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# AUSTRALIAN Shooter

June 2022  
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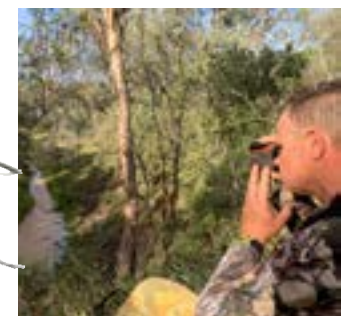
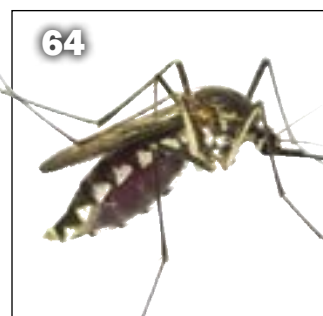
Our June cover - see page 34

# NEXT ISSUE

In the July edition we'll wrap up our three-part custom-build partnership with Beretta Australia when Mark van den Boogaart puts the one-off Tikka T3x CTR in .308 Winchester to the acid test during a Brisbane Valley red deer hunt. Find out how this unique rifle performed in trying conditions and read Mark's assessment of a true one-off firearm.

To reload or not to reload - that is the question. And if it's one you've been pondering for a while then let John Hill's wealth of experience in the subject put you on the right track. He'll explore all the pros and cons of reloading your own ammunition and offer tips on the best way to get started and what equipment you'll need.

The new compact handheld Heli rangefinder monocular 7x25 from Kahles weighs a mere 215 grams and fits handily in your trouser pocket, both qualities which impressed our reviewer Chris Redlich who says "I've owned another brand of rangefinder monocular for years and without doubt this Heli handles much better".







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## CWM marks 30 years of fighting the good fight

Our Conservation & Wildlife Management program which pioneers hunters as true conservationists able to assist in all manner of land management duties began in South Australia 30 years ago this month and during the past three decades the program has expanded across the country to allow CWM branches to carry on this work and become a vital part of Australia's wildlife management efforts.

CWM is now a true 'feather in the cap' of the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia's state and territory branches, with the achievements of members making a genuine difference to our natural landscapes. CWM grew from the hard work of SSAA (SA) members in the Ikara-Flinders Ranges in 1992, after they were brought in to combat feral goats which were decimating the environment and their work expanded into the formal Operation Bounceback program involving the state government and other relevant groups.

The work of countless volunteers through Operation Bounceback has facilitated the resurgence of flora and fauna including the western quoll and yellow-footed rock-wallaby, so this truly is an anniversary where the efforts of members past and present should be congratulated. *Australian Shooter* will further celebrate the achievements our CWM program in more detail in a forthcoming edition of the magazine.

Also this month Australia's 47th Parliament will be preparing to begin its term and regardless of which political persuasion forms government, SSAA National will continue its efforts to represent our 209,000-plus members in the political arena. In the lead-up to the election, SSAA National called for the reinstatement of a formal firearms consultation committee with the new government and we look forward to following this up in coming months.



**CWM's Operation Bounceback has facilitated the resurgence of flora and fauna including the yellow-footed rock-wallaby.**

Work is under way in Western Australia as SSAA (WA) acts in the interests of law-abiding firearm owners in the face of legislative changes and the controversial release of a map detailing location of licensed firearms in Perth and the South West. SSAA (WA) has joined forces in an industry partnership with the WA Firearm Traders Association to form a united front from industry and firearm owners as they represent common goals. SSAA National aids state and territory branches on local issues as requested and on Page 83 of this edition, WA President Paul Fitzgerald has provided an update on what's happening and how WA members can help the cause.

On a final note, SSAA's Academic Bursary Program is now open to 2022 applicants where tertiary students with a keen interest in areas such as law, game management and conservation could receive a funding boost to support their studies.

The SSAA Academic Bursary Program is a \$10,000 annual initiative open to all tertiary students with an interest in furthering the wider community's understanding of areas relevant to the SSAA's goals and philosophies. The initiative began in 2014 and has so far helped young people studying a variety of subjects such as journalism, veterinary science, criminology and biodiversity. Visit [ssaa.org.au](http://ssaa.org.au) for more information.

## Powder puzzler

I WAS GIFTED two tins of Noble powder No.2 from a friend who has retired from shooting. With the current climate regarding powder I'd like to and think I should use this powder (it still smells good) and while I have plenty of old reloading manuals, I can't find any information on this powder. I'd like to use it in a Cat H. firearm, .38 with 158g pill or Magnum case with a 141g BNWC. Would any of your readers have thoughts on this?

Alan Aldridge, Qld



spotlighting in the field. Being both light and gas powered, it had a silky-smooth action and ease of loading was very handy and was particularly useful for despatching foxes at the limit of its range.

From what I read the V3 Field Sport looks a very worthy successor and I can only wish prospective owners good light and straight shooting. I'm not surprised your reviewer bought one.

Alf Standen, via email

## Jumbunna reignites memories

READING JOHN DUNN'S rather touching column about moving on (*Shooter*, November 2021) prompted me to write. I've been a SSAA member for more than 20 years and though not a regular shooter, I always find articles of interest in the magazine (the reason I became a member was because of the original government buyback scheme).

I was once a professional kangaroo shooter working north of Broken Hill and Wilcannia in the early 1960s and have some vivid memories of the hardships and adventures that came my way in those far off years. I still retain a couple of mementoes from those times, one a sleeping bag I made from 'roo hides (shot, skinned, tanned and sewn myself), the other two are rifles - a Sportco 303/25 and .22 Krico.

I've recently written a book describing in detail my experiences as a shooter, entitled *Taming the Wide Brown Land*, published by Olympia of London. (Frank's book is available to buy online - Ed).

Frank Kelly, Qld

## Feral cat review long overdue

ON READING MATTHEW Godson's Open Season column (*Shooter*, November 2021) about our seemingly Teflon-coated feral cat population and the cost incurred

to the taxpayer, being a farm owner on the fringe of state forest I have the displeasure of seeing first-hand what these overwhelmingly protected moggies are doing to our native and farmed animals.

The urge to despatch them is high but with current Victorian laws in place we (farmers and shooters alike) are simply not allowed to control them, albeit on tiny selected patches of government land no-one has access to anyway. When and how do we have these ridiculous laws reviewed with the hard data used as clear reason to overturn them?

Peter Aspin, Vic



## Insurance Q&A

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**Q** I often help people with pest control on their properties and owners always appreciate the \$20 million liability and personal accident cover that comes with membership. I don't take payment for hunting as I know this isn't covered by the insurance terms but sometimes a property owner offers a case of wine, side of beef or similar if they run livestock. What must I be aware of when accepting gifts?

**A** The \$20 million liability and personal accident cover for recreational shooting is a great benefit of SSAA membership and something we're proud to offer members. The insurance product disclosure statements detail members are only covered when hunting recreationally which requires you don't receive payment or reward for hunting. In your situation you could be considered as receiving a reward for your services and in the insurer's eyes

that would be receiving payment for hunting. If you did need to make a claim, the gifts you receive could affect your eligibility to be covered by this insurance. If you'd like to discuss further, call the brokerage on 08 8332 0281. Find more information on member benefits and our other insurance products on our website at [ssaib.com.au](http://ssaib.com.au)



## Hunters beware: La Nina on the wane but rainfall set to continue

**A**t time of writing there's another flooding rain event on the horizon for Queensland and a couple of cold fronts working their way across the south-east of the county. Rain is forecast in a number of states and some of it will be heavy so it certainly looks like winter's on the way. La Nina has undoubtedly opened up the skies during the past few months and there should be hope that some of those areas in Queensland currently still drought-declared might receive that pulse of wet weather they need to revitalise the landscape. Those areas recently hit by 'rain bombs' causing intense flooding will hopefully be missed so recovery efforts can continue.

The Bureau of Meteorology's 'Climate Driver' update at time of writing indicates the 2021-22 La Nina event continues to weaken with oceanic indicators mostly at neutral levels, however atmospheric indicators remain above La Nina thresholds meaning her influence continues.

Sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific are cooler than average but were at neutral levels for much of April while beneath the surface, waters also remain slightly cooler than average. Yet in the atmosphere, indicators remain at typical La Nina levels with stronger than average trade winds in the western Pacific and decreased cloudiness across the tropical

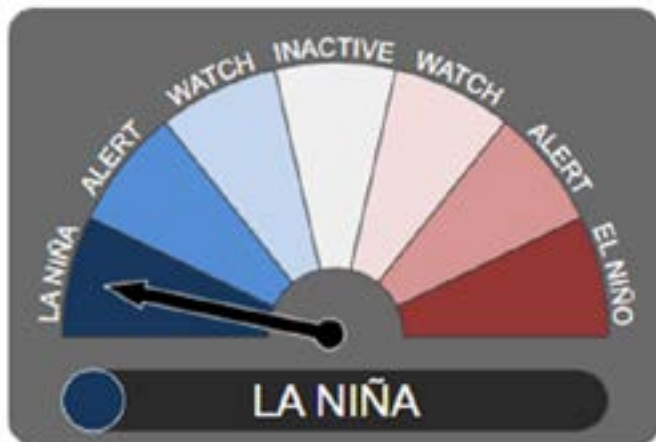
Pacific region. The Southern Oscillation Index also continues at moderate to strong La Nina levels.

Six of seven climate models surveyed by the Bureau indicate a return to neutral El Nino-Southern Oscillation meaning neither La Nina nor El Nino by early winter. Only one model continues La Nina conditions

through autumn, SAM typically has a weaker influence on Australian rainfall.

The Bureau says climate change continues to influence Australian and global conditions with ours having warmed by around 1.47 degrees C for the 1910-2020 period. Southern Australia has seen a reduction of 10-20 per cent in cool season rainfall in recent decades (April-October) while rainfall across northern Australia during its wet season (October-April) has increased. In recent decades there has been a trend towards a greater proportion of rainfall from high intensity short duration rainfall events, especially across northern Australia.

Events such as these are on the horizon right now with a large area of Queensland about to get wet - very wet - in a short period. This rain will have some benefits and some negative impacts. We can only hope during such events that people make the right decisions to stay safe and listen to directions from emergency services. It might pay to put off any planned hunting adventures until weather events like these pass because no game or pest animal is worth risking the life of you or one of your loved ones.



Atmospheric indicators remain above La Nina thresholds.

tions through winter at the moment. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is currently neutral while outlooks show a possible negative IOD developing in coming months. A neutral IOD has little influence on Australian climate but a negative IOD increases the chances of above average winter-spring rainfall for much of the country.

The Southern Annular Mode (SAM) index is currently neutral but is expected to briefly dip to negative levels with neutral to positive levels thereafter for the coming

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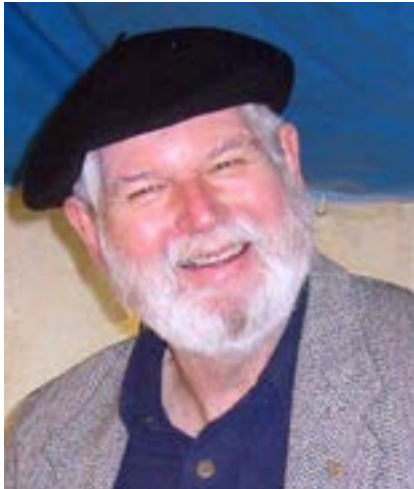


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# This would have been Peter Bindon's 'Bushcraft & Survival' column but . . .



## A man of the people

Rachael Oxborrow

**Vale Peter Bindon: His SSAA input will be sorely missed.**

**A**ustralian Shooter columnist Peter Bindon will be remembered for his vast experience in everything from anthropology, geology and archaeology to simple bush tucker, rabbit traps and gardening. He passed away at home with family by his side in early April. Born to parents Kevin and Elizabeth in 1943, Peter and his wife Nola had sons Patrick and Robert (dec) and was the loving grandfather of Ella-Grace.

Peter contributed the popular Bushcraft & Survival column to this magazine for the past 21 years and over those two decades delivered many thought-provoking, entertaining and informative articles. His first column in April 2001 detailed the beauty of sitting around a campfire and why it can be helpful to know how to light a fire without matches or a lighter if you find yourself in a survival situation. What was to follow over the next 21 years, as Peter worked across various SSAA publications, are countless examples of storytelling with a healthy touch of real-life experience. Simple topics such as the importance

of water carriage (and amounts), identifying and collecting mushrooms for consumption and the beauty of the now almost-defunct photo-film cannister for carrying bush survival items have been the hallmark of Peter's columns and in addition to his regular musings, he contributed product reviews and other shooting and hunting-related stories for Association publications.

Peter grew up in New South Wales in Nowra on the Shoalhaven and his first job was as a primary school teacher. Over the years he and his family lived in Western Australia and the Yass region of NSW and while out west he spent two decades as curator of the Western Australian Museum where he focused on Aboriginal culture, language and the use of plants for the manufacture of items of daily use, food and medicine.

Down the years he used his invaluable skills to train the Australian Defence Forces and lectured overseas soldiers on survival strategies in the harsh Southern Hemisphere landscapes. In addition to writing for SSAA National, Peter published numerous reports on Aboriginal

sites and resources in WA, two books on useful Australian plants and several on local history and notable personalities, mainly in NSW.

Peter was a well-known and popular member of the Yass community and active member of the Masonic Lodge and Yass Garden Club. He was formerly a member of the Yass Lions' Club and appeared as a guest lecturer for the University of the Third Age. He was also involved in developing the National Botanic Gardens in Canberra and the Kings Park and Botanic Garden in Perth which feature many useful and edible plants thanks to his input. His wife Nola said he dearly loved the community and sharing his knowledge and was often approached to speak at all manner of community group events. "Peter had a lot to give and enjoyed doing so and had a story for every occasion," she said.

SSAA National staff and board members extend their sincere condolences to Peter's family and friends - he was a valued contributor to *Australian Shooter* and will forever be a part of the SSAA.





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**Q** I wonder if you could verify if I'm correct in my thinking here. I was under the impression that when shooting Sporting Clays I'd achieve more distance from my loads if I use Full choke as opposed to Modified. I've often been told Modified is only good for around 30m while Full choke is good for up to 50m. Can you explain this?

**Bob Fowles, Vic**

**A** Okay, I have a few hundred words to answer these questions though in reality I could write a book on this subject so I'll try to keep this simple. As far as physical distance is concerned your shot will basically travel the same 'distance' out of a cylinder, or no choke at all, as it will with the tightest of Full chokes. The distance your shot travels in metres will largely depend on the size of your shot and force or velocity with which it's been pushed out the end of your barrel. If you're using exactly the same loads then my statement is pretty much correct.

There have been countless theories bandied about over 'shot strings' and other such phenomena which have some validity. Despite what many people believe, an Open choke actually gives you a longer shot string than a tight choke due to more constriction keeping the back part of a shot load guarded from air resistance for longer, therefore keeping the back pellets closer to the front of the payload creating less string. Will all this effect the distance the shot is

thrown? In theory the more the shot at the rear end of your load is protected from air resistance then I guess this could very well be the case. If it is I suggest it's only marginal but have no evidence to back this up.

The real answer to your question lies in what's to be considered the effective distance of your shotgun's choke. I suggest if you're shooting at 50m targets then Full choke may very well work better for you than Half choke simply because you'll rain more pellets on your target at that distance. With Half choke you may run the risk of having big enough holes in your shot pattern that a clay could find its way through. As I always suggest, if you're shooting inaccurately it won't matter what choke, shotshell or barrel length you're using.

I've written countless articles on effective choke distances down the years and have always been a great believer in changing shotshells at greater distances as well as chokes - simply screwing in a Full choke won't always work. On tougher targets I'd try the largest legal shot size relative to the discipline you're shooting. I believe bigger shot will be just as important at breaking targets at long range, as I've seen countless targets over the years which simply won't fall apart when 'tickled' with lighter, smaller shot sizes. Full choke means you need to shoot more accurately and for some competitors this is not a realistic expectation though bigger shot will obviously give you greater distance.

Effective distance therefore becomes a different argument than actual distance. There are numerous shot charts available that'll give you the maximum distance each shot size can be thrown with a constant muzzle velocity, but I can't ever recall seeing analysis done of distance being measured from different choke restrictions.

I guess if you're really bored there are ways you could measure this but don't be silly enough to have one of your mates stand in the paddock a couple of hundred metres out with your shotgun aimed at forty-five degrees above the horizon and ask him to tell you how far the different chokes are throwing your shotshell's payload. Take my word for it - it won't make too much difference.

Questions to:  
**Russell@GoShooting.com.au**



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**Q** Can you please look at the photo of the markings and inscriptions on my dad's old shotgun. Anything you can tell me about it would be much appreciated. My late father bought it when he was 23 and had it until he was 85. Thanks for your time and effort.

**William Phelan, via email**

**A** Your gun is a nice example of a Belgian side-lock hammerless 12-gauge with 70mm chambers which has been proofed for smokeless powder and should be capable of handling modern cartridges of this length. The words inscribed on your old gun (in French) are as follows, with their translations:

Demi-bloc = half-block; Acier special a haute resistance = special high-strength steel; choke 18.3 (on each barrel) = each barrel is choked by 0.2mm (the standard diameter of a 12-gauge barrel is 18.5mm). The '1kg501' stamp is the weight of the barrels (ie - 1.501kg). Herstal Belgique = the city of Herstal on the River Meuse in Liege Province, Belgium. It's the home of Fabrique Nationale d'Armes de Guerre, makers of FN and Browning firearms among others and has been a large gunmaking centre for well over a century.

**Geoff Smith**

**Q** I want to teach my grandson how to hunt rabbits on my small rural property. I have two rifles - a Brno Model 1 .22 bolt-action and Winchester .22 lever-action - both in very good and usable condition. My grandson likes the look of the Winchester so would this be the best one to teach him with?

**George H., via email**

**A** Both rifles you mention are excellent firearms and either would suit, however as your grandson is a beginner, my personal preference would be to teach him to shoot using the Brno which, being a bolt-action rifle, is probably simpler to use and is of course very accurate.

**Barry Wilmot**

**Q** What's the best barrel length for shooting SSAA 5-Stand Sporting? It seems like this clay discipline is meant to simulate field shooting and fairly close range targets so would my field gun with 28" barrels be a good choice?

**Derek, Qld**

**A** SSAA 5-Stand Sporting is great fun and can provide excellent practice for field shooting. It can be set in a compact area to provide some very interesting and sometimes challenging longer targets which also makes it a worthwhile competition for SSAA clubs. There's no doubt it provides a greater challenge than Trap or Skeet shooting because of the endless variety of angles and speeds the targets can be thrown - it's up to the course setter to decide how hard or easy they want to make the targets on any given day.

A 28"-barrelled field gun with relatively open choke or chokes will certainly do the job so long as the gun has flat-shooting field stock dimensions so it shoots about 60/40 or 50/50 above and below the aim point when patterning your gun to see exactly where it shoots. Over the years we've seen a gradual trend towards longer,

lighter-weight barrels in all the clay target disciplines as they're seen as steadier and smoother to swing. As these disciplines have become more competitive the top shots look for every advantage to help them score those extra targets needed to win big competitions.

If I had to plump for the perfect barrel length, I'd say 30" or 32" depending on your skill level, with screw-in chokes to allow you to adjust for courses with very close targets or those with longer range birds. Your 28"-barrelled gun will be fine for social shooting and practice for field shooting.

**Paul Miller**

**Q** I read somewhere you can control the burning rate of a propellant (powder) by using a specially-shaped chamber inside the cartridge. Apparently it's useful for heavy, slow projectiles fired from short barrels. Can anyone enlighten me on how this might work?

**Brad, NSW**

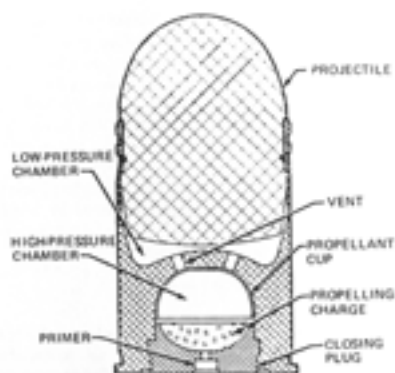
**A** You're almost right Brad. What I think you're referring to is a 'high-low pressure cartridge' which, rather than controlling the burning rate of the powder, applies a low pressure force of relatively long duration, giving a low to moderate velocity to a heavy projectile at a reduced recoil. This is achieved by confining a small quantity of powder in a reinforced chamber within the cartridge next to the primer.

When fired, the propellant creates 'high pressure' gasses in the internal chamber and the pressure escapes at a predetermined rate into a 'low pressure' section of the cartridge case through small holes which provide reduced but continuous pressure against the projectile. The advantage of this process is the effective pressure rises slowly and never exceeds a moderate limit, allowing the firearm chamber to be designed for a much lower maximum pressure than would otherwise be the case.

