguard. Within the magazine the cartridges are separated from each other by helical vanes and the magazine capacity of the review rifle was six rounds.



Belly of the 77/17 showing flush-fitting rotary magazine.



Component parts.

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Ruger's 77/17 - a .17WSM that shoots!

Stock

The Green Mountain stock is laminated with a flat finish. Both the forearm and pistol grip are chequered and the buttstock is fitted with a grey rubber recoil pad and sling swivel studs are provided. Internally the barrel channel and receiver mortise are cleanly cut and sealed to keep out moisture.

While I appreciate the stability they offer, I've never been a big fan of laminated stocks. That said, I admit I found the review rifle very easy on the eye and certainly preferable to the plastic offerings increasingly dominating the market. For those who refuse to waiver from their traditional roots, a conventional walnut-stocked version of the 77/17 is also available.

Testing

For testing the Ruger was fitted with a 3-9x40 Bushnell Engage, the entry level model in the new range of Bushnell scopes on offer from Nioa. Ammunition consisted of three 20gr loads from Winchester, American Eagle and Hornady respectively as well as a box of 25gr Winchester loads. Initial target work was all done at 50m where, according to the ballistics listed on each ammunition pack, both bullet weights loads more or less have the same point of impact as at 100m.

As always, hearing protection was absolutely necessary - this is a noisy little barker. Like other .17WSM rifles I've



Four ammunition types were used for review.



The rifle averaged 20mm group at 100m using the American Eagle 20gr load.



Head of the breech block showing recessed face and extractor in the right-hand rail.



Receiver mortise and barrel channel are cleanly cut and sealed against moisture.

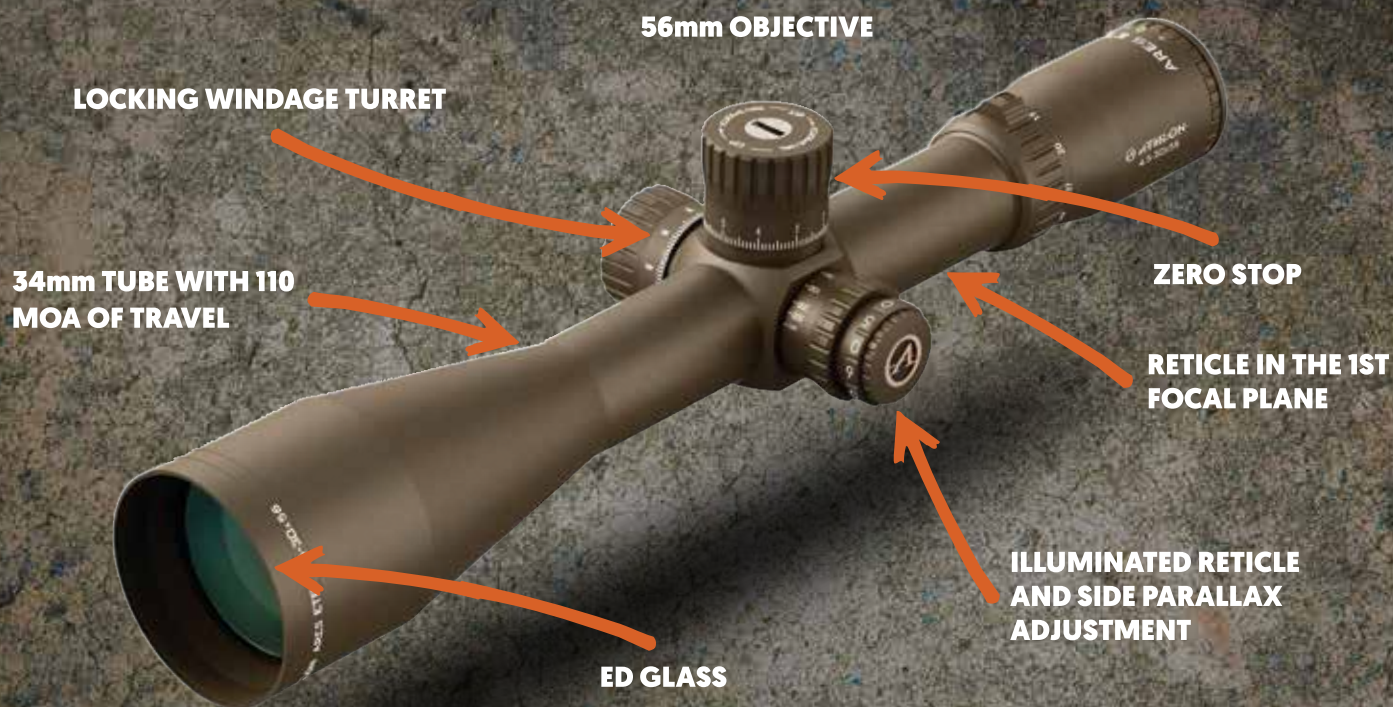
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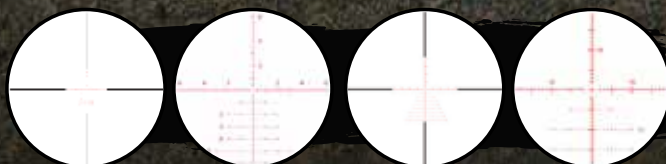
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Ruger's 77/17 - a .17WSM that shoots!

looked at, the Ruger took a little while to settle down. The different loads showed flashes of brilliance as the running-in process progressed, some producing subgroups as small as six and seven millimetres, all of them throwing a shot or two unpredictably to produce groups that ranged between 22 and 27mm.

It was a similar story at 100m where the fliers in some cases blew the overall group size out to as much as 65mm, though a gusty wind at the target frames was almost certainly responsible for that during a couple of sessions. I'd put almost 100 rounds through the rifle before everything settled down and it finally began to group consistently at 100m.

The standout ammunition at that range was the American Eagle, routinely producing 5-shot groups that ranged from 16 to 27mm for an average of 20mm. That's head of rabbit accuracy to around 120m and subsequent field testing proved that was the case. Over a number of afternoon hunts I shot a dozen or so early summer bunnies at ranges from around 40m to a little over 100m. In every case the results were devastating to the point where I had to chest-shoot a three-parts grown animal to have one to photograph that wasn't missing its head.

That level of accuracy also makes the

.17WSM Ruger a useful feral cat and fox rifle to a similar maximum range or perhaps a little further. Given the frangibility of the light projectiles, head shots would need to be the order of the day. Despite the impressive numbers it brings to rimfire tables the .17WSM remains a small game cartridge - high velocity will only go so far and humane kills at sensible ranges must be the priority at all times.

Overview

I thoroughly enjoyed reviewing the Ruger 77/17 as it's the first rifle I've used in .17WSM that has come close to delivering all the potential benefits the advertising claims have so long promised with the cartridge.

The rifle functioned flawlessly throughout, was comfortable to carry without a sling, handled well and with its preferred ammunition it shot to potential off a variety of field rests. My only adverse comment is this would be a much better rifle with a lighter trigger. It really is a litigation trigger and while you get used to the weight over time, it does nothing to enhance the rifle's performance.

That said, the Ruger 77/17 in .17WSM is a powerful little small game rifle that will impress all who take time to run it in properly and enjoy what it has to offer. ●

SPECIFICATIONS

Make: Ruger Model 77/17

Action: Bolt-action, matte stainless finish

Barrel: 47cm long, cold hammer forged, matte stainless finish, six grooves, 1:9" RH twist

Sights: None fitted, scope rings included. Review rifle tested with a 3-9x40 Bushnell Engage scope (not included with rifle)

Calibre: .17WSM (tested) .17 Hornet

Magazine: 6-shot detachable rotary, flush mounted

Stock: Green River laminated, matte finished, sling swivel bases included

Length of pull: 34.29cm

Overall length: 95.8cm

Weight: 3.175kg (bare)

Distributor: Nioa

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Trim Pro-2

adds to glowing reputation of RCBS

Paul Miller

It's widely accepted that RCBS is one of the world's leading manufacturers of reloading presses for both metallic rifle cartridges and shotgun shells.

For many years I've had excellent results with an RCBS Partner Press Kit and have reloaded a lot of rifle cartridges in several calibres with this superb little press as well as accessories and RCBS dies bought separately.

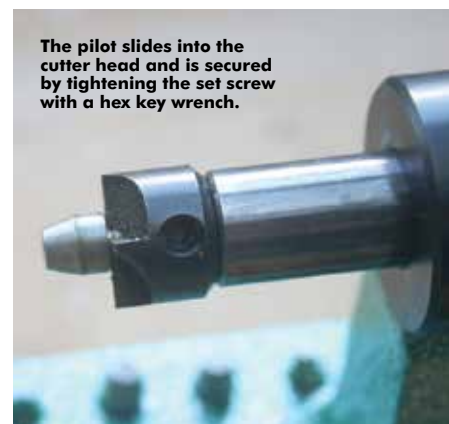
These kits are great for initial forays into serious reloading but you also need a case trimmer if you're starting to do enough shooting that your shells begin to stretch with repeated reloading. Some cartridges tend to stretch more than others depending on the shape of their neck and sharpness or otherwise of their shoulders. We often hear of people shooting 'improved' cartridges where a factory cartridge like the .257 Roberts is fire-formed in a rifle with an improved chamber.

In this example a .257 Roberts Ackley Improved has a much sharper shoulder

angle of 40 degrees. The standard factory .257 Roberts has a shoulder angle of 20 degrees 45' which means it's more likely to feed and chamber easily but also experience neck stretching over time, especially with reloads at the top end of the performance range. Some cartridges provide quite an increase in performance when improved with less taper in the case and more angle in the shoulder, so increasing case capacity. Less frequent or non-existent trimming for the life of the case is an added bonus.

Once a cartridge neck stretches to a point where the manufacturer's specification for cartridge overall case length is exceeded, you can run into problems with chambering your rounds subject to the length of your chamber. A case that's too long can enter the throat of a firearm and a case jammed in this way makes releasing the bullet more difficult on firing. This can dramatically increase pressures and be potentially highly dangerous and damaging to the firearm and, in a worst case scenario, the shooter.

Some people view trimming cases as unnecessary or simply chuck them away and replace with new ones or buy another quantity of factory loads when they reach maximum recommended length. Some more exotic cartridge cases are rather expensive to buy so throwing them away



The pilot slides into the cutter head and is secured by tightening the set screw with a hex key wrench.

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Trim Pro-2 adds to glowing reputation of RCBS

rather than resizing can become a costly exercise. The same can be said for buying exotic factory loads.

If you're interested in consistency and accuracy and ultimately safety, you need to trim your cases when they reach the maximum length stated in the various reloading guides available world-wide. The rule of thumb for trimming is ten-thousands of an inch below the stated maximum overall cartridge length. With a trimmer like this RCBS it's an easy and satisfying job to perform knowing all your cases are the same length and right on specification.

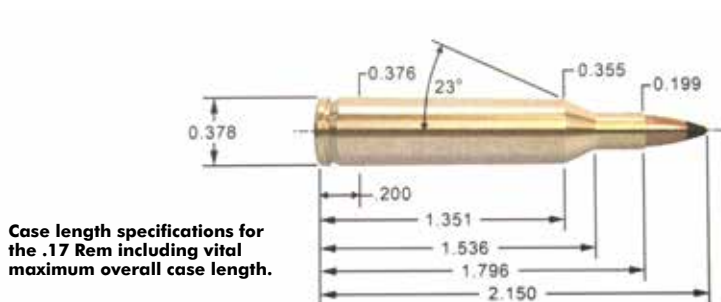
The three favourite cartridges I reload are the .17 Remington, .220 Swift and .25-06. These are all high performance cartridges that stretch their necks with repeated firing of near maximum loads. I never run any of them flat out but still the brass flows forward over a number of firings and they need trimming. These all fall into the expensive category when it comes to buying factory empties. Purchasing these as loaded cartridges really puts a dent in your overdraft. These are all fine examples of why you should trim cartridges and extend their useful reloading life both for economy and safety.

The RCBS Trim Pro-2 is a well-made unit and comes with nine trimmer pilots from .22 cal to .45 cal. Other smaller diameter pilots like .17 and .20 cal are available to buy separately. It's robustly constructed and has a feeling of real quality and precision when put to use.

This trimmer is easy to install by just screwing it to your reloading bench or a substantial piece of timber if you want to make it portable. Simply attach the lever to the spring-loaded Universal shell holder assembly and you're ready to start. Select the calibre of pilot and install it in the cutter head and tighten the retaining set screw with a $\frac{1}{8}$ " hex key wrench. Ideally, select



The essential Vernier caliper showing the cartridge at maximum length and in need of trimming.



Case length specifications for the .17 Rem including vital maximum overall case length.

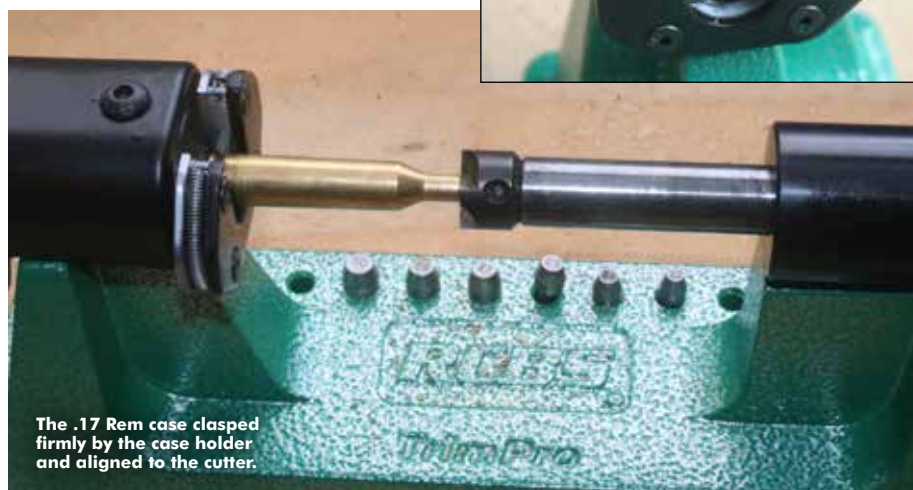
Maximum S.A.A.M.I. Overall Cartridge Length: 2.150"



a case that's already trimmed to size and push down on the lever to insert the case in the shell holder. The two jaws firmly hold and locate the case and this aligns the case to the pilot and cutter.

