

WE TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE GOODIES ON DISPLAY AT SHOT SHOW 2024

AUSTRALIAN

April 2024
\$8.95 incl. GST

Shooter

THE MAGAZINE FOR SPORTING SHOOTERS

UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

Passing the test of the feral pest



SPOTLIGHT
ON FIRST NEW
WEATHERBY RIFLE
IN 50 YEARS



Do it yourself: A beginner's guide to reloading

The official publication of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia
Proudly printed in Australia



ssaa.org.au





Buy and sell new and used

- Firearms, parts and optics
- Reloading components
- Knives and hunting products
- Camping gear, vehicles, boats and property



Take a look now!

The numbers don't lie!

2250+

items listed at
any one time

37,000+

active users

30,510+

sold items

2.37 million

page views per month

7 years

as **Australia's leading** firearms website

“Thanks for your help! Ad went through today without a hitch. It was so straight forward! I am 82 y.o. and not the full bottle on I.T. Thanks again. - Ken”

ssaagunsales.com



58



76



22



40

FIREARMS

- 28 **Back with a bang!**
Chris Redlich tests the first new Weatherby rifle in half a century
- 48 **Two for the price of one!**
Nick Rositano applauds the latest Hardy Hybrid switch-barrel
- 66 **Man the pumps**
Wedgetail's latest offering impressed Daniel O'Dea
- 76 **Stepping out of Glock's Shadow**
Pistol newcomers making their mark, says Rod Pascoe

HUNTING

- 22 **Mob-handed**
Dave Pearce with an insight into the feral challenge

PRODUCTS

- 18 **Turning up the heat on ferals**
- 36 **Hit parade**
- 70 **Not on my watch**
- 80 **Play it by ear**

AND MORE

- 34 **Legislative Action**
- 40 **Play it straight**
- 44 **Ring the changes**
- 52 **Beginner's guide to reloading**
- 58 **Show us the money!**
Daniel O'Dea was in Las Vegas for the annual US extravaganza
- 74 **How's your tolerance?**
- 79 **Final chapter in an enduring legacy**
- 82 **At home on the range**

REGULARS

- 6 **National News**
- 7 **Letters**
- 7 **Insurance Q&A**
- 8 **Open Season**
- 10 **Bushcraft & Survival**
- 12 **Clay Target Q&A**
- 14 **Top Shots**
- 85 **SSAA Shop**
- 86 **Competition News**
- 89 **Competitions**
- 90 **An Outdoor Life**

18



Our April cover - page 22

ALL NEW
MARK 4HD



LEUPOLD



MARK 4HD

THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS LONG RANGE DOMINANCE



BE RELENTLESS



SIFA

Shooting
Industry
Foundation
Australia

PROUDLY DISTRIBUTED BY

NIOA

sporting.nioa.com.au
www.leupold.com

Image taken by remote means

AUSTRALIAN Shooter

THE MAGAZINE FOR SPORTING SHOOTERS

MEMBERSHIP AND MAGAZINE INQUIRIES

Phone: 02 8805 3900

Fax: 02 9832 9377

PO Box 282, Plumpton, NSW 2761

Email: membership@ssaa.org.au

EDITORIAL POLICY

To create a better environment and community understanding of all forms of hunting and shooting sports.

EDITORIAL INQUIRIES

PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061

Email: edit@ssaa.org.au Web: ssaa.org.au

ABN 95 050 209 688

To advertise in this publication contact
Karoline Wasiak on 0412 486 071.

216,313 members strong
as of February 2024

This magazine is owned and published by the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Inc. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy of this Association.

EDITORIAL

MANAGING EDITOR..... Allan Blane
ASSOCIATE EDITOR..... Thomas Cook
CHIEF OF STAFF..... Jennifer Martens
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
& GRAPHIC DESIGNER..... Elizabeth Tyson
GRAPHIC DESIGNER..... Alex Heptinstall
GRAPHIC DESIGNER..... Tammy Michalski
WEBMASTER..... Mark Fieldhouse
ADVERTISING & PROMOTIONS..... Karoline Wasiak
MEDIA AND POLITICS OFFICER..... Rachael Oxborrow
ADMINISTRATION..... Debbie Wing
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT..... John Dunn
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT..... Rod Pascoe

CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE

Robert D. Moore, Chris Redlich, Daniel O'Dea, Neil Graham, Peter Radtke, Mark van den Boogaart, Dave Pearce, Nick Rositano, Frank Varapodio, Rod Pascoe, Kyle Andrews, Ben Unten, Dave Rose.

STATE CONTACT INFORMATION

For SSAA inquiries please contact your state office

NSW	02 7900 1555	WA	08 9497 7919
QLD	07 3281 3447	SA	0419 849 452
VIC	03 8892 2777	ACT	0400 138 955
TAS	0418 734 008	NT	0402 013 918

NATIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Wildlife Programs Matthew Godson
PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061

SSAA National Accounts Office

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

SSAA General Insurance Brokers

Unit 1, 212 Glen Osmond Rd
Fullarton, SA 5063
Phone: 08 8332 0281
Freecall: 1800 808 608
Fax: 08 8332 0303
Email: insurance@ssains.com.au

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



Farewell to a genuine SSAA Benchrest legend

Max Coady, a Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Life Member and well-loved stalwart of the Benchrest community, has passed away, leaving an indelible mark on our sport's history in Australia. He was 87. Max fulfilled the role of National Benchrest Scorer for the best part of 60 years, quietly working in the office with precision and diligence. His humour and smile made everyone he met on the range feel welcome and supported, and his contributions to SSAA Inc and his home-state Association of New South Wales will forever be remembered.

Just last year Max retired from his role as head scorer of the National Benchrest competitions and took to the firing line as a national competitor for the very first time. He'd always been an avid shooter in local competitions around Canberra and Coffs Harbour though, and was involved in construction of the Baulkham Hills, Narrabeen and Silverdale ranges in NSW. He was also involved in the early establishment of other branches across NSW and formation of state and territory bodies around the country.

Max's scoring expertise was also appreciated on a global scale, helping with international postal shoots for the US, Canada, Italy and Germany. He also scored at the World Benchrest Championships in New Zealand and Pacific Regional Shooting Championships on several occasions.

He was the youngest of three boys and began shooting at age 14 with his brothers Phil and Ken. His father 'Pop' received SSAA National Life Membership in 1973. In recognition of his work over the years, Max amassed numerous accolades including SSAA (NSW) Life Membership in the 1960s, SSAA National Life Membership in 1999 and the Australian Sports Medal in 2020. Max is also a member of

the prestigious Benchrest Hall of Fame.

The SSAA Inc board and staff express their sincere sympathies to Max's family and friends, following the loss of a wonderful man and shooting sports ambassador. We'll remain forever grateful for his unwavering commitment and promotion of the sport.

As the final pages of the April edition of *Australian Shooter* were being prepared, we received the sad news that a man many of us have been inspired and educated by as firearm users had passed away. The works of Nick Harvey have been heralded as sacred firearms and hunting scriptures within Australia's firearm-using community for the best part of 70 years. His passion, knowledge and experience will

likely never be matched in the world of firearms history, function and handloading. Nick passed away at the age of 92 on Wednesday, February 21 and is survived by his wife Nancy and children Nick Jr, Alan and Janice.

His legacy within our community will live on through his extensive works in books and magazine articles, which many hold in high regard and

refer to time and time again, regardless of their personal experience and skill level. Nick contributed to *Australian Shooter* (then *Australian Shooters' Journal*) in the early days of his writing, and worked with Yaffa Publishing via *Sporting Shooter* magazine and other titles for the majority of his career.

Sporting Shooters' Association board members and staff extend their heartfelt condolences to Nick's family, friends and colleagues who will miss him dearly. May he live on in the memories of those who loved him personally and in the wider shooting community who've enjoyed and learned from his skills and insight over the years. Travel well, Nick - we thank you for your wisdom and storytelling.



Max Coady: Unwavering commitment.

Celebrate: 21 today!

I'm writing to you as I've just had one of the most successful solo vermin hunts of my life here in Perth. I'm originally from the northeast of England and used to be a gamekeeper in my spare time in the UK on a pheasant and partridge shoot. I would control all the vermin, not only on our property but on other farms and have enjoyed many a successful hunt - but nothing like this.

I now shoot on various farms around Perth controlling invasive species and one farm I shoot on near Calingiri northeast of Perth had a feral cat problem. The farmer, a true-blue Aussie, asked if I could clear them out so I spent two-and-a-half days there and bagged a total of 21 cats. I took this photograph of my haul (20) and, on my way out of the farm, bagged another on the track. I used my five-shot 12G Adler B220 and Tikka T3 Hunter .308 (on the large side for cats but it certainly does the job).

I've had many a good cull on feral cats and foxes but this is top of the league. It was the best hunting trip of my life as I whistled most of them to within range of my shotgun. About six months earlier at the same property I bagged eight cats and three foxes and the damage these would've been doing to native wildlife is off the scale.

Doug Vickery, WA



Thanks for the memories

I've just finished reading the piece on the great Jim Corbet (*Shooter*, November 2023) which brought back memories of reading his books a lifetime ago, sitting in our lounge room totally absorbed in the story, with the hairs on the back of my neck standing up. I wasn't a bush kid from this great land, I was sitting next to Mr. Corbet participating in one of his many hunts.

Through the words of men like Jim Corbet and Robert Ruark I've 'hunted' the great plains of Africa, Indian sub-continent, the Highlands of Scotland and wetlands of a dozen other countries, so thank you for publishing this piece and doing your bit to keep the names of these great men alive.

Shane Smith, via email

'Solution' to thermal blindness

In *Australian Shooter* (August 2023) Rob Dobie said he was having a problem using thermal scopes and losing central (night) vision in his eye. I was having the same problem using 'black hot' with a lot of 'bright' white when looking through the scope at night (apparently red light helps preserve night vision). My solution was to buy a pair of 'John Lennon' glasses with round red lenses which are plastic and not glass. I used tinsnips to trim one of the lenses down to a diameter which allowed me to fit it into the scope's rubber eyecup then sandpaper to smooth off the edges.

Now I'm looking at black hot with a red background and although I still lose some night vision, it's far better and much more comfortable on my eye. Initially, when

looking through the scope it appears rather red but the eye gets used to it quite quickly and within a short time it isn't noticeable. Not for everyone but worth a try.

Jack, via email

New love affair

I was an extremely lucky girl and grew up being a member of the SSAA. My husband Josh on the other hand secured his first firearms licence just last year and is fairly new to the sport. He had his eye on a Tikka .243 after reading a review of the rifle in *Australian Shooter*, so as soon as he received his Permit to Acquire, that's what he bought.

He loves the quality and that feel of finally owning his own firearm and though he only started shooting two years ago, has so much passion for the sport. It's the perfect rifle for our vermin control efforts and I now joke with him that he spends more time with his Tikka than he does with his wife!

Chloe Clarke, via email



Insurance Q&A

SSAA GENERAL INSURANCE BROKERS

Send questions to: insurance@ssaains.com.au



Q: I'm a firearms collector and need more cover than the \$25,000 worth of firearms and fixed accessories offered in the SSAA Mutual Firearms Protection option. Are there other ways with SSAA General Insurance Brokers I can make sure I have the right cover for my collection?

A: There are options to extend the SSAA Mutual Protection cover depending on your needs. The base level protection covers your firearms and fixed accessories at home, at the range or while hunting for loss, damage or theft up to the value of \$25,000. There's an annual fee of \$35

and this can be organised as a part of your SSAA membership process. If you need to increase this by a further \$50,000 you can apply online via SSAAIB at a cost of around \$250, depending on location. More comprehensive information can be found by visiting www.ssaib.com.au or calling us on 08 8332 0281.



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.

Deer culling by shotgun: Is it humane?

Many times I've had discussions with others as to whether shooting overabundant species from a moving helicopter is a humane way to go about it and, as the majority of the time these activities are sanctioned by government agencies, you'd have to say 'I hope so'. More recently, talk has focused on the shooting of wild deer with shotguns from helicopters, a practice which has raised a few eyebrows in our community.

We'll put the concept of 'fair chase' to one side because culling and hunting do consist of different motivations producing different outcomes. In the world of coordinated culling the aim is to shoot every animal possible, especially if you're doing this from an expensive platform such as a helicopter. When it comes down to the humaneness of aerial culling using shotguns, many are worried there could be a potential welfare issue. This is completely understandable as hunters and shooters generally want to make sure animals they target are dispatched in the quickest way possible to ensure a humane death.

There've been a number of studies conducted on this subject, with the latest being one titled: 'Aerial culling of feral fallow deer with shotguns improves efficiency and welfare outcomes'. Both feral goats and pigs have often been controlled by shotguns but the focus of this study is wild deer. There has been some recent pushback by local farmers and hunters towards a wild deer eradication program in the south-east of

South Australia and some have been trying to push the message that using shotguns is inhumane.

Being involved in the fight to save duck and quail season in SA, the pragmatic side of me says if government agencies state it's humane to shoot deer with shotguns, there's certainly no issue to shooting birds with one. I understand and accept that some who are not across all types of hunting and pest control may have different opinions regarding the humanness of various control methods.

The study focused on whether using shotguns would increase efficiency of the program and improve welfare outcomes by reducing the time between the first shot and death, shorten pursuit times and increase the likelihood of multiple projectiles penetrating the thorax of target animals, leading to more fatal injuries to vital organs, thereby minimising time until death.

Researchers reviewed 104 video and audio records to record the efficiency and humaneness of the program. They collected information on the number of rounds fired, time between first shot and confirmed death and pursuit time. Field autopsies of 20 deer were undertaken to assess the severity and lethality of wounds inflicted by shotgun pellets, results showing 104 fallow deer were killed with a total of 383 shotgun and 10 rifle rounds being used. The average time between first shot and confirmed kill of individual fallow deer was 11.1 seconds.

In group situations the first encountered had the longest average time between first shot and confirmed kill (maximum 35.9

seconds), though intervals decreased with subsequent individuals of that group culled. Average pursuit time between detection and confirmed kill of individual fallow deer was 49.5 seconds, while in groups it stretched to a maximum of 159 seconds. All autopsies showed lethal wounds with 100 per cent receiving lung-penetrating damage and 70 per cent heart-penetrating damage.

So what do I make of this data? If the question is whether targeting fallow deer with shotguns at ranges up to 30m is humane I'd certainly say 'yes', as there's no doubt multiple thorax-penetrating wounds brings about a rapid death. An average 11.1 seconds from first shot to death with shotgun compared to rifle studies indicating 21.9 seconds (Cox et al, 2022) and 57 seconds (Hampton et al, 2022) displays better outcomes. Although there are some differences in factors between these three studies, the use of shotguns in this instance does appear to increase efficiency and welfare outcomes of this type of control for this species in that particular environment.

That said, ground-shooting without pursuit or chase should win a gold medal for best welfare outcomes, while providing opportunities for hunters to be involved in ground-shooting activities would alleviate some of the disquiet generated by government-sanctioned deer control programs.

Send questions to:
wildlife@ssaa.org.au



True Class 5 Hearing Protection

CENS Digital custom electronic hearing protection. Amplifies the sounds around you and cuts off when sound is detected above 81dB then sound returns when it's clear & safe. Up to 5 different modes for all disciplines of shooting plus wireless communications.

[earmold.com.au](http:// earmold.com.au)

Email: info@ earmold.com.au

Agents throughout Australia & New Zealand

True custom made shooters hearing protection. Custom made on the spot & ready the same day. Ultimate in comfort & highest rated protection with up to 40.5dB reduction at 4000Hz. Removes background noise & the crack from the shot while still having situational awareness.



Howa
Precision Rifles & Barreled Actions

CUSTOM DESIGNED BY YOU

DREAM IT, BUILD IT...



WHEREVER YOUR PASSION TAKES YOU,
HOWA'S MODULAR DESIGN GIVES YOU THE FREEDOM TO CUSTOM DESIGN THE IDEAL GUN IN FOUR EASY STEPS.

STEP 01

PICK YOUR BARRELED ACTION

Select from Sporter, Varmint, or Carbon Fiber wrapped barrels in long, short, and mini-actions. Customize with a range of calibres, finishes, coatings, and barrel lengths to suit your shooting preferences.

STEP 02

PICK YOUR STOCK/CHASSIS

Howa Barreled actions fit seamlessly with leading stocks and chassis from Hogue, HS Precision, Stocky's, TSP, MDT, and more, offering endless customization possibilities.

STEP 03

PICK YOUR SET OF RINGS

Equipped with dovetail rails and various Picatinny options, Howa fits most scope rings, including our recommended Nikko Stirling's Zero Lock rings.

STEP 04

PICK YOUR RIFLE SCOPE

From bush hunts, to range days or competition shoots, Nikko Stirling scopes have a rifle scope for every Howa set up.



Howa
LIFETIME WARRANTY

SUB-MOA
ACCURACY GUARANTEE

H.A.C.T
TWO-STAGE
TRIGGER

SCAN TO WIN



WIN \$1,000 TO SPEND ON DESIGNING YOUR OWN HOWA

Entry open to AU residents 18+. \$1,000 Supplied as credit to used against a Howa set up of your choosing. Scan QR code to view full T&Cs and to secure your entry. Entries closes on 31st April 2024.



YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER IN HUNTING AND
SPORT SHOOTING SINCE 2007.
www.osaaustralia.com.au



See and be seen when your life depends on it

In February we introduced the fundamental 'Principles and Priorities of Survival', these being Protection, Rescue, Water, Food and the mnemonic associated with them is Please Remember What's First. Applying these principles - and in this order - is how you need to prioritise your survival needs in an emergency situation. Depending on circumstances, some principles can be achieved concurrently but only if the sequence isn't jeopardised.

In February we considered the first priority: Protection. This encompasses protection from rain, sun, wind, danger, animals, hypothermia, hyperthermia, infection, disease etc, so now we'll address the issue of Rescue. Some practitioners re-phrase this survival priority as 'location' because it's all about indicating, to both ground-based and aerial search and rescue teams, exactly where you are.

You could be forgiven for thinking you're easy to spot but the likelihood is you're not. Indeed, when you're out scrub you'll probably be a very small dot within a very large surrounding landscape, even if you are in a flat and deserted area. Tree coverage, undulating terrain, darkness, waves and even the colour of your clothes (camo!) can make it more difficult to identify where you are. Besides, rescuers might pass by in the middle of the day in searing heat while you're seeking refuge in the shade, asleep and out of sight.

Taking measures to better your chance of rescue should actually happen before you leave home, while you're at your most complacent. Do you tell anyone where you're going? What property/paddock you'll be hunting? What CB channel you'll be on? How long you'll be away and with who? Remember your partner or housemate may not be focused on the detail when they give you the obligatory nod as you head out the door, so write it all down.

I prepare what I call a 'fridgegram' which includes all the details authorities may need to know about where I've gone and what I'm doing. These are useful even if you live by yourself because, if you leave one on your fridge door or kitchen table, police will find it when you're reported missing and they kick in your front door.



A tinsel tree is a passive rescue aid which can be improvised from anything shiny.

While it's essential to tell people what you're doing, there's another thing you can do that'll virtually guarantee your rescue. Before you go anywhere, buy a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) and have it registered with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, the federal government agency responsible for regulating and coordinating maritime safety and navigation in Australia. It monitors a constellation of 62 satellites whose sole purpose is to support search and rescue. Costing a couple of hundred dollars but with no ongoing monthly fees or contracts - and a battery shelf-life of up to 10 years - PLBs are the cheapest insurance you'll ever invest in.

There are other pieces of survival equipment which also punch above their weight. For example, a whistle and signal mirror (and no, a CD is not a good alternative) are often underrated but are, in my view, worth their weight in gold. We'll look at these in more depth in future columns but for now it's sufficient to say a rescue whistle can be heard up to 2km away, whereas your voice will reach 200m at best. Meanwhile, a purpose-designed signal mirror can reach the horizon.

Beyond manufactured rescue aids your likelihood of rescue may depend on your capacity to adapt, improvise and overcome. For example, if you want to be seen from the air, create a marker panel. Use the orange side of a survival blanket or the hi-vis vest you keep in the car to wear when you break down by the roadside, or when you're trekking out of the scrub so

you're not mistaken for a deer. Place the blanket or vest on the ground, bright side up, in a cleared open area so it can be seen from the air and by people on the other side of the valley.

Another item to attract attention from the air is the classic SOS symbol, though to be noticeable from height, each letter will need to be around 6m long and contrast sufficiently with local vegetation. Alternatively it may be simpler to generate a 'V' which is referenced in professional pilots' handbooks and known universally as 'need assistance'. In parallel, signal fires and smoke signals will alert rescuers to your location, so did you bring the matches, a lighter or flint? By whatever means you get the fire started, you'll need three fires or smoke signals configured in a triangle roughly 50m apart. This arrangement conforms to the international rule of 3s and is referenced in the same pilots' handbook.

Last but not least, consider making a 'tinsel tree' which simply entails adorning a tree in the open with anything shiny, from the reflective surface of the inside of a chip packet to the mirrors off your car, find what you can and tie it up. These will move about in the breeze, reflecting sunlight in every direction to attract attention. Those are some of our favorite rescue methods but ask yourself: What else can you think of?





WINCHESTER 

POWER POINT®

The saying goes, legends are not born, they are made. Decades of success on deer and big game has made Winchester Power-Point truly legendary. The time-proven dependability is offered in a wide range of calibres and bullet weights, and will be filling freezers, and dropping pests for generations to come.

Features:

- Power-Point: Assures quick and massive knock-down
- Strategic Notching: Provides consistent and reliable expansion
- Contoured Jacket: Maximum expansion performance
- Alloyed Lead Core: Increases retained weight for deeper penetration

RRP **\$34.95 - \$79.95**

Wide range of calibres available.



Q I recently went to a major Sporting Clays competition with my son and we left totally disillusioned. Targets thrown were fantastic, the competition was conducted perfectly but the cheating was unbelievable. I personally saw referees bullied, mates calling 'no targets' for each other and I'd go so far as to say even scoresheets were tampered with. I won't be back at that event ever again. Is this something you've ever had to deal with?

Name and address supplied

A Your question is certainly not the first nor, I imagine, the last on this topic. I've never been an avid Sporting Clays competitor, but have had an awful lot to do with many shooters who excel in this event and I'd suggest 99 per cent of them have never cheated in any way. However, there is that one per cent who constantly drag the rest into a world of pain in their chosen discipline of clay target shooting.

I wasn't at the event you mentioned (I've removed the name of the competition in question), so won't comment on any rumours which may be circulating throughout the sport. You asked if I ever had to deal with cheating. Well, I predominantly competed in the ISSF disciplines where, in major events, three referees decide the outcome of each target. If two of the three agree the target was either hit or missed then that's the result, no more discussion.

Scores nowadays at all top international tournaments are electronically generated from the shooting range to the main scoreboard and posted publicly around the world immediately, therefore scoresheet tampering is impossible and bullying independent referees unrealistic. I've certainly seen some competitors try but largely to no avail.

Major events in ISSF are all run professionally with only qualified referees

presiding over the competition. Obviously in domestic events this strict supervision is relaxed, with many refereed and scored by competitors from the previous squad of shooters. Despite this, at all levels of ISSF cheating is rare. To be honest it's a bit like golf where cheating simply isn't tolerated, though in saying that it should be unacceptable in all sport.

The obvious difference between Sporting Clays and any of the ISSF disciplines is often the targets in Sporting events are thrown over huge distances, across varying terrain and throwing exactly the same target each time can be difficult, especially when wind and undulating topography are involved. It's not uncommon to see Sporting targets vary 10m or more in their flight path between consecutive competitors. This will of course may make some easier and obviously some harder, but simply claiming 'no target' when variances occur is not a realistic option.

Bullying referees is far more sinister and creates a highly dangerous precedent if tolerated at any level. If a squad is administered (refereeing and scoring) by its own competitors then this can be a problem. 'Mates' suggesting the missed target flew a bit strangely and the shooter should 'have that again' can ruin the day for everyone and I hope this is an exception and not the rule on all Sporting layouts.

Your suggestion that scorecards have been tampered with is where the line must be drawn. Any competitor maliciously changing a score should be banned - and for a very long time. Some high profile international competitors have been caught doing this and paid a very high price with their reputation in tatters. The same penalty should apply here.

So what's the answer? The obvious one would be to have independent referees and scorers on each stand, with all scores recorded electronically reporting back

to a central station. This system costs money and in many remote ranges would be physically and financially impossible to implement.

The only way money can be raised to fund professional staff is through nomination fees. Would the majority of Sporting Clays competitors like to pay a \$10 or \$20 levy on top of their existing nomination to cover this? I suggest it would be a very unpopular move. I might be wrong but knowing how most clay target competitors would drive across a major city to buy a slab of ammunition for \$5 less than the local gun shop is charging, I think I'd be correct in my assumption.

ISSF enforce totally random squadding in virtually all major events, therefore enlisting your mates to 'help out' becomes difficult. The suggestion might be worth considering at larger events, though again would meet with stiff opposition as the vast majority of Sporting Clays shooters want to enjoy the competition experience, and rightly so, with friends and family. It's tragic we'd have to consider these drastic measures to combat a tiny minority but if the object of the exercise becomes 'fairness and equitability', then it may come at the cost of 'enjoyment'.

Sadly I feel the only logical short-term solution is to make administrators of the sport aware of these shady competitors and maybe pay 'special attention' to the squads they compete in so this type of underhand behavior can be weeded out.



Questions to:
Russell@GoShooting.com.au

CHIAPPA®

f i r e a r m s



WILDLANDS 92

Model: 920.434
Calibre: 44RM



LA322

Model: 920.432
Calibre: .22 LR



CHARGING RHINO

Model: CF340.276
Calibre: .9MM LUGER

Made In Italy Since 1958.

TSAOUTDOORS

SIFA Shooting Industry Foundation Australia

FIND YOUR LOCAL STOCKIST
tsaoutdoors.com.au/find-an-outlet



Got a question - ask our **TOP SHOTS** ?

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

email: edit@ssaa.org.au

Q I was picking up some empty cases at my pistol club and among them were several 9mm cases head-stamped '9mm +P'. I hadn't seen this before and a fellow member suggested it meant the cartridge had more 'power' than normal. He also said this type of brass usually appears after the police have been practicing on our range during the week. Can you shed any light on what this means?

Colin, NSW

A Plus P ammunition is simply ammo loaded to higher than normal pressure and therefore power as you say, according to SAAMI (Sporting Arms & Ammunition Makers Institute) specifications. This was first done with law enforcement pistol ammunition in an effort to extract every last bit of power from a cartridge while still being safe to shoot from modern firearms in good condition. For most rounds, the gain in performance is minimal and leads to increased wear and tear on the firearm (not to mention the shooter), so you won't often see this type of ammunition at pistol clubs where there's no advantage in having all that extra power and velocity just to put holes in paper targets.

Generally the walls of the cartridge cases are also slightly thicker to cope with the increased pressure. To go one step further, some manufacturers also produce Plus P Plus (+P+) ammunition which is loaded to even higher pressure levels than +P and are generally limited to law enforcement sale only. While not loaded to SAMMI or any other technical specification, the general industry agreement is they're loaded about 15 per cent higher than +P (I've only ever seen +P+ in cartridge collections).

As an example of what 'Plus' ammo can do, I've listed the standard factory load alongside the +P and +P+ loadings for a common 9mm Luger (9x19mm) pistol round. Pressures are given as pounds per square inch (psi). A standard 125gn factory load produces 1140 feet per second (fps) velocity and 35,000 psi of pressure,

whereas the +P load produces 1200 fps and 38,500 psi while the +P+ load reaches 1250 fps and 42,000 psi of maximum average pressure. Despite these high numbers they're still below the maximum pressure of the proof rounds fired in 9mm handguns before they're released from the factory. Figures quoted here come from SAAMI testing data.