Our picture shows the internal work-

ings of a high-low pressure cartridge similar in design to the 40 x 46mm grenade that's fired from a single-shot, hand-held, shotgun-like grenade launcher or from a launcher mounted under the barrel of a rifle. The projectiles are filled with either high explosive or pyrotechnic compounds and weigh around 2700gr and reach a velocity of just 250fps.

**Rod Pascoe**



**Q** A friend and I are heading to the Top End to hunt buffalo later this year and have been debating what calibre of rifle will be needed. He has a .375 H&H which he uses for hunting sambar deer and I have a .30-06 I've used successfully on sambar and wonder if it's big enough for buffalo as I really don't want to buy another rifle I may not need again. I reckon the .30-06 will do the job with good handloads but would appreciate any advice.

**Mike, SA**

**A** You both look to have the situation covered. The .375 H&H is a great calibre for buffalo hunting and I must admit I prefer large calibres but that said, there's no need to feel under-gunned with your .30-06. During the heyday of shooting buffalo for skins many thousands were taken with .303s, albeit mostly from horseback and in the more recent Brucellosis Tuberculosis Eradication Programme, similar numbers were taken from helicopters using .308 rifles.

I've ground-hunted and shot half a dozen buffaloes with the .308 and never had a problem and have also taken them with larger calibres including .35 Whelen, .375, .45/70 and .458 Win Mag. The point I'm trying to make here is it's not what you use, it's where you hit them. While larger calibres deliver more energy, good shot placement is still crucial - if not critical - on big animals like buff, as is bullet weight and construction.

Your .30-06 loaded with good quality solid bullets will do the job if you play your part. Outer Edge ([outeredgeprojectiles.com.au](http://outeredgeprojectiles.com.au)) make an excellent range of high-quality copper projectiles here in Australia including a 178 grain, .308 calibre flat-nosed solid bullet that delivers excellent accuracy and performance on big game without the recoil of larger calibres (reloading data available on the website). Good luck and enjoy your buffalo hunt - I'll be surprised if you don't want to go back again.

**John Dunn**



Larger calibres are recommended for buffalo hunting.



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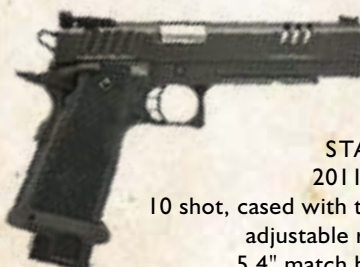


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The Pointer with Nikko Stirling red-dot 1x sight makes for an effective close-range feral game outfit.

# Play it straight

Pointer's budget shotgun well worth a look, says Paul Miller

**W**ith the issues around owning self-loading shotguns in Australia and the general requirement in all states for a special licence and need to justify ownership of such firearms, we've seen an increased interest in alternatives - especially for hunting - which can be bought with a category A licence, the same category that permits ownership of side-by-side and over-and-under shotguns which only allow two shots loaded.

The advantage of straight-pull shotguns like the Turkish-made Pointer 12-gauge under review here is a four-shot capacity plus one loaded in the chamber, which obviously provides more available cartridges per loading for hunting and is especially suitable where multiple targets like rabbits or feral pigs are engaged.

## Stock and fore-end

The Pointer has a very well-shaped stock and fore-end made of a hard-wearing grey polymer material which should withstand lots of abuse in the field. The stock has a substantial rubber recoil pad which helps locate the gun comfortably in the shoulder

and reduces recoil of the often hard-kicking field loads you'd expect to use in a gun like this.

There's a fairly full pistol grip which aligns the trigger finger nicely with the trigger and feels very business-like. Chequering on both stock and fore-end is moulded in during manufacture but is sharp and very effective for securing a comfortable grip, the fore-end nicely shaped and feels great in combination with the pistol grip. The overall look of the Pointer is much enhanced by this modern-looking stock and fore-end design and, as a hunting firearm, it's fitted with studs for attaching an optional sling to carry the gun when not in use.

## Barrels

The Pointer has a matte-finished 28" barrel with a smart looking slightly elevated rib and single brass bead sight which draws the eye nicely. The matte finish is ideal for a hunting gun where shiny light-reflecting surfaces are often a disadvantage, the finish said to be extremely hard-wearing though only time and use will tell if that's the case. The barrel is fitted with five flush-fitting

Mobil chokes from Improved Cylinder to Full which gives the owner a considerable degree of choice from open-choked bird hunting and slug use in the Open choke right through to longer range shooting with the Full.

With only one barrel you have to make a bit of a compromise compared to double guns and the availability of two chokes but generally you can get by with intelligent choke selection on single-barrel shotguns like this. Steel shot should only be used in the more open chokes with half choke the limit for steel shot use (don't use in the three-quarter and Full choke).

## Action

The straight-pull action as already noted has become more popular in recent times and looks like a self-loader but operates with a charging handle that's only available in right hand. The action is easy to cycle and locks in place for the shot with a rotating head - fire the shot then pull back all the way on the handle and release it to reload the next shell.

The chambering process is quick and efficient and rate of fire pretty similar to





The Pointer ST 1000 is a robust and elegant-looking straight-pull shotgun that's ideal as an inexpensive field or farm gun.



Magazine end cap secures fore-end and also has a stud for optional sling use.



Synthetic stock with stylish shadow line cheekpiece and stud for sling if required.

a pump-action shotgun, so lock-up and functioning of the action is different to a pump-action where you need to get used to cycling the action with the charging lever rather than moving the fore-end back and forward as you do with a pump gun. This cycling with the charging handle takes very little getting used to and works efficiently, a large rubber grip supplied that fits over the charging handle though I preferred to go without.

Loading the gun is the same as a self-loader through the bottom of the action and you can accommodate four shotshells in the magazine while a fifth can be loaded 'up the spout' for the maximum five shots in the field. The triggerguard is robust and well-shaped, the safety incorporated behind the trigger and easy to use.

#### Shooting impressions

The Pointer weighs about 3.2kg (7lb) and this light weight makes it easy to carry and quick to bring into action. The balance of this gun is neutral, it's fun to shoot and when I tried it on Skeet targets it handled very well. It was never meant as a clay gun and I mucked up a few second barrels



The Pointer has an elegant straight-pull action and matte grey nitride finish.



## Pointer's budget shotgun

being unfamiliar with cycling the charging handle until I became used to it. We have one member at our club who blew everyone else away by shooting a 25 straight though to be fair he's extremely capable with any type of shotgun.

Interestingly, as a lefty I'd no problem operating the charging handle with my right hand when I grew used to it by supporting the gun through the pistol grip with my left hand and keeping it firm in my shoulder between shots. This meant my trigger finger stayed with the pistol grip rather than leaving it to charge the handle as a right-hander does and then having to relocate the trigger hand and finger to take the next shot. A couple of my right-handed mates had a go and liked it and while we didn't put speed of reloading between right and left-handers to the test, perhaps we should have.

We were unable to do any field shooting due to huge local rainfall and incredible grass growth which was great for the farmers but meant a reprieve for local rabbit and fox populations. We mounted a

Nikko Stirling red-dot sight on the receiver as it's  $\frac{3}{8}$ " dovetailed for this purpose and fired a few shots with Eley Alphamax 34g buckshot at 20m to sight it in. This would certainly make a nice outfit for close-range pig shooting and we even tried slugs, the results being well inside 'minute of pig' at 30m. For single slugs we used the most open Improved Cylinder choke and with buckshot we used Full.

This Pointer distributed by Outdoor Sporting Agencies is amazing value when you consider it retails for around \$599 and can be found even cheaper by shopping around. As a knockabout field or farm gun it should work very well, it was comfortable to shoot and looked good into the bargain. More at [osaaustralia.com.au](http://osaaustralia.com.au) ●

**Traditional under loading port allows four cartridges in the magazine and one can be dropped in the chamber.**

**Patterning your shotgun is important to confirm it's shooting where you want it.**



### Specifications:

**Model:** Pointer ST 1000

**Gauge:** 12-gauge.

**Action:** Straight-pull

**Trigger:** Single selective, tang safety

**Barrel length:** 28" with 3" chamber

**Chokes:** Five Mobil chokes, Improved Cylinder to Full - restrict steel shot use to half choke and more open chokes

**Stock and fore-end:** Grey polymer

**Stock dimensions:** 38mm at comb, 55mm at heel, cast 3.5mm for right-handers, 14.75" length of pull

**Weight:** 3.7kg (7lb)

**Accessories:** Choke wrench, instruction manual

**Warranty:** Five years

**RRP:** About \$599 but shop around

**Distributor:** Outdoor Sporting Agencies, Vic





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XQ38 \$4600



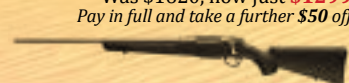
Pulsar Axion 2 XQ35 \$2435  
XQ35 LRF \$2895



Pointer WS500 Straight Pull 12G 20" barrel with tactical choke, ghost sights and pic rail. Thumbhole pistol grip stock with adjustable cheek piece Was \$715, now \$499



Tikka T3x Hunter 6.5x55 Was \$1620, now just \$1299 Pay in full and take a further \$50 off



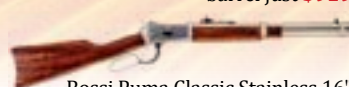
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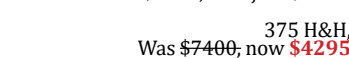


## Sauer 404 Sale



Sauer 404 Classic XT .308 win Was \$5980, now just \$3950

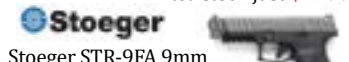
7mm Rem Mag and 300 Win Mag Was \$6660, now just \$3995



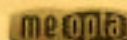
Sauer SUM Mount for Sauer 404 Available in 1" or 30mm just \$660



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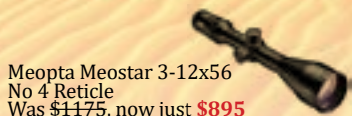


## Meopta Rangefinding Binoculars

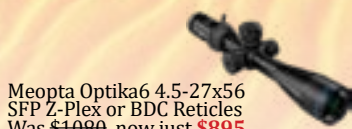


Meopta Optika LR 10x42 HD Rangefinding binoculars just \$1815

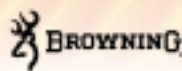
## Meopta Scope Specials Exclusive to Magnum Sports



Meopta Meostar 3-12x56 No 4 Reticle Was \$1175, now just \$895



Meopta Optika6 4.5-27x56 SFP Z-Plex or BDC Reticles Was \$1080, now just \$895



## Browning Clearance



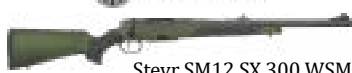
Browning X-Bolt Predator Hunter Heavy 22" threaded barrel w/ brake 204 Ruger, 223rem or 22-250. Was \$1730, now just \$1349



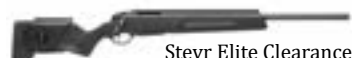
Browning X-Bolt Hell's Canyon Speed Fluted sporter barrel with brake 300win mag and 300PRC available Was \$1970, now just \$1649



Browning X-Bolt Hell's Canyon Long Range A-Tac Available in 300win mag or 300RUM Was \$2480, now just a crazy \$1695



Steyr SM12 SX 300 WSM Was \$3460, 3 only at \$1995



Steyr Elite Clearance 2 x 5 shot mags, integral bi-pod, heavy barrel & adjustable cheek piece .308 or 7mm-08 Mannox was \$4495, now \$3695 .308 Stainless was \$5100, now \$4195

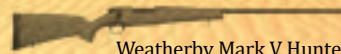


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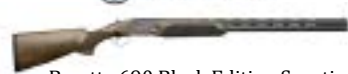
Sako 100th Anniversary Ammo Pack 80 x Gamehead and 20 x Powerhead Blade in a commemorative box. 308win \$224 per 100 30-06 \$241 per 100 Limited Stock



Burris RT-1 Red Dot 2MOA Red Dot Low and high mount included Massive price reduction Was \$649, now \$285



Hornady Lock 'N' Load Auto Charge Electronic powder dispenser/scale Was \$600, now \$349 while stocks last



Beretta 690 Black Edition Sporting 30" 12g with Kick-off Recoil system Cased with 5 extended Chokes Was \$5570, now \$4195



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Many a rabbit has been taken with a gun chambered for .22 Long Rifle. This is an old but well-modified Lithgow repeater.

# Decisions, decisions

Shooting novices must choose shotgun or rifle. John Hill outlines the difference

**W**hen taking up the sport of shooting, as newcomers we're faced with the choice of buying either a shotgun or a rifle.

Advice from other shooters and gunshops is often biased as to how they see the situation, which can be misleading to those seeking help with their selection of a suitable first firearm, the problem being most shotgunners never shoot rifles and just as many rifle shooters never use shotguns, so in order to discover the truth it's necessary to ask those who use both types of firearm.

Shotguns and rifles have entirely different applications. A shotgun is meant to be used at close range on fast-moving targets - whether clay, fur or feathers - while rifles are usually fired at stationary targets and often at considerable distances depending on the type of rifle. It's true a shotgun can be fired at stationary targets and a rifle on moving targets but that's not the way they're normally used. A rifle can't be relied upon to hit a moving target unless

the person using it has exceptional shooting skills.

If shooting at a fast-flying black duck or a fox at close quarters trotting in to a decoy, a shotgun is the only way to go as it was designed for that sort of work. The wide pattern of pellets thrown by a shotgun allows a larger margin of error than that offered by a rifle firing a single bullet, therefore your choice of a firearm should be based on whether the intended targets are likely to be moving or stationary. If the targets are moving, buy a shotgun.

Unfortunately shotguns which perform well at 50m or so have a very limited effective range. While many a claim has been made regarding the 'long-range' capabilities of some shotguns, most become fairly ineffective when the range exceeds 60m, as when used beyond that distance the possibility of that black duck continuing on its way are very good unless a pellet strikes a vital area. A shotgun used beyond its limitations is more likely to wound rather than

kill and I once described a shotgun as 'a big bang and a scatter of pellets which lose their effectiveness in a mere 50m'. While that statement may be a slight exaggeration, it's not too far from the truth.

Most modern shotguns have interchangeable choke tubes which lend the gun greater flexibility than one with fixed chokes and using either open chokes or tight ones can transform a single gun into several by the simple act of changing choke tubes. Shotguns with fixed chokes may be fine for some jobs but a gun choked full wouldn't be a good choice in a quail paddock where more open chokes are desirable, so interchangeable choke tubes have definite advantages.

The selection of an appropriate cartridge can also have a considerable bearing on the effective range of a shotgun and its usefulness on different types of game. If a gun's loaded with No. 10 shot (bird shot) for shooting quail and a fox suddenly appears from the stubble, those lightweight pellets





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GRIP PANELS



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.

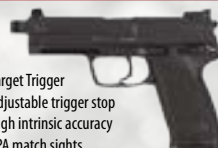


## P30L-SD



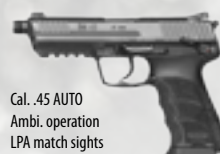
- SA/DA Trigger
- Adjustable LPA match sights
- Paddle magazine release, ambidextrous
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- Thumb operated hammer decocker
- Picatinny under-rail
- Impact and drop-resistant as specified by TR and AC/225 D/14

### USP Tactical



Target Trigger  
Adjustable trigger stop  
High intrinsic accuracy  
LPA match sights

### HK45 Tactical



Cal. .45 AUTO  
Ambi. operation  
LPA match sights

### USP Expert



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Adjustable trigger stop  
High intrinsic accuracy  
Ambidextrous safety

### MARK 23



.45 AUTO  
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Recoil system for minimising the recoil forces.

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FEATURES	
PRESSURE GAUGE	
ADJUSTABLE POWER	
WALNUT STOCK	
AMBI. STOCK	
MAG CAPACITY	
CAL. .22 - 10	
CAL. .25 - 9	

## EVNIX

## AIR SPEED. SEMI AUTO PCP



FEATURES	
PRESSURE GAUGE	
CARBON FIBRE TANK	
ADJUSTABLE POWER	
SOFT TOUCH STOCK	
AMBI. STOCK	
MAG CAPACITY	
CAL. .177 - 12	
CAL. .22 - 10	
CAL. .25 - 9	
CAL. .30 - 7	

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## Decisions, decisions

will be almost useless on an animal that size unless it's extremely close. Larger pellets such as 2s or BBs are more appropriate for foxes, as are 4s and 6s for rabbits and ducks with 7s, 8s and 9s suitable for clay targets. Target loads contain 24 to 28-grams of shot whereas field loads have 32 to 36-grams (there's steel shot and other non-toxic loads for waterfowl). So there are considerable variations in shot cartridges and the use of an appropriate one is very important for a successful outcome.

Whether firing at clay targets, game animals or birds, pattern density is something to consider at all times. Small pellets produce good pattern density yet carry very little energy, while larger pellets carry more energy but give poor pattern density as there are fewer of them in the pattern. Everything involved with shotgunning seems to be a compromise of some sort or other and any particular cartridge and choke combination is only ideal at a specific range. Either side of that ideal pattern density zone the shot pattern will be too dense or too open - a dense pattern mangles the meat while an open pattern allows it to escape.

So when we consider all the different combinations of chokes and shot cartridges, it's not hard to imagine how easy it is to have an unsuitable combination when an unexpected and different type of target is



**An adjustable comb can change a Trap gun into a Field gun by simply lowering the comb. Set low as shown and with open chokes screwed into the muzzles, the gun is set up for a round of Skeet.**

offered, such as the fox in a stubble paddock when hunting quail.

There's also the question of what gauge should be considered when buying a shotgun and there's only one obvious choice - 12-gauge. Of course there are others such as the small .410 and 20 and 28-gauge guns but their ammunition costs are considerably more than 12-gauge with availability often poor or non-existent. Nice guns but costly to feed - and difficult to sell as they're not overly popular. A 12-gauge

gun can be loaded down to a lighter load but a smaller gauge can't be loaded up to duplicate 12-gauge loads.

There are yet more decisions to be made when buying a shotgun and that's whether it's to be an over-and-under or side-by-side (there are also special-purpose guns for trap shooting and sporters for field use). So when shotgunning is looked at in light of what's been discussed so far, making the right choices can be a bit of a minefield.

I have an over-and-under Model 7000



**A Savage .22 Rimfire Magnum which outranges the .22 Long Rifle by a considerable margin.**





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## Decisions, decisions

Miroku Trap gun with interchangeable choke tubes and a buttstock with adjustable comb, the gun mainly used for various forms of clay target shooting. I don't shoot ducks or quail but that Miroku has claimed a few foxes and a good number of rabbits. This under-and-over has been in my keeping for more than 25 years, covers all my shotgunning needs and as far as I'm concerned I don't need any other shotgun as this one does everything I require of it.

So much for shotguns, now it's time to talk rifles. The rifle is an entirely different concept to the shotgun in that it fires a single bullet instead of hundreds of pellets. A rifle barrel has spiral grooves cut into the bore to affect 'spin' on the bullet, this gyroscopic effect stabilising the projectile to keep it travelling nose-first through the air. Spin also helps correct any tendency a bullet may have to drift off course as would be the case if it was fired through a smooth bore.

Modern bullet and rifle barrel manufacture is of such a high standard the accuracy of today's rifles is incredible and the long-range capabilities of some centrefires must be seen to be believed. Tack-driving accuracy goes hand-in-hand with telescopic sights which have revolutionised the modern rifle but the main advantage it has

over the shotgun is it can reach so much further. Hunting techniques differ greatly when using a rifle, the hunter usually quiet and stealthy so the rifle can be brought to bear on undisturbed stationary game, while a shotgunner is more likely to use dogs for flushing out rabbits or birds.

Rifles vary greatly in cost and calibre, starting with air rifles and ranging through various rimfires to centrefires. Rimfires are a good starting point for new shooters and even air rifles can teach a lot of shooting skills at low cost, though aren't really suitable for small-game hunting and even the .22 Long Rifle is fairly restricting due to its

rainbow-shaped trajectory. Neither air rifles nor those chambered for .22 Long Rifle can be described as having long-range capabilities. There are other rimfires and the .22 Rimfire Magnum or .17 HMR should also be considered when you're confident enough to go hunting.

Centrefires rifles are in a category of their own and don't really qualify for mention within the scope of this article as newcomers to shooting would be ill-advised to start with a centrefire. Don't put the cart before the horse - learn to shoot well before venturing into the field to hunt. ●



This Savage .17 HMR 'Classic' rifle took a pair of bunnies on an early morning hunt.

An advertisement for the Mossberg MVP Scout rifle. The rifle is shown in profile, resting on a dark, textured rock. The background is a scenic view of a valley with green hills and a river, partially obscured by mist. The Mossberg logo and 'MVP® SCOUT' are in the top left. The Grycol International logo is in the top right. The rifle's model number 'D/L: 410650524' is in the bottom left. The website 'www.grycol.com.au' is in the bottom right. Social media icons for Facebook and Instagram are also present. A note 'bipod not included' is at the bottom center.

