

Spotlight on the Savage A22R repeating rifle

AUSTRALIAN

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March cover
Sam Garro

Free posters

Starting this month we will be reproducing the SSAA discipline posters in *Australian Shooter*. There will be two posters per month until December

NEXT ISSUE



Cartridge collecting is popular with many firearms enthusiasts, and senior correspondent Rod Pascoe guides us through what it takes to become involved in what is a satisfying, worthwhile and absorbing hobby.

Con Kapralos has put Schultz & Larsen's new Legacy switch-barrel sporting rifle through its paces, finding "the ability to use the same bolt and magazine for all calibres and simple barrel-changing procedure make for a lovely outfit".

There's a good deal of credence in the gun press as to what is the correct shot size for your intended quarry, and Damien Edwards will offer some points to ponder on shot weight selection.

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Fax: 02 9832 9377

PO Box 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761

Email: mem@ssaa.org.au

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Phone: 08 8272 7100

Fax: 08 8272 2945

PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061

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EDITORIAL

MANAGING EDITOR.....Allan Blane
ASSOCIATE EDITOR.....Thomas Cook
ASSISTANT EDITOR.....Dave Rose
CHIEF OF STAFF.....Jennifer Martens
ART DIRECTOR.....Mike Barr
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR.....Judy Ward
GRAPHIC DESIGNER.....Natalie Kuhlmann
WEBMASTER.....Mark Fieldhouse
ADVERTISING REP.....Karoline Miniccozzi
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER.....Sam Talbot
ADMINISTRATION.....Debbie Wing
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT.....John Dunn
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT.....Rod Pascoe

CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE

Ian Thompson, Russell Mark, John McDougall, John Moore, Daniel O'Dea, Thomas Tabor, Daniel Musgrave, John Maxwell, Ray Dennis, Kyle Brewer, Meg Edwards, Sam Garro, Royce Wilson, Con Kapralos, Dick Eussen, Pete Kincade, Don Caswell, Steve Bain.

STATE CONTACT INFORMATION

For SSAA inquiries please contact your state SSAA office:

NSW 02 8889 0400	WA 08 9497 7919
Qld 07 3281 3447	SA 0419 849 452
Vic 03 8892 2777	ACT 0423 043 663
Tas 0418 734 008	NT 0402 013 918

NATIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

SSAA National
Chief Executive Officer and Chief Editor Tim Bannister
Wildlife Programs Matthew Godson
PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061
Phone: 08 8272 7100

SSAA National Accounts Office
PO Box 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761
Phone: 02 8805 3900
Email: accounts@ssaa.org.au

SSAA General Insurance Brokers
The Precinct, Suite 14,
539 Greenhill Road,
Hazelwood Park, SA 5066
Phone: 08 8332 0281
Free call: 1800 808 608
Fax: 08 8332 0303
Email: insurance@ssains.com.au

Please mail all correspondence for the
SSAA National Executive to SSAA,
PO Box 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761
Email: ssaa@ssaa.org.au



President's Message

WITH GEOFF JONES

Conservation programs an important plank in SSAA platform

As we put the annual summer holiday season firmly behind us and turn our gaze to the agenda ahead, there seems much for the SSAA and its members to enthuse about. Let's kick things off by focusing on one of the main avenues that appears to be broadening within the SSAA's sphere of influence, namely the hunting and conservation arena.

It's good to know at this point that the SSAA is actively cooperating and enthusiastically collaborating with a number of state and federal authorities who share our ideals and hopes on such matters. Research and feral animal control statistics have demonstrated the value of legitimate ground shooting activities and we are constantly exploring ways for members to be involved in these programs at their respective state levels.

The links between the SSAA and the Conservation and Wildlife Research Trust (CWRT), which our organisation fervently supports, are well documented and are attracting more and more interest from like-minded commentators about the value that's being offered.

Looking further afield, conservation advancements have been embraced as part of the new *Great Australian Outdoors* magazine. This is another cog that has been added to the SSAA's ever-evolving media interests and the ground-breaking publication, based around the concepts of destination, exploration and conservation, has already been lauded by experienced environmental voices. These experts feel the refreshing outlook of the expansive journal brings to the table a balanced view of conservation and hunting as valid tools which can be combined to help the Australian ecosystem.

There's so much to be positive about as the year opens its doors ever wider to us. Of course, the shooting ranges and compe-

tition shooting should not be forgotten with international and national teams being finalised during the coming months to represent the SSAA and Australia on the world stage in their various disciplines.

Amid all this hurly-burly, it's sometimes hard to keep up. But one thing we must remain aware of is the approaching federal election, at present seemingly mapped out for May. I've always maintained as SSAA president that we will support those who support us. As a democratic body we cannot tell our members how to vote, but that basic mantra is a straightforward point of reference to keep in mind as we enter the polling booths sometime in the near future.

For the moment though, let's take one step at a time and gain pleasure from the heady involvement being invested by the SSAA and its band of members both in established fields and unfolding environmental crusades. It feels like 2019 has only just begun but already our organisation has plenty on its plate to tempt the palate.



G.E. Jones

Geoff Jones
SSAA National President



SSAA - Protecting shooters since 1948

Military muscle holds sway

I REFER TO articles by Rod Pascoe in the *Australian Shooter* (July and December 2018). Readers may be interested to know that among many other variants, a version of the 6.5x55 'Gallery' round mentioned in Rod's 'Consider reduced loads' is used in the 84mm Carl Gustav shoulder anti-tank recoilless gun (pictured) in use by the ADF for almost 50 years.

Like many such weapons the ammunition is expensive and you know all about it when you fire one - concussive muzzle blast and back-blast akin to being punched in the face - and you need a dedicated range which is inevitably a long way from anywhere to fire it on (I'm ex-Army).

Accordingly, ballistically matched sub-calibre training/practice devices are common, most based on small arms ammunition. There are no less than three available for the ubiquitous Charlie Guts-ache as it's universally known among those who carry it, with 9x21mm, 6.5x55mm and 7.62x51mm versions used in various countries.

The ADF had the 6.5x55 which chamber in a breech/barrel arrangement incorporated inside what is otherwise a dummy



84mm round - the characteristic stand-off rod serves as the barrel.

As far as the 6.5 Creedmoor is concerned, 'marketing' does have a lot to do with its popularity. The fact a US military agency adopts a round of ammunition is not necessarily an endorsement based on science, the 7.62x51 NATO (.308W) and 5.56x45 (.223) cases in point. The two most popular sporting rounds of ammunition in the world today were both derived from military decisions.

Rather than banging on about it, I recommend reading *The Black Rifle* by R. Blake Stevens and Edward C. Ezell. The process by which they were adopted verges on

the scandalous. Neither were optimised for their intended role, both cost a fortune in ongoing development of the round and weapon systems and the result has imposed design constraints on the US and its Allies in any attempted remediation that exist to this day.

The 6.5mm Creedmoor is one of a series of 6.5 rounds all pretty much in the same class. There's little doubt 6.5-7mm is some kind of ballistic 'sweet spot' that began with the 6.5x55 more than 120 years ago. National pride and economic muscle is a big motivator among our US friends but it can hinder objectivity.

Steve Larkins, SA

Insurance Q&A

WITH TREVOR JENKIN

Q I own a small farm and am considering installing a private shooting range. Would my existing insurance cover this for liability?

Stephen

A If you're planning a bit of shooting practice you need liability cover for any personal injury to shooters contributed to by your negligence as property owner. However, the second you start to allow 'clients' to use the range and promote it as a business, you'd need to insure the facility as a 'range' or 'club', which would require additional coverage. A few things would also need to be considered in regard to range design, danger templates, stop-butts and so on. Talking to your SSAA state branch is the best place to start when setting up any type of shooting range.

With regard to insurance, there are a few

points you need to consider: Is your liability covered while shooting on your own range? Is your liability covered for third parties shooting on your range? Is the liability of the shooters using the range covered?

The answer to the first is simple: If you're a SSAA member you automatically have liability cover of \$20 million for all lawful and recreational shooting activities Australia-wide. So if you were to cause any property damage or personal injury to a third party due to your negligence, you'd be able to lodge a claim. As far as protecting your liability as range owner in the case of one of the shooters using the range is concerned, you'd need a separate liability policy to cover this. This would be under a Property Owner's Liability policy, which we could arrange.

The last exposure you need to worry about is liability of the shooters using the

range and if you want to cover this. Your first option is to restrict use to SSAA members only, knowing they all have that \$20 million liability cover. The second is to take out a policy to cover liability of the shooters. Again, we can assist and you'd be able to incorporate your liability as the property owner into this policy too. So there's quite a bit to consider and I suggest contacting your SSAA state branch then SSAA General Insurance Brokers so we can discuss your options in detail. Call on 08 8332 0281 or visit ssaaib.com.au

Send questions to: communications@ssaa.org.au



*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.

Opening in tannery business

MAY I SUGGEST you use your magazine to spread the word that KT Australia, the kangaroo leather tannery at Hughenden, Queensland has closed down, meaning there is nowhere north of Narangba which processes kangaroo skin to leather.

There's a good business opportunity going as a result, as there is very little competition nationwide in the kangaroo leather tanning game. Mostly this stems from how local governments in and around cities have strict environmental policies, meaning the old inner-city tanneries no longer exist.

As no such problem exists in regional areas, perhaps someone might be interested in giving the idea of a tannery in northern Australia some consideration (there's certainly no shortage of kangaroos in central Queensland).

With proper management a tannery can employ unskilled workers both male and female and there may even be government help available to an indigenous start-up business, as has been done with other products. Just a thought.

Geoff Douglas, via email

A true friend to shooters

I WAS INTERESTED to read the story by Dave Rose about circus lions escaping and eating their handler (*Australian Shooter*, December 2018). Of particular appeal was

the photo of 'Jim P' when he was a South Australian police sergeant.

I knew Jim very well for many years. He was an excellent friend to shooters, sometimes ruffling the feathers of his police superiors by openly supporting the fact that law-abiding shooters had the legal right to own and use firearms.

He completed the TAFE Firearms Instructors course shortly after it was conceived and was a regular and well respected member of the group. I've included a photo of Jim, left, at one of our meetings with another well known SA shooter, Rod Hunt.

Jim was born Alexander James Pengilly on January 25, 1922 at Redruth in Cornwall. He enlisted in the Second Australian Imperial Force in March 1941 and served for five years in North Africa and the Pacific, eventually being discharged in April 1946. He served in SAPOL for many years, retiring with the rank of Inspector and passed away in April 2013.



Jim will be remembered as a terrific friend to shooters, a fantastic source of stories and jokes and a thorough gentleman with it.

Geoff Smith, SA

'Area fire' an effective ploy

I ENJOYED ROYCE Wilson's article on the Lebel M1886 rifle (*Australian Shooter*, November 2018) and concur it was less than perfect, perhaps resulting in some problems for the 'men on the ground'. No doubt the politics and ethno-centric thinking were factors.

As an aside for younger readers, the .303 and doubtless Mausers and others of the day through until comparatively recent times saw many military rifles sighted for 2000 yards/metres and, as noted, trying to hit a man-sized target at that range was difficult.

However the purpose was not for use in individual fire by sniper or such, but for what was termed 'area fire' - when every available rifle was fired at a visible target in the immediate vicinity. What resulted was as many rounds as possible landing in or about the target as a virtual shotgun blast. It was hoped one or more would do the damage and was also practical in keeping enemy heads down while you advanced towards a more effective range.

Ross Golden, via email

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Thanks for the memories

DEAR SIR, IT is with much sadness I write to say I won't be renewing my membership as I am now 89 years old and in care. I have been a SSAA member since 1985. Back then, V06 Wodonga was an old 4x4m shed with a few broken targets and worn-out butts.

Through the hard work of our committees over the years it is now one of the best ranges around with covered firing points, storage sheds, camping facilities and a new clubhouse. I would like to personally thank two members in particular, Ian Guthrie who was made a SSAA life member, and Max Grimshaw who was also honoured by the Association.

If present and future members enjoy as many wonderful times at V06 Wodonga as I have over the years they will be happy indeed. Many thanks for all the happy hours at V06, all the best for the future and don't give the anti-gun lobby any reason to whinge.

Colin Gray, ex-Black Watch, Vic

Gunsales site a winner

JUST A LINE to congratulate SSAA on their Gunsales website. I advertised two firearms on several websites and of all these SSAA Gunsales produced by far the most enquiries and resulted in the sale of both firearms in a matter of weeks. To be specific, I received a total of 74 enquiries directly through SSAA Gunsales and just two from usedguns.com.

The ease of posting an ad and the fact you can insert multiple photos that can be zoomed in and carefully viewed I believe is one of the main reasons the firearms sold so quickly. I will definitely be using this service solely next time. Cheers!

Guy Pitchford, via email

- Check out our site at ssaagunsales.com

From solid to hollow-point

READING JOHN HILL'S article on case preparation (*Australian Shooter*, August 2018) reminded me of a problem I encountered but ultimately solved. I was given a large amount of 5.56 ammunition but when I fired some in my .223 I experienced considerable pressure signs.

I researched online and discovered



the 5.56 has a far more elongated throat compared to the .223 so I checked the overall length, removed, modified and re-seated the projectiles. Now I had useable cartridges but they were solids and no good for hunting. I ground off the tip to reveal the lead, drilled a small hole to 6mm deep and now had usable hollow-point ammunition. They work well on feral pigs and really open up on foxes.

Greg Kent, via email

Our future's in good hands

WHAT AN AWESOME effort by young Taylah Mitchell (P.72 *Australian Shooter*, August 2018). Only 13 years old, her first deer hunt and an amazing trophy taken with one shot at distance. This is the future of our sport. Taylah, if you read this, well done. Your dad and uncle must be so proud.

David Williams, via email

It's no cross to bear

I NOTICE ON the cover of *Australian & New Zealand Handgun* 17 a picture of a lovely girl shooting a pistol left-handed and aiming it using her right eye. I was exactly the same when I started shooting 25 years ago and was told by numerous people I'd

have to change. But I explained to my local range officer this was my natural way of aiming and have been shooting successfully this way ever since.

Ted, via email

- For anyone interested in this subject or who may have missed it, refer to an article entitled 'Ocular cross-dominance' which ran in the inaugural edition of *Australian Women's Shooter* in our December magazine.

'Ludicrous and outdated'

IN RESPONSE TO Denis Dixon's letter 'Discriminatory venture' (*Shooter*, February 2019), I would like to congratulate the SSAA on having the foresight to publish the *Australian Women's Shooter* and wish the venture every success for the future.

I would remind Mr Dixon that roughly 90 per cent of our membership is male, myself included, and if this new publication goes some way to redressing that imbalance it should be embraced. I would urge our male membership to encourage more women into the Association as this can only help secure our sport going forward.

As for Mr Dixon's question regarding 'does the female shooter of average size somehow have special needs over and above her male counterpart', I know of at least two gunsmiths who have customised firearms to make them more 'female friendly' at the request of women shooters.

As a proud SSAA member of long standing, I would hope our Association sees itself as having social licence to represent the community as a whole, and as for Mr Dixon's ludicrous and outdated claim of the *Australian Women's Shooter* being 'discriminatory', I would invite him to step into the 21st century.

George Bennett, via email

Instrument, not the cause

REGARDING THE ARTICLE 'One million Australians marginalised...' (*Australian Shooter*, Page 40, November 2018). Can someone please point out to the 'group representing intensive care doctors' that firearms may be an instrument of death but can never be "the major cause of death and injury, particularly in rural areas" unless they go off of their own accord.

Herman Grigull, via email



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A bit more on WH

REGARDING THE REFERENCE by John Dunn to William (Bill) Harrison (Top Shots, December 2018). As there appears to be no written history on the internet, here's what I know of the man. From 1955-57 I worked on Cuddapan Station, Betoota, Queensland where Bill and his wife regularly visited, hunted and tested the latest rifles.

WH had a large quantity of new SS Lewis gun barrels and P14 rifles which he crafted into sporting rifles. He was a complete craftsman and did all his own stockwork, metalwork and chambering including the .22 Harrison Wasp, .250 Taipan and .303 Magnum.

In those days the US dollar exchange system made it almost impossible to buy a new American firearm. The brass cast bullet moulds he made carried a simple WH stamped on them and WH was part of a group who instigated the formation of the SSAA. After his wife was killed crossing the road in front of his house, WH ceased business.

His brass bullet moulds are identical and interchangeable with the Cast Bullet Engineering product so I'm almost certain WH's mould-making machinery was sold off to become Cast Bullet Engineering.

Both Bill and his wife excelled with the rifle and as a couple hunted worldwide (she was a dab hand with a 6.5x53 Mannlicher Schonauer). They had a son, an engineer who flew a light plane as far as Diamantina doing charity work for aged land owners.

Clive Edmondstone, via email

Something to crow about

I'VE ALWAYS FELT we should push the fact that rifle ranges are quite eco-friendly places and a haven for wildlife. When I took the attached photograph, shooting was in progress a few lanes away yet our visitor never flinched.



This is one of a pair which nest every year on the range used by the SSAA Herberton branch in Queensland and they come in for titbits most Sundays, especially when feeding young. A few years ago we

had a pair of sea eagles nest and rear chicks near our 300-yard mound and, as we know but the general population doesn't believe, shooting never worried them.

Peter Smith, via email

• With more than 400 ranges nationwide a host to land, trees and wildlife, the SSAA is a proud guardian of our native flora and fauna - Ed

TV ads a great initiative

WOW! HOW GOOD is it to see the SSAA advertising on TV. It makes one feel good to see the Association promoting our sport. Congratulations - don't hold back.

As president of the Tasmanian Deer Stalkers Branch T10, I'm sure these adverts will attract new membership to our branch, notwithstanding we have a holding branch in Tasmania called T50 whose members by way of the Firearms Act can't participate in range shooting and I'm sure they'd enjoy punching a few holes in paper or hearing the clang of a steel target succumbing to their favourite deer rifle.

T50 members are most welcome to transfer to T10 and it's simple - just contact the membership office at SSAA National and make the switch.

Allan Kenny, Tas

Make plans to pass on firearms

THANKS FOR THE article 'Death awaits us all' (*Australian Shooter*, December 2018). This is a topic many don't consider - I know from first-hand experience. I lost my father a few years back and had to go through the process of getting a licence again and appropriate storage.

Having moved abroad I'd let my licence lapse - I'd left the sport a few years earlier for no reason, life just got in the way. When my father died he left a number of guns and rifles that had not only sentimental value but were worth a pretty penny.

I called a police friend for advice who said there was a limited amnesty period following a death but to address it straight away - I had to store the guns at either a police station or gunsmith. I chose the latter and it cost a fortune due to the length of time (the police option was not attractive as they said they'd destroy them if I was outside the amnesty).

I had to attend courses, study and sit exams to regain my licence as my expired one meant nothing - you're treated like a first-time shooter. The time between the test and obtaining a licence was four months and overall it took six months to have everything back and legal. The upside is the process reignited my passion and I'm again a regular shooter and hunter.

Shooters getting 'long in the tooth' should make plans to pass their firearms to licensed parties so loved ones can avoid the hassle and cost they may otherwise end up with.

Michael Bell, via email

Separate reduced load brass

I FOUND ROD Pascoe's article (Shooter, December 2018) informative in that I didn't know AR2206H was such a useful powder for use in reduced loads. I've been using AR2205 for one reduced load but I'll give 06 a try in future.

I've been using reduced loads for my .270 Winchester for years, mainly so I could shoot a shortened version of the centrefire Metallic Silhouette match. I use a graduated series of loads starting with 12 grains of TB at 50m, 14 at 100m and 17 at 150m behind 130/140gr bullets and the same 17 grains behind a 150gr bullet will topple rams at 200m.

In addition to club/target shooting, a couple of reduced-load rounds can be carried when hunting in the event a downed animal needs to be dispatched at close range - 14 grains of Trail Boss behind a 110gr Hornady V-Max bullet does a good job.

What these loads have in common and which wasn't mentioned in Rod's article was the need to keep brass used for reduced loads separate from brass to be used for full-power loads. I was told when I started making reduced loads there's a danger of case-head separations if brass formerly used for reduced loads is later used in full-power rounds. The cause relates to the incomplete expansion of brass inside the chamber when using these reduced loads, and I've always observed that warning and never had an issue with reduced loads. I thought it worthwhile passing this on to those who wish to venture into the world of reduced-power loads.

Pat Kerin, via email

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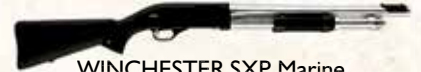


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Duck hunters blindsided by unnecessary restrictions

Across the country, duck hunters have been left scratching their heads by decisions to restrict the 2019 seasons. For years hunters have thrown their support behind the development of sound scientific processes to demonstrate that seasons have no significant negative impact on overall waterfowl populations. It seems clear that politics is still playing a role in what should be purely wildlife management decisions, creating confusion and anger within the hunting community.

Worst affected is Victoria where hunters have been hit twice with heavily-reduced bag limits and a shortened season. The restrictions are so bad that hunters are demanding game hunting licence fees be refunded. The standard bag has been reduced from 10 to four for the first day and five thereafter for the rest of the season - and the season has been cut short by three weeks.

SSAA Victoria's Hunting Development Manager, David Laird, expressed the Association's disappointment via a press release in which he highlighted the fact that private duck counts indicated a significant population in Victoria that could sustain a regular season with no threat to the sustainability of wild duck populations. He suggested that if official summer counts were conducted across most of the state, these observations would doubtless be supported.

Reliance on the Eastern Aerial Waterbird Survey is a big part of the problem. This survey is certainly a useful index of abundance when used correctly but it's continually being used the wrong way. It indicates an index of abundance and wetland conditions across only a small area of Victoria (and other states) and does not take into account dispersed populations sitting on the many other rivers, streams, dams and other significant wetlands outside the two flight lines. It cannot be used as a tool to suggest total number of ducks in Victoria or other states. That's like judging traffic conditions in a major city based on a survey of only two main roads.

These very points were made in SSAA Victoria's submission to the Game Management Authority prior to the season being declared and it seems they were completely ignored. Compounding the frustration, the GMA will not disclose its recommendations to the Minister and on what basis they were made. This lack of transparency leaves unanswered questions, such as was the GMA solely responsible for what hunters see as poor decisions or did they recommend a standard season that was then changed by the Minister based on politics?

The South Australian hunting community was generally happy to accept a small reduction in bag limits due to persistent dry conditions but were more

than disappointed with the delayed start of the season, SA's opening weekend now coinciding with Victoria's. A change in the starting date was not a topic of debate at any of the stakeholder group meetings prior to the season being declared. So when the season was declared, the hunting community felt blindsided by the date change and have rightfully requested an explanation.

The most disappointing aspect of both season announcements was that politics has obviously come into play where science and game management should dictate outcomes. Instead of focusing on ways to overcome the limitations of the Eastern Aerial Waterbird Survey, it seems agencies are failing to subscribe to adaptive management and seek alternative information.

The simple fact that Australian waterfowl are nomadic and fly to areas which hold water and resources seems to be continually overlooked. And if ducks are not in the dry swamps open for hunting, they can't be harvested. Ducks themselves are very good at determining what is found in hunters' bags.

Send questions to:
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A blast from the past

The accompanying photograph shows a form of packaging (some-what tatty) that's unusual for .303" cartridges of the World War II era and which suggests there could be a separate pattern of ball cartridges - other than the familiar Mk 7 and Mk 8 - in use at that time. Not so.

A good authoritative explanation for this apparent anomaly can be found by searching the textbooks of ammunition of that era, which state this 'Red Label' ammo is ammunition supplied to and used by the RAF for its controlled guns. It's not a separate design of its own, rather it comprises a 'sub-species' that was manufactured in the normal manner, but after its final acceptance testing had been completed was selected as being held to tighter tolerances than that standard ammunition made for general service. Such tolerances of major interest here are those relating to the ignition time of the primers, the action time of the complete rounds and so on.

Incidentally, the term 'controlled gun' refers to a machine-gun mounted in an aeroplane, which has its rate of fire and time of fire synchronised with the rotation of the propeller as well as to the pilot's trigger.

The general designation of this special ammunition (ie, ball, tracer or otherwise) is the same as the corresponding types of



The Red Label .303 Ball Cartridge ammunition.

general Service ammunition but with the addition of the words 'Special for RAF Red Label'.

In earlier days military aircraft were fitted with very thin, fragile wings (usually in a double-decker arrangement) that, while capable of supporting the aircraft, were generally far too thin to accept the plane's armament of one or more machine guns. This raised serious problems since the only other reasonable mounting for the necessary guns was on the body of the aircraft, which immediately raised another serious problem - that of allowing those guns to fire forward without fouling the propeller. Sev-

eral patented systems were devised that allowed the guns to be mounted securely on the rear of the engine block and to fire forward. So far, so good.

In the British service, the guns concerned were usually the normal Vickers machine-guns that had been stripped of their water-cooling systems and generally lightened up a bit. Such guns were then fitted with the patented sears that converted them to self-loading rather than fully automatics - that is, requiring a separate operation of the sear for each individual shot.

This single trigger-operation-per-shot was driven by a flexible cable taken from, and timed by the camshaft of the engine. Thus, only when the camshaft, and hence the propeller, were in the correct pre-selected position could the pilot's trigger cause the gun to fire one shot and to reset itself for another shot, which could only subsequently be fired when the camshaft was next aligned as above and the trigger remained down.

When correctly set up the gun fired each time a gap in the propeller arc was in line with the gun and continued to fire at a rate equal to the engine revs. Problems all solved provided the ammo was consistent - that is, was of Red Label standard.



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Q I'm a believer that clay target shooting isn't technically a very hard sport to learn as opposed to more physical activities like golf or tennis, but what I'm finding difficult is the mental approach. I find hitting clays far easier in practice than in competition. Any advice in this area would be greatly appreciated.

Michael McKenna, Qld

A This is a question I've covered before in many different ways and for the most part I tend to agree with your comment. Certainly the technical aspects of golf can be quite complex and the variety of situations a golfer must perfect to be competitive at the highest level outweigh what most elite shotgunners would face.

To explain that further, consider a round of traditional Skeet broken down simply into eight different stations with targets being released from only two fixed machines. The amount of different shots required is reasonably defined as less than a couple of dozen. In golf, the possibilities for different scenarios found in any one round could be endless, particularly where someone like me tends to find their ball after driving off the tee! What's very similar between the two sports is the mental approach and this aspect will more or less determine who the winners and losers at the top level will be.

Whether you're standing over a two-

You must develop a mental preparation before each shot that's simple and repetitive.

metre putt to win a tournament or having to hit the last clay target to take home the monthly trophy at your local range, you'll no doubt be faced with one particular constant when placed under pressure. That is, the 'little man in your head' (or 'little woman' for female sportspeople) who'll be firing instructions so you can take home the prize. You think that voice is there to help you become a champion but in reality it's quite the opposite as it's really the devil, only there to destroy you. A wolf in sheep's clothing.

The trick to shooting successfully is to perfect your technique on the practice range so that in competition you 'just do it' without having to tell yourself technical information. This can be much harder than you think and, as a general rule, the bigger the competition and the closer you come to winning, the louder the voice becomes. Until you miss. And lose. Then the voice is silent.