Rod Pascoe

Q A friend of mine has a Remington Rolling Block rifle which looks like the No.2 Rolling Block you've written about in the past, the main difference being his has a pistol grip stock and is fitted with target sights. We haven't been able to source any information about the rifle and were wondering if you could help us identify it.

Graeme G., via email

A Thanks for your email and subsequent phone call about the rifle which is a Remington No.7 Rolling Block. It was introduced in 1903 with a price tag of \$24 and was made by the Remington custom department and may have originated from a special order. It's based on surplus frames of the M1871 Army Pistol which is larger than the No.2 action. The No.7 remained in production until 1911, by which time only around 350 had been made according to Remington factory records.

It's features were as follows: Colour case-hardened frame and trigger guard; trigger has a checkered face; blued barrel (part-octagonal, part-round); barrel lengths offered were 24", 26" and 28"; fitted with a Lyman tang sight and Beach combination foresight; calibres from the factory were .22 Short, .22LR and .25-10 Stevens but was also available as a special order in .32, .38 and .44 rimfire as well as the calibres used in the No.2, which included .22 Maynard Extra Long, .25-20 Single Shot, .32-20, .32 Long CF, .38-40 and .44-40.

The stock was made from imported walnut with a checkered pistol grip and forearm and there was a hard rubber

butt plate featuring the Remington logo. The rifle was also available fitted with a Schuetzen-style butt plate and wind gauge foresight with or without a spirit level.

Period advertising described it as: 'The finest target rifle ever offered by Remington'. It was the last new Rolling Block produced by the company and is a most desirable and highly collectable firearm among single-shot rifle enthusiasts.

John Dunn



Q I reload 9mm cartridges for my self-loading handgun using a progressive press, though occasionally the powder charge fails to drop into the case, leading to a projectile becoming stuck in the barrel. When this happens I routinely must pull all remaining rounds to ensure they have a powder charge. Is there an easier way of detecting undercharged loads without having to pull them?

Dave, via email

A The easiest way in my opinion is to use an electronic jeweller's scale (they're about \$30 on eBay) which can measure grains and one with a range of 0-50 grams (ie, 770 grains) is ideal for 9mm rounds. The only proviso would be your cases and other components have to be uniformly branded (all same-branded cases, primers, etc) as different brands of cases or projectiles will have a different average weight.

You take a primed case and projectile and place them on the scale then press 'zero', which cancels the weight of the two components. All you do then is remove the case and projectile and place your reloads on the scale, one at a time. The reading will be of the powder charge alone and any which read close to zero should be pulled and checked (this may also reveal any pos-

sible over-charges). Of course you'll get variations because of differences in average weight of projectiles and cases, but the display should give you the charge within a grain or two.

Geoff Smith



Primed case and projectile on the scale, zeroed so the display reads 0.00.



Loaded round placed on the scale shows only the difference, namely the powder charge, which in this round should be 5.8 grains.



Give some thought to matching ammunition to the weight of your shotgun.

Q I'm a bit confused about shotgun recoil and why my 20-gauge Silver Pigeon seems to kick more than my 12-gauge. I thought it should be the other way around so can someone explain what I'm experiencing?

David G, SA

A There has always been an understanding that lighter-gauge shotgun cartridges like the 20, 28-gauge and .410 kick less than the 12-gauge and in most circumstances this is true. Where it gets a little tricky is comparing apples with apples. The 12-gauge shooting a 28-gram load at 1250fps in a gun weighing 8lbs will recoil less than a 20-gauge shooting a 28-gram load at 1250fps in a 7lb-gun. This is just a function of the weight of the gun absorbing recoil and a heavier gun absorbs more recoil with a given load.

Smaller-gauge guns are a delight to use and carry, especially when they're scaled down to size. The downside of this is they weigh considerably less than a comparable 12-gauge in terms of absorbing

recoil. If you were to shoot 32-gram loads at 1250fps in your 8lb 12-gauge, 28-gram loads at 1250fps in your 7lb 20-gauge and 24-gram loads at 1250fps in your 6.5lb 28-gauge, you might expect similar levels of perceived or felt recoil. It all goes awry if you shoot higher performance target or field loads in smaller gauges where lack of gun weight means recoil becomes much more obvious.

I reviewed a lovely Miroku 20-gauge shotgun a few years ago and was provided with high performance Eley 28-gram loads and boy did I know I was shooting that. In the field with relatively few shots and all the excitement it wasn't noticeable, yet after 100 Sporting Clays I really felt the difference. Swapping for a more moderate 20-gauge target load made all the difference.

Stop to consider what you're putting through your 20-gauge and with a bit of thought to matching ammunition and gun weight, you'll turn that Beretta 686 Silver Pigeon into a delight to shoot. Perhaps you also 'need' a matching 686 in 28-gauge?

Paul Miller



27 Beaconsfield St Margate Qld 4019

Ph:07 3883 1733 or 0419 644 269

cleaverfirearms.com E: sales@cleaverfirearms.com



STEALTH ARMS
1911 Platypus Crowd Pleaser
9mm, 10 shot, black finish with
light rail, double stack, cased with
two mags, 5" match barrel, optic
ready, match trigger, mag well.
Takes Glock 17 9mm mags.
NEW \$3195



STEALTH ARMS
1911 Platypus Cotton Candy
9mm, 10 shot, custom cerakote
pink finish, double stack, cased
with two mags, 5" match barrel,
optic ready, match trigger, mag
well. Takes Glock 17 9mm mags.
NEW \$3095



STEALTH ARMS
1911 Platypus The Perry
9mm, 10 shot, custom cerakote
aqua etc, double stack, cased with
two mags, 5" match barrel, optic
ready, match trigger, mag well.
Takes Glock 17 9mm mags.
NEW \$3095



STEALTH ARMS
1911 Platypus Titanium
9mm, 10 shot, titanium cerakote
finish, double stack, cased with
two mags, 5" match barrel, optic
ready, match trigger, mag well.
Takes Glock 17 9mm mags.
NEW \$3095



SAVIOR Urban Warfare double rifle case
ODG or FDE, 46" **NEW \$149**



SAVIOR American Classic double rifle case
Tiger stripe camo, 36" or 46" **NEW \$215**



SAVIOR American Classic double rifle case
Woodland camo, 36" or 46" **NEW \$215**



SAVIOR
Pistol 6x Mag
Pouch, with sling.
FDE or grey
NEW \$34.90

SAVIOR
Specialist range bag
OD Green. Inc 3x
pistol sleeves
NEW \$149



SAVIOR
Mini range mag
Black, grey,
OD green or FDE
NEW \$99.90

SAVIOR
Single pistol case
Black, grey, OD green,
red, teal or FDE
NEW \$44.90



MDT
Field Stock Synthetic
MLOK forend, adjustable cheek.
Available in: Black or FDE
Available for: Remington 700 SA, Tikka T3X,
Ruger American SA, Savage SA & Howa 1500 SA.
NEW \$395



MDT Polymer Magazine Gen 2
243/6.5 Creed/308win 10 shot AICS
Available in: Black, FDE & ODG
NEW \$49.95

MDT AICS
Polymer Magazine
223rem, 10 shot, black
NEW \$49.95



MDT Polymer Magazine
Gen 2
243/6.5 Creed/308win
5 shot AICS
NEW \$44.95



MDT GRND Pod
Available in:
Black or MDT green
Available for:
Arca, pic rail & M-Lok
NEW \$249

MDT Elite Muzzle Brake
Available in: 223rem or 30cal
NEW \$159



MDT Peanut
Shooting Bag filled
NEW \$119.95





WINCHESTER
Hog Stopper
7.62x51 / 308win
135gr hollow point
SPECIAL \$299
/per 200



WINCHESTER
USA
308win 147gr, FMJ
SPECIAL \$275
/per 200



PMC
Bronze Line
308win, 150gr,
soft point
SPECIAL \$289
/per 200



REMINGTON UMC
22/250, 50gr, hollow point
SPECIAL \$275 /per 200



AGUILA
Super Extra Std Velocity
22lr, 40gr, LRN, 1130 FPS
SPECIAL \$47.50 /per 500
\$475 /per 5000



AGUILA
Super Extra High Velocity
22lr, 38gr, hollow point,
1280 FPS
SPECIAL \$47.50 /per 500
\$475 /per 5000



REMINGTON
UMC Range Bucket 38 special, 130gr, FMJ
\$265 /per 300

GHOST



GHOST Speed 360 Mag Pouch
With 3G quick release
Double stack available in: black, red, white,
green, pink, blue yellow, grey, yellow & orange.

NEW \$44.95
Single stack black
NEW \$44.95



GHOST Hydra P+ Speed Holster
Right hand. Available in: Beretta 92, Sig P320 &
P320X5, CZ SPO1 & Shadow 2, Glock 17/34
NEW \$189



GHOST Thunder Elite Holster
Right hand, with 3G quick release
Beretta 92, Sig P320 / P320 Legion, Sig P226,
1911, CZ Shadow 2, CZ75, Glock 19/17/34,
Walther PPQ, Smith & Wesson M&P9, Walther
Q5 Match & Steel
NEW \$109



GHOST Rigid Shooting Belt
Available In: 34", 36", 38", 40", 42", 44" & 48"
NEW \$59.95

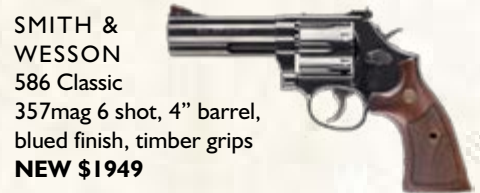


PACT Club Timer III
NEW \$289

Smith & Wesson



SMITH & WESSON
586 Classic
357mag 6 shot, 6" barrel,
blued finish, timber grips
NEW \$1949



SMITH & WESSON
586 Classic
357mag 6 shot, 4" barrel,
blued finish, timber grips
NEW \$1949



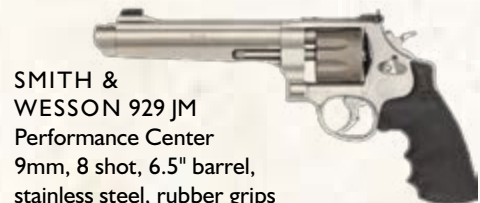
SMITH & WESSON 686
357mag 6 shot, 6" barrel,
stainless steel, rubber grips
NEW \$1869



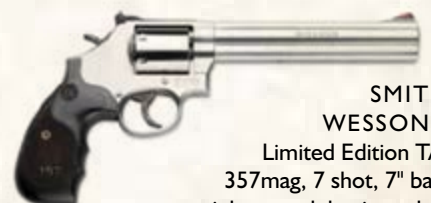
SMITH & WESSON 686
357mag 6 shot, 4" barrel,
stainless steel, rubber grips
NEW \$1869



SMITH & WESSON
66 Combat
357mag, 6 shot, 4.25" barrel,
stainless steel, rubber grips
NEW \$1895



SMITH & WESSON 929 JM
Performance Center
9mm, 8 shot, 6.5" barrel,
stainless steel, rubber grips
NEW \$2890



SMITH & WESSON 686
Limited Edition TALO
357mag, 7 shot, 7" barrel,
stainless steel, laminated grips
NEW \$1949

cleaverfirearms.com
MONTHLY PRIZES!
EXCLUSIVE WEB DEALS!

See the specials first & subscribe today



Turning up the heat on ferals

Matthew Godson meets a new player in the scope market

There's a new kid in town. That was the promotional catch-cry celebrating the release of the new Pixfra Chiron thermal range into Australia by Dahua Technology. There are five models in the range which include a choice of two sensor sizes and three lens sizes, all with ≤ 30 mK NETD sensitivity and the one provided for review by Dahua Technology Australia was their top of the range Chiron C650.

On paper this one has an impressive list of features and specifications for its price point, the scope coming with a 640 x 512 VOx thermal sensor with 12-micron pixel pitch, 50Hz refresh rate and an F1.0 lens. It offers a field of view (FOV) of 8.7 x 7.0 degrees and a handy base magnification of 2.63x that extends with digital zoom adjustment levels of 1x, 2x, 4x and 8x. Detection distance is listed to be up to 2600m, the 1440 x 1080 display screen is OLED and provides clear, crisp images of what the sensor produces.

The C650 has a metal housing to protect sensitive hardware inside, a sturdy flip-out protective cover for the lens and ergonomically, every control you need is comfortably in reach with your left hand. There are only four function controls - the power button, capture button, menu button and rotary knob - and of course the adjustable diopter and adjustable lens to ensure clear images to the eye.

Once the device is on, the Power button also provides the function to execute sleep mode. The Menu button is pressed to display a brief menu or held to display the standard menu and you make the selections you want by turning the rotary knob. Double pressing the Menu button will initiate a flat-field calibration for the image and, when not in menu function, the rotary knob decreases and increases digital zoom. The Capture button allows you to choose between recording videos (press and hold) or taking photos (press) and by pressing the Power and Capture button together you can

change palette colour. Pressing the Power and Menu button together lets you change the zeroing profile.

The palette choices for the C650 include White Hot, Black Hot, Green Hot, Alarm, Iron Red and Sepia. It has 10 reticle options with a choice of three colours (white, red, green) and five zeroing profiles (A-E) which allow for zeroing of multiple firearms and with each of those profiles you can set five different zeroing distances. This is handy for setting different zero settings for short and long ranges or even ammunition types with varying bullet drop. Other functions worth noting include PIP (Picture-in-Picture), RAR (Recoil Activated Recording), DPC (Defective Pixel Correction), Hot Spot Track, video with microphone recording, auto or manual calibration and stadiametric rangefinder (range mode).

With regard to power, the C650 uses replaceable and rechargeable 18650-type batteries and with the ones supplied you have a battery life of around six hours.



Of course these are easy to find and the purchase of additional batteries would certainly extend operational time in the field. They can be charged via the unit or the supplied charger.

I attached the scope to my usual test rifle using the Picatinny mounting system which came with it. I'm told the mount supplied for review has been replaced with a quick-detach version and that'll make it easier to swap and change to other firearms in your collection. A good quality QD mount should help maintain reasonable zero with nil or minor adjustment depending on your needs.

The C650 was easy to attach to my Ruger American rimfire and to ensure I fitted the mount snugly on the rail, I held a little bit of forward force so it had solid connection with the rail while tightening the locking bolts with even force. Doing this and maintaining a consistent locking torque will help preserve the best return to zero possible when detaching and reattaching the scope in a systemic manner.

Sighting-in was a relatively straightforward process. With the scope offering a freeze function you simply aim at the middle of a target and fire a few shots to determine point of impact (POI). Then focus back on point of aim (POA), freeze the image, adjust the reticle to be in line with POI and save your settings to set the zero. I zeroed the scope at 25m and it didn't take long to go through the whole process. The C650 easily picked up the passive thermal signature of the 20mm Glowshot Target repair patches I regularly use to cover POA and POI holes, to ensure I can clearly see them while making final adjustments to complete zeroing.

When viewing various objects with the available palette choices, I had a good demonstration of the quality images the C650 can produce. From those captured during the zeroing process in daylight to landscape pictures and animals at night, this little unit produced the goods and I certainly give the output of the sensor and OLED display a big tick.



For the price, specs and features the Chiron C650 is worth considering.

Turning up the heat on ferals



Three control buttons are positioned next to each other for easy functioning

I'd no trouble picking up the thermal signature of rabbits hiding among fallen timber

When it came to using the C650 for its intended purpose it functioned as expected with ample FOV to be able to quickly scan paddocks for pest animals, important if you don't have a standalone thermal monocular for that task. Detection zone of the scope is more than adequate for most situations and the digital zoom with focus ring brought those distance detections into identification range.

Gross weight of the scope is 696 grams with mount and battery and I found it balanced well on my rifle without feeling too heavy, which allowed me to use it as a spotter when walking and stalking game. Seeing as I used 22LR subsonic ammunition during testing, the recoil didn't have the energy to activate the RAR which isn't a fault or limitation of this particular device, as I've found this also happens with other more expensive units.

While waiting for darkness to fall on one testing session I noticed a few rabbits had started to move from their hiding places into adjacent paddocks. Never one to let an opportunity slip by, I chose to go for a stroll and target some bunnies in daylight. Even here I'd no trouble picking up the thermal signature of a few sitting in the grass and even hiding among fallen timber in mallee bushland. You can use this scope during the day to good effect, just remember to keep the lens cap on when not actively hunting and don't point the scope (like any

other thermal device) directly at the sun to protect the sensor.

When it came time for night patrol the C650 clearly picked up rabbits moving around beyond 250m which is well outside rimfire range, so it was a case of slowly moving to within 50m of an intended target before taking a shot. As always, prior to shooting I used a ballistics calculator to confirm bullet drop across my intended shooting range, taking into account scope height, ammo choice and sighting-in at 25m. With a calculated trajectory indicating less than 0.5 of an inch across the entire 20-60m range, this set-up allowed me to aim dead-on and shoot with no thought of holdover.

I found the Chiron C650 reliable in the field, easy to zero and I liked that it held multiple profiles for use with a variety of firearms. It maintained zero across several shooting sessions, was simple to navigate through its functions and had most of the features you need or want in a thermal scope. With wi-fi connection to an App you can change various functions/settings, capture pictures and video and share them via your mobile device. The factory warranty stands at three years parts and labour with one year on batteries and the C650 retails for \$5299 and is available in a three-in-one kit which includes scope, monocular and clip-on from distributor Australian Sporting Agencies. ●



This young fox at 50m didn't get to become a sheep killer.



I can see you . . . rabbits hiding in the grass at 50m.



ATHLON

RIDICULOUSLY GOOD OPTICS

FEEL THE POWER!

NEW



TALOS 10X42 SFP

Available in two reticles MIL or MOA. 30mm tube, side parallax 10y to infinity.

SRP \$849



No. 1 SELLER



ARGOS GEN 2 10-40X56 SFP

Available in MOA 1/8th. 30mm tube, side parallax 15y to infinity.

SRP \$1,049



NEW



HERAS 15-60X56 SFP

Available in MOA 1/8th. 30mm tube, side parallax 10y to infinity. Locking Turrets. Designed for F-CLASS Shooters.

SRP \$1,499



NEW



ARES UHD 15-60X56 SFP

Available in MOA 1/8th. Illuminated reticle, Ultra High Density Glass, 30mm tube, side parallax 10y to infinity. Locking Turrets. Designed for F-CLASS Shooters.

SRP \$2,649



Available Now! Order through your local Firearm Dealer.

Proudly distributed by Hunting Depot

VIC vjetten@crkennedy.com.au | NSW mscanlan@crkennedy.com.au

QLD mswanton@crkennedy.com.au | WA/NT greg@spencerimports.com.au

TAS sbickle@crkennedy.com.au | SA jgerhardy@crkennedy.com.au



huntingdepot.com.au



Mob-handed!

Dave Pearce with an insight into the feral challenge

Finally we spotted them about a kilometre away, grazing up the side of a hill in the morning light. A black and tan goat had betrayed his feral mob and we knew to load-up and make ready for some shooting action. Containing our excitement we decided to watch the mob carefully until every one of them had moved over the hill then, with the goats out of sight, we were able to drive to the base of the hill unseen. On foot we moved swiftly and quietly to the top, not wanting to spook any stragglers that might be just over the ridge.

I was hunting with two friends and as planned we spread ourselves along the ridge and moved forward as a hand signal indicated goats had been spotted. We were in the perfect position, wind in our faces, sun on our backs and the mob 100m below. From our elevated position we could see in all directions around them, especially up the opposite hill where they'd most likely run so we edged forward into comfortable shooting positions.

On the rocky ground we were using a combination of bipods, backpacks and shooting sticks to build stable positions,

then with everyone sorted and spare mags at hand the 'shoot when ready' call came over the UHF. Within seconds the first shot rang out and with an authoritative thump from a .308 hollow point, the lead billy dropped. It was on! The left-side shooter worked the left edge of the mob, the middle shooter on the middle and me on the right.

This technique saw us systematically target any breakaway animals, slowing their escape and confusing the rest, though it also caused a few double hits as we converged on the last of them. In less than



A billy we smelled before we saw.



Dave's gear for taking the feral challenge.

to plan hunts carefully and doggedly chase down any escapees. To drop every goat you see, that's the feral challenge!

Open season on ferals

If you grew up in Australia, like me, you may not know just how spoilt we are to have unrestricted feral animal hunting, where property owners encourage you to take every one you see. This is in stark contrast to some countries where hunters enter lotteries or pay a fortune for permission to hunt just one animal.

Here, feral herbivores such as goats and deer lack significant wild predators, leaving population control to Australian hunters. If we don't seriously cull herbivores they'll likely go through painful 'boom' and 'bust' cycles and trash the bush in the process, so my passion has long been for hunting feral animals. I get to enjoy a challenging hunt, solve an ecological problem and bring home large quantities of free-range meat to share with family and friends - a triple whammy.

Goat damage

I've hunted goats on private properties, national parks and conservation reserves during the past 40 years and have seen first-hand the benefits of reducing their numbers. Infested properties have nothing green left on the dusty ground and trees are pruned bare, six feet up their trunks. On properties with persistent hunting the bush bounces back and gives native plants and animals a chance. Many small bird species, like the Purple-backed Fairywren, depend

on the shrub layer to survive as it provides shelter from predators, nesting sites and feeds the insects they eat. And the iconic Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby is also directly displaced by goats.

Be part of the solution

Goat herds can increase by more than 60 per cent a year, so the traditional game management approach of just taking what you need shouldn't be applied to feral animals. If recreational hunters stop shooting when they've taken a trophy or filled the fridge, the land manager won't see them as a serious control option and may turn to other measures such as mustering, aerial shooting, trapping and baiting.



The Purple-backed Fairywren is helped by feral goat control in SA.

a minute and all inside 150m, 18 goats lay motionless and while it's not always that easy, it's satisfying when the feral challenge is achieved.

So what is the feral challenge? Well it started about 30 years ago when I was hunting with the SSAA Conservation and Wildlife Management team in a national park. I was proudly telling the senior ranger we'd taken 15 goats that morning from a mob of 30 but instead of congratulating me he barked back: "Why did you let half get away - your job's to take the lot!" That stung and ever since I've made it my policy

Mob-handed!

Farmers and ecologists don't want managed large populations of ferals for easy hunting. If you're invited on a property to cull ferals, take it seriously and hone your skills so you can drop as many as possible. Hunt hard and with persistence and demonstrate that recreational shooting has a legitimate place in feral animal management. Never fear you'll hunt yourself out of a hobby, as I'm yet to hear of a mainland property which doesn't require ongoing shooting to prevent re-establishment. Maintenance hunting is very rewarding as you have to work a bit harder and smarter to find and eliminate dispersed smaller mobs.

Setting up the perfect hunt

Dense bushland is the hardest. You can stalk carefully or wait in a hide, a tree stand on a trail or over a feeder or water point, but you'll likely only take a couple of goats in each engagement and, with every encounter, the mob becomes more wary. Ideally you want a clearing where they go to feed, then you adopt a position between them and their cover to target more of them as they move back to that cover.

Use binoculars

Open rangeland is the friend of the goat culler. Climb to a ridgetop, don't skyline yourself and scan the terrain with binoculars. Move to the next ridge and repeat, as more time looking and less time walking

pays dividends. Look in shadows as goats will bed under bushes in daytime and can easily be missed and once an animal is spotted, assume there are others nearby. Plan your stalk from downwind using gullies and ridges for cover.

UHF radios can help if hunting with others. You should be able to manoeuvre into a shooting position about 100m from goats, ideally above them with sight-lines to areas they're likely to run (usually uphill or towards recently occupied cover). Importantly, before the excitement of shooting starts, clarify which direction shots can and can't be taken, so none are angled towards fellow hunters or sent over a ridge.

Bullets and shot placement

Don't shoot randomly at a mob - choose an animal and target it. Centre chest shots in line with the front leg from a .243 Win cartridge or bigger are deadly. A rapid-expanding polymer tip or hollow-point projectile is ideal and will fragment into the chest, shredding the lungs and arteries and causing instant death.

Rangefinders

I recommend a rangefinder to help better plan your hunt, as across gullies it can be difficult to estimate distances after 100m so I use this device to map an area before I shoot. I calculate my holds and mark where I'll stop shooting, which for me is about 300m.

The ideal goat rifle

This will be set up so it's easy to carry and quick to shoot, so start with a comfy sling. Weight is the classic compromise - light is better to carry and heavy is great to shoot. A heavy gun forgives small errors by the shooter, recoils less and holds accuracy during long strings of fire, though with a backpack full of goat meat you won't appreciate a heavy rifle. I recommend a rifle and scope in the combined 4kg range (scope and rings 1kg and 3kg for your rifle) so if you're comfortable carrying more, beef up your barrel as that's where weight adds value.

Scopes

A 3-9x power scope is all you need. Most shots are taken on 4-8x power, giving a good field of view so you can see what's happening around your target. Up close or when walking 3-4 power is ideal, while for sighting-in and spotting details 12x or more is desirable. I favour front focal plane mil-marked reticles so I can hold over for distance and in front to lead a moving animal.

Interchangeable magazines

I recommend having several 10-shot detachable magazines and a mild recoiling calibre, so several fast follow-up shots can be taken. I've tried lever and pump rifles but find bolt-actions more accurate with nicer triggers and very reliable when under pressure, so find what works for you.



Glassing the Ikara Flinders Ranges in South Australia.



Lithgow arms®



BATTLE PROVEN SINCE 1912



FROM COMBAT TO THE BACK COUNTRY

Since 1912, Lithgow has proudly supported Australia's soldiers on the battlefield. From Gallipoli to Afghanistan, Australian troops have carried weapons made in Lithgow. We are now proud to join Australian civilians in their outdoor pursuits with our new range of hunting rifles. Each rifle in the range is meticulously designed by hunting style, covering all hunts in every environment.



CALIBRES: 204Rgr 223Rem 243Win 6.5cm 308Win

LA102 HUNTER

A lightweight hunting rifle built to dominate the hills on foot

WEIGHT	3.3 - 3.4kg	TRIGGER	Single stage adjustable 2-4lbs
LENGTH	1067mm (barrel 20")	BARREL	Fluted hammer forged chromemoly
CAPACITY	3 - 5 Calibre varied	MAGAZINE	Removable polymer single stack



CALIBRES: 204Rgr 223Rem 243Win 6.5cm 308Win

LA102 VARMINT

A heavier varmint rifle crossing modern tech with traditional aesthetics

WEIGHT	4.0 - 4.1kg	TRIGGER	Single stage adjustable 2-4lbs
LENGTH	1077mm (barrel 24")	BARREL	Heavy hammer forged chromemoly
CAPACITY	10 Rounds	MAGAZINE	Removable metal box magazine



CALIBRES: 223Rem 243Win 6.5cm 308Win

LA102 OUTBACK

A mid weight/ compact scout & tactical truck rifle on a SCSA TSP-X chassis

WEIGHT	4.1 - 4.2kg	TRIGGER	Single stage adjustable 2-4lbs
LENGTH	966mm (barrel 18")	BARREL	Hammer forged chromemoly
CAPACITY	10 Rounds	MAGAZINE	Removable metal box magazine



at all times acts only as an agent for Thales Australia Limited. The sale of any and all firearms and components, is arranged by and through Thales Australia Limited, a licenced firearm dealer. Thales Australia Limited - DLN: 404193638 (NSW)

AVAILABLE NOW - DISCOVER IN STORE

Mob-handed!



Dave's current favourite culling cartridge, the .260 Rem loaded with 143gr ELD-X.

The perfect rest

This depends on where you hunt. On flat open hills, lie prone behind a bipod or if you have a boulder, log or car bonnet, a shooting bag is a quick rest. Toughest country is waist-high bush where you need an elevated position to sit or kneel behind shooting sticks or a small tripod. In some places it might be worth carrying a tripod you can stand behind, though big ones are slow to deploy and difficult to move. There's no perfect solution so experiment with a few.