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RANGER 500



RANGER 570 HD EPS ADC



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RANGER XP 1000 NORTHSTAR PREMIUM

## COMMERCIAL

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PRO XD DIESEL AWD EPS



PRO XD DIESEL CREW AWD EPS



RANGER EV



RANGER XP KINETIC PREMIUM EPS  
ARRIVES JANUARY 2022



RANGER XP KINETIC ULTIMATE EPS  
ARRIVES JANUARY 2022

## WORK AND PLAY



GENERAL 1000 EPS PREMIUM - 60"



GENERAL 1000 EPS DELUXE - 60"



GENERAL XP 1000 EPS DELUXE - 64"

## SPORT/RECREATIONAL



RZR TRAIL 900 EPS PREMIUM - 50"



RZR TRAIL S 1000 PREMIUM - 60"



RZR XP 1000 SPORT EPS - 64"



RZR PRO XP SPORT EPS - 64"



RZR PRO XP PREMIUM EPS - 64"



RZR PRO XP ULTIMATE EPS - 64"



RZR TURBO R ULTIMATE EPS - 74"



RZR PRO R ULTIMATE EPS - 74"

## CREW



RANGER CREW SP 570 EPS



RANGER CREW XP 1000 PREMIUM EPS



RANGER CREW XP 1000 NORTHSTAR PREMIUM



GENERAL XP 4 1000 EPS DELUXE



RZR XP 4 1000 SPORT EPS - 64"



RZR PRO XP 4 SPORT EPS - 64"



RZR PRO XP 4 ULTIMATE EPS - 64"



RZR TURBO R 4 ULTIMATE EPS - 74"



RZR PRO R 4 ULTIMATE EPS - 74"

# Top End,



A large boar taken with a .375 H&H in Arnhem Land.

When hunters talk about game in the Northern Territory, buffaloes and pigs are the species which generally come to the fore and given the amount of attention they've traditionally received in the shooting press that's probably not surprising. Add the *big* factor to the mix and you could be forgiven for thinking they're the only game the Territory has to offer a travelling hunter, which isn't the case. For those with an eye for diversity there's a great deal more on offer so let's start with the obvious and work our way down the list.

## Buffaloes

These are the largest game animals in Australia which makes them an attractive proposition for a lot of hunters. They're common in many places and their numbers seem to be increasing, especially in some of the more remote areas they inhabit which means there are plenty of opportunities to hunt them and while there are usually costs involved, anyone who really wants to take a trophy buffalo can generally find a way to make it happen. I love hunting buffalo and since I first aerially culled and



# top location

Hunting the Northern Territory is like nowhere else, says John Dunn

ground hunted them in 1986 I've chased them through swamps, on dry dusty flatlands, along watercourses and in rocky hill country. Numbers may vary according to the time of day and vagaries of season but there aren't many places the big bovines won't live provided they have access to adequate feed and water - and they're happy to travel for both.

Every now and then someone will claim hunting buffaloes is a bit like shooting cattle in a paddock and it can be, as meat hunters who routinely shoot their animals from the seat of a truck well know. Trophy hunters can do the same thing in some areas if they want to but that isn't hunting, it's shooting and there's a world of difference between the two. Using a vehicle to cover ground and find animals is one thing, using a vehicle as a shooting platform another.

To hunt buffaloes you have to jump out and walk and that's generally a game-changer in terms of being easy - some will run away from an approaching hunter and a short stalk can become a long walk in fairly quick order. Others will run towards a hunter perhaps out of curiosity, perhaps with the intent of expressing a certain level

of discontent at the hunter's intrusion into their personal space and the latter seems to be especially true of herd bulls with cows and calves to defend.

Don't be conned by their seemingly placid nature - if a buffalo decides to have a piece of you for whatever reason there's

a pretty good chance it will press home the point. It doesn't happen all the time but often enough to keep savvy hunters on their toes and that's what makes buffalo hunting so interesting - you're out there with intent and you never quite know what's likely to happen.



## Top end, top location

### Scrub bulls

Like buffaloes, scrub bulls tend to be underrated as a big game animal. Where they've been hunted hard, most will disappear at the first sight of humans or vehicles and when they decide to cover ground they really do - they're big animals with long legs and a turn of speed that would make a racehorse envious. Others seem to object to being looked over or chased and may decide to come and ask you what your intentions really are, especially if you're on foot as you should be. Either way they need to be treated with a great deal of respect. Not all scrub bulls carry big sets of horns but regardless of size they know how to use them. Bulls do fight and over the years I've seen them carrying some fairly horrific injuries which would undoubtedly stop a lesser animal.

They're tough in more ways than one so are a good reason to ensure an adequate calibre with premium bullets like the dependable Outer Edge copper offerings is used and properly placed to reduce the possibility of unwanted dramas. Not everyone wants a scrub bull in their trophy room but they're part of the Australian hunting collection and even if you only ever

target them once, the experience is one you won't forget.

### Bantengs

For a long time these were the premium big game animal in the Top End, mostly due to the remoteness of the Cobourg Peninsula where legal access was essentially limited to guided hunts. A guided banteng outing still isn't cheap but the money you spend should set you up with a trophy that'll hold its own in any display room around the world. Bantengs are big, beautiful animals which demand and are mostly afforded a great deal of respect. They've a reputation for being aggressive and though I've never seen that in them I've no doubt it could be the case.

They're a wonderful animal to hunt. Where they live is remote and sparsely inhabited, country as old as time itself and for the most part untouched except by the traditional owners who've lived there and cared for the land from time immemorial. It's a special place to be treated with respect as do the bantengs which call it home. I've been fortunate to hunt bantengs on the Cobourg twice and will return the first chance I have.

### Pigs

The Top End is home to some large pigs which can be hunted in a number of ways. Using dogs is a traditional and popular hunting technique but I'd suggest bow and rifle hunters probably account for the largest number by deliberately targeting specific areas of habitat, opportunistically when hunting other game or by drawing pigs to specific locations with the use of bait stations.

I've always enjoyed hunting pigs over bait stations as when properly set up and maintained they encourage animals to congregate in accessible areas where they can either be culled or selectively hunted for the biggest and best boars. Unfortunately biggest and best aren't always complementary, something I learned to appreciate when I was guiding for Hunt Australia in the Top End years ago.

We shot a lot of really big pigs but didn't take a lot of really big tusks, the best set I ever saw coming from a rather scrawny animal most hunters would have passed over in favour of something larger. He was shot by an Austrian client over a bait station when he wandered in early one morning and it wasn't until we put the binoculars on



A buffalo bull taken in Arnhem Land with a modern .45/70 High Wall Winchester and FN solid Outer Edge projectiles.



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## Top end, top location

him we realised just how good he was. His extracted tusks were thick and long with extensive grind lengths which put the final score a long way into double figures and if memory serves he was a record of some sort for several years. Personally I've never shot a really big set of tusks in the Top End but always try and one of these days might just be lucky.

### Camels

These are a species landholders seem to either love or loathe. They're big and tough and hunting them will take you into some of the more arid areas which is an adventure in itself. The trophy is their skull which is rather impressive when properly cleaned up and the teeth are amazing and while I've only ever shot one bull, I've never felt the need to go back for another.

### Ducks and geese

I don't shoot ducks or geese but there's plenty of opportunity there for those who do. Hunting the Top End is a rewarding experience which few people will only do once. It's a place of opportunity and for those with a sense of adventure there's no better destination. ●



A young banteng bull in the timber on Cobourg Peninsula. These animals can only be legally hunted under a permit issued by NT Parks and Wildlife Commission.



Graeme Fifield with banteng bull, regarded by many as the premier big game trophy in Australia.



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# On the money

With the waiting finally over, Mark van den Boogaart puts our one-off to work

I was eagerly anticipating the arrival of the SSAA/Beretta rifle and while they say all good things come to those who wait, that wait was starting to test the limits of my good nature. With me in Brisbane, the rifle down in Melbourne and various COVID-19 restrictions in place I really needed to cool my jets which was easier said than done. But like all good stories the day finally arrived and after receiving a call from On Target Sporting Arms in Brisbane, it was time to lay my hands on the rifle.

On walking in I spotted Michael behind the counter and after exchanging pleasantries he relayed a funny story. It seems Beretta had sent the gun in a Stoeger air rifle-branded gun bag and on opening it to begin the necessary paperwork he was surprised and immediately impressed by the new 'air rifle'. Over the course of the next half hour I fielded lots of questions from Michael and the rest of the On Target team about the rifle and gave them the

story of its development. Finally having my own chance to take a good look at it, the first thing I realised was colour selection was spot-on. I prefer a more traditional finish and the application of Cerakote Flat Dark Earth (FDE) and Cerakote Smoke combined with the uniquely patterned Mesa Monte Carlo-styled stock gave the rifle a real compact and business-like appearance.

To recap my previous article on the build, here's where we're at:

- Tikka T3x Compact Tactical Rifle (left-hand) in .308 Win;
- Mesa brand, Tikka Altitude stock in Mohave pattern;
- Steiner Nighthunter Xtreme in 2-10x50mm;
- Burris low-profile hunting-style rings;
- Spartan bipod with stock-fitted connection point;
- Fluted rifle bolt;
- Fully colour-coded with a combination of Cerakote FDE (Flat Dark Earth) and Cerakote Smoke;
- Fully sourced, assembled and test-fired by Beretta Australia gunsmithing services.

Interestingly, what was really grabbing everyone's attention were some of the smaller details including the visible Steiner logo on the Cerakoted scope and engraving on the receiver. The logo transfer was the work of Beretta's Cerakoting specialist and really adds something to the build, giving the scope a factory look like it's meant to be that colour.

As for engraving, the rifle sports the SSAA shield logo on the front or barrel end of the receiver, about the size of a five-cent piece, highly detailed and representing the Association's involvement in turning this idea into reality. On the rear or bolt end of the receiver is the word *indi* in cursive text. Why *indi*? Well that's a little complicated





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- LOCKABLE BALLISTIC KNOBS
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PERFORMANCE IN MIND

## Custom-building a rifle - Part two



The completed rifle.

as it holds multiple meanings. Firstly, *indi* reflects the idea of independence as I was and continue to be a little surprised at how much autonomy, or independence, I was afforded throughout this process. The question was always: 'What do you want, what do you think', rather than pick from a list and that level of independence gave me a

sense of creative licence along with a few nerves! I was heading-up the design so I better get this right. The second meaning reflects the individuality of this rifle as it's a true one-off.

The third is more personal. As a boy I enjoyed the stories of Horatio Hornblower by C.S. Forester and later the TV series,



Engraved receiver with *indi* motto.



Ready for action.

the books focussing on the adventures of Horatio in and around the time of the Napoleonic wars. Part of his journey from midshipman to eventually Admiral, Lord and hero of the Empire is spent aboard HMS Indefatigable, a real ship commissioned in 1794 which saw plenty of action. Indefatigable is untiring, unyielding, incapable of being fatigued which I thought would be a great motto and name for this rifle.

Now looks are one thing but performance is the real test, so it was time to take it to the range. Booking time at SSAA Belmont I headed over one weekday afternoon to sight in the rifle and, on setting it up on the bench, the gun immediately caught the eye of the Range Officer and nearby shooters. Keen to know the details I filled them in on the project and, when the range opened for firing, I went to work. For testing and sighting I used the Spartan bipod as a front rest with standard beanbag rest for the



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## Custom-building a rifle - Part two

buttstock. COVID and subsequent changes to range equipment hire meant I now own a Rock Benchrest (see *Australian Shooter*, July 2021 for review) but as the rifle had a detachable bipod I decided to use that. Now the Spartan bipod isn't as stable as a heavy, purpose-built rest but was up to the task and certainly made my range box a little lighter.

My ammunition of choice was Sako Gamehead in 150-grain soft-points. Sako Gamehead is reasonably priced hunting-grade ammo and 150gr a standard weight for .308 Win, my thinking behind ammo selection being two-fold. The first is that soft-point 150gr .308 Win ammo is available just about everywhere, so a utilitarian rifle built for Australian hunting conditions should shoot well with it. The second was if it performed well with standard ammo then we had a great platform to continue to improve.

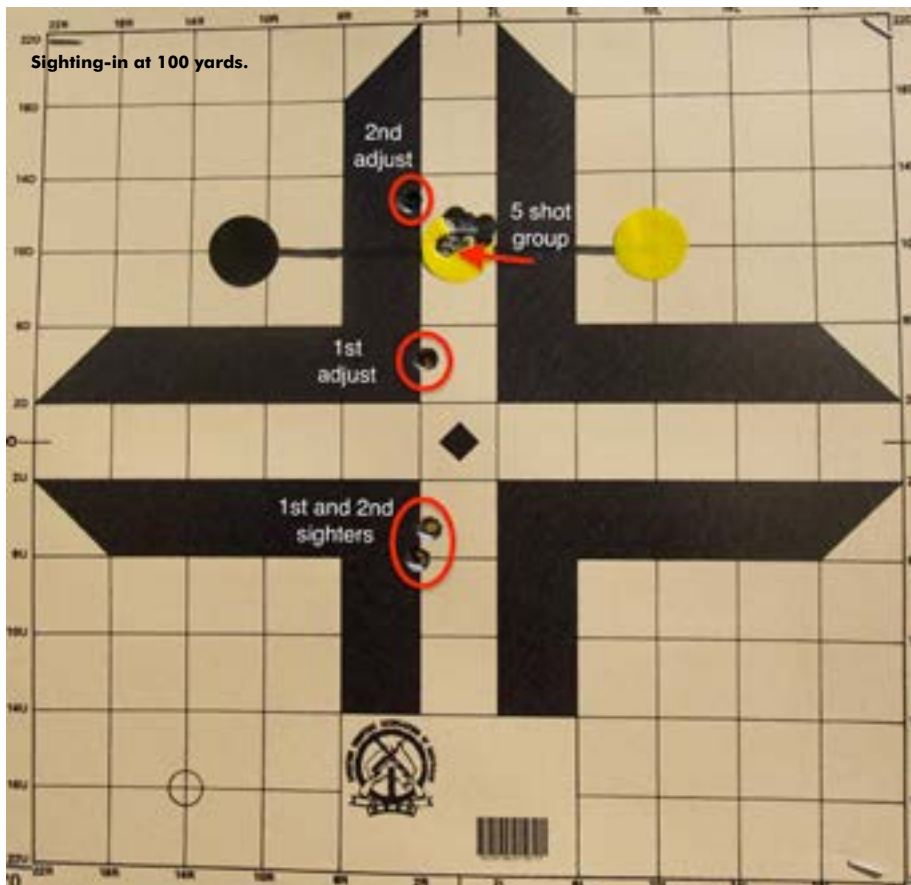
When it comes to sighting-in a rifle I've never been one of those guys who can do it in a few shots, I usually need 20 rounds to be comfortable and sometimes more, so I took a few boxes. Luckily, Byron at Beretta Australia had test-fired the rifle so once I had the focus right and set the illumination, I fired my first shot at a 100-yard target and was immediately on paper. Just to make

sure I didn't fluke it, I followed that up with a second and was happy with the result (taken as a pair the sighters were about 12mm left and 25mm below dead centre).

I hunt medium to large game and like to sight-in my hunting rifles using the Maximum Point-Blank Range (MPBR) approach. If you're unfamiliar with that method MPBR is the furthest distance you can zero your rifle for, at which your bullet is never above or below your line of sight by more than a certain amount. For me that amount is 75mm (3" up) and 75mm (3" down).

To achieve this I sight-in my rifle at 2.5" or 63mm high at 100 yards which in turn makes the shot 1.5" or 38mm high at 200 yards and will reach MPBR of 75mm below at around 280 yards. What this all means is that once set, I don't need to touch the elevation turret again so I can comfortably hunt out to 280-300 yards. Of course MPBR is influenced by projectile dynamics so this is my set-up for soft-point style loads.

Considering the sighters I made a quick adjustment to the elevation turret and fired another shot. This time I was about 50mm directly above the sighters and with another adjustment was around 20mm above the dark line I'd marked on the target before firing, so I decided to drop the elevation a



little and dialled the windage to the right. I then fired five shots the result of which was a group on average about 10mm above the target line. Having reviewed the CTR back in 2018 I knew it was a capable rifle and it seemed the modifications hadn't adversely affected its inherent accuracy.

After the ceasefire I moved a target out to 200 yards and as the Belmont Range is bayside and the prevailing summer breeze comes from the east, I did take notice of the flags at 200 yards. The first four shots were good in terms of elevation (I dropped the fifth a little) and windage pretty much as expected so with six shots left in the first box, I thought about what to do next.

Luckily to the right was a paper target at 300 yards and on being given the all-clear I moved to the corresponding bench and lined up at that distance, the result an estimated 100mm group of six shots at about 125mm below point of aim (sadly I wasn't allowed to go out and retrieve the target). All and all the rifle was shooting as good as it looked and with another day booked at the range I'd be focusing on fine-tuning and having it ready for the real test - hunting red deer in the Brisbane Valley. ●



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The Stellar displays images in Black Hot, White Hot, Red Hot and Fusion modes which can be viewed through a crystal-clear 1024x768 0.39-inch OLED display. Record and store images, audio and video on the device's 64GB internal storage or have the 'Recoil Activation' smart feature do this for you automatically. Built-in Wi-Fi hotspot capability allows for real-time transfer of files, livestreaming to your smartphone and wireless firmware updates.

The Wi-Fi and dedicated app allows you to take complete control of the unit's settings and features from your smartphone. The LYNX thermal imaging scope can capture snapshots, record videos, and set parameters via the HIKMICRO Sight App once connected to your phone via hotspot. Search HIKMICRO Sight App on the App Store(iOS System) or Google Play™ (Android System) to download.

## SPECIFICATIONS

STELLAR	MODEL	SENSOR	FOCAL	MAG	FOV	RANGE	MEMORY	BATTERY	WEIGHT
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	SQ35		35mm, F1.0	1.62 - 12.96, x8	12.52° × 10.03°	1800m			890g
	SH50	384 × 288, 17 μm, NETD < 35mK	50mm, F1.0	3.85 - 30.8, x8	5.28° × 3.96°	2600m		Up to 15h	970g
	SH35		35mm, F1.0	2.7 - 21.6, x8	7.53° × 5.65°	1800m			890g

## FEATURES

Pixel interval: 12μm  
 Detector sensitivity: 35 mK  
 50HZ refresh rate  
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 F1.0 Aperture  
 Capture Snapshots & store on thermal  
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# Dynamic duo!

Glock 34 and Leupold DeltaPoint Pro a formidable pairing, as Daniel O'Dea discovered

**F**or most handgun shooters the Glock pistol needs no introduction, in fact you hardly need to be a shooter to know what a Glock is. It's said in some cultures the word has transcended definition as a brand name to enter the common vernacular as being a reference for any pistol, just as many refer to any cola as Coke. As far as pistols go it's hard to ignore what I've previously described as the single most redefining post-war handgun of the last century - the Glock 'Safe Action' Pistol - but in case you've been in a coma for the past 40 years here's a brief history.

Designed and manufactured by Austrian engineer Gaston Glock, a plastics industrialist, in the early 1980s it originally came about to fulfil a military tender to supply a new handgun for the Austrian Army. Glock, whose set of products included such things as shower curtain rings, had previously

supplied other minor plastic components to the military so the tender sparked his interest. His perfecting of the process of mating plastics to metal surfaces enabled him to incorporate a complete polymer frame into his new pistol design and the rest is history, the Glock pistol going on to not only win that Austrian tender but become by far the most prominent choice for law enforcement agencies worldwide.

Fast-forward to now and Glock finds itself in its Generation 5, filling multiple market niches with models of various frame size, barrel and slide length and of course calibre. Following a more recent trend Glock have also introduced their MOS (Modular Optic System) concept to certain models, a feature allowing easy attaching of an ever-growing array of modern red-dot optical sights created primarily for handguns. The concept is fairly simple as when shooters first started mounting red-dot

sights on pistols they were generally large and cumbersome and mounted off brackets attached to the frame.

As technology improved, sights became smaller and light enough to enable fitment directly to the top of the slide without interfering with the function or reliability of the pistol. Initially this was done (and still can be) by removing the rear sight and using the dovetail groove to mount an adapter plate to take the relevant optic.

The next progression was for custom pistol-smiths to machine the slide to take the optical sight directly. This was preferable as the sight could be mounted lower for a better point of balance as well as sight over bore considerations. It even meant in some circumstances if the iron sights were increased in height, they could not only be retained but could co-witness with the red-dot. This further meant if the electronic optic failed you'd still have a viable way





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## Dynamic duo!

of accurately aiming the pistol. As red-dot optics improved and became cheaper and better all round, market demand grew strongly until all the major players started making their own adjustments. With Glock it was the MOS, at Smith & Wesson the CORE (Competition Optics Ready Equipment), Beretta has RDO (Red Dot Optic) and Sig is just Optic Ready. All might be slightly different in terms of mount interface but the basic concept remains the same - a machine-cut slide to accept a modern red-dot pistol optic more effectively.