I'm constantly amazed at how some competitors shoot world record scores in practice yet are not within 10 per cent of that the next day in competition. You

must develop a mental preparation before each shot that's simple and repetitive. The more complex your pre-shot routine, the harder it will be to replicate when your heart starts thumping at 150 beats a minute at the end of your round.

No matter what routine you develop it must be void of the mass quantity technical data rushing through your head at the moment you call for the target to be released. Of course shooting, as in golf, requires the technical and mechanical aspects to be perfected in practice so your brain has the knowledge and confidence to let you perform these tasks under pressure. Your brain is a marvelous piece of equipment and will work for you under the stress of competition if you let it. That little voice yelling at you is simply interfering with your brain and the knowledge it has absorbed during quality training.

See the target, shoot it. Standing over that two-metre putt requires you to assess the correct line and hit the ball. The more you complicate it the greater your chances of missing.



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Got a question - ask our TOP SHOTS ?

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Q Hello and thanks for a great magazine. I recently bought my first rifle, a Winchester XPR .243, to try my hand at target shooting. Have been to the range a few times and am getting to know the rifle but having trouble with consistency. After sighting in at 25 or 50m I move out to 100m and have a go, aiming to shoot as tight a group as I can, but the more I shoot the worse I seem to become!

Is it possible, being a beginner, that my grip either at the fore-end or stock/shoulder is too tight or am I simply firing too many rounds too soon? After firing a few shots I lose the target completely in my sight and must go looking for it again and generally find my shots have not grouped well at all, both possibly due to my incorrect holding and the rifle moving too much when I shoot.

As I become frustrated I try harder and more than likely am firing too many rounds as the barrel is very hot before I know it. Could someone shine a light on where I can correct things. I'm shooting seated off a concrete bench with a bi-pod. Any help appreciated as I'd love to improve and progress to longer range eventually.

Gus Keenan, via email

A The Winchester XPR is a very practical rifle designed for hunting, not target shooting, so perhaps you're expecting a little more than the rifle is capable of delivering in terms of group size. That said, there are a few things you can do to improve your results.

First up make sure all the appropriate screws are tight - on the action, scope base(s), mounts and scope rings. To sight in, set the rifle up on your bench in sandbags, one under the forearm the other under the buttstock. The bags can be adjusted so the rifle rests steadily and consistently in the same place on the bench with the scope aligned on the target. In that position all you have to do is hold the rifle steady and fire your shots. You don't need a death grip on the forearm or wrist of the stock, just enough pressure to allow the rifle to be fired comfortably and consistently.

While a bipod is a handy piece of kit in the field, off a concrete bench many will bounce under recoil and I suggest that's a significant contributor to the problems you've been experiencing with group sizes and losing the target. Sandbags will eliminate those issues.

When sighting in, hasten slowly. If you

heat the barrel up you increase the possibility of shots walking or spraying the target instead of grouping. Most new barrels also benefit from a running-in process and accuracy generally improves over time.

All ammunition is not made equal so you'll have to try a range of different brands and perhaps bullet weights to find out what your rifle prefers to shoot. When changing ammunition, clean the barrel before moving on to the next to give each lot a chance to show you what it can do. Down the track you may find carefully developed handloads will produce better results than factory ammunition. Finally, practice whenever you can - the long-term benefits will be worth it.

John Dunn

Q I've always wondered why old style military rifles were generally timbered right up to the muzzle but have never seen any explanation (maybe everyone knows except me!) Is it for protection of this easily-damaged part of the barrel bore, something to do with the attachment of the bayonet or control of the barrel's secondary movement when firing? This seems contrary to the emphasis to ensure a fully floating barrel for the .22 Savage I once owned. With the weight of clobber, equipment, ammunition etc it would be preferable the arms carried by foot soldiers were of reasonable weight, which can't be said of the Lee-Enfield.

A deceased friend served on the Kokoda track during WWII and, being of small stature, he was ever grateful to be able to discard the Lee-Enfield when issued with the Owen Gun. Further, my uncle was a sniper in France during WWI and I was interested in the type of rifle he'd have used as, from handed down family information, it wasn't the standard issue Lee-Enfield .303 but a rifle specifically made for the purpose.

Ross Robinson, via email

A Interesting set of questions Ross. Certainly a free floating barrel provides greater accuracy in a sporting rifle but military requirements go well beyond accuracy. If you examine infantry longarms from 'the beginning' (about the year 1400) you'll find most have an extended stock that goes virtually to the muzzle. In muzzleloading days this was important as the stock provided a chassis upon which to mount the barrel, lock and trigger, which were separate parts

in those days and even up to the mid-19th century.

Also, a bayonet was an important weapon as these firearms in close quarters combat were limited to a single shot. Using the now unloaded rifle as a 'spear' meant imposing a lot of force on the barrel, so the extended fore-wood provided support. Likewise, in muzzleloading days having an extended fore-end meant the ramrod could be securely housed within its 'pipes' in the stock.

Although such weapons could only be fired and reloaded a few times per minute in combat, the barrel would inevitably become hot, so having the timber stock surrounding it gave insulation to protect the shooter's hand. As muzzleloaders gave way to breech-loading single shot, then repeating rifles, the tradition of having an extended fore-wood remained. Bayonets soon became attached via a separate lug near the muzzle, but the strength of the timber fore-wood would have been a consideration.

Concerning accuracy, the Lee-Enfield .303 'full wood' target rifle, usually with a carefully bedded barrel, was used by generations of big-bore rifle shooters to give exceptional accuracy in competition over very long ranges. It is only in the past half century or so that military rifles have moved away from extended fore-wood stocks.

Regarding weight, the Lee-Enfield No.1 Mk3 rifle your late friend used would have weighed 8.6lb (3.9kg), the same as the FN FAL 7.62 rifle that replaced it. Certainly the Owen Gun was acknowledged by our troops as being easier to handle and more effective at close quarters than the SMLE rifle, although Ian Hogg quotes the weight of this sub-machine-gun as 9lb 5oz (4.28kg).

During WWI our snipers were issued with scope-sighted Enfield No.3 Mk1 rifles or the Pattern 1914 (P-14) US-made Mauser-style actions made by Winchester, Remington and Eddystone.

Geoff Smith

Q I have a Howa Mini .223 which I use at a 100m range. Normally I shoot with 55gr projectiles and the groupings with a cold barrel out to 100m are 2½" but when the barrel warms up they go everywhere. So I tried 64gr and achieved a better and more consistent grouping. I'd like to use the 64gr but the barrel still gets warm and they start to spray a bit. My question is: should I have

a heavy barrel installed and, if so, what twist should it be.

Ron Manning, via email

A The Howa 1500 mini action is a lightweight rifle with the very short action tailored specifically for cartridges like your .223. It also has a light 20" barrel to help with weight reduction and portability. They've received good reviews with regard to accuracy and trigger pull but are not target rifles, rather very handy hunting rifles well suited to carrying around the valleys and hills and as such you can't expect fine target accuracy from them. Two-inch groups are fine in a lightweight hunting rifle that will be used at relatively close ranges, especially if by experimenting you can tighten up those groups a bit. If you can get to around an inch you should be very pleased with yourself and your rifle.

It's not uncommon for rifles to open up their groups especially if you do enough shooting quickly enough to really warm up a light barrel. This is often caused by the barrel coming in contact with the barrel channel in the stock fore-end. You can fix this by having the bedding relieved a bit to make sure it's free-floating all the time. You can also bed the action or have a gunsmith do this for you.

The website for Outdoor Sporting Agencies, who import Howa rifles into Australia, says your rifle has a 1:9 twist which is very fast for a conventional 22 centrefire rifle. That might also explain why it prefers those heavier 64gr projectiles. Before rebarreling I suggest you experiment with loading some even heavier bullets around 75gr to see how your barrel likes them. Swift Scirocco make a premium hunting bullet in 62 and 75gr which are magnificent performers in my 1:8 twist .220 Swift barrel.

A new barrel is an expensive item but would certainly give you an even faster twist in your rifling to stabilise the longest bullets in your .223 - I'd go for a 1:8 twist. You can still shoot lighter projectiles but also stabilise the longest of .22 bullets right up to 80gr. This also increases the versatility of your Howa as these longer, heavier bullets are more suited to shooting pigs and goats as they're constructed as game bullets rather than the lighter explosive varmint projectiles that feature predominantly in the lighter .22 cal bullets weights available.

Putting on a fast twist barrel will introduce you to a new world of fun and learning, particularly if you're a reloader.

Paul Miller

Q I notice Lapua has introduced a 6.5 Creedmoor case with a small rifle primer pocket as apposed to the large primer pocket on Federal cases. What's that all about?

Darryl, via email

A It's all about horses for courses. The 6.5 Creedmoor and 6.5x47 Lapua cartridges are very similar in capacity and design but were conceived with different goals in mind. The 6.5x47 was designed for international 300m matches, where the ideal is a heavy projectile with a high ballistic coefficient at median velocity to decrease the recoil and turbulence associated with high velocity loads. Bear in mind that 300m is a relatively short distance and the small primer was found to give lower variations than the large one for this specialist task.

The 6.5 Creedmoor was conceived for NRA matches which can stretch to 1000m, an infinitely more challenging task. The large rifle primer was found to more reliably ignite the charges of slow burning powder used to drive heavy, ballistically efficient projectiles to maximum velocity from long barrels.

Since introduction, both cartridges have been used for tasks far removed from their original design, both being popular in a number of target disciplines and the 6.5 Creedmoor as a hunting cartridge. So with both being used at close, medium and distant ranges their requirements have overlapped.

The Creedmoor has more availability in factory rifles so is being used for a lot of close and medium distance target events where the small rifle primer case may give better accuracy and Lapua has been proactive in introducing this case. I use Federal large rifle cases in my Silhouette rifle, mainly because I use AR2209 behind 139gr of Lapua Scenars in my 500m ram loads, but prefer Lapua small rifle cases in my Field and Position rifle as the maximum range is 200m and I'm using AR2206 and AR2208 behind 108 and 123gr Scenars. Testing has shown the RWS small rifle primers I use give me an edge in my

sitting post 200m loads and I'll take any edge I can get!

Greg Riemer

Q I'm learning the art of reloading and there's a lot of good information about but I'd like to learn how to load subsonic ammo for my 7.62x39mm rifle. Could you tell me how to achieve this using Hornady projectiles in 150gr (.312") and 125gr (.311"). Any information appreciated.

Jim, via email

A The 7.62x39mm Russian is not a round that generally lends itself to subsonic loading (less than 1100fps muzzle velocity). Be aware that simply reducing the powder charge below that recommended in your reloading manual is not a safe practice as there has to be a certain volume of powder in a cartridge case to ensure safe and consistent pressures. Above or below that volume and unsafe pressures are possible which could mean damage to your firearm and yourself.

Having said that, you could try a reduced powder charge of ADI's Trail Boss by the recommend method (*Australian Shooter*, December 2018 P.56) with your 150gr bullets and may be able to get the bullets down to subsonic velocities while maintaining safe pressures. I've calculated the safe starting load using Trail Boss is 6.6 grains (70 per cent of available volume in the case). It's safe to increase this load but do not go below this charge trying to chase a slower velocity.

A number of manufacturers supply 7.62x39 rifles fitted with .308" barrels rather than in .310-.311". If your rifle is one of those you could try a heavier .308" bullet such as the ones used in the 300 AAC Blackout cartridge that can be safely loaded to subsonic velocities using .308" calibre bullets between 200 and 220 grains weight. Even with these heavier bullets please heed the warnings on safe pressures.

Be aware also that heavier and longer bullets have to be seated further into the case which in turn affects how you measure the available space in the case from which to calculate your safe starting load. Remember a faster rifling twist rate will be required to stabilise the heavier bullet and a longer cartridge overall length may be an issue for your rifle's magazine.

Rod Pascoe



What you need to know for duck season

John McDougall

Duck hunting in Australia has been a cultural pursuit even before white settlement - the harvest of wild duck undertaken by the Aboriginal people who would throw their hunting sticks at large mobs of ducks then swim out to retrieve their booty.

When the British arrived they brought with them a far more effective method of hunting ducks - firearms - and seeing the abundance here was a means of providing for the table. Wild duck has always been viewed as a delicacy and remains so. Free from genetically modified foods and hormones, the birds are about as 'clean' as you can reap food from nature.

The seasons regulated in modern times are implemented for the purposes of conserving duck numbers as our forebears were a touch 'careless' in their management of wild duck. They operated without proper seasons that took into account

breeding and additionally the numbers of birds that can be hunted each year due to the 'boom and bust' drought interludes found in this country with its often extensive dry periods.

So today we have a highly standardised duck season that often jades hunters but generally, when decisions for seasons and bag limits are made on a sound scientific basis, there are no complaints, though hunters do come under political pressure from the 'green' faction and animal rights groups without consideration of the facts and where emotion is leading the charge.

Having obtained a shooter's licence it's now compulsory for aspiring hunters to undertake what's known as a Waterfowl Identification Test, run by each state's game management authority to assess the hunter's ability to distinguish between game and non-game species.

An application form must be filled out and

can usually be done online then the applicant is delegated a time and venue to sit the test. Cost is around \$45 and on passing you're given a Waterfowl Identification Test certificate which enables you to hunt and shoot waterfowl. All states have made the test compulsory before any hunter is allowed to shoot waterfowl and you need only sit it once.

Unlike most shotgun hunting in Australia the would-be duck shooter must use non-toxic shot such as steel, or 'soft iron' as it's sometimes known, which is compulsory for waterfowl hunting. While you can shoot rabbits, hares, foxes and other introduced game such as pheasant and partridge with lead shot, waterfowl hunting over wetlands and other waterways must be undertaken with steel shot, the only exception being in the destruction of waterfowl on a game permit in NSW during rice growing season.

Ballistically, lead and steel shot are quite



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What you need to know for duck season

different and steel shot generally requires a dedicated steel shot-proofed gun unless you're content to shoot smaller shot sizes, less than #3 shot (sizes 4, 5, 6 and 7). A steel shot-proofed shotgun costs anything from \$800 upwards starting with the very basic South American-made Boito.

There are various Turkish brands - Huglu, Yildiz and Radikal moving up to the ATA - then come Italian-made Bettinsoli and Franchi, before rising closer to the \$2000 mark with the Japanese Browning and Miroku models. Upwards from there we can sample a premium Italian Beretta, closer to the \$3000 price tag.

Most of these brands have choke tubes suited to steel shot use, remembering you're probably better off shooting steel shot modified and full choke just as you would for lead shot use, unless shooting less than 25m over decoys, in which case you'd use the more open chokes and possibly smaller shot sizes.

Ammunition brands vary in price and all are imported from either England, America or New Zealand. I've had good results using Eley, Gamebore, Remington and Winchester but have yet to try New Zealand Falcon loads despite hearing good reports. Velocities vary from 1450fps to 1700fps with the Remington loads lethal on ducks. Faster loads are suited to distant shooting and 'pass' shooting beside a wide river or open swamp where it may be

difficult to move closer to ducks, however slower loads at 1450fps are general all-rounders for decoys and closer shooting out to 35m.

When buying ammunition, whether for the opening weekend or the whole season, the rule of thumb is to go two sizes larger than you'd use for lead shot hunting. I prefer size 2 or 3 steel shot in my first barrel at more distant ducks and size 4 at closer ducks, say over decoys.

The principle is that larger and faster steel shot loads coupled with a tighter choke are used for further shots, and smaller more open chokes for closer shots on waterfowl. If using a multi-choke or interchangeable choke tube gun, I recommend greasing the choke tubes before inserting and taking your choke tube spanner with you to check their tightness. And only ever check choke tubes and their tension when the gun is unloaded.

Now you may want to consider clothing. Your local disposal store will stock a variety of army camo gear while specialist manufacturers such as New Zealand firm Ridgeline have some great camo kit, both lightweight and heavy duty, for all types of duck hunting. I wear a set of Ridgeline over-pants and lightweight over-top as well as some polar fleece for colder hunting conditions such as those found in Tasmania.

Something else to consider are waders. There are fancy but expensive neoprene



waders from the US which are highly serviceable, warm and waterproof but you won't get much change out of \$400-\$500 depending on what you're after. I have two pairs of A.S. Horne waders I'm happy with, which can be custom-made and you're supporting an Australian manufacturer.

I choose thigh waders for shallow water and full-length for waist-high water and am done with cheap waders from disposal stores or fishing outlets as they don't last and holes start to appear soon after you





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What you need to know for duck season

start wearing them. That's one of the bonuses of Horne waders - they can be returned for professional repair and the vinyl they're made from is highly serviceable, lasting many years. As a note of warning I suggest waders are not worn in a boat as, if the boat happens to upturn, waders have a tendency to upturn the wearer as they fill with air and keep you upside down.

With the reduction in bag limits I've taken to using a cartridge belt and shooting jacket combination for holding shells. Remember to keep steel shot loads dry as, if they become wet, there's a chance of them rusting and turning into a solid clump and firing such ammunition will destroy your shotgun.

Decoys are useful for attracting ducks as is the skilled hunter who can master a duck caller, but with so many decoy brands and callers on the market you must learn how to use them properly - you want to attract ducks, not scare them off.

Statutory requirements vary from state to state. Legislative bodies such as Game



State by state: The 2019 duck hunting season

	Victoria	South Australia	Tasmania
Season opening weekend	March 16-May19	March 16-June 30	March 9-June 10
Start times	9am Saturday, 8am Sunday, hunting ceases 30 mins after sunset	15mins before sunrise both days, hunting ceases 30 mins after sunset	30mins before sunrise both days, hunting ceases 30 mins after sunset
Start times rest of season	30 mins before sunrise to 30 mins after sunset	Same as opening weekend	Same as opening weekend
Opening weekend bag limit	Four game ducks per day	Eight game ducks per day	Ten game ducks per day
Rest of season bag limit	Five game ducks per day	Eight game ducks per day	Ten game ducks per day
Permitted species	Mountain Duck, Chestnut Teal, Grey Teal, Pacific Black, Pink-eared, Wood Duck, Hardhead	Pacific Black, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Wood Duck, Pink-eared, Hardhead, Mountain Duck	Pacific Black, Grey Teal, Chestnut Teal, Mountain Duck, Wood Duck
Prohibited species	Blue-winged Shoveler	Blue-winged Shoveler	Blue-winged Shoveler, Hardhead, Pink-eared, Plumed Tree Duck
Hunters MUST	Immediately retrieve all duck shot and salvage at least the breast meat of duck they harvest	Immediately retrieve all downed birds as they are shot	Immediately retrieve all downed birds as they are shot
Drones	No use of aircraft or drones	No use of aircraft or drones	No use of aircraft or drones
Electronic callers	Not prohibited	Not prohibited	Prohibited
Artificial decoys	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Retrieving dogs	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted

Management Authority in Victoria put postings on their website to indicate what public game waters are open or closed and don't forget that owning a shooter's licence and WIT certificate does not entitle you to shoot freely on private waters - you must have permission, preferably in writing.

Please refer to the chart for an indication of the present situation for duck hunting in the states of Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. The Northern Territory also has a duck season but much later in the year.

As a further reference and update, including the various hunting codes of practice, check the website from each state. Hunters' handbooks are also issued by the states which highlight any changes and expand on this basic reference resource. Happy hunting!

• Further information: Victoria - Customer Service Centre 136 186 gma.vic.gov.au; South Australia - Fauna Permit Unit (08) 8124 4972 environment.sa.gov.au; Tasmania - Game Services Tasmania (03) 6777 2054 dpipwe.tas.gov.au. ●



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Talbot on introducing juniors to shooting

Communications Officer Sam Talbot



Few sports are as age-inclusive as shooting. Every day, shooting events are held with competitors from their early teens all the way through to their 60s, 70s and beyond. Young people in particular can gain a lot from time spent at the range as the sport requires dedication, concentration and consistency while teaching responsibility and developing maturity in young shooters.

A recent event, sponsored by SSAA National and with volunteers provided by SSAA SA is a great example of introducing juniors to our sport.

The 2019 Australian Scout Jamboree

Almost every competition has a category for shooters at U-15 and U-18 level and many clubs around Australia cater solely to junior shooters. But nothing quite compares

to the shooting range set up for the 2019 Australian Scouts Jamboree held in the tiny South Australian town of Tailem Bend in January.

More than 10,000 scouts aged between 11 and 14 travelled from all over the world to take part. The scouts had about 150 activities to choose from yet, despite the huge variety, every morning brought a stampeding herd towards the shooting range. As I arrived, numerous scouts were waiting for the 9am start, many of them shooting for the first time and others hoping to earn a much sought-after 'Bang' badge.

Building the range

Long before anyone arrived at the Jamboree much effort went into putting together the purpose-built range, designed by SSAA (SA) in less than a month, including police



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Talbot on introducing juniors to shooting

approval. The 20m range had 18 lanes of fire complete with baffling and targets on a wall of hay bales, followed by one metre of solid sand then more hay bales.

The range was operated by more than 30 SSAA volunteers who worked tirelessly throughout the 10-day event, allowing thousands of scouts to shoot much of the 75,000 rounds of ammunition. When I arrived on the morning of the fifth day more than 1250 juniors had used the range.

The competition

On arrival, each group of scouts was given a safety briefing where they answered questions on different parts of a rifle and general safety precautions. Following the briefing they could decide if they still wanted to shoot and I did see one opt out (fair enough), though she happily watched her fellow scouts shoot. As one group was shooting another was given the safety briefing before shooting, and the process was repeated throughout the day.

The course of fire was 20 shots at a reactive knock-down target, all built by SSAA (SA) volunteers, followed by five shots at a paper target. The best grouping on the paper target from each detail was awarded a 'Bang' badge exclusive to the Jamboree, something which proved extremely popular and created much buzz about what it took to earn it.

Rifles used were the classic CZ 452 fitted with a scope set to 4x power and given their availability, low-cost and ease of use, you can't go wrong introducing juniors to shooting with a .22 rifle. Before each scout reached the line of fire, two 10-bullet and one 5-bullet magazine were loaded and ready to go, meaning no down time. I believe having a clear and organised process for juniors at the line of fire maximises their chances of success and goes a long way to ensuring they enjoy the experience.



Scouts line up ready to go inside.



Hay bales created a very cosy range.

My performance

One detail had 17 shooters so I seized my chance to take part despite being neither a scout nor junior shooter. But as someone with way more experience than my competitors I fancied my chances of topping the detail and winning my own 'Bang' badge.

You'll be happy to know I comfortably hit all targets and shot a respectable group even if it was a little larger than ideal. That proved my downfall as there was one grouping better than mine and all I can say is well done to the scout who beat me and I hope they consider taking up shooting as a sport.



Scouts eagerly lining up outside the 'Bang' section before the day got started.

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Scouts pay close attention during the safety briefing.

Badges aside though, my real challenge for the day was coaching and helping juniors try shooting for the first time, as junior shooting is as much about experienced shooters introducing the next generation to the sport as it is about youngsters shooting.

Coaching a junior

One of the many coaches on the day was Tabetha 'The Big Kahuna' Wilks who flew in from SSAA Port Lincoln to be part of the fun. Tabetha took me under her wing and together we worked with Kate a scout who'd never shot before.

Scouts were given a number so they knew which lane was theirs and one thing I was impressed by was how well the



SSAA SA President David Handyside gives a morning brief and pep talk.

coaches introduced themselves and immediately struck a bond with every youngster who came through. Kate sounded a little nervous but was composed despite having never fired a gun and as Tabetha recapped the safety rules, Kate quickly settled in and had no problem with the scope.

Luckily for me Kate was a bit of a natural and her first shot easily toppled the metal target. With the first shot out of the way I could tell she was much more confident and almost wondering what all the fuss was about. As Kate continued shooting, Tabetha gave her more and more responsibility, stepping back to let her cycle the bolt and eventually insert her own magazine.

My main contribution was acting as Kate's personal cheerleader as she finished with a very respectable grouping and was over the moon to tell her mum: "I fired a gun!" She reckoned her grouping resembled a "vicious version of a hole puncher" which is a pretty good way of putting it. Seeing her joy in completing the 25 shots



Juniors receive their paper targets and find out who has earned a 'Bang' badge.

and having a souvenir target to take home was quite rewarding and I can see why so many SSAA volunteers give up their time to help juniors.

In fact all the volunteers did an incredible job as evidenced by the many tight groupings and constant 'ping' of metal targets being toppled. And while all the coaches were excellent, some juniors had more than they probably realised through the coaching of nine-time Olympic gold medallist Libby Kosmala. While Libby still coaches Air Rifle at a very high level, she happily travelled to the Jamboree to pass on her expertise to many first-timers.

Success of the event

I believe much of the success was due to



Young at heart: Sam's target and the SSAA badge.



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Talbot on introducing juniors to shooting

the preparation and straightforwardness of the set-up. Scouts came in, had their safety talk, collected ear plugs and glasses and went to a lane where their coach met them and was by their side the whole time. The rifles and ammunition were always ready to go and the youngster was able to concentrate solely on shooting.

Once shooting was completed they collected their paper targets along with some SSAA pamphlets, a badge and the option to take some empty brass with them (a popular offer but only available to those not flying home).

For new shooters I think 20 shots followed by a five-shot grouping is about right to get used to firing a rifle for the first time. Some people may see that as too short but it's important to remember new shooters can tire from even just a few shots. And erring on the side of too little makes novices keen to come back as opposed to being worn out, potentially having them subconsciously connect shooting with feeling tired and overwhelmed.

The importance and value in exposing thousands of youngsters to the sport can't be overstated. In total, almost 2500 scouts got to try their hand at shooting, all of

whom can tell their family and friends what a positive experience it was.

Getting involved

Most SSAA disciplines have a junior component with youngsters usually separated into two categories - those up to 15 years and those from 15 to 18. But there's quite a barrier for juniors with parents who don't shoot or who don't shoot a discipline the junior is interested in. Despite that there are many SSAA clubs and programs that welcome junior shooters and will let them have a go - it may just be a question of finding them!

For SSAA adult members who'd like to get involved in junior shooting, doing so is usually as simple as asking at your club or helping organise a come-and-try day. Of course, there's also the less formal approach of taking a junior to the range and letting them have a go which can be just as rewarding. I remember fondly the time I spent as a teenager shooting clay targets as a family.

Conclusion

Sports shooting requires dedication, concentration, consistency and, above all else, practice. These are just some of the life



Sam has a shot with coach Steve Spellman.

skills juniors can develop by taking part in sports shooting and align closely with many of the values held by Scouts Australia. Junior shooters can build a lot of self-esteem from being trusted around firearms. ●

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The Savage A22R repeating rifle

Royce Wilson

Rimfire rifles come in all shapes and sizes with something on the market for everyone. Most of us started shooting with a .22 in our youth and whether it's a beloved favourite like the Brno Model 2, the highly-regarded Henry Model 1 lever-action or classic single-shot Lithgow 1A, many have a special place in our hearts (and gun safes) for a reliable .22 rifle.

While we're all broadly familiar with bolt, lever and pump-action .22s, the latest offering from Savage is something different - a lever release rifle. When the gun is fired the recoil opens the action and ejects the spent round. A catch holds the action open and the gun cannot be fired again until the user manually operates the lever just forward of the trigger, which closes the action and feeds a round into the chamber, readying the rifle for the next shot. From a safety perspective this is marvellous - it's immediately clear if the gun is loaded or not and if there's a round in the magazine.