Cartridge selection

I like these based around the .308 case as they fit in a shorter and lighter action and have a good balance of impact energy and moderate recoil. Some favourites I've used are .243 Win, .260 Rem, 7mm-08 Rem and .308 Win, shooting projectiles in the 90-150 grain range. All these loads will drop goats (and pigs) in their tracks easily to 300m and if you zero for 200m, you can hold dead-on for chest shots between 25 and 250m. The newer 6mm or 6.5mm Creedmoor cartridges are also excellent for goats.

Clothing

Goats can range from outright dopey to highly attentive and with the sun on my back and wind in my face, I've walked toward them across open ground without spooking them. However, larger mobs which have been hunted recently are often very twitchy, usually with several 'look-out' nannies ready to raise the alarm. I'd leave the ghillie suit at home and just wear comfortable landscape coloured camo or plain colours. I always wear long sleeves and pants for protection against sunburn, brush, snakes and, when I drop prone behind the bipod, it's nice to have knees and elbows covered. I believe staying down-wind and using terrain for cover is more important than clothing.

Hearing protection

I use electronic earmuffs for this as they work well with a sun cap and actually aid my hearing when stalking. While muzzle brakes are good for reducing recoil, spotting shots and rapid firing, they're also very noisy and make ear protection essential.

Practice

Precision Rifle competition is great preparation for goat hunting, teaching you to be stable in all sorts of positions using a variety of obstacles. It helps hone your skills in realistic field situations, engaging multiple targets at various distances and shooting swiftly under time pressure.

Butchering and eating

If culling large mobs I usually leave big smelly billies for the Wedgetails and take the back legs of young billies and females. I skin the legs and take them off at the hip and knee joint so I basically just carry the rump home. I use cloth bags inside a plastic liner in my backpack and hang it to cool before packing whenever possible, then use a selection of slow cooker recipes to feed family and friends. If I spot goats near the car I'll take whole young ones and billy legs for my dog or mincing. So hopefully that has you all fired-up to take the feral challenge, test your gear and skills, cull a mob of goats, have a blast, help the environment and feed your family. ●

SFP9L

S F - O R



<p>STRIKER FIRE TRIGGER</p>	<p>MIL-STD 1913 PICATINNY RAIL NATO</p>	<p>DISASSEMBLY LEVER Simple, quick and safe disassembly without having to pull the trigger.</p>
<p>INTERCHANGEABLE GRIP PANELS</p>	<p>COCKING INDICATOR</p>	<p>MAGAZINE RELEASE Paddle Ambidextrous Push button Switchable right/left</p>

Adapter plates: Docter Sight III, Leica Tempus, Insight MRDS, Meopta MeoSight III, Vortex Viper, Vortex Venom, Burris Fastfire 3, Trijicon RMR, C-More STS 2, Leupold DeltaPoint Pro and more to come.

HK45 TACTICAL

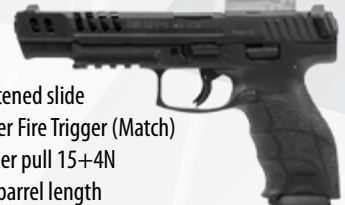


Cal. .45 AUTO
Ambi. operation
LPA match sights



HECKLER & KOCH

SFP9 MATCH OR



Lightened slide
Striker Fire Trigger (Match)
Trigger pull 15+4N
5.5" barrel length
Optic ready platform

MARK 23



.45 AUTO
Ambidextrous safety
Recoil system for minimising the recoil forces.

SFP9 OR SD



Striker Fire Trigger
Interchangeable grip panels
Optic ready platform
SD barrel





Back with a bang!

Chris Redlich tests the first new Weatherby rifle in half a century

I suppose 'better late than never' would best describe Weatherby's latest addition to the hunting arena. It's been about 50 years since they released a new rifle design but in all honesty, why would they rush when the flagship Weatherby Mark V enjoys enormous success with traditionalists, while the popular Vanguard model takes care of the rest?

When asked if I'd be interested in reviewing the newly-released Model 307 I said 'yes' without knowing anything about it, though Weatherby's solid reputation among its peers certainly influenced my decision. Knowing I was reviewing a 307 didn't narrow it down much as the new model comes in two configurations but, aware of my deer hunting pursuits, they sent me the Range XP model chambered in .308 Win.

You could be forgiven for thinking the 307 receiver looks similar to a Remington 700 and I drew that conclusion because I own

two of them. While the two share strong similarities there are noticeable differences and on further research it was confirmed that Weatherby, for good reason, used the 700 blueprint for their Model 307 development. I believe this to be a smart move considering the former has set the standard for many custom and military rifles. To best describe my observations I'd say what Mauser 98 did for controlled round feed actions, Remington has done for push feed, and it's up to others (like Weatherby) to make it their own.

The 307's familiar cylindrical receiver machined from solid bar stock provides a stable bedding while the large recoil lug, sandwiched between the barrel and action, fits snug to the stock recess. Rounding out the Weatherby's rigid platform are two familiar front and rear Allen hex screws, locking the receiver firmly to the stock.

I don't want to be accused of making comparisons but it's hard not to when I have two rifles sitting side-by-side. What's

glaringly obvious is the widened ejection port of the 307 that's nicely curved from about 65mm at the receiver bridge to 76mm at its widest point, allows clear single loading and obstruction-free extraction of unfired short action cartridges, loaded to a longer overall length.

Not surprisingly the new 307 has a 90-degree bolt lift, yet with the rifle arriving complete with a large ZeroTech 4-24x50i Trace ADV scope mounted low in Warne rings to a Picatinny rail, I still had ample room to cycle the bolt smoothly and obstruction free. Naturally the receiver is drilled and tapped to accept all mounts compatible with the Model 700. The bolt is a two-lug design reminiscent of the 700 but instead of a small extractor, Weatherby has broken Remington's trademark 'three rings of steel' design, by incorporating a much larger and stronger AR15-style claw extractor to the bolt face. Along with the plunge ejector both combine to ensure safe and reliable case extraction.

Multi-spectrum binocular

HABROK 4K

Digital Hunting Daywalker



Explore Daytime Hunting in A New Way

All in one solution

= **Thermal Monocular** + **Laser Range Finder** + **5.5-22x60 Binocular**

for quick scanning and searching for accurately measuring distance for excellent detail recognition capability in true living color

4K UHD
Image Resolution

1200m
Thermal Detection Range

1000m
Laser Rangefinder

Video & Audio
Recording



HIKMICRO SIGHT
Wi-Fi Hot Spot for Mobile APP



www.huntsmanoptics.com

HUNTSMAN
OPTICS

Back with a bang!

Range XP on the shoulder and ready for hunting.



Furthermore, the 307 bolt has been designed to be completely field stripped without tools and while I've never had the need to strip my bolt during a hunt, I guess it's another way of 'field-proofing' this new rifle design. If there was ever a way to shave excess weight without compromising strength, Weatherby have done a good job by skeletonising the bolt handle and spiral fluting the body. Bucking the trend is the 307's bolt release, found on the left-hand rear of the receiver and easily depressed for swift removal.

The familiar two-position safety is within comfortable reach of the master thumb, moved fore and aft with ease, though what I particularly like about Weatherby's inclusion of the Trigger Tech field trigger, is it's externally adjustable through the trigger guard via the Allen tool. Naturally I took full advantage of this and lightened it to the minimum 2.5lb from the maximum 5lb, with each incremental turn being click-adjustable and solid to instil confidence in my preferred trigger pressure.

Along with the bolt, the beating heart of any good rifle is its barrel and the Range XP is made from chrome-moly steel with hammer forged rifling. Twist rate for the supplied .308 Win chambering

of one in 10" is clearly stamped on the barrel, and is good enough to stabilise many projectile weights but mostly heavier bullets from 150 to 180-grain. The .308 Win rifled barrel is 22" (550mm) long with a threaded muzzle for brake attachment or suppressor where permitted.

With muzzle-brake fitted the barrel reaches 24" and for larger magnum chamberings you can expect that to stretch to 26". Range XP barrels are of a light sporter profile that's spiral fluted, which not only looks cool but helps further reduce fore-end weight. All steel components have been treated with a graphite black Cerakote for a non-reflective surface and added protection in harsh environments.

By all appearances the new Model 307 isn't dissimilar to many rifles in the long-range genre, but unique to Weatherby is their bold fore-end tip. They can be recognised at a glance by their distinct 'chin' and the new kid on the hunting block is doing the family proud.

The predominantly matt olive composite polymer stock is target-style with an ambidextrous, vertical pistol grip. The hand



Magpul polymer magazine holds five .308 cartridges.

That tells me Weatherby are proud of their latest addition

The 307 action is reminiscent of the Model 700. Note fully adjustable Trigger-Tech trigger.



J.P. SAUER & SOHN
ESTABLISHED 1751



www.sauer.de

NEW

DESIGNED TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BOLT ACTION RIFLE IN THE WORLD. THE NEW SAUER 505

Even the most passionate hunter will feel their heart skip a beat the first time they lay eyes on the new Sauer 505. Slender, beautiful and smooth, this rifle is a joy to hold and behold.

An ergonomic rifle and stock design that perfectly combines elegance and dynamics.

A feeling of pride whenever you see it, feel it, mount it, and shoot it.

Perfect technology, masterful design. No surprise that owners of a Sauer not only appreciate but truly cherish their rifles. Worldwide. Across generations. In every moment.



OSA
OUTDOOR SPORTING AGENCIES

Find your local Sauer Stockist at:
www.osaaustralia.com.au



THE NEW SAUER 505.
A NEVER ENDING LOVE.

Back with a bang!

grip moulded nicely to my palm but for those with 'gorilla' fingers like mine, you may find the trigger a tad close. The rear buttstock includes an adjustable comb with three levels of height to select and, for what appears a basic arrangement, worked well after I raised it to a comfortable height.

Coupled with the muzzle-brake, the stock's 1" rubber butt pad will tame felt recoil from hard kickers. Surprisingly the stock isn't pillar bedded but the barrel is free-floating. All sub-stock components including the trigger guard are polymer, so it's important you take note of the torque pressure outlined in the user manual.

Weatherby have adopted the dual-stack PMAG polymer magazine by Magpul and honestly, for such a large magazine I was surprised it held just five .308 Win cartridges. Despite its plastic construction it fastens with a solid click, and while there's some minimal flex it doesn't rattle like some pretty average steel magazines I've seen recently. Two serrated finger tabs just forward of the trigger guard ensure easy release for both left and right-handers. Rounding out the stock's key features is the generous but not too bulky fore-end grip, subtly contoured to suit the shape, while two sling swivels at the front enable multiple anchorage for bipod or sling combinations.

Range and field testing

After chipping my way through the mundane theory stuff, I was more than keen to put a few rounds through the new gun and test its merits afield. Weatherby guarantee accuracy when using their own ammo but sadly for me, Old Mother Hubbard's cupboard was bare.

Thankfully I had leftovers from other reviews and after using Winchester factory ammo to put me on target, it was Sako 150-grain Gameheads which landed my first sub-MOA group. That fast one in 10" twist-rate soon revealed the much sought-after sweet spot of accuracy, shooting 162-168-grain projectiles. My handloads of Nosler LR AB bullets and Sako Powerheads, both using the aforementioned weights, shot sub half-MOA groups to underline my theory of balance between bullet and barrel.

A hunting rifle can't be truly tested from the comfort of a chair so I planned a trip to the hills. At 4.4kg scoped and loaded, the Range XP isn't exactly a lightweight mountain combo, however the supplied Magpul bipod was used for prone shooting and I attached a sling for the long walk to our hunting ground. Despite its weight the rifle shoulders nicely offhand thanks to the composite stock design and balance of steelwork.

A cameo appearance by one of the local wild dog and pig populations didn't materialise, though by reputation the popular .308 Win has plenty of knockdown power for most Australian game as many hunters will attest. Ironically during my short time with the Weatherby, it was while reviewing another TSA product I bagged a monster boar with a different rifle.

Conclusion

Unfortunately I had limited time with the rifle and would've preferred more, though had it long enough to form a solid opinion. At home and out field is where the 307 Range XP belongs and, while lying prone, I found the package of rifle (muzzle-brake fitted), scope and bipod a real pleasure to 'point and shoot' and reckon anyone seeking a rifle for long-range hunting will enjoy it too.

The model from which it's 307 designation comes (state area code of manufacture in Wyoming), tells me Weatherby are proud of their latest addition and of the fact it's made in the US. Although the new Range XP doesn't sport the rich timber or polished steel of a Mark V, it oozes practicality and I love the way Weatherby have combined the matt black steel with olive stock. The spiral bolt and barrel fluting look fantastic and the way the hole pattern of the muzzle-brake is spiralled to match shows attention to detail by Weatherby engineers.

The rifle is available in the following calibres: .243 Win, .240 Wby Mag, .257 Wby Mag, .6.5 CM, .6.5 Wby RPM, .270 Win, .280 Ack Imp, .7mm PRC, .7mm Rem Mag, .308 Win, .30-06 Spr and .300 Win Mag. The 307 Range XP retails for \$2695 at time of writing. More at tsaoutdoors.com.au ●



Widened ejection port allows for clear ejection.



Spiral fluting matches nicely to spiralled holes of the muzzle-brake while the bold chin (fore-end) of the Range XP says it's part of the Weatherby family.



RITON

SEE THE DIFFERENCE

www.ritonoptics.com



3-9x40
RRP \$ 379



4-16x44
RRP \$ 469



4-12x50 IR
RRP \$ 599



1-8x24 IR
RRP \$ 869



**WE ARE
RITON**

- HD Glass
- Capped, zero resettable turrets
- Side parallax adjustments

THE RITON PROMISE

Our promise to you

As a part of the Riton Promise, we believe in providing you with the best possible service, including the industry's best warranty. The quality of our products makes this the industry's best warranty you'll likely never have to use; however, as hunters and outdoorsmen and women, we know that bad things sometimes happen to even the most cautious.

Our warranty is simple:

- No proof of purchase or registration required for your Riton products
- Lifetime warranty regardless of original purchaser
- All warranty replacements will receive a brand-new product off the shelf. We will never replace the product with a repaired or refurbished product.



Exclusive Australian Distributor

www.extremeoutdoorsports.com.au

(02) 4256 4200

enquires@extremeoutdoorsports.com.au



WA Government shows its hand ... but what now?

Rachael Oxborrow

In a matter of days the Western Australian Labor Government showed its contempt for Parliamentary processes by announcing a 'voluntary firearms buyback' linked to the highly problematic Firearms Bill it was yet to table or have passed into law. Their ongoing campaign, with Police Minister Paul Papalia at the helm, is to remove firearms from licensed law-abiding owners under the guise of improving public safety. The fact is the WA Government holds a clear majority in both houses of Parliament and can wield this power at will, making their Bill an almost sure thing to become an Act during the next 12 months.

The Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Western Australia (SSAA WA) and SSAA Inc, through industry group WA Firearms Community Alliance (WAFCA) and its other member organisations, is interrogating the Firearms Bill and taking advice on the next move. There's also regular communication with members of The National Party of WA to help with information and resources. Key messages for members are:

- WA firearm owners are receiving text messages and emails about the Labor Government's voluntary firearms buyback which is exactly that - voluntary. We are under no obligation to hand over any firearms. The WA Firearms Act is currently known as a Bill - it's not law, it's a draft.

The Parliament will discuss, debate and amend the document for most of this year.

- The individual voices of law-abiding firearm owners are key to the ongoing fight in Western Australia. Contacting local MPs and sharing points of contention, history as a law-abiding firearm owner and urging them not to support the Firearms Act is vital to our cause. The cumulative volume SSAA WA members can make does hold weight, even when the responses from MPs indicate indifference to our viewpoint.

- This fight has just begun. Sign up a friend, family member or neighbour as our strength is in our numbers.

SSAA state and territory members throughout Australia need to be aware of what's happening in WA and not discount the possibility the situation could be mirrored in other jurisdictions. Talking to your local member and highlighting your position in their electorate, carefully considering your vote come the next state or territory election, and encouraging firearms users in your lives who may not be a member of an organisation such as the SSAA are ways we can be proactive in our own backyard.

Meanwhile in Tasmania, police are running with the 'improving public safety' argument to justify changing regulations which will impact owners of antique firearms without public notice or consultation. Tasmania Police Assistant Commissioner Rob Blackwood said the reason for the

change centred around lack of consistency, with items such as replica firearms being controlled through the regulations and antique firearms being exempt. He said both items could potentially be used to intimidate or threaten another person, though didn't indicate there had been a specific incident which sparked this concern and need for change.

Exemption 4 of the Firearms Act allowed people to own pre-1900 antique firearms which can't be fired with commercial cartridges without a licence, registration or storage requirements. The cancellation of Exemption 4 will mean people owning these firearms will be able to request a limited exemption while applying for a licence and registration, sell the firearm or surrender it.

SSAA Tasmania President Andrew Judd said Association representatives were disappointed police felt the need to change regulations which had allowed collectors to enjoy their legitimate hobby with no impact to the public. He said there were open lines of communication between SSAA Tas, the state government and Tasmania Police and lack of consultation with the state's premier representative body was disappointing. Legislative amendments are expected to be made to the Tasmanian Firearms Act to reflect the regulation alterations by police. ●

Queensland Members protect your firearms!

SSAA Queensland Members can now protect their firearms up to the value of **\$25,000** with their State's own Mutual Firearms Protection



Be covered anywhere in Australia and for up to 28 days while travelling overseas

For Queenslanders by Queenslanders

Existing SSAA Queensland Members without firearms protection can add this at anytime by either logging onto the SSAA Queensland Membership Portal via members.ssaqld.org.au or by calling the SSAA Queensland Membership Office on **07 3492 9237**

Just \$35 per annum

Important Note: This advertisement contains general information only, which does not take into account your individual situation. Deporte Mutual Ltd ACN 666 791 877 provides discretionary cover which is not insurance.

Deporte
Mutual Firearm
Protection can cover
firearms and fixed
firearm accessories
for theft or loss



Go to ssaqld.org.au for further information



BLACKOUT
TACTICAL

NEW!

PRO SERIES SAFES



**FIRST FIREARM SAFES WITH
BIOMETRIC SECURITY**

Available Sizes



VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SEE MODELS
www.blackouttactical.com.au



Find your local dealer



DOWN RANGE
PERTH FIREARMS

Hit parade

Champion targets gave Ben Unten hours of enjoyment



100mm gong after.

I recently had the most fun 'plinking' I've had in years and that's thanks entirely to the range of targets from US company Champion. Gone are those less environmentally friendly days spent plinking at cans, only to have shots pass through and not show the hit, or filling plastic containers with water in a bid to show an easy-to-spot sign of a shot on target. The range of Champion products is vast and a few items sent for review included high-visibility targets, spinning targets and steel plates.

VisiShot and VisiColor

The VisiShot sheet contains six targets measuring roughly 75mm which feature printed crosshairs with inner, middle and outer rings. Once pinned to an object with a safe backdrop, hits are clearly visible as an orange 'splodge'. The VisiColor sheets arrives with 12 sticky-backed targets about 52mm (2MOA in diameter) which also have an inner, middle and outer ring.

Once you've stuck your target(s) to a safe object you're good to go. Hits to the outer ring show orange, hits to the middle

ring show green and those to the centre are white. The VisiColour sticker sheet also includes 21 outer ring patches, 14 middle and 16 inner ring, alternatively these can be used as separate targets.

Steel plates (4" and 8" gongs)

The Champion AR500 centrefire rifle targets are available in a square measuring roughly 100mm x 100mm x 10mm thick, a circle measuring approximately 202mm diameter x 10mm thick. They appear to be well-made steel targets. Ensuring a safe

Remington®

PERFECTLY PAIRED FOR PERFORMANCE

REMINGTON 783 SYNTHETIC PACKAGE

WITH

B Bushnell®
TROPHY XLT 3-9x40
SCOPE AND RINGS

AVAILABLE IN A

*Range of
Calibres*

Unleash the full potential of your Remington 783 Synthetic, featuring the renowned Bushnell Trophy XLT 3-9x40 scope and rings. **Achieve unparalleled accuracy and clarity!**



WATCH NOW



1101



SIFA

Shooting
Industry
Foundation
Australia

PROUDLY DISTRIBUTED BY **NIOA**®

sporting.nioa.com.au
www.remarms.com

Hit parade

backdrop, hang them from a frame, set your distance and fire away, the advantage with a steel swinging target being hits are heard as well as seen.

We used a .243 for testing and multiple hits barely marked the surface, so I envisage this target could withstand many thousands of strikes. The orange paint does show the effects of the hits, though this isn't the type of target used for sub-MOA grouping, rather it lends itself to longer-range shooting where 'minute of pig' or 'minute of deer' would be the order of the day. I actually think that as the target 'greys' due to numerous hits it creates a more realistic scenario for the real thing, as I've yet to encounter an animal with a bright-red, target-shaped birthmark on its shoulder.

So practicing 'aiming small, missing small' at an 'area' instead of a dot or cross-hair is invaluable, though if discoloration is a problem or you want a reset, a quick touch-up from a can of cheap spray paint (or better still the adhesive-backed VisiColor targets) will do nicely. A little tip from experience is to use wire for hanging which will allow enough slack for the target to swing. The cable ties I used didn't cope well with the impact of a hit on the steel target and had a tendency to break.

Duraseal varmint target

This delivered the most fun from our session. Duraseal is a rubberised compound claimed to be 'self-healing' for calibers from 0.17 to 50 cal. To use, route the target up one arm of the frame and halfway across the top then slide the counterweight to the bottom. This one's based on a North American prairie dog which is roughly the size of a three-quarter-grown rabbit, so after ensuring a safe backdrop just drive the frame into the ground and you're done.

The Duraseal is about 170mm tall x 55mm wide. We shot this one with .22, .22 Mag, .223, .243 and .30-06 rounds and after a



Spinning single varmint taking the hits.

hit the target spins around the frame until re-righting itself thanks to the counterweight, very satisfying and surprisingly fun to watch. After one 'partial' hit the target spun halfway and ended up perfectly balanced hanging upside down. I was worried this was a fault in the product until I realised that instead of walking down and correcting the target by hand, take aim again and flip it the right way up with your next shot!

An inspection of front and rear of the Duraseal does show signs of your hits but

it convinced me the 'self-healing' claim is good enough that I wanted to rub it on my knees to see if it helped in any way. This one looks like it'll take countless rounds successfully.

These targets provide hours of enjoyment and will be perfect for youngsters, new shooters and old hands looking to brush-up their offhand shooting. They're much more fun than simply punching holes in paper and are handgun compatible too. The Champion range of targets are available Australia-wide so ask your local dealer. ●

Scan for more



OUT NOW

INVALUABLE FOR ANYONE TAKING UP SHOOTING!



SSAA's Comprehensive Guide to
SHOOTING & HUNTING
in Australia

20 months complete in print
something for every shooter

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW
to get into shooting & hunting

TIPS & ADVICE
for rifles,
shotguns,
handguns and hunting



ALFAPROJ



WORLD CLASS REVOLVERS

Manufactured in BRNO, CZ

22LR // 357 MAGNUM // 9MM LUGER // 32 S&W // 38 SPECIAL





PLAY IT STRAIGHT

Mark van den Boogaart has embarked on another custom rifle build

BRX-3: Close-up of the multi-cam pattern.

A little while ago I was asked a seemingly innocuous question about rifles and since I knew the man behind the query, I guessed there might be more to it. He asked me: “What do you reckon would be a good companion piece to the Indi rifle?” Now for those new to the story, the Indi rifle-build was a collaboration between SSAA and Beretta Australia and you’ll find the outcome in the May, June and July 2022 editions of this magazine. You can even watch a hunt with it and Gemma McNabb’s own custom rifle at SSAA-TV on YouTube (check out the ‘Gemma get you gun!’ playlist).

So back to the question and answer. I wouldn’t describe it as a love affair but I do

have great admiration for lever-action rifles as, after a few purchases at the outset of my shooting journey, I realised they were for me. As a leftie they offered me a centrefire rifle as close to a left-handed configuration as I could afford. So with all that exposure to lever-actions I grew to prefer shorter rifles with higher-capacity magazine and a fast action.

The exception to this rule is the Ruger Gunsite Scout. When they released the International model in left hand, I sold my 30 calibre lever-action rifle and haven’t had one since, so going the long way around, my answer to his question was a lever-action. The response was: “What about the Beretta BRX-1?” And more importantly the kicker: “How about working on a BRX-1

for us?” Now that had me thinking. The BRX-1 incorporates a straight-pull action, it’s pretty fast and also makes use of an external box magazine which in practical terms increases capacity. And it’s available in a 20” barrel so it’s compact.

I knew all this as back in September 2022 I’d hunted the Northern Territory with Ian and Jono, where the former had carried a BRX-1 in .30-06 and was successful in dropping buffaloes and pigs, including one of the biggest porkers I’d ever seen. So I said sure, I could work up something based on a BRX-1. Yet before we could go any further I realised this was a one-two combination and my questioner put an extra clause in the contract - it has to make use of a red-dot optic.



My initial response was to try and move the conversation a little towards say, a low-power Steiner scope, but that went nowhere fast. Reading the room I decided not to look a gift horse in the mouth and suggested an Aimpoint Micro H2, a sturdy field-proven hunting optic. With that settled we spoke about a few more options and eventually worked up a project. Sticking with the original idea we'd be customising a rifle primarily for close range that would complement the Indi as part of a wider hunting rifle battery.

It was time to design. My initial thoughts and conversation with Byron, workshop supervisor at Beretta Australia, was for a rifle in varying shades of green and as we wanted to avoid a monolithic colour

scheme, we included some complementary tones. I liked the look of our ideas and Byron approved so we sent off the mocks to the 'Head Inquisitor'. His response: "Too boring, try harder."

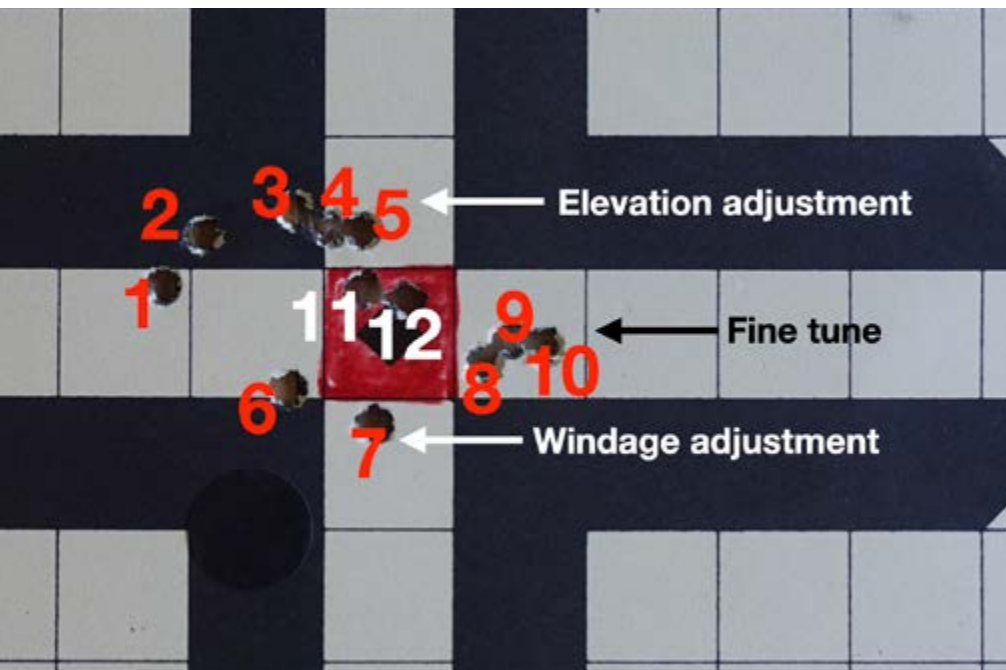
What to do next? Looking for inspiration I started online searching and struck on the idea of 'multi-cam', though Byron pointed out it can appear quite military so we needed to work on an interpretation and corresponding colour palette that would look cool but not tacti-cool.