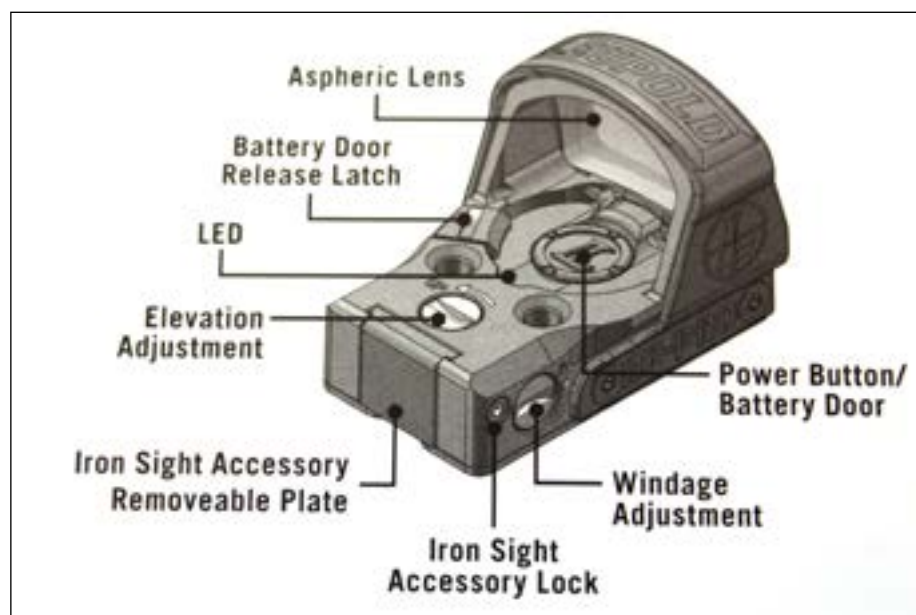
So to the firearm in question. Glock introduced the Generation 5 of its pistol back in 2018, notable differences being removal of finger grooves on the grip which consumer feedback had always been somewhat polarised about (the 'no' vote won), addition of an ambidextrous slide stop and increased bevel on the magazine well. Magazines also now have orange followers and being this Glock 34 is technically a Glock 34 Gen5 FS, it also came with front slide rackers neatly machined into the slide (FS literally means Front Serrations). That's about it as far as visible changes aside from an improved finish but there are multiple small alterations internally, some to accommodate the ambidextrous slide stop and others just general improvements. The main feature in focus is the MOS option.

The Glock 34 Gen5 FS MOS came in a hard plastic case including a cleaning rod and brush, magazine loader, two 10-round magazines, four spare grip panels made up of large and medium sizes both with and without extended beavertail, user manual and a set of four adapter plates for the MOS system.

For the review and representing a perfect pairing, local distributor of both products, Nioa, provided a Leupold DeltaPoint Pro and the MOS system makes fitment easy. Step one is to ensure the gun is clear and made safe then remove the cover screws at the top rear of the slide to expose the precision-machined MOS recess. Adapter plates are numbered 1 through to 4 and follow a series of footprints for most major red-dot optic manufacturers.

For instance plate 1 handles sights from Docter, Meopta and Insight, 2 is for Trijicon optics, 3 for C-More and 4 for Leupold and if you don't recognise an option for your favoured optic, don't worry as you'll likely find one of the patterns listed shares its footprint with other brands (Burris and Vortex use the same pattern as Docter).

On selecting the correct adapter plate you put it in place of the cover you just removed and screw it into position (for



a torque wrench the suggested optimum is 1.5 Newton metres). Once fitted this provides the correct interface for your selected optic to be mounted using the correct mounting screws provided, so with little fuss I had the Leupold DeltaPoint Pro in place and was ready to put some lead downrange.

### Leupold DeltaPoint Pro

This is one of the most popular red-dot pistol sights around, especially with competition shooters, perhaps because although compact it feels like the widescreen TV of red-dot pistol sights. The glass is wide, high and clear and put simply the bigger the lens window the more area there is to pick the dot up. Anyone who's transitioned to using or even just tried a slide-mounted red-dot optic will tell you initially it can be hard to pick up the dot on presentation and until you're used to it you might find yourself fishing around for it.

The more surface area there is to pick up that dot the easier it is to find. Better still, as red-dot optics are parallax free the dot doesn't have to be centred in the lens to be zero on target, even if the dot presents at the top right-hand side of the window. As long as it's still on the intended target hits should be spot-on, so theoretically the bigger the window the easier it should be to pick up the dot on draw presentation, transitions and recoil recovery.

The sight is 46.1mm long, 33.2mm wide and 33mm high with the sight window 25.7mm wide and 17.5mm high. The base of the sights sits a little higher than some others which limits the ability to co-witness with iron sights but uniquely the DeltaPoint



Leupold DeltaPoint Pro showing battery hatch with multi-function button.



Removable plate allows fitment of an optional rear back-up iron sight.



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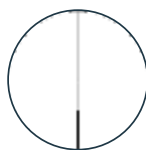
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## Dynamic duo!

has provision to fit an optional back-up rear iron sight at the stern of the sight base. Naturally this needs to be paired with a taller front sight blade which are also available.

The DeltaPoint Pro has a DiamondCoat scratch-resistant aspheric lens for enhanced brightness and resolution, protected by an outer steel shroud with blackened edges. Other features include a battery hatch hinged for easy access via a slide latch, the top of the hatch incorporating a multi-function button which turns the unit on and controls brightness levels (it uses a single CR2032 battery).

The unit powers-up by a press and release of the button, the same button cycling through 10 brightness settings. Brightness increases 25 per cent from lowest to highest so the top setting is 225 per cent brighter than the lowest and once mounted and powered up, adjustments for zero are made via elevation and windage screws at the top and right of the sight base. There's 60 MOA total adjustment in either direction top to bottom and tweaks are made in distinct, audible clicks at 1 MOA values. Another feature is MST (Motion Sensor Technology), a battery-saving mode which after five minutes at rest puts the unit to 'sleep' until movement is detected.

On the range the Glock performed with typical functional reliability, not missing a beat in the feed, fire and eject cycle. I used the Glock MOS/DeltaPoint pairing in our big 9mm ammo review for *Australian and New Zealand Handgun* Issue 20 which includes 14 different 9mm loadings over various test criteria, so we managed a fair round count. Accuracy likewise was typical of a quality-made production polymer handgun, printing fist-sized 10-round groups with almost all ammo types.

The DeltaPoint Pro comes in both 2.5 and 6 MOA dot sizes, the smaller dot allowing more precision shooting at long ranges as the dot covers a smaller surface area on the target, though a larger dot is easier to pick up on presentation so arguably faster to use up close. The sample provided was the 6 MOA version but it's going to come down to personal preference and intended use. It seems most competition pistol shooters prefer the smaller dot size but these compact sights are not only for pistols, in the US they're often found as an offset secondary optic for close-up work both in action-type rifle competitions such as Three Gun or in tactical applications for delicate work.

I found the 6 MOA dot just fine at practical handgun distances and to test the



Gen5 Glock 34 MOS FS  
with Leupold DeltaPoint  
Pro in hand.

limits of this set-up I lined up on a steel plate at 150m. Once I worked out the DOPE (Data On Previous Engagements) I could ring the steel with surprising regularity - a red-dot optic certainly extends the practical range of a handgun.

Most importantly the dot itself on the DeltaPoint Pro appeared perfectly round and sharp through my corrected vision. If you look through a red-dot sight and the dot looks blurred or irregular you may have an astigmatism which relates to imperfect curvature of your eye. It's fairly common and can easily be corrected in your script if you wear glasses or contacts, so don't necessarily think there's a problem with your red-dot if it doesn't appear perfect, it's probably your vision.



Gen5 Glock 34  
showed great  
practical accuracy  
made easier when  
paired with the  
superb Leupold  
DeltaPoint Pro.

Both the Glock 34 MOS and Leupold DeltaPoint Pro are great options for shooters looking to venture into pistol/optic disciplines. The Glock MOS system allows easy fitment of a variety of optics on a proven polymer pistol platform and the Leupold DeltaPoint Pro with maker's legendary support and lifetime warranty provides real confidence in pistol-mounted optics. ●

## Specifications

### Pistol: Glock 34 MOS

**Action:** Striker-fired, self-loading

**Calibre:** 9mm

**Capacity:** 10 rounds

**Barrel:** 135mm (5.31")

**Sights:** Iron and optics ready

**Sight radius:** 192mm (7.56")

**Length:** 224mm (8.82")

**Height:** 139mm (5.47")

**Width:** 33mm (1.3")

**Finish:** Black (nDLC)

**Frame:** Polymer

**Weight:** 735g (25.93oz)

**RRP:** About \$1400 (check with dealer)

### Optic: Leupold DeltaPoint Pro

**Body size:** 46.1mm x 33.2mm x 33mm

**Aperture size:** 25.7mm x 17.5mm

**Body:** Aircraft-grade alloy/steel shroud

**Finish:** Matte black

**Aiming dot:** 6 MOA

**Eye relief:** Unlimited

**Adjustment range:** 60 MOA

**Battery:** 1 x CR2032

**Battery life:** 300-1600 hours based on setting

**Weight:** 57g

**RRP:** About \$800 (check with dealer)



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# Vineyard survivor

Rebuilding history is no easy task  
as Geoff Smith discovered



The original gun as delivered  
and after restoration.

Every firearm comes with a story yet all too often that story is lost when the gun changes hands. Those who oppose the possession of firearms overlook their heritage value as older firearms in particular have stories to tell and, where these haven't been lost in the mists of time, they often reveal important history. What follows is the tale of one such unusual old gun.

## Birmingham

William Hodgetts' workshop at 34 Princip Street was in Birmingham's gun quarter. Although not one of the famous makers he was a skilled barrel and gun lock crafter and since starting out in 1829 was among hundreds of lesser known yet competent workers of his time. The workshop must have contained a forge, anvils, benches and hand-tools including files, chisels, furnace tongs, swage blocks and a wide array of hammers. He'd have had a treadle lathe, drills, thread-cutting taps and dies of his own manufacture and by today's standards,

though it sounds contradictory, they mass-produced handmade guns.

Assistants no doubt pumped the bellows, swung the hammers and helped in the many manual tasks involved though some of the minor processes including sand-casting of 'furniture' and turning of stocks may have been locally outsourced. Clad in leather aprons their tasks were hot, dirty, exhausting, tedious and often dangerous, workers of the time suffering industrial deafness, eye injuries, burns and lung diseases among other hazards. In the mid-19th century Birmingham was the world's largest gunmaker with additional parts (screws, pins, ramrods) for these essentially hand-crafted guns also produced locally and so, when a maker like Hodgetts won a contract to supply trade guns for export to the colonies, much of the work was completed in-house by a broad assembly of workers from the gun quarter.

Today, despite the fact many thousands of such guns were made most are now gone, replaced by more modern ones.





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## Vineyard survivor

When William began, both flintlock and percussion guns were still being made, the latter having rapidly come into vogue by the late 1820s. While times of war and of peace largely dictated fluctuating military weapon outputs, many domestic firearms were steadily produced, mostly for overseas export.

Establishing farms and gardens in far-flung colonies including Australia created a particular demand for shotguns to control pests though most of these guns were tools, basic in construction and lacking the extensive inlaying and engraving found on high-end examples. The combination of obsolescence in design and decay in materials will have seen most from the early to mid-19th century off to their eternal rest in rusty landfill, so any survivors have heritage value.

### South Australia

Immediately after the colony of South Australia was proclaimed in 1836, free settlers moved in to start a new life, the demand for self-sufficiency obvious and immediate. Winemaker Thomas Hardy was one such settler whose name remains familiar and in 1862 he appointed John Western from the English county of Devon as manager of a vineyard in what's now Adelaide's suburb of Marion. Western's family grew and expanded into their own enterprises including one named Oaklands which, in 1961, became the site of Westminster School whose curriculum to this day includes agricultural studies.

Adelaide's growth, especially after the two World Wars, saw local manufacturing take off, immigration and increasing demand for housing leading to large sections of market gardens and vineyards moving

further out. Western's vineyards and orchards were mostly sold up for housing and their enterprises shifted.

However, Westminster School retains a working vineyard and it was in this context that former agricultural science teacher Ian Young was given a battered old single-barrel 14-gauge percussion gun by John Western's grandson Jim. The old gun loaded with black powder charges as previously, but minus the shot (since it was now a closely settled area) was fired to disperse pest birds.

With the passage of time Ian retired as did the old gun, migrating into storage and replaced initially by a youth employed to crack a stock whip then later a gas-fuelled

bird scarer. The old gun remained in the corner of Ian's safe until, with increasing health problems, he moved into residential care. Local police said the 14-gauge muzzleloader was technically an antique and only fit for the dump, a proposition Ian found unacceptable due to its heritage. Consequently his daughter Kyla suggested I might like it as I have an interest in firearms, especially those with provenance.

### Restoration

Old guns in moderate condition should never be 'restored' since originality requires as much of the initial character as possible to be retained but in this case, given its condition, the rules needed massaging. Thick rust precluded any immediate indication of where the gun had been made but removing the twisted wire loop which attached barrel to stock, exposed markings revealing the gun had been proofed in Birmingham prior to 1855 (had it been after this the markings would have included the familiar scripted 'BP' stamp).

The woodwork was battered, cracked, shrunken and on the fore-end a piece had broken off. The exposed iron was extensively rusty although beneath the stock and inside the obviously handmade lock it didn't look too bad, the lock still worked and following de-rusting on the outside of the lock plate, the inscription 'W. Hodgetts' can now be seen suggesting he probably made the lock and barrel. After dismantling the gun into 'lock, stock and barrel' the furniture was carefully removed from the stock, noting the underlug which had previously held the forward ramrod pipes was missing,





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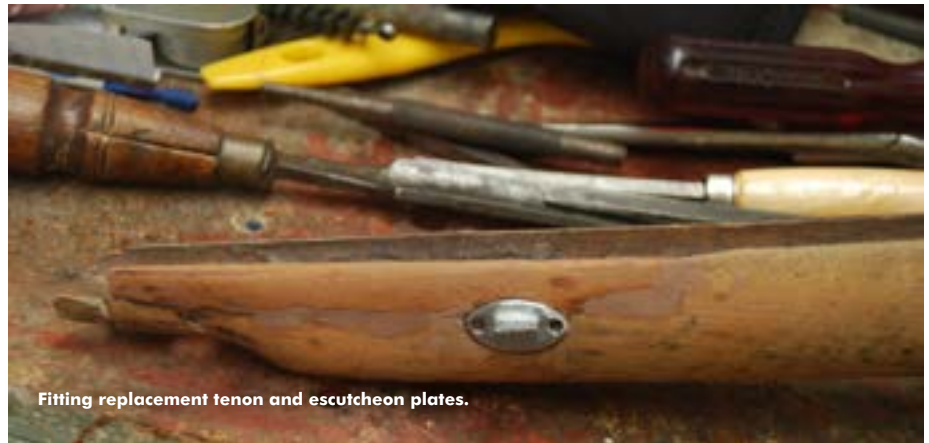
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## Vineyard survivor

its starting position identified only by the twin lines of soft solder remaining under the barrel.

I firstly decided to repair and re-finish the woodwork, so after applying some paint stripper and giving it a good scrub with fine steel wool and water, it was clear there was still some worthwhile grain there. After carefully glueing a small block of walnut into the broken fore-end section with full strength araldite I was able to chisel and rasp the wood back until it looked like the primary shape. Further smoothing and application of several coats of Birchwood Casey's Tru-Oil, dulled back with fine steel wool brought it back to acceptable condition without removing too many of life's imperfections.

A new tenon and the twin escutcheon plates were made from some mild steel scrap but finding tiny No.4 slot-headed woodscrews involved a visit to eBay followed by a few weeks' wait. Cleaning



Fitting replacement tenon and escutcheon plates.

the woodwork also revealed several other repairs had been effected during the 170 or so years since the gun was made. The German silver fore-end cap was removed and cleaned with Brasso and the rear ramrod pipe taken off. Importantly, while



Left side of the action.



Buttplate - the old woodwork shrank a fair bit over 170 years.



The electrolytic de-rusting process.



After de-rusting.



The 'furniture' after dismantling, mostly sand castings.

some restoration was obviously needed it seemed that making it look like new was both difficult and wrong - replicas look new because they are new, originals at least need to include some 'battle scars'.

A piece of 10mm square steel was milled on two sides using ball-nose end mills then draw filed to replace the missing underlug - and a pair of ramrod tubes was turned up then soft-soldered back on to the barrel prior to finishing. While this sounds simple, the old twist forged Damascus barrel resisted my soft soldering attempts vigorously.

Tinning the barrel (getting a reasonable coat of solder bound to its surface) was





## Massive EOY Leupold Clearance

### VX-3HD



Leupold VX-3HD  
1.5-5x20 ZL Duplex.....\$789

Leupold VX-3HD 1.5-5x20 CDS ZL  
Illuminated Firedot Twilight Hunter...\$1095



Leupold VX-3HD 2.5-8x36  
CDS ZL Duplex.....\$789



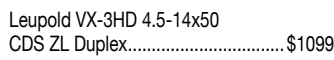
Leupold VX-3HD 3.5-10x40  
CDS ZL Duplex.....\$789



Leupold VX-3HD 3.5-10x50  
CDS ZL Duplex.....\$945



Leupold VX-3HD 4.5-14x40  
CDS ZL Duplex.....\$945



Leupold VX-3HD 4.5-14x50  
CDS ZL Duplex.....\$1099

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Leupold VX-Freedom 2-7x33  
Rimfire MOA.....Just \$475

Leupold VX-Freedom 3-9x40  
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Leupold VX-Freedom 3-9x40  
CDS Duplex.....Just \$495

Leupold VX-Freedom 3-9x33 EFR  
Fine Duplex.....Just \$630



Leupold VX-Freedom 4-12x40  
CDS Duplex.....Just \$550

Leupold VX-Freedom 4-12x50  
CDS Duplex.....Just \$630



Leupold VX-Freedom 4-12x50  
CDS Duplex.....Just \$630

Leupold VX-Freedom 4-12x40  
Long Range Duplex.....Just \$475

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Display True Ballistic  
Range Technology  
Magnum Special Price ..... Just \$315



### Mark 5 HD

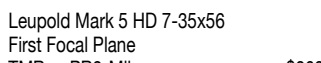
Leupold Mark 5 HD 3.6-18x44  
H59 Reticle in FFP ..... Just \$2995



Leupold Mark 5 HD 5-25x56  
First Focal Plane  
PR2-MOA .....\$3230  
Horus H59 .....\$3685



Leupold Mark 5 HD 7-35x56  
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Illuminated TREMOR3 Reticle.....\$4995



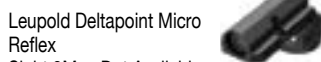
### Freedom RDS

Leupold Freedom RDS 1  
MOA Dot with Pictinny  
Mount ..... Just \$399

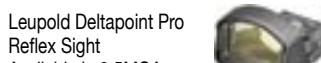


### Deltapoint

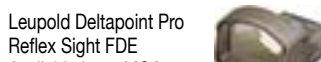
Leupold Deltapoint Micro  
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Reflex Sight FDE  
Available in 2.5MOA or  
6MOA Red Dot  
Standard Model.....\$740  
Night Vision Capable.....\$899

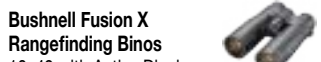


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to suit Deltapoint Pro  
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**iA-317**.....\$3365  
384x288 sensor 17 µm • 1200m Detection  
Range

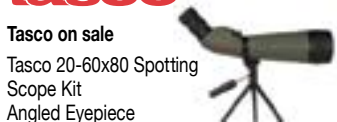
**iA-617**.....\$4080  
640x512 Sensor 17 µm • 1200m Detection  
Range

**iA-612**.....\$5130  
640x512 Sensor 12 µm • 2000m Detection



### Tasco on sale

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Tasco Sportsman 3-9x40  
Includes Weaver Rings..... Just \$139



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Includes Weaver Rings..... Just \$149



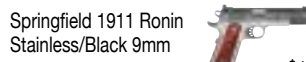
Tasco World Class 4-12x40  
Includes Weaver Rings..... Just \$159



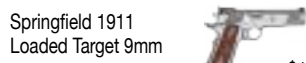
Tasco World Class 6-18x50  
Includes Weaver Rings..... Just \$179



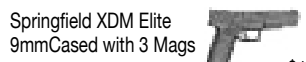
Springfield 1911 Ronin  
Stainless/Black 9mm  
.....\$1615



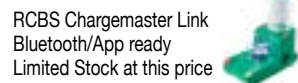
Springfield 1911  
Loaded Target 9mm  
.....\$1975



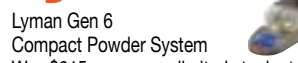
Springfield XDM Elite  
9mm Cased with 3 Mags  
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.....Was \$655 now just \$495



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Mauser M03 Adjustable Stock  
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2 MONTH LAY-BY WITH A 20% DEPOSIT

## Vineyard survivor

tricky until I saw a process on YouTube involving rubbing molten solder on the carefully fluxed surface with steel wool. This worked and I finally found by laying the barrel on some bricks and binding the underlug to it tightly with wire then warming it with a gas torch, the two surfaces bonded. A ramrod was also made from some 5/16" oak dowel and a small brass end turned up and fitted.