Lever release designs have been around for more than a century - the Pieper-Bayard single-shot .22 rifle was being made before

World War One using the principle - and although the draft fell out of favour for a long time it's now making a reappearance, the A22R the most recent incarnation of the venerable idea.

The magazine is a 10-round rotary-style affair similar to that found in the Ruger American .22 rifle. While initially seeming a bit complicated for a rimfire rifle, the design works well and allows for 10 rounds to be held in a magazine flush in the stock - aesthetically pleasing while meaning one less thing to potentially catch on branches and brush when out in the field.

The rifle looks good and handles well but those are secondary to the important questions for the discerning shooter, namely, is it accurate and is it reliable? Yes on both counts.

Importer Nioa and Ipswich gunshop Queensland Shooters Supplies arranged for the SSAA to put the Savage A22R, chambered in .22LR, to the test to see how it would perform both on the range and in the field.

The A22R is lightweight, weighing in at 2.26kg and shoulders well, although I found

the synthetic stock a touch shorter than was ideal for me. It soon becomes apparent the lever release requires quite a stiff pull to activate and can't be reached with the trigger finger without taking it out of the triggerguard (and away from the trigger to do so).

However, what the A22R does is allow the shooter to maintain a sight picture for subsequent shots - the review rifle was fitted with a Leupold VX Freedom 3-9x40 sight and the combination proved a good one indeed.

The action has the big advantage of not needing any space to operate. For example, a bolt-action requires the user to have elbow room to move their arm to operate the bolt, a lever-action entails clearance under the rifle to operate the lever, and pump action rifles need the user to move their support arm to work the action.

The lever release of the A22R means the shooter can hold the rifle on target and move their hand - as opposed to their whole arm - to reload the gun, ready for the next shot with the sight picture retained. The rifle would be great for shooting from



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The Savage A22R repeating rifle

a prone position or enclosed space such as from a ute or 4WD cab.

We all know .22 rifles tend to have favourites when it comes to ammunition, as well as the usefulness of heeding the advice given to most new gun owners to simply obtain as wide a variety of .22 ammo as you can and see how it goes.

With this in mind, I put the A22R through its paces with a variety of ammunition including CCI subsonic, Mini-Magnum and Velocitor rounds, Eley subsonic and high velocity hollow-point rounds, Federal Premium Hunter Match ammunition, Winchester Bushman rounds and an assortment of .22 rounds from the 'miscellaneous' box in the ammunition locker.

The importers claim in advertising the A22R will function correctly with subsonic ammunition and I confirmed this - both Eley subsonic and CCI subsonic ammunition worked flawlessly in the rifle, activating the action the same as standard rounds and proving highly accurate too.

Of the hunting rounds tested, the Federal Premium Hunter Match performed most accurately at 25m on the range, with CCI Mini-Mag close behind. Remington target rounds were the most accurate overall, while of the subsonic ammunition the Eley was most consistent.



The A22R action's design means you'll see at a glance (or by feeling) if there's a live round in the chamber.

It should be noted that all commercial hunting ammunition tested produced consistent and small groups - they'd all fit an area the size of a 10c piece - although the subsonic rounds had a lower point of impact which would need to be compensated for when sighting the rifle on a target.

But I also tested the A22R with some Winchester .22 Long Z rounds which didn't function properly, failing to generate enough recoil to open the action, meaning it had to be cocked manually. These were the only rounds that didn't behave appropriately in

the gun, every other cartridge type feeding, firing, extracting, ejecting and locking the action open with no issues whatsoever.

A number of SSAA ranges have 'single round loading only' rules, meaning the magazine can't be loaded and used for casual shooting. This makes it difficult to sight in or practise with some types of rifle, but the design of this one meant it could be used fairly well under these conditions.

The magazine in the Savage A22R came out easily, falling into my hand under its own weight when released, and clicked



The magazine detaches with no trouble and is easy to re-insert.

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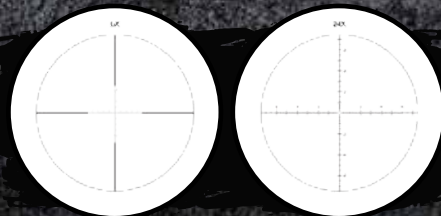
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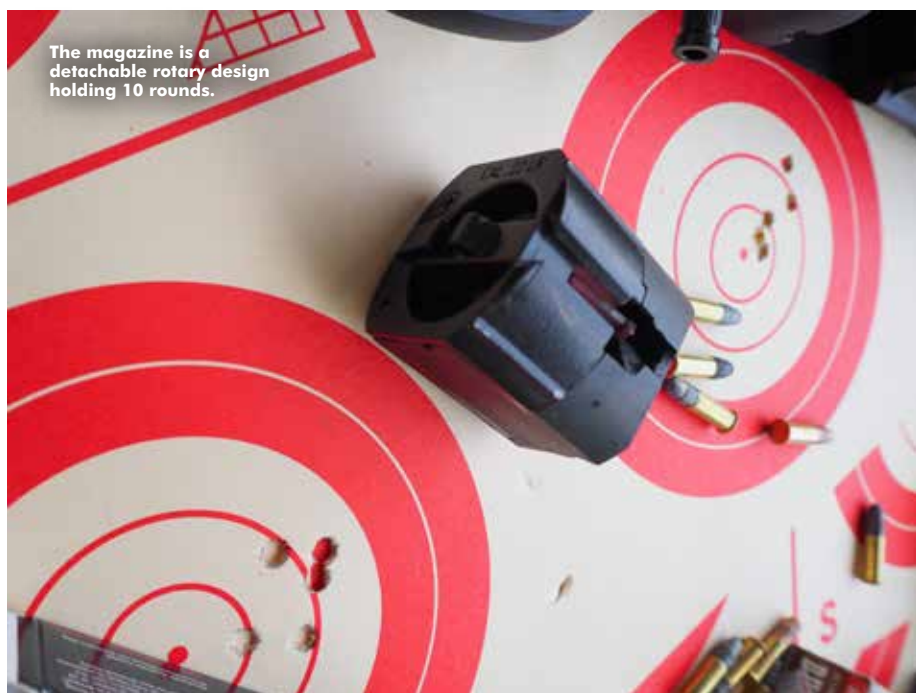
The Savage A22R repeating rifle

home securely when replaced. Of course, just because a rifle works well on the range doesn't mean it will give a good account of itself in the field - after all, you wouldn't take an Omark Model 44 hunting as a matter of course - so I headed out with the A22R to a property in western Queensland in search of rabbits and foxes.

The A22R impressed me greatly, its light weight meaning it was almost no encumbrance at all when carried on a shoulder sling and it came to my shoulder quickly when readied, pointed well and handled nicely.

Spotting a rabbit at about 40m I fired a shot which just missed but was able to operate the lever release, retain the sight picture and put the subsequent round cleanly into the rabbit's head. What I also liked was that the action locking open between shots meant I could clearly see - and feel, at night - the action was open and the ease of removing the magazine was great for safely negotiating obstacles such as fences.

While loading the rotary magazine in lowlight conditions can be a bit fiddly, I couldn't see any reason why changing magazines in the field would present any problems and indeed, for the higher volume shooter, a spare magazine could well be



a worthwhile investment. The trigger was not ideal for me, even with Savage's AccuTrigger adjustable trigger feature. Out of the box I found it extremely heavy and even after fiddling to move it down to

something lighter and more useful, I felt it lacked the crispness I'd have liked, particularly for range use.

While the review rifle was a .22LR, the A22R is also available in .22 Magnum and .17HMR calibres and I see no reason why they wouldn't be more or less identical from a general operation, handling and shooter experience perspective.

While this isn't a precision target shooting rifle - it's accurate but you won't see it at the Olympics - it's a great plinking rifle and bunny-buster, so if you're looking at your gun safe and thinking there's room for a new .22, the Savage A22R has a lot to offer and is well worth checking out.

• *The Savage A22R is a Category A firearm in Queensland. Shooters in other states are advised to check with their equivalent of the Police Weapons Licensing Branch for clarification on the rifle's classification in their area.*



Specifications

Calibre: .22LR (also available in .22 Magnum and .17HMR)

Action: Lever release

Magazine: 10-round detachable rotary

Weight: 2.26kg

Barrel length: 20" (50.8cm)

Sights: Weaver scope base

Price: \$720-\$750



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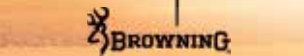
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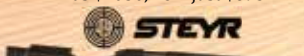
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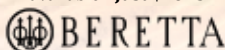
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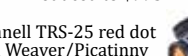
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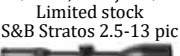


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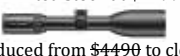
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Go hunting:

What the novice should know

Sam Garro



It's important to study the anatomy of animals for proper shot placement.

As the SSAA membership number continues to soar, more and more people are discovering the shooting sports and looking to get into the recreation of hunting. What follows is an overview of what you must consider if you are one of that number. Consensus on the appropriate rifle for the intended game or purpose varies and I'm not going to try and change anyone's perspective or opinion on the subject, rather convey what I've experienced in a lifetime of shooting for a better outcome and those starting out.

The right firearm

Your chosen firearm should feel balanced, pleasant to handle both in recoil and weight and shoulder comfortably, in time feeling

like an extension of your arm. While a big game rifle for instance, such as a 416 Rigby or 500 NE is the appropriate medicine for an Asiatic water buffalo or Cape buffalo, if such a weighty firearm interferes or is too heavy to handle smoothly, it could prove dangerous and costly in more ways than one. Choosing a lesser calibre rifle such as a 9.3x62mm or 375 H&H with gentler recoil and appropriate bullet would be the more sensible approach.

Action and barrel

For high velocity, flat-shooting calibre rifles, bedding the action and floating the barrel will further assist in improving accuracy. Some rifles by makers such as Weatherby, Remington, Sako, Schultz & Larsen and

others come with the action bedded and barrel floated, which is a plus.

Bullet match

Oddly enough, you can have four different makes of .30-06 Springfield rifles and for the exercise they all shoot factory 150gr bullets. After sighting-in each will satisfactorily print on paper but may also prefer a particular brand of bullet to achieve a tighter grouping. Hence when trialling a rifle for the first time or if not satisfied with the accuracy, try a few different brands of bullets then stick to the one or ones that provide the best result.

Even though they're all the same calibre and projectile weight, miniscule discrepancies in chambers from one maker to another



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Go hunting: What the novice should know

and varying bullet components and design can make a difference.

Bases and rings

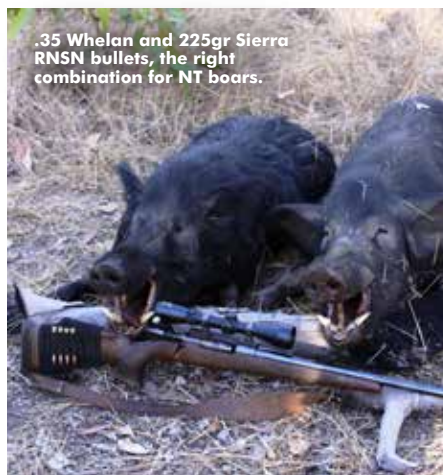
Rings, as with bases, come in numerous configurations, alloy or steel, normally flat black or gloss or silver, size and height from low to high and extra high depending on the dimension of the scope objective lens. Bases or mount type range from dovetail, swivel, Picatinny rail or weaver-type and more to quick detachable.

A rear windage adjustment base provides an advantage where no further actual scope tweaking is available. Usually the lower the scope sits the better. While there are many makes and types on the market, to avoid possible disappointment later it pays to use a quality brand of bases and rings such as Leupold, Talley, Warne, Sako, Tikka and the like, particularly where heavy recoil is a factor and the value of your scope is considerable.

Scope type

A scope, apart from the reticle type, clarity and related characteristic, should be chosen for the particular rifle calibre, intended range or distance use and game hunted. A rimfire .22LR rifle, for instance, seldom requires more than a fixed 4-power scope but larger variable scopes are used particularly where the eyesight is not what it used to be and you want the subject to appear larger. For long-distance shooting at 200m and beyond, scopes starting at 3-9 power and above are appropriate, bearing in mind the greater the power beyond 3-9 the steadier the rifle needs to be held.

In the case of heavy calibre game rifles



Hunting rifles (top to bottom) .338WM Schultz & Larsen for bulky sambar deer, .30-06 Sako A111 for medium to large game, 6mm Schultz & Larsen for medium game and Brno 2 .22LR for rabbits.

such as a .458 Win Mag or .470 NE on buffalo at close to medium range, at a standing or moving target, a lower powered scope of 1.5-5 with good eye relief would be recommended. While a better quality scope may cost a few extra dollars it's worth it in the long term.

Mounting and sighting-in

A scope should initially be mounted loosely before tightening securely to ensure proper eye relief distance and there are no black shadows or sections when shouldering the firearm and peering through the scope. Also adjust the end eyepiece as everyone's eyesight varies. It's important to equally tighten the base and ring screws but not over tighten. Arranging the mounting, fitting and bore-sighting through a gunshop or dealer at a small cost can make the whole process a lot easier as they'll have the components and tools for the job.

A target at 20-25m to sight-in a rifle may seem very close but if your scope is out, at 100m you can miss the mark altogether. Focus on placing the bullets to print on or close to the vertical line of the cross-hair on the target then adjust up or down. Once satisfied with the bullet grouping, move the target out 50-75m, adjust as required and repeat the process to the desired distance.

If travelling on long journeys by car, particularly over rough terrain or by air, it's a good idea to check your rifle is shooting true before venturing out. A hard knock can offset a scope and different atmospheric



Floating the barrel and bedding the action for improved accuracy.



The King

Meeting him was always an extraordinary experience for me, whether in the mating season when his imposing looks left no doubt in the minds of his rivals who they were dealing with, or in his regular winter habitat, where his mere presence was enough to force the other stags to respect him.

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Go hunting: What the novice should know

conditions and latitudes such as in the tropics or cold mountainous regions can also affect accuracy. Many a proud know-it-all rifle owner has come unstuck by not taking suitable precautions or failing to listen to a guide's advice.

Recoil

A quality rubber recoil pad, factory-fitted, simple slip-ons or professionally fitted all help in lessening recoil. Cross-bolts to strengthen the timber stock and a heavier stock to better handle the recoil for some of the sharper and harder kicking medium bore calibres can also make a difference.

Reloading

These days, rifles are built to manage most factory-made ammunition with the projectile seated back sufficiently to handle the actions of the various rifle brands that may vary to some degree in action configuration and magazine length.

Reloading can cater to further refinement and consistent accuracy provided you have the knowledge and are familiar with the process. When brass cases are first fired they're chamber sized to that particular rifle requiring from then to be shoulder or full-length sized. Learning from an experienced shooter and manuals on the subject greatly assist.

Controlling emotions

I've seen on a number of occasions precision shooters at the range plinking the bullseyes with monotonous regularity, yet when it came to their first field outing on deer or other similar game they missed



the easiest of shots - and not just once. Excitement, hesitation, overconfidence, pulling the trigger or rushing the shot, overthinking a shot, not taking the right shooting position or stance by using available rests such as a tree or log, overawed by the size of the trophy animal, taking

too long to take the shot are some of the emotions and considerations faced.

Time and experience are great teachers. Mistakes and disappointments should be lessons learnt and remembered for next time. Calmness, although difficult to control especially when confronted with a trophy animal, a steady head and taking a couple of deep breaths before squeezing the trigger will yield results.

Practice, practice, practice

The adage 'practice makes perfect' couldn't be more true. Some of the best writers and hunters have documented the lengths they went to achieve proficient shooting skills.

Before a safari or significant hunt they'd practise regularly under controlled and field conditions, shooting still and moving targets from different stances and positions using various types of man-made and natural rests, shooting downhill and uphill, from behind assorted types of cover and in different weather conditions. With effort and application a hunter's skills can be enhanced accordingly.

Shot placement

Whether targeting small, medium or large game, understanding the anatomy of the animal being hunted and its vitals





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Go hunting: What the novice should know

for a humane kill is ethical and essential. A wounded animal like an Asiatic water buffalo pumped with adrenalin from a badly placed shot can have disastrous consequences.

WDM 'Karamojo' Bell in Africa in the early 1900s successfully used a .275 Rigby M98 on pachyderm, which was arguably and in many a big game hunter's opinion an under-powered calibre for the task. However, because of his understanding and physical study of the animal's anatomy, in particular the skull, he was able to achieve and repeat one-shot kills.

Back yourself

Under optimal conditions where the game is unaware of your presence and you have the advantage of distance and cover, you can prepare for a steady, calculated shot.

Alternatively, when you only have a small window of opportunity where part of a deer is visible through tangled growth or a tight stand of trees, hold steady until parts of the vitals are presented, back yourself and take the shot, knowing from your days practising at the range the task is achievable. ●

Sam switches to kneeling as he lines up another rabbit.



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Sight radius: 220mm
Adjustment click: 5mm



SP

Mechanical Trigger

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Height: 140mm
Width: 49mm
Overall length: 295mm
Total weight: SP 1095g
Action: Semi-auto
Barrel length: 120mm
Barrel rifling: 6D x 450mm
Sight radius: 220mm
Adjustment click: 5mm



HP

Mechanical Trigger

Calibre: .32 S&W
Height: 140mm
Width: 49mm
Overall length: 295mm
Total weight: HP 1130g
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It's Vegas *and it's show time*

Thomas Tabor in Las Vegas

The gambling magnet that is Las Vegas, Nevada not only attracts card sharps, partiers, holidaymakers and entertainers. For one week a year in January the bright lights of the Vegas Strip focus on those who love everything shooting, hunting and outdoor activities and that's when the US SHOT Show, hosted and managed by the National Shooting Sports Association (NSSF), takes centre stage at the Sands Expo Centre.

While not open to the general public or children under 16, the show has become the number one attraction for outdoor-related businesses worldwide. For many exhibitors

it provides the best opportunity to showcase their wares, many of which will never have been seen by the public, and for guys like me who write about such things the show becomes an intoxicating and addictive drawcard.

But seeing new products for the first time is only a fraction of the benefits enjoyed by attendees - being able to meet face-to-face the people behind them is equally important. Whether your interest is in firearms, ammunition, handloading, optics, safety equipment, firing range gear, gunstocks, firearms parts, camping equipment, cutlery, archery or even the processes associated with making those items, this show is the place to be. There's even a vast area dedicated to the needs of the world's police and military organisations, displaying all the specialised equipment they need and use.

Over the years the SHOT Show has become the end-all hub and meeting point for retailers, wholesalers and associated media. It's here that retailers have a chance to strike deals with manufacturers and suppliers in order to stock their shelves for the coming year.

And through programs including a wide

variety of seminars, workshops and press conferences intended to help educate and train those individuals, everyone comes out the other end better for it. There's even a two-day industry-only event for those who use or produce the tools, machinery and materials in their businesses.

Another initiative, the 'Law Enforcement Education Program', focuses on the protection measures and tactical execution employed by those working in the law and order businesses. And in a similar education-based program - the 'Shot University' - the challenges of retail businesses and shooting range programs are addressed.

SHOT Expo past and present

The first SHOT Show was held in St. Louis, Missouri in 1979 and can only be described as meagre when compared to the 2019 version. Only 5600 participants and 290 exhibitors attended and the entire show covered just 145sq/m. Thereafter, the show visited various cities for years before putting down roots in its current location at the Sands Expo Centre in 2010. As years passed it grew phenomenally in both popularity and size and today is among the top 20 trade shows in the US.





The decision to locate to the Sands was based on its ability to handle huge crowds, while the Vegas Strip provides offsite entertainment for attendees and their families. I've heard it said that changes are in the wind though. Next year a substantial amount of floor space may be added at the MGM Grand to accommodate additional exhibitors and in 2021 new exhibit space could also be added at Caesars Palace.

Putting in the hard yards

In recent years the event has typically hosted 60,000 to 64,000 exhibitors and attendees, some years even exceeding those numbers, and the 2019 show featured more than 2100 exhibitors housed in 58,500sq/m, about the equivalent of 11 football fields. And if that's not enough to put blisters on your feet just thinking about it, consider this: If you walked past each booth just once, you could devote only 22 seconds to each or you'd run out of

time. And by walking past only the booths in the main exhibit floors once, you'd have covered more than 19km and that doesn't include exhibits on the second floor or the new 2019 Pop-Up Preview area.

Industrial Day at the Range

For obvious safety reasons, live-fire events are not practical nor are they allowed on the showroom floor. Nevertheless, in many cases it is advantageous for attendees to have a chance to try some of the new firearms and other equipment in an outdoor setting, and that's where the 14th annual Industrial Day at the Range came into play.

While the show typically opens on Tuesday and runs until Friday, the Boulder Rifle & Pistol Club opens its doors on the Monday for invited guests to enjoy hands-on experience with some of the new products. Once known as 'Media Day' and only open to writers, a few years ago organisers

Franchi's latest addition: The Instinct



All models of Franchi's Instinct over-and-unders were on display.

I HAVE A special fondness for Franchi shotguns as years ago I shot my best Trap scores with a break-open single barrel Franchi Trap gun. So when I saw the company was promoting its new Instinct line of over-and-unders at the SHOT Show I had to have a closer look. And sure enough the Instinct was a showroom floor stopper.

There are four sub-models to select from: L, SL, LX and Sporting II. Most popular gauges are available though not all models include every gauge. Last year they even made the Model SL available in the increasingly popular 16-gauge.

All models come with screw-in interchangeable choke tubes and walnut stock. The L Model has a case-coloured receiver and A Grade walnut; the SL a silver receiver and AA Grade walnut; the Sporting II comes with silver receiver and A Grade walnut; and the top of the line deluxe Model LX is adorned with a case-coloured receiver which has been embellished with gold inlays and comes with AA walnut stock. RRP varies with the model, but run about \$1809 up to \$2785. franchi.com



Franchi's Instinct LX comes with a beautiful gold inlaid receiver.



The products centre affords attendees the first glimpse of new items.
© National Shooting Sports Foundation Inc.

It's Vegas and it's show time



The showroom floor is always a busy place.



There are always exciting displays to explore.

expanded the invitations to include product buyers and renamed it 'Industrial Day at the Range'. Attendance is by recommendation and invitation only and limited to 1700 places.

Invitees have a chance to fire many of the latest firearms and participate in activities and numerous pistol, rifle and shotgun ranges are available as well as booths offering information on the products. There are plenty of opportunities to test drive off-road

trucks, shoot a crossbow, try knife throwing and watch an attack dog demonstration by police and military personnel.

A few years ago I took my one-and-only chance to fire a genuine Gatling gun, I'm ashamed to say not with a great deal of accuracy, but it was huge fun and a truly memorable experience. And there are always openings to try fully automatic weapons, something you probably will never do anywhere else. And having a real love of

shotgun shooting, I'm always hanging around the various clay pigeon throwers with a small gauge side-by-side or over-and-under in my hand.

The 2019 version

I can't claim to have attended every show since that first one in St. Louis, having been to a little over a dozen, but for those I have attended I've enjoyed them immensely and have made many new friends in the process.



During Industrial Day attendees can usually shoot any firearm on display.

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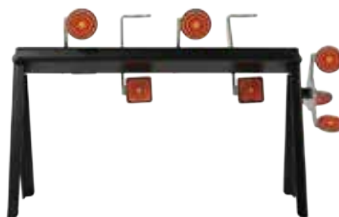
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It's Vegas and it's show time

Obviously there are way too many new products showcased than can be covered here, but if you like to handload your own ammunition you might find the new *Lyman 50th Edition Long Range Precision Rifle Reloading Handbook* or *Speer's Handloading Manual No.15* to your liking.

Rio Ammunition has a new eco-friendly shotshell which comes with a dissolvable and biodegradable wad and for those with a special fondness for the .17 Mach 2, like me, who have been unable to find ammunition, CCI is once again loading that cartridge with its new VNT 17gr bullets.

Mexican ammunition maker Aguila is now offering ammo once considered obsolete in 5mm Remington rimfire, and the same company is producing a shortened version of the 12-gauge shotshell called the MiniShell which is just 1¾" long. Winchester was showcasing its new .350 Legend cartridge which would make a great round for pigs, while Remington has several new rifle choices to select from including a lightweight Model 7 SS HS Precision and



Australia's own Kakadu clothing manufacturer had a booth.

Better game meat with Tenderbuck



ONE OF THE more interesting products I found was a unique game meat processing system called Tenderbuck. This is a simple and safe device which results in more quality steak meat and less meat destined for sausage casings. The same Tenderbuck Electrostimulator has been assisting commercial processors of wild meat for 14 years but has only now been made available to individual hunters.

The system works in two ways to improve overall quality of the meat. It first encourages a more thorough and complete bleed-out of the animal which results in a milder-tasting meat and longer shelf life. Secondly, the meat is tenderized by as much as 40-60 per cent more than non-stimulated processing.

Operation is simple with just two buttons controlling the process. Shortly after the kill you simply connect the two 1.8m cables to each end of the carcass followed by activating the system. Ninety seconds later the Tenderbuck system shuts down automatically and you're done.

Weighing less than 1.6kg the unit is easily portable in the field and comes with a rechargeable internal battery that can hold a charge for months and has enough power to treat multiple animals on a single charge. tenderbuck.com

Model 783 HBT sporting a heavier 16.5" barrel and with a Picatinny rail and over-sized bolt.

Norma is offering a new bullet, the BondStrike Extreme Long Range, which incorporates a unique bonding technology and state-of-the-art design, and there's a wealth of new technology protective eye and ear wear, clothing and footwear, lubricants and gun cleaning products. ●



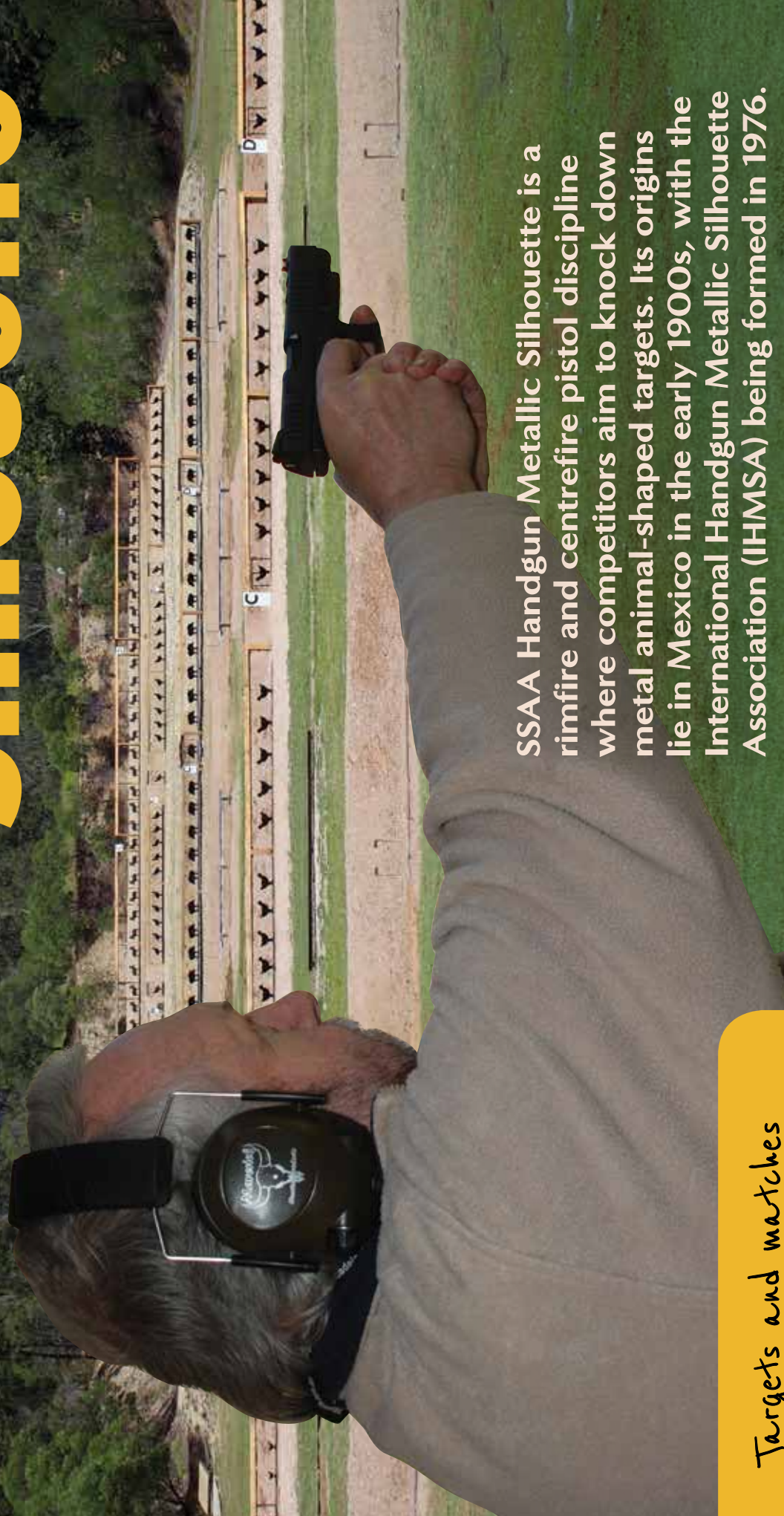
Winchester's shotgun range was kept busy.