Grasp the substantial handle on the revolving cutter bar and push the pilot smoothly into the case as far as it will go. Slide the coarse adjustment bushing with the fine adjustment bushing attached to touch the back of the cutter guide and lock the coarse bushing in place. From here it's a matter of tweaking the fine adjustment to obtain exactly the overall cartridge length you want. This machine is accurate to within 0.001 of an inch and those modifications are easily applied on the fine adjustment bushing then locked in place with the same Allen key as the coarse bushing.

Push down on the lever and insert your cartridge then shove the pilot into the cartridge mouth where it gives a firm fit and ensures concentricity in the trimming process. You will need a Vernier caliper to make accurate measurements and it's a simple process to trim your cartridges. These calipers are another essential for safe reloading so you can make various measurements of your cases and finished reloaded cartridges to ensure they're safe to fire.



The .17 Rem case clasped firmly by the case holder and aligned to the cutter.



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Trim Pro-2 adds to glowing reputation of RCBS

I really rate the spring-loaded Universal shell holder as it does away with changing individual case holders and is so quick and positive to use. The shell is perfectly aligned to the cutter and a simple trim inside and outside with a hand-held chamfering and deburring tool is all that's needed after the machine trimming is done.

I believe there are also various calibre-specific three-way cutters available which attach by removing the cutter head provided with the trimmer. These units apparently trim, chamfer and deburr all in one operation for a neat job. I'll have to look into this for my three hot shots sometime soon, although it's no hardship to use a manual tool for a quick chamfer and deburr.

This trimmer retails for around \$275 from gunshops Australia-wide and provides the comfort of the RCBS reputation for quality, reliability and warranty. I recommend it highly as a top-notch product and an absolute necessity for reloading consistent cartridges that contribute both to accuracy and, most importantly, safety. For more, visit nioa.net.au or rcbs.com. ●



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Schultz & Larsen's Legacy switch-barrel sporting rifle

Con Kapralos



The fact that Denmark is home to a well-respected firearms manufacturer in Schultz & Larsen (S&L) is something that deserves to be celebrated. The company was registered in January 1919 by Hans Schultz and his son-in-law Niels Larsen and their rifles have always been made with an emphasis on first-class craftsmanship and high degrees of accuracy.

In Australia, S&L is represented by Gone Hunting based in Brighton, Victoria. Included with the review rifle were two scopes - a tactical IOR and Premier Heritage 3-15x50 - supplied in detachable rings. Ammunition came in .222 and .223 Remington as well as .300 Blackout.

The rifle

The Legacy is a traditional bolt-action repeater built on a modular switch-barrel design. Its deep blued metalwork and

pillar-bedded walnut stock with an oil finish is a classic look.

The fully-floating switch-barrels are cut-rifled and tin-lapped and the 60-degree bolt throw and triple locking lugs make for a rock solid but silky smooth action. The rifle weighs 2.8kg bare and is supplied with a full length hard-case and take-down tools. One barrel comes with the rifle upon purchase with another three calibres of various profiles, generally standard (14mm diameter) and varmint (18mm) with twist rates available to suit the Legacy action.

The receiver

This is the heart of the Legacy rifle and machined from a solid piece of steel. Ultra-precise CNC machining ensures the receiver and bolt are perfectly aligned with the barrel. The front portion of the receiver ring is bored to accommodate the shank of the barrel with a tight slip-fit. The

underside of the ring and lug are split off-centre with the left side drilled and tapped to accept two barrel retaining screws.

The thicker side of the bottom ring accepts the front action screw as well as accommodating a short stud which mates with a slot in the barrel shank. The receiver has a compact profile with a scalloped segment of the left side having the Legacy name tastefully engraved. Scope mounting is facilitated by the receiver top being machined to accept proprietary S&L 'Slide and Lock' scope hardware as well as being drilled and tapped to take Weaver or Picatinny-style bases. The review rifle had a one-piece Picatinny with quick-detachable rings fitted to both riflescopes.

The barrel

Barrels are a strong point of S&L. Chrome molybdenum steel barrels are bored before being cut-rifled to produce the lands and grooves concentric to the bore itself. The Legacy, being a compact action sporting rifle, is tailored to the .222 and .223 Remington calibres as well as the 6x45 and .300 Blackout. Furthermore, select calibres are offered in differing rates of twist and barrel profiles - the Standard barrel with 14mm muzzle diameter or Light Varmint at 18mm.

All Legacy barrels are threaded at the muzzle with either a M14x1 or UNF-20 thread for additional accessories. All barrels have the calibre engraved on the shank to ease identification.

The trigger

The bottom flat of the receiver houses the trigger group and is located to the rear. The



Rifle in component form (bolt and magazine not shown).



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Schultz & Larsen's Legacy switch-barrel sporting rifle

trigger is of a single-stage design and fully adjustable for pull weight and sear engagement. The test rifle was set at 1.3kg and perfect to use as supplied (S&L stipulates trigger adjustment be made by a competent gunsmith). The trigger blade was slim and comfortable.

The magazine

This is a detachable box design of all-steel construction holding four rounds, kept in place by a spring-loaded latch engaged by a press-button to the front of the magazine. All calibres supplied in the Legacy can use the same magazine and all rounds tested in the different calibres fed easily into the magazine and chambered without fault.

The bolt

The steel one-piece bolt is of a push-feed design with a polished shank, blued bolt shroud and three locking lugs mated to a 60-degree bolt throw. The handle is of a straight profile with a rounded knob at its terminus. Case extraction is possible with a plunger ejector through the bolt face and a Sako-style extractor.

The three locking lugs and recessed bolt face lock up directly into the breech of the barrel and S&L specifies that when



The Premier Heritage scope was fitted to Innomount two-piece rings which mate to a Picatinny rail fitted to the top of the receiver.



The American-style profiled stock with Grade 1 walnut.



All Legacy switch-barrels are threaded for muzzle brakes or noise suppressors where permitted.

fitting a barrel to the receiver, the bolt be fully homed and locked in to set the correct head-space before tightening the rear barrel-retaining screw first, then the front screw. The correct tightening procedure is sacrosanct to the rifle functioning safely.

The stock

This is a piece of straight-grained walnut. Gone Hunting also offers the Legacy stocks

in higher grades of walnut for those who like fancy swirls and stripes. The profile is a straight-combed American-style sporter devoid of cheekpiece and with a slim pistol grip. Precisely cut panels of chequering around the grip and either side of the fore-end set the stock off well and give an excellent hold. The rifle is fitted with a slim recoil pad made of sorbothane but recoil in the calibres offered is negligible.

The stock is normally fitted with QD sling swivel studs as standard but in this case a Spartan Javelin bipod adapter plate is fitted at the front stud position, concurrent to the testing of several Spartan bipods and tripods. The inletting of the stock is excellent with all surfaces neatly finished and sealed with oil.

Aluminum pillars are inletted into the floor of the stock which provide a stable bedding surface for the receiver, with the contact areas glass bedded. The barrels are free-floating along their entire length.

Barrel change-over

The Legacy comes with one barrel according to customer request. The sporter barrels with 14mm muzzle diameter are \$210 less than the equivalent light-varmint



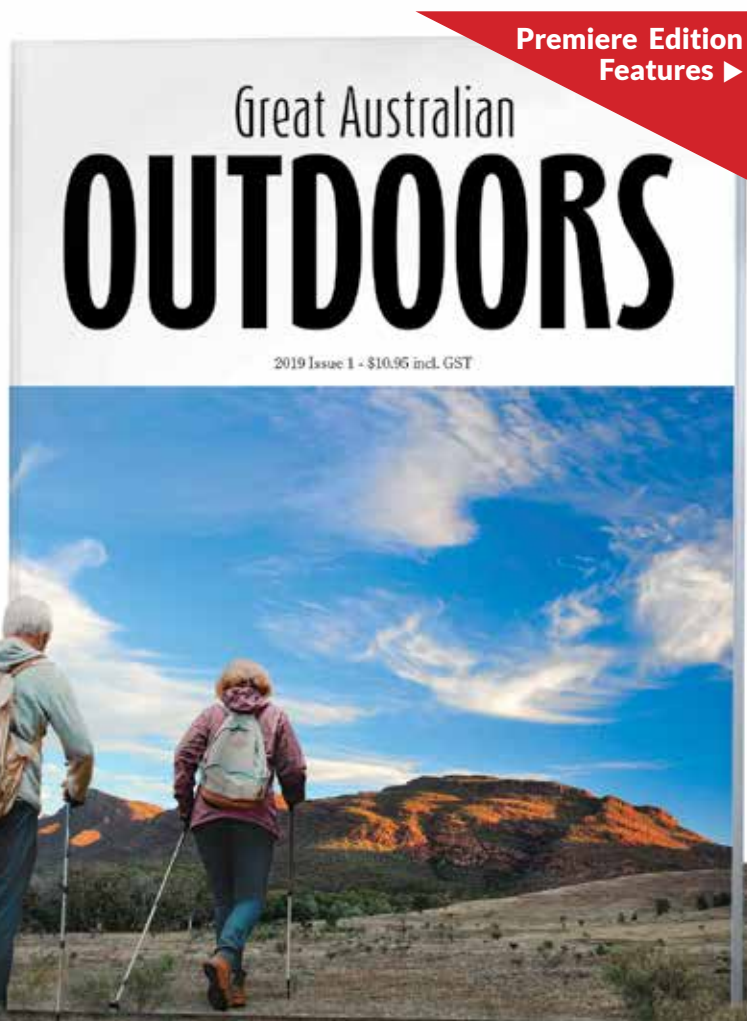
Vernier calipers don't lie - just under 6mm was the best group with the .223 ammunition, using Sako 69gr target ammunition.



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Schultz & Larsen's Legacy switch-barrel sporting rifle

barrels at 18mm (when bought with the rifle).

The Legacy is made to use at least one extra barrel, if not two or three, with additional barrels costing from \$1063 to \$1225 depending on chosen profile. Changing barrels requires the bolt to be withdrawn from the action and the stock removed by extracting the two action screws. Once the stock is taken out, two barrel retaining screws in the front receiver ring are visible. With the supplied tool, each screw is loosened a quarter to half turn and by grasping the barrel firmly it can be pulled from the receiver. The replacement barrel should be inspected carefully to ensure no oil or lubricant is present on the shank or inside the receiver ring.

The barrel is inserted with the groove on the barrel shank mating with the stud in the receiver ring and the barrel needs to be firmly homed with no gap between shank and receiver ring. The bolt can be inserted to set the correct head-space and the two barrel locking screws tightened, the rear first 'just snug' then the front one. With the screws 'snug' they can be tightened to 6-8 Newton metres (Nm) with a torque wrench or nipped up and tightened one quarter turn with the supplied wrench. The stock can be replaced and the action cycled to ensure the rifle is operational.



Results for accuracy testing of the S&L Legacy at 100m with five three-shot groups the norm. All loads, apart from the Browning BXV in .223 Remington, came with the review rifle.

Ammunition	Best group	Worst group	Average **
.222 Remington - Sako 50gr Gamehead SP	23mm	35mm	28mm
.223 Remington - Sako 113G OTM 69gr	6mm	23mm	15mm
.223 Remington - Seller & Bellot Match 69gr HPBT	10mm	16mm	14mm
.223 Remington - Buffalo River OSA 55gr Blitz King	16mm	23mm	19mm
.223 Remington - Browning BXV Varmint Expansion 50gr	15mm	26mm	20mm
.300 BLK Buffalo River OSA 125gr PP SN	32mm	80mm	48mm
.300 BLK Remington High Performance Rifle 220gr OTM	n/a	n/a	n/a

** Average calculated from five three-shot groups

Range testing

The review rifle was supplied with three barrels in .222 and .223 Remington as well as the .300 Blackout. Two scopes in the Romanian IOR and American Premier Heritage were also available. The Premier was chosen as the most suitable scope for aesthetics.

The rifle came fitted with the .223 Remington barrel and testing over several range sessions involved using all three barrels and shooting groups at 100m. Conditions ranging from sunshine to gale-force winds tested both rifle and reviewer. The 1:8 twist rate of the 223 Rem barrel stabilised the larger projectiles better than the lighter ones as expected. For lighter projectiles, twist rates of 1:10 and 1:12 are available and with the switch barrel system it's possible to swap and match barrel twist rates to various projectile sizes and quality.

The rifle did experience issues firing the Remington .300 Blackout ammunition with loads failing for the first seven loads tested. Primer strike was visible but they failed to fire. The Buffalo River .300 Blackout performed without trouble so hard primers on the Remington loads seems the only explanation. All other loads gave no issues.

All other loads tested in the specific calibres gave a mixed bag of results. The .223 Remington chambering performed above expectation, the .222 Remington and .300 Blackout had to deal with gusty winds as indicated in the groups seen at 100m but overall the rifle functioned very well.

Overview

The S&L Legacy was a pleasure to use and is an excellent rifle for the hunter looking for a switch-barrel platform suited to

small-scale calibres such as the .223 and .223 Remington, .300 Blackout and the 6x45.

The ability to use the same bolt and magazine for all calibres and simple barrel-changing procedure make for a lovely outfit. The S&L Legacy starts at \$2614 (with standard profile barrel), with additional barrels from \$1063. More at shultzlarsen.com.au

Specifications

Manufacturer: Schultz & Larsen, Denmark

Model: Legacy

Action: Push-feed bolt-action, take-down

Barrel: Chrome moly, cut-rifled. Barrels offered as standard weight (14mm muzzle diameter) or light varmint (18mm muzzle diameter) - calibre dependent.

Calibres: .222 Rem, .223 Rem, .300 Blackout (all tested), 6x45

Sights: None fitted. Receiver machined for proprietary S&L mounts, drilled and tapped for Weaver base or Picatinny rail.

Trigger: Single-stage adjustable

Magazine: Steel, four shots in single column. Five-shot magazines available

Stock: Oil-finished walnut, Grade I (test rifle). Higher walnut grades offered (additional cost)

Weight: 2.8kg

Distributor: Gone Hunting Pty Ltd

RRP: \$2614 with standard barrel (14mm muzzle diameter), \$2824 with light varmint barrel (18mm muzzle diameter). Additional barrels: Standard \$1063, Light Varmint \$1225.

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Job done: Bill Hambly-Clark with the two shot lions and, inset, eyewitness Mike Young.