Byron's interpretation was a less busy multi-cam pattern complemented by a colour scheme highlighting pattern separation rather than blending it all together so, after some experimentation, we hit on graphite black as a base with



Close-up of the Aimpoint H2 Micro optic.

Play it straight



12-shot sighting-in target with elevation and windage adjustments.



A little low, a little early following the Aimpoint method for off-hand shooting.



Getting better.

an overlaying bright green/Benelli sand palette. To provide contrast we settled on desert tan for the chassis and OD green for the barrelled action and kept the magazine blaze orange. We thought it looked great, though with some trepidation were prepared for rejection from 'higher up'. Yet the response was: "Now you're talking. Approved!" With that, Bryon went to work turning computer-generated concept drawings into reality while I waited to inspect the finished product.

So let's look at this rifle. The BRX-1 is Beretta's initial foray into a straight-pull and the first centrefire to carry their name in years. It's also a real departure from what you might imagine when you think about that name as, rather than a finely-cut timber stock following classic lines, it's synthetic and dominated by angular and even hard edges.

The gun looks modular and makes use of an external flush-mount, blaze orange magazine. It's also compact and comes standard with Picatinny rail for scope and optic mounting, while the barrel end is threaded



Close-up of the straight-pull action.

to allow fitment of a suppressor in countries where such an attachment doesn't cause a collective clutching of pearls. Yet all of that's secondary to the action as on first use of the BRX-1 you notice travel of the straight-pull action is significant and opens the entire breech.

At a distance it looks a little flimsy but up close and, more importantly while operating the straight-pull, it feels tight, smooth and confidence-inspiring. Overall it's a rugged action that's fast and encourages follow-up shots. Again breaking from traditional the straight-pull is ambidextrous so you can move the bolt (or more properly bolt handle) to either the left or right-hand side of the action in minutes with minimum tools, so no more looking for a leftie.

I chose a rifle in .308 Win to complement Indi, though it comes in a range of calibres and, at time of writing, new switch-barrel models were on the horizon. I'm hoping a 9.3x62mm variant is available for my NT hunt in September, as a Top End pig and buffalo-buster would be just the ticket.

Soon after I received email notification that a new file was available. Following the link, I downloaded the file and there it was in high resolution imagery, the BRX-1 with custom finish and Aimpoint. While scrolling through the file my eldest son stuck his head round the office door and asked if that was a new Minecraft gun and, with that, we had a nickname for the BRX-1: The Minecrafter.

The day finally arrived and I took it home for a hands-on inspection. The first thing

that caught my eye was the colour scheme seemed a little more engaging than the images and secondly, it was great to pick up and shoulder as it felt like a hunting rifle. Admittedly that's not really a test so it was time to organise a range visit - or two.

The first visit was a 'getting to know you' outing as I wanted to tune the rifle in at 100 yards and start shooting off the bench. I'd had a chance to speak with the guys at Aimpoint in Sweden who gave me some tips about how best to sight it in, their suggestion being to start by shooting one eye closed like a scope and, once you had it dialled in, try the two eyes open method.

I followed their instructions and also included my own approach and after 12 shots had it dialled in. I then started to push out to 200 yards to see what that would be like and, just like the first time I picked it up, I was impressed. On the second visit I decided to try shooting off-hand with both eyes open and again, following advice from Aimpoint, used their approach to develop the skill.

Using goat and pig targets I was getting the hang of it though one thing I did notice, mentioned by the guys, was I might shoot a little low. This was all down to timing as the Aimpoint method uses a 'rising rifle' approach where a little low means a little early, in other words the shooter is anticipating the shot. I stuck at it until things started to come together and while not perfect after that second range day, I felt confident enough to take the rifle on a hunt.

• Next month: Black hog down! The BRX-1 proves its worth ●

“We make it easy to get the Retail Insurance you need.”

Megan Spiniello | General Manager SSAA Insurance Brokers



A SSAA Member Advantage

- Fire and Perils ✓
- Business Interruption ✓
- Public Liability ✓
- Burglary ✓
- Glass ✓
- Money ✓



Before you renew any Retail Insurance policy get an obligation FREE quote from our team.

We put relationships and personalised service first because we're not only Professional Insurance Advisers but SSAA members as well. We listen to your specific needs then obtain coverage from Australia's leading Insurance companies. We can arrange all types of Retail and Personal

insurance and we make sure everything is correctly covered. Going forward we manage your claims and take care of all the details.

You spend BIG money on Retail Insurance so before you renew any insurance policy get an obligation FREE quote from my team at SSAA Insurance Brokers - A SSAA company set up to help members.”

NSW / QLD / ACT

Call: 0455 777 685*

ali@ssaains.com.au

SA / WA / VIC / TAS & NT

Call: 0478 007 614*

amy@ssaains.com.au

All General Insurances



Travel



Farming



Professional



Trade



Business



Retail



SSAA
General
Insurance
Brokers

RING THE CHANGES

Chris Redlich on the rebirth
of an old Remington 541

The new rings mounted beautifully. Note torx screw for secure clamp-to-dovetail fit.

Have you ever seen something and thought to yourself: 'That looks cheap and nasty?' We've probably all done it so indulge me with a little history first. Almost 30 years ago the national gun buyback forced my hand to purchase my first bolt-action .22 calibre rifle. Disappointingly, I had to surrender my self-loading Ruger 10/22 stainless, a beautiful little rifle I'd bought en route to Cape York in 1995. I remember that era with great fondness when things just seemed a little easier, being able to buy a rifle off the rack.

Yet the powers of the day felt we couldn't be trusted and, to cut a long story short, I bought a nice little Remington Model 581 bolt-action to fill the rimfire void in my safe. The Model 581 was the 'no frills' version in Remington's rimfire range and a cheaper alternative to their 'up-spec' Model 541. Both had a solid reputation for accuracy and from my own experience the pundits weren't just 'blowing smoke up Remington's barrel.'

I admit in my younger years I thought a cheap scope and mounts would do the trick, yet as I've become a little greyer my opinion has changed. I originally bought a pair of adjustable aluminium dovetail mounts to clamp to the Model 581 receiver. Coupled with a basic 4x no-name scope (with old TV-style viewing image), the trio served me well and many a fox, rabbit and feral cat met their demise thanks to that

combo, though it always nagged at me how 'agricultural' the set-up looked.

After more than 25 years of reliable service you may think I'm being a little precious to be critical of appearance, but if I was to try and explain what it looked like I'd say bolt-on rather than built-in. That original 4x scope was replaced a few years ago by a lovely old Leupold VX-1 3-9x40 but the mounts got the better of me and I began looking for a replacement. The first ones I bought were steel and gave a solid fixture, though once mounted the fit looked more like a five-post bull-bar bolted to a Corolla!

Scrolling through Leupold's online catalogue I spotted their ringmounts range for rimfire rifles, yet there was no mention of ones compatible with Remington's Model 581 or 541. Those rifles ceased production a long time ago so it was understandable they'd lost sales interest for scope mounts.

After a couple of phone calls to the helpful staff at a Brisbane gunshop, we determined the correct width of the receiver dovetail and I bought a pair of Leupold CZ rimfire cross-slot 11mm ringmounts in polished blue to match the rifle. For years Leupold mounts have been a popular choice for scope-mounting due to their style and strength and I couldn't wait to retire the old ones and spruce up my .22.

Leupold ringmounts are CNC-machined from high-strength carbon steel to tight tolerances, ensuring precise fitment of scopes and, despite my little .22LR having

next to no recoil, they also feature anti-slip grooves. Both ringmounts are exactly the same so it doesn't matter what order you mount them on the receiver, though it's important to have the lock-tightening screws on the same side.

Ringmounts come in varying dovetail widths and it's necessary to check the dimension of your rifle's receiver as although the Remington's measured



Many readers will be familiar with these older alloy-style rings.



FIOCCHI



WORLD FAMOUS AMMUNITION

223 Rem 50gr Vmax	50 pk
223 Rem 55gr EPN	50 pk
223 Rem 60gr EPN	50 pk
308 180gr SP	20 pk
308 150gr SST	20 pk

**STARTING
FROM
\$60
PER PACK**

EXPECT MORE FROM YOUR CARTRIDGES



CALIBRES: 223 Rem, 243 Win, 6.5CM 270 Win, 308 Win, 30-06 SPR, 300 Win, 338 Lap, 9mm, 357 Mag, 12g

FIND YOUR LOCAL STOCKIST
tsaoutdoors.com.au/find-an-outlet

**TSA
OUTDOORS**

Ring the changes

Field success immediately followed an accurate sighting-in session.



The receiver dovetail must be measured before choosing the rings.



Making a minor modification to suit the dovetail.



Chris taught his son Carl to shoot with the Remington 581.

10.9mm, the European-made CZ's 11mm was the correct match (11mm mounts have enough play to fit receivers from 10.5-11.5mm).

On receipt of the mounts I eagerly began a test fit to the Remington, only to be disappointed by the grip surface area of clamp to dovetail. Although the dovetail was the right width, the receiver's top radius was evidently higher than the CZ rifle, thus reducing ability for the clamps to grip the shallow Remington dovetail. After some thought I decided a slight modification requiring a little patience and the use of metal files would fix the problem, which it did. With careful strokes of the triangular and half radial files, sharpening the two problem areas had the ringmounts fitting the old Remington perfectly so with modifications complete, including the bluing of bare metal surfaces, I fastened the mounts in preparation for scope fitment.

The completed outfit is an all-American affair and you'd be hard pushed to find a more perfect match than a Remington rifle with Leupold scope and rings. The low-profile mounting enabled a comfortable cheek weld to the stock and perfect sight alignment, so with clamps now securely fastened to receiver, I had confidence the VX-1 scope was ready for some serious field use.

Months earlier my local gunsmith lightened the Remington trigger to around 1.5lbs which made a huge difference when testing at the range. The new configuration of my little .22 easily shot sub half-inch

groups using varying types of ammo while sighting off the bonnet of a ute. A city shooter wouldn't have the luxury of field testing immediately on sighting-in a rifle but luckily for me the two are on the same property and just minutes from home.

With the afternoon turning, the local hare population made it known they were warming up for a night's harvesting and three fell in quick succession to head shots, easily and comfortably taken off the shoulder. They'd scrambled back and forth as I tracked them with the scope so when they paused for a breather, the light trigger made squeezing a round off feel like muscle memory.

The Model 581 has served me well including teaching my children to shoot small game, however the addition of new Leupold ringmounts has improved not only performance but looks too. Leupold make mounts to suit a variety of rifles and configurations and while some firearms have ceased production and aren't listed on their reference chart, this doesn't mean you can't match another set of mounts for a different rifle.

It pays to research and perhaps do a little tinkering but be warned, never modify a rifle to make something match, rather modify the rings as the cheaper sacrifice to any possible mistakes. As it was in my case, a minor modification allowed the perfect fit for mounts to an obsolete firearm. Check with your gunshop for pricing and availability or the Australian distributor at nioa.com.au ●



meopta

MEOPTA BINOCULARS

A Better View of the World

Standard Equipment for Every Hunter
and Nature Lover.

Visit www.winchesteraustralia.com.au
to see the range.



MEOPTA MEOPRO
OPTIKA LR
10x42

RRP **\$2,150**



MEOPTA MEOPRO AIR
10x42

RRP **\$1,695**



MEOPTA MEOPRO
HD PLUS
8x56

RRP **\$1,195**



MEOPTA MEOPRO
HD PLUS
10x42

RRP **\$950**



MEOPTA MEOPRO
OPTIKA HD
Available in 10x42 & 8x56

RRP **\$695**



MEOPTA MEOSTAR
B1 PLUS
12x50

RRP **\$2,295**



MEOPTA MEOSTAR
B1 PLUS
8x56

RRP **\$1,995**

WWW.WINCHESTERAUSTRALIA.COM.AU



SIFA



Two for the price of one!



Hardy Hybrid in hard case with plenty of room for other accessories.

Nick Rositano applauds the latest Hardy Hybrid switch-barrel

The offer to review was too good to refuse and, on confirmation, I couldn't wait to lay my hands on the latest Hardy Hybrid rifle. After researching the company I was keen to put this one to the test, as they're one of only a handful of manufacturers who offer a switch-barrel firearm. The rifle is made in New Zealand at Hardy's Manawatu facility, the firm having been founded in early 2006 by Dan Hardy during his time in the NZ Army as an armourer and weapons engineer.

Hardy left the military in 2007 to focus on advancing the gun and since then the company has established itself as one of the high-end brands for developing world class rifles, suppressors, match-grade barrels and muzzle brakes. The Hardy Hybrid in the spotlight here is chambered in 300 PRC and

6.5 Creedmoor, both excellent long-range hunting and target shooting calibres.

On unboxing the rifle in its sturdy carry case you can immediately see no expense has been spared. The barrel compartment conveniently holds two barrels and is separated by a foam wedge for secure transit. The Hardy Hybrid comes standard with its own carbon tripod, made by the company itself and featuring a Picatinny mount to handle heavier recoil, a large ball joint locking mechanism for stability and triangular feet for extra steadiness in longer shots.

Also in the carry case you'll find a directional muzzle brake made from 400-grade stainless steel, itself a world leader in recoil reduction especially in larger calibres which often make even some of the

most experienced hunters flinch. Having the option to tune in the muzzle brake to best suit your load gives you the ability to refine it and make every shot count. There's also a bolt-head change tool, magazine and spare bolt-head for the calibre of your choice. The Hardy Hybrid under review was fitted with a Zeiss LRP S5 5-25x56 riflescope from a manufacturer at the forefront of European optics.

The rifle features a stock made from moulded carbon fibre which gives it strength and integrity and what immediately appealed to me was just how light the setup is even with the scope fitted. The bare rifle weighs a mere 6.7lbs which makes it perfect to sling over your shoulder in the field, especially in some of our more harsh and unforgiving terrain.



Hardy Hybrid at the range after barrel swap from 300 PRC to 6.5 Creedmoor.



Blaser

**Last
Chance!
Offer Ends
31st April**

Choose **\$1,000** worth of Blaser Accessories **FREE** when you purchase an R8 Pro

T&Cs: Offer available via redemption online. Proof of purchase will be required to claim offer. Offer ends 31st April 2024. While stocks last. Scan QR code for full T&Cs and more info.

R8 Professional

**Now available
in 7mm
PRC**



Blaser R8 Professional Starting from **\$6,999**

Available Calibers: 223rem, 6.5cm, 308, 3006, 7mm, 300wm

**Now available
in 7mm
PRC**



Blaser R8 Professional Success Starting from **\$7,999**

Available Calibers: 223rem, 6.5cm, 308, 3006, 7mm, 300wm



Available at the following stockists:

Elks Hunting & Fishing
Safari Firearms
Nyati Hunting Supplies
Allgoods Launceston
Gunco Sports
A&W Grassi
J&A Shooting Supplies

My Mates Outdoors
The Adelaide Gun Shop
Downrange Firearms
Sports Hut
Mansfield Hunting & Fishing
G&C firearms
In Season
Alpine Outdoors

FREE



Scan for more info



osaaustralia.com.au

Two for the price of one!

What's unique to Hardy rifles is their advanced primary extraction, achieved through the entire 90 degrees of bolt lift, compared to most rifles on the market where only the last five degrees of lift triggers the extraction. And being one of the few manufactures on the market to offer a switch-barrel rifle, their claim that each barrel will return to zero is impressive to say the least.

The barrel swap-over is straightforward and can be done in less than two minutes. On the right-hand side of the carbon fibre stock near the forearm are three Allen key head bolts which torque the barrel into the action. Hardy supply a torque wrench with an Allen key head which can't be adjusted, something I'm happy with as there'll be no room for human error of over or under-torquing the bolts.

With the bolts loosened it's a simple case of pulling the barrel out, remembering that when changing barrels always ensure you locate the pin in its correct spot in the receiver. With the three bolts torqued up on the other barrel you're good to go, the next step being to change the bolt face to suit the different calibre. I was swapping from 6.5 Creedmoor to 300 PRC and Hardy supply a bolt-head change tool which I also found easy and straightforward to use. Instructions in the manual are supplied so if ever in doubt be sure to read them. The magazine that's included will suit all Hardy cartridges no matter what calibre.

Producing such a lightweight rifle means some of the key components being used include 4140 alloy steel, H13 die metal, chrome silicon, 7075 aluminium and carbon fibre composites. Hardy's barrels are all CNC gun-drilled for exact precision, spill bore reamed for extreme consistency and lead-lapped finished so you really can make the most important shots count.

The Hybrid is available in several calibres from .223 Rem all the way up to .338 Lapua and having familiarised myself with the rifle, it was time to visit my local range to see how it performs. The one I was reviewing has a 24" carbon barrel and in the Hybrid you can also have a 24" stainless



The supplied torque wrench to swap out barrels is simple to use.

steel option, though the weight of the rifle jumps substantially to more than 9lbs.

Hardy guarantee the Hybrid to return to zero within 1 MOA at 100 metres after a barrel has been removed or installed in the action. Setting up at the range I went through the same process I do when sighting-in any new rifle. After landing a three-shot group under 1 MOA with the 300 PRC, I thought I'd push the boundaries and set up some steel gongs at 600m (the limit at my range). Using the Hornady app with Precision 212-grain Hornady ELDX projectiles, I was able to dial in the Zeiss LRP scope and smack the six-inch gong.

After placing a three-shot group on the gong at 600m I was excited by just how good the rifle was shooting. It was time to change barrels to 6.5 Creedmoor and test if what Hardy guarantees is true, so within a couple of minutes the Hybrid was swapped from 300 PRC to 6.5 Creedmoor. I decided to shoot the latter on paper at 100m and was stunned to discover that after only three shots, I'd measured the group to be .78 MOA under what Hardy guarantees.

I didn't know what to expect recoil-wise from the 300 PRC, especially with the Hybrid being so light, yet the directional

muzzle brake and recoil pad combined to make recoil feel like I was shooting a .243 Winchester. I found myself not flinching as I would shooting other big magnum calibres without a brake, so this rifle will suit not just hunters demanding a lightweight long-range set-up but target shooters too.

Although I didn't have the chance to take the Hardy Hybrid out hunting, this is the sort of rifle I want to be backpacking in the field, as having the flexibility to switch to a different calibre in minutes whether targeting deer in the morning and foxes at night, knowing the rifle will return to 1 MOA is undeniably impressive.

The Hardy Hybrid retails for around \$7500-\$8000 depending on which calibres you choose, so effectively you're buying two quality firearms for what you'd pay for one custom rifle to be built nowadays. The team at Hardy have not only put together a beautiful looking rifle but one which is exceptionally accurate and top of my wish-list for sure. ●

The new Hardy Hybrid switch-barrel rifle in profile.



Three-shot group at 100m measuring .78 MOA with the 6.5 Creedmoor.

SSAA SHOT EXPO 2024

PRESENTED BY



WINCHESTER®

THE SHOWCASE FOR AUSTRALIAN
SHOOTING, HUNTING & OUTDOOR TRADES

MELBOURNE SHOWGROUNDS
19-20 OCTOBER 2024

FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.SSAVIC.COM.AU/SHOTEXPO2024



BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RELOADING

Neil Graham favours the user-friendly Lee Loader

Reloading presses and dies can run into many hundreds of dollars which can be a deterrent to the shooter considering reloading their own ammunition. The Lee Classic Reloading Kit, retailing around \$75-80 at time of writing, can provide a viable low-cost option for those contemplating reloading. The kit comes in a hard plastic box with easy-to-follow instructions and reloading data for the calibre selected, though sadly much of that data relates to powders not readily available in Australia.

Realistically it'll cost you more than this as there are a number of items not included in the kit that you'll need to successfully begin reloading (mentioned in the course of this article). So what do you get with the Lee Classic Reloading Kit and what are their functions?

De-capping chamber: Used initially in conjunction with the decapper to de-prime cases and secondly as a case-holder when seating projectiles.

Decapper: Used to knock the primer out of the case.

Bullet seater/primer chamber: The latter is where primers are placed prior to seating and the former pushes projectiles into the case to a pre-determined depth.

Priming rod: Used to push the case on to the primer after it has been placed on the primer seater. It's also tapped with a mallet to remove cases from the sizing die after cases have been neck-sized.

Plastic powder measure: Calculates the powder charge by volume (be very careful here). Powder charges are measured by weight in grains and the powder measure when dipped into powder will provide with you with a fixed weight in grains. Powders also have different densities which means your measure when dipped into two in exactly the same way will probably show different weights. In the interests of personal safety you need to determine the weight of powder the measure throws and look at loading data for that particular powder.



The kit itself.

RIFLE LEE LOADER COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS



The instructions.

RICO 2
SERIES **RH50 R**

PRECISION UNLEASHED

Redefine thermal imaging with pinpoint accuracy and explore beyond the horizon.

- 2,560 x 2,560 HD AMOLED display
- Matrix III processor
- 20mK sensitivity
- LPVO-style zoom control (3x to 12x)
- 1,000 G/s² shock-resistance
- Built-in 1,200m laser range-finder (2,597m detection)
- 5+ hour run-time
- 32 GB internal memory



Join the official InfiRay Outdoor community on Facebook for Australia's most trusted thermal imaging advice, all in one place.
Visit www.gfpa.com.au

Beginner's guide to reloading

The measure supplied also limits you to one powder charge and to obtain optimum accuracy and velocity you need to be able to vary that charge. For example, ADI's recommended power charges using AR2209 for the .30-06 using a 168-grain Sierra Soft Point boat-tail projectile range from a starting load of 53 grains to a maximum of 59. For the above mentioned reasons, I consider the purchase of a set of reloading scales a 'no-brainer'.

For the budget-conscious Lee have a Safety Powder Scale which cost me \$75, measures up to 100 grains and is really easy to use. Many of the more expensive measures go up to 500 grains but there are very few calibres requiring a powder load in excess of 100 grains.

Body and sizing die: This is used to neck-size cases so they're ready to have the projectile seated into the case. The body is turned upside down, case inserted then hit with a mallet until the head of the case is level with the top of the body. The priming rod is then inserted through the stop collar and tapped with the mallet to remove the case (dipping case necks in graphite prior to insertion makes them easier to remove).

Stop collar: This is screwed or threaded into the body and determines the seating depth of the projectile.

As mentioned, the Lee Classic Reloading Kit doesn't include all the equipment you'll need. There are items which are necessary

and some may not be but they'll make the process easier and quicker. These become apparent when you start to reload a case. The instructions provided outline the steps to load a single cartridge from start to finish, though in practice it's quicker to run a batch and the following steps relate to that.

1: Inspect cases for damage (split necks, etc) then de-prime case using de-capping chamber and de-capper. The primer pocket will have residue as a result of ignition of the primer and this must be cleaned to ensure the primer seats properly. To do this you'll need to buy a primer pocket cleaner and, in addition, if cases have been reloaded a number of times the necks may have stretched so you'll need a case trimmer to bring them back to their original length. We do this because excessively long cases can increase pressure significantly. And if reloading new or cases that've been trimmed, you'll need to chamfer the neck so projectiles experience little resistance during seating.

A chamfering tool will be another necessary purchase. Lee have a Case Conditioning Kit which contains a combination small and large rifle primer pocket cleaner, chamfering tool, a cutter and lock stud for about \$30. A case length gauge and shell-holder for the particular calibre you're reloading is also needed at around \$16. The case length gauge is screwed into the cutter and shell-holder

screwed into the lock stud, a case then place in the shell-holder and lock stud tightened. The case length gauge is inserted into the case and rotated until it stops removing brass from the neck. This can be done by using your fingers or, if you're trimming a batch of cases, the lock stud can be attached to a variable-speed drill.

2: Neck-size the cases as described earlier.

3: Insert a primer into each case by positioning it in the centre hole in the priming chamber, place body/stop collar on to priming chamber, insert priming rod into collar and gently tap with a mallet to seat the primer into the pocket. This stage can be a cause for concern as I've had a half-a-dozen primers go off, probably due to my poor technique.

Because you've neck sized the cases you can't de-prime them with the de-capper as it no longer fits into the case mouth. Trying to open up the case necks I've found isn't worth the trouble so these become throw-aways. As a result I bought a Lee priming tool which comes with adapters for both small and large rifle primers. Simply place primers in the hopper, the case into the shell-holder and press the lever to seat the primers.

With this you can prime as quick as you can insert cases. The priming tool costs about \$70 and you'll also need a shell-holder (\$10) to suit your caliber. A No.4

DON'T use defective cases. Throw out those with obvious defects such as splits or cracks.

DO try the empty cases in your gun to be sure they will chamber. The tool sizes only the neck.

DO chamfer the inside of the case mouth so the bullet will start easily. Use a Lee Chamfer Tool or a pocket knife.

DO make certain you have correct powder and powder measures as indicated in the charge table.

4

Place the tool on the decapping chamber and tap the rod to free the case. LEAVE THE CASE in this position for the next three steps.



1

Knock out the old primers. If your cases are not made in the USA, check to be sure they are not Berdan primed. Look inside the shell and you should see one flash hole. If there are two flash holes, you have Berdan cases and they cannot be loaded with this tool.



5

Add one [1] level measure of powder. BE SURE YOU HAVE THE CORRECT MEASURE AND POWDER. SEE THE CHARGE TABLE.



2

With a plastic mallet or piece of wood, drive the case into the tool flush with the grid.



6

TO AVOID CONTACT with the primer and possible explosion, case must be free from die and resting in the decapping chamber. Insert the bullet through the top.



3

Insert a primer into the locating ring. Place the tool, with shell inside on the priming chamber. Lightly tap on the priming rod several times until the primer is home. NEVER TRY TO SEAT A PRIMER AFTER THE POWDER HAS BEEN ADDED.



7

TO AVOID CONTACT with the primer and possible explosion, case must be free from die and resting in the decapping chamber. Insert the bullet seator and tap until it contacts the stop collar. The stop collar is adjustable so you can seat the bullet as required.



Reloading steps.



Coming April 2024



Leica Calonox 2 View LRF and Sight LRF. The new generation of thermal imaging technology.

A new milestone from Leica: Designed and made in Germany, the new Calonox 2 View LRF and Calonox 2 Sight LRF win hunters over with their compact ergonomic shape, low weight, intuitive operation, and fully-integrated, precise laser rangefinder (LRF). The new, high-quality European sensor, together with Leica's proven image processing software (LIO™) with industry-leading 60 Hz frame rate, delivers images that are even sharper, higher-contrast, and more detailed – along with a large field of view. What's more, the new Calonox 2 Sight needs no individual calibration, but can be used out-of-the-box and swapped between rifles.

Both Calonox 2 thermal cameras are available with or without LRF.

Accessories:

- Remote Control Switch
- Picatinny Mount Set
- Adapter Rings

Discover more – visit your authorised dealer or leica-calonox.com



Beginner's guide to reloading

shell-holder suits a whole range of calibres with the same case head size, including .22-250, .243, .270, .308, .30-06 and more.

4: Pour measured powder charge into case whether by measure supplied or powder scales. A powder funnel (\$10) is a must when pouring powder into cases, as it saves wastage and mess from spills. A reloading block to hold cases upright while charging cases will save time and potential spillage too (\$15).

5: You'll need to set the seating depth of the projectile into the cartridge case. To do this, determine the cartridge overall length (COL), ie, length of cartridge with projectile seated at desired depth. ADI loading data shows COLs for all calibres as do projectile manufacturers such as Speer and Nosler. You could also measure a loaded factory round and work from there.