Field Rifle, 3-Positional, Scoped Air Rifle and NRA Any Sight

Participation in SSAA Field Rifle, 3-Positional, Scoped Air Rifle and NRA Any Sight events improve the hunter's marksmanship under rifle range conditions and shows them the capabilities and limitations of their equipment. Introduction can be through Air Rifle or Rimfire matches, moving on to the more demanding 3-Positional matches up to the higher powered Centrefire events.



Handgun Metallic Silhouette



SSAA Handgun Metallic Silhouette is a rimfire and centrefire pistol discipline where competitors aim to knock down metal animal-shaped targets. Its origins lie in Mexico in the early 1900s, with the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association (IHMSA) being formed in 1976.

0
Targets are fired from left to right in two-minute stages, with a group of five targets (called a 'bank') per stage.

Big Bore matches use centrefire handguns to knock down the almost life-sized targets, which are chickens at 50m, pigs at 100m, turkeys at 150m and rams at 200m. The matches are broken up into four main categories.

Smallbore matches use rimfire handguns to knock down chickens at 25m, pigs at 50m, turkeys at 75m and rams at 100m. The targets are scaled down to three-eighths of full size, making this match more difficult compared to Big Bore. Smallbore is conducted with .22 Long Rifle ammunition, in four main categories.

Field Pistol is a centrefire match available to clubs with a range limited to 100m. These targets are scaled down to half-size and include two categories fired from the standing position.

Firearms and categories

Production category handguns must be used complete in form, finish and mechanical function as manufactured. The Revolver category allows a revolver which also meets the Production category rules. The handgun must be loaded with five rounds and fired as a revolver. The Standing category must utilise one or both hands from a standing position with a Production-class handgun, which may be a single-shot, revolver or self-loader. In the Unlimited categories, the shooter's imagination can practically run wild with few restrictions including a barrel length and sight radius of 15", and 2.7kg maximum weight.

Getting started

Contact your SSAA state or territory office to find the nearest range that conducts the match. However, 200m handgun ranges are not common, so you might start with a club that shoots the 50m match.



Field Rifle

This is a Rimfire and Centrefire rifle shoot designed around the four most used field shooting positions shot over 25, 50, 100 and 200m distances. Centrefire field rifles may be of any calibre and weigh no more than 5.5kg including accessories. Rimfire field rifles must be .22LR and no more than 4.6kg. Rapid Fire is four bursts of three shots, each burst is 15 seconds. Standing Unsupported, Standing Post Rest and Sitting/Kneeling Post Rest are 10 rounds shot slow-fire.

3-Positional

Scoped 3-Positional is a precision match which is more target orientated and testing of the shooter's ability. The event is a slow-fire event, with Prone, Standing and Sitting/Kneeling positions required. The course of fire is 20 shots in 20 or 30 minutes, with Rimfire at 50m and Centrefire at 100m.

Scoped Air Rifle

Scoped Air Rifle provides training and development for national and international rifle competitions, with air rifles inherently accurate over 10m. Any air rifle in .177" (4.5mm) calibre can be used, including compressed air, carbon dioxide or spring. The 10m Scoped Air Rifle match is 40 shots fired from the Standing Unsupported position. The 3-Positional Scoped Air Rifle is shot at 10m, with 20 shots in 30 minutes from each position.

NZA 3 Position Any Sight

Any rifle in the .22 Long Rifle calibre and any sight, telescopic or aperture is allowed. The course of fire is two stages of 20 shots in each position (prone, standing and kneeling) at 50m/yards. SSAA sends a team to events in the US and New Zealand.



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Steve Bain

Wild pig at night - enough detail to be able to identify it when it appears on other cameras in the area.

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SPYPOINT SOLAR

Australian Shooter was given a Spypoint Solar trail camera by Sydney-based company ProsChoice to review in the field. When I received the camera I already had confidence in the Spypoint Solar product as many of my mates use them and rate them highly. The cameras are ideal for a mixture of property surveillance, game viewing and pest/predator management. The Spypoint Solar is a 12-megapixel (interpolated), 42x850nm light-emitting diode (LED) super low-glow trail camera. Like most modern 850nm trail cameras this Spypoint model takes colour images by day and infrared (black and white) at night.

A key feature is a permanently attached and fully integrated solar panel and internal storage battery which charges from either a USB connection (for pre-charging) or via the solar panel (for charging and operation in the field). The trail camera also has a built-in 5cm diagonal viewing screen with zoom and pan functions, allowing the user to quickly scroll through the pictures and/

or videos taken. Integral viewing screens make setting up so much easier and help ensure you walk away from your camera knowing it's monitoring the target zone exactly as you want it to. The internal viewer also relays to you the percentage the solar panel is charging at and will tell you separately the percentage of charge for the AA batteries (if you have them installed) and internal storage battery.

I borrowed my mate's Spypoint Solar cameras on one of my regular hunting blocks so had already found the large screen display and intuitive home menu which automatically pops up on the internal screen. This made the Spypoint a breeze to use in the field. The easy-to-navigate buttons turn the unit off/on and allow you to scroll through screen-displayed menus to select your preferences. On reading the comprehensive instruction manual I discovered there's even more user selectable options/settings tucked away in various modes. After selecting 'settings' from the home menu the user has the following options.



Front three-quarter view of the camera mounted using the Quick Detach bracket.

Settings

General settings in this sub-menu mean you can set the date, time and night picture mode. There are three night-time picture types to choose from: Optimal (efficient battery consumption); IR Boost (more power into the 'flash' for greatest flash range) and

Blur Reduction. To choose the operating mode, select one option from either the photo, video or time lapse menus.

Photo

Photo Delay: Allows the user to choose the time interval between each detection before the camera can record the next photo. **Photo Multi-Shot sequences:** A user-selected choice of one to six frames per trigger/detection with five seconds between each photo in the sequence.

Video

1280x720p HD Video (10 seconds to 90 seconds) with audio stored in Audio Video Interleave (AVI) files - the delay can also be set for the interval between each detection before the camera will record the next video. **Video with 'Photo First' option** (aka Hybrid mode) - a photo is also taken at the start of each video. **Time Lapse - JPG** photos taken at regular, user-set intervals; no detection/trigger required (intervals can be set from 1 minute to 24 hours). **Detection Test** - there's also a 'Detection Test' mode for set-up confirmation.

Author's choice

I'm a fan of the multi-shot sequence mode but also find the hybrid mode very useful. Both features are essential in an 'all-round' trail camera.

Detection and range

This camera's single motion detector covers five detection zones with a detection angle of 40 degrees. Its distance detection sensor can be adjusted from 1.5m to 25m, this span covered at night by a flash range of up to 30m. The trigger speed is in milliseconds (0.07sec) which is the fastest I've tested to date.

Night-time imagery

Night photography is enhanced by automatic infrared level adjustment. High-end cameras like the Spypoint Solar can automatically adjust the strength/intensity of the flash the night-time subjects are exposed to depending on how close the animal is to your camera. This reduces the likelihood of whiteing out details in the photo. For best results make sure there's something in the background, such as trees or bushes that can reflect light emitted by the camera's LEDs. I find the best quality night pictures are achieved when the setting is in Blur Reduction mode.

Power

In a belts and braces approach, not only does the Spypoint Solar trail camera offer



the solar power and internal storage battery combination, you can also install either 6xAA batteries or a lithium cell for back-up. This combination provides an almost unlimited battery life in the field and there's also an option to connect an external 12-volt power source.

Following the maker's instructions before field use, I charged the internal battery for 48 hours using the USB cable then set the camera up using just the solar panel and internal storage battery as the power system. For testing purposes I've run these cameras for months at a time and found they operate perfectly on the solar source alone. According to the directions, if the power level in the internal battery becomes too low to operate the camera, the camera will shut down and preserve all settings. Once the internal battery's power level has been charged sufficiently via the solar panel, the camera will turn back on automatically and resume operating with prior settings unchanged.

After convincing myself the solar power source was everything I hoped it would be, I added a set of 6xAA batteries just to be sure. My intent is to run this camera on the hybrid 'video + photo first' setting. When 6xAA batteries are installed (or the proprietary lithium battery pack utilised), the camera pulls power from the solar panel until the charge in the internal battery is insufficient. At that point it switches to the power from the AA batteries. Once the internal storage battery has been topped up the camera reverts to solar power.

The Spypoint Solar doesn't need 100 per cent panel coverage or direct sunlight to charge the internal storage battery. In early



testing I even ran one on the shady side of a reasonably large tree. Upon checking after a month I found the solar panel had kept the internal storage battery fully topped up, showing that any light present will generate some charge. As previously mentioned, the internal viewer (screen data) shows the percentage the camera is charging, which can be useful when positioning it. You can immediately see the solar charging benefits of angling the camera and its fixed solar panel one way or another, but as the sun moves the charging data is only relevant to that specific orientation of sunlight and camera.

Hardware

The camera's external measurements are 10cm wide x 17cm high x 10cm deep. It comes with both a strap and/or quick detachable bracket option for mounting on a tree. You can use either the bracket and strap or go without the bracket by passing the strap through the alternative loops on the back of the camera.

With the bracket strapped to the tree you can clip the camera in/out of the bracket,

Spypoint's unique trail camera

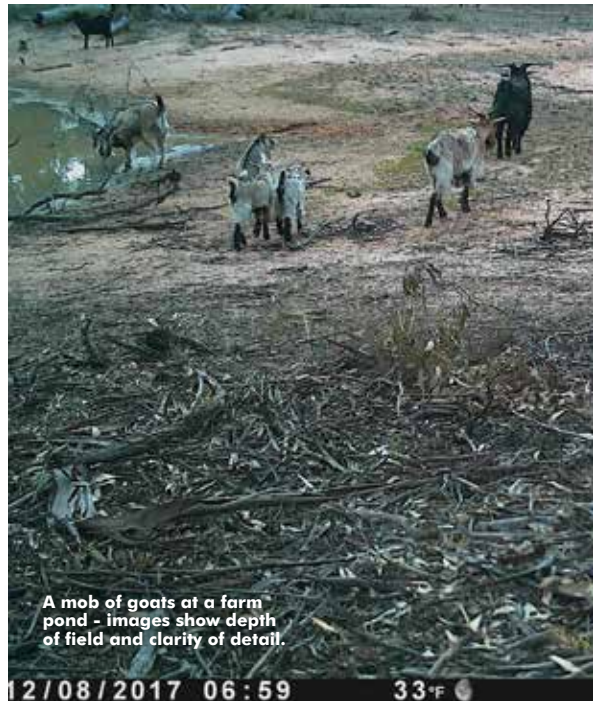
making it easy to check or change the AA batteries without affecting the set-up and orientation of the mounting bracket. The battery cover is flush with the rear of the camera and unscrews to expose the AA batteries. A female thread for a tripod mount is recessed into the base of the camera.

Card choice and image storage

Access to the Secure Digital High Capacity (SDHC) memory card slot is via the camera's front 'door'. The Spypoint Solar accepts SDHC cards up to 32GB and will also work with smaller capacity SD cards. However, this is one of the best available cameras for those situations where, in order to minimise human scent and its effect on spooking game, you may not want to check your trail camera too regularly, hence logic says use the biggest card possible. And if using video I suggest also opting for not just Class 10 cards but those with super-fast read/write speeds (SanDisk offers a SDHC 32 GB card with 300x write speed). Spypoint also has 48MP software for image processing by computer.

Conclusion

Day-time pictures are superb with detection sensitivity and trigger response



A mob of goats at a farm pond - images show depth of field and clarity of detail.



In capturing a crow flying across the 'screen', the Spypoint Solar confirms its super-fast trigger speed.



A fox in winter coat.

exceptional for both photo and video. This unique trail camera saves on batteries and therefore addresses many of their limitations. The Spypoint Solar is available at proschoice.com.au



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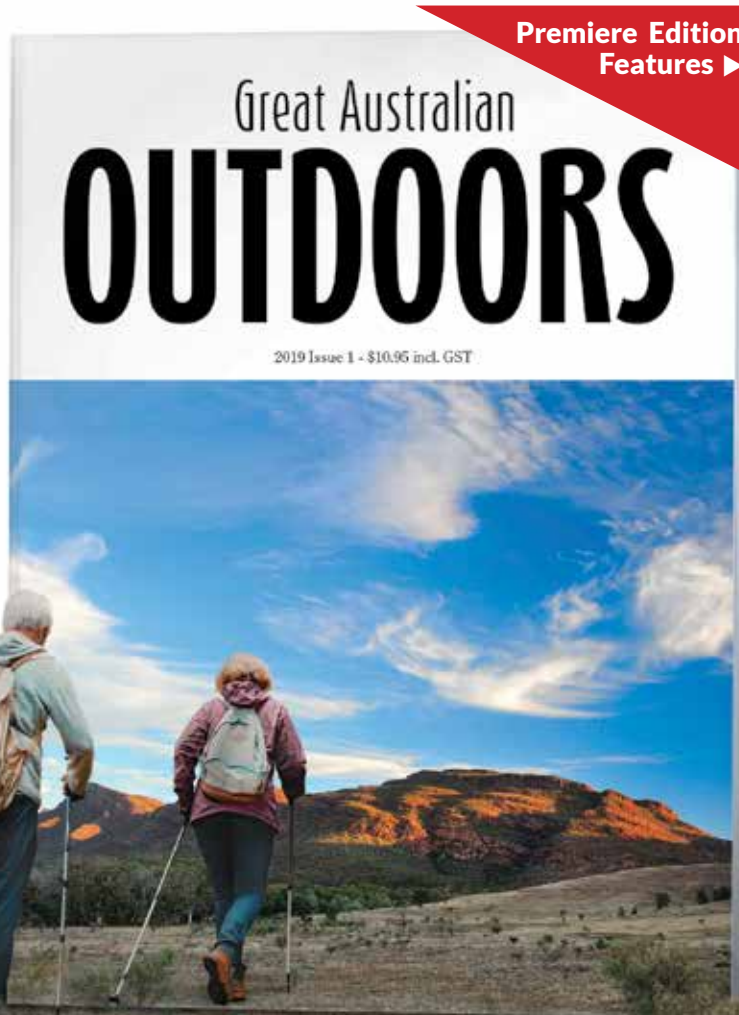
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We reckon the Kiwis can sleep easy

John Maxwell

Australians know New Zealand as a nation of good mates, epic scenery, rugby rivalry and, above all, a safe and peaceful place. So residents of the Hawke's Bay and Gisborne regions on the east coast of the north island must have been astonished to hear they were more likely to be shot dead than anyone else in NZ.

A report by Radio New Zealand detailed NZ Police statistics which indicated the police Eastern district had the nation's highest rate of murder or manslaughter involving firearms.

So how high is that? The answer is not very. NZ Police figures cover the 10 years from 2008 to 2017 and aren't that easy to digest for drawing useful comparisons. New Zealand has 12 police districts - three in the south and nine in the north - each collating their own data, presented as firearms deaths, injuries and occurrences per 100,000 population over the 10-year period.

The figure for Eastern district is 0.040631 which on its own is pretty much meaningless. NZ Radio's report cites a total of 76 firearm murders or manslaughters in all of New Zealand in a decade, 10 of those in Eastern region at an average of

one a year. The major city policing regions of Wellington and Auckland go for years without experiencing a firearm murder or manslaughter.

Last September, NZ Police reported the lowest incidence of murder in 40 years, hardly challenging downtown East St Louis, the US homicide capital with a murder rate of 11 per 100,000 population.

Compared with Australia, the Australian Institute of Criminology figures for 2013-14, the latest available, show a total of 32 murders involving guns - three times as many died from stab wounds. Australia has five times the population of New Zealand.

Australia's overall murder rate for 2013-14 was one per 100,000 population from all causes, guns being used in 13 per cent of the 32 incidents. Past AIC research has indicated the vast majority of gun murders are committed by unlicensed individuals using unregistered weapons, ie criminals.

The NZ Police statistics show higher figures for firearms injuries and 'occurrences' across all 12 police districts. Occurrences aren't defined but the radio report cited NZ Police Association president Chris Cahill as saying gun crime was

severely under-reported by police officers. It said one survey by police showed front-line staff dealt with 86 gun incidents in 79 days with just five officially reported.

That raises a range of issues. Are NZ Police falling down on the job or are they perhaps so under-resourced they just don't have the officers to follow up on gun crime? Or perhaps many of the occurrences are so trivial they justify no official action.

The NZ Police stats could well be the opening salvo in an emerging debate over the country's gun laws, with the review now being conducted the first in more than a quarter of a century.

By Australian standards, NZ gun laws are relaxed. The country has a very high rate of gun ownership and low rate of firearms crime. Only so-called Category E firearms - military style self-loading rifles - and handguns need to be registered. There are no restrictions applied to many other self-loading firearms which can be acquired on a standard firearms licence.

Perhaps it's a bit surprising then the NZ Police Association is calling for tightening of firearms laws, including registration of all firearms. ●

SSAA TV ads spread message far and wide

COUNTLESS SSAA MEMBERS have given our latest TV commercials a big thumbs-up after seeing them across the Win network and Channel 7 through late 2018. The ads carried a simple message - Shooting is a sport for all ages - and featured a bright and engaging mix of youth and experience.

While SSAA members realise shooting is an all-encompassing sport, there are too many Australians who simply don't understand it or even give it much thought. The commercials sought to rectify that and show the positive side of shooting rarely discussed in mainstream media. Far from being dangerous, the ads demonstrated the inclusivity, safety and enjoyment of our sport.

In addition to the two SSAA commercials, a third focused on our Farmer Assist Program and was seen by around 650,000 viewers, again demonstrating the significance of sporting shooters while

encouraging landowners to sign up to the program.

The commercials ran hundreds of times and received overwhelmingly positive feedback with many members delighted to see the sport being exposed to the wider community. "I saw the ad for the first time last night on 7mate and am very happy to see the SSAA putting out great ads like these to help support the firearms owners of Australia. Good work guys," said Mitch via the SSAA TV YouTube channel.

As we step up our inevitable march to 200,000 members, the SSAA will continue to adopt a national approach in its recruitment push and in educating broader Australia. While TV advertising doesn't come cheaply, the benefits gained by informing the wider public on the shooting sports is invaluable.

If you missed the ads you can view them online at SSAA TV.



"Love this ad. This sort of stuff is going to promote the sport big time" - Daniel Reid (Facebook)

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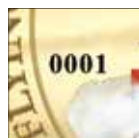
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Chemical camouflage

Making our native mammals invisible to invasive predators

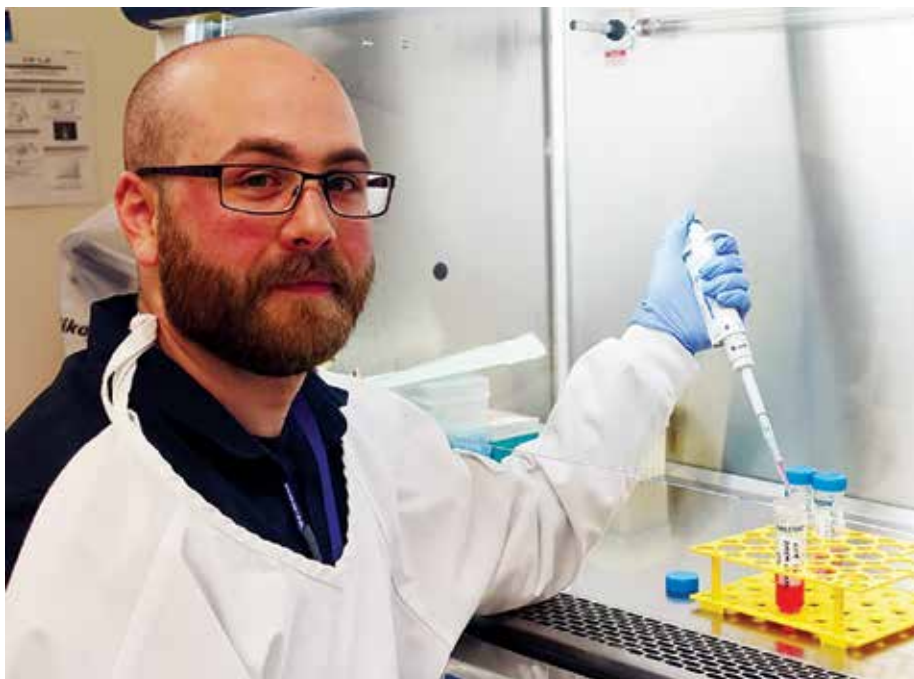
Kyle Brewer is one of four students selected to receive a cash grant in the latest round of SSAA Bursary awards. Here, he expands the thinking behind his ambitious project that grabbed the attention of the SSAA panel

The threat foxes and feral cats pose as invasive predators of native Australian animals has been known since the early 1920s. These marauders are largely responsible for the extinction of 28 (11 per cent) of Australia's known land mammal species and their continued predation is expected to cause the extermination of at least one to two species every decade.

Without effective means of intervention, mammal (as well as bird and reptile) losses will continue and there will be no preventing future extinctions. Currently no 'silver bullet' exists for invasive predator control and multiple containment methods are often employed together (eg, poison baiting, trapping, shooting). Poison baiting is the most effective invasive predator control process and can significantly reduce their numbers. However, in many cases individuals that don't consume poison baits ('bait-shy' animals) persist within the target area and inflict considerable damage on native mammal populations.

This is particularly relevant in reintroduction areas, where attempts are being made to establish small captive-bred populations of native animals in the wild, as bait-shy predators have been known to wipe out entire blocks of reintroduced animals. My PhD research aims to complement current control strategies like poison baiting through the development of innovative control technologies, with the overall aim of improving efficacy. These improved control means can then be used as 'tools' within a 'conservationist toolkit' that can be tailored to specific instances of exotic predator curbs.

Foxes and feral cats possess a keen sense of smell and investigate sources of odours that are novel or associated with food sources. My project aims to take advantage of this and involves the development of an olfactory lure that mimics the odour of a native animal and is designed to attract foxes and feral cats. The lure is unpalatable and therefore, through behavioural conditioning it is hypothesised the predator will associate the odour as a non-food source



and eventually become immune to the effects of the smell and ignore it completely. Similar behaviour is well recognised in humans and is related to sensory adaptation. Imagine you enter a room and inhale the scent of fresh flowers in a vase. If you remain in that room your brain will start to perceive a decrease in the scent's intensity over time (the smell seems to fade) even though the intensity of the aroma actually remains constant. This sensory adaptation is our brain recognising the smell is not dangerous and reducing our sensitivity to it to exclude redundant information.

Ultimately we hope the unpalatable olfactory lure will prove useful for native animal reintroduction programs. Many such projects involve the breeding of animals in captivity followed by the release of the population into the wild. However, before this can happen the intended reintroduction area needs to be cleared of foxes and feral cats through various control initiatives, which can be very costly as well as time and labour intensive.

In addition, the predators may migrate in

and out of the area meaning they're missed. Our alternative solution to this problem is to spread the unpalatable olfactory lures across the intended reintroduction area and allow foxes and feral cats to investigate the odours for several weeks. The lures are designed to smell like the native animal that's going to be reintroduced so foxes and cats gradually become conditioned to ignore the odour (through sensory adaptation) and recognise it as being inedible.

Once the predators have been conditioned, the native animals can be introduced into the area in the hope they will also be ignored and therefore have a much greater chance of survival.

Assistance kindly provided by the SSAA's Academic Bursary Program will allow me to travel to the ACT, deploy the olfactory lure in field trials and test this hypothesis within a controlled reintroduction area.

I thank the SSAA for supporting my ongoing research and also backing the fight to conserve our endangered native Australian animals. ●

Micro brainwave

Research aims to keep bandicoots one step ahead of predators

Meg Edwards is another student who benefitted from the SSAA Bursary awards. She has taken time to expand on the thinking behind her initiative

Native wildlife in Australia has faced devastating effects from introduced predators such as feral cats and foxes. More than a quarter of our mammals have become extinct in the past 220 years and Australia now has the world's worst mammal extinction record. In particular, many of our bandicoots and bilby species are facing extermination from these introduced killers.

Australia has approximately 20 species of bandicoots with many under threat. By training our wildlife to avoid predators, bandicoots may have a fighting chance of survival. The northern brown bandicoot is an omnivorous species weighing between one and two kilograms and very common in gardens, although often people only see their iconic diggings. Northern brown bandicoots are an ideal species to use as a model for endangered groups such as the greater bilby.

As part of my PhD research, bandicoots are captured from the wild and brought to the Hidden Vale Wildlife Centre, a new research unit in south-east Queensland. There, the bandicoots are tested to see how they react to introduced predators then an attempt is made to train them to run into safe bandicoot bunkers.

These bunkers are controlled by microchip automation so only microchipped bandicoots can have access and are safe from predators. The bandicoots are trained to use the microchip-automated bunkers



by enticing them with a piece of bread with peanut butter on - the bandicoots' favourite treat! The bunkers can also be an area where bandicoots could be given supplementary food in the wild after release, as they don't allow access unless the microchip has been registered to the door. So it excludes any potential competitors as well as predators. All this training (to use the bunkers and predator-avoidance schooling) is captured on video and the footage studied to determine the bandicoots' behaviours such as vigilance, foraging and movement habits.