Revealed

Who really shot the Adelaide lions

Eyewitness adds new slant to bizarre tale

Dave Rose

The astonishing tale of the circus lions that escaped from their cages and were on the loose in the Adelaide suburb of Wingfield in 1964, as featured in our December issue, has proved a talking point among many readers.

Since running the story we've discovered the identity of 'Jim P', one of the police officers involved when three of the four lions were shot dead, was Jim Pengilly. The letter from Geoff Smith in last month's *Shooter* gave some background information on Jim.

We've also been given a DVD containing footage filmed as the incident unfolded five decades ago. The recording seems to indicate a crowd of bemused plain clothes and uniformed police officers. There are graphic images of the dominant male lion with the unfortunate keeper, George Herzog, who was mauled to death. Incredibly, the

stand-off lasted more than two hours. In the footage, Wingfield is a rural setting far removed from the urban locale of today.

There are conflicting versions of who actually shot the three lions after a fourth had been coaxed back into its cage. The *Australian Shooter* account was based on an article that appeared in an issue of the quarterly newsletter published by the SSAA Hunting & Conservation Branch (SA) in November 2008. That story firmly placed the credit for downing two of the lions with Jim Pengilly, one of the first to arrive after the alert.

But sources within the SSAA familiar with the event reckon there are different explanations on who did the shooting due to ill feeling between police and a gun dealer who arrived after being asked to assist. He was Bill Hambly-Clark, a colourful

character who ran a city centre gunshop and passed away in 2013. But Mike Young, a long-term SSAA member who accompanied him that day, still lives in Adelaide and has told us exactly what he saw.

At the time Mike was serving in the Australian Army and was a mate of Hambly-Clark's son, Bill Jr, and in his spare time would help out at the gunshop. Mike still has vivid recollections of what happened that day when he was in his early 20s. "I was on leave from the Army and for something to do was helping in the gunshop," he said.

"About 9 o'clock that morning the phone rang and young Bill answered - it was the police wanting someone to help deal with the incident. Bill Jr had been in a motorcycle accident and was injured so I went instead as back-up." They were picked up

by a police car which sped to the scene with sirens blaring. "The police radio was on and it was clear they weren't going to do anything until Bill arrived," said Mike.

Hambly-Clark had sighted-in a Browning Auto and given Mike a Spanish side-by-side. "I had to work out the safety but Bill's instruction was to 'cover me'," said Mike. A Superintendent Lenton surveyed the scene with Hambly-Clark - two lions near caravans and the male by a fence with the remains of the keeper. Lenton instructed Hambly-Clark to deal with the dominant male without interference, while the police shooters were told to focus on the other two.

"I followed Bill about four or five paces behind and to his right," recalled Mike. "He closed to less than 25 yards from the lion with me following - no one else came with us. With Bill about 20 yards away and the lion still undisturbed, he stopped and raised his firearm to take aim.

"At that moment someone behind yelled 'fire' and the lion moved its head sharply as Bill took the shot. His intention had been to head-shoot the animal from the side but the sudden call meant the shot struck its left brow arch, fortunately with enough impact to crack major sections of the skull and kill the lion."

At that point Mike remembers a barrage of shots ringing out from the other shooters, enough to kill one of the lions near the caravans as the lioness ran towards the fallen male. "Bill approached the downed male ready to shoot again if necessary," said Mike. "As Bill was concentrating on him I saw the female coming across my front at speed. I yelled out to Bill who shot it in an instant."

What followed involved a curious course of action by police, according to Mike. "An officer who'd stayed with the group we made our approach from was the first to come forward and raised his shotgun to fire. I said 'it's already dead' but he told me 'I'm going to shoot it anyway' and fired into its ribs."

With Bill about 20 yards away and the lion still undisturbed, he stopped and raised his firearm to take aim

Hambly-Clark then pulled out a skinning knife but was stopped by another officer citing quarantine issues. It later transpired Hambly-Clark did indeed become owner of the two lion skins, and skulls which he boiled down as trophies. As far as Mike's concerned two of the lions were definitely killed by Hambly-Clark. "He shot two lions with three shots in a matter of seconds. I didn't fire a shot," he said. Video footage shows those two lions being shot.

What clouded the issue was the ill feeling between Hambly-Clark and Superintendent Lenton. "There was a personality clash," said Mike. "Bill was a flamboyant character who spoke out and was critical of the police performance."

The filmed images were the work of a freelance operator who happened to be on the scene and Mike believes they were edited to portray the police in a more favourable light than was perhaps merited. "One film only shows the police being involved but that's definitely not the way things played out that day. I know this, I was there." ●

• Watch the drama: Search 'Wingfield Lions' on YouTube for footage posted by Mr Hambly-Clark Jr.

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Look sharp the Nirey KE-500

Con Kapralos



Nirey electric knife sharpeners are arguably the best on the market these days with three models in its electric range - the KE-198, KE-3000 and KE-280 - covering recreational (home use), professional (single use) and commercial (multi use) applications. With more than 70,000 units sold in Australia, Nirey sharpeners are favoured by a wide range of end-users who want to quickly sharpen knives without resorting to labour and time-intensive methods.

Retail giant Coles has used Nirey units in its butchering facilities since 2012 - when time means money you want a sharpener that will minimise down time due to blades that need touching up after high volume meat processing.

Nirey is always looking at ways to improve its electric sharpener range and has just released the KE-500 Ultimate Knife Sharpener. It takes the already excellent features from the KE-3000 and KE-280 and adds a host of new features. Total Knife Care, Australian distributor for the Nirey range, sent *Australian Shooter* the KE-500 kit for evaluation.

It arrived in a well-appointed plastic carrybox which contained the electric sharpener, a set of medium grinding wheels (fine polishing wheels fitted as standard to the unit), and an extra set of fine polishing belts. Two knife angle guides come with the KE-500 which allow for a wide range of blade-ware to be honed and a cleaning brush is also supplied. There's also a comprehensive user manual which Nirey recommends the user read before operating the sharpener and keep on hand for future reference.

Features of the Nirey KE-500 Ultimate Knife Sharpener:

- Sharpens every style of knife, both European and Asian blade angles. Interchangeable angle guides allow knives with both thick and thin edges to be sharpened.

- Sharpens 100 per cent of the blade, including knives with bolsters.
- A much quieter model due to improved gearing in the electric motors.
- New safety guards protect the belts from damage.
- No set-up time.
- Maintains the same edge every time.
- Easy, low maintenance, built to last.
- Uses the same belts as KE-3000 and KE-280 sharpeners.

Time to sharpen

Readers of *Australian Shooter* and *Australian Hunter* may be familiar with my usual knife sharpening system and getting my hands on the Nirey KE-500 would see me round up all my kitchen and hunting knives in need of sharpening (the 'paper slicing' test is the standard method I use). I also had a couple of old Victorinox Fibrox skimmers that needed their edge restored and was confident the Nirey unit would be up to the task.

With the fine finishing/honing wheels installed I easily touched up the edges on all my kitchen and hunting knives. Using the manual as a reference, I passed them through each sharpening wheel two or three times as these knives were not overly blunt.



Grinding wheels are simple to remove and replace.

Once sharpening with the fine wheels was completed, these were easily switched to the medium grinding wheels supplied. With the top cover off, the sharpening ports were given a quick clean with the brush, and the steel debris trays removed and cleared of excess metal from the sharpening.

With the medium wheels in place the Victorinox skimmers were given the blade re-profiling treatment. Again, following the manual's guidelines, the blade edge was quickly restored on both knives and the medium grinding wheels changed back to the fine honing wheels and blades polished to a razor-sharp finish. All knives I put through the Nirey KE-500 passed the 'paper slicing' test. What I must add is that when using an electric sharpener the user must wear eye protection and work slowly without interruption. It's imperative any external distractions are kept to a minimum.

It's good practice that once you've finished using the Nirey KE-500 Ultimate

Electric Sharpener it is given a quick clean and stored in its carry case. Additionally, inspecting the grinding/polishing belts for wear is recommended and replacement belts are available. Inspecting and replacing the belts is covered in the manual.

Overview

For a hunter, serious home cook or anyone who needs to sharpen knives quickly and efficiently, the Nirey KE-500 Ultimate Knife Sharpener represents the pinnacle in professional knife sharpening. Available in the kit form as reviewed with a RRP of \$594 or as the stand-alone KE-500 unit at \$544.50, it represents an investment in quality and is made to last a lifetime providing it's maintained and cared for.

With back-up from Total Knife Care, the KE-500 will make knife maintenance a much simpler task. For more on the KE-500 or the entire Nirey range visit totalknifecare.com.au or email them at info@totalknifecare.com.au ●



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The enthusiast's gun rack

Chas Harding



I had recently reached a milestone in life. After 40 years serving my employer I accepted the backslaps, handshakes, farewells and at 62 was a free and lucky man. I'd been keen on guns, shooting and hunting from an early age. My brother and I gained our air rifles at age nine, saved our paper run money for three years and our Savage Model 24 Combination 20-gauge 22 Magnums came home with dad when we were 13.

I've bought and sold untold guns and scopes over the ensuing 50-odd years, delving into all aspects of shooting and hunting. I consider myself an all-rounder in the shooting game, a master of no one facet but keen. It was, and is, my passion. What had I learnt over all these years that I could pass on to the youngsters of today? The gun rack would be a great place to start. I'd say to them "buy only the guns you absolutely need and then, most importantly, try to wear them out!"

Firearm number 1 would be a bolt-action, magazine fed rifle with a low mounted, medium-range variable scope (3-12±). A calibre .22 long rifle. This rifle would be the one most used as ammunition is readily available, inexpensive and recoil and noise virtually non-existent. Shooting a .22 rimfire rifle is fun and promotes what I believe is the cornerstone of all rifle marksmanship - practice. Sighted dead-on at 50m and knowing its point of impact at 25m and 75m will enable small game to be humanely despatched (rabbits, hares, wallabies, foxes).

With the additional knowledge of where it hits at 100m all official competitions such as Field Rifle, Benchrest, Silhouette and 3-Position can be handled, as well as impromptu shoots that may arise with mates. Other rimfire calibres are fine (.22 Magnum, .17s) but to my mind the .22 long rifle is the cartridge for the one rimfire-only shooter. Winchester 40gr high

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The enthusiast's gun rack

velocity Power-Points would be my ammunition of choice.

Firearm number 2 is the shotgun. Next to the .22 rimfire this is the gun most used. Suited to all feathered targets of quail, ducks, geese and pheasants and fully capable on fur up to and including wallabies, foxes and small kangaroos. On the target front one of its many enjoyable uses is in the clay shooting sports.

Firearm-wise there's really only one choice - 12-gauge, over-and-under, sporting stock configuration, 28-32" barrels, changeable chokes, 3" chambers, steel shot compatible. With this shotgun and appropriate choke/shot size/load selection, the keen shooter can compete effectively in any competition. For all types of suitable game it's perfect. Choke suggestion would be $\frac{1}{4}$ for skeet and small close game, $\frac{1}{2}$ for sporting/simulated field and medium-size animals at reasonable range, and $\frac{3}{4}$ or full for trap, DTL, Trench and larger fur, feathers at around 35m. Shot size and load weight to suit.

Firearm number 3 in the rack has to be a .22 centrefire, magazine fed, bolt-action rifle. Again, low mounted with a 3-12 \pm variable scope. Sighted 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high at 100m with point of impact known at 50, 200 and 300m. All small and medium game can be humanly harvested (rabbits, hares, wallabies,



kangaroos, foxes, small pigs and goats) with this calibre and it's ideal for large volume shooting of crows, roos and other pests.

Low recoil makes them a pleasure to shoot and ideal for centrefire practice. This calibre lends itself admirably to all the official SSAA paper target centrefire matches - Field Rifle, 3P, 2P and any impromptu matches in the field. Specifically my choice would be a .22-250 which does everything the .204, .222 or .223s do and more. Accurate, flat shooting and more humane at 300m for small game, the minor downside of barrel life is not an issue. I replaced my first barrel after 7000 rounds. It was still



shooting 2" groups at 100m and for Mr Average that's a lot of shooting. And 55gr projectiles at approximately 3500fps would be my suggestion.

Firearm number 4 has to be the 'deer rifle' (pigs, goats) ranging from a .24-calibre to the .300 Magnums. All will do the job. Obviously the .24s are a bit light on larger deer and, if chosen, should be used within their limitations - range, stationary animal, vital area accessibility (note: .270 legal minimum for sambar deer in Victoria). The mid-calibres - .270, 7mm, .308, 30-06 all offer good performance with tolerable



recoil. Recoil on the .300 Magnums is manageable but starts to impinge if plenty of target practice is a goal. And practice, I repeat, is the key to marksmanship. It's for this reason I suggest either a 7mm Remington Magnum or a .30-06 firing 140/180gr projectiles at 2800fps for the 'deer rifle'. This offers great performance on game as well as manageable recoil for the target matches of Silhouette Rifle, 500 Fly, C/F Field Rifle and F Class Big Bore. Again, bolt-action, magazine fed, low mounted with a 3-12± variable scope, sighted 1½" high at 100m with a point of impact known at 50, 200, 300m for game plus 400 and 500m for target matches.

Firearm number 5 is fairly specific but considered necessary in the complete minimum gun rack. Usually termed the 'big game' rifle, it will be used on larger animals such as sambar deer, scrub bulls, buffaloes, bantengs and camels though can also be used on smaller game. The uses of this rifle can be handled by the .300 Magnums if that's your 'deer rifle' choice. However, the larger calibres (.35-40) are more emphatic on big game and also enable competition in SSAA Big Game Rifle matches.

My suggestion has to be the .375 Holland & Holland Magnum cartridge in a bolt-action, magazine fed, scoped (2-10±) rifle. Sighted in 1½" high at 100m with a point of impact known at 50, 200 and 300m and 300gr projectiles at around 2500fps would be my pick. This cartridge has a reasonable trajectory similar to a 180gr 30-06 and



is capable of taking any animal on earth. Its recoil is enough for most and in small doses is manageable off the bench though I wouldn't call it fun. Once sighted in, practice should be from all field positions including off shooting sticks as recoil seems less from these positions and I'd limit practice to 20 shots per session.