Seating depth can be adjusted by screwing the stop collar in to increase depth or out to decrease. To set your desired depth, follow the procedure in the next step but start with stop collar screwed right out, seat the projectile, measure COL and, if seated too far

out, screw the collar in a little and repeat until desired COL is reached. Once done, tighten the lock nut

6: Place the charged case on the de-capping chamber then body/stop collar over the case. A projectile is then dropped point up into the collar and bullet seater tube placed into stop collar. Priming chamber/bullet seater is tapped with a mallet until the chamber is flush with the top of the seater, the loaded round then removed.

So what's the rough cost to set up using the above? Classic Lee Loader \$75, safety scales \$75, case conditioner kit \$30, case length gauge/shell-holder \$16, Lee priming tool \$70, shell-holder \$10, powder trickler \$30, powder funnel \$10, reloading block \$12. Total \$328 (approx.)

The Lee Loader has the advantage of not having to be attached to a bench unlike reloading presses, it's highly portable, can be used on any flat hard surface and is a comparatively economical way of getting into reloading. I use Lee Loaders in a couple of calibers and have found them easy to use and produce ammunition, the performance of which I'm more than happy with. And they're not unduly slow to use, especially when in conjunction with the Lee Priming Tool. ●



The advantage of not having to be attached to a bench unlike reloading presses



Case conditioning kit.

READ YOUR AUSTRALIAN SHOOTER ONLINE

**ANYWHERE,
ANYTIME**



Now available on phone, tablet or desktop devices.



SCAN TO START





THE NEW ROVER FROM SABATTI IS NOW HERE!

The new Sabatti Rover action is a completely new design, made out of a solid billet of high-strength 7075 aluminum alloy, precision machined to minimize manufacturing-induced tolerances, then hard anodized. The receiver comes with an integral Picatinny rail allowing the mount of riflescopes or other aiming devices.

The new Sabatti Rover bolt is CNC machined from a bar of steel. The quality of this new three lugs, 60° opening throw bolt, along with a new sturdy extractor and a removable knob, make the new Sabatti Rover action one of the best currently available in the market.



24 INCH BARREL



ROVER HUNTER WITH DROP MAGAZINE

\$1,750 SRP

CALIBRES

.243 Winchester | .270 Winchester
6,5x55 SE | 6.5 Creedmoor
7mm Remington Magnum
.30-06 Springfield | .308 Winchester

FEATURES

- Three lugs, 7075 aluminum alloy action
- Standard trigger
- Cold hammer forged barrel, standard rifling
- 3 shots removable polymer magazine
- Two positions safety, with bolt stop
- Polymer stock

24 INCH BARREL



ROVER ALASKAN WITH AICS MAGAZINE

\$2,190 SRP

CALIBRES

7mm Remington Magnum
.30-06 Springfield | .308 Winchester
.300 Winchester Magnum
.338 Winchester Magnum

FEATURES

- Three lugs, 7075 aluminum alloy action
- Standard trigger
- Cold hammer forged barrel, standard rifling
- Muzzle brake (Jet-Brake)
- 7 shots AICS compatible removable magazine
- Two positions safety, with bolt stop
- Adjustable sights
- Polymer stock with soft-touch finish




Available Now! Order through your local Firearm Dealer.

Proudly distributed by Hunting Depot

VIC vjetten@crkennedy.com.au | NSW mscanlan@crkennedy.com.au

QLD mswanton@crkennedy.com.au | WA/NT greg@spencerimports.com.au

TAS sbickle@crkennedy.com.au | SA jgerhardy@crkennedy.com.au



S H O W U S

the

MONEY!

Daniel O'Dea was in Las Vegas
for the annual US extravaganza

After a five-year hiatus, January found me packing my bags and heading back to the United States, specifically Las Vegas for the annual US SHOT Show. For the unaware, this is an event owned and operated by the American National Shooting Sports Foundation with S.H.O.T. being an acronym for Shooting, Hunting & Outdoor Trade Show.

Unlike our own SSAA SHOT Expo, the US version is a trade show only with no entry to the general public, so basically you have to be in the industry to attend. It's a showcase for suppliers and manufactures to present their wares to firearms dealers, law enforcement, defence organisations and associated media. I first attended in 2008 as registered media to cover the event and,

until Covid, tried to visit at least every other year or so. If you enjoy the shooting sports it's quite the experience.

The scale of this thing is astonishing. Considered the largest trade show of its type in the world, the numbers speak for themselves. Held at the Venetian Expo and for the third-year spilling over into Caesars Forum next door, no fewer than



Zeiss LRP 6-36x56
Illuminated ZF-MRi reticle
Reduced to **\$3485**



Zeiss V4 4-14x44
Illuminated Reticle 60 Ballistic Turret
Back in stock in limited numbers
Reduced to **\$1395**



Zeiss V4 6-24x50
Illuminated Reticle 60 Ballistic Turret
Reduced to **\$1695**



Zeiss V4 3-12x56 Illuminated
Back in stock in limited numbers
Reduced to **\$1395**



Zeiss V6 2.5-15x56 Illuminated Reticle 60,
30mm tube
Hunting Turrets **\$2750**
ASV Elevation Turret **\$2985**



Steyr Scout in stock now
.223 Rem or 6.5 Creedmoor **\$3160**



Steyr Zephyr II
17HMR, 22lr or 22WMR **\$1585**



Stery Zephyr II
Full Stock 22lr **\$1895**



Steyr HS-50 M1 50BMG
Mag fed with muzzle brake and case.
In stock for immediate delivery.
Cat B in NSW, check your state regs
\$15895



Browning BL22 Maple Limited Edition
AAA grade maple stock, 20" barrel
Stunning rifle, very limited stock **\$1715**



Christensen Arms
Ranger Rimfire
Available in very limited numbers
in 22LR and 22WMR. Carbon
Barrel and stock. ~~\$2235~~ **\$1395**



Christensen Arms
Carbon Ridgeline
300 RUM with 26" Carbon barrel with
brake. Silver Cerakote Action.
Massively reduced ~~\$5550~~ **\$3495**



Sauer 404 Classic XT
Limited stock in 223, 308, 270, 30-06,
7mm rem mag and 300 win mag.
~~\$6120~~ **\$3895**
1" or 30mm Sauer SUM rings just
\$660 with any rifle purchase.



Hornady
Lock N Load
Classic Press Kit
~~\$935~~ **\$595**



CZ Shadow 2 9mm
With 1 x NSW compliant mag
(or 3 x standard mags for other states) **\$2115**
Spare NSW compliant mags **\$149**



CZ Shadow 2 Bronze
Limited Edition 9mm
With 1 x NSW compliant mag
(or 3 x standard mags for other states) **\$2099**
Spare NSW compliant mags **\$149**



CZ Shadow 2 9mm mags
(Not for NSW) All other states **\$99**



CZ Magnum Research
10 rnd 9mm Mag
Suits CZ Shadow 2 and
MRI Baby Eagle
Just **\$59** (Not for NSW)



Burris XTR II 5-25x56 SCR MIL FFP
~~\$2330~~, **\$1740**



Burris Eliminator III 4-16x50
Laser Rangefinding scope
~~\$2435~~, **\$1395**



GPO Evolve 6-24x50
GP OPS Reticle
~~\$1595~~ **\$885**



Canik Clearance Limited Stock

Canik Rival SFX 9mm
Black or Grey. Cased with 3 mags,
holster and optics plates.
~~\$1760~~ **\$1295**



Pulsar Thermal In Stock Now



Thermion 2 LRF
Thermal Scope with Rangefinder
Thermion 2 XG50 LRF **\$7685**
Thermion 2 XP50 Pro LRF **\$7835**
Thermion 2 XQ50 Pro LRF **\$4835**
Thermion 2 XL50 LRF **\$10410**



Thermion 2
Thermal Scope
Thermion 2 XG50 **\$6045**
Thermion 2 XP50 Pro **\$5995**
Thermion 2 XQ50 Pro **\$4175**
Thermion 2 XQ35 Pro **\$3815**



Thermion Duo
Thermal Scope
& Night Vision
Thermion Duo DXP50 **\$7625**
Thermion Duo DXP55 **\$7745**



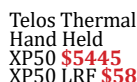
Talion
Thermal Scope
Talion XG35 w/ QD Mount
\$5570



Axion 2
Thermal Monocular
XQ35 Pro **\$2870**
XG35 **\$3535**
XM30F **\$1570**



Axion 2 LRF
Thermal Rangefinding
Monocular
LRF XQ35 Pro **\$3090**
LRF XG35 **\$3975**



Telos Thermal
Hand Held
XP50 **\$5445**
XP50 LRF **\$5870**



Merger
Thermal Binoculars
XP50 LRF **\$7200**
XL50 LRF **\$10650**
Merger XQ35 LRF **\$5995**



Sig Sauer
Buckmaster Combo
3-9x40 Scope
with BDC Reticle
Sig Buckmaster 1500 Laser Rangefinder
Put your ballistics into the Rangefinder
and it tells you the distance of your
target and which holdover point on the
reticle to use.
Incredible value **\$595** for both.

Aimpoint

Last Aimpoints at old price.
Limited stock.

Aimpoint
Micro H-2 2MOA or
4MOA **\$1090**

Aimpoint
Micro H-1 2MOA **\$935**



Nikko Stirling
Octa 4-24x50
Illuminated 4Dot Reticle
~~\$660~~ **\$399**

FXairguns

New FX Panthera Hunter



FX Panthera Hunter
17 and 22 cal 300mm Barrel
25 Cal 380mm barrel
30 cal 420mm barrel
\$2895



FX Panthera Sniper
22cal, 25cal and 30cal 700mm barrels
\$3390



FX Impact MK3 Black
In stock in 177, 22, 25 and 30 cal
Standard 600mm barrel **\$3330**
Sniper 700mm barrel **\$3430**



FX Impact MK3 Sniper Bronze
In stock in 177, 22, 25 and 30 cal
Standard 600mm barrel **\$3395**
Sniper 700mm barrel **\$3495**



Hikmicro and InfiRay
Thermal Scopes and Monoculars
Prices too hot to print. Call for best
price, we will not be beaten! Don't buy
thermal without speaking to us.

Show us the money!



Colourful little Rascals from Savage.

2600 companies displayed their products and services in booths covering more than 821,000sq/ft, that's 76,273sq/m of exposition space. More than 55,400 industry attendees tramped the 22km of aisles for the duration of the event which attracted attendees from 117 countries and all 50 US states.

The show ran for four days and you need pretty much all of that to cover every aisle. Normally travelling solo, this time I destroyed my frequent flyer points balance and had the pleasure of taking my son Max along for the trip. He has long assisted me with photography in my published works so luckily I was able to have him credentialed to attend.

We arrived a few days in advance to acclimatise, having made the 15-hour flight to Los Angeles from Sydney then driving to Nevada. For us the SHOT Show started a day early with an Industry (Media) Day at the range but I'll cover that separately. The event truly is everything shooting, though generally the real challenge is to find new and interesting products relevant to the Australian market so here are some of the highlights.

Bolt-action rifles

One notable trend was that of new bolt-action rifles as the US rifle market is still dominated by self-loaders, predominately AR15 variants, though it seems most companies making these now have a bolt gun in their range as well. Companies like Colt, Aero Precision, Stag Arms, etc all have one, with many catering to the Precision Rifle sector as well as the hunting market.

One of the more interesting ones to launch was the new Beretta BRX1. This straight pull bolt-action rifle features a reversible linear bolt, allowing for conversion to left-handed operation in seconds without tools, an eight-lug bolt head (16 in Magnum calibres) provides strong lock-up, an interchangeable barrel system for calibre change and an adjustable trigger and stock. All this provides a modular rifle system unlike anything I've seen from Beretta and definitely my pick for the most interesting new bolt gun.

On the wilder side was the Q LLC Fix rifle in 8.6 Blackout that features an 8" barrel, suppressor and Reptilia folding stock and furniture. This one's built on



Aussie-built SCSA Taipan rifles on display.



Lithgow Arms were there too.

HORSLEY PARK

AVAILABLE ONLY WHILE STOCKS LAST

Mail Order Specialists Australia Wide

GUN SHOP

Australia's
Gunshop
WHERE EVERYDAY
IS A SALE DAY!

NOW YOU CAN SHOP ONLINE - www.hpgs.com.au



AMMUNITION SPECIALS



1622C Remington 22lr Brass plated 36gr	
HVHP 525 pack.....	\$65 or 2 for \$115!!
Eley Alphamax 12ga 36gr BB 1298 fps.....	\$220/250
Eley VIP Game 20ga 32gr #4.....	\$220/250
F65CRDB Federal Power Shok 6.5CM 140gr sp.....	\$495/200
FAE17WSM1 Federal American Eagle 17WSM 20gr Tipped.....	\$36/50
FAE22350VP Federal American Eagle 223 50gr JHP Varmint.....	\$68/50
FAE308VP Federal American Eagle 308 130gr JHP Varmint.....	\$72/40
RM308W7 Remington Match 308 168gr BTHP Matchking.....	\$46/20
RT65CR1 Remington 6.5CM 129gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$72/20
RT308WA Remington 308 150gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$75/20
RT308WB Remington 308 165gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$75/20
RT308WC Remington 308 180gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$75/20
RT3006B Remington 308 165gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$68/20
RT3006C Remington 308 180gr Core Lokt Tipped.....	\$75/20

RIFLE SPECIALS



AMR22LR Ruger American Rimfire 22lr Synthetic Blue.....	\$620
AMR22LRMG Ruger American Rimfire Rifle 22lr Muddy Girl.....	\$695
AMR22LRODG Ruger American Rimfire Rifle 22lr ODG Green.....	\$695
AMR22LRSW Ruger American Rimfire Rifle 22lr Stainless Walnut.....	\$950
AMR22M Ruger American Rimfire Rifle 22 Magnum Synthetic Blue.....	\$595
B22FVSS Savage B22 22lr Varmint Synthetic Stainless.....	\$695
B22MFVSR Savage B22 22 Magnum Varmint Synthetic Blue 16.5" Threaded.....	\$650
B22MFV Savage B22 22 Magnum Varmint Synthetic Blue.....	\$595
AMR223 Ruger American 223 Rifle Synthetic Blue.....	\$795
AMR243 Ruger American 243 Rifle Synthetic Blue.....	\$795
AMR270 Ruger American 270 Rifle Synthetic Blue.....	\$795
AMR308 Ruger American 308 Rifle Synthetic Blue.....	\$795
AMRR223AR Ruger American Ranch Rifle 223 Blue Synthetic 16" Threaded Bbl, Flash Hider, AR Style 10rd Mag.....	\$895



BAW92465PRCCFDA Springfield Waypoint 6.5PRC 24" Carbon Bbl, Adjustable Ridgeline Camo Stock.....	\$4295
--	--------

SHOTGUN SPECIALS

ATA PRO 12ga U/O Sporting Shotgun, 3x Extended Chokes, Grade 2 Turkish Walnut Timber, Adjustable Comb, Cased, 5 Year Warranty.....	\$1695
AKSP30E Akkar Churchill 12ga 30" U/O Sporter Ejector Shotgun, 5 chokes, Cased, 5 Year Warranty.....	\$1095
AKSP30EB Akkar Churchill 12ga 30" Sporter Ejector Black Action Shotgun, 5 Chokes, Cased, 5 Year Warranty.....	\$1095
AKTR30E Akkar Churchill 12ga 30" Trap Ejector, 5 Chokes, Cased, 5 Year Warranty.....	\$1295
Bushmeister BA-X12 Marine Synthetic 20" Vent Rib Lever Release 12ga Shotgun, 5 Chokes, 5 Shot, Cased.....	\$775
Bushmeister BA-X12 Synthetic 20" Vent Rib Lever Release 12ga Shotgun 5 Chokes, 5 Shot, Cased.....	\$750
Bushmeister BA-X12 Walnut 20" Vent Rib Lever Release 12ga Shotgun 5 Chokes, 5 Shot, Cased.....	\$775
Bushmeister BA-X12 Camo 28" Vent Rib Lever Release 12ga Shotgun 5 Chokes, 5 Shot, Cased.....	\$860
Bushmeister BA-X12 Synthetic 28" Vent Rib Lever Release 12ga Shotgun 5 Chokes, 5 shot, Cased.....	\$750
Bushmeister BA-X12 Synthetic Combo 20" & 28" Vent Rib Bbls Lever Release 12ga Shotgun 5 chokes, 5 Shot, Cased.....	\$945
B220PG7 Adler Pistol Grip Straight Pull 7 Shot 12ga 20" Shotgun.....	\$575
B220PGR Adler Pistol Grip Straight Pull 7 shot 12ga 20" Rifled Shotgun.....	\$675
B220W20 Adler Walnut Straight Pull 7 Shot 12ga 2" Shotgun.....	\$575
B220AW7 Adler B220 All Weather Straight Pull 7 Shot 20" Shotgun.....	\$625
B230TFDE Adler Tactical Straight Pull 12ga 20" Shotgun, 2x 5rd Detachable Magazines.....	\$750

OTHER GOODIES

IA617 IAiming Game Changer 1.6-12.8x40 Thermal Scope.....	\$3095
BURT3940BS11 Bushnell Trophy XLT 3-9x40 DOA QBR Scope with Rings.....	\$195
BURP3120BS3 Bushnell Prime 3-12x40 Multi X Air Rifle Scope.....	\$295
BUREL2104BS3 Bushnell Elite 4500 2.5-10X40 Multi X Rifle Scope.....	\$450
BU119938C Bushnell Trophy Cam 20mp Single Core Brown No Glow Trail Cam.....	\$275
BU66062BF Bushnell Spot On Trail Cam Tan Low Glow 2 Pack.....	ONLY \$230
BULE1300SBL Bushnell Engage 1300 6x24 LRF ADV Target Detection Rangefinder.....	\$320
BULE1700SBL Bushnell Engage 1700 6x24 LRF ADV Target Detection Rangefinder.....	\$370
BG1099442 Bog Death Grip Clamping Tripod.....	\$340
CALD-LS3 Caldwell Lead Sled 3 Rifle Rest.....	\$375
CALD-FCRFL Caldwell Full Length Fire Control Rifle Rest.....	\$795
CALD-LSS Caldwell Lead Sled Solo Rifle Rest.....	\$225

*** NO BACKORDERS AT THESE PRICES ***

1848 The Horsley Drive HORSLEY PARK NSW 2175 PHONE 02 9620 1313 EMAIL sales@hpgs.biz

LIKE US



ABN 85 003 914 850 DLN 410 582 683 • ALL PRICES INCLUDE GST AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE • WWW.HORSLEYPARKGUNSHOP.COM.AU

Please Note: Some items listed above may sellout before ad is released. While this is unavoidable we will endeavour to keep prices as marked but may change without notice.

Show us the money!

a one-piece receiver (no chassis) with a free-float rail, short throw 45-degree bolt and match grade two-stage trigger. It's a neat little special purpose rifle, perhaps not readily available in our market but the good news is it comes in Aussie-compliant versions (no suppressor, etc) and more standard calibres, so we could see it here at some stage.

Pump and lever-action

I was only on the main floor a couple of minutes when I bumped into Damir Lukic from Southern Cross Small Arms manning a stand promoting our very own Australian-made Taipan X pump-action, straight-pull rifle. It was heartening to see Aussie manufacturing taken to the world and Damir assured me interest was high.

As with bolt-action rifles it was surprising to see many of the tradition AR manufacturers also unveiling new lever-action rifles, although many might more accurately be described as reinterpretations of historic designs (such as the Marlin 1895) with some modern improvements including Picatinny rails and even alloy KeyMod or M-Lok fore-ends. Ironically many are still chambered in traditional calibres introduced in the late 19th century such as .45-70 and .30-30.

Even Smith & Wesson are in on the act with their 1854 lever-action, a rifle which pays homage to the fact they were first to patent the design with the Volcanic lever rifle. For the history buffs, Messrs Smith and Wesson's Volcanic Repeating Arms Company was heavily invested in by Oliver Winchester, who'd later take over the venture when it became insolvent. The basis of the Volcanic's lever design was later developed into Winchester's incredibly successful series of cartridge rifles.

In reality Smith & Wesson's take has little to do with the old Volcanic rifle, being a more conventional toggle design, though they claim it to be 'the first to incorporate the feel of our revered large-frame revolver's smooth, crisp action and clean craftsmanship'. The rifle's chambered in .44 Magnum to complement their revolvers too. A couple of versions were displayed in a beautiful high-lustre blued rifle with equally high-grade walnut timber stock and fore-end, and a more modern matt stainless/polymer furniture version.

The former is a limited edition with only 1854 units produced and apparently already sold out, while the latter will be in ongoing production and has many great features such as a large loop lever, recessed sling point and M-Lok slots on the fore-end. I'm looking forward to giving one a run when they land in Australia.



A table full of CZ Shadows.

Of course you can't get more American than taking a rifle of any design, chambering it in .223 Remington and whacking a Magpul P-Mag in it - and the lever-actions haven't escaped! Enter the Henry Repeating Arms company's Henry Supreme. This completely redesigned version has no fewer than six patents pending and is, as mentioned above, a lever-action rifle chambered in .223 Remington with 10-round P-Mag. It features a free-floating and thread barrel, match grade trigger and sub-MOA accuracy, things generally not seen on a lever-action.

Along the same lines but following a separate design path we have the Bond Arms LVRB. Bond Arms until now are almost exclusively known for their Derringer range, small break-action double barrel pistols. Yet in a departure from handgun manufacturing, they have a new rifle loosely based on the old Winchester Model 88 but greatly redesigned and incorporating an AR15-type multi-lugged bolt. Due for release later this year, it's a modern take on a lever-action rifle in .223/5.56 and likely other standardised AR-based calibres such as .300 Blackout and .450 Bushmaster,

again with a P-Mag. Either way, lever-gun enthusiasts will be spoiled for choice in the next few years.

Handguns

There are always plenty of new and interesting pistols at SHOT Show and this was no exception, though like everything else it's hard to find many compliant for Australian sports target use. Take for Example Smith & Wesson's new M&P Magnum, literally an S&W M&P chambered in .22 Magnum, a great pistol but its 30-round magazine and 4.35" barrel will all but guarantee it's non-availability



The Smith & Wesson M&P 5.7 will need a magazine reduction from 22 to 10 if we're to see it.



PULSAR



THERMION 2 LRF XL50

THERMION 2 LRF XL50...

stands out from the crowd with its excellent HD image quality and powerful sensor capabilities. It's perfect for long distance shooters and for observation with a wide field of view.



TSAOUTDOORS

SIFA

Shooting
Industry
Foundation
Australia

FIND A DEALER
www.tsaoutdoors.com.au



Show us the money!

No fewer than
2600 companies
displayed their
products and
services

A tiny segment of just one of the exhibition halls.

here. Likewise their new M&P chambered in the diminutive 5.7x28 cartridge. The calibre's fine and it even has a 5" barrel but we'll need S&W to make a 10-round magazine instead of a 22-rounder for it to be compliant (same with the new Performance Centre M&P M2.0 in 10mm).

Uberti has a new line of 1873 single-action revolvers where the Old West now meets modern times with a top-mounted Picatinny rail added for scope or red-dot fitment. And Walther fans will be happy with their new line of steel-framed PDP pistols including a 5" Match variant, an optics-ready one with weight-reducing lightening cuts and their Dynamic Performance Trigger. Traditionalist will love the fact that Colt have introduced two new Python revolvers, a 6" and 4.25" in the Colt Blue finish and walnut grips, having relaunched the gun in 2020 but only in stainless variants (the blued finish looks superb).

Glock have a few new compacts in .45ACP (G30) and 10mm (G29) which were fun to shoot at the Media Day but won't be seen much Down Under. A company called Military Armament Corp have introduced a new line of Browning Hi-Power clones to be marketed under the old 'Inglis' moniker including an L9A1 version. Starting at just US\$490, it would be great if someone picks these up for Australian distribution. Ruger have a 75th Anniversary Mark IV Target rimfire pistol which pays tribute to the original as well as a Super Redhawk in .22 Hornet with a 9.5" barrel, so no reason we can't have that one.

The Rock Island Armory 5.0E is an interesting single-action pistol with square profiled barrel, internal slide rails, a recessed hammer for longer slide radius, RVS recoil system, Glock-type trigger safety and plenty more innovations worth checking out. Again, one which should be compliant with a 10-round magazine if someone imports it.

Lastly we come to the Canik TTI Combat, described as a 'budget' Taran Tactical Combat Master (the *John Wick* pistol). World champion shooter and master gunsmith Taran Bulter has joined forces with Canik to design a compensated, slide-cut competition pistol with fluted 5" barrel and all the other fancy competition improvements one could wish for, all for less than US\$1000. Again, a compliant pistol in Oz if fitted with a 10-round mag (fingers crossed).

Shotguns

Besides what I saw in person I also went through the published list of 'Top New Shotguns' from the 2024 SHOT Show and after removing all the self-loaders, pump guns and a few unknown brands I was left with only one of any consequence, the 687 Beretta Silver Pigeon 5.



The Taran Tactical Canik TTI Combat, a budget Combat Master.

Carrying deep floral engraving and high-gloss Class 3 wood, to quote Beretta: "The Silver Pigeon evolves with the V version, top of the range of Beretta's 'standard' over-and-under shotguns. Hunters will love this gun even more, a beautiful symbol of efficiency, reliability and minimum maintenance requirements inherited from the 680 platform." ●

• *These are just a few of the firearms highlights, as much as space will allow, but having only scratched the surface, next month I'll take a look at optics and some of the more interesting quintessential American things on display.*

SXR² PUMP



WINCHESTER®

RELIABLE, PRACTICAL, EFFECTIVE.

Winchester, the pioneer of repeating rifles, introduces the new SXR² PUMP.



Winchester SXR² PUMP Composite

Calibres: 308WIN, 30-06SPRG (9/10 shot mag), 300WM (3 shot mag)

RRP
\$2,595



Winchester SXR² PUMP Strata

Calibres: 308WIN (9 shot mag), 30-06SPRG (10 shot mag)

RRP
\$2,695



Winchester SXR² PUMP Field

Calibres: 308WIN, 30-06SPRG (9/10 shot mag), 300WM (3 shot mag)

RRP
\$2,795

FIND OUT MORE:



Man the pumps!

Wedgetail's latest offering impressed **Daniel O'Dea**

It wasn't too long ago if you wanted to buy a new Australian-made firearm you were out of luck. For instance, when Lithgow Arms launched the LA101 in 2013 it had been 40 years since they last designed and built a rifle for the civilian market in Australia and as I recall, within that period there wasn't anyone else making anything (perhaps Leader Dynamic/Australian Automatic Arms pre 1996).

Thankfully today, despite the regulatory obstacles we now have choices when it comes to Australian-built firearms. Besides Lithgow there's Southern Cross Small Arms, Warwick Firearms and Wedgetail Industries, to name some of the better known.

I reviewed the Wedgetail WT25 (October 2023), a superbly accurate self-loading rifle, made specifically with Category D professional contract and primary production licence holders in mind. Self-loaders being a niche market here, Wedgetail have also lent their engineering skills to the manufacture of a new pump-action rifle, so catering to the wider civilian shooting market we now have the Wedgetail MPR-308.

Despite any similarities to the WT25, the MPR is a dedicated Category B pump-action. Sadly, regardless of the fact it's not a self-loader and never will be, at this stage a question remains as to its acceptance under the ridiculously subjective appearance laws in place in states including NSW and Tasmania, so some of us may miss out.

Interestingly enough despite all their other firearms woes, WA shooters have had a win for common sense as it's approved for sale there as Category B. Noting for the record as a New South Welshman myself, for review purposes I have all applicable permits and licenses for both possession and testing of the MPR regardless of any final category determination in NSW.

In appearance the MPR is near identical to the WT25, main difference being the addition of three rail-type sections which appear to float proud of the front handguard at three, six and nine o'clock, forming the pump slide grip that cycles the action. It appears Wedgetail have taken the proven approach, as with several other recent straight-pull variants, and re-engineered some aspects seen on self-loader designs but reconfigured into dedicated, manually actuated systems.