Once trained, the bandicoots are released back into the wild and tracked to determine their reintroduction success. VHF transmitters are attached to the bandicoots and either myself or a volunteer goes out daily to find them and obtain a GPS location. This data is used to see if the predator-avoidance training had an effect on their survival after release. It's hoped information gained from this research can help reintroduction projects around Australia, so I thank the SSAA for their financial support which helped fund the cameras used to capture the video material. ●

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Fabarm's fabulous .410

Under and over and out in the field

John McDougall



John McDougall puts the Fabarm .410 cal/36 gauge through its paces.

Just when you think clay target shooting and hunting has no more challenges, Fabarm has made a .410 calibre/36-gauge under and over shotgun to measure the skills of the best of shooters as well as the young and light-framed.

Firing a ½oz of shot in the latest target Remington American Clay and Field loads used during the evaluation, the .410 calibre Fabarm provided a work-out over the sporting clays ranges when compared with the 12-gauge. In view of its light weight and reduced recoil it's ideal for a youngster or lady shooter starting out as well as any seasoned competition shooter seeking an additional test.

Firing the little ½oz loads was an eye-opener compared to its big brother's 1oz loads in the 12-gauge, but the reduced recoil and lightness of the gun provided benefit for those starting off who find the 12-gauge too heavy and the 20-gauge too savage on recoil. For the experienced shooter the reduced shot load certainly questions the skills.

The barrels

These were perfectly finished with a matte blueing and ran out to 710mm (28") in length. The top ventilated rib was quite





Full-length view of the Fabarm Elos.

high at 7mm above the barrels while the wide and solid side ribs separated the barrels and provided extra weight. At the muzzle end there was a single red fluoro barrel sight while interchangeable internal choke tubes were fitted to enable the user to cater for either hunting or clay target situations.

The choke tubes measured 45mm (1½") and were offered in a selection of constrictions (see specifications table). A T-piece choke tube spanner was supplied and this, along with the choke tubes, arrived in a handy snap-close case for ease of access whether placed in a gun bag or hunting jacket pocket.

At the chamber end the Elos B2 was suited to 76mm (3") cartridges and proofed to steel High Performance level. This superior proofing by Fabarm will be much appreciated by the waterfowl hunter. The ejectors were precisely timed and expelled fired shells well clear of the chamber to facilitate fast reloading. The gun, being chambered for the longer 3" cartridges, would also go well firing the shorter 2½" cartridges if desired.

The receiver

This was nicely designed in a semi-round action with tastefully completed scroll engraving about its surfaces and 'Fabarm' stamped on both sides of the receiver. On

the underside the model of the Elos B2 was to be found also stylishly stamped into the metal, complementing the overall appeal of the gun. The whole receiver was finished in grey nitrite matte which contrasted well with the barrel colouring and woodwork. Not only was the Fabarm Elos B2 expertly made, it looked great too.

Design of the triggerguard was not scaled down for smaller sized or younger shooters but man-sized to suit those who might relish the challenge of the .410 cal/36-gauge Elos. The triggerfoot was deftly designed and not adjustable but comfortable to the feel. Both of the mechanically activated triggers released at around 5lb which seemed a little heavy for a sporting clays gun but quite acceptable and safe for a hunting shotgun.

I was highly impressed by the mechanical trigger system as this is employed due to the almost non-existence of recoil to work an inertia-operated trigger selection system. I also prefer a mechanical selected trigger system for hunting so no opportunities are missed should you have a misfire, as would occur with an inertia selected shotgun. Certainly the mechanically selected trigger system was a bonus.

The top lever was well designed and scaled down for the smaller gauge gun,

unlike the trigger and triggerguard. Fitted with a scalloped lever end for ease of opening the action, the tension on the top lever was nicely weighted for ease of operation. Just back from the top lever, on the rearward part of the top tang was located the safety catch-cum-barrel selector. This was also not scaled down to suit the smaller framed gun but offered a man-sized catch for positive and safe operation.

Stock and fore-end

These were strikingly finished in a matching walnut stain with grain running throughout the stock matching that of the Schnabel (Tulip) fore-end. Chequering about the stock and fore-end was tastefully completed at around 18 lines per inch with the patterns on the pistol grip and fore-end providing great coverage for a firm and positive hold.

The fore-end catch was somewhat different to the mechanical release action found on most other makes of shotgun, but typically Fabarm. To release, the fore-end wood was gently pressed to the barrels before the catch could free the wooden fore-end. To reinstate the fore-end wood the fore-end was firstly lowered on to the receiver before snapping it back into position beneath the barrels.



With the action open.



The safety catch/barrel selector is not scaled down.



The underside is marked 'Overpressure tested' along with model designation

Fabarm's fabulous .410

It was a great idea to include a thin recoil pad on the buttstock of the Elos B2 to maintain a good gun mount. Since recoil was not an issue with the 36-gauge gun there was no need for a thicker recoil pad, even if used by lightweight youngsters or ladies.

In the field

I really enjoyed the challenge of the .410 cal/36-gauge Elos B2. It was a pleasant change from the heavier 12-gauge guns I'd been used to firing with a full 1oz of lead. The lightness of the gun meant it was quite fast and the shorter barrels took a while to appreciate but targets succumbed to the ½oz Remington American Clay and Field Loads I used for evaluation.

Travelling at 1275fps the tiny 36-gauge loads still had the potential to bust clays out to 40m. It took patience to grasp the 'quickness' of the light gun but it was a lot of fun. Friends found it enjoyable too. It attracted a great deal of attention with its reduced report but I wouldn't for a moment suggest it could replace the 12-gauge as the



The grey nitride finish of the receiver complemented by scroll engraving.

basic model for sporting clays and hunting. I'd have enjoyed chasing quail with it or popping some bunnies but dry conditions and the quail closed season didn't present that opportunity.

In closing, if you're after a well-made double-barrel .410 cal/36-gauge shotgun I don't believe you could go past this beautifully appointed offering from Fabarm. ●

Specifications

Maker: Armi Fabarm, Brescia, Italy
Model: Fabarm Elos B2 AL .410 cal/36 gauge
Distributor: Raytrade
Overall weight: 2.72kg/6lb
Barrel weight: 1.26kg/2lb 13oz
Overall length: 1145mm/45"
Barrel length: 710mm/28"
Bore size: .410 cal/36 gauge
Chamber length and proof: 76mm/3" chambered and HP steel shot proof
Chokes: Full x2, Improved Modified x1, Modified x2, Improved Cylinder x1, Cylinder x1. With two fitted into the gun and five fitted into a snap-close plastic receptacle along with the T-piece choke tube spanner
Length of pull: 375mm/14¾"
Drop at comb: 34mm/1⅜"
Drop at heel: 57mm/2¼"
Trigger pulls: Under barrel 5lb; over barrel 5lb
Warranty: Five years
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Three charged after gun-parts bust

John Maxwell

Criminals continue to try to import firearms, with Australian Federal Police and Australian Border Force busting three men who attempted to bypass the Customs barrier with gun components hidden inside a toy motorcycle mailed from the US. Inside the package were 16 earth-coloured plastic frames for compact handguns. They appear to be Glock 26 or similar. Also found were large capacity handgun magazines - 26 box magazines of 30-round capacity and 24 drum magazines of 50-round capacity - which appear to fit Glock handguns.

The operation started on January 9 when ABF officers at the Melbourne International Mail Facility spotted a suspicious parcel containing a child's plastic sit-on toy motorcycle. An X-ray analysis identified anomalies and on opening the parcel officers found multiple firearm parts hot-glued to the outside of the motorcycle. The AFP said following further investigation the ABF identified another two packages found to contain similarly concealed firearms parts.

Police subsequently raided premises in the Melbourne suburbs of Brunswick and Southbank as well as locations in NSW believed to be associated with the importations. Three men aged 25, 26 and 33 were arrested and charged with a series of offences relating to possessing a traffickable quantity of unregistered firearms as



well as trafficking and importing prohibited firearms parts.

During the raids officers seized further firearms parts including 60 gun receivers, 26 magazines of 30-cartridge capacity as well as springs, magazine followers and end caps. Because the three are now before the courts the AFP declined to disclose any further information, such as what type of firearm the 60 receivers would make up.

AFP Detective Superintendent Jayne Crossling said these seizures were significant and attempts to illegally import firearms parts were always treated seriously. "We do not want unregulated and unchecked items possibly making their way to criminal groups, which then has far-reaching consequences for the safety of the community," she said in a media statement. "There is now no chance these firearms will end up in the dangerous hands of outlaw criminal motorcycle gangs or other criminals."

ABF Regional Commander for Victoria, Craig Palmer, said the detection highlighted ABF effectiveness at the border. "ABF officers working in the international mail environment in Melbourne and around the country are highly skilled in targeting suspect consignments and detecting firearms parts, no matter how they're concealed," he said.

"Our officers are supported by technology and use other detection methodologies at our international mail centres to identify a range of high risk items. In this case these techniques have helped us prevent a significant number of firearms entering the community and potentially falling into the wrong hands."

Much more remains to be revealed about this case. It surely shows that illicit imports, dismissed by some anti-gun campaigners as a minor source of illegal firearms compared to those stolen from legal owners, remains a significant source of black market guns for criminals willing to pay high prices for unregistered firearms.

That was demonstrated in 2017 when police busted a gang in Sydney which imported 130 Glock handguns from Germany and sold them on the black market. Just a couple of dozen have since been recovered, one from a member of the Comanchero outlaw motorcycle gang. ●

The tale of the Yataghan bayonet

Ray Dennis

It's amazing how one thing can lead to another. After inheriting an 1870 Snider rifle I wanted to complete the package by finding the accompanying bayonet - not an easy or inexpensive proposition if you want one in good condition.

I soon found myself at a gun and knife show where all I could find was the French Yataghan sword bayonet for the Chassepot rifle. It was in reasonable condition for its manufacture date of March 1870 from the Imperiale de Chatellerault arsenal.

The salesman was a real pro, waxing lyrical about what a wonderful patina it had, apparently a highly valued and prized condition for an antique, though you and I might have called it pitted rust. When I arrived home with my new



acquisition and went to hang it on my wall - the only bit of wall your bride lets you put your boy's toys on - I got the "What do you think you're doing with that rusty piece of junk?"

Displaying my new bayonet, I explained. "Not like that you're not!" was the answer. I further explained I'd be cleaning it up and, as you can see by the photo, got a bit carried away with the sandpaper and buffing compound. I eventually brought it back to better-

than-new shape, even removing the final manufacturing sanding marks to a flawless condition while still retaining all the sharp corners and inspection marks then giving it a spray with a clear lacquer for rust prevention.

It took me another two years to find the 1856 Enfield Yataghan sword bayonet I was after and it has the broad arrow stamp of the war department and a BSA inspection mark. It received the same treatment, removing all that beautiful patina and rechequering the dried out stamped leather hand grips.

I know other collectors out there would be having kittens reading about me defacing our history, though I'm causing no permanent damage that another hundred years of neglect wouldn't rectify and restore to 'antique' value. I enjoy looking up at my shiny little antique collection and am happy they're not locked away in a cupboard, while guests are genuinely interested in their history and marvel at the fact they're 150 years old. Maybe more people would collect antiques and put them on display if they were actually nice to look at. ●

Howa's M1500 KRG Bravo long-range rifle

Con Kapralos



The global success of Howa M1500 rifles can be largely attributed to the relationship between Howa in Japan and the Fuller Global Group, which encompasses entities such as Legacy Sports in the US, Highland Outdoors in the UK and, in Australia, Outdoor Sporting Agencies (OSA). It's heartening to see the Fuller family business flourishing and the Howa M1500 rifle has played a major part in that rise.

The beauty of the Howa M1500 is its availability as a barreled action. While many shooters and hunters opt to buy the bare barreled action and mate it with one of the countless aftermarket stock options available, OSA also offers a complete range of rifles made for a specific purpose, be it hunting or target shooting. One of the newer additions is the Howa M1500 KRG Bravo.

Kinetic Research Group (KRG) is a US-based rifle stock manufacturer which caters to the long-range and target shooting markets. The Bravo stock is a dedicated long-range chassis which mates perfectly with the Howa M1500 barreled action with a #6-contour varmint barrel. The Bravo

chassis is also inletted for other popular makes and models.

The review rifle

The rifle supplied was the Howa KRG Bravo with the 24", #6-contour varmint barrel in .308 Winchester with black stock. Also included was an optic perfectly suited to the platform in a Zeiss Conquest V4 6-24 x50 in steel Nikko Stirling rings.

What's immediately evident is the weight and length of the rifle - it's designed to be shot from a rest or prone (using a shooting mat or ground-sheet). You could carry it around with a sling but your back will protest. The use of a benchrest, bipod or tripod would be the way to go.

OSA lists on its website the Howa KRG Bravo with only the 24" varmint barrel with either the black or FDE (Flat Dark Earth) chassis in 6.5 Creedmoor or .308 Winchester (as supplied for review). The rifle does come with a hard plastic transportation case lined with high density foam, a small selection of KRG accessories and printed user information from Howa and KRG.

The action

The barreled action is the M1500 short-action length and is of a standard turn-bolt repeating design made from a single piece of steel, with a cylindrical upper profile which terminates in a flat underside to facilitate the magazine box and stock bedding requirements. The Howa M1500 action is one of the few that still encompasses an integral recoil lug machined into the same piece of metal as the action itself.

The Howa recoil lug is straightforward, effective and strong. The ejection port is well designed to permit ultra-reliable extraction and ejection of cases. A small gas vent is incorporated into the left side of the action ring as a means of directing hot gases away from the shooter's face. The action top is of a slightly convex nature to which four drilled and tapped holes have been provided, two fore and two aft of the ejection port. This pattern accepts any scope mounting bases designed around the Remington 700/Howa M1500 pattern.

The bolt is an uncomplicated one-piece unit with dually-opposed twin locking lugs and is set on a push-feed action. The spring-loaded plunger through the bolt-face and claw-mounted extractor performs the task of case manipulation and the entire bolt is simple to strip and clean.

The bolt handle is basic, a slight swept back design which comes to the hand easily. It's devoid of any knurling or scalloping and doesn't really need it. The bolt body is matte blued like the rest of the action but its travel is smooth. The bolt lift is of a 90-degree configuration but the layout of the bolt handle shank ensures that even with low mounted scopes, clearance is not a problem.

To remove the bolt, Howa incorporates a small bolt-release tab on the rear-left of the action. Simply depress the tab when the bolt is drawn back.



A single screw retains the covers that access butt-hook and grip storage.

Trigger/magazine

Howa fits all its rifles with the HACT (Howa Accuator Controlled Trigger) two-stage trigger. The trigger breaks cleanly and crisply. I assume the pull weight could be adjusted lower if required but I feel tinkering with triggers should be left to a professional.

The trigger broke at about 1.4kg and was perfect for testing as set. The safety system is an extension of the HACT trigger with a three-position function. The rear-most setting blocks the trigger and locks the bolt handle down, the middle setting blocks the trigger but permits the bolt to be cycled and the forward setting unblocks the trigger allowing the rifle to fire.

Forward to the magazine which is an Accurate Mag (AICS compatible) steel detachable box, designed to complement the KRG Bravo chassis and holds 10 rounds in .308 Winchester. Cartridges are fed by hand and the magazine itself clips into place once inserted into the well. A large ambidextrous magazine release to the rear of the well quickly removes the magazine. Cartridges were picked up by the Howa bolt from the magazine and chambered without any problems.

The barrel

This gives the rifle its purpose. Its extended length of 24" is well suited to the ballistics of the .308 Winchester. The chrome-moly, cold-hammer forged barrel is of a one in 10" twist with the barrel profile starting from 30mm at the knox form and tapering to 21mm at the muzzle. The crown is of a recessed target profile.

The barrel is matte blued to match the rest of the action and metalware. The review rifle had been previously used and before range testing a complete barrel clean was warranted, removing powder and copper fouling.

The stock

The Bravo stock is what makes this rifle a standout long-range affair and its features are substantial. It's built by KRG on a chassis platform but hasn't the usual 'skeletonised-look' of most chassis-stocks, opting for a traditional appearance.

However the Bravo chassis has all the features associated with other KRG stocks. The buttstock and fore-end is crafted from reinforced polymer material which suits the tactical nature of the unit, while the 'back-bone' of the chassis itself is a full-length aluminium platform running from the action to the tip of the fore-end.

The 'radius bedding system' is designed by KRG into the aluminium chassis which permits consistent contact between the



The short-action M1500 in .308 Winchester.



The aluminium backbone of the Bravo chassis.

action and chassis while the barrel is free-floating. The Howa barrelled action is still secured to the Bravo chassis using the two standard action-screws and the chassis is easily removed from the barrelled action. The well which accepts the 10-round Accurate Mag box magazine is made from the same polymer as the stock, as is the triggerguard.

The fore-end of the stock has mounting provisions for Picatinny rails, tripod mounts, barrier stops as well as M-LOK slots in the sides and bottom for universal accessory mounting. Moving to the buttstock, the adjustable cheekpiece, oversized pistol-grip, flexible length-of-pull and quality KRG sorbothane recoil pad makes this a stock which

lets the user set up to their exact requirements when shooting prone, off a bench or tripod.

Other features of the buttstock are a butt-hook which can be used with a rear bag by simply removing a polymer cover and also a small storage compartment in the pistol grip itself.

At the range

Once the riflescope was fitted and bore-sighted, the barrel was cleaned back to bare metal for some serious accuracy testing at the standard 100m. OSA supplied several hunting and target loads from Hornady and Buffalo River which were supplemented with a few favourite loads I use in my

Howa M1500 KRG Bravo .308 Winchester – Accuracy testing at 100m

Ammunition tested	Groups in mm		
	Best	Worst	Average**
Federal Premium Vital Shok 130gr Speer HP	19	29	26
Hornady Match 168gr ELD	14	20	16
Federal Premium Gold Medal Berger 185gr Juggernaut OTM	18	28	24
Federal Premium Vital Shok 150gr Nosler Ballistic Tip	28	39	33
Hornady TAP 168gr A-MAX	20	35	28
Hornady Superformance 150gr SST	13	23	17

** Average calculated from five 3-shot groups

Howa's M1500 KRG Bravo long-range rifle

Lithgow LA102 in .308 Winchester. Five 3-shot groups were taken with each ammunition brand with the barrel cleaned between changes.

The rifle shot all factory loads well with the exception of the Federal Premium 150gr Nosler Ballistic Tip. Strange result as this load is always sub-0.5 MOA in my Lithgow LA102. Several tiny groups around the 13-14mm mark is testament to the tack-driving accuracy of this outfit and the serious handloader should easily achieve clover-leaf groups with their favourite components.

Overview

The Howa barrelled action with the 24", #6-contour barrel mated to the Bravo chassis make this a superb platform to shoot, but it also has 'something', aesthetically-speaking, for users who prefer a traditional stock profile in a rifle.

However, the Bravo chassis has all the features expected of a tactical platform with multiple custom options built in. The Howa KRG Bravo retails for \$1950 and is available from all OSA stockists.

For more visit osaaustralia.com. ●



The rifle in component form.

SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer: Howa, Japan/Kinetic Research Group (KRG), US

Model: M1500 KRG Bravo

Distributor: Outdoor Sporting Agencies

Action: Bolt-action, push-feed

Barrel length: 24" (610mm), varmint profile #6-contour

Calibres: .308 Winchester (tested) - also available in 6.5 Creedmoor.

Overall length: 1110mm

Weight: 4.47kg

Metal finish: Matte blue

Stock: KRG Bravo chassis, polymer construction with aluminium bedding chassis, adjustable cheekpiece, adjustable length-of-pull (12.5"-15"), built-in butt-hook for rear bag, fore-end accommodates M-LOK and other accessory provisions

Magazine: Accurate Mag (AICS compatible) 10-shot detachable in .308 Winchester

Trigger: Howa HACT adjustable target trigger, two-stage, adjustable from 1.1-1.7kg (2.5-3.8lb)

RRP: \$1950



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MAKstorm 4x30i HD Prismatic Scope

Daniel O'Dea



The MAKstorm has audible click adjustment for elevation and windage turrets.



Daniel O'Dea mounted the MAKstorm on a Remington 7615 pump-action for simulated IPSC rifle competition.

In the firearms industry of today we live in an age of optics. I guess these days I'd be deemed middle-aged but it doesn't seem so long ago that an optic on a rifle was a luxury. When I was a boy, scoped rifles were like automatic transmission in cars - great if you could afford it but not necessarily a standard fitment.

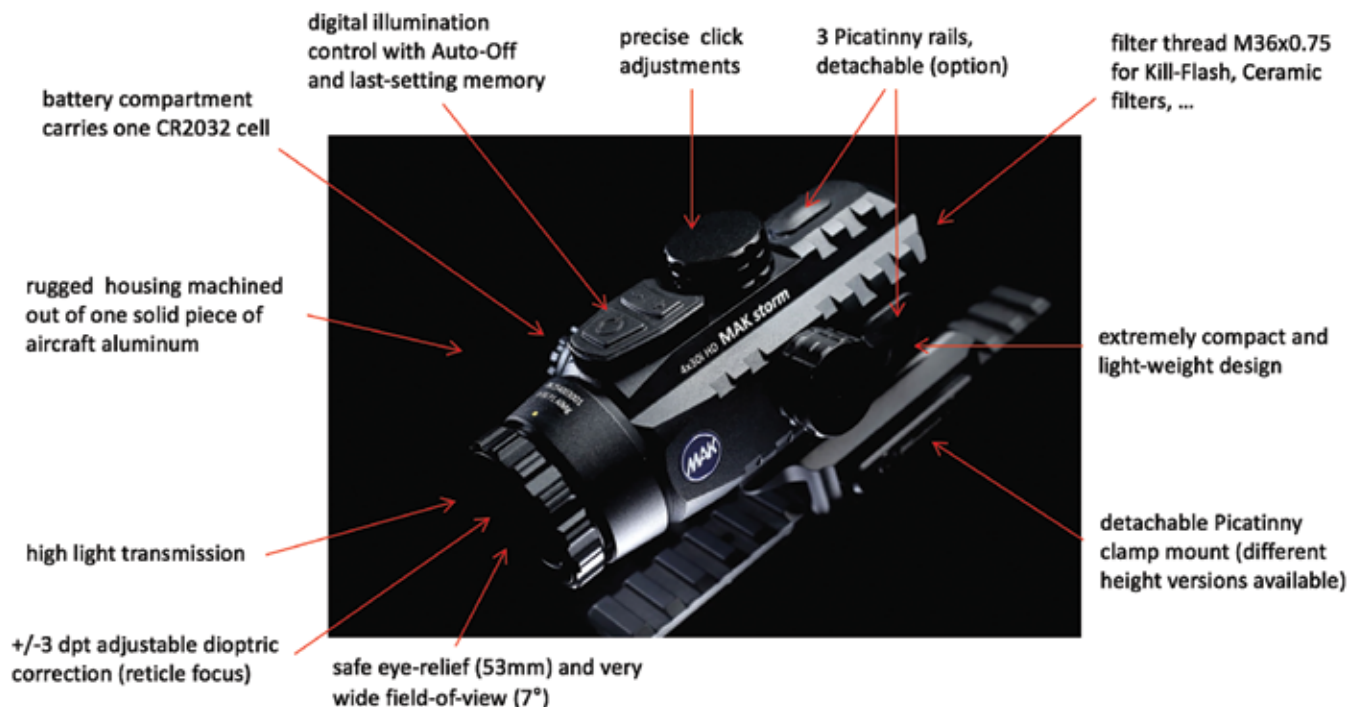
Back then even cheap scopes were relatively expensive with range and features limited. Today we are spoilt for choice with seemingly endless options. Quality has also improved significantly at all levels as cheap scopes used to be practically useless, once cloudy and dark and of questionable reliability. Nowadays even most entry level scopes are bright, clear and track just fine. Meanwhile, top-end glass seems like walking through a display of the latest HD televisions with the image almost better than real life.

A more recent development in optics would be compact scopes that are almost hybrids of traditional lenses scopes and red dot-styled sights. German manufacturer MAK CET Scope and Mounts has a really interesting variant on this theme with its MAKstorm Prismatic Scope. Kleinod Pacific Enterprises is the MAK distributor in this country and gave *Australian Shooter* the chance to put one to the test.

The MAKstorm scope arrived in a padded hard case which was possibly not necessary as my first impression was it felt so solid that I doubt it was possible to break even if you tried. The MAKstorm is milled from one solid sturdy piece of 6061-T6 aircraft grade aluminum, is only about 56mm in diameter and a compact 120mm in length. It weighs in at a stout 398 grams.

Optically the MAKstorm is a 4x30 fixed power scope with illuminated reticle that features 10 daylight illumination settings and two for night vision applications. The objective lens is 30mm in diameter while the ocular lens measures 26mm. The exit pupil measurement is 7.3mm with eye relief to 53mm and a generous seven-degree field of view providing 13.1m coverage at 100m.

MAKstorm 4x30i HD Prismatic Scope



Daytime light transmission is 85 per cent which the maker claims to be the highest in this class of optic.

There's even a focus ring at the ocular providing diopter compensation of ± 3 . The MAKstorm is indeed a fully featured scope which is quite remarkable in such a compact 120mm long package and is only achieved by use of a sophisticated optical prism system.

The MAKstorm has adjustment turrets for elevation and windage at the usual 12 and 3 o'clock positions on the main body. Positive click adjustments are measured in Milliradians as opposed to MOA, simplifying adjustment on our metric ranges. Adjustment increments on the test sample were 0.20 Mrad but a recent upgrade now has MAKstorm variants with .15 Mrad at 100m (or 15mm at 100m) for even finer adjustment. The turrets provide a total of 30 Mrad adjustment for both elevation and windage.

Located directly behind the elevation turret are the controls for the illumination level adjustment. A raised rubberised pad provides touch press buttons for on and off with plus and minus for brightness. The digital illumination system has a memory and maintains the last setting when the unit is turned off. It also turns off automatically after four hours if no motion is detected.

The two night vision settings are barely visible and can only be seen if you cover the objective lens to black out any light

transmission. However, this feature would most likely only be used in military settings, not sports and hunting applications. It's all powered by a single 2032CR battery in a third turret at the 9 o'clock position on the body.

The main body has flexibility in that it includes three rail mounting points at 9, 12 and 3 o'clock which can be employed to add accessories such as lights, lasers or perhaps even an extra reflex sight for close-up targets. The inside lip of the objective lens housing is threaded M36x0.75 so lens protection can be added.

MAK specialises in mounting solutions offering a large range of specialty European-style bases, mounts, rails and rings as well as modern target and tactical-style mounts and rails. As such it is no

surprise the MAKstorm comes with a firm detachable base for mounting to any standard M1913 (Picatinny) rail. The base is held in place by two counter-sunk hex screws for removal should the end user require a higher base or want to switch to a quick detachable option. As standard the mount provides a line of sight 39mm above the rail height of whichever rifle to which it's fitted.

The growth of this style of compact optic is driven by global demand from military and law enforcement agencies. Again it wasn't too long ago that optics on rifles in these applications were exclusively the domain of special or elite forces. Now it's rare to see any soldier in the field without some form of combat optic fitted to their service rifle at least in terms of the western world.

It could be argued that many advancements in the firearms industry are born of military requirement before being adapted to civilian use. In this case, many of the attributes that make such an optic desirable to military and law enforcement ranks also makes them popular for civilian needs. To this end the MAKstorm 4x30i HD has a reticle specifically designed for IPSC rifle competition. The reticle presents as a T-shape featuring a central circle with fine-aiming dot point. It also has marked subtensions for 300, 400, 500 and 600m hold-over points calibrated for .223 Remington, 308 Winchester ballistics.