Firearm number 6 is the last longarm in the rack. Possibly unnecessary but if you're into it and keen, you're into it. An all-rounder will need a lever action, iron-sighted rifle. Not necessary for game as the other firearms in the rack cover all aspects of game shooting, it has its applications in thick cover and everyone should know how to use iron sights. The main reason for it being in the rack is for the lever-action target matches (Silhouette and SSAA paper target) which with iron sights are a challenge and great fun. My choice would be a lever-action rifle in .44 Remington Magnum, accurate enough for all paper target matches out to 100m and capable

The enthusiast's gun rack

of knocking down steel rams at 200m. Suitable projectiles in 240-300gr at approximately 1400fps will account for all game chest shot at under 30m if used instead of a bow.

Firearm number 7 is the handgun and it's tough to suggest one pistol to embrace all disciplines of Olympic, Action, Service, IPSC and Silhouette but the one that covers all bases is the .22 long rifle self-loading pistol. Accurate, cheap to shoot allowing plenty of practice, no reloading necessary or empty brass to pick up, it can be used in disciplines that require centrefire pistols on a 'birds only/score not to count' basis.

In Firearms 1-6 I have intentionally not suggested specific brands as this is a choice for the reader to decide, but for the handgun I make an exception and my standout choice would be the Smith & Wesson Model 41 with a 5" barrel and solid underlug.

Accurate and reliable, ergonomically perfect and modelled on the classic 1911 Colt in regard to the position and operation of the safety, slide and magazine release and virtually unchanged since the start of production in 1958, it's the ideal handgun. For those with ageing eyes the S&W 41 can readily take optical sights. With this handgun, half a dozen magazines and holster, the keen shooter can enjoy the art of the pistol in all its guises.

So there we have my ideal gun rack for young shooters which I reckon is a great starting point. Discuss! ●



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OEP bullets are made on a fully automated CNC machine.

Outer Edge

the new age of copper projectiles

John Dunn

Someone wise once observed that change is inevitable and in the modern context that has never been truer. Technological advances are commonplace in every field of endeavour and there's rarely a day goes by that media outlets aren't gushing about some ground-breaking discovery that has potential to change our lives.

A direct result is that conventional wisdoms are increasingly being challenged. Bullet design is a case in point. We're using bullets today that even 20 years ago wouldn't have been considered possible or practical, particularly so with the range being made in Australia by Outer Edge Projectiles.

OEP bullets are different in a number of ways. For starters they're made from pure copper, a metal traditionally regarded as too soft and light for standalone bullet production except as an alloy. That's no longer the case. The copper used to make OEP bullets is pre-tempered to ensure the finished product will consistently meet specific performance criteria. The temper of the

metal is not changed by the manufacturing process.

The bullets are made in a state of the art CNC production machine. A copper rod is fed into one end and in due course finished bullets emerge at the other, having gone through all the various stages of production untouched by human hand.

The machine incorporates some of the best measuring equipment available to ensure each bullet has been machined to the highest possible standards of consistency in terms of diameter, concentricity, length, shape, weight and finish.

The bullets are then cleaned and coated with a proprietary lubricating finish that reduces pressures and minimises barrel fouling. Despite its colour the finish is not molybdenum disulphide but a non-toxic substitute that's easier to clean. Uncoated OEP bullets are not available.

Unlike other copper projectiles, OEP bullets don't use multiple driving bands to engage the rifling in a barrel. Instead they employ a waisted style of band engagement, its primary advantage being it helps

lower pressures by reducing the surface area of the bullet in contact with the lands. By minimising the number of driving bands pressures are decreased, the ballistic coefficient (BC) of the bullet is improved which in turn often allows increased velocities.

For that reason all OEP bullets have a distinctive hourglass shaped shank, a design that has proved a game-changer in terms of long-range accuracy, producing groups as small as .09 MOA using loads recommended on their website.

The hunting projectiles OEP offers are tested in two different mediums - ballistic gelatine in the laboratory and dry sand in the field. In the field test 160 .308 projectiles were fired at velocities of 1500-3200fps. Of those, 141 were recovered. The average expansion rate was 108 per cent and only one projectile had lost more than one grain of its original weight.

Product range

OEP offers a range of projectiles that begin at .224 and finish at .50 calibre in designs and weights to suit both target and hunting



Outer Edge the new age of copper projectiles

applications. A list of the full range is on the Outer Edge website.

Target bullets

To meet growing demands of people shooting smaller targets at longer ranges, OEP has invested research and effort into producing outcomes that were previously unattainable. To be effective at truly long range a bullet must not only be stable at starting velocities but also at the other end where they're beginning to run out of puff. After a decade of research and development and endless testing OEP has done just that.

Their advances are based on new twist rate standards, a change largely pushed by the US market. As an example, the old standard twist rate for a .243 Winchester barrel was one in 10". These days many new .243 rifles have a one in 8" or even a one in 7" twist, simply because the new experience is that faster twist rates produce better results. That trend seems likely to continue and OEP is waiting for the process to mature across a wide range of calibres.

Hunting bullets

These are made in three styles - hollow point, ball bearing tip and flat nose solids. The HP bullets are drilled in perfect alignment with the axis of the bullet, not punched as some other makes are. The hollows are quite small in diameter by jacketed bullet standards but also much deeper, extending to the base of the bullets' ogive, an important design consideration that contributes significantly to weight retention and the way bullets expand and perform on impact.

As the name would imply, the ball bearing tip HP bullets have a small, hard chrome-coated ball bearing inserted in the hollow point. This gives the bullet a smaller meplat, making it more ballistically efficient and improving its BC by 7.5-15 per cent.



Four of the 12 .308 projectiles available from OEP. The two on the left are for target barrels with one in 10 and one in 11 twists respectively. The two on the right are a 150gr HP and a 178gr FNS.

It's an interesting yet simple way to overcome the drag that a hollow point creates on the nose of a bullet in flight. Testing has shown no significant improvement in or detracton from the way the bullet expands.

Compared to conventional jacketed bullets, copper bullets are around 17.5 per cent lighter but have the same displacement regardless of weight. Being lighter they travel faster, are tougher than lead and provide more reliable expansion. Petals rarely break off and the bullets typically retain around 98 per cent of their weight with double diameter expansion. Generally that means they'll create straighter wound channels with maximum effect, even if exiting the target animal.

Complete penetration with these projectiles isn't the problem some hunters may think. If a bullet is placed to damage or disrupt major organs and break bone, it doesn't matter if it goes out the other side as the damage is already done. If the animal moves from where it was shot it won't go far and there will be a blood trail.

For those who find that hard to accept, consider the humble .22 rimfire we use for rabbit hunting. Projectiles always go right through yet still manage to dump most rabbits on the spot. Copper projectiles perform exactly the same on larger species, one of the main reasons spent projectiles are so hard to find inside downed game animals.

Expansion of a 132gr .284 projectile, recovered from a fallow buck shot at 170m using a No.1 Ruger in 7x57.



A couple of prototype OEP 300gr .458 HP projectiles recovered from buffaloes during field testing.

Field testing

Because we're practical people most hunters and shooters take a conservative approach to new products. We like to know what's being offered, how it works and what advantages or benefits it has beyond what we already use. When Outer Edge Projectiles were first offered commercially to Australian reloaders four years ago, that's exactly the position I found myself in. While OEP principal Steve Hurt is a long-time friend and I knew how much time and effort he'd put into the production of his bullets, I needed to be convinced that what he was promoting would work.

At the time I was shooting RWS 165gn 7x57 factory loads in the No.1 Ruger that has been my go-to hunting rifle for a decade or more. They've always performed so well

in terms of accuracy and on-the-ground results I decided I wasn't going to bother reloading for the rifle any more.

Steve finally convinced me otherwise, sold me a packet of his 132gn hollow point .284 diameter projectiles and sent me some loading data. Using RWS cases I put some test loads together and spent a couple of hours on my range trying them. Results were impressive. The Ruger usually produces groups of 25-30mm at 100m. All the test loads went into 25mm or less, the best topping out at just 17mm. On that basis I loaded more and took the rifle to South Australia on my annual pilgrimage.

The first animal I took was a wonderful fallow buck. He was standing almost face on when I shot him through the base of the throat at a little over 170m. He collapsed and when we dressed him out we found the spent projectile at the rear of his rib cage, perfectly mushroomed to 15mm, still retaining all its original weight. The following day I shot a sambar hind behind the front leg at 70m. Breaking ribs on the way, the bullet sailed through her chest leaving a substantial exit hole. She made no more than 50m before expiring. Since then I've shot red deer and feral goats with the same load, the bullets penetrating the animals but still delivering on the spot kills.

In Arnhem Land I took three buffaloes, a young scrub bull and a dozen donkeys with my .45-70 Winchester High Wall sporting rifle shooting 350gr OEP solids at 2050fps. All the buffaloes fell within 10m of where they were shot though as always, some needed additional encouragement to lie down.

Once they were on the ground all were shot again for safety reasons. Despite the multiple shots applied, only three projectiles were recovered. On that basis I'd say if any residual bullet energy was wasted on thin air, the buffalo didn't seem to notice. The scrub bull made about 50m, running on memories with both lungs punctured and a hole through his chest. None of the donkeys moved from where they were standing.

A day later I shot another buffalo bull with some prototype 320gr hollow point



projectiles, the first shot right through his rib cage. The second broke both scapula, clipped the spine in between and came to rest in the muscle of the offside shoulder. The bull dropped in his tracks.

More recently I've used OEP 112gr HP projectiles in my Browning A-Bolt in 6.5 Creedmoor to take goats and fallow deer. No projectiles have been recovered and none of the animals moved from where they were standing.

Overview

As I'm not a target shooter I can't comment on the projectiles OEP makes for various disciplines. That said I've done a lot of work with OEP hunting projectiles and my experiences have all been good, bullets delivering quick and humane kills on a variety of game. Even so, I've talked to experienced reloaders who refuse to believe copper projectiles are capable of delivering the results OEP does. Apart from a fear of change and the need to rethink what they've always considered gospel, I'm not sure I understand why.

The key to achieving best results with



These three-shot groups were made at 100m with a Blaser R93 using .308 150gr HP OEP hunting projectiles.

OEP bullets is to ensure the maker's instructions are followed to the letter, especially with regard to bullet seating depths. A minimum jump to the lands of .9mm (.035") is required, with 1.3mm (.050") preferred. The Cartridge Overall Length (COAL) is critical and loading data on the website must be adhered to, avoiding substitutions and starting low.

When they began, the OEP crew set out to make the best bullets available and are well on the way to achieving that. Demand for their bullets is increasing as shooters in the know spread the word. Here's hoping OEP achieves the success it deserves. Copper has arrived and I doubt I'll look at conventional bullets the same way again. ●



How to get into cartridge collecting

The history of the development of firearms basically parallels the technological advances in ammunition. It follows that a new firearm design may call for a different ammunition type but more commonly the development of a new type of ammunition will dictate a change in firearm design or method of operation. As Senior Correspondent **Rod Pascoe** explains, keeping track of changes in ammunition technology, design, performance and history is a satisfying, worthwhile and absorbing hobby.



Care should be taken to prevent further deterioration of old cartridges.

Why collect cartridges?

Collecting and studying ammunition is a diverse pastime that covers a wide variety of interest areas. I would happily spend my pocket money at Smith's Sports Store in Sydney on a handful of cartridges on my way home from school in the early 1960s, my only goal being to have one of everything from the cartridge collector's catalogue. My first purchase was one each of the biggest and smallest cartridges they had in stock - an Eley 4-gauge shotshell and 4.25mm Liliput.

Cartridges can be categorised into broad groups such as sporting, shotshells and military and these categories can be further broken down. There are historic and thematic *specialisations* that may involve collecting .303 British cartridges for example, or black powder rimfire cartridges, European sporting, foreign military and even empty packets, advertising material, bullet boards, ammunition clips and links.

Many collectors become experts in their field and some go on to write detailed and informative books and articles on their pet topic. On the subject of books, there's a wealth of well-written research material on every aspect of ammunition, an essential resource for the avid cartridge collector. Firearms collectors too use these books to cross-reference firearms with cartridges and vice versa.

Smith's had cartridges just for collectors.

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Focusing on a period in history is a good way to start a collection. By far one of the most interesting periods in the development of ammunition was the invention to the self-contained metallic cartridge. Over this period, firearm and ammunition manufacturers transitioned their inventory from percussion cap and other methods of ignition to a self-contained metallic cartridge that could be loaded, fired and ejected in quick time from a breech-loading firearm. This also influenced the military and the way they operated on the battlefield.

What to collect?

There's almost no limit to what you can collect and it all comes down to your particular interest and how involved you want to be. There are thousands of cartridge collectors with diverse interests and different reasons for collecting.

Generally it will start when a collector has a particular interest in a time or place in history or a particular country's firearm or ammunition industry or the transition periods in ammunition technology. With some knowledge and research the collector will then want examples of ammunition that



A commercial display of Turkish military cartridges.

best demonstrate this interest.

For example, you've obtained a .40-65 WCF cartridge for a Model 1886 Winchester rifle. This could be the start of your 'American sporting' collection

specialising in black powder cartridges used in single-shot and lever action rifles during the 1800s. This was an interesting period in history that included the American Civil War and Indian conflicts, buffalo hunting, invention of magazine-fed repeating rifles and the transition from black powder to nitrocellulose-based propellants. Your cartridge is head-stamped W.R.A.Co. showing it was made by the Winchester Repeating Arms Company. From here your collection could expand to include all cartridges made for the Winchester '86 rifle or those made by other manufacturers.

Alternatively you could move on to collect others from the same era such as cartridges made by Sharps, Remington, Peabody, Marlin-Ballard, Savage, Frank Wesson, Bullard, Maynard, Colt, Stevens etc. This is still staying within the *broad* category of American sporting before looking at head-stamp variations or bullet and case metallurgy. So frantic were advancements in ammunition technology



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How to get into cartridge collecting

in this period that at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, opponents faced each other with smooth-bore flintlock muzzle-loaders but by the end of the conflict four years later, some units were issued with breech-loading rifles chambered for metallic cartridges.

At almost the same time in Europe, von Dreyse's needle gun, the M/41, was adopted by the Prussian infantry. The rifle was a single-shot, bolt-action, breech-loader chambered for a self-contained paper cartridge with a papier-mâché sabot. This offered a greater rate of fire than their Austrian muzzleloading opponents and the Prussians naturally swept the field. What followed was a transition to metal cartridge cases and a brand new industry sprang up all around the world, manufacturing self-contained metallic-cased ammunition.