The rusty iron bits including the barrel were de-rusted electrolytically using a tablespoon of washing soda per litre of water in various sized containers. The small rusty parts were suspended in a beaker of this solution adding an iron strap as the anode (positive) and the parts themselves attached to the negative terminal to become the cathode. My power supply is a 30-volt 10amp variable lab power supply, the current adjusted to provide a small stream of bubbles from each electrode (I used my rust blueing tank as container for the barrel). The bigger the parts, the higher the current chosen but typically I used around 300mA for between three and 10 hours.

After a few hours the parts were removed and wiped with a rag. They came out coated in black oxide and some of the flaky residue fell to the bottom of the container but it's not an aggressive process, leaving the parts relatively clean grey steel with minimal pitting. William Hodgetts' name became readable on the lock plate after de-rusting and, apart from proof marks and the number 4, is the only identifying mark. While quality guns of this period were 'browned' it seemed from references and appearance of the barrel beneath the old stock the simpler rust blueing process was how it was originally finished, so this is how I refinished the cleaned steel surfaces of the small parts and later the barrel.

Once reassembled the gun has regained some of its original appearance as a single-barrelled percussion trade piece from the mid-19th century. Despite the perils of the pandemic I caught up with Ian Young and Kyla to show them the restoration job when Ian was able to pass on much of the included information and was touched that this piece of local history has found a safe home.

• Acknowledgements: Thanks to Heather Latz of Marion Historical Society and to Sue and Peter Rosser for hosting Ian's post-restoration reunion with the gun. Reference: McKenna, Joseph (2021) *The Gun Makers of Birmingham 1660-1960*, McFarland & Co, North Carolina. ●



Draw-filing the underlug.



Solder lines under the barrel showing where the missing underlug had been.



Ian, right, examines the now visible 'W. Hodgetts' inscription on the lock plate.

### Checking the gauge (for the mathematically inclined)

Calibre (expressed as a gauge) = number of balls per pound of lead (1lb = 454 grams); the density of lead is 11.3 grams per cubic centimetre; bore diameter of the gun measures 1.76cm so radius is  $1.76/2 = 0.88\text{cm}$ ; volume of a sphere is  $\frac{4}{3} \times \pi \times (\text{radius}^3) = \frac{4}{3} \times 3.142 \times 0.88 \times 0.88 \times 0.88 = 2.85\text{cm}^3$ ; multiplying this volume by the density of lead gives  $2.85 \times 11.3 = 32.3$  grams; 1lb of lead could therefore make  $454/32.3 = 14$  of these balls, ie, it's 14 gauge (as suggested by the proof marks).



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30-30 WINCHESTER	150	2390 fps
300 BLK	150	1900 fps
300 WINCHESTER MAG.	150	3260 fps
300 WSM	150	3260 fps
308 WINCHESTER	150	2820 fps
350 LEGEND	150	2325 fps
7MM-08 REMINGTON	140	2612 fps
7MM REMINGTON MAG.	140	3100 fps



# Turkey shoot

The Yildiz Pro 20-gauge deserves your attention, says John McDougall

**Y**ildiz shotguns from Turkey have been coming to Australia for more than a decade and during that time have proved to be very reliable firearms. The consistency of these guns goes unquestioned since their arrival and the Pro series are premium grade which compare well to the best on offer from Italy and other manufacturers around the world.

I've reviewed several of the cheaper Yildiz guns and some of the Pro series in 12-gauge and all have been extremely dependable. The 20-gauge on review here came supplied with some Remington 20-gauge ammunition from Australian distributor Raytrade and I have to say the performance of this well-made gun was impressive. It doesn't come with the cheaper price tag of under \$1000 as with basic Yildiz models as the woodwork and Boss lock used in the Pro models is without comparison throughout the stable. Supplied in a sturdy wooden lockable gun case, the Yildiz Pro Sporter in 20-gauge looks a bargain.

## Barrels

The gun measures 1200mm overall (47¼") and the 760mm (30") barrels are faultlessly finished in a deep lustrous blue, verging on black. Fitted with an 8mm parallel ventilated rib with red fluorescent filament front sight, the gun is every bit a Sporter with the exception of a mid-sight which could be

fitted aftermarket for a very nominal fee.

The top rib and side ribs are expertly fixed and look amazing, complementing the blueing and polishing about the monobloc so far as quality assurance is concerned. As mentioned, the barrels are attached close to the receiver by a Boss locking system whereby a bolt passes over a bite between them. This, coupled with a bifurcated jointing system with replaceable trunnions in the receiver wall, make for a strong action. The gun is chambered for 76mm (3") cartridges and there's no indication if the Yildiz Pro 20-gauge is suited to steel shot loadings though being a Magnum with 76mm chamber, I believe it would be suited for use with 'ordinary' steel shot loads no larger than 4-shot using less than Modified (half) choke.

At the muzzle end of the barrels Mobil interchangeable choke tubes are installed for greater versatility whether shooting sporting clays, skeet targets or hunting. These are 42mm long with two additional chokes having external collars and measuring 65mm, marked on the leading edge with grooves for ready identification - five grooves for Cylinder and one for Full choke. There are five 42mm chokes from Cylinder to Full and two extended collar chokes - Modified and Full. The choke spanner is well designed and highly efficient so top marks to Yildiz.

## Receiver

This is finished in the same coloured blueing to complement the barrels, the triggerfoot in polished steel the only metal feature not blued. Small engraved borders surround the raised sides on the receiver and are tastefully completed without being extravagant. Overall the receiver looks smart with excellent metal-to-metal fitting along with faultless metal-to-wood inletting, design of the triggerguard generous and would easily accommodate thin leather gloves.

The top lever is traditionally positioned to the rear of the receiver while the barrel selector-cum-safety catch is to the rear of the top tang behind the top lever - it worked positively and faultlessly. Inside the receiver the replaceable trunnions upon which the barrels pivot are well fitted and the tolerances accompanying the barrel set to the receiver excellent, with no lateral movement.

Placement of the triggerfoot although non-adjustable is comfortable, its design and polished surface excellent to the touch while trigger releases are similar at around 2kg for each barrel. Both trigger pulls are firm and positive and there's no wondering when they'll release, the trigger mechanism operating on the recoil of the gun to set the second barrel (inertia trigger system).

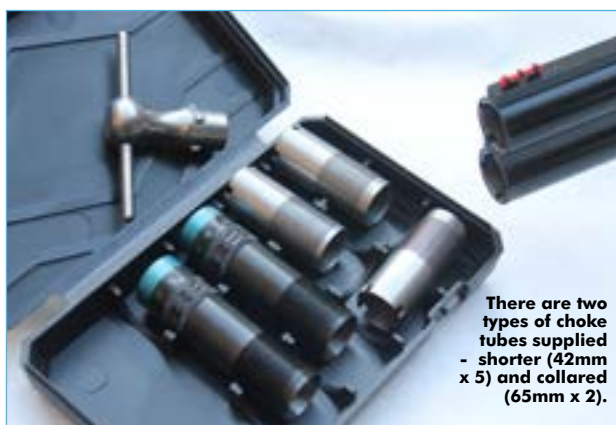




Wooden hard case with suitable covering and lining. All accessories and instruction manual included.



Design of the top lever is comfortable.



There are two types of choke tubes supplied - shorter (42mm x 5) and collared (65mm x 2).



Close-up of the fore-end mechanism showing excellent wood-to-metal inletting.



Highly polished monobloc showing the bite below the ejectors where the cross-bolt locks and the heavy-duty ejectors.

## Yildiz Pro 20-gauge

### Stock and fore-end

These are grade 4 walnut which features excellent grain character and colouring. Finished in oil and chequered at around 20 lines per inch, the Yildiz Pro 20-gauge also has comfortable recoil which makes for perfect and positive gun mount, recoil surprisingly reduced almost to the point where it's non-existent. Dimensions of the stock are standard for a Sporter and balance the barrels perfectly.

Chequering about the fore-end is a little light-on though the pistol grip is generous. The fore-end release latch is typical of those from most manufacturers and functions positively, not scaled-down as you might expect with a smaller than 12-gauge gun, the latch full-sized and quite manageable to operate. A tulip or Schnabel-style fore-end is used and typical for shotguns with specific application to sporting clays which of course doesn't prevent it being used in the field or for other clay target disciplines.

### Over the traps

Delightful is the word which immediately comes to mind as I write this review, the smaller 20-gauge gun well balanced and swings smoothly with its 30" barrels. With many shooting disciplines offering sub-gauge competitions, if you're in the market for a 20-gauge sporting clays gun then this is the best I've reviewed so far.

Priced below \$4000, it's a premium gun and despite being made in Turkey which hasn't yet established its credentials as well as Italy but is getting close, the Yildiz Pro 20-gauge Sporter is undoubtedly a well-made sporting firearm, these sentiments supported by a leading gunsmith associate of mine as the mechanical workings are excellent.

These premium guns appear every bit as good as many of their Italian rivals and actually superior to some. I couldn't fault the Yildiz Pro 20-gauge and for those who don't want to pay the prices asked for Italian or German guns in sub-gauge, these Yildiz Pro models are a highly recommended alternative. ●



Super-strong ejectors and sturdy Boss locking system are great features.

A photograph of a shooter in a green vest and cap aiming a Yildiz Pro 20-gauge Sporter at a clay target. The shooter is positioned on the left side of the frame, holding the gun with both hands. The background shows a grassy field and a cloudy sky. The gun is a 20-gauge Sporter with 30-inch barrels. The overall scene is set outdoors during the day.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Maker:** Yildiz, Turkey  
**Model:** Yildiz Pro 20-gauge Sporter 30" barrels  
**Distributor:** Raytrade, Victoria raytrade.com.au  
**Overall length:** 1200mm/47¼"  
**Overall weight:** 3.45kg/7lb 10oz  
**Barrel length:** 76cm/30"  
**Barrel weight:** 1.45kg/3lb 3oz  
**Bore and chamber:** 76mm chamber, 20-gauge bore  
**Chokes:** 42mm Mobil in Cylinder, Improved Cylinder, Modified, Improved Modified, Full; 65mm Mobil chokes with extended collars - Modified and Full  
**Trigger pulls:** Under barrel 2kg/4lb 8oz, over barrel 2.2kg/5lb  
**Stock and dimensions:** Grade 4 walnut stock and fore-end with chequering at 20 lines/inch. Length of pull: 375mm/14¾", drop at comb: 40mm/1.57", drop at heel: 60mm/2.36"  
**Accessories:** Fitted lockable hard wooden case, instruction booklet, gun sock and choke tube case  
**Warranty:** Five years  
**Price:** Recommended retail: \$3950 (same as the 12-gauge model)



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Useless scope-lens protection for hunting: leather caps will degrade and shrink in rain and are slow to remove while flip-ups aren't much faster and add tunnel vision.

# Get the covers on

Hunting in wet weather, as Samuel B. Mann found, is problematic for scopes

Rain and cold conditions can be serious problems in riflescope usage and before O-rings were used it wasn't unusual to have scopes fog-up in the wet. My mate in Idaho says not only did the old Weavers fog-up but, if he took them out in '40-below' temperatures, the reticles were likely to pop. Some German scopes were susceptible to water entry too and while I'm a fan of the old Nickel Marburg optics and mechanical integrity, some say their lens cement was brittle and they could leak.

There's a bit of hairy fungus inside the objective of my Supra 4x36 but you can't see it from the business end. The scroll slot of their 2.5-6x variable was only sealed by a layer of graphite grease beneath the power ring, inclining me more towards the Zeiss

design where the entire ocular was turned to change magnification, negating the need for a slot.

Some scopes had good reputations for keeping rain out as far back as the 1950s and the Lyman Alaskan was one of them. Some cynics say the 'all-weather' label was justified just by their early use of turret caps but the turrets had no seal beneath the housing. Bausch & Lomb scopes and Leupold's Pioneer had no turrets to leak, with all zeroing done in the mounts.

Once Zeiss/Hensoldt had proper turret caps after World War Two they should've been quite weatherproof - I've had four of their post-war scopes and all were still clear as a bell. Swarovski and Schmidt & Bender were probably much the same though I've had two Swaros and one S&B

where the movements seized up, possibly from heavy grease solidifying around sturdy adjustments unmoved for years. My Pecar 3-7x variable went rusty on Stewart Island in 1978 despite daily cleaning though the internals never let me down.

Kahles claimed to be the first scope-maker to use O-rings (in 1960). My Helia Super 2.3-7x bought new in 1980 kept the moisture out well for the first 21 years at least, then I found deer's blood on the ocular and washed it off with lens cleaner. Next day I was caught in the heaviest downpour I've seen while hunting and the scope fogged up. Whether seal-eating lens cleaner, age or blood enzymes were the cause it earned the scope a trip home to Austria though the passing of time negated the warranty and refurbishment cost me





**Two bikini covers with a much-repaired Uncle Mike's flip-off pair. The latter is quick to release but still not fast enough.**

**See-through covers may be sighted through but rain on the lenses can still spoil the shot. To save the scope they must fit tightly on the bells.**

\$540. But it was money well spent as the scope has served another 20 years since.

With modern O-rings and 'no questions asked' warranties such problems shouldn't worry you now, unless your scope gives up on the trip of a lifetime. Yet rain can still cause trouble by reaching your lenses and obscuring the view and while I've tried all sorts to stop that happening, the old leather lens covers were never an option. Even if you were prepared to ruin them that way they could be hard to prise off when wet - and slow at any time.

Plastic ones held with elastic or rubber are pretty useless too, as if they're loose enough to take off quickly they'll let water run down the sides to pool in front of the lower lens. My favourites for many years were Uncle Mike's flip-off lens covers

which fitted into the ocular and objective overhangs and were held together by two stout pieces of rubber. A loop from the front cover secured them to the rifle via a rubber band around the fore-end and, when the scope was needed, you flipped up the rear cover with your thumb and the assembly would be thrown clear with a small loop around the scope barrel stopping it going too far.

This is quick as you can remove a cover but maybe not quick enough. I was hunting in the Wonnangatta 30 years ago when it started to rain so I unwrapped the covers and put them on the lenses and as the rain increased I took a noisy orange raincoat from the daypack and put that on. That'll be the end of the hunting I thought as I tramped off but five steps later a big hind

jumped out from some gorse bush just ahead. I slipped the safety and flipped the covers but she was gone into more of the head-high scrub. Disengaging the Sako's safety had become second-nature and took no time as I raised the rifle but that fraction of second for the scope covers was too much.

I have bikini covers for some rifles but they're not much fun, slower to take off than the Uncle Mike togs and finding them afterwards could be an embarrassment in the sand dunes. Flip-up lens covers are even worse. You might manage the rear one to hinge up but if there's still one at the front, your view will be "darker than a black steer's tookus" as The Stranger told *The Big Lebowski*. And the bulky housing and flipped-up door obscures the peripheral view.

## Get the covers on

See-through covers are a bit sad but can make some sense. They cut luminosity and on distant shots the front one might even mess with your bullet placement. If the rear one fits tight you could use it alone and just keep your barrel down but even then tunnel vision is worse than from modern field stops and rubber eyepieces - at least they can be used without removal. At close range there's a chance you might get a shot off if raindrops on the plastic haven't totally obscured your view.

On occasions when I think a shot is imminent I walk in the rain with barrel down and a hand over the eyepiece and if a drop or two of water reaches the lens but not right in the middle I ignore it. Try not to wipe the glass in the field as it's better to have a dirty lens than a scratched one. If hunting in cold weather don't take your scope straight into a warm hut in the evening, clean the rifle up outside and put it in a gun sock and case before taking it inside.

Which leads me to how to clean and store scopes at home. Firstly, point the lenses up and try to remove any dust with a puffer or soft brush, hoping grit will fall away from the glass and housing. In order to prevent biological growth on the lenses I prefer not to huff on them myself but pass the scope quickly over water vapour from a recently boiled kettle then blot it off with a clean



**Best not to use scope covers in gun storage. A tissue 'mob cap' can keep dust off the objective but allow air to circulate around the lens.**

tissue. If you have a really clean cloth such as optometrists give out with spectacles that might be even better. I'm wary of lens cleaning solutions in case they eat seals or damage coatings but, if you must use one, dab it on with that cloth. If you polish the lenses do it from the centre out, radially and not round and round.

To prevent fungal growth (and rust on your rifle) don't store it in an unlined shed, subject to extreme changes in temperature. Ideally there should be some air movement around the outer lenses, so leaving the scope covers on may not be a good idea. At the same time you do need something to keep dust off the objective lens if it is facing up and I've used pieces of cling wrap over the bells but that may not help much with the air either (it could keep dust off see-through covers if you leave them on though).

However, my latest idea is a tissue mob cap for the objective, formed on some bigger housing to ensure loose fitting and wrapped with sticky tape for a better chance of air flow. But back to the bush and what's the best way to be ready to shoot when it's raining? Modern water-repelling lenses may do the trick but I prefer to keep them dry if possible. My answer starts with the so-called Safari Sling. Maybe not much use in the conga-line of African expeditions where a rifle held horizontally all day could make for trouble and bad friends, but is great when hunting on your own. It

**Best wet-day solution may be a Safari Sling and tuck the scope under your coat. Use of higher studs, not the zip, makes access quicker.**



**The ocular of an old Unertl Hawk, acquired for research, that's led a hard life. Not only has it a hairy fungus at the right but it seems the owner handled it with a rough glove.**

mitigates the weight of a heavy rifle and keeps it at your fingertips for immediate action, while leaving both hands free for glassing and other duties.

When the rain comes I put on a raincoat at least long enough to cover a scope on a rifle hanging at hip level. It should sit there with no other protection needed but be available in a moment if required, as long as you've not pulled a cord tight at the hem, while a coat not zipped to the bottom but held on the upper studs will let you take the rifle out quicker. Another advantage of your rifle slung horizontally is that when the sun comes out there's less chance your scope will be pointed at it, endangering the reticle with magnifying-glass rays like an ant in the schoolyard. ●





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# Quiet achievers

As Con Kapralos found, Aguila's latest rimfire ammo packs a few surprises

While most owners of a .22 Long Rifle (LR) rimfire will use high-velocity or hyper-velocity ammunition for hunting and plinking applications, the use of lower velocity standard or subsonic ammo is popular where minimal noise is a prerequisite. Hunting with the diminutive rimfire round in the subsonic loading not only provides an additional degree of stealth but is also generally quite accurate.

Having been a fan of standard and subsonic velocity rimfire loads for target shooting, hunting and plinking for many years, the introduction of the Mexican Aguila brand to Australia by Raytrade gave *Australian Shooter* the chance to review three of its specialty subsonic .22LR rimfire

loads in the 38-grain Subsonic Hollow Point, 20-grain Super Colibri and unique Sniper Subsonic with its 60-grain lead bullet. Those latter two loads are unlike anything I've seen in 30 years of shooting the rimfire calibre and testing them would be an interesting exercise.

## **.22HP Subsonic Hollow Point**

This is a traditional hunting round loaded at 1024fps which results in a quiet muzzle report. The 38-grain slug is lead with a very fine cannellure around the base near the crimp of the brass casing, while the tip of the slug has a hollow point built into it to ensure optimal performance when shooting small game such as rabbits, hares and foxes.

Shooting this round through my

German-made Weihrauch HW66 rifle at a testing range of 50m produced no surprises. This rifle shoots any rimfire standard and subsonic ammunition well and the Aguila load followed the trend with five-shot groups all coming in at 35mm or less - easily 'Minute-of-Rabbit'! All cases extracted positively with minimal residue left in the barrel after shooting a box of 50 as validated by passing a couple of dry patches between changes in ammunition. A great round for general hunting out to 75m or plinking.

• **.22HP Subsonic Hollow Point** - Bullet weight 2.66 grams/38-grains; velocity at muzzle 1024fps, at 100-yards 873fps; energy at muzzle 87ft-lb, at 100-yards 72ft-lb; packaging 50 rounds per box.



### .22 Super Colibri

This is a superb short-distance .22LR rimfire load designed specifically for ultra-quiet hunting or target shooting applications. Target shooting at indoor ranges would be the Super Colibri's forte and as a hunting round, shooting around rural outbuildings at ranges less than 30m would be ideal. The 20-grain lead projectile would have enough energy to deal with any pest species without retaining excess energy to ricochet.