Below the reticle is a ranging graph



designed to transpose against a standard IPSC metric target to estimate range to target. An IPSC Classic target is 75cm tall top to bottom. You simply hold the graph against the distant target, if it fits neatly between the graph lines above the 6 mark it is 600m away, the 2 mark 200m away etc. In a hunting application you could use the same graph based on distance from the backline to brisket on larger deer species like sambar which would likely be a similar height (75cm).

The central circle acts as a quick aiming point for snap shooting while the central smaller dot can be used for more precise aiming. Both can be employed for ranging as well. The circle specification has the outer ring covering 15.5 MOA, the line thickness 1.75 MOA and the inner circle edge 12 MOA. As the optic is fixed power, those measurements stay constant. So if you were aiming at a target with a known

height of 36" and that target just squeezes into that inner circle being 12 MOA (12" at 100 yards) it would mean the target is 300 yards away ($36 \div 12 = 3$). For the record, the more precise central aiming dot covers 1.5 MOA or 4.37mm at 100m.

As the MAKstorm's reticle was set up for the IPSC rifle competition, I mounted it on a Remington 7615 pump-action rifle that represents a favoured choice for Australian competitors shooting this discipline. I shot a few IPSC targets in simulated competition and would consider it a good choice in that role, especially for close-up work. Although limited in magnification for longer ranges it would still be a worthy compromise if running a single on the gun, especially with the ranging reticle.

Optics were bright and clear as would be expected from such high-end European glass and targets loomed large on fast transitions. The etched glass reticle was easy to pick up while other range markings and numbers were fine enough as to not clutter the view and stayed perfectly legible. The illumination was bright and sharp with ample adjustment to remain clear in even the most intense sunlight yet not overpower in low light.

Apart from sports target and tactical use, this style of optic would be equally at home in the field on any hitting scrub gun, be it for jumping deer or pigs in the lignum. Typically Germanic, it's so solid it presents as just about bullet-proof in construction so would be bound to take any rough and tumble and hard knocks dished out.

I could see it quite at home on a

lever-action guide gun or big game bolt gun. For its compact size it incorporates a lot of highly technically advanced features such as its Prismatic lens system and digital illumination. Quality, of course, comes at a premium so the MAKstorm is not cheap with an RRP of \$1950 but I'm sure it would definitely fall into the buy right, buy once category.

Further information at kleinodpacific.com/brand/mak/ ●

MAKstorm 4x30i HD Prismatic Scope specifications

Magnification: 4x
Objective clear aperture: 30mm
Exit pupil: 7.3mm
Eye relief: 53mm
Field of view: 13.1m
Diopter range: +/-3
Turret adjustment: 0.15 Mrad
Elevation adjustment: 30 Mrad
Windage adjustment: 30 Mrad
Light transmission: 85 per cent
Digital illumination adjustment: 12-position
Objective filter thread: M36x0.75
Waterproof : 400mbar
Housing material: 6061-T6 aluminum
Dimensions (LxWxH): 120mmx64mmx56mm
Battery: CR2032




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GPO Evolve binoculars

- an eye for detail

Don Caswell



The GPO ED 10x42, left, and HD 12.5x50 models



Eye relief adjustment on the HD 12.5x50s.

German Precision Optics (GPO) hit the sporting optics industry scene in 2017, owned and managed by people with solid commerce experience who've worked in established top-tier optical businesses. Their product line includes binoculars and telescopic sights intended to compete with the best brands. GPO performs the design, engineering and quality control at its German headquarters but, like many other networks, the actual production is done in Asia under strict control from Germany.

GPO offers two lines of binoculars, the Evolve ED glass range with 8x32, 10x32, 8x42, 10x42, 8x56 and 10x56 and the more expensive Evolve HD glass range with 8x42, 10x42, 8.5x50, 10x50 and 12.5x50 binoculars. Australian distributor Raytrade provided *Australian Shooter* with two pairs for review, the Evolve HD 12.5x50 and Evolve ED 10x42.

Quality optics are essential for outdoor

enthusiasts whether for hunting, investigating distant terrain or simply observing wildlife in vivid detail. For game stalkers the prevailing wisdom has been that relatively compact 8x binoculars were ideal, while for long-range work or bird-watching 10x and higher were recommended. In recent years with improvements in lens design and build quality that's no longer a hard and fast rule and in my circle of hunting friends and acquaintances I'm seeing more people moving up to 10x. I often carry 10x42 binoculars on twilight stalks where I need superior light gathering and opt for my compact 10x25s during the day.

Higher powered binoculars, especially those with larger objective lenses for superior light gathering, are naturally bigger and heavier than less powerful models. Still, the most productive hunting times are around first and last light when you want the best light gathering binoculars

you can, especially for trophy hunters who need every advantage in assessing a stag in lowlight forest shadows.

GPO binoculars feature magnesium alloy barrels filled with nitrogen and are fogproof and waterproof, the optical design of the Schmidt-Pechan roof type. The Evolve HD 12.5x50s are coated with a firm rubber skin with textured inserts that provide excellent grip. Both surfaces are black in colour and have a thumb indent under each barrel, a la Swarovski, which I really like.

The ED 10x42s have similar textured rubber grip areas but the main body of the barrel is not rubber skinned. There's a slight difference in the colour of the two surface areas - the grips are described as anthracite and the barrel black. Both feel solid to the touch with a finish that's smooth and pleasing to the eye, the ergonomics excellent, handling well and completely comfortable in use.

Side by side there's a distinct difference

in colour of the objective lenses, the ED 10x42s giving off a distinct reddish-gold reflection while the 12.5x50s have a faint blue-grey hue. ED stands for Extra-Low Dispersion glass which reduces chromatic aberration in the viewed image. Chromatic aberration is apparent as a slight colour fringing to viewed objects and is often more noticeable towards the edge of the viewed area.

HD is for High Definition glass which gives a clearer, more vivid image than standard glass, the benefits particularly noticeable in lowlight situations. In terms of the difference between ED and HD glass, in GPO products I couldn't find it specified in the available technical information. From my observation it's a safe bet there are different coatings, maybe even different glass composition and it's possible there are also some geometric variations in lens design. Certainly the HD glass carries a significant price premium.

I took my tape measure and determined the minimum focus distance, an irrelevance to hunters but important to birdwatchers who need to observe the fine detail of birds at close range. Both GPO binoculars achieved minimum focus distances a little better than their specifications indicated, the ED 10x42s 2.05m from objective lens

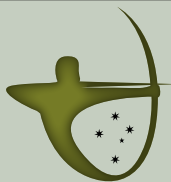


Highlighting the ED glass, top, and HD glass

to the reference object, the HD 12.5x50s at 2.72m.

Another important aspect of binoculars is the number of turns of the focusing

knob required to take focus from closest to infinity. I have a mountain range with a distinct peak 16.6km from my study window which I treat as infinity. The ED



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10x42s went from closest distance to infinity in 1¼ turns of the knob, the HD 12.5x50s a smidge more at close to 1.3 revolutions.

I also measured the dimensions and weight and found a few minor differences from the specifications and have used my numbers on the data table where there's a difference. I put the ED 10x42s beside my Swarovski 10x42 ELs and found the GPOs about 15mm shorter and 115g lighter, the field of view much the same for both sets.

GPO binoculars come nicely packaged, the presentation box containing a sturdy zippered hard case with detachable carry-strap. There's also a neck strap, lens covers, cleaning cloth and a small guide booklet on set-up and use. The binoculars have solid, integral lugs for attaching the carry-strap.

Centre focusing was smooth and precise with just more than one full revolution taking focus from less than 2m to infinity while the dioptre adjustment was different

between models. The HD 12.5x50 offers a range of +/-4 via the centre focusing knob. Pulling the focusing knob back towards you engages the dioptre adjustment for the right eye, defined by precise click adjustments over its range. The ED 10x42 has the more conventional dioptre ring of +/-3 around the right eyepiece and the adjustable eyepieces gave the impression of being heavy duty, unlike some other models. They were firm but smooth to operate with definite detent points.



GPO binoculars come with a zippered hard clamshell case, lens covers, straps and cleaning cloth.



Both sets feature tripod mounting points.

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The internals of both binoculars were well blackened to remove any light catching distractions with no evidence of dust specs or other internal blemishes. Optical clarity, sharpness and colour were everything I'd expect of binoculars in this price range. My perceptions of chromatic aberration were minimal to negligible - in a laboratory situation with test cards and the like I'm sure that could be quantified but looking at the real world of lake, paddock, trees and hills I found nothing to be concerned about. Colour rendition looked fine as well.

Likewise there was minimal geometric distortion and loss of brightness towards the edges of the image, which might be a bit more noticeable if you spend a lot of time looking at architectural structures but nature has few straight lines to make that apparent.

Overall the GPO binoculars looked good, presenting an image of precise German engineering and finish. They felt good too, solid and precise in their moving parts and comfortable to carry and handle, focusing fast and exact with high-quality images delivered. For anyone looking to move up a tier or two in their choice of field optics, GPO is a name to include with the other renowned brands in that league. Visit raytrade.com.au. ●

Specifications

Model	Evolve ED 10x42	Evolve HD 12.5x50
Magnification	10x	12.5x
Field of view (m/1000m)	113	95
Objective lens diameter (mm)	42	50
Glass technology	ED	HD
Lens coatings	GPObright	GPObright
Exit pupil diameter (mm)	4.2	4.0
Eye relief (mm)	16	16.5
Housing	Magnesium alloy	Magnesium alloy
Closest focus (m)	2.05	2.72
Focus knob turns from closest to infinity	1.25	1.30
Interpupillary distance (mm)	56 to 75	58 to 76
Dioptre adjustment range	± 3.0	± 4.0
Prism type	Schmidt-Pechan	Schmidt-Pechan
Daylight transmission (ISO 14490-5-2005)	90 per cent	91 per cent
Waterproof rating (Mbars)	200	200
Length fully extended (mm)	145	190
Width fully extended (mm)	130	135
Depth (mm)	55	64
Weight bare (g)	725	975
Distributor	Raytrade	Raytrade
RRP	\$755	\$2055



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Paper patched bullets a blast from the past

John Moore

It has been said paper patched bullets were the original expanding bullets. Sportsmen of the day would cast bullets of differing hardness, usually by varying the amount of tin in their alloys, depending upon the game they intended to hunt.

In the mid-1800s the world's sportsmen and most armies used paper patched bullets and rifles of all calibres, right down to .22 cal, were loaded with them. Many of today's shooters haven't even heard of them or, if they have, don't know how they work or whether they may be of use to those of us who reload for our firearms.

I've shot a flintlock musket and they're great fun if you have the chance. So let's go back to the days of muskets such as the famous British Brown Bess. These were smoothbore flintlocks where the rifleman poured the charge of black powder down the barrel then placed a greased cloth patch over the muzzle, a round ball on top and pushed the whole lot down the barrel, seating it on the powder. Then it was up to the rifleman to make the powder ignite, sending the round ball on its way. Being a round ball it wasn't too accurate.

Then someone discovered that if a projectile was made to spin, especially if elongated and spun at the right rate, it would fly true. Various ideas were tried with different bullet designs and all sorts



of rifling. The powder was black powder, meaning low velocities so these early rifles shot large, heavy bullets which carried a long way. When it was realised that if a piece of paper was wound around the bullet it kept the lead bullet from touching the metal bore of the rifle, the paper patched bullet was born.

Breech-loading rifles using brass cartridge cases were invented, with target shooters at first loading by seating a bullet into the rifling (like World War Two 25-pounders) followed by a brass case containing the powder charge. Then came the fixed ammunition used nowadays. You've probably seen photos of paper patched bullets - large, rimmed, old-style cases loaded with a lead bullet but sporting a paper collar above the case mouth.

Paper patched bullets are made by winding a piece of paper, usually twice, around a lead bullet. When they were made commercially this was done by hand, usually involving female fingers. However, the lead bullets I make for patching are designed to fit the diameter of the bore, not the groove, which means the paper patch is at least partly cut by the rifling as it travels up the barrel. The bullet sheds the paper patch in pieces as it exits the muzzle. The paper acts as a kind of sabot.

So for a long period in the mid-1800s

paper patched bullets were in vogue but this didn't suit the Americans. Perhaps they didn't have the labour to hand-make each bullet or because their focus was on production machines, but while their sportsmen used paper patched bullets, their arsenals broke ranks and made grooved lubricated bullets (what we know as cast bullets) for their .45-70 Government cartridge.

In the late-1800s engineers worked out how to draw suitable metals into long tubes, so jacketed bullets were born. And, of course, these could be made by machines so paper patched bullets died out commercially. Interestingly, some of the first jacketed bullets were marketed as metal patched bullets.

Don't be concerned about the potential accuracy of paper patched bullets. In the late-1800s rifle shooting was a popular public sport with thousands turning up to watch important matches. Shooting was done offhand ie, standing up, using custom-built single-shot rifles aiming at targets 200 yards away with good shots achieving groups of 2". Quite remarkable.

The ammunition was handloaded at the range, usually using the same brass case, with the bullets either seated separately or as fixed ammunition. Swaged bullets were found to be more accurate than cast at long range, because they didn't contain



Cartridges loaded with paper patched bullets: 30-06 with 150gr bullet, 357 with 200gr, 38-55 with 230gr, 375 H&H with 270gr and 45-70 with 285gr.

any air bubbles. Paper patched bullets were preferred until it was proved around 1900 that the latest grooved bullet designs fired in the specially made target barrels were more accurate for this low velocity target shooting.

About 20 years ago I was frustrated when I couldn't get a short, flat-nosed 30 cal bullet to work. Whatever I did they just leaded the barrel. These bullets had been cast using a high tin lead alloy and were probably 30 years old. I'd used them when working on farms as a lad with part of my job being vermin control. The gods must have been smiling when I put the load together as it would shoot into about one inch at 100 yards in several 308s I had, loaded to about 1600fps. I now know these alloys soften dramatically over time, so I was probably trying to shoot bullets with an alloy that had softened to be like plain lead.

I then read about paper patched bullets. I reasoned that if I used such a bullet it may not matter what the alloy was as it wouldn't touch the metal of the barrel. So I made a reducing die, sized these troublesome old cast bullets down to bore size, wrapped them in some pad paper, wiped lube on them and fired. The bore remained clean as a whistle and I remember being amazed. Fast forward to today when I load paper



patched bullets in larger calibre rifles - .308, .30-06, .38-55, .375 H&H and .45-70 - plus the heavier bullets for my .357 revolver for rams when I shoot Metallic Silhouette.

Most of the hunting I do is in the bush with shots usually at 50-100m, so I want a bullet that will anchor a deer on the spot, which these do without fail. I'm talking about a wide, flat-nosed bullet around 300gr in a suitable alloy in .375 or .45 cal. The muzzle velocity of these hunting loads is 2000-2200fps but I've found I can prepare faster loads. A 270gr load from a .375 H&H at 2550fps, nearly a full power load, performs well if someone wants to shoot

some of these. Note the .375 and .45 calibre rifles are Ruger No.1s so can handle the pressures these loads generate.

There's a bank on our farm which looks down into a wet patch 170m away, ideal for a few 20-litre drums and boxes for some practice with sons and friends, shooting off our knees or over crossed sticks. The fall of shot can be easily seen. For fun shooting I find any alloy can be used, ranging from pure lead to wheel weights, any mixtures of these, and the scrap collected from the sandbox at the rifle testing range. If it can be melted, it seems to work well. If you're contemplating having a go at paper patched



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Paper patched bullets a blast from the past

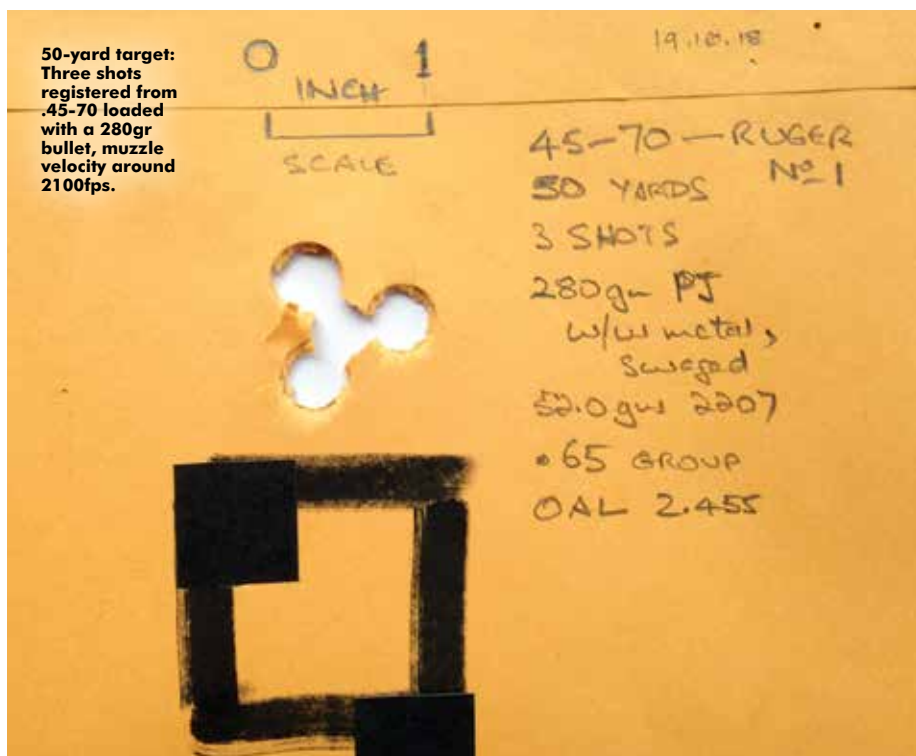
bullets for hunting, at velocities where the impact velocity may be around 2000fps, please do some testing. I use a pretty hard alloy as soft bullets can flatten to a wafer on impact. The hunters and military of yesteryear used hard alloys for their serious work to ensure penetration.

Why would you make these bullets? I do because I can. They take a bit longer to make than good cast bullets but the idea of being able to shoot firearms with bullets made from scrap metal and wrapped in pieces of takeaway shop paper bags appeals. I can make bullets of any weight I wish to try, with any nose or base shape. I cast slugs of the desired weight then swage the final bullet but you can simply cast and size with good results if you wish. And it's cheap shooting with the real costs only being the primer and powder, and wear on the barrel is minimal.

The lube I use is a mixture of beeswax and Vaseline which I find clean to use and very effective. Importantly there isn't any fouling, copper or lead, so at the end of a shooting session all you need is a quick swab with rust preventative, though some shooters don't bother to even do this.

These bullets may be an idea for someone who can't easily buy manufactured bullets.

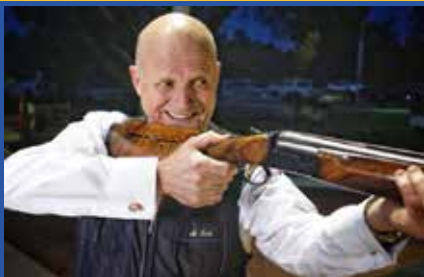
If you're interested, seek out a book



called *The Paper Jacket* by Paul Matthews (Wolfe Publishing). Paul is a US technical writer and can be credited with

documenting, before it was lost forever, a lot of the history and pros and cons involved in making paper patched bullets. ●

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The Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44

Senior Correspondent John Dunn



A pair of Ideal 44 rifles. The top one is chambered for the .22 LR and is a stock standard catalogue rifle. The bottom is a later production centrefire in .25-20. Notice the difference in barrel lengths.

The period from the end of the American Civil War in 1865 through to the early 1900s is regarded by many as the golden age of single-shot rifles. That timeframe more or less parallels the development of the self-contained metallic cartridge we know today as well as modern repeating rifles that came into their own in the 1890s.

Single-shot rifles were manufactured in a multitude of designs by a host of makers who gave the firearms world names such as Ballard, Maynard, Remington, Sharps, Winchester and Stevens - all of which are collectable firearms today - along with other brand names that never quite made the big time but are part of the single-shot story anyway.

Of all the various makers, no other company produced as wide a range of single-shot pistols, rifles and shotguns as Stevens.

Some history

J. Stevens and Company was founded at Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts in 1864, Joshua Stevens being the senior partner with W.B. Fay and James Taylor providing financial backing. The company began to produce vest and pocket pistols based on Stevens' patent of September 6, 1864 as well as a line of precision machinists tools such as callipers and dividers.

In 1886 the firm was dissolved and the

J. Stevens Arms & Tool Company incorporated. Stevens sold his shares in 1896 at which time he ceased to be associated with the company. By 1902 it was promoting itself as the largest producer of sporting arms in the world, a claim many arms historians regard as probably true.

In 1916 it was reorganised and renamed the J. Stevens Arms Company. In 1920 the Savage Arms Corporation bought the entire stock and the two merged. The J. Stevens Arms Company operated as a Savage subsidiary finally being integrated in 1920.

The Stevens Ideal rifles

The first Stevens 'Removable Sideplate' Ideal rifle was made for a short period from 1893 to mid-1894. As the name suggests it had a removable sideplate. Not a lot were produced and today this is one of the rarer and more desirable rifles for Stevens' collectors.

The Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44 was made from 1894 and some say it ceased production in 1933 but this can't be right. I have a Stoeger Arms Corporation handbook dated 1939 that lists four Stevens target and small game rifles, all rimfires built on the 44 action. Noted American single-shot expert Frank de Haas wrote that the model did not cease production until 1947. Whatever the exactitudes of the date may be, it is generally accepted that around

100,000 were produced in a range of rimfire and centrefire calibres.

In 1903-04 the Stevens Ideal 44½ was introduced. This was a stronger action designed for smokeless powders and led to the discontinuation of the old 44 action except in .22, .25 and .32 rimfire calibres and the .25-20 and .32-20 centrefire cartridges. The latter two had also been discontinued by the cessation of production. The 44½ ceased production in 1916.

Contemporaneous with the 44½ rifles was the 044½ or English Model rifle. It differed from the 44½ in that it carried a shotgun-style butt and had a slimmer, tapered barrel. Like the 44½ it too only lasted until 1916 and today both are highly collectable.

The Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44

The No. 44 is the most common of the Ideal rifles and good examples are still around for those prepared to look for them. Usually described as a falling block-type action, the rifle has also been called a tipping block and even a lever activated rolling block. The No. 52 Stevens catalogue of 1907 describes the rifle as a 'drop lever' action so it would seem that even the experts disagree about what sort of action it really is.

Call it what you will but the action operates as follows: When the finger lever is pushed down and forward the breech block

The Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44

swings back and down from the breech face, activating the extractor (for centrefire calibres) or ejector (for rimfires). In the same motion the hammer is pushed back into the half cock or safe position. With the breech block fully lowered a cartridge may be inserted part way into the chamber.

When the finger lever is pulled up and back against the wrist of the stock the breech block rises and closes the breech. To fire the rifle the hammer must be thumbed back into the full cock position before the trigger can be released.

The No. 44 receivers were made from cast steel with a colour case finish as were the hammer and finger lever. The number 44 was stamped on the front face of the receiver, hidden by the fore-end, or on the lower tang just behind the trigger. The earlier 44 actions used an extractor that worked on the left side of the breech but this was replaced with a central extractor in 1901.

About the same time the screws that supported the four main action parts were



The Ideal 44 taken down to show how the barrel and receiver went together. Notice the loosened set screw protruding below the bottom of the front section of the receiver.

changed, provided with a notched locating/locking head that retained them in the left wall of the receiver.

In its most basic form the Ideal 44 had what is usually described as a part round/part octagonal blued barrel No. 2 weight, 24" long in rimfire calibres, 26"

in centrefire. A standard rimfire No. 44 weighed 7lb while centrefire calibres with their longer barrels were listed as 7¼lb. In the 1925 catalogue only round barrelled 44 rifles in rimfire calibres were offered.

The front-sight was a standard blade and the sporting rear-sight ladder adjustable for elevation. Windage adjustments required the sights to be drifted in their dovetails. Barrels were screwed into the receiver and secured by a short set screw housed in the bottom front section of the receiver. This allowed the barrel to be removed for storage or transportation but perhaps more importantly provided the facility of changing barrels with a minimum of fuss – a sales pitch Stevens used in advertising.

Barrels were marked in a number of different ways and together with the extractor location these can be used to place a rifle within an era of production.

The two-piece stock was American



When the action is cycled the hammer is automatically left in the half cock or safe position.

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40 J. STEVENS ARMS AND TOOL COMPANY

RIFLES—Stevens Ideal "Schuetzen Special" No. 54


Barrel—Half octagon.
Frame—Drop forged, case hardened and engraved; new action. Heavy Swiss butt plate, case hardened. Lever of special design.
Trigger—Double set. If single set trigger is desired, deduct \$3.00 from list.
Stock—Extra fancy walnut with beautifully modeled cheek piece, stock and forearm finely checked, all highly finished. Length of stock 13 inches, drop 3½ inches.
Ammunition—Made for cartridges as described on pages devoted to ammunition.
Sights—Our "H" sights (see page 34) are standard and will be so fitted unless otherwise ordered.
Weights and Prices—With 30-inch barrel, weight 11¼ pounds \$68.00
 With 32-inch barrel, weight 11¼ pounds 70.00
 Palm rest, \$5.00 extra.
 With No. 4 barrel, \$2.00 extra.
 With No. 5 barrel, \$5.00 extra.
 With barrels made especially for smokeless powders, \$3.00 extra.
Extras—See page 43.
 For "Stevens-Pope" equipment see Stevens-Pope special catalog.

This model was designed to meet all the requirements of riflemen who want the best. No expense has been spared to attain this end. The best points of the most approved models have been adopted, making this the most complete rifle ever made for the style of shooting in vogue among German riflemen. Every rifle is carefully tested from a machine rest, and a 3½-inch group of ten shots must be made at 200 yards, using the .28-30, .32-40 or .38-55 cartridges to pass inspection.

Component Parts—See pages 44 and 45.
 The minimum charge for mailing component parts of this rifle is ten cents.

TESTIMONIAL
 I have one of your rifles and it is the best rifle I ever owned.
 W. A. SAUCERMAN, Sullivan, Ind.

STEVENS RIFLES and PISTOLS hold more RECORDS FOR ACCURACY than all other makes combined.




From the 1903 Stevens catalogue. The Schuetzen Special was the highest grade target rifle made on the No. 44 action.

CHICOPEE FALLS, MASSACHUSETTS, U. S. A. 29

RIFLES—Stevens "Ideal," No. 44

Barrel—Half octagon, standard length for rim-fire, 24 inches; for center-fire, 26 inches.
Frame—Case hardened and has a solid breech block.
Trigger—Single. (Single set trigger, \$3.00 extra.)
Stock—Oiled walnut, forearm same; regular rifle butt; length 13 inches; drop 3 inches.
Ammunition—.22 Long-Rifle R. F.; .22 Stevens-Pope Armory R. F.; .25 Stevens R. F.; .25-20 Stevens C. F.; .32 Long R. F.; .32-20 C. F.
Sights—Rocky Mountain front and sporting rear. For additional sights see page 34.
Weight—24-inch barrel for R. F. cartridges, 7 pounds; 26-inch barrel for C. F. cartridges, 7½ pounds.
Price—Standard length of barrel . . . \$10.00
 Extra lengths of barrel over standard, per two inches . . . 2.00
 Barrels cannot be furnished longer than 34 inches.
 Made with No. 2 barrel only.
 With barrels made especially for smokeless powders, \$3.00 extra.
 Octagon barrel, \$2.00 extra.
 Shotgun butt, \$1.00 extra.
 Single set trigger, \$3.00 extra.
 This rifle will not be fitted with double set triggers.
 The No. 44 "Ideal" Rifles are furnished with No. 2 barrels only; no deviation will be allowed from this standard.
Component Parts—See page 30. The minimum charge for mailing component parts of this rifle is ten cents.