Despite a free-for-all attitude to collecting in my high school days, I now have a particular interest in modern cartridges, the reason being almost every other day a new one arrives on the scene. Whether as someone's garden-shed experiment - a wildcat - or as a commercial creation, there have been thousands of cartridges developed ever since someone first worked out how to make ammunition. I'm constantly amazed by people's desire to produce a new sporting cartridge, especially with so much tried-and-true products already out there.

Who can collect?

The legislation allowing us to collect ammunition differs across the country. Check with your state's firearms registry for specific details as to what you can collect and the rules relating to storage and security. Generally you're allowed to collect any live sporting or military ammunition



Special production runs appear occasionally.

up to 20mm calibre. Larger than 20mm the ammunition must be inert.

Note that in most states, having a firearms or shooter's licence only allows you to have ammunition for the firearm registered to you. A firearms collector's licence does *not* allow you to collect ammunition either - a separate authority from your state or territory is required to collect, buy, sell or trade ammunition. Most states also require you to be a member of a bona fide ammunition collectors' club such as the Australian Cartridge Collectors Association (ACCA). Also, depending on your location your ammunition/cartridge collector's permit application may ask for information on safe storage and security arrangements and your reason for collecting ammunition.

It's a good idea to join a club of like-minded people such as ACCA and is a great way of learning about the multitude of collecting options. Meetings are held in most states and annual auctions draw collectors from around the country. Remote bidders from around the world also tap into these auctions and sometimes more than a thousand lots are offered for sale. Individuals attending meetings can buy and sell at the auction as well as have tables of goods for swapping.

ACCA produces a quarterly journal full



High quality packets are always in demand.

of photographs and articles on all facets of cartridge collecting as well as details of upcoming meetings and events, books and other items for sale and contacts and links. Members can also place wanted and for sale ads in the journal. Contact them via the website at australiancartridgecollectors.org.

Putting a collection together

There's lots of informative material online about how to store ammunition, keeping it clean and safe from deterioration. I suggest some research as you'll find different points of view on subjects such as cleaning cartridges, whether to maintain the original patina or get rid of every spot and stain. Information can be had word-of-mouth at cartridge meetings and the ACCA website is also a good resource.

Over time you'll accumulate handy tools such as a magnifying glass and calipers to help identify cartridges that don't have head-stamps. Labeling and record keeping is an essential part of collecting and these days most is done digitally with spreadsheets and backed-up with hard copy. Being able to take high-quality photographs is a good way of sharing information with fellow collectors.

Collectors and collections have matured over the past 30 or 40 years to the point that, thanks to the abundance of reference material, improved communication and better access to ammunition both here and abroad, sophisticated and detailed collections and knowledgeable collectors can be found throughout the community.

I've not mentioned the cost of collecting or the investment value of collections as in my experience money doesn't appear to be the chief motivator (or deterrent), although it's fair to say collectors see *value* in their collection in one way or another. The social aspects of going to meetings and auctions around the country and the camaraderie, catching up with like-minded collectors, is a cost well justified. ●



Pinfire, rimfire, centrefire, pistol, shotgun, rifle, tractor starter, old or new, big or small - you can start a collection with anything.

Shooting stalwart recognised with OAM honour

Sam Talbot

Despite a lifetime of involvement in the shooting sports, Clifford Austen was shocked to discover he'd received a medal of the Order of Australia. In fact Clifford assumed an email informing him of the appointment was a hoax.

"I almost didn't reply to the email but my wife convinced me to," he said. "I then received the official notification of the OAM about a month before Australia Day."

The SSAA member and Nowra Rifle Club president received his OAM for services to the sport of shooting. Among many accomplishments, Clifford has been president of the New South Wales Match Rifle and Long Range F Class Association since 2015 and is a former councillor with the New South Wales Rifle Association.

At almost 71 years of age, his willingness to do a host of thankless tasks over the years has brought the shooting sports innumerable benefits. "I've always done whatever I could to promote the sport and make it the best it can be," said Clifford. "I've been more than happy to fill the various roles though my wife is still wondering when I'll get a paid position!"

Clifford has seen the sport from every angle, whether shooting small bore Benchrest in the morning, F Class in the afternoon, building ranges and facilities or representing shooters on legal committees, he's just about done it all. But perhaps what



Clifford has been Nowra Rifle Club president since 1994.

he's best known as is president of Nowra Rifle Club.

When he arrived it had only a dozen members but that number has steadily grown over the years to around 450 today. Clifford also oversaw the club's transformation from shooting just one discipline to more than 20 which now span rifles, shotguns and pistols. He was also a major player in building the club's 800m range.

"There were no toilets or facilities when I joined at Nowra but gradually we put them in to make the club more welcoming to women shooters and families," he said.

Clifford still enjoys shooting as much as ever and aims for a decent score each time he heads to the range. "Shooting is like any other sport and even at my age I still get a buzz out of it," he said. ●

Clifford Austen: Roll of honour

- Nowra Rifle Club president since 1994 and former secretary
- President, New South Wales Shooting Association since 2008
- President, New South Wales Match Rifle and Long Range F Class Association since 2015
- Secretary and public officer, Illawarra and Districts Rifle Clubs Association 2000-2018
- Former councillor, Council of the New South Wales Rifle Association
- Former Shoalhaven branch official, Sporting Shooters Association of NSW
- Former committee member, Shoalhaven City Council Nowra Rifle Club
- Life membership, Nowra Rifle Club 1999
- Order of Australia Medal, 2019

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or 02 6670 8590
Fax: 02 6670 8558

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Fax: 08 8922 3540

Qld Phone: 07 3015 7777
Fax: 07 3015 7788

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Tikka T1x Multi-Task Rimfire

rely on it

Pete Kincade



The rifle shot exceptionally well out to 200m.

When *Australian Shooter* offered me the chance to review another new release from Tikka, I didn't need much convincing. I've previously reviewed the excellent Tikka T3x TAC A1 in 6.5 Creedmoor and that rifle shot exceptionally well with factory ammunition.

This time the package was lighter and aimed squarely at hunters and shooters requiring rimfire performance. The rifle utilises the same stock options and excellent adjustable trigger group as the Tikka T3x centrefire rifles. The receiver footprint is the same as the centrefire T3x series but the dovetail on the T1x is 11mm whereas the T3x dovetail is 16.5mm, which makes perfect sense as the T1x is chambered for the much narrower .22LR and .17HMR rimfire cartridges.

The .17HMR sports a 510mm barrel and the .22LR version may be had with either a 400mm or 510mm barrel. The review rifle in .17HMR unloaded without scope, rings or attachments tipped the scales at a nominal 2.6kg.

The first thing I noticed and liked about the T1x MTR was its familiarity with Tikka's T3x centrefire series - there just weren't any surprises. This is not a cheapened version of the famous Tikka T rifle

concept, this is a T series rifle chambered for rimfire duty.

It can be ordered on its own or with the Bunny Buster package which is the subject of this review. Although I didn't have the chance to target any bunnies with the T1x, its range accuracy makes it a certainty for success when harvesting rabbits out to 200m in .17HMR.

Berretta Australia is the local wholesaler for Tikka and many other fine firearms and hunting accessory brands which places them in the enviable position of being able to launch the new T1x rimfire in a package that includes T1x MTR in either .22LR or .17HMR, Tikka rubber bolt knob (owner can choose to run with or without, I chose to and liked it), Burris 1" rimfire rings, Burris Droptine 3-9x40 scope with Ballistic Plex reticle, two 10-round polymer magazines (Bunny Buster package only, rifle on its own comes with one magazine), Hy-Skor 6"-9" swivel bipod, Tikka Raptor sling, Tikka gun bag and NEXTORCH 1040 lumen hunting torch with scope mount.

Because the T1x is a hunting rifle I chose to test the unit in its package format and without the use of a benchrest or benchrest-style butt bag. Instead, all accuracy testing was conducted with the Hy-Skor bipod, excellent value Burris

Droptine 3-9x40 rimfire scope and my own lightweight butt bag. I use this style of bag in the field when taking prone shots or resting over an obliging log or branch. I wanted to see what the rifle was capable of when shot the way it was designed to be used - in the field - and I wasn't disappointed.

I tested the package out to 200m. Because we have been conditioned by the market to opt for larger magnification scopes I'll admit I was apprehensive with only 9-power magnification and a fixed parallax of 50m. I'm pleased to report the Burris Droptine punched well above its weight. I don't know how they do it at the price-point but the more than adequate ocular viewing box, dioptre range, glass, coatings and positive ¼ MOA click adjustments make the scope a great pairing for the T1x MTR in .17HMR.

All that was needed to put the package into action was to remove the barrelled action from the stock and clean the bore. At this point I weighed the trigger pull which came from the factory at 3.5lb. The factory-set trigger weight is excellent for hunting but should you wish to lighten the trigger further this is easy to do.

After reassembling and torquing the action screws I mounted the Burris



Trigger pull as shipped from the factory was crisp and clean at 3.5lb.



Five shots at 100m, best group 0.52" with Hornady 17gr V-Max.

Droptine scope in the steel Burris rings and bore-sighted the package before heading to my local SSAA range.

Accuracy testing

Four ammunition options were sent for review: 17gr Winchester Varmint HV, 20gr Gamepoint from CCI and two from Hornady, 17gr and 20gr V-Max. All four rendered tight groups at 100m with the 17gr Hornady standing out from the pack but it was at 200m the 17gr V-Max really caught my attention.

Testament to the longevity of the .17HMR is the range of ammunition options. Of the four choices sent with

the rifle, all shot well but Hornady's 17gr V-Max was the pick. This was more surprising at 200m where I expected either the CCI 20gr Gamepoint or Hornady's 20gr V-Max to take the honours but not so as the screaming 17gr V-Max won on the day.

Conclusion

Tikka's T1x MTR in either .22LR or .17HMR is an excellent rimfire rifle, great value on its own and even better in the Bunny Buster package. I've owned and used Tikka centrefire rifles for many years and they're synonymous with quality, accuracy and balance and I really value the adjustability of the excellent trigger group.

In my opinion Tikka is on the money by making the T1x on the same basis as its centrefire rifles and with the same trigger group. This makes production and tooling cost sense which translates to better value for the consumer. It also means stock options from Tikka and the aftermarket are readily available should the user wish to modify the rifle to his or her specific requirements. Options include coloured vertical pistol grips and wider fore-end grips.

The review rifle shot exceptionally well out of the box with nothing more than a thorough clean and scope fitting prior to range testing. All ammunition gave great results with the 17gr Hornady V-Max being this rifle's preference on the day. The trigger was excellent and because it's the same trigger used in the centrefire series, adjustability is a breeze. I can't over-emphasise the fact that this is a great trigger, not a cheapened version because the rifle is a rimfire. I believe that in addition to the precise manufacturing processes and close CNC tolerances maintained by Tikka's skilled technicians, the trigger really ensures the accuracy potential of the T1x MTR.

For shooters looking for a great value rimfire rifle on its own or for a package that has everything you need to go out in the field to garner bunnies for the table or fur, you can't go past the T1x MTR from Tikka. ●



Five shots at 200m, best group 1.48" with Hornady 17gr V-Max.



An ideal choice in terms of balance and versatility.

Specifications

Total length: 1020mm

Barrel length: 510mm with threaded muzzle and steel thread cap

Barrel material: Chromium Molybdenum

Twist/lands: 1 in 9" - 6

Weight: 2.6kg

No open sights

11mm receiver dovetail

Receiver pre-drilled and tapped for Picatinny rail

Single stage trigger same as centrefire T3x series

2 x 10-round polymer magazines

RRP as reviewed (Bunny Buster package): \$1739

RRP rifle only: \$1019

Model Seven worth a few bucks

Remington's latest offering a winner

Thomas Tabor in Texas



To be completely satisfied with the performance of any rifle I typically send at least a couple of hundred bullets down its bore before ever considering it to be hunting ready. I feel I need that level of shooting in order to fully evaluate a rifle's potential for accuracy and to determine which loads it prefers. That wasn't going to happen this time. Not only would I be denied the chance to shoot the rifle prior to arriving in hunting camp, I wouldn't even lay eyes on it or any of the associated gear or ammunition.

The hunt came about unexpectedly when I received an invite from Remington Arms just days prior to boarding the plane to take me to one of the world's most foremost whitetail hunting destinations in Texas. As part of that adventure I'd have the chance to be one of the first hunters to fire Remington's newest rifle - the Model Seven SS HS Precision.

On arriving at Wildlife Systems' S Ranch about 45 minutes outside the town of San

Angelo, I chose to abandon the idea of heading out to hunt that first morning. Rather, I would go to the range behind the lodge to be assured the rifle was properly zeroed and evaluate how the supplied Barnes VOR-TX Premium Hunting ammo loaded with 150gr TTSX BT bullets would perform.

First impressions

The Model Seven SS HS Precision rifle I'd be using had a Leupold Vari X III 3-9mm scope mounted and was chambered in .308 Winchester. If you prefer a different calibre the rifle is also available in 6.5 Creedmoor, 7mm-08 Remington and .243 Winchester.

Having previous experience with both this brand and scope and the ammunition, I was outwardly happy with the combination and soon had the reticles of the scope properly adjusted and shooting groups of under an inch (25mm) at 100m. I was pleased with those results and they reassured me that when it came time to

squeeze off my shot the outcome would be a good one.

While the Remington Model Seven has been in production and available for more than three decades, in my opinion this newest version - the SS HS Precision may be the best sub-model. Outwardly I found it to be a very attractive and practical styled rifle. Its stainless barrelled action comes with a satin matte finish and a trim contoured 20" (51cm) barrel. The rifle has a synthetic HS Precision stock with the action aluminium bedded and an adjustable X-Mark Pro trigger. Remington is convinced the highest degree of accuracy and shot placement consistency is achieved not with the barrel being totally free-floating, but when it has a single small contact point between the stock and the barrel near the end of the stock forearm. For that reason HS Precision makes these stocks for Remington with that contact point moulded in during the normal layup process.

The short overall length of the SS HS Precision at only 39.25" (100cm) made this rifle a good choice within the limited confines of a hunting blind and that same characteristic, coupled with a weight of only 6lb (2.7kg), I feel would also make this a great option for long days in the Outback.