Range testing the Super Colibri at 25m produced pleasing results with five-shot groups averaging 40mm or less from the Weihrauch HW66. What's interesting is the projectile could be seen through the scope exiting the barrel and hitting the target as it's only travelling at a tad over 500fps. This round would be my pick for dealing with feral pigeons which tend to infest farm sheds and grain storage areas as well as rabbits making their homes in close proximity to rural outbuildings. A most effective load, Aguila.

- **.22 Super Colibri** - Bullet weight 1.3 grams/20-grains; velocity at muzzle 590fps, 100-yards 528fps; energy at muzzle 16ft-lb, 100-yards 12ft-lb; packaging 50 rounds per box.

### .22 Sniper Subsonic

I don't believe I've ever seen a rimfire loading with a projectile heavier than 50 grains - until now. The Aguila .22 Sniper Subsonic features a 60-grain lead solid-point bullet on a short brass case and has overall dimensions identical to a standard .22LR round. Being a subsonic load, the 60-grain bullet has muzzle velocity of 950fps and is designed for rifles with barrels 20" and

above. Being a solid-point bullet this quirky little round could be useful in rimfire metallic silhouette shooting (with its extra bullet weight) and also be a handy hunting round at closer ranges on slightly larger pest species.

Range testing at the nominal distance of 50m did produce some interesting results. Shooting initially through my Weihrauch HW66, the 22" heavy sporter barrel with one-in-16" twist wouldn't stabilise the heavier 60-grain projectile, with 'keyholing' quite noticeable. I borrowed my cousin's Norinco JW-15A (one-in-14") and while it's a budget no-frills rifle, it shot five extremely tight five-shot groups at an average of 21mm with no stability issues. Cases extracted without fuss but keep in mind the brass casing is shorter than the normal .22LR case length.

This load will find many fans in the rimfire world who want a heavier projectile for their requirements and Aguila have a winner in the .22 Sniper Subsonic. Just be mindful a slightly faster-twist .22LR barrel (in the order of one-in-14") may be warranted to stabilise this longer projectile. I'd buy a box of 50 to try out in your trusty .22LR rimfire before stocking up in bulk.

- **.22 Sniper Subsonic** - Bullet weight 3.9 grams/60-grains solid-point; velocity at muzzle 950fps, at 100-yards 848fps; energy at muzzle 120ft-lb, at 100-yards 96ft-lb; packaging 50 rounds per box.

For more on the Aguila .22 Subsonic and Colibri rimfire ammunition check with your firearms retailer or visit [raytrade.com.au](http://raytrade.com.au) ●



The twist-rate of the Weihrauch HW66 barrel couldn't sufficiently stabilise the heavier and longer 60-grain projectiles on the Sniper Subsonic loads.



The Norinco JW-15A bolt-action in .22LR had a twist rate to shoot Sniper Subsonics without issue.



One of many five-shot groups achieved with Subsonic Hollow Point loads.



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# Mozzies

## now carrying an added threat

Bob Boland

**S**hooters, hunters, fishers and people who enjoy the great outdoors now face a new risk and responsibility in the shape of mosquito-borne Japanese encephalitis - the risk being catching the disease and the responsibility reporting possible cases. The virus is new to Australia and affects pigs, horses, donkeys and waterbirds (particularly waders) and so far has been detected everywhere except Western Australia, though its highly contagious nature means it's only a matter of time before it shows up there too.

Thankfully Japanese encephalitis can't be directly transmitted between mammals and there's no risk from eating pork so both controlling feral pig numbers and reporting possible cases are some of the ways we can play our part. While the vast majority of people who contract the disease will experience mild or no symptoms, one in 250 of infected people suffer inflammation of the brain which can cause permanent disability or death and while your chances of that are slight, there's no point taking the risk. As

such it's vital that in the field, at the range and even at home we take appropriate precautions.

There's no cure for Japanese encephalitis, treatment instead focusing on managing the symptoms until the body can deal with the infection. As the virus is new to this country most people haven't yet been exposed to it so have no immunity and we don't know what the impact in terms of infection numbers will be. However, it's worth noting that Australia has a history of effectively managing mosquito-borne diseases, for example geographically we should have endemic malaria but thanks to good management the mainland is free of it.

While the primary host of Japanese encephalitis is wading birds, pigs are an amplifying host and the vector is mosquitos, so most of the precautions relate to minimising contact with the latter and avoiding stagnant water where they breed and using insect repellent and mosquito coils in camp or at your shooting base.

As the mosquitos which spread the virus are most active at dusk and dawn,

organising outdoor activities at these times is not advisable, the obvious drawback being dusk and dawn are prime hunting and fishing times and while hunters and particularly stalkers actively work to minimise their scent, most insect repellents do smell.

Furthermore as domestic and feral pigs, horses, donkeys and waterfowl are common across many areas where people hunt, fish and bushwalk, it's not only pig hunters but anyone who enjoys the great outdoors who now have an additional risk to manage and the flooding and generally wet summer many parts of the country have endured mean mosquito numbers are unusually high.

Minimising your chances of contracting this virus include the use of loose long-sleeved clothing and insect screens on tents while gloves and face nets are good investments. There are also a few insect repellents with low or no odour which may be worth investigating though Australian government advice is the best repellents include diethyltoluamide (DEET), oil of lemon eucalyptus or picaridin. While there



# Fresh concern for Top End hunters



AUSTRALIAN IS FACING the possibility of another mosquito-borne virus entering our shores in the form of Lumpy Skin Disease. Detected recently in Indonesia this affects cattle, buffalo and banteng and while it kills only rarely, it causes significant animal welfare and production problems.

The concern is Lumpy Skin Disease could be transmitted via either tropical storms or the Torres Strait into the Top End in the same way Japanese encephalitis found its way here. Compounding the issue is the challenge of detecting these as diseases in Top End cattle, buffalo and banteng populations are notoriously hard to identify let alone manage.

Banteng are a species of cattle native to Asia where they're classified as endangered, though there are feral populations in Australia and as such this is the only place in the world these animals, which boast beautiful hides and good horns, can be hunted.

As Japanese encephalitis has demonstrated, a new disease can become established across multiple states before it's detected which makes control, let alone eradication, incredibly difficult. Additionally, the rapid spread of Lumpy Skin Disease from Africa/Middle East through China, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and now Indonesia in two years is terrifying.

As such it's vital that people who have contact with cattle, buffalo and banteng are on alert for any disease issues and report any unusual symptoms in these animals, specifically signs of Lumpy Skin Disease including fever, watering eyes, depression, lumps as well as abortions and reduced milk yield.

The significance of keeping Australia free of this disease is hard to overstate as both beef and dairy industries would be severely impacted and avoiding it will give our exporters a significant advantage both in terms of price and production. - **Bob Boland**

are two vaccines which protect against Japanese encephalitis, as the virus is new to Australia both access and price are problematic at the moment.

Finally, we have an opportunity and responsibility as shooters and those who regularly visit feral pig habitat in terms of reporting possible Japanese encephalitis in these populations, specifically if you find a litter of dead piglets which haven't fallen prey to a predator or there's an unusual absence of suckers where adult numbers are stable. In this case contact the National Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.

## Minimise the risk

- Use insect repellents - the government recommends those with diethyltoluamide (DEET), oil of lemon eucalyptus or picaridin
- Wear light coloured, loose long-sleeved clothing
- Eliminate or manage stagnant water to limit mosquitos breeding (regularly empty and refill animal water bowls)

- Install flyscreens at home, in caravans and tents
- Use insecticide sprays, mosquito coils and vapour dispensers
- Avoid areas with mosquitos particularly around sunset and dawn
- Consider vaccination
- Horse owners consider using a hooded rug and fly mask and minimise mosquito breeding sites
- Note: Japanese encephalitis is *not* transmitted from animals to humans or by eating pork ●



Pigs both feral and domestic are a Japanese encephalitis host.



A man in camouflage gear and a backpack is walking through a rocky creek bed in a bushy area. The man is seen from behind, wearing a green long-sleeved shirt, camouflage pants, and a backpack. He is walking on a path made of large, dark rocks. The surrounding area is filled with green grass, shrubs, and trees. The background shows a dense forest with tall trees and a clear sky.

# Stress-buster

A family bush retreat was just what Chris Redlich needed

With the phone running hot at work and a mounting workload, I needed a circuit breaker from the 'good stress' of being too busy and a week's hunting with the family was as good as the doctor's orders. Departure day couldn't come quick enough and it was all smiles as we drove north to our destination, the emotion felt never seeming to change when travelling together for holidays.

Entering the gates of the property it was all low-gear driving from here and as we descended further into the valley, our phone service began to disappear along with my stress level and from the tops we were surrounded by panoramic views under the flight path of Brisbane-bound air traffic. Barely a stone's throw from Queensland's Sunshine Coast it was hard to believe we were in the middle of remote deer hunting country but we'd arrived, set up camp and were keen to explore the hills.

An afternoon nap was conveniently interrupted by the call of native birds perched in the trees above our camp. I was already feeling refreshed and, equipped with my 300 WSM, donned my gear in preparation for a scout around close to camp before sunset. The chances of spotting deer in the winter months post-roar is not impossible but a greater challenge and I was more than up for it. The property consists of steep valleys and feeder gullies choked with lantana, making it tough for hunting though offset by spectacular views on reaching the tops.

My chosen locale for our first afternoon would be no more than a kilometre from camp as the crow flies but reality on the ground felt more like 10km. The steep pinch in altitude burned my calf and thigh

An outing with a beautiful creek setting.





Carl glasses the gullies.

muscles as my heart rate accelerated with every step yet despite the cold I'd broken sweat and took a breather, glassing the gullies from my vantage on high.

While cooling down I recalled about a decade earlier almost to the day as an infantryman conducting pre-deployment training in the mountains of Canungra in South-East Queensland and how much I didn't miss it one bit. It was challenging and although my deer hunting adventures in the hills offer physical similarities to my role then, stalking deer is much more enjoyable when conducted at my own pace. Now rested, I proceeded along the ridge line around the tops of the gullies which yielded no deer activity and with the sun beginning to disappear over the mountains I decided to head for camp, arriving to the warmth of the fire just after dark.

I lapped up every ounce of a well-earned sleep-in from the comfort of my swag as the campfire smouldered until our dog Buck, curled up on my son's swag, began to stretch in response to my stirring. Weather reports weren't favourable but if we were going to make the most of dry conditions we had to start hunting soon. After time around camp that morning my wife Sue and son Carl decided to try the hills to the south of camp, myself hunting solo in the opposite direction with daughter Rachel content to keep the fire going and relax in camp.

The first few climbs were crested with ease courtesy of my Yamaha trail bike which I parked atop of one of the many ridge lines and as soon as the motor was turned off my surroundings fell totally silent. After clearing the immediate ridge-line and encouraged by discovery of fresh

deer sign I proceeded further north along the track, ever vigilant for any potential movement. Daylight was rapidly fading and just as I thought I'd be heading to camp empty-handed my fortunes were about to change.

After topping a ridge and hugging the track's edge towards the valley floor, a brief rustle followed by a flash of movement had my attention. I'd been caught out in open country while two red hinds and a fawn stood 80m above me on the opposite steep face of the ridge and because I'd frozen they were unsure of what danger I presented. The animals stood broadside but my view was partially covered by branches and long grass.

I thought my only chance of a shot would be to slowly raise the rifle and fire from my standing position as any



Fresh deer sign indicates recent activity.



Stunning views enjoyed with the family from the tops.





excessive movement would be a giveaway. Shouldering the T3x Super Lite ever slowly offhand, I rested the Swarovski reticle on the lead hind's shoulder and a 168-grain Barnes TTSX found its mark as it pierced the heart. The other hind and fawn took off then stopped long enough for another shot but I was happy with my lot and watched them disappear over the ridge. Scrambling up the face to the point of contact with the deer, a visible blood trail meant easy tracking - my hind had leapt dead on its feet and come to rest against a tree down the opposite steep gully.

Perched on a log just above my downed meat animal, I notified Sue by two-way radio of my success while soaking up the beautiful surroundings as the sun began to fade. I'd a long haul ahead of me and gladly accepted my wife's help as by this time she and Carl had returned from their hunt and were enjoying some time with Rachel back in camp. Firing up the ute all three made their way to my location.

The family was as excited as I was and after a tricky photo session on the side of the gully, we made use of gravity to retrieve the deer from the hill. What had originally looked an easy task of dragging the deer down the gully became a real challenge in the creek below as thorny flora hampered our every move. Carl and Rachel were less than enamoured by their latest adventure as darkness compounded our attempts at dragging the animal clear. Thankfully the winch came to our rescue and with the deer loaded and my bike retrieved from the ridge, smoke from the campfire welcomed us back.

We hung the deer courtesy of a branch

and gambrel close to camp and it turned out my afternoon fortune was welcome as the next two days brought patchy showers, our downtime spent butchering and dressing the carcass and packing the venison into meals. Fillets prepped and spiced for the plate over the fire while the rain kept us camp side was an experience enjoyed by all and with the week drawing to a close we managed to jag a few more hunts through the hills between showers.

Sporadic rain couldn't dampen our spirits but did managed to dampen the track considerably and with all exit points from camp being straight up and the track completely sodden, I knew we were in for a challenging departure. Warm sunshine on our last day made no difference to the track so I readied the ute's winch in anticipation of a tough climb out and, after attempting the first hill, my fears were realised.

At full revs in low gear the ute slipped and slid, making hauling the trailer all the more difficult and on reaching a point just shy of the crest we were stuck. Then the trailer and ute started to slide backwards in the mud, at which point I had the family run the winch cable before we ended up back at camp. With the winch secured to a large tree base I started the line pull, the droning sound of the winch signalling it was at capacity until it stopped cold.

Subsequent attempts to get it going were futile and with the full weight of the ute and trailer hanging by the cable, the family placed chocks behind the wheels. I had them drop the air pressure in the tyres to help traction which proved successful and I was kicking myself for not lowering the tyre pressures earlier. With lessons learnt

we safely climbed the remaining steep hills to flat country and were on our way home.

The entire week away with the family was a great experience, the ute survived without damage but the winch later required a complete overhaul having taken on water which corroded its electrical components. This only served to highlight that maintaining your vehicle's recovery gear is just as important as maintaining your rifle yet despite the mishaps there's nothing like a beautiful Australian bush retreat for precious healing. ●





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Morgan took this buffalo bull with his Steyr .30-06 and 180-grain Barnes TSX bullets.



# Shoot-out!

As the debate rages on, Brad Allen puts a case for both the .270 Winchester and .30-06 Springfield

**T**alk about an ongoing stoush! These excellent old hunting cartridges have been going toe to toe for almost a century and so far there doesn't appear to be an end to the rivalry in sight. As a history lesson the .30-06 started life as the .30-03 cartridge, strangely enough in 1903 when it was released in the US Military's new Springfield bolt-action battle rifle.

The Springfield was their answer to the overwhelming firepower and accuracy the US Army had faced in Cuba during the Spanish-American War of 1898 from Spanish M93 Mauser rifles in 7x57mm calibre and even though the US won the war, those 7x57mm rifles simply outclassed the US-issued .30-40 Krag rifle and cartridge in every department.

Three years later in 1906 the .30-03 case was shortened by .07" and projectile weight reduced from 220 grains at 2300fps to a 150-grain pointed boat-tail bullet at 2700fps - and the .30-06 Springfield was born. The cartridge's 2700fps was a sizzling muzzle velocity for any rifle at that time and consequently boasted exceptionally flat trajectory. Incidentally, it was the same Mauser rifles and 7x57mm cartridge that British and Australian soldiers had faced during the Second Boer War from 1899 to 1902, which caused the British Empire to eventually upgrade the Lee-Enfield .303 rifle to compete, from the old round-nose 215-grain bullet at just over 2000fps to the 174-grain spitzer at 2450fps.

The late 1800s was a time of incredible advances in both rifles and cartridges,



The .270 case (right) is the same length as its parent case, the .30-03, and as can be seen is slightly longer than the .30-06.





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## Shoot-out!

mainly due to the new 'smokeless' gunpowders which had been developed along with military research and development that was heading towards smaller calibres with lighter weight bullets at much higher velocity, to improve downrange performance and flatten trajectory. All of this military research and development was a boon for sporting shooters and hunters who eagerly adopted the military cartridges of the day for their hunting applications. There are some bolt-action rifles and cartridges from that era which are still entirely relevant and viable options for hunters of today.

It would only be 19 years after the adoption of the .30-06 cartridge in 1925 when Winchester released the .270 Winchester as a factory chambering in its Model 54 bolt-action rifle. Like the .30-06, the .270 was also developed from the .30-03 parent case and is slightly longer in the neck than the .30-06. The .270 was specifically designed as a flat-shooting deer calibre with slightly lighter bullets than the .30-06, so producing less recoil which allowed it to be made in lighter hunting rifles.

My love affair with the .270 started back in the 1980s after a 10-year liaison with the 7mm Remington Magnum, a cartridge born in the early 1960s at the start of the belted magnum craze. It was a wonderful cartridge and I hunted everything from foxes to red deer with it, the big 7mm being accurate enough and recoil of little concern shooting 150-grain Sako soft-points at about 3100fps.

With well-placed shots it killed medium-sized game like the Hammer of Thor but was 2" longer and a full 1.5kg heavier than most comparable .270 rifles. As I'd soon realise there was little noticeable downrange performance between the killing power of the 7mm Rem Mag and the .270, so I eventually jumped ship and bought a lighter .270. Since then I've never looked back and can't say I've ever been in a situation where I wished I had the 7mm Rem Mag again. The truth is that if you're not running the big 7mm at full throttle, the velocities you think you're acquiring are probably much closer to factory .270 ballistics anyway, as the .270 has always been factory loaded to quite respectable velocities.

My current handload for our .270s (Ruger S/S paddle stock and my son's Winchester Extreme Weather) is 54 grains of AR2209 behind the excellent Barnes TTSX 130-grain bullet at 3070fps. This load shoots flat and hits hard and so far has been used with outstanding results on everything from foxes right through to Asian water buffaloes here in Australia and in Africa on plains game including gemsboks, red



hartebeests, springboks and jackals. As can be seen the .270 Winchester is no slouch and, with the right projectile and load, is enough gun for a wide array of medium to larger game animals.

That said I believe the .270 Win is at the bottom end of what's acceptable for our Asian buffaloes but adequate for the African antelopes mentioned. My reason for taking the .270 to Africa was not that I thought it the best calibre for the task, but because the calibre was sufficient for our needs and the rifle was primarily to be used by my two young sons, Macen and Morgan. Accordingly, recoil was also a determining factor and the Winchester Extreme Weather has an excellent, well-shaped Bell and Carlson stock and both boys shot it well. I also had total faith in the 130-grain Barnes TTSX load and the rifle held MOA accuracy with it.

My nephew Frank has hunted with my boys and I since he was 12 years old, so on his 17th birthday I surprised him with a new Ruger Hawkeye S/S rifle in the venerable .270 Win calibre. Since then he has successfully used his .270 to hunt all manner of deer and feral game animals and consequently has become a dedicated .270 man.

The last of my boys to come of age as far as hunting rifles are concerned was Morgan and when I asked him what rifle he'd like he didn't hesitate and blurted out: "A .30-06 so I can shoot buffaloes with it as well as deer." Darn traitor! And so it was that Morgan became the proud owner of a new



**Factory .270 rounds for small deer right up to our medium and larger deer. From left: 145-grain Federal 50 per cent recoil load, 150-grain Winchester Power Point and 130-grain Federal Hi-Shock soft-point.**



**Factory .30-06 rounds to cover a variety of hunting applications up to the size of sambar deer: 150-grain Highland, 180-grain Remington Core-Lokt, 168-grain Winchester Ballistic Silvertip and 150-grain Winchester Power Point.**



Steyr Mannlicher Pro Hunter in .30-06. The unusually shaped composite stock with its adjustable length of pull fits him like a glove with one spacer removed and he shoots handloaded 180-grain Barnes TSX bullets with apparent ease. The first animal he took with it was a bull buffalo in Arnhem Land and many goats, deer and pigs since.

Never having owned one, the .30-06 was new territory for me but I had to agree if you want to shoot a .30-calibre with bullets of 180-grain weight or bigger, the .30-06 is possibly the best non-magnum cartridge for the job. Every African hunting camp I've been in offer 'camp rifles' for clients to hire for 'plains game' and without exception include rifles in .30-06. Most are bolt-action though some offer the Remington 7600 pump-action too, their reasoning being most of their clients are Americans usually familiar with the .30-06 as a deer hunting cartridge. Simply put, the .30-06 when combined with well-constructed bullets of 180 grains or more is a capable calibre for all African plains game species.

A few years ago when I finally had the chance to hunt sambar in Victoria I met a lot of keen sambar hunters, some stalkers and some hound hunters. The one thing I did notice was the .30-06 has a huge following in their ranks, with only a few hunters using bigger cannons like the .300 Win Mag and .308 Norma, although the great 9.3x62 is gaining a significant following there too.