This doesn't mean they've modified a self-loader to become a pump-action, rather they've designed a new gun using similar mechanical concepts and components without the presence or capacity to fit any form of gas system. A gas system is the principal actuation method for the

The upper receiver can pivot open on the front pin for easy cleaning.

Off to a good start when sighting-in at 25m.

majority of self-loading centrefire rifles and without which you effectively have a bolt-action firearm.

So what exactly do I mean by all the above? Well in the case of the MPR, in place of any gas system is a drive-rod connecting a pump slide to a bolt carrier, the latter having no gas key as it locks on to the rod. The bolt within the bolt carrier has no gas rings, all these parts are proprietary and in no way compatible or interchangeable with self-loader parts. Likewise the barrel has neither a gas port nor provision for same and upper receiver no provision for a charging handle.

The rifle arrived in an impressive optional zip-open soft case which held it broken down to its two major components of upper and lower receiver groups. The case is lined with both a MOLLE system and Velcro pads to secure various pouches and dividers, customisation being left to the owner's imagination based on final fit-out requirements.

A large netted pouch on the upper flap has two zip-up sections holding the manual and some Wedgetail stickers, while the inside has more merch by way of some cool Velcro brand patches. Separate magazine pouches house two supplied 10-round Magpul P-Mags and there's an optional Wedgetail sling and blast deflector. If presentation counts we're off to a flier.



Starting with the upper receiver group we have an assembly comprising the receiver and handguard, both CNC-milled from 7075-T6 aluminum. The receiver trunnion extends forward of the receiver face to accept a proprietary barrel extension and barrel-nut interface. Wedgetail's 13" free-floating front handguard clamps over the trunnion of the receiver seamlessly, to create a continuous top rail for optic and accessory fitment.

Out front, slots are cut along the side and bottom facets of the handguard to create three rail slots in which a small carriage assembly glides forward and aft on self-lubricating polymer bushes. This sits between the inner sides of the handguard and barrel, basically encircling the free-floating chrome-moly barrel and is connected at the top to a stainless steel drive-rod, in turn connected to the bolt



Man the pumps!

carrier. On the outside of each slot and bolted through into the carriage, sit three rail-type sections which form the pump slide. The lower panel is an actual section of Picatinny rail adorned with a silicon cover which can be removed to fit a vertical grip or other accessories.

Back at the chamber end is a proprietary bolt and carrier system which holds an Australian provisional patent. The brilliance of this design is it creates a degree of primary extraction, something that would generally be absent in this style of firearm. That has plagued similarly designed pump-action and straight-pull rifles as it can lead to cases sticking and problematic ejection. Again, although borrowing design aspects for the receiver and handguard interface from the WT25, neither receiver nor bolt and carrier assembly are interchangeable.

The lower also borrows from the WT25 and while it may look very much the same it's in no way interchangeable, only sharing the trigger-type and a few other minor components. Case in point is an example of the aforementioned re-engineering of self-loading design principals, the MPR using a standard Mil-Spec six-position receiver extension on which to mount the stock.

On the WT25 (self-loader) this part would serve as the buffer tube which would hold a spring-loaded, weighted buffer to



The MPR shot well with most ammunition types.

retard rearward movement of the bolt carrier system under firing and propel it forward again to cycle the action. With the MPR there's no buffer, only a spring-loaded plunger and where the receiver mates to the extension itself, it has a reduced diameter specifically designed to only accept the tail on the new proprietary bolt carrier. Built-in-denial features such as this should prevent any concern authorities might ever have of potential conversion as it's simply not possible.

Assembling the upper and lower receivers is by two simple push-pins and done without tools. Tolerances are kept very tight and there's no distinguishable play between receivers once assembled. Optic installation is easy via the continuous Picatinny top rail, noting high or extra-high MSR-style mounts being required dependent on optic.

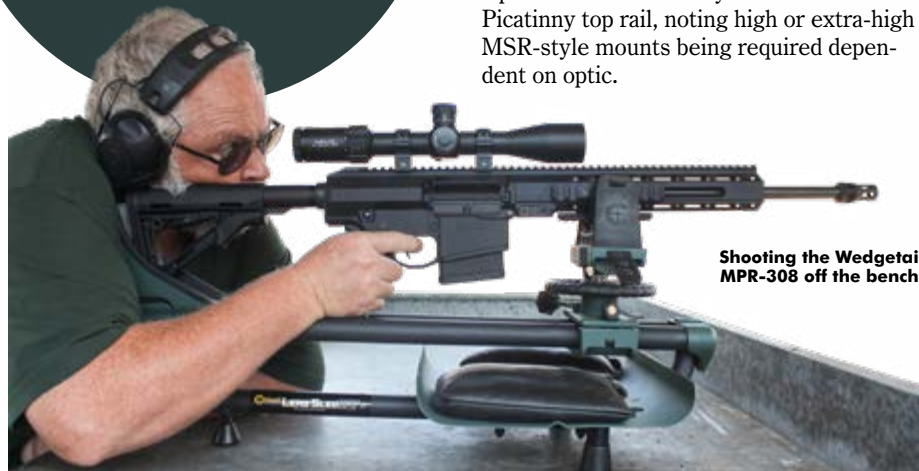
For testing I mounted an Element Optics Helix 4-16 x 44 scope, the 44mm objective housing just clearing the top rail when mounted in a set of Element Optic Acculite 30mm Picatinny ring-mounts. The combination gives a low sight-over-bore relationship with full sight picture immediately apparent on presentation of the rifle.

I'd been pleasantly surprised by the standard of accuracy when I tested the WT25, so with the MPR basically using the same barrel and receiver interface system, expectations were high. I wasn't disappointed when on sighting-in at 25m, three-shot groups between adjustment produced neat clovers, this using mixed-date head-stamped Australian military surplus 7.62 NATO ammo, some of it from the 1970s.

Moving to the 100m range I fired a series of three-shot groups with various factory offerings, the average overall being 1 MOA with three groups almost half that, one spot-on MOA, one at 2 MOA and one which had the first two rounds in the same hole before I pulled the third out to 1.5 MOA.

That accuracy for this style of rifle could in some part be down to Wedgetail's trigger. Like most standard AR-type hammer-fall trigger systems, it's fairly heavy with some creep but in this case, with polished and coated surfaces, any creep is smooth and it does break cleanly. As the rifle uses a standard AR/MSR-type trigger group, there are many aftermarket drop-in replacement units available.

Accuracy for this style of rifle could in some part be down to Wedgetail's trigger



Shooting the Wedgetail MPR-308 off the bench.

Off the bench and in general use the MPR functioned smoothly and effortlessly, loading, firing and ejecting without fault. The new patented primary extraction bolt and carrier system must be working, as I experienced none of the sticky case hangups apparently present in Wedgetail prototypes of the rifle prior to this development. The MPR uses positive forward spring tension to keep the action in battery and there's no forward bolt-lock as found on some non-spring-assisted pump-actions like the Remington 7600/7615 series.

As I'm not the first reviewer of the MPR I've seen a small criticism that if you brace the pump slide reward as to pull the rifle into the shoulder, the bolt may come out of battery in which case the hammer falls and the gun fails to fire. I experienced no such issues though I do tend to run this style of rifle with a squarer to target stance with my support arm extended and locked forward.

This also allows you to shorten up the stock so it's a lesser stretch to run the pump slide. Not a traditional target stance,

one more commonly used elsewhere though the MPR isn't a target rifle either, rather a more modern dynamic hunting firearm where quick follow-up shots are more likely than slow deliberate fire.

I found the MPR a little hard to fault, perhaps I'd like to see the magazines drop free on release as on the sample gun they didn't and were a little tight in the magazine well. This is likely only an issue if you were running IPSC or similar competition, which I'm not sure many would with ammo costs being what they are.

The MPR-308 retails around \$3850 for the rifle as standard with a three-port muzzle brake. As noted the blast deflector, case and sling are Wedgetail accessories and at time of writing they're taking orders to all states except Tasmania and NSW. More at the Wedgetail website. ●

The MPR-308 came in an optional Wedgetail soft case with sling and blast deflector.

Specifications

- Rifle:** Wedgetail MPR-308
- Action:** Spring-assisted pump-action
- Trigger:** Wedgetail single-stage
- Calibre:** .308 Winchester
- Capacity:** 10-round detectable box magazine (2x Magpul)
- Barrel:** Chrome-Moly steel 16" (406mm)
- Twist rate:** 1:10, six lands and grooves
- Sights:** Picatinny rail
- Upper and lower:** 7075-T6 Alloy
- Stock:** Magpul CTR
- Pistol grip:** Magpul MOE rubber overmould
- Weight:** 4.25kg (9.37lbs)
- Price guide:** \$3850 RRP



MOSSBERG®

PATRIOT IN WALNUT



*Scope not included



D/L: 410650524



Not on my watch!



Kyle Andrews used the Fenix 5X to track down a wily predator

I'd been looking forward to making use of my Garmin smartwatch on a hunting trip for some time and when the opportunity finally presented, I couldn't have expected just how useful it would be. Until now, the inbuilt topographic maps feature of my Fenix 5X had been used just the once, about three weeks earlier while 'rogaining' in the Mt Lofty Ranges of South Australia.

Think orienteering but with the ability to plan your own route with the goal of reaching as many locations as possible within limited time. The topographic mapping and pre-saved waypoints were invaluable for sticking to the rather complicated route we'd planned and on that occasion, as with the outing described here, the following dot points are a pretty good general summing-up.

- The accuracy of these devices and level of information presented is stunning.
- With some time invested in the set-up, it can replace a typical GPS for most purposes (one less thing to carry).
- Yes the screen is small but I didn't notice that during use.
- Navigating maps with the onboard buttons is tricky at the start but you get used to it. Newer versions of this watch feature a larger touch screen which is a great improvement.
- Information displayed during and after use is extremely detailed and easily overlaid with satellite mapping.

The chase

I'm sure the fox had become aware of my presence at some point, though I like to think I'd been relatively stealthy and inconspicuous in my pursuit since first spotting it walking roughly the path of the arrow on my map. I was also on the right side of the wind and it appeared to be wandering



around in a fairly casual manner. Deliberate or not though, the animal was following an existing sheep track in a northerly direction, maintaining a pace I couldn't sustain without revealing myself, meaning it effectively kept its distance.

Memories spring to mind of following goats on foot through similarly hilly country, where each hill you crest just shows them moving further away despite being seemingly oblivious to your presence. The fox then trotted calmly into a thick, shaded patch of scrub on the western side of the ranges where I lost sight of it. It was at this point I knew a different approach was needed if I was to have any luck in bagging him, so about 300m away and with good oversight of the area, I decided patience

might be the answer. I moved forward to take cover in a clump of bushes just down from the hill crest I'd been peeking over, then pulled out an energy bar to take stock of the situation.

I'd been tracking the hunt with my Garmin Fenix 5X smartwatch since heading off and recording my movements via GPS, which made for quick access to the topographic mapping with my path thus far clearly shown. Orientation of the maps will automatically update as you rotate the direction you're facing, just turn your wrist and the maps remain forward-facing, a nice touch thanks to the inbuilt compass which can also provide accurate bearings if needed.

I pointed my watch in the direction of the fox and zoomed in to take a closer look

AUSSIE OUTBACK SUPPLIES

ZT
ZERO TOLERANCE KNIVES

28 Products Stocked in Australia

Hinderer Slicer w/Titanium Handles
\$457
ZT0562TI



US Made Fixed Blade w/ Sheath
\$469
ZT0006



COLD STEEL
ANYTIME. ANYWHERE.

71 Products Stocked in Australia

Luzon Folder, 4" Blade
\$99
CS20NQL



Trench Hawk Olive Green w/Sheath
\$117
CS90PTHG



SRK Fixed Blade w/Sheath
\$309
CS35AN




Leatherneck Fixed Blade w/Sheath
\$165
CS39LSFC




BUTCHER'S

28 Products Stocked in Australia

Freek Axis Folder
\$445.95
BMB560BK-1



Bugout Axis Folder
\$299
BMB535




EZE Sharp
BLADE SHARPENER

Blade Sharpener W/Flip-Over
\$325
BS1000




NEXTORCH

Rechargeable Hunting Set Extra Long Range Torch – 1,200 Lumens & 1,100 Metres
\$369
NXT7MAXHUNTSET Rifle and scope not included




American's Proven Edge
DEXTER
THEY SAY IT'S THE BEST

Green River Knife Package
\$245
RHGRKPBU



SCOUT

Butchers Knife Pack
\$135
SCKPBUW



LANSKY
SHARPENERS

Deluxe 5-Stone Sharpening System
\$157
LSLKCLX



Over 1400+ Products Stocked In Australia

AOS DLX RIFLE BAG
Starting from \$189

Features:

- Made from 14oz heavy duty 14 oz ripstop canvas
- Second layer of 16oz ripstop canvas around base
- All canvas breathable, water and rot proofed
- HD 50mm webbing carry straps
- HD #10 spiral zip with dual lockable sliders
- 1" Thick foam padded soft touch inner lining
- Full length zipped pocket along front of bag

Sizing Guide: 40" x 10", 44" x 10", 46" x 12", 48" x 10", 52" x 8", 52" x 12", 52" x 14", 56" x 14", 63" x 14"




AOS Tracker Swag
Starting from \$699
Available in KS & DBL




AOS Old School Canvas & PVC Bags
Starting from \$39.95
AOSBAGSTD1GRN




**DEALERS WANTED AUSTRALIA WIDE!
WEBSITE WHOLESALE ORDER PORTAL
LIVE NOW.**

P: (08) 9274 1997
E: info@aussieoutbacksupplies.com
www.aussieoutbacksupplies.com
[@aussieoutbacksupplies](https://www.instagram.com/aussieoutbacksupplies)



Scan to see our catalogue



Not on my watch!

at what lay ahead of it. The terrain was becoming steeper and to continue following, I'd be forced along a direct route with minimal cover unlikely to have any clearer view through the trees than I already had. The fox could either lose me through a number of intersecting creek beds or by rounding the steep spur ahead of it.

Having kept a close eye with my binoculars, I was confident of the fox's rough position and that it hadn't moved any significant distance yet. I knew these hills were mostly shale with only shallow soil and the odd rock outcrop, so it seemed unlikely there was a foxhole hidden in the trees this high above the creek beds. As things were warming up in the middle of the day I assumed it was taking shelter in the shade.

The detour

I could see a location roughly 400m to the north that would be a better vantage point, a small knoll in the valley below with good cover. Reaching it without walking in plain sight and driving the fox further away would be more difficult, so I decided it was worth the effort to loop around and approach from the opposite side. I'd also have a look at the

animal's 'escape route' on the way just in case. While considering all this, about 15 minutes had passed, my legs were cold and the snacks had run out so I set off.

Although this was an enjoyable walk, the map made it clear it was a long way round. Taking me up to a nearby trig-point marker I had stunning 360-degree views over the hills, then along a length of the original stacked stone fencing for several hundred metres. This provided me with some good cover and is also a spectacular monument to the hard work done by the original settlers of this land.

I'd now completely lost sight of the fox's location and was unable to keep a watch on it for about 55 minutes during this detour, which turned out to be roughly 3.7km and just over two hours on difficult terrain before I finally reached the location I'd picked out.

The shot

On reaching this position and scanning the face of the hill for about 10 minutes I finally spotted the fox in the shade of a tree about 190m out, just as I'd hoped. After such a trek I had the shakes when lining up the shot and it was a good thing there'd

been enough time to choose a nice spot to lie prone and set up. I'm pleased to report I landed it slap-bang in the middle of its chest, thus avoiding the need for a steep climb to make sure of the kill, something I double checked through the binos.

If I'd decided to trudge up the hill, the Garmin Fenix allows quick saving of waypoints at both ends to record the distance and elevation change of the shot to end those debates forever. To 'one-up' the rangefinder you might use for the same task, saving these points gives the option to overlay them on satellite mapping (via phone or PC) or find the location again in the future.

The rifle

I'd been carrying a long-time favourite hunting rifle which I've had since I turned 18, a Howa Model 1500 stainless in .30.06 which was more than up to the task at this distance. My go-to reload is a 125-grain Speer TNT Hollow Point with 52 grains of ADI AR2208 powder, and while I've never chronographed this, my reloading manual puts it at roughly 3050fps, midway between starting and maximum loads (I've tested this out to 250m off a bench and achieved sub-MOA groups). My rifle which did this straight out the box after some quick floating of the barrel using a Dremel tool, made for one happy hunter.

With a black plastic stock and 22" Sporter barrel the Howa is light enough to carry on a sling but you need to be ready for the recoil. After tweaking of the adjustable trigger, the addition of a Leupold 3-9x40 VX-1 scope and Harris bipod it's still a pleasure to shoot after 17 years, even if it was fired just once for the entire morning on this occasion.

The Fenix 5X

To complement the watch itself there are a wide variety of bands available. I use the Garmin silicone one in bright orange, though there are endless options from leather, fabric, more traditional metal links and even third-party paracord bands to literally have spare rope on hand. The 'sapphire' screens are an optional upgrade and extremely tough. Mine has taken some pretty hefty knocks that would smash a phone screen, yet there's not a mark on it after almost four years of regular use.

The watch body itself is similarly sturdy and although the coating can scratch up a bit if you treat it rough, the watch will still look really smart after a clean. Overall I can't recommend the Garmin Fenix range highly enough and this brief encounter barely scratches the surface of its numerous features. ●

Elevation.



Pace.



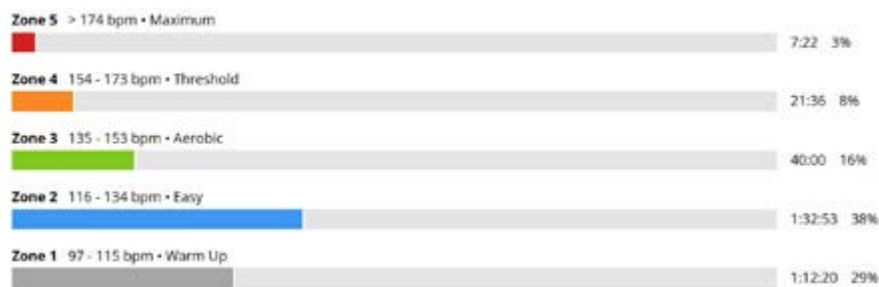
Heart rate.

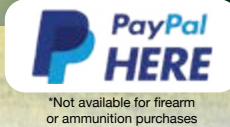


Cadence.



Heart Rate Zones





\$15 flat rate post for all orders anywhere in Australia.

*Excluding firearms and dangerous goods

Bushnell

- Bushnell Engage 1700 Range Finder 6x24 LRF with Advanced Target Detection. Was \$450..... **NOW \$330**
- Bushnell 4500 4-16x50 30mm Tube with side parallax Multi-X Reticle Was \$640..... **NOW \$465**
- Bushnell Banner 6-18x50 1" Tube with Adjustable Objective Multi-X Reticle Was \$346..... **NOW \$220**

TIPTON

- Tipton Ultra Gun Vise Was \$535..... **NOW \$329**
- Tipton Best Gun Vise Was \$385..... **NOW \$229**

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

NEW SPRINGFIELD MODELS AVAILABLE NOW

- Springfield 2020 Redline 6.5CM or 308 WIN 16" or 20" Carbon Barrel Muzzle Brake and 3 shot mag..... \$4740
- Springfield 2020 Rimfire Target Black 20" 22LR..... \$975
- Springfield 2020 Rimfire Target Sage/Black Web 20" 22LR..... \$1099

ANSCHÜTZ

EINFACH EINS WERDEN!

IN STOCK NOW

- 1782D German 243 or 30-06..... \$4320
- Anschutz 1771 223 20" Threaded..... \$3745
- 17 Hornet 23"..... \$3615

RCBS

- RCBS Rock Chucker Reloading Kit Was \$920..... **NOW \$695**
- RCBS Chergemaster Link Was \$715..... **NOW \$599**
- RCBS Chergemaster Supreme Was \$900..... **NOW \$849**

iAiming

NEW IAISING MODELS IN STOCK NOW

- iAiming IA-312 Pro 3.4-13.6X35 First Shot Auto Zero 384x288 sensor..... \$4080
- iAiming IA-612 Pro 2.8-22.4X50 First Shot Auto Zero 640x512 sensor..... \$6475
- iAiming IA-612 Pro LRF 2.8-22.4X50 Integral Laser Range Finder. First Shot Auto Zero 640x512 sensor..... \$7495

BARRETT

BARRETT 50BMGS IN STOCK

- Barrett M99 Black Single Shot. Cased with Factory Bipod 32" Heavy Barrel With Brake..... \$9775
- 29" Fluted Barrel With Brake..... \$9925
- Barrett M99 FDE Single Shot. Cased with Factory Bipod 32" Heavy Barrel With Brake..... \$9805
- 29" Fluted Barrel With Brake..... \$10175

LEUPOLD

MASSIVE LEUPOLD SALE ONLY WHILE STOCK LASTS

Leupold Fixed Powers

- FX-II 2.5x20 Ultralight Wide Duplex Was \$610..... **NOW \$520**
- FX-I 4x28 Rimfire Fine Duplex Was \$610..... **NOW \$520**

Leupold VX-Freedom

- VX-Freedom 3-9x40 Rimfire MOA reticle Was \$610..... **NOW \$519**
- VX-Freedom 3-9x40 Huntplex Was \$610..... **NOW \$519**
- VX-Freedom 3-9x50 CDS Duplex Was \$680..... **NOW \$580**
- VX-Freedom 4-12x40 Long Range Duplex Was \$600..... **NOW \$579**

Leupold VX-3HD

- VX-3HD 2.5-8x36 CDS ZL Duplex Was \$975..... **NOW \$830**
- VX-3HD 3.5-10x40 CDS ZL Duplex Was \$975..... **NOW \$830**
- VX-3HD 4.5-14x40 CDS ZL Duplex Was \$1165..... **NOW \$989**
- VX-3HD 6.5-20x50 CDS-T Fine Duplex Was \$1805..... **NOW \$1535**

Leupold VX-3HD Silver Scopes

- VX-3HD 2.5-8x36 CDS ZL Silver Duplex Was \$1145..... **NOW \$975**
- Leupold VX-3HD 4.5-14x40 CDS-ZL Silver Duplex. Was \$1295..... **NOW \$1100**

Leupold VX-5HD

- VX-5HD 3-15x44 CDS ZL2 SF Duplex reticle Was \$2090..... **NOW \$1775**
- Illuminated Firedot Duplex Was \$2280..... **NOW \$1940**

Leupold VX-6HD

- VX-6HD 4-24x52 CDS ZL2 SF Firedot Duplex with Alumina flip up lens covers Was \$4175..... **NOW \$3550**
- VX-6HD 7-42x56 CDS SF TMOA Plus Reticle Was \$4175..... **NOW \$3550**

Leupold Mark 5

- Mark 5HD 2-10x30 35mm FFP TMR Reticle Was \$3895..... **NOW \$3315**
- Mark 5HD 5-25x56 35mm FFP PR2-MOA Was \$4295..... **NOW \$3655**
- TREMOR 3 or H59 Reticle Was \$4875..... **NOW \$4145**

Rangefinder Sale

- Leupold RX-1400 TBR/W GEN 2 Rangefinder + Flightpath Was \$410..... **NOW \$349**
- Leupold RX-2800TBR/W Was \$1170..... **NOW \$995**

Delta Point Red Dot Sale

- Delta Point Micro Reflex Sight Glock 3MOA Dot Was \$780..... **NOW \$699**
- Delta Point Pro Reflex Sight 2.5 MOA Red Dot FDE Was \$915..... **NOW \$780**

2 MONTH LAY-BY WITH A 20% DEPOSIT



How's your tolerance?

Robert D. Moore tackles the reloaders' dilemma

What is tolerance and why is it important to us as shooters? Well a definition describing tolerance might answer the question. What's the acceptable variation of a dimension as measured from a standard that's not detrimental to the useability of the product? This is a tolerance and it's usually quoted as a plus or minus factor.

Fitters and turners work to a tolerance of .001" so if they were making a hole it was plus .001", while if making a shaft it was usually minus .001". This relates directly to a rifle barrel and bolt where tolerance varies dramatically with the application and situation. In this context it's worth noting that science has not been able to measure just how round a hole might be.

While a rifle barrel that's .003" oversize would be unacceptable by many, it may not cause accuracy problems for the average shooter as it really depends on their situation. Many modern firearms are still made where .001" oversize is excellent, more

than that will usually go unnoticed, though if in doubt consult a toolmaker with suitable gear to measure the diameter of your own rifle barrels.

In relation to shooting, the real issue here is identifying those matters where the cumulative effect of tolerance variances can lead to unacceptable results. Apart from those well-known factors of drag, drift and drop (not forgetting the wind), there are so many elements relating to accurate shot placement it's easy to question how we manage to shoot accurately at all, so consider the following.

Cartridge cases

When reloading, fired cases of the same brand (after resizing, cleaning and trimming) will not weigh the same, as all are made in slightly different ways which means cases will have different wall thicknesses so the internal volume will be different. As a direct result of thick walls the internal pressure when fired will vary,

though this change in pressure may or may not be important. In a case where the reloading chart says a specific load will produce a nominal internal 50,000psi, it could easily have a 500psi variation which will affect speed and therefore accuracy.

There's a Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI) specification relating to the internal volume of a case for a calibre but, like many such things, it's a number that's not measured by any who may care. If the external shape is to specification and the neck is the right size, that's all that seems to matter. A solution to this problem when reloading, although not perfect, is to use quality cases from a single maker and keep them in batches. Don't overload them, keep them clean and in doing so you might just achieve better results.

Projectiles

Most of us accept that regardless of manufacturer, quality projectiles are difficult to consistently make accurately. All projectiles of a brand no matter the size will vary in weight and it seems the type of point isn't a factor except when considering cartridge overall length (OAL). It's likely those with a full metal jacket or ballistic tip will be more consistent than ones with soft or hollow points.

The manufacturing process will result in different diameters for projectiles even in the same batch and it's not unusual for that to vary as much as .0005" plus or minus. The length of projectiles will also vary, though makers rightly state this has little real effect on accuracy so variations in length are but a minor concern. Of more relevance is projectile weight and even match-grade ones vary (this variation as measured has been recorded as much as .1 grain plus or minus). Of far more concern is consistency of the ogive and by measurement, it has been found this can vary several thousands of an inch from projectile to projectile.



Measuring the ogive variation in a .308.

Another possible solution is to test what suits your situation and projectiles from the same maker with the same nominal weight and type are a good starting point. Reloading using projectiles of the exact same weight and diameter from the same batch also helps stack the odds in your favour, though the measuring process is tedious and may not produce the results you hope for.

Manufacturers who claim match-grade projectiles generally indicate a consistent product in the box, though often you need to trial several brands to find one that suits your firearm and its intended use. Recently there seems to have been a move to projectiles with boat-tail bases and ballistic tips, even among those intended for hunting.

Scales

Many modern reloaders use inexpensive electronic scales which boast a repeatable accuracy of .1 grain. All the better scales have an accurate weight used to calibrate them and there's an unwritten rule which



Accurate scales are an essential part of the reloader's equipment.

states: Don't reload if the scales haven't been calibrated. I check calibration of my scales after every 20 rounds loaded.