The hunt begins

With my range work completed I headed to my elevated blind, positioned near a corn feeder. This style of hunting is typical throughout Texas and offers the best chance to see the most trophy-quality deer. And see them I did. On several occasions I had as many as a dozen fine bucks walking around my blind within easy shooting range but I convinced myself to hold off squeezing the trigger on day one to better assess my options.

It was late October and the typical rut wasn't due for another couple of weeks. Nevertheless, many of the bucks were constantly sparring and looking for any potential mates that may have arrived early.

A shot worth waiting for

The next day I was out well before dawn, keen to see what lay in store. As on the previous afternoon I was mesmerised by the interaction between the deer from the comfort of my elevated perch, and while there were lots of quality animals bidding for my attention, one buck in particular grabbed my interest more than most.

Not showing the slightest curiosity in the corn lying around in front of my blind, his focus was on two does nervously wandering in the opposite direction, directly behind me. Through the binoculars I could see he was something special, a mature animal

with near perfect symmetrical horns, four points on each side. His eye guards, sometimes called dog catchers, were also perfectly matched and high rising.

Forgetting the rest I decided this was the animal I wanted, and keeping my eye glued to the lens of my scope it became apparent this buck wasn't going to make a shot easy. As his targeted does moved further away and higher on the gentle sloping hillside, so did he, and the frustrating part was he constantly kept his butt between me and



Sights like this were common.



Many of the hunting blinds were elevated and positioned over corn feeders.



Pigs are plentiful in Texas and considered vermin.

his vitals, making any chance of a shot impossible.

On a couple of occasions my spirits lifted as his position became slightly angled. Thinking I could be seeing a chance develop for a shot to the heart or lungs my finger moved automatically to make contact with the trigger, but as quickly as his angle would change he'd spin around to face away from me again.

In a bid to relieve his pent-up aggression and breeding frustration he'd frequently horn the holy hell out of any bush that had the misfortune to get in his way then, holding his nose skyward and rolling his lips

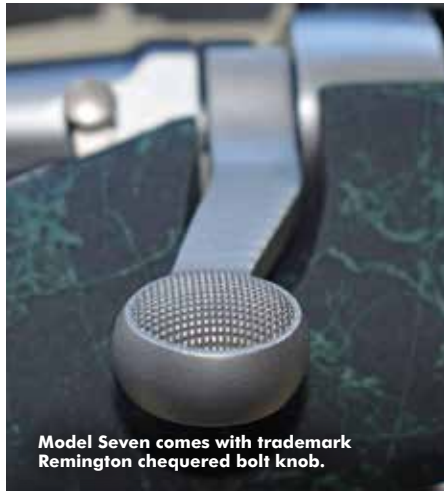
Model Seven worth a few bucks

back, he'd test the air for any sign one of the does might be coming into heat.

Having monitored him for what seemed like hours, but was only a few minutes, my patience was wearing thin as I watched him wander up the hillside and potentially out of range. Then he made what turned out to be a fatal error when he quartered to me for a shot at 132m. In the nanosecond he held that position my chance finally arrived and the .308 shattered the Texan silence. Confident the shot was good I lowered my rifle as the buck burst into a full-on gallop only to collapse 50m later. Just to make sure there was no chance of him rising again I waited a few moments before climbing

down from my position towards my Texas trophy whitetail.

The shot was as perfect as it could have been under the circumstances, the bullet entering just behind the leading shoulder and exiting the far side. On closer examination I couldn't have been happier with his perfectly balanced and matched rack - he was truly a majestic animal typical of the whitetails Texas has become renowned for. Back at camp we estimated his age at 6½ years, field dressed at 52kg which would



Model Seven comes with trademark Remington chequered bolt knob.

Specifications

Manufacturer: Remington Arms
Model: Seven SS HS Precision
Calibre: .308 Winchester also available in 6.5 Creedmoor, 7mm-08 Remington and .243 Winchester
Weight: 6lb (2.7kg) rifle alone
Sights: None
Trigger: Adjustable X-Mark Pro
Action: Bolt
Barrel: 51cm (20")
Stock: HS Precision composite synthetic coloured grey with green gelcoat flecks
Magazine: Non-removable with four-cartridge capacity
RRP: About \$1400



The best feature of this buck was his well balanced rack.

March together to 200,000

With the ranks of the SSAA now 191,000 strong our sights are firmly set on reaching 200,000 members. After all, as we grow so does our political influence and the larger our number the greater the strength for every member and the shooting sports as a whole. With each additional member we continue to offer more benefits and increase our media empire.

Recently we launched three TV ads which were shown across Australia. They focused on shooting as a sport for all, what the SSAA does and our Farmer Assist program and were screened to a potential audience of 650,000 with even more online. The eye-catching ads were put together by Corey Wilson and featured SSAA members and venues like the superb Silverdale range in Sydney. You may remember Corey as the brains and star of the popular *Hunting the*

Menu and host of SSAA's *Field to Fork* TV series.

In the print media, many members have expressed their approval at the second issue of *Australian Women's Shooter* which accompanied our March magazine. The number of female shooters entering the sport is a key growth area, with the involvement of women at the range no longer restricted to caterer or scorekeeper.

In January we published the inaugural edition of *Great Australian Outdoors*, Australia's first magazine of destination, exploration and conservation. It also contains a healthy sprinkling of firearms and the shooting sports to help normalise our pastime to an audience who may be unfamiliar with the benefits of shooting and the vital conservation work carried out by sporting shooters.

A priority is to continue encouraging

newcomers to the sport through SSAA come-and-try days promoted by Coaching and Membership Development Manager Gemma Dunn, like the recent event at Springvale which saw 36 people try shooting for the first time. Additionally, our ongoing conservation projects such as re-populating quolls in the Flinders Ranges and restoring koala habitat to SSAA Queensland's Stewartdale complex continue to make headlines and nurture a more robust and trustworthy image of the shooting sports.

With these projects and many more in progress right now, there has never been a better time to encourage those around you to join the SSAA and promote our cause. 200,000 members will mark a historic milestone for the shooting sports in Australia - the larger our membership the louder our voice and the stronger we will be. ●

make his weight on the hoof at around 68kg.

Three shots, three critters

The days that followed were equally productive, bringing a whitetail doe and a nasty feral pig. Each animal was taken cleanly with a single shot from the .308 Winchester-chambered Remington Model Seven SS HS Precision. The new rifle and ammunition performed superbly, as did the Leupold scope.

The Triple Shock X bullets have long been one of my personal hunting favourites and the Barnes-loaded ammunition worked extremely well for all the hunters in camp - not one animal took more than a single shot to humanely despatch it. There were five hunters in total and each took trophy quality whitetail bucks with racks ranging from eight to 10 points, along with three whitetail does and a trio of wild boar. ●

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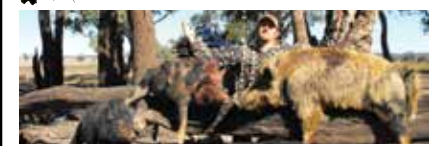
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SSAA Member Alert

Members are reminded that if you are using membership of the SSAA as your genuine reason for your firearms licence, you must ensure you renew your SSAA membership in time. Please be aware that state and territory police firearms registries regularly cross-check firearm licences and your member status. To support your genuine reason and keep your firearms licence and to make sure that SSAA can support you, make sure you renew your SSAA membership.

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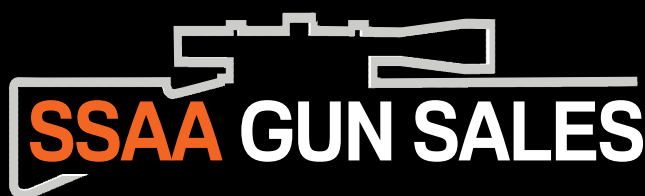
2019

April 6-7	The Betting Hall, Elwick Showgrounds, Hobart	Antique & modern firearms, edged weapons and militaria	Phil Gourlay 0477 411 457
April 13-14	Westgate Indoor Sports and Leisure Centre, Altona North	Melbourne Arms and Militaria Fair	Jeff Pannan 0412 561 243
May 4-5		Australian Knifemakers Guild/Melbourne Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
May 18-19	Penrith Panthers Pavilion, Penrith	Sydney Antique & Modern Arms Expo	Lachlan Matthews 0414 928 018 or events\$razorbckguns.com
May 25-26	Toowoomba Showgrounds, Glenvale Rd, Toowoomba	330+ tables firearms, ammo, militaria & collectibles & more	Dan Watson 0407 643 776
June 15-16	Gympie Showgrounds, Gympie	Gympie Arms and Collectables Fair	Gordon McRae 0428 865 205
July 6-7	Westgate Indoor Sports and Leisure Centre, Altona North	Melbourne Arms and Militaria Fair	Jeff Pannan 0412 561 243
July 13-14	Ballarat Sports & Events Centre, Wendouree, Ballarat	Eureka Arms and Militaria Fair	Nick Smith 03 5342 4433 or ballaratarms.com.au
August 3-4		Sydney Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
August 10-11	Penrith Panthers Pavilion, Penrith	Sydney Antique & Modern Arms Expo	Lachlan Matthews 0414 928 018 or events\$razorbckguns.com
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	info@waarmsandarmour.com.au
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 Arms and Militaria Fair	Jeff Pannan 0412 561 243
October 7		NSW South Coast Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
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

September 12-13	Cannington Exhibition Centre & Showgrounds, Cannington	WA Arms & Armour Annual Militaria Fair	info@waarmsandarmour.com.au
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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.



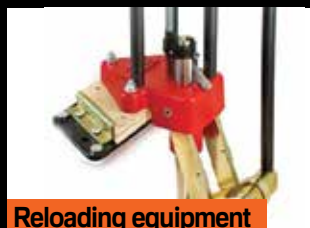
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<input type="checkbox"/> \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> \$154	Includes \$35 insurance premium for SSAA Member Firearms Insurance for 12 months, valid until next membership renewal.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$68	<input type="checkbox"/> \$97	Additional Family Member (No magazine) Applies to each additional person over 18 residing at the same address as a full-subscription Adult member,
<input type="checkbox"/> \$103	<input type="checkbox"/> \$132	Includes \$35 insurance premium for SSAA Member Firearms Insurance for 12 months, valid until next membership renewal.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$68	<input type="checkbox"/> \$97	Pensioner Available on production or photocopy of both sides of your Australian Concession Card.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$103	<input type="checkbox"/> \$132	Includes \$35 insurance premium for SSAA Member Firearms Insurance for 12 months, valid until next membership renewal.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$450		5-year Adult Contact SSAA for firearms insurance information.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$1800		Member for Life Contact SSAA for firearms insurance information.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$173	<input type="checkbox"/> \$233	Overseas Available to members living overseas.
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$54	Junior (under 18 years) Parent's or guardian's signature



Supporting Adult member No.

ADD the HUNTER
for only **\$29**
per year

ALL APPLICANTS PLEASE READ AND SIGN

This application is made in full recognition of the Association's requirement for responsible and ethical behaviour. I undertake to do all in my power to preserve the good image of the sport and the Association. I understand that members breaking the Code of Conduct may be subject to suspension or expulsion. The Code can be found at ssaa.org.au/code

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Refund Policy: Subject to Australian law, membership fees are not refundable, nor can they be transferred.

SSAA Inc. collects personal information of members. The information you provide on this form will be disclosed to the state or territory branch of the SSAA to which your membership application relates. A copy of SSAA Inc's privacy policy can be found at ssaa.org.au/privacy. You can obtain access to your personal information by writing to: SSAA, PO Box 2520, Unley SA 5061.

ATTENTION NSW & ACT MEMBERS

Complete this section ONLY if you wish to use your membership of the SSAA to support your Genuine Reason for having a firearms licence. Register your SSAA activities by marking one or more of the following boxes:

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

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PAYMENT OPTIONS

Enclosed is payment for the amount of \$.....

☐ Cheque ☐ Money order ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card number _____

Expiry date _____ Signature

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

☐ I also wish to donate \$..... to the SSAA

Sign up online - it's quick and easy!
ssaa.org.au



Caitlyn May

Communications Officer Sam Talbot

Caitlyn May is an animal lover, outdoor enthusiast and SSAA member. When she was introduced to shooting by her father Jason, the new sport seemed like a natural progression given her inherent interest in exploring nature and the outdoors. “My dad got into shooting by going hunting with his father when he was young and he’s started to shoot more regularly over the past five years or so,” said Caitlyn.

“I like shooting as it’s different to the things people my age usually do. It’s great fun and allows me to be social instead of staying at home. I also enjoy the fact you can always keep improving and there are so many different disciplines to try.”

Last year Caitlyn was awarded the best female shooter accolade and came second overall in U-15s at her local club. And her



Caitlyn has a special interest in wildlife.



At a recent shoot Caitlyn spun two chicken silhouettes without knocking them over!

Caitlyn with her perpetual trophy for best junior female shooter.



talents don’t end with shooting as she also has a keen interest in science and biology as well as caring for wildlife and ultimately hopes to work with animals as a vet, zoologist or conservationist.

“I was awarded a scholarship to attend a junior vet camp in Bondi which I thoroughly enjoyed. I’ve done many wildlife courses at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, at one of which I was the youngest person to have completed it,” she said. “I remember the first time we went to Sea World and how it made me want to become a dolphin trainer.”

“She’s always had a knack with animals,” said Jason. “She’s been picking up lizards and other animals her whole life and never seems to get bitten!”

Back on the shooting front, Caitlyn mainly sticks to rimfire Field Rifle and rimfire Metallic Silhouettes, using a CZ 452 American rifle with Leupold VX1 3-9x40 scope. “I started those disciplines as part of the junior program and have continued with them. I don’t have an overall favourite as there are aspects of both that I enjoy,” she said.

“I’ve recently begun shooting on Tuesday and Thursday nights with more experi-

enced shooters and found the others very helpful as they’re constantly supporting me and giving me handy tips that they find useful and think may work for me too.”

Caitlyn says all her non-shooting friends think the sport sounds fun and a few are becoming interested themselves. “The friends I’ve made who also shoot are a great source of encouragement and have helped me try new things,” she said.

“I’m so grateful to everyone who has helped me improve and given encouragement. My parents are always motivating me to do my best and dad has been a great help when it comes to answering questions and giving tips. The range officers at the junior sessions have also helped by teaching me lots of the basic skills.

“In future I’d like to try more disciplines such as handguns, shotguns and some centrefire as well as eventually entering some of the bigger junior competitions,” she said.