This rifle is manufactured to meet the demand for a reliable and accurate rifle at a moderate price. No deviations from these specifications except as noted above. No better or stronger shooting arm can be made for the same cartridges. It is recommended without qualifications, and fully guaranteed.



An advert for the Ideal No. 44 from the 1903 Stevens catalogue.



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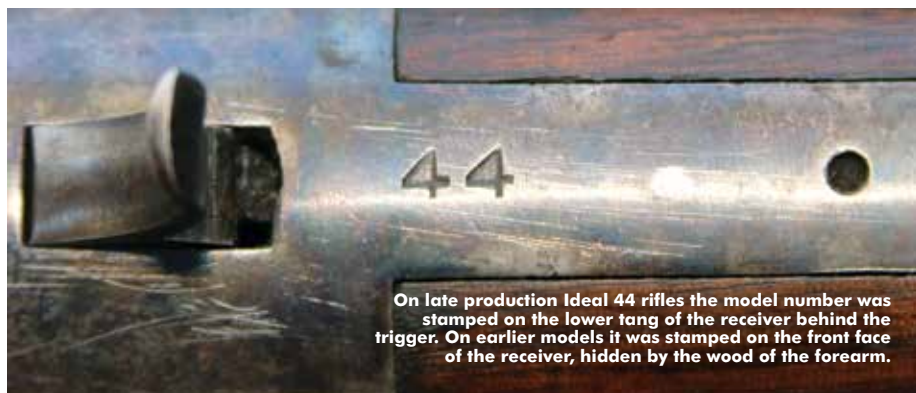
The Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44

walnut with an oil finish, the forearm attached to the barrel via a single screw. The buttstock was attached by wood screws through the top and bottom tangs of the receiver, the butt fitted with curved steel, rifle buttplate - sometimes blued, sometimes nickel plated.

Like so many other single-shot rifles of the era, a host of 'extras' could be ordered for an Ideal 44, including different barrel lengths and profiles to order, special calibres and sight variations or additions, all at extra cost. A number of other manufacturers also made after-market sights that could be fitted according to the whim or pocket of individual customers.

Despite its popularity the 44 action was not a particularly strong one. It handled target loads well enough but had a tendency to shoot loose with higher powered hunting loads. This was particularly true of both the .32-40 and .38-55 calibres, which were consequently discontinued in the 44 action.

At writing I have two Ideal 44 rifles in



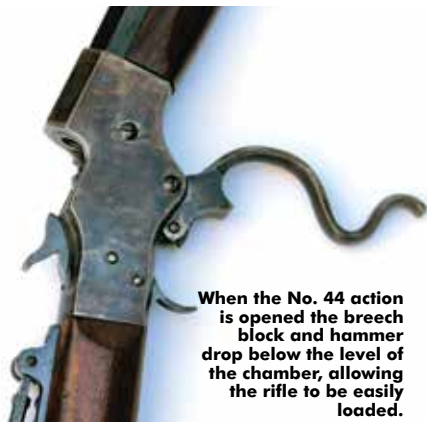
On late production Ideal 44 rifles the model number was stamped on the lower tang of the receiver behind the trigger. On earlier models it was stamped on the front face of the receiver, hidden by the wood of the forearm.

my collection, one a catalogue standard in .22 rimfire, the location of its extractor and the barrel stamping indicating it was made between 1901 and 1916. It's a solid example of the model in good condition, albeit showing some external wear.

The other is a centrefire, chambered in .25-20, with most of the colour case hardening intact. The left side of the receiver is stamped: TRADE MARK, STEVENS,

REG. US. PAT. OFF. & FGN. The rear-sight is stock standard while the fore-sight is a combination with a fine globe in one position and hooded wire cross-hairs in the other. A Stevens Mid-range Vernier sight is fitted to the tang. According to the barrel stamping, this rifle was made after 1916 but before 1925 as the catalogue for that year lists only rimfire rifles.

Both the 44 and the 44½ actions were



When the No. 44 action is opened the breech block and hammer drop below the level of the chamber, allowing the rifle to be easily loaded.

Standard cartridges for the Ideal 44. From left: .22 LR, .25 Stevens and .32 Long rimfire, .25-20, .32-20, .32-40, .38-40, .38-55 and .44-40.



Fond memories of Dr Leo Laden

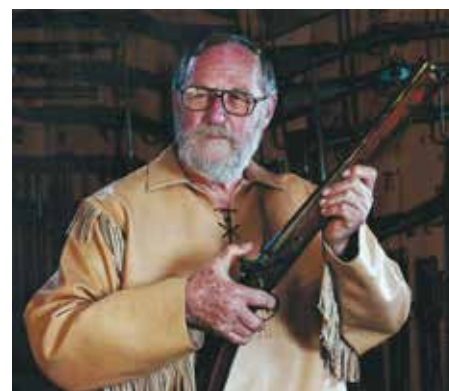
We were saddened to hear of the passing in January of Dr Leo Laden, one of the founders of the SSAA in Western Australia. He was 81. A real character of the sport, his quirky manner endeared him to many and his private firearms museum was on the 'to-do' list for anyone interested in the development of militaria over the centuries.

Leo served in a host of capacities at both state and club executive level and was a vociferous advocate of common sense law reforms with regard to the shooting sports. A life member of SSAA (WA) and the Perth Muzzle Loading Club, Leo held many shooting records over the years and

competed in nine world championships. His many years as a doctor led to him writing a book - *Dicks and Dickheads I Have Known* - a hilarious read based on his dealings with bureaucracy.

He will be sadly missed at WA AGMs where he would always appear with a show-and-tell item, quizzing delegates as to what they thought the item was before delving into its history and more often than not revealing it to be something completely different to the answers offered.

The SSAA sends its condolences to Leo's family and his countless friends and colleagues in the shooting sports Australia-wide. ●



used as the basis for a range of higher quality Stevens rifles. These were generally range rifles with the addition of premium barrels, special sights and stocks, buttplates and finger levers and in some cases engraved receivers.

They carried numbered names that included the Range No. 45 & 46, Modern Range No. 47 & 48, Walnut Hill No. 49 & 50, Schuetzen No. 51, Schuetzen Junior No. 52, Schuetzen Special No. 54 and the Lady Model 55 and 56. Prices varied according to the model but these special rifles were expensive. In 1903 the stock standard No. 44 was advertised at \$10, in the same catalogue the Schuetzen Special at \$68. That disparity has carried through to the present and these days any 'special' Stevens' rifle that comes into the marketplace invariably commands a premium price.

Though never as popular or as highly regarded as the Winchester, Remington or Ballard single-shot rifles, the Stevens Ideal Rifle No. 44 endured and it's a matter of historical fact they were still being made long after their better named and higher priced competitors had disappeared altogether.

In the 1903 catalogue Stevens' advertising described the Ideal 44 as "manufactured to meet the demand for a reliable and accurate rifle at a moderate price . . . no better or stronger shooting arm can be made for the same cartridges. It is recommended without qualification and fully guaranteed."

A lot of shooters and hunters of the time evidently agreed. For that, the single-shot collectors of today can be grateful. ●

Special order cartridges for the Ideal 44. From left: .22 Short and .22 Winchester Rimfire, .22 Extra Long (Maynard) .22-15-60, .25-21, .25-25, .28-30-120, .32 Ideal and .32-35 Everlasting.



Cartridges for the Stevens Ideal rifle No. 44

Rimfire cartridges

.22, .25 and .32

Special orders

.22 Short, 22-7-45 (.22 WRF)

Centrefire cartridges

.25-20, .32-20, .32-40, .38-40, .38-55, .44-40

Special order

.22-10-45, 22-15-60, 25-21, 25-25, 28-30-120, 32-35, 32 Ideal. The last five are all proprietary Stevens cartridges.

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Gun care giant Otis Technology had humble beginnings

Daniel O'Dea



Otis offers a huge selection of gun cleaning products.

The firearms industry is full of fascinating foundation stories, none more so than that of US company Otis Technology. Otis, a leader in gun care products, was founded in 1985 by no less than a 16-year-old girl.

Doreen Garrett was deer hunting in northern New York State with her father when she slipped in the mud and snow and fouled the barrel of her grandparents' Model 94 Winchester she was using. Having nothing to clear the gunk out of the barrel, her hunt was over and she had to track back through the snow to camp.

Her grandfather had fought in WWII with the 10th Mountain Division, so later when combing through some of his gun kit, Doreen came across an old military rifle 'thong', more commonly known in Australia as a 'pull through'. Basically it's a weight on the end of a chain or cord designed to drop from the breech to the muzzle in order to pull a patch or gauze through to clean the barrel. She took to

carrying this around in a tobacco tin when hunting, determined that in future she'd be able to clean her rifle in the field if necessary.

Doreen developed a concept of modernising the pull through to a more compact cleaning system, setting up her first stand at the US SHOT Show in 1985. The story goes she was initially refused entry because, as a 16-year-old, she was under the 18 age limit to be admitted. Her mum helped out with some high heels and make-up to see her into the show to run her own booth. She came away with some strong initial orders and the company has grown from there to being renowned in gun care and also be a major supplier of products to the US military. Not a bad effort for a young girl in a traditionally male-orientated industry.

Tasco Sales Australia is distributor for Otis in this country and sent *Australian Shooter* a sample of products for review. First was the Patriot Series

Breech-to-Muzzle rifle kit. Based on the 'pull through' concept, the kit comes neatly packed in a hard plastic case small enough to throw in your pack. The key to the system is the Memory-Flex cable which is basically a plastic-coated steel cable with brass threaded fittings crimped at either end. The threaded fittings accept bore brushes, mops, patch tips, handles etc, which can be effectively drawn through the bore, replacing the need for a traditional cleaning rod. The rest of the kit comprises a brass bore brush, slotted patch tip, a mop, a double-ended nylon bristle brush and number of round cleaning patches, all items being calibre specific where required.

It also contains a small multitool-come-handle that holds four driver tips - a T20 hex, #0 Phillips, #2 Phillips and 5/32 blade tip. A slot in the side accepts the cable for the tool to become a T-handle to use to pull the cable through and a threaded end can accept cleaning rods in

Gun care giant Otis Technology had humble beginnings

other applications. An instruction leaflet explains how to use it for best results. The kit doesn't include any chemicals or lubricants but the raised blister organiser that holds all the items lifts out to provide space for these if desired.

For years Otis has had similar kits available in a compact round zip-up soft pack. The genius of the system is in replacing the traditional pull through cord with the flexible cable. Once in the barrel it becomes structurally more rigid so you can actually use it to tap or push something like a stuck case out. Let's face it, it's not exactly practical to carry a cleaning rod around with you but easy to drop one of these Otis kits in your pack.

Even easier to carry in the field is the Otis Ripcord. According to the company this is "for times in the field when you just can't reach your Otis cleaning system and need a quick and effective clean". Again based on the 'pull through' method, the Ripcord starts with Memory-Flex cable at its centre with a section of the length including a moulded rubber core and the whole thing covered in a Nomex sheath or surface. It also has the same brass 8-32" threaded ends for attachment of mops, slotted patch holders or other accessories.

The Nomex surface acts as both a brush and patch to loosen and capture fouling as it's drawn through the bore. The rubber section keeps the Nomex surface pressed firm against the bore ensuring 360-degree cleaning and in a clever design feature the same rubber moulded section incorporates a helix form (for rifle and pistol calibres). So the Nomex surface engages the rifling to clean between the lands and grooves.



It's considered a dry cleaning system and recommended for use when the barrel is still hot. It's claimed to be heat resistant up to 700°F (about 370°C). For cleaning it is suggested to brush off and remove particles with a nylon brush and wipe the Ripcord with a cotton cloth.

A key advantage of both the Otis cleaning kit (system) and Ripcord is they allow breech-to-bore cleaning on firearms that may otherwise not easily provide clear access to the bore from the chamber end. With pistols, for instance, it also enables a quick clean without the need to strip the handgun down - just lock the slide back and pass the cable or Ripcord through.

Otis also offers a full range of its 'Smart' cleaning chemicals and lubricants. The company sees the three basic



requirements of gun cleaning chemicals being to clean, lubricate and protect. There are specialised biodegradable agents in these areas with each bottle marked by category 'C' for clean, 'L' for lubricate and 'P' for protect. Therefore, if you face a specific cleaning task such as tackling stubborn copper fouling, you can select Otis Copper remover.

Otis Technology's cleaners are engineered to chemically break down carbon, copper, dirt and oil with a powerful biodegradable combination of agents purportedly making any build-up of these elements easily removed when patching out. Besides their bore treatments their Surface Prep aerosol acts like a tin of brake cleaner for your gun, blasting away heavy dirt, grit and grease from hard to reach areas without the need for disassembly.

Gun care giant Otis Technology had humble beginnings

The lubrication range includes spray, liquid, grease and even dry-lube options so there's something to cover most every application. The Otis Technology Smart protectant line is specifically engineered to stop and prevent rust and corrosion and comes in liquid and aerosol choices.

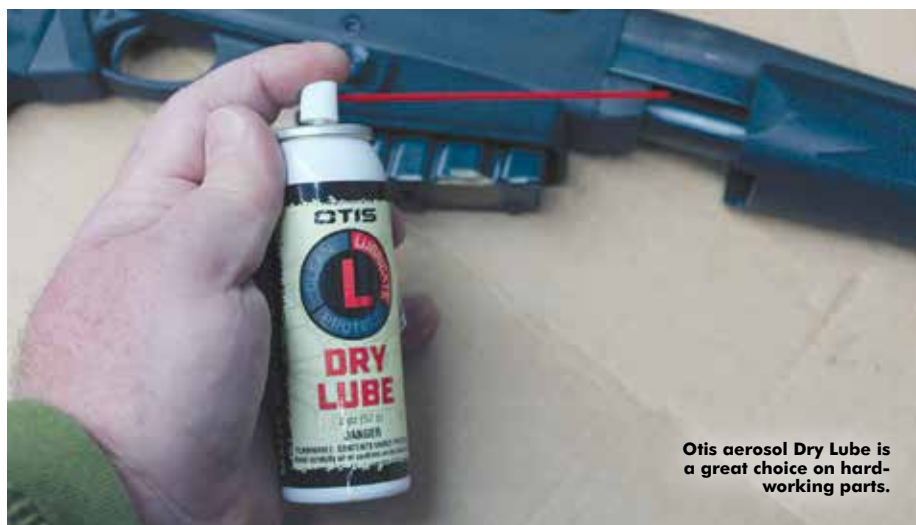
For end of season storage Otis even has a 'Long Term' firearms protectant in an aerosol pack that applies a thin waxy film on all internal and external surfaces which provides protection indoors for up to 12 months without reapplication. The aerosol Dry Lube, originally developed for the US military for desert use, would be equally at home in arid, dry and dusty areas of Australia, especially for primary producers and professional shooters employing self-loading firearms that benefit from heavy lubrication but can be adversely affected by wet lubricants that act like a magnet for dirt and dust.

If you haven't time to pull down your gun for a thorough three-step clean, Otis also has a range of combination 'CLP' products offering all three gun care criteria of cleaning, lubricating and protecting in one formulated solution. The 085 product in either aerosol, liquid or impregnated wipes has long been considered a go-to, one-step application for American shooters to give their guns a quick clean while leaving a light film for lubrication and protection.

Otis Technology delivers a comprehensive range of gun cleaning accessories from proprietary designed patches, bore and cleaning brushes, jags and picks and many other knick-knacks to simplify the tasks of firearms cleaning. Many are grouped in handy blister packed kits. The



Otis Ripcords are great for a quick bore clean without the need to strip your handgun.



Otis aerosol Dry Lube is a great choice on hard-working parts.



Cleaning with the Otis Breech-to-Bore Memory-Flex flex cable and patch system.

three-piece cleaning brush kits contain one each of a phosphorous bronze, stainless steel and nylon twin-headed cleaning brush. Each brush is 175mm in length with a single row 25mm head at one end for reaching tight spots and a wider three-row 35mm head for broader jobs. Twin packs have one nylon and one bronze bore brush.

One great little kit is the grease application pack including a tube of Otis Bio grease, an 8-32 threaded nylon brush head with 82mm brass handle and small nylon end brush for applying the grease. Bulk bore brush packs are also available providing tremendous value. Basically, if there's a gun cleaning job at hand Otis will have the tool. More at tasco.com.au ●



.357 Magnum Alfa

a certain six appeal

Dick Eussen

I treated myself to a new .357 Magnum Alfa stainless revolver, made in the Czech Republic by Alfa Proj, a company based in the well-known firearms manufacturing city of Brno. The Alfa revolver is relatively new to the Australian market though the company was founded back in 1933, firstly building blank-firing pistols and handcuffs before branching off into proper firearms, followed by their current line of revolvers and self-loading pistols in 2002. They added a line of air guns in 2004.

My model is the .357 Magnum Alfa stainless with a 150mm barrel. The instruction book states it can be had in .22 Long Rifle, .22 Winchester Magnum, .32 S&W Long and .38 Special/.357 Magnum platforms. Barrel lengths ranging from 51mm to 152mm and both a timber combat-style and rubber grips are available.

My model is fitted with a rubber-type grip but is also on offer with chequered timber grips. The revolver is a traditional double/single action type having an exposed

hammer and frame-mounted firing pin. The chequered thumb-operated cylinder latch is on the left-side rear of the frame and the six-shot cylinder swings out to the left for loading and unloading. The revolver has adjustable sights though some models can be had with fixed sights.

In looks and appearance the revolver is almost identical to the popular Smith & Wesson K-Series platform. It boasts the same Czech quality we've come to respect among those of us who grew up with Brno rifles and operates and feels the same as a K-Series .38 Special I owned years ago. In single-action mode the trigger is as good as any factory revolver I've used but is a little heavy in double-action.

I have a Ruger GP 100 fitted with Wilson springs, a sweet gun to shoot, and I hauled it out for a trigger comparison test. In single action there was little difference but in double-action the Ruger was lighter, as can be expected. Still, the Alfa trigger was a surprise as we've come to expect very

heavy triggers from US-based factory firearms due to manufacturers wary of possible insurance claims should something go wrong.

Stage one

My first job was to clean it thoroughly as factory guns are protected by grease and other gunk that must be totally removed from all workings, cylinder and barrel. A good gun solvent does the job easily and after the gunk was removed I oiled the working parts to ensure they'd do their job.

The grip is secured by two blade screws, one either side. To remove them I had to use a screwdriver to pry open the front of the grips before they slipped off the handle. There are small protrusions on the hand grip which provide a positive non-slip hold, even when using full power rounds.

The cleaning process is an excellent way to get to know your gun and what makes it tick. As I cleaned I noted the Alfa has a well finished look and feel, no rough or sharp



.357 Magnum Alfa - a certain six appeal

edges, everything rounded, polished and properly finished. All movable fittings are precise and tight while the overall finish is equal to any US-made pistol - the factory clearly pays attention to all guns it ships out.

The Alfa had been tested and fired and came with a factory target showing a 60mm group shot from 15m. As I didn't have the luxury of having the right clamp for the Alfa grips for the Mareeba Pistol Club's Ransom Rest, I shot it from the bench using a Caldwell pistol rest and my own handloads that work well in the Ruger.

Loading the Alfa is easy, just swing the fluted cylinder out, load six rounds, close it and you're ready to fire. The adjustable sights may not be to everyone's liking but I found them excellent. I like hi-viz sights and the front-sight on the Alfa has a bright orange blaze that helps rapid firing



The rear-sight is fully adjustable for windage and elevation.

when the gun is brought up to battery, especially in full sunlight.

The front blade is medium width and designed for general shooting. The Alfa has a sweet single-action trigger that breaks at

2.1lb according to the Lyman trigger gauge. In double-action mode it breaks at 5.1lb which is excellent for a factory revolver. There's no mushy pause or gritting in the trigger in its short but positive travel to impact and it breaks cleanly and positively.



The swing-out cylinder holds six rounds.

At the range

My mission was to match the group the gun came with at 15m and the rubber grip soaks up a lot of recoil from the full-power loads used. Beating the factory group was easy from the bench, then I shot an 18mm group from standing using the Weaver grip and stance before moving the target to 25m where shooting six-shot 80mm groups was the norm - and keeping all shots in the black of a standard 25m pistol target was simple when I played my part.

I found that keeping the bright orange front sight in focus really helped in obtaining the proper sight picture, so it seems whoever shot the factory group included with the gun needs a target shooting lesson!

Unloading the cylinder is done by

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.357 Magnum Alfa - a certain six appeal

swinging it out and pushing the ejector rod in. Ejection was positive with no hang-up or hard-to-push cases. At the end of the range session I was delighted with the results as it's not too often you get to shoot a new firearm without encountering some annoying little issue. As a mate said after firing the Alfa: "It's a keeper."

In summary

If you're in the market for an affordable revolver that may give you an edge on the range or for pest control on the farm, the .357 Magnum Alfa is well worth checking out. It's not that much different to the Ruger 100 with the trigger being similar and a slight edge in accuracy, but that's probably down to the extra 50mm barrel length. The price is right while the finish and feel is similar to any American off-the-shelf revolver I've owned or used. This is a decent and affordable pistol with a base



price under \$1000. The pistol comes with an instruction booklet containing a drawing of all parts, factory target, two cleaning rods fitted with brushes and everything foam-packed in a high-impact plastic case. ●

Specifications

Trigger type: Double/single action
Calibre: .38/.357 Magnum
Weight (empty): 1150g
Overall length: 293mm.
Barrel length: 152mm (6")
Capacity: Six rounds
Price: \$950

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The Larson Atkins X-51 v4 Range Camera

Pete Kincade



The X-51 version 4 Range Camera System by Larson Atkins Systems is the fourth generation version developed by Dan Larson and Dan Atkins. Having previously reviewed version 3 I really liked it for the SSAA Long Range Precision Rifle discipline as it enabled me to validate target results in real time and with no mirage.

Version 3 was almost everything an LRPR shooter could want in a long-range (beyond 1000m) spotting device. I say almost, as the package lacked high definition vision and didn't integrate with mobile device apps. The latter is important for those of us who use ballistic apps and want to store target pictures with their reloading and firing solution data. Other than that version 3 was excellent in every respect and my testing validated Larson Atkins' claim of 2000m between the camera near the target and receiving monitor back at the firing line.

So it was with eager anticipation I received the fourth version of the X-51, an equally impressive long-range target camera system capable of recording stills and video of results down-range at the target board, all in high definition.

Version 4 is superior, simpler and easier to use than its predecessor. The system employs your cell phone, tablet or portable PC for viewing and controlling up to 10 cameras simultaneously and for storing

stills and videos of shot placement (and therefore scores) on the target board. For those running SSAA LRPR matches, need I say more?

Putting the system to work couldn't be easier thanks to a simple design with nothing more than an on/off toggle switch on both camera and receiver. Combine this with what must be one of the best technology user guides I've had the pleasure to read and you'll be up and running in minutes. Just download the free CamHi app from your Apple or Android app store, turn on the camera and receiver and connect your smart device to the Larson Atkins wireless network. It's that easy.

Now head down-range to the target board and position the camera at around a 45 degree angle to the side and about five metres from the target. Orient the camera unit so the antenna points to where you'll be on the firing line or bench, head back to the bench and point and focus the camera via the CamHi app.

Because all the camera functions are controlled via the CamHi app on your smart device, range camera control is intuitive and straightforward. There are no surprises and I really like the ability to capture stills and video and add them to the reloading and firing solution databases on my iPhone or iPad.

Stills and video are all high definition thanks to the 2.4 megapixel camera. Tilt,

pan, zoom, mirror, flip and focus are all controlled via the CamHi app and image quality is superb. The camera and your phone/tablet communicate via the wireless transceiver on the firing line or bench so you don't need a cellular network and you won't be running up a broadband data bill. Too easy? I think so.

iPhone X was used to view camera vision, store results and link them to firing solution data during testing. Larson Atkins claim the camera and receiver units are weather resistant and in one practice session they endured both intense heat followed by some typical Queensland monsoon showers with no problems at all.

Conclusion

Every year I review products related to hunting and shooting, many of them such as rifles, handguns, scopes, reloading equipment and ammunition with specific appeal to those looking to make a purchase or just indulge their passion.

The Larson Atkins X-51 v4 Range Camera system costs less than half that of a good quality spotting scope but does a whole lot more and I believe it will appeal to a broad spectrum of hunters, shooters, long-range precision rifle and target shooters.

I was fortunate to review the system over several months and have to admit it's just as many months since my premium Zeiss spotting scope has accompanied me to the range as it just can't do what this range camera does. The system retails for \$949 and is available at larsonatkins.com ●

Specifications

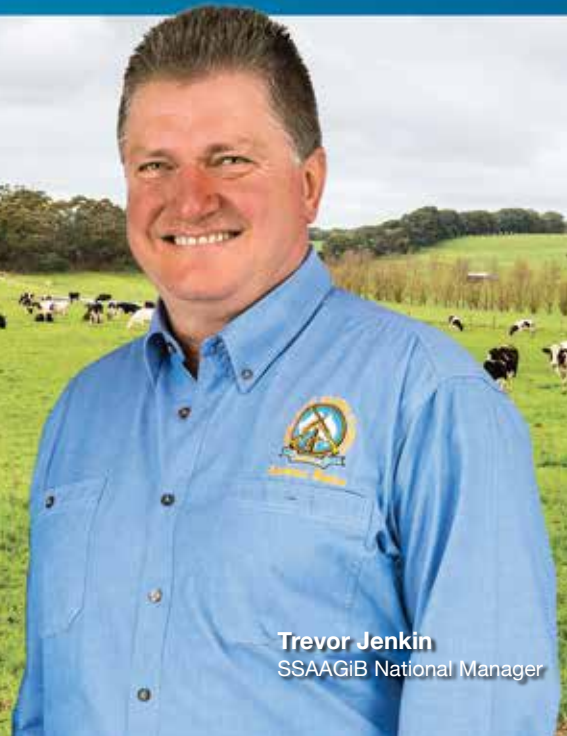
- 2.4 MP HD camera
- 5x optical zoom
- 3x digital zoom
- Connects wirelessly to phone, tablet or PC
- Uses the free CamHi app on iOS and Android devices
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- 2000m range
- 12-month parts and labour warranty



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A SSAA member advantage



Honours shared in Service Rifle showdown

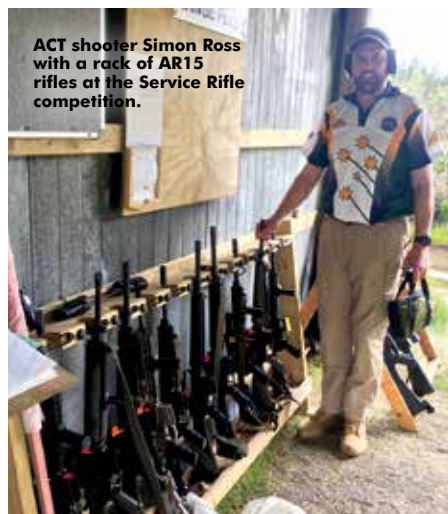
Australian sporting shooters don't get to shoot self-loading military rifles in competition. With one exception. That's when the SSAA Combined Services team heads for New Zealand, most recently for the 2018 Pacific Regional Shooting Championships Service Rifle competition in Rotorua in November.