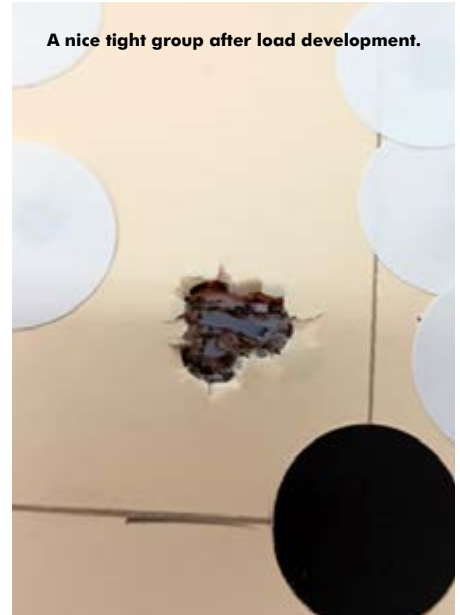
Recently while developing a new .308 Win load the parts were selected, case by case and projectile weight by style and maker. Next was propellant and the initial load chosen was 39 grains from a Nosler recommendation with the final load based on testing being 40.5 grains of ADI 2206H. So is it worth chasing that last one-tenth of a grain trying to fit exactly 40.5 grains of propellant in the case? The time it takes to reload say, 100 rounds, may easily double if you decide to trickle loads to exactly 40.5 grains - and for what benefit?

In the context of tolerance of .1 of a grain we don't know if that's plus or minus the .1. We don't know if that means the range is really .2 grains and is in effect plus one or minus one. So consider a new approach. That load of 40.5 grains might be considered as a number 405 so is there any real problem if we load in the range of 404-406? In the context of all this it's worth considering.

Seating depth

We all want a seating depth based on what we think we know about how close the projectile is to the lands in the barrel. Many factors influence how we seat the bullet and this usually translates into the OAL. The theory's wonderful but sometimes it's easier just to try some loads with different overall lengths and choose what works best for your application.

However, you might find an accurate load where the cartridge overall length means reloads no longer fit into your magazine, so you'll then have to load each shot individually. The combination of projectile shape and ogive often means it's difficult to achieve consistent OAL. Many reloaders will have noticed the extra .06" added to the OAL when ballistic tip projectiles are loaded, though in reality we know it's the ogive measurement that matters.



Conclusion

Most makers of ammunition don't provide details about their manufacturing tolerances but based on measurements made of their products, we can draw our own conclusions. Cases will vary in capacity, projectiles will differ in length, diameter, weight and, importantly, ogive. All these affect performance and of course propellant will vary from batch to batch as will perceived performance based on many factors (charge weight will also fluctuate from round to round).

After reading this perhaps the idea that you need to match the reload to both rifle and shooter makes more sense. As reloaders we know we can do better but it helps if we can arrange things in a manner better suited to our needs. Often we wonder what went wrong when we have an unexpected flyer but considering the above, it's not always your fault. So don't despair, as in the reloading game there are many things you can't control but you can rightly take pride every time you produce a group on or under MOA. ●



AHCMPMG304 Use Firearms to Humanely Destroy Animals

ATS is a Registered Training Organisation certified to deliver industry best practices through immersive live-fire training in Australia's most advanced and only interactive live-fire indoor range. Visit our website for course availability, enrolments, and bookings.

www.atspl.com.au



STEPPING OUT OF GLOCK'S SHADOW

Pistol newcomers making their mark, says Rod Pascoe

Firearms manufacturer Shadow Systems is a fairly recent arrival on the US handgun scene and even newer to Australian shooters, thanks to the appointment of Outdoor Sporting Agencies as importer and distributor here. Based in Plano, Texas, Shadow Systems are philosophical about their roots and have no shame in mentioning their now-competitor, Glock, when marketing their pistols, as the company was founded in 2016 producing aftermarket parts, predominately for off-the-shelf Glock handguns.

To paraphrase the company's own marketing spiel: "... Glock operating systems are plentiful in the market and frequently our customers already own one. That means customers have lots of off-the-shelf options and may already own parts and accessories that fit. As far as Generations go, our pistols are modelled on the Gen 4 operating system so go with that choice if its applicable".

Initially their products were helping Glock owners extract the most from their handguns by providing aftermarket barrels, trigger groups, slides and internals to enhance their performance. But here in Australia where competition shooting is the only genuine reason to own a handgun, a Glock frame full of aftermarket parts doesn't satisfy the 'Production' division rules in a number of the practical shooting sports.

The solution? Shadow Systems have now incorporated their aftermarket parts into complete handguns modelled on the Glock platform. By adding injection moulding equipment to their in-house production line, polymer frames along with all the other parts come together to produce original, production handguns under the Shadow Systems name. Naturally the company's first priority was to concentrate on the

largest and most lucrative segment of the US handgun industry, producing a range of compact and sub-compact guns for the thriving concealed-carry market.

Released at the 2023 SHOT Show in Las Vegas, the DR920L adds to a vast line of polymer-framed, striker-fired 'duty role' pistols by adding an optics-ready feature to a full-size frame and lengthened top end, giving Shadow Systems an entree into the competition handguns arena. OSA gave *Australian Shooter* the chance to put the DR920L through its paces.

What's in the bag?

Not a great deal as it turns out. Unlike some pistol packages these days which tend to fill the box with numerous enticing bits and pieces - some of which will never be used or sometimes discarded - Shadow Systems have elected to go the way of minimal accessories. I prefer this approach as it gives shooters the option to customise their range bag with accessories they want without paying for ones the factory think they should have.

For most serious competitors the first essential additions are of course magazines, which are plentiful. Two are supplied which is enough for a run of the mill pistol club weekend shoot; however, depending on the particular match, buyers will want to add another two, six or 10 to this number.

Inside the large, tough Cordura range bag is the pistol itself, a choice of three backstraps, detachable magazine well, set of screws, spacers and a tube of Loctite 243 for attaching optics. All this is accompanied by the instruction manual and a padlock. One side of the bag has five elastic magazine loops and the other a large pocket for the pistol itself with Velcro closure.

First impressions

Shadow Systems' philosophy is simply to put function before aesthetics although the DR920L does have quite a distinctive 'look' of its own. It does somewhat resemble the Glock 34 Gen 4 optics-ready model and that's because it's the platform the business started producing its wide range of aftermarket parts for. The frame's wraparound grip texture is aggressive enough to keep the gun firmly in the shooter's hold without being uncomfortable.

The backstraps aren't the usual small, medium and large, instead they relate to the grip angle and position of the hand to suit the shooter's natural point of aim. They're labelled 'High' which places the muzzle in a relatively high orientation, 'Neutral' puts it in a flatter position and is the one fitted to the pistol, while the 'Low' backstrap has a nose-down orientation. I thought I'd decide on which to attach once I got to the range and became familiar with the overall feel of the pistol.



Narrow profile
top view.



The full-size frame has a larger beavertail and the redesigned trigger guard has deep undercut which allows the pistol to fit Glock 17 compatible holsters. There's a detachable magazine well supplied which can be used in certain divisions of competitions, while the instruction manual has full details for fitting backstraps and mag well.

The bronze coloured spiral-fluted, match-grade barrel is 5.3" (135mm) with conventional rifling and while this one's unthreaded, other handguns in the range do provide threaded ends for adding compensators. The slide-to-barrel fit is good and hopefully will improve accuracy. The manufacturers are less concerned about this as they say it's not so important to accuracy and a slightly looser mating of these parts improves reliability.

The trigger group incorporates a drop-safe, flat-faced aluminium trigger with 4.5-5lb (2-2.3kg) pull and a crisp, tactile reset. The usual striker-fired internal safeties are also incorporated and as with any trigger, especially on striker-fired handguns, I expect it'll take time to get used to it. The long slide adds to the sight radius of the open sights. Removing the optic cover plate at the rear of the slide reveals the patented multi-footprint optics cut, with just four threaded holes to accommodate most brands of miniature reflex sights

directly to the slide, without requiring intermediate plates or adapters.

In lieu of adaptor plates, Shadow Systems have instead opted for a range of plastic compression spacers to insert in front of, or behind, the optic to stop any forward movement under recoil, a great invention which seems to work well. I noted the extractor spring has been repositioned and is designed to allow longer than normal screws to be used to secure the optics to the slide, without them interfering with internal parts. The DR920L slide is part of the Elite range featuring deep rear directional top serrations, window cuts and a thinned profile at grasping locations.

The attached open steel sights - with the rear being windage adjustable, plain with no dots or lines around the square notch - are simply serrated to be non-reflective. The front sight has a large tritium lamp to draw the shooter's focus to the sight at night, a carryover from the pistol's Defence role. Nevertheless it's big and easy to acquire and

without distracting dots or lines on the rear, certainly stands out. But it's the optics I'm mainly interested in. A SIG Romeo 1 Pro red dot reflex sight was supplied by OSA for review and was installed easily and quickly.

To the range

After applying some lubrication to the usual metal-to-metal contact points and a wipe of the bore, the DR920L was ready to go with a variety of commercial ammo from various factories. Those included Geco, Winchester, Federal, PPU and Sellier & Bellot. I didn't try any home loads because, as we all know, powder is scarce. All factory rounds worked reliably in the pistol, feeding, shooting, extracting and ejecting cleanly, to leave a neat pile of brass in one spot about a meter to my right.

Yet the big test for me was of course accuracy followed by handling and controllability. While a very different gun to the heavier steel frames I've been testing recently, I was surprised at its



Patented multi-footprint optics cut.



Stepping out of Glock's Shadow

controllability in rapid-fire situations. I tried all three backstrap options and settled on the High grip as I was able to find the dot quicker out of the holster than with Neutral or Low.

All ammunition brands were equally acceptable; however, tuned home loads would certainly improve precision and accuracy. In the mix of factory ammo were bullet weights ranging from 115 to 147 grains and, generally speaking, the heavier the bullet weight the better precision and controllability.

Although the pistol is very light at a mere 640g, the balance is well forward. The long slide configuration tends to soak up felt recoil from full-house factory loads which I put down to aiding shot-to-shot recovery during rapid fire. Fellow members of my club, one of whom is an IPSC Production Division aficionado, was impressed by the pistol and particularly its 'pointability' out of the holster.

The recommended break-in time for Shadow Systems pistols is 150-200 rounds. According to the manufacturer, the gun has close tolerances and benefits from a 'wearing-in' period before reliability and performance reach their best. During this time the parts will fully mate and springs will achieve their final set, and they also

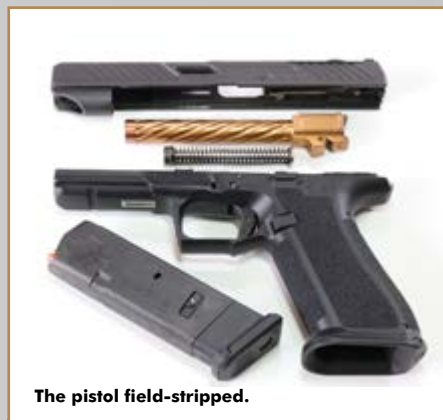
recommend keeping the pistol well-lubricated during this.

I fired at least 400 rounds for this review and did notice a change in 'smoothness' of the slide over three to four hours, not to mention the fact I was becoming more comfortable with overall handling and feel, so I was also being 'broken-in'. The comprehensive operation manual goes into detail on running-in as well as fitting optics, care, maintenance and lubrication.

Summary

At a little over \$2000 the DR920L is a value-for-money pistol when you consider what you'd spend to bring a Glock Model 17 or 34 up to the same specs (using after-market parts) as this gun. And if you did make all those modifications to a Glock it would no longer be a Production Division handgun, whereas the DR920L with all the bells and whistles is an original standalone Production pistol.

I was impressed and actually surprised by the overall performance of the DR920L - it was accurate, reliable and controllable in rapid-fire situations, especially with heavier projectiles. For newcomers to the pistol shooting sports, this should be one of the first handguns to try before you buy if you have the chance. ●



The pistol field-stripped.

Specifications

- Caliber:** 9x19
- Action:** Striker-fired
- Weight:** 22.4oz (640g)
- Frame:** Textured polymer
- Length:** 7¾" (196mm)
- Height:** 5¼" (133mm)
- Slide finish:** Nitride
- Barrel length:** 5.3" (135mm)
- Trigger pull:** 4.5-5lb (2-2.3kg)
- Capacity:** 10+1
- Front sight:** White dot
- Rear sight:** Black serrated
- Retail price:** \$2034

Elevate Your Adventures

with Earthcruiser
Luxury Motorhomes



Unleash your wanderlust with **Earthcruiser!** Explore Australia's rugged terrain, cruise the coastline, or traverse the world's wonders in unmatched comfort and luxury.



- earthcruiser.net.au
- +61 412 642 437
- sales@earthcruiser.net.au



Final chapter

IN AN ENDURING LEGACY

Deer Hunting in Australia
by Nick Harvey
Review by Dave Rose



Legendary Aussie firearms aficionado and outdoors enthusiast Nick Harvey, who sadly died recently, has left a fitting legacy in the form of his farewell publication *Deer Hunting in Australia*. There's probably no better evidence of Nick's expertise and know-how than this impressive hardback offering, which spans 214 pages coupled with graphics and stunning photographs to highlight the buzz of deer hunting.

From the outset Nick manages to retain his unique turn of phrase while capturing the nitty-gritty on what type of deer may be on the hunter's agenda. The opening chapters are devoted to explaining how such an invasive beast ended up flourishing on Aussie terrain, as the author meticulously lists the species which have called this country home. The roll call is extensive, starting with red deer then delving into the merit of targets such as fallow, chital, rusa, sambar, hog and barasingha.

Once the scene has been set Nick offers 10 expert tips for turning the novice into an accomplished deer hunter, advice which makes solid sense from the outside looking in. His attention then turns to reading the signs, a skill which involves understanding the animals' behaviour and movements as he explains how to look for evidence of deer presence such as rubbed trees.

Nick addresses the intricacies of stalking which sounds like an artform in itself as he leaves nothing to chance, maintaining the secrets of successful trophy hunting are patience and awareness. He emphasises that deer hunting is no sport for eager, over-anxious shooters looking for immediate results and on a few occasions underlines his mantra based on an old native American saying: "White man walk a lot see little, Indian walk little see a lot."

Different rifles are recommended for varying settings ranging from woodland to open terrain and, as a highly accomplished hunter, he reminds us: "One rifle, one bullet, one shot." Nick revels in his love of the outdoors experience, with graphics making sure all optics options are covered before he goes on to deal with suitable outdoor wear. As he says: "Ahead of you is meat for the stalking, fuel for the gathering and one kilometre after another of beautiful scenery to be enjoyed."

Nick's loss will be felt in all quarters of the Australian shooting community and as the book sums up: "Next to Nick's love of the technical challenge that firearms offer, he has always had an abiding affection for hunting and been a keen deer hunter for the past 65 years." Enough said. Nick was 92 and is survived by his wife Nancy and children Nick Jnr, Alan and Janice. ●

Play it BY EAR



AXIL hearing protection impressed Frank Varapodio

In the world of shooting and hunting, reliable hearing protection is an absolute must. For years I went with the tried and trusted Impact Sport tactical folding earmuffs which have always delivered in terms of protecting my ears and are a staple in the wider shooting community. However, I've never really enjoyed wearing them as the conventional earmuff, although effective, often felt rigid, cumbersome and ill-suited to my shooting style and position.

As a right-hander I frequently found myself adjusting position to accommodate the earmuffs, which interfered with my shooting experience. This inconvenience sometimes led to delayed shots or even the dreaded 'shooter's ear'. As someone who travels quite a bit I'm no stranger to noise-cancelling headphones, having found solace in products like Bose, and the transition from over-ear to earbuds has been a welcome change in my daily life. Seeking an

alternative to traditional shooting earmuffs, I reached out to Beretta Australia who were kind enough to give me the chance to test the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0.

First impressions

On receiving them my initial impression was overwhelmingly positive. What immediately caught my attention were the sport hooks, designed to provide a secure fit as earbuds have a tendency to dislodge and fall out but these hooks looked promising. Handling the corded earbuds I found them to be lightweight, compact and ergonomically designed. The sleek matte finish of the earpieces and rugged gel/rubber finish of the control sticks gave them a robust and durable feel. The package also includes a compact case to house accessories including a lanyard cinch, clip and wind filter.

Noise reduction technology

One of the standout features of the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 is its cutting-edge noise reduction technology, the Advanced Auto-Blocker shut-off system which activates for sounds exceeding 85dB. According to AXIL it boasts a 29dB noise reduction rating (NRR) which is at the high end for hearing protection, so to put this to the test I used the AXIL with several firearms on the range.

After the initial 'clap' to ensure the device was functioning properly, I started with a .22 and worked my way up through the .222, .243 and finally the .270. The earbuds' performance left me highly impressed as there was no ringing in my ears or discomfort. The hearing enhancement feature also meant I could communicate with the range officer clearly throughout the session with no concerns.

Everything comes in a handy carry case.



Customisable

The AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 are worked by two small control sticks, one for hearing amplification and the other Bluetooth functions. Activating hearing enhancement is as simple as flipping the toggle switch on the left-hand control stick to the 'On' position and from there you can adjust the enhancement volume to your liking, tailored to the environment. This device offers exceptional noise reduction and ambient 6x sound enhancement, providing hunters with superior situational awareness while protecting their hearing from loud gunshots and other hunting-associated noise.

These earbuds also offers seamless Bluetooth functionality. Pairing with a device is straightforward, achieved by holding down the middle button on the right control stick for three seconds and connecting to your chosen device. Once paired, volume control is a breeze with the +/- buttons. A single press of the Bluetooth button will pause music and answer a phone call, while three presses will hang up. Another impressive aspect is hearing protection, enhancement and Bluetooth can be used simultaneously or independently.

I found the sound quality and performance to be exceptional, making it a versatile choice for different scenarios. What I particularly appreciated is you can manage the earbuds without removing them from your ears, a crucial feature for hunters who need to adjust hearing settings quickly without interrupting their focus.



Long-life

Battery life is another area where the product shines. It comes equipped with a powerful and rechargeable lithium battery which fully charges in just two hours and, once charged, provides 25 hours of hearing enhancement, eight hours of Bluetooth use and seven hours combined. This level of battery life is more than sufficient for extended hunting trips, ensuring you won't run out of power when you need it most. Charging is a breeze thanks to the USB-C port on the right-hand control stick (adjacent to the Bluetooth button), with a light indicator changing from red to blue once the battery is fully juiced.

Comfort and fit

These are crucial aspects of any hearing protection device and the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 excels in this regard, coming with universal ear tips to ensure a secure fit and optimal performance. There are three varying ear tips available in the max-protect foam (S, M and L with 30dB SNR), standard foam (S, M and L with 29dB SNR) and silicone (M and L with 19dB SNR).

Foam tips are designed to fill the ear canal and block sound, while the silicone tips are intended for listening to music or making calls. Choosing the right one is vital as one size doesn't fit all and I found the max-protect foam to be challenging to compress and mould for a proper seal. However the standard foam tips were a perfect fit, easy to insert and expand, ensuring proper protection and ideal for everyday environments and smaller calibre firearms.

The sport hooks, while not something I was used to, proved to be a game-changer. Once I had the right-fitting foam tips the earbuds were extremely comfortable to wear for extended periods and I tested them on a flight from SA to Queensland and back, as well as hunting trips in SA and NSW. I experienced no discomfort during those long stretches, in stark contrast to the over-ear noise-cancelling headphones on flights or my Impact Sport tactical folding earmuffs, which I found uncomfortable during prolonged use. Additionally, the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 is IP67-rated for water and dust resistance, offering peace of mind in any environment.

Another advantage of the wireless earbuds is their compatibility with various types of hats including caps, broad-brim, buckets

and even beanies. In contrast, traditional earmuffs limit your choice of head protection, making the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 a versatile and adaptable choice for hunters.

Summary

The AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 earbuds come highly recommended for both seasoned hunters and novices looking for top-quality hearing protection. With their exceptional noise reduction technology, customisable sound settings, long battery life and water/weather resistance, they'll prove a reliable and robust companion for shooters at the range or in the field.

The comfortable fit, intuitive controls and sound suppression capabilities make these an outstanding choice, while the ability to manage the device without removing it from your ears adds to its practicality. Whether a seasoned shooter or someone new to the sport looking to invest in excellent hearing protection, the AXIL GS Extreme 2.0 is a worthwhile consideration. These earbuds underline AXIL's commitment to providing premium products which enhance the hunting experience while ensuring your hearing remains protected.

Check your local gun shop for prices and availability. ●

Control sticks and USB-C charging port.



At home on the range

SSAA inauguration year holds a special meaning for Peter Radtke OAM

Indulge me, as what follows is a recollection of 76 years of shooting and enjoyment with firearms. It's unfortunate that in more recent times firearms and the sport in general have fallen out of favour with the public at large, although the SSAA has been at the forefront of addressing this. Coincidentally it was 76 years ago I obtained my first firearm, the same year the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia was founded and Rimfire won the Melbourne Cup.

My father, William (Bill) Radtke from Bundaberg in Queensland, was considered by many as something of an amateur expert on firearms. He wasn't interested in hunting but in firearms and ballistics generally and wrote many articles on the subject in the late 1930s, which were published in journals such as *Fishing and Gunsport*. One of them was entitled 'Why I Like Guns' which makes interesting reading even now and I still have a copy. He worked on many firearms for repairs and upgrading rifles to improve the operation of their mechanism and accuracy.

He started the Miniature Rifle Club in 1938 with a shooting range in our backyard in suburban Bundaberg, which would be unheard of today (shooting was through galvanised tubes into large pine bocks). In 1941 he participated in fundraising to buy a Spitfire for the war effort and £7000 was subsequently sent to Winston Churchill for a Mk2 Spitfire, Serial No. P8576 and named The City of Bundaberg and District.


My father was rejected for military service during World War Two on medical grounds, so he spent two years working at the Rocklea Small Arms Plant in Brisbane testing .303 ammunition and when that plant closed he worked for the US Air Force at Eagle Farm.

After the war we moved back to Bundaberg and I remember going target shooting at my grandfather's sugarcane

farm with my elder brother and father with his Smith & Wesson .45 revolver. My brother and I took turns to load the ammunition belt and carry the revolver in its holster (aged just seven I was a bit young to fire the .45 Long Colt). On one of those trips my pet dog died after jumping out of the car and biting a cane toad he'd chased.

When I was seven my father gave me a deactivated .22 rifle to play with. It had the bolt removed and a screw through the barrel at the breech to stop a cartridge being inserted. However, someone reported a boy running around a backyard with a rifle and the local police sergeant called by our house to investigate, though he was satisfied there was no danger after inspecting the deactivated rifle.

My father died in 1949 and my mother subsequently re-married and the family moved to Mount Isa in 1952. I enjoyed my early teens with a variety of air rifles, either shooting tin cans in the backyard or out



Army Cadets would travel home from training on a public tram with their .303 rifles

in the hills surrounding the town. In 1957 aged 16, I joined Mount Isa Rifle Club and shot an SMLE No.1 Mk.3 .303 fitted with a bedded heavy barrel and micrometre aperture sights at ranges from 300 to 900 yards (ammunition was supplied by the military at very low cost).

Most days I managed to hitch a lift to the range and on odd occasions I rode my bike with the .303 slung over my shoulder. In those days in Queensland you had to be 17 to legally own a firearm, though if you joined a rifle club that was reduced to 16. It's interesting to note that in the 1950s, Army Cadets at the age of 14 would travel home from training on a public tram carrying their .303 rifles in the open, bolt inserted and occasionally with live ammunition in their pocket.

When I turned 17 I was keen to do my three months' National Service in the army - lots of shooting and free ammo I thought! But just at that time National Service was scaled back to only taking recruits from metropolitan areas and as I lived at regional Mount Isa I was overlooked. I sent a letter to volunteer and did receive an official reply, thanking me for my patriotism but sadly they still could not take me which was disappointing, though not long after the scheme was scrapped in Australia.

In 1964 a friend introduced me to John Stewart who was in the process of setting up a safari business to work the wetlands at the Top End of the Northern Territory. I subsequently joined him in Darwin and together we ran organised trips, hunting

mainly buffalo and wild pigs with clients from the US, Canada, New Zealand and Europe. I bought a Ruger Blackhawk .357 revolver and a Mannlicher .458 African, which was a bit over the top though it did impress our clients. We had some great times swapping yarns and playing jokes, some of which would be recounted in *Crocodile Dundee* more than 20 years later.

During down-times I'd assist another buffalo shooter in the meat business on the Mount Bundy property. I was also keen on leather work and made pistol holsters and gun belts for friends and others, including police officers. I still have the holster and belt from my .357 Ruger, though strangely during the ensuing 50-plus years the leather must have shrunk, as I had to put an extension on the belt so it would fit round my waist! Although it was a lot of fun the safari business wasn't profitable and we ceased operations in 1967.

I remained in Darwin and landed a job with a local architectural firm, while still doing plenty of shooting and fishing on a property managed by John Stewart. I was able to keep my .357 Ruger and over time bought other firearms including a Ruger .22 self-loader, Brno Model 2, Uberti 1866 replica Yellow Boy in 44.40 and a selection of .303s including a No.1 Mark 3 sold by the Australian Government as military surplus, an unissued Savage No.4 Mark 1 and a No.5 Jungle Carbine which really lived up to its reputation and kicked like a mule.

In 1973 I joined Darwin Gun Club and bought a Winchester 101 over-and-under

shotgun for many years of enjoyable clay target shooting and while I didn't shoot exceptionally well, I did manage an A-grade level. That shotgun was damaged during Cyclone Tracy in 1974 and I replaced it with a new Winchester 101 Pigeon Grade. I guess my only claim to fame was practicing with a squad of Australian Olympic shooters who were in Darwin for training. During my time at the club I put my architectural skills to good use, preparing drawings and layouts for new facilities when the club moved from Winnellie to Marrara.

In the mid-1980s long after my safari days, when applying to renew my pistol licence I mentioned to the police sergeant I no longer had a valid reason to keep the gun, however I'd owned it for many years and it was like a family heirloom. I was then offered a collector's licence which I was grateful for and subsequently began my collection of World War Two handguns carried by pilots from various air forces. Interestingly, Darwin police issued us with a special permit which let us shoot our collectors' guns at the pistol club for two hours before our monthly meetings.

I also managed the legal side of the firearms collection for Darwin Aviation Museum of which I was a committee member for many years and president for six. The collection ranged from a .45 Colt 1911 A1 right up to .50 calibre Browning aircraft machineguns for which I managed to obtain a special Museum Firearms Licence.



Left: A seven-year-old Peter with his first rifle and pet dog in Bundaberg in 1948, the year the SSAA was established.

Middle: Peter on safari in the 1960s.

Right: After a successful buffalo hunt.

At home on the range

As my two children were growing up I taught them both to shoot along with the rules of firearm safety. I'd take my son barramundi fishing and on the way we'd do a bit of plinking with my .22 Bruno. He never took up shooting seriously but is certainly a dedicated fishing enthusiast.

In 2008 I moved from Darwin to Canberra and bought a house just a stone's throw from the Australian War Memorial, subsequently transferring my firearms collection to Canberra and obtaining licences with the Australian Federal Police in the ACT. I joined Majura Park Gun Club where I shot clay targets for many years and also the Arms Collectors' Association, where members would display their treasured firearms and gave an informative talk on them.

On leaving Darwin I became president of the Australian American Association and in Canberra I joined the local branch and was later elected to the position of Ceremonial Officer. Our biggest function was the Coral Sea commemoration service at the Australian American Memorial at Russell, attended by the Governor-General, US Ambassador and various military chiefs.

The catafalque party consisted of Australian Federation Guard and US Marines and interestingly, they didn't carry the latest army issues as they were too short for ceremonial purposes. Marines carried the faithful old .30-06 M1 Garand and Aussies their Vietnam War-era 7.62 L1A1 SLRs. As a keen collector of bayonets I tried to buy one of their ceremonial chrome-plated ones but had no luck.