It seems to us Caitlyn has all the makings of a future conservationist, her enjoyment of the outdoors and love of animals combined with skills and lessons learned on the shooting range a great formula for achieving her goals. ●

Sponsor a JUNIOR



Photo: Nicholas Loakim

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.](#)

☐ \$25 - includes 11 issues of the Australian Shooter

☐ \$54 - includes 11 issues of the Australian Shooter and four issues of Australian Hunter magazine

Has the junior been a member before? Yes/No

Membership No.

Details of junior being signed up (must be under 18)

Branch (if known) Sex (please circle) M / F

First name Middle name Last name

Home address P/C.....

Date of birth Phone.....

Email

OFFICE USE ONLY

Details of sponsoring member

First name Middle name..... Last name.....

Membership No.

Payment options

Enclosed is payment for the amount of \$.....

☐ Cheque ☐ Money order ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card number

Expiry date Signature.....

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

☐ I also wish to donate
\$..... to the SSAA

**MAIL TO: MEMBERSHIP OFFICE ,
PO BOX 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761**

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National

National Junior Rimfire Rifle Metallic Silhouette Postal Championships

February 1-July 31, 2019
All clubs/branches

Program: 40-shot match to be shot between February 1 and July 31, 2019. Scores showing competitor's name, branch, age and results for each shot to Kaye McIntyre at juniorsports@ssaa.org.au by August 31. Prizes to third place in U-15, O-15 and U-18. Contact: Kaye McIntyre.

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 third place and juniors. Entries in junior class to include date of birth. Contact: Graeme Wright theplotgw@hotmail.com

SSAA Field Rifle, Scoped 3-Positional, NRA and Air Rifle National Championships

April 17-22, 2019

Southern Districts Rifle Club, Bedfordvale, WA

Program: Wednesday, April 17, practice. Thursday, April 18, NRA 3x40; 10m Scoped Air Rifle - Precision. Friday, April 19, Field Rifle Centrefire; 10m Scoped Air Rifle - 3-Positional. Saturday, April 20, Scoped 3-Positional Rimfire. Sunday, April 21, Field Rifle Rimfire. Monday, April 22, Scoped 3-Positional Centrefire. Nominations: See website. Rules: Current SSAA rule book. Prizes: See website. Facilities: Canteen, licensed bar, toilets, showers, on-range camping with limited power. Contact: Christine 0893 981 131 secretary@sdrc.com.au or Matt 0439 092 686 fieldrifle@ssaa.org.au. See website for full event details.

SSAA National Centrefire Benchrest Championships

April 19-22, 2019

SSAA Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW

Program: April 19, 8am Unlimited 100 and 200yds; April 20, 8am Sporter 100 and 200yds; April 21, 8am Light Benchrest 100 and 200yds; April 22, 8am Heavy Benchrest 100 and 200yds. Nominations: \$60 per class. Rules: Pre-nomination by April 1. Practice April 17-28. Prizes: National medals, top 10 patches, junior trophies. Facilities: Clubhouse, toilets, showers, barbecue, camping on range, catered breakfast, lunch, tea, coffee, gala dinner on Saturday included. Contact: David Billingham 0418 478 160 or Ray Munro 0408 649 126.

SSAA Muzzleloading National Championships

April 19-22, 2019

SSAA Para, Rifle Range Road, Greenwith, SA
Program: Friday, April 19 to Monday, April 22 (please refer to website for full list of events). Nominations: All pistol/rifle \$5 per event, shotgun \$7 (maximum for adult \$100, junior \$50). To be lodged with SSAA Para Branch, PO Box 2013, Adelaide, SA 5001 or email: secretary@ssaa.org.au Cheques/money orders payable to SSAA Para Branch. EFTPOS available at range.

Rules: Muzzleloading rule book No.7. Prizes: National medals and perpetual trophies for aggregates, prize table. Facilities: Camping (limited power sites), toilets and showers. Canteen with lunch each day. Limited supplies of black powder (Swiss and Wano) can be bought at range (please pre-order to ensure sufficient stock). Barbecue dinner Saturday night. Contact: Michael Nicholas secretary@ssaa.org.au or 0467 763 716.

SSAA National Lever Action Metallic Silhouette Championships

April 26-30, 2019

Eagle Park, Little River, Victoria

Program: Friday, April 26: Practice 10am-4pm. Saturday: 80 shots Rifle Calibre. Sunday: 80 shots Pistol Calibre. Monday: 80 shots Smallbore. Tuesday: Over-run day if needed. Sight-in 8am daily, briefing 9am. Membership and grading cards must be shown. Nominations: \$30 per event, \$80 all three. Rules: As per current rule book. Prizes: National medals all grades. Facilities: On-range camping, cafe Friday-Monday. Contact: Mark Butler 0409 135 740 or reltub@alphalink.com.au

SSAA 5-Stand National Championships

April 27-28, 2019

10125 Gore Highway, Captains Mountain, Qld

Program: 200-target 5-Stand (100 targets Saturday and Sunday), team selection for five Open and five Graded members to compete in New Zealand late 2019. Nominations: Online. Prizes: 1st, 2nd and 3rd place medals in each grade. Facilities: Limited onsite cabins and bunkhouse accommodation, camping with powered sites, showers, food and meals for sale Friday-Sunday. Contact: Brett Chambellant shotgun@ssaa.org.au or Mick Norris mjnorris1972@gmail.com

SSAA National Big Game Rifle Championships

May 25-26, 2019

Mickett Creek Range, Darwin, NT

Program: Eight core events as per 2017 National BGR rule book. Medals for each event, overall, veteran, junior and ladies. Supplementary events will also be run. Safety briefing 8.30am, first event 9am. Medals and prize presentation on Sunday. Practice available Friday, May 24. Nominations: Required by May 18. Nominations received after this date may not be processed. Facilities: Barbecue lunch both days, dinner on Saturday. Camping facilities on range. Contact: Barry Seabrook 0438 860 510 or Tony Orr 0409 862 393 email ntbiggamerifle@gmail.com

National Junior Rimfire Field Rifle Postal Championships

Jun 1-Nov 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 Fly Shoot National Championships

June 8-10, 2019

SSAA Batemans Bay Deep Creek Shooting Complex, NSW

Program: Thursday, June 6 bench draw available. Friday, 10am practice and flag set-up. Saturday, 9am Light Gun. Sunday,

9am Heavy Gun. Monday, 9am Rimfire. Nominations: Close June 1. Fees: \$50 per class, juniors half-price, can be paid on arrival. Nominations to statelyshoot@gmail.com or Anthony 0418 406 698. Rules: Current SSAA Fly Shoot rule book (maximum calibre on complex is 8mm). Prizes: Gold, silver, bronze for aggregate each class. Gold for Small Group and High Scoring Target each class. Gold, silver, bronze for 2-Gun Centrefire, 2-Gun Centrefire/Rimfire and 3-Gun. Gold, silver, bronze for juniors U-15 and 15-18. Facilities: Catering by SSAA Batemans Bay Club all weekend, camping \$5 per night, hot showers, toilets, cooking facilities and power. Contact: statelyshoot@gmail.com, Anthony Hall 0418 406 698 or Bryson Payne 02 4471 3135. Full details on website.

SSAA 2019 National Junior Challenge

July 12-14, 2019

SSAA Springvale and Eagle Park ranges, Vic
Program: All SSAA junior members aged 12 to U-18 are encouraged to participate in this event which comprises three core rimfire disciplines - 3-Position, Rifle Metallic Silhouette and Field Rifle. Nominations: \$60 for three events, \$20 individual events. Rules: As per current SSAA Official National Rules. Prizes: Medals for first three in three core events and overall in two age groups. Contact: Jeannine Taylor j9.taylor55@gmail.com or 0417 510 002.

New South Wales

SSAA NSW Benchrest Rimfire Group and IRB State Championships

June 7-10, 2019

SSAA Newcastle Range, East Seaham, NSW
Program: June 6 practice, June 7 Light Rimfire, June 8 Heavy Rimfire, June 9-10 IRB. Nominations: \$50 per day, juniors half price. Rules: SSAA National. Prizes: Medals all events including juniors. Facilities: Clubhouse, toilets, showers, barbecue. Camping on range (please advise). Free breakfast, lunch, tea, coffee. Dinner for a small fee. Contact: Kim Cossick 0429 335 389 or David Billingham 0418 478 160.

Queensland

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.1

February 1-May 31, 2019

Program: Smallbore Conventional Pistol, Smallbore Conventional Revolver, Smallbore Unlimited Standing, Smallbore Unlimited Pistol. Location: All SSAA (Qld) branches with approval to shoot Pistol Metallic Silhouette. Nominations: Results to state NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette chairman by June 14, 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 or hbozic1@bigpond.net.au

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No. 2

April 1-July 31, 2019

Program: Smallbore Hunter's Pistol Metallic Sights - Standing (formerly 50m Iron Sights). Location: All SSAA (Qld) branches with approval to shoot Pistol Metallic Silhouette. Nominations: Results to state NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette chairman by August 14, 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 or hbozic1@bigpond.net.au

SSAA Qld Gallery Rifle State Championships

April 13-14, 2019

SSAA Clermont Branch, Queensland
Program: Friday, April 12, practice. Saturday, Imperial Silhouettes (30+ rounds), 1020 Match (102 rounds). Sunday, America Match (30+ rounds), 1500 Match (150 rounds). Nominations: From Gallery Rifle page on Queensland website, send to Secretary, Clermont Branch. Rules: As per handbook. Prizes: State medals for first, second, third per grade in each match. Facilities: Limited camping at range. Contact: Frances Fowler 0400 831 115 or Don Robinson 0428 986 070.

SSAA Qld Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

April 25-28, 2019

Fraser Coast Range, Churchill Mines Rd, Dundathu, Qld

Program: Open to all SSAA members. Friday, April 26: Rimfire Light/Hunting Rifle 40-shot match + Centrefire Light/Hunting Rifle 40-shot match. Saturday: Rimfire Heavy/Open 80-shot match + Centrefire Service Rifle Silhouette 40-shot match. Sunday: Centrefire Heavy/Open 80-shot match. Nominations: \$15 per event to maximum \$50, juniors half price. (Service Rifle \$10 or included in \$50 max.) Pay on arrival. Rules: As per current SSAA Rifle Metallic Silhouette Rules. Prizes: State medals for 1st, 2nd, 3rd in each grade. Facilities: Camping at range (unpowered). Contact: Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467, hbozic1@bigpond.net.au or Jeff Bennett 0407 969 354, jbenettinana@gmail.com

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.3

May 1-August 31, 2019

Program: Hunter's Pistol Metallic Sights, Hunter's Pistol Standing. Location: All SSAA (Qld) branches with approval to shoot Pistol Metallic Silhouette. Nominations: Results to state NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette chairman by September 14, 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

SSAA Qld Single Action State Championships

May 3-5, 2019

Kingaroy-Burrandowan Rd., Chahpingah, Qld

Program - Friday: Side matches. Saturday and Sunday: Main match. Facilities: Camping on range with hot showers and toilets. Contact: Ian Jacobs 07 4164 8179.

SSAA Qld Combined Services State Championships

May 4-6, 2019

SSAA Bundaberg branch

Program: Friday, May 3, practice. Saturday, Class 1, 2 or 3 pistols. Sunday, rifle. Monday, rifle. Rules: SSAA Combined Services rule book No.4. Nominations: All pistol \$40, all rifle \$60, all events \$90, individual events \$8, juniors half price. Closing date April 19. Current SSAA membership and grading cards must be shown. Barbecue Saturday night, refreshments all weekend. Facilities: Camping at range, toilets, showers. Contact: secretaryQ32@hotmail.com See SSAA (Qld) website for full details.

SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette State Championships

May 16-19, 2019
Fraser Coast Range,
Churchill Mines Rd, Dundathu, Qld
Program: Open to all SSAA members.
Events: Smallbore Conventional Pistol,
Smallbore Conventional Revolver, Smallbore
Unlimited Standing, Smallbore Unlimited
Pistol, Long Range Conventional Pistol,
Long Range Conventional Revolver, Long
Range Unlimited Standing, Long Range
Unlimited Pistol, Hunter's Pistol Metallic
Sights, Hunter's Pistol Standing. Nominations:
\$8 per event to maximum \$60, juniors half
price. Rules: As per SSAA (Qld) NRA Pistol
Metallic Silhouette Guide Book. Prizes: State
medals for 1st, 2nd, 3rd in each event, grade
and 10-Gun Aggregate. Facilities: Camping
at range (unpowered). Contact: Jeff Bennett
0407 969 354 jbennettinana@gmail.com
or Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au

Victoria

SSAA Vic Combined Services Discipline State Championships

April 4-7, 2019
Dookie Agricultural College,
Dookie Rd, Dookie, Vic
Program: Thursday, April 4: Range open for
practice and registration. Friday: 500m Sniper
(F1 & F2 Class), 500m Modified/Accurised
Rifles (H Class), 500m Tactical Development
Rifles (T Class). Saturday: 300m Deliberate
(B Class rifles), 300m, 200m, 100m 3P Core
(B Class rifles). Sunday: 310 Cadet and .22
Trainer, 50m, 75m, 100m 3P. Nomination:
\$25, competition fee \$25 a day or \$100
for all, juniors half price, late fee \$10 (after

March 30). Rules: SSAA Combined Services
Discipline rule book 2017. Prizes: Awarded on
Sunday. Facilities: Dormitory accommodation
at reasonable rates, free camping on range.
Contact: Frank Griffo mlrifile@vicmrc.com
See website for full details.

SSAA Vic Junior Rimfire Silhouette Championships

May 19, 2019
Eagle Park, Little River, Victoria
Program: 8.30am weigh-in, 9am practice,
10.15am shooters' briefing, 10.30am 80
shots Rimfire competition. Nominations \$10.
Rules: As per current rule book. Trophies
1st, 2nd, 3rd at U-18 and U-15 plus overall
winner. Contact: Jeannine Taylor 0417 510
002 or Mark Butler 0409 135 740.

SSAA Vic Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

May 25-26, 2019
Eagle Park, Little River, Victoria
Program: Saturday, May 25, 80 shots
Centrefire; Sunday, 80 shots Rimfire.
Nominations \$20 per event. Rules as per
current rule book. Contact Mark Butler 0409
135 740.