Although they're a large animal any premium big-game bullet of adequate weight from a .30-06 will fell the biggest sambar that ever lived. A favourite load among those knowledgeable hunters is the well-constructed and inexpensive 180-grain Remington Core-Lokt which puts them down without fuss. I have to say I'm extremely impressed by Morgan's .30-06 and only wish I'd been exposed to the calibre years ago. It's an exceptionally versatile round that can realistically be loaded with bullets from 110 grains right up to 240, covering everything from bunnies to buffaloes. On the other hand the .270 can

manage bullets from 90 grains up to 170 and both are versatile performers.

But I have to ask myself if I'd been introduced to the .30-06 all those years ago, what would I be hunting with now? Well I love both calibres and they'll each do just about anything an Aussie hunter asks of them. The .270 will take sambar, buffaloes and African antelopes with quality ammo, while the .30-06 has taken every animal that walks the face of the earth, albeit a tad small to be considered a dangerous game rifle. Both calibres are inherently accurate and neither has an objectionable level of recoil in a well-stocked rifle and both are easy to handload.

At the end of the day the .270 and .30-06 are two excellent, time-proven cartridges which still hold their own against each other and any of the new crop of similar power. But for my money I feel the .30-06 is probably just that bit more versatile though I'm sure most game animals taken with either won't be able to detect the difference. Enjoy the hunt. ●



**Morgan with another billy goat taken for dog meat with his Steyr Mannlicher .30-06 and 180-grain Barnes TSX projectiles.**



# Under wraps

For a hunting advantage,  
Ben Unten says camo your rifle

**T**he vast majority of hunters who are at least mildly keen and have been doing it for more than five minutes have an interest in camouflage and while the target species does have an impact, most of us want to improve our chances of spotting game before they spot us. So whether it's walking up on bunnies, whistling foxes or stalking deer, our chances must be improved by creating some doubt in the animal's mind and as was explained to me many moons ago, camouflage doesn't necessarily mean the animal can't see you, more it has difficulty working out what you are.

I recall trying to whistle up some foxes while in full camo - including gloves and a scrim covering my face - when I looked down at the stainless/synthetic Ruger .223 nestled in my shooting sticks and noticed how bright and shiny the barrel was. I'd

gone to the trouble of disguising myself but the rifle was literally a glow-stick. When I returned from that hunt I set about researching rifle camouflage and discovered everything from Cerakote-type processes to home paint jobs. Although the Ruger has been a great rifle over the years it was relatively inexpensive when I bought it and it's an older firearm so the cost of coating it seemed difficult to justify. And that still left the problem of the scope.

My experience as a tradesman of more than 25 years meant I had my doubts about how successful a DIY paint job would be, particularly finding paint to hold fast to a shiny, stainless rifle barrel long-term. I tried a couple of camo adhesive tapes but found they tended to roll up the barrel when put in a gun bag and were apt to leave a sticky residue and didn't cover the whole stock.

Then I discovered neoprene covers, an option which represented a lightweight, inexpensive and removable solution that not only offered camouflage but an extra layer of protection against damage so I ordered some Boca Shield stock and barrel covers and a Beartooth ScopeGuard cover online. The stock and barrel covers feature a shark tooth pattern inside which as the website says: 'prevents it from sliding or slipping without actually sticking to your rifle.'

The installation process is reasonably straightforward but you must slide the first part over your barrel then roll the sleeve back on itself before unrolling and completing the procedure. The final step is to close the Velcro fasteners which hold it in place. The stock cover sports little elasticised sleeves to hold five spare rounds and after fitting and trimming the barrel sleeve







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I installed the scope cover and fixed with Velcro underneath.

I opted for the sleeve rather than pouch-type scope cover so I wouldn't have to remove it to shoot and risk losing it in the field, the downside being I have no rainwater protection. Overall the installation process took longer to write about than it did to install and, in the field, the covers worked exactly as expected in that they provided excellent camouflage as well as a non-slip surface which was comfortable to grip. There are very few negatives to report. Sometimes the bottom of the scope cover seems in the way a little when

loading the magazine (the Ruger has a detachable floorplate so must be loaded from the top). Also, the barrel sleeve is liable to slide up the barrel slightly when you put the rifle in a gun bag though it takes barely seconds to return it to its correct position and is in no danger of sliding off.

I now feel far more confident when out stalking or whistling up foxes that my rifle won't give the game away, so much so I'm thinking of the same treatment for my .30-06 deer rifle. Neoprene covers are available online and from most good gunshops. ●







# Night into day

As Daniel O'Dea found, the ATN X-Sight changes everything

I was trying to recall the first time I looked through a riflescope. My uncle Barry had a 30-06 sporter built on a 98 Mauser which, as a boy, I'd plead with him to pull out any time we went over. I'm pretty sure it was scoped. The first scope I bought as a teenager was a 4x Nikko Stirling in the early 1980s which cost about \$20 and knowing no better I put it on my spring piston BSA Meteor air rifle which flogged it to death.

Forty years down the track we've seen amazing advances in optics, modern manufacturing and lens technology meaning even

budget-line scopes often have exceptional clarity, while features such as ballistic reticles have led to a complete change in how we consider cartridge ballistics and practical ranging. Recently I unboxed an ATN X-Sight LTV day-night digital rifle-scope sent by Outdoor Sporting Agencies for review. I know these aren't exactly new but this was my first time with a true digital optic and with all my experience based on traditional optics I wasn't sure what to expect.

So what's the difference? In simple terms with a traditional scope you're

looking through a tube full of optical lenses, whereas with digital you're basically peering through a digital camera. One is mechanical so what you see through the tube may be reflected and magnified through a lens - but it's real. With the other what you see is a pixilated image, a digital facsimile of what's appearing in front of the lens, like looking through a video camera on a mini-TV screen - turn it off and there's nothing there.

The ATN X-Sight LTV comes with a rubber eyecup, scope cover, USB-C charging cable, a set of mounting rings, manual, lens cloth and as a day-night scope a separate IR illuminator. The latter looks like a small torch which mounts beside the scope in parallel to light up your prospective target in a non-visible infrared beam. I had to charge the scope for six hours before use then mounted it to a Howa 1500 carbon fibre I had from a previous OSA review and hit the range. It was there I found I needed a Micro SD card (not supplied) for full functionality and also had to download and update the firmware before sighting-in.

Yet all wasn't lost as I worked out the missing Micro SD card just meant I couldn't take pictures or video - I could still sight-in the optic but would have to re-zero after the firmware update. With firmware you need a Windows-based device to download



## Night into day

it which proved difficult in a house full of Macs but thankfully one of my daughters had a Chromebook so after locating an SD card reader I could plug into it, I got the job done. I'm telling you this not to whine about the product or process, just to avoid potential dramas.

Once up and running operation is fairly simple and intuitive so if you can operate TV menu options you should be able to drive the ATN X-Sight choices. The top of the scope body has a keypad much the same as a common remote. A cross-shaped arrangement with up, down, left and right buttons has a central 'OK' or enter button, all multifunctional depending on the mode you're in, a separate button for 'on' and 'off' located in the left upper quadrant.

When powered up the default display shows the forward vision on a rectangular wide screen, a widget either side showing roll (cant) angle on the left and pitch (vertical incline/decline angle) on the right, both measured in degrees and in real time. A small window in the top right displays a magnifying glass with current power setting, a camera or video symbol (dependent on mode selected), SD card and battery level. A press on the central 'enter' button reveals a drop-down menu from which you can toggle through zeroing, reticles, settings and an arrow symbol to exit. The current firmware version number is also displayed and once the desired menu function is reached, a press on the central button selects it.

The ATN X-Sight features 'one-shot zero' which is how the zeroing works as opposed to the practicality of only firing one shot, so do a quick boresight to ensure you'll be on paper. Enter the zeroing menu function

and fire a shot at the target then, looking through the scope, start adjusting towards point of impact using the toggle buttons. A second set of cross-hairs appears virtually a mirror image and as you make adjustments, the main cross-hairs showing in red stays representing the original point of aim, the second set in white representing adjustments made.

Once you've adjusted the white cross-hairs to cover point of impact while the red cross-hairs still cover original point of aim, press the enter button to confirm the new zero and you're done, so theoretically this is one-shot zero. Yet even the manual suggests firing a couple of shots to establish a group from which to base the zero rather than a single round, though either way the



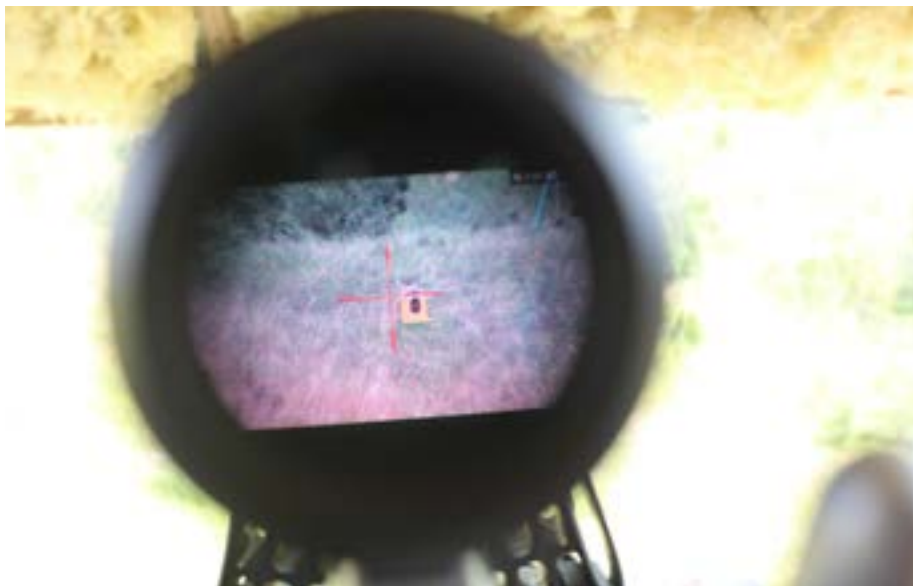
Picture recorded on 3x digital zoom.



Picture in the pitch black of night. There was a fair bit of reflection of the IR illuminator off this 25m target.



Picture taken with the ATN X-Sight LTV on 7.2x digital zoom.



Picture on 9x digital zoom

External view through the X-Sight shows its TV-style widescreen appearance.



system's great and makes zeroing a simple process. Better still, as the zero is digital it effectively represents a grid reference in screen pixilation. This grid reference is displayed in the zeroing function as an X-Y axis, in my case the reference was X55, Y91 which meant once I did update the firmware, or if I had to do a factory reset, all I needed was to enter the zeroing function, adjust to that X-Y refence and confirm - hey presto I'm re-zeroed without firing a shot!

Selecting reticle in the menu offers six options using the up and down buttons to cycle through and centre to select, options varying from plex designs through to a simple red-dot. In the settings menu is the 'sleep' function which lets you select a time (from 5 to 30 minutes) where the scope will go into sleep mode if no movement is detected and once moved automatically exit. Next are 'display widgets' for turning on or off the roll and pitch scales shown in the display if you don't want them visible. 'Factory settings' restore original settings and the manual suggests you record your X and Y zero coordinates prior to a reset.

The main keypad is multi-functional with each button having an alternate direct function, the up-arrow button for instance also controlling the zoom or power setting. The scope provided was a 3-9x and a short press had it cycling through power settings of 3x, 5.4x, 7.2x and 9x - it's a digital scope so digital zoom, not optical. A long press on the down arrow shifts between day and night modes and in night mode a short press cycles through auto, high or low. A short press on the left arrow activates video recording with another short press to stop recording. For still images a press and hold toggles between still and video functions

and a short press takes an individual picture.

On first impressions the digital image didn't match the clarity of traditional optical riflescopes as to me, looking through it was like watching a TV rerun from the '80s with the image grainy, though it's still clear enough to define targets. I did like the roll and pitch feature which removes the need for a scope bubble that many would consider a necessity if you want to stretch the range out. Likewise the one-shot zero feature was great and, true to form, after updating the firmware and doing a factory reset I re-zeroed using the X-Y coordinates and it was spot-on when I sent the next round downrange.

The big advantage is the camera/video and more importantly the day/night capability. The camera side can be fun but awkward to operate as on a rest or bipod it's hard to hold, aim and work the button to take an image freehand as you clearly don't have three hands. I'd prefer a remote button you could tap to the fore-end to take pictures with. Of course you can set the video to record and operate the rifle while recording and the video function can be a good training aid as you can replay your shots and see the sight picture as the shot was broken.

The night vision function is probably the main reason you'd buy a scope like this as it does turn night into day, albeit possibly more grainy and in black and white but functional. With the illuminator mounted and turned on in total darkness, objects within 50m are clearly visible and this unit would be fine to wait in ambush over a bait or game trail in the pitch black of night or to spot and stalk rabbits around the paddock.

I also understand performance can be increased by upgrading the illuminator.

Summing up the ATN X-Sight LTV it would be fair to say it's an entry level into this new age of digital day/night scopes. In researching this article I saw other ATN models with lots more features such as connectivity to other devices as well as taking images or video automatically just prior to the shot in the same way a security camera might operate. For me it was an interesting exercise that whetted my appetite to try more of these optics. ●



The main control pad operates like a TV remote.



Contents of the box as supplied.



The IR illuminator mounts neatly to either side of one of the supplied ring mounts.



# Eyes like a Hawke

Super Sidewinder scope's a ripper, says Con Kapralos

**H**awke Optics has become one of the world's most respected sports optics manufacturers, from humble beginnings in the UK more than 40 years ago to its current presence in around 60 countries as well as earning a major standing in the US market, testament to the products they design, manufacture and deliver to shooting and outdoor sportspeople. The sports optics sector is dominated by several major players and for a company to enter and muscle its way to the front in such quick time means they must be doing something right.

One telling factor is a pro-activeness to constantly refine and redevelop their product lines and the current catalogue reflects this. One rifle scope offshoot that's been redesigned from the ground up is the Sidewinder line which has been available for more than a decade. With the rising popularity of long-range target shooting and disciplines such as Precision Rifle Shooting, Hawke recognised the need for its Sidewinder stable to be refreshed to cater to this sector while not forgetting

its hunting heritage and roots. Enter the new improved Sidewinder assembly with Hawke's H5 optics which it shares with their other superb riflescope offerings in the Endurance series.

The Scope Store, Australian importer and distributor of Hawke Optics, sent *Australian Shooter* one of the new Sidewinder riflescopes in the 6-24x56 SF FFP. The Sidewinder line has 12 models of both Second Focal Plane (SFP) and First Focal Plane (FFP) options, all with side focus (SF) parallax adjustment dials and reticle illumination. The review scope has optical systems in the FFP including the Half-Mil reticle and arrived in the customary white Hawke Optics carton with all accessories - 100mm side wheel, 100mm sunshade, elasticated lens covers, zoom lever as well as a lens cleaning cloth and comprehensive user manual with reticle information booklets. The scope's 363mm long and weighs 775 grams.

#### Up close

The Sidewinder is a big optic made from

aircraft grade aluminium and consists of a one-piece tube body with a matte black hard-anodized finish. At the front, the massive objective bell houses a 56mm objective lens and has provision to install the 100mm sunshade via a threaded section. At the other end the ocular bell is sleek and functional with some new aspects, the ocular focus (diopter) consisting of a quick-adjustable rubber collar with locking ring.

The magnification power dial is aluminium with some integral machined texture which ensures a firm grip when moving the selector. Hawke have also included a throw lever which can be fitted to the magnification dial and makes moving the dial a tad easier, just be aware of the lever's position in regard to the action of the bolt. The power dial moves smoothly between minimal and maximum settings with no hint of internal binding and has firm stops at both ends of the magnification range.

Moving to the middle of the scope, the turret housing is the centrepiece of the



The supplied 100mm sunshade will be appreciated by target shooters.

The new 'witness window' feature on the elevation turret lets you see instantly how many revolutions have been dialled in.

Left and right-hand sides of the turrets.

Sidewinder with some excellent elements incorporated into the redesign. The left of the turret housing has the illumination and parallax dials sitting side-by-side, the illumination dial on the outer edge giving six levels of light with an 'Off' setting between each level. A single CR2032 battery powers the illumination but there's no automatic power-off feature. The parallax dial sits immediately to the right of the illumination dial but works independently and can be adjusted from 9m out to infinity, a must when shooting at set distances of either close, medium or long-range.

A 4" wheel is supplied and can be retro-fitted to the existing parallax dial to make adjustments though these are intended mainly for target disciplines and not hunting. The elevation and windage dials are top notch, especially for a scope in this price bracket, both of a precision locking design that can be tweaked by lifting the dial, making your adjustment and locking into place. The review scope has 1/10 mRad click values for both turrets and the elevation turret has a 'witness window'

feature which, while not a zero-stop, allows you to see at a glance how many complete rotations have been made in the elevation adjustment dial and has 0-4 positions.

The witness window indicator can be reset to zero once the scope is zeroed, instructions included in the user manual. Both adjustment dials have audible clicks and the provision of mRad click values will be appreciated by those who like to dial into distant targets with their particular rifle cartridge. Each rotation of the lift-to-turn turrets (elevation and windage) gives 6mRad (60 clicks) of adjustment or a total of 20mRad or travel.

#### Internally

The latest Sidewinders encompass Hawke's new H5 optics with 24-degree ultra-wide field of view, the lenses made from low dispersion Crown glass which helps minimise chromatic aberration while being able to remove radial distortion and lessen field curvature. The use of 18 layers of multiple ion-assisted sheets, gives maximum

level of light transmission as well as high bumper stages of abrasion resistance which exceed military standards for hardness and durability.

With provision of 102mm of eye relief and high-volume eye box with a thin field-of-view edge, achieving a full image and faster target acquisition is a formality. Technical jargon can only say so much but the proof was in the testing with the H5 optics exceeding expectations. Shooting out to 300m (maximum range distance) the optical quality was excellent with crisp and clear images from edge to edge and superb field of view, the high-volume eye box being a notable exception.

The reticle on the review scope was of the Half-Mil design in the First Focal Plane and, like all FFP, you see more detail in the reticle as you move from lower to higher magnification, the reticle having Half-Mil spaced graduations from 5mil outwards in all directions. Etched crosses on the lower quadrants of the reticle give additional windage aim-off markings and assist easy counting of Mil graduations when aiming



Sleek ocular housing with magnification power dial and adjustable eyepiece.

Hawke Sidewinder 6-24x56 SF FFP rifle scope as reviewed.



at a target. The outer posts are segmented into Half-Mil spacings and the 0.2mil spacings are useful for more precise adjustments. Coupled with the 0.1 mRad click alterations of the turrets, the Half-Mil reticle will appeal to shooters who embrace the Mil Radian reticles and dialing out/holding over at long to extreme distances.

I like simple Duplex or LR-Dot reticles on my hunting riflescopes and have never needed to dial out to targets though having said that, I rarely engage in targets beyond 300m. However, the Half-Mil reticle is well designed and with illumination incorporated can be used in even the poorest light.

#### At the range

The Hawke Sidewinder 6-24x56 SF FFP was tested on several rifles from 50m to 300m with excellent results. Setting up the scope on each rifle was easy and adjusting the elevation turret 'witness window' back to a zero setting was simple. Optical clarity was superb with all images crystal clear in colour and contrast, the eye box up there with the best riflescopes on the market and field of view exemplary.

The Half-Mil reticle, though a tad complicated for me, should provide all the necessary hold-over graduations for shooters keen to embrace the technology while the parallax and ocular focus ensured a razor-sharp reticle at all distances. I performed several tracking exercises with the elevation and windage turrets, pushing them to their limits and point-of-impact always returned to the original position, the sign of a top-notch optic.

#### Overview

If you're a shooter or hunter who likes dialling into targets - be they paper, steel or animate - the Hawke Sidewinder group with H5 optics is one to seriously consider. The review scope in 6-24x56 with Side Focus Half-Mil reticle in the First Focal Plane along with a host of other attributes performed as expected - now even better. The review optic retails for around \$1500 which represents exceptional value. More at [thescopestore.com.au](http://thescopestore.com.au) or [hawkeoptics.com](http://hawkeoptics.com) ●

## Specifications

**Manufacturer:** Hawke Optics  
**Model:** Sidewinder 6-24x56 SF FFP  
**Magnification:** 6x-24x  
**Optical system objective:** 56mm  
**Main tube:** 30mm one-piece aluminium  
**Field of view:** 7.1-1.8m at 100m  
**Eye relief:** 102mm  
**Focal plane:** First Focal Plane  
**Reticle:** Half-Mil  
**Elevation/windage increment:** 1/10 mRad  
**Elevation/windage adjustment range:** 20 mRad  
**Targets:** Exposed locking design  
**Illumination:** Six levels of brightness, 'off' position between settings  
**Lens coatings:** Fully multi-coated 18 layers  
**Length:** 363mm  
**Weight:** 775g  
**RRP:** \$1500  
**Distributor:** The Scope Store



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# SSAA (WA) on front foot over heavy-handed reviews

Rachael Oxborrow

As the political spotlight is focused firmly on Western Australian firearm laws, the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA WA) is working to promote, educate and advocate in the interests of all members and the wider shooting community. In recent months there has been a virtual media storm fuelled by the WA Government and Police as they commit to their second firearms-related legislation play in six months, namely a Firearms Amendment Bill 2021 announced late last year and more recently a proposal to completely rewrite the 50-year-old WA Firearms Act (1973).