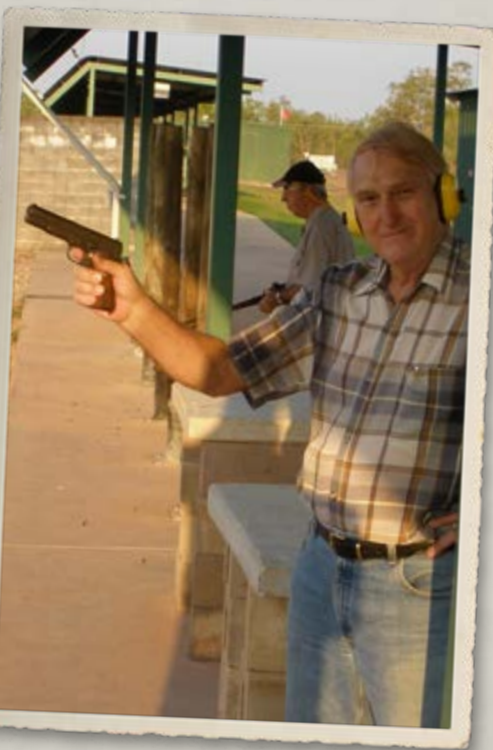
Four years ago I was diagnosed with mild Parkinson's Disease and after contracting Covid twice in hospital, my condition worsened rapidly until I had to move to a nursing

home to receive the necessary care. I had to give up driving and my love of shooting and was asked by my family to let go of my firearms while I was still able. I contacted Roly from Australian Arms Auctions and arranged to have the collection picked up and transported to Melbourne, where they were catalogued and went to auction last September where every item sold, some going for exceptional prices.

Next to shooting, motorcycles and sports cars were my passion and having to give up driving hurt immensely as, at age 80, I was still riding a high-powered motorcycle. My BMW 330i sits in the garage and occasionally my son or son-in-law take me for long drives which I greatly appreciate.

So there ended my 76 years with firearms, though I remain a member of the SSAA and enjoy *Australian Shooter* each month. Interestingly, the firearms haven't changed to any great extent except for synthetic stocks and increasing use of optics such as telescopic sights and rangefinders which the magazine updates us on. Ammunition hasn't changed dramatically either and while many new cartridges have appeared on the market during the past 76 years, there are still many which go back more than 100 years including the .22 Long Rifle, 9mm Luger, .30.06, Winchester .44-40 and even the .50 calibre Browning machinegun round to name a few.

And it's here I return to my father's article, written 85 years ago which provides advice still relevant today when he wrote in his final paragraph: "It's when we grow old with the passing years and can no longer participate in any or much



Peter at a collectors' shoot with a Colt 1911 A1.

active shooting, we may then recline and with pleasant memories look back on happily spent years to which the rifle had given its measure of joy."

In closing I must thank the SSAA for their untiring work during the past 76 years in promoting this wonderful sport and being the mouthpiece for law-abiding shooters throughout our great nation. Keep up that excellent work for shooters of the future. ●

Scan for more

Australian
HUNTER
AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE HUNTING MAGAZINE

Four issues delivered to your home for just \$34
SSAA member price only at membership.ssaa.org.au

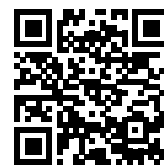
Issue 88
out now



onlineshop.ssaa.org.au

Shop now for exclusive SSAA products, including clothing, camping, accessories, knives, books and more.

See the complete range of products in our Online Shop



**SHOP NOW
IT'S EASY!**



NEW PRODUCT

Fly Hat

The SSAA Fly Hat is a 100% Cotton Drill Bush Hat with a concealed, zippered compartment holding a 100% nylon fly veil with elastic gathering around the base.

\$39.95

SSAA Renegade Jacket

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

\$94.95



SSAA Traditional Logo Belt Buckle



The SSAA Traditional Logo Pewter Belt Buckle measures approximately 8cm x 6cm, comes with protective pouch and care instructions – just add your favourite belt!

\$39.95

Comprehensive Guide to Shooting and Hunting in Australia



Our 2023 edition of the SSAA's Comprehensive Guide to Shooting and Hunting in Australia.

Everything you need to know to get into shooting and hunting but didn't know who to ask!

\$10.95 - Members price

SSAA Essentials Crib Bag

Built to last, this 13-litre multi-purpose bag is made from durable canvas with an adjustable shoulder strap and an oversized storm flap, secured with a zip and two press studs.

\$49.95



SSAA Caps

Great caps in a variety of colours with embroidered logos on the front.

\$19.95



Field to Fork - Second Helpings



Welcome to our latest showcase of Australia's diverse, sustainable and environmentally friendly offerings in *Field to Fork - Second Helpings*.

\$49.95

SSAA Razor Polo

The new SSAA Razor Polo Shirt is a stylish and comfortable grey polo shirt with contrast panels and lime-green fluoro piping. Made from 100% BIZ COOL Polyester Sports Interlock material, the polo has grid mesh underarm and side panels for breathability and a knitted collar.

Sizes ranging from S to 5XL.

\$42



SSAA Cool-Dri Polo Shirt

The SSAA Cool-Dri JB Polo is navy blue with white trim and made with a moisture wicking material, so you will always feel dry and cool.

Sizes ranging from S to 5XL.

\$42



SSAA Cooler Crib Bag

Help keep your drinks and snacks cool with the SSAA Cooler Bag. Made from waterproof black canvas with a fully insulated lining. Made by Rugged Xtremes, the SSAA Cooler Bag is tough enough to handle whatever you want to throw in there.

\$34.95



Snake Bite Kit

In the SSAA Snake Bite Kit are two snake bite indicator bandages and an easy to follow first-aid guide specific to snake bites. Along with other necessary bandages, the kit is compact and packaged in a durable, soft canvas bag that can be worn on a belt, making it easy to take it with you wherever you go.

\$34.95



SSAA Schrade Multi-Tool Black

This handy tool can be stowed safely in its sturdy, fold flap pouch and securely closed with a tough Velcro patch. The belt/loop system helps you keep track of your multi-tool so you can cut, file, pry and pinch your way through any job.

\$59.95



SSAA Rechargeable Knife Sharpener

The SSAA Rechargeable Knife Sharpener uses an abrasive belt sharpening system that operates on batteries located in the handle. It is designed to sharpen every knife you own. Use it on straight or curved knives, filleting or serrated blades and even scissors! It is the only knife sharpener you will ever need.

\$89.95



onlineshop.ssaa.org.au or call 02 8805 3900 for phone orders

National

Handgun Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoot

March 1-May 31, 2024

All SSAA clubs

Program: Small Bore, Field Pistol, Big Bore. Prizes: SSAA Merchandise Vouchers to the value of \$300 (one at \$100 and four at \$50). All entries go into a draw, first name drawn receives \$100, next four \$50 (only one voucher per person). Contact: Russell Mowles handgunsilhouette@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

Field Rifle, 3P, NRA and Scoped Air Rifle National Championships

March 27-April 1, 2024

SSAA Gladstone, Qld

Program: See National website for full event details and nomination form. Facilities: Breakfast, lunch and dinner available to order on website for all days. Contact: gladstone@ssaaqld.org.au

Rifle Metallic Silhouette National Championships

March 28-April 1, 2024

SSAA Riddell Range, Tasmania

Program: March 28: Practice from 2pm; 29: Hunting Rifle; 30: Centrefire; 31: Rimfire; April 1: Air Rifle (all 80 shots). Facilities: Canteen Thursday-Monday, free camping (no power). Contact: Leon O'Brien 0428 495 110 or email disciplines@ssaatas.com.au

Muzzleloading National Championships

March 29-April 1, 2024

SSAA Para Range, SA

Program: See National website for full event details. Medals for first three in each event, trophies for aggregate winners. Facilities: Limited camping and caravan spaces, call to book a site. Toilets and showers, canteen for lunch each day. Contact: Michael Nicholas 0467 763 716.

Black Powder Cartridge Rifle National Championships

April 2, 2024

SSAA Riddell Range, Tasmania

Program: 9am sight-in/practice, 9.45 briefing, 10am 40-shot match. Contact: Leon O'Brien 0428 495 110 or email disciplines@ssaatas.com.au

Long Range Black Powder National Championships

May 24-26, 2024

Cooyal Rifle Range, NSW

Program: Mid-Range: 300yd, 500yd and 600yd, three convertible sighters, 10 consecutive scoring shots each distance. Long-Range: 700yd and 800yd, five convertible sighters, 15 consecutive scoring shots each distance. Available rifle classes: Muzzleloading Rifle and Black Powder Cartridge Rifle (BPCR is a supplementary class). Shooters can only enter one class. Results may be used for selection of a SSAA Long-Range team for next MLAIC Long Range Muzzleloading World Championships. Anyone must enter Muzzleloading Rifle class, shoot all distances and pass scrutineering of

equipment. Facilities: Limited camping onsite, toilets, showers, canteen, breakfast and lunch available to buy. Contact: Dan MacDonald 0408 480 105 or buffalorifeseecretary@gmail.com

National Junior Challenge

July 4-7, 2024

Captains Mountain Complex, Qld
Program: July 4: Pre-registration and practice. July 5: Rimfire Field Rifle (42 shots); Rimfire Hunting Rifle (Qld) subject to interest as extra 40-shot event. July 6: Rifle Metallic Silhouette (80 shots). July 7: Rimfire 3-Position (60 shots). No entry fee, medals for first three in core events and overall age-group winners. Facilities: Cabins and camping available at the complex. Breakfast, lunch and dinner available Thursday-Saturday, breakfast and lunch on Sunday. Contact: junior@ssaaqld.org.au See National website for full details.

Ultra 500/IHMSA National Championships

September 24-25, 2024

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: Ultra 500 matches Unlimited, Unlimited Any Sight. Medal presentation on Wednesday. Facilities: Clubhouse and canteen. Contact: Bob Midworth secmhmsc@gmail.com or Russell Mowles handgunsilhouette@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

IHMSA National Championships

September 27-October 4, 2024

State Shooting Park, Virginia, SA

Program: September 27: Practice day for Small Bore and Field Pistol. 28-30: Competition for Small Bore Production, Revolver, Standing, Unlimited, Unlimited Any Sight. October 1: Practice for Big Bore. 2-4: Competition for Big Bore Production, Revolver, Standing, Unlimited, Unlimited Half Scale, Unlimited Any Sight, Unlimited Any Sight Half Scale, Unlimited Standing. Facilities: Clubhouse canteen and camping. Contact: Wendel Poschl wposchl@bigpond.net.au or Russell Mowles handgunsilhouette@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

Combined Services National Championships

October 3-6, 2024

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: Please refer to SSAA National website for extensive program details. Rules: In accordance with SSAA Combined Services Official National Rules (Revised 2022) No.5. Contact: peter.bogatec33@optusnet.com.au

LEAD APS 150 National Championship

November 2, 2024

Belmont Range, Qld

Program: 150-round match, combination of PPC and APS starting at 3m and moving back to 50m. Facilities: Basic at range, more in Belmont complex. Contact: Trevor Gordon or Bob Pierce lawenforcementactivities@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

NSW

SSAA (NSW) Big Game Rifle State Championships

May 17-19, 2024

Windamere Regional Shooting Complex, NSW

Program: May 17: Set-up, practice and Match 1. May 18: Matches 2-7 and state AGM. May 19: Matches 8-11. Nominations due by May 3. Prizes: Medals for 1-3 in all individual events. Facilities: Camping and caravans permitted, toilets and hot showers. Caravan park nearby. Contact: Ben Doherty bfjdoherty@bigpond.com

Qld

SSAA (Qld) LEAD APS 90 State Championship

April 6, 2024

Belmont Range, Qld

Program: 90-round Police Service match shot from 7m to 50m. Facilities: Basic on range, others on Belmont complex, accommodation on Old Cleveland Rd. Contact: Trevor Gordon or Bob Pierce lawenforcementactivities@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

SSAA (Qld) LEAD APS 150 State Championship

May 11, 2024

Belmont Range, Qld

Program: 150-round match, combination of PPC and APS (3m to 50m). Facilities limited on range, more at Belmont Complex. Contact: Trevor Gordon or Bob Pierce lawenforcementactivities@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

SSAA Qld Long Range Precision Championship

May 24-26, 2024

Captain's Mountain Complex

Program: 23 May range open for Zero checking 2pm. 24th - 8am sign-on, 9am start; Match 1 Rimfire 150m on Mini-core Target; Match 2 - Rimfire 250m on Mini-core Target. 25th - 8am sign-on; 9am start. Match 3 - Centrefire 500m on Mini-core Target; Match 4 - Centrefire 600m on Mini-core Target. 26th - 8am sign-on, 9am start; Match 5 - Centrefire 800m on Core Target; Match 6 - Centrefire 1000m on Core Target. Nominations from SSAA website. Send to Secretary: luna@ssaaqld.org.au or PO Box 101, Inglewood, Qld 4387. Rimfire: \$50. Centrefire: \$60, all events \$80, single event \$25, juniors half price. Pay by 25 May. Cash on the day. Event is for Rimfire and/or Centrefire Class A or Class H of the Rifle Field Events. SSAA Long Range Precision Shooting Official Rule Book No. 1 applies. State medals for 1st-3rd for Rimfire, Centrefire Class A and Class H and Juniors, Aggregates and Teams medals. Cabins and camping available. See SSAA website for pricing. Contact: Richard White (07) 4652 4270.

SSAA (Qld) LEAD APS 180 State Championship

June 8-9, 2024

Belmont Range, Qld

Program: Two-day event, 90 rounds each day, Police Service match starts at

50m moving downrange to 7m. Facilities: Basic on range, more at Belmont complex. Contact: Trevor Gordon or Bob Pierce lawenforcementactivities@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

SA

SSAA (SA) Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

June 22-23, 2024

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: Saturday 80 shots rimfire, 40 shots air rifle. Sunday 80 shots centrefire. Range open 8.30am both days for practice and weigh-in. Facilities: Barbecue catering, hot showers, toilets and cooking facilities, on-site camping. Contact: Mark West markwest@kentcivil.com.au or 0421 775 101.

SSAA (SA) Fly Shoot State Championships

July 13-14, 2024

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: July 11: Bench draw available. 12: Flag setup available. 13: Centrefire 500m Fly: 5-target competition. 14: 200yd Rimfire Fly: 5-target competition. Prizes: Patches for hits on the fly both days. Facilities: Barbecue available for use, camping permitted (limited sites with power), hot showers, toilets and cooking facilities. Contact: Pat on 0455 280 024.

SSAA (SA) Air Rifle State Championships

September 7-8, 2024

SSAA Para, Greenwith, SA

Program: September 7: 10m Precision Air Rifle (40 shots), 10m 3P Air Rifle (60 shots). September 8: Field Target Air Rifle Open (30 shots), 10m 3P Air Rifle (60 shots). Prizes: Medals for all grades including U15 and U18. Facilities: Canteen, light meals, snacks, tea, coffee, drinks available all day. Accommodation: Motels within 15 minutes, caravan parks 20 minutes. Camping on range with showers, toilets and power. Contact: Paul Rawlings paulee06@bigpond.net.au or 0403 436 905.

Vic

SSAA (Vic) Ultra 500 State Championships

May 7-9, 2024

Eagle Park Range, Little River, Vic

Program: Unlimited, Unlimited Any Sight. Prizes: State Championship medals. Contact: metallicsilhouette@gmail.com

SSAA (Vic) Scoped Silhouette State Championships

May 25-26, 2024

Melbourne Sporting Rifle Club, Eagle Park, Vic

Program: Saturday 80 targets centrefire, Sunday 80 targets rimfire, sight-in Friday from 12.30pm. Medals for first three in each grade. Facilities: On-site camping and café. Contact: Mark Butler 0409 135 740.

SSAA (Vic) Handgun Metallic Silhouette Big Bore State Championships

July 26-28, 2024
Eagle Park Range, Little River, Vic
Program: Big Bore. Prizes: State Championships medals. Contact: metallicsilhouette@gmail.com

SSAA (Vic) Air Rifle Silhouette State Championships

September 15, 2024
Melbourne Sporting Rifle Club, SSAA Springvale, Vic
Program: 80 shots, 9.15am practice, 10.15am start. Medals for first three in each grade. Contact: Mark Butler 0409 135 740.

SSAA (Vic) Lever Action Silhouette State Championships

September 19-22, 2024
Melbourne Sporting Rifle Club, Eagle Park, Vic
Program: Thursday set-up and sight-in, Friday 80-shot rifle, Saturday 80-shot pistol, Sunday 80-shot smallbore. Medals for first three in each grade. Facilities: On-site camping and café. Contact: Mark Butler 0409 135 740.

WA

SSAA (WA) Benchrest Centrefire State Championships

May 25-June 3, 2024
Jarrahdale Sporting Shooters, WA
Program: May 25: 300yds Heavy Bench; 26: Unlimited; June 1: Sporter; 2: Light Bench; 3: Heavy Bench. Medals for top three in all grades, trophies for two-gun, three-gun and four-gun. Facilities: Camping with showers, toilets and barbecue facilities, limited power, canteen not available. Contact: Trevor 0417 085 528 or benchrestwa@iinet.net.au or Dave 0400 205 892 or benchrest@jarrahdaleshooters.org.au

SSAA (WA) Lever Action State Championships

May 31-June 2, 2024
Wanneroo Shooting Complex, WA
Program: Friday: Practice. Saturday and Sunday: 9.30 am start, practice from 7.45. Delegates meeting 5pm Saturday. Prizes: WA state medals and perpetual shields. Facilities: Camping at range with power and water, breakfast and lunch available to buy. Contact: Stephen Ellis 0418 388 991 or leveraction@ssaawa.org.au; Pete Corboy 0401 677 383 or president@plarc.com.au

SSAA (WA) Single Action State Championships

June 1-2, 2024
Jarrahdale Sporting Shooters, WA
Program: Friday: Range set-up all day, volunteers welcome (confirm with Billy Dixon). Saturday: Stages 1-2, 3-4, 5-6. Sunday: Stages 7-8, 9-10, presentations. Facilities: Camping available from May 31 to June 2. Contact: Peter Konowalow 0417 186 280 or peterkono@bigpond.com or Billy Dickson 0407 980 955.

SSAA (WA) Lever Action Silhouette State Championships

July 4-7, 2024
Wanneroo Shooting Complex, WA
Program: Thursday, July 4: Practice. Friday: Rifle Match. Saturday: Pistol Cartridge. Sunday: Small Bore (all 80 shots). Medals for top three in all grades, trophies for two-gun, three-gun and juniors. Facilities: Plenty camping room with showers, toilets and barbecue, limited power, meal provided Friday night. Contact: David Brougham 0432 748 703 or laswa2011@gmail.com, clas@iinet.net.au

SSAA (WA) Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

October 26-27, 2024
Wanneroo Shooting Complex, WA
Program: October 26: Centrefire Silhouette, Centrefire Hunter. October 27: Air Rifle, Rimfire Silhouette, Rimfire Hunter (all 40 shots). Prizes: Medals in all grades, SSAA gift vouchers and other prizes. Facilities: Some camping, limited hot showers. Contact: Paul Dunn pauld1939@gmail.com or 0407 428 175.

SSAA Inc Event Cancellation/Postponement Policy

An event may be postponed or cancelled at any time by SSAA Inc, SSAA State Office or club directive. SSAA Inc will not be liable for reimbursement to competitors for any costs associated with a postponed or cancelled SSAA Inc championship event for any reason. Competitors planning to attend an event should consider options for free cancellation or refund of travel and accommodation costs where available.

FIREARMS LAWYER

Get help from 4-time Olympic shooter and lawyer, Glenn Kable
Get the right legal advice!
Available Australia-wide.

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

For a no-obligation assessment, phone 0407 962 200 or email glenn@hartmann.net.au mail@hartmann.net.au

MUCKADILLA SAFARIS NT



e muckadilla@optusnet.com.au Ph 0429 404 484

TOOWOOMBA GUN, MILITARIA & COLLECTABLES FAIR

300+ TABLES
\$10 ENTRY

25th May & 26th May at Toowoomba Showgrounds
9-4 Sat 9-2 Sun

Always buying militaria & blades | Ph Paul 0412 562 252



Sponsor a

JUNIOR

ssaa.org.au

Stay in touch!



SSAA Member Alert

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

Member-only competitions

Enter to win

Send your full name, address and contact number inside an envelope to:

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

OR



SCAN TO ENTER

Go to ssaa.org.au/our-media/competition

COMPETITIONS CLOSE
April 30
2024



Winchester Prize Pack
RRP \$154.85
Kindly donated by Winchester winchesteraustralia.com.au



Manfred+Cracco 'Jackie' Watch
RRP \$395
Kindly donated by SSAA Inc ssaa.org.au



Compact Hydro Pack in Blaze camo
RRP \$99.95
Kindly donated by Ridgeline ridgelineclothing.co.nz

WINNERS!

Australian Shooter February, 2024

Winchester Prize Pack
Daniel Toso, Vic

Dog and Gun Gift Pack
Rob Oliver, Vic

Top Shots Mug
Gilbert Stone, NSW

Junior - Online Shop Voucher
Kaydee Reynolds, Qld

Australian Hunter Issue 87, 2023

Winchester Prize Pack
Greg Andersen, Qld

Traser Red Combat Watch
Lachlan Bennett, Qld

Quart Camp Oven & 12V-240V Vacuum Sealer
Victor Kotal, SA

AUSTRALIAN SHOOTER is published monthly and is printed by IVE, 83 Derby St, Silverwater, NSW 2128.

The Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia Inc (SSAA Inc) is subject to the provisions of the National Privacy Act. We collect personal information from members of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia in the various states and territories. Should you want a copy of the SSAA Inc Privacy Statement or seek further information please write to PO Box 2520, Unley, SA 5061.

Freelance contributions are welcome. We do, however, recommend that potential authors contact the office prior to story drafting. Manuscripts and digital files may be sent to the address shown above. No responsibility is taken for the loss or damage of manuscripts or photographic material.

While the publishers exercise due care with regard to handloading data, no responsibility can be accepted for errors and/or omissions, or any damage suffered as a consequence.

Please note that certain firearm types and accessories advertised in the *Australian Shooter* may not be legally available in all states and territories. Please check with your local authorities before ordering. Neither the AS nor any of its advertisers accept responsibility in this matter. No text or photographs within the magazine may be republished, either electronically or in print, without the express written permission of the Editor.
Copyright 2024.

And the world just keeps on spinning . . .

Last year was pretty tough round our place and while some of the challenges aren't done with us yet, as a family we keep on keeping on. So too the wild world as its patterns repeat with little regard for us humans, something which gives me great comfort as I head to the Brisbane Valley to check my trail cameras one final time before the roar.

Last September I kicked off my annual process of monitoring the block via trail cameras with the intent of finding game. In 2022 my cameras captured a significant build-up of animals, culminating in the best roar I've ever witnessed and 2023 was looking even better until a strange thing happened. The deer disappeared. It was odd - lots of deer then none. Come March the stags were roaring all right but stayed high up on the mountain while the hinds were nowhere to be seen.

It wasn't until last May I finally laid eyes on two stags, a long way off but I was still glad to see them. With that I began to set my sights on 2024 and notwithstanding the challenges at home, I knew our planet would stay on its elliptical track around the sun. The days would shorten, grow longer then shorten again as we passed our equinox and rolled into the new year and that passage of time would eventually bring a new roar.

For those who haven't experienced a roar, think of those few weeks in March and April as one long night at the pub. As that night progresses, jovial chit-chat is replaced by shouting and tough talk. The show ponies start prancing, the ladies look on a little bored by it all and soon enough misplaced bravado leads to scrappin'. All my monitoring work beforehand is to observe the deer (or patrons) so I can figure out whose about and which pub they'll be at and at what time.

Back in December I paid a visit to check my cameras. I'd been using them to bracket the property and on arriving at a camera location I'd use the inbuilt screen to check results. If I had something I'd remove the memory card and replace it with another, if it was 250 images of grass, sticks and leaves I'd move the camera to another location. It's a game of 'Red Deer Battleship' with me guessing grid coordinates with the intention of registering a hit and readjusting if I miss.

The only real downside to checking these cameras is the cameras themselves. Specifically, the display screens are too



Top: First boar of the block. Bottom: The trail camera boar.

small and image scrolling function very slow. Consequently, if I see something I swap out the memory card and, when I do, can be a bit antsy about wanting to get home and have a proper look. Apart from deer I've captured images of all sorts of native wildlife along with wild dogs, foxes, rabbits, hares and, in one instance, a deer with an ear tag. Before you ask I've no idea where that came from. I've even captured two-legged creatures but we won't go into that here.

As I'm a frustrated pig hunter at heart, whenever bacon appears I'm extra excited and during that December visit I captured just that, a good-sized boar on the move in the afternoon light. Apart from its size and potential, what's really interesting is that boar was captured on a trail camera less than 100m away and almost three years on from the first big boar I took on the property. From the images I reckon I knew where he'd come from and direction he was heading but to where remains a mystery, though one I intend to solve.

Sitting in front of my computer looking at that boar, I again began to ponder the ever-present cycles of the wild world. Three years ago I shot a big one. The following year I captured images of a few juvenile pigs then two years later another boar appears and while a 150-grain projectile from a .308 Win may have created a vacancy, the wild world had no intention of that vacancy remaining.

In fact I'd guess the lack of a replacement over time would've been an exception to the rule. His replacement was almost guaranteed, his territory wouldn't sit idle, with the only real questions being how, when and by what other boar? And it's with this sense of natural inevitability I look forward to the roar.

While 2024 may be a hunter's famine, it may just be a feast though I won't know until it arrives. What I do know is that if I'm not there it'll roll on without me. ●



Maximise your hunting success.

Thanks to a perfect view of the target.



Seeing beyond



Conquest V6

V8

ZEISS Conquest V6 Riflescopes

With the Conquest V6 Rifle scope, ZEISS offers a new standard in precision and long-range hunting and shooting. Whether for sitting or stalking game, driven hunts or long range applications- the Conquest V6 with 6x zoom is engineered to impress in any environment or scenario. It combines legendary ZEISS quality and technology with field-proven design into one robust package that's within every serious hunter's range.

ZEISS V8 Riflescopes

Thanks to the combination of high-quality features, ZEISS V8 riflescopes enable more successful moments on the hunt than any other riflescopes from ZEISS; high sharpness of details even in difficult lighting conditions thanks to outstanding optical performance, fast target acquisition thanks to the extra large eyepiece and minimal target coverage due to the ultra-fine illuminated dot. For greater hunting success, even under the toughest conditions.



Find your local ZEISS Stockist at:
osaaustralia.com.au





'GREAT COVER'

Nicholas, Adelaide

For only \$35 get up to \$25,000 worth of SSAA Members Firearms Protection.

Today more than 80,000 SSAA members have their firearms and fixed accessories covered against loss, theft and damage. They are covered at home, at the range, while hunting and overseas for up to 20 days. Claims are settled for replacement value (up to 5 years), assessed by an approved firearms dealer and settled promptly. Compare it to your Home and Contents Policy, which may have an excess greater than \$100 and may only cover your firearms at home. Don't risk another year without cover - Trust SSAA Mutual to safeguard your firearms and fixed accessories.

www.ssaib.com.au

Take up this offer with your next renewal or new membership.

Are you covered?

Call (02) 8805 3900

Email: megan@ssaains.com.au



MEMBERS FIREARMS PROTECTION

HERE'S WHAT SSAA MEMBERS FIREARMS PROTECTION CAN COVER:

Claims Settled Promptly

Firearms & Accessories.

All privately owned firearms registered to the member and fixed accessories.

Coverage.

- Accidental loss and damage of the equipment (including whilst in use, excluding chipping and scratching of stock).
- Malicious damage.
- Collision or overturning of the vehicle
- Fire & extraneous perils.
- Flood
- Theft

Not Covered.

Theft where the equipment was not stored in an approved gun safe as required by State or Territory authority, other than when the equipment is in use or away from the member's premises. Where the member or any person or entity to whom the equipment has been entrusted to fails to comply with any law relating to storage, use or handling of the equipment.

Any commentary provided in the advertisement is general information which does not take into account your individual situation and you should consider SSAA Mutual's Financial Services Guide and Statement of Protection (www.ssaib.com.au) before deciding to become a member and to purchase and hold discretionary protection issued by SSAA Mutual Limited. ACN 655 675 862