Western Australia

SSAA WA Lever Action State Championships

June 1-2, 2019
Wanneroo Shooting Complex,
Perry Road, Pinjar, WA
Program: Saturday, June 1, 9.30am: Classic
Calibre followed by Revolver. Sunday,
9.30am: State Open. Nominations: Fees -
Rifle \$35, Classic Calibre \$25, Revolver \$25
(\$75 all three), juniors half price. Download

full programme and forms at plarc.com.au/
events. State delegates' meeting in PLARC
clubhouse at 7.30pm on Friday. Rules: Rifle
competition in accordance with WA State
Open Lever Action Rifle Championship Rules.
Prizes: State medals and certificates. Facilities:
Range open for practice on Friday, May 31
from 8am to 5pm and Saturday and Sunday
7-8.30am. Canteen Saturday and Sunday.
Camping and caravans on PLARC range
only, toilets on site. Meal and presentation
on Sunday. Contact: Joel Evans leveraction@ssaawa.org.au. Full details on website.

SSAA WA NRA and Air Rifle State Championships

June 8-9, 2019
SSAA Port Bouvard, Dawesville, WA
Program: Saturday, June 8: Scoped 10m
Air Rifle Precision 8am registration; 8.45am
practice; 9.20am briefing; 9.30am match.
Scoped 3-Positional 10m Air Rifle 11.30am
registration and practice; 12.05pm briefing;
12 matches. Sunday, June 9: NRA 3x40
Small Bore 8am registration; 8.30am
practice; 9.05am briefing; 9.15am matches.
Nominations: \$10 per event, \$25 all three.
Post to Port Bouvard Pistol & Small Bore
Rifle Club, PO Box 363, Mandurah, WA
6210. Email secretary@portbouvardpc.
com.au. Rules: SSAA Scoped Air Rifle and
NRA rule book. Prizes: Medals for first three
in each grade per event, certificates for
position win plus points towards WA Hall
of Fame. Facilities: Canteen, light lunch free
for competitors both days. Contact: Ronnie
Pope 0459 545 374 or fieldrifle@ssaa.org.au

SSAA WA Cowboy Lever Action Silhouette State Championships

July 11-15, 2019

Hedland Sporting Shooters,
Port Hedland, WA

Program: Thursday, July 11: Practice 8am-
5pm. Friday: Rifle Cowboy Lever Action
Silhouette 80 shots. Saturday: Pistol Cartridge
Cowboy Lever Action Silhouette 80 shots.
Sunday: Rimfire Cowboy Lever Action
Silhouette 80 shots. Monday: Over-run day
if needed. Sight-in 7-8.15am, briefing 8.45,
first shot 9am. Nominations: \$25 per 80-
shot match, 3-gun \$60, juniors half price.
Rules: Current Rifle Metallic Silhouette rule
book. Contact: Warren Goodfield 0407 440
431 clas@ssaawa.org.au

Northern Territory

SSAA NT Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

May 4-6, 2019
Alice Springs Shooting Complex,
Butler Rd, Alice Springs
Program: Saturday, May 4: 80 shots
Rimfire Silhouette Rifle. May 5: 80 shots
Centrefire Silhouette Rifle. May 6: 40
shots Rimfire Hunting Rifle then 40 shots
Centrefire Hunting Rifle. Nominations:
Rimfire Silhouette and Centrefire Silhouette
\$20, Rimfire Hunting and Centrefire
Hunting \$10, juniors and seniors half
price. Online registration form at <https://ssaaalicesprings.wildapricot.org/2019-NT-RMS-Championships>. Rules: SSAA RMS
rule book, bring grading cards and firearms
licence in NT. Prizes: All grades and junior
divisions. Facilities: Camping and caravan
sites in complex with toilets, showers,
accommodation in Alice Springs. Contact:
Russell Wilkie 0408 165 752.
Full details on website.

SSAA Official Calendar

INTERNATIONAL

August 19-24, 2019 12th MLAIC World Long Range Muzzleloading Championships

Bisley, England

Kim Atkinson 27honeysuckle@msn.com.au

NATIONAL

Feb 1-July 31, 2019 National Junior Rimfire Metallic Silhouette Postal Championships
Feb 1-Nov 30, 2019 Big Game Rifle National Postal Championships
April 17-22, 2019 SSAA Field Rifle, Scoped 3-Positional, NRA and
Air Rifle National Championships

All clubs/branches

juniorsports@ssaa.org.au
Graeme Wright thepilotgw@hotmail.com

April 19-22, 2019 SSAA National Centrefire Benchrest Championships
April 19-22, 2019 SSAA Muzzleloading National Championships
April 26-30, 2019 SSAA National Lever Action Metallic Silhouette Championships
April 27-28, 2019 SSAA 5-Stand National Championships
May 25-26, 2019 SSAA National Big Game Rifle Championships
Jun 1-Nov 30, 2019 National Junior Rimfire Field Rifle Postal Championships
June 8-10, 2019 SSAA Fly Shoot National Championships
July 12-14, 2019 SSAA National Junior Challenge

Southern Districts Rifle Club, Bedfordale, WA
Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW
SSAA Para Range, SA
Eagle Park, Little River, Vic
Captains Mountain, Qld
Mickett Creek Range, Darwin, NT
All clubs/branches
Batemans Bay Shooting Complex, NSW
Springvale and Eagle Park Ranges, Vic

0893 981 131 or 0439 092 686
David 0418 478 160 or Ray 0408 649 126
0467 763 716 or secretary@ssaapara.org.au
0409 135 740 reltub@alphalink.com.au
shotgun@ssaa.org.au
0438 860 510 or 0409 862 393 ntbiggamerifle@gmail.com
juniorsports@ssaa.org.au
stateflyshoot@gmail.com or 0418 406 698
0417 510 002 or j9.taylor55@gmail.com

STATE

February 1-May 31, 2019 SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.1
April 1-July 31, 2019 SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.2
April 4-7, 2019 SSAA Vic Combined Services Discipline State Championships
April 13-14, 2019 SSAA Qld Gallery Rifle State Championships
April 25-28, 2019 SSAA Qld Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

Dookie, Vic
Clermont Branch, Qld
Fraser Coast Range, Dundathu, Qld

May 1-August 31, 2019 SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.3
May 3-5, 2019 SSAA Qld Single Action State Championships
May 4-6, 2019 SSAA Qld Combined Services State Championships
May 4-6, 2019 SSAA NT Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships
May 16-19, 2018 SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette State Championships

Kingaroy-Burrandowan Rd, Chahpingah, Qld
SSAA Bundaberg branch, Qld
SSAA Alice Springs, NT
Fraser Coast Range, Dundathu, Qld

May 19, 2019 SSAA Vic Junior Rimfire Silhouette Championships
May 25-26, 2019 SSAA Vic Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships
June 1-2, 2019 SSAA WA Lever Action State Championships
June 1-10, 2019 SSAA NSW Benchrest Rimfire Group and IRB State Championships
June 8-9, 2019 SSAA WA NRA and Air Rifle State Championships
July 11-15, 2019 SSAA WA Cowboy Lever Action Silhouette State Championships

Eagle Park, Little River, Vic
Eagle Park, Little River, Vic
Wanneroo Shooting Complex, Pinjar, WA
SSAA Newcastle Range, East Seaham, NSW
SSAA Port Bouvard, Dawesville, WA
Port Hedland, WA

Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 or hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
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NEW PRODUCTS



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

The ultimate outdoor jacket!



SSAA Renegade Jacket

The SSAA Renegade Jacket is made from wind and water-resistant breathable material and lined with cosy microfleece to keep you warm.

The clamshell jacket comes with a structured hood to keep the rain off and has a multitude of zippered pockets to keep your belongings secure in the field, on the range, while hiking, hunting or just out and about.



\$94.95

Green

CJG001 - Small
CJG002 - Medium
CJG003 - Large
CJG005 - 2XL

Black

CJB001 - Small
CJB002 - Medium
CJB003 - Large
CJB004 - XL
CJB005 - 2XL

For correct sizing please visit the online shop as the jackets are small in make.

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
CSV006 - 3XL

\$64.95

SHOOTING GLASSES

SSAA Advantage shooting glasses



SGA001 **\$49.95**

SSAA Magnum shooting glasses



SGM001 **\$49.95**

See full details online!

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

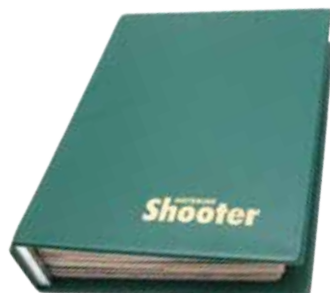


CBW004
Distressed Leaf



CBW005
Oz Flag

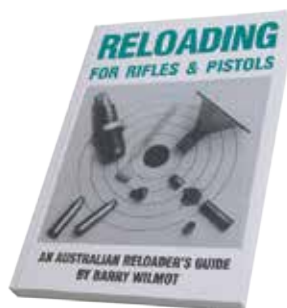
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B0012
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SSAA
cloth badge
B0015
\$7.50



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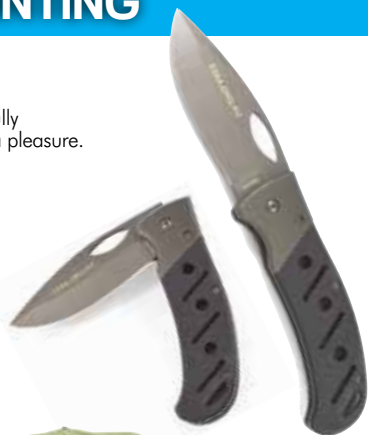
CAMPING & HUNTING

SSAA Ka-Bar folder

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

\$48.95 KBF001



SSAA Apex swag

The SSAA Apex swag measures 2000mm long, a generous 900mm wide and 600mm in height at the peak of the apex.

SWAG05 **NOW \$199**

SAFETY

SSAA first-aid kits

An absolute must-have for home and the car. You never know when the next little emergency might strike - be prepared. These well-equipped bags will make an important addition for the next hunting trip. For full details on the contents of each pack see online shop.

Small 210x170mm **\$39.95**
18-piece pack FA001

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27-piece pack FA002

A heavy-duty tackle box-style **\$78.95**
FA003



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EMAIL.....
MEMBER NUMBER

Please allow 14-21 days for delivery

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or charge my MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐

Card No.

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

DISCOUNT RATES AVAILABLE FOR SSAA CLUBS - CONTACT 02 8805 3900.

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 April 30, 2019.

(Name of competition)
SSAA National
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Unley SA 5061

Enter online at
ssaa.org.au/win

1 of 4 .30-calibre pen sets + deer antler stand

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Engraved pen sets will be as per name entered



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Juniors

GlowShot Flipping Jack .22 Reactive Steel Target

Valued at \$59.95

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glowshottargets.com.au



Competition winners!

Australian Shooter February 2019

1 of 4 .30-calibre pen sets

Andrew Brydon, Vic
Bruce Zanneberg, Vic
Ryan Neal, NSW
Tony Parsey, Tas

Winchester prize pack
Brody Wickham, NSW

**February Junior -
Black Neogard rifle cover**
Thomas Gall, Qld

**February Best
Shots Mug**
Kenneth Keevers, NSW

Hunter 67

Lithgow T-Shirt, bar mat & calendar
Phillip Smith, Vic

**Ammo box, horse decal
& Winchester decal pack**
Leon Becker, NSW

SSAA knife roll
Adrian Lane, NSW

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What was can never be again

A scatter of remnant clouds hung on the horizon, their frayed and windblown edges highlighted by the rising sun. They were all that remained of a storm front that had swept in overnight and disappeared before dawn. In the soft light of morning the salted air smelled fresh and clean and while the breeze was cool, the day seemed destined to be humid.

The shoreline was strewn with clumps of kelp and necklace weed, pushed up by the wind and waves then stranded when the tide peaked and retreated with the storm. Needing a walk and curious to see what the sea had left behind I set off along the beach, the sand squeaking softly beneath my feet as I literally stepped back in time.

When we were kids, fresh to the coast from the arid inland of western NSW, we used to walk the beach with Bill Hooper, my maternal grandfather. We'd never seen so

much water or a proper beach so every outing became a voyage of discovery. I can still see the old man trudging along behind us, enjoying the fact we were racing about as only kids can when the world is new and exciting. We always went home tired.

Later I fished the beaches with my father for whiting, flathead, bream and feisty salmon in the beach gutters when the tide was right. Pop - as he became universally known when the grandkids started to arrive - knew all about such things and we seldom went home empty

handed. He's the one who taught me to walk along the tide line to see what I could learn from what had been left behind.

According to the sign a fox had come early to the tidal table, his rambling marks traversing the length of the beach before he turned inland to see what was available around the lagoon behind the dunes. Gulls squalled and squabbled, fossicking through the weed or chasing the wash of the receding waves for morsels flushed out of the sand.

A pair of ravens strutted along the high

broken and empty beside the pincer of a crab's claw.

There were seashells and discarded feathers, pieces of driftwood and cuttlefish shell and small pebbles of water-worn pumice that had journeyed from who knows where. There were banksia cones and gum nuts, mangrove and eucalypt leaves and collections of other vegetative debris I couldn't begin to identify. Sadly there was also the more common rubbish of our times, the plastic bits and pieces we never saw washed up when I was a boy.

At the end of the beach where signs warned of the dangers of falling rocks I turned and headed back the way I'd come, carrying a couple of plastic bottles some tosser had discarded in the dry sand above the tide line.

An old bloke coming towards me didn't reciprocate when I bade him good morning, just kept going with his head down. He may have been one of those naturally grumpy people you sometimes encounter.

Perhaps he didn't speak

to strangers or, like me, was quietly saddened by the fact a morning walk along the beach really ain't what it used to be. In the real world nothing ever is.

People and places, like times and tides, have a way of changing when we're not looking. What was can never be again and as I deposited the bottles in the nearest bin, I decided that was probably a good thing. Just thinking about all that beach stuff we did as kids is enough to make a grown man tired.



water mark, their feathers ruffled by the breeze, turning over anything that caught their respective eyes and cawing softly to each other, perhaps complaining about the sparseness of the pickings.

The body of a small toad fish lay on its side, unwanted even by the scavengers except for the eyes that had long since been removed from their sockets. Here and there the bladders of bluebottles dried in the morning sun, their trailing strands of stingers washed away or tangled in the weeds. The shell of a sea anemone lay



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