In past years Australian shooters have competed in New Zealand with bolt-action rifles but no matter how well handled, an M96 Swede just isn't competitive against an AR15 with optical sights, especially in rapid fire serials.

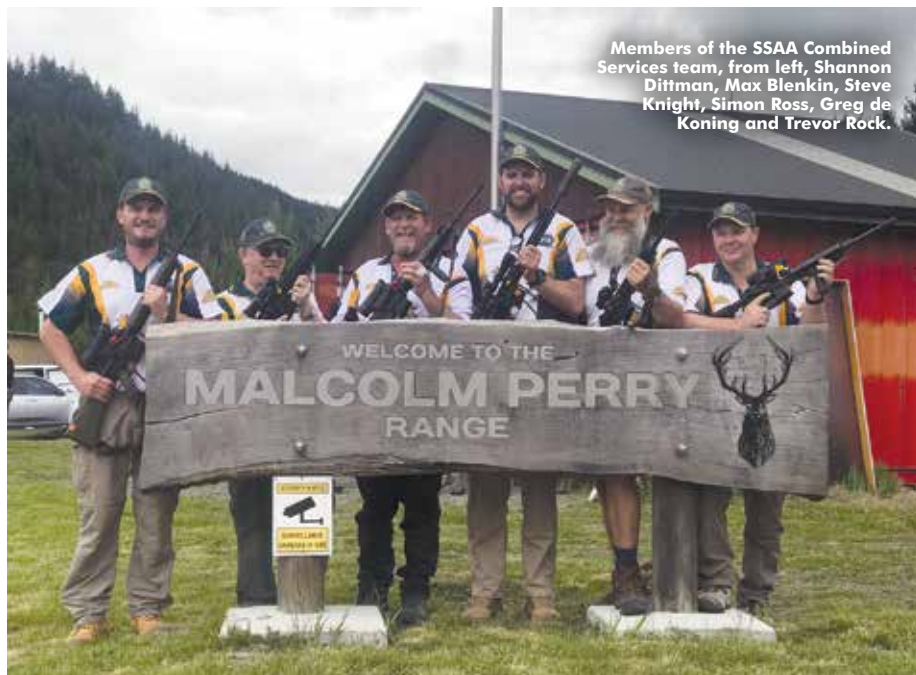
So in recent years Kiwi shooters have kindly loaned rifles to visiting Aussies. New Zealand's gun laws are much more permissive than Australia's but there's still an approval process for visitors to be able to shoot what the Kiwis term Category E military style self-loading rifles, the most restricted firearms in NZ.

With approvals in place the SSAA team of Trevor Rock, Greg de Koning, Shannon Dittman and SSAA Combined Services national discipline coordinator Steve Knight (Qld) and Simon Ross and Max Blenkin (ACT) took possession of the loaned rifles for a day of practice and zeroing ahead of competition.

These were all AR15 rifles in .223 equipped with ACOG or Elcan optics.



ACT shooter Simon Ross with a rack of AR15 rifles at the Service Rifle competition.



Members of the SSAA Combined Services team, from left, Shannon Dittman, Max Blenkin, Steve Knight, Simon Ross, Greg de Koning and Trevor Rock.

The competition was organised by the NZ Service Rifle Association at the Rotorua Deerstalkers range, a picturesque complex with shooting distances out to 300m, just a short drive from town.

During practice, Australian team members assisted the Kiwis in hosting a group of disabled British, Canadian and New Zealand veterans in a fun shoot with various rifles, including a monstrous Barrett in 50BMG. The vets were participating in OpRide, a bike ride from the bottom of NZ to the top with Aussie team members chipping in to help them on their way.

The competition involved two full days of shooting with close to 200 rounds downrange starting at 50m and ending at 300. Serials were varied and challenging, the first at 50m involving 10 rounds - five standing then magazine change and five prone - all in 25 seconds.

More challenging still was the run from the 100m mound to fire 15 rounds on targets at 200m in 60 seconds, not made easier by the fact the match was held

straight after a sumptuous lunch of roast pork and vegetables!

The final match was a double snap at 300m with two rounds fired per six-seconds exposure of the target. It would be nice to report the Aussies trounced their hosts but their top shooters were very good indeed with the match going to local Jason Davis on a score of 851.093.

Second was Aussie Trevor Rock on 816.070, Greg de Koning took fifth on 772.059 followed by Simon Ross on 745.060. Considering they were using unfamiliar rifles this was a fine performance which could only improve with more trigger time. Certainly noticeable was how scores progressively improved over the weekend.

Aside from shooting a highlight of the trip was visiting a pair of local shooters with a truly eye-popping collection of machine-guns. NZ firearms laws permit ownership of fully automatic military firearms, although they can't actually be fired. There were Brens, Stens, AKs, a StG 44, various Russian SMGs, assorted Thompsons and a whole lot more. ●

Aussies on song across the Tasman

Packers Creek Range in Nelson, New Zealand was the venue for the Centrefire Benchrest discipline in the 2018 Pacific Regional Shooting Championships. Held over two days with medals awarded to individuals and teams of two shooters, there was very little between Australia, New Caledonia and hosts New Zealand.

Aussies took gold and bronze in the two-gun team event, Ean Parsons and William Greer topping the podium with a .2728 aggregate with Steve Sori and Milan Morell posting a .2886 score for third, the teams separated by the New Caledonia pair.

Parsons also took gold in the individual two-gun competition with a .2650 aggregate followed by Judy Peacock of NZ and Sori on .2756.

Victory in the Light Varmint event went to New Caledonia ahead of New Zealand but the Aussies came storming back the following day with Parsons and Greer taking gold in the Heavy Varmint category on .2622 ahead of NZ with Sori and Morrell taking bronze.

Australians excelled in testing conditions in the Rimfire Benchrest competition with Neil Digweed, Paul Sullivan and Brian Mitchell filling the first three places in the individual stakes then Digweed and Sullivan combining to take gold in the team competition ahead of Mitchell and John Patzwald with Nick Ward and Janette Mitchell taking bronze. ●



Clean sweep: Rimfire Benchrest medallists Brian Mitchell, John Patzwald, Neil Digweed, Paul Sullivan, Nick Ward and Janette Mitchell.



Aussies just missed out on a medal at the 2018 International Big Game Rifle championships at Pretoria in South Africa. The format didn't do the visitors any favours but they still managed three shooters in the top 10 with Victoria's Bob Christopher best placed in fourth, one ahead of Mark Hibbert (Qld) with Brian Kilpatrick (Vic) seventh. Our picture shows Christopher and Kilpatrick, left, with Hibbert second right.

Gemma shows the way in Try Shooting Day

Gemma Dunn lent an expert hand when she hosted a Try Shooting Day at the SSAA Springvale Range in Victoria. Women and junior shooters were among those who flocked to the event, smoothly orchestrated by Gemma, a former Australian representative shooter who is now Coaching and Membership Development Manager with the SSAA.

Gemma had a small team of volunteers to assist during a fun-filled occasion at the Melbourne suburban venue, the objective to introduce new people to the all-inclusive sport of shooting.

A total of 36 wannabe shooters enjoyed the learning experience with more than half of them women and juniors and two sessions held during the day. “The Try Shooting Day was all about showing how fun, inclusive, professional and safe going to the range and having a shot can be,” said Gemma.

“The SSAA is constantly working on ways to promote the shooting sports and a day where unlicensed members of the public can enjoy our sport and see why we love it so much is a fantastic way to do that.

“It helps break down the misconceptions some members of the public have towards shooters as well as providing a great level of service and experience on our ranges.”



Gemma, right, helps a young recruit get to grips with the art of shooting.

The action was under way after a safety seminar with each segment made up of an assortment of target shoots. A bonus exercise included a special feature where the novices were split into teams to shoot for the highest score.

“We’re hoping those who attended will now see a pathway to competitive shooting and perhaps among them will be our next

national representatives,” said Gemma. “There are so many different disciplines and we’re lucky the SSAA has them all, so there’s plenty of opportunity to become involved.”

In the wake of the buzz about the Springvale get-together it’s almost certain further Try Shooting Days will be on the agenda so keep your eyes peeled. ●

Come-and-try days a big hit at Goulburn

As the fun sport of shooting continues to grow in popularity nationwide, so too do the bi-annual ‘Try Shooting’ days held at the SSAA Goulburn Range in New South Wales. Staged each April and October at the historic range where Australian soldiers were trained during both World Wars, the facility is shared by the local rifle, pistol and clay target clubs.

With more than 50 new shooters attending the October day, they started by completing paperwork, including police forms, then a safety instruction course and finally on to the range under the

supervision of range officer Jason Shepherd. Said Jason: “We’ve been running the ‘Try Shooting’ days for more than five years now and this was one of the best turnouts so far, with a lot of women and younger shooters as well as a few disabled shooters. It was a great day all round.”

Added SSAA Goulburn president Bill Irvine: “It was fantastic to see so many new faces trying their hand at the shooting sports. We place the utmost importance on the safety aspect and will continue to promote our come-and-try days for all those out there thinking of taking up this great sport.”



New shooters receive expert advice from SSAA Goulburn volunteers.

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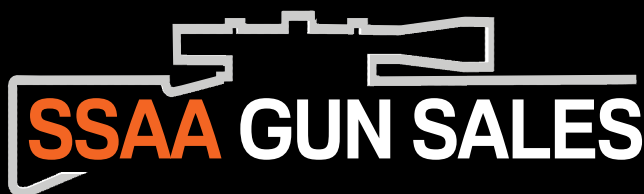
2019

March 2-3	Eastbank Centre, Welford St, Shepparton	200 tables antique & modern firearms - Collectables and Militaria Expo	Ricky Seiter 0400 567 353
March 2-3		Australian Blade Symposium	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
March 9-10	Bathurst Showground, Bathurst	Bathurst Arms Fair	bathurstarmsfair.com.au
March 16-17	Ipswich Showgrounds, cnr Warwick & Salisbury Rds, Ipswich	Brisbane Show of modern, sporting, military guns, militaria, edged weapons, etc	Paul Brush 0412 562 252
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 eventsSrazorbckguns.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
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 eventsSrazorbckguns.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 7		NSW South Coast Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
October 5-6	Westgate Indoor Sports and Leisure Centre, Altona North	Melbourne Arms and Militaria Fair	Jeff Pannan 0412 561 243
November 3-4		Adelaide Knife Show	Gillian Wilson qmacinc@gmail.com
November 10-11	Penrith Panthers Pavilion, Penrith	Sydney Antique & Modern Arms Expo	Lachlan Matthews 0414 928 018 or eventsSrazorbckguns.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.



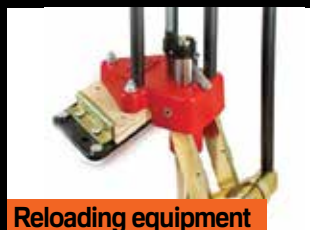
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Phone 02 8805 3900 Fax 02 9832 9377 Email mem@ssaa.org.au

ABN 95 050 209 688

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

Membership No.



**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.

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

First name

Middle name

Last name

Residential address

Town/suburb

State Postcode

Postal address (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)

Town/suburb

State Postcode

Phone (Home) (Work)

(Mobile) (Fax)

Email

Date of birth Male ☐ Female ☐

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Add four issues of the Hunter magazine per year

<input type="checkbox"/> \$90	<input type="checkbox"/> \$119	Adult (over 18 years)
<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.
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<input type="checkbox"/> \$450		5-year Adult Contact SSAA for firearms insurance information.
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<input type="checkbox"/> \$173	<input type="checkbox"/> \$233	Overseas Available to members living overseas.
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☐ HUNTING (club membership)
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Liam Wyatt

Communications Officer Sam Talbot

Liam Wyatt is a member of SSAA Brisbane who gets his kicks from going fast. As soon as he was old enough Liam, 17, acquired his juniors permit and hasn't looked back. In addition to being a keen and active shooter he has represented Queensland as a para-athlete for the past five years in athletics and is the fastest hearing-impaired athlete in his age group in Australia at 100m, 200m, 400m and cross-country.

Liam uses bi-lateral cochlear implants to help him hear and is effectively deaf without them but, rather than letting that slow him down, he has instead acquired a taste for going fast - and that's just what he does.

As well as athletics and firing off rounds you can catch Liam, if you're quick enough, on the race track in his go-kart. Liam and his dad Paul have re-built a Swiss Hutless go-kart complete with 100cc Yamaha engine and "all the upgrades". As for shooting equipment Liam uses a .22 Sako, a Browning lever-action and his dad's air rifle as well as an ex-military Swedish Mauser which very much belongs to his dad.

One interesting side effect from Liam's disability is he doesn't technically need hearing protection on the range. "He

can't hear anything if he turns the processors off and he can't get any deafer," said mum Carol. "But he usually wears ear plugs to keep the Range Officer happy and then he won't have anyone bugging him who doesn't realise he's deaf."

Even with impressive results in other sports Liam still makes shooting a priority, managing to fit everything into his schedule along with a part-time job and starting Year 12 this year. "My friends like to hear about my shooting achievements and give me encouragement," he said. "Although some of them who don't know much about shooting think I'm a bit crazy."

Liam shoots both silhouettes and paper targets but prefers the paper targets as they let him work on his accuracy. He reckons shooting and running instil patience and calmness, qualities necessary for both. "I also like shooting because it brings together people who have similar interests," he said.

"One thing I really like about our club is that everyone gets the same amount of help and accolades, it's not just the best shooters who get all the attention. The people who help me the most are volunteers and other members who are always giving advice or pointing me in the right direction."



Liam with one of his many trophies.



He has represented Queensland at national level for five years.

With this being his last year as a junior shooter before stepping up, Liam aims to progress from rimfire to centrefire, and while he continues to balance shooting, running and go-karting he's patiently awaiting the day when someone invents a sport that combines all three. Until then he'll work towards his dream career of working in logistics and possibly joining the army.

"I'd encourage anyone with a disability to get into shooting as the people are very welcoming and it's easy to make new friends," said Liam. "Some people see me and the stuff I do and think 'if he can do it maybe I can too' and I think that's great." ●

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

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Details of sponsoring member

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

Membership No.

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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, Bedfordale, 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@sdrcl.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@ssaapara.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@ssaapara.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 retlub@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 mjohnis1972@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 ntbiggame@ssaa.org.au

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 statflyshoot@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 U-18. Facilities: Catering by SSAA Batemans Bay Club all weekend, camping \$5 per night, hot showers, toilets, cooking facilities and power. Contact: statflyshoot@gmail.com, Anthony Hall 0418 406 698 or Bryson Payne 02 4471 3135. Full details on website.

New South Wales

SSAA NSW Benchrest Score Championships

March 9-12, 2019

SSAA Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW
Program: March 9, 8am Light Rimfire 50m and 100yds; March 10, 8am Heavy Rimfire 50m and 100yds; March 11, 8am Light Centrefire 100 and 200yds; March 12, 8am Heavy Centrefire 100 and 200yds. Nominations: \$50 per class. Rules: Pre-nomination by February 28 (late fee \$10). Practice March 8. Prizes: State medals, top 10 patches, junior trophies. Facilities: Clubhouse, toilets, showers, barbecue. Camping on range. Catered breakfast, lunch, tea, coffee included. Contact: David Billingham 0418 478 160 or Ray Munro 0408 649 126. Full details on website.

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 Air Rifle State Championships

March 30-April 1, 2019

Rifle Range Rd, off Hervey Range Rd, Townsville, Qld
Program: Saturday, March 30: Air Rifle Field Target - 60 rounds (2x30); Sunday: Air Rifle Silhouette - 80 rounds; Monday: 10m Precision Standing - 40 rounds. Range open 8 am for 9am start. State sub-committee meeting on Saturday, delegates must have written accreditation from branch executive. Nominations: Ian Macdonald 0422 387 028 macsplace99@hotmail.com or Heather Dale 0418 873 258 qldairchief@westnet.com.au. Rules: Current SSAA Rulebook. Grading cards must be shown. Prizes: State medals for first three, juniors and veterans. Facilities: Camping at range with toilets and showers (fees apply). Ranges in town. Snacks and drinks for sale. Lunch, dinner on Saturday and Sunday lunch available to buy. Contact: Heather Dale 0418 873 258 qldairchief@westnet.com.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 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, Dundaithu, 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, jbennettina@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, Dundaithu, 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 jbennettina@gmail.com or Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au

Victoria

SSAA Vic Military Rifle Club CSD State Rifle 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 milrifle@vicmrc.com See website for full details.

SSAA Vic Military Rifle Club ANZAC Day Memorial Shoot

April 25, 2019
Eagle Park Range, Giffins Rd, Little River, Vic
Program: Registration 9am, Remembrance ceremony 10am, competition 10.30. See website for full program. Nominations: \$25 includes lunch, juniors half price. Rules: Shooters graded into MRC GM,M, A, B and C grades for .303 Service Rifle. Prizes: ANZAC Trophy for overall winner using a No.1 Mk3 rifle, medals by grade for each event. Contact: Frank Griffo milrifle@vicmrc.com. Full details on website.

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; 8.45 practice; 9.20 briefing; 9.30 match. Scoped 3-Positional 10m Air Rifle 11.30am registration and practice; 12.05 briefing; 12 matches. Sunday, June 9: NRA 3x40 Small Bore 8am registration; 8.30 practice; 9.05 briefing; 9.15 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

ACT

SSAA ACT Military Firearms Club ACT Territorials

March 29-31, 2019

SSAA Majura Range, 50 Hector McIntosh Grove, Majura, ACT

Program: Thursday, March 28: Range set-up. Friday, March 29: Pistol scrutineering 8am, briefing 8.40, competition 9am. Saturday, March 30: Rifle scrutineering 8am, briefing 8.30, competition 9am. Sunday, March 31: .310/.22 rifle scrutineering 8.30am, briefing 9.15, competition 9.30am. SSAA and grading cards must be shown. Nominations open until March 15, forms at www.actmfc.com, \$40 pistol, \$60 rifle, \$90 all matches, \$10 individual matches, juniors half price. Run in accordance with SSAA Combined Services rule book 2017. Prizes: Medals, Top Gun trophies, patch for every competitor. Facilities: No catering provided, camping and caravans permitted, toilets and showers, camping \$10 per adult per night, barbecue lunch on Sunday. Contact: Simon Troeth 0439 300 335 or mfc.ssaa.act@inet.com.au. See website for full details.

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 ssaalicesprings.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 27honesuckle@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
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
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 reubn@alphalink.com.au
shotgun@ssaa.org.au
0438 860 510 or 0409 862 393 ntbiggamerifle@gmail.com
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
March 2-3, 2019 SSAA SA 2019 Lever Action Silhouette State Championships
March 9-12, 2019 SSAA NSW Benchrest Score Championships
March 29-31, 2019 SSAA ACT Military Firearms Club ACT Territorials
March 30-April 1, 2019 SSAA Qld State Air Rifle Championships
April 1-July 31, 2019 SSAA Qld NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot No.2
April 4-7, 2019 SSAA Vic Military Rifle Club CSD State Championships
April 13-14, 2019 SSAA Qld Gallery Rifle Championships
April 25, 2019 SSAA Vic Military Rifle Club ANZAC Day Memorial Shoot
April 25-28, 2019 SSAA Qld Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

SSAA Para Range, SA
Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW
SSAA Majura Range, ACT
Hervey Range Rd, Townsville, Qld

Dookie, Vic
Clermont Branch, Qld
Eagle Park Range, Little River, Vic
Fraser Coast Range, Bundathu, Qld

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

Eagle Park, Little River, Vic
Eagle Park, Little River, Vic
Wanneroo Shooting Complex, Pinjar, WA
SSAA Port Bouvard, Dawesville, WA
Port Hedland, WA

Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 or hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
atm3855@yahoo.com.au or 0414 880 333
David 0418 478 160 or Ray 0408 649 126
0439 300 335 or mfc.ssaa.act@inet.com.au
Heather Dale 0418 873 258 or glchairchief@westnet.com.au
Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
Frank Griffo milrifle@vicmrc.com
0400 831 115 or 0428 986 070
milrifle@vicmrc.com
Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
or Jeff Bennett 0407 969 354 jbennettinana@gmail.com
Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
Ian Jacobs 07 4164 8179
secretaryQ32@hotmail.com
0408 165 752
Jeff Bennett 0407 969 354 jbennettinana@gmail.com or
Hazel Bozic 07 4128 0467 hbozic1@bigpond.net.au
0417 510 002 or 0409 135 740
0409 135 740
leveraction@ssaawa.org.au
Ronnie Pope 0459 545 374 or fieldrifle@ssaa.org.au
0407 440 431 or clas@ssaawa.org.au

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 8-9, 2019 SSAA WA NRA and Air Rifle State Championships
July 11-15, 2019 SSAA WA Cowboy Lever Action Silhouette State Championships



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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

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SVB005 - 2XL
SVB006 - 3XL

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CJG003 - Large
CJG004 - XL
CJG005 - 2XL
CJG006 - 3XL

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CJB002 - Medium
CJB003 - Large
CJB004 - XL
CJB005 - 2XL
CJB006 - 3XL

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

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CSV004 - XL
CSV005 - 2XL
CSV006 - 3XL

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SSAA Advantage shooting glasses



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SSAA Magnum shooting glasses



SGM001 **\$49.95**

See full details online!

CLOTHING

SSAA Buffwear



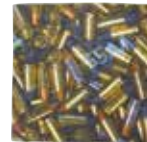
These SSAA Buffs offer a multitude of uses and can be worn to keep dust and dirt out of your face when riding the quad or as a basic headscarf.

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.

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CBW001
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CBW002
Bullet



CBW003
Coloured Leaf

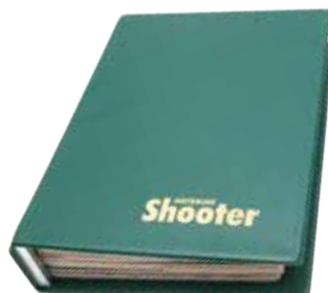


CBW004
Distressed Leaf



CBW005
Oz Flag

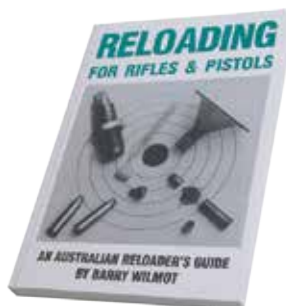
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SSAA cloth badge

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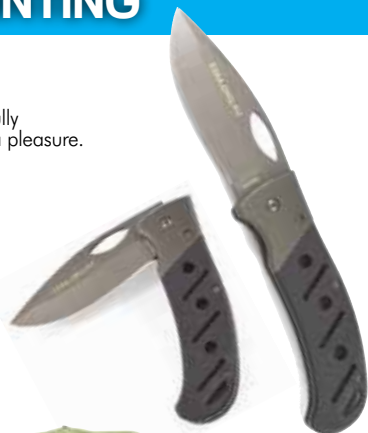
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Handle width: 3cm

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FA003



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March 2019

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

Members-only competitions

WIN

For your chance to win one of these competitions, write your name, address, phone number and membership number on a piece of paper and place it inside an envelope, along with the name of the competition on the front of the envelope, as shown in the example. Alternatively, you can enter online. Competitions close March 31, 2019.

(Name of competition)
SSAA National
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Australian Shooter December 2018

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Chris Marshall, Qld

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James Lawrence, Qld

December Junior - Browning Buckmark hoodie & decal set
Ella Barnes, Vic

December Best Shots Mug
Matthew Cassidy, Tas

Australian Women's Shooter

\$100 SSAA online shop voucher
Diane Eady, Qld

Lithgow T-shirt, bar mat & calendar pack
Bella Hurworth, Qld

1 of 2 UpLULA pink magazine loaders
Shayne King, NSW
Catherine Abela, NSW

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Of Dixie and the deer

Though the calendar showed it was spring, the day had been at least three parts winterish and was working hard on the remainder.

The afternoon sun was bright enough but shed little warmth when it managed to find a gap in the clouds. The wind coming off the mountain was icy and you had to wonder if the overnight rain hadn't fallen as snow higher up.

We'd been for a walk in the morning to check what deer signs were about and in the circumstances there was only one place that offered much hope of success - the bottom corner of a cultivation paddock where the timber provided some respite from the wind.

The sun was still at least half an hour above the skyline when the dog and I slipped into the head of a fallen peppermint gum on the edge of a rise overlooking the paddock. It was a perfect natural blind - a part of the landscape the deer were already used to and an ideal place for a camo-clad hunter and brown dog

to disappear among the dappled shadows. Better still, it gave us a height advantage. If anything moved we'd have to see it.

There was a time when I thought sit-and-wait deer hunters were a lazy lot. Now I know better. Like a lot of my peers I long ago realised I'm not as young as I used to be . . . even if I sometimes forget. Through experience I've learned that if I do my homework and pick the right time and place I can usually take the animals I need.

I've also learned that sitting and waiting

is good for the soul. How can you not relax when all the afternoon requires is that you watch and listen and feel what's going on around you? There's peace and solitude in the evening shadows, even if they're never quiet.

We'd been waiting for 20 minutes or so when Dixie sat up and turned around to sniff the breeze coming in behind us. She lifted her head and snorted a couple of times, thought about what her nose was telling her then lay down again. She sighed resignedly and closed her eyes, obviously



having decided if we were going to wait she may as well sleep.

The sun slipped behind the mountain, its glow reflecting softly on the bottom of some low-hanging clouds. The wind gusted and swirled, still cold on the back of my neck but growing weaker.

Dixie sat up again, sniffed and whined. As I turned around the hackles on her neck came up and she woofed softly, her nose pointing towards the edge of the bush where an electric fence separated the grass

from the trees. Then she growled, louder this time and as I reached out to reassure her a fallow buck came down the fence line towards us.

At best he was a yearling, his head adorned with a pair of grey velvet-covered spikes. He was lean and gangly and, despite his runty appearance, exactly what I was after. "Shoot any fallow you see," I'd been told. "I've enough problems with too many sambar to encourage the fallow to stick around. If nothing else they make good dog tucker."

The fallow pranced nearer and the dog growled again, loud enough to stop the deer in its tracks, his head up as he looked quizzically towards the noise. I shouldered the Ruger, slipped the safety and fired as the cross-hairs settled on the base of his throat. At a bit less than 60m he never knew what hit him.

We scrambled out from under the tree and walked to where he lay in the grass, the dog at my heels clearly concerned about what

we'd find. She was physically shivering and I recalled someone remarkably like me who was exactly the same the first time he walked up to a freshly downed deer.

Only when the deer had stopped moving did she creep in for a closer look and a series of all-around sniff tests. Satisfied with what she'd found she lifted her head, smiled and wagged her tail. I had a meat animal and Dixie her first deer.



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