We've seen state newspaper *The West Australian* essentially publish the location of licensed firearm owners with information provided by the authorities which is disappointing, unnecessary and counterintuitive to any good intent of the process when the Government clearly had zero consideration for the safety and security of law-abiding firearm owners and their families. The two legislative matters on the table in WA fall across a few different issues and areas of legislation as follows.

## Firearms Amendment Bill 2021

The Firearms Amendment Bill 2021 was tabled in the Legislative Assembly (lower house) in November 2021 and impacts regulations around reloading, firearm repairs and prohibition orders. It affects several Acts including the Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913, Criminal Organisations Control Act 2012, Firearms Act 1973 and Prohibited Behaviour Orders Act 2010. The Bill will also affect several other Acts with further amendments down the track.

This Bill has passed the lower house and is currently in the Legislative Council (upper house) and subject to further debate. If the amendment passes the upper house it remains subject to the complete review which will occur with the WA Firearms Act 1973, giving us another opportunity to expose the flaws in these amendments.



## WA Firearms Act 1973 review proposal

In March this year the Minister for Police, Paul Papalia, announced a proposal to completely rewrite the 50-year-old WA Firearms Act 1973, a proposal which will involve an exhaustive consultation process. This is where SSAA WA is on the front foot to advocate and educate for our members as the drafting and consultation process will occur in the coming months and provide us with an opportunity to educate and advocate.

## Promote

It's of the utmost importance we invest in our sport and membership and SSAA WA has partnered with the WA Firearm Traders Association to form a united front to demand common sense and workable solutions throughout the legislative consultation process. The shopfronts of WA retailers are set to change as we call on all firearm owners to side with SSAA WA and be heard as one voice so sign-up a friend up at your

local store and spread the word. The day-to-day operations of all clubs and members are paramount and we aim to ensure no impact to the sport and recreation we love.

## Educate

In the current political environment a professional and diplomatic approach to engagement is the key to success. SSAA WA is recognised as the peak body for firearm owners in the state and this was recently acknowledged by the WA Police Minister in parliament. We've held a seat at the negotiation table in the past and will be there again - SSAA WA was a key stakeholder and contributor to the 2016 Review of the WA Firearms Act 1973 by the WA Law Reform Commission. We'll hold the Government to account and strive to block unintended consequences for SSAA WA members from inclusion in new legislation.

## Advocate

SSAA WA has rigorously stated its position to the Minister that we disagree with the intent and unintended consequences of the Firearms Amendment Bill 2021. SSAA WA has been thoroughly engaged throughout the parliamentary debate with members of the WA Opposition who support our position in the face of a Government holding a majority in both houses of parliament.

In light of recent disingenuous efforts to focus on 'community safety' SSAA WA is not standing idle, we're demanding answers of the WA Police and Police Commissioner who stood by and allowed this type of unwarranted and unprecedented attack on legal firearm ownership and our personal data.

## Stand with SSAA WA

We need SSAA WA members to stand with all firearm owners and our industry as we prepare to represent all lawful activities involving firearms, recreational hunting and the wider shooting sports. Please share our message and stay in touch as we will via our Facebook page, the SSAA WA online newsletter and *Australian Shooter*. ●

## National

### National Junior Rimfire Rifle Metallic Silhouette Postal Championships

March 1-July 31, 2022

All clubs and branches

Program: 40-shot match under current SSAA National rule book. No nominations fees apply. See National website for full event details. Contact: juniorsports@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

### National Junior Rimfire Field Rifle Postal Championships

June 1-October 31, 2022

All clubs and branches

Program: 40-shot match under current SSAA National rule book. No nominations fees apply. See National website for full event details. Contact: juniorsports@disciplines.ssaa.org.au

### SSAA (WA) Lever Action Open Rifle State Championships

June 4-5, 2022

SSAA Narrogin, Dumbering, WA

Program: June 3 Practice, June 4 start 9.30am, June 5 start 9.30am. Facilities: Camping, caravans, breakfast/lunch \$5 each. Contact: Stephen Ellis 0418 388 991 leveraction@ssaawa.org.au or Ray Smith 0428 921 249 narroginshooters@gmail.com

### SSAA (WA) Practical Shooting Shotgun State Championships

June 5-25, 2022

Kukerin Practical Pistol Club, Kukerin

Program: Eight stages, minimum 110 rounds, no slugs, target loads only, Cat. C shotguns. Contact: P Fitzgerald 0407 773 286 wpcrc.president@gmail.com or S. Marris 0427 183 299 Kukerin@ssaawa.org.au

### SSAA 10m Precision, NRA 3x40 3P, Field Rifle Postal Shoot National Championships

June 1-August 30, 2022

All locations

Program: Shot in accordance with current SSAA Scoped 3-Positional & Field Rifle rules from June to August 2022. Contact: Jennifer Ingram jenniingram1978@gmail.com

### SSAA (WA) IRB State Championships

June 19, 2022

Wanneroo Shooting Complex, WA

Program: 3-Card match as per SSAA National Rulebook. Contact: William Barrett Mobile: 0422 744 901 or williambarrett@optusnet.com.au

### SSAA Gallery National Championships

July 23-24, 2022

Para Branch, Greenwith, SA

Program: Events will include Multi-Target I, Timed and Precision I, 1020 Match in Standard and Classic rifles and 1500 Match. Nominations will be received up to the start of events. Facilities: Canteen for snacks and drinks. Contact: Don Robinson 0428 986 070 or Dave McCarthy 0414 880 333.

### SSAA (WA) Sporting Clays State Championships

July 31, 2022

Wanneroo Shooting Complex, WA

Program: 100 Sporting Clay targets. Contact: Neil Cobb 0404 040 357 or neilcobb@bigpond.com

### SSAA IHMSA National Championships

Sept. 30-Oct. 7, 2022

SSAA (ACT) Majura

Program: Sept. 30 Practice; Oct. 1-3 Small Bore and Field Pistol; Oct. 4 Practice; Oct. 5-7 Big Bore. Contact: Russell Mowles handgunsilhouette@disciplines.ssaa.org.au or Cheyne Fischer ihmsa.act@gmail.com

### SSAA Fly Shoot National Championships

August 19-22, 2022

Big Springs Range, Wagga Wagga, NSW

Program: August 19 set-up and practice; 20 Light Gun 500m Fly; 21 Heavy Gun 500m Fly; 22 200y Rimfire Fly. Facilities: Catering breakfast and lunch all three days, camping with showers, toilets, cooking facilities, \$10 per person for all the event schedule. Contact: Greg Chapman chappo555@bigpond.com

## NSW

### SSAA (NSW) Rimfire and IRB Benchrest State Championships

June 10-13, 2022

Seaham Range, Seaham, NSW

Program: See National website for full event details. Contact: Kim Cosstick 0429 335 389 or kircosstick@hotmail.com

### SSAA (NSW) Big Game Rifle State Championships

June 17-19, 2022

Windamere Regional Shooting Complex, NSW

Program: June 17 camping, practice, Event No.1; 18 Events 2-7; 19 Events 8-11. Medals for first three. Facilities: Camping and caravans permitted, toilets and showers. Cudgegong caravan park nearby. Event contact: Ben Doherty 0409 831 258 or bjdoherty@bigpond.com.

### SSAA (NSW) Benchrest State Championships

June 30-July 3, 2022

Dairyville Range, Coffs Harbour, NSW

Program: See National website for full event details. Contact: Ian Thompson: 0499 212 260 or isp\_projectiles@yahoo.com.au

### SSAA (NSW) Combined Services State Championships

September 16-18, 2022

Windamere Regional Shooting Complex, NSW

Program: Full details on National website. Prizes: Medals for all rifle events, Top Gun and Top Gun Junior. Facilities: Barbecue and basic kitchen facilities, camping and caravans permitted at range Friday to Monday, male and female toilets and hot showers. Contact: Anthony Gatti info@nswcsd.com.au

## Vic

### SSAA (Vic) Single Action Black Powder State Championships

July 9-10, 2022

165 Giffkins Rd, Little River, Vic

Program - Saturday: Long Range, four main stages, dusk shoot. Sunday: Six main stages. Facilities: Free camping (limited powered sites), showers, toilets. Contact: Tony Diablo 0419 187 980 or email diablott6@bigpond.com

### SSAA (Vic) IHMSA Big Bore State Championships

July 21-24, 2022

Eagle Park, Little River, Vic

Program: Production, Revolver, Standing, Unlimited, Unlimited Any Sight, Unlimited Half Scale. Contact: metallicsilhouette@inet.net.au

### SSAA (Vic) IHMSA 80-shot Ram Slam State Championships

August 26-28, 2022

Eagle Park Shooting Complex, Little River, Vic

Program: 80-shot Ram Slam, Production, Revolver, Standing, Unlimited. Contact: metallicsilhouette@inet.net.au

## WA

### SSAA (WA) Centrefire Benchrest State Championships

May 29-June 6, 2022

Jarrardale Sporting Shooters, WA

Program: May 29 Unlimited; June 4 Sporter; June 5 Heavy Bench; June 6 Light Bench. Facilities: Camping with showers, toilets, barbecue, limited power, no canteen. Contact: Trevor 0417 085 528 or Dave 0400 205 892.

### SSAA (WA) NRA & Air Rifle State Championships

June 11-12, 2022

Port Bouvard Smallbore Rifle & Pistol Club, Dawesville, WA

Program: June 11: Scoped 10m Air Rifle Precision; Scoped 3-P 10m Air Rifle. June 12: NRA 3x40 Smallbore. Prizes: Medals for first three, certificates for top score. Facilities: Barbecue, canteen, toilets, showers. Contact: fieldrifle@ssaawa.org.au or Matthew Boots 0439 092 686.

## SA

### SSAA (SA) Rifle Metallic Silhouette State Championships

June 18-19, 2022

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: Saturday 80 shots rimfire and 40 shots air rifle; Sunday: 80 shots centrefire. Range open 8.30am for 10am start. Facilities: Barbecue, showers, toilets, cooking facilities. Contact: mmsrcsecretary@gmail.com

### SSAA (SA) Fly Shoot State Championships

July 16-18, 2022

Monarto Shooting Complex, SA

Program: July 16 Practice; 17 200yd rimfire fly, target competition; 18 centrefire 500m fly. Facilities: Barbecue, showers, toilets, cooking, camping (\$5 per night). Contact: Pat Kitschke 0455 280 024, (08) 8349 6544 or whytiger49@hotmail.com

## ACT

### SSAA (ACT) Rifle Metallic Silhouette Snowball Shoot

June 11-13, 2022

SSAA Majura Range, ACT

Program: June 11: 80-shot Rimfire, 40-shot Air Rifle; 12: 80-shot Centrefire; 13: 40-shot Rimfire Hunting Rifle, 40-shot Centrefire Hunting Rifle. Facilities: Camping with showers, canteen. Contact: David 0423 043 663, or Mark 0401 867 839.

## Qld

### Queensland NRA Pistol Metallic Silhouette Postal Shoots

All (SSAA) Qld branches with approval to shoot Postal

Metallic Silhouette Program: Shoot 1: February 1-May 31; Shoot 2: April 1-July 31; Shoot 3: May 1-August 31; Shoot 4: August 1-November 30. See National website for full event details. Contact: Hazel Bozic (07)4128 0467 or pms@ssaqld.org.au

### SSAA (Qld) Field Rifle and 3 & 4P State Championships

August 19-22, 2022

SSAA Gladstone Branch

Program: August 19 Practice; 20 RF Field Rifle (42 shots), CF Field Rifle (42 shots); 21 RF NRA 3P (60 shots), CF 4P (40 shots). Facilities: Free camping, toilets and hot showers (no power), access from Thursday morning. Food and drinks Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Contact: Jennifer Ingram 0418 259 269 or Leanne 0421 017 404 (after 5.30).



## SSAA (Qld) Action Match State Championships

July 23-24, 2022

SSAA Bundaberg, Qld

Program: Barricade, Falling Plates, Moving Target, Practical, Production and Metallic on Saturday, Open on Sunday. Facilities: Lunch and refreshments, camping, hot showers and toilets available by prior arrangement. Contact: Shane McEwan vp@ssaabundaberg.org.au

## SSAA Victoria 2022 AGM notice

### 2022 Annual General Meeting and postal ballot

The AGM will be held from 2pm to 4pm Sunday, September 18, 2022 at Hotel 115 Grill & Brewhouse, 115 Cotham Rd, Kew VIC 3101.

Nominations to fill three Board vacancies will open May 23, 2022 and close June 24, 2022.

Nominations to be posted to **Returning Officer SSAA (Victoria), PO Box 336, Nth Melbourne, VIC 3051**; or emailed to **frank@ybg.com.au**

Results of the postal ballot, which opens August 1, 2022 and closes August 26, 2022, will be announced at the 2022 AGM.

Financial accounts for the year ending April 2022 will be available at [ssaavvic.com.au](http://ssaavvic.com.au) prior to the meeting or upon written request.

For details contact the State Office by telephone :03 8892 2777 or email: [state\\_office@ssaavvic.com.au](mailto:state_office@ssaavvic.com.au)

By order of the Board, SSAA Victoria

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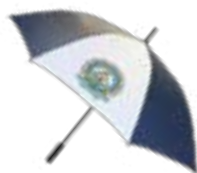




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**\$7.95**



### SSAA beanies

Keep your head and ears warm with SSAA Beanies!

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### Grey Knife Roll

The SSAA Grey Knife Roll includes 16cm Boning Knife, 16cm Skinning Knife, 18cm Filleting Knife and 25cm Sharpening Steel.

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### SSAA Bullet Case Pen

The SSAA Bullet Case Pen has been crafted from a part form bullet case.

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### Field to Fork - Second Helpings

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**\$49.95**



### 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!

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### SSAA Multi Tool

The SSAA Multi Tool, with stainless steel handles, comes with 11 functional tools in one handy unit.

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### SSAA Caps

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Please visit our website for more details.



## 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.

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## SSAA Bush Kettle

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

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

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## SSAA Camping Lantern

This lantern is lightweight and ultrabright, with 450 lumens. Simply pull the SSAA Pop Up Camping Lantern upwards to turn on and push closed to turn it off. When you want overhead light, use the metal 'arms' to easily hang it. Runs on three AA batteries.

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## SSAA Buffwear

Look stylish in the great outdoors with one of the new SSAA Buffwear which come in five great options - Iron Bark, Bullet, Distressed Leaf and Oz Flag.

Perfect for men and women alike, the SSAA Buffwear can be worn in a multitude of ways and comes complete with a cheat sheet to show you a dozen different options to get the most out of yours.

**\$15.95**



## SSAA Hoodie

You can never have enough hoodies! Why not add our SSAA Navy Hoodie to your collection? With the traditional 'kangaroo pouch' and hood, it is sure to keep you warm as you show off the cool SSAA logo.

The SSAA Navy Hoodie is a Gildan heavy blend top made from 50% cotton and 50% polyester preshrunk yarn.

Available in sizes S to 5XL.

**\$53.95**



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

**\$94.95**

Please visit our website for measurements for correct sizing



## SSAA Competition Shirt

Look smart and feel comfortable with the new SSAA Competition polo shirt, with short sleeves to give you a competitive advantage. Featuring a variety of logos from the SSAA's most popular supporters, the shirt is made of 100% Polyester and has a UPF rating of 30+, blocking out 97% of UVA and UVB rays.

Available in sizes Medium to 3XL

**\$94.95**



## Digi Camo Shirts long-sleeve shirts.

Look smart and feel comfortable with the new SSAA Digi Camo polo shirt with brown tones and a stylish digital camouflage design. Featuring a variety of SSAA logos, the shirt is made of 100 per cent Polyester and has a UPF rating of 30+, blocking out 97 per cent of UVA and UVB rays.

**\$54.95**

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# SSAA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

ABN 95 050 209 688

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

Phone 02 8805 3900 Fax 02 9832 9377 Email [membership@ssaa.org.au](mailto:membership@ssaa.org.au)

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

Membership No.

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**PLEASE  
READ AND SIGN**

This application is made in full recognition of the Associations' requirement for responsible and ethical behaviour. I undertake to do all in my power to preserve the good image of the sport and the Associations. I understand that members breaking the Code of Conduct and/or Social Media Policies may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Both can be found at [ssaa.org.au/code](http://ssaa.org.au/code)

SIGNATURE:.....

DATE:.....

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

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

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

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Middle name

Last name

Residential address

Town/suburb State Postcode

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Town/suburb State Postcode

(IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)

Phone (Mobile) (Home)

Email

Date of birth Male ☐ Female ☐

Member referral number if applicable

☐ Tick to subscribe to the FREE SSAA National E-newsletter via email

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☐ \$107 ☐ \$137

☐ \$72 ☐ \$102

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

- ☐ TARGET SHOOTING (longarms only)
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MEMBERS FIREARMS PROTECTION

Mutual April 2022

☐ **SSAA MUTUAL** **TICK IF TAKING OUT SSAA MUTUAL MEMBER FIREARMS PROTECTION.** I understand that the Firearms Statement of Protection for SSAA MUTUAL Members Firearms Protection is on [ssaaib.com.au](http://ssaaib.com.au) for my reference.

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## Whistle while you work

**W**akened by a noisy chorus of kookaburras I sat on the edge of the bed and stared out at a new day. Smudges of cloud drifted across a grey-blue sky, their bellies painted with bands of pink and orange by the rising sun. Magpies chortled. Cawing softly, a couple of ravens drifted down the creek and at the back door Trevor, our black and white guard cat, was demanding to be fed so like it or not it was time to make a move.

As I stood up and stretched, a fox trotted down the road carrying what looked to be the best part of a chicken, leaving the scene of the crime discretely and not at all fazed by the clamorous outrage of dogs chained to their kennels at the house across the creek. For no particular reason he took me back to another of his kind that used to raid my trapline in days when I was much younger, making pocket money from bunnies I sold door-to-door or to the local butcher. I'd see him from time to time, usually heading back into one particular corner of the gully, often as not carrying a rabbit he'd pulled from one of my traps. The dog always gave chase but never could catch up or frighten him enough to stay away.

I laid punitive sets for the thief and while I subsequently caught and killed half a dozen feral cats, the fox remained elusive and it wasn't until years later when I'd grown up some and spent a week's worth of wages on my first shotgun that I finally brought him undone. It was mid-afternoon

when the dog and I headed up the gully, aiming to set up an ambush in a paper bark tree about 30m from the edge of the lantana. With the dog settled at the foot of the tree I climbed to a comfortable fork some three metres above ground level and assembled the gun. With a No.2 ICIL Special stuffed in the chamber I laid it across my lap and waited patiently for the gully to quieten down.

The dog sat up and looked the first time



A fox whistled in and taken with a 20-gauge Winchester High Wall, just like that first one all those years ago.

I blew the whistle, realised it was me then settled again. I waited a bit more and tried again, the shrilling tone of the whistle starting with terrified then throttling back to tremulous - nothing untoward happened. Having read somewhere that too much whistling wasn't necessarily a good thing I stopped for a bit then started again, not so loudly this time, trying to imitate a trapped rabbit resigned to its fate. A yellow robin swooped in, gave me a cursory inspection and flicked away while down along the creek a couple of rabbits fed out of the blackberries. Magpies strutted through the tussocks and out on the highway a truck horn blasted.

For the best part of an hour I intermittently broadcast a mock tale of woe until finally he came. He was sitting quietly on the edge of the lantana when I noticed him partially hidden by some straggling bracken fern, his hide summer thin and skinny brush wrapped around his feet. His head was up, ears cocked, nose and eyes working - clearly interested yet still cautious. I lifted the gun slowly and as I cocked the hammer his head turned to the slight metallic click

but his eyes were searching low, not high. I put the bead on his nose and slapped the trigger, shattering the gully peace.

Looking back I have to acknowledge I really don't know it was the same redcoat that used to raid my trapline. Going by the scars on his face and notches in his ears he could have been but there's no way I could ever be sure, yet all these years later and hundreds of foxes down the track, I like to think it was. His

demise fitted my possibly misguided sense of poetic justice at the time and still does, knowing as I do that a dead fox is always a good thing. Apart from that he was the first one I ever called with a whistle.

Trevor the cat yowled again, snapping me back into the here and now and as I stood up to tend to his demands, I wondered if anyone will ever whistle up the chicken thief that trotted past our house this morning.





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